

Chapter 32 I Don't Care

Norah was surprised to get a response from Derek.

Derek's message read, "Let's meet at Oceanic Treat Cafe at 10 a.m. tomorrow."

After waiting for a response to her numerous messages, Derek finally replied.

The following morning, Norah got up bright and early, selecting a sophisticated dress she had designed from her closet. She applied makeup carefully, aiming to look her best.

She was determined not to let Derek get any wrong idea of her not doing well after signing the divorce papers. Her life had taken a turn for the better since parting ways with the Carter family.

The aroma of coffee filled the Oceanic Treat Cafe, where the cozy wooden decoration offered a warm welcome.

Derek was seated in a booth, glancing at the entrance now and then.

He had chosen to come alone today, leaving Madeline to confront Norah directly. He preferred not to expose Madeline to any harsh language he might use against Norah. He believed that his beloved Madeline shouldn't be subjected to such vulgarity.

Right then, a stunning woman entered the cafe, capturing everyone's attention.

She was dressed in a cream-colored gown that gracefully highlighted her figure. The gown flowed beautifully as she moved. The woman's curly chestnut hair was draped behind her

and swayed with her movements. This woman was gorgeous with a captivating face.

It took Derek a moment to recognize the woman was Norah.

Captivated by her beauty, Derek needed a few seconds to regain his composure.

Norah sat across from Derek in the booth, clutching her purse.

"So, Mr. Carter, you've found the time to meet. Why not just proceed with the divorce?" Norah asked, her tone icy yet her smile unwavering.

"Norah, no need to stir things up with me." Derek grabbed his coffee and had a sip. "I wanted to talk with you about something."

"Mr. Carter, please go ahead."

"I can't grasp why you keep sending me messages seeking my attention. I need to clarify that there's no future for us. My heart belongs to Madeline alone."

"And your point?" Norah probed.

"I realized you're concealing quite a bit from me. I'm looking into it. We'll sort out the divorce once I have the investigation results."

"Fine by me."

Norah's frosty demeanor riled up Derek. "Norah, cut it out with this teasing, okay? It irritates me."

With a light laugh, Norah retorted, "I found you and Madeline have something in common. You both tend to flatter yourself."

Holding back his frustration, Derek stated, "Norah, I'll ensure you receive what I've promised, nothing less, but certainly nothing more."

"Honestly speaking, I don't give a damn to those things," Norah replied coolly, her arms crossed and leaning back. "I couldn't

care less."

Norah assumed the money Derek had promised was nothing more than the service fees for her taking care of him in the past two years. Even though it didn't match up to what she had done for his recovery, it was better than nothing.

Derek scoffed in disbelief. "Come on! Drop the act! Do you think you are somebody who can talk to me like this because you're acquainted with Miss Andrews? What? Does she finance you? You've become quite arrogant. It must be Joanna is fond of you and provides you with fortune, right?"

Derek eyed Norah skeptically, giving her a thorough once-over, and concluded his assumption was logical.

Derek couldn't fathom why Joanna, from a wealthy background, would show kindness to Norah, whom he deemed unworthy. Derek was sure Joanna had hidden motives concerning Norah.

Norah nearly laughed at Derek's absurd accusations, finding his bullshits more amusing than offensive.

"Think as you please, Mr. Carter. My only concern is, when will the divorce be finalized?"

"You're so eager about this divorce. Are you already scouting your next target?" Derek's expression was one of continued annoyance as he stared at Norah's striking features. "You'll need to be patient. I'm in no rush to conclude our business!"

"Aren't you worried about Madeline being labeled as the other woman?"

"I'm well aware that Madeline is nothing like that. I pay no mind to gossipers. I don't care what they say! The divorce will only proceed once the investigation into you concludes."

Norah's smile hinted at her resolve. "In that case, you should brace yourself for a legal notice."

Norah couldn't help but think that Derek's lack of intelligence was precisely why the Carter family had never ascended into high society.

"Norah, what are you implying?"

"My words are clear."

Rising from her seat, Norah towered over Derek. "Mr. Carter, don't assume you can manipulate everything in Glophia to your advantage. If I don't hear from you by Sunday, expect to be summoned by the court."

Just then, the cafe door burst open.

"Norah, shame on you! Derek has divorced you. Why do you cling to him?" Madeline stormed in, her eyes brimming with tears, and approached them. Her voice shook as she spoke, and by the end, she was openly weeping.

"When I was overseas, I endured your marriage to Derek. But now that I'm back, can you please let him go? Our love for each other is real. I'm begging you!" Tears flowed as Madeline pleaded, her distress evident.

"So, that elegant lady turns out to be the home wrecker? She married that guy while his true love was away. What a discreet thing to do," an onlooker commented.

"Don't be fooled by appearances. That expensive dress she's wearing is worth a fortune. She seems quite affluent."

"What good is wealth and beauty if one lacks morals?"

The cafe buzzed with whispered judgments, and someone even began filming.

Norah quickly saw Madeline's attempt to tarnish her reputation.

Derek, caught off guard by Madeline's dramatic entrance, hurried to comfort her, "Madeline, please stop crying. Things

between Norah and me aren't as you imagine."

He had planned today as a spa day for Madeline, seizing the opportunity to meet with Norah alone. Madeline's unexpected appearance took him by surprise.

Madeline, through her tears, implored, "Is Norah troubling you again? She made a spectacle at the race to draw your attention, and now, she's chosen the day my parents return to confront you. Norah, I ask you, can you give Derek back to me?"

Norah gazed at her with a frosty demeanor, "Is Derek a possession? Something to be handed off?"

Derek bristled at her tone, saying, "Norah, mind how you speak."

"Did I say something wrong? Your beloved Madeline storms in here, making groundless accusations. And you? Why don't you explain things to her earlier? I'm no pushover. I've no interest in indulging your games." Norah cast a disdainful look at Madeline, who was still weeping in Derek's embrace.

"Anyway, Mr. Carter, I've made my stance clear to you. Ponder over it. And do keep Madeline in check. I won't tolerate any slander about me in Glophia. Cross that line, and I won't hold back."

With that, Norah turned to those onlookers in the cafe and said, "Anyone who has recorded this, I expect those videos deleted. Should any footage surface online, my attorney will be in touch."

As Norah walked away, Derek clutched Madeline closer, his face a mask of fury, watching Norah leave.



Chapter 33 How's The Investigation Going

Norah left the Oceanic Treat Cafe. Her face was a mask of cool detachment. She had hoped for any updates on her ongoing divorce in her meeting with Derek today, but instead, she was left dealing with his and Madeline's bullshits, which was nothing short of a bummer.

The relentless sun scorched the earth, sending waves of heat shimmering through the air.

As Norah was about to step into her vehicle, she spotted a sleek, black luxury car parked along the roadside. The driver, dressed in black, caught sight of Norah and respectfully called out, "Miss Wilson."

With her expression unchanged, Norah approached and swung the car door open.

Settling into the back seat, she asked coldly, "How's the investigation going?"

The driver carefully shut the door, reporting, "Miss Wilson, after learning about your situation, Mr. and Mrs. Wilson headed for Flatridge Mountain. They took the Mercedes from the garage, leaving under the cover of night."

"Is there more?"

The driver, visibly anxious, added, "Details are secretive, and the information of the car involved in the incident remains unknown. That's all the information available at the moment."

Norah's gaze fell, her fingers idly tapping. "What about my uncle's family?"

"They're at home, with no significant movements to report."

Norah issued her orders firmly, "Have Gilda and Chayce monitor my uncle's family closely and press on with the incident investigation. Any word on Sacredice?"

The driver hesitated, saying, "We've yet to establish contact with Sacredice."

Sacredice was an enigmatic international intelligence agency known for trading information for money.

"Initiate contact with them. Sooner or later, they'll reply." A flicker of determination crossed Norah's eyes. "Whatever Sacredice demands, if it's within the Wilson family's means, comply."

The driver acknowledged, "Understood, Miss Wilson. When do you plan to return to the Wilson family's residence? Your uncle's family is eyeing a stake in the conglomerate."

Norah sneered, "Let them try. I'm ready to confront them. Please keep me updated."

After that, she opened the door and stepped out to drive her own car. She drove aimlessly, lost in thought.

The Wilson family she referred to was not the well-known one in Glophia but a secretive family, lesser-known yet wealthier than the prominent families, though still beneath the Scott family in terms of wealth.

Since her earliest memories, Norah had been wandering, later joining an elite organization for intense training.

After a mission, she learned of the organization's downfall, shed her alias, and settled back in Glophia.

Three years ago, a couple approached her for a DNA test, revealing her connection to the distinguished yet secretive Wilson family as the sole daughter of the family.

Her initial encounter with her biological parents was at their funeral. They had died in a tragic car crash while on a search for clues about her whereabouts.

As Norah drove, her gaze lingered on the roadside plants, feeling the breeze against her skin.

Growing up without strong family ties, she had always been solitary.

Yet, learning of her parents' search for her instilled a resolve to uncover the truth of her parents' deaths. She sensed there was a hidden narrative behind their car incident.

Throughout her stay with the Carter family over the last three years, she clung to the memory of her quest.

Her mind then shifted to Sacredice, the mysterious organization.

Based abroad, Sacredice was renowned internationally, though scarcely recognized within her country. Locally, only a small number of individuals were aware of this intelligence agency.

Sacredice didn't just gather intelligence. They also accepted bounty contracts, which sometimes involved carrying out assassinations.

With adequate compensation, they pursued their targets relentlessly, showcasing a prowess beyond her previous organization. Two years went by with no trace of Sacredice.

Pondering over her uncle's maneuvers, Norah deliberated on her return to assert her rightful place.

Even though her parents were no longer around, the Wilson family's wealth should rightly belong to her.

Since her grandfather had already divided the property clearly, her share wouldn't be claimed by anyone.

"Dad, mom, here you are!" Greeting her parents at the hotel's

entrance, Madeline clung to Derek's arm as they approached.

Madeline's father, Coen, and her mother, Rhoda, arrived arm in arm.

Rhoda tenderly said, "Madeline, after such a long time abroad without a word, it's good to finally see you. And Derek, it's been a while."

Coen gave Derek a friendly pat. "Looking good, Derek."

Madeline lovingly linked arms with her mother, leaning her head on Rhoda's shoulder.

"I've missed you both terribly. Who would've guessed your trip abroad without letting me know? Now that you're back, we should celebrate properly. Mom, dad, Derek has reserved the hotel for you. Let's head inside."

Rhoda said, "Glophia is full of fine hotels. There's no need for such extravagance as Solo Mio Restaurant."

Madeline blinked and said affectionately, "Well, Derek knows you two are coming back today and had made the reservation at Solo Mio Restaurant to welcome you. It's his way of giving you a warm reception."

Coen chuckled. "Thank you, Derek."

As they dined, Coen lifted his glass and asked, "So, Derek, how are things with Madeline? Planning to tie the knot?"

Derek's hold on his fork tightened before he looked up, stating sincerely, "Coen, Rhoda, my feelings for Madeline are real."

Madeline playfully interjected, "Dad, I've already told you. I want to marry Derek."

Rhoda responded with joyful laughter, "You're such a perfect match."

Madeline and Derek's relationship had the full support of both Coen and Rhoda from the start.

Yet, Madeline's sudden overseas trip to marry someone else and Derek's life-altering car incident threw their expectations off course, seemingly dousing any hopes for their reunion. However, against all odds, Derek's commitment to marry Madeline remained steadfast.

Derek set his fork down, reassuring Madeline's parents, "Coen, Rhoda, you have my word. I'll always take good care of Madeline. As for the wedding, we'll plan a meeting between our families to discuss it further."

Rhoda cleared her throat and said, "And what about that woman..."

Having recently arrived back in the country, Rhoda and Coen were unaware of the Carter family's situation.

"Mom, are you referring to Norah Wilson? She and Derek had signed the divorce papers recently."

Recalling the day's events, Madeline nervously nibbled her lip, her eyes flashing with envy. She was ready to lend a "helping" hand if Norah sought to draw attention from any man!

With a light chuckle, Rhoda said, "Ah, that's good to know. Just ensure everything is handled properly. Derek, my only wish is for you to treat Madeline right."

Growing up, Madeline, the youngest daughter of the Powell family, had always been showered with affection by Coen and Rhoda.

Even after going abroad for marriage and returning under mysterious circumstances, Madeline continued to be cherished as their beloved youngest daughter.

At Rhoda's words, Derek found his thoughts involuntarily drifting to Norah.

Chapter 34 Part On Good Terms

Back when Derek and Norah got married, Derek was unconscious in a hospital bed after the car incident. The two families did not conform to the wedding customs. The Carter family didn't negotiate with the Wilson family regarding the wedding date or the specifics of the ceremony.

After settling on a date, Norah moved into the Carter villa, starting her journey of taking care of Derek.

The marriage certificate was secured by Juliana using her connections, given Derek's unconscious condition.

As for wedding photos, there were originally none, but Juliana insisted on Norah taking one.

That photo ended up on the wall of the master bedroom in the Carter villa, remaining there as Derek seldom visited there since he woke up, and it was never removed.

Upon returning, Madeline discarded that wedding photo immediately.

Derek found himself recalling these events with surprising clarity.

"Mom, dad, Derek's been wonderful to me," Madeline declared, nestling closer to Derek with a cheerful demeanor.

Norah roamed until well after midnight, her hunger growing. It was time to eat.

Norah glanced around and recognized the place. It was Solo Mio Restaurant where the race organizers hosted a meal for the

racers just a few days ago.

Parking her car, Norah entered Solo Mio Restaurant with a casual stride. "I'd like a table, please."

"I'm sorry, miss, but may I see your reservation? We need to record it," the receptionist requested politely.

"Ah, I didn't book ahead. Is it still possible to get a table?"

The thought of making a reservation a month in advance hadn't crossed Norah's mind, given her unplanned visit.

The receptionist responded with a sympathetic smile, "I'm sorry, but we have to stick to our policy. Thank you for understanding."

Without insisting further, Norah turned to leave.

"Norah, did you really come here after me?"

Hearing this, Norah glanced back, noting the immediate shift in Derek's expression from pleasant to stern as he approached her.

Derek approached steadily, fixing his gaze directly on Norah.

Derek flattered himself and got the wrong idea. Despite all Norah's talk about divorce and even threatening him with court summon for the divorce, the moment she found out he was dining at Solo Mio Restaurant, she quietly followed him. What a hypocritical woman.

"Solo Mio Restaurant requires prior booking. It's not a place you can just walk in." Derek approached Norah with a taunt. "You stormed off so confidently this morning, and now you're back my side in a rush. Playing hard to get?"

"Derek, have you so quickly forgotten our conversation this morning?" Norah stood her ground, arms crossed, and said, "Don't flatter yourself. Bumping into you is hardly my idea of good luck."

Derek clenched his jaw, "You..."

Madeline emerged, unaware of Norah's presence, and said, "Derek, is our bill settled?" She hadn't noticed Norah beside Derek due to her angle of approach.

Upon walking into the hall with her parents, Madeline finally spotted Norah and felt a wave of irritation.

Letting go of her mother's hand, Madeline moved closer to Derek, eyeing Norah with suspicion, and said, "Miss Wilson, did you come here to steal Derek from me? Please..."

Before she could finish, tears began to form in Madeline's eyes. "I... I understand, Miss Wilson, you still have feelings for Derek, but you two never shared a real connection... Why keep haunting him and resorting to such low actions..."

Rhoda approached, and her tone was firm, studying a tearful Madeline and then turning her attention to Norah, saying, "Miss Wilson, Madeline has been quite clear. You and Derek are divorced. Technically, you and Derek are strangers now. Can't you part on good terms?"

Rhoda's opinion of Norah was tainted by Madeline's twisted description as an illegitimate child of the Wilson family. Without prior knowledge of Norah, Rhoda's attitude was dismissively arrogant.

"Madeline and Derek are in love. After the divorce, you should recognize what's appropriate. Is there a need to disrupt their lives by acting as a mistress?" Rhoda was accustomed to asserting herself, and when dealing with someone like Norah, who seemingly lacked a powerful background, her arrogance shone even brighter. "Miss Wilson, let me be blunt. If you act sensibly, all is well. If not, neither the Powell family nor the Carter family will stand idly by."

Rhoda scoffed. Wanting to badger the future son-in-law of the Powell family, Madeline's future husband? Norah needed to

check if she agreed first.

Norah raised an eyebrow, realizing it was a classic meet-the-parents scenario. She finally grasped Madeline's attitude, as arrogant as Madeline's mother's. It was clear as day to anyone paying attention.

Rhoda donned an elegantly tight dress and failed to soften her severe demeanor, instead giving off a more imposing air as she scrutinized Norah, assessing her worth.

Coen, generally more measured, remarked, "Miss Wilson, part on good terms. We acknowledge your past efforts for Derek. Why degrade yourself with this situation after the divorce?"

Madeline, portraying the victim, quivered, tears streaming down as she clutched her emotions tightly.

Derek's heart sank as he delicately wiped away her tears, soothingly saying, "Madeline, don't cry. It's just a coincidence that Norah is here."

Madeline glanced up to catch Norah's somewhat amused expression and her look of disdain before Norah looked away.

"But one needs to book in advance to dine at Solo Mio Restaurant. Did Miss Wilson arrange a reservation a month in advance?"

Derek's face tensed as Madeline echoed the question he had intended for Norah.

Before the divorce, Derek and Madeline had hooked up, and making reservation at Solo Mio Restaurant was Madeline's idea to celebrate her parents' return.

Norah chose to remain quiet among Coen's and Rhoda's groundless accusations and Madeline's probing questions. She deemed engaging with these idiots fixed in their perspectives pointless.

Norah's eyes shifted from Rhoda to Coen, then lingered on

Madeline and Derek, marveling at the intricate web of fate entangling her and Derek.

Norah just walked to Solo Mio Restaurant on a whim and happened to bump into Derek, who was with his soon-to-be in-laws. She glanced down, finding the situation absurd. Indeed, there existed a profound and unwanted bond between her and Derek.

Derek, with a hint of impatience, stated, "Norah, only you know if this is a mere coincidence or not. Seeing me at the racetrack was unexpected, but today? We just went separated ways after the unpleasant talk in the morning, and now, you're already tailing me. I don't know how you got hold of my whereabouts. I've already made it crystal clear this morning. Until the investigation wraps up, you'd better behave, or you might end up with nothing."

"Threatening me?" Norah's smile was frosty. "Threats are the least of my concerns."

Madeline, through her tears, pleaded, "Miss Wilson, I'm sorry for my earlier words. Can you please leave Derek alone?"

Rhoda, unable to hide her disdain, suggested, "The Carter family is notable in Glophia. Perhaps Miss Wilson is reluctant to sever ties with Derek and lose her Mrs. Carter status. Madeline, stop crying. Derek is devoted to you, and with our support, you have nothing to fear from Norah."

Norah listened to their bullshits, thinking she could have lingered longer if hunger hadn't taken over.

Preparing to depart, Norah lifted her bag and turned, ready to exit.

Just then, a voice exclaimed, "Oh, is that Miss Wilson? Are you here to dine? Please, come this way."