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Nothing Matters, except YOU & Me Chapter 731

At the Locke Group, the higher-ups of the company gathered in a cramped room while a benevolent and kind elderly man was seated right in its center. The seniors studied the elder warily, their eyes filled with fear and respect. The elder's every move seemed to have the power to cause them anxiety.

Not only that, the old man's amiable tone of speech was overwhelming in their ears; the more he acted this way, the more the higher-ups' hands were tied.

"Is Matthias not present in the company today?" asked the old man pleasantly.

The higher-ups were precisely most afraid of this question. They had hoped to leave the room unscathed, but it seemed like it was all merely wishful thinking—naturally, the sharp old man wouldn't leave out such an important detail.

He took in the senior management's reaction one by one and his expression shifted slightly. He didn't need their answer to know that Matthias wasn't at the company at the moment.

However, the old man didn't seem upset; his eyes glazed over them coldly and an unreadable smile hung on his lips. Indeed, in the world of business, the elderly weren't often as kind as they seemed. They could easily become another person in the blink of an eye.

The higher-ups noticed the discontentment of the old man's face, so they all looked at him with utmost sincerity and respect in hopes of making him feel more at ease. However, the old man did not loosen up. Right now, there was even an added sense of sharpness in his gaze. The crowd didn't know how to appease him and the entire room was in hushed pandemonium, for nobody was willing to step up.

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Outside the closed doors, staff members were frantically dialling Matthias' phone non-stop, but sadly, no one was picking up. Matthias currently had his full attention on decorating Heather's villa with his phone set to airplane mode, so it effectively blocked out all manner of cellular contact.

After hours of hard work, Matthias was finally done with his job as Heather's interior designer before he remembered to switch off the function on his phone. Before he could leave the villa, his phone exploded with never-ending messages as alerts blasted his speakers continuously. All sorts of notifications spammed his screen and he felt like his head would explode soon.

As such, he didn't have the chance to bid Heather farewell before he left; with his phone acting this way the moment he stepped outside, his mood hit rock bottom in an instant.

However, when he realized the content of the messages, he couldn't even process his anger as he rushed to his car immediately. He had to return to the Locke Group at once. What he just learned had surprised him completely—he didn't think the head of the Locke Family would visit Bradford City in person. The old man wasn't in good health; in addition to coming all this way to the city, Matthias didn't know how he was able to arrive safely.

Nonetheless, Matthias didn't have the time to worry about Chester's health since he was in a much more difficult situation himself. He recalled how strict the old man usually was on him, and he knew that he was in deep trouble this time.

He sped off as fast as he could and arrived in Bradford when it was nearly post office hours. He went up to the presidential office with his heart restless and uneasy. Just as he was about to push open the door, he hesitated. He noticed that even the new secretary didn't look so good as she stood outside.

Chester was definitely in the office, and Matthias didn't know what to say once he opened the door. As he thought of the man's stern face, he felt apprehensive about going inside.

Things were bound to get complicated the next moment, and Matthias' mouth twitched as his face was heavy with foreboding. He knew that he would have to face it sooner or later if it was meant to be, for running away wouldn't do him any good.

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After swallowing his restlessness and doubt, he pushed open the door and entered the office. Then, he locked eyes with Chester without showing any form of surprise. His gaze was calm and cold, whereas Chester's was emotionless. The two exchanged hard looks in silence, and no one was willing to break it off.

Eventually, Matthias decided to compromise. He lowered his head and slowly went up to the elderly. He knew that the old man was going to interrogate him regarding his absence, and he was quietly thinking up the best countermeasure to save himself.

Meanwhile, Chester's eyes were filled with disappointment for Matthias; the blatant look in his eyes made the latter unsure of how he should explain himself. Matthias suddenly lost the power to take control of the situation, and he could only wait for Chester to pass his judgement.

However, Chester simply remained silent and unfazed. As a result, Matthias didn't know how to start, and the two maintained their stand in the meantime. He knew what the older man was expecting, but he couldn't bring himself to admit his faults.

Meanwhile, Chester felt greatly defeated by Matthias' current behavior, for he didn't think the man would be unwilling to apologize even in front of him. Naturally, Chester was curious as to why Matthias was so bold all of a sudden.

The two kept quiet in the office, and none of them was planning to back down as they played the staring game. Chester waited patiently for Matthias to give in. The Locke Group wasn't fully in Matthias' hands yet, and he was certain that the young man was aware of this.

"Is there a reason you're here for me, Sir?" Matthias asked nonchalantly. After the long silence, his first words were of such indifference.

At that moment, Chester was even more disappointed when he heard those words—how could Matthias act like this in front of him? The way he had addressed Chester also sent a pang to the latter's heart.

"Shouldn't you give me an explanation for not being in the office at a time like this, Matthias?" Chester lost his temper all of a sudden. Since Matthias refused to give him a sincere apology, he didn't feel the need to be polite.

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Matthias looked at Chester calmly, completely unbothered. He didn't have anything to say at this point. So what if he knew how much power the old man had over this company? After all, he was already planning to get to the bottom of the Locke Group's forces from the beginning.

"Sir, where would our company be if I don't make time to meet our clients?" Matthias said casually. He remembered how Chester used to teach him—one shouldn't hold back when it was time to fight.

Chester's sudden visit this time was probably to investigate Matthias' act of disloyalty. Indeed, Matthias was none other than an unpredictable time bomb in the Locke Group, so he already knew that this day would come sooner or later.

Since he had thought about how he would deal with this situation, he was now handling it in a steady manner; it was as though he had been practicing it over and over again in his head. In the end, those words simply rolled off his tongue smoothly without a second thought.

"Have the Lockes ever wronged you, Matthias?" Chester questioned him angrily.

Matthias chuckled as he said, "Have I ever wronged the Lockes, Sir?" He enjoyed seeing Chester being angry, for it made him feel like the head of the family was just a normal human being.

As the old man stared straight at Matthias, he couldn't see even the slightest guilt in his eyes. He knew that Matthias had long since turned against him, so he could only take away his top position in the company before he could bring any damage that was beyond repairable.

"Matthias, I'm dismissing you as the Locke Group's president as of today," said Chester bluntly. He had made the tough decision in just a split second.

Matthias didn't look too surprised, for he felt like Chester was simply putting on a show in front of him. As he maintained his unconcerned demeanor, he then said, "I'm afraid you can't dismiss me as you wish, Sir. There is a list of procedures to go through before it can be decided."

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Chester felt powerless against the wicked smile on Matthias' face, so he stared unblinkingly at Matthias; it was as if by doing that, the latter could feel remorse.

Matthias didn't budge despite that, and his face was still stiff and cold. After all, he was dubbed 'The Smiling Tiger' in the business world. Matthias' smug grin made Chester descend into greater panic, and the latter thought that perhaps he had really made a mistake all those years ago.

"I was the one who gave you everything, Matthias." In the end, Chester decided to use the empathy card.

However, the younger man took a seat in front of the desk before he said, "You were also the one who took everything away from me, Sir." The Lockes had stripped Matthias of his emotions, making him a heartless money-making machine.

"Are you really not grateful for the past, Matthias?" Chester asked in resignation. From the looks of it, Matthias was determined to ruin it all.

"You've already made it clear from what you said just now, Sir. None of you have ever put your trust in me, and I'm nothing more than a pawn that can be replaced at any time." Chester's earlier words had put a stab in his heart, and it was too late for him to turn it around with nostalgia.

"Why can't you understand, Matthias? That was just my anger talking." Chester was still trying to turn the tables. He didn't want to go too far, for he knew that Matthias wouldn't be able to handle the pain.

"Stop putting on that pitiful face, Sir. We know each other too well, and the empathy card isn't going to work on either of us." Matthias could see through his bluff from the beginning; Chester treated the former with great care and concern on the surface with the sole purpose of gaining better control over him.

There were roles to be played in the Locke Family, be it good or bad. Chester had taken all of these into account, and he always had Matthias wrapped around his finger.

"Matthias, I've groomed you for years and I even gave you the highest position in the Locke Group. Why are you still unsatisfied?" Chester asked him bitterly. He thought that Matthias

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wouldn't show his hand in such an outright manner, but he was wrong—this was the worst case scenario.

“Do you think I wanted any of this?” Matthias pointed at himself as he argued. “Have you ever asked for my opinion? Who am I to all of you? Is it a must for me to endure everything just because I'm a direct descendant of the Lockes? I'm nothing but an illegitimate child; I'm a disgrace to all of you. You had no choice but to give me this. Not only that, I had to take it at the expense of my mother's life, my first love, and even my humanity!” Matthias blurted it all out in one breath. He felt relieved, for he had been wanting to say these words to Chester for a long time.

Chester stared at Matthias in astonishment, not expecting this man to have felt so wronged all this while. It appeared that money and power were not all that mattered to some people; stubborn people like Matthias who would cling onto the past existed too.

“You've never told me about these.” Chester didn't know what to say. Right now, Matthias seemed so unfamiliar and different as he stood in front of him.

“How was I supposed to tell you? I'm just a nobody to you; do I have the right to say anything?” Matthias let out a cold scoff. This old man was none other than the biggest culprit—he was the one who made Matthias grovel at his feet for years.

Chester shook his head in dismay. Little did he expect to arrive at such an ending after years of painstaking effort. At the end of the day, Matthias was right—it was them who had robbed him of everything he had.

“I'm sorry. If you need to hold a grudge, just hate me alone. Don't take it out on the Locke Group.” Chester didn't want to argue anymore, so he bit back his pride and apologized for the first time.

However, Matthias didn't accept his apology as it wasn't what he was looking for. “I'm sorry, Sir. Your apology means nothing to me. What I want is far more than that. I want you to see the Locke Group crumble with your own eyes, and I want you to pay for all the crimes that you've done. Be prepared to live in regret for the rest of your life!”

Chester stared at Matthias in terror. So this is what he's been secretly plotting all this while... The old man had truly underestimated him.

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Even though Matthias was still one step away from reaching his goal, he could already see it happening—the Locke Group’s downfall was such a beautiful and rewarding sight to picture.

Chester knew for a fact that the ending was already set in stone. Hence, he lowered his head which was once held high with pride. For the past few years, he had put too much trust in Matthias. In the end, he lost everything to this very same man.

Back then, he probably shouldn’t have agreed to Matthias’ plan of moving all of the Locke Group’s forces to Bradford City—heck, he shouldn’t have trusted Matthias fully. What a cruel punishment it was for him to watch the Locke Group go under in his remaining years. At last, Chester had truly known defeat.

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When the door to the director’s office was pulled open from the inside, Matthias left the room. Since the Locke Group was fully under his control, there was no need for him to be there.

At this very moment, he could openly announce that he wished to personally bring Locke Group to its downfall, and that bearing no fear against the family’s head, things were bound to change with each passing second.

As though he had a new life, he organized the suit he was donning. To him, every molecule of air he took in was refreshing. He loved that sensation, and he intuitively lifted the corners of his lips.

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If it weren't for coping with Heather's covert operation, he would have shared the news with her right away. Sadly, given the circumstances, he couldn't do so.

With how things had escalated, Matthias grew even more assiduous. Since he didn't want to involve her in the Locke Group's affair, he didn't even contact her on social media. Although he was desperate for a compliment from her like an ungrown child, he wanted her to hear the news from others.

As he scanned his surroundings, Matthias turned around and stared at the Locke Group building and momentarily forgot where he was about to go. As he left the premises, he couldn't find a place to go home to as he wished to desert all the residences under that family.

Now that he had nothing else, no words that could describe the emptiness he felt. It wasn't as simple as the happiness from turning a new leaf, for there was even a bittersweet sensation coming from a tinge of unwillingness to flee the family!

As the cooling zephyr brushed against his face, he was reminded of how long winter was this year, and innumerable incidents seemed to have cramped up in this one chilly season. Falling under an illusion that he was looking forward to spring, he tightly held on to his shirt as a fondness for winter suddenly surged in him.

Meanwhile, Heather was notified by Zayne regarding Matthias' status as she hid in the rented residence. Man, he must have planted bugs all over the Locke Group's building!

"He was escorted out of the director's office?" She was piqued by the occurrence of such an event.

"You don't look worried." Zayne saw through her, and he could tell that she was indulging in the drama.

"What for?" she chucklingly continued, "There's never been an issue in Locke Group that he couldn't solve." Since she knew Matthias' true capabilities, she exhibited not even the slightest bit of concern.

Meanwhile, Zayne acknowledged that there was not a single error in her words by shrugging his shoulders, but her attitude might have been a little too lax.

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"This old man that appeared out of thin air is no one to simply mess with," he told her, attempting to draw the subtlest concern from her face.

"The person who can force Matthias out of the company is none other than the family head himself," she casually replied, having figured out the identity of the old man.

At that, Zayne helplessly looked at her. He had no comeback seeing how persistent her carefree attitude was.

"Since you've already guessed it, why aren't you worried?" Zayne wanted to witness her perturbation and how she would look when she was disconcerted for someone else's sake.

When she saw how meddlesome he was, she pursed her lips and was growing more reluctant to give him what he desired.

"You're overthinking it, Zayne. With how the entire company is already in his hands, I honestly can't find anything to worry about," she stated with a helpless face. "No one is able to shake him off from his pedestal, not even Locke's head."

Since he couldn't scare her at all, he decided to withdraw his devilish mischief. Be it, then!

"Fine. You got it all right. How boring!" Zayne got up from the couch. Initially, he wanted to frighten Heather with the news, but to his disappointment, the result wasn't as he had anticipated. It was treacherous!

Seeing his disconcertment, she laughed excitedly. Sometimes, he would leave her the impression that he wasn't actually a detective. She would often be astounded by his foolishness as she would always have to deal with him and his pranks.

"The yard looks good, Heather. Do you want to play ball?" He extended an invitation. Since they always locked themselves in that place, Zayne needed something else to distract himself.

At that, Heather merely rolled her eyes at him. At that moment, all she wanted was to satiate her slothfulness by lying on the bed and doing nothing, which included not moving her body.

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Since he had been heartlessly rejected, Zayne turned to Jason as the latter lurked in a corner. When their eyes met, the other man immediately turned away.

"Let's ball, Jason," Zayne uttered.

"What's a ball?" Jason responded emotionlessly.

Zayne was utterly infuriated by his housemates, and he said in confusion, "It's our country's sport, you heathens!" Why were things so hard for him? All the man wanted was a game of basketball.

The other two that were being rebuked didn't even flinch, and that throbbed him like a direct smack to Zayne's face. After observing the nearby court and seeing how he was closer to Jason, he had a eureka moment.

"Can you grab the ball for me, Jason?" He gave him a dazzling smile. Since he knew that it was no simple smile, Jason figured there was something else in his mind.

"I literally can't move," he blurted as he continued to snuggle up on the La-Z-Boy, enjoying the comfort of the couch. There was no way he would want to leave its embrace.

With that, Zayne espoused the fact that people would change as time went by, just like how the diligent Jason he knew turned into a sloth.

"What are you going to do now?" Zayne walked to Jason. Having given up on Heather, he decided to focus on convincing the other man instead.

Heather covered her ears, annoyed by the endless immature quarrels of the childish brothers. All this noise. Have they seriously never considered the fact that both of their ages could almost add up to 80?

"Let me enjoy the day in peace, Zayne," Jason said to the former. As though he was thoroughly exhausted, all he wished for now was a pleasant, calm afternoon.

"Look at yourself, Jason!" Zayne lectured him, for he loved doing so.

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“Why don’t you find another spot to lie on? Stop shaking around in front of me.” Perhaps Jason was triggered by his brother’s actions, so he started to speak more.

Upon hearing that, Zayne sincerely considered looking for a bat to knock him out as it was growing to be a pain in the bum. His overzealousness was the prime example of men and their overflowing vigor.

Thanks to their thundering arguments, Heather started to contemplate whether she should move out, fearing the men’s noise would irritate their neighbors as she wished the house’s walls were able to block them off.

Right at this moment when she instinctively winced, her movements were caught by Zayne’s prying eyes. As he stared at her from afar, he suddenly revealed a devilish grin.

“What’s up, Heather?” When he directed his attention to her, she was immediately taken aback.

“The two of you are noisy as hell. I’m moving out,” she said, feeling embarrassed by how she had been caught off guard by Zayne.

With that, Zayne walked up upon her with a mischievous chuckle. Since she was trapped in her spot, she didn’t know whether she should challenge him or retreat to the couch.

“That’s not fair, Heather,” he uttered painfully as if she had done something cosmically devastating.

She awkwardly responded with a forced smirk, “Can’t you just keep it down?” The moment she realized that she shouldn’t be manipulated by Zayne’s flow, she decided to take the initiative.

“Come on, Heather. We could make use of such a spacious space! Are y’all just going to crawl up in the corners while doing nothing?” He interrogated her. She used to be the hyperactive one, but for some reason, things had mysteriously turned around.

Heather shook her head and answered, “Our main priority is to keep ourselves hidden, so it’s best that we don’t draw any attention.” She wished that he’d stop bothering her, so she could only resort to logic.

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“How is a game of basketball attention-drawing?” Zayne childishly retorted. What’s wrong with just a game?

“It certainly is! If we were to play in the yard, everyone would definitely see us, so it’s too risky. If you don’t trust me, you can ask Jason.” She dragged the latter into the battlefield without allowing any bystanders.

Upon hearing her, he quickly added, “Indeed, indeed! Basketball will draw too much attention.” All he wanted was his alone time with his La-Z-Boy, and anyone who wished to get him up could dream on!

Realizing that she had the upper hand, she crossed her arms and revealed a glaring beam as she continued, “Look at that, will you? None of us think we should be playing basketball, so I suggest you not dwell on it.”

After finishing her words, she boastfully turned around and headed toward the staircase, intending to return to her room upstairs and leaving the brothers alone in the living room.

Nonetheless, the persistent Zayne yelled at her back, “If you don’t want to play in the yard, we can play in the room. You know what? The living room sounds good!”

Upon that, she hurried her steps and vanished in an instant, having not the tenacity to stay any longer. As he stared at her retreating back in disappointment, he was thrown off by her exceptional escaping skills.

On the other hand, Jason shifted his La-Z-Boy away, hoping that Zayne wouldn’t be able to see him. As Zayne was the only one that was dissatisfied, he would nag Jason into Valhalla. The sight of the brotherly fight was much more adorable than Heather herself.

“Play with me, Jason,” Zayne begged him as he shot Jason a smile so loving that it was unnerving.

Jason sensed danger approaching; he was certain that if he were to reject his invitation, he would surely perish in his hand. As though he was being charged at with a spear, he could feel the penetration from his brother’s gaze and quickly decided whether to flee or to give in to his brother.

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As he was still hesitating, Zayne marched boldly toward him. Jason looked at the other man while he approached hastily, and he couldn't refute after seeing his desperate face.

"Fine, okay," he unwillingly blurted, though his body was still attached to his favorite La-Z-Boy.

Zayne ordered after revealing a cold grin, "For starters, get up from the La-Z-Boy."

Although Jason was reluctant, he was intimidated by his brother's terrifying stare and discontentedly claimed, "Whatever. It's just a game of basketball."

Having said that, he immediately sprung up from the La-Z-Boy while keeping a resistant expression. Meanwhile, Heather, who was upstairs and had witnessed the whole thing, heaved a sigh of relief as she was finally out of Zayne's grasp.

I wonder how Matthias is doing now, Heather thought as she peered at her phone, receiving no news from the man.

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