



50 Very unladylike.

Arwen blinked in surprise as she watched Aiden wrap an apron around his waist. "You are going to cook for me? You know how to cook?" 1

Aiden chuckled softly, moving to the refrigerator and then to the cabinets to gather the ingredients. Arwen followed him, waiting for a response but when none came, she sighed and asked again, "Tell me, I am already very confused."

"I am preparing Fettucine Alfredo for you. What else do you want to know?" he asked, walking to the counter. Arwen trailed behind him, her gaze narrowing slightly.

"Why?" she asked, her tone laced with curiosity. Aiden turned to look at her with his brows raised.

"Why what?"

"Why Fettucine Alfredo?" She studied his expression, trying to read into it, but found nothing unusual.

Aiden smirked a little before taking the washed veggies to start chopping it finely with the needed precision. Arwen watched, quite impressed by his skill.

"That's because it's the only thing I know how to cook," he admitted. And Arwen's initial surprise quickly shifted into a bright cherry smile. 1

"Such a perfect coincidence," she said, adding playfully, "Fettucine Alfredo is my favourite, and it just so happens to be one dish you know how to make. If someone didn't know better, they might think you learned it just for me." 4

Aiden held didn't respond, nor did Arwen mind. She simply watched his skilful hands as they worked, chopping the chicken breast with practiced ease. "The way you are cutting those vegetables, I don't think I will be disappointed. And if I am not, you will have to cook this more often for me. I would love that," she said, excitement evident in her voice.

Aiden back his chuckle, knowing it might make her shy away. He preferred her like this — showing her true self, free from the mask of sweet decorum she wore around others. "You

said you were confused. What's making you confused?" he asked, knowing her confusion wasn't just about what he was cooking.

Arwen hummed in response. "You," she said, catching his full attention. "The Winlow name goes back a long way. I remember hearing my father mention it several times when I was younger. But now, I can't find anything. Not even on the internet. It confuses me because, with everything I am seeing her, I think you must be as famous as any other prestigious family in Cralens."

With such a lavish estate in the heart of the city, she could already tell that her husband was wealthy —far wealthier than Quinn, Fosters or several other families frequently discussed online. Yet, no one talked about the Winslows. Why?

"Because we are Patricians," Aiden said simply. "I don't enjoy being the talk of the city like other families do. Maintaining a low profile is more peaceful, and it gives you an invisible upper hand in most of the situation."

"Invisible upper hand?" Arwen asked, very

intrigued.

Aiden glanced at the pasta, now nearly done. He strained it and moved seamlessly to prepare the sauce. "Mhm. Most of the time, people don't realize who they are offending until it's too late."

That sounded a bit sinister, but it made Arwen smile, as if she didn't hold any sympathy for such people. Aiden saw her smile and knew what it meant. He didn't question her about it, knowing her well enough to recognize this side of her. While others may not have seen the side of her that she had kept hidden, he had once reveled in her every charm.

"Winslows are Patricians. But I am sure there is more to it. Since there is almost nothing about them online, how should I learn more about them?" Arwen asked, her gaze wandering as if she were searching for something. Not finding what she was looking for, she sighed internally.

Just then, she felt herself being lifted into the air. Before she could react or ask what was happening, she found herself sitting on the kitchen counter, her hands resting on Aiden's shoulders. Blinking at him in slight



bewilderment, she raised her brows. But inside, she could feel her heart thrumming.

"You can sit here. Or, if it's uncomfortable, I can grab you a chair from outside," Aiden said, his eyes locked on hers, deep and intense, filled with a desire he was doing his best to conceal.

Arwen quickly looked away, focusing on her dangling before muttering, "This is very unladylike. You don't mind?"

Aiden deliberately looked around, as if searching for someone, before turning back at her. "Does it matter? There is no one around here except me. And I don't mind my wife being comfortable." Then he turned his attention back to the pan.

Arwen smiled as she watched him. It had been just one day, and already she felt more at ease than she ever had in life. Since childhood, she had been constantly reminded of the proper etiquette for standing, sitting, even breathing. As the only daughter, her mother had wanted her to be the best of the best. In trying to meet those high expectations, Arwen had long forgotten how to simply be comfortable.

But it seemed that wouldn't be necessary around

him.

"So?" she asked, bringing back the conversation back to the topic she had started earlier.

Meanwhile, Ryan had returned to Foster Villa. Entering the house, he headed straight to the dining space, knowing both his mother and father would be there.

"Mom! Dad!" he greeted upon seeing them seated and having dinner, as he had expected. But his greeting wasn't met with the usual warmth.

Beca glanced at her son, with furrowed brows. "Why are you here today? It's not the day you usually come for dinner."

"Mom, I came back because I wanted to have dinner with you. Why? Am I not welcome?" Ryan asked, though his tone was tinged with resignation. Beca so wanted to tell him that he wasn't welcome, not after ruining her chance of having the perfect daughter-in-law. But he was her son, and she couldn't shut him out of the house.

Sensing his wife's thoughts, Gareth Foster reached out to pat her hands before speaking to his son. "Sit and have dinner, then. Don't upset your mother more than she already is."

Ryan wanted to argue that her mood was unreasonable, but after such a complicated day, he didn't feel like getting into another confrontation. So, he sat down and served himself a plate.

After taking a few bites, he asked cautiously, "Did Arwen complain to you again?"

Beca's eyes zeroed in on her son as she asked, "What did you do today, Ryan?"