

Bound love 1141

Chapter 1141:

George's voice softened even more as he asked gently, "And your mom?"

Elyse's eyes filled with grief as she replied, "She was killed by the same person. My parents are both gone."

Her voice cracked, and the weight of those memories washed over her, her hands instinctively covering her eyes as she fought to hold back the tears threatening to break through.

Anthony muttered a string of curses under his breath, his own frustration barely contained.

Suddenly, George's face twisted in pain, his hand shooting to his chest as he gasped for breath. Before anyone could react, he slumped to the floor, his body wracked with agony.

When Jayden and Edward finally arrived, they found George on the ground, wincing in pain.

"Dad!" Anthony rushed over, checking on his father.

Elyse froze for a moment but quickly snapped out of it. "I'll call an ambulance," she said. But as she turned to grab her phone, she spotted Jayden.

Jayden assessed the scene swiftly. "I drove here. Let's get him in the car and call the hospital to prepare for emergency care."

Elyse nodded, and together with Anthony, they lifted George into the car. Meanwhile, Edward pulled out his phone to notify the hospital.

Jayden wasted no time, speeding toward the hospital. The drive felt like a blur, and before long, they arrived at the emergency room.

At the entrance, Elyse placed a hand on Anthony's shoulder, trying to reassure him. "He'll be alright."

Anthony, pale and worn out, muttered, "My mom passed suddenly from illness. If my dad leaves like this, what am I going to do?"

Elyse offered a comforting smile. "He loves you too much to leave like that. Besides, you're not married yet, are you? He'd want to stick around to see that."

Anthony frowned. "He's always saying I look like a bear and won't ever find a wife."

That left Elyse speechless. For once, she was at a complete loss. She racked her brain, but no words came.

About half an hour later, George was wheeled out of the emergency room.

The doctor, holding the results, spoke calmly, "The patient fainted due to overstimulation and low blood sugar from not eating properly. After the glucose drip, he should wake up soon. We recommend keeping him overnight for observation."

Anthony let out a deep breath of relief. "Thank goodness."

But frustration followed quickly. "I've been cooking for him every day, but he refuses to eat, saying he's not in the mood. Now look at this—low blood sugar, and I'm the one dealing with it."

Chapter 1142:

After paying the hospital fees, Anthony left while Elyse and the others helped move George to his ward.

As they settled in, Edward turned to Elyse, curious. "So, what exactly happened? Why did he faint?"

Elyse sighed. "I told him about my dad's death. It was too much for him to handle."

Edward looked puzzled. "Your dad? Did he know your dad?"

“Yes, they were close friends when they were young. That violin George made was a special piece for my dad,” Elyse replied.

Edward paused momentarily, then asked, “Your dad played the violin? What was his name?”

“Rickey Benson,” Elyse said.

Edward’s eyes widened. “Rickey Benson? Oh wow, Rickey Benson was your father? What a small world!”

Elyse blinked, confused. “You knew him too?”

“Knew him? He was practically a legend to me.” Edward looked her up and down, still in awe. “I never met him in person, but meeting his daughter feels just as special.”

Elyse wasn’t sure what to make of his reaction, but something clicked in her memory. With a suspicious look, she glanced between Jayden and Edward. “Alright, spill it. What did you two get up to last night?”

Edward’s eyes widened as he stammered, “I didn’t do anything last night! Don’t jump to conclusions!”

Elyse’s gaze shifted to Jayden, who felt an immediate chill but played along. “Ah, nothing happened. You’re overthinking it.”

“A double denial? That’s an admission if I’ve ever heard one. You two definitely did something shady.” Elyse crossed her arms, unimpressed. Her eyes locked on Edward, who was always easier to crack.

Raising an eyebrow, she asked, “Did you do something sneaky? If you don’t spill, I’ll expose you myself. But if you tell me, I might consider going on a date with you.”

Chapter 1143:

As Elyse’s words hung in the air, Jayden’s face darkened, like a storm gathering on the horizon.

Meanwhile, Edward stood frozen, disbelief written on his face, his jaw practically hanging open. “Wait. Are you serious? You’re really going out with me?”

With a steady nod, Elyse confirmed it—right in front of Jayden. And with each nod, Jayden’s expression grew more thunderous, like a volcano on the verge of eruption.

Then, as if a mischievous spirit whispered in her ear, Elyse’s eyes lit up with a sudden idea. She jabbed her finger into Edward’s chest, startling him into a gasp.

Tilting her head with a playful smile, she purred, “But only if you tell me the whole truth.”

Her wicked grin sent icy shivers down Edward’s spine, and even Jayden joined in with a sardonic smile. “Come on, out with it already.”

Goosebumps prickled up Edward’s arms. Why on earth were those two joining forces against him?

With a quick breath, Edward steadied himself. “We broke into George’s house last night.”

Jayden shot him a sharp, intrigued look. This guy was becoming more interesting by the second. Elyse’s brow furrowed in suspicion. “And would you do something as reckless as that?”

Edward hesitated before replying, “We wanted to steal the violin for you. He kept jerking us around—first saying he’d sell it, then changing his mind. It was outrageous!” He paused, his tone growing more serious. “So, we decided to steal it.”

A swirl of emotions flickered across Elyse’s face before she seemed to reluctantly accept his explanation. “And how did both of you end up hurt?” she asked.

Edward sighed. “We had a disagreement about the theft,” he explained. “Things got heated, and we ended up fighting.”

With a pitiful look, Edward turned to Elyse, his voice softening. “Jayden beat me like I was his worst enemy. If you don’t believe me, I can show you my bruises.” He began to lift his shirt.

Elyse put up a hand. “Stop right there! No need to take your shirt off!”

Edward’s expression turned woeful, as if his unspoken message was clear: “If you don’t see injuries, you don’t care about me.”

Rubbing her temples in frustration, Elyse sighed. “I’ll go on that date with you after George wakes up.”

At those words, Edward straightened instantly, the fire of triumph flashing in his eyes as he shot a challenging look toward Jayden.

Jayden’s lips twisted slightly, his gaze darkening with an unspoken promise of retribution.

As soon as Edward excused himself to the restroom, Jayden seized the moment. He pulled Elyse aside to the far end of the hallway, his irritation barely concealed. “Are you out of your mind? Why would you go on a date with him?” he questioned, barely restraining his anger. “I don’t care how you do it, but you have to cancel that date.”

Elyse, her temper flaring, jerked her hand free from his grip. “You want me to cancel? Fine. Then tell me what you and Edward were really up to yesterday!” Her voice was rising, laced with sharp accusation.

Chapter 1144:

Jayden’s jaw clenched. “What are you talking about?”

Elyse’s laughter was bitter, tinged with disbelief. “Do you seriously expect me to buy his ridiculous story? He claimed the two of you cooked up a scheme to steal the violin, only to come to blows when your alliance crumbled. Honestly, do you take me for an imbecile who’d believe such a cockamamie tale?”

Whatever newfound respect Jayden had developed for Edward evaporated like mist in the morning sun.

Seeing Jayden's silence, Elyse pressed harder. "The whole stealing thing was a charade, right? That was real. What were you really fighting over? How long did it go on? Come spill it!" Her eyes bore into him, demanding the truth.

Jayden stood before her, his confidence unraveling under her unyielding stare.

The Elyse he once knew had been meek and pliable, trembling at his every word. But now, she wielded her newfound strength with startling force, turning the tables and reducing him to a cornered animal.

Stubbornly, he crossed his arms. "You think I owe you an explanation? I'm not telling you anything."

Elyse's lips curled into a mocking smile, her initial irritation giving way to amusement. "Oh, playing the tough guy now, are we? Fine, keep your secrets. But don't you dare interfere when Edward and I go on that date."

Jayden's bravado crumbled.

He opened his mouth to protest, but Elyse had already turned on her heel, walking away with a determined stride, her back straight as steel.

When they returned to the ward, they found Anthony already back, holding a paper bag filled to the brim with freshly baked bread.

"Breakfast is served," Anthony declared, distributing the bread among them.

Elyse accepted a serving and began to eat quietly.

Ten minutes later, George stirred from his sleep.

His eyes opened slowly, a weariness clinging to him as he surveyed the room. When his gaze finally settled on Elyse, he spoke with a strange, far-off look in his eyes. "I must've been dreaming. I dreamed of Rickey. He was apologizing to me. Said he's too far away to visit me in my dreams, but he made it through this time—because of you."

Elyse gasped, her hand flying to her mouth. “Really? My dad came to see you?”

George nodded, a soft smile on his face. He struggled to sit up, leaning on his arms. “When I couldn’t reach him by phone, I had a feeling something had happened. I waited—for him to come back for his violin, or for him to visit me in a dream, to give me an explanation.”

A peaceful smile spread across George’s face, a burden seemingly lifted from his shoulders. “Now I understand. I finally know why he didn’t come.”

Anthony muttered under his breath, “What’s all this talk about explaining things through dreams? Sounds pretty creepy. Dad, you should just sleep a little longer.”

Chapter 1145:

George gave him a weak glare but, without protest, lay back down.

It didn’t take long for him to drift off again.

Scratching his neck, Anthony turned to Elyse. “You should head home and get some rest. I’ve got it covered here. Sorry for all the hassle.”

Elyse nodded, grabbing her coat. “Alright, we’ll head out then.” But as soon as they stepped outside the hospital, Elyse halted abruptly at the entrance and turned to Jayden. “You go ahead. I’m going on a date with Edward.”

Jayden’s expression darkened, like a storm was brewing inside him.

“Are you really going out with him?” he asked, his voice tight with disbelief.

Elyse smirked, her tone icy. “Yep. We’re going on a date. You can leave now.”

Edward, with a smug grin plastered across his face, added, “Yeah. You should scram. Don’t stick around and ruin the mood.”

Jayden's fists clenched, his knuckles cracking with the pressure. "You're sure about this? You're going on a date with him?"

"That's right. Now beat it. You're an eyesore," Elyse waved Jayden off dismissively before pulling Edward along with her. Edward threw a mocking glance over his shoulder, flashing a smile dripping with arrogance before catching up to Elyse.

Unable to hold back any longer, Jayden slammed his fist into the wall. The sharp crack of his knuckles splitting echoed, but he couldn't care less about the blood trickling down his hand.

Once on the bus, Elyse settled by the window, and Edward slid into the seat beside her with a chuckle. "So, should we go for our big date?"

Gazing absentmindedly out the window, Elyse replied, "Anywhere. Do you know any great spots for a date?"

Edward thought for a moment before suggesting, "How about horseback riding? I noticed a horse ranch nearby on the way here. Do you know how to ride?"

Elyse shook her head. "Nope, not at all."

"I can teach you!" Edward exclaimed, excitement lighting up his face.

Elyse remained expressionless, replying, "Alright. Let's go horseback riding then."

Edward paused, studying her for a moment before grinning. "If you're nervous about riding alone, I can sit behind you and guide you."

Elyse blinked, caught off guard for a second, before countering, "But if we both ride the same horse, wouldn't that be too heavy for it?"

Edward leaned in closer, a shy smile playing on his lips. "You're so thoughtful. That's one of the things I like about you."

Elyse pressed her finger against his forehead, forcing a smile. “Think you can take advantage of me, huh? Sit up straight.”

Edward clung to her arm, feigning innocence. “But you’re on a date with me! Can’t you be a little nicer? I want to feel loved too.”

Elyse was taken aback, momentarily stunned by his words, and felt an unexpected pang of sympathy for him.

With a sigh, she relaxed, allowing his closeness, and gently patted his head.

“Sorry, I didn’t—” Elyse murmured softly.

Chapter 1146:

“It’s okay. As long as it’s you, I’d do anything,” Edward’s voice held a touch of desperation, though pride gleamed in his eyes. He knew Elyse couldn’t stand seeing him looking so pitiful.

When they arrived at the racecourse, Elyse changed into riding gear. Her long hair was tied up high, giving her an air of sharp elegance.

When Edward emerged after changing, his eyes sparkled with delight. He hurried over to Elyse, exclaiming, “That outfit looks amazing on you! You’re stunning!”

Elyse glanced at her reflection and shrugged casually. “It’s pretty ordinary. Anyone could pull this off.”

“Not in that way! Only you can rock it like that,” Edward insisted earnestly.

Elyse pouted playfully. “Don’t exaggerate. Louise is way prettier than me. I’m jealous of her blue eyes.”

“Louise is definitely pretty, but I find you even more beautiful. You’re the kind of person I truly prefer,” Edward said sincerely, his eyes softening.

Elyse chuckled, teasing, “You’re just seeing me through rose-colored glasses.”

With a smile, he replied, “Yeah, and that’s because you’re beloved.”

Elyse felt herself freeze, caught off guard by the weight of Edward’s words. She was well aware that he had feelings for her, but she never quite grasped how relentless he could be.

A troubled look clouded her face as she struggled to meet his eyes. She couldn’t shake the feeling of suggesting this date—it felt like she had stumbled right into trouble.

Noticing her discomfort, Edward pressed on. “Are you feeling guilty? Like you’re letting down or betraying my feelings?”

Elyse opened her mouth to respond but ended up giving an awkward nod.

Edward burst into laughter, a sound both warm and disarming. “I knew you felt that way! But I’m not giving up on you. Everyone deserves a shot at their own happiness, right?”

Elyse sighed, feeling the weight of helplessness settling in. “Why do you have to put yourself through this?”

Edward gently traced his finger over her cheek, and with a soft smile that melted away much of her confusion, he said, “We came here for a date, after all. Let’s have some fun and make happy memories instead of feeling guilty and leaving both of us feeling down.”

Elyse hesitated, then nodded silently.

Edward uncovered her mouth and gave her a gentle push forward. “Let’s go!” he exclaimed, eyes gleaming with excitement. “I can’t wait to show off my skills.”

Stumbling into the horse ranch, Elyse listened intently as the coach detailed the horses’ quirks and basic riding techniques. As the lesson concluded, it was time to put theory into practice. With trembling hands, Elyse mounted her horse. She had barely gotten accustomed to its slow walk when Edward, trotting beside her, displayed his expertise in full.

He was in his element atop the horse. He gripped the reins with practiced ease, guiding the animal with fluid movements. His face glowed with pure joy—a sight that captivated Elyse despite her lack of romantic feelings for him.

“You’re a natural at this,” Edward teased good-naturedly. “Take your time and practice. I’ll do a few laps to warm up.”

Chapter 1147:

Elyse managed a weak smile. “Go ahead. I’ll watch you from here.”

Edward’s grin widened. “Oh? Well then, I’d better make it a good show.”

With a slight tug on the reins, Edward’s horse sprang into action, its powerful strides eating the ground.

The riding coach observed for a moment before turning to Elyse. “He’s a real pro, that one.”

Though Elyse didn’t fully appreciate the nuances of Edward’s skill, his mastery was evident. She nodded in agreement. “It’s no wonder he rides so well. He was born for this.”

At that moment, Elyse grasped the fundamental difference between them. For Edward, horseback riding was as natural as breathing, a source of deep joy. For her, it was merely a fleeting experience—something she’d likely never pursue again without prompting.

This disparity, Elyse realized, was just one of many between them. Their opinions diverged on countless matters, big and small. Some people found pleasure in certain activities, while others remained indifferent.

She pondered how couples in love often compromised, learning to adjust and embrace each other’s preferences. She was willing to change, but because of that, she knew she couldn’t provide Edward with the happiness he sought in love.

As this epiphany washed over her, she finally understood her true feelings toward Edward. While she didn't love him, she had no desire to cause him pain.

Lost in thought, she absently gripped the reins, resolving to have an honest conversation with Edward at the first opportunity. Suddenly, her reverie was shattered as her horse became agitated, spooked by an unseen threat.

Before the coach could intervene, the animal bolted.

Elyse's scream pierced the air as she was jolted violently, the horse charging off at breakneck speed.

Edward, far ahead, remained oblivious to her plight. As her mount thundered in panic, terror gripped Elyse. Her mind went blank. Instinct took over as she clung desperately to the reins, fighting to stay mounted. Just when it seemed lost, a figure in black riding gear appeared, astride a midnight-black steed.

As Elyse teetered on the brink of being thrown, the man's strong arm effortlessly pulled her onto his own horse.

Trembling uncontrollably, her face ashen with fear, Elyse found herself pressed firmly against the man's chest as they galloped back toward the arena entrance.

Once safely on solid ground, her legs gave way, and she sank to the earth in a dazed heap.

The coach rushed to her side, offering words of comfort. "It's alright, you're safe now. Nothing happened. You're just fine." Elyse clutched at her chest, her heart racing as she struggled to regain her composure.

Edward, having finally noticed the commotion, dismounted in a flurry and hurried to Elyse. Concern etched his features as he knelt beside her. "Are you hurt? If you need a hospital, I'll take you right away."

Taking a few shaky breaths, Elyse managed to shake her head. "I'm alright," she stammered. "Just scared out of my wits. I never expected the horse to bolt like that."

Chapter 1148:

The coach offered an explanation, his reassuring tone calming. “We can’t be certain what startled it—perhaps an insect struck a sensitive area. The horse seems calm now.”

Elyse gazed up at the now-docile animal, a rueful smile playing on her lips. “I suppose horseback riding isn’t my forte after all.”

Edward, with a written all over his face, had been so engrossed in his own enjoyment that he’d neglected to properly oversee Elyse, especially as a beginner.

A wave of remorse engulfed Edward. “Forgive me. All of this is my fault.”

Elyse shook her head gently at his pleading, a soft chuckle escaping her. “Edward, this isn’t your fault. It’s just bad luck. Sometimes it happens.”

Steadying herself against the fence, she rose to her feet. “Besides, you were quite the vision on that horse. I couldn’t take my eyes away from you.”

Edward scratched his head, his voice taking on a hint of uncertainty. “You think so? In that case, why don’t I keep you company for a bit? Once you’re feeling better, you can look forward to another show.”

Elyse smiled. “That does sound tempting, but rein it back a little this time. No more reckless stunts just to show off, understood?”

Edward readily nodded. “Alright, don’t worry.”

As the coach brought over a chair for Elyse, a thought belatedly struck her. “What about the person who rescued me?” she asked. “Where did he go?”

Edward shook his head. “I don’t know. He was already gone when I got here.”

Elyse’s gaze shifted to the coach.

He turned thoughtful and said, “After he saved you and brought you here, he rode off on a black horse.”

Edward’s brow creased in confusion. “Just like that? He saved someone, then just vanished into thin air? What did he look like?” Elyse pressed.

The coach furrowed his forehead as he recalled. “Quite tall, but he had a mask on, so I couldn’t make out his face.”

“A masked face,” Elyse mused, getting lost in contemplation.

Ten minutes later, Elyse’s fears were completely dispelled.

“This time, it looks like we switched to one that I can handle,” Edward said. “Don’t go anywhere near that horse.”

“A horse that matches her skill level?” The coach scratched his chin thoughtfully. “Actually, yes. We have something for her. Just wait here, and I’ll bring the horse to you.”

His words brought out a sigh of relief from Elyse. “Thank goodness. There’s no way I could have managed that one. It’s way too spirited for me.”

“You just suck, noob,” Edward teased.

Elyse snorted, her eyes gleaming with mischief and challenge. “Oh really? If you’re so great, why don’t you show me now that it’s done? Or are you just all talk?”

Edward took the bait, cracking his knuckles as he answered, “Watch and learn, rookie. And try not to be too impressed, yeah?” With that, he made an exceedingly flamboyant show of mounting his horse, then galloped off.

Chapter 1149:

Elyse watched him go, a faint sigh escaping her lips. He was truly a sight to behold on his horse. He was very skilled—that much she could admit.

At this time, the riding coach appeared, leading a miniature horse behind him.

Elyse stared at the creature with an almost disbelieving look. It looked tiny compared with the rest of the horses. "I didn't know there was a breed of horses this small."

"This one's a miniature horse. It's specifically bred as a companion animal, so you have nothing to worry about. Most of the time, children are the ones who ride them, but given your skill level, this would be your safest choice."

Elyse's emotions were all over the place. On one hand, she was relieved. She didn't need to be an expert to know that this horse would undoubtedly be harmless, but then again, could it really be considered riding practice if her feet nearly touched the ground?

The coach placed the reins in Elyse's hands. "Spend some time with him so the two of you can get more used to each other. The more familiar he is to you, the less chance there is of him startling."

Elyse fixed her eyes on the miniature horse as it pranced around her, its tiny hooves creating a steady rhythm against the ground. It was one lively creature.

When Edward looped back, he breathed a sigh of relief. He looked at Elyse mounted on the small horse. "It's perfect for you. You'll be absolutely safe."

She shot him a glare. "Leave me alone. Why don't you go and ride over there? You're getting in the way of me bonding with him."

Edward chuckled. "Bonding, is it? Well, hopefully, he doesn't decide to bond with you by crushing you under his hooves. If you're in trouble, just scream. Good luck."

Riding had always been Edward's passion. Once he was on a horse, nothing could make him come down. He realized that his own lack of skills was holding him back from his enjoyment.

Masking the slight guilt she felt, Elyse waved him off dismissively. "Go have fun by yourself. Stop hovering while the horse and I are getting acquainted. He won't come near me if there's an intruder here."

Edward threw an amused glance at the miniature horse. It seemed rather dull, but still a fitting companion for Elyse to have fun with.

Elyse leaned back in her chair, her fingers softly combing through the horse's mane. The creature relished the gentle attention, lowering itself into its haunches and comfortably settling at Elyse's feet.

To be completely honest, Elyse wasn't really interested in riding, but she had opted to stay a little longer in consideration of Edward's feelings.

As she sat there, her gaze wandered to the far end of the stable. A figure was astride a black horse, his face covered in a black mask.

Elyse shot up and was on her feet in an instant, the miniature horse following her closely behind.

"Can you help me find him?" she whispered to the horse. The miniature horse neighed softly.

Elyse took that as a positive answer and mounted the horse, heading toward the figure in the distance.

Chapter 1150:

But the next moment, the figure darted away, disappearing without a trace.

Elyse frantically whipped her head around, scanning her surroundings for any sign of him. "Let's take a look around in the nearby area," she told the horse.

With another neigh, the miniature horse galloped off, leading Elyse in her pursuit.

However, despite a sweeping exploration of the ranch, they came up empty-handed. On their way back, they met with Edward, who was also returning from his ride.

Edward couldn't help but laugh at the almost comical sight of Elyse trotting around on her miniature horse around the ranch.

After George drifted into sleep, he found himself face-to-face with Rickey once more.

He stood in a lush, green field, surrounded by a riot of blooming flowers, while butterflies danced through the air. In the distance, a gentle stream babbled, and the sky stretched above him, brilliant blue, dotted with fluffy white clouds.

George gazed around for what felt like ages before Rickey finally materialized in front of him.

Adjusting his glasses, George fixed Rickey with a stern glare. “What are you doing here? I told you to live peacefully and stop stirring up trouble, but you never listen.”

In this dream, George appeared as his younger self, full of life. He was dressed sharply in a shirt, paired with a mustard-colored vest, his posture straight and brimming with energy.

Rickey gave a faint smile. “George, I need a favor from you.”

Impatience flickered across George’s face. “You’re dead, Rickey! And even in my dream years, you still want something from me? Can’t you let me rest?”

Rickey chuckled softly. “I’d like you to tell my daughter, Elyse, the story between her mom and me.”

George raised an eyebrow. “The love story between you and Jazmine? Why?”

“Because we never had the chance to share it with her,” Rickey’s smile faded, his tone heavy.

George furrowed his brow. “What good will it do for her to hear that?”

“She doesn’t understand it,” Rickey admitted, his voice tinged with regret. “It was our job to show her, but Jazmine and I—well, we missed our chance. So, I’m asking you, old friend, to step in for us.”

George crossed his arms, giving Rickey a sidelong glance. “And those two men are tailing after your daughter. Which one do you prefer?”

Rickey shrugged. "Whoever she loves, we'll love."

George scoffed. "What kind of father are you? No standards? Aren't you worried she'll pick the 'wrong' guy?"

Rickey smiled. "The only thing we can do as her parents is support her, no matter her choice."

George let out a deep sigh. "I guess you've got a point. You've been gone for so long. What more can you do now?"

Before he could get another word in, the world around them began to unravel. The flowers wilted, the sky dimmed, and everything started to vanish.

Rickey smiled gently at George. "It's time to wake up, buddy."