

Too Much to Bear, My Love Chapter 661

Too Much to Bear My Love

Chapter 661

Chapter 661 I Would Rather That We Become Strangers

“What are you doing here?” June regarded Jennifer with a quizzical frown.

With arms akimbo, Jennifer responded with an ambiguous smirk, “Just dropping by to see how you’re holding up. Wasn’t quite expecting to see that you aren’t doing that much better off either.”

As he adjusted his tie, there was a hint of annoyance between June’s brows. “I don’t have time to humor you if you’re only here to gloat. Now, if you would excuse me.”

“How about a drink together? Take it that we are two people down on their luck, seeking solace in each other in the darkest of nights,” Jennifer said.

Turning around to scrutinize Jennifer’s exquisite figure, June remarked with a laugh, “Couldn’t tell that you’re such a hottie before. Personally, I wouldn’t mind having a quick hookup with you had it been any other day, but not today, unfortunately. I’m just not interested right now.”

Jennifer’s expression grew solemn. “We’re allies, June, so I think a little decency might be in order.”

June’s lips curled up. It was not clear what was on his mind when he opened the door on the passenger side of Jennifer’s ride and sat himself in.

Snorting, Jennifer got in behind the wheels. “Where to?”

“Didn’t you say that we were going for a drink?”

Jennifer stepped on the gas and drove them down to a bar.

Following that, the pair of them entered together. That bar was unlike the typical lively ones. The sort of ear-splitting music that was commonplace elsewhere was conspicuously absent here. Mostly, people just sat on their high chairs to have conversations over a drink or two.

Both of them occupied a table in the corner. Jennifer wanted a cocktail, and June randomly followed suit.

After taking a sip, Jennifer said, "We have been totally screwed over by Oscar, June. Never mind what people on the streets are saying about us, our companies' stock values have also taken a real hit. I suppose that your situation isn't that much better than mine, if not worse. Word has it that the Yard family has left you hanging high and dry. Are you going to take this lying down?"

Taking a sip of his drink, June replied hoarsely, "I swear that sooner or later, I'm going to hand Oscar some real payback for all of this."

As she curled her lips into a cold sneer, there was a subtle hint of mockery in Jennifer's tone. "Has it ever crossed your mind that even the two of us combined would not pose enough of a threat to him? I suppose there must be a reason why Cassie is still so stuck on him. There's no woman who isn't drawn to a strong alpha male." While she spoke, her gaze still lingered upon June as though she meant to imply that he was a loser who had no hope of getting the girl this lifetime.

June slammed down his glass, seething, "What are you looking at me like that for?"

"Are you that easily angered?" Jennifer snickered.

June suddenly broke into a guffaw. "Don't forget, Jennifer, that you've once spent an entire night riding a beta like me, moaning in such delicious ecstasy. I've watched that video and seen how much you enjoyed it just from that expression on your face. Mm, thinking about that really makes me feel like bending you over right here, right now."

"Shut your mouth," said Jennifer in response to her scab being peeled at.

"Are you that easily angered?"

Downing a large mouthful of alcohol, Jennifer sought to douse the flames of fury that were blazing inside her.

"I don't think there's a need for either of us to try to put each other down here, June. Do you have a plan on how to deal with Oscar?" said Jennifer, changing the subject.

"Nope."

"Are we going to be sitting ducks here?"

"Do you have a better suggestion?"

That elicited no reply from Jennifer.

She really had no clue whatsoever herself. The higher-ups that she managed to latch onto inside Clinton Corporations had also backed out owing to the feat of being discovered by Oscar, and all they had provided her with were some unreliable intel.

Clinton Corporations itself was like an iron fortress. It was hard enough for flies to penetrate it, let alone bribe the employees there.

Downing yet another mouthful of acridness, June said, "Better start cleaning up that mess you have on hand, for starters. I heard that the Larsons' stocks have been plummeting because of that video of yours and had lost close to forty million in less than ten days. Rather than coming to me and trying to discuss how to deal with Oscar, perhaps you ought to think about finding a way to patch up that hole."

A vicious glint flashed across Jennifer's eyes. "Mind your own business. No matter how hard up the Larson Group becomes, there are still people we can count on in Tayhaven. This crisis will eventually pass."

June nodded and said no more.

"Hey, June. I was thinking..." Before Jennifer could finish her sentence, she got alcohol splashed onto her face.

Raising her hand to wipe the liquid off, Jennifer glared at the culprit with narrowed eyes.

It was Cassie.

Jennifer set herself upright. "The hell are you doing here, Cassie?"

June got onto his feet as well, looking quite thrilled. "Oh honey, you've come. Is it because you missed me?"

Crossing her arms, Cassie stuck out her chin haughtily. "I was curious to see how you two might look like canoodling together, you shameless pair. You got some nerve, Jennifer. If you fancy this guy, then go after him openly instead of trying to hook up with him through me. Such a slut you are, always so obsessed with men who are attached to other women."

There was a palpable shift in Jennifer's expression, but she took a deep breath to calm herself. "You've probably had one too much to drink, Cassie. Let's have June see you home."

"I didn't even have time to have any before I saw you two snuggling up to each other. Both of you make me sick," said Cassie, shriveling up her nose in contempt.

June went over to her. "There's nothing going on between us, so don't take your emotions out on her. Come on, it's getting late. Let's get you home."

"Why? Does it hurt you to see that?" said Cassie as she raised her head to regard him with an inscrutable look.

Wrapping an arm around her midsection, June forcibly took her out of the bar.

With her hair dripping with alcohol and her teeth gnashing, Jennifer was a disheveled mess.

She was so livid that she emptied the cocktail drink in her glass in one breath and did the same with her two subsequent orders of the stiffest drink available. Then, she paid up and stormed out.

At first, she did not feel the effects, but once she was outside, the sensation of the wind conversely caused the alcohol to rush to her head.

Feeling a surge of nausea, she squatted down by the curb to throw up. Having not had much for dinner, and with the amount of drink she had imbibed on an empty stomach, she was practically puking bile toward the end.

After she was done hurling, Jennifer opened her bag in search of a clean piece of tissue paper to wipe her mouth with. Unexpectedly, there was none to be found. It was as though they were also conspiring against her.

Suddenly, a piece of tissue paper was extended in front of her.

Taking it in her hand, she wiped furiously at her own lips before glancing up to see who was being so kind to her. It was only when she had a proper look at that person did her pupils shrink. A disconcerting sliver of self-consciousness glinted across the depths of her eyes.

Standing up, she reflexively primped her own hair in an effort to appear decorous. "What brought you here, Mr. Carter?"

In response, Carter only looked at her intently in a way that prompted Jennifer to retreat subtly.

"You've come for drinks, haven't you? Well, enjoy! I'll see you around," said Jennifer, waving her hand.

Carter reached out and caught her by the wrist.

Jennifer turned around. "Yes?"

Raising his hand to caress her hair, Carter said, "I'll send you home."

"I've got my own ride," Jennifer shook her head and turned him down outright.

With considerable insistency, Carter brought her to his car and opened the door to let her inside. Then, he secured the seatbelt for her before closing the door.

Circling round to the driver's side, he settled himself in. Jennifer's inability to get the door open left her a little peeved.

"What are you trying to do, Carter Scott?" Jennifer fumed.

"It's late already, so I don't feel comfortable leaving you on your own. That's why I'm going to drive you home."

In spite of her outward portrayal of disdain, Jennifer's heart was filled with anguish.

"Since when have you cared about my safety, Carter? In the past, when I tried to woo you, I bought you supper at midnight several times. All you did was dump them in the trash bin and then shoo me off. You were never concerned if I would run into any bad guys back then," said a goading Jennifer. It was only on keen listening that one would be able to pick up the bitterness that her inflection was steeped in.

Pursing his lips, Carter held his tongue.

After they had arrived at the Larsons, Jennifer undid her safety belt to open the door to the car, only to find it locked tight.

"Open this door right now, Carter," Jennifer hollered.

"Let's chat for a while, Jennifer."

"There isn't anything for us to talk about."

"Even if we can't become a couple, Jennifer, there's no reason for us to treat each other like enemies either. Wouldn't you agree?" said Carter while he kept his own emotions in check.

"Regrettably, I have no desire to be friends with you. When I think of my mom, I'd rather that we are strangers to each other," said Jennifer in spite.

Once more, Carter fell silent.

"Open it. I want to get out." Jennifer closed her eyes and did not reopen them until she had composed herself. "Let me go, Carter. You don't owe me anything. Just stay as indifferent as you were before. Whatever happens to me is no concern of yours."

Carter eventually did unlock the door.

Following that, Jennifer got out of the car, as did Carter. With the car separating them, he said, "Call me if you need anything, Jennifer. I want to help."

That caused Jennifer to pause in her tracks, but she did not look back as she walked off.

Carter's gaze appeared distant while he unflinchingly watched Jennifer's silhouette fade into the horizon.

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Chapter 662 Better To Sort Out Your Own Feelings

Carter stood outside the Larson residence, where he remained until all the lights inside the house went out.

As he drove, his thoughts were all over the place as he questioned his own feelings toward Jennifer. When he saw what a difficult time Jennifer was having outside the bar, it surprisingly wrenched at him in a way that left him quite confounded.

The thought of Jennifer's aloofness toward him also threw his heart into disarray. By the time he came back to his senses, he fortuitously spotted a dog dashing across his path not too far ahead. In a moment of panic, he turned the steering wheel, and with a protracted screech, the car was spun around until it came to a complete halt.

Taking a moment to catch his breath, Carter was finally able to settle his nerves.

He leaned his forehead against the steering wheel in a cold sweat and rested there for quite some time before he restarted the engine.

Back home, he took a hot bath. Afterward, he poured himself some wine and stood by the window that overlooked the sights and sounds beyond.

He appeared distant, though it was less obvious what was going through his mind.

It was the solitude of the night that usually made one especially contemplative.

The very next day, he received a call from Faye summoning him over.

He drove home with pace and stepped inside the hall before greeting, "Mom."

Faye was pouring some coffee into a cup with sublime elegance. When she saw him coming in, she pointed at a couch at the side. "Sit."

Naturally, Carter did as she asked.

Placing one of the cups of coffee in front of him, Faye said, "Give it a try and let me know whether my skills have improved."

Sampling a mouthful, Carter replied, "There's sweetness amidst the bitter notes and a good mouthfeel. Not bad."

"Glad you liked it."

Placing the cup down, Carter said, "Go ahead, Mom. Why have you asked me to come over today?"

Dapping at the corner of her lips with a handkerchief, Faye regarded Carter. "What's going on between you and Jennifer?"

"What are you getting at?" Carter countered.

Faye shot him a look and said, "Don't you play dumb with me. You know exactly what I'm getting at."

That elicited a chuckle from Carter. "There's nothing going on between her and myself, Mom. Didn't you already know that?"

"That's good to hear. I used to think that she's a pretty nice girl, but now, I'm just not sure whether she's the right one for you. So, it's wonderful that she's no longer pestering you. Saved me a ton of worries, at least." As she smiled in satisfaction, there was a hint of smugness in Faye's tone.

Carter's expression dimmed. "Weren't you very fond of her, Mom?"

"I am, still. It's just that I'm not convinced that she'll make the ideal partner for you, that's all. Now that that's out of the way, you should go on to work. I'd be heading out to do some shopping with a couple of friends myself," said Faye while she fiddled with her meticulously manicured nails.

Looking intently at his own mother, Carter suddenly realized how selfish his mother was in her willingness to dictate his love life to further her own ends.

"Don't you find your own words a little cold, Mom?" Carter asked bluntly.

"Are they?" Faye looked up at him in puzzlement. "Weren't you disinterested in Jennifer before? Shouldn't you be relieved that I'm not going to push you to marry her anymore?"

"More than anything else, I think you're only doing this just to preserve your own reputation, Mom, as you never did take your own son's opinions into consideration, ever," Carter's expression turned frigid in an instant.

“Whatever do you mean by that, Carter?”

“You know very well that you’re only thinking less of Jennifer because of the video of her you’ve seen online, Mom. Severing your ties with the Larsons just because of the scandal that happened to them? Don’t you think that’s being a little ungrateful?”

“How could you say that, Carter?” said Faye in slight dismay. “I’m just doing what’s best for you!”

“I’d say that you’re doing what’s best for yourself, Mom. I’m leaving.” Carter then about-faced and straight up walked out.

“Carter! Come back here!”

However, he pretended that he did not hear her.

Leaving the Scott residence, Carter thumped his fists against the steering wheel, feeling extremely low.

Following that, he slammed his foot down on the gas pedal and sent the car shooting out like a bullet. It was not until he slowed the vehicle to a halt that he looked up at the building in front of him through the car’s windshield.

Scoffing, he found himself below Amelia’s workplace once more.

Coincidentally, Amelia was stepping out of her office, and her keen eyes were swift to spot Carter’s car. She walked over and rapped upon his window. “Amelia,” said Carter after he wound it down.

“Were you looking for me?” asked Amelia with her brows perked up.

“I was distracted and somehow ended up here. Didn’t mean to disturb you at work, but I had not expected to be discovered either,” replied Carter sheepishly.

Pointing toward a beverage shop across from them, Amelia said, “I have an hour to spare on my break. We could head over there if you don’t mind.”

Carter did not turn her down, so the two of them crossed the street and went into the beverage shop.

Amelia ordered an orange juice on a whim, as did Carter.

“Why is Jolin not with you today?” Carter asked.

“I asked her not to follow.”

“Did she agree to it?”

“While it’s true that it was Oscar who hired her, she isn’t here to monitor my movements,” Amelia casually explained before she turned her focus back to the subject at hand. “Well, you don’t seem to be in a good mood today.”

“It’s nothing, really. Just had a little tiff with my Mom. I’m getting a little tired of her dictating my marital options at her own convenience,” said Carter, smiling in poignancy.

“But you did not agree to it, didn’t you?”

Carter nodded.

“Then, why does it continue to trouble you?”

“I’m not sure how to explain this either.” Noticing Amelia scrutinizing him intently, he hastened to ask, “Uh, why are you looking at me like that?”

Amelia shrugged. “It’s rare that I’m able to chat with you calmly like this, so it’s kind of new to me. Suddenly, I realized how dashing you are and how it makes you and Ms. Larson a great match. I think you guys would look cute together.”

Carter’s heart suddenly skipped a beat.

Lowering his eyes to shield his own emotions, he laughed. “That’s funny, Amelia, especially since you know very well how I feel.”

“We’ve known each other for over ten years now, Carter, so I daresay my own understanding of you is at sixty percent at the minimum, if not a hundred. Though you might act annoyed whenever I mentioned Ms. Larson, I could always sense that lingering doubt in your eyes, so it occurred to me that you might not really dislike her as much as you think you do.” Amelia’s words were pointed.

That tickled Carter. “Stop teasing me, Amelia. You know who it is that I fancy, so don’t you try to pair me up with other women just because you’ve got Oscar now.”

Pursing her lips, Amelia decided to swallow her unspoken words.

Still, she regarded him ambivalently.

“What?”

“I think it might be better for you to sort out your own feelings first, Carter. Like I told you before, don’t wait until it’s too late for regrets,” cautioned Amelia solemnly.

She did not want Carter to get hung up on his infatuation with her, for that would not only put her in a difficult position but, at the same time, cost him a true soulmate.

That aside, she genuinely felt that he and Jennifer would be good for each other.

With his head dipped, Carter appeared thoughtful.

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Chapter 663 Merely A Misunderstanding

Nevertheless, being the stubborn person he was, Carter was unwilling to admit that he actually cared for Jennifer. Hence, he only stayed with Amelia for half an hour before he left.

As she watched him disappear into the flow of the traffic, Amelia shook her head haplessly. She then uttered under her breath, "Oh, Carter. While you are able to understand the emotions of others, you are blind to your own. Indeed, it takes others to know oneself. Did you not realize that you were not as attached to me as you were before?"

It would appear that Carter had missed Jennifer after she had given up on her two-year-long pursuit of him. That was why her distancing herself from him had conversely yielded his attention.

Acknowledging how it might be improper for her to meddle too much in the love lives of others, Amelia decidedly went back to the office.

In the evening, a call came in from Tiffany after work.

When Amelia picked up, Tiffany sounded listless. "Are you free, Babe? Mrs. Hisson has invited me to attend the wedding of one of Derrick's cousins. I've no idea what she's up to, but whatever. Come over to my place if you're available. I'll let you in on the rest when you're here."

Considering it briefly, Amelia agreed, "I'll see you in an hour."

After she hung up, Amelia got into the car driven by Oscar and leaned over to give him a peck on his lips. "I won't be able to have dinner with you and Tony tonight, and could you drop me off at Tiff's? Mrs. Hisson has invited her to attend the wedding of one of Derrick's cousins, and she has no idea what would be waiting for her there."

Oscar's lips curled up as he started the engine. "Then she may be in luck. I guess Old Mr. Hisson's putting Mrs. Hisson under some real pressure, so tell Tiffany to make the most out of this opportunity. Perhaps we should start preparing a generous gift for her already."

Amelia had also been put in a buoyant mood. More than anyone else, she would be delighted to be able to see her friend married off.

After Oscar rolled into the neighborhood, Amelia unbuckled her seat belt. "Head on home first, Oscar. I'm going to help Tiff check on her gown. You can come by and pick me up when I'm done."

Oscar acknowledged her with a nod before Amelia alighted and took the elevator upstairs.

The sight of a disheveled and unkempt Tiffany had her frowning in disapproval. "What's going on, Tiff? Why do you look so knackered?"

"Come on in first." Tiffany turned sideways to allow Amelia through.

The former then shut the door behind Amelia. "Take a seat, Babe. I'm going to go freshen up for a bit."

No more than five minutes elapsed before Tiffany reemerged in a clean change of clothes. However, there were dark circles beneath her eyes.

"What have you been up to, Tiff? Why are your eyes so puffy?" Amelia asked.

"I've been working on a manuscript for two days straight and haven't gotten more than six hours of rest in between. It wasn't long after I fell asleep that Mrs. Hisson's call woke me," the yawning Tiffany stretched herself on the couch and replied with a shrug.

"Weren't you already close to finishing that manuscript that is due for publication? What's with the rush then?" Amelia asked.

"Owing to how well-received the movie was, I had multiple inquiries coming from a number of studios. The famous director from the entertainment scene, Stu Fox, said he wanted me to pen an action-themed script. It so happened that it was something I had in mind as well. With him helming the project, it could be a great boost to my professional credentials and perhaps propel me to the top of the heap. Previously, I only specialized in writing all sorts of novels, and the first time I did screenwriting was for an adaptation of my own fantasy novel. On top of it being an action script, it's going to be directed by Stu, so I cannot afford to skimp on my effort. I just had to give it my all."

"It's okay to want to give it your best, but you shouldn't take your own health for granted either," said Amelia, who was not completely supportive of her approach.

Tiffany then brought herself close to Amelia before she said, "Let's drop that for now, Babe. Come check out some gowns with me. I've no idea what Mrs. Hisson is up to by having me over this time."

Getting onto her feet, Amelia chuckled. "Didn't it occur to you that this wedding invitation could actually be another expression of Mrs. Hisson's compromising, Tiff? Perhaps her invitation could be an opportunity to see whether wedding bells might be on the horizon for Derrick and yourself?"

Tiffany was comparatively less optimistic. "She's extremely calculating and unpredictable, so who knows what's going on inside that head of hers? I can only hope that I don't screw this up. Everything else will have to wait after this is over. Come on, let's go have a look at those gowns."

Amelia nodded in assent.

The duo arrived at the boutique where they had made an appointment prior.

"We have the gown that you've reserved ready for you, Ms. Winters. Please, come this way," the store assistant said courteously.

Tiffany nodded in acknowledgement.

After heading inside to put it on, she did a little twirl in front of Amelia when she came back out. "What do you think of this one, Babe? It shouldn't come across as too shabby at the wedding banquet of the mega-rich, right?"

"It suits you well. The light claret tone looks very charming. I like it," came Amelia's honest opinion.

"Great. Then I'll take this." Tiffany was also rather decisive. Heading back inside to change out of the gown and into her own clothes, she promptly had it wrapped up afterward.

"Aren't you going to take a look at the others?" Amelia asked.

"There's no need to, as I'm just going to be a guest in the company of Derrick. No reason for me to try to steal the limelight from the bride either, so I'm fine so long as I don't come across as being too miserly. A prim and proper outfit that wouldn't draw too much criticism would suffice," Tiffany said.

That made certain sense to Amelia as well.

As the Hissons do not think too highly of Tiffany's background, they would be bound to scrutinize her attire no matter what. By avoiding showiness and dressing modestly right from the get-go, she would be giving them very few justifications to give her grief over it.

Once done with her purchase, Tiffany held Amelia by the arm as they sought something to eat.

After settling themselves inside a restaurant, the two of them casually ordered four dishes and a soup. After Tiffany urged the waiter to have them served up quickly, she started to stare at Amelia out of boredom.

Amelia was a little bemused by the way her friend was looking at her. "Why are you staring at me like that?"

"It feels like I haven't had a proper look at you in a long, long time. During those two years in Beshya, we spent almost every single day together, but after coming here, we were both kept busy by our own lives. Even Kurt made up all sorts of excuses to exit our social circle. Now that I think back on it, it seems that our time in Beshya has been our most carefree days because once we were back here, it has been nothing but stress, stress, and more stress from work and family," said Tiffany in lamentation.

Amelia smiled wistfully. How true is that, but that's life. There are just so many things that are out of our own control.

"That's so unlike you, Tiff. No matter how close friends are, they can never compare to one's life partner. That's why I really do hope for a happy ending between you and Derrick," said Amelia in earnest.

"You can be sure of that, Babe. So long as he does not turn his back on me, I'd never let go of him," Tiffany said.

That prompted a subtle smile from Amelia.

Once the food was served, the two of them dined in a harmonious atmosphere until they were rudely interrupted by a shrill female voice that emanated from the other side. "You're such a jerk, Derrick Hisson."

When that voice trailed off, Amelia and Tiffany were left staring at each other. That was because they recognized that voice as belonging to the one and only Crystal Halliwell.

Following that, they heard Crystal's high-pitched voice again. "When do you intend to be a man about it, Derrick? Didn't you say that you were just fooling around with Tiffany? That you wouldn't marry her? What's the meaning of this now?"

Hearing that made Amelia feel ill at ease. Reflexively, she looked toward Tiffany. Quite foreseeably, the latter wore an awful expression on her face.

That harrowing voice kept at it, though. "I want an answer from you today, Derrick. Otherwise, I will send the video of our most intimate moments to Tiffany. I bet she'd love to know what sort of man you really are."

Amelia regarded Tiffany, seemingly at a loss for what to say. "There has to be some sort of misunderstanding here, Tiff. Don't read too much into it."

Lifting her glass of water from the table, Tiffany downed it all in one gulp. When she placed the vessel back down, her hands were still trembling.

Then, she stood up so suddenly that it jolted Amelia onto her feet as well. Amelia reached out and grabbed her by the shoulders. "What are you doing, Tiff?"

Tiffany was breathing rapidly, and the veins on her neck were visibly popping.

In spite of that, she still managed to stay in control. "I'm just going to pop over to take a look. If Crystal is really the one Derrick loves, then I'd back out of this. No questions asked."

Amelia grabbed onto her arm and would not let go of her. "Don't be rash, Tiff. I'm coming with you."

When Tiffany and Amelia went over, it became apparent that it was merely an exhibition of Crystal's vocal histrionics. The male protagonist was, in fact, not the "Derrick Hisson" she had mentioned but someone else.

Exchanging glances with each other, all Amelia and Tiffany saw in each other's eyes was bafflement.

A sliver of awkwardness and embarrassment flashed across the eyes of the initially hollering Crystal when she noticed the pair's arrival but was quickly able to compose herself.

Clearing her throat purposefully, she smoothed out her already tidy hair. "Oh, it's you guys. What a coincidence."

Snickering, Tiffany responded a little acerbically, "That is an extraordinarily unusual thing you are into, Ms. Halliwell. It's only now that I know you enjoy roleplaying. For a moment, it almost had me believing that you might have some unspeakable secret going on with my boyfriend."

Clenching her fists tight, Crystal replied with a snort, "Don't get too cocky, Tiffany. Do you think Derrick is really in love with you? Sooner or later, he's going to dump you."

"You won't have to worry about that, Ms. Halliwell, because Derrick and I are currently very much in love and happy together. We'll let the fates decide what the future holds," Tiffany hooted boisterously. "I do sincerely hope that you'd be able to find yourself your own better half someday, Ms. Halliwell. That ought to fix your preoccupation with stealing other people's boyfriends."

“You...”

“Happy roleplaying with your buddy, Ms. Halliwell, and have a nice day.”

Off went Tiffany leading Amelia by the hand, leaving Crystal nearly passing out from rage.

That episode of shenanigans by Crystal made it impossible for Amelia and Tiffany to resume eating. In the end, the duo opted to have some tacos on the streets instead.

“Not upset anymore?” asked Amelia in amusement.

“Was I ever, Babe?”

Putting on a tough front, as usual.

Despite that, Amelia did not expose her. “Why didn’t Derrick accompany you to the boutique today?”

“He had to meet with some studio executives to discuss the adaptation of a novel by another author. If it pans out, we could have new investments to commence shooting come next spring. That author is a newcomer but is pretty talented. Shows considerable maturity craft-wise too. Should we be able to adapt it, we would be expecting a promising viewership.”

“I have faith in Derrick’s judgement.”

The two of them idly chatted away until they finished the tacos. After Amelia footed the bill and got into the car, she said, “Say, Tiff. What would you have done had Crystal and Derrick really been together?”

“First, I’d castrate Derrick. Then, I’d dump him,” said Tiffany resolutely.

That’s totally Tiffany’s style. It’s a good thing Derrick hasn’t cheated on Tiffany. Otherwise, he would have been reduced to a wreck.

What Tiffany could never have anticipated was that should Derrick ever prove to be unfaithful to her, she would not harm him but choose to leave him quietly.

To truly love someone meant that one would rather bear the pain than hurt one’s beloved.

Though Tiffany came across as being extremely loud and brash, she was the rare type who was unfailingly devoted and whose love would only grow. If her lover stayed loyal to her, then she would never turn on him.

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Chapter 664 Close To Being Violated

Once Amelia had sent her to the neighborhood, Tiffany said, "Babe, thanks for sending me back."

"Go on in. Be strong and attend the wedding with Derrick," said Amelia.

Tiffany showed an "okay" gesture before getting out of the car.

Once Amelia got back home, she went to Tony's bedroom. She saw him sleeping in Oscar's arms and making some adorable sounds.

Just as Amelia got nearer to them, Oscar opened his eyes in alertness. When he saw it was her, the harsh look on his face was replaced with tenderness.

Carefully, Oscar shifted his arm and let Tony hug his teddy bear instead. He then got off the bed and reached out to embrace Amelia. "You're back. Why didn't you call me so that I could go and pick you up?"

"I drove Tiff's car back," said Amelia.

With his arms around her waist, they went back to their bedroom.

"Did the dress fitting go well?" asked Oscar.

Amelia nodded.

Oscar tapped her nose before saying, "Let me tell you a piece of news. I think you will be quite happy to hear about it."

In response, Amelia blinked in anticipation.

"One of the Hissons is getting married, and our family has received an invitation. When the time comes, both of us will attend the wedding together."

Amelia smiled lightly. "That is certainly good news."

Oscar kissed her on the forehead. "Go and take your shower. It's getting late."

"Okay."

When Amelia went into the bathroom, Oscar followed her in very quickly. He hugged her naked body from the back and savored the scent of the shower gel on her body.

“Amelia, you smell so good,” uttered Oscar hoarsely.

She turned around and put her arms around his neck as the water flowed down their bodies.

Because of the water, Amelia’s eyes were only half-open. She stood on her tiptoes and kissed him on his lips. When the fire in him was ignited, she retreated and wiped her face. In a coquettish tone, she said, “Oscar, I’m so exhausted today.”

Looking at her, Oscar caught a hint of mischief in her eyes. However, he had no heart to force her when he saw her piteous look.

“Woman, do you know you are playing with fire?” said Oscar in a husky voice. Fortunately for Amelia, Oscar did not pounce on her like a leopard and devour her.

Amelia fluttered her eyelashes at him before saying, “Oscar, go out first and let me take my shower. I’m completely worn out. After spending the entire day drafting designs and going for the gown fitting with Tiff, my whole body is aching. Could you please give me a massage later?”

Oscar looked at her intently and actually intended to leave the bathroom as he was told.

Just as Oscar reached the door, Amelia clung to him like a nimble snake and mumbled daintily, “Oscar, why are you so obedient today?”

At that point, Oscar could not take it anymore. He turned around and pinned her against the wall.

After they were done, Amelia was so wasted that she fell asleep. As such, Oscar had to finish showering her and put her in bed.

He kissed her lightly on her forehead before saying, “Good night and sweet dreams.”

Once he was sated, Oscar, too, fell asleep very soon with Amelia in his arms.

In the blink of an eye, it was the wedding day of Derrick’s cousin. Since both parties came from prominent families, the wedding was naturally a grand affair.

Amelia was all dressed up as she entered the hotel while holding Oscar’s hand.

The guests were mostly from the business world. The moment they spotted Oscar, they began to surround him and chatted away. They would all praise Amelia before changing the topic to work-related stuff. Oscar skillfully deflected their questions and said,

“Gentlemen, today I’m only here to attend the wedding with my wife. I just want to take it easy. Perhaps, all of you should do the same too.”

With that, those who wanted to talk about business had no choice but to swallow their words.

“Yes, young man. You’re right,” all of them agreed with Oscar. Those businessmen were older than Oscar. However, in terms of business tactics, they were not comparable to him. That was why they were intimidated by Oscar. Deep down, they were worried that he might harbor some malicious motives toward their companies.

With a serious face, Oscar said, “I think I see someone I know. My wife and I will go over to say hello. Please excuse us.”

Everyone around them nodded.

With that, Oscar brought Amelia over to meet Derrick.

When Amelia did not see Tiffany, she asked, “Where’s Tiff?”

“She’s gone to the washroom.”

Amelia studied Derrick and noticed that he looked particularly dashing that day. He was already outstanding, to begin with, and others paled in comparison to him.

“Derrick, you look very handsome today.”

“Thank you. You look very beautiful too today. Both Mr. Clinton and you are very compatible,” Derrick returned the compliment politely.

Amelia smiled at his words. Seeing that Tiffany was not there yet, she asked, “Since the movie has become a hit, as the producer, you must have made your mark. Now, Tiff is not only a best-selling author, but she is also a highly sought-after screenwriter for several directors. I heard one of the directors wants her to do an adaptation of an action novel. Tiff’s career has certainly risen up to a higher level, thanks to her own capabilities. I think it’s time for both of you to settle down now. After all, Tiff is not that young anymore.”

Derrick was not bothered by what she had said. Instead, he said seriously, “I already have the ring ready. Once my cousin’s wedding is over, I intend to propose to her. We have been together for three years now. It’s about time we get married.”

Relief flashed across Amelia’s eyes. However, the thought of Kate gave Amelia a headache.

Amelia asked tentatively, “Has your mom agreed?”

Derrick sidestepped the question and replied, "My granddad has agreed."

It was exactly as Oscar had predicted.

Amelia persisted in her questioning. "Old Mr. Hisson has agreed, but what about Mrs. Hisson?"

Just as Derrick was about to speak, there was a commotion at the entrance. Amelia glanced in that direction and saw that Kate had just arrived. Standing next to her was none other than Crystal.

Amelia narrowed her eyes and turned to look at Derrick. "It looks like Mrs. Hisson and Old Mr. Hisson don't agree with one another. She still has her eyes on the daughter of the Halliwell family as her daughter-in-law."

A hint of awkwardness flashed across Derrick's eyes when he saw his mom walk in with Crystal as if they were mother and daughter.

Derrick assured Amelia, "I will convince my mom. Sooner or later, she will like Tiff."

"What if your mom never likes Tiff in this lifetime? Will you be willing to cut all ties with your family?" questioned Amelia as she eyed him carefully. No one was sure if she was making things difficult for him on purpose or if she was testing him.

Derrick lowered his eyes at her intense stare. By the time he looked up again, he said confidently, "No, I won't. I will try my best to make sure that Tiff and my family get along. If I can't even manage the relationship between my wife and my mom, then I'm not fit to be a man."

Amelia gave him a bright smile and patted his shoulders. "Derrick, I have always had faith in you."

Derrick chuckled at her words.

Right then, Kate came over to them with Crystal by her side. "Oscar, Amelia, you are here."

Oscar merely nodded politely.

Nevertheless, Kate was not bothered by his lack of enthusiasm. Unperturbed, she turned to Crystal and introduced them, "Crystal, he is the heir of Clinton Corporations. His name is Oscar, and he's a few years older than you are."

Crystal extended her hand and said, "Mr. Clinton, nice to meet you."

Oscar reciprocated the handshake.

“Oscar, she will be my daughter-in-law in the future. You’ll have to help me take care of her,” said Kate with a chuckle.

“My apologies, Mrs. Hisson. I’m already married. I’m afraid I won’t be able to agree to your request,” said Oscar.

Kate smiled before responding, “Oscar, you are such a sentimental and loyal person.”

After the polite exchange, Kate looked at Derrick and asked, “Derrick, where’s Tiffany? I recall inviting her to your cousin’s wedding. Why? Is she so high and mighty that she can’t attend the wedding?”

“Mom, she has gone to the washroom. She’ll be back in a short while,” answered Derrick.

Amelia was getting worried as Tiffany was taking too long in the washroom. “Oscar, I want to go to the washroom too. You stay here and chat with Mrs. Hisson.”

Oscar nodded in acknowledgment.

The moment Amelia walked away, Jolin followed her closely to protect her.

When Amelia came to the washroom, she found the door locked. There was also a sign hanging on the door stating that the washroom was undergoing cleaning. She frowned as an ominous feeling surged in her. Knocking on the door, she asked, “Is anyone in there?”

However, there was no reply.

She turned the doorknob and found that the door had been locked from the inside.

Amelia began to panic and asked, “Jolin, can you unlock the door?”

Nodding, Jolin took out a gadget that was meant for unlocking doors. Within a few seconds, Jolin managed to unlock the door.

Amelia rushed in to find a man making his move on a woman, and the woman was none other than Tiffany.

At that moment, Tiffany’s mouth was covered, and tears were flowing down her eyes. To make matters worse, the upper half of her clothes had been ripped off. Thankfully, the man still had his clothes on, so Amelia could safely assume that the man had not violated Tiffany yet.

“Tiff.” Amelia’s eyes were filled with rage. She shut the door and instructed, “Jolin, take this b*stard down.”

Like a leopard, Jolin pounced on the man and caught hold of him before he had a chance to react.

He shouted angrily, "Who the hell are you? This girl is mine. We are about to have a jolly good time. Why are you spoiling my fun?"

Jolin gave him two tight slaps across his face and told him fiercely, "Shut up. If not, I'll kill you right now."

The man was wise enough to stop talking.

Amelia rushed over to embrace Tiffany. She then got Jolin to give Tiffany her coat so that Tiffany could cover herself. "Tiff, don't be afraid. Everything is fine now. I'm here, so no one can hurt you."

As humiliation engulfed Tiffany, she buried her face in Amelia's neck and burst out in tears. "Amelia, thank God you came. I was so frightened just now. I was nearly, nearly..."

However, she could not finish her sentence. The fact that she was so close to being raped by that man was a humiliation that she would never be able to forget

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Too Much to Bear My Love

Chapter 665

Chapter 665 Lay Waste To That Part

Amelia said, "Jolin, find out this man's background."

"Understood, Mrs. Clinton," Jolin replied as she pinned the man on the ground with her foot.

Amelia then helped Tiffany up before saying, "I'll bring Tiff to her room first. Make sure you keep his mouth clamped shut. Since he likes forcing himself on girls so much, I'd say we should lay waste to that part of his so that he won't do the same thing to other women."

"Understood, Mrs. Clinton." Jolin was eager to jump into action, while the man under her foot paled. Instinctively, he covered his crotch. Just as he was about to scream for help, Jolin uttered, "Go on. Scream. I'd like to see if those people will come to your help faster or if I'll destroy your crown jewels faster."

Immediately, the man shut his mouth up, but he continued to shake in fear.

Amelia helped Tiffany into the room before grabbing a drink for her from the refrigerator. "Have a drink to calm down. I've already called and asked someone to send you another set of clothes.

Tiffany then opened the bottle and took a sip of the cold drink. The coolness of the liquid made her calmness return.

"Are you feeling better now?" Amelia asked in concern.

Tiffany nodded. Indeed, her face was not as colorless as it was a moment ago.

"Babe, thank you. If not for you, I think I might not have been able to escape such a horrendous situation," Tiffany told her with a pale smile.

"It's nothing between the two of us. Once you've changed into the new clothes, I'll call and ask Derrick and Oscar to come over."

Tiffany gave her a slight nod.

The clothes were soon sent over. Amelia then asked Tiffany to change into them in the bathroom. Once she was done, Amelia said, "I've called Oscar, and they're on their way over. With us here, no one will be able to hurt you, so don't be scared."

By then, Tiffany had already recomposed herself. She replied with a chuckle, "Babe, I'm fine. Don't worry."

Amelia let out a sigh of relief. Tiffany was much stronger than she thought. If it were another woman, she might have been bawling her eyes out in a mental breakdown. Amelia was glad that her friend was capable of recovering in such a short time.

Both Derrick and Oscar came quick. Right as Amelia opened the door for them, Derrick rushed past her toward Tiffany. He then hugged her and kissed her cheek before worriedly asking, "Are you okay?"

As Tiffany buried herself in his arms, the feelings of indignation she suppressed earlier exploded instantly. As she sobbed, she said, "Derrick, you're finally here! I was so scared. That man nearly raped me! Thank god Amelia saved me. I was so terrified."

In an apologetic tone, Derrick whispered, "This is all my fault. I didn't protect you well enough. It won't happen again, so don't be scared."

Seeing that, Oscar wrapped his arm around Amelia's waist and said, "Let's go out first. Give them some space."

Amelia nodded in acknowledgment.

She and Oscar then tiptoed out of the room to give Derrick and Tiffany some privacy.

Once they were outside, Oscar gave Amelia a once-over. "You're not hurt, are you?"

Amelia shook her head. "Jolin was with me."

As Oscar caressed the back of her head, he said, "I'm thinking of adding another two bodyguards for you. I'm worried that Jolin won't be able to protect you by herself."

Amelia was amused by his words.

"Oscar, don't be paranoid. Tiff was the victim. We should think about finding the one targeting her instead. This person is too vicious. If they had gotten their way with Tiff with so many people at the wedding, she would undoubtedly become everyone's laughing stock. Besides that, her relationship with Derrick would come to an end. That person is clearly trying to destroy Tiff!" As Amelia spoke, she became increasingly infuriated.

"Don't worry. Jolin will surely get the answers from him," Oscar reassured her confidently. After all, he had confidence in the interrogation skills of the people he personally trained.

Sure enough, Jolin came over after an hour and informed, "Boss, Mrs. Clinton, I've found out that Crystal Halliwell was the one behind this."

"What did you do with that man?" Amelia asked.

"I destroyed that part of his before getting two people to take him away to another place. We're waiting for your instructions, Ms. Winters," Jolin reported solemnly.

Only then did Amelia let out a sigh of relief.

"You've done excellently this time, Jolin. I'll cook up a great meal for you once we're back," Amelia told her.

"Thank you, Mrs. Clinton."

By the time Derrick and Tiffany came out, the latter had already recollected herself.

After a glance at Derrick, Amelia told him, "Derrick, Jolin has already found out from that man that Crystal was the one who ordered him to do this. As Tiff's boyfriend and the reason she suffered this, I'm sure you know what to do. I hope you won't disappoint Tiff again. If you can't keep her safe, I'd doubt whether you're the right one for her."

Derrick pursed his lips upon hearing that, and the expression on his face was grim as a murderous glint flashed past his eyes.

“All right. It’s the newlyweds’ big day today. Let’s talk about this again after the wedding is over,” Oscar interrupted, trying to ease the tension in the air.

Derrick nodded at that.

The five of them then returned to the venue. The bride and the groom were already on the stage, and when Crystal saw that Tiffany was fine and entering the venue with Derrick, a flash of frustration and resentment appeared in her eyes. However, right as Derrick landed his gaze on her, she immediately put on a demure facade and smiled at him.

Derrick looked away and took a seat while keeping his arm around Tiffany.

Kate glanced at Tiffany and grumbled, “Tiffany, weren’t you just going to the washroom? Why did you need everyone to go with you as well? What’s the matter? Did you fall into the toilet?”

Tiffany only smiled in response.

However, Derrick frowned and replied, “Mom, it’s my cousin’s wedding today. I’m sure you don’t want her to be unhappy today, right?”

As Kate fiddled with her slender fingers, she sneered and fell silent.

Once the wedding was over, Derrick halted Crystal in her tracks and said to his mother, “Mom, I’d like to speak to Ms. Halliwell in private. You don’t mind her coming to shop with me for a while, right?”

Kate threw a glimpse at Tiffany, who was sticking to Amelia, and answered in disbelief, “Why are you getting Crystal to come with you? Why don’t you just talk to her right here and now?”

“Mom, you want to listen to our conversation, don’t you? Come with me, then. I’d like to show you how wicked this daughter-in-law of your choice is,” Derrick grimly said to her.

At that, Kate cast a strange look at Crystal and whispered, “Crystal, what have you done?”

A trace of fear flickered past Crystal’s eyes. She could guess that the man she sent must have told them that she was the mastermind. Otherwise, Derrick would not be so hostile toward her all of a sudden.

What an idiot. He couldn’t even deal with a woman, and he even revealed my name.

Despite the countless thoughts that raced through her mind, she continued to put on an innocent facade. “No, I didn’t, Mrs. Hisson. I don’t know what Derrick wants to talk to me about either. Maybe there’s some kind of misunderstanding.”

Derrick then turned to his mother. “Mom, since she said she hasn’t done anything, just let her come with me. I won’t let this matter go otherwise.”

Kate had no choice but to follow along at his insistent attitude.

The group of people then returned to the hotel and took the elevator to the highest floor. When they reached the room, Jolin knocked on the door. Soon, someone opened it.

Upon seeing Oscar, the subordinate who opened the door greeted, “Boss.”

“Where’s the guy?”

“He’s inside.”

The man then took a step aside to let Oscar and the others in. Once the group of people stepped into the room, they were greeted by the sight of a tied-up man with a look of agony on his face. The moment that man saw Crystal, his eyes lit up.

He screamed, “Save me, Crystal! I’m your cousin! You said that Tiffany is an escort who lives in the shadows. That’s why I tried to force myself on her in the washroom. You can’t set your cousin up like this! I’m an only child!”

Crystal’s expression darkened at once, and her face turned pale.

“Shut up!” she finally snapped.

Kate peeked at the panicking man on the ground before turning to Crystal. “Crystal, what’s going on?”

Crystal parted her lips and stammered, “M-Mrs. Hisson, this is just... This is just...”

On the other hand, Tiffany, who was standing beside Derrick, was watching the scene in agitation. Every time she looked at the man, she was reminded of the scene where she was nearly raped by him.

Derrick wrapped his arm around her waist and murmured, “Are you okay?”

Tiffany turned to tell him, “Derrick, I want to go outside.”

Amelia walked over to her and volunteered, “I’ll go out with her.”

Amelia and Tiffany then went out of the room with Jolin following them.

“Jolin, get a cup of warm milk for Tiff.”

“Yes, Mrs. Clinton.”

Once Jolin was gone, Amelia asked, “What’s wrong, Tiff?”

Tiffany shook her head and muttered, “It’s nothing. I just feel nauseous. I can’t believe Crystal tricked her cousin into coming after me.”

“One will always reap what one sows. I’m sure Derrick won’t let the ones who hurt you off.”

Tiffany nodded in agreement.

While Amelia chatted away with Tiffany outside, a scene was unfolding in the room.

“Crystal, you can’t just watch on while they punish me for your misdeeds! Mom and Dad know I’ve come to find you. If anything happens to me, I’d like to see how you’re going to give the Halliwell family an explanation. You do remember that Grandma and Grandpa love me the most, right?” the tied-up man was still babbling away.

The grimace on Crystal’s face deepened.

What a good-for-nothing!

No matter how resentful Crystal was toward her cousin, she could not possibly just sit on her hands. After all, she was the one who had tricked him into the situation. Furthermore, their grandparents were very fond of him. Even though this grandson of theirs was talentless and decadent, he was a sweet-talker and knew how to make their grandparents happy. Since her grandfather was still the one in charge of the Halliwell family, she could not let anything happen to her cousin.

“Derrick, could you untie him first? I’m sure there’s some kind of misunderstanding at work here,” Crystal pleaded as she looked at Derrick.

However, Derrick rejected her immediately, “No, he nearly had his way with Tiff. I’ve only asked you to come to confirm that he knows you. Since both of you are members of the Halliwell family, I’ll be telling the Halliwell family about this myself. I want the Halliwells to give a proper apology to my woman.”

At that point, even Kate’s expression turned grim.

“Crystal, is Derrick speaking the truth?” she asked.

Crystal’s mind was in chaos by then. After a moment of contemplation, she said, “Mrs. Hisson, this is just a misunderstanding. I was only joking with my cousin. I never thought

that he would take my words seriously. My cousin's a little perverted, and he has seen Tiffany before. I never expected that he would try to force himself on Tiffany at the wedding. I swear!"

Right as those words left her lips, the tied-up man began shouting, "Crystal, what are you talking about? You were the one who told me that Tiffany was coming today! You told me not to let the good opportunity slip by! In fact, you even told me that if I took her nude photos after I've gotten my way, you'd get Derrick to let me have my fun with her for a while!"

Crystal's face turned ashen upon hearing his words.

"Shut up right now! When have I ever said something like that?" Crystal cried out.

A look of disappointment appeared on Kate's face as she stared at Crystal.

"Crystal, you've let me down. I won't intervene in this anymore." With that said, Kate turned to leave.

Crystal ran after her and yelled, "Mrs. Hisson, this really is a misunderstanding! I haven't done anything!"

"Tell that to Derrick. I'm not going to intervene in this matter anymore. I don't want my son to hate me because of you." Kate then flung her hand away and left the room. Meanwhile, a bodyguard towed Crystal back into the room.

When Kate left the suite, she spotted Amelia gently consoling Tiffany. A conflicted look danced past her eyes, but she still walked over to the two young women.

When Tiffany saw her, she rose to her feet and greeted, "Mrs. Hisson."

Kate's lips parted, but it took her a while before she could squeeze out, "How are you feeling?"

Tiffany froze at her words. A beat later, she came back to her senses and replied, "I'm all right. Thank you for your concern, Mrs. Hisson."

"Glad to hear that. I'll be taking my leave first." Nevertheless, Kate only took three steps before she walked back to the two. "Tiffany, I just want to remind you that the Halliwell family are reputable people. Don't make Derrick cross those influential people because of you. I can choose not to help Crystal out for my son's sake, but don't use him for his sympathy and let him offend people."

At that, Kate left.

Tiffany stood transfixed for a long while.

On the other hand, fury began boiling in Amelia. Kate had crossed the line this time. Clearly, she wanted Tiffany to do nothing but suffer in silence even though the latter was the victim in the matter.

“She’s too much!” Amelia snarled.

Tiffany sighed gloomily before leaning back against the wall quietly.

Seeing her piteous state, Amelia’s heart wrenched in pain.

“Are you okay, Tiff?”

“Babe, I don’t plan to let that man go because he nearly raped me. I won’t be able to let go of this grudge unless I teach him a lesson.”

“Jolin has already destroyed that part of his on behalf of you. He won’t be able to lay another finger on another woman for the rest of his life. For a man, losing his crown jewels is worse than killing him,” Amelia calmly pointed out to her.

After a glimpse at Amelia, Tiffany finally smiled.

“Babe, you really know me well,” she said. Tiffany had been preoccupied with the overwhelming fear of nearly getting sexually assaulted back in the washroom, so she had not heard the instructions Amelia had given Jolin. Now that Amelia had told her what she had asked Jolin to do to the man, the flame of fury in her heart dissipated.

“Are you feeling better?”

“Much.”

“Then don’t dwell on it anymore. Things will get better.”

Tiffany nodded at that.

Too Much to Bear, My Love Chapter 666

Too Much to Bear My Love

Chapter 666

Chapter 666 Protected By The Boss

Crystal and her cousin were sent straight back to Saspiuburg. Initially, the Halliwells did nothing, for they knew that they were in the wrong. However, when they heard that Crystal’s cousin had been castrated, they instantly turned livid. In no time, Crystal’s grandparents took a flight to Tayhaven and went to the Hisson residence to demand an answer from Derrick.

Unfortunately for them, Terrence was out to meet his friends while Kate and Finnick were overseas for a research conference. Even if Crystal's grandparents wanted to bring justice to their grandson, they would first need to meet the Hissons in person. Hence, they rushed to Derrick's office in rage.

When Derrick heard that the two of them had come, he arched a brow and asked his secretary to invite the two to his office.

Once the two were in the office, Derrick asked his secretary to prepare some snacks and tea for them as a gesture of courtesy toward his elders.

Some of Reuben Halliway's anger faded away when he saw Derrick being so respectful toward them, but the very thought of his grandson's current state made his fury return.

"Derrick, please give me an answer as to why you've done that to my grandson!" Reuben growled as he glared at Derrick. The flame of rage burned brightly in his eyes despite his blurry sight.

Nevertheless, Derrick was not afraid of the elderly man at all. He solemnly said, "Mr. Reuben, I think you'd get a quicker answer if you ask your grandson and granddaughter about this instead. Your grandson tried to sexually assault my girlfriend. If not for my friend's early discovery, he would have gotten his way. I don't know why he ended up in this way, but if I were there, I would have beaten him to within an inch of his life. My girlfriend is now traumatized because of him. I'm already being courteous to the Halliwell family by not having sent him straight to the police. While you've come all the way here for an answer, I was just thinking of coming to you for justice too."

Reuben's expression darkened before his face paled. Derrick's explanation was completely unlike what Crystal and his foolish grandson had told him.

As his lips trembled, he asked, "Derrick, are you telling me the truth?"

"Old Mr. Halliwell, if you don't believe me, I can show you the hotel's surveillance footage. The footage shows how your grandson stalked my girlfriend into the washroom. His actions were nothing but perverse. If I were to send the footage to the police, I think the police would have enough evidence to charge your son," Derrick remarked.

Reuben's face turned bright red, and he slammed the cane he had in his hand onto the ground before snarling, "This b*stard! He has brought shame to the family! He could have had any woman he wanted, but he just had to forcibly take someone!"

On the other hand, Crystal's grandmother, Dorothy, was a woman who doted on her grandson a lot.

As she consoled Reuben, she looked at Derrick grimly. "Derrick, in a way, I've watched over you since you were young. I rarely come to Tayhaven nowadays, but you're becoming increasingly outstanding. You're basically a copy of your mother. I thought you were a good man, but I never expected that you'd do something drastic like this to my grandson. Perhaps you should be giving me an answer. You can always get another girlfriend if you lose this one, but I won't be able to have any great-grandchildren now that you've done that to my grandson."

Derrick sneered at her words.

"Old Mrs. Halliwell, as far as I remember, you've always been an intelligent, elegant, generous, and caring elder of mine. I never thought that you would say something like this today. I don't know what happened to your grandson for him to turn out in this way, but the way you're unreasonably spoiling him is simply disappointing," Derrick ruthlessly responded.

Having been mocked, Dorothy grimaced in response.

"Derrick, are you going to make the Halliwell family your enemy for a woman?"

At her words, Derrick's anger morphed into incredulous laughter.

"What are you laughing at?"

"Old Mrs. Halliwell, I've always thought of you as someone wise, but as it turns out, you're just like everyone else. If I can't even protect my woman, I think I'm not fit to be a man. The lesson I taught him is considered a light one." Derrick then stood up, a sign of him asking them to leave. "Old Mr. Halliwell, Old Mrs. Halliwell, please leave. I still have work to attend to."

The elderly Halliwell couple then stormed out of the office.

"Derrick's too much! He actually had the audacity to embarrass his elders. That's so uncivilized of him!" Dorothy complained the moment she entered the car.

In the meantime, Reuben was silent with a grim look on his face.

"Say something! Our grandson's been castrated, and he'll be sterile from now on. Are you telling me that you're fine with that?"

"Let's go back."

"What?"

"I said, let's go back."

“We came all the way here from Saspiuburg, but you’re going back just like that?”

“What else can we do? It’s all because our useless grandson is a pervert. That’s why he ended up like this. Do you want us to have a fallout with the Hisson family instead?”

Dorothy was silent, but she had a scowl on her face.

“Fletcher, drive to the airport,” Reuben instructed.

“Of course, Old Mr. Halliwell.”

However, Dorothy refused to get down from the car when they reached the airport.

She said, “Go back to Saspiuburg by yourself. I refuse to believe that I won’t be able to do anything to a woman who has no one backing her up. She has taken Crystal’s place and done this to my grandson. They’ll think that the Halliwells are easy targets if I don’t settle the score with her.”

“Stop trying to fool around.”

“You are becoming increasingly meek with age. The Hissons have already done something horrible like this to us, and you’re doing nothing about it. While you don’t mind embarrassing yourself, I do,” Dorothy gravely told him.

Reuben said in response for a while.

A beat later, he turned to the driver and said, “Fletcher, to the hotel.”

“Understood, Old Mr. Halliwell.”

The driver then turned the car around and drove to the hotel that the Halliwells frequently stayed at in Tayhaven—a hotel that they owned.

Dorothy queried, “You’re not planning to go back anymore?”

Reuben closed his eyes and did not answer her.

A sly grin grew on Dorothy’s lips.

In the meantime, the one who had been secretly tailing the elderly Halliwell couple called Derrick.

“Mr. Hisson, Old Mr. Halliwell and Old Mrs. Halliwell went to the airport before turning around and going to the hotel,” he informed.

"I got it. Keep following them and install a surveillance camera in their suite if you can. I need to know what they're doing," came Derrick's voice from the other end of the line.

"Understood, Mr. Hisson."

After ending the call, Derrick walked to the window and lit a cigar before letting it burn between his fingers.

As he looked at the traffic flow outside, he sneered. "Old Mr. Halliwell, I didn't want to confront you at the start, but you left me no choice. Instead of reprimanding your grandson, you've chosen to take action against the victim instead. I won't sit back and do nothing, or else I have no right to be her man."

Just as the cigar between his fingers was about to burn out, Derrick walked over to his desk and extinguished it in the ashtray.

He then made a call and said into the receiver, "Mr. Clinton, I need a few people from you. The Halliwells are here, and I think they might make a move against Tiff."

After Oscar replied to him, Derrick continued, "Thank you, Mr. Clinton. Amelia saved Tiff, and that's a favor I haven't repaid. I'll treat you both to a meal another time."

After a pause, he added, "All right. I'll hang up the call and return to work first."

Once the call ended, Derrick buried himself in his work. Meanwhile, Amelia was right beside Oscar.

"What's the matter? Derrick's asking to borrow a few men from you?" Amelia queried.

"The Halliwells have come. I think they're here to settle the score," Oscar gave her a curt answer.

Amelia scowled. "Are they going to lay their fingers on Tiff?"

"Silly woman, they've flown all the way here from Saspiburg. They can't possibly be here to reminisce about the good old times," Oscar answered in amusement.

Amelia then said, "Oscar, send Kurt to protect Tiff. Kurt's better in close combat. Tiff will be safer with him around."

"I'll send a few more people over, so don't worry. They've all been trained by me," Oscar reassured her.

Amelia nodded in relief.

After pondering for a while, she took out her phone and called Tiffany.

“Tiff, the Halliwells have come from Saspiuburg. Be careful. Oscar will be sending a few men to Oscar to protect you from the shadows, but you should be wary of your surroundings, too,” Amelia cautiously reminded her.

“I got it, Babe. Thank you. Don’t worry. Nothing will happen to me.”

“That’ll be it then. I’ll come and see you tomorrow.”

Oscar soon sent men to protect Tiffany. A while later, Reuben and Dorothy ordered three burly men to go to the neighborhood Tiffany lived in.

“Watch out. They’re here.” The bodyguards that Oscar sent turned warier as they carefully tailed the three men.

They followed the trio into the stairwell before exiting at the same time.

The three bodyguards glanced at Oscar’s men, but they did not want to cause a ruckus, so they continued their way toward the entrance of Tiffany’s condominium.

Right as they were about to knock on her door, a gun was pressed against one of the Halliwells’ men.

“Good sirs, why don’t you come downstairs with us? I think we should have a nice talk.”

As they had a gun trained on them, the Halliwells’ men had no choice but to head downstairs.

Once they were in the car, the Halliwells’ men asked, “Who are you? We’re only hired men following orders. You guys look buff, so I’m guessing that you’re trained. We’re not going to stop you from earning your living, so don’t stop us from earning ours too.”

“We’re from Clinton Corporations. The woman you’re targeting is under the protection of Mr. Clinton. Go back and tell your client that this woman isn’t someone they can afford to mess with.”

The three men paled upon hearing that.

One of them then barked out a laugh. “So she’s under Mr. Clinton’s protection. We were fools for not realizing that. We’ll leave now.”

At that, the three of them opened the car door, stepped out, and left.

“I thought that the Halliwells were impressive people, but the three people they’ve hired are just cowards.”

“They’re not cowards. It’s because Boss is well-known in both the society and the underworld. Even the mayor is respectful toward him, and the big shots in the underworld regard him as a friend. Those three men are just bodyguards trying to make a living. How can they possibly not be fearful of Boss?”

“Are we going to stay here then?”

“Money makes the world go round. There will always be idiots who will try to mess with us for the money. Do you think we can leave just like that?”

They knew the answer was no, so they had no choice but to stick around.

“Tiffany has a good life. She’s Mrs. Clinton’s good friend, so she gets to benefit from her status too,” one of them started.

The other two only smiled in response.

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“I’m afraid we can’t fulfill your request, Old Mr. Halliwell. Here’s the deposit you gave us. We’re returning it in full,” one of the three bodyguards stated as he slipped the bank card in his hand back to Reuben.

Reuben narrowed his eyes a fraction, but he remained smiling as he inquired, “Why? Do you find the deposit too little?”

“Of course not. This deposit is far more generous than that of other clients. But we really can’t take the job. The woman you’re asking for is acquainted with Mr. Clinton, and the heir of Clinton Corporations isn’t someone a small security firm like us can afford to offend,” the bodyguard explained.

“The heir of Clinton Corporations?” Reuben echoed thoughtfully.

“Old Mr. Halliwell, you’re from Saspiuburg, so you might not be so familiar with the business circles in Tayhaven. Everyone from Tayhaven knows that a single word from the Clintons has the power to shake the city. They’re exceedingly powerful and aren’t someone we can afford to offend. Please look for someone else. Insignificant people like us dare not go against them,” the bodyguard expounded.

In response, Reuben waved a dismissive hand.

Those three bodyguards promptly scampered away like mice.

“What a bunch of idiots! And they call themselves the best security firm? Their bodyguards are all utter cowards!” Dorothy, who had been silent so far, scoffed.

At that, Reuben threw her a look.

“Dearest, it seems we’ve got to reconsider things,” he murmured, sighing faintly.

Born with a silver spoon in her mouth, Dorothy seldom bothered about the affairs of the outside world all these years, so she knew little about the Clintons.

“Clinton Corporations ranks first in Tayhaven in terms of annual profit. They have tens of thousands of employees, with thousands of them making tens of millions, five hundred of them making millions, and the rest making thousands in annual income. Their employees’ incomes are among the highest in the entire country, let alone Tayhaven. One can even say that the Clintons are even more powerful than the Hissons. Since that woman is actually under the Clintons’ protection, I’m afraid we can’t make a move against her easily,” Reuben explained briefly. Then, he again heaved a sigh morosely.

Dorothy plunged into silent contemplation for a moment.

She then demanded, “Don’t tell me we’re just going to leave with our tails tucked between our legs without avenging our grandson? How are we supposed to show our faces in public if we were to return bare-handed?”

Reuben said nothing.

“I’ll go and meet that so-called heir of Clinton Corporations tomorrow. I want to see whether he’s really that intimidating,” Dorothy sneered disdainfully with a snort.

In her opinion, the heir of Clinton Corporations was no different from other wealthy heirs, capable of nothing else other than eating, drinking, and having fun. Therefore, she didn’t believe that she wasn’t his match when she had seniority over him.

“Don’t be rash, Dearest. I’ll go and meet him tomorrow,” Reuben countered.

“Let’s go together.”

The next day, the two of them went to Clinton Corporations by car.

The receptionist stopped them both.

“Sir, madam, may I know who you’re looking for? Do you have an appointment?” she asked politely.

"This is my business card. I'm here in Tayhaven for an inspection, and I heard that Clinton Corporations is one of the biggest companies in the city, so I'm interested in collaborating with your company. Please give your boss a call on my behalf," Reuben fibbed.

The receptionist studied the business card. Not daring to dawdle, she made the call. After hanging up the phone, she went over to them and uttered courteously, "This way, sir, madam."

Reuben and Dorothy trailed after her, taking Oscar's private elevator upstairs directly.

The instant they stepped out of the elevator, Linda was already standing there to welcome them.

Bowing slightly, she queried, "Old Mr. and Mrs. Halliwell?"

Reuben nodded in affirmation.

"This way, please. Mr. Clinton is already waiting for you both inside." Linda respectfully led them to the office door before opening it and ushering them in.

"Old Mr. and Mrs. Halliwell are here, Mr. Clinton," she reported.

Oscar raised his hand and waved it dismissively, ordering, "You may leave."

"Understood, Mr. Clinton."

Consequently, Linda went out and even thoughtfully closed the door behind her.

Oscar stood up and circled the desk, scrutinizing Reuben and Dorothy surreptitiously. Subsequently, he extended a hand and greeted, "Nice to meet you, Old Mr. and Mrs. Halliwell. I'm Oscar Clinton."

Reuben fixated his gaze on the man. Admittedly, he's an incredibly outstanding man with striking looks and dignified manners. He has a formidable aura and an authoritative air of someone superior.

"I've heard a lot about you, lad. Indeed, you're very capable despite your tender age and far more outstanding than I expected," Reuben drawled blithely, deliberately ignoring the man's outstretched hand.

Withdrawing his hand, Oscar remarked without any change in expression, "Have a seat, Old Mr. and Mrs. Halliwell."

As the couple took their seats, Linda considerately brought coffee in.

“Have some coffee, Old Mr. and Mrs. Halliwell,” she urged, putting the coffee in front of them.

Then, she placed a cup of coffee before Oscar. “Have some coffee, Mr. Clinton.”

Nodding, Oscar instructed, “You may leave. Don’t allow any irrelevant individuals in without my permission.”

“Understood, Mr. Clinton.” Linda bowed slightly before leaving silently.

Oscar sat on the couch opposite them with his legs crossed, his posture very much elegant.

“Have some coffee, Old Mr. Halliwell. The coffee my secretary brews has always been top-notch, so I think you’ll find it suited to your tastes.” He was in no hurry to get to the crux of the matter, making pleasantries instead.

Picking up the cup, Reuben took a sip of coffee. He nodded and commented, “Not bad. It’s fragrant and rich, with a hint of sweetness amidst the bitterness. This is probably top-quality Black Ivory Coffee, yes?”

“As expected of a coffee connoisseur, Old Mr. Halliwell. You could tell the type of coffee with a single sip,” Oscar complimented with a smile, changing his posture.

Reuben merely smiled before he intentionally gave a cough and started, “Lad, we’re not here today to shoot the breeze with you. Let me cut to the chase. You’re acquainted with Derrick’s girlfriend?”

“Are you referring to Tiffany, Old Mr. Halliwell? She’s my wife’s best friend and also my god-sister. I’ve known her for eight years. I reckon you’re here because of your grandson’s matter, right? He almost violated her. If it weren’t for Mrs. Hisson pleading for mercy on his behalf, I would’ve sent him right to the police station. No one has ever managed to remain unscathed after making a move against someone under the protection of the Clintons. You should be glad that he’s your grandson, Old Mr. Halliwell. Otherwise, he’d be six feet under now,” Oscar stated indifferently. It was as though he was speaking of the nice weather that day.

Fury flashed across Dorothy’s face. She was on the verge of blowing her top when Reuben grasped her hand and signaled her not to act recklessly. After all, it wasn’t the Halliwell family’s territory there.

One would never be able to win without the home advantage.

“Lad, my grandson might be a bit of a womanizer and covets beautiful women, but he didn’t know that she was your god-sister. Don’t you think you were taking things too far to castrate him? He can’t have intercourse with women anymore, so my wife and I can’t

have great-grandchildren. Shouldn't you give us an explanation?" Reuben enunciated dangerously with his eyes narrowed into slits.

Hearing that, Oscar snickered. Instead of answering, he asked, "So, he's impotent now?"

A flash of rage glinted in Reuben's eyes at how a snot-nosed kid actually dared challenge his authority.

"What did you mean by that, lad?"

"Nothing much. I just feel that when one commits heinous acts, one will always be repaid in kind. The old adage is indeed true. What goes around comes around. It seems that your grandson was too much of a rake and sullied too many women, so his retribution caught up with him. Old Mr. Halliwell, I think this is a joyous matter. You no longer have to worry that you'd have a great-grandson appearing out of nowhere," Oscar replied solemnly.

"You'd better watch it, Oscar Clinton!" Dorothy lambasted, the reins on her temper snapping.

However, Oscar merely shrugged. "Was I wrong, Old Mrs. Halliwell?"

"How dare you!"

"Calm down, Dearest," Reuben interjected.

Dorothy panted heavily, so furious that her face was slightly contorted.

"Are you adamant about protecting that girl named Tiffany, lad?" Reuben inquired calmly.

"Old Mr. Halliwell, it's good to forgive and forget. Your grandson was the one at fault in the first place. It so happens that I also had someone investigate him, and I discovered that he was quite the lecherous man. He's bedded countless women and drained himself, so he's naturally impotent. It's ungentlemanly of you to vent your anger on an innocent woman who was the victim," Oscar riposted grimly.

At that, Reuben got up from the couch and declared, "Fine. Young people are capable, so I'm afraid that I'm no match when I'm old and frail. However, the Halliwell family is no easy prey either. You'd best protect her for the rest of her days."

When he was about to reach the door, Oscar reminded, "Old Mr. Halliwell, the Halliwell family is indeed formidable, but the Clintons and Hissons are also no easy prey. Do you think it's worthwhile to offend both families and affect your family business for the sake of a useless grandson?"

Harrumphing, Reuben swung open the door and stalked off.

After leaving Clinton Corporations, Dorothy raved and ranted. "That young man really has no manners! He doesn't even have basic respect for his elders!"

"That's enough, Dearest. Our influence hasn't yet spread to Tayhaven, and we aren't his match when this isn't our territory. Besides, he's right. There really isn't any need for us to offend both the Clinton and Hisson families for the sake of a useless grandson," Reuben admitted with a low sigh.

Dorothy understood that as well, but she was mortified to return empty-handed.

"It's the young generation's world now. Time and tide wait for no one, and we've been left far behind," Reuben lamented.

In the end, the two of them could only return with their tails tucked between their legs. Just when everyone thought that the Halliwell family had given up, thereby relaxing their guard, Tiffany was kidnapped without warning.

When Amelia learned from Derrick that Tiffany had disappeared, she almost fainted.

She rushed to Tiffany's place with Oscar. "What happened, Derrick? How did Tiff go missing?" she questioned urgently.

"I didn't see her when I came home from work, and she didn't pick up my calls either. For that reason, I'd like to borrow some men from Mr. Clinton to help search for her," Derrick uttered with a somber expression on his face.

"I've already sent men out to look for her, dispatching men to the airport, train station, and the like. As long as she makes an appearance at those places, we'll spot her for sure," Oscar reassured.

Cradling his head in both hands, Derrick muttered depressingly, "This is on me. She wouldn't be missing if it weren't for my negligence."

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Chapter 668

Chapter 668 Uploading An Arrest Warrant Online

"This isn't the time for you to wallow in guilt, Derrick. Perhaps Tiff's phone died or something. Let's wait for a bit first. Who knows, she might appear in a moment," Amelia coaxed, masking the anxiety in her eyes.

Nonetheless, Derrick remained clutching his head. He couldn't imagine what would become of him if Tiffany had really gone missing.

Verily, he regretted not marrying her earlier and arranging for a security detail to protect her in secret. This is all my fault. Things only ended up in such a mess because I decided to be with her before dealing with my emotional entanglements. If I'd been more resolute in dealing with Crystal instead of showing her mercy for the sake of our past childhood affection, she wouldn't have almost been violated. And now, she has even been abducted!

Amelia turned and glanced at Oscar, but they could only wait with Derrick.

There wasn't any good news from the men Oscar sent out, and time passed as slow as molasses while they waited.

The three of them waited in the house for almost three hours, but still, there was no news. Restless, Amelia sprang to her feet and proclaimed, "That's it. I want to go and search for Tiff. The danger to her increases with every passing minute. I can't allow anything to happen to her!"

Likewise, Derrick got to his feet and asserted, "I'll go, too."

"Derrick, I think you can mobilize the influence of the Hisson family to search for her. Furthermore, she's a freelance novelist, so her life is usually monotonous and haphazard. Apart from some necessary socializing, she almost always stays home to write her manuscripts. I don't think she has any enemies besides the Halliwell family. I've already sent a group of men to Saspiuburg to monitor the Halliwell family alongside the men I stationed there. As for Tayhaven, I've already contacted the police and have them keep an eye out. We've got to remain calm. If we panic, it'll be of no use in saving Tiffany," Oscar urged, still as calm as ever.

Derrick walked over to the man. Raising his hand, he thumped the latter in the chest. "Thank you!" he murmured sincerely.

In return, Oscar flashed him a smile. "She's Amelia's best friend and also my god-sister." Hence, I can't possibly sit around and twiddle my thumbs.

A ghost of a smile bloomed on Derrick's face.

Subsequently, the three of them went out in search of Tiffany, but they were like headless chickens and couldn't find any trace of her. They then went back despondently with their heads hung low. The moment they opened the door, they saw that the lights were turned on. They all looked at each other. Derrick sprinted up the stairs as though having lost his mind, shouting, "Are you back, Tiff?"

When he swung open the bedroom door, he so happened to glimpse Tiffany hobbling out of the bathroom with a massive wound on her ankle.

“What happened, Tiff?” Dashing over, he scooped her up in a bridal carry without a second’s delay. Amelia and Oscar, who raced in after him, were also inexorably shocked to see Tiffany’s condition.

“Where’s the medical kit, Derrick? I’ll go and get it!” Amelia hastily offered.

In response, Derrick told her where the medical kit was kept.

Amelia ran off and retrieved the medical kit. Derrick initially wanted to take it from her, but she insisted, “I’ll do it.”

Derrick didn’t argue but automatically gave his place to her.

Bending at the waist, Amelia helped Tiffany clean the wound and apply some salve before bandaging it with gauze.

“Thank you, Babe,” Tiffany uttered weakly, a smile tugging at her lips.

Amelia put the gauze away before lifting her head and gazing at Tiffany’s rather pale countenance in distress. “Will you tell us what exactly happened, Tiff? We almost went out of our minds with worry in the past ten or so hours that you were missing.”

“I was kidnapped.” Tiffany proceeded to narrate the events of her kidnapping briefly.

Initially, she went downstairs to buy a ton of food after writing the most interesting part of her manuscript, planning to treat Derrick and herself to a feast that night. Unexpectedly, two burly men seized her and stuffed her into a car no sooner had she left the neighborhood. The car then sped off. They didn’t blindfold or tie her up, merely telling her that someone wanted to see her and insisting that they weren’t purposefully making life difficult for her.

True to their word, they didn’t do anything to her even after being on the road for several hours. In fact, they even gave her food. She could tell that they had no intention of hurting her, so her courage grew. When the car drove past an area with dense foliage, she clutched her stomach and clamored about a stomachache, complaining of terrible pain.

They were initially suspicious, but they then saw that she was truly in excruciating pain. What cinched their decision was when she gritted out, “Sirs, you’re also human and are well aware that there’s no delaying in the event of a stomachache. I don’t begrudge you for your concerns, but I’m worried that I’ll go in my pants once I can’t hold it in, causing all of us to suffer from the stench.”

They had probably been ordered not to restrain her too much, for they weren't all that wary of her, telling her to alight from the car and find a place to relieve herself.

She ran to a relatively secluded place and even deliberately cried out, "Sirs, my stomach hurts very badly, so I might take longer. Please wait for a while. Don't rush me, or I'm afraid that I wouldn't be able to relieve myself when I tense up."

"Hurry up if you want to do it! Why are you spouting so much nonsense?" they snapped impatiently.

Grimacing, Tiffany focused on locating someplace where she could take off. Subsequently, she discovered a corn plantation behind the undergrowth. At once, she felt that the heavens were smiling upon her. All the stars had aligned for her, so it could only be destiny if she failed to make good on her escape.

Fortunately, luck was on her side. Although she was all bloodied from the corn blades grazing her, she finally managed to shake off those men.

After fleeing, she made her way back from sheer memory. However, she still didn't see anyone halfway back, and only vast nothingness was around her. She didn't know where she was either. Having walked for an indeterminate time, she caught sight of a car at long last. Alas, it drove straight past her.

A few more cars drove past after that. Finally, one car stopped, perhaps because she looked truly pathetic.

She hitched a ride and got into the car. So parched that her throat was dry, she implored in a hoarse voice, "May I have some water, sir? I'm really thirsty."

The driver handed her a bottle of water.

The woman in the passenger seat inquired, "How did you come to be in such a condition, miss?"

Taking a huge gulp of water, Tiffany answered with a bitter smile, "It's a long story. Honestly, I was kidnapped. My boyfriend is the owner of a publishing company, while I'm a best-selling author. I was the screenwriter of many fantasy movies in the past." While saying that, she even named a few of the movies.

"I've watched that, and I love that screenwriter! I didn't know it was you!" The woman appeared exceedingly excited. She turned and said to the man who was driving, "Darling, I'm a fan of her novels. No matter what, you've got to drive her back. These kidnapers are too much. Just because she's a famous screenwriter, they wanted to kidnap her for ransom!"

Smiling, the driver queried, "Miss, you live in Tayhaven, yes? We're heading to Norwal City, and it takes at least five hours for a trip back to Tayhaven."

"Darling, let's drive her back first."

At the woman's insistence, the driver agreed to drive her back.

Only after driving for about six hours did they arrive at the gate of Tiffany's neighborhood. "Won't you give me your phone number, Mrs. Ziegler? I'd like to treat you both to a meal to repay you for your kind gesture."

The woman readily left her phone number but then countered with a smile, "Forget about a meal. Just send me a copy of your newly-published book in the future. I'm a fan of your novels, and I've read every single work of yours. I also attended the book signing event you had at Sagacity Square, but there were too many people, so I didn't manage to get your signature. Give me a signed copy next time, okay? All right, go and clean up quickly. My husband and I still have to rush back to Norwal City, so we'll talk another day."

As Tiffany watched the car drive away, she couldn't help feeling gratified that there were still many kind people in this world. Otherwise, she would have been left stranded by the roadside and either died of exhaustion or starvation after two or three days.

After hearing her story, Amelia didn't know whether she should say that God was looking over Tiffany or that it was sheer dumb luck.

"Babe, don't you think I'm particularly lucky?" Tiffany crowed smugly.

"Yes, you're really lucky. Anyhow, I think we should just change our names to reflect our bad luck. In all these years, it's either me or you getting hurt. Neither of us can remain unscathed," Amelia couldn't resist griping.

At her remark, Tiffany burst out giggling.

Even Derrick and Oscar were gripped by the urge to laugh.

"Are you still hurt anywhere other than your ankle?" Amelia asked in concern after laughing.

"They're all minor scratches, so there isn't any need to apply the salve. I'm famished, though. Can you cook me something, please?"

Torn between laughing and crying, Amelia still went and prepared some food for her.

When Tiffany had finished eating and drinking, Amelia queried, "Tiff, do you still remember those kidnappers' faces? I'll make some sketches and hand them over to the

police so that the police can issue an arrest warrant for them. We've got to know the perpetrator behind this incident."

Tiffany pondered for a moment and tried her best to describe the men who kidnapped her.

After Amelia made the sketches based on her description, she handed them to her. "How do these look?"

In response, Tiffany flashed her a thumbs-up.

"Amelia, your drawing is incredible! You're even better than those who attended art academies!" Tiffany lauded.

"If the sketches are accurate, let's go to the police station right away. We can't allow the kidnapers who abducted you to go unpunished. You were lucky this time, but you'd be dead if they were violent. You wouldn't be sitting here, laughing!" Amelia chided, reaching out and poking her friend in the head.

Tiffany merely giggled sheepishly.

The four of them went to the police station and had the police deploy officers to arrest the kidnapers immediately.

With Oscar and Derrick both placing pressure on the police, even the police chief took the matter seriously. He dispatched almost all of the officers from the police station to hunt the kidnapers down.

The police gave chase according to the route Tiffany provided, but to no avail. They then uploaded the sketches of the kidnapers on the internet. Oscar raised the reward to two hundred thousand, asking for information on their whereabouts. If anyone turned in one of the kidnapers, they would receive two hundred thousand. That amount would double if they did so for both. The high reward had the netizens going into a frenzy.

The internet could lay someone out in the bare, and all the netizens launched a search for the kidnapers' whereabouts. The kidnapers were infuriated to see their faces plastered all over the internet and went straight to the person who hired them.

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Chapter 669 A Broken Leg

"Mr. Halliwell, you merely ordered us to escort that woman to you back then. We didn't hurt her in any way. But what should we do now? Our faces are plastered all over the

internet, and the police are even offering a reward of two hundred thousand to arrest us. You've got to help us suppress this matter. Otherwise, we're never letting you off the hook!" the leader of the kidnappers asserted in a harsh voice.

The Mr. Halliwell he was addressing was none other than the man previously castrated by Jolin under Amelia's orders, Zyaire Halliwell. Incandescent with rage, he roared, "What a bunch of worthless idiots! I paid you to kidnap her, yet you allowed her to escape midway! After having caused a huge mess now, you've still got the nerve to ask me to handle things? It's already merciful of me that I didn't eliminate the lot of you! Get lost, you bunch of worthless idiots!"

The kidnappers were livid, but still, it was the leader who snarled, "Mr. Halliwell, you can't just sit idly by. You were the one who forbade us from hurting her in the first place and instructed us not to restrict her freedom. That was why she made up the excuse of having a stomachache and escaped right under our noses. If you don't guarantee our safety this time and we get arrested, we'll definitely drag the Halliwell family into this mess."

"You're threatening me?"

"We're no easy prey either, Mr. Halliwell. We know a lot of people in this line of work. You hired us, yet you won't guarantee our safety. Since you're such a useless and unreliable client, you should watch out, lest you're stabbed to death on your way home from a night out."

"Buzz off! You're a bunch of worthless idiots, yet you still have the guts to make demands of me?"

Indeed, the kidnappers didn't contact him anymore. However, when Zyaire, a playboy who did nothing besides eating, drinking, and carousing, was on his way home in a drunken state the next night, someone slipped a gunnysack over his head and dragged him into an alley, beating him up severely. The perpetrator even broke one of his legs.

In the end, a passerby spotted him and sent him to the hospital.

The Halliwell family almost passed out upon receiving news that he had been hospitalized. Needless to say, Crystal's situation was no better.

With Zyaire being in bad shape, she was naturally the subject of anger since she was the culprit behind it all.

Dorothy slapped her in front of everyone and spat, "You really disappoint me, Crissy! Look what you did to your cousin! He's barely alive now!"

Crystal's parents stepped forward and defended her.

Her mother, Suzanne Zahn, argued, "Mom, you can't just place all the blame on Crystal. You know Zyaire's character full well. I think he probably had his leg broken because he was flirting with some girl. It's clear as day that this is revenge from the mafia."

"Nonsense! He's your nephew! You're spouting accusations when he's still laid up on the hospital bed, huh?" Dorothy lambasted.

Suzanne wanted to speak further, but her husband tugged at her shirt and smoothed things over. "Mom, this isn't the time to point fingers. Let's see what Zyaire's condition is first."

Only then did Dorothy's expression ease up.

The doctor then spoke to them about Zyaire's condition, saying that there was no possibility of recovery for his leg, and he could only walk with a limp in the future.

Dorothy fainted right then and there.

"Mom!" The Halliwell family plunged into chaos.

After making sure Dorothy would be all right, Suzanne suggested, "Crystal, go abroad and lay low for a while first. With your cousin in such a condition, she'll likely vent all her wrath on you since he's her favorite. Go and wait it out, only returning when things have calmed down in the Halliwell family."

Shaking her head, Crystal asserted, "I want to go to Tayhaven, Mom. I'll never accept it! I don't believe that Derrick would be so cruel to me. I want to seek justice for myself!"

"Why are you so obstinate? Look what he did to your cousin. If your grandparents really fly into a rage, they might even cross you off their will. Thus, don't go to Tayhaven anymore. Just pretend that we've never made the acquaintance of the Hissons. They're merely a bunch of ungrateful people!" Suzanne urged.

Crystal straightened to her full height with stubbornness written all over her face.

"I can't accept this, Mom. I've waited for Derrick for so many years, and Mrs. Hisson also promised to take me as the daughter-in-law of the Hisson family. I can't simply let go. If I'm not happy, the Hissons should also brace themselves for mayhem," Crystal hissed.

At that, Suzanne's temper flared.

“What do you want, then? It’s abundantly clear that Derrick isn’t going to marry you! All this is just one-sided on your part! He loves someone else, and if you’re so eager to cling to him, you’ll only be making a fool out of yourself!”

However, Crystal merely snorted and scoffed, “Who can tell for sure before the last moment?”

Unable to convince her daughter otherwise, Suzanne had no choice but to allow her to leave first. She even gave Crystal a gold card without a limit and warned, “It’s fine if you want to go to Tayhaven, but don’t do anything that will humiliate the Halliwell family!”

“I got it, Mom.”

And so, Crystal left. Without bringing anything with her, she went straight to the airport and bought a plane ticket, flying over to Tayhaven. Upon reaching, she didn’t alert anyone to her arrival. Instead, she hired a private detective to keep an eye on Derrick and Tiffany and then report their whereabouts to her.

In the luxurious presidential suite of a hotel, she swished the wine in her glass and swore, “Just you wait, Derrick Hisson. Sooner or later, you’ll be mine. Even if it means a battle that drags on for years, I’m going to snatch you back, and you’re going to be my husband!”

Okay, I’m going to change my strategy and practice the adage of knowing thyself and thy enemy. I don’t believe that Derrick and Tiffany’s relationship is really so strong that it’s indestructible. There’s no unbreakable relationship, only mistresses who are lazy!

Zyaire’s matter was the deciding factor that triggered her determination to snatch Derrick back. She didn’t want to be the target of criticism by the entire Halliwell family and have nothing at all while Derrick got to live happily with his beau.

I was the one who made Derrick’s acquaintance first, but Tiffany got a jump on me in the end, and I became the mistress in the eyes of others. How could there be such twisted events in this world? She found it wholly unfair and wanted to snatch Derrick over to claim him for herself. Right then, she could no longer be bothered whether it was because of her so-called love or possessiveness toward him.

Crystal stayed in the hotel for a day before she drove to Derrick’s office.

No sooner had she parked the car than she received a call from the private investigator. The person on the other end of the phone reported, “Ms. Halliwell, we discovered that the person you wanted to monitor, Tiffany Winters, was kidnapped a few days ago. The kidnapers’ sketches were published online, with a reward offered for their arrest. You can find the related information online.”

“Did the kidnapers do anything to her?” Crystal demanded earnestly.

“I’m afraid that I’ve got to disappoint you, for rumor has it that she escaped midway. However, both Mr. Clinton and Mr. Hisson are infuriated. Hence, they offered a high reward for the kidnappers’ arrest.”

Sneering disdainfully, Crystal snapped, “Why are you telling me this when she’s fine?”

“Didn’t you say you want to know everything about her, Ms. Halliwell?”

“That’s enough. In the future, don’t tell me about trivial matters. I’m going to hang up if there’s nothing else. I’m not paying you so much money for you to tell me about some insignificant matter!” she growled impatiently.

Having said that, she hung up right away.

As she stared at the towering office building, her hands tightened around the steering wheel. She hated Zyaire to the core then. If it weren’t for his stupidity, I wouldn’t have been dragged into the mess, and Derrick wouldn’t act as though I’m his mortal enemy whenever he sees me! Besides that, I wouldn’t be this afraid to visit the Hissons after coming to Tayhaven!

After sitting in the car for an indeterminate amount of time, she caught sight of Tiffany and Derrick walking out of the building with the former holding the latter’s arm. A flash of resentment and hatred promptly flittered across her eyes.

She wanted to swing open the door and get out of the car, but she retracted her hand for some inexplicable reason.

After that, she followed them both while maintaining a certain distance.

Ahead of her, Tiffany stated with her hand on Derrick’s arm, “Derrick, I’d like to treat Amelia and Oscar to a meal today. They’ve helped me a lot throughout this time. Although we’re all friends and don’t mind helping each other out, I’ve still got to treat them to a meal.”

“Sure.”

Derrick dipped his head and pecked her on the lips, remarking, “Mom knows that you were almost violated at the banquet, so she’s still feeling a touch guilty toward you. She has also relaxed her stance slightly on our relationship. As such, I think she’ll agree to us getting married soon.”

“Really? You aren’t deliberately saying that to make me feel better, are you?” Tiffany questioned dubiously.

“Of course not,” Derrick maintained indulgently. Then, he added, “As the host, I’ll invite Mr. Clinton, Amelia, Mom, Dad, and Granddad. I’ll arrange this matter. You only need to attend the dinner obediently the next day.”

Tiffany cast a skeptical look at him and inquired in puzzlement, “Are you hiding something from me, Derrick?”

“You know all my affairs, no?”

“I’ll believe you this once.”

Pulling her into his arms, Derrick chuckled softly.

Meanwhile, Crystal was so enraged that she clutched the steering wheel tightly in the car as she watched them both nestling with each other. Her nails sunk into her flesh.

What exactly is so great about her that you treat her so well, Derrick?

Her heart twisted as her mind wandered.

She was particularly perturbed that she lost to Tiffany when she was obviously superior. No matter what, she couldn’t accept that fact. The latter wasn’t her match in any aspect.

Too Much to Bear, My Love Chapter 670

Too Much to Bear My Love

Chapter 670

Chapter 670 Intending To Propose

Derrick paid Amelia a visit. Amelia put her bag on the chair before taking a seat. She asked smilingly, “Derrick, is something the matter with you asking me out so secretly?”

Derrick passed her the menu. “Order some food first. We’ll talk while we eat.”

Soon after they placed the order, the servers brought them the foods they had ordered. Derrick also asked for a bottle of red wine and poured Amelia a small glass.

Amelia swirled the wine in the glass and chuckled. “Derrick, aren’t you making things too grand? First a meal and now wine. Don’t tell me you’re hiding something from Tiff?”

Instead of responding to her question, Derrick merely lifted and clinked his glass with hers. “Cheers.”

Despite being highly baffled by his behavior, Amelia still took a sip of the wine. Then she picked up her fork and ate a few mouthfuls before she said, "So, will you tell me now?"

"I intend to propose to Tiff tomorrow, and I need your help."

Hearing that, Amelia almost choked on the food in her mouth. That piece of good news came so abruptly that she could not process it well.

She let out a few coughs before asking, "W-What did you say?"

"I want to propose to Tiff. But why do you seem so surprised?" Derrick looked at Amelia, who rarely lost her composure, in amusement.

Grabbing the napkin to wipe her mouth, she replied, "It's nothing like that. It just didn't cross my mind that you'd say that. Of course, I'm delighted to learn that you want to propose to Tiff. Tell me, what am I supposed to do?"

Derrick went ahead to share his plan with her.

Amelia nodded in acknowledgment but brought up the old conversation again. "Have the Hissons agreed to your decision?"

"I've talked to my mom. She seems less rigid as compared to the past. Even though she didn't say it explicitly, I think she has accepted how things are, especially after Crystal's matter. I know Tiff has suffered too much recently. I want to marry her. Perhaps this celebratory event might wash away all the gloominess."

Amelia's heart melted as she listened to his words.

She raised her glass and said, "Let's have a toast. If you really marry Tiff, I hope you'll treat her sincerely and never let her get hurt. It hasn't been easy for her these years. Others might think a freelance novelist like her is an easy job, but you and I both know how she gets no sleep when she gets busy. She not only suffers gastritis as a result, but she even landed in the hospital once because of a spinal condition. She faces so many issues with her body from head to toe. You must watch out for her and shower her with all the love you can give."

"I will," Derrick solemnly promised while keeping a serious look.

"Here, cheers. I'll leave Tiff in your hands from now on. Remember, never let her get bullied. She's not alone; I'll always stand by her side."

"Of course." The two clinked their glasses again and continued with the meal while discussing his plans for the proposal.

Derrick fixed the date for a meal together at Lakeside Restaurant on Saturday evening at six.

That day, Kate and Finnick arrived together, while Oscar came with one hand holding Amelia and the other carrying Tony. As the hosts, Derrick and Tiffany had arrived earlier than everyone else and had been waiting for the others in a private dining room.

After the two families settled down, they quickly ordered some food. It did not take long for the food to arrive. Finnick lifted his wineglass and said, "Oscar, here's a toast to you. I'll have to trouble you to help Derrick out if there's anything he doesn't know or any problem he runs into in the future."

Oscar stood up in reciprocation, lightly knocked his glass against the former, and raised his head to down the contents in one gulp.

"Great! I admire your decisiveness."

Kate tugged at Finnick's pants and whispered, "Sit down. Don't humiliate yourself in front of the younger ones."

Finnick sat back down.

Subsequently, the two families continued enjoying the dinner, and the atmosphere seemed rather harmonious. Throughout this time, Amelia had been picking foods for Tony to eat.

Almost eating her fill, Kate grabbed the napkin and wiped the corners of her lips. She cleared her throat and uttered, "Derrick, Tiffany, I've thought about it. I know I can't split you two up no matter how I try. Since that's so, I've decided that I'll agree to your marriage."

Tiffany froze on the spot and shifted her gaze to look at Kate in disbelief. It was beyond her expectations that this piece of good news would come this quickly.

Kate flashed a smile and continued, "I'll no longer stand in the way of your marriage again. But I do have some conditions."

Derrick took a sip of the soup. "Mom, I've yet to propose to Tiff. It's too early for you to say all this." He did not want his mother to ruin his plan of giving Tiffany a romantic proposal.

"You can do it now. I only want to put forth the conditions I have." Kate's gentle voice had a hint of assertiveness. "Listen to what I have to say and feel free to raise your opinions if there's anything you guys aren't happy about."

Without a choice, Derrick put down the spoon in his grip and pretended to listen attentively. His mind was in turmoil as he brooded over how he was going to propose to Tiffany later and give her an unforgettable experience.

“Tiffany should stop writing scripts after you guys get married so that she can focus all her attention on nursing herself and bear me a grandchild,” Kate said. “Second, you guys have to move back. As the daughter-in-law of the Hisson family, Tiffany has to fulfill her responsibilities of taking care of the elders. Also, she has to head to the church with me every Monday to Wednesday and pray to God so that she’ll get pregnant. I want at least four to five grandchildren. And finally, she’ll have to learn the various decorum every Thursday to Sunday. We’re a prominent family; as the daughter-in-law of the Hisson family, she has to be familiar with basic etiquettes.”

Amelia was so overwhelmed by those unreasonable requests that she burst into incredulous laughter. She’s one of a kind, huh? She has already agreed to their marriage, yet she annoyingly sets so many rules.

Tiffany, on the other hand, put her fork down.

“Mrs. Hisson, I can agree to giving birth and bearing Derrick’s children, but I’m not a sow, so I intend to have only two kids. Similarly, I have no intentions of giving up being an author and a screenwriter. So I’m afraid I won’t be able to satisfy those conditions you stated,” she earnestly remarked while looking at Kate.

The latter’s expression darkened, an obvious sign that she was displeased.

Amelia broke the silence. “Mrs. Hisson, what Tiff meant was, she’s used to being busy. As for getting pregnant, destiny is the most important factor. If it’s destined to be, bearing ten kids won’t be a problem, let alone five. Besides, given the Hissons’ wealth, I’m sure you won’t mind raising more kids.”

Only then did Kate’s expression ease.

“Mom, we can talk about having kids in the future. Tiff and I want to have some alone time after getting married. We don’t want to have kids so soon,” Derrick chimed in.

At that, the scowl on Kate’s face deepened.

“Dearest, if they get married, they will decide for themselves when they want to have kids. Since you’ve agreed, then don’t be the villain anymore. Besides, Oscar and Amelia are here too; don’t ruin the atmosphere here,” Finnick persuaded.

Those words had helped to calm Kate down.

After dinner and after Derrick sent his parents away, Amelia came up with an excuse that she wanted a companion for shopping and pulled Tiffany along with her. Tony had wanted to follow, but Amelia objected.

“Babe, what clothes are we buying?” Tiffany asked.

Amelia laughed. “Let’s look around. I heard that there’s a performance at Clover Square today. Let’s go catch a glimpse of it together later.”

Tiffany nodded in response although she did not seem to be in the mood for it.

“What is it? Are you mulling over those words Mrs. Hisson said just now?” Amelia was amused.

Tiffany shook her head.

“It’s good if you aren’t. But Mrs. Hisson is clearly trying to make things difficult for you even though she verbally agrees to you marrying Derrick. If you decide to marry into the Hisson family, I’m afraid there’ll only be tougher days ahead. Have you prepared yourself for that?”

Tiffany appeared slightly hesitant. I don’t mind agreeing to any conditions, except giving up on my career. I can’t do it. I don’t want to become a full-time housewife and ask others for money. There’s no way I can give up on my career just like that.

“Are you thinking of backing out now?” Amelia probed.

Tiffany shook her head quickly. “That’s not it. I was just wondering if I’d be able to give up my career after the marriage.”

“If you like it, then there’s no harm in continuing working. But if you don’t, then give up by all means. I believe Mrs. Hisson isn’t that unreasonable either.”

Tiffany heaved a sigh. She was well aware she would not get to enjoy a peaceful life even after marrying Derrick.

“Stop brooding over that anymore. Let’s go shop around.”

Amelia took her hand and casually walked around before making their way toward Clover Square, only to realize there was not even a single soul around. Puzzlement swamped Tiffany. “Babe, didn’t you say there’s a performance here today?”

Amelia smiled. “Maybe it’s not time yet.”

Just as the two walked closer, beams of fireworks shot up into the sky before exploding into a dazzling display of colors and sounds. With the fireworks display as a backdrop,

numerous people began walking out from all directions and headed toward Tiffany with a rose in their hands. As they passed the flower to her, they exclaimed, "Tiff, say yes to Derrick!"

The roses in Tiffany's hands came to a total of ninety-nine, an expression that the man would love the woman until the day he died.

When she lifted her head after the crowd dispersed to one side, coming within her line of vision was Derrick, standing not too far away from her.

Amelia nudged Tiffany's arm and said, "Tiff, there are no problems that are tough and unsolvable now that you've met the love of your life in this world. Don't ever let go of him."

Tiffany felt her cheeks beginning to heat up as she gave a slight nod.