

Chapter 89 Living Together Like Lovers

Declan was momentarily caught off guard, clearly not expecting Bryce's quick response. He knitted his brows, preparing to question Bryce on whether he had actually ever made such a statement.

Declan himself was unaware of Kimberly's drink preferences.

But then, he noticed Bryce subtly signaling as if to indicate that he had done all he could to assist.

Declan remained quiet for a moment.

Suddenly, it dawned on him that Bryce was trying to help him make a positive impression in front of Kimberly!

With that realization, he quickly cleared his throat and nodded approvingly at Bryce.

"Indeed, I did mention that. Nicely done, I'll add a bonus for you at the end of the month."

Bryce allowed a cheerful smile to spread across his face. "Thank you, Mr. Walsh."

He then quietly moved to the side, fading into the background. As Declan looked away, Bryce's smile vanished, replaced by a slight sneer.

Did Declan really think such a small bonus was significant?

Without the substantial salary Chris paid him, Bryce might well have been destitute.

In Bryce's view, Declan was the most miserly boss he had ever encountered!

"Ahem..."

Chris, catching Bryce's contemptuous look towards Declan, nearly choked on his coffee, almost spraying it across to Declan.

The situation was hilariously absurd!

He had never seen his usually composed secretary express such disdain.

Declan was left utterly speechless.

He cast a slightly annoyed look at Chris and shifted away slightly, cautious of any accidental coffee spray.

Then, his attention shifted back to Kimberly. "Are you sure you want me to disclose my conditions with so many others around?"

Kimberly raised her eyebrows slightly, pulling out a few tissues and handing them to Chris as she asked, "Is there an issue with discussing it here?"

Chris took the tissues quietly, cleaning the corner of his mouth, just as he noticed Bryce taking a phone call. Bryce's expression altered subtly before he quickly exited the room.

Chris's eyes dropped thoughtfully, his mind on the recent phone call.

He guessed it was Sandra on the line.

Wanting to follow up, Chris lifted his eyes to Kimberly and said with composure, "Ms. Holden, I'll need to step outside briefly. Please continue your discussion I'll be just outside if you need anything. Just call."

Kimberly was taken aback. Chris had been adamant about joining her, and now he was leaving them to their conversation?

No, his real intention was to catch up with Bryce!

Realizing that Bryce had already left the room, she nodded subtly. "Alright, Mr. Howard, I'll join you shortly."

Chris offered a smile and exited the room.

Now alone in the spacious private room, Kimberly and Declan faced each other. She looked directly at him and asked calmly, "Can we proceed now?"

Declan's lips twisted into a smug smile, pleased as if he had managed to drive Chris away.

"Absolutely."

He leisurely lifted his coffee cup, took a sip, and then deliberately said, "I want an investment from the Howard family."

Kimberly was momentarily speechless.

Her face tensed, a surge of anger building up inside her. She hadn't anticipated such an audacious demand from Declan. Yet, given that their divorce wasn't finalized, she restrained her frustration.

"Have you lost your mind? If you're seeking investment from the Howard family, you should be speaking to Chris. Why are you bringing this to me? Do you think I wield any influence over the Howard finances?"

Declan looked visibly perplexed and slightly annoyed. "Why not? Aren't you and Chris close? Couldn't he handle such a minor favor for you?"

Kimberly's expression instantly turned cold. Clenching the porcelain cup in her hand, she said through clenched teeth, "Declan, if you repeat that, do you believe I won't splash this coffee on you?"

Declan offered a sheepish smile. Observing Kimberly's enraged expression, he scratched his nose. "It seems you and Chris aren't an item yet. Hold on to that coffee, I was only joking. Can't you see?"

Kimberly suppressed the urge to lash out, her tone cold. "That's not acceptable. Change the terms!"

She was all too familiar with Declan's despicable character and was skeptical that this was his only demand.

Declan looked at her strangely, paused, and then said, "If that's off the table, let's modify the condition. I propose we live together as lovers for ninety-nine days."

"Have you lost your mind?" Kimberly couldn't restrain herself any longer, glaring at him as though he were foolish, her voice dripping with sarcasm. "To live as lovers for ninety-nine days? Declan, you've barely been able to tolerate my presence for half a day over the past year. Do you really

think you can endure ninety-nine days with me? Can you handle it?"

Declan fell silent unexpectedly, his eyes locked on Kimberly. He could discern the derision in her gaze.

After a moment of silence, he said solemnly, "The mistakes of the past were my fault. I didn't value what I had. Kimberly, I'm asking for a chance to make amends. Allow me these ninety-nine days to try and win back your heart, will you?"

Kimberly was speechless.

She felt as though lightning had struck her, her entire being numb with revulsion. "And what happens if you fail to win back my heart within those ninety-nine days?"

She needed a clear answer. If tolerating the present could lead to a better future, she might consider it...

Declan held her gaze with unwavering confidence, certain of his allure. "That's not going to happen."

"Don't test my patience..." Kimberly's voice was tense, her fingers tightening around the cup, tempted to act.

Declan quickly softened, aware of his public image. He did not want to be drenched in coffee and escorted out of this upscale area, possibly bumping into acquaintances immediately upon leaving.

He forced a strained smile. "Calm down. If we don't reconcile, I promise I'll let you go."

Kimberly snorted coldly, "Words are easy. How about we make it official with a written agreement?"

Declan's expression darkened slightly, his displeasure evident. "Is that really necessary?"

"It's absolutely necessary." Kimberly grabbed a notebook and pen from the cafe, sliding them across the table towards Declan with a steely look. "If you hesitate to write it down, it only shows you're trying to deceive me."

Declan's eyebrows furrowed deeply, his disappointment clear. "Is that

what you think of me?"

He had never contemplated divorcing Kimberly. He had only considered negotiation after she escalated matters, even threatening legal action. He felt compelled to meet her and discuss terms.

If he could secure an investment from the Howard family through Kimberly, it would be a significant win. Trading a marriage for a substantial investment, an opportunity for the Walsh family to thrive, seemed like a worthy exchange.

Yet, without the Howard family's investment, Declan was reluctant to let Kimberly go. He believed that with a bit of persuasion, perhaps a heartfelt gesture, she would no longer be so discontented.