

Bound love 1521

Chapter 1521:

Lucille probed further. “Are you really considering false testimony to help Dolores? But what if Shaun regains his memory? Won’t he uncover our scheme?”

Elyse lounged in the living room, engrossed in a message from Jayden confirming he had wrapped up work and was on his way.

A sudden noise snapped her back to reality. She looked up just in time to see Shaun shuffle out of his room, his cheeks wet with tears. He locked eyes with her, his voice barely a whisper of pain. “I just had a nightmare.”

Elyse, taken aback, responded, “What did you dream about?”

He wiped his cheeks, the tears relentless. “It’s all a blur, but it stung. It was like trying to hold sand—it just slipped through my fingers.”

Worried, Elyse stood and offered some comfort. “Maybe it’s for the best you don’t remember.” But Shaun was adamant, shaking his head. “No, it feels too important. Maybe it’s about her!”

Elyse’s face tightened, words failing her for a moment.

After collecting himself, Shaun ventured, “I know you’re worried I’ll end up broken or lose my marbles. But could you tell me the name of the person I’m searching for?”

Elyse bit her lip, then sighed. “Are you sure you want to go down that road?”

Shaun’s voice was firm. “People say amnesia is a blank slate, but I call it a curse. I won’t hide from my past. Painful or not, I have a right to remember.”

Elyse tried to comfort him. “Honestly, wiping the slate clean can be a blessing. No one would fault you.”

“But I would,” Shaun cut in, his voice breaking. “I can’t live with myself if I run away. It might be a thorny past, but it’s mine.”

Elyse took a deep breath and decided to come clean. “The woman you’re asking about is Tracy Bernard, my best friend.”

She hesitated, then continued, “She fell hard for you, moved to Liverton because of you. You two were an item for over a year, even talked about tying the knot.”

She stopped abruptly, noticing Shaun’s pained expression.

He gripped his head with one hand, his brow and nose glistening with sweat. His lip caught firmly between his teeth, his complexion ghostly pale.

“Tracy... that name rings a bell. I’ve definitely heard it. I know her!” Shaun grappled with his memories, desperately trying to place Tracy, but coming up short.

Elyse steadied him, her voice laced with concern. “Don’t push yourself too hard. It might just backfire on your brain!”

Shaun’s response was a resolute shake of the head. “I have to remember her. I must. I need to piece together who I am and our shared history.”

“Your past was woven with both joy and sorrow, but that chapter is closed now. Let it go,” Elyse counseled.

Yet Shaun’s determination did not waver; his thirst to recall his past was unquenchable.

Overcome with emotion, he cried out and crumpled to the floor. Driscoll, observing from nearby, intervened with respect. “I kept the doctor here just in case. I’ll get him right now.”

Watching Shaun lie motionless on the floor, Elyse sighed deeply. “What a mess we’re in,” she murmured, a note of defeat in her voice. Driscoll echoed her sentiment, shaking his head. “What’s done is done. He’s just being headstrong.”

Elyse reflected sadly. “Had he only known sooner, perhaps things would’ve been different. His love for Tracy was there, but it wasn’t deep enough—that’s why he mistreated her. After she left, regret dawned on him, and he saw her true value. Even now, amidst the fog of amnesia, he seeks her.”

Chapter 1522:

She added thoughtfully, “If Tracy knew about his struggles, I wonder how she’d feel.”

Just then, the door burst open, and Jayden strolled in, spotting Shaun on the floor.

He glanced over before turning to Elyse with a beaming smile.

“Sweetheart, did you miss me today?”

“Yes, I missed you,” came Elyse’s simple reply.

Jayden teased, “Why the mechanical tone, like you’re reading off a script?”

“Ease up!” Elyse snapped playfully. “I said I missed you, didn’t I? Don’t push your luck.”

Jayden’s laughter softened the moment, and he then focused on Shaun. As the doctor made his examination, Jayden inquired calmly, “What’s the scoop? Any memories of Tracy resurfacing?”

“Just snippets, nothing solid. But at least it’s not a complete blank,” Elyse admitted, the situation clearly weighing on her.

She patiently awaited the doctor’s verdict on Shaun’s condition before she and Jayden headed out to Freda’s family gathering.

Arriving at Freda’s, Elyse was pleasantly surprised to see Cody there. With genuine excitement, she approached him. “Mr. Tucker, when did you land in Cambape? You should have given me a heads-up!”

Cody's laughter was light and easy. "I've been here a few days. Thought I'd keep it a surprise since we were bound to meet up soon."

Elyse's smile widened. "You've been missed! My violin practice has been stuck in a rut, and I'd love to pick your brain about it."

"Absolutely," Cody replied, his tone inviting and warm.

Cody gazed at Elyse with affection, his fingers gently smoothing her hair before shifting his attention to Jayden.

"Word from Gavin is that you two have been nurturing your relationship," he remarked. "I hear it's flourishing even more than before."

The respect in Jayden's voice when addressing Cody was unmistakable now.

Time had changed things dramatically—where once he'd sought only to dominate Elyse, viewing Cody with barely concealed contempt and hostility, now he stood transformed. His demeanor radiated pure respect.

Jayden stood before Cody with genuine sincerity. "We're discovering each other anew, building something deeper," he responded.

Cody nodded at his words, saying, "That's good. Your previous approach was rather impetuous. Remember, matters of the heart deserve careful consideration."

His gaze drifted to Elyse, who bowed her head respectfully, quickly affirming her understanding.

Freda consulted her timepiece nearby. "Our time draws near. She should be arriving momentarily."

Curiosity flickered across Elyse's face. "Are we expecting another guest?" she inquired.

A knowing smile played on Freda's lips. "Someone rather unexpected."

Bewilderment clouded Elyse's features.

However, five minutes later, she met the mysterious guest Freda had mentioned.

Celeste swept in, a vision in flowing silk, her silver tresses perfectly coiffed, clutching an elegant purse. Her radiant smile, intended for Freda, wavered upon spotting Gavin lurking behind her, and then froze completely at the sight of Cody. Reality struck hard—Cody's presence was no illusion. She desperately sought an explanation for his unexpected appearance.

Chapter 1523:

Struggling to maintain composure, she ventured, "I thought this was meant to be a family affair? What brings Cody here—and those two as well?"

Her finger jabbed first at Gavin, then at Elyse.

With unwavering confidence, Freda announced, "Mrs. Griffin, allow me to properly introduce Gavin Cramer, my boyfriend."

Before Celeste could interject, Freda quickly added, "Marriage is on our horizon—if all proceeds as planned, I'll soon be his wife."

Then she continued, "And Cody is my boyfriend's mentor. Elyse is his friend, and Jayden... well, he's rather inconsequential."

Celeste's polished smile began to crack. "But a family gathering..."

Freda smiled warmly. "Indeed, they're all part of my future extended family. Mrs. Griffin, you simply must get acquainted."

Believing Freda ignorant of her history with Cody, Celeste maintained her composure. "I apologize, Freda, but urgent matters require my attention. I'll have to skip today's gathering."

Before Freda could protest, Cody interjected smoothly, "Ms. Griffin, it's been quite a while. Perhaps we could have a word?"

Her expression soured instantly. “What could we possibly have to discuss? Your apprentice orchestrated this entire meeting, didn’t he? Cody, don’t take me for a fool.”

Cody replied, “Ms. Griffin, time has painted us both with silver strands. The years have carved their paths across our faces. Can’t we, in the autumn of our lives, speak as equals who’ve weathered the same storms?”

Disdain etched across Celeste’s features. “Your presence turns my stomach. Take your disciples and vanish. Remember my influence in this industry. Cross me, and I’ll ensure your disciples never find a stage in Lesbourg.”

After saying that, Celeste cast a cold glance at Elyse. Her glacial stare pierced Elyse, making her shrink back.

Jayden moved swiftly, positioning himself as a shield between them. Celeste’s lip curled as she withdrew her icy gaze. “Have I made myself clear? If you did, don’t block my way!”

Cody remained unmoved. “Ms. Griffin, I was wrong back then.”

She faltered, words catching. “What... did you say?”

Cody’s gaze was calm as he said, “You were right all along. Rickey and I should have heeded your wisdom instead of blindly trusting our own judgment.”

Celeste stood motionless, her lips parted in disbelief.

The notion of Cody apologizing had never crossed her mind in all these years.

“I never thought I’d live to see the day you apologized to me,” she breathed, her expression a tapestry of warring emotions.

A bitter smile graced Cody’s lips. “I’ve wanted to apologize for a long time, but so many things happened afterward. Perhaps it was my success that kept battling with my desire to apologize.”

Celeste's penetrating gaze fixed on Cody, carrying weight in its inscrutability. Time seemed to pause as her eyes swept across the sea of shocked faces before returning to lock with his.

The air crackled with tension until her decision crystallized. She would allow him this moment—one chance to unravel the tangles of the past. With the grace of a dancer, she beckoned him toward Freda's moonlit backyard.

"What just happened there?" Elyse whispered to Gavin, watching the pair disappear into the night.

Chapter 1524:

"Leave it alone, Elyse." Gavin's words carried a gentle warning as he crossed his arms. "Some stories need to unfold without an audience." A thoughtful silence claimed Elyse before she nodded. "I suppose you're right."

Yet curiosity flickered in her eyes like candlelight. "So when you asked me to invite Celeste over last time, you were asking it for Mr. Tucker?"

"Exactly," Gavin admitted. "We'd hit a wall trying to arrange a meeting ourselves."

"Humph," Freda interjected, tossing her silken hair with dramatic flourish. "Only I can get her to show up. My family sponsors a ton of music events, you know. People in the industry wouldn't dream of offending Celeste, and she wouldn't risk offending my family."

"That makes sense. Celeste wouldn't give us the time of day, but she can't ignore your invitation," Elyse acknowledged.

"See?" Freda shot Gavin a playful wink. "You wouldn't even be in the same room with Celeste if it weren't for me."

"You're right. I'm a lucky guy to have you as my girlfriend," Gavin grinned.

A rosy blush painted Freda's cheeks. It was the first time Gavin had publicly acknowledged their relationship.

“You two are disgustingly sweet,” Elyse smirked.

With her cheeks still tinged pink, Freda wrapped herself around Gavin.

“We’re going to be even sweeter.”

““Ugh, gross,” Elyse mock-shivered.

The moment was interrupted as Jayden appeared behind Elyse, wrapping his arms around her waist.

Elyse’s body tensed at his touch. “What are you doing?” she asked, pivoting to meet his gaze.

Jayden cast a knowing look at Gavin and Freda. “We’re pretty sweet too; you just haven’t seen it.”

“If we haven’t seen it, it hasn’t happened. Prove it!” Freda challenged with a scoff.

Elyse’s eyes flicked instinctively to Jayden, her heart racing as she doubted he’d dare make a move in front of Gavin and Freda.

But Jayden surprised her, gently lifting her chin and pressing his lips to hers.

Freda’s gasp echoed through the room as she covered her mouth, unmistakable envy shimmering in her eyes.

Breaking away, Jayden arched a brow in triumph. “Didn’t happen, huh?” he teased. “We were practically glued while you were all who-knows-where.”

“Come on. Get a room! It’s sickening,” Freda groaned, rolling her eyes. The playful atmosphere dissolved as Elyse’s attention drifted to the backyard, worry creasing her brow. “They’ve been out there for ages. I hope they’re not arguing.”

Gavin shook his head, a knowing smile playing on his lips. “Don’t worry. Mr. Tucker knows what he’s doing. He genuinely wants to make amends for what happened.”

“Why were they on such bad terms?” Elyse’s brow furrowed in concern.

Gavin shrugged. “I don’t really know. His past is largely a mystery to me.”

Noticing Elyse’s troubled expression, Jayden gently ruffled her hair. “If he’s apologizing, I’m sure things will work themselves out. They just need space and time.”

“It’s taking forever,” Elyse muttered under her breath.

“Are you hungry?” Freda interjected, brightening the mood. “I’ll have some snacks brought out.”

Chapter 1525:

Within minutes, a uniformed servant appeared bearing a tray laden with delicate appetizers. The group settled into the plush comfort of the living room, their conversation drifting from topic to topic as they waited.

The clock ticked steadily forward, nearly two hours passing before Cody and Celeste finally emerged from the garden.

The room stirred to life as everyone rushed to meet them.

“How did it go?” Elyse leaned forward eagerly. “Did you work things out?”

Cody’s face softened as he reached out to ruffle Elyse’s hair. “Sorry to worry you. We had a good, long talk. I think we finally talked things through.”

Celeste responded with a skeptical snort, but tellingly chose not to contradict him.

“It’s getting late!” Freda declared, linking her arm through Celeste’s with practiced familiarity. “I’ve been waiting for you. Come on, let’s grab some food.”

Celeste cast a playfully withering look at Freda. “We could’ve eaten hours ago if you hadn’t invited them over.”

“But I wanted you to meet Gavin!” Freda burst out with infectious laughter, her eyes dancing with delight. “He’s my absolute favorite boyfriend!”

Celeste’s piercing gaze shifted to Gavin, like a spotlight, her expression softening into quiet contemplation. “I trust your character,” she said, each word carrying the weight of a solemn blessing, her voice rich with maternal approval. “I know she’ll be in good hands with you.”

“Thank you,” Gavin replied, his head dipping in a gesture of profound respect.

Celeste’s gaze sharpened, her eyes narrowing slightly. “If you ever cause harm to Freda, you’ll have to face me.”

Gavin met her gaze calmly. “Don’t worry. I’ll never break her heart.”

Turning to Cody with a frown, Celeste said, “You and Gavin are cut from the same cloth.”

Cody gave a sheepish touch to his nose, a hint of embarrassment on his face. “I thought we had moved past this. Why are you still giving me the cold shoulder?”

Celeste simply snorted, opting not to respond further. Massaging her temples, she said, “Let’s just have dinner. I’m eager to head home and rest.”

Following her lead, everyone made their way to the dining room.

The group dispersed after the meal.

While driving home, Elyse and Jayden came across a familiar spot.

“Could we stop here for a bit?” Elyse suggested. “I would like to walk around.”

Jayden agreed without hesitation, parking the car nearby and accompanying her toward a park.

The park buzzed with life, with people wandering down the paths and vendors at the gates.

Looking around, Jayden, unfamiliar with the area, asked, “What’s special about this place?”

“Tracy and I visited this place once,” Elyse responded, her eyes roaming the park.

Confused, he echoed, “You and Tracy were here?”

“Yes, it was right after our sophomore year,” Elyse reminisced, her voice tinged with nostalgia. “We had saved up from our part-time jobs to visit. Our hotel was just around the corner, and we’d come here for snacks every evening.”

“You two were close, weren’t you?”

A shadow crossed Elyse’s face. “Why doesn’t she just come forward? If she’s okay, why wouldn’t she contact me?”

Chapter 1526:

Noticing her distress, he gently wrapped his arm around her. “Perhaps she has her reasons for staying away,” he suggested softly.

“What’s the reason?” she asked, her voice filled with grief.

“Maybe what she’s involved in is something she can’t share. She might be trying to spare you the worry,” he suggested.

Elyse exhaled deeply, her silence speaking volumes as they continued their walk through the park.

They soon arrived at a clearing swarming with street performers. Spotting a violinist, Jayden nudged Elyse.

“Hey, why don’t you perform a piece?”

Elyse raised her eyebrows in surprise. “What do you want to hear?”

“No, I mean, you can perform it for Tracy,” Jayden explained. “Use the music to show how much you miss her. Let your emotions flow through.”

“But she won’t hear it. She’s not here,” Elyse replied.

“It’s about expressing your feelings, not her hearing them,” Jayden continued.

Elyse pondered for a moment, her expression softening. “Actually, that’s not a bad idea. I just can’t think of a piece that fully conveys how much I miss her.”

“There must be one. Just think about it for a moment,” Jayden said.

Elyse paused, deep in thought, then approached the street musician.

She explained her unusual request, and the musician agreed without hesitation. Elyse took the offered violin and moved to the microphone.

As the music began, onlookers stopped to listen, captivated by her performance.

Her playing was a flood of raw emotion—an ache buried deep, a longing both desperate and hopeless, overwhelming in its intensity. A wave of helplessness swept over her, leaving Elyse adrift, lost in the flood of her own sorrow.

Why had she and Tracy grown so distant? She yearned for her friend’s presence more than ever.

Jayden observed, moved by the sorrow on her face.

Was it the music, so full of yearning, or his own empathy for her distress that stirred these feelings? He didn’t know the answer, but he was taken aback by the depth of his own emotions, this sudden realization of how deeply he could feel the world around him. He softly said to himself, “I’m not emotionless. I can feel this sadness.”

Jayden found himself more attuned to his emotions with each passing day.

It felt like both a gift and a burden, pulling him further away from the cold, unfeeling persona he'd once been.

Elyse, having just finished her performance, walked back to his side with a distant look in her eyes.

She glanced up, noticing the faraway expression on his face. With a soft tug at his hand, she murmured, "Let's go."

He met her gaze and nodded, taking her hand as they began walking toward the park's exit.

Behind them, someone lingered in the shadows. A figure in a black cap trailed silently, head bowed as tears streaked down her cheeks.

It was Tracy.

Since her return to Watscar, she had made a habit of visiting this park in the evenings. She never expected to see Jayden and Elyse here.

Chapter 1527:

Her heart ached as she held back the impulse to step forward. Instead, she chose to stay hidden, her feet moving cautiously as she followed them.

When Elyse had begun her performance earlier, Tracy had found herself drawn to the music. She'd perched on a nearby bench, transfixed.

The melody struck a chord deep within her. It wasn't just music—it was a message. She was certain Elyse had played it for her.

Elyse missed her.

The realization hit her like a wave, and her own longing welled up, spilling over as quiet tears.

Her chest tightened, and for a brief moment, she allowed herself to drown in the ache of their shared solitude.

Elyse missed her, but she missed Elyse more—so much more. But now wasn't the time.

This moment, as raw as it was, only strengthened her resolve. The plan she had set in motion was too important to risk. Reuniting now would ruin everything.

Tracy sat there for a moment, collected herself, and then left, taking a cab to a nearby bar.

Upon arriving at the bar, she ordered a drink, her movements slow and absentminded. She stared at the glass, the world around her fading into the background as her thoughts wandered. She had no idea how much time had passed when a voice broke through her haze—clear, familiar, and utterly unexpected.

She turned abruptly, her eyes locking onto Shaun's side profile.

He sat a few tables away, pale and weary-looking, with a bodyguard beside him happily munching on fries. Shaun nursed a bottle of beer, taking slow, intermittent sips.

Tracy's brow furrowed instinctively. What was he doing here?

Her stomach knotted at the sight of him, but she quickly composed herself. Shaun had lost his memory—he wouldn't recognize her. It was better to let him remain in his oblivion. She turned back to her drink, resolving to ignore his presence.

Meanwhile, Shaun's bodyguard set down an empty plate and spoke up, his tone bordering on impatience. "You've come all the way to the bar, had half a bottle of beer—shouldn't we head back now?"

Shaun responded with a moody glare, his voice heavy with gloom. "What's the rush? I'm reflecting on my past love."

The bodyguard raised a skeptical brow. "Reflecting? Back then, you didn't even bother to look back. And now you've got amnesia—what exactly are you remembering?"

Shaun froze for a moment, caught off guard. A faint blush crept up his cheeks as he stammered, “Just—just mind your own business! I ordered you all these snacks, didn’t I? So eat them and zip it!”

The bodyguard sighed dramatically, shaking his head. “Fine, but take it easy with the booze. You know it’s not good for you.”

Shaun glanced at him, his expression softening momentarily. “You actually care about me?”

With a resigned shrug, the bodyguard replied, “It’s my job to look out for you. If you drink yourself stupid, the doctor’s gonna tear me apart tomorrow during your checkup. I’d rather not deal with that.”

Shaun clenched his jaw, glaring at the man as if he’d committed a grave offense.

Chapter 1528:

Why couldn’t his bodyguard understand the subtlety of romance? Couldn’t he see that this wasn’t about alcohol but heartbreak?

Frustrated, Shaun tightened his grip on the beer bottle and muttered under his breath. If his bodyguard wouldn’t get the hint, fine. He’d drink until the ache in his chest dulled.

Half an hour later, the bottle sat empty on the table. Shaun stood abruptly, muttering something about needing the restroom.

The bodyguard leaned back in his chair, watching him go. He quipped, “The booze hitting you already? Is there something wrong with your system?”

Shaun shot him a withering look. “I’m fine! Just going to the restroom. And stop commenting on my health—I’m perfectly capable!”

Shaun’s mind buzzed with indignation as he left the restroom, his steps brisk and purposeful. His bodyguard had no idea what he was talking about. As Shaun walked out of the men’s room, he

collided with someone who was about to enter the ladies' room. He stumbled slightly, blinking in surprise. His eyes met Tracy's, and for a fleeting moment, the air seemed to still.

Shaun froze the moment his eyes landed on her. He stood rooted to the spot, unable to process anything except the figure before him. Tracy, on the other hand, barely spared him a glance. She didn't expect him to react so strongly; after all, he had no memory of her. To him, they were strangers. She told herself that was how it should be—no ties, no complications.

But as she walked past him, his hand darted out, gripping her arm before she could leave.

Startled, Tracy turned to face him, her expression calm despite the surprise in her chest. "Do you need something from me, sir?" she asked, her voice measured and polite, as though addressing a complete stranger.

Shaun's eyes searched hers, bewilderment flickering in his gaze. "Miss, have we met before?" he asked, his tone laced with uncertainty. "You seem... familiar."

A small, almost indiscernible smile tugged at the corners of Tracy's lips. She shook her head gently, her voice light but firm. "No. We've never met."

Shaun blinked, clearly thrown off. His brow furrowed as though trying to grasp an elusive memory. "Really? But why does my heart..." His voice trailed off, his words caught somewhere between confusion and a faint ache.

A strange sensation coursed through him—a tightness in his chest, sharp and insistent, like a needle pricking his heart. He clutched at the feeling, desperate to make sense of it. Why did the sight of this young woman stir something buried deep within him?

Shaun was still wrestling with his emotions when Tracy's patience ran thin.

Her smile vanished as she swiftly withdrew her hand. Looking at Shaun with cold eyes, she spoke with a chilling tone. "I told you. We don't know each other. Isn't your attempt at flirting just pathetic? I'm not interested in playing games. If you're trying to pick up women, look elsewhere."

With those words, she headed into the ladies' room.

Shaun examined his hand, sensing something was wrong. He was convinced he had encountered her before.

Upon exiting the restroom, Tracy returned to the bar. She eyed her drink and scanned the room, noticing several men with suspicious intentions.

A sense of disgust overwhelmed her, prompting her to push her drink away and order a fresh one before settling back in her seat. Meanwhile, Shaun was also in the area, watching her intently. His bodyguard, having polished off several plates of snacks, belched contentedly and asked, "Can we go now?"

Tracy had completely captivated Shaun's heart, and he had no plans to leave.

Chapter 1529:

He firmly declined, saying, "I'm staying. You can leave if you want."

The bodyguard exhaled heavily. "What's so special about this place? No one is even joining you for a drink. Why stay?"

Shaun responded with irritation, "You wouldn't understand!"

The bodyguard scratched his nose. "I really don't. But we've been here nearly an hour, and you've barely touched your drink. Are you trying to act like the mysterious loner?"

Shaun said sharply, "Just keep it down, will you? If you're bored, I'll get you more snacks."

The bodyguard agreed, "Alright, bring them on. I can't drink, so I might as well eat."

Shaun promptly grabbed the menu and ordered more food for his bodyguard. After discarding the menu, he said, "From now on, don't bother me!"

The bodyguard, puzzled by Shaun's conduct, watched him closely and realized Shaun was fixated on a woman's back.

He was utterly astounded. Shaun had come here to pick up girls, hadn't he? Just a short while ago, he had said he was here to grieve a love he had lost, yet now he seemed to have fallen for someone new. The bodyguard was torn with conflicting emotions. He couldn't help but think that men were, without a doubt, unreliable.

Half an hour had gone by, yet Shaun remained captivated by the sight of Tracy's silhouette.

He puzzled over why he imagined her walking up to him, embracing him, and delivering a passionate kiss. Such thoughts thrilled him.

But why indulge in such fantasies? It was truly embarrassing.

As he continued to daydream, the men watching Tracy grew restless. They moved closer, surrounding her, and extended an invitation for her to join them.

Tracy harbored a deep-seated dislike for such characters. She sharply responded, "Do you really think you can impress me with those pathetic looks?"

The men, who had been watching Tracy for some time, assumed she was unattached and alone.

Yet, what single woman displayed such boldness? They resolved to put her in her place.

As they moved to act, Shaun intervened swiftly, positioning himself protectively between Tracy and the advancing men, his back to her. He said angrily, "Who do you think you are? Touch her, and see what happens!"

The men stood there, stunned.

Tracy, equally surprised, struggled to grasp the unfolding events. Shaun's bodyguard, looking irritated, hurried over and pulled Shaun back to safety.

Why hadn't Shaun signaled before rushing in? The bodyguard had almost choked on his snack.

Maintaining her expressionless demeanor, Tracy said, "I don't need your interference in my affairs."

Shaun, misinterpreting her rejection as concern, grinned reassuringly at her. “Don’t worry—I’ve got you covered.”

This left Tracy even more speechless. She hadn’t sought his protection. The men were accustomed to flirting with attractive women, but today, not only did they fail, they were also humiliated in the process. Reacting impulsively, they drew their weapons and lunged forward.

Shaun’s bodyguard, skilled and quick, managed to fend off the five attackers, safeguarding both Shaun and Tracy.

Chapter 1530:

However, the group’s leader, seizing an opportunity, pulled out a dagger and struck the bodyguard’s arm while he was distracted.

Caught off guard by the sudden assault, the bodyguard retaliated with even greater force.

The confrontation escalated rapidly as the leader’s accomplices, inspired by their leader’s actions, drew their own knives, aiming at the bodyguard.

He skillfully disarmed them, preventing any further attacks.

Enraged by the turn of events, the leader smashed a bottle over Shaun’s head.

The bottle shattered upon impact.

Staggering from the blow, Shaun paused, then slowly turned to look at Tracy, who observed the chaos with a detached demeanor, seemingly unaffected by the violence around her.

Shaun inspected Tracy from head to toe before sighing in relief. “Thank goodness you’re okay! I was worried I wouldn’t be able to protect you.”

Tracy was amused by his concern. “Doesn’t hurt where you got hit?”

He blinked at her for a couple of seconds, then asked on impulse, “Will you kiss me if I say it hurts?”

She shook her head without missing a beat. “No.”

But he was undeterred. “I really want to kiss you, though. What do I have to do to make you say yes?”

Instead of answering his question, she simply smiled.

Another moment passed before Shaun began to feel dizzy. He reached up to touch the back of his head, only for his hand to come away bloody.

Tracy noticed as well. “Goodness, you’re bleeding!” But her tone was teasing, and there was no hint of worry in it.

Shaun chuckled feebly. “Don’t worry about me. My bodyguard will make sure I get to the hospital.”

Then he closed his eyes and crumpled to the floor.

The remaining patrons were already frightened by the earlier brawl, and the sight of someone collapsing only sent them into sheer panic. “Someone’s dead!” a man screamed. And just like that, the crowd fled the establishment in a frenzy.

The sudden chaos sobered the leader of the group of men up. He stared at the exodus through the door, belatedly realizing that he was still holding half of the broken bottle.

Terrified, he tossed it away and ran into the crowd to join their escape. When his companions saw him flee, they also discarded their makeshift weapons and followed his trail.

Shaun’s bodyguard wasted no time. He hauled the unconscious Shaun over his shoulder and rushed to the nearest hospital.

Elyse and Jayden had just returned home to retire for the night when they received the news. They were speeding to the hospital in no time. Elyse spotted the bodyguard waiting in the hallway. When she saw the blood covering his clothes, she couldn't help but cry out, "Why did you hurt so badly?"

The bodyguard shook his head. "It's okay. Just some cuts and bruises, nothing life-threatening. But Mr. Kennedy was hit in the head."

"You shall face the consequences of your negligence," Jayden said firmly, then added, "What exactly happened? Explain everything in detail."