

Chapter 526 Romantic Messes

"That man resembles your mother?" Adah's eyes flew wide with shock. Elliana's mother was a dazzling beauty. The odds of a stranger sharing her features so perfectly were beyond coincidence—it had to be family.

The same thought ignited in Elliana's and Adah's minds, and both girls shared a look of barely contained excitement. Years had slipped by without a single promising lead, and suddenly, this one moment had changed everything.

"I managed to jot down his license plate!" Adah announced, breathless with the overwhelming joy.

A grin spread across Elliana's face. "Me too. Let's run the plates later."

"Perfect." Adah agreed, grinning back.

Spotting Milton had scrubbed away every last trace of sadness from Elliana's mind. In its place, exhilaration surged. The heavy knot in her chest dissolved, leaving her feeling sharp and clear.

Her path wasn't all about romance—it was about chasing after something bigger. She would never lose herself over heartbreak. Sorrow had no hold on her. She was Death Thorn. Trivial romance had no power to derail her.

Just then, Cole caught up and saw Elliana's entire expression transformed by genuine happiness. The tight ache in his chest instantly soured into a profound wave of bitterness.

For a moment, he'd told himself she'd be torn up about him. He'd imagined it—maybe even hoped for it. But witnessing her light up at Milton's appearance, and then seeing her chase after the car, drove a bitter envy right through him.

Sarcasm spilled out before he could stop himself. "Already found

someone new to obsess over, I see?"

Elliana met his gaze for a moment and then looked away, pointedly uninterested in engaging.

That only added fuel to Cole's fire. His voice grew sharper, colder. "You don't waste time, do you? It's impressive how quickly some people can move on."

Allan, who had followed Cole over, pressed his fingers to his forehead and let out a sigh.

Experience had taught Allan that Cole's jealousy always showed itself like this—petty, obvious, and desperate.

The sting in Cole's words stoked Elliana's anger, but she refused to waste a single syllable on him. Instead, she shot him a glare fierce enough to cut glass and walked off.

Two steps later, she stopped and spun back, her voice icy with confidence. "You're absolutely right. That man is not only more attractive than you, but he's got real charm. Why would I even look at you when I could have someone like that?"

Another glare was all she offered before she turned again, making it clear she was done.

Not three steps had passed before she paused again and faced him a final time. "And hear this—I will be a moron if I ever flirt with you again. And if you dare show your face to me again, you're a retard!"

With that last remark, Elliana strode away for good, her back straight and unwavering.

Adah gave Cole a withering look and hurried to follow.

Cole was left standing there, too stunned to speak, his mouth half-open. The whole exchange felt absurd—frustration prickled beneath his skin. The arrogance of her, acting so resolute, as if she were the one dumping him. They weren't even together. Who did she think she was? Unbelievable.

And yet, for all its absurdity, the rejection still stung. An emptiness pressed down on him, impossible to ignore. A curse slipped under his

breath.

Meanwhile, Allan's gaze lingered on Elliana's retreat. Something about her struck a chord, a nagging sense that he'd crossed paths with her before, and not at Podgend. The sharpness of her comeback, the way she'd turned Cole's words inside out—it brought to mind memories of that "ugly" Elliana.

But he soon dismissed the notion with a shake of his head. No way. Elliana's ugliness was legendary. She'd been that way since childhood. There was just no way Lilah, with all her beauty, could be the same girl.

No farewell or backward glance came from Elliana as she climbed into her car and pulled away. Even the purr of the engine sounded like a rebuke.

Watching the car vanish down the street, Cole felt like someone had carved a hollow space straight through his chest. That ache twisted inside him, hot with frustration and humiliation. She was just a woman he'd met a few times. Why did she have this power over him?

Some ridiculous, alpha-male quote from the internet floated through his head, something about putting women in their place if they got under your skin.

The very idea startled Cole, jerking him back to reality. What the hell was wrong with him? He had to be losing his mind.

Allan, oblivious to Cole's turmoil, wallowed in disappointment. His own hopes of wooing Lilah's friend had been dashed by Cole's outburst, and now with Cole and Lilah at odds, where did that leave him and Ava?

A heavy sigh escaped Allan's lips.

Without a word, Cole turned and stormed off, ignoring Allan completely.

"Where are you off to now, Cole?" Allan called out, not really expecting an answer.

Stone-faced and silent, Cole didn't even slow down.

Hugh had watched the whole messy affair unfold. Trailing after Cole, his thoughts churned with confusion and concern. Could it be true—had Elliana truly given up on Cole? And if she had, was Milton her next pursuit?

If Elliana and Milton got together and Cole's memories came back, the fallout could be disastrous.

Being the head of security, Hugh could hardly get any sleep with his boss's romantic messes.



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