

## Bound love 631

Chapter 631:

Elyse pondered for a while before drifting off to sleep on the chaise longue. She had no idea how long she had been asleep when Tracy slipped into the room and squatted beside her.

Elyse felt a gentle poke at her waist, prompting her to pout and crack open her sleepy eyes.

Seeing Tracy, Elyse grumbled in a sleepy, babyish voice, “What are you doing? I’m trying to sleep.”

Tracy’s eyes were soft as she gazed at Elyse. “My love life is a mess. I’m all tangled up and can’t seem to be honest about my feelings. Don’t you hate me for it?”

Groggy and confused, Elyse blinked at her friend. “You’re hurting in your relationship. As your best friend, why would I ever hate you for that?”

Tracy raised an eyebrow. “Are you for real?”

“Absolutely. I feel for you, more than anyone. Seeing you in pain breaks my heart,” Elyse replied, her eyes brimming with tenderness.

Hearing this, Tracy lowered her eyes, a small, relieved smile tugging at her lips. She sighed and said, “Remember when you asked me about my feelings for Shaun? Every time I try to deny or downplay my relationship with Shaun, my heart betrays me, saying that’s not how I truly feel.”

Elyse nodded, patiently waiting for Tracy to continue.

Tracy went on, “But I can’t bring myself to accept Shaun again. He did too many things I can’t forgive. My feelings for him are still there, but I just can’t accept him back.”

After speaking, Tracy smiled sadly. "I'm conflicted right now. I used to be passionate and fearless about love, saying whatever was on my mind. When did I become so contradictory?"

Elyse shook her head gently. "It's not your fault. It's Shaun who left you feeling so conflicted and sensitive. If he truly wants to be with you, he should offer a heartfelt apology instead of making you, who did nothing wrong, bear all this pain."

She yawned and mumbled, "But knowing Shaun, a sincere apology from him is pretty much a pipe dream."

Tracy nodded. "You're right. That's just how he is. Unless he truly wants to change, no one can make him."

As she started to feel drowsy again, Elyse asked, "Where are you headed? Who will look out for you if you leave?"

Tracy replied, "I'm going to see Shaun. There are things I need to say to him in person."

She added, "Besides, I can't stay holed up in your place forever. Should I lock myself away just to avoid Shaun? That's impossible."

Elyse pouted. "I suppose you have a point."

Tracy gazed out the window at the dreary, colorless sky. "I guess the best thing I can do is look out for myself, right?"

Seeing that Tracy had made up her mind, Elyse didn't push further. Instead, she asked, "Are you heading to Shaun tonight? It's pretty late. Why not rest and go tomorrow?"

Tracy stood up and said, "No, I've finally found the courage and clarity I need. I must seize this chance to speak with him."

She touched her chin thoughtfully. "But it probably won't take long. He underestimates my resolve and might just take what he sees for granted."

Elyse thought of Jayden and sighed. “Men can be so full of themselves and overly confident.”

Tracy said, “Sorry, I’m not the best person to give relationship advice since mine’s a mess too. But I genuinely hope you find happiness. You and Jayden can work things out slowly.”

Elyse shook her head. She had spoken to Jayden, but he hadn’t taken her seriously.

Tracy walked to the door, opened it, and flashed a playful smile at Elyse. “No need to see me off. I need to handle this on my own.”

Elyse gave Tracy a warm nod and a friendly wave. “No matter what happens with Shaun, I’ll always stand by you. You’re my best friend, come what may.”

Tracy flashed a confident wink. “This time, I’m fighting for my future.”

With that, Tracy left. Elyse replayed Tracy’s words in her mind, struck by how such bravery seemed now. It was as if Tracy had recognized her inner struggles and was determined to turn things around.

Elyse sighed softly. “That’s awesome. I wonder when I’ll find the same courage Tracy’s showing.”

Chapter 632:

After waking up, Elyse nestled back into the chaise longue but quickly sobered up. She got up and made her way to the living room. As dinnertime approached, Driscoll escorted Morgan into the villa.

Spotting them, Elyse eagerly threw herself into Morgan’s arms, who greeted her with a bear hug.

“Didn’t you say you’d go out for some fresh air? What brought you back so soon?” Elyse asked, her excitement palpable.

Morgan looked Elyse up and down. “You seem to have gained a bit of weight. That’s good! Jayden’s been taking good care of you.”

She then released Elyse, and they both settled onto the sofa.

“I didn’t get very far. After making arrangements for your father’s company, I started dealing with Lanny Lloyd’s real estate properties, except for Norde Mount Villa,” Morgan explained.

Elyse looked puzzled. “Norde Mount Villa? That was my childhood home. What happened to it?”

Morgan continued, “It’s under your mother’s name. It was the only property your parents bought together.”

Elyse was taken aback, not expecting the villa to belong to her late parents.

Morgan joked, “Thankfully, Jayden missed Norde Mount Villa when he tore down Lanny Lloyd’s house. Otherwise, your childhood memories would be gone.”

Elyse nodded in agreement. “How lucky! I’m so glad Jayden didn’t tear down that house.”

After a moment of thought, Morgan asked, “Are you planning to visit Blue Sea Music Studio tomorrow?”

“Mr. Tucker gave me some days off to rest at home. I can go there whenever I want,” Elyse replied.

Morgan smiled. “Would you mind taking me with you tomorrow? I haven’t seen Cody in ages.”

Elyse was momentarily stunned but quickly recovered. “Sure, let’s head over there together tomorrow,” she agreed with a warm smile.

Morgan’s eyes sparkled with a hint of nostalgia. “Cody and I go way back. It’s been over 20 years since we last saw each other. I wonder if he still remembers me.”

Elyse pondered aloud, “He should remember you, Morgan. But after all this time, he might not recognize you right away.”

Morgan gently touched her face, nodding. “I’ve aged. It’s understandable if he doesn’t recognize me.”

That night, Morgan stayed at Elyse’s place. Knowing Morgan was a guest, Jayden invited her to discuss business in his study.

It was then that Elyse discovered Morgan had majored in finance in college. Had Rickey taken over his family’s company, Morgan would have been right there helping him run it.

Had Rickey started his own business, Morgan would have been his vice president. Either way, Morgan would have been instrumental in Rickey’s success.

Elyse hadn’t yet asked Morgan if she found more joy in running a company or being an actress, but Elyse was patient. Morgan would be staying at her house, so she didn’t mind letting Jayden monopolize her time for a while.

On the second morning, Elyse was enjoying breakfast at the table when Morgan strolled in late, yawning widely.

“Didn’t sleep well last night?” Elyse asked, curiosity piqued.

Rubbing her eyes, Morgan sighed. “Your husband handed me three business plans and laid out his vision for the future. He did an impressive job—I couldn’t find a single flaw. Yet, he insisted I review every detail.”

Elyse mused, “Hmm. He probably wants your approval. Jayden once told me that he sees you as my parent. He’s likely being kind.”

Morgan snorted. “It’s in-law like that! We spent the entire night dissecting business models and company operations. I understood it all but had no desire to listen.”

Elyse, finding the situation amusing, ended up eating more than usual for breakfast.

After tidying up, they headed to Blue Sea Music Studio. Elyse planned to accompany Morgan inside, eager to surprise Cody.

She couldn’t wait to see Cody’s reaction upon meeting an old friend he hadn’t seen in over 20 years. Elyse was brimming with excitement.

Upon arriving at the studio, Morgan followed Elyse inside. They had come early, and the only person there was Gavin.

Gavin was casually eating a sandwich and sipping coffee at the coffee table. When he noticed Elyse, he looked surprised. “Have you recovered already? What brings you here?”

Chapter 633:

Elyse approached Gavin eagerly, her voice filled with anticipation. “Has Mr. Tucker arrived yet?”

Gavin glanced briefly at Morgan, who was curiously surveying the studio, before responding, “Not yet, but he should be here soon.” His gaze then shifted back to Elyse. “May I ask who this is?”

Morgan turned towards Gavin with a warm smile, extending her hand in greeting. “I’m here to see Cody.”

Elyse explained, “She’s an old friend of Mr. Tucker’s. They haven’t seen each other in over two decades. I wonder if he’ll recognize her.”

Gavin's eyebrows lifted in surprise. "Over two decades?"

Elyse nodded, guiding Morgan towards the sofa with a gentle gesture.

Moments later, the studio door creaked open, and Cody entered, carrying a violin case. He shut the door swiftly, shutting out the winter chill.

As Cody stepped inside, he felt someone's gaze on him. He intended to greet Elyse but was quickly drawn to the middle-aged woman seated beside her.

His eyes widened in recognition, memories flooding back like waves crashing against a shore. Softly, almost incredulously, he whispered, "Janet?"

Elyse watched in astonishment as Cody immediately recognized Morgan. She realized their connection must have been deep for Cody to remember her after so many years.

With a smirk playing on her lips, Morgan stood up boldly. "It's no longer Janet. It's Morgan now."

Startled for a moment, Cody placed his violin case down, his eyes darkening with emotion. "You wretched woman! Why are you still alive? What do you think you're doing, showing up here like this?"

Elyse felt a pang of unease. She had never expected Cody's first words to Morgan after over two decades to be so hostile. Her heart sank as she sensed the bitterness that still lingered between them.

Morgan listened calmly, her expression unreadable. She kept her back turned to Elyse, hiding a mischievous smirk.

In a pointed tone, Morgan replied, "Are you disappointed I'm not dead?"

Cody's face fell into his hands, grappling with the flood of emotions and memories. After a moment of heavy silence, he sighed deeply, his tone turning somber. "This isn't the place for this conversation. There's a café nearby. Let's talk there."

Morgan nodded in agreement and then turned to Elyse. "We'll be back soon. Please wait here."

"Sure," Elyse replied, scratching her head with a mix of confusion and curiosity as she watched them leave.

As they departed, Elyse turned to Gavin with a worried expression. "Do you think they'll argue? Mr. Tucker seems to have some resentment toward Morgan."

Gavin calmly took a sip of his coffee. "They're adults. Even if there's resentment, they'll resolve it."

Elyse nodded, her attention momentarily distracted by a bowl of candies on the table. She reached for one, unwrapping it and popping it into her mouth.

Gavin watched her for a moment before asking casually, "Have you been keeping up with your violin practice lately?"

Elyse nearly choked on her treat, clearing her throat before responding, "Of course I have."

With a curious glint in his eye, Gavin extended his violin case towards her. "Give it a whirl. Let's see if your skills have gotten rusty."

Elyse took the case, her mind momentarily blank. After a brief pause, she unlatched it, retrieved the violin, and positioned herself in front of Gavin, preparing to play.

As her fingers caressed the bow, a rush of memories flooded her mind. She imagined Cody and Morgan's long-awaited reunion, her concerns for Tracy and Shaun's relationship, thoughts of her lost child, and, of course, Jayden.



Though burdened by a multitude of sorrows within, the faintest warmth experienced in diverse encounters still imbued her with strength.

As the final notes faded into the air, Elyse lowered her bow and turned to Gavin.

Gavin made no comments about her performance, his thoughts drifting back to a conversation he'd had with Cody long ago, where Cody had described Elyse's music as emotionally rich, each note resonating with the echoes of her soul.

At the time, Gavin hadn't fully grasped the depth of Cody's observation. After all, he poured his own heart and soul into his violin playing. So why hadn't Cody labeled his music emotionally rich too?

After watching Elyse perform, he now understood the stark contrast in their approaches. Elyse's music carried the weight of raw emotion, effortlessly captivating listeners and guiding their emotions.

When her melodies whispered melancholy, her audience shared her sorrow. When her bow danced with joy, their spirits soared.

Gavin glanced at Elyse, a faint smile playing on his lips. "You probably don't get much practice time at home, do you?"

Chapter 634:

Elyse, feeling a pang of guilt, avoided making eye contact and admitted, "I've been feeling tired easily lately, so I haven't managed to practice for long stretches."

Gavin let out a sigh. "There's less than three months until the competition. You need to push yourself harder, or you'll end up embarrassing yourself on a global stage."

Feeling rebellious, Elyse retorted, "I doubt it! I'm confident I can earn everyone's applause."

Gavin cracked a smile and said, "Keep at it. Until Mr. Tucker is back, you need to continue playing the violin."

Looking resigned, Elyse replied softly, “Okay.”

As they chatted and laughed, they were unaware that Fiona had been observing them from a window for quite some time.

This was Fiona’s first visit to the studio since her disagreement with Gavin. She had come intending to follow Cody’s suggestion to apologize to Gavin and then resume her practice. However, spotting Elyse there, Fiona felt a surge of jealousy.

Elyse already had Jayden. Why then was she still sharing laughs and seeming so close with Gavin? Wasn’t she aware that being married meant she should steer clear of even the appearance of undue closeness with other men?

Fiona clenched her teeth and stormed off, deciding not to enter the studio.

After walking away, Fiona spent her day shopping at the mall. While there, she felt a pang of envy seeing the couples around her. She then entered a luxury handbag store. Inside, she watched a man purchasing bags for his wife using a credit card.

The woman’s joyful and self-satisfied expression ignited jealousy in Fiona. She found herself reminiscing about the joyful moments shared between Elyse and Jayden. Fiona wished she could be the one with Jayden.

Driven by her emotions, Fiona became fixated on seeing Jayden. She was determined that things needed to change. She felt an urgent need to convey to Jayden that she was the most suitable woman for him.

With that thought in mind, she hailed a taxi to the Bayzee Group.

Having recently spent a lot of time at home, she had conducted thorough online research about Jayden.

She discovered many details about him. For example, she learned that Jayden was once a key figure at the Owen Group and had become disabled following a car accident a

year ago. These were aspects of Jayden that were new to her, yet she was eager to learn more about him.

At the Bayzee Group, Fiona called out to the receptionist, "I'm a friend of Elyse Lloyd. She's Mr. Owen's wife, you know? I need to discuss something important with Mr. Owen concerning her."

Elyse's name was well-recognized at the Bayzee Group. After all, Jayden had recently introduced Elyse at the company, and everyone was aware of his deep affection for her.

Therefore, when Fiona mentioned she needed to speak with Jayden about Elyse, the receptionist quickly relayed the message.

Although Fiona was granted permission to go up, she felt no joy, only bitterness. The mere mention of Elyse's name seemed to instantly elevate the receptionist's demeanor. Fiona envisioned that once she became Jayden's wife, she would replace the current receptionist.

After Fiona took the elevator up to Jayden's office, she paused at the door when Tobin appeared. Tobin looked at Fiona with suspicion. "Are you really a friend of Mrs. Owen?"

In response, Fiona snapped back, "Why wouldn't I be her friend? I'm her violin practice partner."

Tobin remained cautious around her. "You mentioned you're here to discuss something about Mrs. Owen?"

Fiona persisted with her deception. "Yes, that's correct. Is there an issue?"

"What is the matter concerning her?" Tobin asked, maintaining his politeness but harboring deep suspicions.

Irritated by Tobin's demeanor, Fiona retorted sharply, "It's a matter I need to discuss with Jayden. What if your interference causes unnecessary delays?"

After a brief hesitation, Tobin knocked on Jayden's office door and entered following a response. He then stood by the door and briefly relayed the situation.

Fiona heard Jayden's voice saying, "Let her in," and she gave Tobin a triumphant smile.

Tobin, without further remarks, opened the door for Fiona, but his gaze was icy enough to chill. Tobin was a dedicated advocate for Elyse and believed she was the perfect partner for Jayden, making him vigilant about women who approached Jayden with hidden agendas. Fiona had already been fired by Tobin and was not allowed to see Jayden again.

## Chapter 635

"Greetings, Mr. Ruby Senior!"

It wasn't until those words were spoken that the Ruby family members came back to their senses and greeted Rowan. No one had expected him to appear in such a dramatic way.

They understood the reasoning behind his actions, though.

After all, if even Augustus could openly apologize to Felix, it was clear that Felix held an extraordinary status. Whether or not the Ruby family feared him was secondary, but they certainly didn't want to create a mysterious and powerful enemy unnecessarily.

"I've seen enough of the Ruby family's hospitality. It's not necessary to keep this up," Felix said coldly.

He sneered inwardly. Rowan clearly knew exactly what was happening. While he might not have orchestrated the events in the hall, there was no way he was unaware of them. If not for the Crayden family's appearance, this situation wouldn't have unfolded like this.

A dull thud echoed as Reid was about to apologize. He then rolled his eyes and collapsed to the floor.

"Dr. Zeller, I took the liberty of punishing him. Does this satisfy you?" Rowan asked.

Felix was momentarily stunned.

Rowan had been ruthless. He had directly severed Reid's spinal cord. Reid would spend the rest of his life confined to a bed, beyond the help of any so-called miracle doctor.

"Well, it seems you're a straightforward man. Since that's the case, I'll accept this as your apology. But if anything like this happens again, I'll leave immediately."

Rowan smiled. "Good, good! Rest assured, Dr. Zeller. As long as I'm here, the Ruby family will not offend you again."

He then turned to Augustus and added, "Augustus, please take a moment to rest in our home. Once I've finished here, I'll come to personally host you."

Augustus waved his hand. "No need to be so polite, Rowan. Dr. Zeller's matters take precedence. I wouldn't dream of imposing. I'll visit again another time."

With their objective achieved, Augustus and Axel left.

As for Reid's fate, the surrounding Ruby family members didn't dare utter a word. This was the authority of a patriarch. Moreover, it was clear that Reid was just a disposable pawn in the family. Otherwise, he wouldn't have been used as a scapegoat so blatantly.

Taking the elevator to the upper floors, Rowan explained with a smile, "Dr. Zeller, my apologies. The top three floors are reserved for our family elder's private quarters. No one is allowed to disturb him unless it concerns the survival of the family."

Felix nodded. "Understood. Besides, I'm not here for any grand gestures. My purpose is simple. I agreed to treat Rosalyn, and that's all."

Rowan gestured to the right and said, "That's a private room we've prepared for you, Dr. Zeller. You'll be undisturbed there. I trust you'll find it useful?"

Catching the subtle implications, Felix smiled lightly. "It seems you know that the bone isn't an ordinary object. Yes. I'll need two days to grind it into powder. Once that's done, I can use it to treat Rosalyn."

"Excellent! Seeing that you're a master of medicine, let's not waste time. Please, go ahead."

After Felix entered the room, Richard appeared.

"Father, do you really trust Felix?"

Rowan chuckled. "Trust isn't a matter of what you see with your eyes. The bone bears a mark left by our family

elder. If he tries to switch it for something else, the moment he leaves the building, the array in this building will detect it.

"Unless he truly grinds the bone into powder as he claims, there's no way to fool it."

Richard suddenly understood. "Ah, so that's why you insisted on bringing him here-to prevent any such tricks.

"But Father, what exactly is that bone? It's been passed down through generations, yet there's no information about it anywhere."

Chapter 636:

Cody looked at Fiona and immediately understood what had happened. His head spun, and he murmured, "Easy there," as Morgan, who had been right behind Cody, quickly stepped up to support him.

Gavin, lingering at the back, had no idea what had transpired. He swiftly moved forward to stand beside Elyse and saw the scene unfolding inside.

In a frantic state, Fiona attempted to fix her clothes, which only made things worse. It took a while before she managed to cover herself up.

Gripping the desk with trembling hands, Fiona looked up to meet Gavin's cold face. Quivering, she asked, "Gavin, why are you all here?"

Gavin's lips curled into a sardonic smile. "If we hadn't shown up, how would we have discovered your audacity to try and seduce Elyse's husband?"

Fiona forced a smile. "This is all a misunderstanding. It's not what it looks like. There's nothing between Jayden and me."

She turned to Jayden with desperate hope in her eyes. "Right, Jayden? Tell them there's nothing going on between us."

Jayden pointed to a surveillance camera in the corner of the ceiling and said, "It's your first time in my office, so you wouldn't know it's under constant surveillance. Every word and action of yours has been recorded. I can't vouch for your innocence, but mine is crystal clear."

"Surveillance?" Fiona looked up in panic, noticing the cameras in all four corners of the room. Fearfully, she stammered, "Why would you install cameras?"

Jayden sneered. "If I hadn't, what's to stop others from swiping company secrets while I'm not around?"

Fiona was speechless. She had thought of many excuses to defend herself, but deep down, she knew that once Jayden showed the footage, her defense would crumble.

After a brief struggle, Fiona finally gave in. With a heavy heart, she turned to Elyse, who had been silently watching the whole time. Unable to meet Elyse's scrutinizing gaze, Fiona lowered her eyes and said softly, "Elyse, if you have something to say, just say it. I can handle it."

Elyse tilted her head, a smile playing on her lips. "Fiona, do you want me to scold you so you can feel less guilty?"

Fiona avoided Elyse's eyes, too scared to respond. Elyse looked away and spoke slowly. "When you came to my house last time and offered to accompany me for my prenatal checkup, something felt off. You seemed overly concerned about my husband. I didn't want you to come to the hospital with me, but you insisted."

After a tense pause, Elyse's voice turned icy as she asked, "Fiona, on the day I lost my baby, did you purposely choose not to save me, waiting for me to lose my baby?"

Fiona's lip quivered as she bit down on it, her clenched fists betraying her fear.

Elyse continued, "You must have been over the moon when I lost my child, right?"

Gavin stood there in shock, unable to fathom that Fiona had done it intentionally. In utter disbelief, he questioned Fiona, "Elyse is your violin practice partner, your friend. How could you stand by and watch her lose her child?"

Filled with bitterness, Fiona replied, "Because I love him too. He's handsome, wealthy, and kind. Why couldn't I have him? What makes you better than me?"

Jayden stood up, his expression cold. "You're out of your mind comparing yourself to Elyse. How do you even measure up to her? With your ordinary looks?"

Fiona, stung by Jayden's harsh words, stared at him with a mix of emotions. "Is Elyse really that amazing in your eyes? Why would you go to such lengths for her?"

Jayden, perplexed, asked, "Stupid questions. In your mind, should I treat you well instead of her? Who do you think you are?"

Gavin, finding Fiona's words absurd, chimed in, "Do you think you can just claim any man you fancy, regardless of whether he has a partner? How is your behavior any different from that of a mistress?"

Fiona, momentarily stunned, quickly retorted, "You don't get it. Jayden and I had a special connection. It's destiny. We belong together."



## Chapter 637:

“Enough! Just stop.” Cody snapped back to reality. He strode over to Fiona, who had been trying to manipulate everyone with her prattle. The moment Fiona saw Cody, she fell silent, not daring to utter another word.

“Come out with me. We need a proper talk.” Cody’s tone was ice-cold. Turning to the others, he added, “I won’t be joining tonight’s dinner. You all go ahead without me. I’ll make it up to you with a meal next time.”

With that, Cody gave Fiona a pointed look, and she quickly followed him out.

Lingering by the door, Gavin wavered, unsure whether to follow Cody. Just then, Morgan approached, pulling Gavin aside and saying, “Come with me.” Gavin instinctively wanted to refuse, but seeing Elyse and Jayden, he inexplicably nodded and followed Morgan.

Tobin had also slipped away at some point.

Now, only Elyse and Jayden remained in the office. Jayden raised an eyebrow, noticing Elyse’s steady gaze. Clearing his throat, he asked, “Why are you looking at me like that?”

Elyse didn’t respond immediately. She walked into the office and shut the door behind her. Jayden asked tentatively, “Do you think I did a good job and want to reward me?”

Elyse pressed on, “Fiona has been pestering you for a while now. When did she start seeking you out?”

Jayden raised an eyebrow again, his expression unruffled. “It doesn’t matter. Every time she came near me, I told her to buzz off. My heart belongs to you alone.”

Elyse continued, “Then why does she keep saying meeting you was fate? When did you two cross paths, and what happened between you?”

Jayden crossed his arms, his demeanor unchanged. “That’s irrelevant. I didn’t do anything. She’s just daydreaming, making me the hero of her fantasies.”

Elyse took a deep breath before asking again, “If we hadn’t stumbled upon you and Fiona today, would you have ever mentioned what happened to me?”

Jayden shrugged, nonchalant. “It wasn’t worth mentioning. Telling you would have only caused unnecessary worry.”

Elyse laughed, but there was no joy in it. At that moment, she couldn’t decide if she was making a mountain out of a molehill or if she was simply forced to tolerate deception.

“Jayden, I remember you promised to share everything with me, no secrets. It seems that promise didn’t mean much to you,” Elyse said, her strained smile betraying her disappointment.

Jayden frowned, perplexed. “A promise, but is it really necessary to mention every little thing?”

Elyse, feeling drained, replied, “Then what does count as important? You didn’t tell me about your chat with Brook either, did you?”

Utterly bewildered, Jayden implored, “Haven’t I done enough? I stay steadfastly loyal and devoted to you alone. And I always keep women at arm’s length. Isn’t that enough?”

Feeling powerless, Elyse replied, “Jayden, my concerns have never been about loyalty. I trust that nothing happened between you and Fiona. I know you’re faithful in our relationship, but what about the issues that lie between us?”

Jayden furrowed his brow. “Aren’t our issues resolved? What’s there to discuss?”

Elyse was at a loss for words, her mouth agape. After a long pause, she looked at Jayden with a heavy heart.

“You’ve built an impenetrable fortress around your heart, and I can’t find a way in. You never share your past, your pain, your sorrows, or even your uncertainties with me.

You present yourself as the perfect husband, always wearing a mask of perfection. But I know this isn’t the real you. You never let anyone see the true you,” she said, her eyes welling up with tears and her voice trembling.

Jayden opened his mouth to respond, but for the first time, he found himself speechless. Because, in truth, he had never allowed anyone to breach the walls of his inner world.

So many years had drifted by, and Jayden had always worn his masks flawlessly. Whether he was the relentless CEO of the Owen Group or Elyse’s devoted husband, he played his roles to perfection. Yet, Elyse saw through the facade, recognizing the man beneath. But who was the real Jayden? Even he wasn’t sure.

As Jayden gazed at Elyse, he couldn’t help but admire her for seeing through his carefully crafted personas. She was at the gates of his heart, ready to step inside.

Yet, Jayden would never admit to being that kind of person. To do so would unravel years of carefully crafted roles.

Frustrated, Jayden retorted, “You think I’m just putting on an act? Do you see my sincerity as worthless and toss it aside like trash?”

Chapter 638:

Elyse’s reddened eyes welled with fresh tears as she choked out, “That’s not what I meant at all.”

Jayden’s frustration crackled in the air. “Then spit it out! Don’t you think I’m trying? What more do I need to do to make you happy?”

Elyse furrowed her brow, the gesture a desperate plea for understanding. “No, Jayden, that’s not it. You’ve completely misunderstood.”

Jayden snatched his phone from the desk, his jaw clenched. “Misunderstood? I don’t think so. Here I am, rejecting women left and right for you, and you’re still complaining? I have a meeting. You should head home first.”

Panic surged through Elyse as she realized the chasm of miscommunication. She lunged to explain, but Jayden held up a hand, his voice firm. “Go home, Elyse. Rest. Think about what you’ve done wrong. I’ll deal with this when I get home.”

Elyse stood rooted, stunned into silence as Jayden swept past her, leaving her alone in the sterile office. A suffocating despair settled over her as she wandered out of the Bayzee Group building, her steps heavy and directionless.

Back at home, Elyse collapsed onto the bed, burying herself beneath the covers. She gnawed on her finger, her mind a tangled mess. Could it truly be her fault?

Fiona trailed behind Cody, a silent shadow, as they returned to Blue Sea Music Studio. The atmosphere inside was thick with tension, Fiona perched gingerly on the sofa, afraid to break the suffocating silence.

Cody returned with two glasses of water, taking a long sip to compose himself before offering one to Fiona. She stared at the glass, the coolness a stark contrast to the turmoil brewing inside her.

Finally, after a leaden silence, Cody spoke, his voice low. “The recent change in your appearance—the manicures, the focus on beauty—it all started because of Jayden, didn’t it?”

Fiona, after a long, hesitant pause, finally nodded. “Yes, Mr. Tucker.”

“You are aware that Jayden is married to Elyse?” Cody’s voice was a quiet rumble.

Fiona offered a small, defeated nod.

“Do you understand the gravity of your actions?” Cody pressed.

Fiona remained silent, the weight of his words pressing down on her. Finally, she mumbled, her head hung low, "I know. I'm trying to take him from Elyse."

Cody exhaled a heavy sigh, the sound laced with disappointment. "Fiona, you're being incredibly selfish. You have such a promising future ahead of you. Why throw it all away for this?"

A flicker of defiance sparked in Fiona's eyes. "Just because I came along later doesn't mean I'm not right for him. Maybe he'd be happier with me."

Cody slammed his fist on the table, his voice rising in anger. "You're delusional! Are you sure this is love, or are you simply jealous of Elyse, envious of her life, and wanting to steal it?"

Fiona bit her lip, stung by his words. "Mr. Tucker, you don't understand love. How can you say what I feel isn't real? I'd do anything for Jayden. Isn't that love?"

Cody's gaze softened, replaced by a profound sadness. "Fiona, I had such high hopes for you." He moved to the window, his posture reflecting a deep well of memories.

"Do you remember when I first met you? Such a small girl lost in the joy of the violin playing. There was a genuine happiness on your face that has vanished. You've forgotten your passion, the music that once filled your heart."

Shame washed over Fiona. She had a question that had gnawed at her for years. Squirming in her seat, she blurted out, "Mr. Tucker, why did you take me on as your student? I wasn't talented like Elyse. Why me?"

Cody turned slowly, his gaze holding hers for a long moment. "Does a child with less talent not deserve a chance to learn?"

Fiona found this answer unsatisfactory. "But why keep a mediocre student like me?" she persisted.

Silence stretched between them, broken only by Cody's heavy sigh. "Honestly, Fiona," he admitted, a hint of amusement in his voice, "you made excellent tea. That's why you became my apprentice."

Fiona's jaw dropped. "That's it?"

Cody met her gaze with a knowing look. "The real reason I took you in, Fiona, is because you made the best tea."

Fiona was not satisfied. "Is that a valid reason?"

Cody sighed deeply. "Fiona, you've betrayed Elyse and refuse to accept responsibility. From now on, you are no longer my student."

Chapter 639:

Fiona's mind blanked out, and her face slowly paled. After a few silent seconds, it dawned on her that Cody wasn't joking. He genuinely intended to sever their mentor-apprentice relationship.

Shaking, Fiona asked in disbelief, "Mr. Tucker, are you serious? You're really letting me go as your apprentice?"

A flicker of hesitation crossed Cody's face, but he quickly regained composure, his voice firm. "You tried to seduce Elyse's husband, deeply hurting her. I can't justify keeping you here."

"But I just fell for her husband. What's wrong with that? Is loving someone a mistake?" Fiona defended herself, not feeling even a shred of wrongdoing.

Cody looked at her, disappointment evident. "Falling in love isn't the issue, but pursuing a married man is. You coveted Elyse's life and sought to replace her. That was your fault."

Tears streamed down Fiona's cheeks, not from guilt, but from frustration that no one understood her love. She had given up so much for it, yet even Cody failed to see her side.

With eyes red from crying and filled with bitterness, Fiona challenged him. “Mr. Tucker, do you really think expelling me over something so minor is justified?”

Cody replied steadily, “Yes, it is. Your actions have caused trouble that’s not easily resolved.”

Fiona sneered, her voice dripping with contempt. “Ridiculous! It’s you who are biased toward Elyse. Not just you, but Gavin and Irving as well. You all favor her. The problem lies with you.”

Cody exhaled deeply, his tone level yet firm. “If the roles were reversed, if it were Elyse who had seduced the husband of my other apprentice, I would have expelled her as well. I’ve always treated everyone the same.”

Fiona’s voice cracked as she screamed in despair, “That’s a lie! In your heart, Elyse is the one who matters. What am I then, to you?”

Cody furrowed his brow, struggling to find a way to soothe the agitated Fiona. Realizing the futility of the argument, Fiona’s shoulders slumped. “Enough. I am no longer your apprentice. Whether you’re biased or not doesn’t matter anymore. I’m leaving.”

Without sparing Cody another glance, she turned and walked away.

As she stormed out, she ran into Irving, who was casually strolling toward the studio. Noticing Fiona’s furious expression, Irving asked with a hint of bewilderment, “Why the long face? What’s gotten into you?”

Fiona had always harbored a strong dislike for Irving. As she brushed past him, she couldn’t resist the urge to shove him hard. Caught off guard, Irving nearly toppled over. He staggered back, regaining his balance after a few shaky steps.

Watching Fiona storm off, Irving shook his head, puzzled by her outburst. Given their mutual dislike, he chose not to waste his time talking to her.

Once inside the studio, Irving encountered Cody. Cody appeared to have aged dramatically, collapsing wearily onto the sofa. Irving barely caught the sound of Cody's deep sigh.

Irving scratched his nose, his voice tinged with confusion. "Mr. Tucker, what's going on? I saw Fiona storm out."

Silence hung in the air for a few seconds before Cody responded, "Fiona is no longer your junior, nor is she my apprentice anymore. Make sure Elyse and Gavin get the message."

Irving was stunned, his thoughts scattering. "Has Fiona been expelled by you? What happened?"

Cody let out a weary sigh. "It's a grave matter." He avoided further explanation, suggesting that Irving ask Gavin, then he left the studio.

Left alone in the studio, Irving felt overwhelmed. He stood in silence for several minutes, processing the news, then pulled out his phone to call Gavin.

When Gavin learned of Fiona's expulsion, he let out a resigned sigh. "You should talk to Elyse. I'm tied up with some things here."

"Alright, handle it. Take care of your matter," Irving responded, then tried to reach Elyse. However, her phone went unanswered, prompting him to send a text.

Meanwhile, Elyse was cocooned in her comforter in bed, her mind racing and unable to find sleep. Her phone rang, but she felt no desire to answer. After much thought, Elyse decided to wait for Jayden's return to discuss her thoughts, but he did not come home that night.

Chapter 640:

The evening unfolded in a local bar, where Jayden, already nursing his second drink, awaited Peyton. Despite the setting being casual, the atmosphere was anything but relaxed. Peyton, no longer confined by his cast but still using a wheelchair, wheeled into the bar with caution.



Peyton approached Jayden and took a seat next to him, grabbing a bottle and cracking it open. “Why the sudden call? Missing company? You have Elyse, don’t you? Why drag us out?” he asked with a smile.

Jayden ignored the question and inquired instead, “Where’s Clive? When’s he showing up?”

Peyton took a hearty gulp from his bottle. “Caught up in a last-minute meeting, but he’ll swing by later,” he replied, pausing as he caught the troubled expression on Jayden’s face.

He leaned in, concern evident. “Everything alright, buddy? You and Elyse haven’t been at it again, have you? It’s none of my business, but she’s still on the mend. You guys shouldn’t be fighting.”

Jayden’s expression darkened, his brows knitting together. “It wasn’t me who started it. Elyse is the one stirring things up. No matter what I do, it’s never good enough for her. She’s always dissatisfied.”

Peyton, sipping his drink, threw a half-teasing, half-serious comment back. “Maybe you’re just not doing enough, huh?”

It was hard for Jayden to tell if Peyton was joking or not. “Are you even hearing me? It doesn’t matter what I do; she’s never pleased.”

“Then hear me out,” Peyton said, giving Jayden a look. “Elyse’s hardly the type to be ungrateful. If she says you’re not cutting it, then you’re probably not.”

Jayden’s expression darkened further, his voice edged with frustration. “Whose side are you on? Mine or hers? How can you even agree with her?”

Peyton chuckled lightly. “Hey, I’m on your side—really, I am. You might think you’re doing enough and that Elyse should be happy with what she’s getting, but maybe it’s not actually what she needs. Perhaps you’re missing what she’s truly after.”

Jayden went quiet, his features tightening. Peyton continued, a hint of seriousness under his casual tone. “Plus, we all know how much Elyse has put up with for you. She stood by you even when you pretended to be disabled, lost a child amid all the family chaos.”

Jayden took a slow sip of his drink, his response muted.

Peyton finished his beer quickly and then asked nonchalantly, “So, what did Elyse say you failed to do this time? And why can’t you do it?”

“Just about my past,” Jayden muttered, letting out a weary sigh.

An understanding “Oh” escaped Peyton as he nodded, piecing things together. “Really, is it necessary to keep bringing up my past in a relationship?” Jayden argued, his tone challenging. “Why not focus on the future and leave the past behind?”

Peyton responded thoughtfully, “Your idea seems sensible at first glance, but dig a little deeper, and it starts to look a bit questionable.”

Jayden raised an eyebrow. “Are you sure you’re a surgeon? You sound more like a therapist.”

Peyton retorted with a smirk, “Isn’t it expected for a doctor to have a broad range of knowledge?” He cracked open another beer and took a deep gulp.

“People should look to the future. Perhaps Elyse feels she can’t connect with you emotionally, and that’s why she’s so intrigued by your past.”

Jayden’s gaze hardened. “Why do you have the impression that you’re here as Elyse’s advocate, trying to coax things out of me for her?”

Peyton laughed lightly. “I’m here for your own good, buddy. I get why you’re hesitant to open up. Your past is pretty grim, and you’re afraid of Elyse finding out.”

He paused, looking intently at Jayden. “You need to trust that Elyse is the kind of woman who would stick by you, not ditch you over some minor issue.”

Jayden remained silent for a while, then spoke, "Do you really think Elyse would stay if she knew everything? I'm not convinced. She'd bolt if she discovered my whole story."

Peyton cut in sharply. "It's not that you fear Elyse won't believe you; you lack belief in yourself."

Jayden frowned. "Why wouldn't I believe in myself?"

"Don't get too caught up in hiding the past," Peyton shrugged nonchalantly. "I've been in the dating game for a while now, encountering many women, some with traits similar to yours."

"Screw off," Jayden snapped. "You're the one behaving like a woman!"