

Wolfless 62

Chapter 62 The Present

Lila immediately interjected, "Dad, just leave her be. Today is your 80th birthday, and we have so many relatives here. Why let Tessa embarrass us?"

Walter slammed his cup onto the table with a resounding crash.

"Embarrassment? Who here feels embarrassed? If anyone refuses to dine with Tessa, they're welcome to leave." His fury ignited. No matter what he did, they still treated Tessa like an outsider.

"What's going on?"

Hearing the commotion, Yardley strode over.

"Tell Tessa that if she doesn't come, dinner won't be served."

All he wanted was a harmonious family gathering. But without Tessa, it felt meaningless,

Yardley's expression darkened. "Dad, you're 80 years old. Tessa may be immature, but must you be as well? Everyone is waiting. They're our elders. Does it really matter if one junior isn't present? Why make the entire family wait for her?"

Just then, the door swung open, and Tessa stepped inside.

She hadn't received Lila's call, but she knew it was Walter's birthday. Finding out their dinner location had been effortless.

“Grandpa, I’m here.”

The moment Walter saw her, his hardened expression softened.

“Tessie! Come sit with me.”

Tessa walked over and took a seat beside him.

“Grandpa, there’s no need to be upset. It’s your birthday; of course I’d come.”

Walter’s stern expression softened into a warm smile. As expected, Tessa was his favorite.

He reached out, patting her head affectionately.

“Tessie, what will you do when I’m no longer around?”

“Grandpa, you’re in great health. Don’t say such things,

“Alright, since everyone is here, let’s start the dinner.”

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Yardley remained silent, though his expression was still grim. After all, it was Walter’s birthday, no one wanted to spoil the occasion.

“Winnie, your midterms are over, right? How did you do?” Chloe Zimmerman, Winona’s aunt, suddenly spoke up.

“Aunt Chloe, I did alright.”

“I heard from Tina that the test was particularly tough! Lila, you’re so fortunate” Chloe’s voice dripped with flattery.

Lila smiled, pleased with the shift in conversation. She had invested so much in Winona’s success.

“Tina is a lovely girl too. I’m sure she did well.”

“I probably did better than Tessa.” Tina Quinn smirked.

“Tina, mind your words.” Chloe feigned concern, then turned to Tessa. “Tessie, don’t take her seriously. Tina is still young. She doesn’t know any better.”

“I don’t mind.” Tessa’s tone was indifferent. Why should care about insignificant people?

“Tessie, you’ve finally returned to Navoris and enrolled at Navoris High. It’s not like those Falindale schools that ignore grades. You should focus on your studies instead of wasting time like before.”

“Aunt Chloe, and how exactly was I wasting time before?”

Tessa raised an eyebrow. It was obvious they were provoking her.

“Do you truly believe you have the right to judge my life?”

“Tessa! Is that how you speak to your aunt?” Lila snapped.

“I’ve always spoken this way—rude and disobedient, isn’t that what you’ve already decided?” Tessa’s voice was cold. “And let me remind you, today is Grandpa’s birthday. I’ll overlook the situation for now, but if I hear anything like this again, don’t blame me for being harsh.”

Their pretentious praise and veiled insults disgusted her.

“Enough! Are we eating or not?”

Walter’s voice cut through the tension, silencing the room.

“Tessie, don’t take their words to heart.” Walter sighed, his gaze filled with pity.

After dinner, the family began presenting their gifts.

“Grandpa, I have something for you as well.”

Winona stood, retrieving a deep blue velvet box.

“I purchased this antique Colt revolver at Sotheby’s Auction for 70,000 dollars. I hope you like it.”

“Winnie, you’re so thoughtful. It’s 70,000 dollars!” Chloe’s eyes gleamed. That was no small sum for an ordinary family.

“It’s just a bit of interest from my trust fund and some extra money I earned from part–time work. It’s nothing too extravagant. I just want Grandpa to be happy.” Winona smiled sweetly, though she shot a quick glance at Tessa.

Last week, Walter had transferred 20 percent of Sinclair Corp’s shares to Tessa. If she failed to present a gift, or if hers was unimpressive, he would surely be disappointed.

“Tessa, Mr.

Walter gave you 20 percent of the companys shares, yet you didn’t prepare anything for his birthday?” Chloe sneered, unwilling to let her off easily

“How much I give to Tessa is my decision as her grandpa,” Walter said coldly. “I’m an old man nearing the end of my days; I have no need for gifts.”

“Grandpa, don’t be upset. I did prepare something for you.”

“Oh? What is it?” Walter’s interest was piqued.

Winona’s expression darkened. Why is Grandpa always so biased toward Tessa?

I carefully chose something he loves. But with just one glance, he simply tells the butler to put it away. Yet now, he actually seems interested in Tessa’s gift.

She was desperate to see what Tessa had prepared.