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This Time, I Will Get My Divorce, Mr

Chapter 248

Oh, good, so Rina hasn't actually been found yet. But it seems as if Mom can't wait to see her because why else would she bother decorating Rina's bedroom before the girl is even located? At this rate, Mom's attention will be stolen by her the moment she returns.

Tina's hands curled into fists on top of her knees as she dwelled upon these thoughts. She lowered her head by a fraction and hid the dark look on her face.

After a pause, she looked up once more and feigned concern as she asked Julia, "Mom, what if—and this is a big what-if—Rina has a weak and cowardly character because she'd grown up in a poor family? Assuming that is the case, she would only embarrass you in public because she's too afraid and too incapable of doing anything right. Would you still like her and look forward to meeting her?"

Julia shot her daughter an affronted look, her face no longer a picture of gentle compassion as she demanded, "Tina, why would you ask such a thing?"

Tina held her by the arm coquettishly and explained, "I was only curious because that's how most soap operas go—you know, how the long-lost child from some affluent family is finally reunited with their parents. But they end up getting shunned by them because their incapability is humiliating. I'm just worried that you and Dad might treat Rina the same way."

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“Oh, is that it?” Julia batted away her doubts and smoothed Tina’s hair affectionately. “Pay no mind to things like that, seeing as they only ever happen in soap operas.”

“So you won’t end up treating Rina like an outcast even if something like that happens?” Tina narrowed her eyes slightly as an icy gleam lit up her depthless orbs.

Julia nodded firmly. “Of course not. I carried her and gave birth to her, not to mention she was the child your father looked most forward to. You have no idea how your father—” She broke off with a quick sigh, then added, “It doesn’t matter. The bottom line is that you have absolutely nothing to worry about. Your father and I won’t mistreat or sideline your sister that way, and even if she were to be in such unfortunate circumstances, it would only make us love her harder. We wouldn’t shun her or dislike her at all. In fact, we’d try to make it up to her even more!”

“I’m so happy to hear that!” Tina broke into a smile, looking as if she truly was relieved on Rina’s part.

However, the bad premonition she had had was amplified, and she was the only one who was acutely aware of the crisis she would face soon.

She had painted a rather tragic backstory for Rina in hopes of luring her mother into revealing her true feelings about her lost daughter. That had backfired, though, seeing as it did not curb Julia’s excitement for the reunion but prompted her to want to make it up to Rina instead.

Just as I thought, Rina is turning out to be my biggest hurdle next to Sonia. Tina grew mutinous, and a sinister gleam flashed in her eyes as she became seized with the urge to annihilate anyone who got in her way.

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Presently, at the Fullers' Residence, Toby stepped out of the car with the chauffeur's support.

Meanwhile, Rose came out of the house to greet Toby as soon as she heard the sound of the car pulling up. She had been so worried about her grandson that she decided to remain at the Fuller's Residence and refused to return to the old manor.

"You're home late, Toby," she remarked disapprovingly as she made her way to the car.

Toby graciously took the cane the driver had handed him, then said, "I was stuck in traffic, Grandma. Shall we go into the house?"

He had no intention of telling the old woman about what happened at the restaurant earlier, fearing that she would be mortified by it.

"Yes, of course we shall," Rose agreed with a nod.

The both of them proceeded toward the house with their individual canes, which proved an entertaining sight, given the decades between them.

Jean was carrying out a platter of fruits from the kitchen when she saw Rose and Toby. "Oh, you're home, Toby!" she exclaimed in greeting.

Toby nodded briskly in acknowledgment. "Mom."

"Take a seat," she urged as she hastily put the platter down and made to help him.

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However, he brushed her off and said, "I've got it." There might not be any strength in his legs, but that didn't mean he couldn't manage sitting on his own.

He set his cane aside and held onto the armrest of the couch as he slowly eased into his seat. Jean, on the other hand, pushed the fruit platter toward him and asked cheerfully, "Have you patched things up with Tina, Toby?"

Patch things up? Toby lowered his gaze when he heard his mother but made no reply. He wondered why his mother would even see this as something even possible.

When he recalled how his every thought and emotion had been inexplicably swayed and manipulated because of her, he wanted nothing more than to kill her!

If Tina truly was Maple, Toby was willing to overlook all that he had done for her before the accident—regardless of whether he was being manipulated at the time—given that he really was in love with Maple.

However, if Tina had been pretending to be Maple all along, then there was no way he would let her get away with such a despicable form of deceit!

At the thought of this, Toby grabbed his cane and rose from his seat. "Grandma, Mom, if you'll excuse me, I'll be going back to my room to rest. I'm a little tired."

In truth, he wanted to return to his bedroom so that he could find out for sure if Tina was Maple, though he already knew the answer to that. Having said what he did, he headed for the elevator.

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Meanwhile, Jean glanced at the untouched platter of fruits, then at Toby's back. Slightly peeved, she grumbled, "He didn't even answer my question."

Rose rolled her eyes at the younger woman pointedly, then stalked into her own bedroom without another word. She found it pointless and grating on the nerves to continue sharing the same space with this daughter-in-law of hers, seeing as Toby had already left. If it weren't for the fact that this woman has been good to Toby and Tyler, I would have kicked her out of the Fuller Family long ago.

In the bedroom, Toby pulled open his drawer, intending to take out Maple's past letters to him and read through them once more. However, he froze in shock when he saw that his drawer had been emptied out, and not a single letter from Maple remained.

At that moment, he felt as if his own heart had been emptied out, but he quickly became apoplectic.

He stormed downstairs and summoned all the household servants. With a voice like thunder, he demanded, "Who took my letters from my drawer?"

The servants exchanged helpless and bewildered looks. They shook their heads slowly and denied opening the drawer in question.

Seeing this, Toby thought that none of them was willing to confess to the crime, and he grew even more furious as he snapped, "I said that no one is allowed to step into my room without my permission, let alone touch my things! Did none of you pay attention?"

Unable to stand the blank accusations, one of the servants who had been working the longest in the Fullers' Residence finally spoke up. "Young Master Toby, we really did not open your drawer."

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When the other servants heard this, they nodded and said hastily, "That's right, Young Master Toby. We really didn't."

Toby narrowed his eyes as he surveyed them and tried to see if they were lying, but having assessed their expressions, he realized that all of them spoke the truth. None of them flinched or averted his gaze; the steady and genuine look in their eyes and on their faces showed that they weren't lying to him.

He fell silent. If they didn't touch my drawer, then how did my letters go missing in the first place?

Just then, Jean let out a small yawn as she rounded the second-floor landing. "Toby, what in the world are you doing?"

"Madam, it seems as if Young Master Toby's letters have gone missing, and he's extremely angry about it," the first servant who had spoken up earlier explained.

Jean cast a curious look at her son. "Toby, what letters are they referring to?"

"My letters with Maple," Toby answered swiftly. He didn't have to lie about this. After all, it was no secret among the Fullers that he had been pen pals with Maple.

"Oh, you mean the letters you exchanged with Tina? I thought she burned them into ashes." Jean let out another yawn as she said this, revealing two rows of slightly stained teeth.

Toby's face darkened at this, and he looked so dangerous that even his voice came out cold and cutting. "Did you just say that Tina burned them?"

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“Yes, and you agreed to it, too. Don’t you remember?” Jean threw him a confused look.

Toby stiffened at this. I agreed to it? Why would I even agree to let Tina burn those letters? They meant more to me than anything else I own; I wouldn’t have saved them for over ten years otherwise!

But the next moment, a certain memory surfaced in his mind: it was a scene from nearly three months ago when Tina had only just awakened. She told him that there was no point in keeping the letters now that she had regained consciousness and would stay next to him. She had said that the letters would be better off burned away into nothing—and he had agreed to it!

He had actually agreed to it! Mortified and in complete disbelief, Toby clutched his cane even tighter. How in the world could I have agreed to do something so awful? I couldn’t possibly have done that! What wretched power in the world has compelled me to do something like that?

His knuckles turned white, and the veins on the back of his hand throbbed as he tightened his hold on the cane.

That’s right! I was not as lucid after the accident as I am now. Tina could have said anything, and I’d agree to it without stopping to think if it was problematic. I didn’t even bother saying no to her at the time, and I’ve certainly never experienced heart-wrenching pain.

Suddenly, it was as if everything made sense. The only reason why he even agreed to let Tina burn those letters was because he had been under the influence of some strange persuasive force, and he never truly intended to do so in the first place.

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