

## 147 Until I give the order.

Catrin stood frozen at Arwen's words. Her breath hitched when she realized what had just happened. 1

Arwen left? She just left like that without any hesitation?

Her mind raced to comprehend the reality that just happened, but the weight of Arwen's fiery determination and her fierce words lingered in the air— 'From this moment on, I will live for myself.'

Catrin shook her head, her heart clenching as she fought against the suffocating wave of disbelief. This couldn't be real. Arwen loved and respected her most in this world, she wouldn't leave like that. With that, she turned to Idris, hoping —no, begging —for him to deny it all, to say something that would make her believe this wasn't at all real.

But her last hint of confidence shattered when she met his defeated gaze. Idris sat slumped on the sofa as his shoulders trembled slightly. There was no anger in his posture, no reprimand for Arwen's words. Only defeat was evident in his frame.

"Catrin, we..." he began, his voice feeling heavy

with sorrow. "... have been a disappointment as parents. We have failed Arwen. How are we going to make up to her?" 1

He paused, letting the weight of his words sink in, before looking up at her again. Matching her gaze, he added again, "Will we ever be able to make up to her? To make her come back to us again?"

Catrin's lips parted as if to respond, but then instead it changed, her expression hardened. Her features twisted into an icy mask of denial. "How is any of this our fault, Idris?" she rebutted with a tone, sharp and unyielding. "Why are you taking all the blame? We did nothing wrong. We are her parents, and we were doing what we felt was right for her. I did what I believed was best for her. It's not our fault to think of her best interest. None of this is our fault." 2

"Catrin —" Idris tried, his voice cracking with the weight of the emotions.

But she cut him off. "Instead, it's her fault. How dare she walk out of this place and sever her ties with us? We are her parents. How dare she disrespect us like that?"

Idris shook his head, with disbelief evident on his face. "She didn't leave or sever the ties on her own, Catrin. You forced her to do that. How could you?"



Catrin's expression froze at his words, her gaze narrowing at him. "What do you mean?" she demanded, her tone laced with warning.

"Don't deny it now," Idris said. His voice came steady despite the anguish in his eyes. "You asked her to choose, between us. You made her believe that she wasn't enough unless she met your expectations. It was you who pushed her away, Catrin. You made her take this decision."

"Idris, I clearly gave her the choice," Catrin snapped, her words biting. "But she decided to sever ties with us rather than giving up on her so-called lowlife husband that she picked up from some dump. If she chose wrong, that's on her, not on me." 2

Idris stared at her, stunned into silence. "Arwen wasn't any of our business clients, Catrin, she was our daughter," he said, his voice barely above a whisper. "Why does she even have to choose us in the first place? Being her parents, we should be with her irrelevant of her choices. But you issued an ultimatum, one that no child should ever have to face. Why did you do that?"

"I don't understand how could you blame this on me, Idris," Catrin said, her voice tight with frustration as she looked away. The weight of Idris's words cracked the façade that she desperately clung to, but her pride and denial

served as her powerful shields. "Ryan is the best choice for her. I chose him for her, and you also know no one can be better for her than Fosters. Yet she foolishly broke up with him and married some stranger we don't even know. Can't I even be angry?" 1

Idris paused, choosing his words carefully before speaking. "If Ryan comes as a choice that we have to pick over Arwen, then he cannot be a good choice. He could have been our son-in-law if he had married Arwen, but Arwen has been our daughter from the very moment she came into this world. She should never have been an option for us to weigh against anyone else. If you only hadn't treated her as an option today, we wouldn't have lost her." 1

Catrin faltered, her resolve momentarily shaken. Arwen was not an option for her. She was her daughter, the one she had shaped and molded. But hadn't she poured years of effort into making her perfect? Into making her the best? And now, just when she was on the cusp of seeing her hard work bear fruit, Arwen had thrown it all away. 5

Shaking her head, Catrin refused to accept this. To accept all her efforts go to waste. No, Arwen couldn't disappoint her like that. She wouldn't allow it. "No, Idris we haven't lost her," she said before adding. "She will come back," her words

came like a mutter that made it feel more like she was talking to herself. "She can't live without her family. She can't live without me. She will come back."

Idris's eyes filled with despair as he shook his head. "Seems like you have forgotten how our daughter truly is, Catrin."

Catrin refused to accept the defeat. Shaking her head, she added with steely determination. "If I said she will come back, then she will, Idris. I will make her come back." With that, she reached for her phone. 1

Idris didn't understand what she was upto. As he watched her movements, a sense of unease grew within him. He saw her dialling someone's number and asked, "What are you doing, Catrin? Who are you calling?"

Catrin didn't answer. At the same time, the call she made was answered. She spoke firmly into the line. "Hello, this is Mrs. Quinn speaking. I want all of Arwen's bank accounts and credit cards frozen immediately. Do not unfreeze them until I give the order." 6

