

Chapter 52 Rhonda's Relatives

"Rhonda, have you come alone?" Rhonda's eldest aunt, Susan, asked with disappointment when she saw Rhonda enter the yard alone.

"I guess her husband is not good-looking. That's probably why she hasn't brought him with her," Rhonda's third aunt, Jane, teased.

"Hey, Rhonda, how could you do this to us? We came all the way here to welcome your husband. Why didn't you bring him? Don't you want to introduce him to us?" Rhonda's second uncle, Ross, complained.

As everyone bombarded her with questions, Rhonda remained silent, watching them with disgust.

She felt they were up to no good.

"Rhonda, you're back. Come on in." Nora squeezed through the crowd and held Rhonda's hand, her face beaming with joy.

Just then, everyone heard Leonard's voice from outside the yard. "Eliam, why have you brought us so many gifts?"

The relatives unanimously turned around and saw a handsome young man following Leonard into the yard.

Leonard happily ushered him inside, holding several bags in his hands.

"Rhonda, is this your husband?" Rhonda's second aunt, Martha, who had been silent the entire time, finally spoke.

"He is so handsome." She smiled.

Eliam politely nodded at the gaping crowd and asked Leonard to give the gifts to everyone. Then, he held Nora's hand and led her into the house.

Nora was delighted to see him. She kept telling Eliam that he shouldn't have bought so many things for her.

The relatives found that Nora's gifts were expensive while they all got cheap ones. They envied her and mumbled snide remarks about Rhonda.

Meantime, Susan walked into the house and asked Nora, "Mom, how much did you get from marrying Rhonda to him?"

Nora was taken aback. She didn't know what she meant.

"What are you trying to say?"

"I want to say the Horton family raised Rhonda. We have helped her a lot since she was a child. If it weren't for our support, she wouldn't have grown up and studied in college. Now that she is married, shouldn't she repay us?"

"Yes. I remember when Rhonda got sick when she was young, it was I who took her to the hospital and paid for the medical expenses," Ross chimed in.

"Uncle Ross, when your son went to college, my sister paid for his tuition. Have you forgotten that? Why didn't you mention it?" Leonard retorted.

"Shut up! I haven't mentioned a word about the money you borrowed from me for your tuition when you went to college," Ross barked.

Rhonda couldn't stand it anymore. She sprang up to her feet and asked, "Uncle Ross, I paid for my brother's tuition. When did you give him money?"

"Well, once Leonard ran out of money, he called me, and I lent him two hundred dollars. I'm not sure if it was for paying the tuition fee or not." Ross didn't sound as confident as he was a while ago.

"Mom, you should stop being too partial," Jane added. "Everyone knows Rhonda bought an apartment in the city. She only graduated a few years ago. How could she possibly make so much money? You've obviously helped her! Anyway, your money also belongs to us. Now that you have given all your money to Rhonda, don't you think we should have a share of the money given by her husband?"

"What are you saying? That is her money! Why would you get a share of it?" Nora's face reddened with rage.

Rhonda opened her mouth to say something. However, Eliam spoke first.

"I know I don't have the right to interfere in your family's affairs, but everyone should follow the laws and rules. According to custom, the money should rightfully belong to Grandma. Your point is reasonable though. Since it's Grandma's money, all her children can have a share."

Susan was thrilled to hear that. She praised Eliam for being reasonable.

Eliam smiled and continued, "However, according to the relevant regulations of Inheritance Law, if you want to divide Grandma's property, you must fulfill your obligation first. Let's talk about her treatment expenses – nothing else. We all know that Grandma was hospitalized and had major surgery recently. The surgery cost about one million dollars. She has five children in total, and each of you should contribute one hundred thousand dollars. It is fair, isn't it?"

"One hundred thousand dollars? How will we get so much

money?" Jane was the first to express her objection.

Eliam chuckled. "You know what? Rhonda used all the five hundred thousand dollars I gave her and the money she got after selling the apartment. Despite that, she still has a debt of two hundred thousand dollars. I understand it is not easy for anyone to arrange one hundred thousand dollars right away. Why don't you all split the two hundred thousand dollars? Each of you can give Rhonda fifty thousand dollars. How does that sound?"

As Eliam finished speaking, everyone exchanged glances in silence.

They all knew that Nora's treatment had cost one million dollars, but no one thought they had to pay for the expenses.

They all began calculating diligently and understood Eliam meant they couldn't get a penny from Rhonda but had to give her money. No one could accept it.

Rhonda was a topper who had majored in finance. But she didn't expect Eliam would be smarter than her.

Besides, his every word was logical and analytical, leaving no room for argument.

At that moment, Martha, who had been silent all this while, broke the awkward silence.

"I've told you this is immoral. Rhonda's husband has come to visit us for the first time, but you all are creating a fuss in front of him. I'm ashamed of you!"

Martha shook her head with disgust. Then, she took out five hundred dollars from her pocket and gave it to Rhonda. "Rhonda, I don't have the potential to arrange such a big amount. This is just a token of goodwill. Please accept it."

"Auntie Martha, I can't take the money." Rhonda had grown up eating in Martha's house. Only Martha and Nora cared about her.

"Take it. I may not be able to attend your wedding. Congratulations in advance."

Martha stuffed the money into Rhonda's hand, turned around, and left.

Susan, Jane, and Ross looked at each other. Realizing they couldn't take advantage of Rhonda today, the three left dejectedly.

At noon, the neighbor prepared a sumptuous meal for Eliam.

After lunch, Rhonda accompanied Nora back to her room.

Leonard played chess with Eliam in the yard.

Rhonda sat on the sofa in the room and peered at the two in the yard through the window. Her heart melted at the sight of them getting along with each other.

"Rhonda, have you considered having a child?" Nora asked suddenly.

"Grandma, I'm still young."

"It's time for you to have a baby. I gave birth to Leonard's father when I was your age."

Leonard's father was Nora's eldest son. He was a sincere farmer. Unfortunately, he died in an accident when Leonard was a few months old.

Afterward, Leonard's mother married someone else and never contacted them again.

"Grandma, all I want now is to work hard and provide you with a comfortable life. I don't want to think about anything else."

Nora let out a weary sigh.

"Silly girl, your man is excellent in all aspects. If you don't give birth to a baby soon, he might end up with someone else. I don't want you to regret your decision when that happens."

"Grandma, if we are destined to be together, he won't end up with someone else. Let nature take its course."

Nora was rendered speechless.

While the two were talking, they saw Eliam rush out of the yard after answering a phone call.

Then, Rhonda's phone rang.

It was a call from Eliam. He told her that Diana had fainted on the street and had to hurry to see her. He asked Rhonda to take a bus home.

Eliam had left her again because of Diana.

Rhonda felt a little disappointed but soon suppressed her emotions.

After having dinner with Nora, Rhonda took a bus back to the city with Leonard that evening.

On the way, she saw that Leonard was still using the phone she had bought for him during his freshman year. The phone had become old – its screen was cracked, but he was still using it.

"Leonard, are you out of money again?"