

## Chapter 43 Stealing A Kiss

After Jayden offered to treat Elyse's classmates to dinner, the group's perception of him shifted slightly.

Some speculated that no ordinary guy would make such a generous offer, hinting that Jayden might be an influential figure. Curious, they approached him with their drinks, eager to engage him in conversation.

Others simply observed from a distance, refraining from making any negative remarks about him.

Lizzie's attitude shifted the most. She spoke in hushed tones, worried that someone might ask about the venue of her own wedding.

While her husband was a rich businessman, they had celebrated their wedding in a modest hotel, never even considering a venue as opulent as the Grandeur Hotel.

She dreamed of such a lavish setting, but financial constraints made it impossible.

Despite this, she was more eager than anyone to see what the next day would bring.

She secretly wished for Elyse and her husband to be exposed as pretenders and embarrassingly removed by the hotel staff. Such an event would give her the chance to openly mock them with pride.

Meanwhile, Elyse, sitting next to Jayden, was being toasted by others. She politely sipped her wine, but eventually, it got the better of her. Holding her empty glass, she gazed around in a tipsy haze, a smirk on her face, wanting to continue the revelry with another classmate.

Realizing Elyse was intoxicated, Jayden set his glass down. "I'm sorry, Elyse is drunk. I need to get her home," he announced. As he took her hand to lead her away, someone blocked their path.

"Jayden, when we get to the hotel before you tomorrow and the staff

asks who booked the table, should we just use your name?"

"Yes." Jayden nodded, choosing not to elaborate.

After leaving the room, Jayden glanced at Elyse, who was mustering her strength to keep standing. "Can you make it home without help?" he asked.

"Yes. I can manage," Elyse replied, nodding earnestly. However, as soon as she settled into the car, she fell asleep.

Jayden looked over at her dispassionately and shook his head helplessly.

When they reached home, rain began to fall. Driscoll was waiting outside the villa with an umbrella.

"Sir, do you need help with her?" Driscoll inquired.

Jayden stepped out of the car and gently lifted Elyse into his arms. The orange lights bathed her face, casting a warm glow that softened the chilly night air.

"No, I've got her," he said firmly.

With Elyse in his arms, Jayden walked confidently forward, Driscoll following with the umbrella to shield them from the rain.

Once inside, Driscoll closed the umbrella and addressed Jayden, "I'll get everything ready for you to freshen up."

"I'll come down after I've settled her," Jayden responded.

Carrying her, he ascended to the second floor. Driscoll watched Jayden's retreating figure and smiled warmly.

Elyse squirmed uncomfortably in Jayden's arms.

In response, Jayden whispered a stern warning in her ear, "If you keep moving, I might just drop you."

The drowsy girl opened her eyes slightly and mumbled, "You're so mean."

With a smile, Jayden looked at her and asked, "Why am I mean?"

"You just are," Elyse responded frankly.

Jayden let out a sneer as he entered the bedroom. He walked to the bed and, without hesitation, loosened his grip, causing her to tumble onto the mattress.

"You're ungrateful. I've never been mean to you," he retorted.

She rubbed her backside and protested, "You're lying."

Jayden crouched down and pinched her cheek, forcing her to face him. "Little drunkard, you'll see how bad I can be."

Elyse stared back at Jayden, her eyes weary and confused. She blinked a few times and then succumbed to sleep.

Jayden remained by her side, watching her sleep. Without thinking, he pinched her cheek gently. Her skin was soft, much like her gentle nature.

Suddenly, she whimpered in discomfort, like a distressed cub.

Moved by the moment, Jayden leaned down and kissed her on the lips. The kiss was brief and impulsive.

Realizing what he had just done, Jayden was shocked. He quickly released her and hastened out of the room.

Standing in the corridor, he touched his lips, bewildered by his own actions. He shouldn't have done that!

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When Theo got home, the image of Elyse and Jayden together replayed in his mind. He couldn't stop thinking about their interaction, how perfectly they seemed to complement each other.

Overwhelmed by the thought, his grip tightened, and he hurled the glass in his hand onto the floor.

"You married him. What about me? Who am I to you?"