

Midnight 921

Chapter 921

"Don't be ridiculous!"

"I'm dead serious." There wasn't a hint of jest in Everett's eyes.

He had truly considered this way, and thought that's why he pursued so relentlessly in his life, never straying and never letting go.

Dorothy fell silent, perhaps because she found herself at a loss for words.

To others, his words might seem like pie in the sky, but Dorothy knew he wasn't joking.

This man could truly do anything.

"So, can you answer my question now?"

"What question?"

"That you love me."

Everett's gaze was fixed on her delicate face. His left hand was cupping her chin, not allowing her to look away.

After a few seconds of eye contact, she finally caved.

"Yes, I love you."

The moment Everett heard those words, his eyes suddenly began to sting and get teary.

"I finally heard it."

He felt like he could die right then without any regrets.

"But I'm afraid I'll still disappoint you in terms of giving you trust." Dorothy's past life was self-contained and guarded. Asking her to open up completely and depend on someone for everything was a tall order.

Sometimes, hurting Everett wasn't her intention.

Maybe... her knack for harsh words was inherited from Bella. She never knew how to talk softly.

"No worries, I'll just stop listening to anything you say from now on."

"Everett." Since they were opening up, Dorothy decided to ask what she'd been wondering, "Tell me the truth. Why does it have to be me?"

It was such a struggle and such torment. Any other woman would have made Everett's life so much easier! He wouldn't even have to lift a finger; women would flock to him.

She was serious about the question.

Everett thought seriously too before answering, "Maybe... I have a tendency for self-punishment?"

Dorothy glared at him, "I thought as much."

He laughed and pulled her into his embrace, "I'm really happy today."

Dorothy raised an eyebrow, "You sure I'm not deceiving you?"

"Then deceive me every day, will you?"

"No, I'm tired. I want to sleep."

As Dorothy made to leave, Everett immediately leaned in close, "The couch is a bit hard."

"So?"

"Let's sleep in the bed together then." He said.

She paused, "You said that..."

"I'll restrain myself."

Since Everett always kept his word, Dorothy didn't suspect anything.

But his hands started wandering the moment they lay down.

Dorothy, unable to bear it any longer, pinned his hand to her waist!

"Everett!"

"I feel safer this way."

"Just keep it there. Don't move it around!"

His roaming hands made people hard to believe his words.

"Pfff." His soft sigh came from behind her, "Go to sleep. I won't touch you. I'll restrain myself. Once you're asleep, I'll go take a cold shower."

Dorothy paused, then turned to face him, "You want to catch a cold?"

"What should I do then?" In the darkness, Everett held her hand against him, "It's quite hard for me."

Especially at night. Especially with her by his side.

It felt like just the scent of her hair was enough to set him ablaze.

"Then... then I..." Dorothy was finally swayed by his plea for sympathy.

But Everett just smiled, "Your health isn't great right now. We have all the time in the world. Go to sleep, don't worry about me."

"Still, you seem about to burst." Dorothy could feel that his boxers were barely containing it.

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Everett let go of her hand, pulling her back, not allowing her to face him directly. He didn't want her to see the expression on his face.

"Alright, time for bed. Goodnight." He said.

"I really can..."

"Dorothy!" Everett's voice hinted at frustration, "You can't! I've been holding back for too long."

So, once the floodgates of desire opened, there was no turning back.

At least for tonight, she wouldn't be able to handle it.

Hearing his husky and strained voice, Dorothy wisely decided to drop the subject, "Oh, then goodnight."

...

After ending her call with Everett, Quincy put her phone aside. Her laptop screen was filled with lab data and cell culture results.

This was her umpteenth failure. She was getting irked despite her patience.

Failures weren't new to her, but this time, it felt especially frustrating. Or let's say it wasn't just because of the failed experiments...

Finally unable to bear it any longer, Quincy stood up and walked to the window, opening it for some fresh air.

Her phone rang again.

It was her father Ronin calling.

"All thanks to you, our family had pulled through this crisis! If the Lopez family hadn't come through with the money on time, our family would've faced disaster!"

Ronin was ecstatic, but Quincy found his words grating.

"Do you even realize what I had to give up for this?" she asked.

"Ah, sweetie, you were going to marry someday anyway. Now that you have a chance to marry into the Lopez family, so what's there to complain about? Forget about our country, how many families can stand shoulder to shoulder with the Lopez family in the entire world? How many men can compare to Everett?" Ronin's tone was almost as if he expected Quincy to be grateful, "The Lopez family has only one heir, and countless people would kill for the chance to be his wife."

"But what I wanted was a lifetime partner."

"That's a fantasy!" Ronin could sense what his daughter meant, but given her current situation, he couldn't be too harsh. He tried to speak earnestly, "Sweetie, you've lived in luxury in our family from the moment you were born. Do you know how much your medical education cost? I've never complained! Our family really needed help this time."

Ronin had plans to acquire several companies to monopolize the market.

But then the financial chain broke, and the bank demanded the remaining payment. Failing to pay would mean losing the collateral. The only ones capable of providing such a large cash flow were the Lopez family.

If the needed amount was smaller, he could have asked for a loan, and Jonathan might have agreed, given their many years of friendship. But the gap was too vast to bridge with a simple loan.

"Dad will promise you something. Once this merger is complete and our family is back on its feet, if you truly don't want to stay with Everett, I'll support you. You can divorce him then!"

Quincy almost laughed at that.

"Do you really mean that?"

"Why wouldn't I? You are my own daughter!"

"The Lopez family just casually dropped a billion to cover your losses. Jonathan isn't a fool. You must have promised him a share of your project, or you've agreed to permanently bind me to the Lopez family. Otherwise, Jonathan wouldn't have simply handed over the money. He's not known for charity without seeing a benefit." Quincy said.

He would either sign a contract or get profit. Wasn't that how the business world worked?

Either contracts or benefits. Who would part with their money without a reason? A saint?

"Sweetie..."

"If I'm not mistaken, you chose the latter option because you didn't want to share your profit."

Chapter 923

Ronin instinctively wanted to argue when his daughter guessed it right.

"But that'll all be yours after I pass away, right? If our family can do well, then you can hold your ground when you're married."

Quincy didn't want to hear any of it. She sighed softly, "Dad, I'm only helping our family this once. After that, I want nothing to do with any of the family affairs."

"You..."

"I don't want your money, and clearly, you never planned to give it to me. I just want my freedom! Since you've basically sold me to the Lopez family, consider me as someone you never had." With that, Quincy hung up the phone.

She thought she would feel terrible after saying those harsh words, maybe even cry.

But, surprisingly, not even a hint of sourness came to her eyes.

Maybe he was right. Every gift had its price tagged secretly, and since she had her share by enjoying her family's privileges, paying her dues was only fair.

...

The following day, Dorothy woke up to find Everett rarely still in bed, leaning against the headboard and working on his phone.

Feeling her stir, he glanced down, "What do you fancy for breakfast?"

Dorothy took a moment to gather her thoughts, remembering everything that had happened the night before.

"I'm not really hungry..." she muttered.

"That's not an option. You need to eat."

"Then, something light, I guess." Dorothy propped herself and sat up. "I'll go freshen up."

In the bathroom, she could tell Everett had just taken a shower not long ago. Although he had dried the place, the air still held a hint of dampness.

And the thermostat was undoubtedly set to cold showers, turned all the way down.

He seriously did this in the early morning?

Dorothy felt her cheeks warming up. She quickly patted them, and began to freshen up.

When she came out, Everett was already dressed in his suit, waiting on the couch with his long legs crossed.

"Are you heading to the office?" she asked.

"No, I'm taking you to see a doctor."

Dorothy frowned, "I don't want to go to the hospital."

"We're not going to the hospital." Everett stood up, taking her hand. "We won't go anywhere you don't want to."

She didn't respond; she just heard him sigh above her head.

"Dorothy, be a good girl. You still have to stay with me for life."

"But..."

"No buts, just do as I say."

Dorothy couldn't help but laugh, "Now you're being bossy."

"If I had known being bossy worked on you, I wouldn't have held back."

Finally, she laughed, changed her clothes, and let him take her to see a doctor in the countryside.

Everett had gone to such lengths, so the least she could do was to take a step as what he just wanted.

She owed him that much.

Upon arrival, the doctor Everett had arranged was already waiting.

"Dorothy, relax and cooperate with the doctor." He paused, then added, "Dr. Quincy recommended her."

"Oh." Dorothy nodded and then smiled at the female psychologist, "Hello."

"Hello, Ms. Sanchez! Dr. Quincy briefed me on your situation. Here's the thing, if we can manage your suicidal tendencies without it, I'd advise against MECT treatment due to its side effects. Let's try medication for a while and see how it goes," the shrink said softly, her smile reassuring.

Dorothy frowned slightly, "Can we make it so I don't have hallucinations first?"

"You're having hallucinations?" The shrink looked surprised, murmuring, "It shouldn't be this severe..."

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"What was that? Sorry, I didn't catch it."

The shrink shook her head, "Nothing major, let's start with medication and see how it goes. Does that work for you, Mr. Lopez and Ms. Sanchez?"

Everett stood by Dorothy's side, his hand firmly clasping hers as if to transfer his strength to her, "That's fine, whatever it takes to get her well again."

The shrink smiled, her response seemed to be loaded with subtexts, "Curing this illness indeed requires quite a bit from you, Mr. Lopez."

Leaving the shrink and getting into the car, Dorothy kept gazing out of the window and was lost in her thoughts.

As they neared the hotel, she suddenly grasped Everett's hand, "Can she really cure me?"

"Of course," he replied without hesitation.

After a brief silence, Dorothy said, "Let's... go back to the Bay Residence."

Everett's voice was soft and warm, "Missing them?"

She nodded, "Yeah."

"Good, Abigail and Langston will be thrilled."

Seeing the smile on his face, Dorothy mimicked it, though her heart wasn't in it. She didn't feel any joy at the thought of seeing the kids; in fact, she was even somewhat resistant.

These were the very ties that kept her from finding peace!

She didn't want to see anyone, including Everett.

But as long as she was alive, the show must go on, and freedom would remain elusive.

She had many roles to play and many scenes to enact.

Especially in front of Everett, she had to act normal, pretend she was living a typical life, and show that she had many things in this world to hold onto. Only then could he be at ease.

As for herself, she could only hope that the medication prescribed would really work.

...

Returning to Bay Residence felt like stepping back in time.

Upon entering, Abigail and Langston rushed to their mom, hugging and kissing her.

"Mommy! I missed you so much!" Abigail yelled.

"Uh-huh." Dorothy gently touched her daughter's hair, but she was unable to reciprocate the sentiment no matter how hard she tried.

Even Langston, usually glued to his computer, came over to inspect, "Mommy, dad said you were sick. Is it serious?"

"It's not serious. I'm almost better."

"That's great! Then Mom and Dad can be both around."

Everett came out of the kitchen with freshly washed fruit and placed it on the table, "Don't bother your mom too much, she needs her rest."

"It's okay." Dorothy smiled, picking up Abigail, "What fruit do you want?"

"Apple!" Abigail pointed at a shiny red one on top.

"Alright, I will peel it for you." She pulled up a chair, grabbed the apple, and the paring knife beside it.

The kids resumed their playful chase around the living room.

Dorothy forced a smile, but as she looked down at the knife, her body seemed to move on its own, her fingertips brushing against the sharp edge.

It hurt, and she could feel it.

The blood that followed was visible to her eyes.

Yet, Dorothy felt no panic, no fear, only a peculiar sense of relief as if her entire being was immersed in comfort.

It was as if something tempted her to cut deeper and more fiercely, to let the blood flow more freely.

"Dorothy!"

Suddenly—

The knife was snatched from her hand by Everett!

Dorothy looked up blankly, her vision slowly clearing, "I... I was just trying to peel the apple, and I accidentally..."

"From now on, stay away from these things!"

Chapter 925

He had barely turned around when he saw her slicing her finger with the knife!

Dorothy shrunk a bit under his loud voice, looking down, "I'm sorry, I lied. I just couldn't help myself..."

Everett tossed the knife aside and pulled her into a tight embrace, gently patting her back to comfort her.

"You haven't done anything wrong. It's on me for raising my voice and for not putting the knife away safely. We'll get through your illness together step by step."

"Yeah." She would do her best to cooperate.

After holding her for a while, Everett stood up to grab the first-aid kit to bandage her finger.

The cut wasn't deep, and it hardly bled compared to the injuries Everett had seen her endure, but he still applied the antiseptic with great care, asking if it hurt.

Dorothy felt like she was on the edge of a cliff, too resigned to even struggle. Nevertheless, he was desperately calling her back! That made her feel like she couldn't justify it even if she wanted to jump.

...

As night fell, Dorothy took the medication the shrink prescribed and soon felt drowsy.

Everett waited until she was truly asleep before leaving the bedroom.

"Dad, is Mommy's sickness not getting better?" Langston looked troubled when he saw him, hesitantly asking.

Everett ruffled his hair, "Why do you ask?"

"It's just... Mommy feels both close and yet so far away," Langston couldn't quite articulate his feelings, but that's how he felt.

"She'll get better. With Dad here, she won't be sick forever."

Langston nodded, "Then Abigail and I will be good and not make Mommy mad. Whatever Mommy asks, we'll do."

"That's my boy." Everett stayed in the kids' room until both children were asleep before heading back to the living room.

He glanced at his phone and noticed a missed call.

From Quincy.

He called back, and Quincy picked up quickly.

"Mr. Lopez, I heard from a friend that Ms. Sanchez is now so ill she's having hallucinations?"

"Yeah, some of her behavior seems involuntary, not just simple depression."

Quincy was silent for a moment before sighing, "Don't put too much pressure on her for mental illness takes a long time to heal. And her emotional wounds haven't healed yet, so making recovery even harder."

"I have a feeling her condition isn't just psychological."

"Did you find out something else, Mr. Lopez?"

"No."

It was just his intuition and conjecture. After all, the issues with Dorothy's mother had been dragging on for years. Though hard to accept, Dorothy still had enough time to buffer, so it seemed unlikely her depression would lead to severe hallucinations.

"Don't overthink it! Once I'm done here, I'll head over to Eldorria City to check on her condition."

Everett frowned, not responding to her offer but instead suddenly asking, "Did you know about my father taking out a large sum of money to help your family?"

"...Yes."

"What did you promise him?"

Everett knew his father well enough to know he wouldn't just give away a large sum of money out of pure friendship.

Quincy chuckled, "Don't you know? Jonathan wanted me to marry you."

Everett said nothing.

"But... unless you agree, it won't happen. Who am I to register with by myself?"

"I can't marry you."

Chapter 926

Naturally, Quincy wasn't surprised by the response.

"I wish I could stay out of all this drama too if I can."

All she wanted was to be a doctor, to heal and to be free.

So Quincy tried to persuade Dorothy to drop the case, to give in to Jonathan's demands and make things work with Everett.

But unfortunately, everyone had their reasons. She had reasons she couldn't forgive, and Quincy had reasons she couldn't refuse.

...

The prescription worked wonders.

Dorothy slept through the night without a single dream.

She was slowly waking up the next morning to the familiar ceiling of the Bay Residence's master bedroom, momentarily unsure if she was still trapped in a dream.

"You're awake." Everett's voice broke the silence.

Dorothy followed the sound, taking a few seconds before her face showed recognition.

"Yeah."

"Did you sleep well?" Everett asked, pulling her up from the bed like he was treating a kid.

Dorothy smiled, "It's been a while since I've slept that long."

"I had someone check the medication you were prescribed. It's good for treating your condition, but it's not meant for long-term use. I'm worried about dependency. So tonight, we'll try a different method to help you sleep."

A different method?

Dorothy blinked, her gaze meeting Everett's curling eyes.

"What are you thinking? I mean, like using aromatherapy or doing some light exercise before bed."

Her cheeks flushed, "I...I wasn't thinking anything."

Everett didn't tease her further. He stepped back and said, "Go freshen up, then come out for breakfast. I have a meeting at the office today and it'll take about three hours. Call me if you need anything."

"Go ahead, don't worry about me."

Dorothy knew she had become a burden to Everett and didn't want to drag down his work too.

After breakfast, she helped Everett with his tie and watched him leave Bay Residence.

Turning back to the bedroom, Dorothy noticed that Everett had child-proofed the entire house, even padding the sharp corners of furniture thoroughly. He was genuinely afraid of her harming herself again.

Dorothy touched the padded corners repeatedly, lost in thought until her phone rang.

It was Dr. Quincy.

Seeing the caller ID, she was a bit surprised but not really.

Due to her condition, Everett and Dr. Quincy had been in touch more frequently.

"Hello, Dr. Quincy."

"Hey, it's me! Just checking in on you." Quincy's chuckled. "Did you sleep well last night?"

"Very well. I was dreamless."

"Sleep as much as you need. Being run-down affects recovery from any illness! Mr. Lopez is truly concerned about you; he was constantly checking in and putting even me under pressure! Just last night, after I left the hospital, I found several missed calls from him."

Dorothy frowned slightly. She just had an indescribable emotion. But she knew Everett's concern was for her.

"Sorry for the trouble, Dr. Quincy."

"Now you're calling me doctor too, but isn't treating patients part of my job?" Quincy's voice remained soothing. "If you feel like you're bothering me, then get well soon! Otherwise, Mr. Lopez might just drag me to Eldorria City himself!"

Chapter 927

Dorothy suddenly realized that Dr. Quincy couldn't stop mentioning Mr. Lopez in their conversation.

Every mention was due to her illness, but the familiarity in their talks was a far cry from the alienation she felt back in the days of Swevia Country.

"It seems he's really gotten to you. When he gets back from the office, I'll have a word with him and tell him not to bother you all the time."

"He's just looking out for you. Seeing a loved one in pain and not being able to do anything about it is tough. I can understand Mr. Lopez's feelings! It's fine, I only check my phone when I'm free, and if I see a missed call from him, I just call back." Quincy's tone was polite and was also brought no arrogance that Heather had, making Dorothy feel a bit guilty for suspecting her.

Maybe it was the depression that made her overthink?

Dorothy tried to curb her wandering thoughts and smiled, "I do have to thank you, though. Not just for my illness, but for you were Everett's lifesaver every time he got hurt."

"No need to thank me on Mr. Lopez's behalf!" Quincy paused, "Strictly speaking, it's a transaction. I save him, and he has to give me something I want in return. It's an even exchange."

Dorothy kept thinking about Quincy's words even after they hung up.

What she wanted.

What could it be?

It didn't sound like it was just about the salary the Lopez family offered her.

...

"Quincy, your father should have called you by now, right?"

Jonathan had his reasons for hurrying Quincy. After all, the appeal for the court case hadn't been granted yet. If Dorothy could be swayed or regret her decisions before then, there was room for negotiation.

That would make his arrangement for Quincy even more meaningful.

If the appeal was accepted, then the trial would be inevitable.

"Yeah, he told me," Quincy's voice was firm but not overbearing, "Don't worry, Jonathan, I'll do what I promised."

"I trust you! But... it's been quite a while," Jonathan chuckled, "Look, the money I gave to your family was quick, or else we couldn't have saved your father's situation! I'm in a tight spot now, and I can't wait much longer."

Quincy was silent for a few seconds before speaking, "Give me three more days, and I'll get Mr. Lopez to agree to marry me."

"Alright! I'll wait three more days." Jonathan wasn't worried about Quincy's family taking the money and not delivering. After all, if they dared to play games, they couldn't bear the consequences.

Quincy knew this very well.

"Quincy, I'm really looking forward to you marrying into our Lopez family! You're much better than Dorothy in every way."

If Quincy didn't understand his intentions now, she would be really foolish.

Jonathan was just trying to protect his wife, which she understood. But if she couldn't persuade Dorothy, she would have to handle it her way.

"Stop teasing me, Jonathan! I just hope Mr. Lopez doesn't tear me to pieces when the time comes."

"I believe you've already prepared a way out if you already made a move! Your father, a smart man, must have a clever daughter."

"Well, you could say that."

A safety net was indeed in place. In this dangerous game, she just hoped to come out unscathed and not complicate matters further.

Chapter 928

"Alright, I'm counting on you then. Don't let me down." Jonathan said.

The stakes were too high for Quincy's family. A simple gesture from him, and her family could just keep their footing in the business world. But if he decided to play dirty, then her family would be like a small boat in the midst of a stormy sea, constantly at the mercy of the elements.

After ending the call, Quincy set her phone aside and let out a heavy sigh.

Sometimes she wondered what really defined good and evil.

Was self-sacrifice the epitome of goodness? And if one abandoned goodness and morality, but managed to save her parents, was that act still good, or did it veer into evil?

...

When Everett picked up the call from Langston, he was in the middle of a boardroom meeting.

Delegates from several international partners were present for a site inspection, ready to sign the official contracts after exchanging letters of intent.

“Dad! Mom fainted!”

Everett shot up from his chair, “Don't worry, Langston. I'm on my way!”

Kevin, standing nearby, quickly explained to the partners, “Mrs. Lopez is unwell. Please do understand the situation.”

The partners nodded in understanding; after all, they couldn't afford to offend the Lopez Corporation.

By then, Everett had already vanished from the boardroom as expected.

Arriving at Bay Residence, he saw Langston sitting beside Dorothy, with Abigail already in tears.

“Dad!”

“Don't cry, I'm here now.” Everett scooped the unconscious Dorothy into his arms, and the doctor he had called arrived shortly after.

“Dad, is Mom going to... leave us?”

Langston stopped mid-sentence, choosing his words carefully.

Despite being more composed than Abigail, he was still just a kid.

“No!” Everett's reply was unwavering.

Following the ambulance to the hospital, Dorothy was rushed into the ER.

The glaring red light seemed to tear Everett's heart into pieces, filling him with anxiety and restlessness.

As minutes ticked by silently, the ER was eerily quiet.

Just as Everett's patience was running thin, the doctor finally emerged.

“Mr. Lopez, Ms. Sanchez's symptoms... they resemble poisoning.”

Poisoning?

“What kind of poison?”

“We need further tests for a definitive conclusion. Her reactions and symptoms are quite unusual,” the doctor said, clearly troubled.

When the doctor first saw Dorothy's blood test results, he was baffled because he had never encountered such a case before.

Several standard toxicology tests showed normal results, yet the patient's condition remained dire.

“How long will the tests take?”

“It's hard to say, Mr. Lopez.” The doctor dared not give a precise timeframe.

He was utterly clueless. The assumed poisoning was just a suspicion.

Everett was about to say something more when a nurse hurried out, “The patient is awake!”

Without waiting for the doctor's response, Everett rushed into the ER.

There on the hospital bed, Dorothy lay pale, her eyes open but void of life.

“Dorothy!” He quickly approached and took her hand into his.

Dorothy turned her face towards him, confused, “Why am I here?”

“You fainted!” he asked with a frown, “Tell me, did you eat or drink anything unusual?”

She shook her head, unable to remember anything before she fainted; her mind was a blank slate.

“Everett, I don't want to stay in the hospital... take me home...”

“Okay! We'll go home now.”

Chapter 929

The doctor was going to stop them. Considering Dorothy's current condition, it hardly seemed wise to let her leave the hospital.

But no one dared to protest once Everett spoke up. They exchanged looks, until finally, they watched as he scooped her up and carried her out of the hospital.

Dorothy nestled into his broad chest, listening to the steady beat of his heart and feeling her own heartbeat slowly sync with his...

To be so resolutely chosen by someone was a dream many yearned for, wasn't it?

At least, Dorothy was crystal clear about one thing, that as long as she was willing to turn around, Everett would always be there behind her. That was a reassurance, a trust in its purest form.

"Everett." She said.

"Hmm?"

Dorothy reached up, her fingers lightly circling his neck. "Heal me, please. I want to live, to see you grow old and grey. Wonder if you'll still be as handsome."

Everett looked down at her with a smile on his face, "I will."

Dorothy had always wanted to ask him if he was tired. Because living felt so exhausting to her—breathing was a chore, and even waking up each day was a struggle.

But in this moment, seeing Everett, who had been tirelessly looking after her for years, she realized the one who should be tired wasn't her, but him.

He was pursuing an endless route like groping in the dark with no end in sight. And he had lived like this for over a decade.

How could she be the tired one?

...

Dorothy's condition was far more serious than Everett had anticipated.

He had thought it was merely a case of food poisoning at worst, something that could be treated with the right antidote. But as a day passed and the hospital was still at a loss.

Dorothy would drift in and out of consciousness, her mind clear one moment and foggy the next.

"Mr. Lopez, we've done all we can! Perhaps... you should seek out a more skilled physician?"

They didn't dare delay, so they opted to be frank with him.

Everett's gaze swept over the doctors before he stood up and dialed a number, "Did you poison Dorothy?"

"No!" Jonathan was slightly taken aback by his son's accusation. "I wouldn't wait until now if I wanted to harm her."

"Then who could have poisoned Dorothy?!" Everett hadn't suspected his father initially. His main idea was that his presence could deter any direct action against Dorothy. But as the poison remained unidentified and untreated, he couldn't help but cast his doubts that way again.

"Hold on!" Jonathan raised his voice. "Are you saying Dorothy's been poisoned? And it's critical?"

"If anything happens to her, no one's getting off easy!"

"Everett! I'm your father!" Jonathan struggled to accept that his own son would confront him so aggressively for a woman. "I've told you, I haven't touched Dorothy, nor have I ordered anyone else to. If I wanted to settle the lawsuit that way, it wouldn't have even gone to trial!"

He could have made Dorothy disappear without a trace!

"If not you, then who?"

"Then investigate! Send someone to probe me, your father, and see if what I'm telling you today is a lie!" Jonathan's patience had worn thin. "Your mother's severe illness didn't even get a glance from you, but for Dorothy's poisoning, you come accusing me with no evidence at all. Great job. I, Jonathan, have indeed raised a good son! Don't forget you're a father too!"

His tone and manner didn't seem like those of a man guilty of poisoning Dorothy.

Chapter 930

Was it possible that Dorothy had somehow crossed someone?

"Did you instruct anyone to harm Dorothy?"

"I would never—" Jonathan's words cut off abruptly mid-sentence.

His thoughts had raced to what Quincy had told him.

To make his son agree to marry her within three days, she'd surely need to pull some strings.

Targeting Everett directly would be too difficult.

But finding a weakness through Dorothy? That would be much easier and a precise way to manipulate Everett.

If Quincy was behind this, Jonathan had to admit he was impressed by the girl's boldness. He had pegged her as naive and simple, but she turned out to be quite daring.

"I didn't have a hand in it anyway. You should look into others," Jonathan chose not to share his suspicions. And he didn't want to say it out loud.

After all, as long as the end goal was achieved, he couldn't care less about Dorothy's fate.

Everett hung up without a word.

Returning to his room, he found Dorothy awake. She looked incredibly weak and even her lips were drained from color, "Everett..."

"I'm here." He gently pulled her into his embrace, soothingly stroking her back, "Dorothy, have you noticed anything unusual about anyone you've been in contact with lately?"

Unusual?

Dorothy chuckled weakly, "Since I left my job, you know everyone I've been in contact with. If I had to say there was something unusual, it might be... you."

"Me?"

She nodded, "Yes! You've never been the type to have private dealings with Dr. Quincy."

Everett frowned slightly, "Did she tell you that?"

"Not exactly. I saw it myself." Dorothy met his gaze, her voice weak but firm, "You know? When I saw you had interactions with Dr. Quincy, I got jealous, even though I didn't want to admit it!"

"I was in contact with her only because—"

Dorothy placed her hand over his mouth, stopping him from explaining further.

"I know all about it! I understand your personality as well as your habits. I know you reached out to her because of me! But it still made me uncomfortable."

She had tried to adjust her feelings many times, but what she truly felt was something she couldn't deceive herself about.

"Then I won't contact her anymore. There are plenty of other doctors." Everett immediately reached for his phone to delete Quincy's contact.

Dorothy quickly stopped him, "I didn't tell you this to make you delete her! I... I just want you to be happy."

"Hm?"

"You thought I didn't love you, right? Do you still think so?" Dorothy leaned into his chest, listening to his heartbeat, feeling at that moment that all her previous stubbornness and hard-headedness were pointless.

What was all that for?

Everett was stunned for several seconds, unable to grasp the sudden change. Her swift turnaround made him feel as if he was dreaming.

"Why... are you saying all this now?" he asked.

"Maybe I'm afraid of keeping these words to myself. Now that I can speak, I'll say it all." Dorothy took a deep breath, "Though I don't know what's gotten into me, I can tell it's serious from your face! Everett, if it's really hard to cure, don't trouble yourself or the doctors anymore."

"No!"

"Let me finish." Dorothy squeezed his arm, "I don't want you to do things you dislike for my sake anymore! You have to promise me that you mustn't follow me if I truly can't be saved."