

A Love Forgotten (Arianna and Elijah)

Chapter 109

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My heart stilled and I wanted to pull away

"Hurry up and play

The guy who'd won earlier called out impatiently

Hesitantly, I placed down a "South Pawn

Norman chuckled "Nice move! Playing the South Pawn-may it bring you smooth sailing

With an, he took another drag from his cigarette, adjusting my chessmen for me again.

Truthfully, I did know a little about chess. Growing up, Tolten watched my mom play with her friends, though watching was one thing-playing was another

As I gradually picked up the rules, I found myself getting the hang of it until I looked down at my pieces and realized I had a checkmate.

I glanced at Norman, unsure. He casually flicked his cigarette ash and gave me a nudge. "You've got it! Time to collect!"

He stood up, calling out loudly, "She won! Hand over the cash!"

The other three groaned, reluctantly digging in their pockets.

"No way! Mr. Wood's hack just ended. She's won back everything he lost earlier. We need to go another round

The game resumed

resumed, with Norman sitting next to me and occasionally guiding my moves, soon more comfortable, I began to understand why so many people found the game so thrilling. Each piece opened up multiple possibilities for different strategies it was annually pretty fun. Caught up in the excitement, I lost track of time. Round after round, I kept winning with triple millipeds, a pile of winnings steadily

by growing. Even Teri joined in, eagerly counting my

In the final game, I landed yet another perfect checkmate with a race, grandmaster-level move. The thither players let out exaggerated groans. "Ugh! We've lost so much in one night!"

"No more, no more. Arlanna's luck is unbeatable. We can't keep up!"

"Yeah, right! She said she didn't know how to play, but clearly, she's a pro!"

One of them even gave me a mocking, self-satisfied look, which made me feel a bit guilty.

Norman, counting stacks of bills with a satisfied smile, glanced at them and smirked, "What are you all whining about? Paying respect to Alanna is worth every penny, isn't it?" He turned to each of them, giving them a nudge.

"Simon, didn't your dad want to take on that Bailey Hills maintenance contract? Tomorrow, go talk to this person. Tell your dad to bring you along, and mention my name."

Then, to another, he said, "Gabriel, what are you whining about? You lost the least tonight. And that Patek Philippe you wanted? I'll get it for your birthday."

"And you, Sebastian. Keep talking that I love hearing it, and I'm sure she does, too. Aren't you chasing after that girl, Georgina Kelly? Lend you a car to impress her?" Their sour expressions immediately turned to smiles, and they started singing Norman's praises along with a few compliments for me.

Just then, the door opened, and a server was trying to bold someone back, saying, "Mr. Linden, please! Mr. Linden."

Floored up, but before I could process what was happening, a strong hand grabbed my arm, yanking me so hard that I almost fell off my chair. Norman moved quickly, pulling me into his arms and away from Elijah's grasp.

The room fell silent. Esjak glared at me, his eyes filled with anger and disappointment. "I didn't expect to find you here."

I irradiated myself, meeting his gaze calmly. "I didn't expect to see you here either, Mr. Linden. Must be late."

He pointed at Norman, standing protectively in front of me. "How do you know him?"

Norman swatted Elijah's hand away, mirroring with a casual disdain. "What's with the temper, Mr. Linden? Something got under your skin today?"

The mom erupted in laughter. The others weren't on Elijah's side and clearly felt no need to show him any respect

Bijali's dare sanded on Norman. "Mi Wood, what's your game?"

Not man picked kin mat with a picky, Telening confusion. "What's my game? I don't know what you're talking about, Mr. Elaken." Elijah unteled, "Pasing dir seems like you're quite skilled at kicking people when they're down, aren't you?";

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Norman gave a shy smile. "06? Is that so? Isn't it Elijah's dealing poddess, Jocelyn, who started spilling the tea? I'm just helping the public see the truth."

Someone couldn't hold back and snickered

I watched Norman stomp allo Elijah's sore spots while ja seed powerless to stop him. I couldn't help but laugh

Elijah saw my reaction and seethed "ima, you

However, I quickly cut him off. "What does this have to do with me? Jocelyn claims you deceived her. Maybe you should explain yourself to her instead embarrassing yourself here. Elijah's gaze dashrted. "And what does hanging out with him neat

I let out a decisive laugh. "Mr. Linden, I'm divorcing you. We're done. I'm free to be with whoever I want, and if I feel going out, I will. You have no say over me anymore." Hisare turned ashen as he took a step closer as if to drag me away.

Norman instantly pulled me behind him, hands in his pockets, his stance relaxed yet challenging "Mr. Linden, do you really think you can cause a scene on my

Elith's some was icy. "Mr. Wood, she's still my wife. I'd advise you not to meddle in other people's family matters"

Norman chuckled and turned to his friends behind him. "Tid you hear that? He's calling A York his wife. Since when was that old nem?"

Elijah's face darkened even further. With a lazy smile, Norman took out his phone and ca silly played a recording

"Don't bring up that lunatic Ariana to me. I don't have any feelings for her she's just a fool, a toy got bored of Mrs. Linden's title is going to belong too sooner or later." One of the prys chimed in, "But Mr. Linden, didn't Ms. York give you a massive wedding pti? Word is she's got 50 million dollars in cash under her name."

Elijah's slightly drunken voice continued, "so million dollars means nothing. She's i compared to la. In my eyes, she can't even measure up to a single strand of Jo's hair."

The room fell silent. I felt a rush of blood to my head, then a cold wave crashing down. My mind buzzed "Stop pestering me. I'm just out socializing to you really need to keep tabs on me 24/7!

**) cold you, there's nothing between me and Jocelyn Why are you as jealous?

"I swear I don't love Jocelyn-I only love you."

I slowly raised my head, the pain in my temples throbbing. But those phrases kept echoing in my mind. Elijah's Lips moved "Ari, L."

I forced myself to keep calm, smirking coldly. "Thank you for your honesty, Mr. Linden."

Elijah's face twisted with anger and embarralabent, Suddenly, he lunged at me, iching out to grab me.

fragments of painful memories began resurfacing.

But Norman reacted instantly, delivering a swift, powerful kick directly to Elijah's stomach Elijah doubled over, catching his abdomen, and collapsed onto the floor. Elijah's endutage stepped forward, intent on helping him. Nocean's friends, however, leaped to block their path.

Gabriel jumped onto the glass table, holding a beer bottle, and yelled, "Nobody move! Il anyone Luches M Wood, I'll go all out with him.

Norman scanned Elijah's group with a mocking smile Lighting a cigarette, he leaned back, eyes, half-i

Elmed.

"Anyone willing to risk it, step up. Otherwise, crawl out of here."

Elijah's friends, who usually just tagged along with him for fun, clearly had no intention of getting hurt for his sake. One by one, they backed down and fled. Norman turned to me without sparing a glance at the crumpled Elijahson the floor. "Are you hungry, Arlanna How about some late-night snacks?"

I wanted to shake my head, but Norman grabbed my hand grinning "Come on, let's go. I'm starving"

He joined to Trai, who was pinning from ear to ear. "Hey, beautiful, help Arianna get her winnings!"

Teri jumped into action, quickly stuffing the Stateside notes into a bag, grinning so widely it looked like her face might split.