

Bound love 131

Chapter 131:

Jayden frowned. “Me chatting happily with her? Who? You do realize that you’re the one who walked out and took a stroll with another man,” he gritted his teeth before continuing, “I haven’t even settled accounts with you yet. You really like starting troubles, don’t you?”

Elyse felt even more upset. “What did he mean, starting trouble? Ridiculous! He was the one dining happily with another woman. He even let Judy use her utensils.” Just the thought of it sparked her fury anew. “I don’t want to see your face right now. We’re sleeping separately tonight.”

Up ahead, the driver shuddered. Was their fight so bad that they were even going to sleep in different rooms? He needed to report it to Driscoll as soon as possible and request backup.

Jayden stewed. He wasn’t expecting Elyse to be angry to this extent. Worse still, he had no idea why. He thought back to everything he had done throughout the day, but he found nothing out of the ordinary. Certainly nothing that would warrant this fit she was throwing. Clicking his tongue in frustration, he asked, “What exactly is happening here? What did I do wrong? Be clear with it once and for all.”

Elyse pressed her palm against her forehead and sighed. She didn’t want to talk about this anymore. When she was still with Theo, she had never felt any sense of security. Sadly, Jayden’s actions earlier were very reminiscent of what she had to endure in the past. At this point, she didn’t even want to talk about this. She just wanted to burrow under the covers and sleep until the end of the world.

She didn’t say anything else for the rest of the drive. No matter what Jayden said to her, she just kept her silence. As soon as they arrived home, Elyse went straight upstairs, ignoring Jayden. He scowled, furious now too.

Noticing the tension between them, Driscoll cautiously approached Jayden and asked, “What is wrong with Elyse? I thought you picked her up. Why doesn’t she seem pleased?”

“How should I know?” Jayden snapped viciously. “She’s not saying anything like some mute from the streets. I keep asking her again and again, but she won’t even look at me.”

“Alas,” Driscoll sighed. “I’m guessing that she is still bothered by the fact that you let Judy use her personal tableware.”

Jayden frowned at Driscoll in bewilderment. “What personal tableware? I’ve never heard of such a thing.”

The butler sounded a little helpless as he explained, “When she first married you, I noticed that she preferred to keep to herself. So, I had someone prepare two sets of matching tableware for both of you. She was very happy with them and even told me that she finally felt like she was part of the household.”

Driscoll cleared his throat, a little embarrassed as he continued, “But earlier, you didn’t stop Judy from using her tableware. You even let her sit in her usual place. In her eyes, you were inconsiderate to her and her feelings. She probably thinks you have developed affection for Judy.”

Jayden inhaled sharply. “Why didn’t you tell me about any of this before? I had no idea it was her personal tableware.”

“But the pieces are customized, Mr. Owen,” Driscoll defended himself. “Didn’t you notice when the tableware was changed?”

Jayden fell into silence. Truthfully, he had indeed noticed, but he didn’t think much of it. He took another deep breath and stroked the band of his wristwatch. “Are you saying that Elyse misunderstood me because I didn’t stop Judy from using her tableware?” His eyes suddenly lit up with realization. “You’re saying that she is jealous.”

Driscoll briefly closed his eyes and nodded helplessly. “I would advise you not to be so happy about it, though. She is really upset at the moment. You should go and reassure her.” He also made a point of telling Jayden, “She is actually quite distressed by Judy’s presence. If you want to appease her, I’m afraid you need to send Judy away.”

“Hmm, when you put it like that, it sounds like she really is jealous of Judy,” Jayden turned pensive. “All right, it’s late. You should head to bed, Driscoll.”

Then he wheeled himself to the elevator and went to the second floor.

Driscoll watched Jayden go with yet another sigh. The young couple still had a long way to go.

In the bedroom on the second floor, Elyse had just finished taking a shower and was in the process of applying her skincare in front of the dressing table when Jayden came in.

She turned in her chair and frowned at him. “What are you doing here? I’m not sleeping with you.”

For a long while, Jayden just stared at her. She was definitely jealous. “This is also my room,” he drawled as he approached the bed. “Why can’t I sleep here?”

Elyse scoffed. “Just sleep in your study and leave me alone.”

“No, I want to sleep with my wife in my arms.”

Chapter 132:

Elyse was livid. Jayden had never acted like this before. She stood up in a huff and walked over to him, intending to drag him out of the room. But try as she might, the wheelchair did not budge. It seemed to be stuck firmly to the floor.

Even so, Elyse didn’t give up easily. She tried again and again, and with every thwarted attempt, her resentment grew. In the end, she let out a frustrated noise and glowered at him. “Fine. If you won’t leave, then suit yourself. I’m going to bed.”

She stomped past him and climbed onto the bed. She made sure to wrap herself tightly with the blanket to the point that even her head was covered.

Jayden looked on in amusement. He stood and joined her on the bed, deliberately causing the springs to creak as he sat down beside her.

Elyse remained still and pretended to hear nothing.

Jayden reached out and poked her in the forehead. Her hand shot out and slapped his finger away. Next, he poked her on one buttock, causing her to twist and snarl at him from under the blanket. “Don’t touch me. Believe it or not, I will kick you out of the bed. Literally.”

Jayden scoffed at her threat and easily pulled her into his arms. “Please, honey. I can’t sleep without you.”

“Have some shame, Jayden Owen. And let go of me,” Elyse struggled in his embrace, but after a while, she was too exhausted to move another inch. She finally pulled the blanket off her face and stared blankly at the ceiling in defeat.

Jayden poked her again, this time on her cheek. “Why is your head coming out? Can’t keep hiding, can you?”

“You win,” Elyse rolled her eyes. “I think I almost got crushed back there.”

Jayden quickly turned the lights off before completely pulling the blanket away. “You were meant to be pinned down under me. Now be good and let me pleasure you.”

Elyse froze from the shock. The next thing she knew, his lips were on hers. “I haven’t forgiven you yet,” she tried to say, but her words were swallowed by Jayden.

As the night grew late, Judy, who had been forgotten by everyone, finally arrived at the villa gates. She had taken a taxi earlier, but the driver had scammed her by taking a long detour.

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Just when she was about to file a complaint, the driver tossed her out of the car. Then she took another taxi, but this second driver didn’t know the way to the villa, so she was taken on a long detour again.

Over three hours had passed since Elyse and Jayden had returned home, and the villa was now deadly quiet. The household staff had all gone to bed, and even the security guards were dozing off in the surveillance room.

Judy stood at the stoop of the villa and rang the doorbell for a good while, but no one came to answer the door.

She was cold, exhausted, and desperate to drive a permanent wedge between Elyse and Jayden. She planned to keep them from sleeping in the same room that night. Yet, here she was, locked out of

the building. Judy kept ringing the doorbell and waited. Half an hour later, one of the security guards finally startled awake.

He peered at the video feed from the villa entrance and spoke on the intercom. “Who are you? What are you doing out there this late?”

Judy almost jumped with relief. “My name is Judy Foster. I’m a friend of Jayden’s. Open the door and let me in.”

The security team were all briefed about their boss’s friends, but this guard hadn’t heard of any Judy. He considered it for a moment before saying, “You say that as if you’re a guest in this house. How come I haven’t seen you before?”

“I was out the whole day,” Judy explained in a rush. “I drove out with Jayden this morning.”

The security guard frowned at that. “Why would his boss drive out with this woman? He’s so devoted to his wife, and the couple even came home together.”

At that point, his partner, a chubbier security guard, also woke up. He rubbed his eyes and asked what the commotion was about. Then he said, “Oh, I know her. She’s the new maid. Let her in through the back door and have her stay in the servants’ quarters.”

The first security guard complied and told Judy to walk around the villa and enter through the back door. At first, Judy didn’t realize its significance. She was just glad that she could finally get in. It wasn’t until she had stepped through the back door that she realized she was in the servants’ quarters.

Were they really going to treat her as a servant?

Judy was so furious that she wanted to find Jayden and demand that he fire the security guards then and there. But she took a deep breath and reminded herself of her main goal. She was going to be Jayden’s future wife. She couldn’t let a minor setback get to her. As for those pesky guards, she would deal with them once she was the hostess of the house.

Judy calmed down and resigned herself to the fact that she was going to spend the night in the servants’ quarters. She wouldn’t be here for long anyway. Soon, she would be in the master’s bedroom, lying next to Jayden.

Chapter 133:

After arriving home, Richie removed his hat and sunglasses and collapsed onto his bed. He pulled out his phone to review a video he had recorded earlier.

In the video, Elyse was deeply immersed in her violin performance, drawing in passersby who stopped to listen. She seemed like a deity of music, enchanting her audience with a sacred and mysterious allure. Once he had edited the video, he sent it to Cody Tucker, a musician friend currently overseas.

Richie had kept a secret from Elyse. The true music enthusiast in his stories wasn't a friend but his uncle Cody, a resolute and middle-aged man nearing fifty who remained single, dedicating his life to music. Richie texted Cody with the video, saying, "My new friend who played the violin very well and emotionally."

Not expecting an immediate response from Cody, Richie set his phone aside and closed his eyes to rest. To his surprise, his phone soon rang. Puzzled, he picked it up and saw the caller ID. It was Cody. Shocked, he answered the call.

"Uncle Cody, what's wrong?" Richie asked as he answered the phone, his voice filled with confusion.

"What's the name of this girl?" Cody inquired quickly.

Richie, still puzzled, responded, "Is everything okay? You seem really excited. I only just met her today."

Cody, finding Richie's chatter excessive, reverted to his usual reserve and said, "Never mind that. I'll be back soon. Please introduce me to her."

Richie's confusion deepened. Why was Cody so interested in a young lady? Was it her violin skills that caught his attention? Feeling as though he had stumbled upon something significant, Richie agreed enthusiastically and ended the call.

"You're lucky to be chosen, Elyse. Just wait and see," he murmured to himself.

Meanwhile, Cody sat alone in front of a log cabin, watching the sunrise. Initially, he wasn't particularly interested in Richie's musical finds, knowing his nephew's limited understanding of music. His patience with Richie was thin. However, when he saw the video's thumbnail of a girl playing the violin, he felt compelled to watch it. The girl's emotional depth while playing caught his attention. She seemed wholly absorbed in the music, though Cody noted she could still refine her technique.

After watching the video a second time, Cody sensed a familiarity in the girl's expressive performance. She reminded him of someone. Intrigued, he played the video again. As he stared at the girl's face, he was struck by their resemblance. "Is this fate? There is someone who looks like you," Cody murmured to himself.

Morning at the villa found Elyse waking up feeling exhausted and fragile, while Jayden still slept soundly beside her. She looked at him and noticed the bite marks on his neck, her cheeks warming at the memory. Last night, Jayden just wouldn't quit, no matter how much she begged him. "He was driving me insane," so she bit him randomly. Even after she bit him, Jayden didn't relent. If anything, he grew even more passionate. Elyse wept, but her tears failed to move Jayden's heart.

Reflecting on this, Elyse's anger flared once more. She felt irked seeing him peacefully asleep. Determined to retaliate, she bit him hard once again. Jayden awoke with a start, feeling the pain, and caught her in the act of seeking revenge on his chest. He grasped her chin firmly, causing tears to well up in her eyes.

"Are you blaming me for not satisfying you last night?" he questioned. "Well then, I'll make it up to you. I can't bear to disappoint my wife."

Struggling to speak, Elyse's eyes widened as she managed, "I'm not dissatisfied."

"Really? I find that hard to believe," Jayden replied, covering her eyes and kissing her passionately. Elyse let out a soft moan as Jayden, unmoved by her discomfort, pressed on to satisfy her desires.

Meanwhile, Judy rose early, though she hadn't slept well. Despite this, she persevered for the day's plans ahead. Entering the dining room, she discovered breakfast nearly prepared. Noticing Jayden's absence, she queried Driscoll, "Jayden hasn't come downstairs yet. Should I go upstairs to call him?"

Judy didn't wait for Driscoll's response; she strode confidently towards the stairs. But Driscoll, disliking Judy's unilateral decisions, intervened, his tone tinged with impatience and a hint of warning. "Miss Foster, whether you're a guest or a maid, it's not within your rights to meddle in Mr. Owen's affairs."

Narrowing his eyes, Driscoll cautioned, saying, "Please remember your place and refrain from acting inappropriately."

Judy clenched her teeth, seething at Driscoll's presumption. After all, he was just a butler—how dare he address her like that? In her mind, Judy vowed that once she became Jayden's wife, the first person she would dismiss would be Driscoll.

Observing Judy's reluctance to comply, Driscoll sensed her hidden agenda. He surmised that she intended to seek out upstairs. Driscoll was keenly aware that Judy's presence was the primary catalyst for the discord between Elyse and Jayden. This time, Driscoll was resolute in his decision not to allow Judy to ascend to the second floor and potentially disrupt the peace between Elyse and Jayden, no matter the circumstances.

Judy's lips twisted in irritation as she responded sharply, "What's the matter with you? You are as wary of me as you would be of a thief. Are you afraid I'll jeopardize their relationship?"

Maintaining his composure, Driscoll replied diplomatically, "Miss Foster, you're overthinking. I just ask that you adhere to the rules." With gritted teeth, Judy begrudgingly withdrew.

Half an hour later, Jayden emerged, his face exuding contentment. Driscoll stepped forward, directing a maid to bring out the breakfast that had been carefully kept warm. As a devoted butler, Driscoll respected his master's privacy and refrained from prying into Jayden's personal affairs. Even if Jayden chose to forego breakfast and emerge later in the day, Driscoll remained discreet and didn't inquire further.

Yet Judy couldn't resist expressing her concern, approaching Jayden with genuine care. "Mr. Owen, why the late descent? Are you feeling unwell? Shall I fetch a doctor for you?"

Jayden lifted his head, striding past Judy toward the dining room, his attention fixed elsewhere. Despite being disregarded, Judy remained undeterred, trailing after Jayden as she spoke. "Why are you alone downstairs? Where's Ms. Lloyd? Is she still sleeping? Why is she sleeping in when you're up?"

Driscoll felt a twinge of discomfort at Judy's probing. As he readied a reprimand, Jayden interjected sharply, "Her affairs are not your concern. If idle chatter is your forte, perhaps domestic service isn't your calling. You're free to depart and indulge in gossip elsewhere."

Jayden's disapproving words left Judy feeling deeply upset. How could Jayden defend Elyse so staunchly? Yet Judy masked her emotions with a simple acknowledgment. "Understood."

At that moment, Elyse descended from the upper floor, violin in hand, her movements hurried. Spotting her, Driscoll called out, "Mrs. Owen, breakfast awaits. Please join us."

Elyse's gaze met Jayden's complacent expression, stoking her ire. It was his insistence on their morning intimate encounter that nearly made her tardy.

"I'll pass on breakfast. It's too late. I need to join my orchestra members immediately," Elyse stated, and then hurriedly departed.

Jayden tore his gaze from Elyse, addressing Driscoll. "Arrange for a sandwich to be sent to her later."

Driscoll nodded deferentially. "Of course."

Judy glanced around without saying a word.

Seated at the table, Jayden started his breakfast. Meanwhile, Judy stood nearby, lightly touching her belly. "Mr. Owen, I've been waiting for you and haven't eaten yet. May I join you for breakfast?"

Fearing Jayden's rejection, Judy adopted an overly sweet tone. "May I, Mr. Owen?"

Jayden, without lifting his gaze, responded icily. "I recall you offering to serve in the household, yet now you seek to join the master for breakfast. Are you committed to servitude or not?"

Judy's eyelids fluttered in unease. Jayden's demeanor had shifted overnight. What had prompted this sudden change? Cursing inwardly, Judy suspected Elyse's meddling.

In that moment, Judy's disdain for Elyse deepened, but she couldn't dwell on it. She needed to act swiftly. "That's not my intention," she clarified hurriedly. "I'm eager to serve you. Please don't dismiss me in anger."

Jayden remained silent, intensifying Judy's anxiety. She knew she had to remain by his side, or all her plans would unravel.

Then she noticed a red mark on Jayden's neck. Seizing the opportunity to connect with him, she gently pointed it out. "Mr. Owen, are you injured here?"

Jayden reached for his neck, acknowledging the mark. With a hint of mischief, he adjusted his collar and said, "Yes, I was bitten by a puppy."

"No puppy dared to nip Jayden's neck except Elyse."

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Judy's eyes filled with tears as she stared at the love bite on Jayden's neck. Had it happened just last night? Why else would that mark be there? They must have stayed up late, too busy engaging in intimacy to come down on time this morning. Jealousy gnawed at Judy; she clenched her teeth tightly.

Driscoll noticed the mark too and sighed in relief; they must have reconciled. He mentioned casually, "I'll have someone take breakfast up to Mrs. Owen later. She needs to eat."

Jayden agreed immediately, "Absolutely. We can't have her going hungry."

Judy bowed her head silently. Her face remained composed, but inside, she was seething. She had complained of hunger, and Jayden had dismissed her, yet he was considerate towards Elyse. Why couldn't he see that she was just as hungry? Her feelings of love and injustice kept her quiet throughout Jayden's meal. Once he had finished, he retreated to his study, leaving her alone. Her heart grew heavier.

Meanwhile, a sandwich and a bottle of warm milk were ready in the kitchen. Seeing this, Judy approached the cook with a forced smile. "Is someone taking that to Elyse? I'm free right now; I could do it."

The chef looked puzzled by her eagerness and replied cautiously, “I need to check with Driscoll first.”

“Why bother him for just delivering breakfast? I’ll take it,” Judy insisted, grabbing the tray. She exited with the breakfast, ignoring the chef’s calls to stop.

After assigning a maid to deliver the meal, Driscoll returned to find it already taken. The chef explained what had happened. Driscoll’s expression darkened. “She shouldn’t be involved again,” he muttered. It was clear he understood Judy’s intentions, though he was unsure of her exact plan.

Driscoll blamed himself for the mishap and resolved to apologize to Elyse upon her return.

Meanwhile, Judy never delivered the breakfast to Elyse. Instead, after leaving the villa, she found a secluded spot to devour the meal prepared by the chef before wandering around and returning later. Unaware of the breakfast meant for her, Elyse arrived at the studio and started her rehearsal. Hungry, she resorted to nibbling on some biscuits she found in her locker. As she ate, Elyse felt a pang of self-pity. Jayden was content, yet here she was, starving. Poor her.

She pulled out her phone and texted Jayden, “You are a bad guy. You enjoyed yourself while I’m stuck here eating biscuits to fill my stomach.”

Jayden responded promptly, “Didn’t Driscoll arrange for breakfast for you?”

During her break, Elyse hastily texted back “no” and returned to her rehearsal.

In his study, Jayden pondered Elyse’s reply. Driscoll entered with a cup of tea, and Jayden asked him, “Who was supposed to send the breakfast to Elyse?”

Taken aback, Driscoll replied truthfully, “Judy. I had someone else in mind, but she insisted on taking it herself.”

Driscoll hesitated and asked, “Is there anything wrong?”

Jayden paused, then said flatly, “No. Please leave; I need to get back to work.”

Driscoll nodded and withdrew quietly.

Upon her return, Driscoll confronted Judy. “You need to start cleaning the house now.”

Judy was taken aback, almost protesting until she recalled her earlier offer to help. With a grimace, she agreed to the chore assigned by Driscoll.

Following Driscoll to the designated cleaning area, Judy observed, “This place looks really clean already. Maybe I should work on another area.”

Driscoll’s expression hardened as he responded sternly, “It’s necessary to maintain the cleanliness of every part of the house daily, even if it appears clean. You are a servant; it’s your responsibility.”

Chapter 136:

Judy was incensed by Driscoll’s audacity, the old butler trying to give her orders as if he were some kind of boss. Who did he think he was? Jayden, the man she was supposed to be serving, never asked her to do anything. Why was this old butler trying to tell her what to do? Who did he think he was, arranging work for her like that?

Observing Judy’s reluctance, Driscoll met her gaze with a steely stare. “Miss Foster, if you don’t want to do this, you’re free to return home. We have no room for servants who don’t pull their weight around here.” His words were cold and calculated.

Stung by his criticism, Judy’s shoulders tensed. “I can do it. When did I ever refuse?” She snatched the broom from him, her grip tight as if to convey her anger through the bristles.

Judy had never in her life done anything as menial as sweeping the floor. Treated like a princess since birth, she had been shielded from anything remotely resembling work; her every whim catered to. Yet here she was, sweeping back and forth. The broom passed over the dust on the floor, but Judy’s heart wasn’t in it.

Driscoll watched Judy’s ineffective sweeping with mounting frustration, his brows knitting into a disapproving scowl. As her attempts to clean continued to fall short, the butler’s patience finally

snapped. “If you can’t clean the floor properly, you won’t be eating lunch,” Driscoll declared, his tone firm and unyielding.

Stung by the threat, Judy’s ire flared. “What do you mean? The floor is perfectly clean.”

Driscoll’s patience had worn thin, his anger simmering just below the surface. “Miss Foster, you should return to your gilded cage. Clearly, you’re not suited to being a servant,” he spat.

Judy, seething with rage at the butler’s blatant disrespect, forced herself to swallow her pride and renewed her efforts, sweeping the floor with exaggerated care and precision.

Seeing Judy finally relent, Driscoll felt a flicker of relief and quietly exhaled. Straightening up, he addressed her with a stern but slightly more gentle tone. “I have other duties to attend to. I expect this floor to be spotless by the time I return. Don’t even think about slacking off. I will know if you do.”

Judy nodded in reluctant compliance, her eyes locked on the floor as Driscoll turned and disappeared from view.

Once he left, her compliance vanished. She discarded the broom and began exploring Jayden’s house, her curiosity piqued by a locked door. What secrets lay hidden behind it?

Just as Judy pondered the mysteries behind the locked door, her musings were interrupted by the approach of a vigilant maid with a duster in hand.

“Hey, what are you doing here?” the maid questioned, catching Judy off guard.

Quickly composing herself, Judy replied, “Nothing, I’m just finishing up sweeping the floor.” She gestured toward the broom in the corner, hoping to deflect suspicion.

Her curiosity outweighed any sense of propriety as she deftly extricated herself from the maid’s presence and made a beeline for Jayden’s room. To her surprise, the door swung open with little resistance, granting her uninhibited access to the private sanctuary of Jayden and Elyse. Without a second thought, she boldly entered, surveying the pristine space before her.

Feeling bold and naughty, she confidently climbed onto Jayden's bed, enjoying its comfort and imagining it being hers soon. Just as she began to relish her moment of indulgence, a menacing roar shattered the silence.

"Miss Foster, where are you?" Driscoll's voice boomed, his anger palpable in every syllable.

Judy's quick thinking allowed her to escape the bedroom before he arrived. Upon confronting him, she donned an act of innocent bewilderment, asking, "What's wrong, Driscoll? How can I help?"

His countenance remained impassive, his rage palpable as he responded tersely, "Follow me. Mr. Owen wishes to speak with you."

Judy's face contorted ever so slightly. She inquired about the reason behind this unexpected summons, but Driscoll paid no heed, marching towards the study with unwavering purpose.

Left with little choice, she trailed behind him, her unease mounting with each step. Upon arrival at the study, she was confronted by a familiar face—the maid she had encountered earlier.

As the maid saw Judy, she pointed at her and cried out, "It's her! She was trying to get into Mr. Owen's collection room. She looked at the lock too!"

The maid thought Judy was a new maid. She had never before encountered a servant so brazen as to try and break into Mr. Owen's collection room.

"Judy, I've had my doubts about your motives for seeking employment here," he said, accentuating his words with the rhythmic tapping of his fingers against the table. "But now it's clear that you just wanted to steal from me, isn't that right?"

Judy's shock and indignation were palpable as she tried to defend herself. "No! You're wrong about me. I never tried to steal anything. That maid is mistaken."

Turning to the maid, Jayden spoke with a measured tone radiating authority. "Thank you for your service. You've gained a bonus. I'll handle the rest of this. You may go now."

The maid beamed with gratitude, offering a curtsy and replying with a wide smile, "Thank you, Mr. Owen." After that, she exited the room.

Jayden looked at Judy and said, “You should have been working, not wandering around. If you didn’t plan on stealing anything, then why were you in my room?”

Chapter 137:

Judy felt a tingling sensation on her scalp as she heard those words. She wasn’t sure if she was imagining it, but she had definitely felt a strong sense of malice from Jayden just a moment ago. In search of a way out, she hastily mentioned, “Ms. Lloyd realized she forgot something and sent me to pick it up for her.”

Jayden fixed a long, searching gaze on her before inquiring, “So, have you managed to retrieve the item?”

Judy fought to keep her composure as she replied, “Yes, I’ve found it. I’ll deliver it to her later.”

Driscoll, overhearing the conversation, was filled with rage. He was convinced that Judy’s entry into Jayden’s room was for some covert purpose. “How could she claim she was merely assisting Elyse with an errand? She was not someone Elyse would turn to for help. She didn’t even like Judy.”

With a stormy look, Driscoll waited for Jayden to give an order. He was skeptical that Jayden would be deceived by Judy so easily. Yet Jayden, tapping his fingers thoughtfully on the table, asked slowly, “I see. Did she request that you deliver them immediately?”

“Yes, sir,” Judy answered with a nod.

“Very well, you may leave now,” Jayden said.

Judy looked up, startled by the ease of her dismissal. “Thank you,” she exclaimed. With her excitement barely contained, she exited the study with a bounce in her step.

Left behind, Driscoll could barely contain himself any longer. He was stunned by Jayden’s reaction. It was evident that Judy’s response was unsatisfactory. “Even if Jayden chose not to punish her, he should have dismissed her. Yet he let her go so easily.”

“Sir, why don’t you punish her? It’s clear she’s lying,” Driscoll protested.

“I have my reasons,” Jayden replied curtly, dismissing him with a wave of his hand.

Driscoll, biting back further arguments, turned and left reluctantly.

Later that evening, Elyse returned home by car. As she stepped into the house, she caught snippets of conversation from the servants in the garden.

Did you hear? Mr. Owen allowed the new maid Judy to enter his room. She even used Mrs. Owen’s exclusive tableware,” one servant whispered.

“Mr. Owen is so kind to Judy. What does this mean for Mrs. Owen? I thought they were in love,” another servant mused.

“You’re mistaken. They aren’t in love at all. Maybe Judy is the right person for Mr. Owen,” a third added.

Elyse chose not to confront the servants. With a heavy heart, she entered the villa and was immediately greeted by Judy’s flirty voice. “Mr. Owen, why don’t we plant some flowers in the garden? Let’s plant roses. They’ll look beautiful in bloom.”

Jayden responded thoughtfully, “Do you like roses?”

Watching from a distance, Elyse saw Judy lower her head shyly. It was clear she had feelings for Jayden.

Realizing this, Elyse clenched her fists. She feared history was about to repeat itself. Just as Kaelyn had taken Theo, could Judy take Jayden away? A wave of sadness overwhelmed her as she looked at Jayden with mixed emotions.

Jayden noticed her return and casually asked, “Are you planning to have dinner at home tonight?”

Elyse furrowed her brow. Why would he ask such a question? Where else would she eat? Or was there truth to the maid’s whispers that Jayden no longer loved her?

Suppressing her sorrow, she replied, “Do you want me to dine at home tonight?”

Jayden seemed puzzled by her question. Unaware of Driscoll’s cautionary glance, he simply said, “If you’re not eating here, I’ll ask the chef to prepare less food.”

“Sir,” Driscoll was taken aback. “Did Jayden realize the impact of his words?”

Elyse forced a smile and said, “You go ahead and eat. I have other plans and won’t be dining at home.” With those words, she ascended the stairs.

Unable to contain his frustration, Driscoll, who had served Jayden for many years and watched him grow up, found himself at a loss. He ventured to ask, “Sir, aren’t you concerned that she will be upset?”

Jayden remained silent, his frown deepening as if lost in thought.

Meanwhile, Judy could hardly contain her delight. She saw an opportunity in the couple’s strife to further her own aims. Now more than ever, she was convinced that causing a rift between Elyse and Jayden would be straightforward. With a bit more effort, she was certain she could secure her place as Jayden’s wife.

Chapter 138:

Emerging from the second-floor room, Elyse underwent a transformation, slipping into a flowing gown, her makeup meticulously applied, and her hair cascading elegantly around her shoulders. Descending the stairs in her sleek black high heels, she effortlessly captured Jayden’s attention. His gaze lingered on her graceful form, a hint of jealousy creeping into his voice as he spoke, “What’s with the fancy dress?”

Without sparing him a glance, Elyse responded icily, “I have matters to attend to.” With that, she brushed past everyone, her demeanor distant and determined as she exited the house. Driscoll couldn’t help but sigh inwardly at Elyse’s evident anger this time.

Meanwhile, Jayden felt an urge to pursue her and seek clarification but found himself halted by Judy's intervention. His gaze bore an imperceptible hint of hostility as he challenged her, "How dare you try to stop me?"

Judy, emboldened by Jayden's previous concern, remained oblivious to the underlying tension in his voice. She calmly explained, "Look at her getting all pretty for her date. It explains her reluctance to dine at home."

Despite Jayden's simmering anger, Judy failed to register his displeasure. Instead, she cheerfully suggested, "I'm famished. Let's have dinner first."

Meeting her gaze with a glare, Jayden inquired, "Hungry?"

"Yes, aren't you?" Judy replied unfazed. Taking charge, Judy maneuvered behind Jayden's wheelchair, guiding him towards the dining room as if assuming the role of the household hostess. She then attended to his needs with care, selecting food for him before gazing upon him with affection.

"Please, you should eat before it gets cold," Judy insisted, her tone laced with concern as Jayden remained impassive, his expression somber as he moved to the elevator.

"Mr. Owen, where are you going?" Judy persisted, grasping the armrest of his wheelchair in an attempt to halt his departure.

Jayden's response was curt and chilly. "Let go," he commanded, his voice devoid of warmth.

Reflecting on the events of the afternoon, Judy couldn't help but believe that Jayden harbored feelings for her. After all, his coldness wasn't exclusive to her; he treated everyone with the same detachment.

Convinced that Jayden's apparent indifference masked deeper emotions, Judy remained resolute in her belief that he held a special fondness for her. Driscoll escorted her away, Jayden's voice slicing through the tension, his tone commanding as he motioned for Driscoll to intervene.

Driscoll's expression soured at the directive. He harbored no warmth for Judy; in his view, she failed to grasp her place as a maid. Were it not for Jayden's inexplicable leniency, he would have

disciplined her long ago. With firm resolve, Driscoll seized Judy, adhering to Jayden's instructions without hesitation.

"Take her back to her quarters. No one is to open the door for her without my permission."

"Of course, sir," Driscoll affirmed before briskly leading Judy away with an authoritative air.

Judy made one last attempt, reaching out for Jayden's arm. But Driscoll intercepted, his grip firm and unyielding, ensuring compliance with Jayden's orders. As Judy found herself being pulled further away from Jayden, confusion and sadness crept into her voice.

"What's happening, Mr. Owen? Why are you treating me like this all of a sudden? Did I upset you?" she queried, her tone tinged with sorrow and bewilderment.

Jayden remained silent, his gaze fixed ahead, devoid of any acknowledgment towards her. Taking control of the wheelchair, he maneuvered it out of the house, leaving Judy's questions unanswered.

Inside the room, Judy was confronted by Driscoll's chilly demeanor as he locked the door behind her. "Remember, you are just a maid here. Take this time to reflect on your actions," he stated icily.

Indignant, Judy protested, "What did you just say? I'm not a maid. I haven't done anything wrong. Let me out. I need to speak with Mr. Owen."

Convinced of her own innocence, Judy refused to accept any wrongdoing. She was convinced that she and Jayden were destined to be together, especially considering his seemingly special treatment towards her.

"Jayden cares for me deeply. Can't you see that?" she implored Driscoll, her desperation evident in her pleas. "He treats me better than he does Elyse. Let me out, Driscoll."

Standing firm at the door, Driscoll listened to Judy's outburst with a sense of confusion. Though Jayden's behavior towards Judy seemed indulgent, it was clear to Driscoll that Jayden's feelings for her were anything but genuine.

"Perhaps it's time you seek medical attention, you delusional maid," Driscoll reiterated, punctuating his words with the reminder of Judy's status as a maid, before departing without a backward glance.

Judy's disbelief turned to frantic pounding on the door and desperate shouts, but her pleas fell on deaf ears within the villa. Locked away, she found herself abandoned and ignored by those around her.

Meanwhile, the other servants in the household were taken aback to discover Judy's predicament. Despite her claims of Jayden's favoritism towards her over Elyse, they questioned why Jayden had decided to lock her up.

The servants then laughed at Judy's intention of replacing Elyse. In the aftermath of the commotion, Driscoll sought out Jayden only to learn that he had pursued Elyse.

He stood in silence for a moment, a sense of resignation washing over him. "It seems I'm a tad too late. He should have followed her long ago," he murmured, his helplessness palpable.

Chapter 139:

Elyse chose a taxi over her car to head to the shopping mall, sending messages to several people, yet all were unavailable—even Tracy couldn't make time. She meandered down the street engulfed in loneliness. Suddenly, her phone rang. Startled, she answered, and her smile faded as she recognized the voice on the other end.

"Ms. Lloyd, it's clear you're disappointed. I saw it. Were you expecting someone else?" Richie's voice was thick with sarcasm.

Embarrassed, Elyse whispered, "Are you nearby? I didn't see you."

Richie snorted, signaling his annoyance, then instructed, "Look up."

Obediently, Elyse looked up and spotted Richie on the second floor, waving through the glass. Richie invited her up. "My work is wrapping up. I'll take you to dinner soon."

Relieved, Elyse hurried to the second floor, where Richie awaited her at a doorway. "Take a seat here. My interview is just about to finish," Richie ushered her into the room and returned to his host, a camera recording their interaction.

Elyse sat awkwardly in a corner of the room, watching the proceedings and waiting for them to finish. Richies session had concluded. Once the host finished recording some final questions, everyone started to pack up and leave. Richie, preferring not to return to the company, donned his hat and mask and departed with Elyse.

“Why didn’t you dine at home? If I hadn’t seen you wandering the streets, where would you have been going?” Last time when Richie encountered Jayden, Elyse, and Judy, he had deduced something was amiss and had spoken up for Elyse. However, he hadn’t expected Elyse to be so easily defeated. Noticing the disappointment in his gaze, Elyse felt an inexplicable guilt. She touched her nose to conceal her embarrassment. “I just wanted to get out for dinner, that’s all.”

“And what would you like to eat?” Richie was skeptical of her response. Her sadness was evident.

He saw right through it. Elyse was unsure. She responded dismissively, “Anything’s fine. You choose.”

Richie rolled his eyes in exasperation. “I’m treating you. Let’s go.”

They entered a restaurant and secured a private room. As they did, the glass door swung open, and Theo, accompanied by several men in suits, walked in. Upon seeing each other, both Elyse and Theo looked away, taken aback. Elyse, gazing down at her shoes, suddenly wished to dine elsewhere, but Richie had already placed their order. “Trust me, the food here is top-notch,” Richie assured her, talking nonstop to distract her. Then, without looking at Theo, Elyse walked away.

Once settled in an exclusive dining room, they briefly chatted about music. Then Jayden called, and Elyse couldn’t hide her smile as she excused herself to take the call. However, Theo leaned against the door with a cigarette hanging from his lips, which was smoked down to half its length—it seemed he had been there for quite some time. Elyse, repulsed by his presence, stepped back and demanded, “What are you doing here?”

“I’m waiting for you,” Theo replied, extinguishing his cigarette and tossing it in the trash. His voice tinged with an unwitting hopefulness. “Your birthday’s coming up. What do you want? I’ll buy it for you.”

Elyse dawned on her that her birthday was the following week. Yet, why should she accept a gift from him? She dismissed him firmly. “Don’t worry about it, Mr. Ward. Just mind your own business.”

Theo, anticipating rejection, wasn't upset but persisted. "I've never celebrated your birthday with you. Let me make it up to you this time."

Theo's plea was earnest, as if he truly wanted to atone. But it was already too late.

Chapter 140:

Theo stared at Elyse, a myriad of conflicting emotions surging in his heart. He would always toss and turn in bed at the end of the night, overwhelmed by disappointment in himself for failing to fulfill his promises to her. He wanted a second chance to redeem himself. He pondered whether Elyse would fade from his thoughts and allow him to rest peacefully if he made amends.

Theo spoke in a tone one would usually use when coaxing a sullen child. "I know it's not possible right now, but we parted ways too soon. There's still so much I wanted to do for you."

Elyse scoffed in disdain. "What kind of things? Are they even important? Because if they are, then why did you ignore them until now?" She turned stern as she added, "Quit your acting. I have no need for your crocodile tears, and I certainly don't need you to do anything for me."

It was evident that she was set on their separation. Theo's anger dissipated, giving way to bitter remorse in his heart. It would be dishonest to claim he had no feelings for her, yet for some inexplicable reason, he had attempted to ignore his emotions. He blocked her path and asked in earnest, "Did you ever love me, Elyse?"

Elyse was taken aback. "What the hell was wrong with this man? Why was he always doing things she couldn't understand?" She looked him in the eye and let out a small chuckle. "Yes, I did love you before, but so what?"

Theo's brows furrowed. She claimed to have loved him, but why had she married another man? "Divorce Jayden," he said in absolute seriousness. "I will make up for everything I did wrong in the past."

Elyse cocked her head to the side and sneered at him, "Make it up to me, huh? How do you plan to do that exactly?"

“I will give you a much bigger wedding than the one you had,” Theo answered confidently. “I know I disgraced you in front of our guests that day, but if you give me a chance, I will be more careful next time.”

Elyse closed her eyes and sighed. “I don’t think you fully grasp why I am disappointed in you.”

Theo looked offended. “What reason could she possibly have to be disappointed in such an excellent man as myself?” He grabbed her arm, wanting to ask her all the burning questions in his mind, but Elyse was no longer interested in speaking to him. She tried to break free from his hold, and it was in the middle of her struggle that Richie opened the door of their dining room.

He had heard the commotion from outside and came in just in time to see Elyse being manhandled. “How dare you!” Richie roared as he strode over and broke them apart. He pulled Elyse behind him and glared at Theo. “You’re a dead man. I don’t believe this. You look like a decent man, yet you dared to lay hands on her. Apologize right now, or I will expose your misconduct online.”

Theo was initially bewildered by Richie’s sudden appearance. The more he looked at the latter, however, the more he recognized him. After all, Richie was a popular star with a large fan base. Seeing him act so protective of Elyse now, Theo let out a bark of self-derisive laughter.

“What’s so funny, you bastard?” Richie demanded. “I said apologize to her.”

Theo snorted and looked Elyse up and down. “I guess I really underestimated you. First, you hooked up with Jayden Owen, and now you’re with a celebrity. You just can’t live without a man, can you?” He clicked his tongue and pretended to mull over something. “Let me see, Jayden cannot satisfy you, so you found yourself another man. Isn’t that right?”

Elyse’s mind went blank. She didn’t understand the nonsense Theo was spouting, but she finally got the implication. She exploded, “What kind of woman do you think I am?” she screamed at him. “How dare you insult me to my face!”

But Theo wasn’t done mocking her. “Oh, did I say anything wrong?”