

All Sins 171

Chapter 171

How could she have expected to glean anything from his eyes? She almost chuckled at her own audacity. "Can I go now?"

The air thickened with tension.

"I get it. You're mad at me. Stay here while you cool down. I'll bring you some water," Tyler said, breaking the silence.

Olivia's phone buzzed, and Tyler glanced at her for a moment.

She looked up just in time to notice the wedding ring on his finger. Quickly, she looked away.

1/2

That night, Olivia was brought back to Sandalwood Palace. A maid helped her up to her room to rest.

The injury wasn't too severe, but its location made every movement painful. The maid assisted with cleaning her up before leaving. Then Tyler entered the room.

"Mr. Tyler," the maid greeted, straightening her back.

"You may go now.

"...Understood."

Once they were alone, Olivia closed her eyes and turned away.

Tyler sat next to her on the bed, unbothered. "Still angry?"

Olivia relaxed but didn't let it show. After a brief moment of holding onto her resentment fruitlessly, she replied, "...No, not really. I'm fine."

"Have you applied the medicine?"

Not wanting to talk much, Olivia answered, "Yes."

Tyler didn't check if she was telling the truth. "Make sure to apply it regularly to prevent any complications with the blisters."

"Got it," she replied matter-of-factly.

They fell into silence before Tyler spoke up again, "I shouldn't have assumed the worst of you or suggested behavior that goes against who you are. I'm sorry. I shouldn't have said those things."

His apology sounded surprisingly sincere to Olivia. "I'm not the person you imagined me to be, Tyler."

#1

"If I told you I lost control, would it make it easier for you to forgive me?"

"What made you lose control in the first place?" she asked reflexively, without a second thought.

Then, it hit her. Alarmed, she looked away, scared to see something she didn't want to see.

He noticed her reaction and reined in his emotions. He decided not to pressure her into accepting his feelings. Ten minutes later, he said calmly, "Is there anyone you want to invite to the wedding banquet?"

She looked at him.

“I’ve sent out invitations from my side. Do you have anyone in mind?”

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Olivia belatedly realized that there was still a banquet to organize. A feeling of apprehension filled her as she asked, “Who did you invite?”

“No one you know. Oh, maybe one or two you might be acquainted with,” Tyler replied. “Do you have any names in mind? If so, give me a list.”

“No, I don’t have anyone in mind.”

“Alright. I’ll invite a few people we both know then,” Tyler said before leaving.

Olivia watched him go, perplexed. What was that supposed to mean?

“Send an invitation to Claude Pearce,” Tyler ordered his assistant.

“Got it. Should we inform the Pearces about Olivia’s new identity? It would save us some trouble from misunderstandings.”

Tyler’s expression turned cold. “Did I ask for your opinion?”

Tyler rarely scolded his staff. The assistant was reminded of her blunder at the hospital. “Sorry, that

was my mistake,” she stammered. “Um, Mrs. Jones asked when the IVF procedure will start.”

“After the banquet,” Tyler decided, hoping to avoid appearing impatient.

But the Joneses, as it turned out, were more impatient than expected.

“They don’t want to wait until then. They’ve been pressing us, and even the hospital,” the assistant informed, sensing that her boss was hesitating. “I don’t think we can drag on any longer, Mr. Tyler.”

Tyler closed his eyes, frowning. After a while, he said, “Alright, let’s move the banquet date forward.”

Claude had considered calling Olivia to check on her, but before he could, a maid delivered a letter. An invitation from the Harrises. For a wedding banquet.”

“A... banquet?”

Whose wedding was it? Wasn’t Naomi still unwell?

He opened the letter and fell silent as he read its contents. Sophie descended the stairs just then and asked, “What’s that?”

She poured herself a glass of water. “Also, are you interested in Olivia or something?”

Claude crumpled the invitation in his hand, startling Sophie.

The next morning, Olivia’s mind was in turmoil. She remained holed up in her room, not once venturing downstairs.

She sat on her bed, lost in her thoughts, even after the maids had prepared breakfast.

Chapter 173

There was a knock on the door, and Olivia looked up.

“Ms. Olivia? Mr. Tyler would like to speak with you.”

It was Tyler’s assistant. Olivia knew it had to be something serious. Maybe it was what she feared. She could sense that they had been preparing for this since that day.

“Okay, I’m coming,” she replied, procrastinating for a bit before finally deciding to get out of bed.

Just then, her phone vibrated—it was a message from Claude.

She stared at it for a moment, then froze.

Tyler waited for about 10 minutes, but Olivia still hadn’t shown up. Breakfast had gone cold, but he understood why she was taking her time, so he didn’t rush her. Instead, he occupied himself with reading the news.

About half an hour later, he heard footsteps coming down the stairs. The assistant noticed Olivia leaving the dining hall again.

Tyler looked up as Olivia approached, her face pale. He set his papers down.

“You... sent an invitation to Claude?” Olivia asked.

Tyler feigned calmness. “Yes, I did. Why?”

“Why did you do that?”

“Don’t you know the connection between the Pearces and us? It’s only natural for him to receive an invitation. Unless you think he shouldn’t know,” Tyler replied.

Olivia took a deep breath, pushing down her emotions. “No. I just didn’t want Sophie to know.”

“She will, sooner or later. I’ll explain to her if she asks. How’s that sound?” Tyler said smoothly.

Every word he spoke made him sound innocent, but Olivia was sure his intentions were anything but. Tyler glanced at the cold breakfast. “Take a seat. The food’s gone cold.”

Reluctantly, Olivia complied.

“How’s your injury?” he asked.

“It’s getting better,” Olivia replied, forcing the words out. “Thank you for your concern.”

Tyler got straight to the point. “IVF after the banquet. Are you ready?”

“Naomi’s waiting, right?”

“Mm–hmm.”

Olivia had no idea what her sister was going through, but the last time she saw her, Naomi was in critical condition. At this point, she had no more questions, “Okay,”

A car horn sounded outside, and the maid informed Tyler, “It’s Mrs. Jones.”

Olivia grimaced, tightening her grip on the fork.

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As Tyler looked outside, he caught Hillary descending from her car. It was obvious why she was here.

He instructed his maid to greet her, and she entered the dining area to find them having breakfast together. She approached the table and asked, "Hello! I'm here to ask when the two of you are going to have IVF."

Hillary had been sending numerous messages without response, so she decided to ask directly. She glanced at Olivia, who avoided her gaze.

"We were just discussing that," Tyler replied.

Hillary turned back to him, smiling. "And how did it go?"

"After our wedding banquet," Tyler stated matter-of-factly.

Hillary sighed in relief. "That's good to hear." After a moment, she added, "A wedding banquet? I thought you said there wouldn't be any events like that."

"It's really just a banquet."

Hillary relaxed a little. "Good. I don't think we should publicize the fact that you two are registered as married. It's better if no one knows."

Hillary might be unaware, but the Harrises were already informed of their status. Ana wouldn't overlook the significance of marriage and skip organizing a celebratory event!

...Not that Olivia could voice this thought. Her lips turned pale.

"The banquet will be held soon," Tyler informed her.

"Great. Thank you, Olivia." Hillary waved, and one of her assistants approached with some treats. "I baked something for Olivia a few days ago—her favorites," she said. "I haven't seen her in a while. Can we talk?"

“You should ask her,” Tyler suggested.

Olivia considered under Hillary’s gaze and replied, “I’d like that.”

Hillary smiled and took Olivia’s hand, despite her not having eaten yet. “Please let her finish her meal, Mrs. Jones,” Tyler interjected.

“Oh, I’m sure she’s already had her fill. Right, Olivia?” Hillary said sweetly.

“R–Right,” Olivia whispered.

Tyler fell silent as Hillary led Olivia upstairs, while he took a sip of his coffee.

The two women walked as if they’d always been close. Hillary asked directly, “Where are you staying right now?”

This was her other agenda. If they were going to undergo IVF, there was no reason for them to share a room. She was here to confirm that.

Olivia sighed. Luckily, she and Tyler had been sleeping in separate rooms, maintaining a distance since they registered as a married couple.

“I’ve always been staying in the guest room,” Olivia replied simply.

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Olivia gestured toward the room in front of her. “Here.”

Hillary, unfamiliar with Sandalwood Palace, inquired, “And where’s Tyler’s room?”

“That one. The master bedroom.”

A study separated their rooms, which provided Hillary with some relief. "I see. Let's take a look at your room."

Olivia led her into her room. Hillary observed signs indicating that someone had been staying there- it wasn't just for show.

"Why haven't you two started the procedure after getting married?" she asked.

"I've been waiting for his decision too. But he just didn't-"

"You mean Tyler didn't say anything?" Hillary interrupted.

Olivia nodded.

"Liar!" Hillary suddenly snapped. "You're the one refusing to cooperate! You're just like your mother, always putting on a facade with fake smiles and fake everything! You claim you're doing this for Naomi's sake? As if I believe that crap. You never cared about her!"

Olivia fell silent.

"I want to remind you that you're only here to get pregnant. You're only doing it to save Naomi. The certificate is just a piece of paper! Everything you have—your position, status, comfort—belongs to your sister! Don't you dare forget that!"

Olivia remained quiet.

"If you betray us in any way, I'll make sure your mother's grave is destroyed and her remains burned!"

“Understood,” Olivia replied quietly.

“The only one who deserves to die is you! It should never have been Nao-”

The door suddenly swung open. It was Tyler.

“T-Tyler?” Hillary stuttered, immediately removing her finger from Olivia’s face.

Olivia looked down, her eyelashes fluttering.

Hillary awkwardly retracted her hand. Tyler stared at her with an icy gaze.

“Er, she had something on her face. I was just pointing it out!” Hillary explained, rubbing Olivia’s cheek to complete her excuse.

Tyler glanced at Olivia. “I’ve had the maids prepare some fruit tea for you, Mrs. Jones. Please enjoy it,

he said in a flat tone, his face devoid of any smile.

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Hillary looked awkward. Of course, she knew exactly what Tyler must have seen and heard.

“Oh... Okay. You don’t have to be so formal with me. I’m not a guest here,” she said, trying to lighten the mood.

“We shouldn’t overlook proper etiquette,” Tyler replied casually.

Hillary chuckled nervously. “Sure.” She turned to Olivia and said, “I’m going downstairs then.”

Olivia stood there, trying her best to appear composed. She nodded and replied, "Yes, of course."

Hillary turned and walked away, while Olivia remained still. When she reached the door, Hillary said to Tyler, "Let's go, Tyler."

"Hmm, you can go ahead," he said.

Hillary's expression froze momentarily before she looked away and headed toward the corridor.

Tyler lingered at the door for a moment, casting a glance at Olivia still in the room. He frowned before finally leaving.

As if all her energy had been sapped away, Olivia sank onto the bed. She looked utterly exhausted.

She wasn't sure when Hillary had left. By the time she went downstairs, Hillary was already gone. Tyler was the only one left, sitting at the dining table.

Olivia couldn't interact with him as naturally as she wished. However, she greeted him and sat down to have breakfast.

Even though Olivia tried to appear normal, how could he not notice her red, swollen eyes?

Observing Olivia eating the cold food, Tyler instructed the maid, "Heat up the food."

The maid promptly removed the cold dishes and brought back steaming hot replacements.

Olivia continued to eat with her head bowed, never once lifting her gaze.

Just then, a maid from the Harris residence entered the room, carrying a few items. She addressed Olivia, “Miss, Ms. Maisy sent you some jewelry. She said you can wear them at the banquet.”

“Okay, please thank her for me,” Olivia replied softly.

Tyler directed the maid, “Take them to the room.”

After the maid left, Tyler resumed his breakfast elegantly.

In the days leading up to the banquet, Olivia had been upset. She turned off her phone to avoid receiving any calls.

The Harrises took the banquet very seriously, continuously sending items to Sandalwood Palace.

On the day of the banquet, a makeup artist arrived early to prepare Olivia. Despite the elaborate makeup and attire, Olivia felt like she was in a daze as she sat before the mirror.

She was a university student, but now she was dressed like a bride. Everything felt surreal, yet oddly familiar. She remembered a similar scene from when she was fifteen, standing beside Naomi.

As she gazed blankly at her reflection, she saw her face overlapping with Naomi’s.

Suddenly, someone appeared before her, breaking the illusion. She snapped back to reality and saw Tyler in a tuxedo standing behind her in the mirror—the man who stood next to Naomi when she was

fifteen.

However, this time, he stood behind her, his expression cold and serious. He had lost the warm smile she had seen at that time.

Olivia quickly straightened up, trying to appear less dispirited.

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The maid and makeup artist greeted Tyler as he entered, "Mr. Tyler."

He responded with a flat acknowledgment before approaching Olivia.

Since their recent conflict, Olivia hadn't initiated much conversation with him, but she called out,

Tyler."

Stopping behind her, he asked, looking into the mirror, "How much longer?"

Olivia wasn't sure if he was addressing her or the makeup artist, who remained silent. She replied, "We've just started. It'll probably take over an hour more."

Tyler glanced at her again.

Although the makeup artist had only started, Olivia looked stunning today. She sat there like a blooming flower, pretty and lively.

In the warm light of the room, Olivia noticed that his stern, cold face seemed somewhat gentler. Yet, she could still discern deep emotions in his eyes.

"Are you tying your hair up?"

She nodded. "Mm-hmm, I think so."

Tyler stared at her in the mirror before instructing the makeup artist, "Just keep it light and natural."

"Sure, Mr. Tyler," the makeup artist replied.

Concerned about her unfamiliarity with such events, Olivia asked, "Is there anything I should watch out for?"

Being inexperienced, she felt clueless. Although it was just a banquet, given it was hosted by the Harris family, she didn't want to embarrass herself.

"No need. Just be yourself and stay by my side," Tyler replied flatly, his gaze lowered.

Olivia nodded. "Okay."

The maid who had served Olivia at Sandalwood Palace brought in breakfast. She looked doubtful, still adjusting to the idea of Olivia becoming the lady of the house when she had been a mere guest before.

She had thought Tyler only saw her as a... sister.

She offered Olivia the ravioli, saying, "Please... have some."

Feeling uncomfortable under the maid's gaze, Olivia glanced at Tyler before accepting the food.

Tyler appeared unperturbed as usual, remarking, "Eat a bit to fill your stomach. You won't get a chance to eat for a while."

Olivia complied, picking up a spoon and eating a couple of ravioli.

As the makeup artist opened the box containing the antique jewelry, she hesitated, recognizing their value and not wanting to use them carelessly. She asked, "There are a couple of headpieces here, Which one would you prefer?"

Olivia glanced at the jewelry box and realized it belonged to Maisy. Now she felt troubled, not knowing which one to wear.

Tyler glanced at the box and said to the makeup artist, "Use the one with the pearls."

He picked the most youthful and understated design that suited Olivia's age. The other pieces seemed either too colorful or old-fashioned,

Following his instruction, the makeup artist carefully placed the orchid-shaped diamond headpiece on Olivia's sleek, dark hair as Tyler stood behind her. It looked beautiful,

He left right after that.

When he reached the door, he asked Linda, "Who from the Pearces will be attending?" "Claude will be there," Linda replied.

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Tyler didn't seem surprised. Instead, he seemed pleased. He then left the room.

Meanwhile, Olivia endured the makeup session, which lasted as long as she anticipated.

After more than an hour, the makeup was finally completed. She inspected her reflection in the mirror.

The make-up artist reminded her, "Your dress is quite long. Please be careful when you walk."

Olivia acknowledged the advice with a nod and rose cautiously from her seat.

When she went downstairs, she found Tyler patiently waiting on the couch.

"She's ready, sir," the maid informed him.

Tyler looked up at Olivia. Today, she wore a pale pink satin dress adorned with a pearl headpiece. Her complexion glimmered like diamonds.

Though she stood there awkwardly, Tyler's expression remained unreadable as he stared at her.

"Let's go then," he said, closing the magazine in his hand and rising from the couch.

Only when she saw him stand did Olivia approach. Tyler paused when she reached him and extended his hand toward her.

At first, Olivia didn't know what he was trying to do, so she stood there blankly.

Tyler clarified, "Give me your hand."

Unfamiliar with the formalities, Olivia slowly placed her hand on his arm.

Beside Tyler, Olivia appeared youthful. Indeed, she was young, accentuating Tyler's mature demeanor.

Before leaving the lobby, Tyler whispered to her, "Stay close to me today."

Nervous, Olivia murmured her assent.

Just as they were about to leave, the makeup artist interjected, "Wait, you forgot something."

She took out the wedding ring, which she retrieved from the safe earlier. She slipped it onto Olivia's finger.

The diamond was excessively large, making Olivia view it as a hassle; she had never worn it.

Tyler caught a glimpse of it when the makeup artist placed it on Olivia's finger. "Let's go," he said, turning away and leading the way.

Olivia followed obediently as they made their way to the car.

Upon arrival at the Harris residence, they were greeted by a throng of guests. Olivia couldn't describe how grand it was. She thought the previous banquet was lavish enough; never had she imagined this one to be on a whole new level.

The garden boasted a towering champagne fountain, while the entrance was lined with parked cars. White decorations adorned the door, and a floral fountain graced the front of the living room. Melodic piano tunes resonated throughout the place.

The expansive house spanned close to 1,000 square feet and was filled with elegantly attired guests clutching wine glasses, all prominent figures in society.

As Olivia stepped out of the car with Tyler, she couldn't help but wonder, 'If the banquet is already so grand, what will the wedding look like?'

Her mind was in turmoil, struggling to make sense of the spectacle before her.

A guest eager to engage in small talk approached them. Tyler remained composed, unfazed by the social niceties.

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Tyler didn't sweat throughout the small talk. He seemed to have gotten used to grand events like this.

However, it was a different story for Olivia; she felt uneasy being around him. Despite her efforts to remain inconspicuous, she couldn't escape the attention of those chatting with Tyler.

"Congratulations, Mrs. Harris," a guest extended his hand toward her.

Caught off guard, Olivia panicked. She was unsure how to respond.

Tyler intervened, introducing, "This is Mr. Freddie of Lucent Co.."

After a moment of hesitation, Olivia reluctantly shook hands with Freddie and stammered, "T-Thank you."

Freddie chuckled, teasingly remarking, "You've married a young one, Mr. Tyler."

Tyler smiled gracefully in response. "Olivia is indeed much younger than me. I hope you'll excuse her lack of manners."

Freddie's bright smile conveyed his approval. "Why would I mind? It's good to marry someone young. You should cherish her. She's too cute to worry about manners."

Tyler responded subtly, "She has certainly made a few missteps."

Freddie offered his blessings before moving on, leaving Tyler and Olivia alone. However, more people came to chat after he left, and it was chaotic.

Feeling overwhelmed, Olivia clung to Tyler's arm like a lifeline as he deftly handled the conversations, accepting toasts and well wishes on her behalf.

Naturally, Tyler knew that she couldn't handle an occasion like this. And so, he would gracefully sip a drink on her behalf during/toasts, allowing her to simply stand by his side and offer a smile now and

then.

As she quietly stood there, with guests approaching to chat with them, the Harris' butler approached Tyler and said, "Mr. Tyler, you'll need to toast to certain guests before the banquet begins."

He acknowledged the butler.

Concerned about Tyler's alcohol consumption, the butler inquired, "Are you alright with drinking so much?"

Tyler had basically drunk all of the toasts given to Olivia. Naturally, he didn't need to drink on every occasion, but he did so when it was called for. As the evening progressed, the number of toasts added

1. up.

Yet, he appeared unruffled. "It's all good."

The butler nodded and left.

Nervous, Olivia tightened her grip on his arm. Tyler glanced at her, asking softly, "Are your feet tired?"

Her heels, chosen to match his height, were particularly hard to walk in. Olivia, tense with the effort of not stumbling, whispered, "I'm okay."

Tyler offered, "Do you want to change into more comfortable shoes?"

Thinking of the impracticality of doing so in the midst of the event, Olivia declined, "I can manage..."

Tyler respected her decision, refraining from further discussion due to the surrounding crowd.

When the banquet started, Tyler guided Olivia to toast the guests at each table. Amidst the sea of faces, Olivia suddenly recognized someone among the guests...

Chapter 180

Olivia froze. Tyler kept walking, but he stopped when he felt her grip on his arm. Turning back, he

looked at her with concern.

“What’s wrong?” he asked, then followed her gaze to where Claude sat.

Olivia was stunned to see Claude there, and it seemed he was looking back at her too. She couldn’t believe he had come.

Claude’s expression was calm, almost indifferent. Meanwhile, Olivia’s face remained expressionless, unsure of how to react under Claude’s intense gaze.

Tyler watched their expressions for a while before looking at Olivia and saying, “The Pearces are on our guest list as well. Should we do a toast with them?” He sounded casual, as if it were just another suggestion.

Olivia couldn’t describe what she was feeling. Facing Claude was difficult because it brought her relationship with Tyler into focus, a reality she struggled to confront in his presence.

Claude, however, seemed to notice her distress despite her efforts to appear composed.

Though she had dressed up for the occasion, Olivia felt everything was now in disarray.

Noticing Olivia’s silence, Tyler pressed, “What’s wrong?”

Meanwhile, the person who was holding the wine was staring at Olivia too.

Realizing she couldn't let herself panic, Olivia mustered some strength and replied, "Nothing, I'm just tired. I'd like to take a rest. Can we do the toast later, Tyler?"

But Tyler wasn't oblivious to her evasive behavior. He glanced between Olivia and Claude, sensing the tension.

"We're greeting the guests now. Let's finish the toast first," he insisted firmly, denying her request outright.

Feeling defeated, Olivia fell silent.

Tyler's eyes turned cold as he said, "Let's go," leading her to another table.

'She'd had enough today,' he thought, hoping Olivia would realize where she stood, and perhaps Claude too.

As if nothing had happened, Tyler greeted the guests cheerily.

Olivia, on the other hand, trailed along, her mind elsewhere. Claude had been staring at her, like a knife slicing her continuously.

Finally, they reached Claude's table. Olivia kept her eyes down, avoiding his eyes. Claude briefly glanced away before rising to Tyler's toast.

Tyler toasted to Claude first. "Thanks for coming."

Claude raised his glass. "It's my honor. It's your big day after all. How can I not come?"

Tyler smiled, taking a light sip of his wine. "Then I won't say more since we know each other well. Enjoy." He then drank half a glass of the wine that he had been holding but had barely touched.

Claude drained his glass in response, then turned his gaze to Olivia. A faint smile played on his lips as he addressed Tyler, "Congratulations. I hope the two of you have many happy days ahead and build a wonderful family together."

Tyler accepted the well-wishes with a smile. "Thanks," he said, turning to Olivia. "Let's go."