

Bound love 1641

Chapter 1641:

An eerie silence blanketed the scene. No one had anticipated Esteban's sudden kneeling, let alone him doing so in front of the crowd, as if pleading for forgiveness from their adversaries.

Elyse was stunned, unable to tear her gaze from him.

To her astonishment, Manfek's fighter jets began to slowly turn and withdraw.

Elyse's breath caught in her throat. "They're actually leaving! Did Esteban's kneeling actually work?"

A ripple of disbelief passed through the crowd, quickly transforming into joyous cheers. The immediate threat had dissipated. Now, they just had to hold on a little longer, waiting for the help they so desperately needed.

As Elyse looked around at the faces filled with tears of joy and relief, a heavy sense of comfort settled over her. "Is this a dream?" she whispered. "Is it really over?"

"Ronan!"

Luna's voice broke through the moment, filled with relief of her own.

Elyse turned just in time to see Luna running toward Ronan.

Ronan, though bruised and battered, was on his feet, moving again.

Elyse's attention was pulled to a sobbing sound. She turned once more and saw the orchestra members, overcome with the realization that they were alive, clinging to one another as tears flowed freely. A bittersweet smile tugged at Elyse's lips as she took in the sight, her own tears threatening to fall.

She reached up to brush them away, only to notice the dust and scrapes that marred her hands.

Drawing a deep breath, Elyse picked up the microphone. “Hello, everyone,” she began, her voice steady yet touched with emotion. “Let me reintroduce myself. I’m Elyse Lloyd. I’m Rickey Benson’s daughter, a violinist, and like him, I’ve taken up the violin.”

Fighting the lump in her throat, she continued, “After everything we’ve been through, I know how drained everyone must be. It’s okay. I’ll play something soft, something gentle to ease your weary hearts. Even after all this suffering, I hope you can find the strength to face the pain.”

As the music floated, new musicians added their sounds to the harmony.

The soothing tunes brought comfort to those devastated by the tragedy. Lying on the floor, Rebecca gazed vacantly at the sky, her face devoid of emotion.

“You’re quite the performer,” she said dryly. “A simple kneel and Manfek’s fighters scatter? Seems almost miraculous.”

Her smile grew slowly. “Esteban, if I masterminded this game, then you truly stole the spotlight. You outshone me entirely.”

Esteban’s face clouded over. “You call causing the death of so many innocents a game? You’ve tarnished our family name for everyone to see!”

Without a hint of regret, Rebecca retorted, “And you think you’re any better? Climbing higher by pushing me down? We’re the same, Esteban. You’re no hero.”

Esteban sneered. “Comparing me to you? We’re entirely different. I’m not the monster here.”

Chapter 1642:

As Rebecca opened her mouth to reply, Esteban covered it with his hand.

He refused to listen to her madness any longer. Could she ever face the truth, admit her failures? Esteban had his doubts. She was likely planning her next scheme.

But now he had her cornered, and he was determined to ensure she could never harm anyone again.

His eyes found Elyse on the stage, and a genuine smile appeared on his face.

“A bomb overhead, yet there she is playing the violin. How much does she cherish that instrument?” he whispered to himself.

Still, he felt a deep sense of gratitude towards Elyse. Her ingenious tactic had captured the global spotlight with the concert.

Workers had removed the debris from a collapsed wall, allowing medical teams to assist the wounded and then the others.

Just as the last of the evacuees were assisted out, Elyse’s legs buckled, and she fell dramatically, her body giving in to the stress, fatigue, and sheer relief.

Chloe, hobbling towards the stage with her injured leg, reached Elyse. Elyse gasped upon seeing Chloe’s blood-streaked face.

“Chloe! What happened?”

Chloe wiped at her face, only making the blood smear more. “Got stuck under some debris. Blacked out for a while, then woke up and started looking for you.”

Helping Chloe to stand, Elyse draped an arm around her for support.

“We need to get you to medical attention.”

Concerned, Chloe inquired, “Are you alright?”

Elyse looked down at herself. “I’m fine. It looks worse on you.”

They began to make their way to the exit, but a wave of dizziness halted Elyse after just a few steps.

Chloe had an uneasy feeling. “Elyse, are you really okay?”

Elyse looked down at herself again. “I’m fine. It looks worse on you.” They continued walking, but the dizziness returned, causing Elyse to stumble.

Chloe’s concern deepened. “Elyse, are you sure you’re okay?”

Elyse gave a weak nod, but a sudden itch in her nose prompted her to touch it, only to find her fingers smeared with blood.

“Why am I bleeding like this?”

“You don’t have any internal injuries, do you?” Chloe asked, her voice tinged with panic.

“I don’t believe so,” Elyse replied, sounding uncertain. “I just passed out. I wasn’t struck by anything.”

As they spoke, Elyse’s legs gave out, and she collapsed to the ground.

Chloe was alarmed and exclaimed, “What’s happening to you?”

Chapter 1643:

“I’m not sure,” Elyse whispered faintly, feeling overwhelmed by dizziness.

Her eyes fluttered shut, and she fell forward, unconscious. Chloe’s plea for help echoed loudly. “Someone, please! Help us! She’s passed out!”

Three days later, Elyse regained consciousness, the passage of time slipping by unnoticed. She opened her eyes to see Jayden sleeping lightly beside her, his head propped on his hand in a posture of silent vigilance.

Feeling a strange numbness in her hand, Elyse shifted slightly, causing Jayden to startle awake.

He immediately locked eyes with her, worry etched across his face. “How do you feel? Any pain?”

“No, I just need something to drink,” Elyse responded, her throat parched.

Jayden quickly assisted her to sit up and handed her a glass of water.

She took several deep sips, then returned the glass to him.

“What’s been going on?” she inquired.

“Rebecca was arrested,” Jayden said. “She was just diagnosed with a congenital personality disorder today. She’s mentally unstable. Everyone’s worried the royal family will try to cover up her crime. There are even protests happening now.”

Shocked, Elyse responded, “Rebecca has a personality disorder? How did it go unnoticed for so long?”

“Her mother paid off the doctors,” Jayden replied. “She made sure all her medical records appeared normal.”

Elyse’s expression grew troubled. “Her mother knew something was off with her and still let her carry on like this?”

Jayden nodded solemnly. “The situation is complex. The King has many children, but despite her issues, Rebecca is notably bright—more so than her siblings in many ways.”

Elyse opened her mouth to speak, but no sound came.

After a moment, she managed to ask, “How does the royal family feel about Rebecca now?”

Jayden shook his head. “No idea. No updates yet. I tried asking Esteban, but he didn’t respond.”

A knot tightened in Elyse's chest. "Rebecca won't be acquitted of her crimes, will she? Who will take responsibility for the lives lost that day?"

Jayden let out a heavy sigh. "So many lives were lost. The public won't let Rebecca walk away from this. If the authorities mishandle things, there could be a revolt. And if that happens..."

He hesitated, his expression grim. "Executing Rebecca might be the only way to appease the public's rage."

Elyse gave a solemn nod. "True, but who knows what'll happen next? We're just ordinary people. We did everything we could."

Chapter 1644:

Jayden agreed. "Exactly. For now, your main priority is recovering in the hospital."

Her brow furrowed. "Why?"

She glanced down, inspecting herself. "I'm fine," she insisted, her voice steady.

Jayden let out a weary sigh. "You have a mild concussion. The stress from that day was too much. It overwhelmed you, and you ended up sleeping for three straight days."

Elyse's jaw dropped. "Three days?" she gasped. "And Chloe? She was covered in blood that day! Is she okay?"

Jayden offered a reassuring smile. "Chloe's fine—just a few minor cuts. She's at the hotel right now, glued to her phone."

Elyse exhaled in relief. "Good. In that case, I want to head back to the hotel too. It's just a mild concussion. I'd rather recover at home."

Jayden hesitated, then gave a thoughtful nod. "If that's what you want, I'll make the arrangements. But leaving today depends on the doctor's assessment."

“Fair enough,” Elyse agreed. “Go ahead and have them check me now.”

As the doctor examined Elyse, Luna appeared at the hospital room door, a bouquet of bright flowers in her hands.

Catching sight of Jayden, Luna asked, “Is Elyse awake today?”

“Yeah,” he replied. “You can go in after the doctor finishes.”

Luna’s face lit up, and she waited by the door without complaint.

When the examination ended, she followed Jayden inside.

Elyse’s face brightened the moment she saw her. “Luna! What brings you here?” she asked, her voice warm.

Luna cleared her throat, a sheepish smile spreading across her face as she handed the bouquet to Elyse. “Thank you for everything. And... I’m sorry for yelling at you before the performance.”

Elyse accepted the flowers with a warm smile. “It’s alright. I completely understand how you felt.”

Luna’s expression turned thoughtful. “Even though this whole ordeal has left a shadow over so many hearts, I believe we’ll get through it.”

Elyse was moved by Luna’s resilience. “How’s your mentor doing?” she asked.

“He’s recovering at another hospital,” Luna said. “The injuries are serious but not life-threatening. A bit of good luck in the middle of all this mess.”

Elyse nodded, visibly relieved. “That’s good to hear. I’ll visit him soon. Please give him my regards in the meantime.”

“Sure, I’ll let him know,” Luna promised with a nod.

After chatting for a while, Luna's expression grew thoughtful.

"By the way, your dad, Rickey Benson, was an incredible violinist. Too bad I never had the chance to meet him."

Elyse blinked, caught off guard. "Why are you bringing up my dad?"

Chapter 1645:

Luna's brows furrowed. "Wait, you haven't heard? You and Rickey are trending online. People can't stop talking about both of you."

Elyse's stomach knotted. "What?" She quickly pulled out her phone, her fingers trembling as she searched.

A headline caught her eye, and she clicked on it. The article detailed Rickey's legacy—how Rebecca had tricked and falsely accused him. Despite the betrayal, he had continued working tirelessly for peace behind the scenes.

The article stated that the first organization to provide relief efforts after the atrocity was founded by her father. Elyse froze, disbelief washing over her.

Did her dad really start a relief organization? How could she not know? Luna glanced at her watch. "It's getting late. I need to visit my mentor at the other hospital."

Elyse nodded, still processing the revelation. "Go ahead. I'll be fine."

With a quick nod, Luna left.

Jayden entered the room moments later. Elyse's voice was urgent. "This article says my dad founded a relief organization. Did you know about this? Have you checked it out?"

Jayden absently scrolled through his phone screen. “I haven’t verified it personally, but that’s what the news reports are claiming.”

Elyse’s brow furrowed in confusion. “That doesn’t make any sense. My father never established any relief organization. Why would they keep pushing this narrative?”

She chewed her lower lip thoughtfully before adding, “Could they be attempting to salvage his reputation?”

“I’m not certain,” Jayden replied, his expression darkening. “But I’ll investigate it thoroughly.”

Elyse shifted uneasily in her seat. “Do you think Esteban is behind this information leak?”

“No chance,” Jayden responded, running a hand through his hair. “He’s been tied up lately—hasn’t even returned my calls.”

A shadow of worry crossed Elyse’s face.

Noticing her distress, Jayden playfully pinched her cheek. “Hey, chin up. I’ve spoken with the doctor—you’re cleared to leave, just need to stay on top of your medication schedule. Why don’t you get changed?”

Elyse’s spirits lifted at the news. After changing into fresh clothes, she left the hospital with Jayden by her side.

Their path down the street came to an abrupt halt at a massive crowd. Elyse craned her neck to see ahead. “What’s causing all this commotion? The crowd is enormous.”

“It’s a demonstration,” Jayden explained with a weary sigh. “Yesterday’s turnout was nothing compared to this. Rebecca’s really struck a nerve with the public.”

“Seems we’ll have to find another route,” Elyse observed.

Chapter 1646:

“Not much choice there,” Jayden concurred. “The city’s been gridlocked for days now.”

They stood in silence, waiting for an opportunity to navigate through the chaos.

As they prepared to cross, Elyse peered through the car window, witnessing the protesters clashing with police at the frontline.

To her amazement, she spotted a group of young musicians in the crowd. Despite their youthful appearances, their eyes blazed with unwavering conviction.

“What are they thinking?” Elyse whispered, watching in disbelief as these young performers faced off against the armed officers.

“They’re not just protesters,” Jayden explained, his voice filled with admiration. “These young souls, inspired by your courage, have found their own symphony of resistance.”

Elyse whispered, bewildered, “But a violin... it’s hardly a weapon.”

“That’s precisely the point.” Jayden’s eyes softened. “They’re wielding melodies instead of malice. Remember when you stood atop those ruins? Your violin’s cry pierced the heavens and touched hearts worldwide.”

Lost in contemplation about her music’s far-reaching impact, Elyse’s thoughts scattered at the sight of a familiar face.

“Geraldine!” The name burst from her lips as she hastily lowered the window.

The young violinist spun around at the call, her instrument clutched close to her heart.

Upon spotting Elyse, she rushed over, concern etched across her features. “I heard about your hospitalization! Are you alright? I wanted to visit, but...”

“Don’t fret about me. I’m fine,” Elyse assured her with a gentle smile. “What brings you here?”

“My violin speaks what words cannot,” Geraldine replied, her grip tightening on her instrument.

“But the consequences...” Elyse began, worry lacing her voice.

Geraldine’s expression hardened with determination. “As a citizen of Virelia, I can’t stand idle while incompetence reigns. Whatever punishment awaits, my conscience demands I take this stand.”

Elyse’s eyes welled with tears. “I can’t bear the thought of anything happening to you.”

“My path is chosen,” Geraldine declared, unwavering. “Even if they throw me behind bars, I’ll have no regrets. This is my calling.”

Overwhelmed with emotion, Elyse could only grasp Geraldine’s hand tightly, as if trying to anchor her friend to safety.

Noticing Elyse’s distress, Geraldine’s features softened into a reassuring smile. “Things might not be as bad as they seem.”

“You’re more than a rival—you’re someone I deeply respect,” Elyse confessed. “I dream of competing against you again.”

“Our paths will cross again,” Geraldine promised warmly. Her smile brightened as she added, “Your performance that day was unforgettable. The Swan Cup competition against you? A great experience for me.”

Chapter 1647:

Elyse gripped Geraldine’s hand tightly, her heart heavy with unspoken words as their eyes met in silent understanding.

A voice called out, breaking their moment. Geraldine scanned the area briefly before saying, “I need to go; my friend needs me.”

With a knowing nod, Elyse watched her friend's retreating figure disappear into the crowd.

Noticing the concern etched on Elyse's face, Jayden asked gently, "Are you afraid she'll be arrested?"

"Yes," Elyse replied gravely. "Her actions are risky."

"But someone has to fight for what's right, just like you did that day," Jayden reassured, affectionately patting her head before rolling up the car window.

Elyse sank into her seat with a weary sigh, letting her eyes drift shut as the tension slowly left her body.

Back at the hotel, Chloe met them at the entrance.

Elyse's eyes immediately fixed on the bandage adorning Chloe's forehead. "How's your wound?" she asked, concern lacing her voice.

"I took a rock to the head and twisted my ankle," Chloe explained, "but nothing serious. Doctor says I just need rest."

Relief washed over Elyse's features. "Thank goodness you're alright."

"There's something else," Chloe whispered, leaning in closer. "A guest arrived while you were gone. He's waiting in the hotel lounge."

Elyse, halfway through removing her coat, froze. "Who would be looking for us at this hour?"

Chloe glanced furtively around before lowering her voice further. "He came with an entourage of bodyguards. Definitely not your average visitor. Must be someone of importance."

Confusion clouded Elyse's features as she processed this information.

Slipping her coat back on, she went to find Jayden.

Upon hearing the news, Jayden appeared equally perplexed, unable to imagine who might be seeking them out.

Together with Chloe, they made their way to the lounge, spotting the imposing presence of bodyguards stationed at the entrance from afar. Even before reaching them,

As they approached the door, Elyse could feel an aura of authority emanating from within. Who could command such presence? After a brief exchange with the guards, only Elyse and Jayden were permitted entry, leaving Chloe outside.

They stepped into the room without protest, finding a distinguished man with silver-streaked hair seated on the sofa, his eyes closed, wearing an immaculate suit.

Elyse exchanged a quick glance with Jayden before venturing carefully, “May I inquire as to who you are?”

The distinguished man opened his eyes and rose gracefully, bowing deeply to Elyse. “I am here to express my gratitude, Miss Lloyd, for stopping my daughter’s reckless behavior and saving my people.”

Chapter 1648:

Elyse’s breath caught in her throat. “You, you are...”

“My name is Benjamin Dyson, the King of Virelia and father to Esteban and Rebecca,” he stated, a strained smile playing at his lips.

“Why did you seek me out?” Elyse asked carefully.

“I wished to thank you personally. Without your intervention, my daughter would have caused far greater devastation.”

Stunned into silence, Elyse and Jayden sank onto the sofa as they absorbed his words.

“I had planned to visit you in the hospital,” Benjamin continued, “but upon learning of your discharge, I decided to wait here instead.”

“I understand,” Elyse said thoughtfully. “Though I wonder, is gratitude your only reason for this visit?”

Benjamin nodded, then seemed to catch her underlying concern. “Rest assured, I won’t ask anything of you. Rebecca will face the international court for her crimes. I won’t interfere with justice.”

“You truly won’t take any action?” Elyse pressed.

Benjamin caught the skepticism in her tone and sighed heavily. “I understand your doubt. Many find it hard to believe I would let my daughter face judgment.”

He hesitated, his shoulders heavy with the weight of his words. “But this time, I truly have no justification to act against my conscience. I’ve witnessed my people’s suffering firsthand, and their pain cannot be ignored. Though Rebecca is my daughter, she has torn apart countless families. Protecting her would be an injustice.”

Studying his weary features, Elyse understood the true purpose of his visit.

Here was a father grappling with impossible choices, seeking counsel from someone outside his circle of advisors.

Recognizing his need, she engaged him in genuine conversation, speaking not to a king but to a troubled parent.

Perhaps it had been years since anyone had addressed him so candidly, which explained why their discussion stretched long into the evening. By the time Benjamin took his leave, night had fallen over the city.

Elyse watched Benjamin leave, her heart a whirlwind of emotions. “This isn’t turning out the way I envisioned,” she muttered, her thoughts spinning.

Jayden, his voice tinged with thought, remarked, “When we decided to halt Rebecca’s plans, we unwittingly opened a Pandora’s box.”

Elyse paused, reflecting, before asking, “Benjamin mentioned that the events ahead won’t affect us and that we can leave whenever we want. So, when do we leave?”

Jayden, furrowing his brow, inquired, “Should we wait for Esteban?”

Elyse hesitated, then responded, “Waiting for him probably won’t change anything. He’s buried under the weight of government duties. Benjamin said the next successor isn’t clear yet, so the princes and princesses will have to compete all over again.”

Chapter 1649:

Jayden gave a slow nod. “Let’s stay for two more days. Chloe’s foot needs a bit more time to heal.”

Elyse agreed. “That works. I could use the extra two days of rest as well.”

While they waited, the protest marches finally came to an end. Benjamin had stepped in personally, facing the crowds with an open heart.

He acknowledged their anger and disillusionment, offering a sincere resolution. He promised not to shield Rebecca, and that promise was enough to calm the storm. With that, the protesters left in peace. Elyse couldn’t help but breathe a sigh of relief when she saw Geraldine’s bright smile. She had feared the worst—wondering if Geraldine might have been caught up in the protest and arrested.

On the night before their departure from Virelia, Esteban braved the raging storm to pay them a visit.

Elyse, barely awake, threw on a coat over her pajamas, rubbed her temples, and asked, “Why on earth are you here so late?”

Esteban, wiping his damp face with a handkerchief, grumbled, “What else could I do? Between Rebecca’s mess, my father’s abdication plans, and a thousand national matters to handle, I had to put out fires everywhere before I could get here.”

Elyse, still half-asleep, yawned and asked, “So, is everything finally under control?”

Esteban nodded with a weary smile. “Sort of. At least I can breathe a little now. Tomorrow, I don’t have to wake up at five in the morning. Six will do.”

Elyse’s eyebrows raised. That was his idea of a break?

Esteban grinned and continued, “You have no idea. But seriously, I wanted to thank you. You’ve helped me more than words can say. The country and its people are grateful, too.”

Elyse blinked in surprise and responded, “You don’t need to be so formal.”

“You’re the one being too casual,” Esteban teased, his face turning mock-serious. He then reached into the black bag beside him and pulled out a neatly wrapped gift.

Elyse took the package, curiosity piqued. “What’s this?”

Esteban shrugged. “A small token. You can keep it as a decoration in your home.”

Elyse nodded, and they continued chatting.

During their conversation, Elyse suddenly recalled a piece of news and asked, “I heard something about a relief organization supposedly started by my father. Did you set that up?”

Esteban furrowed his brow in confusion. “I did plan a piece of news to clear your father’s name, but that was meant to be released when Rebecca went to the international court. I don’t know anything about this organization.”

Elyse’s expression faltered, and she turned to Jayden. “Did you find anything out?”

Jayden, looking reluctant, replied, “My team dug into it, but the people in the organization were all tight-lipped. We hit a dead end.”

Esteban, scratching his chin thoughtfully, asked, "It's that mysterious? I'll have my team investigate, too."

Chapter 1650:

Elyse's eyes brightened. "Thank you. That's very kind of you."

Jayden crossed his arms, determined not to be outdone. "I'll get to the bottom of it before he does."

Esteban stood up, signaling it was time to go. "We've talked long enough. I should be on my way."

Before stepping out, he smiled and added, "By the way, I spoke to Louise a few days ago. She was surprised that she had sent fighter jets."

Jayden raised an eyebrow. "She didn't mind taking the money, though. She was all smiles when she got it."

Esteban chuckled. "Well, I'm glad you didn't pay her for bombs. If you had, she probably would have taken those too."

Jayden grinned. "That would have been far too expensive. I won't be paying her for anything else, that's for sure."

Esteban let out a hearty laugh, picturing Rebecca, puzzled, trying to make sense of why Manfek had deployed fighter jets.

"And when you two tie the knot, don't forget to invite me. I'll be there to celebrate," Esteban said with a wink.

Elyse laughed, teasing, "You want me to send you an invitation? How about three months in advance?"

Esteban's eyes widened in surprise. "That would be perfect. I was just about to ask for that!"

Elyse smirked. “You’re not the only one who’s requested that.”

Frustration flickered across Elyse’s face as she shook her head. “You should leave now.”

Esteban’s lips curved into a knowing smirk. “Don’t forget to invite me—and make sure the invitation arrives three months ahead!”

“Just leave!” Elyse’s voice cracked with overwhelming emotion.

With a playful smile dancing on his lips, Esteban cast one meaningful glance at Jayden before departing.

Something about that exchange set off warning bells in Elyse’s mind. She turned to Jayden, suspicion coloring her voice. “Why did he look at you that way? Are you keeping something from me?”

Jayden merely tilted his head, meeting her gaze before letting out a soft laugh and striding into the hotel.

“What’s so amusing?” Elyse followed on his heels, irritation evident in every step.

In one fluid motion, Jayden wrapped his arms around her, sweeping her off her feet and carrying her into the hotel. With gentle precision, he deposited her onto the bed.

Unaware of the storm brewing, Elyse’s face grew serious. “Esteban mentioned you gave Louise a significant amount of money. How much did you actually give?”