

# Nothing Matters, except YOU & Me Chapter 420

Heather made her way into the house as she usually did, doubting that anyone had missed her last night when she did not come home. In her family, indifference and ignorance were household values. However, panic gripped her as soon as she stepped past the threshold, for she saw a couple standing shoulder-to-shoulder in front of her, assessing her with stern looks on their faces—the couple was none other than her parents themselves.

Thinking that they were probably furious about last night, she grew flustered. Nonetheless, she quickly composed herself and tried to brush past them nonchalantly, but was halted in her tracks when her father pulled her by the elbow.

She frowned at this. She was not used to physical contact with her parents, much less being treated with such hostility. There was a clear aggravation in the way they handled her that she couldn't help but bristle at the gesture.

"Is there something wrong, Father?" Heather's expression was stony and the good mood she had been in was completely ruined. She could feel her arm throbbing from where Stephen's fingers dug into her flesh as he gripped her elbow.

"Bold of you to come home after last night!" Stephen thundered and it was a sharp contrast to his usual cheery demeanor. Heather could hear alarm bells ringing in her head as she registered his rage and she instinctively knew that something bad had happened.

Standing next to him, Camille tugged on his sleeve and said urgently, "We'll talk about it when we're inside, Stephen. The doorstep is no place for lectures."

Feeling irritated, Heather shrugged off his hand and said icily, "I'm going to need an explanation, Father." She had never been man-handled like this before and her pride was her besetting sin. There was no way she would not retaliate after he had embarrassed her like that.

"Heather, you're in big trouble," Camille explained with her brows drawn together, which only made Heather even more bewildered.

“What in the world are you talking about?” she demanded, her tone full of annoyance. Her family rarely interfered in her personal affairs and that had been the case ever since she attained independence from them. She liked to think of it as the glorious age of her rebellion.

Besides, her grandfather—Robert—often sang praises of her to everyone else. Knowing that he would always be there to stand up for her, Heather slowly grew liberal and acted on her own whim and fancy. There was nothing her parents could do or say about her.

“Let’s talk inside,” Stephen said now through gritted teeth as he shot her a dark look. He made it sound as if she had committed some unforgivable crime.

Heather scoffed and did not so much as spare them a glance. “How ridiculous,” she muttered under her breath. Then, she turned on her heel to leave, not wanting to waste another second with them.

In reality, there was nothing surprising about her apathy toward them. Despite her outstanding achievements, Stephen had always been resentful of the fact that she was not a son, and he blamed Camille for her inability to produce a male heir for him.

He held some unresolved grudge against Heather, as though her existence was the sole reason for his lack of authority in the Langston Family. He was also deeply envious of his elder brother, who had two sons and thus had all the authority in the family.

Camille, on the other hand, was soft by nature. She habitually deferred to her husband and was constantly terrified that she would be abandoned by him if she did not please him in any way. Naturally, her yearning for acknowledgement had driven a wedge between her and her daughter.

As for Heather, her personality and temper were wrought by her parents’ lack of affirmation of her. If her grandfather did not mind the fact that she was born a daughter, she did not see why her parents should. At some point, her tolerance toward them began to wither away.

Presently, she sauntered into the living room and saw that Robert was seated in his armchair. “Grandpa,” she called out sweetly. She knew that the only person she had to please was her grandfather.

Robert's taste and preferences had changed after he had had his heart broken all those years ago, which accounted for the Langston Family's indulgence in over-the-top, opulent aesthetics.

Nevertheless, he was a man with real knowledge and innate talent. His words and decisions carried the most weight in the family and he had vast experience in the business world. It was no surprise at all that Heather looked up to him as a role model.

Nowadays, Robert was no longer interested in material comforts and grandeur. In what could only be described as a much-welcomed change of style, he began to favor plain and neutral tones that were reminiscent of his good old days. As such, he was delighted to see that Heather, too, dressed in pastel hues, which were part of her wardrobe staples. It only made him like her even more.

"Come here, Heather. There's something I'd like to talk to you about," Robert commented heavily. Upon hearing the sullen tone in his voice, Heather couldn't help but panic.

Meanwhile, after following her into the living room, Stephen chided accusingly, "You ungrateful girl—how dare you disrespect me like this?" Camille, on the other hand, fell in step behind him, looking wary as she kept silent.

Knowing that she was surrounded, Heather did not bother looking over her shoulder as she smiled and said, "What is it that you want to talk to me about, Grandpa?" As far as she was concerned, the only person in the family to whom she respected was Robert.

Robert had to admit that he had been overly-indulgent with her. She had a fiery personality that was similar to Lisa's—she stood for nobody's nonsense and she acted however she liked, which he deemed were endearing traits.

While the girl was addressing her grandfather, Stephen bristled at her blatant show of disrespect. He was enraged by how she had deliberately ignored him and grew resentful at the thought of how Robert berated him more than he did Heather.

Unable to contain his anger, he marched forward and brought his hand down on her, intending to slap her across the face. Thankfully, Heather was in a much better state and she managed to dodge in time.

She was enraged at her father's actions and so was Robert. Stephen had as good as doomed himself now.

“Father,” she said in a warning tone as she tightened her grip on his wrist. Years of training had resulted in her having enough strength to make men break into cold sweat.

“You ingrate!” Stephen bit out, trying to resist the pain as he lifted his free hand and attempted to strike her once more.

Upon seeing this, Heather shoved him away and snapped, “Don’t embarrass yourself in front of Grandpa.” Not wanting to appear unruly in front of Robert, she held herself back.

“Don’t humiliate yourself here, Stephen,” Robert barked. In all honesty, he wondered how he ended up with a son like him. While his first son did not have the brightest of minds, he was still much better than Stephen, who was hopelessly incompetent.

After Robert’s terse warning, Stephen did not try to cause a scene once more and instead turned to lash out at Camille. “Look at this mongrel that you’ve given birth to!” he growled while pointing at Heather.

That statement only triggered Robert and Heather once more but this time, the former was the first to retaliate in anger. “You ingrate! Why don’t you ever think before you speak? Are you saying that I’m an old dog, then?” Who would call their own child a mongrel? Could this man be any more idiotic?

Meanwhile, Heather crossed her arms and watched this scene unfold with amusement. Stephen had basically thrown himself under the bus and she didn’t even have to lift a finger.

Knowing that he had slipped up and angered the old man, Robert gave his father a look of resignation. At that moment, Camille tugged on his sleeve and muttered gently, “Stephen, don’t lose your temper in front of the old master.”

“Go away!” he roared and shrugged her off. Heather was indifferent as she took this in. She felt sorry for Camille but that sentiment was soon replaced by apathy.

When Heather was young, she would try desperately to please her mother, angling for even the slightest bit of maternal affection. Over time, she realized that Camille would sell her out within a heartbeat just to placate Stephen. As the years went by, she drifted away from her mother and now she regarded the latter as nothing more than a stranger.

Watching this exchange, Robert grew thunderous and pointed at Stephen as he barked, “You should be the one who goes away!” This ingrate is going to be the end of me!

Stephen glanced at his father and upon seeing the rage on the latter's face, he knew he was in a precarious situation. He was sullen as he left but he did not forget to shoot a pointed look at Heather along the way.

After banishing his son from the living room, Robert glanced at his frightened daughter-in-law and said exasperatedly, "You should go too, Camille." This was unnecessary on his part, given that she would have trailed after Stephen anyway.

Now that the two eyesores had left the room, Heather felt the muscles in her shoulders loosen. She gave Robert a grateful look. This was not the first time he had had to speak up for her to save her from conflict.

"Come here and sit down with me for a chat," Robert invited somberly. With his temperament, he would undoubtedly pass down the torch to Heather, but everyone else in the family disagreed with such a notion and he knew he could not act on his own accord when it came to something as important as this.

Heather immediately walked over to him. He was the only one who offered her kinship, and there were days when she found herself thinking about how he was the only reason why she hadn't left the Langston Residence years ago and moved out to live on her own.

"I know things have been hard for you all these years, Heather," Robert said now, his wizened voice riddled with self-blame.

"I didn't think things were hard for me—not while I have you to back me up." She leaned her head on his shoulder, just like how she would fall asleep in his embrace when she was young.

Upon hearing that, Robert patted her shoulder comfortingly. He really doted on this granddaughter of his but there was only so much he could give her.

"Heather, there isn't much that I can leave to you," he said ruefully. The Langston Family was a large household to preside over and as the years went by, he found that his words carried less weight. The power he once held was being chipped away little by little as he loosened his iron fist.

"You've given me the most important thing of all—kinship. That's more than enough, Grandpa, and I can work for everything else," Heather replied, and she meant it too. In her

younger days, she had wanted her fair share of the Langston Group but now that she was all grown up, she had a much clearer perspective on life.

Life was finite and there was no need for her to constantly chase after perfection. Heather wasn't bothered by the fact that she could never be in charge of the Langston Group. She was confident that she could make a name for herself in the business industry, even if it meant she had to start from scratch.

"I know you have your own brilliant ways to figure life out and that you're all grown up now. You're capable of making your own decisions." Robert paused in thought and he looked as though he was trying to choose his words carefully.

Being the only person who knew him like the back of her hand, Heather could hear the exasperation and hesitation in his words. Putting him out of his misery, she said, "You can say whatever it is that you want, Grandpa. You don't have to beat around the bush when you're with me."

He smiled at this and relief colored his face. She reminded him so strongly of Lisa all those years ago—determined, forthright, and endearing.

"The newspaper arrived this morning and the headline..." He trailed off, then reached for the newspaper on top of the coffee table and flipped it over to the front page. The headline immediately leapt out at Heather.

She stared wide-eyed at the words, incredulous as she snatched the newspaper from him. She sounded as though she was in a daze as she mumbled, "No; this can't be. How did this happen? Which reporter even came up with this ridiculous article?"

Seeing her like this put an arrow through Robert's heart; he had foreseen how hurt she would be. She was a proper young lady after all, and would never involve herself in such scandalous affairs.

"Do you trust me, Grandpa?" She lifted her head and gazed at him helplessly.

How could this happen? Her mind scrambled for answers and after a long moment of thought, she concluded that Matthias was the only person who could have anything to do with this.

"Of course I trust you," Robert answered assuringly with a firm nod of his head. However, he recalled one of the servants telling him that Matthias had been the one to drop Heather back home earlier on.

With that in mind, he asked tentatively, "But what exactly is going on between you and Matthias?" He needed an answer to know what to make of this situation.

Heather bit her lip, resentment flashing across her features. Not wanting to hide anything from him, she explained, "Matthias hates me, Grandpa. He's doing this out of revenge." I didn't think his revenge would be so quick and ruthless, though.

Robert was taken aback by this. He would never have guessed that their relationship was one borne out of vengeance.

Just then, the butler rushed into the living room and in his hand was the gift box that Heather had tossed to the maid earlier. At the sight of this, she faltered. It looks like things are going to be harder to explain from this point onward.