

The Epic BD 691

Chapter 691 He Won't Die with You Around

"What would you do if I killed him? Dexter pulled out a tissue and slowly wiped his palm.

Josie felt a shiver down her spine and did not doubt that Dexter would kill Arnold as he said. "That's a crime."

Dexter sneered, "He won't die with you around."

Josie resisted lashing out at him. She closed her eyes and said, "What will you do about the waiter from just now?"

"Larry has explained about him."

But Josie knew Arnold would not let the waiter off. She imagined he, like her, would become a tool in Dexter and Arnold's game.

"Josie!" Dexter shouted suddenly. "If I don't get rid of Arnold, he will not hesitate to retaliate and kill me."

Josie observed him through the darkness.

Everyone in Wavery knew Dexter and Arnold were rivals.

Two days later, Josie prepared tea for Paul in Mason Garden. He took a sip and shook his head. "Josie, you're bad at making tea. You should stop making it."

Josie wanted to laugh at herself. "It seems I'm only good at drawing."

Paul was unsure about how he should respond. "Erm, right. You should focus on what you can do."

Josie was left speechless. She grabbed her phone without thinking and saw a notification about a news article. Wavery is struck with another construction accident, resulting in the dismissal of the director of the city's industrial and commercial department!

Her hands shook.

Dexter succeeded despite the odds and ended the matter within two days. It seemed Arnold did not even have the chance to do anything.

Josie opened the article and read through the detailed reporting on corruption matters. The article also said that the police stopped Mr. Lynch's family at the airport before they had a chance to escape.

Dexter quickly took down all the perpetrators with his plan.

Josie searched all over the Web and could not find news about Will. She calmed down and pondered on it. Then, she guessed this was the most extensive result Dexter's plan could hope to achieve.

However, he could not proceed further than that.

If he did, he would not only face obstruction from Arnold. Even the higher-ups would forbid him from going further.

Still, the damage to Carter Group's reputation was sulligent to assuage Dexter's fury

But Jour knew Dexter could achieve more if she had ng gotten in his way

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"Why are you angry? I don't remember you ever liked tea" Paul noticed her silence and tried to coax her

Josie got out of her daze and responded. "Who likes tea? Not me."

"You've been brewing tea for two days straight, switching between chamomile and Darjeeling tea, Paul spoke as if he was the victim of her tea obsession.

Josie was stumped. She could not help but recall Liana's elegant gestures as she prepared tea in Heaven on

Earth.

The memory left her frustrated. "Am I unsophisticated?"

Noises of a car sounded from downstairs as she asked this question. Dexter had returned. Larry exited the car first and opened the door for Dexter. He saw Josie and waved at her with a smile.

However, Josie turned away and pretended not to notice.

Larry felt awkward. "Mr. Russell, is Mrs. Russell still and

Dexter did not look up. He exited the car by himself and headed into the house. "Let her be"

"What if the Olsen family fails to conceal the matter? There are already rumors in the upper-class circle. If Mrs. Russell were to hear..." Larry was worried.

Dexter planned to go to the study but paused upon hearing Larry. He headed to the balcony instead. Meanwhile, Josie covered herself with a shawl and closed her eyes to enjoy the sunlight.

"Dad," Dexter greeted Paul with a nod.

Paul waved at him. "Come here. Josie brewed tea. You should give it a try."

As expected, Josie did not get up, to pour tea for him. Dexter looked down and picked up the cup before her. The tea had cooled, but he could still taste its slight bitterness.

"Chamomile tea, Dexter said softly.

Chapter 692 What's the Point of Our Marriage

Josie opened her eyes immediately upon hearing Dexter. She could not stand his comment.

However, Dexter glanced at her and continued, "You must improve your techniques"

Dexter's words affirmed Paul's opinion. Thus, Paul tugged Josie's hand and said, "Listen, even Dexter agrees you're lacking. I have been saying the same thing, but you wouldn't listen."

Josie turned to the other side and refused to speak.

Dexter and Paul exchanged glances. Then, Paul stood up and announced, "I'm getting a glass of water to clear the aftertaste. You tormented my taste buds enough for the past two days."

Dexter and Josie were the only ones left on the balcony. Seeing Josie would not speak, Dexter squinted and looked at the distant sea. "Mr. Lynch has been arrested, and Arnold will likely be in trouble for the rest of the year. You don't have to waste time learning to make his favorite tea"

His words were harsh. Josie could not help but open her eyes and argue, "I didn't learn it for him. Likewise, this cup of tea doesn't belong to you."

Dexter extended his hand slowly but suddenly gripped her hard, pulling her into his embrace, "How can you think of belonging to anyone else except me?"

Josie knew she could not escape and did not bother to struggle. Instead, she relaxed and said, "I don't want to belong to anyone. After all, some things were never mine."

Dexter circled his arm around her waist and leaned down, inhaling her scent. After a while, he asked solemnly, "How much do you know?"

Josie was stunned. To her annoyance, she knew what he meant.

"I don't understand."

"When did you find out Liana returned to the Olsen family?"

Dexter finally understood everything, but it took such a long time that Josie was no longer interested in discussing it with him. Instead, she said coldly, "I found out about it at the same time as you did."

Meaning it was the night of New Year's Eve.

Dexter suddenly realized and knew why she said those words after that night. It turned out she had found out about it so soon.

"I see. Arnold must have told you when you met him that day"

Josie retreated slightly and faced him. "You probably never plan on telling me if he didn't"

Dexter did not avoid her this time. "I would have told you."

"I waited a few days, but you never brought it up"

He likely never planned to tell me if he had not discovered my connection with Arnold Joste sneered derisively and continued, "Now that rumors are spreading in our circle, you decided to tell me because you didn't have a choice Dexter, what's the point of our marriage if we behave like this"

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It saddened her that their marriage was filled with so much distrust.

Dexter tightened his embrace. Her detachment frightened him.

"I wasn't sure if she was Liana in the first few days she returned. Once I confirmed it, I planned to tell you, but Grandpa found out first and requested to see her."

Everything he said so far matched what he did. He had arranged for Henry to meet Liana and discovered the incident at the construction site when he returned. In short, a series of events delayed his opportunity to inform her.

Josie was tired and did not want to argue with him. "Honestly, there were many chances when you could have told me, but you didn't. Was it because she is too precious to you that you could not let her go? Were you worried that I, your wife, could never understand how important she was to you? Was that why you didn't dare to tell me?"

Josie had no choice but to accept that she felt her position was under threat when she saw Liana.

Dexter frowned slightly. "Josie, I admit to delaying, but it wasn't because I'm worried you would misunderstand."

Chapter 693 You're the One I Desire

How can that not be the reason?

Josie frowned and could not figure out Dexter's thoughts.

Meanwhile, Dexter loosened his hold on her waist as if to set her free.

"I didn't tell you because she's someone you know."

Josie was astonished. "I know her? Who?"

She did not have many female friends in Wavery and could count the number of them with just one hand. If Liana was someone she knew, Josie believed she would have recognized her previously in Heaven on Earth.

"Heather.

Dexter had a guarded expression as he said that name. However, his eyes flickered briefly and filled with conflicting emotions.

Hearing that name, Josie suddenly lost balance and fell backward, knocking the back of her head loudly against the chair.

Dexter immediately pulled her back up and rubbed her head. "Josie..."

Josie resisted the pain and pondered on the revelation numerous times. How could it be Heather? Didn't Heather leave Wavery? Why did she return, and how could she be the missing Liana?

Josie had a sudden spark in her mind and finally figured out everything. She recalled thinking that Heather resembled herself when they first met.

It turned out Heather did not resemble her but Liana. She is the real Liana!

Josie could not help but connect the past incidents. What they revealed gave her goosebumps. My goodness, Many of the details matched.....

Orphans... Liana... Heather....

Both names are even plants related.

The realization struck a blow to her mind. She had a severe headache after figuring out everything. "Is it confirmed?"

Dexter looked at her. Tve confirmed it. There's nothing wrong with the DNA result. Moreover, some of the details matched."

Josie suddenly realized why Dexter conducted a DNA test alone. She also understood why he couldn't tell her about the matter previously.

No wonder Arnold also refused to tell me about her!

"How was she discovered?"

No one realized Heather was Liana, even though she lived in Wavery for so long How was she suddenly discovered after leaving the city

Dexter recalled his initial suspicion that now turned to regret. "Claudia went to Rivodia to pray at Sousturham and met Heather by coincidence. She felt an instant connection with her."

In actuality, it was Larry who arranged for Claudia's trip to Rivodia.

No one expected such a chance meeting.

Claudia...

Josie's headache worsened. Her heart hurt slightly, but she did not know why.

"I heard Heather didn't have a family. She must have been happy to be accepted into the Olsen family"

Dexter looked at her curiously. "Are you unhappy?"

Josie smiled bitterly. "No, I'm not." She leaned toward Dexter. "What about you? Is it as you desired?"

If Dexter was being honest, he kept thinking about Liana when she was missing. However, he did not feel much happier now that she was found. It did not matter that he recognized her as the real Liana through their conversations and interactions.

Instead, he felt a little bewildered.

Dexter lifted her long hair and rubbed the split strands, "You're the one I desire."

Josie's heart skipped a beat.

She was surprised that she could still fall for him even though they had been together for a long time.

Josie was a little dazed. "If... What if Heather wants to snatch you from me?"

Dexter laughed. I'm not a commodity. How can anyone snatch me?"

Josie wrapped her arms around his neck and said coquettishly. "What if she wants you? Will you give her a chance?"

"Is that your impression of me? Do you think I'm that fickle?" Dexter replied.

Josie blushed and did not know how she should answer him.

He wrapped his arms around her waist again and sighed. "I'm yours."

Chapter 694 She Was in the Photo

Those words were more than enough to make Josie happy.

Meanwhile, news about Liana's return to the Olsen family soon spread throughout their social circle. It was rumored that when Heather was confirmed to be Liana, Mark was so happy that he recovered from his illness. Moreover, he did not sleep all night and declared he would organize a banquet and everyone in the city.

Heather had to persuade him to stop, or he would have proceeded with the banquet.

Surprisingly, Summer was the one who spread the news about Liana's return. She seemed even more excited than Mark and acted the role of a loving sister. She cried so profusely that no one could tell whether she was faking it..

Laura had told Josie these.

Laura appeared animated as she described what happened and could not hide her disdain. "Honestly, you and Heather look incredibly alike. No wonder Old Mr. Russell initially mistook you for her,"

Josie was pouring tea but paused upon hearing Laura. She smiled and replied. "She is now the real Liana. With that in mind, isn't she who looks like me. Instead, I'm the one who resembles her."

Laura was surprised by Josie's response and apologized immediately. "I'm sorry, I didn't mean it that way"

Josie did not mind. "It's all right. What about you? How are you doing in the Olsen family

Laura smiled bitterly. "Nothing special, just being invisible. Zach has his hands full dealing with Summer and the intimidating Liana. He doesn't have time to hit me anymore."

Josie could not help but be concerned about Laura's situation. "Are you sure you can't divorce him?"

"I can stand it."

After a while, Laura continued, "The Olsen family's business dealings and the extent of Zach's embezzlement are enough to send him to prison."

Josie frowned. "What are you planning to do?"

"I don't have any plans. I'm just saying that everyone has their desperate moments. Wait, and you'll see."

Josie could not help but worry when Laura spoke cryptically

"The Olsen family plans to organize a small-scale banquet to welcome Heather home. I saw Dexter's name in the invitation list. Will you be attending with him?"

Josie recalled the scene of Summer's birthday celebration and felt like laughing "Do you think they want.

me there?"

Laura did not know what to say

"I'm not going. It's a celebration, after all. I don't want to cause a scene and spoil everyone's mood." Josie was aware that she was not welcome.

Hearing that, Laura stopped insisting. Then, Josie left and went to look for Paul.

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Paul was sitting in a rocking chair, reading e

Heather's return to the Olsen family.

He put on reading glasses and read the article carefully, Josie, come take a look."

Josie went to Paul.

"The girl in the photo resembles you." Paul pointed at the photo curiously.

Josie's smile faded. "We look similar, right.

"Yes, I thought it was you at first glance and wondered when you have become someone else's daughter. Paul joked.

Josie pointed to a photo. "This girl is the little girl in the photo the other day. This is how she looks like : a grownup."

"The photo from the other day. Paul considered. "That's not right. You're the girl in that photo."

Josie did not respond. Paul's mind was less alert, and his memories were unreliable since he was discharged from the hospital. Sometimes, it was not unusual for him to say things that did not make sense. Thus, Josie was not bothered by his words.

"I'll check what Julie made for lunch."

Jo. Jo! You're the girl in the photo!" Paul kept shouting after her, but Josie did not turn around.

Two days later, Arnold received an invitation from the Olsen family.

Josie was beside him when someone brought the invitation to him. "I hate how some people ignore personal boundaries. You're married. Why did they invite you?"

Her tone carried a hint of jealousy, prompting Dexter to explain, "My involvement with the Olsen family is not because of that."

Chapter 695 Why He Loved Her

les was curious now that he had mentioned it. She wondered why Dexter had a close connection with The Olsen family. Initially, she thought it was due to a marriage alliance.

What is the reason then?"

Dexter leaned back and shut his eyes briefly. Five years ago, one of the Olsen family's projects involved something in the gray area and nearly caused their downfall. Russell Group gave them a hand and bore the blame for them?

Josie considered it. Five years ago... "But there are many things connected to the gray area nowadays. Moreover, you and Arnold are involved in them."

They were careful to keep them under wraps. In actuality, they were involved in many shameful and dirty

businesses.

"It was different that time because it involves someone's life."

Josie frowned. "How did you help them?"

The matter involved the death of a prominent person, triggering an investigation from higher authorities. Mark pleaded with many people but could not cover up the case. During a critical moment, Dexter offered evidence to prove that the deceased broke the law. With that evidence, the investigation gradually diminished the blame on the Olsen Group.

Due to this, Mark owed Dexter a significant favor.

Five years ago, Dexter had just started and took over Russell Group's business at a young age. Everyone waited for him to stumble and embarrass himself. However, before they knew it, Dexter allied with the prominent Olsen family.

Moreover, Mark admired ambitious and courageous young men. Dexter was one of them.

Thus, within a few years, Mark helped develop Russell Group into Wavery's most significant tax contributor. From then on, the Russell and Olsen family depended on each other despite never entering a formal agreement.

That was why the relationship between Olsen and Russell Group was more than just that of an industry senior and a new generation.

"But you had just started and had neither the influence nor the backing of someone with authority. How did you obtain that evidence?" Josie sprawled on the bed and asked doubtfully after listening to Dexter's

story.

Dexter did not answer her question but said, "That's all in the past."

Josie noticed his unwillingness to discuss the matter and made her guess. "Don't tell me you arranged the death in Olsen Group. That's why you could offer them assistance when they needed it."

Dexter chuckled calmly. "Seems like I'm a shady person in your mind."

"That's right, Josie admitted frankly. "People like you are devious and have many tricks up your sleeves."

“What about Arnold? What do you think of him?” Dexter asked suddenly. Josie was stunned briefly before, answering, “Do you wish to hear what I think?”

the following day and made her way

de for you to be back

for him and e

What do you think of this back tie Black suits you?

Dexter grabbed her who “You’re not angry?”

Why should I be angry? Unless you don’t care about me anymore!

Although her consideration was charming, she was too calm, leaving him dissatisfied. He even felt the urge to argue with her

I will only attend the banquet for a while and will be back soon

Josie pulled her hand away and smiled. “Sure, I don’t mind even if you stay there forever

She was teasing him.

Dexter smiled. Strangely, the teasing improved his mood. He left the house and went to his car

Chapter 696 Error in DNA Test

It was spring, and the weather was good. Josie was bored of staying home and decided to head to the studio.

Most of the employees had returned to work. They did not expect to be inspected by the higher-ups so soon after starting work, so the whole office had low morale,

Angel was complaining to Alice when Josie arrived. “Alice, our job is only to draw designs. We know nothing about Carter Group’s shoddy construction. How can they investigate us?”

Jade was photocopying documents nearby and joined their conversation. “That’s right. We discovered it first and tried to stop it. Ms. Jo nearly got dragged into it. How would we know they carried out work at midnight?”

As Josie heard the news about Carter Group, Josie could not help but think that Dexter would never let Arnold off easily.

Rumors were rampant when the office reopened after the New Year holiday.

“Since we didn’t do anything wrong, the investigator won’t be able to find anything.” Alice comforted her colleagues and looked up to find Josie entering the office. She hurried ahead.

She immediately pulled Josie to the side. “I heard rumors that you colluded with Arnold and manipulated the situation. That’s not true, right?”

Josie sighed and headed to her office. Coincidentally, Laura was already there. "I've worked with you for many years. Do you think I'm that kind of person?"

Alice pouted. "I suppose not."

"What about the matter between you and Arnold? Is it real?" Laura poured herself a cup of coffee and asked calmly before turning to Josie.

Josie hit Laura with her handbag. "How could you do such a thing? Are you trying to cause me trouble?"

Laura laughed despite herself. She sat on the couch and crossed her legs. "Anyway, I heard you and Arnold went to the hospital on New Year's Eve. Furthermore, based on my information, Dexter only learned about the incident a few days later. That means you didn't tell him."

"It's amazing how rumors spread. All it took was a few days for the world to know about it." Josie poured a cup of coffee for herself.

She sipped before continuing. "Why didn't you tell me that Liana has been found?"

Josie noticed a flicker of guilt in Laura's eyes.

Laura met her gaze and stared for a few seconds before bursting into laughter. "You've met Arnold. Didn't he also hide it from you?"

Her mentioning of the matter angered Josie. "He told me about it but didn't reveal that Heather was Lana

Laura laughed even louder upon hearing her and slapped her thigh. She nearly ran out of breath from laughing. "I've been waiting to see your reaction. How do you feel? It's unexpected, right? Your expression is as I imagined"

Josie picked up a pea euslim and hit Laura with it

"Don't blame me Claudia went to Rivodia and claimed she had found Liana upon her return. How could we be sure that it was real?" Laura explained. "Although Mark was happy about the discovery, he immediately arranged a DNA Test on New Year's Eve. Everyone gathered

sleep all night Oh that included your husband

Josie's expression darkened

house the

"The result turned out to be real, to everyone's astonishment. By then, it was morning, and Dexter had also left. I thought he would surely tell you." Laura had a playful expression. "But I guess I was wrong"

Josie picked up another cushion and threw it at her.

"I had an excellent show that night. Thinking about Zach's expression still makes me want to laugh?"

Zach could never win against Summer. Now, he had another rival, Liana, whom the family beloved. It would further threaten his already dismal position. Moreover, Mark would likely never give him any position of authority again.

Josie laughed with Laura, but her expression soon turned solemn. "Could something have gone wrong with the DNA test?"

She found the matter too coincidental to be accurate, no matter how she thought. Of all the people in the world, she could not believe that Heather was Liana.

Chapter 697 Liana's Welcoming Banquet

Laura waved her hand. "Mark and Clauha suspected this but found other ways to confirm Heather's identity. They checked the birthmarks on her body and found them to be the same as Liana's. That was why they confirmed that Heather was Lana

Joste had heard about Liana having birthmarks. However, it had been too long since she saw the missing person's notice that she forgot what birthmark it was

"Could the birthmarks be taked?"

Laura shook her head. "Even if someone were to fake the birthmarks, they would have to know their position and appearance. However, Mark and his wife are the only ones who know what they look like. It's nearly impossible for anyone to imitate them."

In other words, Heather had to be Liana.

Josie understood upon hearing Laura's explanation.

Meanwhile, Laura lay on the couch and covered her face with her hands. She asked curiously, "Why did you ask? Do you suspect something?"

"You said Heather passed the DNA test and had the right birthmarks. How would I dare to suspect anything? Forget my nonsense." Josie finished her cup of coffee and frowned at the bitterness.

Laura observed Josie and said, "Don't blame me for not warning you. Heather is now Liana, meaning she is someone precious to Dexter in his youth. Things are different now."

"I heard a rival company tried to bring Dexter down when he was at the peak of his authority. The company put in a massive effort to search for Liana, which rivaled even the Olsen family. They wanted to find her and use her to threaten Dexter. This might sound harsh, but if Liana decides to compete with you for Dexter, you might lose."

Laura's words were harsh, but Josie did not care. "I've been Dexter's wife for many years. If he chooses to abandon me for Liana, there's no point fighting it."

Laura stood up and approached Josie. "I don't mean he will give up immediately. But it's hard not to compare you to Liana. Furthermore, what if she keeps taking up his affection? If this persists, who knows how long he can resist before giving in to his desire."

That meant Liana would always be a thorn in Josie's side and a threat to her marriage.

Josie pondered briefly and shook her head. "It won't happen."

Laura sighed and did not press the matter.

"How did Summer react to Liana?"

Josie believed Summer would see Liana as her rival for her family's affection and would not stand her.

"Surprisingly, Summer is exceptionally friendly to Liana. I wonder if Summer is acting out of fear for her position. Laura explained indifferently. "Still, no one will expose her even if she's acting. The Olsen family needs to maintain a harmonious front."

Josie was briefly silent before asking. "It's Liana's welcoming banquet today. Why aren't you attending?"

You have your reason for not going Its the same for me

Josie and Laura exchanged glances and smiled at their shared anguish

After a while, Alice entered with documents. These are the documents that require your signature)

Josie checked each document and signed them After some time, she paused and asked, "Is Russell Group reorganizing its design department?"

Since she left the company, the department could never find someone suitable to lead it. Moreover, Josie had opened her studio. Thus, Dexter decided to break up the department. Furthermore, the company had also given up on real estate, switching to other investment areas.

Yet, Russell Group was rebuilding the design department. How could Josie not know the company was making such an arrangement?

"From what I've heard, the department is recruiting and offering generous benefits."

"I understand." Josie felt strange and put the document down.

It was night by the time she finished dealing with work matters. She suddenly turned to Laura and asked, "Regarding the matter with Arnold, how long do you think it will take him to recover?"

Laura looked at Josie meaningfully, "Are you kidding me? You're still worried about him?"

Chapter 698 Stylish and Sophisticated

It was eight o'clock at night, Dexter attended the welcoming party for the Olsen family's first daughter which was held at the Bulgari Hotel's top floor

There weren't many people in attendance, but those who were there held powerful positions in society. Rumors were circulating that Mark Olsen was considerate of his youngest daughter, so he didn't invite many people to the party. However, given the identities of the guests present, it seemed that he cared for Heather very much.

Amidst the crowd's chatter, Summer greeted the guests politely and gracefully, fulfilling her duties to uphold her family's reputation.

The guests could tell that even though Heather was the main focus of the event, Summer still held power in the Olsen family.

Mark and Claudia arrived at the top floor, dressed to the nines in their finest evening wear. Their impeccable attire was a clear indication of how much they cared about the event. The stylish and sophisticated pair were made for each other.

Heather was wearing a white cocktail dress that clung to her figure. She had a calm and serene air as she followed Mark around to greet the guests.

Every guest at the party offered their congratulations.

“Father, Dexter is here,” Summer said, looking at the entrance.

After hearing what Summer said, Mark’s eyes scanned the room until they landed on the tall, distinguished figure in the crowd. He watched as Dexter approached him and reached out his hand for a handshake. “Mr. Olsen, I apologize for being late.”

Mark chuckled softly in response. “You’re not late.” Mark replied, putting his hand on Dexter’s shoulder. “Leanne, get Dexter a cocktail.”

The cocktail was within reach, as the waiter was standing right beside them. However, upon seeing that Mark had given his instructions, Dexter remained still.

Heather passed the cocktail to him, her face a deep shade of red. “Dex”

After her identity was exposed. Heather returned to calling Dexter “Dex” the way she used to.

Dexter nodded and took the drink from her with a rather indifferent air. Out of the blue, Summer asked. “Dex, why didn’t Josie join you today?”

Their eyes met, and there was an unspoken tension between them. A playful grin appeared at the corner of his lips as he quipped, “I don’t see Arnold today either.”

Summer noticed Mark shooting her a warning look, but she paid him no mind and continued. “I don’t need to control him. He knows not to overstep his bounds. Is that the case with Josie too?”

Her question was so absurd that it made Dexter chuckle in disbelief. “She doesn’t like big occasions like this, so I respected her decision.”

Dexter was always protective of Josie and wouldn’t let anyone speak ill of her. Mark’s face turned a deep shade of crimson, and his jaw clenched. Heather’s grip on her glass tightened as Dexter’s words registered. She lowered her head in discomfort.

Did car hear what he said, sis You need to be this capable to have a successful manage. It i wonderful to leave a man who loves and protects you so much? Of course, one man isn’t enough You’ll

fund two or duce mone There’s so much you still have to learn” Summer’s bold and

makeup only added to the menacing tone of her words.

Claudia’s voice lowered to a stern tone, “Sin

Heather tried to defuse the situation by chiming in. "Thanks, Summer"

Summer's lips twisted into a vicious smirk. She was about to leave when Dexter suddenly spoke up. "I heard that something went wrong with Arnold's construction project, he commented casually. "He's in a bind trying to solve the problem, so he must not have much time to spend with you. You need to be more tolerant."

Summer felt a chill run down her spine. She hadn't expected him to get back at her so nonchalantly.

Mark immediately interjected, "What problem?"

Dexter's lips curled into a sneer. "It's similar to what the Russell Group faced last time. His project has been sabotaged, and he has no one to back him up. I'm afraid it'll take him a long time to recover."

Not knowing how to address his provocation, Summer forced a smile; her fingers pricking against her skin. Mark's jaw clenched, and his eyes narrowed. It was clear that Dexter was targeting his words at Summer, and she knew it.

But Mark maintained his composure and suggested, "Since the problem has arisen, you should help Arnold resolve it. You don't need to concern yourself with our family matters."

Summer furrowed her eyebrows. "Father..."

"That's enough," Mark said with a calm and unfaltering voice.

Chapter 699 She Might Mind

It was clear that Dexter was behind the problem that was crippling the Carter Group. Mark, however, seemed to be turning a blind eye. This could be because he didn't care about Arnold, or perhaps he simply valued Dexter too much to lose him.

"I heard you took Leanne to see Old Mr. Russell a few days ago," Mark commented, swiftly changing the subject.

Dexter was not at ease with Mark's use of the nickname "Leanne" to address Heather, even though it was as a nickname he had been familiar with in the past.

It was natural to cling to the precious memories they had shared, but it was also an undeniable truth that his heart belonged to Josie..

"Yes, Grandpa was pleased to see her."

"I'll go see Grandpa more often when I have the time. I missed him a lot, too," Heather added, her voice filled with longing.

Dexter nodded dismissively, then took a sip of his cocktail.

Mark's words were bold and unwavering. "That's kind of you, Dexter," he said. "Old Mr. Russell was very fond of Leanne and took care of her. She should be visiting him more often. Also, you were so close with Leanne ever since you two were kids. You should spend more time together."

Claudia cleared her throat to interrupt him. "They're adults now," she enunciated, her voice firm. "They'll figure things out on their own. There's no need for you to meddle in their relationship."

Dexter met Heather's eyes, his expression darkening. Mark's continued disregard for his marriage to Josie was starting to get to him. He felt like Mark was treating him like he wasn't even married, as if his relationship with Josie didn't matter.

He averted his eyes and lowered his head, the crease in his forehead deepened as he thought about Josie. Why didn't she want to follow him? What if she misunderstands him?

Dexter greeted the guests at the party, then went into the lounge area. A server came up to him and asked if he needed anything.

"Don't let anyone come in," he ordered.

As soon as he gave his orders, the door opened a crack. The server's eyes widened when he saw who was standing there.

"Ms. Olsen..."

It was Heather. She was holding a glass in her hand and staring at Dexter. "Dex."

He couldn't fault the server for anything, as she had come in unannounced. He then gestured for the server to leave the room.

They were the only two people in the lounge.

Heather sat down next to him. "My father crossed the line just now," she said softly. "I hope you don't take his words to heart. I won't interfere with your relationship with Ms. Warren."

Dexter was taken aback by the way she referred to Josie. "You've never called her Ms. Warren before," he remarked.

Heather's eyes darted around like a cornered animal. She had always referred to Josie as Mrs. Russell, but now she called her "Ms. Warren." It was as if she was trying to erase any trace of their relationship.

"If you don't mind..

"I do mind," Dexter snorted. "But she might not."

Heather's face fell; her eyes filled with despair, and her mouth turned into a frown. She looked like she was about to burst into tears.

She looked very similar to Summer.

However, Heather was not as assertive as Josie. If Josie were hurt by his words, she would confront him and give him a piece of her mind. She would not hesitate to stand up for herself, even if it meant causing him trouble.

“Dex, I can see that you really like her,” Heather commented, her eyes downcast. “But I want to know if you were attracted to her at first because of me?”

It was clear what she was trying to insinuate.

“I don’t mean to pry,” she added. “But I just wanted to know if I meant anything to you in the past.”

Heather’s eyes were wide and innocent as she asked the question, her tone of voice free of malice. When he saw that she was simply curious, Dexter’s voice softened, and he answered her question patiently.

“It’s not because of you.” His relationship with Josie started off as an agreement, but it had nothing to do with Liana.

Heather’s smile faltered *at his* response.

She took a sip of her cocktail, her eyes clouding with sadness. “It seems like we’ve already gone our separate ways. We’ve started new lives and are not the same people we were.”

Chapter 700 You’re One of My People

Her words transported Dexter to the night the rain poured down endlessly.

He closed his eyes, and the image of Liana reaching out her hands to him in the rain was as clear as day in his mind. Her presence had been like a beacon of hope in his life.

But she stood before him with a new identity after so many years, and he failed to recognize her. He even sent her away and made her life miserable.

“Leanne,” he finally uttered.

Heather’s ears perked up.

“Wouldn’t you like to have a life of comfort and stability, staying with the Olsen family and marrying a kind and proper gentleman?” He looked into her dark, beady eyes and asked sincerely.

Heather’s eyes were like two pools of darkness, filled with sadness and regret. “I must have really missed out on you,” she said, her voice barely more than a whisper.

Even the slightest spark of hope can ignite a fire in the heart. Heather had never dared to dream of being with Dexter, knowing that they were from different worlds. But as they talked about the past, she couldn’t help but feel a chill run down her spine.

Dexter didn’t respond.

“I remember the night before I started middle school, you promised to show me around the school, and you promised Grandpa that you would take care of me. But everything has changed in the ten years we’ve been apart.”

Heather’s eyes twinkled as she reminisced about the past, sharing with Dexter the memories he had long kept hidden. It was as if the Liana he knew had never gone away.

Dexter's fingers grazed the cigarette box on the table. He took out a cigarette and held it between his thumb and forefinger, his knuckles white with tension.

"The time when we were as close as soulmates is now only a fragment of our history, isn't it?"

The glowing embers of the cigarette were so close to his fingertips that he could feel the heat radiating from them. He tapped the cigarette against the ashtray, knocking the ashes off before they could burn him.

"Leanne, we're both adults now. I'm really sorry for the things I did. I'll make it up to you from now on," he said, his eyebrows twitching.

"This is not what I want, Dex. You know it all along."

Dexter had no way of avoiding the topic. "What do you want?" he asked.

Their eyes were locked on each other for a long time, the silence hanging heavy in the air. Heather didn't say a word in response.

Dexter looked at the door. The contrast between the lively scene outside and the suffocating tension in the room was jarring. "Find a good man," he said finally, his voice thick with emotion. "Don't find someone like me."

Heather forced a smile. "What do you consider to be a good man?"

"A good man has a strong moral compass, a stable career, and the financial means to support a family. He will treat you with respect and love, and his family will welcome you into their home with open arms," Dexter rambled after thinking for a moment.

"I'm not good enough for a man like that."

"In what way are you lacking? You're one of *my* people. You could be Natasha Rostova if you wanted."

"Natasha? I don't have the looks or charisma to win the prince's heart," Heather replied. "I think I'm more like Sonya, who is treated poorly by the man she likes."

Dexter's eyes clouded over,
and the lines on his forehead deepened.

Dexter
was convinced that Heather had sent the photo to Josie, so he brought her to Heaven on Earth to humiliate her. His plan didn't work out as he had intended. Nonetheless, Heather was left feeling deeply hurt.

The
memory of that day was seared into her mind.

"I was just teasing you, Dex," Heather chirped, her eyes glinting. The corners of her lips turned up in a smile, and she didn't seem bothered.

The hurt that had been caused could not be easily undone.

“I swear I’ll never treat you that way again,” Dexter said solemnly. The anchor of his sins would continue to exist within his heart.

Dexter’s voice was soft, but his tone had a steely determination.

He would not cause Liana any further pain because of Josie. D

“You’ll be in a tight spot if there’s a misunderstanding about our relationship,” Heather said, her eyes flashing with concern. She knew how complicated things were, and she didn’t want to see Dexter get hurt. “Dex, I promise I won’t cause you any more problems.”

The cigarette was a charred stub, its contents long since consumed. It was still clutched in his hand, but he hadn’t even taken a puff. After he left, Mark called him, his voice dripping with false concern. “Dexter, I didn’t get to talk to you much today. We’ll catch up again next time.”

He left the event early, and Mark was quick to notice. Dexter could see right through Mark’s act. Although he was courteous and showed respect, his intentions were evidently questionable.