Coolest Girl In Town Chapter 811 - 814

Chapter 811 I Don't Care!

In the hospital, despite having casts on both her legs and an arm, Adelpha was still not staying still as she shouted, "Don't bother me! It was supposed to be my opportunity to study abroad, but it's now been stolen! I'd rather die!"

When Lyra saw that, she felt bad for her and kept coaxing her, "My poor daughter. Let's not think about that anymore, okay? You need to focus on your recovery first. Don't move around already. You've just applied some medicine. It'd be a shame if the wound on your pretty face gets infected and leaves a scar!"

"I don't care! I want to go overseas! I want to further my studies! I want Maestro Yorkson!" Adelpha glared at Elise and said, "It's all because of her. She made me like this! If she hadn't dodged in the first place, I wouldn't have fallen down the stairs! She wanted to ruin my face! Is stealing Maestro Yorkson not enough?! How can this be fair?!"

Hearing that, Elise rolled her eyes. "You're saying that I should've just stood still, let you push me down the stairs, and end up like how you are right now? Will you be happy then?"

"Did I say that? If you had stopped me, maybe both of us wouldn't have fallen down. You just wanted to make a fool out of me in front of Maestro Yorkson!" Adelpha was relentless.

"Enough!" Onyx was annoyed by the both of them and shouted sternly. "Have you not embarrassed yourselves enough yet?!"

Adelpha stopped talking at once. In fact, Elise didn't want to bother her in the first place, so she looked away.

Irritated, Onyx looked at Elise and clicked his tongue, but didn't say anything else.

Then, he turned to look at Adelpha and scolded her, "You! Who can you blame when you can't even walk properly yourself? After learning the piano for so many years, you aren't even better than your sister, who started later than you. How dare you make a fuss when you have lousy skills? If I were you, I'd just live quietly. Why do you need to ask for a scolding yourself..."

"Dad! Why are you saying that to me?!" Adelpha was angry and sulky at the same time since his attitude toward her these days was turning colder and colder.

"Did I say anything wrong?" He became more agitated and said, "Do you know how much I've spent on you throughout the years? How did you repay me? You're bad at the piano, and your academics aren't stellar either. You just can't do anything right, so why can't I say anything about you?"

"I..." she had no comeback and could only pull her blanket as she sulked, feeling angry on her own.

Looking at her sulky look, Jacob nearly laughed out loud. However, he didn't want to stir up trouble, so he held back his laughter.

Just then, a notification from Twitter popped on his phone suddenly, which included 'the two elders of the Sinclairs' as the keywords.

He clicked into the trending list and was attracted by the hashtag that was trending first.

He stared at his phone screen for two seconds with an intriguing look on his face. Then, he deliberately raised his voice. "Oh, Alexander is getting married."

"What?!" Adelpha strained her ears at once and shouted agitatedly, "What? What are you talking about? Alexander is my boyfriend. It's impossible for him not to tell me if he's getting married!"

Under Onyx's pressure, she must have swallowed the word 'f*ck'.

Hearing that, Jacob shrugged his shoulders and said casually, "See for yourself if you don't believe me, then. It's trending."

As he said that, he clicked something on his phone and passed it to Elise, who was standing beside him.

When Elise took over the phone, what was showing on the screen was not the news about Alexander, but a news account that uploaded social news.

'The historic town area is on fire. The whereabouts of the two elders from the Northwest's Sinclair Family are still unknown...'

The mountain in Elise's heart collapsed at once, and her heart skipped a beat.

After a while, she snapped out of her daze and turned around to run out of the place.

Onyx tried to ask her to stay, but before he could say anything, Elise and Jacob disappeared from the room.

"Rude," he complained in a low voice.

Beside him, Adelpha finally finished reading the news about Alexander's marriage with help from Lyra.

Her expression worsened as she read the news. In the end, she even threw the phone away and started crying while hugging the blanket. "Why? Why is everyone abandoning me? Alexander is such a traitor!"

"There you go crying again. You only know how to cry. Can't you live without men around you? You've really embarrassed the White Family. When your legs recover, go back to the suburbs at once, and don't come back to town without my order!" After saying that, Onyx left as well. It was better for him not to see her since he didn't want to waste any more time with her.

Meanwhile, outside the hospital, Elise entered the car and instructed Jacob to drive. "Go to the historic town area!" she said.

Although there was not much expression on her face, it was obvious that she was extremely tense.

Hearing that, Jacob started the engine and seemingly remembered something. He then turned to look at her and said calmly, "Master, I think we should confirm the authenticity of this news first. What if this is a trap set by the Boyle Family, and they are just waiting for us to bite the bait? It'll be the end of us!"

"I don't care!" she shouted uncontrollably. "They are the ones who raised me. I can't bet on their lives!"

As soon as she said that, her phone started ringing. She took out her phone and saw that it was an unknown number.

At this moment, Elise and Jacob exchanged looks, and the same person came across their minds—Elijah.

After reorienting her breath, she picked up the call and put the phone at her ears before probing, "Hello? Who is this?"

"It's me." The moment Alexander's voice came from the other side of the phone, all her tense emotions dissolved at once.

She lowered her shoulders and heaved a sigh of relief.

"I'll keep it short not to leave anything against me. Grandpa and Grandma are well. Don't be fooled!" Alexander hung up the phone immediately after saying that.

When Elise called the number again, it couldn't be reached anymore.

"What's wrong, Master?" Jacob asked with concern.

"Nothing..." She put down her phone despondently, but it was obvious that she had calmed down.

"Are we still going to the historic town area?" he asked again.

While shaking her head, she looked to her front with something in her mind. "Go home. We should get ready for the trip overseas with Maestro Yorkson."

In one of the office buildings of Tissote, Elijah was standing in front of the French window. His cunning eyes were overseeing the whole city below his feet, showing his greed.

"Master, two days have passed, but there's still no news. Could it be that Elise didn't come back?" Marcus asked from the back.

Hearing that, Elijah narrowed his eyes and put one of his hands on the glass while flicking his finger. "Did she really die at sea?"

"That's possible. There is always news about sharks attacking boats around the area we passed by the other day. Her body might be in one of the sharks' stomachs already." Marcus analyzed the situation.

At this moment, Elijah kept quiet. Did I lose a good pawn just like that?

"What should we do about the two elders of the Sinclair Family?" Marcus asked respectfully.

"Release them." Elijah waved his hand. "What good can there be to keep those two old ones? I'll take this as doing one good thing in my life. Prepare for the trip overseas."

The mess that Elise left behind was still waiting to be cleaned up.

Chapter 812 Young Master Irvin Ran Away From Home

In the waiting lobby of the airport, Jacob placed Elise down on the chair and went to the washroom.

As soon as he went in, someone held his neck and pushed him into one of the cubicles.

When he reacted, the door of the cubicle was already closed. Alexander's body was bigger than his, and Alexander's face, along with his sharp eyes, glared at him as though he was a beast hunting for its prey, extremely bloodcurdling.

Only after swallowing his saliva did he force himself to remain calm. "W-What are you doing, Mr. Griffith?"

"If any incident happens when she gives birth, I want you to save her as her husband. Can you remember that?" Alexander's voice was cold, giving off an intimidating aura.

Hearing that, Jacob nodded subconsciously. "I know what to do even if you don't say."

"But you don't know her." Alexander's attitude was still frigid.

"Who? Master?" Jacob understood immediately. Since women were emotional creatures, especially mothers, they could give up their lives for their children.

Alexander then released him and emphasized again, "She must be fine no matter what happens. If anything really happens, just let her hate me. Don't be afraid that you'll be embroiled."

"Don't worry. Master is the one who gave me this life. If she wants me to die, I will let her live first," Jacob said with determination.

After a few minutes, Jacob returned to the lobby, where the announcement was already reminding the passengers to board the plane.

He quickly went over to Elise and guided her to the check-in point.

As they stood at the check-in counter, Elise turned around reluctantly, and her gaze was searching around the lobby.

When her gaze landed in Alexander's direction, he took his sunglasses off and looked at her from afar.

The feeling of being unable to leave each other and the insecurity about the future were conveyed through their eyes. They looked at each other, and their gazes turned determined.

Death couldn't do them apart, so it was the same for time and distance. They would be back at each other's side one day.

After confirming that, Elise bid goodbye to him in her mind and then turned around, starting her journey abroad.

Alexander saw them leave and only left the airport alone after seeing the plane disappear into the clouds.

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Seven years later, Alexander appeared on the front page of an entertainment magazine for the thousandth time.

The media wrote, 'Since Alexander Griffith inherited Smith Co. from Kenneth Bailey and his wife went missing seven years ago, he has completely freed himself. Throughout the seven years, he has married and divorced once every year. After continuously marrying six wives that look a lot like Elise Sinclair, he was seen going on a date with a mysterious woman. According to the reporter's investigation, the woman has a son and a daughter, but Alexander doesn't care. From what an insider disclosed, Alexander is going to marry her soon! Now, we can't help but say there's no end to our dream guy's hobby of collecting beautiful ladies that look like Elise."

In Alzue, Elise was in silk nightwear and sitting in front of the computer desk. She then opened an anonymous email. 'Honey, it's time to come back.'

There were only six words and no sign-off, but she knew exactly who this was from.

At this moment, her maid came into her room in a hurry. "Madam, Young Master Irvin has run away from home!"

Meanwhile, a cab stopped at the entrance of the airport. When the car door opened, a little figure jumped out of the car. After he stood still, he stuck his body into the car again and took his skateboard out before stepping on it.

When the car drove away, there was only the boy's slender figure left by the road.

Although he was only seven, he towered over children his same age, looking as tall as an adult woman. With his clean-cut short hair, he looked youthful with his headband.

He had comely eyebrows and a pair of peach blossom eyes that looked as though they could talk. Combined with his fair skin, he was definitely someone who could be seen at a glance in the crowd.

With his skateboard, he skated into the lobby and collected his flight tickets familiarly. Just as he was about to check in with his skateboard in his arm, the watch on his wrist started ringing.

Raising his brows, he took out his Bluetooth headphones and put them on before answering the call. Instantly, Elise's resigned voice came from the other side.

"Irvin White! Come back! Didn't I tell you that we still can't leave the country now?!"

Hearing that, the little guy sighed resignedly. "Mommy, I already know everything. The Daddy at home is not our real Daddy, right?"

"Who told you that?" Elise didn't refute it.

"I guessed it myself. He always treats us as his master and guests. This is not how Daddy is supposed to treat us. I'm going back to Princeton to find our biological father!" His words were so plausible that he didn't give her any chance to stop him. "It'll be too late if I don't board the plane now, Mommy. Take good care of Lexi. Bye."

As soon as he said that, he hung up the phone at once and dashed over to join the line at the check-in counter.

After some observation, he walked toward a young woman who was alone and stared at her sincerely with his big eyes.

The woman looked around her and pointed at herself after some thought. "Are you looking at me, kid?"

"Miss." Irvin pretended to be affectionate and continued, "You're so pretty. Can I sit with you?"

Who could stand the coquettishness of a boy who looked like a little prince?

"Thank you." She tidied her hair shyly. "I'm okay with that, but I'll need your guardian's permission."

"He's fine with it." Irvin turned around and pointed at a man with a big beard at the end of the line. "That's my guardian. He's so boring. I prefer making small talk with a lady as pretty as you."

She looked around and nodded, indicating that she understood. "He does look boring. Okay, I can bring you along."

With that, Irvin boarded the plane to Cittadel under the woman's care.

On the other hand, when Jacob knew about Irvin running away from home, he went out immediately. "Don't worry, Master. I'll get Young Master Irvin back for sure!"

"It's okay." Elise stopped him. "We can return to Cittadel. Send some photos of Irvin to Jamie. Don't let him get into any trouble."

"I'll do that now." He nodded respectfully and went to the study at once.

Just as he left, a little girl in a princess dress appeared while walking in her leather shoes. Then, she jumped into Elise's embrace.

"Mommy? Mommy, is what Irvin said real? Are we going to meet Daddy?"

The little girl looked just like Elise as though they were carved from the same mold. Her pair of eyes were especially beautiful. Her chubby face made people want to prank her, but they couldn't watch her get sad.

Elise held her little hand and asked gently, "Do you not like your current Daddy?"

"I like him," Alexia said, but after that, she became gloomy again. "But not very much. Not like how I like Mommy. If people ask me if I like Mommy or Daddy, I will definitely say Mommy. My friends say that they like Mommy and Daddy the same, but I'm different..."

Chapter 813 The Heavens Will Punish You for Deceiving a Child

Elise held her precious daughter with an aching heart. "It's okay if it's different, as long as it's how you truly feel. You don't have to share the same experience as everyone else."

"Is it okay if I don't like Daddy as much, Mommy?" Alexia asked innocently.

"You'll like Daddy, Lexi." Elise sighed.

The situation in Cittadel had been ever changing in the past seven years, and Alexander had been fighting it alone this whole time.

Without him shielding them from harm's way, how could she and their children stay safely abroad this long?

A father like him naturally deserved their children's love and respect.

She believed all of Alexia's doubts would vanish as soon as the little one met him.

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Meanwhile, on the other side of the world, Irvin successfully arrived at Tissote after nearly a day's journey.

After parting ways with the pretty lady he boarded the plane with, he took advantage of his height and hid behind the crowd, sneakily checking out the situation at the main arrival hall.

Just as he thought, a few suspicious men had hidden amongst those who came to pick the travelers up.

To be on the safe side, Irvin changed directions and headed to the north wing.

Very quickly, he arrived at the north exit. Because there wasn't much of a crowd, there wasn't a line to board the cabs either. It was like it had been specially prepared for him.

The child puffed up his chest with pride as he looked at the nearly empty hall and strode to the sidewalk.

Just as he reached his arm out to hail a cab, a frivolous-sounding voice came from behind him. "Do you need a lift, kid?"

Irvin turned around reflexively to find a man in a gray suit. He had a pair of alluring eyes, but they gave the child a bad feeling, so he held his guard up at once.

Jamie pulled his car key out with a grin, then pressed a button while pointing the key at the side of the road.

Beep, beep... The headlights of a red Jeep parked on the roadside flashed a couple of times before returning to normal.

Irvin's eyes lit up upon seeing the vehicle, thinking it looked pretty cool.

However, he came to his senses pretty quickly. There was no way this guy was looking for customers when he drove such a nice car, especially in an area with very little traffic.

"Why would you need to look for customers when you have such a nice car?" The boy put up a mean front.

Jamie smirked, drooped his eyelids, and snorted a chuckle under his breath. It sure isn't easy to trick Anastasia's son.

At that, he composed himself and walked up to Irvin, putting his hand on the child's shoulder chummy-like. "It's precisely because I'm driving a nice car that no one dares to sit in it, and that's why I have to beckon customers. It's a pretty nice car, kid. Don't you want to go for a ride?" the man lied through his teeth.

Irvin quirked a brow and turned his head to give the man a disdainful, sidelong glance.

I knew it! This dude's a bad guy. He's out here to deliberately trick kids out of their money! How dare you trick me. Do you really think I'm just like any other seven-year-old?! Just because I don't bare my teeth doesn't mean I don't bite!

At that, the child smiled innocently and agreed. "Will you give me a good discount, then?"

"Of course!" Jamie patted his chest and promised, "I'll give you a twelve percent discount. How about that?"

"Okay. You're really nice, mister." Irvin played dumb calmly.

Just you wait, you profiteer. I'm going to make you wish you never tricked me!

"Hahaha, you're a sweet one." Jamie felt good. "Come on, hop in!"

At that, Irvin opened the back seat door and popped right in.

After Jamie sat in the driver's seat, he started the engine right away and drove off.

Meanwhile, Irvin pulled out his tablet and opened the map, checking their live location warily.

Fortunately, they were heading into the city. He could find a chance to get out after they arrived downtown.

Jamie, on the other hand, would size the boy's facial features up from the rearview mirror every now and then, and the more he looked, the stranger he felt.

Anastasia gave birth to this kid, right? But why doesn't he look like her or her husband? Instead, he looks a little like Elise? And his eyes remind me of someone... Who, though?

Made uncomfortable by Jamie's stare, Irvin asked grimly, "Why did you just drive away when I haven't told you where I want to go?"

Jamie instantly came to himself and asked inattentively, "Where do you want to go, then?"

Anastasia had told him to keep an eye on her boy before she arrived at Tissote. Thus, no matter where Irvin requested, there was only one place they would end up at—Keller Residence.

"I want to go Disneyland!" Irvin gave a random location.

"There you go," Jamie lied through his teeth. "This is the road to Disneyland!"

Irvin frowned in response, speechless.

Disneyland was located in the west, but they were now heading south. Hell, they were heading in the opposite direction.

"The heavens will punish you for deceiving a child..." Irvin intoned as he put his tablet back into his bag and carried it back on his shoulders.

At that, Jamie cleared his throat and resounded loudly inexplicably, "What are you talking about?! Do I not look like a good man?! There's no way I'd lie to you!"

"My mommy said the hotter the guy, the better their lies." Irvin shifted his posture and leaned slightly forward while holding onto the driver's seat, getting ready to strike.

"I..." Jamie didn't know what to say for a moment. Your kid's really precocious, Anastasia. There's no tricking him!

He mumbled for quite some time before finally saying, "This very much depends. A handsome guy like me is definitely a good guy!"

"Are you really handsome? I didn't take a good look. Can you turn around?" Irvin feigned innocence.

With that, Jamie fixed his hair and hurriedly turned his head around after making sure the road ahead was clear. "Here."

Lo and behold, he was met with a spray.

Caught unprepared, the mist covered his entire face, and the next second, the burning sensation made it hard for him to open his eyes.

To avoid an accident, he had no choice but to pull up short.

Screech... The screeching sound of tires skidding across the road rent the air.

"What was that?!" Jamie pressed on his eyelids, in dreadful pain.

"Pepper spray," said Irvin as he got out of the car. At that, he blew a raspberry. "What did I tell you? You'll be punished for deceiving a child. There you go! See you, himbo!"

At that, he hopped off the Jeep and went away without ever looking back.

"Hey!" Jamie unfastened his seatbelt and chased after the child at once. However, he couldn't open his eyes at all. Resigned, he returned to the vehicle and called 'Anastaisa' via Bluetooth.

"I'm really sorry, Anastasia. Irvin's too mischievous. He ran away just as we reached the city. Don't you worry, though. I'll have the guys look for him, stat."

"It's alright. I don't blame you." Instead of being upset, Elise asked concerningly, "You didn't get hurt, did you?"

She had a very good idea of what her son was like—things would never end well for anybody who went against the kid.

Jamie was one for dignity, so how could he allow himself to look bad in front of his idol?! "Nah, I'm good. He's just a kid, so how badly can he hurt me?! I was just caught a little off guard!"

"That's good to hear." Elise nodded. "I'm going to board the plane now. We'll talk when I reach Tissote."

"OK."

"Sure." Jamie immediately called an ambulance after ending the call.

Chapter 814 You're Confused

Irvin dashed amok on the streets. Worried that he would become an easy target, he went into a mall he came across.

But lo and behold, because his actions were too quick for him to react, he bumped straight into a woman who was walking in his direction, causing her to stumble and lose her grip on her coffee, spilling it on another woman.

The coffee instantly left a massive stain on the second woman's snow-white dress.

"Sorry!" Irvin hurriedly put his hands together and apologized. "I really didn't mean to do it. Are you scalded?"

However, she didn't answer him immediately but only fixed her dress with a frown.

On the other hand, though, the man beside her had a hint of sadness in his eyes when he realized who the child was.

Never did Alexander imagine finding the person he could only see through pictures and videos in the last seven years to suddenly stand in front of him. However, it still hadn't come time for them to reunite.

"Where are your parents?" he asked, looking impassive on the surface, seemingly unfazed by the minor accident.

"She's not here." Irvin owned up to it. "Even if she comes, we'll still have to apologize and compensate. Your time will be wasted like that, so why don't I just compensate you now?"

A sliver of grimness laced Alexander's eyes, but he said nothing. Looks like this little rascal came back on his own.

"You talk big for a little kid." The woman was in seventh heaven when she could finally hang out with Alexander again, but her good mood was now ruined thanks to this little episode. She didn't want to simply dismiss the issue, but then because Alexander was right next to her, she could only pretend to make a joke out of it with a chuckle. "This designer dress is from a foreign brand's latest collection. It's worth about ten thousand Alzue Vraleings. I'm afraid your bit of allowance isn't enough to pay for it."

"Alzue Vraleing? That's great. I haven't managed to exchange the currency yet." Irvin's eyes lit up, and he pulled a wad of cash out of his bag. "Here you go, ma'am."

The woman took the cash from him dazedly, and to her surprise, it was indeed Alzue Vraleing!

At that, she shifted her gaze back to Irvin, now having a different impression of this generous little kid.

"Since you've taken the money, you've agreed to settle this. I have to go now, ma'am. See you!"

"I have something to attend to. If you'll excuse me." Alexander made an excuse and walked away right after Irvin left, leaving the woman there alone.

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After a few corners and turns, Irvin finally arrived at the publishing house Onyx worked in.

At that, he sat on the lion statue at the gates and waited patiently for the man to come out.

At last, Onyx finally came out, talking and laughing with his colleagues as everyone started getting off work.

Irvin spotted the man in the crowd at first glance and jogged to Onyx with his skateboard in his hands. "Grandpa!" he called out sweetly.

Mommy said Grandpa is super nice to us. He'll certainly be thrilled to see me!

Alas, reality gave his beautiful dream a big slap in the face.

Onyx froze for a split second, and upon realizing the child was calling out to him, he frowned in disdain and deliberately dissociated himself in a joking manner. "Hahaha, poor kid! He has confused me with his grandfather!"

Irvin's smile froze on his face, and the child furrowed his brows disappointingly. "But I didn't!" he insisted.

"Sure, sure, you didn't. I bet you're hungry. Here, I'll give you some money for food." Onyx feigned generosity and pulled Irvin aside while pulling a banknote out of his pocket. As he handed the cash to the little guy, he gripped his arm and mumbled a warning, "Go and wait in the cafe over there, rugrat, or you can forget about ever calling me your grandfather!"

At that, he shoved the money into Irvin's hand and laughed as soon as he turned around, leaving with his colleagues.

Irvin stood rooted to the spot, frowning as he held the banknote in his hand, baffled. Why would Mommy lie to me? Grandpa isn't as nice as she said he is at all!

Meanwhile, inside a car afar, Alexander's gaze shone with mixed emotions as he looked at the child's thin figure. Ellie, how long more do I have to wait before I can see you again?

Fifteen minutes later, Onyx rushed over to the cafe and sat across from Irvin with a grim face.

While the former had nothing but despise written all over his face, the latter was expressionless, looking like he had lost all expectations.

"What can I get you, sir?" A server approached their table.

"Nothing, thank you. I'll be leaving shortly." Onyx waved his hand and dismissed the server.

As soon as the server left, Onyx showed his true colors and interrogated Irvin. "Did your mother send you to me?"

Irvin had barely said a word when the pompous man interrupted, "No need to tell me. I've got her number. What time would that woman have to practice her piano when she has to take care of you alone in Alzue?! Surely Maestro Yorkson kicked her out long ago. Your mother expects me to support you just because she's now impoverished?! Huh, what wishful thinking!"

The child was utterly gobsmacked. Is this really Grandpa? Or have I gotten the wrong person? Why would I genuinely feel repulsed by this man in front of me?

"Don't look at me like that. I haven't been doing well myself in the last few years. I may have raised your mother, but she has done nothing for me in return. So, I have no obligation to wipe her a*s."

At that, Onyx pulled out two one hundred banknotes and slapped them on the table impassively. "This is all I have left. Tell your mother this is as much as I can help her with. Any more than this, she'll have to figure it out herself. Also, don't think about selling White Residence. We're staying there even if it's the last thing we do."

At that, he walked out of the cafe without ever looking back.

Meanwhile, Irvin fell into deep thought as he stared at the two banknotes on the table.

He might not be able to understand the harsh adult world yet, but he could already grasp the feeling of being undesired.

To think the perfect grandfather from his imagination would give him nothing but impassiveness and estrangement.

Even an adult would fall apart when the harsh reality gave their dream a wake-up call, so what more a child?

He stared at the two banknotes stubbornly like he was cutting his nose to spite his face as he clenched his fists under the table.

Just then, a slender hand appeared from the side and pressed the index and middle fingers on the cash.

Irvin reflexively looked up and happened to meet Alexander's fathomless gaze.

The man's eyes drooped, looking down at the child as he spoke in a deep, magnetic voice. "No need to feel sad over someone who's only worth two hundred bucks," he said.

Irvin blinked, latching his bewildered gaze at the man like a devoted worshiper.

"There are many two hundred banknotes in the cash you've given us. There's no need to bother yourself with a man like that when he can't even treat you as well as you treat a stranger," Alexander counseled calmly.

"But that's my biological grandfather," Irvin remarked.

"There are many things in this world where you can't judge based on kinship. You have to use your heart to determine to see a person and how close your relationship with them should be," said the man gravely, his words thought-provoking.

As though enchanted, Irvin nodded inexplicably. "I got it. Thank you, mister."