

## Chapter 67 No One Would Dare Bully Her

---

"Did you hear your son's words? If people find out, they might think we, the elders, are mistreating Kimberly, who has no parents to defend her! Go on, apologize to Kimberly!" William was sternly admonishing Theodosia and Colin, appearing to defend Kimberly, but in reality, he was merely trying to soothe Archie's fury without much sacrifice.

Kimberly observed the scene with a cool detachment, a scornful smile hidden in her thoughts.

If William genuinely cared about her well-being he wouldn't have waited for Archie's outrage to act against Theodosia and Colin.

His actions were merely to appease Archie.

Theodosia, feeling unjustly accused but under the intense scrutiny of her husband reluctantly said to Kimberly, "Kimberly, I'm sorry. I should have guided Colin better. Please forgive us."

Witnessing his wife's compliant apology, William quietly exhaled in relief. He noticed Colin on the ground, the latter's expression rebellious and angry. William frowned slightly, aware that Colin would not apologize, and chose not to push further.

William snapped, "What are you staring at? Keep quiet, or it'll be worse for you."

Colin clamped his mouth shut, though his face still broadcasted defiance clear to anyone watching.

William then addressed the three individuals on the steps, his expression remorseful. "Dad, I had no idea Colin would say such things. He's young and rash. Maybe he felt slighted seeing Kimberly being generous to Gia with gifts, yet cold to him... It's just youthful foolishness. It's not worth your upset. It's harmful to your health."

This was obviously another attempt to curry favor with Archie.

Kimberly's eyes narrowed as she cast a cool glance at William, then silently observed Archie. Having been raised under Archie's guidance, she was well-versed in his character.

Archie hated family strife. Previously, with Archie's influence and her parents' social skills, the Holden family had always presented a united front.

She was uncertain whether her grandfather would take William's side against her.

Since her marriage, Kimberly had not been back to the Holden family home, nor had she shown up for the regular family gatherings. She had only returned for her parents' funeral, which could be perceived as showing a lack of respect for her family.

"This must not happen again!" Archie said firmly. When he looked at Kimberly, his face softened, and his voice grew tender. "Kimberly, this is your home. No one will push you out. Are you hungry? I understand you've just returned to the city, so you likely haven't eaten. Come, let's have dinner together."

His words conveyed a clear promise that under his watch, no one would dare bully her.

Archie's affection for Kimberly was palpable. His warmth towards her was recognized by all in the Holden family, making it clear that no one could slight her, even though she was now married.

"Speaking of which, Grandpa, I am feeling a little hungry. Let me assist you to the dining room." Kimberly was deeply moved. She managed a smile, holding back tears, and supported Archie as they made their way downstairs to the dining room.

Archie's presence had a calming effect, easing the anxiety that had troubled her. She had been uncertain about the family's reception upon her return. Previously, Archie had distanced himself from the daily dealings of the family, but his indignation at her distress provided a clear stance. With her grandfather by her side, what was there to fear? She remained the beloved eldest granddaughter of the Holden family!

The Holden family assembled in the dining room, each member taking their designated seat. Archie made a deliberate choice to seat Kimberly on his right, underscoring her special place within the family, while Mabel, the current leader of the Holden Group, took the spot on his left.

William caught the moment Archie directed Kimberly to what was typically his seat. A fleeting chill passed through his gaze, but he masked it swiftly and took his seat beside Kimberly in silence.

The table was laden with an array of fine dishes. Despite the hour being late, everyone's stomachs were growling. However, all waited for Archie to begin.

Archie placed a lobster onto Kimberly's plate, and beamed at her. "This was always your favorite. Fortunately, your aunt mentioned you'd be coming today, so I asked the kitchen to prepare all the dishes you love. Try this one, see if it still tastes the way you remember."

Kimberly felt a wave of emotion. She nodded, expertly peeled and halved the lobster, then dipped it in sauce. She offered half to Archie with a sweet smile. "Grandpa, would you share this with me?"

"Of course."

Archie accepted her offer with a wide smile, his affection for her evident. He cherished and cared deeply for her.

Reflecting on the early loss of Kimberly's parents, Archie felt profound sadness. He desired to fill the void of family love she had missed.

Their tender interaction drew the eyes of others, stirring a mix of emotions. Christian's family, particularly Gia, watched with envy. She recalled a grandfather who was usually stern and rarely smiled at her, yet he was distinctly warm and affectionate towards Kimberly. Such envy was natural. She too longed for their grandfather's affection. Sadly, that affection seemed destined for Kimberly alone.

William's expression became tense, his hand tightening around his fork, his smile straining.

He struggled to comprehend why Archie continued to shower Kimberly with favoritism.

Back when Kimberly's father, Archie's favored son was alive, his partiality towards her was understandable. But now, with her parents no longer alive and her having married into another family, why did Archie continue to show such blatant favor?

William feared that if the current trend persisted, Archie might end up giving all his shares to Kimberly, making William's scheming all these years for nothing

He then shared a look with his wife, who quickly caught on to his cue and asked with a smile, "Kimberly, why did you return alone this time? Where is Declan? Did he not come back with you, or is he perhaps coming to pick you up later?" She aimed to put Kimberly on the spot.

Kimberly picked up a napkin, dabbed the corner of her mouth, and turned to Theodosia, her words measured. "I'm not leaving tonight. I'm staying to spend more time with Grandpa. Regarding Declan... I've decided to end our marriage."

Her announcement surprised everyone except for Mabel, who was privy to Kimberly's plans for divorce, and Colin, who had just returned from overseas and was out of the loop.

"Divorce? Kimberly, are you sure you've considered this thoroughly?" Archie asked.