

A Farewell 111

Chapter 111

Sage couldn't help but sneak a peek when she heard that name. As she craned her head, she saw Henry York. He was dressed in a tracksuit with his hair slicked back. He was hanging out with two other shady-looking men while smoking

cigarettes.

Instinctively, she hid behind the bamboo grove.

"That woman and a few of her classmates will snap some photos here. Of course, I have to stick around." He took a puff and exhaled. "Relax! You're free to leave after you help me with something. I'll even foot the bill for a night out at the bar!"

"What do we have to do?" one of them asked.

"Shove that Layla chick into the lake."

"Whoa! What are you up to, Henry? Murder is illegal!"

"What the hell are you talking about?" Henry kicked the guy. "I'm only asking you guys to push her into the lake. I'll save her right away!"

"Ooh, I see what you're up to, Henry. You're going to be her knight in shining armor, huh? Then, you'll be able to give her CPR, take her to a hotel, help her change into a fresh set of clothes, and all that jazz..."

His words became increasingly outrageous, but Henry didn't deny anything.

Instead, he snuffed his cigarette and said, "I've been courting her for days, but she keeps blowing me off. So, I have to do something else. Remember, you need to lure her somewhere no one will notice. And don't just shove her! Make it look

like an accident. That's the only way she'll trust me," he explained.

"No worries, you can count on us!"

The three swaggered out of the bamboo grove with their plan in place.

Sage then cautiously walked out. It made sense, though. Layla didn't seem interested in Henry, it was no wonder that he needed such a pathetic plan.

Sage retreated to the restroom to avoid running into Henry. Then, she pulled out

her phone and was about to call her aunt Susan when she noticed a message from

Ian.

"Do you have something you need to tell me?"

Unbelievable. What could she possibly have to tell him? With no time to spare for Ian, she dialed Susan's number.

"Sage, why couldn't I reach you? What happened last night? Did Ian dump you? Are the rumors true?" Susan unleashed a barrage of questions as soon as the call connected.

Sage didn't feel like dealing with her aunt's questions that morning, so she ignored her calls. She cleared her throat and stated coldly, "Mind your own business, Aunt Susan! It doesn't matter if I get divorced from Ian. I'll still be better off than Layla, who can't even behave in college and is constantly partying and failing her classes!"

Sure enough, Susan was enraged by her words. Her tone turned harsh. "Is that

how you

you address your elders, you little brat? If Layla weren't so young, you

wouldn't even have the chance to marry into the Holcomb family!"

"Do you seriously think someone who can't even complete her studies could become the mistress of the Holcomb family?" Sage scoffed.

"Sage Jayner!" Susan was seething in anger. "Is this how you treat us after all the years we spent raising you? You ungrateful wretch!" Then, she hung up the phone angrily.

Sage also stowed her phone away with relief. Knowing Susan, she was sure she would immediately call Layla and force her to return to school.

If Layla dared to disobey her mother, Susan would either come and get her or cut off her allowance. Layla knew her mother's personality well enough not to defy

her.

Henry's plan wouldn't work if she could get Layla out of there. Then, Layla wouldn't fall for his "knight in shining armor" nonsense.

Chapter 112

"Hello? Ms. Joyner, are you in there?" Just then, Michael's voice came from outside. Sage walked out of the restroom and smiled at him.

He awkwardly explained, "You've been in there for a while. I was worried you couldn't find your way back, so I came over to check on you."

"I just got caught up on a call, that's all. Let's go," she responded casually.

Sage didn't run into Henry and Layla on their way back to the barbecue area as they were in different locations.

Kai and the gang were working the grill when they got back. Some of them munched on snacks and sipped on beer, and someone was also strumming a guitar. The atmosphere was laid-back and chill.

"Would you like a beer, Ms. Joyner?" Michael asked.

Sage shook her head. "No thanks. I still have to drive."

Besides, she had already drunk too much last night, so she needed to take it easy

today.

Nodding his head, he passed her a juice box. He also took one for himself, and they settled down on the field.

"It must be nice to be young. After all, you can pursue your dreams without a care in the world," she remarked.

Michael looked at her earnestly. "Ms. Joyner, you're also young. You can pursue your dreams, too."

Sage chuckled. What was her dream? When she was young, she wanted to be a perfumer like her mother. Then, she became interested in drums and aspired to become a drummer. In college, she chose finance and set her sights on becoming the best investor in the country.

But she hadn't realized any of her dreams. Instead, she chose to chase after Ian and became the wife he hated so much that she ended up in the psychiatric hospital.

Her momentary lapse of attention worried Michael. "I came across some news about you, Ms. Joyner. If you're feeling down, there's no need to pretend to be okay. I asked you to join us so that you could unwind."

Sage turned to look at him. His eyes were bright, and his voice was earnest as he comforted her. The sunlight shone through the trees, bathing everyone in its

warmth.

Sage raised her hand to shield her eyes and flashed a smile. "Thank you, Michael.

I'm not pretending to be okay. On the contrary, I'm feeling pretty good."

Kai snapped a photo on his phone. "Woah, this photo is amazing! Check it out, Ms. Joyner."

Sage leaned over to look at the picture he had just taken. Her expression softened as

she shielded her eyes with her hand. She looked like an angel bathed in sunlight.

"Nice shot! I had no idea you were so skilled. So you're not only an expert in music and computers but also a great photographer," she complimented.

"You know it!" Kai raised his head smugly.

Sage spent the rest of the afternoon eating and chatting with Michael and his friends.

In the evening, she took everyone to the most luxurious seafood restaurant in town and treated them to a feast. Sage had a few drinks with them in the lively atmosphere. She took a moment to post on Instagram to commemorate the joyous day.

"I realized how wonderful life was when I practiced self-love." She posted the photo Kai took alongside another shot of a table full of seafood and wine.

The group left the seafood restaurant after eating and drinking their fill.

"Ms. Joyner, why don't you have Michael give you a ride home? He's got his driver's license," Kai suggested.

Sage was about to say she could hail a cab when she heard a woman beside her exclaim, "Oh my god! That guy is so handsome!"

Turning around to look nosily, her jaw fell open as she realized who it was,

Chapter 113

The man got out of the car. He was tall, handsome, and clad in a smart suit. His chiseled features appeared stern under the light. It was Ian! Terry, donning a

similar suit, was walking with him toward the restaurant.

Ian glanced over at Sage as he noticed her gaze. Terry saw her, too, and nodded politely at her.

She assumed that they had an appointment here. Sage smiled at Terry but ignored Ian. Then, she said goodbye to her new friends before walking away.

"No way! He's walking toward me! Do you think he's going to talk to me?" the woman beside Sage whispered nervously to her companion.

Sage took a look and noticed that he was walking toward them. The man came to

a halt in front of her.

“Did you drink again?” he asked lowly.

Sage pouted. “What’s it to you?”

Jan looked at her without saying a word. The woman who had exclaimed earlier heard their conversation and realized Ian hadn’t noticed her. Hence, she

reluctantly left with her companion.

Sage scoffed internally as she couldn’t understand what that woman had seen in Ian. Despite his good looks, Ian was nothing but a jerk.

Michael was acquainted with Ian and had seen the pictures last night. Afraid that he would cause a misunderstanding for Sage, he politely interjected, “Mr. Holcomb, Ms. Joyner only had a couple of beers. She didn’t overdo it. We were just about to take her home.

Ian’s dark gaze shifted to Michael. “My wife doesn’t need an outsider to take her home.”

The other band members were all surprised when Ian called Sage his wife. They knew Sage was married, but they had no idea her husband was such an attractive and powerful person.

All of them felt inferior standing next to him. Michael’s face flushed with embarrassment when he heard Ian’s dismissive remarks.

Sage glared at Ian. “He’s not an outsider! He’s my friend! Mind your own business. I don’t need you to meddle in my affairs. Let’s go, Michael!”

She was about to leave when Ian grabbed her hand. "What the hell are you doing?"

she snapped.

Just then, Terry walked over to them. Ian tightened his grip on her hand and refused to let go. "Go inside and greet Mr. Russell and the others," he ordered

Terry.

Terry was not at all surprised when he heard that. He nodded. "Sure thing, Mr. Holcomb." He then walked into the restaurant.

Ian led Sage to his car and said, "I'll take you home."

The driver had been watching their exchange closely and tactfully opened the car's rear door as they approached.

"Let

go

of me! I can get home alone. I don't need you to drive me!" Sage shook off Ian's hand in frustration.

"Sage Joyner, do you want to be the trending online again?" he asked apathetically.

Sage realized that someone outside the restaurant seemed to have recognized her and was holding up their phone to take a picture of her.

She despised being the subject of gossip. She had no choice last night. She stopped arguing with Ian, covered her face with her hand, going straight into the

car.

The band members were still shocked after Ian's car left. "Michael, is Ms. Joyner going to be okay?"

Michael watched as the car vanished into the distance. "Don't worry, she can handle her own problems."

Chapter 114

"Ooh, I guess someone knows her very well, huh?" one teased.

"Let's not joke about her anymore," Michael said solemnly. "After all, she's a girl. Some jokes might be harmless to us but could cause her trouble."

The others quieted down when they noticed the usually good-tempered Michael getting visibly upset.

Meanwhile, Sage had her back to Ian in the car. She didn't want to talk to him.

Ian, too, remained silent. His handsome face was hard-set, and his jaw muscles were clenched. He seemed to be holding back his temper.

He was probably waiting for her to explain why she had gone to dinner with

Michael and his friends.

Even if they weren't getting a divorce, he still didn't have the right to dictate who she could and couldn't be friends with. Hence, she didn't feel the need to explain

herself to him.

Not long after, the car pulled up to Solaris Estate. Ignoring Ian, Sage exited the car and stormed into the house.

Wanda breathed a sigh of relief when she saw her. "Mrs. Holcomb, thank goodness you're back! You had no idea how upset Mr. Holcomb looked when he left. I didn't even dare to make a sound."

"He's been back?" Sage asked.

"Yes, he came home around 6:00 p.m.- Mr. Holcomb!" Wanda greeted Ian as she noticed him walking into the house.

Sage asked with a frown, "Don't you have an appointment?"

After all, Terry was waiting for him at the restaurant, wasn't he? However, Ian didn't answer her question. Instead, he simply marched up the stairs.

Why was he giving her the cold shoulder when he was the one who insisted on taking her home? He must be out of his mind.

"Mrs. Holcomb, did you come back with Mr. Holcomb?" Wanda inquired.

Sage nodded. "Yep. I ran into him at the restaurant after having dinner with my friends,"

“But Mr. Holcomb said he had no plans this evening,” Wanda muttered.

“Maybe something came up,” Sage responded. “Well, don’t mind me, Wanda. I’m going back to my room to get some rest.”

When she returned to her bedroom, Ian was seated on her chaise lounge as if he were waiting for her.

Sage frowned. “Have you lost your memory? I told you not to come into my room anymore.”

He crossed his legs and said coldly, “We need to talk, Sage.”

“What do we even need to talk about?”

Ian reached for some papers beside him and threw them at Sage. “Why did you invest in Mimosa?” Was this what he was referring to in the message he sent her

at noon?

Sage wasn’t surprised that Ian found out about her investment in Mimosa. “I didn’t use your money. It’s my own savings.”

Ian was rendered speechless. “That’s not the point.”

“Then, what is?”

“Did you plan what had happened at the party last night?”

Realization dawned on her. "Are you asking me if I bribed the hotel staff to hurt Ivy with that falling chandelier?"

His anger boiled over when he noticed her indifference and mockery. He sneered. "Yes. After all, you've done such things before!"

Sage smiled wryly when she heard that. Ian had never trusted her. He always suspected that she was involved whenever bad things happened to Ivy.

"Let's just get divorced, Ian." Sage couldn't tolerate his bullshit anymore. "Then,

you can fly off into the sunset with Ivy."

Chapter 115

Ian jumped upon hearing Sage's words, and his expression darkened. "Sage

Joyner, are you just bringing up the divorce because you think you can use it to threaten me?"

"Well, are you feeling threatened?" Sage retorted.

"Don't be ridiculous!" he snapped. "I'll sign the divorce papers tomorrow! I'll even accompany you to the courthouse!" He threw the documents aside and stormed out, slamming the door behind him.

Sage was stunned for a moment. She took a minute to compose herself before settling into bed. Ian had finally agreed to a divorce. She was finally free!

Sage unlocked her phone to share the good news with Tiana. However, when she opened Instagram, she noticed a flood of likes and comments on her recent post. She clicked on it and noticed that, besides some friends and Michael, Shane had

also liked it.

Shane had even left a comment. "Congratulations on finding your way back to the right path."

Sage understood he was implying that loving herself rather than Ian was the "

right path". However, she couldn't be bothered to respond to his schadenfreude.

She clicked on Tiana's profile and was about to send her a message when a video call from her came through.

"I was just about to text you, Tiana! Is this what it means when people say 'great minds think alike?'"

"Great minds, my ass!" Tiana fumed. "You said you'd call me this morning, but I've been waiting all day and haven't heard so much as a peep from you!"

Sage had been in such a rush to get to Mimosa that she had simply promised Tiana she would contact her later. Unfortunately, she got sidetracked by the barbecue event with Michael and his friends and completely forgot to call Tiana.

"Well... the timing of your video call was just perfect!" Sage giggled.

Tiana didn't bother to argue with her about this anymore and out to the dia What's up with all this news about last night? It's been trending on wurde sodio, and it even popped up when I checked my phone"

Sage befly recounted to Tiana what had happened the night before.

"So.... when you found out someone was sneaking pictures of you, you decided to roll with it and capitalize on the situation?"

“Mhm, since they’ll just paint me as some pitiful and miserable anyway, I might as well use it to my advantage instead of being the butt of everyow’s jokes.”

“I’m impressed. You were able to turn it into a solid marketing

campaign though you were heartbroken,” Tiana praised. “The old you would’ve stopped Ian from leaving the banquet hall in front of everyone.”

Sage was reminded of something after Tiana mentioned that. In the past, she had followed Delilah’s advice and invited Ivy out to a café to meet up because she noticed that Ian was treating Ivy very differently from how he treated her. However, their meeting was cut short when a falling chandelier struck her.

Ian appeared at the entrance to the café before she could process what had happened, and he immediately accused Sage of orchestrating it when he noticed Ivy covered in blood. “Sage Joyner, if that chandelier hadn’t missed her by a hair’s breadth, she could’ve been killed! How could you be so malicious?”

“It wasn’t me! I don’t know what happened!”

“Who else could it have been? You were the one who invited her out and chose

this place!” Ian retorted as he carried Ivy to bring her to the hospital

Sage was furious and wanted to hash things out, but Ian shoved her aside, causing her to collide with the corner of a coffee table and injure her lower back. It took her half a month to recover...

Sage wondered if it was just a coincidence that she was hit by a chandelier then

Tiana didn’t bother to argue with her about this anymore and cut to the chase. “What’s up with all this news about last night? It’s been trending on social media, and it even popped up when I checked my phone.”

Sage briefly recounted to Tiana what had happened the night before.

“So... when you found out someone was sneaking pictures of you, you decided to roll with it and capitalize on the situation?”

“Mhm, since they’ll just paint me as some pitiful and miserable woman anyway, I might as well use it to my advantage instead of being the butt of everyone’s jokes.”

“I’m impressed. You were able to turn it into a solid marketing campaign even though you were heartbroken,” Tiana praised. “The old you would’ve stopped Ian from leaving the banquet hall in front of everyone.”

Sage was reminded of something after Tiana mentioned that. In the past, she had followed Delilah’s advice and invited Ivy out to a café to meet up because she noticed that Ian was treating Ivy very differently from how he treated her.

However, their meeting was cut short when a falling chandelier struck Ivy.

Ian appeared at the entrance to the café before she could process what had happened, and he immediately accused Sage of orchestrating it when he noticed Ivy covered in blood. “Sage Joyner, if that chandelier hadn’t missed Ivy by a hair’s breadth, she could’ve been killed! How could you be so malicious?”

“It wasn’t me! I don’t know what happened!”

“Who else could it have been? You were the one who invited her out and chose

this place!” Ian retorted as he carried Ivy to bring her to the hospital.

Sage was furious and wanted to hash things out, but Ian shoved her aside, causing her to collide with the corner of a coffee table and injure her lower back.

It took her half a month to recover...

Sage wondered if it was just a coincidence that Ivy was hit by a chandelier twice.

Chapter 116

“Hello? Earth to Sage. Please don’t tell me you’re feeling sad again because you were thinking about how Ian was panicking about another woman,” Tiana teased when she noticed Sage had spaced out.

Sage rolled her eyes at Tiana. “Do you seriously think a 5–star hotel would have a random safety hiccup?”

“Logically speaking, no,” Tiana answered. “Do you think there’s something fishy about Ivy getting injured?”

Of course, it was suspicious. But Ian must’ve looked into it. Ivy must’ve covered her tracks well if even he couldn’t find anything. Even if she tried to look into it, she would probably find nothing.

But even if she did find something, Ian would probably get the wrong idea and suspect her of scheming again. He might assume she could not move on from him, which was why she was harping on the issue.

Anyway, Ivy was the one in pain. This little scheme of hers would not affect Sage as long as she didn’t care about Ian’s opinion.

“Let’s not talk about this anymore. I have good news!” Sage’s tone lightened up a little.

“What is it?”

“Ian has agreed to sign the divorce papers! As long as we can keep it under wraps from Grandma, we can get our divorce certificate tomorrow!”

Tiana's eyes widened. "He agreed? Didn't he insist on getting both your parents' consent just a few days ago? Why'd he change his mind so quickly?"

Sage chuckled. "I'm sure he was just giving me a hard time. But with Ivy being injured so severely this time, he's probably afraid that I'll do something worse if he keeps stalling."

"Hold on," Tiana interjected. "Ian thinks you're behind Ivy's injury? Is he out of his mind? Did he forget what kind of person you are? you're not one to beat around the bush. If you had a problem, you'd confront it head-on!"

Sage was rendered speechless. "I can't tell if you're complimenting me for being straightforward or insulting me for being stupid."

Ignoring her jest, Tiana pressed on. "Is that why you're so set on divorcing him, Sage?" Sage sprawled on the bed, flipping through a magazine that she found on the bedside table while kicking her feet in the air. "That's one of the reasons. It's a long story, but basically, we're just not a good fit. I don't want to tie him down with marriage anymore. It's better for both of us this way." "

The door swung open as soon as she said that. Sage whipped her head around and noticed Ian had returned.

Even though she wasn't sure if he had heard her, his expression was much colder than before." If looks could kill, she'd be dead right there and then.

"What" Initially, she wanted to question him. But she stopped herself when she met his

gaze.

Ian didn't utter a word. He strode over to the bed and took his pillow, books, glasses, and other belongings before storming out of the room again.

It all happened in a matter of seconds, and Sage didn't even have the time to react.

“What’s up with him?” Tiana seemed startled as well. “Did you guys get into a fight? He looked terrifying,” she asked after Ian left.

Sage walked over and locked the door. “Nope. He was acting all strange outside the restaurant earlier. He was rude to my friends, and then he dragged me home. He’s been snappish ever since. Forget it. Have you seen the pictures I posted on Instagram?”

“No, I haven’t. What’s wrong?” Tiana said as she scrolled through her Instagram. “Oh my gosh!”

“So what do you think? Don’t I look beautiful?” Sage tousled her hair smugly.

“Who’s that hunk in your picture?”

“Huh?” Sage tapped on her profile and zoomed in on the picture. It was only then that she realized Michael was also in the picture that Kai took.

Chapter 117

“Do you have magnifying glasses for eyes or something? I can’t believe you spotted him when there’s barely a hint of his face.”

Tiana continued, “He’s good-looking, especially when he’s looking at you like that. Ooooh, I see that twinkle in his eyes.”

“Oh, hush. Don’t make stuff up.

Sage zoomed in on the photo again. Michael was sitting next to her. Even though only half of his face was visible in the picture, one could still see his chiseled features and the way he looked at her. His bright eyes were filled with warmth.

“So... did you chow down all that seafood and wine with that hunk?” she asked.

Sage clarified, "No, we weren't alone. There were a handful of people there. Oh, and you'

I've

met him before. Remember the last time we went shopping? He was the one I helped pick out the suit for at the mall. His name's Michael."

"No way! Him? What a small world. Is he the one Ian was rude to?" she asked.

"Yep."

"I'm guessing he only agreed to the divorce after you two fought?"

"What are you getting at?" Sage asked.

"I just have a feeling that Ian stumbled upon your post on Instagram and went to the restaurant because he was worried," Tiana guessed.

Sage clicked her tongue. "Ian was there for a business appointment with his assistant, and we just happened to run into them. Besides, he never checks Instagram. I used to tag him in my posts, and he told me that he didn't have time to look at them."

"But he wasn't happy to see you with Michael, right? He probably expected you to explain yourself when he brought you home, but you didn't say a word and even asked him for a divorce. Clearly, he agreed in a fit of anger," Tiana continued, sounding like an investigator. He must be jealous! He just doesn't know it yet.

Sage thought that the idea of Ian being jealous was ridiculous. "Why would he be jealous when he doesn't have any feelings for me?"

"Why don't we bet on it since you don't believe me? I bet you guys won't get divorced tomorrow because Ian will change his mind!" Tiana said confidently.

“Sure, but you’re going to lose.” Sage then changed the subject and asked, “So when are you and Wilson planning to come back?”

“We should be back the day after tomorrow. Let’s get together then!”

“Sounds good.” Sage then brought up the topic of Wilson’s female classmate again.

Tiana told Sage that ever since she started sending lunch to Wilson, his female classmate had kept her distance and hadn’t acted out of line.

Then, she mentioned that she had picked out a platinum bracelet for her mother-in-law and a ceramic teapot for her father-in-law. The girls then chatted about Mimosa for a while before hanging up.

It was already 9:00 a.m. when Sage woke up the next day. After freshening up, she went downstairs, where Wanda had breakfast ready.

“Wanda, has Ian gone out already?”

“Yes. Mr. Holcomb left early for the office.”

Sage immediately dialed Ian’s number. She half expected him not to answer, but his cold voice came through after a few rings. “What is it?”

Sage walked away to a secluded corner and asked quietly, “Have you signed the divorce papers? Can we go get the divorce certificate this morning?”

Ian remained apathetic. “No. I’m busy.”

Sage couldn’t shake the worry that had crept in after what Tiana had said. Could Ian be having second thoughts about the divorce?

“I understand you’re too busy to get the divorce certificate, but you can at least find some time to sign the divorce papers, right?” Sage grew anxious. “Where are you right now? I’ll come to you.”

“My office.” He then hung up the phone.

Sage walked over to the dining table. Wanda was no longer in the living room, so she probably hadn’t overheard their conversation.

Chapter 118

Even though it was highly unlikely that Wanda had told Linda about the divorce last time, Sage still wanted to keep it a secret.

After breakfast, Sage left for Holcomb Corporation and breezed into the CEO’s office. She was about to walk in when she saw that Owen and Susan were in the office with Ian.

She furrowed her brows and wondered why her relatives were here. Did Ian call them over? Sage looked at Ian questioningly, but he just glanced at her before looking away. Not wanting to be rude, she knocked gently.

The middle-aged couple, who were sitting on the couch, heard her knock on the door and turned to look at her. “What brings you here, Sage?” Susan asked.

Her expression and tone suggested that Ian hadn’t told them about the divorce. Sage breathed a sigh of relief and asked them the same question.

“We’re here to thank Ian, of course. He introduced us to the CEO of Pacific Group last time, so we brought a little something for Ian as a token of our appreciation! We’re also having lunch with the CEO of Pacific Group.”

Sage then noticed the fancy gift boxes on the coffee table after Susan mentioned them. From what she had said, it sounded like their business deal hadn't been finalized yet. So, they still wanted Ian to get involved personally.

Sage was speechless. "Aunt Susan, didn't you promise Grandpa that you wouldn't bother Ian for help with the company anymore?"

"Oh come on, Sage. We're not bothering him. Ian and the CEO of Pacific Group are friends. Isn't it normal for friends to have lunch together? It is, isn't it, Ian?" Susan turned to Ian for confirmation.

"He's busy," Sage cut in. "He's got a lot on his plate."

Sage didn't want Ian to be involved in her family's affairs anymore. Plus, she wanted to finalize the divorce smoothly.

"Ian hasn't said a word yet. How do you know he's busy?" Susan grumbled.

"That's right, Sage. Besides, no matter how busy Ian is, he's gotta eat. We'll just hang out here until he's done. Then we can all go grab a bite together!" Owen said in a declaratory tone. Owen could be more stubborn than Susan at times. Moreover, when he said he'd wait, he

meant it.

Sage didn't want to waste her breath on them anymore. She just wanted to get the divorce papers sorted out. Hence, she walked over to Ian despite their puzzled gazes.

Ian lifted his gaze and looked at her. Susan couldn't ask him outright since Owen and Susan were there, so she blinked at Ian twice as if to ask, "Have you signed the papers?"

However, Ian asked, "Are you okay?"

Sage was tongue-tied. He was deliberately being obtuse. He knew exactly what she was asking, but he was just playing dumb!

Sage decided to gesture toward his lounge and said, "Come over here for a second. I need to talk to you."

"What's going on, Sage? What can't you say it here?" Susan asked, puzzled.

"It's personal. We'll be right back." Sage had assured Susan because she knew Susan was worried that she would stop Ian from helping them.

"Why are you getting all handsy with Ian in front of your elders? If you have something to say, say it here!" Owen chimed in, slightly annoyed.

Sage couldn't be bothered to argue with them. She planned to lean over and whisper into Ian's ear. However, Ian turned his head as soon as she leaned over, and her lips accidentally brushed against his cheek.

Chapter 119

His skin was ice cold on Sage's lips, carrying the subtle scent of his aftershave. Her heart skipped a beat, and she hastily took a step back. As she did so, she realized that her red lipstick had stained his handsome face.

"Sage, what are you up to? Why'd you start kissing Ian all of a sudden?" Susan asked.

Sage had no idea he would suddenly turn his head! Ian rose from the couch just as she was about to explain herself. "Uncle Owen, Aunt Susan, please excuse me for a moment."

He then took a tissue and disappeared into the lounge. Sage followed suit as she couldn't be bothered to waste her breath on them.

Ian was wiping his face with a tissue when she walked in. His gaze was dark and unreadable. Sage closed the door and cleared her throat. "I didn't mean to... I just--"

"Just spit it out and get it over with," he growled, interrupting her.

Sage didn't beat around the bush either. "Have you signed the divorce agreement?"

Ian looked down at her when he heard that. Sage was much shorter than him and didn't like being looked down upon by Ian. Hence, she stood on her tiptoes and glared at him. "Well? Answer me! Don't just stare at me!"

Ian scoffed. "How could you ask me for the divorce agreement with a straight face after you deliberately called Uncle Owen and Aunt Susan here and acted all lovey-dovey in front of them? How is your skin so thick, Sage Joyner?"

Sage was dumbstruck. What did he say? Sage was too furious to even argue with him. "So have you signed the agreement yet?"

Ian gave her a stink eye. "It's on the desk outside."

Sage rolled her eyes, but she had gotten the answer she wanted. So, she turned around to open the door. But as soon as she opened the door, she noticed Susan leaning against the door as if she had been eavesdropping.

"Sage, what were you and Ian talking about signing just now?" Susan asked before Sage could ask what she was doing.

She couldn't believe the boldness of Susan. How could she be so nosy?

"Oh, it's nothing, just some insurance paperwork," she said perfunctorily. She didn't want to escalate the tension between Ian and herself.

Just then, Ian walked over to them. Susan turned to him and asked, "Is that so, Ian?"

Ian glanced at Sage, who looked a little tense, and nodded. "Yeah."

Sage breathed a silent sigh of relief. It seemed like Tiana had been overthinking. As she had suspected, Ian had no intention of dragging things out.

Sage walked over to his desk and retrieved a folder while Susan and Ian were conversing.

she immediately saw the divorce agreement.

Flipping it open,

Sage was overjoyed. Her hands were shaking with excitement. It hadn't been easy, but she finally had the divorce agreement in her hands!"

Sage hugged it tightly. "Uncle Owen, Aunt Susan, please excuse me. I'll be taking my leave now.

"I'm afraid I must decline your invitation too, Uncle Owen and Aunt Susan. I have a meeting this morning and a lunch appointment that I can't cancel," Ian added as she was about to leave. It was obvious that Ian wanted them to leave. He'd already signed the divorce agreement, so he had no obligation to help the Joyner family's business anymore.

Hence, Sage chimed in, "Since Ian is tied up, let's not disturb him."

The couple didn't seem pleased, but they had no reason to stick around since Ian had turned them down. So, the three of them left the office together.

“What’s wrong with you, Sage? You knew damn well why we wanted to invite Ian out for lunch. Not only did you not help us, but you kept coming up with excuses for Ian. Are you deliberately trying to piss your Uncle Owen off?”

Chapter 120

Susan started berating Sage as soon as she stepped outside. Sage was in a good mood, so she let it slide. She even comforted Owen. “Calm down, Uncle Owen. Don’t you think it’ll be better for us if we can seal a deal without Ian’s help?”

“Don’t pull that crap on me. I’m not your grandfather. It won’t work on me!” Owen snorted. “Do you think it’s easy to run a business? In this day and age, connections are everything! Why should I disregard what we have with Ian and make things harder for myself?”

Sage was about to respond when the elevator chimed, and the doors slid open. An employee rushed out, his arms laden with files. Even though she tried to step aside to avoid him, she still bumped into his shoulder. The employee’s files and her folder both fell to the ground.

“I’m so sorry!” the young boy apologized profusely.

Sage ignored the pain in her shoulder and rushed to pick up her folder.

“Let me see what’s in the folder.” Susan snatched it away before she could reach it.

Sage rushed to snatch it back. “Give that back! Didn’t I tell you it was some insurance. paperwork? There’s nothing interesting in there.”

Susan hid the folder behind her back. “I just so happened to be curious about insurance too. Let me take a look at what you have.”

“I’ll have one of the staff introduce the agent to you later—Aunt Susan, what on earth are you doing?”

Susan pushed her away and opened the folder before Sage could finish her sentence. Sage tried to snatch it back, but she was no match for Susan. The latter turned her back to Sage and quickly

scanned through the document.

“What the hell is this, Sage Joyner?” Susan turned to yell at her niece after skimming through the document. Her voice was so loud that the employee gathering the documents and everyone in the secretarial department looked over.

Owen also sensed something was amiss. He snatched the folder from his wife’s grasp. His expression hardened as he scanned its contents. He then raised his hand and swung it at Sage. Instinctively, Sage closed her eyes. However, she didn’t feel any pain. When she opened her eyes, she saw Ian standing in front of her.

He had Owen’s hand in his grasp as he said solemnly, “Let’s talk this out, Uncle Owen. There’s no need for violence.”

Owen glanced at Ian and eventually withdrew his hand. He glared at Sage and ordered, “Let’s go to Ian’s office!”

Sage was dragged back to Ian’s office by Owen and Susan. Ian, on the other hand, calmly instructed his assistant, “Tell someone else to start the meeting. I’ve got something to attend to and will be late.”

“Understood, Mr. Holcomb.” Ian walked into his office after his assistant left.

Owen asked Sage and Ian sternly, “What’s the deal with this divorce agreement? Whose idea is it?”

Ian remained silent. Sage admitted indifferently, “I did.”

“Why did you-” Owen jumped up, ready to throw a punch, but Susan’s icy glare stopped him. “Why are you filing for divorce, Sage?”

Sage responded coldly, "Uncle Owen, Aunt Susan, this is between us as a couple. I hope you guys won't meddle."

"What's the meaning of this?" Susan fumed. "I can't believe you! You've seriously been spoiled rotten by your grandfather. How dare you make such a big decision without informing your family?"

"Why can't I make my own decisions?" Since the divorce agreement had been exposed, she didn't hold back. "I'm not happy in this marriage, so why should I force myself to be in it? Besides, Ian agreed to it. What say do you have?"