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# Love Coming from the Least Expected

## Chapter 186 - 190

Darius was amused by my questions as the corner of his eyes crinkled into a smile. I supposed he recalled something funny as he shook his head and said, "You girls really live for rom-com huh. A piece of advice though, it's good entertainment, but don't expect your life to turn out exactly the same."

I chuckled and was intrigued. "Darius, it looks like you're quite familiar with rom-com."

"My wife enjoys them, and sometimes I will watch it together with her." Darius ordered a glass of warm milk for me, and a cup of coffee for himself. "It's better for women to take more milk."

I noticed that like Chris, Darius had the tendency to order warm milk for women. The Lane brothers were more attentive toward their women as well.

Cupping the warm milk in my hands, I sipped on it and said, "Darius, you and your wife must be really happy together. I have to say I'm quite envious."

He gave me an enigmatic look, which I did not really understand. However, I did not pay too much attention to it.

"Chris did not come home after getting back from overseas and stayed in the hotel instead. I even heard that he deliberately got close to the CEO of the Smith family. At first, I couldn't quite understand what he was trying to do, but now I think I've figured it out. Have you made your decision?"

"What?" I asked in confusion.

"Have you and made the decision to finally be together with my brother?" Darius asked with a deadpan manner.

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I nodded. "Christopher has done a lot for me. I've made my decision back when he pulled me out of depths of despair. I've promised myself that I will not leave him, unless he's the one ending it between us."

I did not say that to impress Darius so that he would go easy on me. Those were heartfelt words.

"It's going to be a very difficult journey, and there will be a number of obstacles along the way. Are you sure you can make it through?" Darius sipped on his coffee and put down his mug. He traced the corner of his mug and tapped lightly on it as he looked at me.

"I don't know how long I can hold out for with the impending crises. But one thing for sure is that I'm willing to have faith for this world again because of Christopher."

I thought for a moment before looking straight into his eyes and said, "I don't know how a man can be lying when he's risked his life for me. Hence, I will persevere and keep on going until the day he decides we are done."

Darius stopped tapping on his mug and let out a soft sigh. Surprisingly, a hint of sorrow fled across his face, and I could not help but wonder what kind of worries could trouble this man who seemingly did not have anything to worry about.

Darius had already regained his composure when I snapped out of my thoughts. I was almost questioning if I had been imagining things.

"Since you've already made the decision, it's best to follow your heart. I do hope you and Chris will make it till the very end."

Darius took his handkerchief and wiped his fingers. His fingers were better looking compared to Christopher's. Darius had a scholarly sophisticated aura to him, as opposed to the stereotypical rigid mayor that I thought he was.

"I normally do not meddle in Chris's personal matter, and he's managed himself very well so far. But you guys had better take it easy as he's quite badly injured this time. You have to refrain him from fooling around too much."

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I almost spat out the milk that I was drinking. Two men had voiced out their concerns about Christopher and my sex life. Could things get any more embarrassing than this?

I was at a loss for words and merely managed a stiff smile. However, at the thought of him saying that the path Christopher and I would have a hard time, my heart sank. It must have something to do with his family. My inferiority complex and insecurities came bubbling up inside of me again.

Why does Christopher have to be so damn rich?

Even though social statuses were no longer the yardstick for compatibility of marriage as in the olden times, it was still going to be a problem if the gap was too wide.

Darius fished out a paper from his pocket and starting to scribble something on it, and I was stumped. Didn't he say that he wouldn't issue me a check? What is he writing?

"This is for you!" Darius handed over the paper to me and I held my breath, hesitating if I should reach out and take it.

The man broke into a chuckle again and smiled. "You really do resemble your mother. Take it, it's my phone number. Be sure to save the number, and you can call me if you encounter any problems in the future."

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I walked out of the cafe with Darius' number in my hand. The scrawny handwriting on the note reminded me of Christopher's. They were indeed brothers.

Does this mean that Darius has acknowledged me?

He really was an open-minded brother.

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I did not tell Christopher what went down, lest he made fun of me. Well, could he really blame me when anyone from his family could technically crush me like a bug?

His father used to be the governor and had disciples all over Avenport while his mother was an iron lady running the Lane family empire. Though holding much power and authority, the two were surprisingly friendly and approachable.

Besides, his brother was the mayor as well. It was a miracle that Christopher did not turn out to be a playboy who only knew how to fool around, and was even more impressive considering he was actually a very bright man.

I had no idea what he used to do in the military, but I supposed he had to be one of the more outstanding ones.

Five days later, I went to the café and met up with Lyle as promised. It seemed like he had been having a good time because the man was beaming.

The way he looked reminded me of when I first met him when we were eighteen. After all, he already had children with Crystal. He was just happy.

At the sight of me, the trace of a smile disappeared from his face, and he looked troubled. Maybe he thought that his happy looks would make me misunderstand that he still cared about me. However, I just thought his grim look was doing us both a favor.

He could have just dropped his hypocritical act. I snorted to myself and said nothing. After all, we were going to be strangers after today.

Some people believed in staying friends after breaking up with somebody, but I knew it was just a bald-faced lie that even children wouldn't believe. Couples who had children together could even turn into enemies after getting a divorce, much less us.

There was no sense in troubling myself over Lyle and Crystal. Why would I squander my time on those two?

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If someone was truly belittling me and putting me down, the best revenge was for me to rise up and improve myself for the better. Their judgmental attitude and words should be the least of my worries.

Lyle handed over the divorce papers to me, and this time without hesitation. However, there was a hint of guilt in his eyes.

Maybe it was for the better. He had wanted to ruin my reputation when the topic of divorce first came up. At least when he was plagued with guilt, he wouldn't stir up any trouble for me anymore.

As with last time, I skimmed through the terms and realized that the compensation had been amended to five million as opposed to the ten from before. I crossed it off again and penned down my signature.

There were two copies of it, one for each of us. I did not even need to go to the City Hall to get it notarized as Lyle would take care of the rest. Even if he chickened out last minute, Crystal would have personally seen it done.

"Please post me the notarized agreement afterward. That way we won't have to see each other again," I said impassively.

Lyle took the second copy of the agreement and peered at my signature underneath. An inexplicable glint flashed across his eyes as he asked, "Grandma said you had a crush on me for eight years. Is that true?"

I was taken aback and I did not expect Sharon to tell Lyle about it. It seemed like it would be near impossible to keep her in the dark about the divorce. Shrewd as she was, Sharon would have figured it all out. Otherwise, she wouldn't have told Lyle about it.

I lowered my head and smiled as I placed my copy of the agreement in my bag. Even if something were to happen, notarized documents were legally binding. Whatever happened next would be the least of my concerns.

Everyone knew I was in love with Lyle—Crystal, Yvette, and even Grandma, literally everyone but Lyle. It was ironic that the man should be the one oblivious to the fact.

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However, I cast a glance at Lyle and said, "Do you think there's a point in asking that question right now?"

He was stumped, and I noticed his hand which was holding the documents shook before he replied in a dejected manner, "Yvonne, I just want to let you know that I did consider living a good life together with you. Do you believe in me?"

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My lips curled into a smile. Divorce was not really a cause for celebration in most cases for women. However, I begged to differ. I thought this divorce was one of the best things to happen as it finally freed me from the shackles that had bound me for two years. It was liberating, to say the least.

I could almost taste the sweet scent of freedom which was enough to make me drown in them.

"It doesn't matter whether I believe you or not. I wish your family nothing but happiness." It was not entirely a heartfelt wish. I had a hunch that Crystal would not stay meek for long. It was possible that she had a bigger plan in motion.

However, I was not that dumb to tell Lyle that. Besides, he wouldn't believe me either.

He believed in Crystal wholeheartedly, as I once did in him.

"Thank you, Yvonne. Truly." His voice was a bit hoarse. "What are your plans for the future?"

"I don't think it concerns you, ex-husband." I rose from my chair and put down a bill on the table before turning around to leave. The sunshine felt warm and reassuring against my skin as I made my way out of the cafe, warding off any lurking gloominess over my head.

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Right then, I could feel weights lifted off my chest as I raised my hands triumphantly, cheering at passersby and cars along the road, "I'm finally free!"

Paying no heed to the mocking glances of the people, I beamed with delight as I skipped in the direction of the sun like a child.

Finally, the depressing marriage between me and Lyle was over.

With the heavy weight lifted off my chest, I was almost skipping as I strode down the road. I even found myself whistling.

Some people would say to grit one's teeth and get through to the end after one had chosen a particular path.

I could not resonate with that statement. One of the worst things that could happen to a woman was to marry the wrong man. Why can't we choose for a second time if our first choice turns out to be the wrong one? I'm the only one to suffer if I give a dime about what others think.

With the phone in my hand, I could not wait to share the good news with Christopher and Sabrina.

Even though a divorce could not strictly be construed as a cause for celebration to most people, it was for me. My ego wouldn't have let me stay together with Lyle even if Christopher had not appeared in my life.

A car stopped by my side, and it was Lyle's Porsche. He wound down the car window and said, "Where are you going? I could drop you off."

"No need. I can just walk even if I don't have the money to hail a cab," I smiled and winked at him.

Lyle's face sank in response, perhaps from thinking that I was too cheery. He stared at me and said coldly, "Are you that happy that we're finally divorced? Are you that desperate to get another man?"

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“Of course, I’m happy!” I had no idea about what was on his mind since he knew I would spare him no niceties if he tried to talk me up again. However, I was too happy to squander my time with him. Just one little retort will do.

“I married you for two years, being the haggard wife as I was, you dumped me in a hotel to let another man sleep with me. We haven’t even slept together before you sent me off to a bunch of kidnappers and I was nearly raped by them. So, do you think I should be happy that I’m finally free from you?”

I noticed all colors drained from his face, then it slowly turned red from embarrassment. To be honest, I was starting to feel bad.

“Do you think I should walk alone along the road, sobbing as I go? Or do you think I should be crying out loud in a corner, and wait for you to come to comfort me? Then, you will say something along the line that you still have feelings for me, turning me into the third wheel between you and Crystal instead?”

I swore the man appeared guilty at my remark. It was as if I was spot on, and that he truly had the intention in mind. Then, I thought I was going too easy on him.

“Tanner, do you really want to be my enemy? I was just caring about you seeing that we had been married for two years after all, and yet you’re thinking that you’re some hotshot,” Lyle berated me.

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I narrowed my eyes at him. Actually, Lyle was a clear-headed person most of the time, except when he was with Crystal. He was rational and reasonable back in the cafe. Why is he being so dumb right now?

I peered at the passenger seat through the car window, and there was Crystal. She draped over Lyle’s coat and waved triumphantly at me with a poised elegance. The crinkle in her eyes was telltale of her glee.

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"I'm sorry, Yvonne. It's my fault that you and Lyle have to get divorced. Given the choice, I really wish that I can leave and stop being the third wheel between you and Lyle, but you of all people should know how it feels to grow up without a father. I don't want my child to go through the same."

Her eyes turned red as she peered at me guiltily. "Please don't be mad at Lyle. I was the one who suggested for him to help you out, seeing that you're all alone. Anyway, even if the two of you aren't married anymore, you guys are still friends who have known each other for a long time. You're my cousin, and will soon be Lyle's cousin-in-law as well."

Wrapping my arms around myself, I narrowed my eyes at the troublemaker. She must have said something behind my back just now to make Lyle change his mind. This woman was really ingenious at sowing discord between people.

"I'm sorry, I have no interest in hitching a ride with my ex-husband and the homewrecker who is pregnant with his child. Get out of my sight if the two of you know better. The two of you make me sick."

"Yvonne, you cannot talk to Crystal like that. Do you think I would have caught up to you if she hadn't begged me to do so?" Lyle could not bear to see me chide Crystal, and roared at me. He even got off the car and looked like he was ready to strike me at any moment.

"Shh!" I gestured at Lyle to shut him up, and closed my eyes, breathing in the light floral scent in the air. "Look, the air smells like freedom. Why are the two of you relentless going after me? Why can't we just go on our separate ways and never see each other again?"

"Yvonne, could you cut it out? You can hate me, but you cannot do that to Lyle. He really does care about you." Crystal sat in the backseat and tried to make me look like the evil woman who was trying to stir up trouble.

"Did you hear that? Crystal knows better than you do. Yvonne, you're going to be a nobody after leaving me. There's nothing more you can achieve in life. Don't pin your hopes up on getting another good man. You don't deserve one either."

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The mixed doubles are at it again. I rubbed my sore temples and decided to let out my secret weapon. I turned my head to the side and looked deep into Lyle's eyes.

"Lyle, are you only going to stop when you see me crying? Did you know how difficult it was for me to force a smile like that? My heart is broken beyond repair." I almost threw up after saying that.

"I had a crush on you for eight years, and you married me. But you never said you loved me. Did you know how hard it was for me to endure those sleepless days and nights without you? I was practically living the life of a widowed woman.

"Now that we're divorced, why do you have to go to the extremes and hurt me again?" For a web of lies to be believable, it was necessary to weave some truths into it. My eyes turned red from recounting the unbecoming and dark past.

"Yvonne, I..." Lyle seemed to have recall some memories at my remark, and stammered. It was apparent that he was plagued by guilt once again.

I grabbed his hand and put it on my chest and said, "You can feel for yourself how badly it hurts right here."

"I'm sorry, so sorry, Yvonne!"

Yeah, damn right you are. I tore off the clothes on my body in a swift motion and yanked it down my shoulders as I pinned down his arm. Then, I screamed at the top of my lungs, "Help, there's a pervert here! Please help!"

"What? How dare that pervert attack a woman out in broad daylight?"

"My goodness, he's even torn off her clothes! What a scumbag!"

"Damn it, I have to teach that b\*stard a good lesson!"

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A middle-aged woman and a young man dashed over to my rescue. The woman hurled her bag of carrots at Lyle's head and I took the opportunity to step on his toes.

"Damn right you're sorry! Serves you right for trampling all over me!" I kicked him in his legs, and someone came over to stop Lyle from striking me.

A crowd started to gather around the scene and onlookers gesticulated as they engaged in hushed whispers. I covered my face and pretended to break into a sob as I said, "He doesn't want to let me go after tearing off my clothes..."

"Don't worry, Miss. We have reported this to the police."

"I called over some reporters. They're on their way here."

What? Someone's called the reporters? I did not want to make the news, and hid behind the middle-aged woman who was still clutching on to her other half of the carrot. Noticing that Lyle was giving me the death glare, I gestured thumbs down for the loser.

He grimaced at my provocation. If there weren't any people around, he would have beaten the crap out of me.

In the end, we did not split on good terms. I did not want to hate him, but he was the one pestering me relentlessly. In the end, we ended up hating each other. Perhaps this was for the better since it was near impossible that we were going to stay friends after this.

I did not believe that my life would turn for the worse after leaving Lyle. I still have Christopher, and even if we did not end up together, at least I would have some sweet memories to treasure.

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Crystal panicked after seeing that Lyle was at a disadvantage. She got off the car and shouted at the crowd, "Don't listen to the nonsense that the woman spewed! She tore off the clothes herself, and was just trying to extort money out of us."

I did not wish to stay and listen to her. Pointing straight at her, I shrieked, "Look at her! Isn't she the new school artist, the one who ruined a family? Everyone, look!"

The crowd grew bigger with my remark, surrounding the two of them.

Scurrying out of the crowd, I stood outside and watched as Lyle and Crystal shot daggers at me. I waved gleefully at the two and turned around to leave the place.

Even from some distance away, I could still listen to the mutters of the crowd.

"Ah, so she's an artist. It's my first time seeing one in person."

"Well, she's a homewrecker. I read an article about her some time ago, and she said she has an aptitude for art. What a disgrace to the art community."

"Let me hit her a few more times with this carrot. I hate these homewreckers ruining families! Boy, protect this young miss behind you."

I stood underneath the tree and looked at the ever-growing crowd and burst into a laugh. It was a hearty laugh in a long time. Back a dog up in the corner, and it's going to bite.

Crystal still thought that I was the type to never fight back despite being squashed and toyed with. She had forgotten one little convenient fact that she was a public figure while I was a nobody.

Actually, it was not a big deal being an artist, nor was she as influential as celebrities. However, she was too fixated on the idea of being famous that she had curated her image to resemble that of a rising star by going on talk shows and getting featured in art exhibitions. With her high-profile marketing plan, it was near impossible to find someone who did not recognize her in Avenport.

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A hint of sorrow crept up as I chuckled. I was such a loser back then, and I had despised myself back then.

The camera flashlights kept going off as shutters clicked. I knew that Lyle and Crystal would make the headlines tomorrow, and the duo would become a hot gossip topic.

Even though I felt sorry for putting Sharon through this, I did not regret my actions. After putting him down this time, it was unlikely for Lyle to keep pestering me.

“Are you that happy that you’ve done something bad?” A familiar voice rang behind me, and I traced the voice to see Christopher who was standing right behind me.

It was as if he had been standing behind me all the while as if he had never left. Whenever I turned around, I had the luxury of knowing that he would be there for me. As I looked at him, my thoughts strayed and I stood frozen on the ground.

Many years later, the way he looked when I turned around that day would be vividly etched in my mind, for I knew that day was the very day that I started to look at the world from a whole different perspective.

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