

Until You're Mine /

The Humble Ex-wife is Now A Brilliant Tycoon

Chapter 11:

Yolanda's red-rimmed eyes and trembling voice tightened Brendon's heart. To him, she embodied everything virtuous—selfless, nurturing, and impossibly kind—qualities Christina had never shown him.

Brendon's thumb traced slow circles across the back of Yolanda's hand, cherishing the delicate warmth of her skin. "You'll know by then," he murmured, pulling her into a firm embrace. "Yolanda, nothing will ever happen to you as long as I'm here."

Touched by his words, Yolanda buried her face in his chest, her whisper unsteady, as if she truly regretted leaving abruptly back then. "Brendon, I'll never leave your side or break your heart again. I'm sorry for leaving you three years ago. It was my grandfather... He threatened me with his life. I had no choice but to leave the country back then, Brendon. I didn't know what else to do..."

Tears glimmered in her eyes, a calculated act of innocence, as she added, "But tell me the truth... Have you truly forgiven me? Or is this just about hurting Christina?"

Brendon froze at the question, the image of Christina's cold, dismissive face flashing in his mind, the humiliation still clinging to him. His expression darkened. "She isn't worth that kind of effort," he said, voice sharp with disdain. "I know you were trapped, Yolanda. I've never blamed you—not for a second. From now on, nothing will come between us again."

Yolanda's heart swelled at the vehemence in his voice. His loathing for Christina felt like a gift. So, Christina truly had no charm at all. Despite her years of effort to win Brendon's affection, she could not earn even a sliver of his heart.

Yolanda smirked, drawing pleasure from the conclusion that Christina held less charm than her. Despite the time and distance, all she had to do was return, let a single tear fall, brush her hand against Brendon's—and he was hers again, completely.

Katie sneered, her tone dripping with disdain, "Yolanda, someone like Christina doesn't even deserve to breathe the same air as you."

Putting on an air of gentle modesty, Yolanda gave Katie a slight frown. "Katie, let's not speak ill of her. While I was away, she did stay by Brendon's side to care for him. For that, I'm thankful."

Frustration flickered across Katie's face as she retorted, "Yolanda! You're way too kind, too forgiving. Keep acting like this, and one day someone might snatch Brendon right out from under you!"

"That's never going to happen," Brendon interjected, his brows furrowing. "I belong to Yolanda. That won't change."

“Brendon, you’re really telling me you never felt anything for Christina? Not even a little?” Katie asked, raising an eyebrow. Her intuition told her there was something subtly different in the way he looked at Christina.

“Nothing at all,” Brendon said, his tone sharp and certain. “Christina means nothing to me and never will.”

Turning his gaze to Yolanda, his eyes softened with affection. “There’s only one woman I’ve ever loved—and she’s right here in front of me.”

A wave of emotion overcame Yolanda, and she clung to him tightly, tears spilling as she whispered, “Brendon...”

Katie, watching the tender moment unfold, exhaled slowly, a sense of reassurance washing over her. Maybe she’d misread things. Their connection was unshakable—no outsider could ever come between them. She had always viewed Brendon and Yolanda’s love as something rare, like it belonged in storybooks. Christina could plot all she wanted, but it would never change a thing. Brendon’s heart would never belong to her, and there wasn’t a chance she could ever steal him from Yolanda.

Breaking the brief silence, Katie asked brightly, “Should we head to the Morfort Restaurant now?”

Brendon didn’t miss a beat. He remembered Christina had been there, and with no sign of hesitation, he said, “Let’s go.”

Soon, the three of them reached Morfort Restaurant. But by the time they got there, they’d already missed the better seating, and Brendon’s ranking in the competition wasn’t quite enough to secure a prime spot. So, they ended up at a table farther off, while Christina sat up front at the first table.

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Chapter 12:

Christina sat beside Davina, her laughter spilling out like a bell—light and easy. She wore confidence like a second skin, and the soft charm in her smile only added to her grace. Already named the winner, she seemed to shine even brighter, effortlessly drawing eyes toward her.

Katie couldn’t help but notice how the spotlight had shifted to Christina. A few of the men were even looking at Christina with something close to admiration, maybe even respect, which only stirred her jealousy more. How did someone like Christina—just an unwanted woman—end up stealing the spotlight?

Rather than acknowledge Christina's talents, Katie clung to the idea that something shady was going on behind the scenes. In her mind, Christina hadn't won on skill and had clearly made some backdoor deal with the shooting range staff.

"I've gotta admit, I didn't expect Christina to pull that off," Yolanda commented, her tone tinged with feigned warmth. "First place. Even beat Mr. Scott. She's kind of the star right now, isn't she?" Though the words came wrapped in admiration, Yolanda's glance flicked toward Katie, a spark of mischief behind her eyes.

And just as Yolanda expected, Katie snapped, bitterness sharp in her voice, "Oh, come on! Who knows what kind of strings she pulled to come out on top? A plain nobody like her beating a reigning champ? That doesn't add up. Bet she slept her way to the championship with the organizers."

Brendon shifted in his seat, his expression clouding. Her words made it sound like he had been betrayed.

"That's a bit much," Yolanda said under her breath, her words calculated to fan the flame while appearing to defend Christina. "Christina doesn't really seem like that type."

Katie let out a laugh that held no humor. "Don't be fooled. The second she signed those divorce papers, she started parading around like she was auditioning for attention. Skirts shorter. Makeup bolder. She's desperate, and everyone knows it."

Before Katie could spit out more venom, Brendon interjected, "That's enough. Eat." His tone left no room for argument.

"What? I'm just telling the truth. Why are you snapping at me like I said something out of line?" Katie retorted, shooting him a glare.

Seeing another chance to soften the mood, Yolanda reached out and lightly touched Brendon's sleeve, her voice low and calm as she said, "Brendon, go easy..."

on Katie, will you? She's still young. She blurts things out without thinking. She's not trying to hurt anyone."

"You're always making excuses for her. That's exactly why she keeps pushing the line," he said, letting out a quiet sigh, the edge in his voice dulled significantly.

Just then, the manager of the Morfort Restaurant stepped into view, commanding instant attention like a ripple through still water.

Legends swirled around the establishment's enigmatic owner—a figure whose reach extended far beyond the polished walls of the restaurant. Years ago, a haughty noble family had tried to undermine the Morfort Restaurant's business, mocking its prestige. Predictably, their arrogance was short-lived. Not long after their audacious actions against the Morfort Restaurant, the family's fortune crumbled, their reputation shredded beyond repair. A family accustomed to luxury and privilege had failed to handle the downfall—some had committed suicide or gone mad. Those who clung to survival did so on the edge of society—begging, scavenging, shadows of their former selves.

The Morfort Restaurant's owner's identity remained cloaked in secrecy, but everyone knew the power behind it was not to be trifled with. No one was foolish enough to mess with even the servers, much less the manager. To the guests, the manager wasn't just a restaurant employee. It was like seeing the trusted envoy of a king.

With elegance in his step and a courteous smile, the manager scanned the hall before proceeding with silent authority.

"I think he's coming over here," Yolanda whispered, barely able to contain her anticipation.

Katie was even more thrilled, her eyes fixed on the smiling manager. Could it be that the mysterious owner of the Morfort Restaurant had taken notice of her? And if that were true, maybe the owner was even on par with Dylan—or at least close.

Katie sat straighter, shoulders back, lips slightly parted. She was ready for the spotlight to find her.

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Chapter 13:

Whispers rippled across the room like wind through tall grass.

"Do you think the manager came for Katie Dawson?"

"Has to be. He wouldn't be this serious unless something major was going down."

"Maybe the owner of the Morfort Restaurant has taken an interest in her."

"If that's true, the Dawsons just struck gold. Their status would shoot through the roof—and they'd probably take a few people with them."

"Honestly, Katie's got some serious luck on her side."

Wrapped in the glow of attention, Katie looked like she was walking on air.

One by one, heads turned toward Katie's table, curiosity building like pressure behind a dam.

With a hint of bashfulness in her eyes, Katie rose to her feet and offered a modest smile, preparing to meet the manager.

Everything about her posture said she expected the manager's approach to end right at her side. Instead, he glided past her without a second glance. For a full second, she stood frozen, her grin faltering mid-expression.

The humiliation hit her like a slap. Her hands twitched, and she struggled not to shrink into her chair. By now, the quiet had turned into silent amusement. The entire room knew exactly what had just happened.

"Didn't you say you needed the bathroom? I'll come with you," Yolanda said, leaning in to break the tension.

Thankful for the intervention, Katie forced a smile and quickly said, "Yes, let's go."

Yolanda stood up. Just as the two were turning to leave, they froze mid-step when the manager suddenly stopped—right in front of Christina's table, beaming.

Their heads slowly turned, eyes fixed on Christina as if she had just grown wings.

"Miss Jones, my employer would be honored if you and your friend would join him for a private meal on the top floor," the manager said with a slight bow and polished tone.

The Morfort Restaurant's top floor wasn't meant for regular patrons. It was practically sacred ground. No one entered without an invitation, and most folks never even saw the staircase leading there.

A wave of envy swept across the room as everyone's attention snapped to Christina. Did she actually know the elusive owner of the Morfort Restaurant?

Brendon's grip on his wine glass tightened, his expression darkening.

"When did Christina get acquainted with the owner of the Morfort Restaurant? Was it during the shooting competition or could it be..."

Yolanda deliberately trailed off, leaving the implication hanging in the air.

Katie sneered, bitterness seeping into her smile. "I told you before—she's always had a way of getting what she wants with her tricks. Now you see her knack for snaring men!"

"Or maybe we're reading too much into it. Could just be coincidence," Yolanda said purposely, casting Brendon a sidelong glance to gauge his reaction.

"I don't see what kind of coincidence you think there is. If she actually had any talent, there's no way she could have tolerated being stuck doing nothing but housework every single day for the past three years. She'd have gone out and made something of herself. But no—she's spent all those years living off the Dawsons without a single thing to show for it," Katie replied, her voice sharp with resentment.

Katie's blood boiled at the thought of Christina rubbing elbows with the elusive owner of the Morfort Restaurant. Rage twisted her face as she said through clenched teeth, "She really knows how to throw herself at powerful men."

“Weren’t you both headed to the restroom? Don’t linger,” Brendon chimed in, not bothering to hide the chill in his voice. His sharp tone made it clear he was done listening.

Catching on to Brendon’s foul mood and wanting no part in what might follow, Yolanda looped her arm through Katie’s and nudged her away.

Once Yolanda and Katie disappeared from view, Brendon’s eyes trailed after Christina’s back as she walked away with the manager. His thoughts churned. Something about watching Christina walk off left a bitter taste in his mouth. He couldn’t name the feeling, but it scratched at the edges of his calm like a thorn. The discomfort reminded him of tossing aside something insignificant—only to watch someone else treasure it.

Brendon’s jaw tightened as he frowned, eyes narrowing while Christina walked out of sight. Food sat untouched in front of him, and he loosened his tie with a sigh, suddenly stifled by the weight of his own frustration.

Away from the buzz below, the top floor revealed a very different world. Christina stepped into a quiet space where refinement lingered in every corner.

By the grand window, Dylan sat in a tall-backed chair carved with intricate details, his presence commanding without effort. A lavish spread waited on the polished wood table—wine, porcelain, silverware—all arranged like a private banquet for royalty.

Dylan was the only one in the room, and though he sat with ease, there was something about him that made the space feel charged. He carried himself with a quiet, commanding grace, like someone out of reach, wrapped in both power and poise.

Christina blinked. So, this was the elusive owner of the Morfort Restaurant—the very employer the manager had spoken of.

Christina led Davina over and took a seat without hesitation, a playful note in her voice as she said, “Looks like Mr. Scott’s got a request for us.”

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Chapter 14:

Christina knew Dylan wouldn’t have revealed his role as the mysterious owner of the Morfort Restaurant unless he needed something from her.

“I do need a favor,” Dylan said without hesitation, cutting straight to the point.

For a moment, his eyes lingered on Christina, and the usual frost in his stare softened just enough to reveal something gentler. People often pegged her as a simple housewife, someone forgettable. But even without the Rose identity or that trophy from the shooting competition, she had an undeniable presence. There was a quiet poise in her, the kind one couldn't fake.

"So, what exactly do you want from me?" Christina asked, her tone steady.

With unwavering focus, Dylan replied, "I need the King's treatment opportunity to save someone. I don't care what it takes—I'll pay whatever it costs."

A single brow lifted as Christina smirked. "Anything at all?"

"Every cent, every favor. Name it," he said without missing a beat.

A laugh slipped out of her. "Even your life?"

That question hung in the air, teasing and sharp. Before Dylan could respond, Ralphie strolled in just in time to catch the tail end. With a chuckle, he interjected, "You've got guts, Miss Jones."

While his words carried amusement, his eyes told a different story. He scrutinized her, intrigued. This woman didn't flinch or stumble. Whatever softness she showed was surface-level. He'd never seen anyone—let alone a woman—speak to Dylan that way. And to do it with such ease? Unheard of.

"Not really," Christina said, flashing a composed smile.

Davina mumbled with food in her mouth, "Christina's the best."

Ralphie, catching only part of it, looked curious. "What was that?"

"I said, Christina's the best," Davina repeated between bites, not bothering to look up.

Ralphie chuckled, genuinely entertained by Davina's confidence. "You sure do hype your friend up."

Without missing a beat, Davina lifted her head, her face alight with excitement. "Why wouldn't I? Christina's amazing."

That look in her eyes said it all—pure, unshaken pride in her friend.

"Don't forget Dylan's got a pretty solid reputation too," Ralphie remarked, grinning as he leaned back slightly.

Ralphie brushed off her enthusiasm, chalking it up to friendly loyalty. Christina's talents in various fields hadn't struck him yet. Only later, after one reveal led to another like falling dominoes, would he realize just how wrong he'd been.

"Please," Davina sneered, rolling her eyes before returning her attention to her plate. No matter what anyone said, in her world, Christina stood at the top. No contest.

Rather than feeling slighted, Ralph found Davina's sass a little charming. She was refreshingly bold—nothing like the polished women he usually met.

Christina turned her gaze to Dylan. "So, have you decided?" Her voice was casual, but her eyes missed nothing.

With no hint of hesitation, Dylan nodded. "If that's the only way to secure King's treatment, I'm willing to give my life." There was no bluff in his tone. He meant every word.

Christina stared at him, noticing the steel in his expression. It was the look of someone who'd already accepted the cost. Who could possibly mean so much to Dylan that he'd be willing to lay down his life without a second thought? Something about it tugged at her curiosity. Who exactly was worth all this effort from him?

"I'm not saying that to impress you," Dylan added, thinking she might not believe him.

Christina's lips curled into a faint smile. "I know you're serious. But death isn't the currency I'm after. I've got other terms in mind."

Interest sparked in Dylan's voice. "What kind of terms?"

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Chapter 15:

Christina gave a casual shrug. "Still thinking it over."

Across the table, Dylan leaned in slightly, his tone unwavering. "Whatever you decide, the terms are yours to set."

"What if I asked for your entire family?" Christina asked, her voice calm but firm as she suddenly dropped her light expression.

The question hit like a stone tossed into still water, the mood shifting in an instant. Anyone listening might have thought Christina meant to strip the Scott family of everything they had.

Dylan, however, didn't flinch. A half-smile tugged at his lips. "My life's worth more than the Scotts put together. If I'm ready to hand my life over, the rest is just background noise."

That made her laugh—sharp and sudden. "That's sharp. Alright."

With a smooth gesture, Dylan lifted his glass. "To making this work."

“To making it work. But...” Christina raised her glass.

“But what now?” Ralph interjected, his voice tight with barely concealed impatience.

Christina’s eyes flicked toward him. “But I can’t promise King will agree. That part’s out of my hands.”

“No guarantees are fine with me,” Dylan said at once. “If there’s even the tiniest chance, I’ll take it.”

Even if King declined, Dylan still hoped Christina could broker a meeting. That alone would be worth something.

“Alright then.” Without hesitation, Christina finished her wine in a single go. It surprised her, honestly—that Dylan, known for being cold and calculated, could care this much about someone. Maybe he wasn’t made of stone after all.

As Christina and Dylan exchanged conversation over their meal, Brendon sat off to the side, clearly ill at ease. Not even the elegant dishes or rare wine could distract him. His mind was a carousel of bitter possibilities about the nature of Christina and the restaurant owner’s relationship. Was Katie right? Had Christina cheated on him during their marriage? And worse—had he been blind to it all, just another fool left out of the show?

Images he wished he could block out crept in anyway—Christina, caught in an intimate moment with the mysterious owner of the Morfort Restaurant.

Each new thought dragged Brendon further into a spiral, his expression growing darker with every passing second. His fingers wrapped tighter around the wine glass, the strain enough to make the stem creak.

Silence pressed down on the table like a weight. Katie stole a glance at him but didn’t dare open her mouth.

Yolanda clenched her jaw, trying to mask the irritation simmering just below the surface. Clearly, Brendon wasn’t as detached from Christina as he liked to pretend. Now that the Mitchell family was in trouble and desperately needed the Dawson family’s support, she knew she had no room for mistakes. The idea of Brendon and Christina reconnecting was unacceptable, especially now. Plus, she’d always been the one to call the shots in a breakup. The thought of being cast aside? Unbearable.

“Why is Christina still not back?” Yolanda asked purposely, her voice light with feigned worry. “Could something have happened between her and the owner of the Morfort Restaurant?”

Katie let out a sharp laugh. “Wouldn’t be the first time she threw herself at a man. Since the divorce, she’s been busy collecting admirers. Bet she was cheating long before the divorce.”

“I don’t think she’s that kind of person,” Brendon interjected, though doubt lingered in his tone.

And once doubt took root, it never stopped growing. He had never once had faith in Christina. His focus on her? It was about pride—his pride. He simply couldn't tolerate the thought of being cheated on.

"Brendon, can you stop being so naive?" Katie snapped, her patience wearing thin. "She's nothing but a tramp."

That did it. Brendon turned his glare on her. "One more word about her, and your allowance is gone. Try me."

Katie fell silent, but the fire in her eyes never dimmed. She shifted her anger toward Christina instead, convinced everything had started going wrong the moment Christina showed up, making Brendon, the ever-doting big brother, scold her more than before.

Irritated, Brendon tugged at his tie, the tension sitting heavy on him. No matter how hard he tried, his mind still clung to suspicions about Christina's loyalty.

Meanwhile, on the top floor, the group had just finished eating and wrapped up their conversation. Christina, feeling the effects of the wine settle in, stood up to leave. But as she moved, her balance faltered, and she stumbled forward, landing squarely against Dylan's chest.

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