

# Nothing Matters, except YOU & Me Chapter 421

As Heather watched the butler approach them, she felt as though the wheels of fate had been set in motion and there was nothing she could do to stop them.

She blanched as the small gift box was carefully placed in Robert's hand, clueless as to what it contained.

However, now that she was thinking about it, she had a bad feeling about what might be in the box.

"I'll open it if you don't mind," Robert said as his fingers clasped the box.

She managed an exasperated smile and answered with what she hoped was nonchalance, "Go ahead." He would only grow more suspicious of her if she were to deny him from opening the box.

In retrospect, she might have been too brash when she explained herself earlier; it was obvious that her grandfather did not completely believe her this time. After all, it was hard to convince anyone that Matthias was trying to exact revenge on her when there was neither a basis to the story nor proof to support her claim.

Suddenly, Robert handed the box over to her and he broke into a kind, affectionate smile. "This is a gift for you, Heather. It wouldn't be right for me to open it."

When she took the box, she winced slightly, as though the gift burnt her. It was impossible for Heather to back out of the living room now and discard the offending object, which meant she was left with no choice but to open it in front of Robert. She knew it was the only way to prove that she had nothing to hide, thereby gaining his full trust.

Her eyes fell on the box. Feigning indifference, she opened it to reveal the diamond necklace nestled within. She couldn't help the small sigh of relief that escaped her at the sight of this, and the fear drained out of her as she thought, Thank goodness it's just a necklace.

But just as she gingerly picked up the jewelry, she dislodged the note that had been tucked beneath it. A grimace twisted her features as she stared at the note, knowing that she would

only appear guilty if she did not pull it out. It looked like Matthias had spun an intricate web to trap her.

On the flip side, if she were to read the note and find that Matthias had written something lewd, she would have to come up with a plausible explanation.

Under Robert's watchful gaze, she suppressed her fury and pulled out the note, then assumed an unruffled front as she unfolded it.

On the note were three lines inscribed in careful penmanship, the first of which was a poem, and the following two were his own words. She scanned the words that read, 'I pace around hungry, sniffing the twilight, hunting for you, for your hot heart, like a puma in the barrens of Quitratue; there are few things in the world that could compare to your beauty, and the ruby is one such thing. Fate has brought us together and I hope to only give you nothing but the best.'

Quoting one of the more obscure, sensual poems by Pablo Neruda would have usually been the gateway to capture Heather's attention, but seeing as how things had turned out presently, it was an understatement to say she was not impressed. She wanted to tear the note into pieces and throw the ridiculous ruby necklace into the trash.

She gritted her teeth at the thought of Matthias' elaborate scheme. How could I let my guard down and allow him to get away with all these infuriating shenanigans?

She should have tread more carefully around him after the first set-up instead of underestimating him, and now she had only herself to blame for this predicament. How naïve and foolish of her to have been duped by his charming maneuvers—she ought to strangle herself.

Just then, Robert cleared his throat, the sound of which pulled her out of her thoughts.

Judging from the way things were going, he could tell that there was something complex going on between his granddaughter and Matthias. Surely the latter would not go to such lengths if he had no actual feelings for Heather.

As for the talk of vengeance that Heather had mentioned, Robert found that there was no basis for it. After all, Matthias had only just arrived in Bradford City, and it wasn't only until a few days ago that Heather had returned to the city as well.

He was skeptical that any feud could have brewed between the both of them within such a short span of time. On the contrary, he would be more inclined to believe that it was an age-old story of love at first sight.

They probably had a fight that resulted in Heather's present denial of any association with him. Or perhaps he tried to force himself on her last night.

As far as Robert was concerned, Matthias had left a decent impression on him after their first and only meeting. Furthermore, the young man appeared to have given some thought into getting a gift for Heather, which meant he was putting in the effort to pursue her romantically. There didn't seem to be anything foul or wicked going on here.

"I'm going to my room, Grandpa," Heather said presently, desperate for some peace and quiet as her energy drained out of her.

Robert nodded without adding anything else to the conversation, knowing that he could not get a word in with her or put his foot into her personal affairs while she seemed so downtrodden.

Having gone into her bedroom, Heather closed the door behind her and shuffled over to the bed. She was exhausted and she hated that she was suffering such a messy defeat. She thought about the newspaper that headlined her non-existent scandal with Matthias and grew frustrated, not being able to figure out why that man had orchestrated this.

She brought her fist down onto the bed and hammered out her annoyance. Then, pulling a pillow over her face, she mumbled grimly, "I won't let you get away after all the despicable things you have done, Matthias Locke."

Heather was so outraged that she would have beaten him up if he were standing before her right now. However, at the thought that he had a black belt in karate, she realized that he could easily take her down. As things were, pummeling him to death would not be a viable option.

And so, the fury gnawed away at her. She couldn't just sit by and do nothing while he turned her into some pathetic piece of pawn on his chessboard. She had to strike back but she was at a loss as to how she could do that, seeing as she had no idea why he was doing all these in the first place. Brilliant as she was, she could not come up with a way to put that man in his place.

It was crucial for her to figure out the purpose behind all his schemes. She could tell that he still had a thing for Myra and judging from the way he behaved, it was clear that he had not gotten over the woman. As such, Myra was the key to this battle.

Going on that assumption, it could mean that he was trying to sabotage her friendship with Myra, and Heather panicked at the thought of this. There was no telling what lengths he might go to just to get what he wanted.

Robert was the only family she had and Myra was her only friend. There weren't many sentiments that tethered Heather to this existence, and she would do everything she could to stop Matthias from taking these away from her.

After a long moment of thought, she realized that she was making no headway in discovering his true intentions, and came to the brisk conclusion that he was doing all these just to spite her. For him to go all out to wage war against her meant that he had taken calculated risks. She might not know what his plans were, but she was certain that the scandal he faked was only a small part of them.

The more Heather pondered on this, the more tired she felt and eventually, she fell asleep. She had slept well under the effects of the drugs last night but the side effects were brutal. Her entire body was sore and her head pounded relentlessly.

When her eyes fluttered open much later in the evening, she saw that it was dark outside. She woke up starving and realized that she had been holed up in her bedroom for close to ten hours. Having missed dinner, she patted her stomach, which grumbled in protest.

There would not be dinner on the table at this late hour. She glanced around resentfully at the darkness that cloaked her room, musing at how it mirrored the abyss in her heart. Her hatred for Matthias continued to burn in her as she decidedly burrowed into bed once more.

She spent most of the night drifting in and out of sleep, feeling restless and hungry. It had been a long time since she felt so miserable, and suffering a defeat by Matthias was the sole cause of her sorry state. When she woke up early the next morning, she strode out of her room feeling rejuvenated.

She noticed that the servants were throwing meaningful looks at her as she walked by them this morning. Bristling at this, she hurried into the living room in search of a respite from their judgmental gaze.

It was far too early for the others in the house to greet the day and upon entering the living room, she saw Robert reading the morning paper. She bridled at the sight of the newspaper and she had an inkling that something bad had happened again.

She began to sneak out of the entryway, but was stopped in her tracks when Robert said, "Come here, Heather." Hence, she had no choice but to walk over to where he was.

Heather thought she might be able to avoid what was fast becoming a disastrous breakfast, but it looked like she was forced to partake of it anyway. Feeling anxious, she pulled out the seat across the table and glanced warily at the newspaper laid out in front of her grandfather. Needless to say, she was worried that something worse might happen today.

"Take a look for yourself," the older man said, his expression tight as he slid the newspaper over to her.

She scanned the front page news and saw that the large picture beneath the headline was one of Matthias and herself. She didn't even know where the paparazzi had taken this shot.

The caption itself was more than groundbreaking and upon reading the entire article, she felt rage course through her. It hadn't been a big deal when Matthias brought her into the board meeting at the Locke Group as a passive participant, but the newspaper had twisted the narrative entirely. The article claimed that her attendance at the meeting was in conjunction to her upcoming marriage to Matthias, and both his company and hers would join forces following their union.

Heather seethed at this. It looks like Matthias is smarter than I gave him credit for—he's now completely taken over the narrative! She wanted to rip the newspaper into shreds. How audacious of him to claim that my family business will be partnering up with the Locke Group! she thought to herself, fuming at the malicious turn Matthias' schemes had taken.

"Grandpa, I told him that I do not speak on behalf of the Langston Family. This newspaper is spouting absolute nonsense," she explained angrily. How dare they claim that I have signed a partnership agreement with the Locke Group on behalf of the Langstons?

It was infuriating how the article could make such baseless claims and blow them up into groundbreaking news. The person who wrote the article certainly has quite the imagination to spin such creative lies to fill the entire front page.

Heather would not let any one of Matthias' accomplices get away with tarnishing her name, so she made the decision to drop by the newspaper company so that she could find out what other dirty lies the journalist had in store.

Meanwhile, Robert's expression softened after he saw the look of disbelief on Heather's face. He knew she was an ambitious young lady, but she would not go so far as to sign an agreement on behalf of the entire company.

"It looks like Matthias isn't going to give up on his pursuit of you," he remarked. This was what he had taken away after reading the situation as a whole. In some ways, it brought back memories from when he had been younger.

"Grandpa, don't take this the wrong way. I've told you that vengeance is the only reason why Matthias is pestering me in the first place," she reiterated with much more emphasis this time. Heather understood that there were some things that did not make sense at first instance, but all she had to do was keep on insisting that this was the truth and others would start to believe her.

"The both of you have only just met—how could there be any bad blood between you?" Robert was completely puzzled by this and he would only grow anxious if he did not get an answer to this riddle.

"He and I—" Heather broke off, suddenly at a loss for words, knowing very well that she couldn't say that she had known Matthias since their younger days. After all, it wasn't as if her family had any impression of him in those times.

"Forget it," Robert interjected as he assessed her pensively. "Young people have their own ways of doing things." He was washing his hands off this, and had no intentions of interfering in her affairs.

"I can't come up with an explanation right now, Grandpa, and I have no evidence to support my claims either." She was trying to persuade him but she wasn't even sure if her words were falling upon deaf ears.

Upon seeing that he had no response to this, she sighed and leaned into her chair. She wanted to bury her head into the ground; she was growing tired of Matthias' games and she wanted to march right up to him so she could demand an explanation. However, judging from the way things were going, she knew she had to keep her distance from him. She couldn't risk giving the paparazzi and the tabloids any more ammunition.

"Heather, if that boy from the Locke Family is giving you a hard time, I promise I'll take care of it," Robert said assuringly at last, reaching out to clasp her hand. He liked Matthias, but his granddaughter's opinions came first and there was no good in forcing her to compromise.

Nonetheless, he couldn't help but feel sorry for the young man. Robert was getting flashbacks of his past and speaking from experience, he knew that it would only end badly if one forced a relationship on the other. Women were mysterious creatures after all, and they could make up their own minds about these things, however hurtful it might be for the men who so desperately pursued them.

"I promise I'll give you an explanation soon, Grandpa," Heather said with a steely look in her eyes. She couldn't care less about how powerful or capable Matthias was—she would stop at nothing to clear her name.