

That Can Be Arranged chapter 56

Chapter 56 Goodbye, Sweetheart

Tessa had to keep herself from sighing aloud as she said this. The sensibility of her rejection did not take away from the sadness that came with it.

Nicholas, on the other hand, fell silent as well, like he could not bring himself to argue with her.

With nothing more to add to this, she looked away from him and muttered softly, "It's late. You should get some rest, President Sawyer. I'm heading back to sleep."

She rose from the couch after that and returned to Gregory's bedside. She tucked the blanket snugly around him, then hunched over the side of the bed and slept.

In truth, however, sleep evaded her. She was merely resting her head on her folded arms as she took in Gregory's cherubic sleeping face, feeling an inexplicable rush of sadness.

Meanwhile, Nicholas sat on the couch like a statue as he stared at Tessa's back with interest, but he left her decision as it was and did not attempt to dissuade her from it. Admittedly, he was surprised to hear how much thought she had put into her rejection and how far-sighted her reasons had been.

That being said, he had to agree with her. Gregory was developing an attachment to her that would eventually grow into a bond. More importantly, if Nicholas had any confirmation at all that she was the woman who had abandoned her child for money all those years ago, then he would have cast her out of their lives without a second word.

As things were, it was better for Tessa to leave them now rather than wait for complications to arise over time. Gregory would be upset and throw fits at first, but he was a smart kid, and as time went on, he would figure out the reasons behind her departure.

And so, for the rest of the night, neither Tessa nor Nicholas spoke to each other.

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Early next morning, Gregory broke into a wide grin as soon as he woke up and registered Tessa's presence at his bedside. "Good morning, Miss Pretty Lady!" he greeted cheerily.

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Tessa's smile was a gentle and dazzling one as she reached out to caress his soft cheek. "Good morning, sweetheart."

She promptly led him to the adjoining bathroom to wash up, and when that was done, the three of them enjoyed breakfast, which was delivered personally by the Sawyer Family's butler. Then, Nicholas and Tessa brought Gregory to run several more tests to see whether he was doing much better.

When the check-up was done, the doctor walked to Nicholas and declared, "Good news, President Sawyer. Young Master Gregory is completely fine and there is nothing for you to worry about anymore. However, his gastrointestinal system is still working to purge the remaining toxins, so it's advisable for him to stick to plain, healthy food for the next month or so until his body fully recovers. Remember, he must stay away from foods that could stimulate any sort of stomach or gastrointestinal discomfort."

Nicholas nodded somberly as he replied, "Thank you, doctor."

They went over the discharge paperwork and made their way out of the hospital once that was done. Before leaving, Tessa waved goodbye at Gregory, saying reluctantly, "Goodbye, sweetheart."

Gregory froze and doubt crept over his little face as he asked, "Miss Pretty Lady, aren't you coming home with me?"

"I'm sorry, sweetheart," she began apologetically. "There's a really important performance lined up for our orchestra, though, and I'll have to go for a really long training before that, so I won't be able to see you at all."

"Oh..." His expression fell when he heard this and he mumbled in disappointment, "Does this mean you'll be gone for a really long time? How long will that be?"

The question shot through her heart like an arrow, but she maintained her smile as she said quietly, "Well, I don't know how long I'll be gone either."

He looked up at her with wide, glistening eyes, and pressed, "Then, can I go and visit you whenever I miss you?"

Her heart twisted even more, but she stood her ground and said firmly, "I'm sorry, sweetheart, but it's better if you don't visit me at all for the time being. It might be a little hard on my schedule as it is."

Gregory's mind raced, as if he had sensed something was off. A prickly sensation assaulted his nose as he asked sorrowfully, "You don't want to tutor me anymore, do you, Miss Pretty Lady?"

"I..." Tessa trailed off, thinking of a way to gently let the child down, but after a minute or so, she decided that she could not be anything but blunt as she pursed her lips and replied, "I'm sorry."

After leaving the hospital, Gregory was silent on the entire way home. He had his head down the whole time and there was unmistakable sadness written all over his face, coupled with heart-wrenching disappointment.

Unsettled by the child's depressing demeanor, Nicholas tried to get the little guy to speak, but his attempt at conversation was brutally rebuffed by Gregory's silence.

With a sigh, Nicholas gave up.

They pulled up at Dynasty Gardens half an hour later.

Presently, having gotten word that Gregory would return home today from the hospital, Stefania was already waiting eagerly for his arrival. As soon as she saw him walk past the threshold, she walked up to him happily and crooned, "Oh, hello, my little baby! I have missed you!"

Ecstatic to know that the little boy was perfectly fine, she went on to ask a flurry of questions out of concern. "What do you want for lunch, Greg? I'll get the kitchen to whip up something delicious for you, how about it? Do you still feel terribly, my darling?"

However, he kept his head down the whole time and he did not utter a single word. He even stepped around her and sulked his way into his room before rising on his tiptoes to lock the door.

Something was definitely off and Stefania couldn't help but grow distressed as she asked frantically, "Nicholas, what's wrong with Greg?"

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Chapter 57 Twenty Million

Nicholas was already exhausted as it was. When he saw how flustered and worried Stefania was over Gregory's obvious depressive state, he couldn't be bothered to explain as he muttered, "He's just throwing a fit. You know how kids are. Just let him work through it himself in his own space, Mom. Why don't you go home and get some rest? You can drop by some other day."

She nodded in silent agreement, but added fretfully, "It's only normal that he's feeling down after leaving the hospital. Try to cheer him up as much as you can, Nicholas, and if you give him a hard time, trust me when I say I'll give you an even harder one!"

"Got it," he replied grimly with a nod.

A satisfied Stefania then began to head for the door, but abruptly turned to give the butler a pointed look as she ordered, "Andrew, make sure you keep an eye on Greg for the rest of the afternoon and call me if anything happens." With that, she spun on her heels and left for the company.

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Over at Pinnacle Residence, Tessa had washed up as soon as she returned home from the hospital, and after having a change of clothes, she got ready to leave for orchestra rehearsal.

Timothy couldn't help worrying when he saw that she was rushing for work. "Tess, don't you want to take a break before going for orchestra rehearsal? You've been on your feet for the whole of yesterday and you have only just returned!"

Tessa gave him a small smile and explained soothingly, "I really do need to rush, though. The orchestra's schedule is packed tight with rehearsals."

Clearly displeased that she was working so hard, he grumbled, "It's inhumane that the orchestra doesn't let you take a day off or something. I get that rehearsals are important, but you need your rest!"

She knew that he only had his best interests at heart, and instead of getting irritated by his grumbling, she proceeded to comfort him. "This has nothing to do with the orchestra. Besides, I've already gotten enough rest."

As reluctant as Timothy was, he knew he had no choice but to let her go to work. With an imperceptible sigh, he said quietly, "Hey, Tess, once I start earning my own money, I promise I won't let you work so hard anymore. You'll have me to rely on."

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Upon hearing this, Tessa was so moved that she flashed him an indulgent smile. "Well, then, I guess I'll have quite the retirement plan lined up for me." She paused, then added softly, "Be safe on your way to school later, okay?"

He nodded obediently. "Got it. I'll be waiting to have dinner with you this evening, Tess."

She hummed in response, and with the violin case slung over her shoulder, she made her way out of the apartment.

The sun was high in the sky by the time she left Pinnacle Community. She felt the hot and dry breeze caress her face, and all of a sudden, she felt a little hollow. Perhaps this is the life that I'm meant to have, and I shouldn't hold out for anything more.

Meanwhile, not long after his exchange with Tessa, Timothy cleaned the house and left for school.

He didn't have any lessons that morning, but he arrived early to go through some things associated with the student council. He had only just sat down in the student council's designated office when his friend, Henry, barreled through the door and cried, "You're finally here, Timothy!"

Timothy smiled at him in greeting. "What is it? Did something exciting happen?"

Henry nodded eagerly with bright eyes, slightly out-of-breath as he said, "Remember how I told you about Reinhart Group the other day? The person-in-charge actually came to school and asked to see us personally! He wanted to go over the details of the project, and he says the price is up for negotiation. I think they really mean business this time!"

Anyone within their range could hear how excited Henry was about this prospect, but his enthusiasm was met with a scoff from Timothy, who said decisively, "We will not be seeing them."

Henry gaped at him in bewilderment. "Why not?"

"Because there isn't a need to," Timothy answered matter-of-factly, his voice flat and cold. "They won't be offering us much anyway, and I'd say they would cap the offer at a measly five million and nothing more."

While Henry did not argue with him over this, he was still a little hesitant about the decision. "Timothy, I know what you're thinking, but don't you think it's a little snobbish of us to turn them away even after they've come to see us personally? I mean, that seems a bit offensive, no?"

Timothy was quiet after hearing this, and he considered Henry's standpoint. Then, as if a lightbulb had gone off in his head, he changed his mind and suggested, "How about if you meet them instead, Henry? Tell them that maybe I'll consider if they're willing to offer us twenty million."

"Well..." Henry thought about this for a moment, then nodded. "Let's go along with your plan, then!"

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Chapter 58 Playing Hardball

That same afternoon, Henry was at the cafe near school grounds, where he met up with the representative from Reinhart Group at the agreed time.

The representative was a middle-aged man with rather refined features and he was dressed in a suit and leather shoes while looking proper.

After the both of them took their seats in the cafe, the man introduced himself affably, "I'm Silas Reinhart, the chairman of Reinhart Group. It's a pleasure to meet you."

Upon hearing this, Henry immediately straightened in his seat and said courteously, "Oh, it's nice to meet you, too, Mr. Reinhart. I'm Henry."

Silas flashed him a casual smile, and he seemed rather enthusiastic as he chuckled heartily. "How refreshing! You certainly know your manners, young man." Then, he cut to the chase by asking, "So, Henry, what does your buddy think about the deal we're offering for your project?"

"Well..." Henry trailed off, unsure how he was supposed to relay what Timothy had told him.

Sensing the boy's hesitation, Silas grew serious and prompted jovially, "Actually, Henry, I came to meet you today with the utmost sincerity. If you're willing to sell the software rights to our company, then we're more than ready to up the initial offer of two million to five million."

Henry worked hard to hide his astonishment at this. Is Timothy psychic or something? I can't believe this man is actually offering us five million for the software! If he's willing to up the price by three million in the spur of the moment, then surely five million won't be the upper limit!

Being an intellectual, and a street-smart one to boot, Henry pursed his lips and pretended to look torn as he said slowly, "I don't know, Mr. Reinhart... Five million isn't exactly what I had in mind."

At that moment, Silas' smile slipped a little, but he maintained a friendly front as he chuckled. "Henry, I get what you mean, but we can't go any higher than five million." He paused and stared at the younger boy assessingly. "I'll admit that your software is a rather brilliant one, and with its bright prospects in the market, it's definitely worth more than the two million we initially offered. That's the reason why our company has decided to re-evaluate the offer and came up with the adjusted sum of five million instead. I don't think any other company would make an offer like this."

Henry knew that the man was beating around the bush, so he countered with a smile, "Mr. Reinhart, we aren't new to this whole thing, and I'm sure that everyone involved has a clear idea of how much our project is worth. Actually, I came here today to tell you that my buddy refuses to sell the software unless you're offering twenty million. That said, we are incredibly flattered that your company has such high regards for our project, but five million..."

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Twenty million? Silas' expression turned grim at this. He couldn't believe the audacity of these kids.

He was acutely aware that the software was definitely worth twenty million on the market, but to be outsmarted and have his bluff called by two college kids wounded his pride. They're just kids who are still wet behind the ears! They should thank us profusely and feel so honored that Reinhart Group even noticed their software project at all!

More to the point, he thought he had been the bigger person when he offered to up the price by three million. And yet, these punks are turning a blind eye to my good favor!

As displeased as he was, Silas willed himself to calm down, for he knew that the Reinhart Group was in a precarious position right now. Procuring the project would be the pivot point for the whole company to get back on track, so he couldn't very well throw a tantrum in front of Henry right now.

Swallowing his rage, Silas forced out a friendly grin as he cajoled, "Look, buddy, I've been through the same thing, so I know how you young ones think. Of course it's wonderful for

young people like you to be ambitious, but you need to have an eye for these things and know when to take the offer instead of blindly spewing your demands.

“Whether or not this software of yours is worth twenty million, the both of you must first understand that we’re the only company on the market right now that wants to buy your software; the fact that we’re willing to pay a hefty sum for it is more than enough proof of our genuinity. If you refuse to sell it, who’s to say that you will get a better offer? At the end of the day, the software could very well end up losing every bit of its worth, and you won’t be able to sell it off at all.

“Besides, there are plenty of talented people coming up with various high-tech stuff, and we see technology replaced by even more innovative ones overnight. Do you really think your software is the best one out there? Hah! Don’t be naive, boy. It could be superseded by an even better one in the next two days. By that point, I won’t even consider buying yours for cheap even if you beg me! Do you understand?”

Henry froze when he heard this, taken aback by the threatening and haughty edge to Silas’ tone.

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Chapter 59 The Punishment They Deserve

Henry secretly agreed with what Silas had said. An opportunity like this was scarce these days, and if they didn’t take Reinhart Group up on their offer, someone else would.

Admittedly, Henry was starting to sway, but when he thought about how insistent Timothy had been about the twenty million, he shook his head at last and said, “I’m sorry, Mr. Reinhart, but I’m afraid I can’t be the only one calling the shots.”

Silas gritted his teeth, his eyes narrowing slightly. He finally realized that this negotiation was going nowhere, for the person who called the shots was not Henry, but the co-creator of the software.

As such, he seized the chance to say with a tight smile, "In that case, get your buddy to come over. I'll be right here waiting, and I'll talk to him about the offer. If price remains the only problem, I'm sure upping it by a fraction won't do any harm. Although to be realistic, twenty million would be too steep!"

Upon hearing this, Henry nodded slowly. "Very well, then. Just give me a moment while I give him a call." He rose from his seat after this and walked to a quiet corner, then called Timothy so he could relay what Silas had said.

On the other line, Timothy let out an amused bark of laughter after he heard the full story and sneered, "Not realistic, eh? Then, there's nothing for us to talk about! I don't have the time to meet him anyway; I have to see the teacher about the college sponsorship, so just ask him to leave without a deal."

With that, he hung up decisively.

Henry heaved a sigh, frustrated by his friend's stubbornness and the complicated situation waiting for him back at the table. Alas, he rejoined Silas and said apologetically, "Mr. Reinhart, I'm afraid my friend won't be coming; he's busy at the moment."

Silas frowned when he heard this, looking grim and offended. He was the chairman of a company, and he had taken the time of day to go over the deal personally, and yet he was being snubbed by some college kid here. Busy? Hah! How busy can a college student be?

Sensing the older man's displeasure, Henry quickly spoke up for Timothy. "I'm not lying, Mr. Reinhart. My friend really is busy at the moment. He has his hands full sorting out the sponsorship for his studies abroad, and if he weren't, then I wouldn't be the one talking to you right now."

Silas scoffed coldly when he heard this, though his anger was reduced by a smidge. That being said, he was still upset that he was going to walk away without a deal. As such, he demanded bluntly, "Then, the least you could do is give me a name. If your friend truly is too busy to see me, then I shall go and see him personally when I have the time."

Henry blinked, and he thought this sounded like a feasible enough plan, so he answered, "His name's Timothy Reinhart."

An incredulous Silas stiffened in his seat. "What?"

Without thinking too much of it, Henry repeated, "Timothy Reinhart."

Meanwhile, Timothy had never planned on collaborating with Reinhart Group in the first place. Money aside, the name Reinhart Group was enough to make him gag.

Alas, who could have thought that the representative from the revolting company would still badger him even though he had already asked Henry to reject the offer? Looks like the company's really desperate, Timothy thought grimly. Then again, this is what they deserve!

He was of the apathetic opinion that he would never have anything to do with a repulsive company like Reinhart Group, not even if it went bankrupt and the whole family had to beg on the streets for a living because that was the punishment they deserved. However, such a thought disappeared as quickly as it came.

Presently, when he saw that it was getting close to evening, he took out his phone and texted Tessa, 'Hey, Tess, what do you feel like having for dinner? I'll get the groceries and make you a feast after I'm done with class.'

Tessa was still busy with orchestra rehearsal and time was a luxury none of them could afford. When they finally caught a few minutes' break, she fished out her phone and replied, 'I'm thinking sticky pork ribs and battered fish.'

These were Timothy's specialties. Having read her text, he smiled gently and texted, 'Got it.'

Following that, he left to go grocery shopping as soon as class was over. However, he had only just stepped out of the school gates when a man in a suit stopped him from going any further.

"Are you Timothy Reinhart?" the man asked straightforwardly.

Timothy could sense the man's hostility, and he narrowed his eyes as he demanded icily, "And you are?"

The man introduced himself without missing a beat, "I'm Mr. Reinhart's assistant. He'd like to see you for a moment, so if you'll follow me, please."

Timothy's expression shifted, and he looked behind the man. Sure enough, there was a black Mercedes Benz idling by the side of the road, and it bore a really familiar license plate number, too!

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Chapter 60 A Son's Defiance

An icy gleam flashed in Timothy's eyes as he side-stepped the man in the suit, snapping, "I will not be following you anywhere!"

Seeing this, the assistant rushed toward Timothy and barred his way once more. "Timothy, the chairman's offer is a genuine one, which is why he wanted to see you personally today. We hope that you'll give us a chance!"

Timothy was ruthless as he let out a bark of laughter. "Then, tell the chairman that I have nothing to say to him! Also, I will never sell my product to your company, so if you know what's good for you, stay away from me!" With that, he pushed the assistant aside and continued on his way.

Meanwhile, Silas took in all this from where he sat in the backseat of the car. He was furious that the boy he had been waiting to see was treating his invitation with such disdain. I can't believe the nerve of this punk!

At that moment, Silas could no longer contain his rage as he pushed open the car door and got down from the vehicle. Then, he stormed up to Timothy and snapped angrily, "Timothy, it's only been a few years, but it looks like you've developed quite the temper!"

Upon hearing this, Timothy turned to register a seething Silas standing not too far away. He regarded the older man with the same disgust as one might a repulsive street rat.

Presently, Silas crossed over to him in long, angry strides, sounding like a self-righteous ogre as he bellowed, "I was just thinking about how insolent two college kids could be to turn down an offer to collaborate with me, but as it turns out, you were the one behind all this! Looks like you've grown a pair, haven't you, Timothy? Do you actually think you can go head to head with me?"

Scorn colored Timothy's gaze when he heard this and he found this incredibly hilarious. Glowering at Silas icily, he stood his ground and pointed out sarcastically, "Dear Mr. Reinhart, I think I've made it very clear from the beginning that I will not be selling my software and that's the end of it! Why are you still pestering me like chewing gum stuck on a shoe? It's one thing to be shameless, but you ought to consider how irritated the rest of us might feel."

"You—" Choking on fury at the insult, Silas felt his nerves dangerously close to popping, and he bit out belligerently, "You useless punk! Is this the way to talk to your father?!"

A humorless laugh escaped Timothy as he drawled pointedly, "Don't flatter yourself. Tess and I never had a father and hearing the word come out of your mouth makes me want to retch!"

Silas' face had turned as dark as the bottom of a pan. I can't believe this brat has the audacity to speak to me this way!

Timothy had no intention to waste more time on this, for he still had groceries to grab. As such, he said in plain and simple words, "Mr. Reinhart, this is all I'll say for today: I will not sell my software to Reinhart Group even if it means certain death, so I suggest you give up on this futile effort of yours and leave me the hell alone!"

The harsh words lingered in the air between them and he turned on his heels to march away from the fuming man.

Rooted to the same spot, Silas watched with burning rage as Timothy retreated further away, and his face was grim as he muttered mutinously, "That's not up to you!" He immediately barked at his assistant commandingly, "Go and bring that punk back here!"

"Yes, sir," the assistant replied, then hurried after the boy.

Timothy's legs were not strong enough to begin with, so there was no way he could have outrun the assistant, much less put up a fight. Within seconds, the assistant hauled the boy into the car unceremoniously.

"Hey, let me go! Let me go right now!" Timothy cried, outraged as he tried to break free. However, no matter how hard he tried and how much he shouted, his efforts of escape were to no avail.

He glared at Silas somberly and demanded, "What the hell do you want, Silas?"

Silas eyed him triumphantly, taking pleasure in the boy's hapless struggling as he scoffed. "What I want is simple enough: for you to hand over the rights to the software you and your buddy created. Reinhart Group needs it."

Initially, he had thought of upping the price by a smidge if the college kids still refused to sell the software for five million. That had been a possibility until he discovered that the software was created by none other than his own son. As things were, Silas could get his hands on the software without having to fork out a single penny!

Children were born to obey their parents anyway, and it was only right for Timothy to hand over the software without objection. Silas grinned like the cat that ate the canary, seemingly proud of how clever he was in handling this.

However, Timothy had figured out what the man thought, and with a defiant laugh, he countered, "And if I refuse?"