

Rewritten 21

Chapter 21

Madelyn had always been arrogant and unyielding, a woman accustomed to having the world at her feet. The predicament she was now in, Zach had foreseen it long ago.

After lighting the candles, Hayson turned. "What exactly happened to Madelyn? Do we know the full story yet?"

Hayson had rushed back as soon as his plane landed, not even taking the time to change clothes. He was a burly figure, appearing clumsy, his wrist adorned with a tough-looking bracelet, eyes stern and a bit intimidating. Hayson had engaged in some rough business in his youth, his exterior not reflecting the terror he could instill. His expressionless face gave a false impression of mildness, of gentleness, yet nobody dared overlook his ability to deliver punishment. Perhaps due to an early life marked by violence, he had installed a statue of a saint in his study and donated generously to the church every year, perhaps seeking to alleviate his guilt.

"We've looked into it," came the reply. "The Arnold family is also investigating this matter. And... yesterday, as I was preparing to act, they'd already taken the initiative. The person who hurt Madelyn was taken away by the Arnold family."

"The Arnold family?" Hayson's eyes narrowed.

"Yes."

The Arnold family, the preeminent name among the Big Four Families of Ventropolis, controlled the city's economic lifeline. They were true aristocrats, the upper crust. By comparison, the Jent family was a mere stepping-stone at their feet.

"When did Madelyn start associating with the Arnold family? With Forrest?"

"No, it appears to be someone else. I suspected that Forrest had ordered the attack on Madelyn. It doesn't seem possible that Forrest would come to Madelyn's defense."

Forrest was the Arnold family's adopted illegitimate son. He had indeed had some disputes with the Jent family before joining the Arnolds. If anyone was going to harm Madelyn, it would be Forrest. Perhaps they had grown too complacent, forgetting who granted them their safety. No matter what, Madelyn was Hayson's daughter. Daring to harm her would be akin to slapping him in the face directly.

"Are you sure someone from the Arnold family is helping Madelyn?"

Zach nodded. "Yes."

Hayson pondered for a moment, his brow creased. "If someone's stepped in, then we'll leave things be. That Forrest is nothing more than a stray dog I once fed. Teach him a small lesson, but make sure it doesn't trace back to us."

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A shadow crossed Zach's eyes, he nodded slightly. "Understood, Father." @

"How's Madelyn doing?"

"She's stable for now."

"I brought some gifts from Sinagora; you can give them to her later. She inherited my temper, a bit too fiery. You, as her brother, should be more understanding."

"I treat Madelyn as my own sister. Every young girl has her temper," he said with a mild tone, but his eyes held a glacial chill.

"Good, as long as you understand. You should go."

Zach bowed his head slightly. "Rest well, Father."

The day was resplendent with sunshine, a clear sky stretching as far as the eye could see. The temperature was just right, neither too chilly nor too warm. Madelyn savored a bowl of creamy potato soup served by Rosario, as delicious as ever, a taste that filled her with a sense of nostalgia. Now, on her fifth day, her wounds had scabbed over and begun to heal, albeit a bit itchy, which sometimes made her want to scratch.

“Madelyn, who sent you the flowers?”

Madelyn turned her head to look at the roses by her bedside, a small smile playing on her lips. “A friend asked to have them sent over. He’s a bit unable to get out and about, but the fact he sent someone with flowers to see me makes me very happy.”

Among the nineteen roses, there was a card tucked away. It read, [I hope you leave the hospital soon. I look forward to seeing you again – Ethan.] 19 was her lucky number.

“When you get out, be sure to invite him over. I’ll cook you guys a feast.”

“I will. Once I get out, I’ll definitely meet him.” She was supposed to meet him, but who knew she would get hurt and have to delay their meeting. Madelyn had never met Ethan; they

usually chatted through a window or over the phone. She was looking forward to the day they would finally meet face-to-face.