

A Love Forgotten (Arianna and Elijah)

Chapter 121

Chapter 121

Ms. Speroni could hold back her indignation by even sitting down. "Mr. Wood, this whole situation was instigated by this crazy woman compensating Teri leaped, "You bitch keep spewing now, and I'll make sure you regret it!"

Spencer shrank back, probably well aware of Teri's temper and her willingness to follow through on her threats.

Teri pulled Teri back into her when Teri's hot-headedness often led her to turn a justified complaint into a perceived overreaction

Logan sat behind his desk, hands clasped, his gaze steady and unwavering in a bone as cold as his expression, he spoke. "Ms. Spencer, apologize." Spencer was taken aback. "Mr Wood -

Logan's gaze hardened. "Ms. Spencer, there's surveillance footage in the lounge. You know very well what you said to?

to Ms. York?

to me. I demand an apology and

Ms. Spencer was momentarily speechless, realizing she was trapped. Under the weight of Logan's steely gaze, she turned to Teri reluctantly and muttered. "I'm sorry Teri needs a pleary supposed to make this right? Spencer turned to me, barely betraying her disdain despite her forced apology

Ma York, Apologies. I shouldn't have brought up your

(vrouw nut through her words, silencing the room.

Everyday inane, including Ms. Spencer, who had more to say,

one was by "Ma.Spencer, you've been with the company for about five years. Given your service, we'll give you a generous severance package."

Ms. Spencer's face drained of color as the reality set in. She panicked, "Mr. Wood, what did I do wrong? Please, Mr. Wood."

Without another word, Logan pressed a button on his desk and called "Mr. Russell, please come in. Also, contact the finance department to process Ms. Spencer's severance package and arrange for the handover of her duties." Spencer was escorted out, her protective gear down the hall. The commotion quickly subsided, and silence returned to the office.

Both Teri and I stared at Logan.

Turning to Teri, Logan said, "Ms. Stuart, you've passed the interview. Please

start in three days. If you have any questions, consult Mr. Russell." Teri, nettled and somewhat flustered, respectfully nodded. "Thank you, Mr. Wood. I'll work hard to get it done. All, give Teri a moment to finish up, and we'll head out for dinner."

(I tentatively took the hint and excused myself)

I was about to follow when Logan called me back.

I turned, feeling well-conscious. "The sorry I didn't expect to cause this much trouble today."

Logan (eyes held a gentle warning). "Insure

None of this was your fault."

With that, he went back to his work, leaving me alone in another lounge, feeling a little ill.

After this bag of hot air, I wondered what might have upset Teri.

After some time, the door opened,

and I instinctively flinched. This time, a female employee entered. She gave me a friendly smile. "Miss Russell asked me to check on you, Ms. York. Is there anything I can help you with?" After that intrusive, deathly moment with Teri, my eyes were blurry, and my face looked swollen and red.

Chapter 122

Chapter 122

To be honest, if it weren't for my curiosity about the truth, I would have already left with Teri.

The round-faced girl was Melissa Poswell. She gave me a wain smile: "Lunderstand. By the way, Ms. York, my name in Melissa. I'm just an assistant in the HR department. You can call me Mel

She then pulled out a large pouch and started taking out items like a magician. "hught a bunch of stuff. Let's see if there's anything you need."

The produced foundation, lipstick, powder puffs, indeven a small vial of essential oil to refresh the

As she handed me these items, she casually mentioned that the commotion Ma Spacer had caused had already spread across the company within ten minutes

Melchuckled "Ms. York, everyone's saying that it's about time Ms. Spencer it. Some of my coworkers are even planning a barbeque celebration tonight."

Lasked. "Was she that bad?-

Mellowed her voice. "Not exactly bad, but she always acted superior because of her looks. She bullied new employees, took credit for her team's hard work, and all the male employees had to lawn her calling her the "office beauty"," With a grimace, she continued, "I had the misfortune of being on her team for six months. It was maberable. I almost wanted to quit"

As I cleaned my face, I found myself asking "And Mr. Wood, is he always this.." erailed off, unable to Lind the right words, white gestating to express my confusion

Mellooked puzzled "Mr. Wood? What about him?"

1 stammed. "The way he just fired her like that. It was intimidating. He didn't hesitate at all with Ms. Speech.

sel was silent for a moment and shook her head. "That's unusual for him. He's usually all bar work. Everyone says he's easygoing and treats everyone with respect, even the cleaning

1. Helt even in baffled

Mel, poothly due to her young age or natural curiosity, leaned in and asked, "Ms. York, whur did Ms. Spendo in you?".

1 shook my head, feeling lost

Mel's bow Ludowed "Ms. Spencer in known for her backhanded comments, making people feel uncomfortable. She must have said something pretty harsh."

Suddenly, fragments of Ma. Spencer's matter word flashed through my mind.

"Remember seeing you on at a business gala three years ago. You and Mr. Linden looked so close back then.

"And didn't Mr. Linden get selected as a Top Ten Influential Figure and Most Stylish Gentleman because of your help?

"Oh yes, Mas Linden, you had quite a close relationship with the event organizer, Ma. Tucker"

My face turned pale as dread gripped me, and my hand trembled.

Mal noticed and asked, "Ms. York, are you feeling alright? Do you need help?"

I forced my voice to sound steady, "Mel my stomach at Could you get me a glass of hot water?"

Seeing my pale face and the way I held my stomach, Medately ran off to get soon hot water.

As soon as she left, I fumbled to open my phone, my shaky hands managing to bring up the search engine after several failed attempts.

Finally, I managed toward for Top Ten influential Figures" and "Most Stylish Gentleman" from three years ago..

There he was, Elijah Linden, standing tall and proud in a tailored suit, long every bit the age of access, his expression smug and assured. The photos captured every angle of his composed, handsome face. But as I delved deeper, my heart plummeted

I launched my Twitter app and searched for the same titles to find articles like a punch to the gut.

"Linden Group's Max Linden Begging on his Behalf,

"Linden Gossip's Lady with a Sultry Peure-Her Fast Exposed"

My thumb lingers

is scrolled through the articles, revealing a slew of degrading photos, each blurred around the face, but unmistakable.

Chapter 129

Chapter 123

Chapter 123

I scrolled through the comments nine by one, each more degrading than the last,

With malicious and vulgar remarks,

"I thought it was a marriage allumer between two prestigious families. Turns out Mr. Lieden put himself a 'wild' woman She looks like one hose women who do that kind of dirty work." "co, this woman's got a great figure. Snow white skin and legale daya!"

"wow, I'm honestly jealous of Mr. Lindan. She must be something is the bedroo

"They say she's a high-society heiress? Then why doesn't she have any self-respect? Disgraceful"

"It doesn't matter if she's rich and beautiful. Her plate life's a mess. A friend told me that this York heiress loves partying at bars every night with a different crowd." That was a take story, for sure

The dizziness and throbbing pain made it hard to beache

I set phone down, pasping for a Fimally, I understood the ridicule in Ms Spencer's words.

Three years ago, Elijah took me to a business gals and then I was slandered, turned into nothing but a twisted spectacle.

A scream ripped from me as the realization sank in

Melling opened the do, bolding a cup of hot water, startled by my outburst, almost sp

She hurried ever. "Ma York!"

However, I staggered back, avoiding her touch, and bolted out of the room

If in her shock.

she called after me, but Leuldn't hear her anymore. All I knew was that I had to leave and escape from everything Despair engulfed me, a tidal wave

I wave that threaten

threatened to drown me

me entirely.

I found myself cowering by the shimmering sea. The last streak of sunset barely clung to the horizon, a faint golden line

Behind me, I heard the sound of a car pulling up, followed by hurried footsteps. I didn't turn around

The footsteps came closer until they stopped just behind me. "Ari?"

The voice was Amir's. He sounded both startled and relieved. "Ari, what's wrong? Why are you out here?"

then he

I slowly lifted my head from my knees, squinting at the view in front of me, my face expressionless. His footsteps edged closer, and then his hand rested on my shoulder. I turned around and looked at this unfamiliar, yet familiar hand. The look in my eyes must have shaken him because he took a step back. "Ari, what

what's going on!"

I heard my own voice, calm and detached "Amir, did you ever love me?"

His tense expression softened in an instant. He exhaled deeply, pulling me into his arms as "Yes, of course, I love you: I truly love you."

His embrace felt distant, as though my heart no longer registered its existence. Perhaps it had died long ago. There you were? Or maybe not? I had no idea

I let myself lean against his shoulder, head and heart

I heard him whisper, "Ari, let's start over, okay? Don't be foolish. You love me, and you can't live without me. Everything you said is not true. Even if some of it were true, it's

He adjusted my posture, gently holding me by the shoulders. His gaze fixed on mine, he desperately searched for a reaction, but he was disappointed.

There was nothing - no expression, no spark in my eyes, but even a change in my complexion

Finally, Amir sensed something about me. He was confused, he looked at me. "Amir, what's happened to you? Did something upset you?"

He repeated his question a few times. Then, his eyes widened as he realized "You saw these things Jocelyn Zaklonillas, debet you?"

He tugged at his shirt, trying to console me "ui, don't worry to you. I'll handle everything. True"

He turned away, pulling my face print as he walked and "why is your face so red?"

He turned back slowly, asked, "Lijali, how did we start dating?"

Caught off guard, he hesitated a few moments before saying "You had just finished your freshman year in the sun"

Chapter 124

Chapter 124

Elijah heated before continuing, "We met briefly during your freshman orientation. You asked for my phone number and then got my WhatsApp. You reached out to me a few times. I interrupted him, "Were you dating Jocelyn at the time"

Elijah's gaze sharpened. "All what are you trying to find out?"

I replied calmly. "I just want to get the facts straight before you claim I broke up your relationship. I want to know the truth."

Though still suspicious, Elijah's tone softened as he explained, "We were arguing constantly at the time, nearly every two weeks."

I pressed, my voice neutral, "So, did I know you were seeing someone"

This looked puzzled by my demeanor

"No, you didn't," he admitted after a moment, "but I also wasn't dating you. We never went out back then"

"Thank you." I said, nodding

He frowned. "Thank you for what?"

At least knowing your boundaries back then."

I paused, then asked, "Did you breakup with her afterward?"

Elijah nodded. "Jocelyn started preparing to further her studies abroad that summer. We were practically done by then anyway.

"My family's company had hit a rough patch, so I couldn't focus on her, and you found out about my situation from somewhere and kept pursuing me."

A bitter laugh escaped me. Elijah seemed to see it, his expression wary

He'd always been smart, and I felt foolish for not seeing it sooner. A man as clever as him must have known all along what I wanted, so why did he keep telling me to "stop acting foolish"? Because he never intended to acknowledge his own faults. Elijah, sensing my chill, draped his coat over my shoulders, shrugged off, and finally lost patience

"Ariana, what are you trying to do? Did you really call me out here just to ask pointless questions?"

I took out my phone and showed him the search page I'd been scrolling through earlier. My voice was cold. "And what about this?"

Shock flickered across his face, and then his expression turned furious. He snatched my phone, shutting it off quickly.

"Ariana, what are you trying to say?" he demanded. "You have the nerve to bring this up? I haven't even-

I began laughing, the sound bubbling up uncontrollably, tears streaming down my face. "So, you do know the truth, don't you? ** Elijah's anger grew. "What much? This was all because you didn't know how to behave -

He cut himself off as his throat had closed because he saw me standing on the edge of the seawall, just inches from the drop

Below us, these churned, waves crashing onto the rocks below, some 20 feet down. His expression shifted. "Ari, what are you doing?"

I felt the cold sea breeze rush through me, an exhilarating sense of freedom surging in. Eyes half-closed, I let the moment take over, embracing the feeling of liberation.

Elijah's voice tiembled "Ari, get down, please."

The wind lifted my hair, and I gave him a faint smile. "Why should I, Elijah, didn't you say I didn't know how to behave? Maybe a woman as terrible as me disappearing would be better for

I laughed, the salty breeze mingling with my tea

Elijah? What's the truth here?"

with my tears. "Jocelyn said broke up your relationship, yet you just told me you'd already broken up when I came into the picture. What about this,

His mouth opened, but no word came out

"A million dollars and your undying love for Jocelyn," I murmured

I started humming softly, my toes tracing the rough face of the seawall's ledge, inching toward the very end, swaying slightly as the wind gusted,

Elijah's voice shook uncontrollably, "Aul, come down! Crise down, and I'll tell you the truth."

But I looked past him, sepainting at the distant horizon

"It doesn't matter anymore, "I whispered "None of it matters at all."

I raised a hand in Tarewell. "Goodbye, Blijali. Thope we never ment again."

"No!, you did nothing. You were set up!="

I closed my eyes, teaning back into the old. The ion of free fall was exhilarating, lifting my spirit as th

The last sound I braidwana ford crea

as though my soul were finally susting free.

Goodbye to this ainted world Goodbye to everything I loved, hated, and never had the chance to cherish. None of it mattered anymore. Fädn't need to know the truth or hold onto any memories of the past. Maybe i was never meand 10 exist in this world

Chapter 125

Chapter 125

lunk into the dark depths of the sea

Strangely, I didn't feel cold. Instead, there was a comforting warmth, like I had returned to my mother's embrace. It was so soothing I didn't want to open my eyes. I just wanted to stay asleep right there, in her arm.. ""Her blood pressure's crashing! Start transfusion-400 milliliters!"

"Debrillator! Hurry up! Clear!"

"Move aside! Prep for surgery!"

"Ari, please! I'm sorry! Ari, don't scare me like this-how could you do this to yourself?"

"Art, please wake up! Ari..."

"Don't hold me back! AL."

The noise was overwhelming. All I wanted was to sleep, I tried to say something, but suddenly, a surge of blood spilled from my mouth

"She's coughing up blood!"

Did I just cough our blood? Did it mean I was still alive?

I struggled to open my eyes-and somehow, I did. Above me, bright, glaring lights stabbed into my vision, and chantic, frantic voices surrounded me.

"Ari, stay with us."

A voice echoed in my mind, tugging me back. Through the haze, I glimpsed a familiar face. I wanted to smile, to tell him I was okay, but something kept pushing out of my mouth

I forced a slow, shaky smile in his direction, trying to lift my hand toward him, I felt relieved, comforted just by seeing him the one person who had given me warmth after I'd lost my

But before I could fully reach him, my smile faded, and the world dissolved into blackness again

felt or amende journey, drifting in limbo for what seemed like an eternity. I didn't know where I was going or what I was looking for.

In this dense fog, voices whispered around me. But whenever I tried to listen closely, they would fade away. So, I kept walking

There was a strange sense of peace, though I could see nothing, hear nothing

"Ani? Please, wake up, okay?" a voice murmured beside me, close with arms

"I'm so sorry. I didn't know things would turn out like this. I'm a terrible friend-I never should have brought up that awful thing.." "Ari. I'm your best friend, your closest buddy. Don't scare me like this, I can't live without you!" In the darkness, I lived quietly. I couldn't speak, nor could I find Teri

I sighed I wanted to tell her that is was really okay.

*Dear An, wake up. It's me, Jonathan!"

Jonathan? I mood up in the fog, straining to se

"pon?" I called into the emptiness. "Jon, where are you?"

"Dean diri, you're the best, right?"

Brould hear Jonathan's suppimad sobs

Chapter 126

H

old gently move my body, wiping away sweat and changing my clothes.

moving

Thrli, ince again, enraything fell silmat feeling but I wopped my armu arbund myself. The days bred to in this strange lumbo, where sukces occasionally reached me, use It was a peculiai feeling like my soul was locked in a body that could sense everything yet remain Finally, en a beautiful, sunny afternoon, Ilinand birds chirping tide the window someone took my hand, holding it gently, rubbing it softly. Then, that taniliar voice reached my ears

"Aal, poesive Lean sleeping age it's thine do wake up."

His wider was like the prosle apting lanece drifting in through the open winds. He lifted ine, placing me down onto something dt and cushioned

Helt his presente close to try wat as he whispered, "You ally girl it you don't wake up soon, I'm going to kiss you."

cheek. Was a peck even considered a kiss? It felt like a joka like something meant to fool child

surge of trustration, my eyes snapped open

me froze as he saw my eyes open. Then, gradually, a radiant smile spread across his face.

his eyes sparkling, more beautiful than anything I had ever seen. And then without warning, he leaned in, p

pulling me into a deep, lingering kis

one month after my com. When I opened my eyes, the first person I saw was Logan, and his kiss woke me up. It was suc 1ch renrand almond as if I had been reborn

(long after, Très came barreling into the hospital com, thowing herself at me in a

t was such a sweet way to return to thi

at me in a storm of tears and remorse.

sun was sil barse, barely able to make a sound, so I let her sob all over me, clinging to my hand as if I might vanish at any moment.

(mouce cracked as she choked out, "Ari, do you forgive me?="

ring her putty, beat-streaked face, my heart ached for he

seen unconscious, she'd deadly suffered too-ber usual sounded face had lost all its softness, and she looked thin and drained. Her voice warned in the medur "nude mega 900 so foolish? Why did you jump into the sea? You have no idea how dangerous it was cütqadinascade of memories from right before I lost consČIOUSNELL

loves me expression as I picked up her phone, typing a single question, "Where is Elijah?" -

efined betre she finally said, "He saved you. He jumped in and pulled you out, but he broke his leg in the process

Im the hospital. He could have been discharged, but I think he's been staying to wait for you to wake up."

prterssing this.

for my hand, fer expression taut. "Ark, please don't do anything like this again. You nearly died"

- Turn ayes told me how close I had come to not making it

precious tall from the second floor was just a dramatic gesture-bult to scare, hall to seek comfort this time, I'd genuinely Even up. Somehow, against all odds, I'd been hughe Howrsed on pete, lost in thought.

desproved coelulty. "What did Elijah say to you? Why would you go so far as to jump off that cliff?

I shock my Brad, unwilling to delve into those memories. But before she could press further, Logan walked in

and in his tone, and I noticed that Teri seemed intimidated by Logan

and ask if she could stay a line longer, but Teri quickly gathered her things and left in a flash before I could reac

Bytted to Logan. He seemed to read my mind, adjusting his glasses as he calmly said, "Going forward, try not to talk with Ms. Stuart about the past

naked confused but he didn't elaborate. Instead, he simply picked up an apple from the table beside the bed and began peeling it

so I watched him quietly.

were beautiful-long fingers with defined knuckles, moving with a gra

grace that reminded me of lotus petals stretching toward the sun.

tudy, Luger red casually in a white shirt and tailored slacks. The top button of his shirt was undone, and as sunlight streamed in through the Loga, absorbed in peeling the apple, seemed

of my action

de a few skilltal turns, be to the pre, letting it fall to the floor in a single, delicate spiral Fe

a fleeting moment, I wished I could be that apple pouring

Chapter 127

Chapter 127

The moment that shamelessthought

my mind, my cheeks began to heat up

Logan was still seated beside me, calmly asing what looked like a very expensive and refined life to slice the apple into prefectly shaped pieces. I kept watching, unable to break the secene:

An unbelievably handsome man, wearing a white shirt that somehow seemed even brighter than moonlight, was sitting here, meticulously slicing an apple just for me. Those handy- capable of signing deals worth billions-were now mording so gracefully, preparing to feed

me

I was mesmerized

dit out to me. I obediently opened my mouth, and as the case hit my tongue, I realized it was the best

Logan finished slicing the apple, then speaced a place with a small silver fork and hold it out to i apple dever had.

With a gentle unile, Logan continued to feed me, and continued to open my mouth, take a bite, and then open again for more.

At last, he paused. He took a wet tissue and gently wiped the corners of my mouth. I smiled, tilting my face up, prepared to enjoy whatever attentive gesture would come next. With a smirk, hesaid, "Close your even

Tassumed he was about to clean my face and obediently shut my eyes. But instead of a wet to kiss landed on my lips

Stunned, 1 barely had time to react before he pressed deeper, stealing my breath

diving in and

This kiss was far more intense than the one he'd given me when I'd fist woken up. The was as unfamiliar edge to it, a passion that surged past restraint, a sense of him di taking control, sweeping me up completely My breathing fell into strythm with his, heat rising under my skin, making

hospital gown suddenly feel too thin, 100 flimsy against the energy radiating from him.

As his weight pressed down, pulling me closer, felt my oxygen dwindling, enni ely at his mency, as he kissed me with a fiery intensity.

Dizziness didn't come as I'd expected; instead, I felt as if I were entering an entirely new world,

His breath, his warmth, the way he traced every line and carve of my face-each sensation seemed to carve self into my memory.

A small, involuntary sound escaped my throat. He inhaled sharply, and then I felt his hand, cool against my skin, slide under my waist.

The kiss lasted until I could barely handle it anymore. Only a thread of restraint held us back from crossing in unspoken line.

Blushing, Lamraightened my hospital gown, and Logan, clearing his throat, poured me a glass of water.

I stuck a glance at him and noticed that his ears had turned a faint shade of red

blushing. I managed, "You just kissed me out of nowhere"

Logan handed me the warm water, and with a playful swipe across my cheek, he said, "Because you're adorable."

I lowered my head to take a sip, but I couldn't hide the smile creeping onto my face. Just then, there was a knock on the door. I looked up. Mr. Russell entered, looking "Mr. Wood, there's a situation"

Logan had already returned to his usual calm demeanor. "What's the matter?"

Mr. Russell glanced at me with a hint of unease, and sensed it must have something to do with me

Only mom did not notice that, after three days awake,

she hadn't asked about what had been happening outside

"We Haveli," I asked, my voice still raspy but much clearer than before, "is there something going on?" Mr. Juvarli shifted uncomfortably and looked to Logan, clearly needing to depart something privately. Logan frowned slightly, and that was when the shouting started from outside. "Let the shouting! Why are you stopping at Who gave you the right to stand in my way!"

"Tan is a hospital, not a prison. I want to see my wife!"

Hisze Logan's face shifted, too, a hint of tension in his expression.

Without waiting for me to ask, he strode out of the room, Mr. Russell following closely behind him.

Left alone in the room, I sat dejected before finally deciding to get out of bed but the moment my feet touched the floor, a sharp pain shot up my leg. Talopetten-ladinsken my leg

Chapter 128

Chapter 128

My leg was still in a cast, held with steel screws. I had no choice but to lie back down on the bed. Outside, voices rose, each shout louder than the last,

"Logan, what do you mean by keeping my wife from me?" It was Elijah's voice..

Logan's tone was calm and cutting, "Elijah, she's not your wife anymore. My legal team filed for divorce with the court over two weeks ago

"So what? She still my wife until the court says otherwise!" Elijah's voice was hoarse but definite

"Does it matter?" Logan's voice remained cold. "The second she decided to leave you, the marriage was over. What's left is just settlement."

"You think you can tell me if I still have a relationship with her? What are you to her? Until the court says we're divorced, she's my wife, and I'm her husband." Logan's laugh echoed down the hall, crisp and unbothered. "That's quite interesting. Since when did a marriage certificate make a wo

a woman a man's possession? You think that piece of paper means she has to listen to whatever you say?"

Elijah, unwilling to be deterred, shouted, "Don't change the subject. I want to see her! Let me see her!"

"Nope," Logan replied smoothly

Elijah then said. "I'll sue you for illegal detention. 1

The end of his sentence dissolved into a clamor of scuffling and crashing sounds. It seemed someone was beating him up, with people outside trying to pull them apart.

A faint smile tugged at my lips. Just then, another woke, full of rage, roused down the hallway.

"Elijah, you worthless bastard! Take one more step toward me, and that will be the end of your life!"

Achill went through me. Ignoring the pain in my leg, I hurriedly flipped myself off the bed.

Awbeckhau was parked by the window. Grinding my teeth, I started the agonizing journey from the bed to the wheelchair, one excruciating step at a time.

Each step I took felt like walking on knives, and every movement brought me closer to collapse. Sweat soaked through my hospital gown, and beads of sweat trickled down my forehead. Finally, I managed to reach the wheelchair. Grasping the armrest tightly, I pulled myself forward, but in my haste, I slipped and fell onto the wheelchair with a loud thud. The pain was blinding, making stars flash before my eyes, but I forced myself not to pass out, gripping the armrest hard as I straddled into the seat,

The hallway was a mess, of rather, Elijah was a mess. He lay sprawled on the ground, half-buried under a wheelchair knocked skew, with two crutches bent and broken around him. As I scanned the hall, packed with people and confusion, I gathered all the strength I could muster and shouted, "Jon!"

I put everything I had into it, feeling the now sting in my throat.

"Awake? You're really awake?"

Elijah, still on the ground, looked at me and started crawling toward me, desperation and relief clear in his eyes. "Al, you're an

But I didn't spare him another glance. My eyes scanned the crowd, searching for a familiar figure.

"Jon!" called out again, this time with a pleading tone in my voice.

I caught a glimpse of Jonathan. He hesitated, almost as if hiding, before trying to slip away. Panic surged through me, and I pushed the wheelchair forward as fast as I could.

Logan finally stepped in, calling out to the man's retreating back, "Jonathan! Don't leave!"

This figure stopped, seemingly torn by some intense inner struggle. Slowly, he turned around.

Tears instantly flooded my eyes, spilling down my face, and a sob escaped me,

Jonathan sighed, defeated, as he walked over to me. Looking down at me, his little sister, sitting in a wheelchair and crying like a child, he sighed deeply.

"You little fool, my sweet little AL"

I let out a wail and threw myself, breaking into a full, untrstrained sob.

Jon, you finally came to see me finally.

Chapter 129

Chapter 129

An hour later, everyone gathered in the spacious lounge around the hospital volter...

Given my extended coma, Logan had arranged for me to stay in the best ward the hospital had, which was more like a fully furnished apartment with three rooms and a living area. So, we all gathered in the suite's living room, looking at each other in an awkward but was silence.

Clinging tightly to Jonathan. He seemed a bit stiff at first but eventually wrapped his arm firmly around me as well. I felt like crying again, but this time, it was pure relief and happiness. Dijah, meanwhile, had been sent back to his ward to hospital staff, sparing us all from the serum cloud that was his presence.

Jonathan sighed. Looking at Logan "Thank you. Logan. We might not have been here with us if it weren't for you "

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Logan reached over and gave his shoulder a reassuring pat. No need for thanks between friends, Jonathan. Besides, I've always had a soft spot for Ari."

Jonathan's expression grew complicated. "If I'd known what we know now, I should have let you court her back then, at least then she would've been spared years of suffering with that jerk Elijah

I looked at him in shock. "Ton! What are you talking about?"

Jonathan gave an apologetic smile, scratching the back of his head. "Ari, do you remember that number 1 bought him to our family's villa in the countryside?"

The memory was a bit hazy, but I nodded slowly. That summer was the only time I really met Logan before he entered my life. I remembered Jonathan introducing me to a quiet, refined boy different from anyone I'd ever known

The boy seemed to have an impenetrable wall between him and the world. He was neat, but effortless and unassuming. Though he was soft-spoken and polite, he wasn't timid.

I remembered him mostly because he'd kept himself hidden, watching from afar, then disappearing whenever I noticed him. It was as if he was content just to exist in the background. Back then, I was outgoing and fashion-conscious, drawn to the vibrant, lively types. I had a crush on who preferred the quiet

im any attention, knowing only that he was a handsome, mysterious friend of my brother's

Jonathan nodded, smiling faintly "Yeah, that summer. That's when this guy told me, very stinably, that he liked you,"

My face burned as I turned to Logan, who gave a small nod, confirming it. Stammering. I looked back at my brother, "But I never knew. Jon, you never told me."

Jonathan looked at me intently "Of course, I didn't tell you. You were so young back then. I think you were only in tenth grade. No, you'd just finished middle school!"

Jonathan gave Logan a hard look as if his old objections still held some sway. "You were just a kid, and he was, well, he was older than you."

Jonathan, I interrupted, "Logan's not that old!"

Jonathan merely scoffed "old enough. And I told him to forget any ideas he had about pursuing you

I lowered my head, embarrassed but also curious.

"He even asked if it was just your age that made me refuse," Jonathan continued.

Logan took on the story with a soft smile. "And then you said it was because I didn't deserve her, and the Wood Family were too conservative and traditional. You wanted her to marry SOZLUMDE WILD could prove her true happiness" Jonathan's face flushed a little, deeply embarrassed "Yes That's right.

A pang of regret hit me. "But the person I chose wasn't good for me at all "

Silence fell on us, each of us lost in thought.

Finally, Jonathan spoke up, breaking the quiet.

In the end, maybe everything's balanced out.

Jonathan looked at him, confused by what he meant by "balanced out" and turned to Logan, hoping he'd explain

to the ground, and

and

Logan's expression animated. "What your other means is he put me through a trial back then. To make me give up on pursuing you, he changed me to a fight, beat me to Made

in useat Hut 1 walldn't come neat you again until I'd pi terminywell worthy." what?"
Lutajad at may la other dishuck "Jon, you fought bat

Chapter 130

Chapter 130

Jonathan put on a rather sour expression as he looked at Logan. "Yes, I fought him. What of it? Sure, it's one thing if a random punk likes my sisties, fit when my own friend is thinking about my sitter, how can I not give him a beating?" He shot a challenging glance at Logan lack then, you weren't a match for me. I remember gave you a bloody nose.

Do you Logan touched his nose with a smirk. "Troe, ut if I remember correctly, you didn't come out of it unscathed, either. Your eye was swollen, and I recall something about a sprained arm Trouldn't hold back my ruiny. "So, who wn?nd my brother win, or want it you? I won," they both said simultaneously, shooting each other a

Finally, Jonathan muttered reluctantly. "Fine. He won, but not without a struggle. I still had him pirmed to the ground, though."

"So..." I pieced together the story, still a bit amazed. "What you're saying Logan was actually these prison who had feelings for me?"

Jonathan's voice softened. "I just want you to see things clearly, that's all. Sometimes, the right person doesn't arrive on out timeline, but they're there. Don't waste another second on the

He reached over and gave Logan's shoulder a gentle pat. "I'm souty, man, I should've let you pursue her back then, Maybe if I had, none of this other mess would have happened." Logan gave his hand a measuring squeeze in return

Chit me then what Jonathan was really trying to do. He was combining the, trying to ease the pain of the past. He was still worried I might spiral over Elijah, worried that I might try to hurt myself again.

I let out a long breath, feeling the weight lift off my chest

"Jan, I'm long done with Duh, I promise I will never do anything foolish be

Jonathan still looked a bit wary. "Art, you don't need to worry about that anymore. The drotce papers have been filed an

"If he tales to see you again, just don't. Don't listen to anything he says, understand!

He crouched down so he could look directly into my eyes. "Ari, Fül be here for you. I'll protect you"

I nodded. My throat tightened with emotion as I hugged him, my voice trembling "Ton, don't ever leave me"

the court, and soon, you'll have nothing to do with him except the

After that confrontation, when Jonathan had thoroughly roughed him up, Elijah stopped trying to see me. My hospital ward returned to its peaceful state.

Teri visited me irregularly, but her visits were capped at an hour each time-apparently on strict order from Logan

Teri was really afraid of Logan, and of course, it was probably because he had harshly scolded her when she jumped off the cliff, fell into the sea, and went into a coma. She seemed subdued lately, likely still feeling the pain through

Despite this new carefulness, her visits were filled with light chatter and, inevitably, updates on the divorce case and job

- case and Jocelyn's current status

"Look at this post," she said one day, scrolling through her phone to show me a thread that had ballooned to a thousand replies-all gossip dissecting the latest on Elijah and Jocelyn. Some of it was familiar to me, but other parts were new. I read through the thread, half-amused, as it seemed public opinion had reached a verdict.

The vast majority were tearing into them, calling them out for their betrayal and deceit, especially toward me, the "wronged wife"

Others couldn't understand why Jocelyn, with such a promising future, would stoop so low to be a mistress.

Of course, there was the small minority clinging to the "love makes no one a third party" defense, but even they were quickly shut down. I finally put the phone down, curious. "Is Elijah still in the hospital"

Teri nodded. "Yeap. He hasn't been discharged yet, Actually, he's in the building

"Tally" How'd you find that building?"

the building just across from your

the besitated, looking slightly embarrassed "Well, one time when you we still unconscious, I may have had a slight moment and, uh,dered a bunch of funeral wreaths to be deliveredjo hin room, with a note that said "Rest in Peace""