

## 123 Has she always been so good at masking her real self?

The next day, at Foster Ventures, Ryan was sitting and working behind his desk when Daniel entered, pushing the door of his office. 1

Ryan glanced up to look at him briefly, noting the exasperation on Daniel's face, but chose to ignore it and returned his attention to the document on his screen.

"Ryan, what do you think you are doing?" Daniel asked, coming to stand right in front of him. "Is this all you have learnt from your regrets?"

Ryan looked up at him leisurely, and then shrugged. "I don't know what are you talking about, Dan. What did I do?"

Daniel's fingers clenched, though he managed to keep his cool. "You very well know what I am talking about Ryan. Don't act dumb. What did you post on your social media page? Are you even serious?"

"I am serious, and that's why I just agreed to the truth. How is that wrong?"

Daniel could no longer make sense. Shaking his head in disbelief, he asked, "Really? That's what you truly think."

"Dan, I just stated what happened back in university. It's not like I lied. How is that wrong?"

Daniel stared at him before sighing. "You didn't lie, Ryan, but you didn't say it all as well. You know your words didn't clarify things, rather they now have put Arwen in netizen's criticism. Now everyone will think Delyth was the one who suffered, and that Arwen was the one who took you away from her."

"So?" Ryan asked, his tone unbothered. "Isn't that right? I proposed Delyth during the university, but Arwen had forced us into the engagement." 1

"Ryan, you know it wasn't her. It was never here. It was both of your families that pushed you into this arrangement. She never claimed to love you so much that she would take you from another woman. Or, I would better say, she never said that she was dying to marry you. It was you, who never had the courage to refuse, and you blamed it all on her."

Daniel hadn't planned to say it bluntly, but it was the truth. He had thought Arwen loved Ryan,

which is why she agreed to marry him. But only recently, he realized that she had never expressed that outright. They had all assumed she loved Ryan deeply based on her actions alone.

Her gestures of care and concern around him had seemed like love and affection. But only after he saw her with Aiden did he realize that there could be a different explanation. Arwen's gestures towards Ryan had always felt forced, as if she was doing what she was expected to do, playing the role she had been pressured to accept.

Ryan gritted his teeth. "If I didn't refuse, neither did she. Wasn't that enough to tell that she deliberately made everyone accept the arrangement?"

Daniel didn't respond. He only stared at Ryan as if asking him to rethink it all over again.

"Dan, Delyth has been getting cursed for over a week now. I had tried everything and even talked to the lawyers. There was no solution, and still, there isn't any. I can't let her suffer all of it. I had to do something. Arwen didn't leave me any choice."

Ryan said, and Daniel almost chuckled at that. "Why am I not surprised? Though I thought that you were regretting things, I also knew Ryan being Ryan would have a stupid logic like this."

"Dan!"

"Ryan, it's not that Arwen didn't leave you any choice; it's more like you don't want to leave her any choice except to come back to you," Daniel said, unfazed by the roar Ryan had let out earlier. "But brother, I think you are terribly miscalculating something. Arwen had never come crying to you, not even when you left her alone at the Civil Marriage Bureau. What makes you think that she will come back this time? She is not Delyth. She is Arwen, reminding you just in case you have forgotten."

"She will come back," Ryan replied with such confidence that if given a chance he would bet his fortune on it.

Daniel shook his head at his delusion. "Let's see then. If I had known her even one cent, then she won't even look back at you. Definitely not after what you have done today, for sure."

With that, Daniel turned and walked out of his room. Behind him, Ryan sat clenching his fists.

After Daniel's words, his confidence felt wavering. But then he thought of the little game Arwen was up to.

Wasn't she doing it just to get his attention? As long as he kept her on edge, fearing she would lose her place in his life, she would eventually come back, seeking his forgiveness. This little post was just her punishment for making him feel restless.

Ryan's hand moved to the mouse, opening another window on his screen. And no later, a familiar video played on the screen. His brows furrowed but it eased when he saw Arwen's young face appear on the screen.

Back then, he didn't get a chance to notice her expression when he had proposed to Delyth on his knees. But now, as he watched, he saw that her face remained unreadable, as if his sudden proposal like that didn't stir any emotion in her at all. She neither looked angry, nor jealous. It just felt as though she were just another bystander witnessing a boy professing his feelings to the girl he loved.

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Meanwhile, on the other side, Arwen was on a video conference when she felt her phone vibrating. Her eyes darted down to check, and seeing her father's name on the screen, she quickly texted him back, before focusing back again on the meeting.

Once done, she closed the call and took her phone to give a call back when Gianna's call entered instead. Accepting the call, she was about to say that she would call her back in some time as she needed to give a call back to her father, but Gianna's voice came through loud and furious.

"What is that son-of-b\*ch even thinking? Did he think he can blabber anything he thinks in his dumb head?"