

Bound love 1061

Chapter 1061:

Frowning, she nudged it. It felt too heavy to be random luggage. Maybe the staff left it there. Must be some stage equipment, she thought, brushing it off.

Meanwhile, someone else in the audience noticed a similar black suitcase beneath their seat. With a shrug, they ignored it, thinking it was part of the setup.

The concert began minutes later. Elyse took the stage, focusing on the music and rhythm of the orchestra. Everything was going smoothly until a massive explosion suddenly erupted from the back right of the stage.

Everyone stood frozen, shock rippling through the hall. For what felt like an eternity—ten seconds of absolute silence—no one moved nor spoke.

Then, someone finally broke through the paralysis, their voice cracking with panic. “The concert hall—it’s exploded!”

People screamed and scrambled over one another to escape, turning the room into a frenzy. Elyse stood frozen in shock on stage, her heart pounding as she watched the scene devolve into panic. “Stay calm! Don’t push!” shouted staff members, trying to prevent a stampede.

Elyse stood frozen, unsure of what her next move should be. She longed to flee, yet the exits were overflowing with people, all squeezed together. Just then, a second explosion shook the venue.

Dust settled on Elyse’s head as she looked up, her eyes widening as the massive crystal chandelier swayed dangerously above her. If it fell, it would surely crush her.

Biting her lip, she edged toward the exit. Suddenly, someone seized her wrist, pulling her in another direction. She turned to face a stranger. With suspicion in her voice, she demanded, “Who are you? Release me now!”

“Release you? Not a chance.” The stranger scoffed, his grin revealing yellowed teeth. “Without you, how am I to claim my eight million?” His gaze was shifty, scanning Elyse with unmistakable greed. Had it not been for the stipulation from the buyer to keep her unharmed, he would have relished the thrill of sleeping with this stunner.

Elyse wrestled to free herself—his hold was iron-tight; the pandemonium around them only grew. No one seemed to notice her struggle amid their frantic attempts to escape. Her resistance grew fiercer. “I won’t go with you! Let go!”

“You dare defy me?” The man sneered, brandishing a remote control. She halted, her voice icy with fear. “What is that?” With a smirk, he pressed a button, and a third explosion tore through the hall.

The building shook as if on the verge of collapse. Horrified, Elyse screamed, “Monster! You intend to kill us all!”

The man spoke lazily. “There was no other way to abduct you. You’re never without your bodyguards. Just yesterday, my accomplice tried a direct approach, but alas, he was captured.”

Chapter 1062:

“Yesterday...” The memory of a lurking figure flashed through Elyse’s mind—it was him. Before she could react further, a blow to her head rendered her unconscious.

When she came to, she found herself forced into a black vehicle. As they departed, the man hit the button again, triggering a fourth explosion. A section of the music hall crumbled, engulfing the area in chaos and screams.

Elsewhere, Edward desperately searched for Elyse. After making several rounds, he found no sign of her but encountered Darren. Grasping Darren’s shoulders, Edward’s voice was fraught with urgency. “Have you seen Elyse?”

Darren shook his head, his voice laden with uncertainty. “I got swept outside by the crowd. Wasn’t she on stage? She should’ve made it out, right?”

“No, she’s not out yet,” Edward replied, his tone grave. “I just checked with the event coordinator. They confirmed everyone was evacuated; no deaths, only injuries. The injured are already receiving

medical care.” A wave of anxiety washed over Darren. “You mean she might still be inside? But parts of the building have collapsed!”

Edward pondered briefly before suggesting, “Could she have been abducted?”

“Abducted? By whom?” Darren’s confusion was palpable. Edward laid out the hefty reward in the black market for capturing Elyse, leaving Darren utterly dismayed. “These explosions are baffling.

We’re just musicians; who’d want to blow us up? But if it’s about targeting Elyse, that changes everything. For some, eight million is a compelling enough reason to plant bombs and disrupt our performance. Amidst such chaos, it’d be easy to snatch Elyse.”

This realization struck Edward like a bolt of lightning. “This is horrendous. Elyse must have been taken by...”

Darren continued, his voice laden with urgency, “We have to find her. If she’s fallen into the hands of villains, I dread to think what might happen to her.”

Finding her would be a challenge. Time was not on their side, and he feared it was slipping away.

That night, Elyse stirred from her uneasy sleep in the backseat of the car. Her head ached sharply as she reached to feel the back of her skull, discovering a pronounced bump. A mere brush of her fingers against it sent a jolt of pain surging through her.

Bracing herself with trembling hands, she peered out the window. A vast river meandered close by, reflecting the moonlight. Nearby, the man who had abducted her earlier stood vigil by a fire, his eyes never straying far from the flickering flames.

Confusion clouded Elyse’s mind. The location felt wrong for a mere holding spot—it had the eerie vibe of a rendezvous point for illicit transactions.

Chapter 1063:

Just then, a cruise ship cut through the river’s calm, approaching steadily. The man snapped to attention and moved towards the riverbank, awaiting its arrival.

Elyse's heart thudded against her ribs. Instinctively, she knew—the cruise's passengers were likely embroiled in the black market.

The cruise liner arrived at port, and two men in dark coats disembarked, both dressed identically in black hats and tinted glasses. Between them, the one trailing behind held a large travel case.

The man who had knocked Elyse out grinned servilely, bowing and nodding to the pair as he escorted them toward a nearby vehicle.

Inside the car, Elyse trembled, too terrified to even glance in their direction. One of the men from the black market nodded slowly and asked, "You didn't touch her, right? The client had very specific requests. If you didn't follow them, there's no payment."

The man who had rendered Elyse unconscious quickly replied, "Of course not! Don't worry about it. Why would I even bother? She's nothing special—no figure whatsoever to speak of. She's too plain for my liking. Once I get paid, I can have someone more interesting."

His explanation seemed to satisfy the men, who opened the car door and hauled Elyse out. Shaking with fear, Elyse remembered a time when Kaelyn had also employed underworld figures, but Elyse had kept her distance back then, so she hadn't experienced their menace up close. Now, there was no escaping the terror of being in their grasp.

The men handed over two large cases to Elyse's kidnapper. When he opened them, he found them packed with cash. Ecstatic, he leafed through the money, casting a glance at Elyse. "Who would've thought she'd be worth this much? What kind of wealthy person would spend all this on her?"

"That's not for you to know," one of the men responded. "We only deal in cash. You've got yours, now we're done here."

Elyse was then led back to the ship by the pair. To them, she was nothing more than cargo. With the odd instructions from their buyer, they had no intention of harming her. After chaining her up, they paid her no further attention, as though she didn't exist.

Huddled in a corner, Elyse wrapped her arms around her knees. For the first time, she truly understood what it felt like to have no idea what was coming next. Hours passed before exhaustion finally claimed her, and she drifted into sleep.

When she awoke, she found herself in a different location. Now, she was confined to an iron cage, surrounded by discarded items.

The room was damp, and after sitting for a while, she began to feel the chill, hugging herself to keep warm. Time seemed to drag on, and then a tall figure in a black windbreaker appeared before her.

Chapter 1064:

Seeing that she was awake, he tossed her a piece of stale bread and a bottle of water. Without hesitation, Elyse snatched the food and drink, eating ravenously. The man looked surprised by her composure and asked, “Why aren’t you crying?”

Elyse paused, then questioned, “Would you let me go if I did?”

Without missing a beat, the man responded, “You’re worth money. Why would we let you go?”

“I know it’s pointless to cry, so I’ll conserve my energy instead,” Elyse replied casually.

The man fell silent and began pushing the cage out of the room. They moved down a long corridor. The walls were marked with dark stains, and the air was thick with the smell of decay. Elyse kept quiet, feeling as though she were walking into the depths of hell, destined to be offered up to some monster.

After leaving the hallway, they emerged outside. On the desolate ground, a plain car waited. The man unlocked the cage and gestured to the driver. “From here on, you’re his responsibility. He’ll take you somewhere nice.”

Elyse panicked and shouted, “No! I don’t want to go! Please, let me go home!”

She never imagined she could be sold like an object. But she wasn’t an item—she was human! Ignoring her protests, a few men shoved her into the vehicle. As one of them closed the door, he chuckled and said jokingly, “Good luck with whatever comes next. Your future awaits you.”

Elyse was enraged. What future? She felt doomed! With her eyes closed, despair overwhelmed her heart.

There was nothing left but to accept her fate. The car drove for miles in silence. When they arrived, the driver dropped her off and left without a word. Elyse stood in the midst of a dense forest, her emotions in turmoil.

They had taken her through so many stops and handed her over so many times. How could Edward or anyone else possibly track her down? At this thought, Elyse felt herself sinking deeper into hopelessness.

“Hurry inside! What are you doing standing here?” Armed guards surrounded the house, keeping watch from all sides. Elyse felt like a defenseless rabbit compared to them—powerless in this situation.

She was shoved inside, her body tense with fear. The house was eerily empty. She glanced around nervously, unsure what to do or where to go.

She had no idea what fate awaited her, but one thought kept circling in her mind: if she could negotiate with the buyer, maybe she could convince them not to harm her. That would be the best outcome she could hope for.

As her thoughts raced, footsteps suddenly echoed from upstairs. A surge of terror shot through Elyse. She covered her face, trying hard not to let her sobs get too loud. She was terrified, and this was an experience she never wanted to live through again.

Chapter 1065:

“Are you crying, Elyse?”

That voice... Could it be? No! That was impossible! Elyse looked up, stunned, only to see Jayden—the man she had been thinking about day and night—casually descending the stairs. Jayden smiled as if fully expecting Elyse’s shock. He slowly walked toward her.

Her eyes, now red from crying, widened in disbelief. Her whole body trembled. She was so stunned that as he got closer, she instinctively took a few steps back, trying to create some distance between them.

Seeing her retreat, Jayden spread his arms and teased, “What’s this? It’s only been a few days, and now you’re acting distant? Don’t be so heartless.”

Elyse’s voice trembled as she whispered, “I thought you were dead. How are you still alive?”

Jayden, clearly enjoying her confusion, smirked. “It was a dangerous situation. What good would it have done to tell you? I was protecting you, wasn’t I?”

Elyse’s fear quickly gave way to boiling anger upon hearing this. The intensity was so overwhelming that it drowned out all her other emotions. Her tears stopped, and her expression hardened. “You haven’t changed one bit. I don’t think we need to communicate anymore.”

With that, she turned to leave, but Jayden, realizing he had taken the joke too far, hurried after her in a panic. “Don’t be mad, darling. I was only teasing you. This time, I’ll explain everything. Please don’t go.” Jayden was terrified of losing her, so he coaxed and persuaded her until she reluctantly stopped.

He gently guided her to sit on the sofa, but she crossed her arms and scoffed. “Alright, explain everything then. Otherwise, don’t even think about talking to me again.”

Jayden chuckled nervously. “Where should I start?”

Elyse glared at him. “Are you seriously asking me that? I already told you—if you don’t explain clearly, we’re not getting back together.”

Jayden’s expression grew serious at her words. “I was shot a few days ago. When rescue didn’t arrive on time, I passed out from the blood loss.”

Elyse’s heart clenched, but she kept her composure. “Where were you shot?”

“My right shoulder. They rescued me on time when they found me, so it wasn’t too bad,” Jayden replied.

Elyse's gaze shifted to his right shoulder. To reassure her, Jayden unbuttoned his shirt, revealing bandages. "I was wearing a bulletproof vest, though it wasn't the best quality. It still saved my life."

Elyse felt a swirl of emotions, but her voice remained calm. "Why did you even participate in such a dangerous operation? What are you involved in?"

Jayden sighed. "At first, I just wanted to deal with someone. But they were too clever and had powerful allies. They tried to use their influence to bring me down. I couldn't let that happen, so I found people who could help me. Since they helped me, I had to return the favor."

Chapter 1066:

Elyse raised an eyebrow. "You have allies? Who are they?"

Jayden smirked. "Garret Miller. You don't know him personally, but you know his siblings."

"His siblings? Louise and Chesney?"

"Half-siblings. They're both heirs to the royal family," Jayden answered, leaning back.

As Elyse processed this new information, things started to click. "So, you're helping Garret eliminate his rivals? But Louise told me that Garret went missing, possibly dead, with no trace of him."

Jayden nodded. "She wasn't lying. That's a false story we put out to lure out hidden threats and give Chesney a chance to seize power."

Elyse's brows furrowed. "Why help Chesney seize power?"

"I don't know his reasons. As an ally, my job is to assist him with what he needs," Jayden shrugged. After he finished his words, he noticed that Elyse hadn't asked the most important question yet.

He decided to bring it up himself. "Shouldn't you be asking me about the bounty?"

As clarity returned to Elyse's thoughts, she pressed on, "Okay, what's the story with the bounty? Why would someone put up eight million dollars for my capture, and under such peculiar terms?"

Jayden offered Elyse a glass of water and grinned. "That bounty? I was the one who issued it."

Stunned, Elyse responded, "Have you lost your mind? Why place a bounty on me? And eight million dollars, really? Do you have money to burn?"

Jayden laid out his reasoning. "Back then, I was trapped between two hostile forces, and you were busy preparing for your tour. I wanted to take you with me, but considering your aspirations, I felt I had no choice but to leave you in Edward's capable hands."

Tears welled up in Elyse's eyes again. "You disappeared, claiming you couldn't look after me. Did you ever think about how that would make me feel?"

"I'm truly sorry. I know it pained you, but I was out of options. Leaving you with Edward was the only way to ensure your safety," Jayden admitted with a somber tone.

Elyse turned away, her frustration mounting, refusing to face him.

Undeterred, Jayden explained, "Although I couldn't bring you along, I knew my adversaries would jump at the chance to seize you and use you as leverage against me."

Elyse's voice was tinged with sorrow as she asked, "What happened next?"

Jayden elaborated, "I concocted a plan to put out a bounty. This strategy set villains against each other, vying to capture you. Many of my enemies have fallen in their attempts. Their greed proved fatal."

Chapter 1067:

He sighed, noting the pain in Elyse's eyes. "I understand if my methods seem incomprehensible to you."

As long as they kept you safe, the reason didn't matter. I offered a bounty of eight million dollars for your safe capture, ensuring no one would dare harm you. This hefty sum was a deterrent against recklessness, giving the illusion of danger while actually providing you the utmost security. This was my way of protecting you when I couldn't be there."

Elyse, struggling to articulate her feelings, remained silent for a moment before speaking. "I'm feeling worn out. I need a shower, something to eat, and then I'm going to bed."

"Alright. I'll show you to my room," Jayden agreed.

Frowning, Elyse questioned, "Isn't there a room just for me?"

Jayden explained, "We're not at my place; this is one of Garret's properties. Many areas here are restricted. Given the ongoing crisis, it's safer to stick together."

Speechless, Elyse found her thoughts in even greater turmoil.

"It's really annoying to share a room with you," she complained.

Jayden exhaled deeply. "Things are just this way for now. If we were at my place, I'd set things up differently. Just bear with it. Once everything settles, I'll make it right."

"You always tell me to just deal with it and wait it out. I'm sick of it," Elyse retorted sharply, her frustration evident. "Where's the shower? I need that shower!"

"I'll show you the way," Jayden responded, leading her upstairs.

Once they reached the room, Jayden opened the bathroom door. "Go ahead and shower. I'll find some fresh clothes for you."

As Elyse closed the door behind her, she missed the fleeting, sly look that crossed Jayden's face.

Under the warm spray of the shower, Elyse felt her emotions swirling. The events of the past weighed heavily on her, and although she wanted to cry, no tears came. She simply stood there, numbed by the stream.

After showering and changing into fresh clothes, Elyse found a bowl of clam chowder waiting for her on the table.

“This clam chowder...” Elyse began, taken aback.

“I made it myself in the kitchen,” Jayden revealed.

Surprised, Elyse realized she had never known Jayden to cook. This was a first in all the time she had known him. She took a spoonful, and the taste pleasantly surprised her, enhancing her appetite.

“It’s delicious, isn’t it? If you enjoy it, I could cook for you daily,” Jayden proposed.

Elyse frowned upon hearing phrases like “daily.” She was all too familiar with such promises—beautiful yet empty. She had become immune to his often unfulfilled promises.

Jayden observed quietly as she ate. Once finished, he suggested, “Now you should rest. Garret will be back tonight, and you’ll have a chance to meet him then.”

Chapter 1068:

Hearing this, Elyse questioned, “Will all these schemes and battles end? Am I just supposed to stay here forever?”

“Not forever. I’ll resolve this soon. Don’t worry. Just wait for me,” Jayden assured her, his voice calm yet firm, attempting to ease her anxiety.

Elyse let out a bitter laugh, her voice dripping with sarcasm. “Here we go again—waiting. We’re divorced, and yet you still want me to wait around for you? What is it with you and always making me wait?”

She jabbed her finger sharply into Jayden’s chest, frustration seeping into her every word. “What gives you the right to keep me waiting my whole life?” Tears threatened to spill as a wave of helplessness washed over her, her nose tingling with emotion.

Desperate to hide her vulnerability, she spun on her heel and retreated into the room. Jayden tried to follow her inside, but the door slammed shut inches from his face, the sound echoing in the hallway.

Rubbing his nose, a flicker of guilt crept up on him. He knew his actions had hurt her, and while part of him regretted it, he couldn't stop now.

There was no turning back—not after everything. The weight of loss still hung heavily in his heart. Having tasted it once, he knew he couldn't survive it again.

As her man, he felt it was his duty to shield her, to give her the kind of future she deserved—one free of fear and doubt.

Inside, Elyse collapsed on the edge of the bed, choking back quiet sobs as the tears finally broke free.

The flood of emotions drained her, and after a while, she leaned against the pillow, biting her lip as anxiety gnawed at her. The future was a blank slate, a terrifying unknown, and all she could see right now was chaos.

After what felt like hours of restless tossing and turning, she finally drifted off into a deep, uneasy sleep. Jayden, ever watchful, quietly slipped into the room. Seeing her fast asleep, he tiptoed closer, his heart strangely calm.

In recent days, he had danced with death more times than he cared to count, dodging bullets and charging through gunfire. There were moments when he was sure he'd never make it back to her, when hope seemed like a distant memory slipping through his fingers.

It was the unwavering determination to return to her that fueled him, keeping him moving even when everything else told him to give up. He believed that even if he couldn't stand on his own two feet, he'd crawl his way back to her if he had to. Standing beside her now, he felt an odd sense of peace settle over him.

Suddenly, Elyse stirred, her eyelids fluttering open as if she could sense Jayden's presence. She blinked up at him, her fingers reaching out to gently graze his face.

"Why do you always leave me feeling so broken?" she asked softly, her voice fragile.

Jayden placed his hand over hers, pressing it against his cheek. His voice was low, filled with quiet remorse. “It’s on me. I know.”

Chapter 1069:

As their eyes met, the tears came again, spilling freely down Elyse’s cheeks. She pulled her hand back, muttering, “Since I met you, I’ve turned into such a crybaby.”

Jayden gave her a small, rueful smile. “I know. I’m the one who made you cry.”

Before Elyse could say another word, a frantic knock shattered the moment.

“Mr. Owen! It’s urgent! Garret’s been surrounded! You’ve got to do something!” The voice outside was full of panic.

Jayden’s expression hardened instantly. Glancing back at Elyse, he saw fear flicker in her pale face. He raised a hand, trying to comfort her. “Don’t worry. I’ll deal with this and be back before you know it. Just stay here and wait for me.”

Elyse stood frozen, watching as Jayden disappeared before she could even react.

The click of the door behind him lingered in the air, and she couldn’t help but wonder—was what Jayden was doing really that dangerous? Why did he have to keep throwing himself into these perilous situations? Hadn’t he made enough from his business ventures? Elyse’s mind spun with confusion and concern.

Two long hours passed as Elyse waited in her room, but the uncertainty gnawed at her. She couldn’t stand it any longer. Determined to get answers, she left the room and made her way outside.

In the backyard, she spotted a small group of people and hurried over to them, desperate for information. But instead of the clear answers she was seeking, one of them asked her, “Are you Mr. Owen’s beloved?”

Caught off guard, Elyse blinked. “What did you say?”

With a knowing smile, the person replied, “Mr. Owen told us a few days ago that he’d find a way to bring you here to stay with him. Seems like he made good on that promise.”

The man chuckled before adding, “Oh, and he said once all this is over, he’s going to marry you. Make sure to send us an invite to the wedding.”

Elyse stood there, stunned, trying to process what she’d just heard. After a long pause, she finally asked, “You... you know me?”

“Of course! Mr. Owen never stops talking about you,” the man replied cheerfully. “He’s always saying that once everything’s wrapped up, you’re heading off on a honeymoon. Garret’s even joked about how love-struck Mr. Owen is.”

A pang of sadness hit Elyse as she murmured, “But Jayden’s gone. Garret is surrounded, and Jayden... he went to save him.”

Understanding dawned on the man’s face. “You’re worried he won’t make it back, right?”

Elyse nodded, her heart heavy with fear.

Chapter 1070:

The man waved his hand dismissively, his voice lighthearted. “No need to worry. The word from the front is all good. The enemy’s trapped with nowhere to run—they’re just boxed in.”

A weight lifted off Elyse’s chest, and for the first time in hours, she allowed herself to breathe easier. She pouted a little, her voice soft as she asked, “So, will he be back today?”

The man slapped his thigh with a hearty laugh. “Look at you two, head over heels! Don’t fret. Once this is all sorted, we’ll be raising our glasses at your wedding—mark my words.”

Elyse’s cheeks flushed with embarrassment as she asked, her voice uncertain, “What’s your name? How should I address you?”

“Peyton Ellis, an old friend you haven’t seen in quite some time,” he replied, a smug grin spreading across his lips. Elyse said nothing, her eyes fixed on him. She stared at Peyton’s face for what felt like forever until something odd caught her attention near his neck.

Curiosity got the better of her, and she stepped closer, her fingers brushing against the strange texture on his neck. Shock washed over her. “Is this a latex mask?”

“Surprised? Didn’t see that coming, huh?” Peyton threw his head back, laughing loudly, clearly enjoying the moment.

Elyse stomped her foot in frustration. “Peyton! Do you seriously think playing these games with me is fun?”

“Of course it’s fun! You didn’t even recognize me! Why wouldn’t I enjoy it?” Peyton teased, raising an eyebrow, his grin growing wider.

Elyse was too angry to respond, her words stuck in her throat. She remembered everything he had said earlier and realized how foolish she had been to take him seriously. She wished she could disappear from sheer embarrassment.

Peyton’s eyes twinkled when he sensed her discomfort. “Oh, by the way, I may have stretched the truth a bit earlier. Want to know which parts?”

Elyse tried to act indifferent, though her voice betrayed her. “I don’t want to know. Honestly, I assume everything you said was a lie. I didn’t believe a word of it.”

Peyton leaned in, his tone playful. “Really? If you didn’t believe any of it, I suppose there’s no point in clearing things up.”

“You—” Elyse was at a loss, fuming silently at his teasing. Running a hand through his hair, Peyton smirked. “I’m irresistible, I know. Don’t say too much now, or you might fall for me.”

Elyse gave him a sharp look, her expression unreadable as her thoughts churned. “You know, that mask has really made you bold and narcissistic.”

Peyton shrugged. “What’s wrong with me being confident? And please, call me Vincent when I’m wearing this mask.”