

Chapter 69 I Am Not Willing To Settle

As Kimberly lightly tapped her fork against her plate, the sharp sound made everyone turn. With all eyes on her, she calmly said, "Uncle William, Aunt Mabel, instead of arguing so passionately on my behalf, perhaps we should consider Grandpa's perspective? After all, he is still the head of our family."

Kimberly's eyes then shifted to Archie, who had been quiet, her look filled with a subtle hope. "Grandpa, what are your thoughts?"

Kimberly realized she needed to intervene before Mabel, overwhelmed by anger, might reveal all of William's dirty secrets.

It wasn't that exposing William was out of the question—it was just that doing so now would tip him off, potentially triggering unforeseen plans from the cunning William.

Now was simply not the right time.

While Archie was the center of everyone's attention, Kimberly discreetly signaled Mabel with a glance, encouraging her to remain composed and not react to William's insults.

Mabel was initially surprised and somewhat irritated but recognized Kimberly was making sense. She slowly resumed her seat, feigning indifference as she turned to Archie.

Archie, caught by surprise with everyone's sudden focus, stayed silent for a moment before his eyes moved between his youngest daughter Mabel and his cherished granddaughter Kimberly. As astute as he was, he sensed something amiss.

Feeling the weight of everyone's stares, Archie cleared his throat and said earnestly, "I support Kimberly's decision to seek a divorce..."

"Dad!" William interjected, his voice filled with disbelief and distress.

"You're harming Kimberly by supporting this!"

Archie's expression hardened. "Shut up! You think I am harming her? It's you who's trying to destroy her life! You're aware that Declan is no good, and that Kimberly is unhappy with him, yet you force her to stay tied to him. What are you really after?"

As Archie asked him, William's complexion went pale, his eyes darting as he stammered a defense, "... I just thought that a divorce would tarnish her reputation, and our family's reputation too. These days, people just make do! Who truly finds genuine love anymore? Expecting loyalty and love from a man—it's utterly unrealistic!"

Kimberly's gaze hardened as she looked at William. Really? He believed those words were justifiable. No surprise there, given how well he and Declan got along—both cut from the same cloth, only William was the older rogue, and Declan the younger.

"I'm not willing to make do," Kimberly said, her tone firm.

William's eyebrows knitted together in frustration, and he was about to respond when Mabel interjected with a smile, "Settle? William, you seem quite skilled at that. Is that what your marriage to Theodosia has been all about?"

Upon hearing this, Theodosia's face flushed with anger as she shot William a furious look, silently questioning his true motives.

Now, William found himself in an increasingly difficult position, his irritation evident. He hadn't succeeded in convincing Kimberly to stay married, and now his own marriage seemed to be under scrutiny.

He shot Mabel an angry look and slumped back into his chair, muttering, "Why do you have to interfere in everything? My marriage is different—it's based on true love!"

"Really?" Mabel retorted with heavy sarcasm, followed by a mocking laugh. "So, you're saying Kimberly and Declan don't share true love? Then why resist her divorce so stubbornly? Could it be that it threatens your own interests?"

William felt the pressure mounting, his face growing darker as he struggled to respond. "How would her divorce affect me? Mabel, you're being overly suspicious. Perhaps you should find a partner yourself to

deal with your issues!"

Mabel, the youngest of her generation at thirty-something, was wholly dedicated to her career.

She had promised Archie years ago that she would prioritize the Holden family business over personal pursuits, earning Archie's trust to lead the company due to her proven skills. Yet, Archie still held out hope that she would eventually find someone special.

Mabel's expression instantly hardened. In response to William's barely concealed insult, she sneered, "As if I need a man! A man would just hinder my financial success. Why would I want someone as cunning and two-faced as you, always trying to outsmart me while I give you my hard-earned money?"

She then glanced at Theodosia with a small smile and said, "Don't you agree, Theodosia? You certainly have a lot of insight into this."

Theodosia, having tolerated Mabel's sharp comments all evening finally snapped, her gaze piercing "And what exactly are you implying Mabel?!"

As she watched both William and Theodosia react with mounting anger, Mabel couldn't help but feel a wave of satisfaction, her smile widening "Exactly as it sounds."

Both William and Theodosia were seething, glaring at Mabel with intense hostility.

Kimberly, sitting in her seat, fought to suppress her laughter. In just two days, Mabel had become quite the sharp talker. When had she gotten so good?

"Enough" Archie declared, his frown deepening as he gave William and Theodosia a stern look. "Are we here to eat or to argue? If it's a fight you want, take it outside! You're ruining the meal for everyone."

William felt somewhat unjustly treated but remained silent, particularly after Archie's admonishment.

"Grandpa, please have some juice to cool off." Kimberly, acting sweetly, poured some juice into a cup from a pot next to her and offered it to Archie with a charming smile.

Archie's expression softened as he accepted the cup, sipping the juice with a smile.

"Indeed, my dear is the most thoughtful. What's the point of having so many children?" he asked, glancing disapprovingly at William and Theodosia before returning his warm gaze to Kimberly.

William and Theodosia were left speechless by Archie's sudden shift in mood. Wasn't he just playing favorites again?

The family returned to their meal in silence, except for Kimberly and Archie, who continued to engage in lighthearted conversation, making William's family feel even more out of place. Kimberly certainly had a talent for winning Archie over!

The more Archie showed favoritism towards Kimberly, the more uneasy William's family became about her influence.

"So, what did the Walsh family say?" Archie asked seriously, setting his fork down after sampling some food Kimberly had served him. Concerned about the progress of Kimberly's divorce, his appetite was minimal, and he wanted details to prepare any necessary guidance.

At the mention of the Walsh family, Kimberly's mood also shifted, and she placed her fork down, her expression cooling slightly.