

Chapter 79

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The next morning, Duncan's phone rang, and he saw it was a call from Lady Zelda, his mother. Curiosity piqued, he answered the call and listened as she spoke. Lady Zelda informed him that she was at the Walton Domicile and that someone important wanted to see him. Intrigued and slightly puzzled, Duncan agreed to make his way there.

Upon arriving at the Walton Domicile, Duncan was greeted by Babette who reminded him of a promise he had apparently made. She brought up the idea of celebrating his victory in winning the contract, suggesting they have a little party to commemorate the achievement.

Duncan, however, seemed preoccupied and declined the offer. "I'm sorry, but I'm occupied at the moment," he replied, his mind seemingly focused on other matters. "But let's finalize something in the company instead," he proposed, attempting to redirect the conversation to a more business-oriented topic.

Babette nodded in understanding and left, respecting Duncan's wish to prioritize his current engagements. Meanwhile, Lady Zelda, wearing a warm smile, approached her son. Sensing his daze and curiosity, she spoke gently, "Son, someone important wants to see you," leaving the identity of this person shrouded in mystery.

Duncan's mind raced, trying to piece together the puzzle. "Who?" he asked, his voice tinged with both intrigue and confusion, eager to uncover the identity of the individual awaiting him.

Feeling a mix of nervousness and anticipation, Lady Zelda revealed the identity of the important person awaiting Duncan's arrival. "He's... your grandfather, my father-in-law," she confessed, her voice carrying a hint

of excitement. With a smile, she turned around and called out to her father, inviting him to join them.

As Lady Zelda's words hung in the air, Duncan's heart skipped a beat. It had been a long time since he had seen or met his grandfather. The thought of the reunion stirred a whirlwind of emotions within him. With a renewed sense of purpose, he straightened his posture, preparing himself for this long-awaited encounter.

Finally, the moment arrived as the old-aged man emerged, wearing a smile that seemed to transcend time. He approached Duncan and Lady Zelda, his presence commanding and comforting simultaneously. The weight of their shared bloodline and the stories he had heard about his grandfather flooded Duncan's mind.

Though slightly nervous, Duncan couldn't help but feel a surge of warmth and excitement. Slowly, a smile formed on his lips as he prepared to embrace this long-overdue reunion with his grandfather, ready to embark on a journey of discovery and connection.

As Sir Logan reached Duncan, his hands trembled with a mix of anticipation and emotion. His lips parted in awe as he struggled to find his words. "D... Dun... Duncan, my son?" he stuttered, his voice filled with a mixture of surprise and disbelief.

Lady Zelda chuckled softly, her eyes glimmering with affection, as she gently corrected her father-in-law. She placed a comforting hand on his shoulder, reassuring him. "No, father, he's not Dunstan. He is Duncan, my son, your grandson."

A wave of realization washed over Sir Logan's face as he absorbed the information. His eyes welled up with tears, reflecting the depth of his emotions. With tenderness, he placed his hands on Duncan's face,

examining the features that mirrored those of his late son. Overwhelmed with joy, he exclaimed, "Oh, he looks exactly like his father, my late son."

Tears streamed down Sir Logan's weathered cheeks as he held Duncan's face, cherishing the sight of his long-awaited grandson. The weight of the years they had spent apart seemed to melt away at that moment. "I finally see my grandson after all these long years," he said, his voice tinged with both happiness and a hint of sorrow. He chuckled through his tears and embraced Duncan tightly, his hands gently patting his back in a gesture of love and acceptance.

As Duncan embraced his grandfather, a surge of emotions overwhelmed him. He held on tightly, seeking solace and connection in this long-awaited reunion. He blinked away the tears that threatened to spill from his eyes, trying to compose himself in the presence of his newfound family.

Meeting his mother's gaze, Duncan's heart ached with a mixture of longing and conflicted emotions. At that moment, surrounded by the love of his grandfather and the gaze of his biological mother, he yearned to let go of the painful memories and hardships he had endured. The years of poverty and struggle, the role he had played as a servant in his wife's family, and the mistreatment and scorn he had faced from Zinnia—all of it felt like a heavy burden that he wanted to release.

Yet, as much as he desired to leave it all behind, Duncan found himself unable to fully let go. The wounds ran deep, etched into his very being, and the scars of his past experiences remained. They had shaped him and molded him into the person he was at that moment. He felt it was right to hold on to his resentment.

Duncan's eyes were filled with a mix of anticipation and apprehension. The weight of two decades' worth of emotions hung heavily on his

shoulders. He had come face to face with his estranged grandfather, who had just admitted to a terrible mistake he had made long ago.

Sir Logan, his face etched with lines of remorse, gently broke the embrace and placed his hands on Duncan's cheeks. With a warm smile, he spoke softly, his voice tinged with both sadness and relief.

"I'm so happy to see you, my grandson," Sir Logan began, his words carrying a genuine sense of joy. "You know, twenty years ago, I did a bad thing. I was devastated, and in my grief, I blamed you for your father's death."

Duncan's heart skipped a beat as those words echoed in his ears. The revelation was unexpected, yet it somehow validated the anger and resentment he had harbored for all those years. His mother, Lady Zelda, who had made her own mistakes, suddenly seemed overshadowed by his grandfather's admission.

Lady Zelda, in her grief-stricken state, had forgotten about Duncan for a moment after his father's death. She hadn't searched for him immediately, inadvertently pushing him away from their lives and forcing him to endure a wretched existence on his own. Duncan had blamed her for his pain, for the lonely years he had spent without his family.

But now, standing before his grandfather, Duncan wrestled with conflicting emotions. On one hand, he craved the love and acceptance he had longed for, the validation that his grandfather's remorse seemed to offer. On the other hand, he still clung to the bitterness that had defined his relationship with his mother.

As Sir Logan watched Duncan's expression, he could sense the storm of emotions swirling within his grandson. He reached out and squeezed

Duncan's hand gently, his eyes filled with compassion.

"I know it's difficult to process, grandson," Sir Logan said, his voice filled with empathy. "But I want you to know that I have regretted my actions every single day since. I have missed out on so much of your life, and I can never change that." He took a brief pause to control his emotions, not wanting to break down in front of his son at such a great moment.

Sir Logan continued, his voice filled with sincerity, "Duncan, you probably left because of that... I hope you forgive me, my boy. Please."

Duncan, still grappling with his emotions, took a moment to gather his thoughts. He didn't want to dwell too much on his past grievances, realizing that holding onto anger would only impede the process of healing. With a steady voice, he nodded and replied, "I owe nothing against you, G... Grandfather."

A warm smile spread across Sir Logan's face, relieved to hear Duncan's response. He chuckled softly and pulled Duncan into another embrace, a gesture of gratitude and newfound hope for their relationship.

As they disengaged from the embrace, Duncan's gaze shifted towards Lady Zelda, his mother. Her eyes were filled with a mix of anticipation and trepidation, silently pleading for his forgiveness. She yearned for a chance to rebuild their fractured bond, to make amends for her past mistakes.

But as the silence stretched on, it became apparent to Lady Zelda that complete forgiveness would not come easily for Duncan. The wounds inflicted by her actions ran deep, and the scars of their fractured relationship were still fresh.

Duncan studied his mother's expression, his heart torn between longing for reconciliation and the lingering pain he carried. He wanted to believe in her, to trust that she had changed and genuinely regretted her past behavior. Yet, forgiveness was a complex process, and it couldn't be rushed or forced.

At that moment, Lady Zelda understood that her redemption would require patience, understanding, and consistent effort. She couldn't expect Duncan to forgive her overnight. Rebuilding trust would take time and healing, and she was willing to embark on that journey, no matter how long it would take.

The weight of the unspoken words hung heavily in the air, a reminder that forgiveness couldn't be demanded or expected. It had to be earned through actions, remorse, and sustained change.

Duncan, aware of his mother's silent plea, offered her a small, tentative smile. It was a glimmer of hope, a sign that he was open to the possibility of forgiveness in the future. But for now, he needed time to heal and process the pain that had shaped his life for so long.

Lady Zelda, though disappointed by the realization that forgiveness wouldn't come immediately, felt a flicker of hope ignite within her. She would patiently wait and work towards rebuilding their relationship, knowing that true forgiveness couldn't be rushed or forced.

And so, with the weight of their shared history still present, the three stood together, bound by a newfound sense of understanding and the promise of a future that held the potential for healing and reconciliation.

Taking a deep breath, Lady Zelda reached out and held her father-in-law's hand, her gesture a symbol of reconciliation and a desire to move

forward. "Father, let's have breakfast. Okay, Duncan?" she said, casting a hopeful glance toward her son.

Duncan, still processing the complex mix of emotions, nodded in agreement. The prospect of sharing a meal felt like a small step towards rebuilding their fractured relationship. He mustered a faint smile, offering a glimmer of his willingness to give their bond another chance.

Zelda couldn't contain her excitement, a peal of soft laughter escaping her lips as she observed the interlocked hands of Sir Logan and Duncan. She followed closely behind them as they made their way to the dining room, a sense of warmth enveloping her as they walked side by side.

With a renewed sense of purpose, Zelda took charge of serving breakfast. Her heart swelled with joy as she watched Duncan's smile brighten as he enjoyed the meal, sitting next to Sir Logan. It was a simple moment, yet it held immense significance for her.

As Duncan savored each bite, Zelda couldn't help but ask, her voice filled with genuine concern, "Is the food okay, Duncan?"

He lifted his gaze to meet her eyes, his expression thoughtful as he silently pondered his response. At that moment, a wave of conflicting emotions washed over him. Memories of the pain and abandonment intermingled with a glimmer of hope for a better future.

Finally, Duncan's eyes softened, and he offered her a small, sincere smile. "It is delicious, Mother," he replied, his words carrying a hint of warmth and acceptance.

Zelda's heart swelled with gratitude and relief. She knew that the road to complete forgiveness would be long and arduous, but this small exchange felt like progress—a step towards rebuilding the trust and

connection that had been shattered.

With renewed determination, she vowed to keep working on herself and their relationship, understanding that actions spoke louder than words. As they continued their breakfast, a sense of cautious optimism filled the room, each bite representing a moment of healing and the possibility of a brighter future.

Suddenly feeling an urgent need, Duncan stood up from his seat. "Um, I need to relieve myself, please," he said, feeling a bit embarrassed.

Lady Zelda responded promptly, "You can use the bathroom upstairs. Take the stairs, and when you reach the top, the next room on your right down the hallway, go in and use it."

Duncan nodded gratefully and quickly left the room in search of the bathroom.

"Why did you ask him to use your room's toilet?" Sir Logan inquired, genuinely intrigued.

Lady Zelda smiled warmly, her eyes reflecting her thoughtful nature. "So he can see the large photo of his father there. I want Duncan to have a moment with his father, even if it's just through a photograph. I thought it might bring him some comfort and allow him to connect with his dad, even if only for a brief moment."

Sir Logan's eyes softened as he glanced at his daughter-in-law. "You are so thoughtful," he remarked, appreciating her compassionate gesture.

Lady Zelda's smile widened, knowing that her small act had touched the hearts of both Duncan and his grandfather.

Following his mother's instructions, Duncan made his way up the stairs

and reached the designated room. He gently pushed the door open and stepped inside, his eyes immediately drawn to the bathroom door in the corner. However, something unexpected caught his attention and caused him to pause in his tracks.

Hanging prominently on the wall by the bed was a massive photo frame, housing a large portrait of someone who looked remarkably similar to Duncan himself. Intrigued and filled with curiosity, he took a few steps closer, his gaze fixed on the image before him. It was a close-up picture, capturing the features of the person in exquisite detail.

As Duncan studied the photograph, a sense of familiarity washed over him. The face staring back at him from the frame bore a striking resemblance to his own. The shape of the eyes, the curve of the nose, and the contour of the jawline all mirrored his features.

Realization dawned upon Duncan as he remembered his grandfather's words about him resembling his father. The connection between the photograph and his father became clear. At that moment, a rush of emotions flooded through Duncan's heart, a mix of joy, longing, and a sense of belonging.

"Father," Duncan whispered, his voice filled with a mixture of awe and affection. His hand instinctively reached out, gently touching the glass covering the photo. A warm smile spread across his face as he continued to caress the familiar features, tracing the contours of his father's face with his fingertips.

Intrigued by the presence of the diary lying on top of the side cupboard, Duncan's eyes were drawn to it. With a mix of curiosity and uncertainty, he withdrew his hand from the photo frame and reached out for the diary. His fingers brushed against the worn cover, feeling the weight of its secrets within.



Opening the diary, Duncan's eyes immediately fell upon the name inscribed on the first page - "DUNSTAN WALTON." The familiarity of the name sent a shiver down his spine. It was his father's name, written in bold letters as if to claim ownership of the pages that followed.

As his gaze shifted to the next page, Duncan's attention was caught by the presence of a letter and some codes written at the edge. The sight of the codes piqued his curiosity, but it was the words written beneath that held his focus - "Don't flip through the pages if you don't have the heart. Leave me with my miseries."

The words struck him as odd, their meaning unclear. They carried a sense of pain and secrecy as if someone had penned them during a time of deep sorrow.