

## Bound love 1701

Chapter 1701:

With a harsh laugh, Jayden suddenly lunged forward, slamming Shaun into the sofa and pressing his elbow against his throat. “Damn it, are you going to talk or should I arrange another hospital stay for you?”

Between ragged coughs, Shaun spat back, “You bastard, my lips are sealed.” His eyes blazed with newfound determination; he’d sworn his allegiance to Tracy.

“And what about Elyse? Hasn’t she been good to you?” Jayden’s words came through clenched teeth.

Shaun struggled against the pressure on his throat. “Sure, Elyse has been kind to me, but she’s not my girlfriend. Her kindness means nothing compared to Tracy!”

Jayden’s fingers twitched with the urge to throttle him.

The tense moment was broken by Brook’s entrance, documents in hand, ready to discuss a new project with Jayden.

Brook froze in the doorway as he caught sight of Jayden pinning someone to the sofa.

The stranger’s face remained obscured, but Brook couldn’t miss the telling flush across his cheeks.

Witnessing this compromising scene, Brook stopped, shocked.

Brook and Jayden locked eyes in a moment of excruciating silence before Brook cleared his throat. “My apologies. I’ll return when you’re... finished.”

Jayden’s eyes widened with dawning horror. “Finished with what? Wait, what exactly do you think is happening here?”

Brook, pointing at Jayden and the man below him, grinned and remarked, "This scene could easily be misunderstood by onlookers."

Jayden looked down, caught Shaun's eye, and his anger erupted. He swung a punch at Shaun, exclaiming, "This is all your fault!"

Shaun, visibly upset, rose quickly and retorted, "I promised silence, yet you pressed further. How is this my doing?"

Brook, lightly clearing his throat and eyeing Shaun with intrigue, asked, "Isn't this Mr. Kennedy? When did you two grow so close?"

Jayden responded sharply, "Close? Far from it. I barely tolerate him."

Shaun countered, "Wait until Tracy and I reconcile. Then we'll see what you think."

Jayden scoffed, "Reconcile? That's laughable. I'm just waiting for you to see the error of your ways." His frustration was palpable, and he chose not to say more.

He couldn't understand Shaun's blind trust in Tracy, firmly believing that she would never reunite with him. It seemed clear to him that she was manipulating Shaun, who accepted her words without question.

Shaun straightened his clothes and declared, "You all need to stay out of Tracy's business. I'll manage it myself."

Jayden, trying to compose himself with deep breaths, challenged, "You intend to handle her issues on your own? What if she wants to kill you? Will you handle that too?"

Shaun paused briefly, then responded softly, "Even if she wants me dead, it remains our concern. If she ever harms me, I'll bear it without complaint."

Chapter 1702:

Shocked by Shaun's stance, Jayden, with a look of disbelief, responded, "She's lost it. Don't get dragged down with her. You're not helping her by enabling her."

Shaun pushed past Jayden, saying firmly, “Keep out of my and Tracy’s affairs!”

He then stormed out, seething with anger.

Jayden was more incensed than Shaun. Now, he really wanted to stay out of Shaun’s business.

Brook, who had been observing from the doorway, commented with amusement, “It seems your efforts went unnoticed. Your good intentions have been completely overlooked.”

Looking up at a smirking Brook, Jayden said sharply, “If this isn’t related to the company, leave me out of it.”

Holding up some documents and smiling, Brook added, “I know you’re upset, but we need to discuss these business matters.”

Resigned, Jayden gestured to the chair. “Fine, come in.”

Brook, visibly satisfied by Jayden’s discomfort, found pleasure in the situation.

Meanwhile, Elyse and Chloe were busy.

After a hectic afternoon, they planned to grab a meal at a restaurant before the evening radio show.

Upon arriving at the mall, Chloe felt a sudden pain in her stomach and excused herself to the restroom.

While waiting, Elyse browsed the nearby stores.

As she passed a boutique, a familiar figure caught her eye—Hardy! Initially, Elyse intended to greet him, but her attention shifted when she saw Hardy heading directly toward someone else.

It was Tracy!

Elyse was taken aback. She nearly mistook her, but there was no denying the distinctive aura and presence—it was definitely Tracy.

“Tracy!” Elyse called out impulsively.

Engrossed in her phone, Tracy was startled by a voice she recognized.

She looked up to find Elyse’s eyes locked on hers from a distance.

In that instant, old memories flooded back.

Elyse’s eyes welled up as she called out again, “Tracy!”

Her voice echoed with hurt and deep concern.

Tracy’s complexion went pale. Without hesitating, she turned and hurried away.

“Tracy, stop! Are you avoiding me?” Elyse called out, stunned and hurt by Tracy’s abrupt departure.

She chased after Tracy, determined to confront her and demand explanations for her sudden disappearance and her recent return without any attempt to reconnect.

The more Elyse pondered the situation, the deeper her sorrow grew, tears clouding her vision and complicating her chase.

Chapter 1703:

Ahead, Tracy’s pace quickened as she heard Elyse’s calls. Each shout of her name tightened her chest with growing distress.

Tracy’s heart pounded violently in her chest, each beat a thunderous roar in her ears.

Guilt gnawed at her insides, a constant, relentless ache that twisted in her gut. The thought of facing Elyse made a wave of dread crash over her.

Her friend couldn't know what she'd done.

But there was no turning back now. She had to see her revenge through, or the searing anger and pain would consume her whole.

Therefore, she couldn't let Elyse stop her.

As she glanced back, she saw Elyse's tear-streaked face, and a pang of remorse twisted deep inside her. For a brief, fleeting moment, she longed to reach out, to wipe away those tears. But she couldn't. She had to keep running, or everything she'd fought for would slip through her fingers like sand.

Tracy weaved through the crowded mall, her steps quick and frantic. Elyse struggled to keep up, dodging between shoppers, but within moments, Tracy mingled into the sea of people.

Her chest tightened. Tears blurred her vision, and in her desperation, she stumbled—crashing into someone. A sharp gasp escaped her lips as she hit the floor.

By the time she looked up, Tracy was gone.

Defeat settled over her like a heavy weight. There was no point in chasing anymore. Blinking back tears, she pushed herself up, murmuring an apology to the stranger she had collided with.

"Elyse?" A familiar voice, laced with concern, cut through the haze of emotion. "What's wrong? Why are you crying like this?" The moment Victor saw her tear-streaked face, something fluttered in his chest—something he quickly forced down.

Startled by the familiar face cutting through her blur of tears, Elyse wiped her eyes and mumbled, "I'm so sorry, Victor. That was my fault. Are you okay?"

Victor's gaze landed on her scraped knee. "I'm fine. You, on the other hand, just hit the floor pretty hard."

She shook her head, brushing off his concern. Exhaustion and something heavier—something raw—shadowed her face. “It’s nothing. Doesn’t even hurt.”

But it was obvious. The sting of the fall wasn’t the only thing weighing her down. Victor exchanged a quick look with his friend, both of them silently asking the same question.

His friend spoke first, his voice careful. “Did you and your boyfriend have a fight? You can talk to us, you know. We want to help.”

Victor nodded, something unreadable flickering across his face—hope, maybe. If things were bad between Elyse and Jayden, maybe...

Elyse lifted her gaze, her expression flat. “No, it’s something else.” The flicker of hope in Victor’s eyes dimmed, but he quickly masked it. “At least let’s clean that scrape,” he said. “You should get it checked at the hospital.”

She glanced down at her knee, barely interested. “It’s fine. I’ll call my assistant. She can take me.”

Chapter 1704:

Frustration churned in Victor’s chest. He wanted to be the one helping her, but she was shutting him out.

A heavy pause lingered between them before he exhaled, his voice tight. “Alright then.”

Elyse’s hands flew to her pockets, patting them frantically. Her face paled. “My phone—I lost my phone!”

Victor’s posture stiffened. “Did you drop it while you were running?”

She swallowed hard and gave a miserable nod. “I think so.”

As if the night hadn't already unraveled enough, this was just one more thing pulling her deeper into the spiral.

Victor didn't hesitate. Seeing the panic creeping in, he pulled out his own phone. "Don't worry," he said, already dialing. "My family owns this mall—I'll have them check the security footage and find it."

Elyse hesitated, then exhaled. "Thank you," she murmured, her voice small.

Something in Victor's chest softened.

Fifteen minutes later, the phone was back in Elyse's hands.

It had slipped from her pocket while she was chasing Tracy, only for a man to scoop it up and pocket it instead of turning it in. Security caught up with the man just as he was about to slip into the parking garage.

Elyse let out a shaky breath, clutching her phone like it was a lifeline. "Victor, I don't even know how to thank you," she murmured.

He grinned and reached out, ruffling her hair with easy affection. "Just don't freak out next time. Stay calm, and you'll be fine."

Elyse felt warmth creep up her cheeks. "Thanks again. I really appreciate it."

"Anytime," he said easily. "If anything like this ever happens again, just call me. I'll be there."

Her heart did an annoying little flip. She murmured another thank you before turning to leave.

Victor watched her go, something unreadable flickering in his eyes. His friend smirked, nudging him. "Don't tell me you're falling for her, man."

Victor scoffed—maybe a little too fast. "Please. I was just helping a friend."

Elyse grabbed her phone and quickly typed out a message to Chloe.

Before she could even put it down, her phone buzzed.

Chloe's voice came through, trembling. "Where did you go? I just ran to the bathroom, and when I came back, you were gone! I tried calling, but you hung up. You really scared me."

"I'll be back soon," Elyse said, keeping her voice steady. "I'll explain everything when I see you."

When they finally met up, Elyse told Chloe everything.

Chloe's eyes widened as she dropped to check Elyse's knee. "It's all scraped up! That must hurt like hell!"

"I didn't feel the pain when I fell," Elyse explained. "But once I started looking for my phone, that's when it hit me."

Chapter 1705:

Chloe let out a long breath. "We need to get you to the hospital. Those wounds aren't something you can ignore." They headed straight for the hospital.

After Elyse's injuries were treated, they planned to crash in the TV station's lounge and order takeout for dinner.

Just as Elyse settled into the lounge, her phone buzzed. It was Jayden. His voice sounded tired. "Where are you? When are you done with work? I need to talk to you."

Elyse exhaled slowly. "Funny, I've got something to tell you too."

"I need to talk to you about Tracy," Jayden said.

Elyse froze, her voice a little too sharp. "I was just about to say the same thing!"



There was a brief silence before Jayden spoke again. “Where are you? I’ll come meet you.”

Elyse gave him the address, then hung up. She turned to Chloe, adding, “Order an extra meal. Jayden’s coming too.”

Chloe’s face tightened at the mention of Jayden.

She felt the weight of Elyse’s injury on her shoulders, worrying Jayden would blame her for it.

Fidgeting in her seat, Chloe couldn’t settle. She kept playing with her phone but couldn’t bring herself to enjoy it.

Half an hour later, Jayden arrived. Without preamble, he motioned for Chloe to leave, saying he needed a private word with Elyse.

Chloe hesitated at the door, balancing her meal in one hand and a stool in the other.

Elyse narrowed her eyes, wondering what was so important that it had to be a private conversation.

She shot Jayden a glare. Did he really have to be that rude about it? With a sigh, she opened the meal box and pushed it toward him. Her expression remained unreadable as she said, “I saw Tracy at the mall.”

Jayden picked up the fork, his tone casual. “Let me guess—Tracy didn’t want to see you.”

Elyse gave a small nod, but her eyes shimmered with hurt. “I called her name. She heard me. We even made eye contact.” Her voice wavered. “But the next second, she turned and ran. I kept calling, tried to catch up, but she wouldn’t even look back.”

Jayden sighed. “She won’t, Elyse. Right now, you’re the last person she wants to see. That’s why she ran.”

Her chest tightened. “But why? I’m her best friend. Does that mean nothing to her?” Tears slipped down her cheeks, splattering onto the table.

She shoved a huge bite of food into her mouth, chewing furiously as if it could drown out the ache in her chest. Eyes locked on a random spot, she willed herself not to break down.

Jayden sighed and grabbed a tissue, gently dabbing away her tears. “Shaun met with Tracy today,” he said. “I don’t know what they talked about, but he’s completely turned against us. He’s siding with her now, saying that once she gets her revenge, she’ll consider getting back together with him.”

Chapter 1706:

Elyse let out a sharp scoff. “Is he serious? How can he actually believe that?”

Jayden nodded. “Oh, he does. Completely. He’s already daydreaming about their future together—like she didn’t just spend months wanting him dead.”

Elyse blinked, stunned. “What a total idiot. She literally tried to kill him. What makes him think she’d suddenly want a fresh start?”

Jayden let out a heavy sigh. “Shaun’s completely deluding himself. He wants Tracy back so badly that even if she’s lying to him, he’ll believe every word without question.” He shook his head. “Yeah, looking at it that way... he really is a fool.”

Elyse let out a small chuckle. “Exactly. He took her for granted when they were together, and now that she’s gone, he suddenly regrets everything. Even if it’s all a lie, he’ll believe it. I just don’t get him.”

Elyse wrapped up her conversation with Jayden just as it was time to start work.

Grabbing her violin, she opened the door—only to find Chloe sitting on the floor, poking at her meal with a dejected look. Guilt flickered through Elyse’s chest. She hesitated, then offered a small, apologetic smile. “You can come in now. We’re done talking.”

Chloe glanced up, then gave a quiet nod before picking up her stool and stepping inside.

Meanwhile, Elyse headed to the broadcasting room to record a program. Across town, Tracy lay on her bed, her expression tight with discomfort.

A dull ache spread through her belly, making her uneasy. Had all that running earlier harmed the baby?

She lay still, anxiety tightening in her chest. This child hadn't come easily—what if she lost it?

If that happened, who knew how long it would take to conceive again? And if the truth came out, she wasn't ready for that.

Just as her thoughts spiraled, the sound of the front door opening snapped her back to the present. Lowell was home.

He stepped into the room, his eyes immediately landing on her. Concern flickered across his face as he shut the door behind him. "You're in bed early. Are you feeling okay?"

"It's nothing. I went hiking earlier and wore myself out. I just need some rest," Tracy said, forcing a small smile.

Lowell didn't press further. As he unbuttoned his shirt, he sighed. "Work's been insane lately. I haven't had much time for you. Once things settle down, I'll take you out."

Tracy's lips curled into a sweet smile. "I'll be waiting."

Her soft tone made something in his heart warm. He walked over, leaned down, and pressed a gentle kiss to her forehead.

"I'll take a quick shower," he murmured. "Then I'll be right here with you."

"Okay," she whispered softly. He ruffled her hair affectionately before heading to the bathroom, looking pleased with himself.

As soon as the door clicked shut, Tracy exhaled deeply, tension leaving her body.

She reached under the pillow for her phone, quickly typing a message to the first contact on her list. Without checking the name, she explained that she might have harmed the baby and was feeling unwell, asking for help.

Chapter 1707:

The reply came swiftly—an offer to take her to the hospital.

Tracy's blood boiled. Her fingers flew over the screen as she shot back a sharp response, scolding the person for suggesting a hospital visit when Lowell was in her bathroom. The person didn't respond right away.

Tracy sat there for a moment, her finger hovering over her phone, until a message finally came through—an offer to buy medicine from the hospital if she provided more details.

Tracy considered it for a moment before deciding it was a reasonable solution. She quickly typed out an explanation about her meeting with Elyse and the running incident.

After a brief pause, the reply came in the form of a voice message. Tracy glanced toward the bathroom door, then pressed play, her heart skipping a beat as she heard the voice on the other end.

"I understand. I'll get the medicine. Once Lowell is asleep, you can come downstairs to get it," Shaun's voice said clearly, sending a chill through her.

Tracy's eyes shot open in shock. Her heart raced as she realized she'd messaged Shaun by mistake. The panic hit her like a wave, and her mind cleared instantly.

Quickly, she scrambled to send a voice message. "I didn't mean to send that to you. Don't come!"

Shaun's reply was short and final. "I'll be there."

Frustration surged through Tracy. She fired off another message, but no reply came. It seemed Shaun was determined to go through with it, regardless of her wishes.

Unable to stop herself, Tracy messaged Hardy, explaining the entire situation.

After hearing her out, Hardy's voice came through the speaker. "Since Shaun's already getting the medicine, I won't come. Too many people might draw attention."

Tracy couldn't argue with Hardy's reasoning, but the words left a bitter taste in her mouth. It felt like she was being left to handle everything on her own. Men were always so unreliable!

As she stewed in frustration, the sound of running water stopped. Lowell had finished his shower and was about to come out.

Tracy quickly shoved her phone under the pillow and lay back down, her heart pounding in her chest.

Lowell emerged from the bathroom, blissfully unaware of her inner turmoil. He climbed into bed beside her, settling in as if nothing were wrong.

Tracy kept her eyes on the ceiling, counting the seconds, waiting for him to fall asleep.

But before that could happen, her phone buzzed again. Another message from Shaun.

She carefully checked her phone without making a sound. Shaun had already made it to the hospital and would have the medicine soon. A heavy knot formed in her chest. How could he move so fast? Was he always near the hospital, just waiting for her message?

"Why aren't you asleep yet?" Lowell's voice pulled her back to the present. He was barely awake, his words slurred with exhaustion. Tracy's heart skipped a beat, but she quickly regained her composure. "I just checked my phone. It buzzed, but it was just an ad," she murmured, her voice steady.

Chapter 1708:

Lowell gave a soft grunt, rolling over to continue sleeping.

Tracy's breath caught in relief. He hadn't suspected anything. Once she was sure he was asleep, she quietly typed a message to Shaun, asking him to delay his arrival since Lowell wasn't out cold yet.

Shaun's reply came almost instantly, "Are you sharing a bed with him?"

Tracy stared at the message, momentarily taken aback. She quickly typed back, "It's natural for couples to share a bed." Shaun didn't respond.

He was probably hurt, she thought. But honestly, she didn't care anymore.

Her focus had shifted entirely. She no longer thought about Shaun's feelings—her own were all that mattered now.

The dull ache in her abdomen reminded her of the stakes. She didn't care who brought the medicine; she just needed it.

An hour later, Lowell's breathing had deepened into a steady rhythm, signaling that he was finally asleep.

Tracy had watched him carefully during that time, making sure he was in a deep slumber.

She draped a shawl over her shoulders, ignoring the sharp pain in her abdomen, and quietly padded barefoot out of the bedroom.

Downstairs, she opened the front door, and near the fence stood Shaun, holding a box of medicine. His face was etched with worry, the cold wind brushing against him as he waited.

Their eyes met for a few moments before Tracy stepped outside and gently opened the gate of the yard.

The moment it creaked open, Shaun couldn't hold back anymore—his concern poured out as he reached for her, eager to pull her into an embrace.

Tracy, feeling the exhaustion settle in her bones, barely managed to ask, "The medicine?"

Shaun handed her the medicine with a steady hand. "Here. There's a note about the doctor's instructions. Make sure you read it before taking the meds."

Tracy nodded, her voice barely above a whisper. “Okay. Thank you. You should go now.”

But Shaun’s expression shifted, and he didn’t let go of her.

Tracy frowned, confused. “What are you doing?”

Shaun’s gaze softened, his words filled with urgency. “Come with me. Lowell won’t marry you, and if you stay with him, you won’t be able to keep the child. Come with me—no matter what, I’ll accept your child! I’ll raise them as my own.”

Tracy felt a surge of frustration, her patience snapping. “Are you crazy?”

Shaun’s voice dropped, filled with agitation. “Yes, I am crazy! That’s why I want to help you raise Lowell’s child! Tracy, ever since you fell off that cliff, I’ve been living with nothing but pain and regret!” He paused for a moment, collecting his thoughts, before continuing, “I’ve been with you for so long, and I’ve done so many things that hurt you, but my biggest regret... my biggest regret is ruining our wedding. We were so close. We were so close to being a married couple. A few days ago, Jayden teased me, saying that if we had gotten married, we’d already have a child by now.”

Chapter 1709:

Tracy stayed silent, her face unreadable.

Shaun’s voice cracked with desperation. “Please, leave with me. If you want to bring down the Ruiz family, I can help. You don’t have to do it yourself. I can’t watch you do this. I can’t take it.”

With that, he buried his head in Tracy’s neck, his body trembling with quiet sobs.

Tracy stared blankly at the flowerbed by the door. After a long pause, she spoke, her voice firm. “I won’t rest until I’ve dismantled everything the Ruiz family stands for.”

Shaun stood there, feeling a surge of frustration and sorrow.

If only he had realized sooner, if only he had seen the signs, Tracy wouldn't have been pushed to such extremes, doing things that hurt herself in the process.

It was all his fault.

He couldn't abandon her now—not after everything. No matter what mistakes she made or the mess she created, he would stand by her.

He owed her that much.

Tracy let him cry for a while, her silence a quiet comfort. Then, after a deep breath, she patted his shoulder and said softly, "Stop crying. I need to go back and take my medicine."

Shaun lifted his head, wiping his face, his eyes red from the tears. He nodded, his voice steady but tinged with concern. "Okay. If you need anything, just message me. I'll help you."

Tracy gave him a brief nod. "Got it. You should go now."

With the medicine in hand, she turned and walked away, closing the door softly behind her. She made her way to the kitchen, scanned the doctor's instructions, and took the medication as directed.

As she held a glass of water in her hand, her eyes drifted to the window. Her thoughts were a quiet storm, but her resolve was ironclad. Things had come this far, and there was no turning back now.

Tracy's hand moved to her abdomen, and a faint, mysterious smile curled on her lips. "Almost three months. I'll give you the prenatal check-up report as a surprise, Lowell. Don't disappoint me."

After taking the medicine and hiding the rest away, she returned to the bedroom, her mind already set on what would come next.

Lowell, sensing movement beside him, groggily mumbled, "Did you go out?"

Tracy's voice was soft as she replied, "I just went downstairs to get some water. I forgot to leave some on the nightstand."



Lowell nodded, his voice still drowsy. "I'll make sure to leave a glass of water for you tomorrow night, so you don't have to get up."

Tracy smiled faintly. "Thank you, darling."

Lowell pulled her closer, pressing a gentle kiss to her cheek. "Good night."

Tracy lay still in his arms, her face unreadable, as she wondered what his reaction would be when he learned the truth. How would he feel, knowing how much he loved her? A thrill ran through her at the thought.

A week after his business trip, Lowell couldn't resist calling Tracy the moment his plane touched down.

Chapter 1710:

The thrill of closing another major deal coursed through him, and he longed to share his success over dinner that evening.

Though Tracy declined his invitation, she casually mentioned preparing a surprise, catching him off guard.

"Does this mean I get to see you?" Lowell asked, his voice tinged with sudden hope.

"Yes, it does. You've worked hard during this time, even playing along with my little tricks," Tracy replied.

"Isn't this just a part of our fun? I really enjoy it, darling." Lowell's excitement bubbled through his words.

"The surprise is almost here, just in the next couple of days. Look forward to it!" Tracy's voice held a promise before she hung up the phone.

Lowell returned to the office with a spring in his step.

Though dinner with Tracy wasn't in the cards, just knowing he'd see his girlfriend's face soon filled him with warmth.

His joy evaporated the instant he pushed open his office door. There sat Dolores in his chair, spinning around with an unsettling smile that set his teeth on edge.

"Why are you in my office? Get out of my chair," Lowell demanded, his expression darkening.

Dolores remained planted in the seat, her smile unwavering. "Lowell, you seem very happy. Did you just finish a call with your girlfriend? What made you so happy? Care to share with me?"

"It's none of your business. Now get out of my chair," Lowell's patience wore thin.

Dolores tugged one of her ears in mock innocence, pretending not to hear. "Didn't you tell me to figure out a way to get close to Shaun? I have an idea. I've got a friend who tracked Shaun's recent whereabouts. I can drug him with little effort."

"Since you've got everything planned, why don't you just go ahead? Why tell me instead?" Lowell's words dripped with contempt.

"I have indeed arranged everything, but I need you to do me a favor," Dolores revealed, her voice honeyed with ulterior motives.

Lowell raised an eyebrow, suspicion crossing his features. "What do you want me to do?"

"Help me find a few paparazzi. I want them to be at the hotel early in the morning to capture the most intimate moments," Dolores said with a sly smile.

Lowell chuckled darkly. "You want them to catch undeniable evidence of you two in bed, right?"

"You're very smart," Dolores purred, offering her praise.

Rising from his desk, Lowell strode over to Dolores, pulled her unceremoniously from his chair, and reclaimed his seat. His voice dripped with irritation as he spoke. "Don't bother me with this kind of thing. I don't want to get involved in your affairs!"

Dolores's perfectly curated expression crumpled into a frown. "Aren't you my brother? You used to love helping me. Why won't you help me now?"

"Because I was such a fool before, alright?" Lowell's fist crashed against the desk, his patience finally snapping. "Please, handle your own matters. Don't always expect others to help you. Don't you think that's childish?"