

A Favor 60

Chapter 60

I sprawled on the couch with the other guys, smiling as we watched the girls belt out “Dancing Queen” at the top of their lungs. None of them could really sing, but the room overflowed with laughter, and their energy was contagious.

Winona stood out among them, letting loose in a way I’d never seen before. She fit right in, laughing with Aubriella and the others, confidence shining through her.

I couldn’t help noticing how different she was from Leona. Leona always looked miserable at gatherings and never even tried to get along with my friends. Most nights, she did nothing but complain and pick everything apart. Sometimes I wondered how any of us had ever tolerated her.

When I realized I was thinking about Leona again, I pushed it aside. There was no comparison between the two.

“She’s got way more life in her than Leona,” Carsten joked beside me.

“I was thinking the same thing,” I chuckled.

“Come on, Davidson. What’s really going on between you and Winona? You keep saying it’s nothing serious, but I don’t buy it. Every time she’s near you, it’s like you can’t help but light up. I haven’t seen you this happy in ages.” Carsten’s tone turned serious as he leaned in.

Damn. My stomach tightened. I hated how easy it was to lie to everyone—and how easy it was to keep lying to myself, too.

“Honestly, Carsten? I don’t know what to call it. It feels too soon for anything real, and until the divorce is settled, I can’t even think about starting something new. I just need time to clear my head.” I let out a long breath, dragging a hand through my hair.

“All right, man. I get it. I won’t push.” Carsten nodded, giving my shoulder a reassuring squeeze.

I shot him a grateful look. I didn’t want to ruin the mood or drag the night down with heavy conversations. We dropped it just as the girls finished their loud performance, pausing dramatically for applause.

They ended their concert with an exaggerated bow, and we erupted into cheers and clapping, laughter bouncing off the walls. They were wildly off-key, but no one cared. If anything, it seemed like they enjoyed it even more because of that. When the noise died down, Winona looked at me with a radiant smile before slipping into the kitchen, and I found myself grinning like an idiot.

I slipped through the crowd and followed her in.

“Hey,” I called softly as I stepped inside, catching her attention.

She turned, her eyes bright.

“Did you enjoy the show?” Her laugh was light and teasing.

“Oh, it was unforgettable. But let’s be honest—none of you should quit your day jobs.” I couldn’t help laughing as the memory hit me.

Winona pouted and turned away, pretending to be offended. I laughed as I closed the distance between us, stopping just short of touching her. I wanted—more than anything—to grip her hips and pull her against me, but I held back, afraid of crossing a line.

Instead, she reached up and pinched my nose playfully.

“You’re an idiot. We were amazing, and you know it.” She smiled, her laughter filling the kitchen.