

Illusions 571

Chapter 571

How could she just stand there, indifferent?

This was the only man she had ever loved, the man who, over and over, confessed his love for her. Words she once dreamed of hearing, now sweeping over her like a hurricane, overwhelming and all-consuming.

"Liz, please don't cry. Did I say something wrong again? Did I upset you?"

Lizetta's tears fell faster, scalding drops landing on the man's hands and cheeks. Remington gently wiped them away, his handsome face a mix of tenderness and panic.

But Lizetta pushed him away forcefully. She staggered backward, nearly falling. Remington turned pale with fright, jumping up to catch her, only to be pushed away again. His tall, lean figure stood there, hand outstretched, watching her cry, wanting to embrace her but too afraid to do so, his expression one of deep regret.

Lizetta choked out between sobs, glaring at him, "Don't touch me, you jerk!"

"Alright, alright, I won't come closer. I'm the jerk, the absolute worst, unforgivable. Please, just stop crying."

Remington was at his wit's end, clueless about how to comfort her. The more he tried, the more she seemed to cry, the more hurt she appeared.

Lizetta calmed down a bit, accusing

him, "Why do you act so innocent? With your way with words, knowing exactly how to hit where it hurts, how could you possibly say the wrong thing? Remington, you're doing this on purpose! You choose now to say these things, just when I found out about my real family, when I'm at my most vulnerable and my defenses are down. You're trying to sway my heart! You call me sly, but you're the most cunning hunter of all! Your love is nothing but calculated moves. I don't want to hear it!"

With that, Lizetta turned and quickly entered the bathroom, locking the door behind her. She was afraid if she delayed any longer, she'd give in to her softer emotions and once again swallow his honeyed words laced with pain.

Lizetta didn't see the shocked and

pained expression on Remington's face as she closed the door. His deep eyes reddened, losing their usual calm, filled with hurt. Gone was his usual self-assurance and strategic thinking. Those words had come naturally to him, a true reflection of his feelings. But in her eyes, his heartfelt words were

nothing but calculated manipulation.

Remington's thin lips curved into a self-mocking smile as he approached the bathroom door, his voice strained. "Liz, if I made you sad again, I take back what I said. If you don't want to see me, I'll leave now. Don't stay in there too long, it's stuffy."

He waited silently for a moment, but there was no response from inside. He didn't know if she was still crying, suppressing the urge to break in, he sighed deeply and turned away.

Inside the bathroom, Lizetta pressed against the door, her eyes wet but unable to stop the silent tears. Tears, perhaps, were the best way to release emotions, like lancing a boil, painful but somehow relieving the bitterness in her heart.

It was then she heard it. A gentle, familiar piano melody floated into the room. Lizetta paused, surprised. She opened the door and stepped out.

Remington was gone from the room, but on the floor by the bathroom door, flower petals spelled out three words: I'm sorry.

The opening door caused a breeze,

scattering the petals, blurring the message. The piano music came from her phone on the bedside table, its screen still lit. It was Lizetta's

phone, but she hadn't renet

piano piece. She recognized immediately; it was Remington playing, with his unique touch. And the piece he played was "Winter Snow," her own composition posted on Twitter, inspired by their first meeting when she was eight.

Chapter 572

But Thaddeus had just confided to her that in his memory, their first encounter traced back even earlier than she remembered. Before Lizetta even had a thread of memory to cling to, he had already etched her into his heart.

The melody meandered through the quiet of the hospital room, swelling Lizetta's chest with an indescribable mix of emotions. It was as though the pieces of herself she'd discarded were being gingerly collected by him, piece by piece.

As though their roles had reversed, with him patiently waiting for her to turn back.

After a long moment, she finally approached and sat beside the hospital bed. Looking at Thaddeus lying there, Lizetta's cheeks flushed with a bashful smile. "Big brother, did you hear all of that? I'm sorry, did I disturb you?"

"You must be teasing me, still such a crybaby even after becoming a mom."

"Big brother, what should I do? I think I still love him. Should I trust him again?"

In the car.

Remington wore an expression of cold detachment, sitting in the back seat, and instructed his driver Ray in a grave tone.

"Any anomalies found with Hans' case?"

Ray shook his head, glancing at the man in the rearview mirror before quickly averting his gaze.

Despite Remington's stoic facade, Ray couldn't shake the feeling that Mr. Dashiell was in a foul mood. But that seemed odd, considering he had just had a lengthy private meeting with his wife.

"No anomalies detected. The scaffold collapse incident two months ago appears to be an accident, with no evidence of tampering. It's been fourteen years, and most of the prison guards and the warden from Hans' case have been transferred.

The new warden, who transferred from Tranquil Meadows last year, is unaware of Hans' connection to you. And Bard, who is familiar with Hans' situation, recently had a flare-up of an old injury and is recuperating at home, which is why the information didn't reach you sooner.

The day before yesterday, the new warden called to apologize for the oversight, hoping to invite you for a meal to personally apologize when you're available..."

As Ray reported, it seemed Hans had been fortunate, with no abnormalities found.

"Should we continue the investigation?"

Remington closed his eyes, his voice icy.

"No need. Hans forged a paternity test, so what he did to Liz wasn't just domestic abuse. Let's proceed with legalaction; make sure he stays behind bars this time."

Evidence of Hans' abuse towards Lizetta, including photographs, medical assessments, and witness statements, had all been meticulously preserved by Remington.

Given the leniency typically granted in domestic abuse cases, Remington had engineered a different trap to incarcerate Hans.

Now that it was clear Hans wasn't Lizetta's biological father, his actions were not merely domestic abuse but premeditated assault and child endangerment.

Remington intended to ensure Hans paid for his crimes anew.

"Understood, I'll take care of it personally," Ray responded promptly.

Remington opened his eyes. "Before you send him off, interrogate him thoroughly. And look into Liz's background."

"The hospital where Mrs. Dashiell was born closed down eight years ago, and the medical staff have long since dispersed. It might take some time."

Ray responded, and Remington rubbed his temples, sighing.

"Let's keep this from my wife for now."

He hoped to locate Lizetta's biological family first, assess the situation, and then decide whether to share the news with her.

Having suffered enough in both the

Hawthorne and Gardenia families,

Remington didn't want Lizetta to face any more pain if her own family turned out to be another source of heartache.

Ray acknowledged the instruction and dropped Remington off at his office before setting out to deal with Hans.

What was anticipated to be a

straightforward task-given the surveillance detail previously assigned to Hans-turned

complicated when Ray arrived

find the bodyguard unconscious and Hans nowhere to be found.

Chapter 573

Remington had just wrapped up a meeting when he got word that Hans had bolted. As he strode towards his office, the air around him felt heavy with tension.

"We've tracked him to an hour ago at the airport. It looks like he caught on to our tail and got spooked. He's left Zion City," Ray reported, his voice tight with concern. "I underestimated him, Mr. Dashiell. I let him slip through our fingers, but I promise to make it right and bring him back.

Remington's handsome face was set in a grim line. "Let's talk when you've got him," he said curtly before ending the call.

Catching up to him, Timothy Temple clapped Remington on the shoulder, a note of concern in his voice. "Hey, Remi, take it easy, will you? All this stress is aging you."

Timothy thought back to their recent meeting with the Temple Group, where Remington had been all business, his demeanor so frosty that Timothy could've sworn they were in the red for five million dollars, no profiting.

Remington, in no mood for chitchat, shrugged off Timothy's hand, his reply icy. "Why are you still here?"

"Come on, Remi, I'm just looking out for you. You know, Litchi is all about the looks. If you let yourself go, you're out of the game. Keeping a light touch, giving her space to breathe-that's key. Make sure you dazzle her next time, get her heart racing..."

Before Timothy could finish, the door to Remington's office slammed shut in his face, leaving him to mutter to himself about the wasted wisdom of his many romantic endeavors.

Inside, Remington scoffed at the notion. Was he really the type to rely on his looks to get ahead?

But then, barely ten minutes later, he abruptly set aside the paperwork in front of him and called Cedric.
"Bring me two boxes of facial masks!"

Cedric was puzzled. The boss was getting quirkier by the day.

Lizetta was surprised by the turn of events over the next week. She hadn't seen Remington, but his presence was unmistakable.

Her shadowed protectors were

clearly his men, and the meals

prepared by Bess occasionally

included dishes that seemed out of

her usual repertoire.

Each morning, fresh flowers, always including a green rose like the ones Remington had given her, were placed in the living room vase.

One morning, she even found a short, stubby hair on the pillow next to hers...

She chose to ignore these small signs.

Then one day, she got a call from Jerome, informing her that Dora was flying into Zion City, her injuries now healed. He even provided the flight details, hoping to surprise Lizetta.

Delighted, Lizetta decided to meet Dora at the airport with a bouquet in hand, aiming to give her a pleasant surprise.

Arriving early, she contemplated visiting a dessert shop when suddenly, someone tugged at her dress from behind.

Turning around, she found herself face-to-face with an elderly lady, her appearance humble but her eyes kind and filled with laughter.

Though Lizetta felt a sense of

warmth from the woman, the bustling airport environment made her wary. However, the sight of her bodyguards approaching reassured her.

Bending slightly, Lizetta smiled at the old lady. "Can I help you with something?"

Instead of answering, the old lady simply took Lizetta's hand, insisting, "Come with me."

Chapter 574

Her hands were warm and soft, much like Fiona's.

They were the hands of someone who lived a life of comfort and ease, Lizetta noted. The elderly lady carried herself with a grace reminiscent of Fiona's.

She exuded a peaceful aura, the kind that comes with age, not at all the type to mean harm.

So, Lizetta signaled to the approaching bodyguard to hold back.

The elderly lady, as Lizetta had guessed, didn't drag her away but instead stopped in front of a bakery's display window. She pointed at a dessert behind the glass, smiling at Lizetta.

"I'm hungry, I'd really like to have that. Could you treat me to it?" she asked, her eyes gleaming like a child asking for candy.

Lizetta realized the lady was somewhat disoriented, probably separated from her family.

With a gentle smile growing on her face, Lizetta nodded, "Of course, I can do that for you, but you'll have to promise me one thing in return."

The elderly lady nodded eagerly, as if afraid Lizetta might change her mind and the dessert would vanish.

Laughing softly, Lizetta led the lady into the bakery and ordered her a strawberry soufflé pancake.

As they sat down, Lizetta pushed the dessert towards her and said, "Here's your treat. Could you give me your family's phone number now?"

The lady looked at the dessert and then stood up, "Just a moment."

Her movements were swift for her age, and she quickly walked over to the cashier's counter.

She returned with a spoon, handed it to Lizetta, and pushed the dessert between them, smiling warmly, "Elsa, isn't this your favorite strawberry pancake? You have to share it with me, eat up." Lizetta, puzzled, wondered who Elsa was.

It seemed she had been mistaken for a family member. Reluctantly, under the lady's insistent urging, she shared the dessert with her.

Lizetta also scanned the lady for any contact information, finding none.

Worried her family might be frantic, Lizetta gently coaxed her into taking a photo.

Exiting the bakery, Lizetta waved over her bodyguard, Dean, and instructed, "Can you take this photo to the radio station for help?" After Dean left with her phone, Lizetta turned and was surprised to see a familiar figure approaching.

It was Jerome, his coat billowing behind him as he walked briskly towards her.

Seeing him, Lizetta's heart tightened, recalling his previous confession of affection during their time in Luminesia. Clearly, Dora was Jerome's hire, and it was unusual for her to return without their boss personally picking her up.

Yet here was Jerome, and Lizetta had been feeling a change in her own feelings lately.

Believing in being decisive when not intending to give hope, she braced herself for Jerome's approach.

Before he could speak, she stepped

back, gesturing towards the bodyguard she had left behind, and started, "Mr. Madden, worried about me in my condition? I forgot to tell you, I have a bodyguard with me, left by Remington. You've been a great help in Luminesia, a real lifesaver to both me and the baby. When you're free, I'd like to invite you and Remington for a meal, to properly thank you..."

Jerome looked momentarily stunned.

Just then, the bakery door opened and the elderly lady came out,

beaming, holding her dessert net

"Tang

Took, someone treated me to a

Sherry pancake, it's delicious!"

Jerome smiled, taking out a napkin to wipe the cream from the lady's mouth, then turned to Lizetta with a smile, "This is my grandmother, I'm here to pick her up."

Lizetta, "..."

Chapter 575

Jerry watched as Lizetta wished she could just disappear into thin air, a slight smirk playing at the corners of his mouth. "Confidence is a good thing."

Lizetta's face turned a bright shade of red. She had been praying that Jerry hadn't picked up on her subtle rejection, but clearly, he had no issues with emotional intelligence. The one with the problem was her. Feeling utterly embarrassed, Lizetta stammered, "Well, in that case, I won't bother you any longer. Maybe some other time when Mr. Madden is free, I could invite Mr. Madden..."

She turned to leave, but once again, her coat was gently tugged from behind. Recognizing the familiar force and location, Lizetta turned around to see Mrs. Bernice Madden, but this time, tears filled the old lady's eyes, her expression one of confusion and sorrow.

"Elsa, where are you going? Won't you come home with mom?"

Lizetta, seeing Mrs. Madden about to cry, was at a loss. She looked to Jerry for help, and he stepped forward, wrapping his arm around his grandmother, then said in a gentle voice to Lizetta, "My grandma thinks you're her deceased daughter, Elsa Madden. Don't take it to heart."

At this, Mrs. Bernice Madden became upset, slapping Jerry's arm.

"Jerry, don't you start thinking I'm going senile! I am not. This is my Elsa, and Elsa's expecting my granddaughter Andrea. Aren't you going to call her aunt?"

Lizetta remembered hearing from Remington that Nelson Madden and his wife had only one daughter, Elsa, who had passed away early. Jerry was adopted by the Madden family, and he had mentioned that Lizetta reminded him of an important relative. It seemed he was referring to Elsa.

"Call her," urged Mrs. Bernice Madden, while Lizetta hesitated, not wanting to distress the old lady by correcting her. Before Lizetta could resolve her dilemma, Jerry, in an attempt to cheer his grandmother, indeed called out, "Aunt."

Lizetta, "..."

Suddenly, she had a grown nephew, and it wasn't even her fault. Seeing the helpless look on Jerry's handsome face, Lizetta couldn't help but let a smile escape her eyes.

Jerry locked eyes with her, feigning annoyance as he slightly squinted, then his lips curled into a slight smile.

Just then, a young woman in a red dress hurried over.

"Grandma, why are you wandering off again! I just went to give directions, and when I turn around, you're gone!"

The woman approached and pulled Mrs. Madden away. Mrs. Madden was still clutching Lizetta's coat, causing Lizetta to stumble a step, which Jerry quickly steadied her by the arm.

"Are you okay?" Jerry asked, looking

down at her. Lizetta shook her head slightly and Jerry turned his gaze to the woman, his expression hardening as he said, "Wendy, you're being rude."

Mrs. Madden shook off Wendy's hand, annoyed, "Don't pull me, I want to stay with Elsa!" She returned to Lizetta's side, gripping her coat tightly once again.

Wendy, feeling slighted by their treatment, looked to Jerry and said with a hint of grievance, "Bro, I was just worked about grandma. There are so many people at the airport, and if grandma wanders off and gets lost, or if something bad

happens to her..."

Mrs. Madden immediately waved her off, "I'm with Elsa, and Elsa is not a bad person. Elsa even bought me strawberry shortcake! It's sweet!"

Wendy glanced at Lizetta, then stepped forward, frowning as she took the strawberry shortcake from Mrs. Madden's hands.

"Grandma, how many times have I

told you not to just eat things strangers give you? What if it had something bad in it? You could get taken away by bad people, locked in a dark room, and never see grandpa and us again."

Chapter 576

Mrs. Bernice Madden seemed to be in the grips of dementia, her mental state regressed to that of a child. Startled by Andrea, she looked both confused and uneasy, causing Lizetta to feel a pang of discomfort. She took the elderly woman's hand and said to Andrea, "I'm sorry, it was thoughtless of me to give her something to eat without considering."

Andrea was about to retort when Jerome's stern voice interrupted her. "Andrea, you should have kept a closer eye on grandma. Since she found her way back safely, let's not dwell on it.

With that, Andrea nodded, tossing a strawberry shortcake into the trash can before turning back. "Thank you for looking after my grandma," she said to Lizetta, then turned to Jerome, "We should go, grandpa is anxiously waiting."

Jerome didn't move but introduced Lizetta to Andrea, "Andrea, my sister, and Lizetta, a friend of mine. About three months ago, Liz saved you at a bar, remember?"

Andrea's eyes widened in surprise, and after a moment, she smiled gratefully at Lizetta, "So it was you who helped me that night when I was drugged. I was out of it and didn't recognize you, thank you." That night, three months ago, Lizetta had unexpectedly saved a girl from a potentially dangerous situation at a bar, and after giving their statements at the police station, she had left. Lizetta had nearly forgotten the incident; the woman had worn heavy makeup and a body-hugging dress that evening. Now, Andrea stood before her, looking younger and more elegant than that night, causing Lizetta not to recognize her at first.

She nodded with a smile, "It's fate, Ms. Madden. You're welcome."

Andrea continued, "I wanted to thank you in person, but after my grandparents and parents learned about the incident in Zion City, they immediately brought me back to Tranquil Meadows. However, I did ask my brother to thank you for me."

Looking up at Jerome, she asked, "Bro, did you properly thank Ms. Gardenia for me?"

Before Jerome could respond, a familiar, deep voice cut in, "So, Mr. Madden, has your family been taking care of my wife all this time at Florence's request?"

Lizetta felt a shiver down her spine

and turned to see Remington

stepping closer, his presence commanding even amidst the crowded airport. His tailored dark grey suit highlighted his composed and striking demeanor. Despite seeing him just a week ago, seemed different, almost

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breath-takingly so. Avoiding his gaze, Lizetta thought bitterly how the familiarity seemed misplaced now. And there they were, days away from making their union official, and he was boldly referring to her as his wife.

But Remington, unbothered by such thoughts, naturally wrapped an arm around Lizetta, drawing her close. His hand was warm against her through the fabric, his familiar scent enveloping her. Lizetta stiffened, glaring up at him, but he only continued, not meeting her gaze but softly patting her side, "Ah, my daughter knows her daddy's here, kicking me through her mom's belly.

She's already so smart."

The encounter, woven through with everyday miscommunications and the complexities of relationships, resonated with a touch of humor and the warmth of familial bonds, albeit in unexpected forms.

Chapter 577

Liz was utterly flabbergasted as she stared at Remington. What on earth was he rambling about? There was no way she hadn't felt any movement if Daisy was indeed "quietly" nestled in her belly.

Yet, there was Remington, speaking with utter seriousness, "Mr. Madden probably has no clue what it feels like to have a baby kick. I suggest Mr. Madden and Florence hurry up, tie the knot, and start a family. It's quite the miracle, wouldn't you say, Liz?"

He lowered his gaze only to lift his eyebrows suggestively at Liz a moment later. His hand gently caressed her side, his touch whispering, "Let's keep this our little secret."

Liz had just made a fool of herself in front of Jerome, which was embarrassing enough. Now with Remington also stirring the pot, she felt her cheeks burning with embarrassment, unable to face Jerome. She shot Remington a fierce glare, at a loss for words. Just then, a group hastened their steps towards them. Leading them was an elderly gentleman, his hair silver but his spirit vibrant. His face etched with worry.

Mrs. Bernice Madden's face lit up at the sight of him, waving excitedly. "Archie, come see who I found!"

Nelson moved closer, taking his wife's hand, his demeanor visibly softening. "Who is it? Surprise me," he played along.

The elderly lady had wandered off, and it was clear that Nelson was the most concerned, yet he didn't utter a single word of blame. His every emotion seemed to vanish in her presence, his tenderness like that of soothing a child.

In contrast to Andrea's earlier demeanor, Nelson's affection and silent warmth towards his wife were touching. And Mrs. Bernice Madden, though her mind was not as sharp, clearly relied heavily on Nelson.

Liz suddenly envied such a bond -

to grow old together, through thick and thin. A smile unwittingly spread across her face, and seizing the moment, she stepped away from Remington. It's true what they say - some people really set the bar high!

Left with an empty side, Remington felt a pang of loneliness, wanting to close the distance between him and Liz. But Mrs. Bernice Madden, pulling Nelson along, reached Liz first.

Mrs. Bernice Madden said with a mix of pride and confusion, "Archie, look, I found our Elsa! And look, our granddaughter Andrea is in her belly."

"Archie, if Andrea is in Elsa's belly, then who is this Andrea?" she asked, pointing at the young woman next to her, clearly befuddled.

Andrea shook her head in resignation, "Grandma, it's me, Andrea. I'm all grown up now. So, how could she possibly be my mom? You've got the wrong person, grandma."

Mrs. Bernice Madden frowned, her expression turning to one of anxious confusion, clutching Nelson's hand tightly. Nelson, while comforting her, couldn't help but fixate on Liz, momentarily startled.

Liz, in her simple pink lace top and casual, belly-supporting palazzo pants, draped in a cream cardigan, her hair loosely tied up with a wooden pin, looked effortlessly

graceful and serene. There was net

something about her - a

Elsa in her gentle demeanor, yet upon closer inspection, not quite the same. But even Nelson had to admit, the young woman before him was indeed more striking.

resemblance to his late net

"My dear, were you the one who looked after my wife? Would you join us for a meal as a token of our gratitude?" Nelson asked, smiling warmly.

Before Liz could respond, Andrea

stepped forward, taking his hand. "Grandpa, Miss Gardenia clearly has her own matters to attend to here at the airport, and that gentleman is her husband. You and grandma must be tired from the flight. Let's find another time to thank Miss Gardenia properly."

Nelson was about to respond when Mrs. Bernice Madden grew anxious, tugging at his hand.

Chapter 578

"Ash, I'm not tired. I want to have dinner with Elsa!"

Nelson caught the old lady's pleading, panicked gaze, and any hesitation on his face vanished completely.

He immediately turned to Lizetta and Remington, flashing Remington a smile.

"So, you're Mrs. Dashiell? Mr. Dashiell, my wife seems to have taken quite a liking to your wife. Would you mind if we invited you both to join us for a casual dinner?"

Both being figures in the business world, even though Nelson had stepped back from the forefront, leaving the Madden family business in the hands of Jerome and his son-in-law, Conrad West, he was still acquainted with Remington, having met him a couple of times at business summits.

Remington held a respectful admiration for a business predecessor like Mr. Madden and glanced at Jerome and Andrea beside him before nodding with a smile.

"Having Mr. Madden and the gracious lady visit Zion City, the honor of hosting falls to me. Moreover, Mr. Madden has previously done my wife a great service.

I've tried to express my gratitude twice, only to be kindly refused by Mr. Madden. With Mr. Madden's noble character, I hope he wouldn't turn down our invitation today?" Remington's gaze shifted to Jerome.

Indeed, Remington had sent Cedric with generous gifts to Jerome's doorstep, only to be turned away.

Now, as the two men's eyes met-one cool, the other clear-Jerome's slight smile seemed to dissolve any underlying tension.

"Perhaps this question should be directed to Liz first, seeing as my grandparents wish to invite her. And naturally, I have no objections."

His words seemed to hint at Remington's dominant nature, lacking respect for Lizetta.

Remington's expression darkened slightly, changing the atmosphere around them.

However, Jerome had already turned to Lizetta, his eyes twinkling, voice warm.

"Dora's flight will be arriving soon. Wouldn't you be too tired to go out for dinner after picking her up? If it's too much, we can always plan for another day." All eyes turned to Lizetta.

Jerome's considerate demeanor made him appear more like Lizetta's husband than anyone else.

Cedric, standing behind Remington, dared not meet his boss's gaze.

The boss was indeed caught off guard this time.

All the effort spent in the past weeks, trying to assert his dominance and battling jealousy, seemed futile compared to M Madden's tactful and gentlemanly approach.

Feeling unexpectedly pressured, Lizetta found Mrs. Bernice Madden's anxiousness hard to ignore.

"Elsa, let's go for dinner. I'm hungry, and I'd love your company," she said, tugging at Lizetta's sleeve.

Facing the old lady's hopeful and hesitant gaze, Lizetta felt an inexplicable tenderness, unable to voice any refusal.

Perhaps it was Mrs. Bernice

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Madden's resemblance to Fiona

Dashiell and Granny Rachel that made her feel a special connection, unwilling to let the old lady down.

"Alright, I'll pick up a friend first, and then I'll join you for dinner, okay?"

Mrs. Bernice Madden's face lit up with joy, wrinkles and all. She then turned to Remington, finally voicing her confusion. "Elsa, who is he? I don't recognize him."

Lizetta, arm in arm with Mrs. Bernice Madden, laughed, "He's not important. I don't know him either."

Mrs. Bernice Madden glanced at Remington again, catching his sullen expression, and shook her head.

"Elsa, he may be handsome, but he

has a look of unkindness about him-so stern he might even be the type to mistreat his wife. I have a good eye for these things. We're better off staying away from such men."

Remington, "..."

UMS

Chapter 579

Dora's worst injury was a gunshot wound to the abdomen, but thankfully, Ray arrived in time, and it wasn't life-threatening.

After some time to recover, she was mostly fine. However, when Lizetta went to pick her up, Dora was still visibly exhausted and decided not to join Lizetta for dinner at a restaurant. After Dora left by cab, Lizetta and Remington got into their car.

The backseat was spacious, yet Remington sat right next to Lizetta, close enough that Lizetta had to scoot towards the door.

"Can't you scoot over a bit?" Lizetta couldn't hide her annoyance.

Remington's gaze was fixed on her, admiring her frosty expression, wishing he could use Timothy as an excuse to break the ice.

All the talk about experiences and relaxation didn't seem to work at all.

A week apart, and the only thing that changed was his growing longing for her.

"I can't, my legs are too long," Remington said, spreading his long legs even further, so his thigh pressed against Lizetta's.

With his height of over six feet three inches, he claimed there was no comfortable way for him to sit without taking up all the space.

Lizetta gritted her teeth, turning to look at him with a half-smile.

"I know you're good at stretching your legs, no need to show off."

Remington was baffled. "When did I ever...?"

But he quietly drew his legs back, giving Lizetta a bit more room. Just when she thought she had some space, she was suddenly lifted by a strong force and found herself sitting on Remington's lap. Lizetta was furious. "What are you doing?"

Remington's face was cool as he raised an eyebrow. "You accused me of stretching my legs too much, so now you're pinning them down, making it impossible."

Lizetta was speechless and attempted to struggle, but Remington wrapped his arms around her, pulling her closer. His breath was hot against her ear, his voice hoarse with suppressed emotion. "Have you missed me, even a little, during this time apart?"

His breath tickled her ear, causing her heart to flutter uncontrollably.

That day in Thaddeus's hospital room, his words had left a mark on her.

She often dreamt about their childhood memories, him trying to braid her hair, teaching her how to ride a bike...

Upon waking, she found her thoughts uncontrollably drifting to him.

Yet Lizetta wasn't ready to admit it. She barely moved her lips to speak when Remington suddenly looked up, holding her gaze.

"Never mind, don't say it. You're always so contradictory. I won't believe it anyway. I'll find out for myself."

Before Lizetta could react, Remington's hand was on her chin, and his lips were on hers.

He kissed her deeply, urgently, until Lizetta bit him hard on the lip, tasting blood.

Remington released her, wiping the blood from her lip without anger, surprisingly in a good mood.

"Mrs. Bernice Madden was wrong. You're not to keep your distance from me, especially now that it's too late for that."

Lizetta moved away from him, settling on the opposite side.

"It's not too late. We're divorced, remember? And Mrs. Madden was right; she and her husband had a love that could make even the gods jealous!"

Their kiss, brief as it was, didn't cure the longing but Remington dared not push her further.

He took a tissue, pressing it against

his lip, and said, "Divorced or not you're no longer the Dashiell family's charity case. You're just Lizetta, the woman I, Remington, intend to woo, to love, and to bring home.

Lizetta clenched her fist, listening to his deep, serious words.

Remington continued, "Divorce was an end. You, but for me, it's a new beginning! The kind of love that could make the gods jealous? I'll give you that."

Chapter 580

He'd made it clear from the start-he wasn't giving up!

Lizetta glanced out the window, staying silent. Yet, she couldn't help but wonder: could a man like Remington actually pursue a woman? And what would that pursuit look like? Would he, like any other

guy, write love letters, whisper sweet nothings, be at her beck and call, stay up all night watching Netflix and chatting, doing all sorts of mundane things together?

By the time Remington and Lizetta arrived at the restaurant's private dining room, the Maddens were already comfortably seated. Mrs. Bernice Madden had been eagerly awaiting their arrival, with Nelson having to constantly soothe her to prevent her from running out to the street in anticipation.

The sight of Lizetta brought a childlike smile to the elderly lady's face, radiating an innocence that was truly heartwarming. "Elsa, take a seat here!" Mrs. Bernice Madden stood up, pulling Lizetta to the empty chair next to her, eagerly sharing the delectable dishes she'd ordered.

Naturally, Nelson sat on the other side of Mrs. Bernice Madden, with Jerome next to Lizetta, and Andrea beside Jerome. This arrangement left Remington no choice but to sit between Andrea and Nelson, clearly a move to separate him from Lizetta.

Without taking his seat, Remington approached Jerome's chair. "Mr. Madden, would you mind swapping places? Liz isn't feeling well, and I'd like to take care of her."

Jerome, without even glancing up, leaned over to fill Lizetta's glass with water, stating, "Taking care of her isn't a hassle, just a simple gesture. No need for all the fuss of switching seats, Mr. Dashiell. Please, take a seat."

Remington cast a glance at Lizetta, who seemed quite at ease, deeply engaged in conversation with Mrs. Bernice Madden, indifferent to who was seated beside her. Was she deliberately ignoring his gaze, perhaps to tease him? Nonetheless, she casually took a sip from the glass Jerome had just filled, her movements smooth.

Well then!

Remington took a step forward, pulled out a chair, and sat down between Andrea and Nelson, directly opposite Lizetta. Once seated, his cold gaze drifted towards Lizetta, making it impossible for her to pretend she hadn't noticed.

Feeling uncomfortable, Lizetta

focused her attention elsewhere.

However, Andrea suddenly let out a soft laugh, remarking, "Mr. Dashiell and Mrs. Dashiell must be very move, just like grandparents.

In just this short time, Mr. Dashiell has turned into a love-struck statue."

She raised her voice slightly, ensuring that everyone could hear her. The comment drew everyone's attention to Remington, even Mrs. Bernice Madden paused her conversation to look over. Remington, however, remained composed, his gaze fixed on Lizetta, now even more focused. As their eyes met, he smiled, "The love between Mr. Madden and Mrs. Bernice Madden is truly enviable. It would be an honor to follow Mr. Madden's example."

His words felt like a public declaration of love. Lizetta's cheeks burned with embarrassment, and she quickly looked away.

Andrea, with a suppressed smile, continued, "You see, brother? Mr. Dashiell and Mrs. Dashiell can't take their eyes off each other, even across the table. If you don't play cupid and let Mr. Dashiell switch seats, how are we supposed to enjoy our meal?"

Her words were directed at Jerome,

but her gaze lingered on Lizetta. There was a scrutinizing look in her eyes, puzzled over what charm Lizetta, visibly pregnant, possessed to have Remington, a prominent figure in Zion City, so captivated and even making the usually indifferent Jerome show such special

attention.

Even her grandmother seemed to have forgotten about her own granddaughter at the sight of this

woman, Perhaps it was a clashe

vibes, but despite Lizetta's previous help, Andrea couldn't help but feel a strong aversion towards her, sensing an underlying threat.