

## Chapter 284 What A Jerk!

Observing Bettie's effortless grace, devoid of any traces of envy, Lance pressed his lips together, indulging in a measured sip of water. "Keilani often received accolades for her discernment," he remarked.

"Insincere praise," Bettie scoffed and retorted.

Lance found himself rendered speechless.

The waitstaff commenced their choreographed ballet of serving, presenting an opulent bottle of wine alongside the culinary delights.

With a deft flourish, Bettie unfurled the wine's secrets, allowing its crimson essence to cascade into a glass, then another for Lance.

Though Lance abstained, Bettie, on the other hand, indulged in two glasses with fervor.

Observing her persistent inclination for the elixir, he gently interjected, "Perhaps, it's wise not to overindulge."

She retorted, devoid of pleasantries, "It's none of your business."

Pouring herself another glass, she remained determined. Just as she was poised to savor the next sip, Lance playfully teased, an air of self-assuredness in his tone, "Could it be you are jealous knowing that I have a girlfriend?"

Bettie paused as if she had heard a joke. "Jealous? Me, jealous of you? Are you kidding me? Don't flatter yourself!"

"Then why the excessive drinking?"

"I have my reasons, unrelated to you."

"I think you are just jealous."

"I'm not jealous!"

"You are!"

Bettie found herself momentarily struck silent. Placing her glass gently upon the table, she conceded, "Fine, I'll refrain from drinking. Satisfied now?"

Arching an eyebrow, Lance couldn't suppress a fleeting smile. Catching Bettie's gaze, he swiftly composed himself and sighed. "Well, I had hoped you still harbored some affection for me."

"Interesting!"

To expedite their day, Sabrina and her companions chose to forgo a return to their hotel at noon, opting instead for a quick outdoor meal before dashing off to their next filming locale.

Following a full day of trekking, Sabrina found herself weary, her feet throbbing with fatigue.

Midday saw Tyrone attempting to carry her on his back, yet it offered little respite.

Upon returning to their hotel, Sabrina reclined on the sofa, reluctant to budge from her spot.

Meanwhile, Bettie headed back to the hotel after her own lunchtime sojourn. Following a restful interlude, she meandered through the city center before returning.

Noticing Sabrina's and Aylin's evident exhaustion, Bettie thoughtfully arranged a takeout meal for all four of them.

As the delivery arrived, Sabrina had already mustered some strength and asked Bettie, "How was your lunch with Lance today? Did he cross the line?"

Bettie shook her head and responded, "No."

"But you seem unhappy," Sabrina observed and remarked.

"How could that be? I'm fine." Bettie swiftly denied.

Bettie just felt annoyed. Lance, despite being entangled in a romantic relationship, continued to flirt with her as if their shared history still held significance.

Bah, what a jerk!

How had she ever fallen for such a man in the past?

On the afternoon of the second day, they returned to Mathias. Upon exiting the expressway, Sabrina parted ways with Blayze and the others.

Wayne, for his part, steered the vehicle straight toward the airport.

This morning, Blayze received an urgent call from his father, compelling him to return without delay.

In the blink of an eye, the reason behind his father's summons became crystal clear to Blayze.

An hour later, Blayze found himself boarding a plane bound for Violetholt.

Two hours passed and the aircraft touched down at Violetholt's airport, where a waiting driver stood ready. Stepping off the plane, Blayze started his journey to his residence.

The Fowler family mansion, while not ancient, was a quaint townhouse nestled at the heart of Violetholt. The property market here was anything but forgiving.

The vehicle eased into the courtyard, and Blayze alighted, striding purposefully into the living area.

Nicol Fowler was engrossed in constructing a tower of toy building blocks on the carpet. His demeanor shifted to one of apprehension as he spotted Blayze's return. He hastily stood, blurting out, "Blayze."

Nicol had come into the world when Blayze's father was already fifty, rendering him considerably younger than Blayze. Their interaction had been limited and they were, in essence, half-siblings. Nicol harbored a

palpable unease in Blayze's presence.

"Well," Blayze replied as he removed his overcoat, hanging it meticulously on the rack before slipping into comfortable slippers. "Where's dad?"

"He's in the study," Nicol said, pointing toward the upper floor.

Blayze ascended straight to the second story, arriving at the study's entrance. With a composed knock, he sought permission to enter.

A grave voice resonated from within, "Come in."

"Dad, how may I be of service?" Blayze entered, addressing his father.

Marco Fowler, now well into his sixties, had weathered the trials of time. Although his health had faltered before the onset of the new year, leaving him less vigorous than his prime, his countenance remained serious. A faint crease marred his forehead, and his eyes exuded a sharp shrewdness. His regal presence remained undeniable.

Blayze got his eyes and brow from Marco, leaving no doubt that Marco had been a striking man in his youth.

"I've heard you've been in Mathias lately," Marco inquired, his voice hushed.

"Yes."

"What did you get up to during your time in Mathias?"

After a pregnant pause, Blayze lifted his gaze, locking eyes with Marco. "You seem to already know, don't you? Otherwise, why summon me back?"

Marco dispensed with pretense. "Come back after ensuring the ongoing projects are managed diligently. Cease any targeting of the Blakely family."

A smile graced Blayze's lips as he countered, "Father, I harbor no ill intentions toward the Blakely family. I am adhering strictly to the

company's future development blueprint. Perhaps our agenda collides with the Blakely Group's, leading to your misconceptions."

Marco mirrored the smile. "Future development plan? Do you think I've grown too senile to discern reality? Now, you even attempt to deceive me?"

"No," Blayze swiftly refuted.

"Then stay in Violetholt. I want you to lead the Fowler family to greater heights. I won't allow you to wield it as a tool for revenge, jeopardizing the family's welfare!"

A wry smile played on Blayze's lips. "Endanger the Fowler family? You're well aware whether your concern lies with the Fowler family or that woman and her son."

A shadow clouded Marco's gaze. He hesitated before finally speaking. "Of course, it's the Fowler family I'm worried about."

Clearly, Blayze remained skeptical. "If your concern truly rests with the Fowler family, then rest assured. I shall not endanger our family's well-being."

Marco fixed his gaze upon Blayze, his voice carrying weight, "Mathias lies far away from Violetholt, outside the Fowler family's reach. What purpose does this endeavor serve? You are my eldest son, the one I nurtured with heart and soul. I expect you to elevate the Fowler group, not squander your energy on such matters."

"I'm wholeheartedly working to further the Fowler family's interests. It's you who seem to be siding against us."

Following a brief interlude of silence, Blayze abruptly raised his gaze and remarked, "You haven't laid eyes on him in person, have you? Well, I have. No wonder he is your son. He's the spitting image of you without a trace of the Blakely lineage..." ○

Marco was left momentarily stupefied.

Indeed, Marco had never personally encountered Tyrone, though he had glimpsed Tyrone's visage in financial reports from time to time. Witnessing Tyrone's exceptional prowess, a subtle sense of pride would wash over him. He even entertained the notion that, had Tyrone remained within the Fowler family's fold, nurtured by him, Tyrone might have blossomed into an even more remarkable individual.

Observing Marco's reaction, Blayze sneered and continued, "Regrettably, he remains oblivious to his true lineage. He steadfastly believes Elijah is his father."

Drawing upon his wealth of experience, Marco maintained his composure.

Marco fixed a stern gaze on Blayze and implored, "No further words are necessary. Now is not the opportune moment to confront the Blakely family. You have only just assumed your position, and your actions have been excessively radical. Sooner or later, you will suffer consequences. Promise me you won't go to Mathias anymore."

"No way," Blayze replied resolutely.

A shadow darkened Marco's countenance. Just as he was about to unleash his ire, Blayze pivoted and departed. "Dad, unless you have something else to say, I shall take my leave."

From behind, Marco's furious voice resounded, "Get back here!"

