

Bound love 961

Chapter 961:

Undeterred, Edward persisted, "By the way, if there's anything you need, just ask. I'm here to cater to your every wish."

"There is one thing," Elyse mentioned, looking at Edward warily. "Does the Moon Palace have a space where I can practice the violin? If not, I'll practice in my room."

Edward couldn't hold back his frustration. "Why do you always think about the violin? Can't we talk about something else?"

Elyse regarded him coolly, realizing his intent. "If I don't bring up other topics, will you not let me stay?"

"Why would you think that?" Edward raised his voice. "Do you really see me as that petty? Your safety is my priority."

Elyse nodded. "Then I have no more questions." Edward fell silent, sulking in his seat as he sipped his drink.

Meanwhile, Elyse gazed out of the car window. The Moon Palace served as the government office, not easily accessible to the public. Since Edward had taken her there, she planned to explore thoroughly.

As the car approached a garden, Elyse asked curiously, "Are we there?"

"Yes, after this garden, we'll reach the building where you'll be staying," Edward explained, but he couldn't help complaining. "This place isn't as wonderful as it seems. There are many guards, and it's hardly a place for freedom. If you'd like, I could take you to a manor in the countryside instead."

Elyse observed the building before them. It was a six-story structure, and as Edward had noted, it was patrolled by guards, making it feel more like a prison than a home.

With a calm voice, she said, "Freedom might be limited, but it's safe. And isn't safety what I need most right now?"

Edward found himself at a loss for words. He had always disliked the place, but to Elyse, it seemed to provide some comfort.

After they stopped, Edward went to her side of the car to open the door.

As Elyse stepped out, she frowned. "Wait, my clothes and personal items are still at Jayden's."

"Don't worry, Jayden has already packed them and sent them here," Edward said, stroking his chin thoughtfully. "It seems this situation is more complicated than I realized. There's a chance he might not make it through this."

Elyse paused, her expression freezing as she looked at Edward, a lost child in her eyes.

Noticing the change in her demeanor, Edward sighed with a touch of regret. "Those are just my guesses. Don't take them too seriously."

Chapter 962:

He gently nudged Elyse toward the building, adding, "This place might not be the most liberating, but the chef here is remarkable. You must try the food later."

As they entered the building, a middle-aged man in a tailcoat stepped forward to greet them respectfully. "Mr. McCoy, welcome back."

Edward introduced Elyse, saying, "This is the friend I've been talking about. Please take her to the guest room we've prepared. Make sure she has everything she needs."

"Understood." The butler turned to Elyse and politely said, "Please follow me, Miss."

Elyse nodded and followed the butler upstairs.

In the elevator, she felt a sudden sense of relief, which the butler picked up on. His tone softened as he said, “Miss Lloyd, you are the only woman Mr. McCoy has ever brought home. That’s reassuring to me.”

Elyse looked puzzled. “Doesn’t Edward have other female friends?”

The butler shook his head. “It’s not just female friends. He doesn’t really have any friends. His temper drives people away.”

Curiosity sparked in Elyse. “He has a bad temper?”

“Yes. He’s quick to anger, and his words can cut deeply,” the butler explained, smiling with a hint of relief. “But your presence in his life gives me hope. It shows he isn’t all that bad. There’s someone who can accept him.”

Elyse’s lips twitched. Why did it seem like the butler was implying something more?

When they reached her room, Elyse took a moment to look around. Her belongings had been neatly packed and brought over, including her personal items.

After checking everything, Elyse turned to the butler and said, “Thank you. I have everything I need for now, so I won’t require further assistance.”

The butler nodded with respect. “Very well. Should you need anything, just call for me.”

Once the butler had closed the door, Elyse was left alone. She immediately released the exhaustion that had been weighing her down and collapsed onto the bed.

Ever since receiving a message from Jayden earlier that afternoon, she had been plagued by unease. She longed to cling to something tangible, yet nothing was within reach.

“Charlie and Aarya are already gone. Who else is Jayden dealing with?” Elyse whispered to herself, realizing she had no one to answer her questions.

She pulled her phone from her pocket and opened her message thread with Jayden. She had sent several messages to him earlier, but he had not responded. Now, she stared blankly at the screen, wondering if Jayden would reply to her.

Elyse spent some time on her phone before she finally sent a message.

As expected, Jayden did not reply.

Chapter 963:

What could be so critical that he couldn't spare a moment to respond? Elyse bit her lip, feeling upset. She also felt a hint of fear that Jayden might not return alive. But why should it matter to her if Jayden couldn't make it? They were already divorced. Even if he passed away, it had nothing to do with her. Yet, the thought of Jayden dying made her heart heavy.

Confused by her feelings, Elyse decided to distract herself by playing her violin. The butler had mentioned there was still some time before dinner.

She got out of bed, picked up her violin case, and headed downstairs. After inquiring with the butler about where she could practice, she made her way to the small garden at the back of the building.

The garden was modest, about the size of a soccer field, and much smaller than the one they had passed earlier. Edward often practiced there too, which might explain his dissatisfaction with its size.

Just as Elyse was about to open her violin case, she was suddenly drenched by a cold downpour from above. Startled, she screamed and looked up to see a woman leaning out of a second-floor window.

The woman was striking, with long, smooth hair cascading over her chest, adorned with a red bow headband that added an elegant charm to her look.

Angered, Elyse yelled, “Who are you? Why did you pour water on me? Don’t you realize how dangerous that is?” The woman looked down haughtily, her chin held high. Without remorse, she replied, “I knew it was you down there, so I did it intentionally. You’re Elyse, right? Leave Moon Palace. You don’t belong here.”

Elyse retorted, “Do you think I’ll leave just because you tell me to? Who do you think you are?” Quickly, she inspected her violin, relieved to see it was still dry. However, her mood for playing had vanished.

“You want to know who I am? Very well, I’ll grace you with my name,” the woman said before withdrawing from the window.

Elyse took some tissues from her pocket and began drying herself off quietly.

Soon after, the woman appeared downstairs. She was clad in shiny boots and black stockings that accentuated her slim, elegant legs. Her black coat and wool sweater added a chic touch to her ensemble, perfect for the snowy weather.

She moved with poised grace, in stark contrast to Elyse, who felt disheveled and bulky in comparison.

“My name is Louise Miller. I’m engaged to Edward, and both our families have given their blessing,” Louise announced, crossing her arms like a monarch. “So, are you intimidated now?”

Chapter 964:

Intimidated? By what? Elyse was puzzled but responded honestly, “If that’s the case, I hope your marriage happens quickly.”

Louise paused for a moment before letting out a scornful laugh. “Interesting response. Are you backing off to gain an advantage? I didn’t realize you were so cunning.”

Elyse looked at Louise, perplexed. “Enough with the nonsense. You drenched me with water. You owe me an apology.”

Louise's expression remained haughty as she dismissively replied, "An apology? Impossible. I've never apologized to anyone in my life. Just name your price for compensation. I can afford any amount."

Elyse was frustrated. "This isn't about money. You need to apologize."

Louise frowned, her pride unyielding. "Didn't you hear me? I won't apologize. I did nothing wrong. Why should I apologize?"

With that, Louise reached out and grabbed Elyse's hair, dropping all pretense of decorum.

Elyse winced in pain, momentarily stunned, then retaliated by grabbing Louise's hair as well.

The butler, who had just arrived with tea, was shocked to see the two women grappling with each other. "Stop fighting! Release each other!" he urged, but neither woman was inclined to let go.

As one held on, so did the other.

Eventually, the butler had to call Edward, who managed to separate them upon his arrival.

By then, both of their hair was disheveled and tangled.

Elyse, losing her temper, yelled, "When you make a mistake, you should apologize! Didn't your parents ever teach you that?"

Louise, overcome with emotion, retorted, "I won't apologize. What are you going to do about it?"

Elyse glared at Louise, her teeth clenched in anger.

Edward, sensing a potential conflict, quickly intervened to diffuse the tension. "Please, let's not argue anymore. You both are acting irrationally. Let's go inside and discuss this calmly."

Before Elyse could respond, Louise voiced her frustration, saying, "Edward, why do you take her side? Why not mine? Don't you care about me anymore?"

Edward was at a loss for words. "Can't you see how unreasonable you're being? You've been spoiled by your parents."

Louise, incredulous, demanded, "Edward, you've changed. You've turned your back on me."

After saying that, Louise attempted to storm off, but Edward caught her arm.

Chapter 965:

This time, Edward spoke with authority. "Why are you running away? As someone involved, you should stay and resolve this, not throw a fit in front of me." Louise, her teeth still clenched, shot an angry look at Edward but reluctantly allowed him to lead her back inside.

Elyse followed them, carrying her violin case in one hand and smoothing her hair with the other.

The butler, witnessing the scene, tried to reassure Elyse. "Don't be upset, Elyse. Louise may be difficult, but she's not malicious. There must be a reason for her behavior towards you."

Elyse adjusted her bangs and replied, echoing the butler, "I understand. She believes Edward has changed his feelings. But she shouldn't worry about me. I won't interfere in their marriage."

"Marriage? Whose marriage?" The butler looked puzzled.

Elyse responded, “Between Louise and Edward. Aren’t they engaged? Edward is her fiancé, after all.”

The butler corrected her, saying, “No, they aren’t engaged. They grew up together, and he views her more like a sister.” He continued, “Please don’t misunderstand.”

Elyse fell silent, sensing that perhaps the butler also misunderstood something, but she chose not to elaborate.

Once inside, Louise crossed her arms and stood defiantly, her posture oozing hostility. She looked at Edward with disdain and said, “I won’t apologize. She should leave. I don’t want her here.”

Edward, frustrated, responded, “Can you stop acting like a child? Elyse is my friend. She’s in a difficult situation and needs to stay.”

Louise, seemingly hurt, called Edward “a complete fool” and stormed off.

Elyse watched Louise depart and expressed her concerns. “She just left like that. Shouldn’t you go after her?”

Edward sighed and replied, “Don’t worry. Even if she leaves, she can’t really go far. This is Moon Palace, after all. It’s not easy for anyone to leave or enter.” He added after a moment, “Besides, she lives here too.”

Elyse nodded, no longer interested in discussing further. “I’m going to change. My sweater is wet from being under my coat.”

Upon hearing this, Edward quickly instructed the butler, “Please prepare some cold medicine for Elyse. We can’t afford for her to get sick.” With that, he rushed out the door.

Though expansive, Moon Palace had many restricted areas where one couldn’t roam freely without proper authorization. The spaces open to visitors were quite limited.

It didn’t take long for Edward to locate Louise in a secluded part of the garden.

Louise was weeping, her face buried in her hands as she crouched on the ground, her shoulders heaving with each sob, appearing utterly distraught.

Chapter 966:

Edward stood with his arms crossed, leaning against a white wall. He watched Louise for a while before finally asking, "How long do you intend to keep crying?"

Louise looked up in surprise, her face streaked with tears. "Why are you here? You have someone else now. I'm irrelevant. Shouldn't you be comforting her instead?"

After a moment's thought, Edward replied, "Yes, I should be comforting Elyse."

This response drained the color from Louise's face. Trembling in the chilly breeze, she looked even more delicate. "If that's what you prefer, then go to her. Why are you here? I don't matter anyway." Her tears flowed freely as she spoke.

Edward, completely baffled, wondered why Louise was so quick to tears and why she seemed to cry over every little thing. "You upset Elyse, and I need to bring you back to apologize to her," he said, hoping that might help soothe Elyse's feelings a bit.

Louise slammed her foot down and raised her voice. "I refuse to accept this! It shouldn't be this way. Why should I be the one to apologize and make her happy?"

Edward snapped back, "Because you threw water on her during the cold winter!" His voice was heavy with displeasure and anger. "Where are your manners? Do your parents know you act this way?"

Louise's response only fueled her anger further. "Nonsense! I am well-mannered."

Edward responded firmly, "Fine. Come and apologize to Elyse. When you're wrong, you need to own up to it." He reached out to grab her arm, but she sidestepped him.

Louise growled, "She doesn't matter. She's my love rival, and I despise her the most!"

Edward felt a sharp migraine forming from Louise's immature statements. "Can you be more reasonable? What love rival? Stop inventing stories!"

"The one inventing stories is you!" Louise retorted. "Earlier, when you spoke to me, you stopped talking about politics or the violin. Now all you talk about is her. You're fond of her. You're infatuated with her."

Edward felt irritation rise as she laid bare his hidden feelings. "Who I fancy is none of your concern. Isn't it normal for someone my age to be interested in a woman?"

Louise started crying again. "No, it's not alright! Because I have feelings for you, and I hope to be your wife someday."

Edward stood there, his mouth agape and eyes wide with astonishment. Louise's candid admission took him by surprise, and he was unprepared for how to react. He quickly dismissed her, saying, "You're delusional. My wife? Stop dreaming!" With that, he dashed away, forgetting the initial reason he had come to talk to Louise.

To Louise, Edward's departure felt like a definitive rejection. Overcome with heartbreak, she hurried back to her room, sobbing uncontrollably.

After changing into fresh clothes, Elyse left her room, planning to see if cookies were available. Instead, she ran into Louise. Elyse was taken aback by the sight of Louise's tear-streaked face. "Why did you cry so much? Did Edward yell at you?"

Chapter 967:

Louise, humiliated by Elyse witnessing her in such a vulnerable state, tried to maintain a tough facade. "It's none of your concern. You're just annoying," she snapped.

Noticing that Louise still had enough fire to retort, Elyse decided against trying to console her and stepped aside to let her pass.

Feeling even more ashamed, Louise rushed back to her room.

Elyse let out a helpless sigh. The instigator of the drama was weeping more than the actual victim, which unfairly made it seem like Elyse was at fault. She grimaced and headed downstairs to ask the butler about any available snacks.

The butler answered candidly, "Dinner will be served shortly. Would you like a snack in the meantime?"

"No, thanks. I'll just wait for dinner," Elyse replied, settling into the living room to watch the news on TV. Shortly thereafter, dinner was ready. The butler went upstairs to call Louise, but she did not respond.

He returned downstairs and informed Elyse, "Miss Miller didn't answer. Miss Lloyd, please feel free to start your dinner."

Elyse nodded and began eating immediately.

Once she finished her meal, she noticed the butler's anxious expression. "Is Louise still not coming down for dinner?" she inquired.

"Indeed," replied the butler, his concern evident. "Since she is staying with us only temporarily, I need to ensure she's well cared for. If not, it could cause problems for the family due to her unique situation."

Elyse paused to think, then offered, "Let me assist you." She stood up and made her way upstairs.

The butler, still fretful, followed her. "Do you intend to comfort her yourself? Isn't that a bit much for you?"

Elyse shook her head. "No, it's okay. I'm not occupied with anything right now."

When she reached Louise's door, she knocked lightly three times. "Leave me alone!" came Louise's annoyed voice from inside.

Without hesitation, Elyse took a spare key from the butler, unlocked the door, and accepted the dinner tray from him before walking in.

Before shutting the door, she said to the butler, "Please give us some space. Trust me. I'll comfort her." The butler hesitated, his lips parting as if to voice his reservations, but ultimately, he nodded and left Elyse to handle the situation.

As Elyse stepped in, she could hear Louise's cries echoing in the room. She moved further inside, and after passing through the hallway, she found Louise in the living room, crying uncontrollably.

Louise clutched a teddy bear, her face buried in her arms, unaware that Elyse had approached from behind.

Chapter 968:

Elyse set the dinner tray down on the small table and silently observed Louise. She exhaled deeply and said, "Stop weeping. You were harsh to me, and now you expect my comfort? That's unfair."

Louise, who had been deeply engrossed in her sobbing, jumped at the sound of another voice. She raised her head, her face streaked with tears and her eyes wide with bewilderment, giving Elyse a stunned look.

Upon seeing Louise's forlorn expression, Elyse sighed once more, took out a tissue, and offered it to her. "Clean your face. You've cried enough. You're probably starving. Have something to eat."

Louise immediately scowled. "What are you up to? You don't really care, so quit pretending!"

She suspected Elyse was only acting kind to charm Edward and gain his affection.

Elyse laughed softly, "Ah, you caught me. Seems you're quite clever."

"I'm warning you. Someone as plain as you doesn't stand a chance with Edward. He's merely smitten with you for now. Once he snaps out of it, he'll abandon you," Louise snapped bitterly.

Elyse propped her chin in her hand and replied nonchalantly, “I hope he realizes that soon and leaves me be.”

Faced with Elyse’s composed demeanor, Louise understood she was up against a formidable rival. Despite the harsh words thrown at her, Elyse maintained her composure, proving she was not easily rattled.

Louise bit her lower lip, cleaned her face with the tissue, and folded her arms. “Tell me. What do you really want from Edward? If it’s money you’re after, just name your price and leave him alone.”

Elyse found Louise’s accusation slightly amusing but chose to be straightforward. “I have no hidden motives. I’m only here for a short time and will be leaving soon. There’s no need for you to worry so much.”

However, Louise was not convinced by her claim. In her eyes, Edward was remarkable and belonged to a distinguished family. Women went to great lengths to be near him. How could Elyse not have any ulterior motives? Louise was convinced Elyse must be playing hard to get with Edward.

With that thought, Louise clenched her teeth. How could she unveil this woman’s deceitful guise? “Can you truly claim you have no hidden agenda?” Louise challenged.

“I can,” responded Elyse, still calm.

“Then swear it!” Louise demanded, visibly upset.

Elyse looked at the furious expression on Louise’s face, raised her hand, and began to swear, facing her directly.

Louise was caught off guard by Elyse’s serene manner. She remained skeptical, pondering if Elyse wasn’t scared of the consequences of her deceit.

Observing that Louise had quieted down, Elyse believed she had managed to soothe her.

Chapter 969:

Elyse gestured towards the dinner waiting on the table. “It’s time to eat. We can address other issues after you’ve had your meal, alright?”

Louise felt like declining, but just then, her stomach rumbled. She reluctantly conceded, “Since you insist, I’ll do you the favor and eat first.” With that, she began eating heartily.

Elyse observed Louise, who, despite being famished, still adhered to her manners and etiquette, and felt a slight admiration.

“Is this meal sufficient for you? If not, we can go out to eat,” Elyse offered.

“Do you think I eat a lot? This is more than enough for me,” Louise responded.

Elyse glanced at Louise’s trim and well-maintained figure, aware that she had to keep her shape and couldn’t indulge too much. She silently watched Louise eat, appreciating her determination.

Once Louise had finished, Elyse gathered the empty dishes and prepared to leave.

“Where are you headed?” Louise asked, surprised.

“I’m taking these dishes to the butler,” Elyse answered, thinking that delivering the dishes to Driscoll would wrap up her responsibilities.

Staying in the Moon Palace made Elyse feel a bit out of place, so she always looked for ways to contribute to justify her stay there. By assisting the butler with Louise and Edward’s issues, Elyse felt she was indirectly supporting Edward.

Louise was still confused. Normally, after finishing her meal, Elyse would stay to continue their discussion. Yet, Elyse just exited her room.

Louise disliked the feeling of not being in control. She spent the rest of the evening feeling unsettled, trying to figure out when she could speak with Elyse again.

After passing the dishes to the butler, Elyse returned to her room. She lay down briefly and, on impulse, picked up her phone to check her messages with Jayden.

As she had anticipated, Jayden still hadn't responded to her texts.

Looking at Jayden's contact, Elyse experienced a surge of sadness. She wasn't sure why she felt this way. Perhaps it was because she had faced some mistreatment today and there was nobody to defend her.

Elyse reflected on the difficulties she had encountered earlier in the day, and her eyes began to tear up. Feeling out of place in someone else's home only deepened her distress. She set her phone down, unable to shake her frustration.

Suddenly, her phone buzzed.

Elyse looked over and noticed Jayden was calling. She felt a flicker of surprise and, with shaking hands, answered the call.

"Hello?" she said, unaware that her voice was trembling. All she knew was that the turmoil inside her seemed to lessen just a bit.

Chapter 970:

There was a brief pause on Jayden's side before he spoke in a concerned tone, "Are you doing okay at Edward's?"

Elyse took a moment to compose herself, managing to speak more steadily. "Yes, I'm alright. Don't worry about me."

"Are you crying, little liar?" Jayden asked, his voice tinged with resignation.

Just then, a tear rolled down Elyse's cheek, landing on her bedding before vanishing. She quickly wiped away the evidence. "No, I'm not crying. I told you not to worry, and yet here you are, concerned over nothing."

She glanced around her room and added, "I'm at the Moon Palace. You know what? Edward is the governor's son. With him here, I almost feel untouchable."

Jayden replied, "I know. That's why I left you in Edward's care."

Though Jayden was not fond of Edward, he acknowledged the man's influence. With Edward nearby, Elyse would be safe.

He paused for a moment, then added, "I'll come to pick you up once I finish my business here."

Elyse scoffed at his promise. "You never share what you're doing. You're such a liar!"

Jayden fell silent again. "I'm sorry, but I have my reasons for keeping things from you."

"Don't bother coming back for me, then. I don't see what good comes from all this secrecy."

Elyse inhaled deeply, frustration bubbling inside her. "If you insist on pushing me away, I don't care anymore. Nobody waits forever for someone."

Jayden didn't reply, but Elyse could hear the sound of wind and a lighter flicking on the other end. She guessed he was probably smoking a cigarette. Closing her eyes, she quietly visualized the scene.

After a lengthy silence, Jayden finally said in a subdued tone, "It doesn't matter. If you want to be with another man, go ahead. But if I come back and find him, I'll kill him."

Elyse was shocked. "Have you lost your mind?"

“I’m not joking,” Jayden stated, inhaling deeply from his cigarette and exhaling slowly. “In this life, you are only meant to be with me. Don’t even consider other men.”

Elyse felt her anger rise. “So, I’m supposed to be with you, kept in the dark and played for a fool, huh?” Her emotions swelled, and her voice trembled with unshed tears. “You’ve always been this way! Why can’t you change? You promised to share your secrets with me, but now it’s always ‘next time.’ When will you stop making excuses?”

After speaking, Elyse felt overwhelmed. She bit her hand to stifle a cry. What was the use of crying? Jayden had messed up initially, and they were already divorced. Did it really matter whether she knew his secrets or not? She kept trying to convince herself.

On the other end, Jayden heard Elyse’s muffled cries, his expression reflecting loneliness and regret.