

## A Farewell 171

### Chapter 171

Eager to draft a proposal as soon as possible, Sage brought her laptop to the adjacent guest room to avoid bumping into Ian

After several hours of work, she realized she couldn't do it. After all, she had not personally gone to gather information, so she couldn't come up with the necessary data. Everything she wrote felt wrong.

Sage felt a shadow looming over her as she wondered whether she should visit Collin tomorrow. Looking up, she was surprised to see Ian standing next to her.

Sage was about to close her laptop, but Ian had already seen what she was doing and asked aloud, "Why are you collecting data from Professor Braun's research institute?"

She realized there was no point in hiding it now that he'd seen it. "I think their drug has potential. I'd like him to give me the distribution rights," she explained.

"Huh?" Ian frowned. "What's gotten into you all of a sudden?"

"I'm sure you invested in their institute because you believe their research has potential, right? So why can't I be interested in it?" she asked.

He glanced at her. "Professor Braun's situation isn't as simple as you think. Please don't get involved in everything you come across." In short, he was accusing her of getting involved in his project to spite him.

"I'm dead set on getting it," she snarled. "Don't you dare stop me!!"

Ian suppressed his anger. "The drug hasn't even been launched yet. No one can guarantee its success. What will you do if it doesn't turn out to be profitable?"

“It’s alright. I have you to back me up 1 don’t hit the jackpot.” Sage grinned. “After all, you did say that we’re in this together. Your money is mine too.”

Ian was at a loss for words. “You sure are banking on a long shot.”

“Of course! Why wouldn’t I rely on you when I can? I’m not stupid, you know?” Sage responded confidently. She wasn’t afraid of him making a

first.

After all, her goal was to prevent the distribution rights from falling into the hands of Ivy or Henri. Everything else was secondary.

“Anyway, what brings you here?” She changed the topic.

Ian replied calmly, “It’s getting late. I’m here to remind you to go to sleep. I’m a light sleeper. I’m afraid you’ll wake me up if you go to bed later.”

Sage was itching to snap back at him. If he was such a light sleeper, he could always just go

back to his room. Why did he have to sleep with her in the master bedroom?

After all, Grandma hadn’t installed any surveillance cameras. There was no way she would know where he slept.

However, she bit her tongue, powered off her laptop, and returned to the room.

Ian trailed behind her at a steady pace. It made her feel as if he were an eager puppy who had been waiting for his busy owner to join him in bed.

Sage took her pajamas and went to the bathroom. Ian had already laid down on the bed and closed his eyes when she emerged from her shower.

Sage deliberately dawdled. She took her time moisturizing her skin and blow-drying her hair. Sage only crawled into her blanket when she suspected Tan had dozed off.

In the past, when the couple shared a room, she either slept on the chaise lounge or was too drunk or tired to notice Ian was next to her on the bed.

But now, she could feel his breath and smell his scent since she was in the same bed with him. Only a blanket separated them.

## Chapter 172

Sage was used to sleeping alone, so she wasn't comfortable sleeping beside Ian. Plus, it was too late for Ian to retire to the study.

Hence, she resorted to the age-old method of counting sheep to get herself to sleep. When she reached the 800th sheep, she was overcome with drowsiness and slowly drifted off to sleep.

Lost in the haze of sleep, she felt herself surrounded by warmth. The oppressive cold from the air conditioner penetrated every corner of the room. However, the warmth enveloping her was immensely comforting, causing her to lean back unconsciously.

However, she soon noticed that she was leaning against something stiff and hard. Before she could figure out what it was, she suddenly felt a warm sensation on the nape of her neck. It felt like something was gently sucking on her.

Sage tried to move, but she was trapped. She struggled with all her might for a moment and then sat up. Looking around, she realized nothing was holding her down.

The room was shrouded in darkness, save for the soft glow of the rabbit-shaped crystal lamp. She was in the middle of the bed, and Ian was lying next to her.

Ian stirred as if he had been roused by her movements. He opened his eyes and asked hoarsely, "What's wrong?"

Sage stiffened for a moment before realizing something was amiss. She eyed Ian suspiciously and asked, "How did we end up sharing a blanket?"

Before drifting off to sleep, she distinctly remembered covering herself with her own blanket.

Ian's voice was still hoarse. "Perhaps you were cold and crawled in yourself." With that, he closed his eyes.

Sage stared at Ian for a moment. His brows were knitted, and he looked annoyed at being disturbed. Did she really crawl into Ian's blanket? The room did feel colder than usual.

Sage realized she had probably done it while she was asleep. It made sense that she would gravitate toward warmth since she was cold.

Sage decided not to dwell on it. She cranked up the heat and covered herself with her own blanket again. To keep her distance from Ian, she added more blankets to the bed and slept on

the edge.

However, Ian couldn't take it anymore. He threw off the covers and got out of bed just

minutes after she fell asleep.

"What are you doing?" she asked, puzzled.

Ian stormed out without answering her, probably because he was annoyed at being woken up by her.

“Tsk, someone woke up on the wrong side of the bed,” she brooded. Sage couldn’t be bothered with his outburst. She simply snuggled into her blanket and drifted back to sleep.

Ian was nowhere to be found when she woke up the next day. He must not have returned after

he left the room.

Sage got out of bed and headed to the bathroom to freshen up. There, she noticed another red mark on the back of her neck, which looked similar to the one before.

She walked out of her room, intending to ask Wanda to change the bedding, but Wanda just so happened to be outside her room holding a bath towel and men’s pajamas.

“Where did you get those, Wanda?” she asked.

Wanda responded, “Mr. Holcomb took a shower and changed his clothes in the adjacent room last night, so I’m taking care of the laundry.”

Didn’t hes

in the master bedroom last night? There were signs that he had used it when she went into the bathroom. Perhaps he took another shower this morning. He was always very particular about cleanliness after all.

“By the way, Wanda, could you do me a favor and change the bed sheets for me? Also, could you arrange for someone to disinfect the room?” Sage asked. “I’ve been getting these weird bites on the back of my neck for the past couple of days, and I don’t know what’s causing it.”

“That’s weird... I clean the room every day, so there shouldn’t be any bugs.” Wanda found it strange, but she did as she was asked.

After having breakfast and getting dressed, Sage was about to head out when she received a

call from Ian.

## Chapter 173

Why would he call her this early in the morning? He was probably going to stop her from looking for Collin or ask her to join his company's team-building event again.

However, she felt like there was not much to say about either of these things. Hence, she decided to ignore his call. He used to ignore her calls as well. It was time for him to feel the same frustration.

Sage silenced her phone before heading out. Sage spotted a familiar figure when she arrived at Collin's research facility. It was Ivy.

Sage hadn't seen Ivy since she was injured at the Holcomb Corporation's party. She hadn't expected to run into her here.

Ivy wore an elegant dress and a tailored blazer. It made her look professional, yet gentle. She had her bangs down, presumably to cover the wound on her forehead. Even with makeup on, she looked frail.

Sage couldn't believe how dedicated Ivy was, or that she had only stayed in the hospital for a few days and was already back at work after being hit by a chandelier.

In her previous life, Ivy spent nearly half a month in the hospital even though her injuries weren't as severe. Of course, Ian had been by her side the entire time. This had made Sage green with jealousy.

Hence, she kept bombarding Ian with messages. She complained that her back was hurting a lot and that she was also in the hospital for physiotherapy, hoping that Ian would come and see her. Yet he ignored her and never even replied to a single message.

She was so angry that she endured the pain in her back and went to the hospital with Delilah to cause a scene. As expected, she was driven away by Ian. He even warned her to behave herself, or that he would otherwise hold her accountable for injuring Ivy...

“Mrs. Holcomb, what brings you here?” Ivy’s voice snapped her out of her reverie.

Sage looked at her gentle demeanor and asked icily, “Why can’t I be here?”

Ivy didn’t seem to mind her tone. “Of course, you can be here. I was just curious, that’s all.”

Sage didn’t want to waste her breath on Ivy. She was afraid that she would lose her temper and strangle Ivy because of what happened in her previous life. Calmly, she walked toward her.

However, Ivy held up a hand to stop her. “Mrs. Holcomb.”

Sage came to a halt. “What do

you want?”

“I want to apologize to you for what happened at the party,” Ivy responded. “After all, you

were misunderstood and blamed for something you didn’t do because of me.

“Ian was also just looking out for me as a friend. He doesn’t have any special feelings for me, despite what the rumors suggest. I hope you won’t get the wrong idea.”

Sage smiled when she heard that. “Ms. Shekdotter, your words don’t add up. On one hand, you claim that Ian was worried about you, but on the other hand, you also say he doesn’t have any special feelings for you, and you don’t want me to get the wrong idea. Don’t you think that’s a little contradictory?”

Ivy’s face flushed red. “Mrs. Holcomb, perhaps I didn’t express myself clearly. In short, nothing is going on between Ian and I. Ian has a lot of work to deal with every day, and I don’t want to add to his

troubles.”

Sage noted that Ivy was trying to prevent her from quarreling with Ian and upsetting him over these trivial matters.

Sage sneered. “How considerate of you. If I didn’t know any better, I might’ve thought you were his wife.”

Ivy, on the other hand, seemed oblivious to her sarcasm. “Honestly, it’s as simple as tit for tat. I will naturally treat others the way they treat me.”

## Chapter 174

Sage wondered if Ivy was trying to get a rise out of her. She was about to say something when she noticed Ivy tucking a strand of hair behind her ear, revealing the earrings on her earlobe.

They were shaped like orchids, and the petals were made of diamonds. It was strikingly similar to the ones Ian had left on her bedside table last time.

It was clear that both pairs were from the same designer. So, Ian hadn’t given her the pair of earrings he had intended to give Ivy. Instead, he had bought two pairs and given them a pair each. This revelation only fueled Sage’s growing frustration.

“Ms. Shekdotter, your earrings are really pretty,” she said lowly.

“You think so?” Ivy touched them and smiled warmly. “It was a gift. I didn’t think he’d remember that orchids are my favorite flower.”

“Orchids are pure and elegant. It suits you, Ms. Shekdotter,” Sage complimented.

Then, she abruptly changed the subject. “By the way, here’s a funny story. I have a similar pair of earrings. I checked the price and found out it was worth around 20 thousand dollars.”



“Is that so?” Ivy seemed genuinely surprised. “Ian also- I mean, do you like orchids as well, Mrs. Holcomb?”

“It doesn’t matter if I like them or not. I believe you just said that Ian gave you those earrings. Am I right, Ms. Shekdotter?” Sage inquired.

Ivy didn’t utter a word. She simply smiled.

“In that case, I’d appreciate it if you returned them now,” Sage continued. She then flashed a smile at Ivy, who looked like her eyes were going to pop out of their sockets.

“Ian and I are married, so the money he spends is our money. Since he dropped 20 grand on a gift for you without consulting me, you’ll either have to return them or transfer me the money.”

Ivy was shell-shocked. She was well aware that Ian would never tell Sage that she was the one. who had bought those earrings. So, she knew Sage would think about her pair when she noticed Ivy was wearing a similar pair.

However, she had expected Sage to go crashing down to the depths of despair when she hinted. that Ian had given her the earrings. She wanted Sage to humiliate her or even quarrel with Ian and question him out of anger. Either way, she expected some kind of conflict.

But to her surprise, Sage didn’t lose her temper or kick up a fuss. Instead, she asked her to transfer 10 grand.

“Well? Which is it, Ms. Shekdotter? Are you going to give me the earrings or the money?” Sage pressed.

“Have you considered how Ian would react if he found out about this, Mrs. Holcomb?”

“I couldn’t care less about what he thinks. I’m just exercising my rights as his wife.”

“Mrs. Holcomb, I bought the earrings. They have nothing to do with Ian,” Ivy confessed.

“I see. You just don’t want to cough up the cash, huh? Wait right here.” Sage whipped out her phone. “I’ll give Ian a call and ask him to throw in an extra 10 grand in the divorce settlement. You can be our witness, Ms. Shekdotter.”

“That won’t be necessary!” Ivy couldn’t drag Ian into this. He was already upset about the photo she had taken the last time. He would be seething if he found out that she had misled Sage into thinking that he had given Ivy the earrings.

“I’ll Venmo you 10 grand,” she said through gritted teeth.

Sage smugly handed Ivy her phone. “Go ahead.”

Even though Ivy wasn’t short of 10 grand, she was still a little upset about giving it to Sage.

Following the transaction, Ivy casually asked, “Mrs. Holcomb, why aren’t you wearing the earrings today?”

“I didn’t like them, so I sold them,” Sage responded.

Ivy felt her breath hitch in her throat. She couldn’t believe that Sage had actually sold the earrings that “Ian had given her”. Shouldn’t she have treated them like her greatest treasures and never touch them?

Chapter 175

“Oh, I’ve received the money. Thanks, Ms. Shekdotter! By the way, when you’re free, could you go through all the gifts Ian has given you and tally them up? Please don’t forget to transfer half of the amount to me.”

Sage then strolled off toward the research facility. Ivy was at a loss for words.

She couldn't help but feel that Sage had changed a lot because she no longer got upset by whatever she said or did.

Could Ian's recent change of heart toward Sage be due to this? What was she up to? Who was behind this?

Mulling it over, she decided to call Delilah get back on Sage's good side."

"I don't care what you have to do, but you need to

"I don't care what you

Ivy realized that she had underestimated Sage, which was why she was in such a difficult position at the moment. She had to find a way to keep tabs on Sage.

Meanwhile, Sage magnanimously transferred 10 grand to Tiana and texted her.

"Didn't you mention yesterday that the hospital set up a charity fund? I'd like to donate 10 grand anonymously."

"Oh, Sage, you're such a gem. You're so kind and beautiful. I'm sure you'll be rewarded for your good deeds."

"Cut it out. When are we meeting for dinner today?"

"OMG. I'm so sorry! My mother-in-law decided to visit a relative all of a sudden, so we'll have to reschedule!"

Compared to Tiana, Sage had an easy time managing her relationship with her mother-in-law. After giving Tiana a good ribbing, Sage made her way to Collin's office to meet him.

Collin was surprised to learn of her plans. “Ms. Shekdotter from Bolton Investment had just asked me about the clinical status of the drug, so I’m surprised that you’re interested in the distribution rights of the drug, Mrs. Holcomb. Did Mr. Holcomb ask you guys to show up separately?”

“I want the distribution rights. It has nothing to do with Ian,” she said with a smile.

He didn’t take her seriously because he thought she was having another lover’s spat with Ian. Mrs. Holcomb, to be honest, this has been my life’s work. I’d like to launch it under the name of the research institute.”

Of course, she could understand Collin’s wishes. But there was one thing she couldn’t quite wrap her head around.

If Ivy had predicted the success of this drug during her investigation, how did she manage to convince Collin to let Henry have the distribution rights? Furthermore, the investment funds Henry obtained after that did not come from Bolton Investment. So where did the funds come

from?

While Ivy’s father, Roland, had his own company, judging from its size and influence, it couldn’t possibly have come up with such a large sum of money. Could it be that someone else had helped Ivy?

After obtaining some pertinent information from Collin, Sage followed the staff on a tour of the lab and some other places.

She decided to say goodbye to Collin after she had a better understanding of the situation. But when she got to the door, she noticed Ian there, waiting for her.

Ian was decked out in a suit, as usual. He sat with his back to the door on the couch in the reception area. Even from afar, his presence and confidence were unmistakable.

“Mr. Holcomb, your subordinate was just here a few hours ago. Are you here because you doubt their abilities?” Collin asked with a smile when he spotted Sage’s figure.

“Of course, I have to be more attentive when it comes to matters regarding your institute, Professor Braun,” Ian said calmly.

research

Collin chuckled. “Oh, is that so? Did you not rush here to find Mrs. Holcomb because you heard that she was here, Mr. Holcomb?”

Chapter 176

Jan remained unfazed despite hearing that. “She’s here as well?”

Collin was caught off guard as he hadn’t expected this to be his response.

Sage was aware that Collin had misunderstood her and Ian because of the “cucumber feast” last time. He must’ve assumed that she and Ian were playing a “cat-and-mouse” game, which was why he jested.

“Professor Braun,” she called out with a smile to spare Collin from embarrassment.

Ian turned to look at her when he heard her voice. His dark eyes were as deep and unreadable

as ever.

Sage ignored him and said to Collin, “Thanks for everything today. I’ll be leaving now.” Then, she left without stepping into the office.

Ian also made his way over to her as she reached her car. Sage assumed that he had visited Collin for business. She wondered why he was leaving so soon.

But in any case, she wasn’t in the mood to deal with him. Hence, she opened the door to the driver’s seat and was about to hop in when Ian stopped her.

“Did you seriously come to Collin for the distribution rights?”

“Yes, and?”

Ian looked into her eyes. “In that case, why are you in such a hurry to leave? You’re not usually one to let an opportunity slip by.” Was he implying that he would back her up?

Sage found the situation rather amusing. “I heard this project belongs to Ms. Shekdotter. What opportunity could I possibly take advantage of?”

Ian frowned. “Ivy’s the director of Bolton Investment. Does it bother you that she came here to negotiate business?”

Sage was more annoyed with him than with Ivy. Her temper flared when she thought about those darn diamond earrings.

“Ian Holcomb, do you have anything else to say? If you don’t, get out of my way! I don’t want to listen to your nonsense!” Her imitation of Ian was spot-on, both in terms of tone and expression.

Sure enough, his expression soured. He made an effort to suppress his anger

and asked, ‘

Why didn’t you answer my call?”

Sage sneered. “Seriously? Why are you asking me that? Don’t you do that all the time? I believe you know the answer and the reason better than I do.”

Ian responded patiently, “I missed your call last time because I was stuck in a meeting. You had already shown up at the office by the time I got out.”

“Has your memory failed you, or are you suggesting that that was the only time you had missed my calls?” she asked.

Sage used to call and text him consistently. It annoyed him to no end, so he often ignored them.

Ian couldn't help but think of what Calvin had said when she brought up old scores. Women will bring up every little thing that upset her in the past if you don't placate her when she's angry.”

Ian realized Calvin was right. He couldn't quite put his finger on the emotions that were swirling within him. It was a combination of annoyance, anger, and frustration.

He was aware that Sage was angry with him, but he was attempting to make things up to her. So why was she so unforgiving?

“Sage Joyner, are you done? I'm tired of your games.” Ian's forehead creased. “If you don't want to work at Bolton Investment, I'll let you work at my office. Are you happy now?”

Sage was dumbfounded. “What the hell is wrong with you? I wasn't playing any games! Besides, when did I ever say I wanted to work in your office?”

“Is that not the case? Sure, you might act indifferent on the surface, but you always find a way to get involved in anything remotely related to me. If that's not one of your games, what is?” Ian seemed to have had enough. “Pick a position at my company and go to Terry tomorrow. He'll arrange it.”

## Chapter 177

When she first graduated, she did mention that she wanted to work in his office. She wanted to be close to him and see him every day. Sage was surprised that Ian remembered what she

had said.

However, she was not interested in working anywhere near his office now. In fact, she wanted to stay as far away from him as possible! However, she was aware he wouldn't buy it.

There were less than 10 days left until their divorce. There was no need to argue with him anymore. Hence, she slid into the driver's seat without another word. Sage was about to start the car when Ian got into the passenger seat.

"Where do you think you're going? I haven't finished talking to you," he fumed.

Sage looked at him coldly. "What else do you have to say? If it's about the job, thanks, but no thanks. I'm not interested in any position in your office. Whoever wants it can have it."

Ian gritted his teeth when he noticed her impatience. "What the hell do you want, Sage?"

"I want you to get the hell out of my car," she snapped. "Can you manage that?"

"I'm going home with you," he said through gritted teeth.

"I'm not going home right now."

"Where are you going, then?"

"That's none of your business."

Her distant demeanor made it seem like he was the one who was pestering her now. His

patience snapped.



Ian

Want to get a divorce because he thought they could work things out. He had done everything he could, but Sage was still unable to move past their troubles. In that case, he wouldn't force her to stay.

Ian got out of the car. He had intended to warn Sage, but she stepped on the gas and sped off as soon as his feet touched the ground. He was rendered speechless.

Sage arrived at her grandfather's house. Her eyes misted over as she watched her grandfather tend to his flowers and plants. She was overjoyed that she was still able to be by her grandfather's side in this lifetime.

Donald spotted his granddaughter and waved excitedly. "Sage! Come on in, dear."

Sage wiped away the tears that had gathered in the corner of her eyes. "I just got here. I noticed you were busy, so I didn't want to interrupt you."

Donald chuckled. "Come over here and help your ol' Gramps weed the garden."

"Alright." Sage picked up a mini hoe and joined Donald in the garden to help with the flowers and plants.

The sun hadn't completely set yet, and the afterglow lit up from the horizon. The garden was filled with a sense of peace and tranquility as the two of them tended to the flowers and plants.

Sage couldn't help but feel like she had been too obsessed with Ian in her previous life. It got to the point where she had missed out on the simple joys of life.

"What's on your mind, Sage? Have things gotten better between you and Ian recently?" Donald inquired.

Sage was reminded of the gift from a few days ago. "Grandpa, why did you buy a gift for Ian in my name?"

Donald chuckled. "Well, did you buy him a gift yourself?"

Sage pouted. "Of course not! He doesn't care anyway."

"I heard from your Aunt Susan that Ian was quite pleased when he received the gift." Pleased? He didn't even bat an eye. Her aunt was definitely exaggerating.

"Grandpa, what did you get him? Was it expensive?" she asked. Sage wasn't willing to spend

any more money on Ian.

Donald flicked her forehead. "I got him a tie clip, nothing too fancy."

All of a sudden, she remembered that Ian had been wearing a tie clip when he had helped her the night before. She found it a little strange at the time since he rarely wore a tie unless it was for a formal occasion.

Sage now couldn't help but wonder if he had worn the tie because of the tie clip.

## Chapter 178

"Sage, your Uncle Owen said he was able to seal the deal this time because Ian helped him. out. It looks like Ian really cares about you," Donald said with a smile.

"Grandpa, I know you want to ease the tension between Ian and me, but it's really not necessary," Sage said solemnly. "You were right about what you said last time. I'm very stubborn about the people and things I care about, and I don't give up easily. But once I've made up my mind, I rarely change it.

"Indeed, I can't just flip a switch and erase all my feelings for Ian overnight, but I've

thought things through. I used to be so selfish. I wanted to hold on to the things I wanted. But I've realized that I'll only hurt myself by holding onto them too tightly. So, I'll set both

Ian and myself free."

His granddaughter's somber expression tugged at his heartstrings. "It looks like my Sage is all grown up now."

Growing up was a good thing. It meant that she was more mature and level-headed in dealing with problems. But as her grandfather who doted on her, he secretly wished for her to never grow up and always be carefree like a child.

"Grandpa, Ian and I will get divorced after Grandma's birthday," Sage told him, seizing the

moment.

Donald was aware that there was nothing he could do to dissuade her. "I won't stop you as

long as you've thought it through, Sage." 1

Sage felt a huge weight lift off her shoulders. "Thanks, Grandpa."

Sage received a call from Linda after having dinner at her grandfather's place. "Sage, didn't I ask Ian to tell you we were having dinner together? Why didn't you show up?" Linda asked

reproachfully.

All of a sudden, it hit her. This must've been what Ian intended to tell her when he called her and got into her car this morning!

Sage felt a little guilty. "I was at Grandpa's place, so I couldn't make it."

"It's alright. By the way, Leo will be back in a few days. Do come over with Ian then, and we can all have a get-together."

Linda jested, "Didn't you tell me several times before that you wanted to meet your in-laws and were confident you'd win them over? Sabrina can't make it back this time, but you can meet Leo first!"

Sage was surprised. In her previous life, Ian's parents, Leo Holcomb and Sabrina Padilla, couldn't return home for Linda's birthday due to some issues. So why did Leo return in this lifetime?

Linda assumed Sage was worried since she had fallen silent for a while, so she hurriedly reassured her. "Don't worry, I call the shots in this household. If Leo dares to give you a hard time, I'll straighten him out for you!"

Sage felt a gentle warmth spread through her chest. Linda was genuinely good to her. She would always stand up for her, no matter what. Even if Linda was only doing so because she was her

granddaughter-in-law, she was moved.

"I'm not worried about that, Grandma."

Sage was worried about her divorce from Ian. She had seen Leo a couple of times on video calls. Although they hadn't talked much, she could tell he was a formidable man.

According to Linda, Leo had been incredibly strict with Ian since he was a child. He was also known for being decisive and uncompromising when he was in charge of Holcomb Corporation. How would a man like that react when he found out his son and daughter-in-law were getting a divorce?

Chapter 179

"What are you worried about, then?" Linda asked knowingly. "I'm assuming you still haven't changed your mind about divorcing Ian?"

Sage didn't answer her question. Instead, she apologized. "I'm sorry, Grandma. I didn't realize Uncle Owen and Aunt Susan would go and bother you last time. I must've caused you a lot of distress, didn't I?"

Linda let out a soft sigh when she heard that. "I wasn't bothered by their visit. However, I wished what they said was true—that you wouldn't divorce Ian."

Sage fell silent because that was something she couldn't do.

Of course, Linda understood what her silence meant. "Sage, you promised you wouldn't bring up divorce before my birthday, but you still got your hands on the divorce agreement. Did Ian do something to upset you again?"

Linda continued, "I've been waiting for you to confide in me, but you haven't called me until now."

Sage used to complain to Linda quite frequently, which caused her a great deal of trouble. Sage apologized again. "This has nothing to do with Ian, Grandma. I insisted that he sign it first. I heard you even scolded him. But the truth is, you should have scolded me instead."

Linda chuckled. "Oh, Sage, just look at you. You're still standing up for Ian. Be honest with me, did you decide to have Ian sign the divorce agreement early because of what happened with Ivy at the party last time?" 1

The elderly woman might not have been tech-savvy, but that didn't mean she had no means of receiving news.

Sage was about to respond when Linda continued, "That woman was just someone who used to come over to our house when she was younger. She and Ian are just acquaintances. There's absolutely nothing going on between them. Shall I go talk to her and kick her out of the company?"

“No! It’s alright, Grandma,” Sage hurriedly intervened. “No one expected the chandelier to come crashing down at the party last time. Besides, Ian didn’t do anything wrong. Those reports were just made up to grab attention. Please don’t talk to Ivy.”

In her previous life, Linda had looked for Ivy on her behalf. Then, Ivy resigned, as per Linda’s instructions. However, Ian was no fool. With a simple investigation, he discovered

that she and Linda had conspired to force Ivy to leave.

Consequently, Ian not only rejected Ivy’s resignation but even proposed that she join the Holcomb Corporation’s board of directors. No one could force her to leave once she joined

the board.

Linda was furious when she found out. She summoned Ian back to Holcomb Manor and forced him to rescind his decision and dismiss Ivy.

Ian, however, refused outright, claiming that Ivy was qualified to join the board of directors, Linda was so upset that she fell ill for many days.

In this life, Sage didn’t want Linda to fall ill from anger again.

“Grandma, I’m the one who wants to get a divorce. This is between me and Ian. It has nothing to do with Ivy. There’s no reason for you to involve her.”

“When did you become so tolerant, my dear?” Linda seemed displeased. “That woman looks like she’s up to no good. Don’t you want me to teach her a lesson on your behalf?” 1

Sage did want that. She had to admit that Linda had a sharp eye—she could see right through Ivy at a glance. It was just a pity that Ian couldn’t see it.

However, Linda's lecture wouldn't affect Ivy at all. On the contrary, Ivy would use the opportunity to make herself look as pitiful as possible. Sage didn't want to give her that opportunity.

"I'm far from tolerant, Grandma. It's just that... nothing will change even if you teach Ivy a lesson. Don't worry about me. I know my

limits."

Linda couldn't help but worry for her grandson when she heard Sage's calm and composed

response.

Sage used to be so anxious whenever something related to Ian arose. She would actively ask for help and turn to Linda for advice.

## Chapter 180

However, the situation was reversed at the moment. Sage had turned Linda down despite her offering to help. Sage might actually leave her grandson if he remained indifferent and unattentive.

Linda realized that she needed to make them spend more time together. Making up her

mind, she said, "Alright then, I won't worry about it anymore. By the way, it's been a while since I've had your mille crepe cake, Sage. Could you make it for me? I'll have someone come over to pick it up tomorrow morning."

Sage used to be a spoiled young lady who never did any household chores. But she decided to enroll in cooking classes and learn how to prepare meals and desserts after stumbling upon nonsense like "the way to a man's heart is through his stomach" in books.

Consequently, she prepared delicious meals every day for Ian. However, he never showed up, even after the food was cold. Even if he did show up, he only ate very little. Hence, her efforts were always in vain.

Fortunately, this skill eventually came in handy because she could prepare desserts for her grandfather and grandmother-in-law.

Sage ensured her desserts wouldn't be too sweet or heavy since the elderly couldn't consume too much sugar or grease. This meant that Donald and Linda could eat them without worrying about their health.

Sage hadn't cooked in this lifetime yet. However, since Linda had requested it, she readily agreed. "Sure!"

"Also, you promised that you would get along with Ian. Please don't lie to me again."

Sage understood her concerns and responded perfunctorily, "I won't."

Initially, she planned to spend the night at her grandfather's place. But after Linda's phone call, she drove back to Solaris Estate.

Sage was surprised to find Ian sitting on the couch in the living room when she walked in. She was about to ask Wanda to prepare some ingredients for her but stopped in her tracks.

He was probably still upset about the incident from this afternoon because his face was expressionless. Yet, his eyes lit up briefly when he noticed her.

"Aren't you supposed to be at Grandma's place?" she asked, puzzled.

"I arrived at Holcomb Manor alone. Grandma didn't see you and assumed I must've bullied you, so she scolded and kicked me out." His tone was harsh. "Did you do this on purpose, Sage? Did you not show up on purpose even though you knew about this just so I'd get scolded by Grandma?"

Sage scoffed. "Don't be ridiculous. I had no idea we were meeting Grandma for dinner tonight." She thought that he deserved whatever telling off he had gotten. With that, she headed toward the kitchen.



"I'll have spaghetti without onions," he said. For some reason, his tone softened.

Sage turned to look at him, puzzled.

"What? Aren't you going to cook me something since you know I haven't eaten dinner? I thought you were aware that Wanda took the day off."

She cursed him under her breath. Was he out of his mind?

"Mr. Holcomb, if the thought of lifting your precious hands pains you so much, please order takeout or hire a chef to grace your doorstep," Sage quipped. "I'm not your housekeeper, and I'm not obligated to cook for you."

His forehead creased. "Oh, so now cooking for your husband is considered beneath you? Then, why were you so enthusiastic about it in the past? I remember someone insisted on cooking even when I explicitly said I wasn't hungry."

Sage sneered, "Since you claim to be my husband, Mr. Holcomb, let me ask you, have you ever bothered to fulfill your duties as a husband? Have you ever given a damn about your wife's feelings, and have you ever appreciated the effort I put into the warm meals I cooked for you?"

"Frankly, you've never acted like a husband. So why on earth do you feel entitled to demand that I continue to play the role of the perfect wife?"

Ian was rendered speechless. "Why are you going into the kitchen, then?"

"I'm making a mille crepe cake for Grandma." Then, she turned around and walked away.

As he watched Sage's slender figure disappear into the kitchen, multiple emotions swirled inside Ian. Why was she unwilling to cook for him now?

That evening, Sage set the mille crepe cake batter in the refrigerator to rest for tomorrow. Then, she prepared a low-sugar filling for the cake. After that, she went upstairs.