

Bound love 1211

Chapter 1211:

After putting things in order, Jayden grabbed a black backpack and stepped out of the room.

Elyse, who had kept her eyes squeezed shut, slowly opened them. She found herself dressed in Jayden's clothes, which hung loosely on her frame.

She reached down and instinctively touched herself, realizing the soreness lingered—Jayden hadn't exactly left her spotless; a faint residue clung to her fingers.

Elyse pursed her lips, muttering to herself, "Is this what you call taking care of me? You're slacking off today."

Quickly, she changed back into her own clothes, grabbed her purse, and made her way out of the room.

Downstairs, she spotted Jayden leaning against a car, engaged in conversation with a few others.

She hesitated, knowing that if Jayden caught sight of her, he would likely lock her up.

At that moment, Peyton emerged from the adjacent room, glancing around nervously before whispering urgently, "You finally made it down. I thought you wouldn't come. You spent the entire afternoon with Jayden, and I started to worry he might have..."

Elyse felt her cheeks flush with embarrassment. "I almost passed out, but I didn't forget about our plan. I pushed through and made it here."

Peyton eyed Elyse with concern, taking in her disheveled appearance. "Jayden really put you through the wringer, didn't he? I heard you two arguing earlier. Are you sure you're okay? If you're not up for it, let me go in your place."

Elyse's face turned crimson. She shook her head and replied, "No need for that. I'm fine, and besides, I want to handle this myself."

Seeing that Elyse had made her choice, Peyton didn't press further. He gestured, "Come on, follow me. I'll get you into another car without Jayden spotting you."

Elyse nodded, grateful for the assistance. "Thanks for your help."

Meanwhile, deep in the woods, Amanda trudged onward, hoping to spot a familiar landmark, but feeling like a ship lost at sea. After a while, she heard footsteps and followed the sound, her heart leaping at the sight of her teammates. "Thank goodness I found you! Where have you all been? Weren't we supposed to be on cleanup duty? How did you vanish like that?"

The group exchanged uneasy glances before one of them finally spoke up, "How did you manage to track us down?"

Amanda frowned in confusion. "What do you mean? Was I not supposed to?"

The leader rubbed the back of his head awkwardly. "Now that you've found us, you've really put us in a bind. This means we have no choice but to take action against you."

Chapter 1212:

Amanda's smile faltered. "What? We're teammates! You can't do this to me!"

"It's an order," the leader sighed. "We had planned to leave you here to fend for yourself, but we didn't expect you to actually find us."

He turned to the others, saying, "Let's get this over with. No use dragging it out. If we hurry back, we'll still make it for a hot meal."

At his words, the group raised their guns, aiming them squarely at Amanda.

Though not particularly skilled in combat, Amanda had a knack for survival. The moment she sensed danger, she readied a smoke bomb.

As the smoke billowed, she bolted, her teammates hot on her heels.

Gunshots rang out behind her as she ducked behind a massive tree. When she noticed them veering off in the opposite direction, she seized the opportunity to slip away.

The commotion of her escape caught the attention of others nearby, redirecting their pursuit toward her.

Amanda ran for a time before suddenly tripping and hitting the ground, lying still.

Her pursuers approached, kicking her lightly a few times. “Looks like she’s down for the count. She’s done. Let’s move on.”

After a cursory check, they left her there.

Amanda remained motionless for several minutes, waiting until she was sure the coast was clear. Just as she began to rise, she heard footsteps approaching again, so she quickly closed her eyes, pretending to be still.

The footsteps grew closer until she sensed someone standing right before her.

Hardy peered down at her, his tone sharp as a knife. “I know you’re not dead. You always wear a bulletproof vest, complete with blood packs for show. They may think you’re gone, but I know you’re perfectly alive.”

Hearing Hardy’s voice, Amanda sighed in relief. She sat up slowly, muttering, “If I’d known you were following, I wouldn’t have had to make such a messy run for it.”

Amanda’s brow furrowed, irritation darkening her gaze. “When did you start tailing me?”

“Since you embarked on this mission,” Hardy answered, his voice steady as a rock.

Amanda blinked in disbelief. “You’ve been lurking since the beginning? Then why didn’t you step out and help? You knew VA was lost, didn’t you? And that my own teammates were hunting me down? Yet, you just stood by and watched?”

Hardy gave a slight nod. “Yes, I watched. This isn’t my battle, is it?”

Amanda jabbed a finger into his chest, her frustration simmering just below the surface. “People ought to have a heart! But clearly, you don’t. You forgot the promise you made to my brother. You haven’t kept your word.”

Chapter 1213:

Hardy shook his head, unfazed. “No, I haven’t.”

Amanda’s voice rose. “How can you say that? When I was hunted, where were you? When I was lost, where were you? All of it proves you broke your promise!”

Hardy replied, “I did promise him I’d look after you, yes. But there was an additional condition, one you’re unaware of.”

Amanda’s gaze hardened. “What condition?”

He explained calmly, “If you ever crossed a line—one I couldn’t stomach—I had the freedom to step back. You’re an adult, after all. You can fend for yourself.”

Amanda shook her head, disbelief written across her face. “No, there’s no hidden condition! You’re just making excuses. You see me as a burden, don’t you?”

Hardy’s expression remained unchanged. “I don’t need excuses. I never mentioned the condition because I didn’t expect you’d stoop this low. But once I saw that side of you, I decided to wait until the moment was ripe.”

A faint smirk played on his lips as he added, “And now, that moment has arrived.”

Amanda froze, her voice trembling. “What... what are you saying?”

Hardy rubbed his chin thoughtfully. “It means you’ve managed to anger your superior enough that he wants you gone for good.”

Amanda’s expression shifted as she pieced things together. “You mean Jayden, don’t you? This entire setup... it was his doing?”

Hardy nodded, his eyes narrowing. “Precisely. You drugged him and tried to harm the woman he holds dearest. Did you think he’d let you walk away from that?”

Amanda looked stunned. “But why didn’t he deal with me directly? Why weave this elaborate web?”

“Because it was my idea,” Hardy said with a hint of amusement. “You should be thanking me. Thanks to my suggestion, Jayden granted you one more day. Without it, your fate would’ve been sealed this morning.”

Amanda shook her head, unable to process the betrayal. “This can’t be real. You’re lying.”

Hardy’s tone grew colder. “I went through all of this just to lay it out clearly between us.”

With those words, Hardy drew a gun, aiming it at Amanda’s chest.

Amanda’s face went pale, her body quivering.

“You’re not actually going to kill me, are you? Don’t forget—you’re my brother’s friend. You swore to protect me.”

Hardy’s lips twisted into a mocking smile. “Believe me, I can’t stand you. You think you can shackle me with that promise, but I’ve been waiting for you to push it too far. And here we are.”

Chapter 1214:

Amanda’s voice grew desperate. “Please, you can still change this! Just let me go, and we can pretend none of this happened. Jayden will assume I’m dead anyway.”

Hardy's gaze was steely. "I follow my orders. Jayden wants proof of your death, and I intend to deliver it."

Tears streamed down Amanda's face as the gravity of her fate sank in.

For the first time, she understood that Hardy had truly severed any bond they once had, and her actions had led them to this breaking point.

She sobbed, "Hardy, please don't do this. I was just reckless. I'm not truly evil. Spare me, please."

Hardy looked at her tear-streaked face, unflinching. "Hardy isn't even my real name. It's a mask I wear. Did you honestly think I'd ever reveal my true identity to you?"

Amanda's eyes widened as the truth dawned on her.

Before she could respond, Hardy didn't hesitate. He fired, the shots piercing through her bulletproof vest, until the final bullet struck her chest.

Her body shuddered, crumbling to the ground, helpless.

Hardy stood over her, gazing down as her eyes met his, frozen in shock and despair.

He crouched and gently closed her eyelids.

"Still holding onto a grudge?" he murmured. "How utterly pathetic."

Upon reaching the new outpost, Jayden settled into his quarters and dialed Garret.

When Garret picked up the call, he asked, "What's going on? Need backup?"

Jayden hesitated for a moment, then replied with a serious tone, "No, I just wanted to ask—if anything happens to me, could you get Elyse to a safe place?"

Hearing this, Garret chuckled lightly, “What’s this? Losing confidence in your survival skills?”

“No, I fully intend to come back. But, you know, life’s unpredictable.”

“If you’re aiming to return, just hang tight. I’ll arrange to blow up the target. Then you can get back to Elyse—maybe even marry her if that’s the plan. In fact, I’ve got a secluded island perfect for a honeymoon,” Garret said calmly.

Hearing this, Jayden reached for a cigarette on the table, lighting it with a grin. “As expected of the crown prince, having the authority to deploy fighter jets.”

“Isn’t that the fastest way to get rid of dangerous targets?” Garret retorted.

Jayden took a drag and shook his head. “Thanks, but this is my fight. I want to settle it myself.”

Garret sighed slightly. “You know, sometimes I think you’re a little too paranoid. You should probably talk to someone.”

Chapter 1215:

Jayden shrugged. “Maybe. I know I’m paranoid, but it’s tough to admit it’s a problem. I’ve always tried to be normal.”

After a short pause, Garret changed the subject. “What about Elyse? Where is she? Does she even know what you’re up to today?”

Hearing Elyse’s name, Jayden seemed slightly displeased. “Keep her out of this. It’s no place for her.”

Chuckling, Garret teased, “Oh, really? In the few days she’s stayed with me, she’s picked up shooting and grenade-throwing from Louise. She doesn’t seem that fragile.”

“Firearms are dangerous enough. Why on earth did you let her near grenades? What if she’d been hurt?” Jayden asked through gritted teeth.

Garret paused for a moment, then replied dryly, “If you want her safe, should she just stick to baking and playing with dolls? You seriously need some help, my friend.” With that, Garret ended the call.

Jayden tossed his phone onto the table, finished his cigarette, then picked up ammunition and a handgun from his backpack. After getting geared up, he left the base, armed and ready.

That night, he embarked on a solo mission, slipping into the enemy camp undetected, neutralizing sentries, and moving in. Guided by instinct, he stopped at a door, pushed it open, and found himself in a large room with windows on every wall. In the center lay a tactical map, while a large screen—now dark and damaged—dominated the space.

Sitting in front of the screen, his back to Jayden, was a man in a beige bucket hat and white coat, broad-shouldered and imposing.

Jayden stared at the figure for a long time, then said, “You’re here alone. That’s unlike you.”

With a firm voice, he slowly added, “Grandpa.”

Upon hearing Jayden’s voice, Enzo slowly opened his eyes, his gaze sharp and commanding despite his age. Slowly standing, he turned to face Jayden.

With an intimidating tone, he asked, “Do you think I’d be afraid of you?”

Jayden replied calmly, “Shouldn’t you? Ever since our split, it’s been nothing but conflict. Back at home, you tried to end me, and even abroad, you partnered with terrorists to have me eliminated.”

Enzo chuckled darkly. “Wasn’t it you who forced my hand? Now you blame me?”

With a smirk, Jayden replied, “Just because I didn’t live as you wanted, you tried to cut me down.”

Raising an eyebrow, Enzo shook his head. “Shame you survived that car accident, crippled but still alive. Your legs may be broken, but your mind could still serve the family—even if you could no longer bear the weight.”

Chapter 1216:

Enzo’s eyes narrowed, his voice turning cold as he continued, “But I never expected you to fake being crippled. That deception was beneath you, especially with me.”

Jayden laughed softly. “Such tricks may seem minor, yet they serve their purpose. During my time pretending to be crippled, I gained insight into your true motives. Frankly, it’s disheartening.”

With a scoff, Enzo replied, “I feel let down too. I nurtured you from the ground up, guiding you to be bright, capable, and successful. All of it was meant for you to work with dedication and sustain the Owen legacy. And this is how you repay me? With betrayal—not just of me, but of our family!”

Jayden met Enzo’s gaze and said calmly, “You claim it’s for my benefit, but it’s really about you. You resent your mortality. You want control over the Owen legacy indefinitely, to remain at the helm. So, you shaped me to be a mirror of yourself, just to have me echo your ideals. I’m not my own person; I’m a vessel for your ambitions, a host for your dream of immortality.”

Disappointment clouded Enzo’s face. “So that’s your view of me. Everything I did, I did out of love, yet you believe I pushed and manipulated you.”

Hearing Enzo’s words, Jayden felt a blend of sorrow and bitter amusement. He saw himself as someone deprived of the capacity for love—a creation molded by Enzo’s influence.

“Since being with Elyse, I’ve felt emotions I never knew. Every single day with her is nothing short of special. Yet, over and over, everyone around us questions why I cause her pain, why I make her cry,” Jayden said.

He paused for a moment, a hint of sadness crossing his face. “When I heard that, I was stunned. I never thought I was hurting her. I was showing my love, giving her all I had. I loved her more than anything. But still, they say I hurt her.”

At this, his emotions suddenly grew intense, forcing him to pause and gather himself.

Once he regained his composure, he continued, “Eventually, we divorced, and Elyse kept asking why I did things that caused her pain, why I concealed things from her, why I chose to carry burdens alone. It was because I loved her, wasn’t it? Isn’t that what love is—only bringing happiness to her?”

Jayden grew silent for a while, then looked back at Enzo, his words slow and deliberate. “But it seems that’s not the case. She never found joy, never felt fulfilled. In trying to show love, I was causing her harm. But is that my fault?”

“I was taught to think this way. I grew up without love, so when I wanted to show love, I didn’t know how.”

After another short pause, he asked, “Grandpa, am I pathetic? I don’t even understand what love truly is.”

Chapter 1217:

Enzo’s gaze turned cold. “So, because of this, you want to rebel, to challenge me? You’re the future leader of the Owen family. Is knowing love even necessary for you? What value does love hold? The fortune generated from Owen Group—that’s tangible. Wealth you can touch.”

With a sneer, Enzo added, “Love? Those at the top don’t concern themselves with it. Love is one of the most worthless things in this world.”

Jayden closed his eyes, taking a deep breath, and when he opened them, his gaze was firmer than before.

“Money is physical, love is spiritual. No matter how much money I have, it simply can’t fill the emptiness and void in my heart. The simple truth is that love has value beyond wealth.”

Enzo scoffed and said, “It seems I gave you too much. You’ve forgotten what it means to struggle. Remember, there are people out there who barely survive, who don’t even have the chance to think about love.”

“Yes, for many, survival is the priority, leaving little room to contemplate love. But I’m different. Born into the Owen family, I have the privilege to think about and explore what love is,” Jayden replied.

Seeing Jayden’s defiance, Enzo grew enraged. “Are you really determined to go against me? Apologize now, return with me, and I’ll make you the head of the family immediately.”

Jayden shook his head. “Leading the Owen family has never been my ambition. That’s your desire, Grandpa. You spent a lifetime pursuing it, yet it still wasn’t enough. Now, you expect me to fulfill it on your behalf so you can live through me once again. Don’t be so selfish.”

Enzo chuckled bitterly. “Selfish? Is that what you call me? Really? You dare accuse me of selfishness? Why do you think I chose you among all the younger ones? Isn’t it because...”

Jayden interjected calmly, “Isn’t it because I’m the brightest, the most capable, and the most obedient? My parents were consumed by greed. The moment they realized I’d be the Owen family’s next leader, they abandoned me and gave me to you.”

Enzo struck the floor with his cane and yelled, “How dare you speak to me with such insolence!”

Jayden responded, “The truth has made you angry, hasn’t it? It exposes your true motives. Deep down, you’re just an uncomplicated man. Inside, there’s only emptiness, loneliness, self-interest, and egotism. When someone sees you for who you really are, your power fades. You’re actually quite weak.”

Enzo’s breaths came heavy as he leaned on his cane, appearing trapped without any options left.

Jayden watched Enzo for a long moment, then pulled out a gun and aimed it at him.

Enzo’s face filled with terror. “You actually plan to kill me?”

Chapter 1218:

Jayden shook his head and replied, “Honestly, I don’t hold grudges over the way you treated me. You did teach me many things. I’d be satisfied with simply stripping you of your influence and

letting you live out your years in a retirement home. But you crossed the line when you went after my unborn child.”

Jayden paused for a moment as he mentioned the child, his control faltering. “Elyse was barely two months along. She was so thrilled, so full of hope. It was our love made real, a symbol of our bond. And you ended that.”

Jayden’s face twisted with grief, tears slipping down as he spoke, each word filled with anguish. “That child was Elyse’s, carried for me. Do you understand how much I was waiting for that child’s birth? But you ended it. I don’t even know if it was a boy or a girl. You forced Elyse onto an operating table and made her endure every bit of that pain.”

Enzo scoffed. “You’d turn against me just because I killed a child of yours? You can father plenty of others. Sleep with more women; you’ll have children to carry on the line. They’ll still share your blood.”

Jayden sneered. “But they won’t be born of love, only of lineage. Grandpa, you excel at turning people into instruments. In your eyes, women with children are just vessels for heirs. Offspring are merely assets to uphold the family. To you, every Owen is just a piece under your control. Was I ever anything more than a pawn to you?”

Facing the reality of danger, Enzo could no longer maintain his composure. He began yelling like a child denied his wishes. “This is rebellion, pure rebellion. You’ve opposed me for months over a single lost child. You must be out of your mind to want me dead. If you dare go through with this, don’t you fear the people I have in place who’ll strike you down first? I’m warning you. Put down that weapon, and I’ll let you leave.”

Jayden scoffed. “I came alone to put an end to this twisted history between us. If you kill me, fine. I have no regrets. But if I kill you first, don’t blame me.”

With that, he prepared to pull the trigger.

But just before the shot could leave the chamber, Jayden sensed imminent danger and swiftly took cover behind a stone column.

Seeing that his men were nearby, Enzo relaxed and began to taunt Jayden. “Do you have any idea how many people I’ve stationed here? You might dodge one, but you won’t evade them all.”

Jayden frowned, scanning the area with sharp attention.

Enzo continued, “Jayden, your intelligence has always been undeniable. From a young age, I knew you were the ideal choice for the Owen family’s future. That’s why I held you to higher expectations. Just come back with me. Isn’t it Elyse you want to marry? I’ll make the arrangements. You can be together. I’ll even throw the most extravagant wedding for you both.”

“A wedding for us? That’s the most absurd thing I’ve heard,” Jayden said with biting sarcasm. “If you meant to bless us, how could you end the life of our child?”

Chapter 1219:

Closing his eyes, Jayden pictured the child he had lost. His heart felt as though it were being torn apart.

Elyse was shattered by the loss. It was evident to all who knew her. What they didn’t realize was that he shared her anguish.

Wracked with sorrow, he had schemed relentlessly, vowing to exact vengeance for their child. His plan was clear—he would confront Enzo personally and avenge his unborn child.

“You fail to grasp my true intentions, Jayden,” Enzo responded coolly. “It’s disheartening. Your actions are utterly devoid of gratitude. There are no other words for it.”

Jayden retorted sharply, “I’ve yet to encounter someone who regards their kin merely as tools.”

Enzo’s face grew livid, and his eyes lit up with lethal intent. “Are you aware how many of our clan members were doubting me? They were rebelling, and it was all due to your deeds. You are the blight of our clan. To safeguard our clan’s well-being, I had to remove that child, regardless of the consequences.”

Jayden laughed dismissively. “Spare me your justifications. They have their own opinions. Of course, they’re beyond your control.”

He added firmly, “I too refuse to be manipulated by you.”

Rising, Jayden confronted Enzo with newfound resolve. However, he soon realized he had underestimated Enzo’s cruelty.

Enzo was more prepared than Jayden had anticipated, turning what seemed like an upper hand into a perilous situation for him.

As Jayden struggled to stay alive, Enzo watched with grim satisfaction. This was exactly what he had hoped for—a traitor’s downfall.

With Jayden cornered and out of options, Enzo declared, “If you acknowledge your faults now and return with me, pledging loyalty to me, I’ll consider giving you a second chance.”

Gasping for air, Jayden realized he was nearly out of ammunition, with just a few shots left in his handgun.

“You fear death greatly, don’t you?” Jayden challenged him. “You’ve surrounded yourself with your best guards for protection. Are you that frightened of dying?”

Enzo gave a knowing smile. “Fear of death isn’t something I know. Someone of my stature must outlive the rest. It’s both my duty and my burden to continue leading the Owens.”

He sneered, “Both you and your doomed child are bound for brief lives.”

A gunshot echoed through the air.

Jayden swiftly pulled the trigger, but the shot merely grazed Enzo’s arm due to a misjudged angle.

Chapter 1220:

Enzo clutched his wounded arm and collapsed with a gut-wrenching scream.

Through his pain, he shouted, “It hurts so much! I feel like I’m dying! Shoot him! Don’t let him get away with this!”

As bullets pelted a stone pillar, Jayden took cover behind it, the impact stirring up a haze of dust.

Enzo, incredulous that Jayden remained unscathed, yelled desperately, “Someone take him down! I’ll pay triple to the one who does!”

The barrage ceased suddenly, followed by the sound of quick footsteps.

Then, three consecutive gunshots broke the silence. Mercenaries hidden in the shadows fell one by one.

Stunned by the sudden turn of events, Enzo demanded, “Who dares attack my men?”

He then faced Jayden with suspicion. “Did you call for backup? You’ve betrayed our agreement by bringing reinforcements!”

Jayden, equally surprised, had anticipated Enzo would have him surrounded to attempt a capture, not this unexpected ally. He had no hand in their arrival. As more mercenaries were struck down, their cries foretold Enzo’s impending doom.

Realizing the gravity of his situation, Enzo pleaded, “Jayden, call off your attack! Remember, I am your grandfather. You cannot do this to the man who raised you...”

Just then, a familiar voice caught Jayden’s attention.

He turned to find Elyse standing firm, her expression steely as she aimed a handgun. She fired decisively, taking down another mercenary.

Her voice was icy with rage as she warned, “Jayden, you’re in deep trouble tonight.”

The moment Jayden’s eyes met Elyse’s, his mind went blank. Only when he regained his senses did a quiver surge through his core.

Why was Elyse here? As he pondered, Elyse was already striding toward him with purpose.

Jayden's eyes widened with apprehension, his mouth agape as he frantically searched for an excuse. To his shock, Elyse's hand cracked across his face, leaving him stunned and reeling.

"Do you know why I did that?" Elyse demanded, her expression icy.

Jayden's response was a confused shake of his head, followed by a rapid nod.

Elyse's voice was cold and sharp. "Jayden, have you even considered the irresponsibility of your actions?"

"I was trying to eliminate all the dangers, to ensure your safety," Jayden replied earnestly.

"Why not just lock me away then?" Elyse retorted sharply. "Wouldn't that be safer?"