



132 Till it's gone.

Ryan stumbled, and suddenly things started to make sense. Arwen's indifference finally started to make sense. It all happened after that accident —because she thought he had left her to die. But he didn't. She misunderstood —gravely misunderstood. 1

How could she even think that he would leave her to die like that? He wondered internally, struggling to find that answer. 2

Desperate to explain, he looked up at his mother. "Mom, I didn't know she was that badly injured. I thought she would be fine. Believe me, Mom. I truly wasn't aware, and ..."

"Ryan," Beca interjected with a sigh, disappointment heavy in her voice, "you are still not getting it. It's not just about misunderstanding Arwen's situation that day. It's about you leaving her there and choosing someone else. It's about you choosing Delyth over her —not just one time, but every time. You regret this one incident but have you even considered how many times Arwen must have regretted you —regretted having any expectations of you?"



This was not the first time Beca had tried to make Ryan see his mistakes. She had often said similar things, hoping he would finally understand. But every time, he brushed it off, convinced that he knew what he was doing. However, this time, her words hit him deeply, making it almost difficult to breathe.

Gareth watched his son struggling and reached out to place a comforting hand on his shoulder. "Ryan, we have decided that we won't try to push you toward Arwen anymore."

Ryan looked at him stunned, as if he couldn't quite grasp what his father was saying. Noting the confusion on his face, Gareth nodded and added, "We understand that you don't care for her in that way. But even so, son, she didn't deserve the way you treated her. Instead of struggling with this guilt, go and apologize to her. Make a clean break. That way, this regret will become more bearable."

"Dad, w-what are you saying?" Ryan asked, shaken.

"I am asking you to go and talk to her. Tell her you are sorry. Although no apology can fully make up for what you did, it's the least you can offer," Gareth said, his voice full of conviction.



"That way, if you ever cross paths with her you will have the face to look at her. Otherwise, it will even become hard to look at your reflection in the mirror."

"Dad!" Ryan stepped back, shrugging off the grasp his father had put on his shoulders. "She is my fiancée. I understand that it was my fault to leave her that day. But even so, that doesn't mean we should break up on some misunderstanding like that. I am sure apart from an apology what she deserves more is an explanation. Once she gets that, I am sure she will understand."

Gareth was baffled at his son's response. Exchanging a fleeting look with Beca, he returned to him. "Ryan, you ..."

"Dad, I might not like Arwen, but the arrangement between the Fosters and Quinns benefits both families. I can't let this go over a misunderstanding. I know I have made mistakes, but if I can explain things, I am sure, we can move past this." 1

Gareth's face grew serious. "What are you going to move past, Ryan? The misunderstanding that happened that day, or what you have caused today?" He eyed him coldly, carrying an air of



intimidation. He might be an easygoing dad, but he wouldn't let his son repeat mistakes again and again. "Marriage isn't some business contract. It's a partnership of mutual trust and respect which you failed to establish with Arwen at every step of life. If you can't see that, no explanation or apology will make up for the way you treated her."

"Dad, I ..." Ryan hesitated, searching for words. However, not able to find the right ones, he simply took his steps back and said, "I can't explain things to you, but I can only say that I will make things right."

Beca's gaze softened as she looked at her son. "You can't make things right, Ryan —not when you ruin everything with your hands. I already told you this before and I will tell you this again. You already lost Arwen. Now nothing you do will bring her back."

Ryan shook his head, refusing to accept her words. "Mom, I will make things right. Arwen misunderstood me that day. I will go and explain to her, and she will understand," he said before turning on his heels to leave.

Before Gareth or Beca could say anything, he was already gone. Gareth had never thought

Ryan would react like this. Though his son hadn't made it clear, he could sense his strong feelings for Arwen. No matter how hard Ryan tried to mask it behind terms like 'responsibilities', 'benefits' or whatnot, Gareth could see the desperation and fear in his gaze—the kind of fear that comes only when a man realizes he is about to lose a most precious person in his life.

"Beca, I think our son has finally fallen for Arwen," he said, turning to look at his wife with a smile. But seeing her remain unmoved, his brows tugged in a frown. "I can tell this from a man's instincts. Don't you believe it?"

Beca shook her head. "I don't have to believe it, Gareth. I can also see it too. Ryan had long fallen for Arwen."

"Then why are you not happy? Isn't that what you wanted always —Ryan to fall for Arwen and for Arwen to become our daughter-in-law?" Gareth asked perplexed.

But Beca smiled sadly. "Even if I wanted that, it can never happen," she said.

Gareth's frown deepened. "What do you mean?"

Beca glanced at him before sitting back. "Your son is serving us the perfect example of the



saying *'one doesn't know what they have got till it's gone'*. Arwen has gone; no amount of Ryan's regret could bring her back," she said, and seeing her husband still staring at her with confusion, she added it in clear words. "Arwen has already moved on and married someone else. So no amount of Ryan's regret will bring her back, not until she wants it. And Arwen would never want him again. Not after what he did to her." 3

Just as she finished, the butler came with hurried steps, holding a tablet in his hand. "Madam," he interrupted, exchanging a worried glance with Gareth. "Ms. Quinn shared something on her profile that has garnered everyone's attention."

Beca didn't understand and extended her hand out for the tablet. "What is it?" she asked.

While she checked it online, her expression shifted. And a smile curled her lips, not of appreciation, but of regret. "Here, comes the proof of what I just said. See it with your own eyes," she said as she handed Gareth the tablet to look for himself.

