

Runaway 491

Chapter 491

Robin should be brimming with confidence if she really knew where Irene Spencer was.

So, why was she panicking? Even if Isaac could never calm down when it comes to Irene, he was not stupid and his mind still worked just fine.

Keeping his face straight, he said, "Show me proof that you know where she is and I'll release him."

And that naturally left Robin flustered. She prepared nothing at all, and she had no idea why Isaac was willing to believe her.

Moreover, evidence? She did not even know if Irene was actually alive! "Like I said, let Ian go and I'll tell you where she is,"

Robin said, a little too impatient just then.

"You'll never find her if you refuse."

Even James was laughing at her folly and ignorance at that point.

Isaac was just not letting any chance slip by to find Irene—he would not be here otherwise.

And since she was feeling guilty in the first place, James's laugh only unsettled her further. She was trembling so much she could not even hide the panic on her face, but she feigned composure nonetheless.

"W-What are you laughing at?"

"If you actually know anything, tell us where Irene Spencer is right now,"

James snarled.

"If you don't, we'll feed Ian Jefferson to the fishes. His threat left Robin falling apart—she was clenching her fists, but her hands were shaking from fear.

"I-if you...hurt him, you won't ever find out."

From the very start, it was a game of who blinks first, and Robin was convinced that she could convince Isaac and James that she knew where Irene was.

But she was too inexperienced, and thus exposed herself early on.

James traded a look with Isaac and said, "Since you don't want to say, you just have to watch him die."

Then, as Robin looked on, he gestured for his men to tie a rock to Ian and started walking him to the sea.

"W-What are you doing?!"

Realizing that they were dead serious, Robin was on the verge of bursting into tears.

"Don't you want to know where Irene Spencer is?"

James did not even look her way and gestured at his men—with a loud splash and water splattering everywhere, Ian was thrown into the ocean!

"I-I'll tell you! Just get him out of there!"

Robin cried.

"We're all ears," James said calmly.

"I-I don't know," Robin mumbled, giving in to the pressure.

"Please, you have to save him!"

No one moved, however, and were merely staring coldly at her.

Desperate and seized by terror, she dropped to her knees, begging, "I just wanted to save Ian! That's why I lied about Irene Spencer—I don't even know if she's alive, but you believed me anyway! Please ... you have to help him!"

"Get him out of there," Isaac said coolly, and his men pulled Ian out of the water.

Drenched to the skin, Ian would have drowned if they were too slow.

Robin ran up and tore the gag keeping his mouth shut.

"Are you alright?"

Ian coughed, splattering water out of his nose and unable to speak just then.

Robin turned and gave Isaac a pleading look.

"Please! No matter what happened, he's still your cousin! I promise to keep an eye on him and stop him from doing anything bad!"

However, Isaac would not waste his breath with her now that it was clear she had no idea where Irene was.

"Take him, James,"

Isaac growled.

Let Ian go? No way! Even if they now had evidence that Irene survived, it was still reality that Ian tied a bomb to her and kidnapped Tommy.

Isaac Jefferson, sparing the bastard who hurt his wife and child?! Dream on!

"wait!"

Someone appeared and stopped Isaac just then, and Robin became smug when she saw who it was!

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Robin knew that she would never rescue Ian so easily, and therefore sought Henry Jefferson's help before he arrived.

After all, Henry was Isaac Jefferson's grandfather, and always would be.

No matter how cold or hostile Isaac was toward his own family now, Robin was convinced that he would show no such sentiment toward his own grandfather.

She was sure that if Henry showed up, they would be able to take Tan back.

And yet...

Isaac's expression was calm as a placid lake when he saw Henry, and he was unmoved at all.

On the other hand, Henry was leaning against his cane.

His health had deteriorated considerably and there was no hiding it, despite the meticulous care of his team of doctors.

Right now, he was just a candle in the wind.

"Isaac."

Even so, he was deferring to Isaac now, and he did not speak like an elder at all. He was just another family member, begging for forgiveness. He certainly regretted making the mistake of changing sides, instead of appealing to Isaac with sentiment.

Things would not have turned out like this otherwise, but his regrets changed nothing.

"I'm sick, and it's very serious...I won't last more than a few days. Seeing that Ian is your cousin..."

Even as he spoke, Isaac's chauffeur had opened the door for Isaac, and he already got into his car, ignoring Henry completely.

"Isaac..."

"Sir, perhaps you should listen,"

Money Penny chimed in, having rushed up to stop Isaac from leaving, and hoping that he would forgive Ian given Henry's health.

They were all Henry's family, and he had to side with the weak now that Isaac won.

He did not want to see his family kill each other until the last man.

"Sir, please," Money Penny pleaded.

Even so, Isaac was unmoved, and told his driver.

"Go."

"Sir..."

Money Penny kept trying, but Isaac's car simply thundered past him, leaving suffocating fumes in its wake.

Having failed so utterly, Money Penny returned to Henry, holding his arm to keep him standing.

"You knew this would happen even before you came, sir..."

Henry, however, turned to James and said, "I'm ordering you, James Cross—release Ian."

"Sir, you know that it would get me fired," James said while remaining solemn and respectful.

"I don't want to lose my job. Please don't make things hard for me."

With that, he turned to his men.

"Get him inside the car. Move."

Robin, however, was clinging tightly to Ian in fear.

You're just Isaac Jefferson's lapdog! What right do you have to disobey his grandfather?!"

Even as Ian was leaning against Robin's arm, his lips curled up in a smile.

She cared so much about him.

He had not lost everything —at the very least, he had a woman who loved him.

On the other hand, could Isaac say the same, even with his mountains of wealth and unending list of accomplishments? "Robin,"

Ian whispered even as he watched her.

"Don't waste your breath. It won't work."

Robin, however, was stubbornly holding on to hope and Ian.

"No. Your grandfather has spoken. I don't think James gets to strut."

Even so, James and his men came up just then and firmly pulled Ian out of her grasp while James leveled her a cool stare.

"I may be a lapdog, but I'm Isaac Jefferson's lapdog. That's why I don't have to listen to anyone."

Robin looked up, glaring at him in pure spite.

"You're a lowlife! You're vermin!"

One of James's men spoke up for James right then.

"Ian's girl really has a potty mouth, doesn't she? Guess we'll have to show him some proper hospitality when we get back."

Robin was certainly shaken, and screamed, "You wouldn't dare!"

"We're the ones holding him. That's not up to you to decide,"

With that, they shoved Ian into the car, shutting the door with a loud bang! Robin caught up, but the driver did not care how hard she was hitting the door or if he hit her, and floored the gas pedal.

Robin was knocked off her feet, and her knees were cut and bleeding while the cars sped off.

While Henry was left sighing, Moneypenny understood all too well what he was thinking.

"There's no saving him, but..."

"You have a plan?"

Henry turned toward him.

"I do," Moneypenny replied and leaned toward Henry...

Chapter 493

Moneypenny's voice was very soft as he whispered to Henry, and he was sliding peeks at Robin as she remained on the ground.

"Sir, you're just upset because Master Ian is one of your grandsons, but he did murder Irene Spencer."

In other words, he was saying that Isaac would never forgive Ian, and now, they had no leverage or ability to fight Isaac. "But as long as he leaves a seed, he's not gone forever,"

Moneypenny finished.

Henry quickly understood what he meant.

Turning to look at Robin and thinking about it briefly, he soon said, "Well, that's an idea."

To assure him further, Moneypenny added, "Master Greg's line will not be snuffed so soon, anyway. Even if something were to happen to Master Ian, his father still lives—he's lost the function of his legs, but that doesn't mean he's lost all functions below the waist."

Henry's wrinkled eyelids twitched.

"Sly old fox."

"Well, is there a reason it wouldn't work?" Moneypenny asked as he helped him stand.

Henry considered it, but Moneypenny was right—his grandson was gone, but his son was still alive.

Even if Isaac now had a stranglehold over the Jefferson family estate, they were still not poor enough to need alms.

A starving elephant would still outmatch a lion! They still retained a considerable fortune to live grandly, and it was not that hard an issue to get Greg a woman.

Money talks, after all.

As for Ian, they could give up on him if things did not work out.

"What should we do?"

Robin ran toward them just then, and tugged on Henry's sleeve.

"You have to save Ian!"

Henry traded glances with Money Penny, and Money Penny told her, "As you can see, Master Isaac isn't giving any quarter. There's nothing we can do."

Robin was desperate.

"Are we supposed to just sit and watch Ian being locked up? He's still so young..." Henry, however, had no patience for her complaints. What good was crying? They would have gotten Ian out if they could. But the reality was that they could not, and would crying change a thing? What a waste of time! He was going to let Money Penny tell her, but since his butler was dawdling, he simply said, "If you care so much about him, are you willing to bear his child?" Robin froze.

What was that supposed to mean? How did it suddenly get to that? "Shouldn't we be thinking about how to save Ian?" she asked.

"We can't get him out,"

Henry made it very clear.

"But you should be able to make it inside..."

"W-What?"

Robin's teary gaze showed both understanding and disbelief.

"You will go into his cell and get pregnant with his child. Then, I'll get you out."

Robin dropped limply to the ground.

"W-We're not going to save him?"

Henry breathed a long sigh — it was not as if he did not want to do it, he just could not. This was about the only thing he could manage.

"It's fine if you don't agree to it. There's no forcing this anyway," Henry said, and turned toward Money Penny.

"Let's go."

"Wait."

Wiping away her tears, Robin said, "I'll do it."

Henry naturally expected that answer — she loved Ian so much she was definitely willing to sacrifice herself.

As such, he turned toward his butler, "Make the arrangements, Money Penny."

"Of course, sir."

Over at Minerva, Irene was looking for her department head, Dr. Pitt, while holding a stack of materials, including the latest progress report on the development of a fully artificial heart.

The theme of the forum of Zidonia happened to be about that, and everyone knows that Mead Clinic stood at the top of this field.

With the progress report and the pile of data she carried, she was hoping to bring this back home, and the Zidonian research on artificial heart would most definitely gain a breakthrough.

She was at once hopeful and apprehensive, but just as she was about to knock on the door to Dr.Pitt's office, she heard voices.

As she listened to the conversation, her face fell...

Chapter 494

Dr.Wells, the chief of the hospital, was telling Dr.Pitt, 'The orders from above are that our research is not to be revealed to Zidonia.Yes, our new Zidonian shareholder had made us agree to take part in their forum at all, and it was out of our hands, but our country's efforts should be kept here.Would we still have an edge over them if we announce our findings there?'

Dr.Pitt was sharp enough to tell that it was not just the hospital wanting to keep things under wraps—there was more at stake than what she could see.

Meanwhile, Dr.Wells was still ranting in frustration about how things had been mishandled.

"Also, Dr.Tanner may have contributed greatly, and it's almost beyond question that she should be sent as a representative, but did you forget that she's Zidonian? Where do you think her loyalties lie? I'm sure you know, so why choose her? You should have hidden it from her in the first place! You're basically asking for it!"

"I just thought that she is the right person," Dr.Pitt admitted.

"I didn't think that far ahead."

"She's already an attending physician now, so stop letting her steal the spotlight or she'll get out of control.She's outstanding — keeping her will help our research, but if we allow her to rise beyond our control..."

Dr.Pitt suddenly said quietly, "Actually, I've asked her to prepare the progress report on our research to bring it to Zidonia.She's probably done by now..."

It was as if she knew Dr.Wells would throw a fit, and it happened just as she thought it would.

"What were you thinking?!"

Dr.Wells scowled.

"She's just going to send everything we have back to Zidonia! Don't you know how much capital was spent on this research? And we're supposed to hand it over to Zidonia for free?!"

Nonetheless, Dr.Pitt said, "Actually, I think she would be even more suspicious if I were to suddenly tell her that she's not going. I'll just screen through the report and take out anything that is potentially vital."

"Good. Be more careful from now on,"

Dr. Wells said, reluctant to lose a talented doctor like Irene as well.

"I know," Dr. Pitt replied, and Dr. Wells left her office.

Irene had hidden herself in a corner and felt the irony as she watched Dr. Wells leave.

Though the title of the forum was 'Salvation without Borders', it was not actually the case—nations competed against each other like individuals would, and that created borders between lives.

She hence returned to her office, taking out all the important materials from the progress report—she would never have had access if Dr. Pitt did not ask her to help compile it.

And what was the point of the forum if she did not bring these back? She must, and not through Dr. Pitt.

She shoved everything she took out into her drawer, and brought what remained to Dr. Pitt, who was standing outside her office.

Dr. Pitt was going to look for Irene after Dr. Wells left, but Irene arrived anyway.

"Come in," Dr. Pitt said, and sat down behind her desk.

Irene handed her the report, and said, Here's the materials for the forum.

Please go over them."

Dr. Pitt glanced at her, and screened through the materials, looking up in surprise when she was done.

"Is this everything?"

Irene nodded, feigning a look of confusion.

"Is that lacking?"

Dr. Pitt hesitated for a moment, but said, "This is far from everything we have in our research."

"There are things that should be retained here after all," Irene replied.

"But you're Zidonian..."

"And right now, I'm here in Minerva,"

Irene pointed out.

Dr. Pitt was a person of charity, but she was helpless in the rivalhood between nations.

"You've done well," she said.

Irene lowered her head to hide the brief flash of emotion in her eyes.

Back in Zidonia, Isaac was now sure of Irene's survival.

But he had no idea where to start looking—Robin was at a dead end, since she had no idea where Irene was at all.

The only option now was to make Stephen talk.

Everyone has their weakness, but Isaac had to take a tough approach with Stephen.

Standing with his clasped behind his back, he growled, "If you still won't talk, we would have to bring in your wife and child too."

They were in a square hut, but since Stephen was just brought in, he had not experienced the pain and desperation of being a prisoner.

"You're despicable."

He spat furiously.

"Your dispute is with me and no one else!"

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Isaac's tone was sharp and ironic.

"You? What else do you have left? Stephen was left stumped right then. Certainly, all the honors and accomplishments he accrued over his career were gone, and he was slapped with the disgrace of causing a death by negligence before his retirement. But Isaac was the reason for all that! As such, Stephen stubbornly snarled, "Fine. Do whatever you want to me and my family. I can't tell you a thing anyway, because I know nothing."

"You don't give up, do you?"

Isaac beckoned for someone to bring a chair which he sat on and crossed his legs casually, appearing lofty and indomitable.

"James, bring his family here."

Stephen panicked right then—he was fine with whatever they would throw his way, but he did not want his family involved.

"I would have told you if I knew, but I don't. What am I supposed to tell you?!"

"The doctors who helped you with Irene's surgery have already confessed that she's alive, and you switched a burned body with hers," Isaac growled as he leveled Stephen a sharp look.

"You know very well where she is—so stop pretending." Stephen feigned composure despite his fear.

"They're lying. I don't know a thing."

Isaac leaned against his chair, but he was clearly impatient.

"Being soft with people like you only makes things worse. Do it, James— I'll take responsibility even if things get out of hand."

"Stop! Not my family!"

Stephen had been busy with work in his younger years and never spent much time with his family.

After he was forced into a dishonorable retirement, it was his wife who stayed at his side as they weathered through the difficult period after.

He would not allow his wife to suffer because of him again, or his child to encounter danger and difficulties at work.

Moreover, he knew how Isaac did things—he had firsthand experience.

"I- I can tell you, but under one condition—"

"You are not in a position to negotiate." Isaac simply cut him short.

Stephen clenched his fingers and looked Isaac straight in the eye, and suddenly laughed.

"Did you know why Irene left you?"

He wanted to ask Isaac to support Irene's career, and in turn tell Isaac where she was.

However, Isaac decided to go overboard, giving him no quarter— in that case, he had no reason to let him off easy! On the other hand, Isaac remembered how determined she was in pushing him away, and said, "She thought that I didn't love her..."

"No, you're wrong."

Stephen laughed.

"It's Irene who doesn't love you. Back in that OR, she was grabbing me and begging me to help her run away from you."

Isaac's placid expression started to crack, and Stephen continued when he saw that.

"She said being with you was painful."

Even if he had no idea what trouble he would get Irene into just for saying that, he knew that it would hurt Isaac, knocking his insufferable butt off his perch.

Isaac would otherwise continue being pompous! Stephen wanted payback too, because it was Isaac who pressured the chief of Melville Hospital into framing him for a patient's death—even if the patient was obviously beyond saving.

Forced to retire and stripped off all honors, everything he worked so hard for over the years crumbled overnight.

He would be lying if he said that did not bear a grudge.

Deciding that it was not painful enough, Stephen continued, "That's not all—she was already in love with someone else, and even bore his child!"

Isaac's eyes narrowed into dark slits, his calmness vaporizing into fury.

He was a lion ready to pounce!

"Fuck you!" he growled.

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Stephen was laughing, having gained the upper hand. "Oh, calm down—you may have the looks, but your temper is so foul that even the ladies run away from you. Why don't you try to change that instead?"

Isaac sprang from his chair, appearing so furious that he could kick

Stephen right then, and James had to quickly stop him.

"He's just playing you, sir. Calm down."

"If you say so—but you will have your answer when you see her," Stephen said confidently.

James shot him an icy look. "Quit yapping and give us an address, or else!"

More or less content just then, Stephen finally said, "She will be returning to the country for a forum."

Both Isaac and James thought of the same thing at the same time.

Mead Clinic's annual forums were usually held within Minerva or neighboring countries, and they only moved it to Zidonia this year.

"Is she working at Mead Clinic?" James asked.

Isaac had the same question in mind.

Stephen nodded. "Yes."

James was shocked—they had been in Minerva, and was even in touch with Mead Clinic's shareholders, but never knew that Irene was working there.

That was when Stephen added, "She's working under the alias of Jane Tanner."

James was left gaping when he heard the name. 'W-What?! Jane Tanner?!'

That hideous-looking doctor?

Right, she was pregnant...

Did that mean she really had a child with another man?

He turned to look at Isaac in reflex, and his face had darkened just as he expected!

Hotmesh Research was in charge of receiving the foreign guests from Mead Clinic at the airport, as well as arranging their lodgings and the venue for the forum.

There was a reception prepared for every guest, and they would be taken to their lodgings.

Like the others, Irene was arranged to stay in a hotel with Dr. Pitt and a fellow researcher.

"Here's my number. Call me anytime you leave me," her host said, offering her a business card.

"Thank you," Irene replied.

"You must be feeling jet-lagged from the long trip. Feel free to take a break," the host said. Still, Irene walked Dr. Pitt to her room first, and the latter took a seat after getting into it. You should rest, Jane."

"Okay," Irene replied. "I'll be right next door—call me if you need me."

An attendant had already taken Irene's luggage to her room and she returned to her room, a hand on her belly as she locked the door.

Leaning against it, she heaved a long sigh—she had been on edge, but she was slightly relieved now.

She took out a stack of paper from her clothes, which she hid with relative ease since she was wearing loose clothes because of her pregnancy. It was paper too, so the airport sensors would not pick up anything.

The stack of paper contained vital research data from Mead Clinic's development of a fully artificial heart. It was fortunate she had hidden it where she did—if she had left it in her luggage, Dr. Wells would have found them.

He called for a spot check on everyone's luggage—even Dr. Pitt's— for safety reasons.

Staring at the stack of paper for a while, she pondered for a long while before eventually deciding to ask for Stephen's help.

She would eventually leave anyway, and she would never find anyone who can use this data to its full potential—but Stephen would definitely be able to give it to the right people.

Moreover, he had always been keeping tabs on this research, and his passion for the medical field remained despite his retirement.

With that in mind, she put everything in her bag and left the room.

The walkway was quiet and she took the elevator downstairs, heading out of the hotel with one hand on her bag strap and the other on her belly.

Acar happened to arrive at the hotel just then.

After Isaac had learned about her whereabouts from Stephen, he quickly sent his goons to check, and it turned out that Mead Clinic did send Irene over for the forum.

He was the sole reason the forum was held in Zidonia, and it was naturally easy for him to get her address.

"Isn't that her, sir?" James spotted someone who reminded him of

Jane Tanner and was pregnant as well. She had a face mask on, and despite not wearing a cap, she had allowed her hair to dangle loosely, covering her face.

Isaac turned toward her.

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Isaac saw the woman walking around the circular fountain in front of the hotel. She was wearing a khaki trench coat with a white floral dress, and her black mini boots were short enough to bare her fair legs. Despite being heavily pregnant, she was not swelling up. Her black hair was spread over her shoulders, and despite the face mask hiding her face, it did not hide her tenderness.

As James stopped the car, Isaac alighted and started toward her.

Irene had been keeping her head lowered and did not notice the person coming toward her, so she suddenly found her way blocked by another person.

She tried to move to the right, but the person before mimicked her to keep blocking her path, doing the same when she moved to the left.

Frowning in slight annoyance, she growled, "Could you-"

She trailed off when she looked up and saw the person before her, and she quickly lowered her head again guiltily.

"Please, excuse me," she said, but there was a quiver in her voice.

Even so, that single look was enough for Isaac to recognize her.

Who else could she be?

"What if I refuse?" he said with faint anger.

Irene, clutching her belly, tried to turn and leave, but Isaac quickly caught her by the wrist and pulled her back to the hotel without a word.

She panicked-she had never expected Isaac to recognize her as soon as she returned, even catching hold of her!

"You've the wrong person," she said, bracing herself.

Isaac stopped in his tracks. "You're not Jane Tanner?"

Irene was left confused, but she refrained from struggling because she was heavily pregnant.

After Isaac pulled her to the room, he growled, "Card."

Irene's eyes widened in disbelief. "Y-You know where I'm staying?"

Impatient, Isaac began to scrounge through her trench coat pockets before finding it. He then proceeded to swipe it and pulled her inside.

And the instant he closed the door, he pinned her against it, his eyes locked on hers as he flashed a smile-it did not quite reach his eyes, and was actually intimidating.

He suddenly reached out and tore her face mask off, and she turned away in reflex to hide her facial scars.

"Are you hiding?" His gaze was dark like a bottomless abyss just then.

Irene lowered her gaze, her voice hoarse for some reason. "I..."

She had so much to say, but did not know what to tell him.

Was she supposed to complain that he did not love her?

Or was she supposed to explain that she would never use their son to force him to stay with her? It was hilarious thinking about it now.

"How did you know I was-Umph!"

He had forced his lips onto hers without warning and he was devouring her viciously. At the same time, his hand firmly brushed through her hair to hold her head, forcing her to meet his firm kiss.

The familiar scent upended Irene's thoughts, and her handbag slid off her hand.

She slowly closed her eyes, but that was how easily one would be moved when they are in love.

Even if she repeatedly told herself to calm down, her heart and mind are always easily messed up when she was face to face with him.

Restraint? What a joke. She slowly raised her hands, wrapping them around his waist as she greedily breathed in his scent.

"Who's the father?"

She had been entranced by the kiss, but the growling question cleared her mind right then. Her eyes widened, her pupils dilating.

At the very next instant, she shoved him away as hard as she could, her fingers curling into her palm in fury. He has every right to not love her, but he had no right to slander her! Her body shook violently, and she raised her hand to slap him across the face!

Chapter 498

'Isaac Jefferson, you have every right to not love me... But you have no right to question my virtue.'

With that, Irene reached for the doorknob, opening it with a click.

However, Isaac caught her hand. "I'm sorry."

Stephen's words had struck him where it hurt, and he let his own anger get the better of him.

Moreover, she really was pregnant, which was why he had such a poor choice of words.

'Irene, if I didn't love you, I'd never be with you even if we had ten children. All I wanted to do was protect you, that's why I said I was only staying with you because of Tommy-the more I showed concern for you in front of Ian, the more he would want to hurt you.'

Irene looked up, forgetting her scars in shock. He had said that because he did not want Ian to hurt her.

So, was it all just a misunderstanding?

Isaac's eyes landed on her scars then and his expression darkened further. His throat felt stiff and he could not speak.

Irene came to her senses when she realized what he was looking at. She quickly tried to hide it, but her hands seemed to be at a loss if she should brush her hair over it or pull up her collar.

Looks are everything for women, and it was natural that she did not want the man she loved to see her hideous face.

"Don't look," she murmured, lowering her head.

Nonetheless, Isaac cupped her face so that she looked at himself.

Two pairs of eyes—one evasive, the other gazing lovingly. He studied the burn scars that stretched from her face to neck. The skin was left wrinkled, uneven, and reddened—unseemly, even hideous.

All he felt was pain and heartache.

Irene's eyes welled with tears. "Don't look. It's ugly."

She certainly did not like the way he stared, taking in her ugliest state.

Isaac simply gathered her in his arms, his face pressing against the burned side of her face and whispering gently into her ear, 'It isn't.'

Irene knew very well how she looked. "You're lying."

"It must have hurt," he simply said, carefully caressing her and kissing her on the forehead. "I'm sorry."

He blamed himself for not protecting her, allowing Ian to capture her, and for saying what he did without thinking, sending her running away with their child.

Irene leaned on his chest and asked, "How did you know I was here?"

She did not understand how Isaac discovered her—he never realized that 'Jane Tanner' was actually her back in Minerva.

"Stephen Carr... And I'll definitely kill him," Isaac growled through his teeth, having almost fallen for Stephen's lies.

Now that he had calmed down and thought about it, the look on Stephen's face made it clear that he was messing with him, intent on provoking him.

"Stephen?" Irene was actually surprised.

"He told me that you fell in love with someone else and did everything to leave me..."

'He said that?' Irene looked up at him. "Is that why you believe I was with someone else and had their child?"

'I... I didn't believe him,' he said, clearly averting his eyes in guilt.

He had let his anger get the better of him, but he would not have if he had doubted Stephen.

After all, Stephen told him that Irene left him because she no longer loved him-what if it was true? He felt uncertain about why she left, but now he knew, and it was all because she misunderstood him.

"Isaac Jefferson, actually feeling guilty?"

It had hurt her considerably when he asked her who the father was.

"What a coincidence-I need to talk to Stephen. I'll ask him why he said that when I do, so are you coming along?" she asked.

She naturally wanted to prove that Stephen was lying.

After all, she had been gone for months, and it was natural for Isaac to get suspicious now that she was pregnant.

It just went to show that they did not fully trust each other yet.

Isaac naturally would not refuse her, but he did not want it to be today. "We can go tomorrow-"

"It's urgent. Tomorrow would be too late," she insisted.

Isaac had no choice but to take her there, and they soon arrived. Irene pressed the doorbell, and someone soon answered...

Chapter 499

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So, was it all just a misunderstanding?

Isaac's eyes landed on her scars then and his expression darkened further.

His throat felt stiff and he could not speak.

Irene came to her senses when she realized what he was looking at. She quickly tried to hide it, but her hands seemed to be at a

loss if she should brush her hair over it or pull up her collar.

Looks are everything for women, and it was natural that she did not want the man she loved to see her hideous face.

"Don't look," she murmured, lowering her head.

Nonetheless, Isaac cupped her face so that she looked at himself.

Two pairs of eyes-one evasive, the other gazing lovingly.

He studied the burn scars that stretched from her face to neck. The skin was left wrinkled, uneven, and reddened-unseemly, even hideous.

All he felt was pain and heartache.

Irene's eyes welled with tears. "Don't look. It's ugly."

She certainly did not like the way he stared, taking in her ugliest state.

Isaac simply gathered her in his arms, his face pressing against the burned side of her face and whispering gently into her ear, "It isn't."

Irene knew very well how she looked. "You're lying."

"It must have hurt," he simply said, carefully caressing her and kissing her on the forehead. "I'm sorry."

He blamed himself for not protecting her, allowing Ian to capture her, and for saying what he did without thinking, sending her running away with their child.

Irene leaned on his chest and asked, "How did you know I was here?" She did not understand how Isaac discovered her-he never realized that 'Jane Tanner' was actually her back in Minerva.

"Stephen Carr... And I'll definitely kill him," Isaac growled through his teeth, having almost fallen for Stephen's lies.

Now that he had calmed down and thought about it, the look on Stephen's face made it clear that he was messing with him, intent on provoking him.

"Stephen?" Irene was actually surprised.

"He told me that you fell in love with someone else and did everything to leave me..."

"He said that?" Irene looked up at him. "Is that why you believe I was with someone else and had their child?"

"I... I didn't believe him," he said, clearly averting his eyes in guilt.

He had let his anger get the better of him, but he would not have if he had doubted Stephen.

After all, Stephen told him that Irene left him because she no longer loved him-what if it was true?He felt uncertain about why she left, but now he knew, and it was all because she misunderstood him.

"Isaac Jefferson, actually feeling guilty?"

It had hurt her considerably when he asked her who the father was.

"What a coincidence-I need to talk to Stephen. I'll ask him why he said that when I do, so are you coming along?" she asked.

She naturally wanted to prove that Stephen was lying.

After all, she had been gone for months, and it was natural for Isaac to get suspicious now that she was pregnant. It just went to show that they did not fully trust each other yet.

Isaac naturally would not refuse her, but he did not want it to be today. "We can go tomorrow-"

"It's urgent. Tomorrow would be too late," she insisted.

Isaac had no choice but to take her there, and they soon arrived. Irene pressed the doorbell, and someone soon answered...

Chapter 500

It was Hannah Loggins, Stephen's wife.

Even though Isaac did not really lay a finger on Stephen, the stress Isaac put him through left him ill afterwards, considering that he was advanced in age.

Naturally, the instant Hannah saw Isaac, she was scowling and snapping, "What are you doing here? Haven't you hurt Stephen enough?"

Irene glanced at Isaac then-what did he do that he was met with such hostility?

However, this was not the time for that since she had more pressing matters.

Moving to stand in front of Isaac, she smiled at Hannah and explained, "I need to talk to Dr. Carr-it's urgent, and he'd definitely agree to see me if he knows it's me."

"You're his student?" Hannah asked.

"Yes," Irene replied.

"You can come in, but not him." Hannah was not holding back at all, which left Isaac scowling in turn.

He had not gotten even against Stephen for tricking him, and he was being turned down at the door? He had certainly never suffered such abuse!

Seeing that things were getting out of hand, Irene tugged on Isaac's sleeve. "Wait for me in the car. I'll be right back."

"No."

Isaac refused right away-it was so difficult to find her again, and where would he look if she ran away again?

And she had already run away twice! It was high time he remembered that.

Irene was speechless.

"It's really important..."

"Doesn't matter." He refused her regardless.

"How about waiting for me here?" Irene suggested.

"No."

"Then what do you want?"

"I'll come in with you," Isaac said.

Gone was the usually aloof man-replaced by a manchild.

Irene turned toward Stephen's wife, hoping that she would relent. "I promise you, he won't hurt Dr. Carr-"

"Forgive me, but he's not welcome in his house." Hannah was equally determined.

Irene felt a migraine as the situation devolved to a stalemate.

That was when Stephen called out, "Let them in, Hannah."

He must have heard them.

However, Hannah was not agreeing to it, and kept standing in the doorway as she retorted, "He took you away once. What happens if he does it again once I let him in? Do you think you could stay alive after another round, with those old bones of yours?"

"I won't die," Stephen said.

"No means no." Hannah was not listening.

Irene did not have any time to waste, and pulled Isaac away, whispering, ' Look, I'm begging you-just wait for me in the car, alright?'

Isaac was unmoved. "What if you run away again?"

Irene was speechless. That was what he was afraid of?

"Why would I run? You've already explained our misunderstanding, and look -" she pointed at her own belly. "Do you think I can run?"

Isaac refused regardless, clinging to her like a child.

Having no choice, Irene turned around and passed the research materials to Hannah, who brought it to Stephen, who knew what he should do the instant he got it.

Isaac thought that she was upset, and quickly pulled her toward himself.

Being heavily pregnant, Irene easily lost balance, though she caught her handily as she fell backward.

Their eyes met, but Irene quickly averted hers-perhaps to hide the scarred part of her face.

Isaac knew that she was still self-conscious about it, and so, leaned in to kiss her scarred neck.

Irene felt breathless just then, flinching a little in Isaac's arms while her eyes welled with tears.

"Hey..."

Helping her to her feet, she said then, "I'll wait here."

Irene pursed her lips, and turned to leave without a word.

There were no issues this time since Isaac was not following.

Stephen was in his bed, and the instant Irene entered...