

## After Death 241

### Chapter 241

Nadia wanted to say something, but Charles beat her to it. “Stephany is my daughter, Steven, so that makes you my son-in-law. Since your wife hung her sister from the beams, you have to teach her a lesson on my behalf.”

He stopped Nadia from speaking because he couldn’t read Steven. Steven cocked his head and looked at me. “How could you hang your sister from the beams?”

Charles sighed in relief. He was about to add to Steven’s words when Steven continued seriously, “You should’ve killed her before hanging her there.”

This time, Charles wasn’t the only stunned one. I was too. Steven looked so serious.

And so, I educated him seriously, “Shut up. We can’t break the law.”

He nodded obediently. “Okay.”

“Y–You two! How dare you!” Nadia’s face was red with rage.

Charles also gnashed his teeth furiously. “You’re nothing but an illegitimate son, Steven.

And you’ve yet to gain a steady foothold in the Lincoln family. With Mr. Martin around, you have no right to act so obnoxiously!”

He was pissed now. I raised an eyebrow. “C’mon, don’t tell me you’re mad already.”

“How about we... shut the door and get rid of them?” Steven asked creepily.

Ewan had finished dealing with Ann and Kelvin. He came inside and was about to shut the door per Steven’s words.

Charles and Nadia panicked. “W–What are you guys up to?”

Charles mustered his courage. “I don’t believe for a second that he can kill us in broad daylight!”

Ewan pulled out Steven’s certificate of mental disability. He sighed and said, “I’m sorry to say this, but Mr. Lincoln is mentally disabled.”

That, coupled with Steven grabbing a fruit knife from the coffee table, made Charles’ legs give out. Nadia held his arm tightly and backed away in panic. “You’re instigating a psycho to murder, Stephany! Make him put the knife down! Let’s talk this out!”

I gave her a helpless look. “Sorry, but I can’t control him when he acts up.”

Ah won back done, but Ann, Kelvin, and their men had yet to successfully sue it looked like the Lincoln family’s security was up to standard, but it

ke something was wrong.

Soon, the sound of dogs barking came from outside. Ann howled, Kelvin screamed, and

the bodyguards with them were also yelling. Had dogs been set on them?

looked at Steven in astonishment. He had an apple in one hand and the fruit knife in the other as he slowly approached Charles and Nadia. "The Lincoln family has given you 200 million dollars, so you two need to sever ties with my wife.

From now on, she'll have nothing to do with you and you aren't allowed to pester her anymore. What say you?

His tone was airy and casual, but the threat in it was thinly veiled.

Charles had turned pale with fright. He barked at me, "We've raised you since you were 18, Stephany. How could you treat your biological parents like this?"

"Oh, you're my biological parents now?" I laughed. "Have you really cared about the woman

named Stephany Larson since her return?"

In Stephany's diary, she wrote that the Larsons thought she was trying to get their attention by claiming that she had gotten acute gastroenteritis. They thought she was made of sturdier stuff since she'd grown up in the countryside.

Stephany went into shock from the pain in the middle of the night. If not for her being discovered by a security guard when she was running out of the Larson residence, she probably would've died from the pain.

Let's forget the talking. It's too troublesome. We should just kill them." Steven turned to look at me innocently

I took a deep breath without responding. This time, Charles and Nadia were genuinely frightened. Charles' voice trembled as he said, "Get this freak away from us, Stephany. D-

Don't forget what you promised me!\*

He wanted to use the fact that Stephany had pretended to be Stephanie so that she could get close to Steven to threaten me into compliance

Chapter 242

I looked aloof. "Sorry, but I don't remember anything. Your precious daughter drugged me on the day of my wedding, as did James. The drugs were too strong. I couldn't handle them, and I've lost my memory."

Charles' lips twitched. "We'll act like we never had you as a daughter. Get this freak away from us!"

"Fine." I nodded,

Ann's screams came from outside the door. "Help me! Mom, Dad, help!"

I was curious to know what was happening outside.

Seeing that Steven wasn't moving forward anymore, Charles and Nadia made a run for it.

But they were even more terrified after opening the door.

There were several dogs in the courtyard. They had pounced on Ann, Kelvin, and the bodyguards. They were trying to drag them to the ground. The smell of blood was in the air. I heard the sound of flesh being torn and screams rending the air. It was a living hell.

Nadia almost fainted at the sight of it. Her legs gave out, and she fell to her knees.

A dog was biting Ann's leg, and she was screaming for help. Kelvin was so focused on running for his life that he couldn't be bothered about her. He allowed the dogs to jump on her and bite her face.

I gasped, not knowing how to put a stop to the situation. The Lincoln family's bodyguards were trying to control the situation, but the dogs refused to let go.

Afraid that someone would die from this, I said in a small voice, "Steven..."

He came over to me, looking cold. He put the peeled apple in my hand and covered my eyes as he said softly, "Don't look."

I clutched the hem of my dress tightly. Although this was what Ann deserved...

A few of the stronger bodyguards had already fled, and Kelvin had taken shelter in the car.

None of them dared to rescue Ann. And so, Ann was left alone as the dogs surrounded her and chomped down on her.

Charles and Nadia were terrified, so they didn't dare to help her. They could only cry and scream for someone to call the police.

These are strays from around the area. Mr. Lincoln Senior was kind enough to allow us to feed them in the backyard, Ann aggravated them when she brought so many people with her here. We've already called the police, though," Ewan said.

The dogs stopped their attacks and dispersed when they heard the police sirens. They were gone before the police arrived. To my surprise, the dog in the lead was the cute wolfhound I'd seen in Steven's villa,

I thought it was a gentle dog, but it turned out there was a side to it that I wasn't aware of.

It was so fierce and aggressive that I doubted an actual wolf would stand a chance against  
1. it.

"What's going on here?" The police rushed over to see Ann covered in blood and screaming for her life. She looked like she'd gone mad.

\*This lady here trespassed on private property with a bunch of ruffians. They didn't look like they were here in peace, and they had weapons on them.

“The strays that the master of this household were feeding were scared, so they bit her.

They’re gone now. We tried to put a stop to things as soon as possible.” Ewan stepped forward to deal with the police. “Since they were under the Lincoln family’s care, we’ll compensate no matter how much it costs.”

The police officers hurriedly called an ambulance. Charles and Nadia had already dashed toward Ann to hold her in their arms. She had fainted due to the fear, and her face had bite marks all over. She looked terrible.

I had mixed feelings as I looked at her from the door. In Stephany’s diary, she had written that Ann had once locked her in a dog’s cage before. She was stuck in there for a whole night, screaming for help. But no one had come to her rescue because the school had been empty at the time.

She was only saved the next day when someone came to feed the dog. By the time she was let out of the cage, she was already a little out of it.

The matter was brought up to the Larson family, but Charles and Nadia defended Ann, saying that she wasn’t capable of doing anything like that. They were sure that with how wild” Stephany was, she didn’t accidentally lock herself in the cage.

I didn’t know whether this was Ann’s retribution. After all, she had trespassed on private property—it was her own fault she was bitten.

Ewan had already made it clear that compensations would be made accordingly. Ann

would have to bear the pain and consequences of being disfigured herself, though.

Revenge was oh, so sweet.

“This is murder! Murder! Officers, they were trying to commit murder! They let those dogs. out on purpose! Mr. Lincoln Senior is already paralyzed. How could he rear any dogs? That

psycho’s the one behind this!” Nadia screamed for the police to arrest Steven.

He hid behind me, looking scared. He peeped at the police and said, “They look so fierce... I’m scared.”

## Chapter 243

“Mr. Lincoln has a mental condition and can’t be aggravated. But these people came uninvited and...” Ewan sighed. He pointed at the surveillance cameras. “We have surveillance cameras here, so you can check the footage.

“We tried to stop the dogs from attacking as soon as it happened, but you should be aware that it isn’t easy to get a dog to let go of something once they have their teeth in it.”

The cops looked at Steven before turning to Charles and Nadia. “Hurry up and take her to the hospital while we get to the bottom of this. It’d be a different story if you guys were really the ones who had trespassed on private property.”

Steven continued to hide behind me as he glowered at Charles and Nadia. He sounded scared, but his words were brutal as he said, “Don’t forget that you’ve already severed ties with Stephany. If you break in here and aggravate me again... I might just kill you.”

Once Charles, Nadia, and the cops were gone, he asked me in a small voice, “Stephie, were you scared?”

I shook my head. I was only worried about the dogs. “Wasn’t the dog in the lead yours? Will anything happen to it?”

“It’s smart. It should be at home by now,” Steven said happily.

I asked, “What’s its name?”

He lowered his head without saying anything.

“It doesn’t have a name?”

“Stevie...” he muttered.

“Huh? Its name is similar to yours?” I felt like laughing.

He huffed without saying anything else.

“Mr. Lincoln, Mrs. Lincoln, Ann’s been taken to the hospital. She’s not in any mortal danger, but her face is likely disfigured. The matter’s starting to gain traction online.” Ewan came

over.

“Steve, were you behind what happened to Stephany’s grandmother?” I asked.

He didn’t deny it. Instead, he changed the subject. “Stephie, I don’t want to go to work...

Come with me.

I pushed his handsome face away. He was pretending to be pitiful, but it wouldn’t work on me. Go there yourself. I have other things to do.”

“I don’t want to...” Steven didn’t seem to dare to let me out of his sight. Maybe he was afraid that something would happen to me.

\*Fine, fine. I’ll go to work with you first.” I could only appease him.

Before leaving the Lincoln family, we went to check on Ignatius, who couldn’t even speak anymore. If I were to be honest, he would probably be better off dead than paralyzed like

that. It was too bad that he had to stay like this and act as a cover-up, I didn't believe for a second that he was capable of being kind enough to feed the stray dogs. Those strays obviously belonged to Steven.

Ignatius glared at Steven; his eyes were almost popping out of its sockets. He could only grunt and groan without making any sense. It was an anxiety-inducing sight.

Steven stared at him with a smile. For a second, I couldn't help but think that he was scary.

"Take care of yourself, Grandpa. You have to live a long, long life." He walked over to Ignatius.

Ignatius' veins protruded, but he couldn't say a word.

I left the room to see Ewan standing outside and waiting for us. "How long have you worked for Mr. Lincoln Senior, Mr. Bart?"

He answered honestly, "Ten years."

"Don't you have any loyalty to him after working for him for so long?" After Ignatius had fallen sick, all of the Lincoln family's household staff had undergone a huge change.

## Chapter 244

At first, I suspected that Ewan was secretly some big shot. But then, I saw how respectful he was toward Steven. Later, I suspected that Ewan was using Steven's position as the Lincoln family's heir and his mental disability to give himself free rein.

"You're still young, so you don't know how evil people can be." Ewan didn't really answer my question. He seemed to be changing the topic, but there was an underlying meaning to his words that I didn't really get.

"My father died in an accident at a construction site when I was a teenager, and my sister was only five at the time. My mother abandoned us and fled after taking the compensation for my father's death.

"From then on, my sister and I only had each other. I studied and worked at the same time. I had to pick up trash just to make a living. Thankfully, there were kind people in our lives who helped us out of the slums."

Ewan walked beside me as we headed to the courtyard. He looked at the weeds poking out from the ground and pulled them out with a smile. "My sister was beautiful. Everyone said she was lucky that she could marry James."

At the time, Ewan's sister had indeed married above her station by marrying James.

I looked at him in surprise. James had indeed had a wife, but I never expected her to be

Ewan's sister.

"If I wasn't working as Mr. Lincoln's assistant, James would have never met my sister." Ewan sneered. "He married her, but it was likely only because he wanted me to take his side—he thought

Mr. Lincoln Senior had high hopes for me. It was too bad that he was a scumbag, though."

His gaze landed on my belly. "When my sister was six months pregnant, her looks and figure took a turn for the worse because of her hormones. James didn't like that she was no longer pretty, so he had affairs left, right, and center.

"He became entranced with a popular starlet and insisted on divorcing my sister despite

Mr. Lincoln's objections. She was already six months pregnant—how could they get divorced?"

Ewan's sister had been pregnant at the time. If she'd refused to get divorced, James wouldn't have been able to do anything.

Take a guess at the brilliant idea that the starlet placed in James' mind." Ewan smiled faintly.

The look on his face made a chill run down my spine.

"She said... the whips used to train horses at the stables hurt like hell but wouldn't leave obvious marks. She told James to whip my sister until she agreed to get a divorce. She also told him that domestic abuse was a private matter.

"If my sister died because she insisted on remaining married, it would be her own fault."

I took a deep breath. The level of cruelty humans were capable of was truly eye-opening.

"And so, James returned home that night after having a bit too much to drink. He whipped my sister, killing her and her baby..."

Ewan's tone was calm. It was as if he'd already let the matter go. But I knew he hadn't and wouldn't. He hated the Lincoln family, James, and Ignatius.

I couldn't help but think that he'd played a huge role in making the Lincoln family end up like it was today. He wasn't a simpleton.

"James lied and said that my sister fell from the stairs, and Mr. Lincoln Senior forked out a huge sum of money to cover up the truth. If it weren't for the nanny being on good terms with me and risking her life to give me the video she'd recorded, I would've thought that my sister was just unfortunate..."

Ewan opened the car door. "I'm sorry, Mrs. Lincoln. I shouldn't have told you these things."

"What happened after that?" I asked meaningfully.

He faltered, then said with a smile, "After that, I brought Mr. Lincoln back from the asylum. Our situations were similar, so we understood each other. His eyes reminded me of my sister's, so I transferred all my guilt for her onto him. I tried to make things up to her through him."

He was saying that he'd later met Steven, but I couldn't help thinking that there was a hidden meaning in his words.

"Later, James got what he deserved. He'd had too much fun in his youth, so he'd lost the ability to have children. He'd even injured his spine and ended up in a wheelchair..." I said.

And now, Ignatius is a vegetable. I guess it's what they deserve."

"Death isn't a punishment for the most evil of people. Keeping them barely alive... Now,

that is a punishment," Ewan said pointedly.

For some reason, a pain suddenly prickled my heart. Death wasn't a punishment; keeping someone barely alive was.

Before my death, I'd been stuffed and put on display in that glass cabinet. The murderer had gone to such lengths to keep me alive. Had he been punishing me?

Suddenly, my head started hurting. I leaned against the car door, trying to get past it. It only became slightly better when Steven came to me and held me.

What was it that I'd forgotten?

## Chapter 245

When Steven and I arrived at the Lincoln Group, there were still some employees causing a ruckus.

The Lincoln Group is a reputable, public-listed company. Don't we have anyone else to run the show aside from a retard? Even if something's happened to the chairman, we need to have someone capable to take over!"

"Exactly! What right does a retard have to manage the company?"

"Not only is he a psycho, but he's also an illegitimate son. He has no right to manage the company!"

Their words were nasty; someone had obviously put them up to this. Well, it made sense. The dark side of mankind was always amplified when its interest was involved. If Martin could promise them good things, they could slander someone who'd never harmed them



without blinking an eye.

“Why didn’t a psycho like him die in that accident? Why did Mr. Andy have to die?”

“I heard that he brings bad luck to everyone he’s around.”

“I heard that even the fire at the welfare home didn’t manage to kill him!”

My expression darkened. I looked at the person who’d spoken last. “Steve...”

I tiptoed and cupped my hands around Steven’s ear, whispering, “Follow Mr. Bart upstairs.”

He looked at me obediently, not wanting to leave without me.

“Be good.”

He nodded reluctantly and followed Ewan away with his eyes lowered. I stood at the company’s entrance and gazed at the people who were protesting. Then, I walked over to them and asked, “What’s Martin offering you for you to riot here?”

These people were some of the company’s senior executives, and they held important positions. They were positive that they wouldn’t be fired because there wouldn’t be anyone to replace them at such short notice.

“Who are you?” the person in the lead asked.

“My name’s Stephany Larson. I’m the Lincoln Group’s president’s wife,” I said.

You? The president’s wife? Mr. Lincoln Senior may be down, but that doesn’t mean it’s up to a paycho to take over as the company’s president. And you, the so-called president’s wife, don’t have the right to throw your weight around here,” the man said arrogantly. He kept saying that Steven wasn’t worthy,

“How about you take over, then?” I smiled. “Do you think you’re worthy?”

His expression darkened. “Stop wasting our time. Get Mr. Bart and Mr. Steven out of here! We disagree with Mr. Steven being the company’s president!”

“I bet you’ve been promised plenty of stuff, seeing as you’re the one leading this. How much will the people with you get, though?”

“The Lincoln Group isn’t short on staff, so you guys don’t need to go on strike. You’re fired,” I said, continuing to push the man’s buttons.

“What right do you have to fire us? Who the hell do you think you are?” he roared.

“I’m the president’s wife, that’s who. Besides, you’re disrupting the company’s daily operations by neglecting your job. Why would I keep you around if you’re not doing what you were hired for?” I glanced at the surveillance cameras in the lobby and shifted slightly.

The man stormed forward, pointing at me as he started arguing with me. I decided to take a leaf out of Steven's book—I stepped forward, then quickly plopped myself down onto the floor and clutched my belly.

I cried out in pain, "Why did you have to do that?"

The man was baffled. "What the hell are you talking about? I didn't even touch you!"

I gave the other people a pained look. "I know this has nothing to do with you guys, but he just pushed me. I'm carrying the Lincoln family's heir. If something were to happen to me, he'll be the only one I'll go after..."

Damn, I was so kind.

”

Everyone else was stunned. Things had been so chaotic earlier that they hadn't really seen what had happened. It didn't help that my acting was so genuine.

I cried out to the security guards, "Hurry up and call the police! He hit me!"

The man spluttered, unable to defend himself. "Cut the act! I didn't—"

"You're the closest to us, but I know that you didn't do it. You saw him push me, didn't you? Don't worry, I'll only go after the culprit. He'll be the only one I'll bring charges against." I

looked at the person closest to the man and tried to sow discord between them.

## Chapter 246

The person panicked and looked at the man in the lead. "No, I..."

The man looked at him, anxiously waiting for him to prove his innocence. But under such circumstances, the person could only say that he hadn't seen anything. "No, I didn't really see what happened..."

The police soon arrived. Ewan helped me into the ambulance.

With everyone watching, Ewan said, "We suspect that this man, Mick Jensen, has accepted bribes. His wife has told us that he has a mistress, and there was a million dollars in cash found at her residence."

He kept his voice low, but it was still loud enough for everyone to hear him. It was clear that Mick was the only one who'd gotten paid that much to riot. But whatever it was, their little alliance was done with.

I sat in the ambulance and glanced at Ewan. On our way here, I'd reminded him that we had to catch the ringleader before dealing with the others. But in such a short time, he'd already hit the ringleader where it hurt.

I had the feeling that Ewan had long since thought about the things that would occur

here. He'd just kept his silence and gone along with me...

I thought I was smart enough to think of something like this, but something felt off to me. Was I really protecting and helping Steven? Couldn't Ewan have dealt with it even if I hadn't done anything?

"Everything's been dealt with as you'd instructed, Mrs. Lincoln," Ewan came over to report to me after the police took Mick away.

I parted my lips. He was flattering me by saying he'd done as I'd instructed. I'd only made the first move—he'd done everything else.

If truth be told, his flattery... made a chill run down my spine.

"Uh... you didn't tell Steve about this, did you? I don't want him to worry. I'm fine, after all."

"Mr. Lincoln doesn't know about this. Once we're done with things here, he'll head to the hospital to accompany you for your prenatal check. I'll just inform him that you went ahead of him." Ewan already had everything planned out.

I nodded. "Alright, then."

Before the ambulance left, I glanced out the window. I didn't know whether my eyes were playing tricks on me, but I felt like Steven was looking down at me from inside the building.

Steven arrived shortly after the ambulance brought me to the hospital.

"Stephie... you didn't wait for me." His eyes were lowered, and he looked aggrieved.

I glanced around. The ambulance had driven so slowly and steadily that I'd almost kept him waiting. What was this about me not waiting for him?

"Uh... I was worried that you were busy with work," I said, trying to appease him.

He held my hand a little nervously. "I'm going to be a dad, aren't I?"

I was taken aback. The child was indeed his. "Of course. Or do you want me to find this baby another father?"

His eyes immediately darkened, and he tightened his grip on my hand. "You can't do that."

I smiled. "Are you done with work?"

"Ewan told me everything, Stephie." Steven's expression changed almost instantly.

He looked happy and excited, and he acted like he was totally dependent on me. You were the one who thought of the idea to get rid of those people. You're so smart!

I felt diffident, but I didn't know exactly why. "From now on, remember to let me know

beforehand if you're facing any trouble."

The sense of protectiveness that surged in me boosted my confidence. This was my second chance at life—there was no way I couldn't deal with those scum. As long as I was around, no one would be able to lay a hand on the people I cared about.

"You're the best, Stephie. How will I survive without you?" Steven was still acting like a child. He held me and told me how dependent he was on me. He also said that he couldn't live without me.

I couldn't help feeling like I'd spoiled him rotten. But what could I do about it? What else could I do aside from continuing to spoil him?

## Chapter 247

Ewan was quick and efficient. Mick soon spilled everything -he told us that Dax's assistant was the one who'd given him the money and instructed him to lead a riot at the Lincoln Group. He refused to admit that he'd pushed me, though.

I didn't probe too much. My goal had been to drag out the person behind Mick, anyway. It was clear to everyone that Dax was behind everything, but he'd managed to get away every time so far.

It didn't matter, though. I could get rid of his people one by one and replace them with my own. After all, he had Martin behind him, and their roots ran deep.

"Martin's getting on in years, and Dax is his only son. Think about how sad Martin would be if he were to lose his only heir." Steven had gone to collect the medical report with the nurse, so I spoke to Ewan. "I know you're smart, Mr. Bart. I don't care why you've approached Steve; I just know that we have a common enemy."

Common enemies, to be exact—Martin and Dax.

The fact that Ewan had chosen to stand with Steven as soon as Ignatius fell was enough to tell Martin and Dax that he was ready to wage war against them.

They were as ruthless as they came, so there was no room for Ewan to lose this war now that he'd chosen to work with Steven.

"I understand." Ewan nodded. "I'll do exactly as you and Mr. Lincoln have instructed."

"Can we sneak any of our people into Dax's life?" I asked.

Ewan faltered. "He may not be as cautious and sensitive as Martin, but he's still strict when choosing his subordinates. I've thought of a few ways, but he generally doesn't allow anyone other than his confidants near him. Besides, all the people around him have to get past Martin."

I chuckled. It looked like Martin kept Dax on a tight leash. Still, all children had a rebellious streak somewhere. I refused to believe that Dax was an exception to the rule.

“Let’s approach this differently. We can’t keep waiting around for Martin. How about

we try doing something about Dax’s bedfellows? Men, in general, are no match for feminine wiles,” I said.

Upon meeting Dax, I knew that all the men in the Lincoln family were perverts who couldn’t keep it in their pants. James had been like that, and so was Dax.

They weren’t exactly the same, though. Dax thought of women as his playthings and cared more about his career. Still, things would sometimes get out of hand when he was having fun with his playthings.

Ewan gave me a complicated look. Then, he nodded.

I figured that if Martin lost Dax, he probably wouldn’t have any other trump cards or bargaining chips. That way, Steven would eventually be able to gain a steady foothold in the Lincoln Group.

“The doctor said that everything’s fine, Stephie. This is just a regular prenatal check,” Steven said when he came back. He still looked as silly and innocent as always. It was as if he was a pure white sheet.

A voice in my head kept telling me that I had to protect the sheet and keep it white.

“That’s good. Congratulations, Mr. Lincoln.” I took the report from him and, for some reason, congratulated him.

As soon as the words were out of my mouth, I was taken aback. Why did I congratulate him? Had he always wanted to be a father? Or had I promised him something in the past?

Steven stiffened. Then, he threw his arms around me and held me tightly. His voice was hoarse as he said, “Thank you, Stephie.”

Despite his words, I couldn’t help but feel diffident. I’d forgotten about him, abandoned him, and even fallen for someone else. Did he really… not hate me at all?

At times, I felt like I wouldn’t blame Steven if it turned out that he’d really lost control and murdered me. I was the one who’d done him wrong in the first place—I’d forgotten about him and fallen in love with someone else when he was at his lowest.

I’d even gotten pregnant!

“Let’s go home.” I wanted to take him home. My chest felt stuffy.

Chapter

“The doctor wants to see me,” Steven said mysteriously. He told me that the doctor had some things to tell him, so I let him go without thinking too much about it.

I sat in the corridor as I waited for him to return. Then, I saw Michael. He looked like he was almost fully recovered, which made sense. Bad things never died, after all.

He was walking with a middle-aged man and talking about something. When he turned around the corner, he saw me and stopped. He looked like he wanted to say something to me.

## Chapter 248

I ignored Michael and turned to focus on the middle-aged man. When I laid eyes on him, my heart clenched. He seemed so, so familiar...

Who was he?

I tried my damndest to recall who he was, but nothing came to me. When he saw me, he approached me with a smile. I was instinctively repulsed by him and wanted to get up to leave.

He looked at me appraisingly, seemingly seeing right through me. “It’s nice to meet you, Ms. Larson. My name’s Peter Jones, and I’m a psychiatrist.”

I was taken aback. A psychiatrist?

“I’m Wendell Carlson’s classmate from elementary school. We grew up together, and we’re the best of friends.” He seemed to be saying these things for my benefit. He was telling me that he and my father weren’t just acquaintances.

I stared at him in shock. Wendell Carlson was Stephanie Carlson’s father.

“Stephanie was sick as a child, and I was the one who was in charge of treating her,”

Peter continued with a smile. Despite being a middle-aged man, there was something about him that made him stand out.

Michael stood beside him, looking like he was closely watching my every move. It pissed me off. Their appraising gazes made me feel like they were watching a lab rat in a cage.

“Is it any of my business whose friend or doctor you are?” I frowned.

Peter smiled. “Sorry, I’ve overstepped my boundaries.”

Michael explained, “My mother sought Dr. Jones out and asked him to treat me.”

I sneered. “What, have you really lost your mind? If you have, you should go to an asylum.”

Peter didn’t say anything as he watched us. He was smiling gently, but there was

something about it that made my skin crawl.

“Stephany...” Michael had learned his lesson. He didn’t call me “Stephie” today. “I’m sorry for the trouble I’ve caused you. I mistook you for Stephanie Carlson because of my own issues.”

I wasn’t used to him suddenly being such a gentleman. I huffed and looked away; I didn’t know what he was trying to do.

“I’m really sorry,” Michael apologized again before leaving with Peter.

He’d acted so out of character that I couldn’t help feeling that something was wrong. My sixth sense told me that something was amiss.

After they turned the corner, I followed them secretly. Then, I heard Michael ask Peter, “Did you manage to catch anything?”

“Your guess might be correct,” Peter answered.

“Then... what should I do?”

“Stephanie had a strong self-consciousness. After being aggravated, she would choose to seal certain memories that she didn’t want to recall as a way of protecting herself. With some mental cues, we can...”

I couldn’t hear the rest of the sentence. I frowned. I knew that Peter wasn’t up to anything good.

“Mrs. Lincoln,” Ewan suddenly said from behind me. “The car’s here.”

He made me jump. I turned to look at him. “Did you see the guy with Michael Ford?

His name is Peter Jones, and he says that he’s a psychiatrist.”

He nodded calmly. “I know him. He’s the best psychiatrist in Huma, and he’s considered the voice of authority in the industry. Mr. Lincoln Senior had once hired him to treat Mr. Lincoln.”

“It didn’t work?” I subconsciously asked.

“He said that Mr. Lincoln is fine,” Ewan said. “I guess that’s what all voices of authority are capable of.”

I took a deep breath, “Yeah. What sort of authority is he?”

“He said that Mr. Lincoln’s fine and that Ms. Stephanie Carlson, who was fine, was sick. That’s ridiculous, isn’t it? I heard that he first started working in the asylum that

Mr. Lincoln was in.”

I glanced at him, feeling like he was insinuating something. He seemed to be deliberately saying these things to me.

“He said that Mr. Lincoln’s fine and that Ms. Stephanie Carlson, who was fine, was sick. That’s ridiculous, isn’t it? I heard that he first started working in the asylum that Mr. Lincoln was in.”

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Steven and the doctor came out together. The doctor was saying a few things to him, and Steven looked pretty happy. He came over to me and held my hand. ”

Stephie...\*

His fingers were a little cool. His grip made my heart settle in my chest. “Is there something bothering you?”

He could always see through me. I shook my head. “No, I’m fine. Let’s go home.”

I was distracted the whole way home. Peter said that he used to be my doctor, and Ewan said that Peter had claimed that Steven was perfectly fine while I was the one with the problem. What did these things mean?

“Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln, Mr. Martin has organized a family gathering, saying that it’s an annual affair for the Lincoln family. You two have to attend,” Ewan said.

Steven looked impatient. “What a nuisance.”

It had occurred to me that Martin would find an opportunity to aggravate Steven.

After all, Steven had foiled Martin’s plans too many times, so Martin was probably already suspicious of Steven.

He suspected that Steven was only acting like a psycho, so this was the perfect opportunity to test his suspicions out.

\*Steve, when we get home, I don’t want you to go anywhere. Stay with me. You have to call me even if you’re going to the restroom.” I held Steven’s hand, feeling a little worried.

Ewan pulled up at the entrance of the Lincoln family’s residence. As soon as I got out of the car with Steven’s hand in mine, I saw Yasmin, who was standing a distance away.



It came as a surprise to me that she could still run around like this when she was supposed to be under the police's close supervision. I glanced at her and sneered. She looked haggard now, perhaps because she was constantly living in fear.

She had prominent dark eyebags; it looked like she hadn't slept well in a long time.

She approached me.

I ignored her, wanting to head into the house with Steven.

Yasmin said, "Stéphany."

I glanced at her. "What?"

She seemed to be taking a different approach today. "I came to... apologize to you, Stephany. I'm sorry for misunderstanding you and telling the police that you were linked to a murderer."

I was surprised. What had gotten into Michael and Yasmin today?

"The police told me that there's no doubt over the crimes Simmie's committed, but they're still trying to track down his accomplices. But the fact that no one else has died after Simmie's death most likely points to him being the mastermind behind everything.

"I can't remain under the police's protection forever, which means that I need to go back to a normal life and job as soon as possible," she said. She looked like she was ready to turn over a new leaf.

I appraised her. "You've gotten off scot-free for killing Stephanie Carlson, I see.

You've got a few tricks up your sleeve, don't you?"

I was obviously testing her patience. After a pause, she said gently, "Stephany, that wasn't what I meant to do. I didn't want to kill her; I just..."

Seeing that I wasn't interested in what she had to say, she switched tactics. "I'll admit that I'm at fault here. Because of that, I'll do my best to make it up to her. Since she'd loved Michael so deeply, I'll spend the rest of my life by his side. I'll love and care for him on her behalf."

I was speechless. How shameless could she be? But, I guess I knew what she was doing here now—she wanted to mark her territory. Was she warning me not to get close to Michael by pretending to be Stephanie?

"Mrs. Ford has also accepted me now, and I've already moved into the Ford family's residence. I'm staying in Stephanie's room, and it's given me such a profound understanding of her love for Michael. I'll make sure to keep her love for him going. Yasmin wiped her tears. "I'll take care of Mrs. Ford too."

I stood there and watched her performance. In the past, I would've been devastated.

Now, however, it was as if I was an outsider to the situation. I was nothing but a spectator.

I was even starting to think of Stephanie as someone who had nothing to do with me. I could sense my dislike for myself...

I couldn't believe that I was filled with scorn and contempt for the person I'd been back then. I could even feel some of my memories returning. Something... was awakening within me.

"Has she lost her marbles?" I asked Steven softly.

He seemed to be enjoying the show too. He looked at me and nodded seriously. "She does seem a little off her rocker."

## Chapter 250

Yasmin gnashed her teeth, then continued, "I'm sorry to have caused you guys so much trouble. We used to be classmates, Steve. You should know that I'd never done anything to bully you or Simmie and that I haven't done anything bad.

"If you're the one behind Simmie, please stop. Don't go any further down this path.\*

"Go get yourself checked if you've lost your mind," Steven said. He pulled me away from her, looking contemptuous. "Don't let her infect you with her poison."

Yasmin sneered and gave me a meaningful look. "Congratulations on finding such a great husband, Stephany..."

She was obviously insinuating something by emphasizing the words "great husband ". She looked like a spectator who was waiting to watch my act. "I hope you and Steve stay together forever—you two are a perfect match. I hope you'll have a happy

life and family together..."

Her words were supposed to be good wishes, but she'd somehow turned them into evil curses. She was just waiting for me to make a fool of myself; she wanted to see

how I would meet my end.

Yasmin was making fun of me for siding with the devil and taking a nosedive into hell.

"I should wish you the same. I hope you and Michael stay together forever. Don't let him ever get away—we wouldn't want him to go and ruin someone else's life, right?" I turned away with Steven's hand in mine.

I could feel Yasmin's gaze turning evil as she stared at me. She only left after Steven and I entered the living room.

"Don't listen to her. I'll treat you really well," Steven said. He was afraid that Yasmin's

words would get to me.

"I trust you." I smiled at him.

He was pleased to hear that. He wrapped his arms around me and refused to let go."

I want to head home early, honey."

"What did the doctor say to you just now?" I asked curiously,

"He said that it's beneficial for the expecting mother to have sex during pregnancy-it'll help keep her hormones steady so that she remains in a good mood."

I almost bit my tongue. I should've known better.

Just then, Martin, who was seated at the head of the table, said, "I'm surprised you knew to return for today's gathering."

That seat was usually reserved for Ignatius. But now that he was bedridden after suffering from a stroke, Martin had taken it upon himself to take the reins.

The members of the Lincoln family were all in attendance, even the family members who had gotten their wits scared out of them by Steven. However, they looked ashen as they cowered by Martin's side. Steven had obviously gotten them good.

Steven swept a gaze over everyone without saying a word.

"We're all family here. Come and have a seat." Martin was acting like he was the head of the family. He was trying to show me and Steven up.

There weren't any empty seats at the table. Where did he expect us to sit? In the corner? Or did he want us to remain standing?

I glanced at Ewan and asked innocently, "Whose family gathering is this?"

Ewan said politely, "The Lincoln family."

"Who's the head of the family? Is it Mr. Martin? When did that happen? Grandpa's still alive, isn't he? Why is he in Grandpa's seat?"

"It's not a good sign, you know. He might get a stroke tomorrow, for all we know."

Steven said seriously, "Yeah, it's a bad sign. Anyone in that seat's going to get a stroke."

Martin's expression darkened. He slammed his fist on the table and stood up." Where are your manners? Is that the proper way to speak to your elders?"

Did he think he could scare me by being loud? I said, "Steve and I aren't feeling well, Mr. Bart, so we won't eat at home. We'll be going now."

"Stop right there!" Martin barked. The bodyguards at the door stood in my and

Steven's way.

Steven's gaze immediately darkened as he pulled me behind him protectively. I knew he was mad.

Martin had come prepared. He had several men with him; he'd even had the door locked. Was he going to illegally imprison us?

"You're mentally disabled, Steven, so you're unable to make decisions independently. It's for the Lincoln family's sake that I'm taking over the company." Martin thought he had no chance of losing.

He continued, "I've already spoken to the people at the best asylum in Huma. They'll be sending some people, who are already on the way, here. You're going to spend the rest of your life there, whether you like it or not."

I frowned. He wanted to lock Steven up in an asylum?

I gave Steven a worried look. Martin had the upper hand in numbers, and as Steven's elder, he wasn't wrong for wanting to get Steven admitted to an asylum, especially since Steven had a record.

What could I do?