

Bound love 301

Chapter 301:

Seeing the repulsion in Elyse's gaze, Theo eased his hold, a hint of self-deprecation glinting in his eyes. Taken aback by Theo's demeanor, Elyse found herself at a loss for words. "What's going on with you? I haven't done anything to warrant this. Can you stop acting like I've hurt you?" Theo nodded. "Fine." His words were accompanied by a cautious scrutiny of her expression, fearing her reaction.

Elyse wanted nothing more than to avoid Theo altogether. She turned away, preparing to leave when she heard a distinct click. Alert, Elyse turned back to see a figure clad in black wielding a camera and snapping pictures frantically. "Stop!" She dashed after him in haste. Realizing he had been caught, the paparazzo swiftly stashed his camera and made a quick escape.

Her legs trembling, Elyse eventually stumbled and fell, clutching her knees in agony as sweat beaded on her forehead. Rushing to her side, Theo noticed her bruised knees and said worriedly, "Let me take you to the hospital."

"Stay away from me!" Elyse glared at Theo, her eyes brimming with disgust and resentment. "Did you see what that man was doing? He was secretly snapping pictures of us. There's bound to be some negative press about me later. It's only going to make things harder for me." After speaking, she struggled to get up and limped towards the elevator. There was an infirmary upstairs where she could treat her injured knees.

Knowing he had contributed to her injury, Theo silently trailed behind her, silently vowing to protect her. Unaware of Theo's presence, she continued on, her steps faltering as the pain intensified, tears streaming down her cheeks.

As Darren emerged from the elevator, he spotted her wiping away tears, clearly in distress. Rushing to her side, he asked with concern, "What happened to your knees?" Elyse explained, "There was a paparazzo earlier. I tried to chase him down but couldn't catch him. I ended up hurting myself in the process."

Darren was taken aback. "Paparazzi? Inside the building?" He took out his phone, intending to ask security to investigate the paparazzo who had infiltrated inside. However, he noticed Theo standing behind them the whole time. Confused, he looked at Theo and asked, "Who's this?"

Without turning back, Elyse knew who Darren was referring to. “Ignore him. I need to go to the infirmary.” Darren nodded and escorted her there, with Theo following closely behind. Despite Elyse’s repeated requests for Theo to leave, he insisted on staying with them. Darren began to suspect that Theo might have feelings for Elyse. But wasn’t she married?

Arriving at the infirmary, they found it empty. Elyse sat down, waiting for the doctor to attend to her knees. Suddenly, a message arrived, mentioning that additional paparazzi were attempting to sneak inside the building upon hearing news of Elyse and Theo behaving intimately. Elyse could only manage a bitter smile, already anticipating the potential backlash from online commentators.

Seeing her distress, Theo offered reassurance. “Don’t worry. I won’t let them tarnish your reputation. You’ll be okay.” However, Elyse remained skeptical of Theo’s words. She turned away, unwilling to look at him. Just then, the doctor arrived, coinciding with the arrival of the hacker Troy Happer sent by Jayden.

Glancing at Elyse, Troy said, “Mr. Owen sent me to restore the monitoring footage. Can you show me the way?” Darren patted Elyse on the shoulder and said, “Stay here and rest. I’ll take him to the monitoring room.” Elyse nodded silently as she watched Darren and Troy leave.

After preparing the disinfectant items, the doctor approached her and carefully examined her injuries. “The injuries are a bit severe. It’s best to seek further treatment at the hospital,” he advised. Without hesitation, Theo said, “I’ll take you to the hospital.”

Your injuries are serious; simple disinfection won’t suffice,” the doctor advised.

Elyse replied firmly, “I don’t want you to take me to the hospital. Just leave now. I don’t want to see you.”

Theo felt hurt by her rejection. Struggling to speak, Theo’s voice was heavy with sadness. “I just want to protect you. Can you accept my help?”

Elyse locked eyes with him, her words deliberate. “Who are you to protect me? I’m married. I have my husband. It’s over between us. Can’t you understand?”

Theo shook his head, still unable to believe that Elyse, who once loved him deeply, was now rejecting him so definitively. Elyse had reiterated it countless times. She sighed, expressing her helplessness. “Theo, please don’t be so persistent. After you left me at the altar, it’s clear we can never be together.”

Theo's eyes welled up. Suppressing the bitterness within him, he declared stubbornly and forcefully, "We can be together again. I'll make you fall in love with me once more."

She wanted to respond, but in the end, she remained silent. The atmosphere in the infirmary grew tense, leaving the doctor, who was unaware of the situation, feeling uneasy, standing between Elyse and Theo. Wasn't it something they should have discussed privately? How could they air such personal matters in front of him? Weren't they embarrassed?

At that moment, the doctor found himself unsure whether to leave or stay.

Chapter 302:

Troy, the hacker, sat in the monitoring room, rapidly tapping away at the keyboard. Lines of code popped up on the computer screen as Troy kept typing, and more code began to fill the screen. Within ten minutes, he had recovered the missing surveillance video and began to scrutinize it by fast-forwarding through the footage.

Darren stood behind Troy, wide-eyed. "Did you really restore it?" he asked, astonished.

With a calm nod, Troy replied, "Restoring the video data wasn't that difficult."

Before he could finish, the screen suddenly went black. Darren immediately asked, "What happened? Is there a problem?"

Troy glanced around, raising an eyebrow. "No, someone shut down the monitoring room's power supply, trying to stop me from investigating."

Darren was left speechless. The power had indeed been cut. He hurried to check who had sabotaged the power supply. Moments later, he hurried back to the monitoring room, saying, "The switch was destroyed. We'll need the maintenance team to fix it, and it'll take an hour."

"No worries. I have the surveillance footage saved on my laptop. I can review it later," Troy replied, packing up his laptop and checking his watch. "I need to take Mrs. Owen to the hospital now."

Darren understood his task was complete and escorted Troy back to the infirmary. Opening the door and passing by Theo, Troy told Elyse, “Mrs. Owen, I’m done here. It’s time to get you to the hospital.”

Elyse nodded, and despite limping, slowly moved toward the exit.

“What’s wrong with his head?” Theo complained bitterly. “What’s more important than Elyse’s well-being? Why didn’t you take her to the hospital soon? What were you even thinking?”

Troy shot Theo a scornful look, clearly unimpressed. “You’ve already lost to Mr. Owen. What makes you think you’re qualified to speak here?”

Theo grew increasingly irritated with Troy’s smug demeanor and was ready to fight with him. Troy noticed Theo’s mounting anger and only grew more smug. “Oh, you’re mad now, huh? Come on then, if you’re so tough. Is that what you want, to get your butt kicked?”

Theo snapped, teeth clenched, itching to teach this rude brat a lesson. Elyse stepped in, rubbing her temples, and scolded the two. “Stop arguing. You’re giving me a headache.” With an exasperated tone, she added, “If you’re so eager to fight, take it outside. Just stay out of my way.”

Stunned, Theo held back. He had never seen Elyse this upset and, oddly enough, found her kind of cute when she was angry. Elyse had always been sweet and patient with Theo, following his lead and soothing him. But now, seeing her temper flare up for the first time, made Theo realize she must have been quietly dealing with her own frustrations this whole time. This time, Theo didn’t try to stop her from leaving.

Darren wanted to see Elyse off. Before he left, he noticed Theo lingering and couldn’t help but advise, “You should go. Clinging to the past is pointless. It’s time to move forward.”

With a sigh, Darren hurried off to catch up with Elyse and Troy. Theo offered a strained smile. He wanted to move on, but the further he walked, the stronger the urge to turn back and find Elyse, who had once loved him deeply. He reflected on how his past life had been filled with schemes and self-interest. Only with Elyse had things seemed genuine. But he had never had the knack for recognizing beauty. He always measured worth through a business lens. He’d valued her love as if it were the cheapest commodity in the world. Now, he’d missed his only chance, and he knew he could never reclaim it.

Chapter 303:

With Troy and Darren's help, Elyse slipped past the paparazzi and made it to the hospital for treatment. Holding his laptop bag, Troy stood faithfully by her side. As the doctor took care of her injuries, he tried to sound older than his years. "Mrs. Owen, the boss requested that I ensure your safe return home once your bandage is taken care of."

Elyse blinked, giving him a good look. "Troy, how old are you? Are you an adult?"

Clearing his throat, Troy said, "I'm 19. I see myself as mature."

"Are you still in college?" she asked with interest.

"Yeah, I'm a student," he replied and nodded. "But I consider myself very responsible. If you need anything, you can always reach out. I'm happy to help."

Elyse smiled kindly. "Thanks, Troy."

Her gentle smile made Troy scratch his head bashfully. "I'll take you home now. The boss should be back soon."

"Understood," Elyse replied. Troy drove her home. Once there, Elyse thought about inviting him to dinner, but he declined politely. Troy had to return and review the surveillance footage to gather evidence that would clear Elyse's name. After he left, Elyse pulled out her phone to see that several pictures of her with Theo had gone viral. That paparazzo had snapped them in various poses, including one that made it appear as though they were sharing an intimate kiss.

Before long, Elyse was trending for all the wrong reasons. "#ElyseCheatingWithHerEx" was trending as one of the most popular hashtags. Scanning through the comments, she was bombarded with harsh accusations of exploiting Mabel and infidelity, with more people siding with Mabel.

Disheartened, Elyse put her phone down. She understood that staying away from the comments was the only way to protect herself from the hurt they caused.

In an office of the Bayzee Group, Jayden worked methodically, focused on his tasks. The sound of knocking broke his concentration. "Come in," Jayden called.

Eva carefully set a document on his desk and informed him, “Mr. Owen, the CEO of our partner company, is here to see you. He’d like to have dinner tonight to talk about cooperation.”

Jayden didn’t hesitate. He replied coldly, “No, I have dinner plans at home tonight. Tell him the partnership is off, and there’s no room for negotiation.”

Eva couldn’t help but be intrigued by Jayden’s cold, commanding attitude but kept her composure. After Tobin left that afternoon, Eva finally had a chance to walk into Jayden’s office. It was usually tough to talk to him. After thinking it over, Eva asked, “The secretaries are having a dinner gathering tonight, Mr. Owen. Would you like to join us?”

In truth, she made up the invitation hoping to have dinner alone with Jayden. If Jayden said yes, she would treat her colleagues to dinner. If he declined, she wouldn’t offer. Without looking up, Jayden replied, “Thanks, but you all go ahead. I’d rather have dinner at home.”

“Understood, Mr. Owen,” Eva acknowledged dutifully before stepping out of the office. Once the door was closed, she muttered in the hallway, “He always goes home for dinner and has turned down countless invites. Strange... isn’t he single?”

Rumors about Jayden circulated online occasionally, but Eva wrote them off as the efforts of women hoping to get his attention. Still, she couldn’t shake the suspicion that his unwavering dinner routine hinted at someone waiting for him at home.

When Eva returned to the secretary’s office, she glanced at Mia Fuller, the head secretary. With a curious look, she approached her. “Mia, is Mr. Owen single?”

Mia adjusted her glasses before answering, “I’ve got a feeling he might have a girlfriend.”

“How do you know?” Eva asked, visibly surprised.

Mia smiled and said with a playful warning, “No gossiping on the job. If you keep asking, I might have to deduct your pay.”

Eva looked taken aback. “Please don’t. I’ll get right back to work.”

Chapter 304:

Elyse was reading on the sofa when Jayden came home for dinner. Upon his arrival, he looked quite worried. He noticed her hurt knees and said, “You got hurt after going out. From now on, just stay home where it’s safe.”

Elyse glared at him unhappily and said, “I tripped because my legs were weak from our intimate activities. Perhaps we should stop our intimate encounters.”

With a nonchalant air, Jayden removed his tie, his fingers deftly undoing his shirt buttons, revealing his exposed collarbones. A subtle yet undeniable hint of danger danced in his eyes as he spoke, his tone assertive. “We are married. Nothing is wrong with me having sex with you. If not me, who else would you rather have sex with? Answer me.”

With a commanding aura, Jayden drew closer, towering over her. Trapped beneath his overwhelming presence, Elyse found herself retreating into the recesses of the sofa. Her voice quivered with apprehension as she stammered, “Only you, Jayden. I just want to have sex with you.”

A hint of satisfaction played upon Jayden’s lips as he heard Elyse’s timorous answer. With a more gentle touch, he placed a finger on her cheek, faintly brushing her skin. A devious smile crept across Jayden’s face as he voiced his inquiry, his voice dripping with smugness. “But why has another man found his way into your life?”

Elyse pulled back, creating some distance between them. “I’m not interested in discussing Theo right now. If you have questions, it’s best to ask him directly.”

As she spoke, Elyse turned her head away. She wasn’t interested in engaging with Jayden at that moment. Jayden raised his eyebrows, surprised by Elyse’s defiance. She claimed he didn’t pamper her, yet she looked so confident and defiant. No one else dared to stand up to him, but she did.

Jayden was about to punish her, but he hesitated and stopped. In the morning, he had exhausted her with their passionate lovemaking. If it happened again, she would only grow more discontent. Jayden reined in the carnal flames raging inside him, his fingers encircling her chin with a steely grip, forcing Elyse to turn her gaze toward him.

“Would you like some help with those photos?” he asked deliberately.

Elyse snapped, “If you can accept the rumors about me and another man, then don’t interfere.”

Jayden didn’t truly love Elyse. His desire was just a man’s possessive urge. After mentally uttering those words, she bottled up her anger and refused to meet Jayden’s gaze, instead wrapping her arms tightly around a throw pillow.

Jayden rubbed his temples, perplexed as to why he had managed to upset her once again. Despite his confusion, he pulled out his phone and sent a message to Tobin, requesting that he scrub the internet of any related information.

Jayden put away his phone and said, “I have something to take care of. I’ll be in my study. Please stay here and relax.”

“What are you busy with?” Elyse asked without thinking. Feeling awkward, she turned away after speaking to Jayden.

“Don’t worry, it’s nothing significant. I’ll be done in a moment, and then I’ll join you,” Jayden replied, smiling to himself as he expertly maneuvered his wheelchair into the study.

He kept quiet, knowing it wasn’t the right time and wanting to shield her from his dangerous world. Elyse felt a sense of despair rather than sadness when he didn’t answer her question. She took a deep breath, patted her face, and tried to reassure herself. “It’s alright. As long as I don’t develop feelings for him, I won’t get hurt.”

Since Jayden didn’t have romantic intentions, she couldn’t hope for love from him. She hugged the pillow tightly, finding some solace. She felt a deep and chilling loneliness, one that seemed to seep into her very bones.

Kaelyn heard Theo was back in town, so she stopped by his favorite restaurant and packed some of his favorite dishes to welcome him home.

She had visited his home so often that the household staff knew her by sight, and the servant would let her in without any fuss. Kaelyn handed the takeout to the servant, asking her to heat them up and serve them to Theo later. In a concerned voice, she asked the servant, “Where’s Theo? I haven’t seen him. Is he okay?”

The servant responded with a deferential demeanor, "He is currently in the garden."

"Then I'll go find him," Kaelyn hurried to the garden, her excitement evident in her quick steps. Theo sat under the pavilion, staring at his phone with a mix of concentration and sadness on his face. Kaelyn crept up behind him, trying to surprise him, but accidentally caught a glimpse of his phone screen. It was a photo of Theo and Elyse.

Kaelyn had rushed to see Theo after work, unaware of the buzz about him and Elyse, having had no time to check her phone. Her face suddenly went pale as she thought of Theo and Elyse together. Theo was lost in the photo, his finger tenderly tracing Elyse's face on the screen, revealing his deep affection. Her heart felt like it was shattering into a million pieces. She mustered up the courage to ask Theo, "Do you still love Elyse?" Her voice trembled slightly.

Chapter 305:

Theos gaze lingered on Elyse in the photo, his eyes softening with tenderness. He then looked at Kaelyn, his expression hardening. Kaelyn noticed the shift in his demeanor, and her face fell. Theos voice was icy as he asked, "Do you want me to stop detesting you?"

"Yes," Kaelyn responded quickly, her eyes brimming with hope.

"If you can get Elyse to leave Jayden, perhaps I'll think better of you," Theo remarked casually, as though the task was trivial.

Kaelyn's face contorted in frustration. She had worked tirelessly to break up Theo and Elyse. Now, how could she possibly push Elyse to divorce Jayden just to get back with Theo? Kaelyn's smile grew bitter. "Doesn't it bother you that Elyse is someone else's wife? What about your own mother's feelings?"

Theos gaze became frosty. "Elyse is the only one for me. No other woman comes close, and nobody can stop me from being with her."

Kaelyn's expression turned bleak. She was shocked by the depth of Theos obsession with Elyse. Theos voice was firm as he instructed Kaelyn to leave his house.

Climbing into her car, overcome with frustration, she screamed. Kaelyn pounded on the steering wheel and cursed Elyse. Once she had vented her anger, she found herself settling into a calmer

state. Muttering to herself, she said, “Theo, you really want to be with Elyse. And you think you can manipulate me to push her towards a divorce. Not happening.”

As she started the car, her phone rang. It was Mabel on the other end. Taking a deep breath to compose herself, Kaelyn answered in a soothing tone, “Mabel, what’s going on? Why are you calling?” Mabel’s voice tinged with anxiety came through, “Kaelyn, do you think Elyse will discover the evidence of my theft? What if she finds out? Would I be in trouble?”

Kaelyn replied reassuringly, “Absolutely not, Elyse is your sister after all. Even if she stumbles upon the evidence, she won’t harm you. Don’t worry about it. She’s still your sister, isn’t she?”

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Chapter 306:

However, Mabel was still worried and said, “But someone informed me that Elyse has found someone who’s capable of retrieving the deleted surveillance footage. It looks like she is on the verge of getting her hands on the evidence.”

Kaelyn scoffed inwardly when she heard this. How could Mabel think that she was safe just because she had deleted the surveillance footage? It ought to be pretty obvious that Elyse was bound to get her hands on the evidence since Jayden could easily get it for her. Kaelyn had long felt that this was what was going to happen, but she had deliberately refused to warn Mabel. After all, Kaelyn had a lot to gain from the whole situation. By seeing to it that Mabel made more reckless remarks online and blew everything out of proportion, Kaelyn had caused the whole situation to descend into total chaos.

Speaking as softly as she could, Kaelyn said, “You have to calm yourself down, Mabel. There’s no way Elyse is going to get access to the surveillance video since it has been deleted.” Being the dummy that she was, Mabel brightened up a little and foolishly believed what Kaelyn had just said. Swallowing hard, she asked innocently, “For real? Are you sure Elyse will never find out the truth?”

“Of course, are you doubting my words? Also, you shouldn’t be afraid of Elyse coming after you. Don’t forget that you’re my favorite, and I’d do anything to defend you,” Kaelyn replied.

Deeply touched, Mabel sighed softly and said emotionally, “You are an angel sent to me from heaven, Kaelyn. You care more about me than my own blood sister. It’s quite a pity that you aren’t my sister; life would have been more lovely.”

Amused to hear this, Kaelyn shook her head. “Must all the words that come out of Mabel be stupid? It was true that no matter how much a fool was played by others, they’d still gullibly think of others as being good people.”

After saying a few soothing words to Mabel, Kaelyn hung up the phone. With a scoff, she began to tap the steering wheel as a barrage of thoughts flew through her mind. Smiling wickedly, she muttered, “To repay your trust in me, I promise not to let you down.”

Meanwhile, after having dinner, Elyse was practicing on her violin while sitting on the sofa when Jayden opened the door of his study and gestured at her to come over. Elyse pursed her lips and put her violin aside. With some effort, she slowly rose from the sofa and began to limp toward him.

Seeing this, Jayden, feeling sorry for her and not wanting her to be in pain, said, “Stop where you are. I’ll come and pick you up.” Elyse nodded and stopped walking. Jayden then wheeled to her, coaxed her onto his lap, and said teasingly, “Perhaps I should arrange for you to have a wheelchair of yours.”

“All I’ve got to deal with is a few scrapes that are bound to heal sooner than later. It should hurt way less tomorrow,” Elyse replied.

“Of course, you should be okay soon. Besides, the medicine that I gave you is the absolute best, and you wouldn’t even have a scar once the scrapes have healed,” Jayden said. With that, he used a hand to secure her so that she wouldn’t fall and took her into the study.

Once they were in, Elyse used a hand to shut the door and asked with a confused look on her face, “Why did you summon me?”

“Troy just informed me that he has gotten the evidence. I believe you should check the video out yourself and then decide what the next course of action should be,” Jayden replied. With that, he picked up his phone from the desk and clicked on a video.

In it, Mabel could be seen arriving at the orchestra’s building fully prepared. The video had been edited to smoothly show as Mabel journeyed from the entrance to the lounge and to the point of her stealing the sheet music from Elyse’s locker. After Mabel had retrieved the sheet music, Rebekah suddenly appeared out of nowhere. The two ladies then proceeded to talk, after which they took out their phones and added each other as friends. After speaking for a little while, the duo went their separate ways.

When the video came to an end, Elyse’s eyes were already dull. This wasn’t how she expected the truth to be. Jayden returned the phone to the desk and said, “So what do you plan on doing? There are two people in the video who are going to have a lot to answer for if the video should be released to the public. One of them is your sister, and the other is a member of your orchestra.”

After pursing her lips for a moment, Elyse asked, “You are asking me what I intend to do because you believe that I’ll be lenient and spare them, right?”

Jayden nodded and replied, “Of course, I do believe that you wouldn’t want to hurt them. But then if you’re really that pissed off with them and seek to teach them a lesson that they won’t forget in a hurry, I’ll gladly do that for you.”

Elyse pouted her lips and said, “But that would make you appear like you’re the bad guy. You shouldn’t worry. I’ll decide on what to do.” Patting the back of Jayden’s hand, she continued, “Just take me back. I’m going to need some time to think before coming up with a decision.”

Jayden raised his eyebrows and exclaimed jokingly, “How dare you use me like I’m some sort of private wheelchair taxi!” Chuckling, Elyse shrugged and replied, “Because I can. Now, hurry up and return me to my room.”

Jayden shook his head and sighed in an exaggerated manner. He then smiled dotingly at Elyse and took her out of the study and back to her room.

Once Jayden left her alone, the smile on Elyse’s face instantly vanished. Picking up her phone, she quickly sent a message to both Rebekah and Mabel. Elyse intended to present both women with a chance to prevent things from going downhill. All the duo had to do was come around now, and Elyse would see to it that what happened was kept off the public’s eyes.

However, since both of them took Elyse as an enemy and hated her to the core, they not only turned down her kindness but also replied with some quite offensive and sarcastic remarks.

When she got their replies, Elyse nodded and made up her mind. Tomorrow, she was going to prove her innocence to the world.

Chapter 307:

The next morning, Mabel luxuriated in the embrace of sleep until she naturally awoke. With a sleepy hand, she reached for her phone, eager to check her online presence. However, her heart sank as she discovered a barrage of unfavorable comments awaiting her. Confusion clouded Mabel’s mind. How had her pristine online reputation taken such a sudden malicious turn overnight? Just yesterday, she had been held in high regard. What had changed so drastically?

Mabel's trembling fingers navigated to the top search result, revealing the incendiary phrase "Whole Process Of Mabel's Theft" dominating the hot topic. Mabel's fingers trembled as she hesitantly clicked on the video link. A piercing scream escaped her lips as terror gripped her upon the realization that the footage before her was none other than the incriminating surveillance video capturing her illicit acquisition of Elyse's sheet music.

Mabel's cries of disbelief echoed through the room. Wasn't the video deleted? Wasn't it supposed to be lost forever? How could it resurface now? Fear drained the color from Mabel's face, leaving her complexion ashen. She stood frozen in shock, caught in disbelief for a long time before the fog of panic slowly lifted, and she regained her senses.

She reached for her phone with trembling hands, desperate to connect with Rebekah for reassurance. However, her hopes were dashed as the phone rang unanswered, leaving her to grapple with the realization that Rebekah, too, was engulfed in her turmoil, unable to offer solace or support.

As the damning video surfaced into public view, it brought with it another layer of incrimination: the revelation of Mabel and Rebekah's transaction records. A staggering sum of six hundred thousand dollars had been clandestinely transferred into Rebekah's account, further complicating the scandal.

With the emergence of the video and the accompanying transaction records, every detail of the scandal was laid bare for all to see, leaving no room for doubt. Rebekah was privy to Mabel's theft, yet rather than reporting the wrongdoing, she opted for silence, striking a clandestine deal with Mabel in exchange for a hefty sum of hush money.

The timing of Jayden's decision to expose the scandal was calculated with precision. Rather than opting for the cover of night when online activity tended to peak, he strategically chose half-past nine in the morning, a subtle yet impactful moment that ensured maximum visibility.

At this time, Rebekah was heading to her orchestra job. The top brass of the Celestial Sounds Symphony were about to meet to talk about Rebekah's conduct on the job. Jayden was eager for a swift resolution. He hoped to restore Elyse to her job promptly while rooting out the true culprit responsible for the disruption.

At this moment, Rebekah stood in the meeting room facing scrutiny from the senior leaders of the Celestial Sounds Symphony. Before her was an extravagant item she had purchased with Mabel's money. Adding to the gravity of the situation, Darren uncovered troubling revelations. Not only had

Rebekah tampered with the monitoring room's power switch, but she had also succumbed to bribery, allowing the paparazzi to infiltrate and stir chaos.

Clearly, Rebekah had overstepped the boundaries. The impending consequences might not sit well with her. As for Mabel, seeking retribution against Rebekah would have to wait in the queue of priorities.

Feeling frustrated, Mabel scratched her head and let out a loud shout. She grabbed her phone and stormed out to find Glenda. Glenda was engrossed in a television show when she suddenly heard Mabel's cries and swearing. Glenda gazed at Mabel with concern.

"Sweetie, what's wrong? Who's upset you? I'll help you stand up to them," she said, offering Mabel a tissue.

Tears streamed down Mabel's face as she accepted the tissue from Glenda. "It's Elyse. She discovered the video of me stealing and shared it online. Now, everyone thinks I'm a thief, Mom. Elyse is tormenting me. It's like she wants to destroy me."

Glenda was taken aback and stumbled over her words. "But didn't you mention that Elyse couldn't find any evidence? How did she suddenly come across it?"

Mabel stamped her feet in frustration, tears still flowing. "I have no idea. It's so frustrating. My company even retracted their support for me. Now, everyone's pointing fingers at me, calling me a thief. Let's strategize together. Could you assist me in persuading Elyse to reconsider her narrative and acknowledge my innocence?"

Glenda was left speechless, uncertain about how to comfort Mabel as she held her in her arms. In a moment of turmoil, Glenda grappled with the impossibility of convincing Elyse to alter her stance. Yet driven by her motherly instinct to shield her daughter from distress, Glenda resolved to take action.

"I'll shoulder the blame. Just tell them it was my scheme, and I directed you to take the sheet music, sparing you from being labeled a thief," Glenda proposed.

Mabel's sobs echoed in the room. "Mom, if you take the blame, they'll only scold me even more severely. They won't buy your story."

Realizing the limitations of their previous plan, Glenda spoke with a solemn tone. “Well, our only option now is to approach Elyse and plead for her understanding, to ask her to show you some leniency.”

Mabel’s response was swift and firm. “Mom, you can go if you want, but I won’t. I can’t stand Elyse. She doesn’t deserve to be called my sister.”

Glenda’s expression darkened, her eyes betraying a storm of emotions. She opened her mouth as if to speak but then swallowed back the truth. She couldn’t bring herself to reveal to Mabel that Elyse wasn’t truly her sister. Glenda reassured Mabel, saying, “Stop worrying about it. I’ll handle everything from here on out. Just focus on being good these days. No internet surfing or going out, okay?”

Through tears, Mabel lamented, “Mom, I love being in the entertainment industry. When you speak to Elyse, please ask her not to bar me and to arrange for my return to the showbiz later on.”

“Alright, I understand. I’ll talk to Elyse about it.” After a moment’s contemplation, Glenda made her way to the garden to confer with Lanny.

Chapter 308:

Lanny was staying at Mabel’s place too, finding respite amidst the verdant embrace of the small garden, a cup of tea in hand. It was no surprise when Glenda approached him; he had anticipated this moment long ago. In his estimation, Mabel and Glenda shared a certain lack of foresight. How could evidence easily vanish into thin air?

Setting down his teacup, Lanny stared at the uneasy Glenda with empathy. “Mabel’s wrongdoing cannot remain hidden, can they?” Glenda nodded, her discomfort evident. “The tide has turned online. Our daughter bears the brunt of public condemnation while Elyse stands declared innocent.”

“You reap what you sow. I urged you to heed my counsel. Now you understand the gravity of our situation. You should have listened,” Lanny remarked, recognizing Jayden’s influence. Despite his physical limitations, Lanny held Jayden in high regard.

Indeed, Lanny’s keen observation had not failed him. Even after a year in a wheelchair, Jayden’s eyes retained their sharpness. They spoke of authority; Jayden’s gaze was perpetually astute and uncompromising.

After some consideration, Glenda proposed, “Should we appeal to Elyse directly? Perhaps she could quell the online storm and facilitate Mabel’s entry into the entertainment industry after a suitable interval. We are, after all, family.”

Lanny scoffed, “I doubt family holds much sway now. Jayden likely sees us differently.” Glenda retorted cheekily, “Jayden’s marriage to Elyse makes us family. How can there be ill will within a family?”

“Our priority should be self-preservation. Your notion of reinstating Mabel into showbiz is ill-advised. Once this ordeal concludes, we should get Mabel married and be relieved of such burdens,” Lanny insisted.

Glenda’s tone grew somber. “You know her defiance. Marriage is not a notion she’ll entertain willingly. Even in dire straits, you remain her defender. Encourage her to apologize earnestly and persuade Jayden to grant us clemency. Otherwise, we all face dire consequences.”

With a steely glare, Lanny’s fist made contact with Glenda’s head, leaving her reeling. As Glenda sank to the ground and covered her head in agony, Lanny spat on her. In Lanny’s view, Glenda and Mabel were troublemakers, yet abandoning them was not an option. Reluctantly, he helped Glenda to her feet, resolving to accompany her and Mabel in seeking reconciliation with Jayden.

When Mabel was informed of the need to apologize to Elyse, she locked herself in her room, declaring defiantly, “Not even if the heavens themselves demand it! I refuse to bend to Elyse’s whims.” Lanny pounded urgently on the door of her room. “Please come out swiftly. You’ve found yourself in a difficult situation, and it’s time to make amends.”

Mabel’s voice pierced through the door, laden with defiance. “Mom promised to go in my stead. If you persist, I swear I’ll jump from this window.”

Alarmed by the prospect of Mabel’s drastic action, Glenda intervened, halting Lanny’s insistence. “Let her be. If she’s unwilling, Elyse will understand considering our familial bond.”

Lanny’s frustration ignited, his gaze ablaze with anger. “Let her jump if she dares. A fall from the third floor won’t claim her life. If she chooses to jump, then perhaps Jayden will forgive us.”

Their dwelling, a modest house spanning three floors and an attic, housed Mabel's quarters on the uppermost level, affording her a panoramic vista.

Mabel's laughter, tinged with fury, echoed from within. "So be it. I see now your true intentions. You'd rather see me perish than face Jayden's ire."

Lanny's retort came sharp and unyielding. "Then jump, and perhaps peace will be restored. If my demise is your desire, then I shall oblige."

With those words, Mabel fell into an ominous silence. Trembling, Glenda dared to inquire, "Honey, has she truly jumped?"

Though a pang of guilt gnawed at him, Lanny maintained his facade of resolve. "Let her. Jump if she wants. I shall inform Jayden of the outcome. If any harm befalls our daughter, you shall answer for it." Glenda gave Lanny a firm push before hastening downstairs to the first floor.

Barefoot and heedless, she raced to the garden's edge. There she beheld Mabel lying still on the ground, her eyes sealed shut. A harrowing cry escaped Glenda's lips, piercing through the air. "Honey, come over quickly. She... she jumped off the building."

As Elyse sat peacefully sipping her tea in the garden, her phone rang, interrupting the tranquility. Confusion clouded her voice as she answered Jayden's call. "What's the matter?"

"Glenda will call you soon. She'll tell you that Mabel jumped off the building and ask you to come to the hospital. Wait for half an hour after the call. I'll meet you there," Jayden's voice rushed through the phone before he hung up.

Elyse couldn't shake off the bewilderment. Mabel, afraid of pain, jumping off a building? And how did Jayden know? Questions swirled in Elyse's mind, but Jayden wasn't reachable.

Chapter 309:

Even though Elyse had doubts, she followed Jayden's advice and left the house after thirty minutes. Upon reaching the hospital parking lot, she unexpectedly ran into Jayden just as he stepped out of his vehicle. Surprised, Elyse blurted out, "Why are you so punctual?"

Jayden, exiting his car in a wheelchair, replied, "I got here three minutes before you did."

Feeling slightly embarrassed, Elyse limped towards him. Unable to stand seeing her struggle, Jayden called out, "Tobin!"

Tobin emerged from the vehicle holding a foldable wheelchair. He set it up and offered it to Elyse, saying respectfully, "Please, Mrs. Owen, take a seat."

Elyse responded, "It's just scraped knees. It's not like I broke my legs."

Jayden scoffed, "What's the difference? You can't walk properly. If you don't want the wheelchair, I can get you crutches instead."

After glaring at Jayden, Elyse awkwardly climbed into the wheelchair. When she pressed the control button, the wheelchair shot forward towards Jayden. Quickly, Tobin, standing behind Elyse, pulled the wheelchair back to stop it from hitting Jayden. The abrupt movement made Elyse jolt back. She was startled but unharmed.

With her hand on her chest, she exclaimed, "Is this wheelchair really this tricky to handle?"

Jayden gave her a look of disdain and immediately told Tobin, "Keep her away from the controls. You push the wheelchair."

Tobin agreed, saying, "Yes, sir."

Feeling embarrassed, Elyse tried to regain her composure. She smoothed her hair and acted as if nothing had happened, urging Tobin to hurry. They then proceeded to the elevator and headed for the operating room.

Glenda and Lanny waited nervously by the operating room door, hoping for news on the surgery's outcome. When Elyse and Jayden approached, they stood up with a mix of fear and worry.

Still puzzled about why Mabel had jumped off the building, Elyse asked, "Why did Mabel jump off the building?"

Glenda's eyes welled with tears at the question. Although she felt like scolding Elyse, seeing Jayden made her restrain herself. Lanny stepped in, explaining, "Mabel felt so guilty about what she did that she couldn't face you anymore and acted impulsively."

Elyse pulled out her phone and showed them a message, asking, "Is her apology just her way of blaming me for ruining her career?" Elyse had noticed a message from Mabel after her call with Jayden. It was sent eight minutes before Jayden's call.

With a stern look, Elyse said sarcastically, "Is this how Mabel acknowledges her mistake?"

Lanny was at a loss for words, frozen in place. He had been unaware of Mabel's message to Elyse before her drastic action. Elyse's dismissive wave stopped him from arguing further. For Lanny and Glenda, Mabel was their primary concern, not Elyse, who sat before them in a wheelchair.

Elyse had long recognized Lanny and Glenda's bias. Their love for Mabel overshadowed any of her missteps. With impatience, Elyse stated, "No need to explain. I think I understand why she did it. She ruined her own career and couldn't deal with the fallout."

With a hint of sarcasm, Elyse said, "She rose to fame using my works. Now that her stardom's fading, it's like poetic justice, don't you think?"

Tears filled Glenda's eyes, rolling down her cheeks. "Elyse, it's my fault. I played favorites with Mabel. I won't do it again, I promise. Please don't ban her from the showbiz. She truly dreams of being a star."

Lanny's expression changed, and he swiftly covered Glenda's mouth. "Oh, are you unhappy with my orders and suggesting I take them back?" Jayden leaned his chin on his hand, looking at Glenda playfully.

Lanny tried to defuse the situation and reassure, "No, that's not what she meant. She respects your decision." Lanny vowed sincerely and said, "I promise Mabel will give up on the entertainment industry. She needs to let go of that dream to give Fluen peace."

Jayden looked at Lanny, his expression unreadable. Mabel had stolen Elyse's original works, which catapulted her into success. Without those songs, she would never have had her big break. Jayden's actions were all about getting back what belonged to Elyse.

Chapter 310:

“Do you believe she possesses the qualifications to pursue a career in singing?” Jayden posed the chilly question.

Lanny, masking his disapproval with a forced smile, replied, “No, I’m afraid not. Perhaps her path lies in marriage, becoming someone’s housewife.”

Glenda, her frustration evident, shot Jayden a venomous glare. Jayden, ever observant, noted the shift in Glenda’s gaze and playfully remarked, “It appears your wife disagrees.”

In a sudden display of anger, Lanny swiftly struck Glenda across the face, his expression twisted into a malevolent sneer. “If you persist in your dissent, I’ll kick you out of my house.”

Being slapped, Glenda composed herself, swallowing any protest. In a subdued tone, she murmured, “I will talk to Mabel.”

Jayden twirled a ring on his thumb, a subtle hint of menace flickering in his eyes. “You’d best be sincere. Should I catch wind of Mabel’s aspirations to sing again, there will be consequences.”

Trembling with fear, Lanny acquiesced, pledging to keep Mabel’s dreams suppressed.

After a brief pause, Jayden turned his attention to Elyse. “Furthermore, your daughter has taken something precious from my wife—her original works. While I won’t retaliate against her, she must apologize to Elyse upon waking,” he added sternly. “And it must be a sincere apology, with her kneeling.”

Lanny and Glenda, just regaining their composure, paled once more, rendered speechless by Jayden’s decree.

At that moment, the operating room’s green light spilled into the corridor as its door swung open. A nurse emerged, wheeling a hospital bed with Mabel lying on it, her eyes shut tightly, her complexion pale.

Seeing her daughter emerge, Glenda cried out in distress. “Mabel! Sweetheart, please wake up!”

The nurse attempted to push the bed back to the ward, but Glenda's presence obstructed her. With a patient smile, she implored, "Ma'am, please remain calm. Your daughter is stable and will awaken soon."

Wiping away her tears, Glenda followed Lanny to speak with the doctor. With reassurance, the doctor explained, "She'll be alright. She has a fractured leg, some bruises, and a moderate concussion. She'll need to stay in the hospital. Let's get the paperwork sorted."

With Mabel out of danger, Glenda's laughter mingled with tears, creating a whimsical sight. Glenda and Lanny continued to inquire about Mabel's condition, completely unaware of Elyse's presence nearby. Seated quietly, Elyse observed them with silent intensity.

Surprised, Elyse witnessed a genuine display of parental love from Lanny and Glenda. It was a side of them she hadn't expected, one that revealed their deep affection for their daughter. She had assumed Lanny would remain stoic and Glenda would uphold her elegant demeanor. Yet here they were, showing unabashed concern for Mabel.

But what was her role to this couple? Watching Lanny and Glenda intently, Elyse expected them to turn to her, acknowledge her presence, and include her in their relief for Mabel. Instead, they briskly headed to the elevator, consumed by the administrative tasks ahead, leaving her unnoticed and unaddressed.

Feeling a pang of sadness, Jayden glanced at Elyse and sighed inwardly. Did she feel neglected and unloved by her parents? How childish. Jayden gently took Elyse's hand, his warmth momentarily startling her.

Elyse turned to him, her expression blank, and asked, "What's the matter?"

"Do you want to see Mabel?" Jayden asked casually.

"Do you want to?" Elyse responded, her emotions tangled.

"She's not my sister. Why should I visit her?" Jayden replied simply.

Without a moment's hesitation, Elyse declared, "Then we shouldn't go. I am well aware she has no desire to see me, and my presence would only upset them. Her presence would cast a shadow over their joyful moments."

Jayden promptly responded, "Then let us return home."

With a glance, Jayden conveyed his silent request to Tobin, and the latter grasped it instantly. Taking charge, Tobin steered the wheelchair around and headed back towards the elevator.

Upon their return home, as they prepared to unwind, Tess stormed in, her demeanor brimming with fury. With a firm grip on Elyse's arm, she demanded, "Divorce. You must divorce my son."

Perplexed, Elyse countered, "But why should I part ways with Jayden?"

"You've cheated on him," Tess's face flushed with indignation. "Even with his disability, I will not tolerate anyone deceiving him. The notion of Jayden being betrayed cut Tess to the core."