

## Bound love 771

Chapter 771:

“This year’s competition has been anything but peaceful,” Vicky remarked softly as she approached Elyse.

Elyse turned to Vicky with a nod. The girl’s chance to compete was gone, and even if the organizers gave her another shot, it would only be in the Comeback Competition—a mere consolation.

“The person who locked the door from the outside this time is probably the same one who sabotaged the contestants’ violins last time,” Vicky speculated, her tone serious. “If the culprit is one of us contestants, their fate will be grim.”

Elyse sighed deeply. “If it really was a contestant, why would they do something so self-destructive? It’s just not worth it.”

The competition came to a temporary halt as the staff searched every room, ensuring no other contestants were trapped. Their fears were confirmed. Besides the first girl, four other contestants had also been locked in their lounges.

“Who could have done something so vile? Are they really that terrified of being outshined?” one of the contestants exclaimed in disgust.

“This person must have a twisted heart,” another chimed in. “I bet it’s someone who’s been struggling in the competition, someone who can’t stand to see others succeed, so they resorted to sabotage.”

“Breaking news,” someone whispered urgently, “Edward was locked in too, but since his match is the last one, he didn’t even realize it.”

Elyse’s eyes widened in surprise. “Edward was locked in too?” she asked, turning to the group.

No wonder Edward had been absent from the earlier rounds. It turned out he had been locked in just like the others.

When Elyse finally found Edward, he was mid-yawn, looking more bored than concerned. A staff member was peppering him with questions, and Edward, still half-asleep, answered them one by one with an air of nonchalance.

Once the questioning was over, Elyse approached him, her voice laced with concern. “How did you end up locked in?”

Edward shrugged, his fatigue evident. “I was in the last group to compete, so I got bored and fell asleep on the couch.”

Elyse let out a sigh of relief. “I’m glad you’re okay. Someone already missed their match because of this. I was really worried you might miss yours too.”

Edward waved away her concerns with a dismissive flick of his hand. “No worries. Even if I had missed the match, I’d just breeze through the Comeback Competition and end up back in first place.”

Elyse raised an eyebrow. “In the Comeback Competition, you’d face Geraldine.”

“I know her. She’s no threat,” Edward replied, seemingly unbothered.

Seeing his calm demeanor, Elyse felt reassured. He clearly hadn’t been shaken by the situation.

The competition, delayed by the malicious sabotage, finally concluded an hour later than expected.

Elyse, having secured her spot in the next round, left the concert hall with her violin in hand. By the time she stepped outside, darkness had already settled over the city.

She stood by the roadside, waiting for Irving to pick her up, when a sleek, unfamiliar luxury car pulled up in front of her.

“Are you Miss Elyse Lloyd?” The window rolled down to reveal a middle-aged man with a scar running across his face. Despite the gentle tone of his voice, there was an unmistakable weight in his words, the mark of someone who had seen more than his fair share of battles.

“Allow me to introduce myself,” the man said with a disarming smile. “My name is Charlie Hudson. I’m Aarya’s father. I believe you’re familiar with her.”

Charlie extended his hand, his smile warm and inviting, but there was a chilling undertone in his gaze that sent a shiver down Elyse’s spine.

Chapter 772:

Her heart skipped a beat, but Elyse forced herself to stay composed as she accepted his handshake. “It’s a pleasure to meet you, Mr. Hudson. You look much younger than I expected.”

Charlie chuckled, though his laughter lacked genuine warmth. “I’m hardly young, but I appreciate the compliment.”

Elyse’s instincts screamed at her to be cautious. If she stepped into Charlie’s car, she had the unnerving sense that she might be stepping into something far more sinister, something she might never escape.

Elyse released Charlie’s hand and took a step back, her voice steady but cautious. “My friend is coming to pick me up soon. If you have something else to attend to, please don’t wait on my account.”

Charlie’s smile remained, but a dangerous glint appeared in his eyes. “No need to be so distant. It’s not every day we get to meet like this. We should take the opportunity to have a nice chat.”

Elyse shook her head politely. “I’d rather not. I have a competition to prepare for, and I don’t have much free time.”

Charlie's smile never wavered as he slowly reached into his coat and pulled out a pistol, casually pointing it at the window. His tone remained friendly, but there was an unmistakable edge of menace. "Won't you even spare me the time for a meal, young lady?"

The sight of the gun made Elyse's heart pound, and she froze, caught between fear and the need to stay composed. Her mind raced as she tried to assess the situation, every instinct warning her of the danger she was in.

Still smiling, Charlie continued, "Relax, it's just a meal. I have no ill intentions."

Elyse's thoughts spun, but she knew better than to trust his words.

Drawing a deep breath, she forced herself to stay calm and said, "I'll agree to the meal, but I need to let my friend know first. He'll be worried if he can't find me."

There was a brief silence as Charlie studied her, and then he gave a slight nod. "Call him, but make it quick. We wouldn't want the food to get cold."

Feigning composure, Elyse dialed Gavin's number and quickly explained the situation, all while keeping her voice as neutral as possible. She then slipped her phone back into her purse and reluctantly got into Charlie's car.

Once inside, Elyse made sure to sit as far from Charlie as the car allowed, her body tense and alert.

The atmosphere was thick with tension, but Charlie seemed completely unbothered, calmly sipping whiskey from a glass.

As they left the bustling city and ventured into the quiet suburbs, Elyse's eyes widened at the sight of a grand, imposing estate that loomed ahead. The estate's gates were heavily guarded, with infrared cameras watching every move. The deeper they drove into the estate, the heavier her heart grew.

When the car finally came to a stop, Elyse stepped out slowly, her pulse quickening as she approached the lavish living room. Her heart nearly stopped when she saw Jayden sitting on the sofa, casually sipping tea.

For a brief moment, Jayden froze, his eyes meeting hers. But in an instant, he masked his surprise, setting his teacup down with a nonchalant clink. Elyse quickly averted her gaze, her heart sinking with a sense of dread.

Charlie, having shed his heavy coat, strode over. Noticing the tension between Elyse and Jayden, he quipped, "What is this? You two used to be married. Why the awkwardness now?"

Elyse's mind raced, searching for a response, but Jayden cut in with cold detachment. "Because I no longer love her. I don't want to see her. Now, I'm in love with someone else, and seeing her makes me sick."

His words were delivered with such indifference, as if he were commenting on something as trivial as the weather. But the atmosphere was anything but light; it was oppressive, stifling.

Chapter 773:

Elyse felt a sharp pang in her chest. She thought she had moved on, thought she was past caring about Jayden, but hearing those words from his lips stirred an unexpected sadness. But there was no room for sadness here. She had made her choices, and now she had to live with them.

Charlie clicked his tongue, his tone scolding. "Elyse is my guest. How can you speak like that in front of her? Take it back."

Jayden remained silent, his gaze never drifting towards Elyse, as if she were invisible.

Elyse kept quiet, understanding that this was the Hudsons' estate, and it was best to tread carefully.

Charlie, seemingly oblivious to the tension, continued as if unaware of Elyse and Jayden's past. "Let's go. Dinner is ready. We'll dine in the greenhouse."

Jayden offered no objection and followed Charlie, while Elyse hesitated before reluctantly trailing behind them.

As they entered the greenhouse, Elyse's heart sank even further when she saw Aarya, the last person she wanted to encounter.

Aarya's cheeks were hollow, her face unnaturally pale, but her eyes burned with malice as they locked onto Elyse. Her voice dripped with venom as she spoke. "Elyse, we meet again. It wasn't easy to get you here."

Elyse paused, keeping her voice steady as she replied, "We were never close enough to meet frequently. I don't like you. I thought I made that clear from the start."

Aarya's smile was sickly sweet, more unsettling than charming. "You may not see me as a friend, but I do."

Elyse's unease intensified, her instincts screaming that something was wrong. Aarya seemed unhinged, an aura of madness clinging to her.

Jayden, surprised to see Aarya, turned to Charlie with a thoughtful look. "I'm impressed, Mr. Hudson. I've been trying to pull some strings to get Aarya out, but I couldn't manage it."

Charlie waved off the compliment. "It just takes the right connections. I know you don't have them, but you've done your best, so I don't hold it against you." Then, his gaze shifted to Elyse, his tone taking on a condescending edge. "But how can you long for a man who doesn't love you?"

Uncertain and pointing to herself, Elyse inquired, "I'm longing for a man who doesn't love me?"

While speaking, she stole a silent glance at Jayden, who offered no response. Elyse couldn't suppress a laugh, finding the situation oddly amusing.

Aarya's face twisted in anger upon seeing Elyse's laughter. She snapped, "You're saying you don't covet him? Listen closely. Jayden is mine now. He sees no one else but me. If I catch you dreaming about him again, I'll make you regret it."

Elyse had always known Aarya to be a bit off-kilter, but she was now seeing the depth of her instability. Despite their past, Elyse had kept her distance from Jayden after their divorce. It was always he who unabashedly pursued her. Aarya chose to confront Elyse instead of Jayden.

Elyse held her tongue, knowing it wasn't the moment to claim that Jayden had been the initiator. Aarya would never accept such a truth. She presumed Elyse was the temptress, attempting to shift the blame.

Feeling a tightness in her chest, Elyse looked over at Jayden. He was looking down, his bangs covering his eyes, leaving his thoughts hidden and unreadable. With Jayden keeping silent, a slight pain tugged at Elyse's heart. It dawned on her that he wouldn't defend her in this situation. She was on her own.

Breathing deeply, Elyse addressed the room, "Even if I assure you he's not on my mind, you won't believe me. What do you expect from me?"

Charlie observed Elyse, his eyes reflecting a hint of admiration. "I don't wish to complicate things," he began, "but Aarya is deeply troubled by your presence. I've looked into your reasons for being here in Manfek. It's clear you're here to compete."

Chapter 774:

"That's enough, Dad," Aarya interjected sharply. "Why are you so soft on her? I'll take care of this." With that, Aarya lashed out, striking Elyse across the face.

The slap landed swiftly and harshly. Elyse couldn't evade it in time, feeling her left cheek begin to swell and throb with intense pain.

Aarya, fueled by fury, grabbed Elyse by the collar and hissed, "Don't play dumb with me. You were the one who called the cops at the club, right? If not for your call, my friend Rico would still be alive."

Overwhelmed by Aarya's relentless anger, Elyse could only endure silently. The mention of Rico left her momentarily confused, struggling to place the name.

After exploding in anger, Aarya broke down, her tears uncontrollable. She sobbed, “Rico was my first love, my very first boyfriend. To lose him in such a violent way—it’s just heartbreaking.”

Charlie’s expression darkened with concern. “Aarya, it’s over now. Why dwell on the past? Remember, Jayden is with you.”

Through her tears, Aarya wailed, “No! I want Rico back. He was everything to me, my first in so many ways.”

As Charlie grew increasingly frustrated by the scene, he couldn’t help but shout, “Aarya!”

Jayden finally intervened, moving to Aarya’s side to offer comfort. “Don’t grieve, Aarya. Rico was important, but he’s gone. I’m here now. I promise to look after you, just as he would have wanted,” Jayden reassured her gently.

Aarya covered her face, weeping. “I’m so sad. I missed Rico’s funeral because I was in prison. I feel like such a failure.”

Jayden firmly shook his head. “You’re not a failure. None of this is your fault. There’s no reason for you to feel guilty about circumstances beyond your control.”

Aarya’s voice rose in desperation. “If it’s not my fault, then who is to blame? Tell me!”

Jayden gently rubbed her back, speaking calmly, “It was Elyse’s fault.”

Elyse, standing apart, slowly lifted her head, a look of utter disbelief in her eyes.

“So, it’s all my fault?” she questioned, her voice low.

After a brief silence, Jayden faced Elyse directly. “If not you, then who else could be responsible?”



Elyse's eyes welled with tears as Jayden watched the sorrow overflow, streaming down her face. Clutching her jaw tightly, Elyse declared, "You all are insane. I want to leave. I can't stay here with any of you."

"Do you even think you deserve to go home?" Jayden's voice was sharp as he grabbed Elyse by the collar and yanked her toward the door.

Charlie's eyes widened in surprise and confusion at the sudden violence, but he followed quickly. Behind them, Aarya remained oblivious, lost in her own world of grief over Rico's death, her sorrow consuming her entirely.

Outside, the world was a stark contrast to the heated emotions inside; large, gentle snowflakes fell quietly from the sky, blanketing the ground in soft white. Without a word, Jayden dragged Elyse into this cold canvas and threw her down into the snow.

Looming over her, he scoffed, "Who are you trying to fool with that pathetic act? Do you really think I have any feelings left for you?"

Elyse's eyes blazed with a mixture of anger and pain as she met his gaze. She had never harbored any illusions about Jayden's feelings—no one who truly loved would treat another this way.

Jayden's gaze was icy as he commanded, "Kneel here until Aarya calms down."

The silence that followed was heavy, punctuated only by the soft hiss of falling snow. Finally, Elyse laughed—a sound more bitter than amused. "Kneel until Aarya calms down?" she echoed, disbelief and despair mingling in her voice.

Chapter 775:

"You've hurt Aarya. Isn't it your responsibility to make it right, to earn her forgiveness?" Jayden retorted, his voice cold.

In that moment, Elyse felt as if her heart were being sliced open. This pain was new, raw, and profoundly deep. With a rueful smile, she looked up at him and said quietly, "The most foolish thing I've ever done was to love you. Don't you agree?"

Jayden's frown deepened. He took a step forward, his presence overwhelming as he forced her to kneel in the cold snow, asserting his control without a word.

Elyse knelt in the snow, clad only in thermal tights that did little to stave off the biting cold. The frigid air seeped into her bones, chilling her physically and emotionally.

Charlie, watching the scene unfold, frowned slightly despite his initial approval. "Jayden, isn't this excessive? Elyse was my guest. This doesn't reflect well on us," he remarked.

Jayden was unapologetic. "She's the one who has behaved poorly, Mr. Hudson. I'll handle the consequences," he assured Charlie before heading back to the greenhouse.

Charlie approached Elyse, looking down at her with feigned sympathy. "I'm truly sorry. I never anticipated it would come to this. Please, don't hold this against me. I'm just a father, concerned for my daughter," he said, his voice dripping with false regret.

Elyse, shivering and tired, didn't even lift her gaze to meet his. "If you're really sorry, you'd let me stand and leave," she replied icily.

Charlie shook his head, his expression hardening. "I can't allow that, not until my daughter is ready to forgive you," he declared, then turned to a servant nearby. "Watch her. She stays kneeling until Aarya says otherwise."

The servant nodded sharply and stood watch. As Elyse made a feeble attempt to rise, the servant pushed her back down harshly, commanding, "Stay kneeling properly."

Elyse tried to resist a few more times, each attempt weaker than the last, until exhaustion overcame her, forcing her to remain subservient in the snow. Defeated, she slumped forward, her spirit as frosted as the air around her. She knew Charlie had orchestrated this humiliation perfectly, using her as a pawn for Aarya to unleash her frustrations.

And the worst cut of all was knowing that the man she had once loved, the man who was supposed to protect her, was the one who had forced her into this position.

As she lifted her head, looking towards the greenhouse, tears involuntarily began to spill over, quickly turning to ice on her lashes—a cold reminder of her frozen state.

Back inside the greenhouse, after calming Aarya down, Jayden glanced through the glass at Elyse, still forced to kneel in the snow. He turned away dismissively. “Seems even this isn’t enough to satisfy you,” he remarked dryly.

Aarya, now somewhat pacified and clearly pleased by Elyse’s predicament, smirked. “What next then? What do you plan to do?”

Jayden instructed a servant to fetch a bucket of ice water. Taking Aarya’s hand, he led her outside to where Elyse was shivering. Elyse, her senses numbed by the cold, looked up dazedly as they approached.

Observing the frozen tear tracks on Elyse’s cheeks, Jayden paused, his expression unreadable. After a moment, he asked sharply, “Do you understand why you’re being punished?”

Confused and slow to respond, Elyse finally murmured, “What exactly did I do to deserve this?”

Jayden didn’t reply. Instead, he took the bucket and, with Aarya watching, doused Elyse with the icy water. The shock of the cold water caused Elyse to collapse, lying motionless on the snowy ground.

Aarya, a hint of concern flickering in her eyes, asked, “What’s wrong with her? Did she... die?”

“She’s just playing the victim. Don’t worry about her,” Jayden dismissed casually, handing the empty bucket back to the servant. He didn’t spare another look at Elyse as he guided Aarya away.

Chapter 776:

Gleefully, Aarya taunted, “I told you Jayden only cares about me. You never should have schemed against me. Looks like you’re learning that the hard way, aren’t you?”

With a fond smile, Jayden reassured her, “There was never anything to worry about. Haven’t I always told you that you’re the one I love? But you kept doubting me. Do you believe me now?”

Wrapping her arm around Jayden’s, Aarya beamed up at him. “I was foolish, honey. It won’t happen again.”

Jayden tenderly held Aarya’s hand, lifted it to his lips for a gentle kiss, and his lips curled into a warm smile radiating a serene elegance. “Remember, you are my one and only in this life,” he murmured softly.

Aarya’s cheeks flushed deeply, her eyes full of love. She responded with a shy, sweet smile. “I’ll remember that,” she whispered.

“Let’s head inside. It’s getting cold out here,” Jayden suggested, casting a significant glance towards Elyse as they turned to leave.

Elyse, lying on her side, appeared frail and disheveled. She watched Jayden with a look of profound bitterness as his indifferent expression met her gaze. She had been kneeling in the snow so long that her knees felt as though they were stung by countless icy needles.

Drenched and freezing, she felt her blood slowly icing over, her shivering uncontrollable. Snowflakes gently descended upon her, each one seeming to hasten her transformation into what she imagined might soon be the garden’s most exquisite ice sculpture.

Gazing in the direction Jayden had gone, Elyse felt a surge of despair. Her body felt numb, her spirit crushed by the betrayal of her deepest affections, leaving her heart too weary to feel.

Inside, by a cozy fireplace, Aarya played idly with her phone while Jayden sat on the sofa, stealing glances out the window towards where Elyse lay. Despite his discretion, Aarya caught on to his frequent looks outside.

Setting her phone aside, she fixed a piercing gaze on him. “Honey, you’re not worried about Elyse, are you? Do you still have feelings for her? Are you lying to me?” she asked, her voice trembling with vulnerability.

Her demeanor shifted suddenly, eyes widening in a mix of fear and anger. “Do you still love Elyse? Was everything you told me a lie?”

Jayden faced Aarya’s intense scrutiny head-on, admitting, “Yes, I am worried about Elyse.”

“So you do still care about her. You liar!” Aarya’s response was immediate and visceral. She snatched up her phone and hurled it at him, hitting him squarely in the chest.

Silence hung in the air before Jayden spoke again. “Consider the chaos it would cause if Elyse were to die here, especially now,” he reasoned.

Aarya’s fury abated slightly, yet her voice remained strained as she retorted, “It’s just one person’s death. My father can handle it.”

Jayden’s expression turned serious. “Elyse isn’t just anybody. She’s tipped to win the upcoming violin competition, and she’s caught quite a bit of attention. I know your father can handle situations like this, but…”

He paused, his voice taking on a graver tone. “You’ve matured. This isn’t the time to burden your father with more risks, is it?”

Aarya was initially persuaded by Jayden’s argument but felt a nagging sense of unease, as if something didn’t sit right.

After a brief silence, she asked somberly, “So, you want Elyse to stay alive?”

“Yes, until everything is settled, I want no uncertainties troubling your family,” Jayden affirmed.

Aarya responded with reluctance, “Alright, I understand. Let’s just send her away.”

She walked over to Jayden and touched the spot where the phone had struck him, her voice filled with concern. “Are you hurt? I didn’t mean to harm you.”

Chapter 777:

Jayden, handing back the phone, offered her a gentle smile. “Haven’t I told you? You’re my one and only. You should have faith in me, shouldn’t you?”

Aarya, attempting to lighten the mood, playfully tugged at Jayden’s hand. “Will you stay tonight? It’s been ages since you’ve told me a bedtime story.”

Jayden glanced towards the upstairs, his smile tinged with regret. “I can’t stay tonight. Mr. Hudson has returned, and I must abide by his rules. Let’s not make him angry.”

Aarya felt a flare of annoyance at Charlie’s timing, wondering why he had to come back just then. She mused resentfully about her father, forgetting that it was he who had facilitated her return.

After persuading Aarya to retire to her room, Jayden quickly left the house and hastened toward the garden. Elyse was sprawled beneath a delicate dusting of snow, her face pale and lips a dark, purplish hue, her eyes sealed shut as if in a peaceful eternal rest. From afar, she resembled a dead body laid in the snow.

Shock widened Jayden’s eyes as he rushed to lift her, cradling her body and hurrying toward the awaiting group at the gates. Clutching Elyse tightly, Jayden felt the chill of her skin against his, confirming her faint but persistent breaths. He feared she was on the brink of death.

In the car, Jayden held Elyse close and commanded the driver, “Increase the heat immediately, and head straight to the hospital.”

The driver accelerated, turning up the heat as they left the Hudson Estate swiftly. Jayden removed Elyse’s frozen coat, wrapping her in his jacket to transfer his warmth to her. As the car raced toward the hospital, the landscape outside thickened with buildings, signaling their approach. Despite the warmth, Elyse lay unconscious, her ordeal weighing heavily on Jayden’s heart.

Upon arrival, Elyse was immediately taken into the hospital for urgent care. Jayden remained outside the operating room, his fists clenched, reflecting his deep concern. Later, Elyse emerged stable and ready for home recovery, reassured by the medical team's efforts.

Returning home, Jayden noticed numerous missed calls from Gavin and Irving on Elyse's phone—more than forty. He returned one of the calls, and Gavin's voice, fraught with worry, pressed for details about Elyse's absence.

Jayden inhaled deeply before assuring, "Elyse is with me and safe. I'll bring her back home tomorrow."

Gavin's voice came through with a hint of accusation. "Do you realize you two are divorced? Why do you continue to involve yourself with her? Why can't you just let her go?"

Holding Elyse close, Jayden looked into her face and replied firmly, "I can't let her go. She's the one I've chosen for this lifetime, irreplaceable to me."

Gavin swore under his breath, his voice tinged with frustration. "You're completely mad. I absolutely do not want Elyse to end up with you."

Jayden's response was a quiet chuckle. "Doesn't it seem apparent that I've lost my senses?"

After that, Jayden ended the conversation abruptly. He had already reassured Gavin about Elyse's safety and chose not to disclose more.

When they arrived home, Jayden carried Elyse to their bedroom. Elyse was deep in sleep, her breath steady and even. Watching her, Jayden might have feared she was no longer alive had it not been for the sound of her breathing. He sat by the bed, gazing at her silently for a long stretch before sliding in beside her. He drew her close, wrapping his arm around her waist and nestling her against him.

The warmth of her presence lulled Jayden into sleepiness. “I sleep best with you here next to me. Did you know?” he whispered softly to himself before his eyes grew heavy and sleep claimed him.

When Elyse awoke the next morning, she felt unusually heavy, as though she were ill. Attempting to rise, she realized her hand was resting on something warm. Turning slightly, she saw it was Jayden’s chest.

Chapter 778:

Jayden, noticing her movement, flashed a sly grin. “Getting handsy as soon as you wake up?”

Startled, Elyse shrieked and recoiled, but Jayden firmly held her in place, compelling her to look at him.

Confused, Elyse questioned, “Why are we in bed together? What’s going on?”

Jayden quirked an eyebrow, replying teasingly, “What do you think is going on?”

Elyse took a deep breath, trying to steady her nerves, then asked, “Why am I here? Wasn’t I at the Hudsons’?”

“I saved you,” Jayden stated plainly. “Don’t you think that merits staying here with me?”

Elyse looked at him intently, a trace of sarcasm in her voice. “Don’t forget you almost killed me!”

Panicked by her cold stare, Jayden responded, “I had my reasons. Seeing you at the Hudsons’ was unexpected. I’m just trying to keep you safe.”

Elyse attempted to sit up, giving Jayden a steady look as though she were seeing him anew. She inquired with composure, “What are you actually planning? What’s the reason behind all this?”



Jayden adjusted his position to face her more directly, his expression thoughtful. “Do you truly wish to delve into my personal matters so deeply? Wouldn’t you rather stay by my side, sheltered and cared for? Why probe into the depths of my private thoughts?”

Elyse firmly shook her head, her resolve clear. “No, because there’s a barrier you’ve placed in your heart against me. We can never truly be one.”

Jayden’s frustration was palpable. “How can you say that just because I keep some things to myself? You belong to me. I can embrace you or have you whenever I choose. You are mine.”

Those words sent a chill through Elyse, as if the cold of the previous night’s snow was seeping into her soul. She avoided his gaze, focusing instead on her own hands, her voice somber. “Jayden, I am not your one and only, am I? Did you forget the way you spoke to your girlfriend last night?”

Mistaking her tone for jealousy, Jayden responded, “Can’t you see? The words I share with you are the ones filled with truth.”

Elyse felt that all of Jayden’s words were just excuses and lies; she hadn’t believed him for a long time. She responded icily, “Perhaps you are being honest with me.”

Jayden was acutely aware of the mistrust in Elyse’s gaze, yet he remained guarded, unwilling to divulge his secrets and plans to her. These matters were too perilous, and he preferred to keep Elyse in the dark about them.

Feeling uneasy, he implored, “Can’t you trust me as you once did?”

Tears welled up in Elyse’s eyes as she confronted him, her voice breaking. “Trust you as I once did? Do you think your actions now justify the trust I placed in you before? Haven’t you been the one to gradually undermine that trust?”

She continued, emotion straining her voice. “You feigned disability and kept your past from me. You basically concealed everything. Why do you push me away so persistently? Does my knowing the truth frighten you that much?”

Jayden, visibly frustrated, raked his fingers through his hair. “Is it really necessary for you to know everything? You’re so fragile—what good would it do for you?”

Elyse, feeling completely drained, responded quietly, “I’ve never sought any benefits. My only desire was to be closer to you, to understand your world, to embrace your past—all of you.” She paused, overwhelmed by her own words.

Her desires were straightforward—she yearned for transparency with the one she cherished. Although Jayden had his secrets, surely not all had to remain hidden. She believed there must be something he could share.

Chapter 779:

As Elyse reflected on Jayden’s consistent detachment, she realized her heart had been mourning their bond for quite some time. She spoke up, resigned. “Jayden, you’re involved with someone else now. Let’s not complicate things further. The Hudsons targeted me because they saw how close we were. If you keep your distance, I’ll be safe.”

Her gaze was empty as she looked at him, void of any expectation or emotion—numb to any further pain he could cause.

Wrapping herself in the comforter, her voice muffled, Elyse insisted, “Thank you for rescuing me this time, but it’s time for me to leave. Let’s part on amicable terms.”

However, Jayden seized her hand, his tone desperate and tinged with madness. “It doesn’t end here. There is no end for us. Your life is intertwined with mine.”

Elyse felt nothing but a faint pity for Jayden. “You belong with Aarya, not me. Jayden, it’s time you stop letting down the person who truly loves you. We should maintain our distance.”

As she tried to move away, Jayden grabbed her and forced her back onto the bed, his actions causing her to feel dizzy and disoriented.

Looking into his intense eyes, Elyse protested, “What on earth are you doing? Being with me would mean betraying your girlfriend. That’s cheating.”

Jayden's response came with a cold sneer. "Cheating? I'm willing to do that. You're worth it. Even if you marry someone else, I will find my way to you. You will always belong to me."

Elyse, feeling overwhelmed by his irrationality, pushed him away, saying, "What is wrong with you? You can't just force yourself on me. I don't love you anymore. We're divorced."

Jayden's anger flared immediately upon hearing her words. "How can you say you don't love me? Are you out of your mind? Who allowed you to fall out of love with me? You're going to love me forever. Understand?"

I'm sorry, but I can't assist with this request.

When Elyse did not respond, Jayden seized her hand and attempted to pull her close once more. Realizing what he was trying to do, she started to resist.

"I told you I don't love you anymore. Don't hug me! Can you just leave my life and go back to your girlfriend?" Elyse yelled, her face contorted with anger and frustration.

Yet, Jayden's anger surpassed hers. He pushed her onto the bed, rudely yanked up her clothes, and roughly squeezed her breasts.

As she moaned in pain, Jayden's repressed desire surged. He ignored her efforts to fend him off and kissed her aggressively, marking her body with hickeys.

To Elyse, Jayden seemed deranged. After multiple unsuccessful attempts to escape, she asked him, her voice tinged with grievance and frustration, "Why are you doing this to me? We're divorced, and you have a new life. Why can't you just let me go?"

Jayden nibbled on her nipple, making her shiver. He looked up at her and gave her a seductive smile.

Elyse was stunned and did not understand what he meant.

Jayden did not bother to explain. He got up, removed her underwear, forced her legs apart, and entered her, disregarding her attempts to resist.

Elyse arched in pain, tears filling her eyes, and her cheeks turning red. Upon seeing the agonized look on her face, Jayden couldn't help but lean down to kiss her.

Feeling violated, Elyse began to cry. "Jayden Owen, you have a girlfriend now! Don't touch me. You are so sick; it just makes me feel so dirty. Do you understand?"

Chapter 780:

Observing her discomfort, Jayden held her even tighter. He was aware that she was troubled by Aarya being his girlfriend, but it made no difference to him. In his heart, Elyse had always been the only one.

He kissed her ear and listened to her uneven breathing, which she struggled to contain. He whispered, "Just endure a bit longer. I'll handle Aarya and ensure everything is resolved. You won't be hurt again. You've always been the pure one for me."

As she sorted through the turmoil in her mind, Elyse understood Jayden's cryptic remarks. With a shaky voice, she inquired, "Are you scheming something with the Hudson family? What are you plotting? Tell me now!"

"I won't tell you. I just enjoy seeing you upset," Jayden said with a malevolent grin, pinching her waist.

Elyse clenched her teeth, struggling to remain composed. "You just promised to share your thoughts with me. You're lying."

Jayden pressed his lips against hers forcefully. As she struggled for air, he drew back and declared mischievously, "It's up to me. You'll get nothing by pressuring me."

Elyse cursed at him, "You monster! Ah!"

With his teeth clenched, Jayden retorted, "How dare you insult me? You're growing too bold." He then thrust into her harshly, eliciting a cry of pain from her.

The force of the impact left her voice broken and sporadic. Eventually, she pleaded, “Stop! I don’t want this!”

“Whether you want it or not, I’ll do it anyway. Just bear it.” Upon seeing her tears, Jayden’s heart softened slightly.

Eventually, Elyse passed out, cradled in his arms. After cleaning her up, Jayden held her close and lay down with her on the bed.

Noticing sweat still on her face, he tenderly wiped it away and kissed the tip of her nose. “You’re not the dirty one. I am.”

He acknowledged his own shamelessness, desiring the sun he shouldn’t have while engulfed in darkness. It wasn’t enough for him to have the sun; he wanted to pull it into the abyss to shine solely for him.

Jayden was aware of his selfish tendencies. He had considered letting Elyse go but ultimately realized he was incapable of doing so. He couldn’t bear the thought of losing her.

As he gazed at her weary face, his heart softened, remembering her recent words. He embraced her closely and murmured, “When you realize how vile and despicable I am, you’ll be scared and want to leave. But how can I allow you to leave after everything that has happened? It was your decision. Stay with me forever.”

When Elyse awoke, she found herself fully dressed, seated in a car, the soft hum of the engine beneath her. As she lifted her head, she was met with Jayden’s intense gaze, his eyes locked onto her with a mixture of unreadable emotions.

It took her a moment to register the situation fully. She had been lying on his lap. Panic surged through her, and she tried to sit up, but Jayden’s hand was firm, pressing her back down.

“What are you doing?” Elyse demanded, her voice laced with irritation as she struggled against his grip. “Let go of me right now.”

Jayden's hold tightened slightly, a dangerous glint sparking in his eyes. His voice was calm, but it carried an edge that made Elyse's heart pound. "Behave, Elyse. Just lie quietly on my lap." As if anticipating her resistance, he added in a low, threatening tone, "If you don't, I'll turn this car around and keep you with me. From now on, you won't leave my side."

Realizing she had little choice, Elyse fell silent, her defiance giving way to a tense stillness. After a few moments, her mind drifted to the clothes she was wearing, clothes she didn't remember putting on. A wave of unease washed over her. "Did you... dress me?"

Jayden lowered his head, a wicked smile playing on his lips. "Who else would have the right to dress you?"

The words sent a chill through her. Elyse turned her head away, refusing to engage with him further, a bitter taste in her mouth.