

A Shotgun Marriage Chapter 10

Chapter 10

Tia ignored his implication with a frown and changed the subject. "Lance, may I bring my annual leave forward?" She had no other family members and someone had to be around to look after her grandmother. "Sure, no problem," Lance permitted without a second thought. Tia nodded in response, then checked the time before saying to Lance, "It's getting late. Why don't you and Shannon head back first?" "I should stay," he suggested. "I can help if anything comes up." However, she refused. "It's fine. I can manage on my own. Why don't you send Shannon home instead?" "She can return home on her own. I'll stay here with you," he insisted. In response, Tia looked over to Shannon, who was uncomfortable while tugging the corner of her lips at her. However, she concealed it with a smile in two shakes. "Yeah, I can return home on my own. You don't have to worry about someone like me; I'm penniless with zero sexual appeal." Of course, Tia didn't fail to notice the hint of pain laced in her eyes. "Thank you, Mr. Garrett, but you should also head home." Lewis, who had been silent all this while, spoke up. "I'll keep Tia company and take care of Grandma." At that, Lance looked toward him with clear animosity and slightly reproached, "Don't you think it's a little inappropriate?" To that, Lewis placed his arm around Tia's waist naturally, looking as unruffled as ever while he said to Lance, "I'm Tia's fiancé. What's so inappropriate about it?" "You—" Lance glared daggers at him while clenching his fists, livid. At that moment, Elizabeth spoke up upon sensing the growing abnormality in the room. "Lance, you and Shannon should head home. It'll suffice for Tia and Lewis to stay back." Lance knew he couldn't insist anymore when Elizabeth had put it like that. As such, he nodded and said he'd visit the next day before heading out of the ward. Likewise, Shannon nodded a farewell at Tia and bade Elizabeth goodbye before following Lance out. After the two left, Tia retreated from Lewis' embrace in slight discomfort. She then returned to Elizabeth's side. "Grandma, do you feel uncomfortable anywhere? I'll get a doctor." "No," Elizabeth shook her head. "I just feel tired and weak." At that, Tia tucked her in and said, "In that case, you should get some rest." Elizabeth nodded in response, but she still wanted to know how things went down with Lewis' parents. "Tia, have you met with Lewis' parents? Tell me, how did it go?" "Mr. and Mrs. Harvey are really lovely," said Tia, knowing her grandmother wouldn't rest until there was an answer. "Also, Mrs. Harvey is really sweet." "Have they taken a liking to you? Will they... You're an orphan, after all—" "Grandma, my parents are delighted with Tia." Lewis cut Elizabeth off. "I've told them about Tia's situation beforehand, and they aren't biased like that." Elizabeth finally relaxed after hearing his words. She nodded and answered, "Good, good." As much as she wanted to see Tia get married and as pleased as she was with Lewis, she wouldn't let her beloved granddaughter marry into their family only to suffer if the Harveys minded Tia's background or something. "Grandma," said Tia while brushing the few strands of hair on Elizabeth's forehead to the side. "Get some sleep if you're tired. Are you hungry? Do you want me to get you some soup instead?" Elizabeth opened her mouth and thought she indeed couldn't taste much. "What time is it? Are they still selling some soup?" "They are. I'll get you some then." Tia rose to her feet and headed out while speaking, only to be stopped by Lewis. "I'll do it." He headed out just like that, not giving Tia the chance to refuse. "Lewis is a great kid," Elizabeth said to Tia after the man had left the ward. Tia nodded in agreement. "Yeah, he is." "Lance is a good kid too. I can tell that he really likes you." Elizabeth had sent Lewis out on purpose, for she wanted to have a moment with Tia. "What are you trying to say, Grandma?" As dense as Tia was, she knew that Elizabeth was implying something. At that, Elizabeth patted Tia's hand and held it. "Compared to Lewis, I know Lance is a better choice for you. At least, you and Lance have a friendship, if not love." "Grandma, there's nothing between Lance and me. I—" Tia wanted to explain, but Elizabeth cut her off, shaking her head as she insisted, "Let me finish." Tia nodded in response, saying no more. "At first, I imagined how great it'd be if you and Lance ended up together. I can tell the boy likes you, but his family is too complicated. A wealthy family like his is beyond our league, for we're just ordinary folks. Your mom was the best example. The rich and noble are all about rules and etiquette, so I don't want to see you suffer that kind of grievance. Besides, just how long can a feeling last? He might say forever, but who can guarantee that?" After what happened to her daughter, Elizabeth no longer believed in love and all that jazz. All she wanted was for Tia to live a peaceful, normal life with a decent guy. At that, she continued, "I can tell Lewis is a really great guy. He might not be good with words, but he's honest, and that's reassuring enough. I can rest knowing you're in his hands. Even if I'm no longer around, I don't have to worry about you living your life alone." "Grandma, how can you say that?!" Tia grew agitated upon hearing her words as tears pooled in her eyes. "How can you not be around?! You can't say something like that!" Elizabeth smiled in response and caressed Tia's cheek. "I'm getting tired. I'm going to sleep for a while," she said, feeling lethargic. "Alright, I'll be here." Tia nodded. By the time Lewis returned with the soup, Elizabeth had already fallen asleep and Tia gestured at him, telling him to be light with his steps. After putting the soup on the side table, he took a glance at the sleeping Elizabeth before whispering to Tia, "I bought two bowls. You should eat some while it's hot." At that, Tia shifted her gaze to the takeout before looking back at him. It suddenly dawned on her that he was indeed like her grandmother had said. He might not be a talker, but he was thoughtful; he knew exactly what one needed at that moment. "Let's talk outside," she whispered while gesturing at the door. Lewis nodded in agreement and made his way out first. After closing the door gently, the two stood in the corridor right outside Elizabeth's ward. "Thank you for your help tonight. I really appreciate it," said Tia as she thanked him bashfully.