

Love Coming from the Least Expected Chapter 546

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I had wanted to tell Dad about my marriage with Christopher as it was killing me to keep so many things bottled up, but I held my tongue because I knew he wouldn't care.

"I was just curious, that's all. Mom seemed to care a lot about Uncle Robert when she spoke to me the other day. She's really sad about his death, too. Do you know how Uncle Robert died?"

Nathan shuddered and said after a brief pause, "The Andersons were quite a prominent family in Avenport back in the day. Robert was a brilliant businessman, but his stubbornness and arrogance got to him and he couldn't get back up after taking a few huge blows. The Andersons faced bankruptcy after a major project of theirs failed, and Robert... Well, he couldn't take it and jumped off a building."

"Really?" I remember Mom telling me that Julia was the last person Uncle Robert saw before he died, but it seemed everyone else thought he had taken his own life.

"That's right. He jumped from Centurion Tower ten years ago. That building was owned by the Andersons, and your mom has been conflicted about it ever since. It happened shortly after we got married," Nathan said in a low voice.

My mind was completely filled with thoughts about Christopher after leaving the hospital that I ignored both Crystal's taunts as well as the strange looks Scarlett and the others gave me.

I thought about paying the Goldstein family a visit even though I really disliked them, which was probably due to the conflicts I had with the Tanners.

While crossing the street, I saw Mom and Darius on the other side. They seemed to be having an unpleasant conversation, judging by the angry look on Mom's face. Darius, on the other hand, looked helpless as though he was plagued with guilt. He was trying to tell Mom something, but she simply brushed his arm off and walked away.

The two of them used to be really close and nearly became a couple. I waited until Mom drove off in her car before coming around the corner.

Darius stood there in place for quite a while, only to jump in shock when he noticed me standing next to him. "You saw everything?"

I shook my head. "I just happened to pass by."

"I was going to help Chris out, but it looks like our past feelings for each other weren't enough to change her mind!" Darius said with a wry smile and an inexplicable look of regret on his face.

I wasn't sure if his regret was due to me and Chris becoming enemies or him being unable to protect the beautiful memories he had with my mom.

It's probably more the former than the latter, I guess.

"Does Mom know that you used to..." Love her? I left the sentence hanging, but Darius clearly understood what I was implying and shook his head. "I couldn't possibly tell her that until I was certain of her feelings for me, or it would only stress her out. Besides, your mom only loved your dad the whole time."

"My mom loved my dad..." I kept repeating that sentence in my head. If she loved Dad so much, why did she leave him so decisively back then? Why would she now return to the country as Mrs. Goldstein? She's not the kind of person who would do such a thing! Mom is a smart woman, so she wouldn't have easily given up on the man she loved, even with Scarlett in the picture!

"Come over to the Lane residence when you have the time. My mom wants to see you," Darius said.

"I will!"

I saw Mom sitting on the sofa in the living room the moment I got home. She was instructing a bunch of servants who were packing my belongings. "What's going on, Mom? Where are they taking my stuff?" I asked anxiously as I ran up to her.

"Ah, you came just in time! You shouldn't be staying here now that we're finally reunited, so why don't you move in with me? I bought a mansion in Avenport; we can live there together!" Isabelle replied with a smile and continued instructing the servants. She didn't even bother to ask me if I wanted to live with her.

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In my state of panic, I stopped the servants and shouted, "Wait! I didn't say anything about moving out, Mom!"

"You don't want to stay with me?" Isabelle's expression turned gloomy with displeasure.

She had me at a loss for words. While there was technically nothing wrong with me staying with her after her return, this house belonged to both Christopher and me, so it meant a lot to me.

Although it was just a tiny apartment unit, it was the warmest and coziest place for me. Christopher had prepared this place as a safe haven for me when I was being bullied by Lyle. This was the place he brought me to when Lyle and Crystal made me homeless.

If he had not done that, I could very well have slept out on the streets.

"But this is my house. It'd be a waste to just leave it empty." I didn't dare mention Christopher in front of her as I didn't want to upset her even further.

"So what? You could just tidy the place up and rent it out for some passive income! The mansion I bought is so spacious that you can even alternate between living upstairs and downstairs anytime you like!" Isabelle said with a smile. She was clearly satisfied with my reply earlier as she didn't even say a word about the men's toiletries in the house.

"But... But..." I was about to protest further but kept quiet when I recalled Sabrina's words. I then stopped the servants who were packing my stuff and said through clenched teeth, "Please leave everything the way it is. Since you've bought a new house, you could just replace all these items with new ones instead. We'll have a fresh start!"

In actual fact, I didn't want Christopher to return to an empty house and get upset.

"That works, too!" Isabelle then motioned at the servants and said, "All right, put everything back where you found them. I've got tons of money to afford things of much higher quality anyway! Come on, let's go shopping! We need to replace those rags of yours with some decent clothes! Besides, it's my fault you've barely been able to buy yourself anything nice throughout these years."

She brought me into her car and handed me a platinum-colored card. "Here's some pocket money. Spend it however you like, and feel free to ask me for more if you run out. No need to be too frugal, okay?"

I recognized that card – it was only a grade lower than the black card Christopher gave me. After accepting the card and stuffing it into my handbag, I went shopping with Isabelle and bought a bunch of stuff before moving into her new mansion. It was next to a huge lake and had a balcony with a great view of the lake.

“Mom, do you know about Dad being hospitalized?” I asked while leaning against the balcony.

Mom was sitting on a recliner with a glass of wine in one hand and a cigarette in the other. She looked like a completely different person from who she used to be, and I couldn’t help but find her a little unfamiliar. The mother that I once knew had changed so much with the passing of time that I barely recognized her anymore.

“Nathan is in the hospital?” Isabelle looked up all of a sudden and blinked a couple of times before breaking into a disdainful smile. “I bet he’s been drinking too much coffee and staying up late too often, huh? Honestly, he should’ve collapsed long ago from overwork! I take it that he went looking for you?”

“Yeah!” I saw no trace of affection for Dad in Mom’s eyes at all. Perhaps whatever they had going between them was long gone...

“Mom, what if... What if Dad were to beg you to spare the Tanner family? Would you be willing to do that?” I asked cautiously.

“Your dad told you to say that, didn’t he? He sure is a smart one for seeking your help. He knows I don’t see anyone else but you.”

Isabelle pursed her lips into a faint smile; I couldn’t tell what she was actually feeling. “I helped him build the family business from scratch using my own money, and guess what? He goes on to keep a mistress using that money and even has a daughter the same age as you! As if that wasn’t bad enough, he even wanted me to place Scarlett before myself! Things probably wouldn’t have been any better for me even if I stayed.”

She then turned to look at me as she continued, “How about... I give you everything the Tanner family owns as dowry? I mean, everything is technically mine to begin with anyway. It’s clearly stated on the shareholders’ agreement that I am the rightful owner of the Tanners’ assets, even though Nathan has probably destroyed that document by now.”

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“Of course, that doesn’t matter anymore. What’s mine will still be mine. My daughter can’t get married without a proper dowry!” Isabelle smiled.

She wants to give me everything? Naturally, my first response was to refuse her offer. “I don’t want any of that, Mom. You know how I’ve always preferred drawing since I was a kid, right? I’m getting kind of famous now and a lot of people have acknowledged my artistic skills. I’m really happy to do what I like for a living, and I don’t need anything else.”

Isabelle gave me a strange look and said after a brief pause, “You silly girl! Why would you defend that scumbag father of yours after all the suffering they’ve put you through? You should spoil yourself a little sometimes, you know? I’d grant your requests even if they are selfish.”

“In that case, could you spare the Tanner family? I mean, we’re already free to live our own lives now. We don’t need to bother with certain things anymore,” I said softly.

I did sometimes want to be a little selfish but I couldn’t bring myself to do so with anyone other than Christopher. Isabelle and I seemed to have this barrier between us; things simply didn’t feel the same anymore. The cost of being selfish with her was far too great and I was afraid of losing what I had.

“Enough. Look, I know what I’m doing. Nathan wants to protect the Tanner family but he chose to send you while he hides in the back. How smart of him, treating us both like fools!”

Hearing that, I knew better than to say any further because she would get mad if I did. She then brought me shopping for clothes and had me try on a ton of them. She also bought a lot of clothes after simply asking for my size without me even trying them on.

This was the longest Christopher and I had been separated, and I had been feeling increasingly uneasy since he left. It was as if I had lost my pillar of support. The past two days without him felt like two years.

However, I knew Christopher had left to give Mom some time to cool off and slowly accept him. He knew that having me cling to him at all times would only anger my mom even further, so he decided to take things slow and easy.

My mom came over and got me to move out today, Chris. She even bought a mansion because she knows I don’t like to live with the Goldsteins. I can feel that she’s really making an effort just for me. I know you’re probably mad about me leaving, but Sabby’s right: a brief separation is necessary

for the sake of a better time together in the future. You tried getting closer to me in your own way, and now I'm trying to do the same. I love you, Chris.

That was what remained of the long text I sent Christopher after a lot of editing. I didn't expect him to reply at all. I was flipping through a magazine with pictures of Remington's artwork for an art exchange in Fleynia when I heard my phone vibrate. I quickly turned around and grabbed my phone, only to see a text message reminding me that I had a package to receive.

Feeling a little disappointed that it wasn't from Christopher, I texted the delivery man and had him bring it to the mansion instead.

The delivery man brought the parcel over to me before dark that day, and I quickly opened the package in my bedroom. It wasn't until I saw the content inside that I froze on the spot. I carefully took the box of lollipops out of the package and saw a note on it that read: Remember to have these lollipops whenever you're feeling down.

Lollipops were my favorite snack. He would give me lollipops every now and then, so I knew Christopher was the one who sent these.

My phone vibrated again all of a sudden, and I quickly swiped at the screen in response. What greeted me was a text message from an encrypted number. You're such a naughty girl, moving out all by yourself! Don't expect me to go pick you up when you move back in next time! I'm angry. I'm not going to talk to you unless you coax me!

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Although it was an angry text, I couldn't help but smile when I read it. Christopher was simply so nice to me that he couldn't bring himself to upset me at all. For some reason, all the negativity in me vanished that very moment, while the world around me seemed to have magically become a lot better.

Christopher had this special ability to warm my heart each time without even saying much. Instead, it was the little things he did that worked wonders. There was no way I could ever give up on a man like him, let alone leave him.

He had spoilt me to the point of no return. I would be a fish out of water without him – no one could possibly treat me better than he!

I'll let you do whatever you want to me when you get back, okay?

I sent that text to him just to share my current mood with him, even if he couldn't see me on the spot.

Things didn't seem to be getting any better for the Tanner family. When I woke up the next morning, all I saw on the news were rumors about them going bankrupt. Looks like the stuff I told Mom yesterday backfired... Dad has hurt Mom so badly that she no longer has any feelings of affection for him. The deeper you fall in love with someone, the more you hate them when they hurt you. Judging by how angry Mom looks whenever she talks about Dad, I can tell that hatred is all that remains in her heart.

Maybe the reason why I don't hate Lyle is that I met Christopher before I fell to the darkest depths of hell. It was Christopher who pulled me out of that abyss just in time.

Dad had just completed a checkup and looked like he was going to be discharged when I arrived at the hospital. His servants could be seen carrying his bags and standing at the entrance.

Nathan ran up to me and asked anxiously when he saw me, "How did things go? Did your Mom agree to spare us?"

I shook my head and let out a sigh as I said, "I'm sorry, but I don't think I can help you out with this one, Dad. I tried to talk Mom out of it, but she's very firm about her decision. It's obvious that she won't change her mind just because of what I said."

Nathan went pale and grabbed me by the wrists as he shouted desperately, "What? Why? Belle cares so much about you; she would definitely consider your requests! Eve, I know I have mistreated you and you have every right to hate me... But you must help me this one time or the entire Tanner family will be finished!"

"Calm down, Dad!" He was squeezing my wrists so hard that I broke out in a cold sweat from the pain.

"I can't calm down! You're a member of the Tanner family too! How could you just sit idly and watch us go bankrupt? That's my life's work, damn it! Your mom helped me build it back then, so why is she now hell-bent on destroying it completely? She could just come after me alone if she hates me! Why destroy something that belongs to her as well?" Nathan yelled with a twisted expression.

"No, that's not true! Mom only turned out like this because she loves you way too much! You should go explain to her and resolve the matters from the past. That's the only way for her to let go of her hatred."

Nathan looked like he was about to kill someone with that expression and the constant panting, but I could only comfort him by saying, "I do want to help you, but Mom is a very determined person and won't change her mind simply because of what I say. You're the only person who could move her, Dad. You need to go see her yourself, okay?"

It was obvious that Mom hated Dad for covering behind me, and that she was waiting for him to go see her in person.

"Hmph! Spare us the bullsh*t and just admit it if you don't want to help us! Yvonne, you ingrate! I can't believe you'd just sit by and watch the family you grew up in getting destroyed! No wonder you're not part of the family! We should've kicked you out and left you to die on the streets back then!" Natalie shouted angrily at me.

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"What did you say? What do you mean I'm not part of the family?" I raised my voice as well.

Natalie wouldn't have said that without a reason, so there must be some kind of secret that I did not know of.

"Natalie!" Nathan yelled at her.

"It's time to stop hiding it, Uncle Nathan! Yvonne doesn't give a sh*t if you treat her like family, so you should just tell her the truth! Yvonne isn't your daughter, and yet you've raised her like your own! She has no right to treat you like this!" Crystal butted into the conversation as well.

I stared wide-eyed at Crystal in shock. All these years, I have never considered the possibility that I'm not Nathan's biological daughter! I simply assumed he was angry and frustrated at my mom for leaving him, so he took it out on me. I used to hate him for betraying Mom, but... If I'm not his biological daughter, then what's the point of all this?

I grew up knowing Nathan and Isabelle as my parents. Imagine the shock and disbelief I felt when Crystal told me I was not Nathan's daughter!

The next thing I knew, we were surrounded by a group of journalists who kept snapping away while firing questions about our family relationship.

"Is Yvonne Tanner really not your daughter? Is what Ms. Yates said true?"

“Ms. Tanner has been living with the Tanners since childhood, so whose daughter could she be? Please answer us, Mr. Tanner! Who’s causing the Tanner family to go bankrupt? Rumor has it that the Goldstein family plays a part in this incident. Is that true?”

That was a question that I wanted to know the answer to as well, and I looked at Nathan in hopes of him giving me the answer. All sorts of thoughts began running through my head, but I had a feeling that Crystal was telling the truth.

That was the only way to explain everything that had happened. It made sense why Nathan would love Crystal and Yvette more than me – that was because I wasn’t his daughter, to begin with!

The fact that he had raised me even though we weren’t related by blood was indeed a selfless act of generosity in itself.

“Dad... Is what Crystal said true?” I forced those words out of my mouth. Even though I already knew the answer to that question, I still wanted to hear it from the man himself.

Nathan glanced deeply at me and took a moment to calm down before saying in front of all the journalists around us, “Yes, it’s true. You are indeed not my daughter. I even have a DNA test report here that clearly states we are not related by blood at all, and that you...you’re not my daughter.”

The look on his face made it seem like admitting this fact was the hardest task in the world.

I staggered a few steps back in shock and leaned against the wall to stop myself from falling. “When did you find out?”

I remembered him being really nice to me back then, but he started hating me at one point and began treating me horribly. Perhaps that was the time he found out about the truth.

Nathan took a deep breath. “I knew about it long ago, even before Yvette was born.”

I closed my eyes. Whatever hatred I felt toward Nathan seemed to have vanished in that instant. I used to hate him so much for being an irresponsible father, but it turned out he wasn’t my father to begin with, so he didn’t owe me anything.

As Crystal said, he wouldn’t have been in the wrong even if he kicked me out of the Tanner family. Instead, he simply let me stay even after Mom left me behind.

