

Chapter 180 Isabel Can't Sleep, and Neither Can Xander

Reggie's eyes widened at the scene. Just as he was about to step in, Isabel grabbed an apple from the table and hurled it at Colin.

"Mmph—" Colin grunted as the apple struck his chest, forcing him back a step. However, he managed to stay on his feet.

Isabel narrowed her eyes and gave him a cold, scornful look, followed by a visible scoff.

"Are you really sacrificing your dignity for Lillian, a girl who isn't even your blood relative?" That's just pathetic."

Colin held back his rage, gritting his teeth as he responded, "You're right; Lillian and I aren't related by blood, but she treats me like her real father. She's pushed herself just to make me proud. A child like that means more to us than blood!"

Isabel and Reggie's hearts grew cold upon hearing Colin's words.

"Isabel, I've never asked you for anything. I'm your father, and I hope you'll help Lillian for the sake of our relationship. If not, I'll kneel at your door until you agree!" Colin was desperate enough to abandon all his pride.

Seeing Colin try to act like a shameless fool, Reggie didn't know what to do.

Colin was their biological father. Although he was a scoundrel, they couldn't let their father kneel like that forever.

Just when Reggie was at a loss, Isabel stepped forward.

"If you want to kneel, do it in a crowded place. That way, there'll be more people watching."

"You!" Colin nearly passed out from anger.

"Stop kneeling. You just want Lillian to be released, don't you? Cut the act," Isabel replied, her voice laced with sarcasm.

Hearing this, Colin's eyes immediately brightened. "Are you saying you're willing to take the blame for Lillian?"

"I'm not crazy. Why should I take the blame for that hypocritical woman?" Isabel responded, rolling her eyes subtly.

Colin gritted his teeth and glared at Isabel, his anger building. "Then what do you mean by that?"

Isabel casually sat back on the couch, crossing her legs, her posture confident and unrestrained. She raised an eyebrow and answered the question, "It's simple. The Downeys are after Lillian because I've been pulling the strings behind the scenes."

"What did you just say?" Colin's brain momentarily froze at her words. However, as realization hit, his eyes widened in fury, and he glared at Isabel with the intense urge to strangle her.

"You didn't see that coming, did you?" Isabel smirked, her eyes gleaming as she watched Colin.

"Why did you do that?" Colin spat the words through clenched teeth.

"Isn't that a ridiculous question? Lillian broke the law—drunk driving, hitting someone, and running away. She can't face the consequences herself and now wants to put the blame on me. She hurt me, yet she doesn't allow me to retaliate. Why should I accept that? Am I just meant to be bullied by Lillian? Am I born to be the scapegoat for the Zimmerman family?"

Isabel's voice grew louder and colder with every word.

"Is it because my mother died young? Is it because I didn't meet your expectations? So now I'm supposed to take the blame and be abandoned by you?"

Honestly, Isabel wasn't particularly angry about this. She had long since seen through Colin for what he was.

Her current fury was probably due to redirecting her anger from Xander to Colin.

Colin looked into Isabel's angry eyes, and for a brief moment, he felt a pang of discomfort. But it quickly faded—after all, Isabel was never as important to him as Lillian.

"Isa ... " Reggie called out, his voice full of concern.

Isabel took a deep breath and slowly exhaled, her expression returning to its usual indifferent, cold demeanor.

"Reg, don't worry. I'm fine."

After reassuring Reggie, Isabel shifted her focus back to Colin.

"I can convince the Downeys to let Lillian out soon, but I have two conditions."

"Alright, tell me," Colin replied quickly, willing to do anything for Lillian's release.

"First, never show up in front of Reg and me again. You're really annoying," Isabel said with a wary tone.

Colin's chest heaves noticeably. "Fine, I agree. Now, tell me your other condition."

"Second, from now on, don't go to my mother's grave on the anniversary of her death. I'm afraid she won't rest in peace if she sees you."

Upon hearing this, a murderous expression crossed Colin's face.

Isabel's words were dripping with mockery. To Colin, they stung far worse than a hundred slaps.

What kind of unfilial daughter is this?

She's worse than an animal!

The atmosphere in the living room instantly became eerily silent. For a moment, no one made a sound. Isabel wasn't in a hurry; she picked up the tea from the table and took a small sip.

After a long silence, Colin finally loosened his tightly pressed lips, gritting his teeth as he said, "Alright ... I ... agree!"

Each word felt like it was being forced out of Colin's gritted teeth, one at a time.

At that moment, Colin wanted nothing more than to tear Isabel apart and feed her to the dogs.

After Colin stormed off, Isabel turned to Reggie with a smile, her voice tinged with a hint of playful pleading. "Reg, I'm hungry. My stomach's growling."

When Reggie saw Isabel rubbing her stomach, he couldn't help but smile with a mixture of indulgence and happiness.

"Alright, I'll make you something to eat."

Seeing Reggie in a better mood, Isabel knew her little act had worked perfectly.

Mm, Reg, hurry up.

A smile of contentment spread across Isabel's face as she watched Reggie spring into action. In the past, she would have never allowed herself to act so cutesy, but with Reggie, it felt so natural.

She realized it wasn't that she couldn't act sweet and playful; she just hadn't found someone who made her feel like she could be this way.

By 11 PM, Isabel had washed up and settled into bed, ready to sleep. Oddly enough, despite her efforts, she couldn't fall asleep.

That's strange. I don't usually have trouble sleeping in new places. So why can't I sleep?

She tucked the blanket between her legs and focused on counting sheep to help herself relax.

"One sheep, two sheep ... "

As she counted, Isabel imagined the soft, fluffy sheep in her mind to keep her attention.

"Sixty-six sheep... sixty-seven Xanders ... sixty-eight Xanders ... "

Before she knew it, every fluffy sheep had turned into Xander's strikingly handsome face.

Wait!

Isabel's eyes snapped open with a "swish."

What is going on?

I have been counting sheep, so how did it suddenly turn into Xander?

Have I lost my mind?

After a few seconds, Isabel glanced at the empty spot on the bed. Suddenly, an image intruded into her mind—a man slipping into her room uninvited, lying beside her, and pulling her into his embrace.

Is Xander the one who's causing my insomnia?

Isabel was startled by the thought.

Seriously?

How did I get so accustomed to this?

I can't keep doing this. I need to get rid of this habit.

She had only agreed to a one-year contract with Xander, and once it was over, she would leave.

Isabel lay on her back, staring at the ceiling with bright eyes. There was not a trace of sleepiness in them.

I can't sleep!

I wonder what he's doing right now.

Just as Isabel was lost in thought, her phone rang unexpectedly.

Isabel's eyes widened in surprise—could it be a call from Xander?

After a brief hesitation, Isabel rolled off the bed, reached for the phone on the nightstand, and glanced at the screen.