

Bound love 701

Chapter 701:

Lost in thought, Elyse concluded her performance.

The garden fell quiet again, the melancholic yet beautiful strains of music lingering in the still night air.

Elyse gazed thoughtfully out the window. Felicia remained silent, seemingly fast asleep and heard nothing.

With a hand in his pocket, Pearce suggested, "Forget it. Grandma must be asleep by now. If not, she would've already scolded you."

Elyse stroked her chin, deep in thought. "Well, there's not much I can do now. But I've fulfilled the wish. I'll leave at first light."

Pearce's curiosity grew. "Whose wish did you fulfill? Was it your own?"

Elyse flashed Pearce a secretive smile. "I won't tell you just yet."

Pearce glanced at his watch and said, "Alright, alright. You can tell me later. For now, let's get some food. Aren't you thirsty?"

Hearing this, Elyse frowned and replied, "Yes, I'm incredibly thirsty. And I'm starving, I could devour a cow now."

Pearce chuckled and responded, "Let's go then. I know a place for some good beef."

Elyse and Pearce departed, their laughter echoing as they talked.

From behind the curtains of a second-story window, Felicia, clad in pajamas, sat quietly in a chair, gripping her cane.

Once the voices disappeared, Felicia stood, lifted the curtain slightly, and peered outside.

The garden was empty, making the earlier music seem like a figment of her imagination.

Felicia dropped the curtain and returned to bed, but sleep eluded her.

She wasn't well-versed in music, yet the tune she'd heard resonated with her, stirring a vague nostalgia as if from a distant past.

Later, after dining, Elyse returned home to pack her bags for an early flight.

Unaware of Elyse's earlier constraints imposed by Felicia, Gavin approached and inquired, "Why did your grandma insist you stay for dinner right before your departure?" This was the cover story Elyse had crafted for Felicia.

Felicia's reputation was so tarnished in the eyes of Gavin and Cody that it could hardly get any worse. Otherwise, Gavin and Cody might become overly concerned for Elyse.

Elyse smiled and explained, "That's just how the elderly are sometimes. They say one thing but mean another."

Gavin nodded in understanding and mentioned, "Just now, Irving sent me a text. He's about to board his flight and will meet us at our destination."

Elyse nodded, pressed down on her suitcase, struggled to close it, and exclaimed excitedly, "I'm all set!"

At dawn, Elyse, Cody, and Gavin took off on a flight headed for another country, Manfek.

Meanwhile, in Cambape, Richie was in his hotel room, watching as his performance went viral online. The comments overflowed, with fans praising his performance.

He was eager to post photos of himself and Elyse and planned to caption them, “Shoutout to my awesome friend for boosting my performance today! Ready to dive into the action and hopefully set the stage on fire next time.”

Meanwhile, Tobin was in his office, taking a break by browsing the web.

Since Elyse left home, Jayden had thrown himself into work, becoming a workaholic. From the moment he woke up, he was either working or planning work, pushing his employees to increase their pace.

Chapter 702:

At that moment, Tobin missed Elyse, wishing she would forgive Jayden and return soon.

Just then, Tobin noticed Richie trending online and clicked to watch his performance. He spotted Elyse in the background.

With a racing heart and shaky hand, Tobin clicked on Richie’s profile and saw pictures of him with Elyse.

Tobin’s eyes widened immediately. He finally had news of Elyse. Better days seemed on the horizon.

He rushed to Jayden’s office, struggling to keep his excitement in check, and knocked on the door.

“Come in,” came Jayden’s response.

Upon entering, Tobin felt as if he had walked into a freezer. Despite the lights being on, the office seemed gloomy and chilly.

He shivered, then approached Jayden with a serious demeanor.

Jayden was reviewing a document and didn't look up. He asked calmly, "What's the issue?"

Tobin presented the photo on his phone. "Sir, I have information on Elyse's whereabouts."

Hearing Elyse's name, Jayden's mind momentarily went blank. After a few seconds, he regained his composure and looked at the phone.

It was truly Elyse.

She appeared vibrant, her eyes shining with energy and optimism.

The man next to Elyse looked familiar to Jayden. He recalled that the man's name was Richie, a relative of Cody.

With his emotions under tight control, Jayden demanded sternly, "Track Elyse's location. I need a full report on her activities within half an hour."

"Yes, sir," Tobin replied and exited the office.

As soon as the door shut, he couldn't hold back his glee and started dancing a little.

He was certain Jayden wouldn't ignore any lead on Elyse.

The morning following Elyse's departure, Pearce was absorbed in his work at the office when his assistant, Glenn, entered. "Your grandma has arrived," Glenn declared, interrupting Pearce's concentration.

"What? Why is she here?" Pearce asked, placing his paperwork aside, a wrinkle of worry forming on his forehead as he moved towards the door.

In the lounge sat Felicia. Catching sight of Pearce, she stated plainly, "You have one hour to bring Elyse to me."

Pearce stopped, puzzled. He couldn't grasp why Felicia continued to go after Elyse, especially since the latter had just left.

"I will not do it," Pearce stated firmly. "Can't you just leave Elyse alone?"

The sharpness in Felicia's eyes deepened, pressing on Pearce as if it were a physical force. "I am aware of your fondness for her, but our family has its rules. Now that she's back with us, she must conform."

Felicia's stubbornness left Pearce speechless. He massaged his temples, trying to explain calmly, "Grandma, Elyse isn't really a Benson. She has shown no interest in being part of our family."

Felicia dismissed the remark with a sneer. "That's ridiculous! She's back with us now, which makes her a Benson. Isn't her father, my own son?"

Chapter 703:

Pearce realized that arguing with his grandmother was pointless. He admitted, "Elyse came back only to visit you on behalf of her father, but you have never really embraced her. Why would she want to stay with us?"

He paused, then cautiously continued, "Moreover, during her stay in town, you've treated her terribly, always scolding and punishing her. You even locked her in a dark room without any food or water."

Felicia glared at Pearce.

Pearce slightly winced but stood his ground, adding firmly, "We're meant to be family, yet you treat her as if she doesn't belong. Why would she ever want to stay with us?"

Visibly irate, Felicia responded sharply, "I won't debate this with you. Call Elyse out here now, I want to hear it from her."

"It's too late," Pearce replied calmly. "Elyse has already left."

“How disrespectful!” Felicia shouted, striking the floor with her cane.

“When she was here, you refused to speak to her. Now that she’s gone, you suddenly want to talk?” Pearce pointed out.

Just then, Glenn approached and respectfully announced, “Ms. Bentley has just arrived.”

“Ms. Bentley? Are you referring to Victoria Bentley?” Pearce asked, his tone uncertain.

Glenn confirmed with a nod. “Yes, she’s here, and she’s brought Forrest with her.”

Pearce murmured to himself, “Why did she bring her son? Is she trying to cause trouble?”

Calmly, Felicia suggested, “Why not go and see for yourself instead of guessing?”

Feeling slightly rebuked, Pearce rubbed his head, sighed deeply, and declared, “Alright, I’ll go and see her.”

As they entered the reception room, their gaze landed on Victoria. She was standing, captivated by the expansive view that the large windows offered. Noticing their presence, her focus changed, and her face lit up with a smile. “It’s been a while,” she said warmly.

Pearce returned the smile. “Indeed, it has. I think it’s been several years since we last saw each other?”

Victoria replied, maintaining a cool distance, “I think that sounds about right.”

They exchanged brief pleasantries before sitting down across from each other.

Pearce took the lead in the conversation. “Ms. Bentley, may I ask what brings you here today?”

Victoria arched an eyebrow and crossed her arms. “You’re not aware? Elyse didn’t mention my visit?”

Pearce’s thoughts were in turmoil. How was Elyse connected to all this? Yet, she hadn’t breathed a word of it to him.

Victoria’s comment seemed to provoke Felicia, who looked visibly upset. “Has Elyse caused some trouble?” she asked, turning to Pearce. “I’ve always said she needs to be disciplined more. She must learn proper behavior!”

Pearce’s face grew stern, and he spoke firmly. “Grandma, Ms. Bentley hasn’t given us any details yet, so please refrain from jumping to conclusions!”

At Pearce’s response, Felicia became visibly angry. “Are you suggesting I am treating her unfairly? How much does that unrefined girl really understand about manners?”

“Grandma!” Pearce’s patience had reached its limits. His tone grew louder. “Please take some time to truly understand her before you judge her. I’m not sure where these ideas are coming from, but I will not stand by while you disparage her like this!”

Felicia gasped, her hand flying to her chest as she struggled for air.

Chapter 704:

Watching the intense exchange, Victoria couldn’t help but smirk. “Interesting turn of events,” she commented. “But let’s remember why I’m actually here—to talk about the partnership.”

A heavy silence fell over the room, leaving Pearce visibly confused. “Excuse me, did you mention... a partnership?”

Victoria nodded affirmatively. “Yes, that’s right. Elyse gave me a very promising response, so I’m here to explore the possibility of a partnership.”

After a few moments of thought, Pearce, clearly puzzled, asked, “What did Elyse discuss with you at your banquet?”

Victoria was taken aback. “She didn’t tell you?”

Pearce shook his head. He had tried to ask Elyse, but her responses were always evasive.

Victoria got straight to the point and explained, “She was apologizing for Rickey and mentioned things that helped me move past it.”

Suddenly, it clicked for Pearce. He remembered how Elyse often spoke of wishes and regrets. Perhaps meeting Victoria was also on the list of her wishes?

Victoria thought back to that day’s events and couldn’t stop laughing. She had aimed a gun at Elyse’s waist, yet Elyse showed no fear and even boldly looked her straight in the eyes.

The first time Victoria met Rickey, she had similarly aimed a gun at his head. Throughout the encounter, Rickey begged for mercy relentlessly. Interestingly, Victoria had threatened Rickey with a fake gun, whereas she had pointed a real one at Elyse.

Victoria noticed some similarities between Rickey and Elyse, yet Elyse displayed her unique qualities. That was part of the reason Victoria found herself not wanting to pull the trigger.

Laughing, Victoria said, “Pearce, your cousin is truly one of a kind. I’m open to discussing a partnership with you, all thanks to her.”

Pearce was astounded. He hadn’t anticipated that Elyse, in her brief time in Cambape, would play a role in securing a significant project.

Upon hearing this, Felicia became restless and urgently inquired, “Didn’t Elyse badmouth Thea when she met with you?”

Victoria looked confused and turned to Pearce, asking, “What do you mean by this?”

Pearce just shook his head.

Then Forrest intervened to clarify for Felicia. He said, “You mean Thea Benson? She’s nothing but a bootlicker to me. I’m bored of her and in the market for a new one, so I drove her away.”

Felicia didn’t believe it. “Are you sure this has nothing to do with Elyse?”

Forrest quirked an eyebrow. “At that banquet, Elyse spent her time talking with my mom. I barely spoke with her.”

Felicia was utterly stunned. It dawned on her that she might have misjudged Elyse.

Unaware of the tension between Felicia and Elyse, Victoria said, “Elyse is more admirable than her father. Next time, if the opportunity arises, let’s share a meal. I’d like to spend more time talking with her.”

Pearce nodded. “Absolutely, once Elyse is done with her competition, I’ll set it up.”

Victoria grew curious. “Competition? What kind of competition? Is it something I can watch?”

“Definitely. I’ll make the arrangements for you.” Pearce realized that bridging the gap with the Bentley family was simply a matter of involving Elyse.

With Victoria showing an interest in getting to know Elyse better, Pearce was more than happy to help.

Chapter 705:

While Victoria and Pearce were animatedly discussing Elyse, Felicia found herself unable to focus on their conversation. Her thoughts were in disarray. She wasn’t sure if the shock had overwhelmed her or if her advancing age was slowing her down.

Eventually, she came to understand that she had been misled by Thea and had wronged her own granddaughter.

Felicia was so upset that she nearly tumbled from her chair.

Forrest noticed Felicia's distress and considerably suggested, "Mrs. Benson, you seem unwell. Would you like to go home and rest?"

Turning to see Felicia's pale face, Pearce asked, "Grandma, are you all right? Should I take you to the hospital?"

Regaining some clarity, Felicia clutched Pearce's hand and urgently asked, "Where's Elyse? I need to see her. I have something important to tell her."

Pearce responded with a hint of resignation, "As I mentioned before, Elyse is overseas competing. She left yesterday."

"When is she coming back?" Felicia asked, reluctant to accept the situation.

"Well..." Pearce hesitated, reluctant to admit that Elyse had no immediate plans to return to Cambape. She might travel elsewhere after the competition.

Elyse had said she didn't have a home, so she was free to go anywhere.

Pearce stammered, "Maybe she'll come back after the competition."

Felicia sensed Pearce's hesitation and questioned him, "Are you keeping something from me?"

With a bitter smile, Pearce admitted, "Grandma, Elyse never really felt at home here. It's hard to say when she'll visit again."

Felicia tensed up. Her hand loosened as she whispered, "You're right. She never saw the Bensons as her home. That was my fault."

Witnessing Felicia's sudden sadness, Pearce was unsure how to console her. He reassured her, "Don't be so hard on yourself. Elyse has a big heart. She'll come back to visit us eventually."

Victoria, realizing the mood had shifted, rose and said, "Mr. Benson, I'll have my team follow up on our agreement later. I look forward to a fruitful collaboration."

Pearce nodded and escorted Victoria and Forrest to the elevator. He then returned to find Felicia looking desolate. "Grandma, let's not linger on this. Let's get you home."

Felicia remained silent for a long moment before nodding. She picked up her cane and slowly made her way out of the reception area. Pearce trailed behind, noticing how Felicia's stooped posture seemed to age her further.

After dropping Felicia off at her home, Pearce quickly drove back to his office.

Once home, Felicia instructed her maid, "Please fetch Thea for me."

The maid acknowledged and left to find Thea.

Thea, unaware of what had happened, thought Felicia missed her. As she approached Felicia, Thea greeted her with a cheerful smile and teased, "Grandma, did you miss me? Because I sure missed you."

Felicia looked at the granddaughter she had adored for over two decades, struck by a sudden realization that she might not know Thea as well as she thought.

Felicia remained silent, lost in thought. Thea, feeling the tension, straightened up and asked cautiously, "Grandma, why are you so quiet?"

Felicia shifted her gaze away from Thea and instructed the maid nearby, "Bring the ferule."

The maid briefly hesitated but soon brought the ferule as instructed.

Chapter 706:

Thea, in disbelief that the ferule was intended for her, questioned, “Grandma, what are you planning to do with the ferule?”

Felicia gestured toward Thea and said, “Those who misbehave must be punished. You need a good beating, or you’ll forget who truly rules this house.”

Thea was stunned. Her grandma was ordering her to be punished. But why?

Before Thea could voice her confusion, the maid forced her down and delivered a sharp blow to her buttocks.

Thea cried out. “Ouch! Grandma, what have I done to deserve this? Please explain.”

Felicia gave a dismissive snort. “Still playing innocent, are you?” Felicia then instructed the maid, “Continue until she admits her faults.”

It dawned on Thea that Felicia might know something, which explained the harsh punishment. Realizing that denying was futile, Thea quickly confessed, “Grandma, I admit my mistake. I framed Elyse. It was wrong of me to frame her.”

Upon hearing the confession, Felicia’s heart grew heavier. She had indeed caused injustice to Elyse.

Trying to hold back her emotions, Felicia instructed, “Take Thea to the dark room. She needs time to think over her actions.”

Two days later, Elyse, Cody, and Gavin landed in Manfek. They met up with Irving at the airport before making their way to the hotel.

Cody kept busy, driven by his old friend’s enthusiasm for music, and headed off to a different location.

Once Elyse, Irving, and Gavin reached the hotel, they freshened up with quick showers and then rested to overcome the jet lag. After a full day's sleep, Elyse woke up feeling peckish. She changed her outfit and set out to find Irving and Gavin.

Upon hearing a knock, Irving answered the door and asked, "What's up? Couldn't sleep?"

"Let's go eat!" Elyse rubbed her belly and pouted. "I'm starving. How about we go grab something to eat?"

Irving also felt a hint of hunger and patted his stomach. "Hang on, I need to change," he said, walking into his room.

Elyse walked in and took a seat, scanning the room, and noticed Gavin was not there.

When Irving returned, dressed and ready, Elyse inquired with curiosity, "Where's Gavin? Still asleep?"

"He went out; apparently he has a meeting about the competition," Irving replied, checking the competition schedule on his phone. "You've got half a month before your event. Don't forget your violin. We'll find a place to practice after we eat."

Elyse's smile waned a bit. Under Irving's insistence, she grabbed her violin case as they set out in search of food. Irving, familiar with the area from a previous competition, led them to the best local eatery.

Strolling through the town, they came across a restaurant marked by several pots of fading roses at the entrance. Elyse walked to the door, looking down at the cracked soil in the pots.

Irving swung open the glass door, and a wave of wine scent hit them. Elyse took a sniff and felt a bit tipsy.

Irving grabbed a menu from the owner and quickly flipped through it, then turned to Elyse and asked, "What do you want to eat?"

Elyse scanned the menu briefly and pointed out her choices. “Escargot, duck confit, French onion soup, beef bourguignon... That should do it.”

Irving expressed concern. “I hope the wine doesn’t affect your ability to play the violin later.”

Elyse responded defiantly, “A little wine won’t make me drunk.”

Irving raised an eyebrow, offering a sly smile. “Then let’s order a drink for you as well.”

Elyse huffed. “Fine by me. I can handle it.”

Chapter 707:

Soon after, the owner came over with their wine first. Elyse lifted the glass to her nose and inhaled deeply. The enticing aroma made her eager to taste it.

Suddenly, a cold sensation of danger brushed against her back.

Startled, Elyse scanned the room cautiously for any signs of threat.

Irving, with his wine in hand, noticed her actions and asked, “What’s going on?”

Seeing nothing out of the ordinary, Elyse responded, a bit disheartened, “It’s nothing. I just felt like I was being watched.”

Irving gave her a quick look and teased, “You’re all bundled up. Who’d notice your pretty face?”

Elyse gritted her teeth. “That’s not what I meant.”

Irving gazed out the window and said, “It’s quite cold today. Looks like it might snow.”

Elyse let out a sigh. “There’s already plenty of snow on the ground. We don’t need more.”

Leaning on one hand, Irving said, “But isn’t there something special about playing the violin in the snow?”

Elyse looked at him, both stunned and curious. “Irving, you really think that?”

She took another sip from her glass.

In an instant, that strange sense of killing intent enveloped her back again.

Quickly, Elyse set down her glass and turned around. The other guests were merely enjoying their meals, nothing amiss.

Elyse started to question herself. Was she just being overly sensitive or self-centered?

Irving, oblivious to her discomfort, was still gazing out the window.

Lost in thought, Elyse was suddenly distracted by the sound of piano music filling the restaurant.

Everyone’s attention was drawn to the music.

Elyse turned her head curiously toward the music. The pianist was a man donned in a knitted hat and a green checkered scarf, his face nearly hidden.

Yet, Elyse recognized the melody.

Perhaps encouraged by the wine, Elyse approached the pianist and asked, “Hello, would you like to play together?”

The man looked up, his eyes reflecting surprise and shyness, and murmured, “What piece do you want to play?”

Elyse asked, “Can you play ‘He’s A Pirate’?”

He nodded and answered with a few introductory notes.

Elyse nodded, clearly surprised. “Yes, that’s it. Just give me a moment.”

She hurried back to her seat, popped open her violin case, and under the watchful, expectant gazes of the crowd, she approached the pianist.

Irving observed Elyse quietly, even pulling out his phone to capture the moment for her. Elyse and the man looked at each other, an immediate mutual understanding passing between them, and they began to play in unison.

“Wow, it’s incredible.” An onlooker in the restaurant, enthralled by the performance, couldn’t help but exclaim.

Irving wasn’t the only one recording; nearly everyone had their phones out, eager to capture the beautiful duet. Soon, they reached the stirring climax of the piece, blending delicacy with intensity. Elyse masterfully captured the mood, her playing resonating with strength and emotion in the crowd.

Chapter 708:

When the piece ended, the man stood up and extended his hand to Elyse, introducing himself, “I’m David Lawson. It was wonderful to perform with you.”

Elyse returned the smile. “I’m Elyse Lloyd. Hopefully, we can work together again soon.”

David and Elyse exchanged pleased smiles.

Suddenly, that unnerving sensation of malice targeted Elyse once more.

Startled, Elyse quickly let go of David's hand and turned to find out who was so perverse as to keep watching her.

Seeing her distressed, David asked with a puzzled look, "Everything alright?"

Elyse, failing to spot anyone suspicious, turned back somewhat embarrassed. "Sorry, just ignore that."

She walked back to where Irving was with her violin in tow.

Irving, seeing her return, teased, "How does it feel to provide a free concert?"

Elyse, glowing with joy, replied passionately, "It's truly a privilege to play the violin. Music empowers people. I feel so energized now, like I've conquered the oceans."

Irving chuckled and handed her a fork. "Miss Pirate, let's eat first. Afterward, we can head to a park to practice."

"Okay, I got it." Elyse, feeling ravenous, immediately started eating.

Once they finished eating, they bundled up against the chill and ventured out to find a suitable practice spot.

Nearby, there was a small park where the orange streetlights cast a gentle glow on the snowy ground.

Elyse moved with difficulty, unsure if the deep snow or her heavy violin case was slowing her down.

Irving reached a bench first, cleared off the light dusting of snow, and dried it with a handkerchief.

He turned around and noticed Elyse was having trouble keeping pace.

Irving observed her briefly, then asked with a hint of concern, “Are you feeling alright? You seem a bit off.”

Elyse paused, then denied it with a shake of her head. “No, it’s just that the snow is really thick and tough to walk through.”

Irving still seemed unsure. He stooped down to gauge her state more closely. Seeing that her face wasn’t red, he felt more at ease. “Alright. Would you like to take a break, or are you ready to start practicing?”

Elyse set her violin case on the bench, retrieved her violin, and said firmly, “I’m ready to practice.”

“Alright, begin whenever you’re ready.” Irving settled onto the bench, hands tucked in his pockets, and watched Elyse intently.

Elyse began to play her violin, choosing pieces at random as nothing specific came to mind.

During her fifth piece, a tall figure approached from behind.

The man was wrapped up, his face completely obscured.

Elyse and Irving, feeling secure and undisturbed, ignored the approaching man.

Thus, they were taken by surprise when the man swiftly reached into Elyse’s pocket, stealing her wallet, and Irving only realized what happened when it was too late.

“That damned thief! He can’t get away!” Irving got up from the bench and took off after the thief.

Elyse, stunned by the sudden theft, felt her mind go blank.

Chapter 709:

In that moment, she wondered if she might actually be a bit tipsy.

Elyse stood there, collecting her thoughts, the chill hitting her face sharply.

She looked up to see snowflakes beginning to fall.

She watched the snow for a moment, recalling Irving's earlier prediction of snow in the restaurant.

As a snowflake drifted toward her, she reached out and caught it gently in her hand.

While gazing at the snowflake resting in her palm, Elyse sensed a presence and looked up.

Jayden, dressed in a gray coat and carrying a black umbrella, was staring directly at her.

Elyse was rooted to the spot, their eyes locked.

Time seemed to stretch, and Jayden slowly moved toward her under the glow of the orange streetlights.

At that moment, the rest of the world fell silent to Elyse, her focus solely on Jayden.

With each step he took, the sound resonated like a heartbeat, syncing with Elyse's own heart.

Jayden was standing in front of Elyse, shielding her with an umbrella.

Elyse slightly parted her lips, unsure of how to respond.

Seeing her astonished look, Jayden unexpectedly felt a surge of comfort.

He scoffed, “Are you a fool? You know you can’t handle your liquor, yet you still choose to drink outside?”

Elyse was stunned. Was this really Jayden? Was he the one she had been thinking about day and night, or was he just a figment of her imagination?

Noticing Elyse’s confused expression, Jayden laughed out of frustration. “Don’t you remember how you tend to kiss people randomly when you’re drunk?”

At that moment, Elyse snapped back to reality and naively questioned, “When have I ever kissed people randomly?”

Jayden clenched his teeth. “So, you’ve forgotten kissing me too, have you?”

Elyse tried to remember, but her thoughts were jumbled. She couldn’t recall a thing.

She was merely bewildered by Jayden’s presence.

She reached out to touch his face, tentatively asking, “Are you the real Jayden or just my imagination?”

Feeling the chill of her touch, Jayden quickly caught her hand, warming it with his own.

Elyse also sensed Jayden’s warmth and hesitantly asked, “Are you alive?”

Jayden laughed out of frustration. He had tracked down her flight details and flown over on a private plane.

He had been following her all day, yet she still questioned his existence.

Growing even more exasperated, Jayden exclaimed, “You don’t even know if I’m alive or dead?”

Elyse gazed at Jayden, feeling somewhat wronged. “You appear in my dreams every day. How can I be sure if you’re real now or just a hallucination after drinking?”

Jayden was once again at a loss for words because of her.

Releasing her cold hand, he grasped the back of her head and kissed her while she looked on, puzzled.

Chapter 710:

The woman he had loved deeply was now right before him.

He desired to kiss her fiercely as a reprimand for her sudden departure.

As Jayden kept kissing her, he realized Elyse had become silent. When he pulled away, he saw that she had fallen asleep.

He couldn’t fathom that she had actually fallen asleep!

He was furious to the point of feeling pain inside, yet unable to act against her.

Jayden maintained a stoic expression. He lifted Elyse with one arm and sat her down on the bench.

He continued to stand there, holding the umbrella, protecting her from the wind and rain.

About ten minutes later, Irving arrived with a pink wallet.

Seeing Elyse with her head lowered, sitting on the bench, Irving suspected something was wrong.

He quickly approached her and checked on her. Upon discovering she was asleep, he let out a sigh of relief.

He said, "I told you, you had too much to drink, but you wouldn't admit it."

He gathered up the violin and then noticed something odd.

The violin case was dusted with a thin layer of snow, but Elyse remained untouched by it.

Irving scanned the area but found no one else around, which left him confused.

"Hey, wake up. Don't sleep here; you'll catch a cold," Irving said as he gently tapped Elyse's face.

Elyse mumbled in her sleep, sinking even deeper into slumber.

"You're really lucky to have a friend like me," Irving said quietly in defeat, lifted Elyse onto his back, and quietly made his way to the hotel.

Unknown to Irving, Jayden silently observed them from behind a large tree as they departed.

After her night of drinking, Elyse slept deeply.

She awoke the next morning.

She stretched leisurely in bed, and then memories of the previous night flooded back to her.

Jayden! He had appeared and kissed her.

Elyse instinctively touched her lips, feeling the residual warmth from Jayden's kiss.

Eager to verify if Jayden had really been there, Elyse hurried to the next room and knocked on the door. Irving, still groggy and unkempt, opened the door, asking impatiently, “What now?”

Elyse cautiously inquired, “Irving, did you see Jayden yesterday?”

Irving’s face crumpled with indignation as he snapped, “Jayden? You were so drunk yesterday, remember?”

Elyse, undeterred, pressed on. “Irving, did you see Jayden or not?”

Irving scratched his head in frustration. “There was no one else there. You’re just missing him so much you’re seeing things.”

Elyse’s resolve wavered under Irving’s adamant denial. Had she really been so drunk that she had imagined the whole thing?

Seeing Elyse standing there, lost in thought, Irving sighed deeply, his annoyed expression softening. “Are you waiting for him to show up?”