

Read Mr. Kane Got Blacklisted Chapter 1473 [Eleven Jewell]

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Darcie took on the role of the lady of the house despite Wenham's initial reluctance. She often cited reasons like being good friends with Freesia and not wanting to see Trevor suffer to make frequent visits to the Saun residence.

As a widower and a single mother, rumors began to circulate over time about their relationship. It did not take long for these whispers to reach the ears of the Saun family elders.

"Grandma's health was deteriorating, and she was bedridden in her last few years. Darcie's own daughter could not bring herself to serve her in such close quarters, but Darcie could. She not only cared for her meticulously but also personally tested the alternative medicine

prescribed by the doctor to ensure its safety before Grandma took it," said Trevor.

Wenham's mother, Eleanor Albott, saw Darcie as a kind woman who knew how to manage a household. Thinking about her son, who was reluctant to remarry, and her poor motherless grandson, she felt reassured knowing a woman like Darcie was looking after them. So, she began to play Cupid.

Wenham was initially unwilling to marry Darcie; he even felt a bit repulsed. It was not until his mother was critically ill and about to undergo surgery that he decided to marry Darcie. Otherwise, she would not agree to the operation. In order to appease his mother, Wenham eventually consented.

"After the surgery, Grandma got better and insisted Dad fulfill his promise."

So, six years after Freesia's passing, Wenham married Darcie. The wedding was kept very low-key, as it was not a marriage Wenham had willingly entered into from the start.

In the days after their wedding, they treated each other with respect. With a woman in the house, the lives of Wenham and Trevor became more organized. Eleanor was also very happy with the outcome.

Five years into their marriage, Eleanor passed away. Wenham feelings for his new family had gradually grown over those five years, especially toward Jaylene. Every time he saw her, he could not help but think of his own daughter, who he assumed had died. 'If she were still alive, she would be around the same age,' he thought.

Humans are emotional creatures. Even if there was no romantic love after so many years of being together, there was always familial love. And so, this family continued to exist.

"This version is different from what Keegan told me. In his version, Dad and Darcie gradually fell in love with each other," said Stella.

Trevor chuckled. "That's just the story we tell outsiders. Who would want to let the world know they were pressured into marriage?"

Stella paused. It seemed like there was an underlying meaning behind Trevor's words, hinting at something about Darcie.

She glanced at him. "What do you think of her?"

Trevor curtly said, "She's as sharp as a sword and a wolf in sheep's clothing.

Stella did not expect Trevor to be so direct with his words.

After some thought, Trevor added, "She's good to him though. When Dad was seriously injured at the mine years ago, her quick thinking saved him. She did not care about the storm and brought him back to the city in the middle of the night. The doctors said if it had been any later, they might not have been able to save him."

'If that was the case, why does she harbor such strong animosity toward me?' thought Stella. 'It's not like I would threaten her position as Mrs. Saun.' This was something Stella could not fathom.

Soon, they arrived at the Saun residence. Situated in Clear Water Cove, the ecological environment was excellent, and the atmosphere was serene. Stella did not get a good look at the place the last time she was there because it was already evening. This time, she was able to appreciate the garden landscapes.

They both got out of the car after it came to a stop. As Trevor knocked on the door, Stella noticed two flowerpots covered with plastic wrap not far from the entrance. Inside, there were two identical plants. They were short and delicate. They looked like roses.

Stella found it a bit strange. Roses were tough plants and did not require insulation. Even if they withered in winter, they would bounce back up in spring. They did not need protection.

Stella was about to ask Trevor about the flowers, but the doors opened. A woman in her forties called out, "Mr. Saun, Ms. Saun, you're back."

Mr. Kane Got Blacklisted Chapter 1474 [Eleven Jewell]

The titles left Stella feeling a bit out of place. It also reminded her of Cordelia's butler, Baldwin. She could not help but wonder why everyone seemed to favor such formalities. Trevor seemed equally uncomfortable with these formalities. "Sandra, you can just call me by my name."

Sandra nodded in agreement. "Of course, Mr. Saun."

Trevor was speechless. He turned to Stella and decided to introduce them. "This is Sandra. She used to work as a caregiver and took care of Jaylene."

Stella exchanged greetings with Sandra, and she warmly welcomed them inside. Wenham, unable to contain his excitement, had already left the living room. When he heard the sound of the engine at the door, he rushed to greet them.

As Stella passed through the entryway, Wenham's voice reached her ears.

"Why did it take you so long to come home?"

Trevor sighed, "As soon as Grandpa and Grandma entered the boarding gates, I brought Stella straight here. It's not like we flew a plane, Dad."

Wenham was in high spirits and did not pay much attention to his son's response. He greeted Stella eagerly and asked, "Stella, are you hungry? Dinner will be ready soon. I personally prepared a fruit platter for you. Please, have a seat and enjoy."

Trevor glanced at the plate full of fruit and let out an impressed sound. 'Woah. What in the world is that supposed to be?'

Wenham's lips twitched, and he playfully scolded, "You rascal- It's a rabb-.

Before he could finish, he noticed Stella gazing at him, eyes wide.

Wenham paused, then suddenly said. "Stella, since you were born in the year of the rabbit, I specially carved out this bunny for you."

'Dad, I'm actually born in the year of the tiger," Stella whispered.

Wenham was taken aback. "Well, tigers do eat rabbits, so it all works out."

Trevor could not help but chuckle. "Maybe we should talk about something other than your bunny, Dad."

Wenham was about to reprimand his son for his constant teasing when Darcie's voice came from behind. "Stella, you're here."

Trevor's smile was nearly wiped off his face while Stella remained composed. "Mrs. Saun, thank you for having US."

'There's no need for such formalities, child. We're family," Darcie said warmly. She was dressed in a light gray, long-knit coat with a white long skirt underneath. Her curled hair framed her shoulders. She emitted an aura of sophistication and grace. Even her voice held a gentle, soothing tone.

'Where's Jaylene? Hasn't she come down yet?" Wenham turned to ask.

"Jaylene is upstairs helping Sandra get Stella's room ready."

Wenham was momentarily surprised and felt a touch of melancholy." What? But I haven't had a chance to discuss it with Stella yet."

"What's there to discuss? Now that Stella's back, of course, she should stay at home," Darcie said, turning her gaze to Stella. "We've been busy preparing your room these days. Your dad was worried you might not like it. You just rest, and I'll take you upstairs to have a look later."

Wenham was frustrated. He had intended to subtly gauge his daughter's feelings about moving in over dinner. While he longed for his daughter to

come home and grow closer to him, he also wanted to respect her wishes. Yet, before he could even try, Darcie had ruined the surprise.

Wenham thought that Stella would reject the offer, but reality proved otherwise. Stella smiled and softly said, "Alright. Thank you, Darcie."