

Bound love 291

Chapter 291:

Elyse expressed surprise at Rebekah confessing her love. “Did Freddy accept her?”

Freddy’s response carried a mix of emotions, his intentions unclear. He didn’t outright reject Rebekah. Instead, he mentioned needing time to consider, which pleased her.

Perplexed, Darren inquired, “Didn’t he harbor dislike toward her? Why didn’t he reject her?”

Elyse was left speechless, the revelation too startling for an immediate response. After deliberation, she cautiously suggested, “Perhaps Freddy sought to spare Rebekah public embarrassment. He may have wished to show her some respect, especially in a public setting.”

Darren remained unconvinced. Having spent ample time gaming with Freddy, he understood Freddy to be resolute and decisive. To Darren, Freddy’s actions hinted at ulterior motives, though he refrained from speculating further.

“You can reach out to Freddy for clarification. We all inquired earlier this afternoon, yet he remained tight-lipped,” Darren’s mischievous notion sparked.

Elyse’s astonishment was palpable. “He didn’t tell you anything when you asked him. Do you suppose he’d divulge anything if I inquired?”

Darren’s voice dropped, his grin sly. “Perhaps he’d open up to you. Remember when he harbored feelings for you?”

Elyse felt deeply embarrassed. It seemed like ages ago. How could Darren still recall it? Furthermore, after marrying Jayden, she drew a clear boundary with Freddy, regarding him solely as a friend. Now Darren had dredged it up, amplifying her discomfort. Thankfully, Jayden wasn’t present. If he overheard, she dreaded the repercussions.

“Understood. I’ll give him a call and seek clarification,” she guiltily ended the call.

She discovered Freddy's contact. After pausing, she opted to dial. Curiosity about his lack of rejection towards Rebekah lingered. Recalling Freddy's animosity towards Rebekah, his sudden compliance puzzled her. A sense of unease persisted.

Upon connection, Elyse greeted warmly, "Hey, Freddy, what occupies your time?"

A sneer tinged with mockery emanated from the receiver. It was a woman's voice. The voice sounded familiar to Elyse. She asked uncertainly, "Rebekah? Is it you?"

"Don't be so audacious, Elyse. As a married woman, how dare you dial Freddy at midnight? You're despicable, still pining for him post-marriage. Don't you feel repulsed?" Rebekah spoke rapidly, her biting words resounding through the air.

Elyse massaged her ears, her tone impatient. "Can you speak more gently? Also, I called Freddy for a reason. Why did you answer his phone?"

In response, Rebekah's demeanor softened, her tone becoming conciliatory. "It's customary for me to answer his phone. We're in a relationship now. Don't you want to know what he's doing? He's currently showering. Does that satisfy your inquiry?"

Elyse was taken aback, remaining silent for a prolonged moment before finally speaking. "Please return the phone to Freddy."

Rebekah, visibly irritated, retorted, "I'm being truthful. Whether you believe it or not, he's now my boyfriend. Stop calling him. Don't you realize how low this makes you?"

With a conflicted expression, Elyse pondered before asserting, "Then let Freddy speak for himself and confirm your relationship."

Rebekah, momentarily flustered, swiftly regained composure and asserted with arrogance, "As I mentioned, he's currently showering, making it inconvenient to answer. Did you have a message for him? I'll pass it along."

What Elyse wanted to say couldn't be passed on by Rebekah. Rubbing her stiff face, Elyse uttered, "Nothing serious. I won't intrude on your time together."

Aware that Elyse assumed her relationship with Freddy, Rebekah felt at ease. Upon hearing the bathroom faucet cease, she swiftly ended the call and erased the call log.

Emerging from the shower, Freddy dried his hair and queried, “Who was on the phone earlier?”

Rebekah feigned civility, remarking, “It was a fraudulent call. I reprimanded the deceiver and terminated the call.”

Chapter 292:

Freddy was a striking figure who attracted the attention of numerous admirers during his college years, yet he remained single, rebuffing all advances. Rebekah couldn’t recall exactly when she started fancying Freddy, but she knew she had pursued him persistently, desiring no one else but him. Unabashedly displaying her admiration, Rebekah gazed at Freddy with affection, declaring, “You have undeniable charm, rivaling any man.”

Freddy, feeling uncomfortable in only a bathrobe, replied, “Had you not drunkenly vomited on me, would I even be here at this hotel showering?” With a sheepish smile, Rebekah concealed her ulterior motive for the incident.

Maintaining a cold demeanor, Freddy walked past Rebekah, intending to put on his pants first. However, she stood and hugged his waist, causing him to tense up.

Despite his efforts, Freddy couldn’t push Rebekah away. “Are you crazy? Let go of me!” he exclaimed.

Rebekah held onto his waist firmly and asserted, “I won’t release you. You know how much I love you. I confessed my feelings earlier today. Have you made a decision? Do you agree to be my boyfriend?”

Freddy clenched his teeth and firmly stated, “I haven’t made a decision. Let go of me.” With a sudden surge of strength, he managed to push Rebekah away, causing her to fall to the floor.

As Rebekah sat on the floor, her eyes filled with heartbreak, she cried out, “You have feelings for Elyse, don’t you? Even after she got married, you never considered giving up on her.”

Freddy remained silent, his gaze cold as he stared at Rebekah. Deep down, he knew he did have feelings for Elyse. Learning of her marriage had left him in a state of shock. For days, he had found himself moving through life like a mere shell, devoid of vitality. It wasn't until he witnessed Elyse back home with Jayden that the reality of her marriage truly sank in.

Surprisingly, Freddy didn't harbor animosity towards Jayden for stealing Elyse away. Instead, he directed his anger inward, blaming his own hesitations and fears. Reflecting on missed opportunities to confess his love, Freddy's lips curled into a bitter smile.

Despite their long acquaintance, Elyse remained unaware of his feelings. Breaking free from his thoughts, Freddy turned his attention to Rebekah. Observing her sorrowful expression, he forced a smile and said, "She's married. It's impossible for us to be together."

However, Rebekah sought more than mere words of acknowledgment. She yearned for assurance that Freddy had let go of his feelings for Elyse and that he could accept her wholeheartedly.

Refusing to relent, Rebekah rose to her feet, her voice filled with determination and urgency. "I'm not like Elyse. My love is reserved only for you. Why can't you choose me? What's holding you back?"

Freddy chuckled. "You love me? How can you prove that you're truly committed to being with me?"

Anxious to convince him, Rebekah swiftly retrieved her phone, displaying the substantial balance in her bank account. "Look, I have hundreds of thousands of dollars. With this, we can build a happy life together."

Upon seeing the sizable sum, a flicker of surprise crossed Freddy's features. Where had Rebekah acquired such wealth? When Rebekah had confessed her love to him earlier that day, she had gone as far as purchasing a watch worth over a hundred thousand dollars as a gift for him. He recalled her modest family background, leaving him puzzled.

Lost in thought, Freddy couldn't shake off the mystery surrounding her sudden affluence. Misinterpreting his silence as hesitation, Rebekah believed her offer was swaying him. Encouraged, she approached him, pressing her body against his and embracing him.

With a smile, she said, "As long as you're with me, I can buy you anything you desire." Noticing that Freddy didn't resist her advances, Rebekah boldly began to touch his belt.

Rebekah had invited Freddy to dinner at a hotel's restaurant with the intention of deceiving him into entering a hotel room. Knowing that Freddy was a neat freak, Rebekah intentionally drank excessively and vomited on him. She was certain that he would be unable to tolerate being covered in vomit, prompting him to get a hotel room to shower.

Rebekah didn't see her actions as wrong; she believed she was doing whatever it took to win Freddy's love. Blushing, Rebekah asked affectionately, "It's not that we're incompatible. Why can't we be together?"

Just as the bathrobe was about to slip off, Freddy grabbed her hand. Under his intimidating stare, she recoiled in fear, stepping back.

Chapter 293:

Freddy's voice turned icy as he confronted Rebekah. "Did you believe I wouldn't notice you did it intentionally?" His eyes were filled with undisguised disgust.

Rebekah shrank back, unsettled by Freddy's chilling demeanor. She managed a forced smile and replied, "I'm not sure what you're referring to. I don't understand."

"You don't understand?" Freddy scoffed. "You're such a phony. Do you genuinely like me?"

Struggling to maintain her composure, Rebekah feigned sincerity, saying, "Of course I like you."

Freddy's smile held no warmth as he retorted with disdain, "You don't like me. You're only interested in taking me away from Elyse. You're envious of everything about her."

Rebekah's smile faltered slightly. "What does Elyse have to do with this? Even without her, I'd still care for you."

Freddy remained unconvinced by Rebekah's words. Pushing her aside, he tied his bathrobe, grabbed his soiled coat, and headed into the bathroom. He'd rather wear soiled clothes than remain in Rebekah's presence.

Perplexed, Rebekah couldn't fathom how things had escalated so quickly. She mustered her best acting skills, conjuring a few tears to appear pitiful, hoping to garner Freddy's sympathy and persuade him to stay in the hotel and spend the night with her.

However, when Freddy emerged from the bathroom, he immediately opened the door and left without sparing a glance at Rebekah.

Frozen in shock for a moment, Rebekah eventually cried out into the empty room, but Freddy paid no heed to her pleas.

As Freddy walked out of the hotel, a frown creased his face, enduring the discomfort of his soiled clothes. Pulling out his phone, he dialed Elyse's number.

Elyse was surprised by his call. "Why are you calling me? Aren't you with Rebekah?"

Freddy was taken aback. "How did you find out I was with her?"

Scratching her head, Elyse replied, "I just called you, and she picked up and said you two were an item."

Reflecting on Rebekah's recent remarks, he couldn't help but smirk coldly and with a touch of irony. "It seemed Rebekah had quite the knack for spinning lies."

Collecting himself, he said, "Something doesn't add up with Rebekah. She's sitting on a hefty savings account, flaunting a limited edition purse, and even treating everyone to afternoon tea."

Elyse, who was in the midst of taking her medicine, was startled by Freddy's revelations. "Did Rebekah win a lottery?"

Furrowing his brow, Freddy replied, "I'm not sure. I had a feeling something was off, so I trailed her. I caught her conversing with Vicky in the garden, mentioning something about evidence, though I couldn't make out the specifics."

Elyse's eyes widened in shock. "Rebekah mentioned evidence?"

“That’s right. I agreed to have dinner with her today because I wanted to get some words from her, but...”

Freddy’s expression soured with disgust as he recalled the events that followed.

Recognizing that Freddy did it for her, Elyse was touched. “Thank you,” she said sincerely.

Freddy smiled bitterly. He knew his actions were driven by selfish motives, hoping Elyse would remember his kindness in the future. He felt like a coward, unable to openly declare his love for her. Instead, he resorted to covert gestures, plotting ways to make Elyse recognize his kindness.

“I suspect Rebekah knows something. She’s behaving oddly. I’ll keep investigating for your sake,” he continued.

After a moment of silence, Elyse sighed and replied, “Thank you. I’ll treat you and other guys to dinner once this is all resolved.”

Freddy nodded. “Alright. I’ll have some expensive dishes, please.”

Elyse chuckled. “Got it. Everything will be topnotch. I promise you’ll enjoy it.”

After ending the call, Jayden, who had been standing nearby, glared at her menacingly. “That was a man’s voice. You’ll be treating him to dinner?”

Elyse shot Jayden a sharp glare. “It’s Freddy. He mentioned that Rebekah might know something and could have evidence.”

Intrigued, Jayden urged her to divulge more details. After hearing her explanation, he rubbed his chin in thought. “The substantial amount in Rebekah’s account could be from Mabel.”

Elyse scoffed. “Impossible. Rebekah doesn’t even know Mabel. How could they be involved?”

Jayden shrugged casually. “If you doubt it, I can have someone check their transaction records. If Rebekah received money from Mabel, it suggests they not only know each other but also conducted some business.”

“How could you check their transaction records?” Elyse was aware of Jayden’s influence, but she found the idea dubious.

Seeing her skepticism, Jayden pinched her cheek and grinned. “Then I’ll have to prove it to you and earn your trust.”

Though she didn’t voice it, Elyse realized Jayden wasn’t bluffing. He indeed held significant power and influence.

Chapter 294:

As noon approached on the second day, Elyse left the hospital and returned home. Shortly after she settled in, Tobin arrived with a document.

“Sir, this is what you requested,” Tobin conveyed, offering the document to Jayden.

After reading it, Jayden remained silent and then passed it to Elyse. Perplexed, Elyse scrutinized the bank account records and discovered that Mabel had transferred six hundred thousand dollars to Rebekah.

Clutching the statement tightly, she incredulously queried, “Does Mabel truly know Rebekah? What arrangement have they made?” She didn’t notice that her voice was trembling.

After a pause, Jayden said, “It likely pertains to your sheet music. Otherwise, it’s challenging to justify why Mabel would give Rebekah six hundred thousand.”

Elyse was taken aback. Following a prolonged silence, she declared, “I’ll inform my friends and seek their assistance in probing Rebekah. It’s inconsequential if the truth eludes discovery; I possess the means to establish your innocence as well. Do not fret excessively,” Jayden reassured, enfolding her in his embrace, his gaze ablaze with longing.

Lost in thought, Elyse failed to notice Jayden’s arousal. Upon regaining awareness, she realized they were alone; Driscoll and Tobin had departed, and the room was sealed shut.

Pressing her hands against Jayden's chest, she avoided meeting his intense gaze. Biting her lip nervously, she murmured, "It's daytime now. It's not the time for intimacy." The last word filled her with extreme shyness, and she bowed her head, unable to meet the man's gaze directly.

Admiring her shyness, Jayden drew her nearer, clasping her in his embrace. Nipping her ear, he murmured in a hoarse, low tone, "I crave you. Do you not desire me?"

Quivering, Elyse blushed, replying, "No. Release me. I want to go back to my bedroom."

Halting her, Jayden proposed, "We could engage in the living room."

"No way," Elyse retorted firmly.

Jayden grabbed her breasts as a punishment for her refusal. As she moaned in his embrace, he warned, "If you decline once more, I'll escort you to the kitchen."

Pain seared through her, yet soon she found somewhat solace. She despised the sensation of being in his grasp.

Their mutual affection lacked completeness, yet their physical compatibility was undeniable. Observing her desire to flee, Jayden perceived it as another act of disobedience. Slowly, he directed his other hand toward her, softly murmuring to her ear, "Darling, you're wet. Don't attempt to flee."

Feeling embarrassed, Elyse retorted, "I'm not. Who's wet?"

With a quirked eyebrow, Jayden prodded the sensitive spot.

Gradually, her resistance waned, replaced by soft moans. "Not there. Please."

Perched upon Jayden's lap, she blushed, her attire askew, tears brimming in her eyes. Weakly, she leaned against him, casting him a pitiful glance.

Jayden bowed his head, the sight fueling his desire to possess her even more. One thought consumed his mind – he must take her now.

Licking his lips, Jayden uttered, “You want me, don’t you?”

Elyse’s mind blanked momentarily before comprehending Jayden’s intent. She responded with greater distress, “I do not.”

“Stop denying it,” Jayden insisted.

Elyse, bewildered, watched as Jayden removed her blouse and flung it onto the sofa before she could stop him. Shielding her breasts with her arms, she cast a cautious glance at Jayden, quivering beneath his gaze filled with desire.

He lightly tapped her buttock and murmured, “Quickly remove your trousers on your own.”

“I decline,” Elyse stated, her complexion pale.

Jayden casually touched her buttock and remarked, “Your trousers are wet now. If you refuse to remove them, I’ll tell others you peed on yourself.”

Glancing at her trousers, Elyse felt extreme embarrassment. “Do you have to do this to embarrass me?” Elyse questioned, her tone tinged with grievance.

Chapter 295:

Jayden tenderly caressed her head, affirming, “I’m just kidding. It’s a way of showing I like you.” Despite her reluctance, Elyse refrained from resisting Jayden. As she slowly rose to her feet, she hesitated to remove her trousers. Jayden playfully extended his finger, lightly brushing the fabric of her panties. “Have you pondered the consequences of keeping me waiting?”

Terrified, Elyse wordlessly complied, shedding her panties. Jayden regarded her with approval. As she stood fully unclothed, he enveloped her in his arms with satisfaction, inquiring provocatively, “Should I give it to you now?” With that, he trailed his touch along her thighs once more. This time, she was sitting at the side of his lap, clamping her legs when he approached. But Jayden disapproved, consistently parting her legs.

He continued enticing her, and she became aroused. She pleaded, “Stop it. Get inside me. I feel terrible.” Tenderly lifting her, Jayden found a suitable angle and entered. He relished teasing her

until she desired him and requested his help. She was always so obstinate that he resorted to cunning. Jayden nibbled her ear and murmured, "Remember, I'm the sole one capable of this."

In a haze, Elyse embraced Jayden's neck to steady herself.

She savored it while murmuring, "Only you can do this to me." Upon hearing her words, Jayden intensified his movements, while Elyse's moans grew louder and more pronounced. Their intimate encounter lasted for a span of two to three hours, culminating in Jayden halting his actions upon hearing Elyse's pleas for respite. With a voice strained from passion, Elyse seated herself upon Jayden's lap, awaiting his assistance in dressing her.

"Whom would you choose, me or your parents?" After dressing her, Jayden suddenly inquired.

Weary and leaning against Jayden, Elyse asked with curiosity, "What's the reason for this question?"

Bending down, Jayden retrieved her underwear and assisted her in putting it on. "It's nothing. I'm merely curious."

Wearing a pained expression, Elyse expressed, "If I were to declare my choice for you over my parents, would it cast me in a ruthless light? After all, my parents raised me."

Jayden gently kissed her forehead, saying, "I'm glad you've chosen as I have. Selecting my parents isn't something I'll do."

Thinking about her parents, Elyse experienced a hint of disappointment. Jayden asked, "I might have to reprimand your parents for this. You don't object, do you?"

"What sort of reprimand? Are you considering extreme measures?" inquired Elyse.

"Absolutely not. I merely desire them to endure a bit," Jayden responded with a meaningful smile. "Considering they're your parents, I won't be overly harsh."

Although uncertain about the nature of Jayden's intended punishment, Elyse instinctively trusted that he wouldn't inflict harm, thus refraining from further inquiry.

A day later, Glenda noticed Jayden's lack of retaliation and reassured herself that as Elyse's mother, she remained secure from any harm he might inflict. With this assurance, she found herself in high spirits, relishing her time at Mabel's residence. Suddenly, Mabel called. Glenda, sipping coffee, picked up and greeted, "Hello, sweetie. What's the matter?"

Anxious, Mabel exclaimed, "Mom, what do we do? Dad is trailing me. I'm almost home. He might discover our address."

Fear seized Glenda. She had been ignoring Lanny's calls and had even powered down her phone. If he were to locate her, her demise would be inevitable. "Stay calm. He's your father. He won't harm you," Glenda reassured Mabel and herself.

Mabel didn't fear Jayden, but she dreaded Lanny. She felt suffocated under her father's control. Upon arriving home, Mabel hurried inside, trailed by Lanny. Spotting her entering a villa, Lanny approached with curses.

"Let me in, Glenda. I'm aware you're in there. Let me in. Otherwise, I'll end you," Lanny bellowed furiously.

Chapter 296:

Lanny relentlessly pounded the iron fence, generating a loud sound. Hiding behind Glenda, Mabel cast an apprehensive glance outside the villa, querying, "Mom, it's the first instance I've witnessed Dad in such a rage. Will he resort to violence against me?"

Shielding Mabel, Glenda subdued her trepidation, tenderly patting Mabel's shoulder and assuring her, "Go back to your room for now. I shall converse with him."

Mabel furrowed her brow, proposing, "Maybe I should talk to him. After all, I initiated this predicament. If I elucidate, he may empathize with us and take our side."

Confident that Jayden posed no imminent threat, Mabel reasoned that even if he did, he wouldn't do anything to harm them for Elyse's sake. Her strategy now hinged on enlisting Elyse's surrender and support.

“No way. His anger renders him deaf to reason.” Following a loud retort, Glenda compelled herself to regain composure. She ushered Mabel back to her room and instructed, “Return to your room momentarily. I’ll talk to him.”

After chauffeuring Mabel to her room, Glenda urged herself to compose and proceeded to operate the iron fence using a button.

“Where the hell are you two? Glenda, show your face immediately or I’ll burn the house!” Lanny ran into the yard shouting.

Glenda emerged on the porch wearing a solemn expression. She feigned composure and uttered, “Stop shouting. Come in first.”

Upon spotting Glenda, Lanny’s fury ignited. He briskly approached her and administered a forceful slap, catching Glenda off guard and causing her to stumble. Before Glenda could recover from the slap, Lanny commenced assaulting her.

“You bitch! How dare you ignore my calls! I shall end you!” Lanny’s eyes glinted with fury. Groaning in agony, Glenda lay sprawled on the floor.

From her room, Mabel peeked and witnessed Glenda’s assault. “Stop it! You will kill Mom!” Mabel intervened urgently. “Stop harming Mom! She acted on my behalf.”

Mabel shielded her mother, embracing her tightly to prevent further attacks from Lanny. Lanny’s anger intensified upon seeing her.

“How dare you appear before me? This is entirely your fault!”

Mabel countered, “I was defending my career. You don’t understand me at all. You sought only to ruin our lives. Come with me. Apologize to Jayden and plead for our lives.” Lanny shouted furiously as he delivered a kick. Mabel, her hand covering her abdomen, uttered slowly, “That’s impossible. Elyse destroyed my career. I demand an apology from her.”

“You’re dragging us down!” Lanny, seething with rage, lifted his hand poised to strike Mabel.

Glenda rose to her feet, shielding Mabel. She couldn't bear the thought of her daughter enduring violence, so she spoke with sorrow, "Please don't harm her. She's your daughter. Doesn't it pain you to see her career destroyed?"

Mabel cried out, "Hit me! Just kill me! You don't care about me anyway. You won't defend me. You're not fit to be called a father."

With eyes ablaze and breaths ragged, Lanny hesitated, but the slap never landed. "You'll end up killing us all," Lanny refrained from striking her in the end.

Glenda embraced Mabel tightly, tears flowing freely as she inquired about any injuries. "You've spoiled her. Look at the mess she's made. You will get yourself killed because of her," Lanny exclaimed, unable to contain his frustration.

Mabel snorted defiantly before finding the courage to speak up, "Perhaps she'll fall victim to your violent ways."

"Bastard," Lanny clenched his teeth with hatred but ultimately refrained from giving a slap. After a brief silence, he let out a heavy sigh before speaking, "Have you considered how to address Jayden's anger?"

Mabel rolled her eyes, questioning, "Are you really that scared of him? Jayden is Elyse's husband now and I'm her sister. Even if I harmed her, what could Jayden do to me? Elyse wouldn't ask him to harm her own sister. I'll just have a chat with Elyse about it, and she will forgive us."

"You've certainly figured out your escape plan," remarked Lanny.

Mabel retorted, "Consider it. You're Elyse's father. What could Jayden really do to you?"

"Are you certain he will forgive us? What if he doesn't?"

Mabel said, "If he refuses to forgive us, then it's Elyse's fault. She should be able to convince Jayden to let us go."

Chapter 297:

Hearing Lanny's words, Glenda shivered but remained silent. He glanced at her with intensity and commanded, "Come into the room with me." Lanny walked into a room first. Mabel pulled Glenda aside, whispering anxiously, "Mom, once this is all over, you should divorce Dad."

Glenda's eyes widened in disbelief. "Divorce him?"

Mabel nodded firmly. "He's bad-tempered. He hit you hard earlier. I saw it. It broke my heart. You'd be better off without him."

Glenda wrung her hands, her voice tinged with worry. "But what about after? I don't have any money. How will I manage?"

Lanny's temper was notorious, and he often took his frustrations out on Glenda. Despite this, he compensated by giving her a substantial allowance each month. With the money, Glenda could afford to purchase expensive items daily, living a life of luxury. How could she maintain her lifestyle if she were to leave Lanny?

Mabel noticed the concern in her mother's eyes and said earnestly, "Mom, once I'm back in show business, I'll have plenty of opportunities for ads and endorsements. I can help you financially if you need it."

Glenda felt a flicker of temptation. Mabel's potential earnings suggested a more comfortable life without Lanny. Yet, a sudden thought halted her. Her expression softened into an awkward smile as she suggested, "Maybe we should drop the idea of divorce for now. Your father and I are managing fine, and there really isn't any pressing need for us to separate."

Mabel's brow furrowed in confusion. "Mom, what's holding you back? What are you and Dad so scared of about Jayden? Isn't Elyse your daughter and Jayden your son-in-law? Why does he intimidate you?"

Glenda found herself at a loss for words. Elyse was not actually their daughter, which complicated their relationship with Jayden. "It's not something for you to worry about. I need to discuss this with your father," she said, trying to soothe Mabel before she turned to enter the room.

Mabel exhaled a frustrated sigh as she watched her mother walk away. The gravity they placed on the situation was baffling to her. Inside, Lanny caught Glenda's nervous glance and mocked,

“Scared now, are you? Why weren’t you scared when you supported Mabel yesterday? You directly defied Jayden’s orders. Do you want to get us both killed?”

Glenda lacked confidence in her response. “We’re okay, aren’t we? Jayden didn’t do anything to us. Maybe Mabel’s right. It was just a threat. He won’t actually harm us.”

Lanny’s laughter was bitter. “Mabel is naive. Why are you acting just like her?” He pulled a pack of cigarettes from his pocket, took one out, and inhaled deeply. “If Jayden were really lenient, would he have demanded we wait outside his villa all night and apologize to Elyse? Is that how a son-in-law treats his parents-in-law?”

Glenda’s face tightened, the memory of Jayden’s menacing demeanor from the previous morning clouding her expression. She snapped back to reality and asked anxiously, “What do we do now? Is Jayden actually going to harm us?”

Lanny sneered. “So now you realize you’ve messed up, huh?”

Glenda’s fear was palpable. “What should we do?”

“You’ve openly offended him. If things escalate as Mabel suggested, we’ll have to rely on Elyse. She’s our daughter; she can’t just ignore this,” Lanny took another long drag of his cigarette and spoke calmly.

Glenda paused to consider and then voiced her concern. “What if she finds out one day that we’re not her real parents?”

“Don’t ever let her find out,” Lanny interjected sharply. A moment later, his expression changed as he remembered something and narrowed his eyes. “Have you checked if that old woman is at the nursing home?”

Glenda replied with a hint of embarrassment, “I went there, but I couldn’t figure out a way to sneak in.”

“Useless,” Lanny’s eyes flashed angrily. “We can’t let her spill our secret to anyone else.”

Glenda trembled and nodded in agreement, overwhelmed by fear. That secret had to remain hidden; it was known only to them.

Fresh from a shower, Elyse picked up her phone and dialed Darren's number. When Darren picked up, he inquired casually, "What's up?"

"It's about the surveillance footage. I want to go check it myself. Can I get in the monitoring room?" Elyse was currently suspended and unsure if she could access the monitoring room.

Darren responded with concern, "You can get in, but it might be better if you didn't. There are paparazzi outside the building waiting for you. If you show up, they might follow you."

Elyse felt frustrated. "Isn't there another way? I'm feeling anxious just sitting at home. I'd like to come over and help you guys."

After a moment's thought, Darren replied, "Okay, I'll work something out. Just let me know when you're about to arrive, and I'll come out to meet you."

Elyse nodded, her spirits lifted. "Alright, I'm leaving now."

Chapter 298:

"Didn't I wear you out? You still seem to have the energy to go out," Jayden's voice sounded.

Startled, Elyse spun around, but her legs gave out beneath her, leaving her seated on the floor. Meeting Jayden's intense gaze, she found herself at a loss for words. Awkwardly, she mumbled, "I just didn't want to wait. I wanted to investigate on my own."

Jayden's eyes briefly flickered down to her legs. Blushing, she struggled to stand, feeling like a child caught misbehaving, her gaze fixed on the floor. With a sigh, Jayden pulled her into his arms, allowing her to sit on his lap. His touch sent shivers down her spine, and in a hoarse whisper, she protested, "I'm going out. Please stop."

Pinching her chin, Jayden gritted his teeth, his voice tinged with frustration. "You still have the energy to go out after that steamy sex? Can't I satisfy you in bed?"

Elyse thought he was overthinking it. Pushing against him, she replied, “Stop being naughty. I didn’t imply you’re lacking. You... you’re very awesome in bed.”

Jayden lifted her chin and kissed her. “I’ll drive you there. I happen to have to go out too.”

Surprised, Elyse asked, “You’re going out? Where are you going?”

Raising his eyebrows, Jayden teased, “Now you care about me?”

“I’ve always been concerned about you. It’s you who leaves me out.”

Amused, Jayden kissed her on the cheek and said, “It’s not time yet. I’ll include you in the future. Don’t worry.”

She turned her head away, anger simmering within her. However, Jayden found her reaction adorable. Jayden moved towards the door, carrying Elyse in his arms. Observing their departure, Driscoll asked, “Are you two going out together?”

Elyse noticed the changed carpet in the living room, her head bowed in silence, avoiding thoughts of what had happened. Jayden replied, “We’re on the way. I won’t be back for dinner. Take care of her and ensure no one bothers her.”

Driscoll nodded respectfully. “Understood.”

Once outside, Jayden’s driver chauffeured Elyse to her destination. Stepping out of the car, she spotted Darren waiting nearby. Feeling apologetic, she murmured, “Sorry. Have you been waiting long?”

Darren shook his head. “No, I just got here.”

Then he turned his attention to Jayden. He knew that Elyse was married, and this was his first encounter with her husband. “Hi, Jayden Owen, right? Nice meeting you. We should all get together for dinner sometime,” Darren greeted Jayden amiably.

Jayden cast a few glances at Darren, devoid of any disdain in his eyes. For the first time, he didn't feel repulsed by a man near his wife and even replied to his greetings. After exchanging a few words with Elyse, Jayden drove away, and she waved goodbye to him.

Considering for a moment, Darren said, "Your husband seems easy to get along with. How about inviting him to hang out with us next time?"

Feeling conflicted, Elyse replied, "He's not easy to deal with. He's quite challenging."

Darren rubbed his chin thoughtfully. "Really? I didn't get that impression."

Elyse placed her hand on her hip. While Darren might not feel it, she certainly did. Dealing with Jayden was anything but easy. As she followed Darren into the car, she noticed a bag on the back seat. Curious, she asked, "What's in there?"

Darren explained, "You'll need to put everything on: a mask, a hat, sunglasses, and a black windbreaker. Wear them before we enter the parking garage."

"Is there paparazzi in the garage?" Elyse asked in shock.

Darren furrowed his brow. "Someone spotted paparazzi sneaking into the garage this morning. Though they were chased away, no one knows if there are new ones lurking."

Elyse immediately donned all the protective gear. As Darren pulled into the garage, he scanned the area cautiously, ensuring it was clear of any unwanted attention. Satisfied, he opened the door, and they exited the car swiftly. Heading straight for the elevator, they both breathed a sigh of relief upon entering.

"We're safe," Darren said.

Elyse nodded. "Yes, we are."

All the orchestra members were engaged in rehearsal, undeterred by Elyse's absence. Walking past the rehearsal room, Elyse stole a quick glance inside and caught sight of Grace and the other members. Without stopping, she turned and trailed after Darren toward the monitoring room. Spotting Elyse, Freddy blinked incredulously, unable to believe what he was seeing.

Chapter 299:

Did Elyse just pass by? Freddy and the other orchestra members caught sight of her. Isn't she supposed to be suspended? Why is she back? Was she allowed to return?

As the break commenced, Elyse's unexpected appearance sparked chatter among the crowd. The events from the previous day were fresh in everyone's minds, fueling their curiosity. While others engaged in speculation, Freddy pondered whether to approach Elyse. Just then, Rebekah walked out of the rehearsal room.

As Freddy debated his next move, snippets of conversation floated around him. "Rebekah's been acting strangely lately. Did you see her carrying that expensive purse today? It must've cost a fortune. Where did she suddenly get all that money from?" "I don't know. Could it be a loan?" "And that gem bracelet she's wearing. It looks pricey." "But do you really think she could afford such luxury? I'm betting that purse is just a knockoff." The girls exchanged glances and proposed, "Why don't we check it out ourselves? That way we can determine if it's original."

Upon hearing this, Freddy hesitated, retracting his steps. The girls approached Rebekah's purse on a chair, intent on inspecting it. But Rebekah's quick return was unexpected. She reacted angrily, "Are you out of your minds? How dare you go through my belongings!" Reaching for her purse, Rebekah accidentally knocked it to the floor, scattering its contents.

Amidst the chaos, Freddy spotted a flash drive. Realizing her mistake, a girl retrieved the flash drive for Rebekah, apologizing, "We didn't mean any harm. Please forgive us. We were just curious about the authenticity of your purse." However, Rebekah's agitation only increased upon seeing the flash drive. Snatching it up, she vehemently defended her purse, "Of course it's real! You could never afford it, you poor losers!"

The group's expressions soured after the scolding, and they walked away in frustration after a few retorts. Observing this, Freddy noted how Rebekah dusted off her purse and carefully retrieved the flash drive. It appeared that the flash drive held greater value to her than the purse.

Puzzled, Freddy wondered how the value of a flash drive could rival that of a designer purse. Could the information on the drive be so valuable? Freddy's suspicion grew. He couldn't shake the feeling that there might be something secretive or significant stored on it.

In the monitoring room, Elyse joined Darren to review the surveillance footage. To their dismay, they discovered that the footage from the day of their first performance had mysteriously disappeared, with even the backup copy nowhere to be found. Darren let out a sigh of frustration. “I spoke to the security,” he explained, “and there was only one guard on duty that day. Since there were no orchestra members present, he wasn’t stationed in the monitoring room during his breaks or when he needed to step away. He has no idea who might have sneaked in.”

Elyse nodded, her expression grave. “The person who accessed the surveillance system must be familiar with the building’s security protocols. It’s highly likely that it’s one of our orchestra members.” Darren rubbed his temples, perplexed. “It’s possible, but I can’t say for sure who it might be.”

“It’s Rebekah,” Elyse asserted confidently. Darren’s eyes widened in disbelief. “Really? Are you certain?” Elyse nodded solemnly, informing Darren about Rebekah’s involvement in accepting six hundred thousand from Mabel. After a moment of consideration, Darren said, “If that’s the case, it’s plausible. Otherwise, it’s difficult to determine who your sister might be collaborating with within our orchestra.”

Elyse agreed, acknowledging the logic behind Darren’s words. “But I lack direct evidence to prove that Mabel stole my sheet music with Rebekah’s assistance. Could the money have been received for another purpose?” Deep in thought, Darren replied, “Then our best bet is to locate the surveillance footage, as it’s our only tangible evidence.”

With determination, Elyse dialed Jayden’s number. Even though the surveillance video had been deleted, she believed there might be alternative methods to recover the data. Jayden had assured her that if she encountered any difficulties, she could rely on him for assistance. Elyse decided to heed his advice and let him aid her in the investigation.

Chapter 300:

Elyse was seated in the monitoring room when the door was flung open and Vicky stormed in, visibly furious. Upon seeing Elyse, Vicky’s anger intensified. “You’ve been suspended! How dare you show your face here? Haven’t you caused enough trouble for our orchestra?” Elyse furrowed her brow, taken aback by Vicky’s rage. “There’s no need to be so angry with me. I’m here to uncover the truth,” Elyse replied calmly.

Darren, drawn by the commotion, entered the room looking puzzled. He addressed Vicky, “Vicky, are you out of your mind? Why aren’t you practicing your violin? Shouldn’t you be with the rest of the orchestra?” Thinking of the paparazzi gathered outside the building, Vicky vented her

frustration. "This is all your fault, Elyse. Can't you just stay home? Your actions are affecting everyone."

Setting her phone aside, Elyse stood up from her chair, her voice cutting. "I'm a victim too. Will staying home make my grievances disappear?" Vicky, rendered speechless, finally managed to say, "Have you found any evidence?" Elyse cast Vicky a peculiar glance before responding, "Frankly, I've uncovered some clues. I'll seek assistance shortly, hoping the truth will emerge soon."

"You'll return to the orchestra before long," Darren joined the conversation with an optimistic smile. Elyse nodded in concurrence, hopeful that retrieving the monitoring footage would restore normalcy to her life. Vicky silently left the monitoring room, her fists clenched in frustration. With determination, she hastened to the elevator, her teeth gritted. Once inside, she swiftly messaged Rebekah, arranging a meeting.

Still harboring resentment from the recent argument with those girls, Rebekah arrived at the small garden with a somber expression. "Why did you ask me out?" she questioned with displeasure. Lost in thoughts about Elyse, Vicky remained oblivious to Rebekah's clear display of disrespect.

Vicky's brows furrowed, her gaze reflecting concern. "Are you sure you've erased all traces of Mabel's theft?" Rebekah affirmed confidently, "Absolutely. I backed up the footage and then deleted it." Impatiently, Vicky stated, "Elyse will seek to recover the deleted surveillance data. If she succeeds, she'll return."

"Elyse would try to retrieve the data," Rebekah pondered silently before grasping the seriousness of the situation. "If Elyse indeed recovered the data, her collusion with Mabel would be exposed." Rebekah, concealing her anxiety, retorted, "It's not going to be that simple. Elyse won't make it."

Vicky eyed Rebekah suspiciously, her lack of faith aggravating Rebekah. Rebekah's embarrassment escalated into anger. "Do you lack faith in me?" "No, I do trust you," Vicky assured her, declining to dwell on such insignificant concerns. Promptly, she departed, resolved to strategize with Abram on removing Elyse from the orchestra effectively.

Alone now, Rebekah felt a surge of panic, swiftly dialing Mabel's number. Mabel, taken aback by the call, inquired, "Why are you calling me?" Rebekah detailed the situation, prompting Mabel's fury. "If Elyse recovers the footage, you'll owe me six hundred thousand dollars!"

Rebekah's face drained of color. She had almost depleted the six hundred thousand dollars. How could she repay it? Mabel sneered relentlessly, her tone devoid of mercy. "No matter what, you must halt Elyse, or I'll hire someone to end you."

Understanding Mabel's seriousness, Rebekah shivered. "I'll do everything to stop Elyse," she vowed. After the call, Rebekah fretted. How could she foil Elyse's investigation? With a sudden burst of inspiration, a cunning glint ignited in Rebekah's eyes as she hastened toward the entrance of the building.

Seated in the monitoring room, awaiting Jayden's subordinates, Elyse grew bored and opted to visit the canteen on the first floor for a drink. Descending the stairs, someone abruptly dashed out, obstructing her path and causing a startle. Upon recognizing the individual, Elyse felt both shocked and apprehensive. "Are you out of your mind, Theo? What brings you here?" Theo rubbed his temples. Having heard about the unfortunate incident involving Elyse the day prior, he swiftly flew back from another city. Theo examined Elyse to ensure she was unharmed before speaking. "I'm relieved to see you're okay. I've heard the paparazzi are swarming around you, fearing something bad might happen." Elyse frowned. "Could you please release my hand?"