

The Unshackled Queen: Never Say Never Online Free - Chapter: 621

Johanna's eyes widened in feigned shock, stepping back.

“Christy, how dare you pin this on me? I’ve been confined to my room for self- reflection for the last two days. How could I possibly have orchestrated this? I defended you out of goodwill. I believed you were innocent, but are you trying to set me up.”

Pretending to be heartbroken, Johanna continued, “You’ve let me down, Christy. How could you endanger Grandpa? Do you have any conscience?

I had such faith in you.”

Johanna's deceptive confirmation sealed the grim fate for Christy, who couldn't believe her supposed ally would throw her under the bus.

Hannah, observing the unfolding drama, surmised that Johanna had manipulated Christy. However, she wasn't inclined to let Christy off the hook.

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Anyone with harmful intentions deserved accountability.

Byrum broke his silence, coughing to gain attention.

“Christy, I'd rather not add to the chaos. It's best if you leave voluntarily.”

Realizing that eviction from the White family would make any return impossible, Christy lunged towards Byrum.

“Byrum, believe me! Johanna is the puppet master behind all this! Trust me, please!”

Fearing for his grandfather's safety, Jalen swiftly moved to restrain Christy.

“Calm down! Come with me!”

“I’m not going anywhere! I’m not going anywhere!”

Struggling, Christy slumped to her knees.

“Byrum, I messed up! I should never have listened to Johanna and tampered with your medication. But I never intended to harm you! I’ve been part of this family for so long. Can’t you trust me just this once? I never meant to cause you any harm. Really!”

Byrum stared at the ground, his thoughts inscrutable.

Concerned that Christy could ruin her scheme, Johanna feigned sorrow.

“Christy, you’re the one I trust most in this family! Why are you framing me? I knew you had issues with Hannah. I even advised you not to take it too far! I stood up for you, and now I regret it.”

“You!”

Cornered and frantic, Christy was at a loss. She had no evidence to prove that Johanna had manipulated her into swapping the medication.

In her desperation, she clung to Jalen’s shirt.

“Jalen, believe me!

We’ve been together for so long! Don’t you know the kind of person I am?”

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Jalen wavered. He’d known Christy for years. She was fiery, yes, but never deceitful in this manner.

He glanced skeptically at Johanna. Despite his reluctance to question her, he couldn’t shake the feeling that Christy wouldn’t set her up without a good reason.

The moment Johanna's eyes met Jalen's gaze, they brimmed with tears.

"Do you trust her over me, Jalen?"

Tensions surged, filling the living room with a cacophony of arguments.

Visibly annoyed, Byrum finally said, "Hannah, this is on you now.

Your grandmother and I are too old for these disputes. Make your choice."

Taking her grandfather's words to heart, Hannah simply nodded.

"Alright, Grandpa. Go rest upstairs."

When they were alone in the living room, Hannah moved to the sofa and settled in.

"Grandpa may be lenient, but I won't be. Christy, you can either leave willingly or be escorted out, which won't be pretty."

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"Hannah! I admit I've wronged you. But I never intended to harm Byrum. I fell under Johanna's influence. Can you give me another chance?"

Without letting her elaborate, Hannah gestured for the waiting bodyguards to remove her.

"Butler, instruct her to finalize a divorce with Jalen at the court within three days. Otherwise, legal action will follow." Hannah gave a nod to the butler.

"As you wish, madam."

As the butler exited the room, Hannah overheard Christy's sobs from outside. The butler kindly dismissed the two bodyguards.

"Please step out for a moment."

Once they were gone, Christy trembled as she said, "I didn't actually..."

Interrupting her, the butler reassured, “Madam, Miss Moore is aware that you wouldn’t harm Mr. Byrum White.

Confused, Christy stared at the butler.

“Then why did she..

With a distant smile, the butler clarified, “Even if you aren’t the chief plotter, you did tamper with Mr. White’s medication. That makes you an accomplice.”

Christy’s face fell, and the butler added, “Furthermore, you lack any proof that Miss White directed you to switch the medication.”

“I understand...”

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As she prepared to depart in dejection, the butler interjected, “However, Miss Moore is willing to offer you an opportunity. If you uncover the true instigator, she might consider forgiving you.”

Christy’s eyes lit up, as if clutching a lifeline. She nodded at the butler and said, “I will! If I can gather evidence against Johanna, I’ll do whatever it takes. Whatever it takes!”

Acknowledging her resolve, the butler nodded and said, “In that case, please lay low for a few days. I’ll reach out when there’s an update.”

“Understood! Absolutely, I get it.”

In the living room, seeing Christy be ushered away, Johanna exhaled deeply and shot Hannah a disdainful look.

“Stop playing the devoted granddaughter. Why didn’t you inform us about the surveillance system earlier? It’s as if you wanted the spotlight after Grandpa’s incident.”

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Hannah retorted with a grin, “Maybe you should schedule a doctor’s visit to check on your mental health.”

Hannah studied Johanna, her words dripping with irony.

“If I’d warned you, would that have stopped Christy from tampering with Grandpa’s meds?”

Johanna’s face paled.

“That’s not on me! Grandpa gave you authority over family issues, but that doesn’t mean you can blame me! Do you think if we’d known about the surveillance earlier, Grandpa’s meds would still have been tampered with? Would his condition have worsened again?”

Edwin had had enough of Johanna.

“The surveillance was installed for my sake. We had no idea someone in the house was plotting against Grandpa.”

Still smiling, Hannah faced Johanna.

“A guilty mind needs no accuser, right Johanna?”

Johanna shot Hannah a furious look.

“Your insinuations are lost on me!

Grandpa told me to reflect on my actions. I’ve no interest in bickering with you further!”

As Johanna stormed out, Edwin sat next to Hannah, his expression fraught with concern.

“Hannah, I’m not convinced it’s that simple.”

“What do you mean?” Hannah arched an eyebrow.

After hesitating, Edwin said, “While Christy may have a fiery temperament and occasionally rub people the wrong way, she’s always

treated Grandpa with utmost respect. Moreover, Grandpa has never had an issue with her. There was no reason for her to harm him intentionally!”

“Having settled my nerves, I too sensed something off about the situation.”

Jalen exhaled deeply, shifted his seat, and fixed his gaze on Hannah.

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“Edwin’s right. I’ve been married to her for years. She might be hot-headed, but doing something like this doesn’t add up. If she were crafty enough to devise such a scheme, she wouldn’t have waited for your arrival to act.”

Bainbridge Looked puzzled.

“What’s going on? Are you saying Christy isn’t behind this?”

Hannah shot him a dismissive glance.

“Explaining this to someone of your intellectual caliber would be a waste of time. Mind your own business and go enjoy yourself.”

Stung by Hannah’s words, Bainbridge fumed, “What’s that supposed to mean?”

“Are you really that dense? I want you to leave. You’re only getting in the way.”

“Fine, fine!” Visibly aggravated, Bainbridge spun on his heels and stormed off.

A N G E L A ‘ s L I B R A R Y

Once the room had fallen silent, with only the three of them remaining, Hannah said, “I’m certain she’s not the plotter, and I believe her.”

Jalen looked surprised.

“You’re saying Johanna manipulated her...”

“Did you see Johanna’s reaction earlier? Who else could it be?” Edwin scoffed.

“She failed to frame Hannah this time, but she’ll definitely try again.”

Hannah’s voice turned icy.

“She won’t get another chance. I need to ask for your assistance. During the banquet, make sure she can’t attend. I’ve got a plan to expose her.”

Edwin and Jalen exchanged glances and nodded.

“Consider it done.

We’ve got this.”

After Christy was ousted, tranquility returned to the White family villa for a while. Knowing the house was under surveillance, Johanna kept a low profile, mostly staying confined to her room.

On the banquet day, Bryson’s staff delivered to Hannah an exquisite pearl necklace and a luxurious white halter dress.

When Hannah got the dress, she dialed Bryson’s number. He didn’t pick up, but she wasn’t bothered by it. Instead, she had someone carry the dress to her room.

Tonight’s banquet was an event that both the elders of the White family deliberately skipped to let the younger generation shine.

Dressed in her Halter Dress, Hannah descended the stairs and caught Edwin’s eye.

“Wow, Hannah! You look stunning!”

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Hannah had opted for simplicity. She had her hair up in a casual bun, held by a single hairpin, exuding grace.

Hearing Edwin's exclamation, Bainbridge glanced up, caught sight of Hannah, smirked, and then looked away.

Jalen was on his way down the stairs, with Johanna pestering him.

"Why can't I go to the banquet with you?"

"Grandpa has grounded you for reflection; you're not going anywhere,"

Jalen responded.

Lounging on the sofa, Edwin added, "Just stay put. Grandma and Grandpa have hospital appointments. No disruptions, okay?"

"I'm also a member of the White family too, you know! Why do you only care about Hannah?"

Johanna felt isolated. Seeing everyone so biased toward Hannah, she nearly lost it. She darted down the stairs and turned to Bainbridge.

"Bainbridge! They're leaving me behind! Will you take me?"

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Though tempted to undermine Hannah, Bainbridge wasn't eager to make a spectacle with Johanna.

"It's not that big of a deal, Johanna. You'll get your chance. If we defy Grandpa's orders, he'll have our heads."

Realizing she was stuck, Johanna shot Hannah a venomous look.

"You're pure evil, you know that? I won't forget this."

Hannah glanced at the woman storming upstairs, grabbed her purse, and said nonchalantly, "We should head out. It's getting late."

The event was designed not just to impress Hoijery's local elite, but also high-profile individuals from other cities.

When they got there, lights danced across the room and melodious music filled the air.

Hannah's arrival, along with the grandsons of the White family, drew immediate attention. A flurry of people came up to introduce themselves.

"Miss Moore, I specialize in International Trade over in Crakholis.

Here's my card. Perhaps we could explore business ventures in the future."

Graciously accepting the card, Hannah replied, "I appreciate the offer, sir. If an opportunity arises, I'd be glad to collaborate."

Within a short time of entering the hall, Hannah had collected over ten business cards.

The event was a lavish affair. Declan had brought nearly his entire family, as the Edwards Group wasn't doing as well and needed strong alliances.

Sadie had spotted Hannah the moment she walked in. Irritated by Hannah's increased poise and allure, Sadie clenched her teeth.

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"I can't believe she snagged this role by sleeping with a man! I really misjudged her!"

Eliana, clinging to Declan's arm, observed, "Miss Moore is quite the networker. She's managed to build such connections in Hoi Jerry, even after parting ways with Declan."

Declan had noticed how Hannah was swarmed by business tycoons. He was seething with jealousy.

People were only drawn to beautiful women! They had bypassed him, focusing instead on handing their business cards to Hannah, who graciously accepted each one.

The thought that Hannah was here to flirt enraged Declan.

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"Ouch, Declan, you're hurting me!"

Snapping back to reality, Declan responded frostily, "I'm going to go mingle. Find a seat."

Eliana sneered inwardly, "In truth, he isn't interested in socializing. He just wants to rekindle things with Hannah."

Eliana had lost all concern. It was better for her to find someone superior to Declan at this gathering.

Meanwhile, Sadie's gaze never left Hannah. How she envied her!

"Miss Moore, it's been a while," said a voice behind Hannah.

As Hannah concluded her mingling, she turned to find Layne.

"Mr. Cartwright, you're here too?"

"This gathering is a hotspot for influential people. I'm scouting for potentially worthwhile ventures."

Lifting her glass, Hannah quipped, "Then Mr. Cartwright, perhaps you should think about teaming up with me in the future."

"Of course." Layne raised his glass and clinked it against Hannah's.

"If I were looking to establish a joint project, then I would naturally prefer to do business with you, Miss Moore."

"What a huge business deal, Miss Moore. Do you think you can collaborate with us as well?" Declan had appeared out of nowhere and sidled up next to the two with a fake smile on his face.

Hannah instantly felt sick at the sight of his face, and her own smile faded away.

Layne, on the other hand, was able to keep his courteous expression despite his surprise.

"Mr. Edwards! I knew that the Edwards Group is neck deep in Valmere's real estate industry, but I haven't heard that you were branching out to a different line of business. When did you develop an interest in the Internet industry?"

Declan was stunned to be suddenly put on the spot. He cleared his throat before saying, "Well, everyone knows that we need some diversity if we are to progress. We are old friends, aren't we?"

Please keep the Edwards Group in mind."

“Old friends?” Layne repeated, one eyebrow raised as he looked Declan up and down.

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“I believe we’ve only met a handful of times, Mr. Edwards. I wouldn’t exactly call ourselves ‘old friends’.”

His tone was kind, gentle even, but it effectively stopped Declan from blurting out his true intentions.

Feeling humiliated, Declan did as he always had and pinned the blame on Hannah. He turned to her and asked, “Didn’t Bryson come with you?

Or, don’t tell me...”

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He paused pointedly, a glint of malice flashing in his eyes.

“Has he abandoned you already? Didn’t I warn you that someone of his standing is even more unreliable than the ones you’re used to? I mean, why would he fall for a divorcee in the first place?”

Hannah’s hand balled into a fist. She had to fight the urge to plant it in Declan’s face. Thankfully, she was able to swallow her anger.

“I don’t see how that has anything to do with you, Mr. Edwards.”

“Oh, it has nothing to do with me at all,” Declan said mockingly.

“I just don’t want you to disgrace yourself any more than you already have. As my ex-wife, you are still unfortunately related to the Edwards family name.”

Hannah narrowed her eyes at him and sneered, “We’ve been divorced for half a year. Whomever I choose to be with or what I decided to do with my life is none of your business. What, did you expect me to spend the next three years living Like a forlorn widow?”

Declan's expression turned ugly. Was she cursing him with an early death or something? But then he heard a suppressed chuckle from his other side.

Layne was holding his fist against his mouth, but it did little to hide his grin.

"Oh, sorry. Please continue."

"Hannah! Just what do you mean by that?" Declan was getting increasingly angry. How did this woman become so arrogant in such a short time?

Without warning, he grabbed Hannah by the wrist and pulled her forward.

"Don't forget that you still hold 20% of the Edwards Group."

"Oh, so you want me to be thankful for that?" Hannah retorted with a sarcastic smirk.

"No way. Your grandmother gave those shares to me, Declan. That has nothing to do with you either! You even refused to give me a few million when you demanded a divorce, remember?"

"If I'm not mistaken," Layne interjected, "the current assets of the Edwards Group exceed a billion in value. Yet you couldn't even pay your ex-wife ten million or less? It appears that you are quite the unreliable partner, Mr. Edwards."

Declan's face turned an alarming shade of red. He had meant to insult Hannah, but things ended up going the other way around.

"Come with me! I have something to discuss with you in private!"

Declan was so enraged that he was already yanking her in the direction of the door.

"Let go of me!" Layne's face turned cold. Just as he was about to help Hannah, another voice spoke from a few feet away.

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“Let her go.”

Hannah paused in her struggle and looked up.

Today, Bryson wore another one of his tailored black suits over a black cotton shirt, though the lack of tie made him look more rugged than usual.

He reached out, and Hannah felt his warm hand grasp hers before she fell into his familiar embrace. The scent of sandalwood hit her Like a wave washing over her entire body.

Declan froze upon seeing Bryson, but he wasn't about to back down.

“Mr. Mitchell...”

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Bryson cut him off with a cold glare.

“You're manhandling my girlfriend in the middle of a public event. Is this how a dignified man should act?”

“I have something to say to Hannah,” Declan said, his voice turning a notch deeper from the pressure Bryson was exuding.

“What? For all you know, I might be trying to apologize to her.”

“Apologize?” Bryson looked down at Hannah's wrist. Her skin was already turning red where Declan had seized her.

“Is this how you express a sincere apology?”

Declan gritted his teeth and tried his best not to sneer. He faced Hannah again and bit out, “I'm sorry, I shouldn't have grabbed you like that. I was too impulsive.”

Hannah placed her free hand on Bryson's arm.

“Forget it,” she said softly, not wanting to deal with her ex-husband for a second Longer.

Bryson smiled as he felt her lean against his chest.

“So, this counts as an apology, then?”

Declan practically growled, but he didn’t dare to go against Bryson outright.

“What else do you want? I’ve apologized, and she told you to let it go...”

Instead of answering him, Bryson picked up a glass from the nearest table and smashed it against the wooden edge.

Crack!

Glass shards rained on the floor.

Needless to say, the sound attracted everyone’s attention.

“What was that? What’s happening?”

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“There seems to be a fight going on over there. Oh, wait. Isn’t that Mr. Mitchell? Who is he quarrelling with?”

“Ah, I recognize the man. He is from the Edwards family in Valmere.

The woman Mr. Mitchell is holding is that man’s ex-wife.”

Most of the guests were not aware of the events that had transpired in Valmere. As a result, the hall was soon filled with animated conversations.

Meanwhile, Bryson held up the broken glass, its rim sharp and jagged.

A sinister glint entered his eyes as he smiled at Declan.

“If you chew a piece of this, I just might dismiss this encounter altogether.”

“What? What the hell are you saying?” Declan’s eyes went wide as saucers as he stared at the broken glass. His tongue already stung just listening to Bryson’s words.

“I...” His forehead broke out in a cold sweat. After everything, he still didn’t have the guts to refuse Bryson right to the latter’s face.

“I just pulled her by the hand. You can’t... Are you saying that you want me to give up my life for that?”

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“It looks like you weren’t sincere with your apology, after all,”

Bryson said coldly.

Knowing that a storm was brewing inside him, Hannah pulled at his arm.

“Come on, the guests are here to discuss business. Don’t turn this into a big deal. I’m all right.”

Bryson turned and looked at her for a moment before loosening his grip.

The broken glass, or what was left of it, fell to the floor and completely shattered into countless pieces.

Declan was trembling with fear at this point.

“Since Hannah told me to forget the matter, then I shall do so,”

Bryson said lightly.

“I am very sorry, Miss Moore,” Declan muttered, his head still lowered in a mix of shame and fear.

“Everything that has happened here today is all my fault.”

Hannah was already turning away from him.

“Don’t mention it again. If you know what’s good for you, then you’d better take your leave.”

Hannah could tell that something was not right with Bryson, and she simply wanted to take him away from Declan before the confrontation escalated further.

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Declan jumped on the chance and scurried out of the hall in a rush.

The shame was already eating at him, and he knew that it would only get worse with every second he lingered.

Once Declan was gone, Bryson eased his embrace around Hannah and pulled back slightly.

“Are you sure you’re okay?” he asked, his gaze gentle.

“I’m fine.”

Hannah braced herself to ask him what was wrong, but she was interrupted yet again.

“Mr. Mitchell. It’s nice to finally meet you. You are as outstanding as the rumors say.” Layne greeted Bryson with a smile and offered his business card.

“Please accept this.”

Bryson plucked the card from Layne’s hand and glanced at it.

“I remember you.” His eyebrows were raised when he looked back up at Layne.

“You’re the person who designed the most advanced chip technology in Newfort four years ago Layne nodded, his smile widening.

“That’s right. Even then, I wanted to return and develop my products on familiar soil. I moved my business back here as soon as I could.”

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"Hmm." Bryson nodded and turned to Hannah.

"Someone from Muvrand will be here in a while. I'm heading upstairs, do you want to come with me?"

Hannah looked around and spotted Jalen in the distance, chatting with several executives from different companies.

"No, it's all right. You should go. Jalen might not be able to handle it without me."

Bryson's eyes gleamed with meaning as he gazed down at her face. He reached out and tucked a strand of hair behind her ear.

"Then, wait for me."

"Okay."

She watched Bryson disappear upstairs before turning her attention to the pieces of glass scattered on the floor. Hannah's brows furrowed slightly.

She had been with Bryson for a while now, but this was the first time she had ever felt that something was truly wrong with him.

Sure, he had always been a cold and distant man to outsiders, but she never knew that he could be so cruel.

Declan seemed to have prompted Bryson's worst side to come out.

"Mr. Mitchell is very protective of you."