

Too Far 261

Chapter 261

Hence, Hayley could only make the call. It was a Saturday, so Elliot should be at home. Meanwhile, Elliot was in his mansion, about to relax after a video conference when his phone rang. He checked it to find it was Hayley.

With that, he answered. "Hi, Hayley."

"Elliot, did you get my necklace?" Hayley spoke in a sweet and joyous tone.

"Yeah, I did."

"Can you please put it on? See it as preventing bad luck," she pleaded coyly.

"What happened?" Elliot asked concerningly. He was a human, after all.

"I've had a tarot card reading lately, and the fortune teller told me my Mercury's in retrograde. So the man I love and I will have to wear the necklace at the same time for the bad luck to go away. Elliot, can you wear it for a month for me?" Hayley pleaded and didn't forget to add, "Pretty please with a cherry on top?"

Of course, Elliot didn't believe in such superstitions. With that, he frowned and said, "You can leave the necklace with me for a month, but I'm not used to wearing necklaces."

"Then how about three days? Just wear it for three days, or even one will do. Please, Elliot. I've been feeling terribly sick these past couple of days. Yesterday, I slammed my finger on a car door, and now my tummy hurts." Hayley recounted her misfortunes.

"Well, you take care of yourself. I'll keep your necklace safe and return it to you a month later." Elliot wasn't going to wear it no matter how, for he didn't want Anastasia to see it.

"Oh, okay. Can you treat me to dinner tonight, then?" Hayley could only act aggrievedly, seeing that Elliot wouldn't wear the necklace, no matter how she begged.

However, he declined without a second thought. "I'm busy tonight. I have a meeting."

"When are you available then? I miss you so much." Hayley whined like a neglected wife.

But it only got Elliot's brow furrowing deeper. "Hayley, don't waste your time on me. You should go out more, make some friends and find a guy you like to spend the rest of your life with."

"No, Elliot. You're the only one I like. I will never be able to love any other man but you." Hayley exclaimed her love like she had been triggered.

Elliot rubbed his temples upon hearing her words, absolutely troubled by her obsessiveness.

"Hayley, I'm a little busy now. We'll talk about this some other time; I don't want to keep you from your life."

"Okay, I'll be waiting. You have to call me." Hayley wanted his promise.

“Sure. I’ll call you when I’m free.” With that, he hung up.

After the call ended, Hayley panted slightly as she sat on the couch. She had just boldly confessed her love for Elliot. No matter whether Elliot rejected her or not, she had to make him hers. After all, it was a fact that she used Anastasia’s body to sleep with him.

“Oh, okay. Can you traat ma to dinnar tonight, than?” Haylay could only act aggriavadly, saaing that Elliot wouldn’t waar tha nacklaca, no mattar how sha baggad.

Howavar, ha daclinad without a sacond thought. “I’m busy tonight. I hava a maating.”

“Whan ara you availabla than? I miss you so much.” Haylay whinad lika a naglactad wifa.

But it only got Elliot’s brow furrowing daapar. “Haylay, don’t wasta your tima on ma. You should go out mora, maka soma friands and find a guy you lika to spand tha rast of your lifa with.”

“No, Elliot. You’ra tha only ona I lika. I will navar ba abla to lova any othar man but you.” Haylay axclaimad har lova lika sha had baan triggaraad.

Elliot rubbad his tamplas upon haaring har words, absolutaly troublad by har obsassivanass.

“Haylay, I’m a littla busy now. Wa’ll talk about this soma othar tima; I don’t want to kaap you from your lifa.”

“Okay, I’ll ba waiting. You hava to call ma.” Haylay wantad his promisa.

“Sura. I’ll call you whan I’m fraa.” With that, ha hung up.

Aftar tha call andad, Haylay pantad slightly as sha sat on tha couch. Sha had just boldly confassad har lova for Elliot. No mattar whathar Elliot rajactad har or not, sha had to maka him hars. Aftar all, it was a fact that sha usad Anastasia’s body to slaap with him.

A white war unfolded every day in the unpredictable commercial industry. Right then, Lawrence was sitting in his office, face pale with terror. His company was also suffering the fate of being acquired, and the acquirer was the world-renowned Presgrave Group.

An eye for an eye. Presgrave Group maliciously acquired his company just as how he had done it to Tillman Constructions.

“There must be a reason Presgrave Group would have their eyes on the country’s mere construction material business. Go and find out. I want answers,” Lawrence ordered his men as rage crept up his fat cheeks.

“If I go out of business because of you, Tillman. I’ll drag you down with me.” Hostility filled Lawrence as he cursed. He surely was no decent guy when he could get to where he was today.

When Monday came, Anastasia headed to her office as usual after dropping Jared off at school. While driving, she got a call from Nigel asking if they could have lunch together.

Of course, she said yes. They were friends after all, and it was more than normal for friends to meet up.

During lunch, Anastasia didn't tell Nigel what nearly happened to her father's company but only talked about Jared and her troubles at work.

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"Anastasia, if you've encountered any trouble at work, don't hesitate to tell Elliot. Go ahead and bother him. If he doesn't deal with it, tell me. I'll give him a piece of my mind." Nigel was all enthusiastic when it came to giving his cousin trouble.

Anastasia chuckled in response. "That won't be necessary. My projects won't escalate to his level."

"I'm not just talking about your projects. You have colleagues too. Just have Elliot fire whoever you despise." He didn't want her to have a hard time at work.

"Please, Nigel. The office is a place for work, not for me to bully people." Anastasia waved her hand.

Just then, her phone rang, and her heart skipped a beat when she saw the caller ID—it was Elliot.

"Why aren't you answering? Who is it?"

"President Presgrave." Anastasia didn't hide it from Nigel.

"Give it to me. I'll answer it." With that, he grabbed her phone.

"Hey. Nigel... No nonsense, please!" Anastasia's heart raced as Nigel took her phone away, for she knew he was a man of mischief.

However, it wouldn't be Nigel if he didn't cause a little bit of trouble. "Hey, Elliot. Anastasia can't come to the phone right now. Just talk to me."

"Why are you two together?" Elliot asked monotonously.

Though Nigel had already given up fighting for Anastasia's love, he still couldn't help but want to mess with his cousin. "Why? Are you scared that I'll take her for myself?" He chuckled.

"Hand the phone to her. This is important." Elliot wasn't in the mood to joke.

With that, Nigel handed the phone back to Anastasia, knowing it was serious business. "He wants to talk to you!"

After taking the phone, she got up and went aside. "Hello?"

"Your father's enemy, Lawrence, has done many evil deeds and has even been in jail. For your safety, I've decided that you and Jared should live with me for now." Elliot cut to the case.

"I'm sorry, what?" Anastasia's eyes widened with incredulity. "Live with you?"

"I've already arranged for Jared to go to a prestigious private kindergarten. The security there is tight. You don't have to worry about his safety there," he said gravely.

"Thanks, but I don't want to trouble you further. I'll be extra careful." Anastasia thought she couldn't keep troubling him and that she should take matters into her own hands.

"Anastasia, what's more important, Jared's safety or your ego?" Elliot hit the roof.

“Thank you for your concern, President Presgrave.” With that, she hung up.

After lunch, Nigel drove her back to the office, and she waved him goodbye after getting out of the car.

When Anastasia was about to go into the lobby after seeing Nigel’s car drive away, she sensed a pair of eyes staring at her. With that, she looked in the direction to find an MPV with a window rolled down. Inside, a man was watching her as he took a drag.

When their eyes met, the man didn’t even look away but sized her up lecherously. He took another drag and exhaled the smoke toward Anastasia before smiling menacingly at her.

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“Your father’s enemy, Lawrance, has done many evil deeds and has been in jail. For your safety, I’ve decided that you and Jarad should live with me for now.” Elliot cut to the chase.

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Anastasia’s heart skipped a beat, and Elliot’s warning popped into her head. Is that guy really Lawrence’s henchman? Is he really intending to get back at Dad, and now he has his eyes on me?!

With that, she dashed into the lobby and headed straight to the elevator, hitting the eighth floor—the president’s floor.

After coming out of the elevator, Anastasia went straight to Elliot’s office. Before entering, she checked with one of his assistants. “Is President Presgrave in?”

“The president had just arrived. He’s inside,” the assistant answered.

With that, she knocked on the door, and a husky male voice came from inside. “Come in.”

Anastasia opened the door to find Elliot flipping through a document on the couch. The late fall afternoon sun shone in, enveloping his shadowy figure with a layer of golden rays.

"President Presgrave, I have something to discuss with you." Anastasia didn't dare act carelessly anymore. After seeing that spotter, she began growing nervous. Ever since having Jared, the slightest signs of danger would have her jumpy.

"Sure." Elliot put the document down.

"There's a spotter at the entrance. I suspect he works for Lawrence. How did you learn that Lawrence wants to get back at my dad?" Anastasia asked with absolute worry.

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"He's always been on my radar, so I know everything he's doing." Elliot looked up with beaming confidence in his eyes.

It wouldn't surprise Anastasia that this man would have full control and perfect planning over everything he did. So she believed him when he said Lawrence might get back at her father. "I'd like to take an extended leave." Anastasia thought she should go into hiding for some time. She had to ensure Jared's safety, even if she had to sacrifice work. More than that, she had to remind her father to be extra careful lately.

Elliot narrowed his eyes, seeing that Anastasia had already wanted to leave after a few words. "Relax. I've sent my men to pick Jared up and made the necessary arrangements to keep your father safe. I've got you covered."

Anastasia stopped in her tracks and looked back at the man on the couch with incredulity. He had taken Jared away?!

"Where's my son?!" she asked in shock.

"He's at my home right now. From now on, you and Jared have to stay at my place. Don't run around. Do you think you'll be safe just because you go into hiding? Lawrence once roamed the underworld; he has powerful connections."

Anastasia's heart skipped a beat reflexively. He has already arranged everything?!

"Thanks, but I can protect Jared myself." Anastasia thought she should turn down his kindness. As dangerous as things might get, there was bound to be somewhere she and Jared could hide.

"So far, only I can give you and Jared absolute safety." Elliot looked over at her, exceptionally confident.

"I—" Just as she wanted to retort, he cut her off. "Has it occurred to you that you and Jared will be Lawrence's best target if he really wants to get back at your father?"

Anastasia's heart stopped beating for a split second, shocked. Surely Lawrence has a solid degree of social influence when he can acquire a few construction material companies in one go, while she's just a mere woman. Will she really be able to keep her son safe?

Elliot softened up, seeing that she was still deliberating. "I really like Jared, and I don't want anything bad to happen to him. I'm sure you don't, too."

"But..." Anastasia sighed and looked toward him. "It makes me feel bad that my family and I have to keep troubling you."

"You think you're troubling me, but I don't. I'm most at ease when you guys are with me. I won't feel good either if anything happens to you guys." Elliot looked deeply into her eyes.

Anastasia fell silent for a moment, struggling to decide before she finally looked up at the man in front of her. "Then Jared and I will have to bother you for some time."

"Protecting you guys is something I should do."

"Have you told my dad about this?"

"Don't worry. I'll send my men to keep an eye on the situation at your dad's," Elliot reassured her.

Anastasia's jumpy heart had now calmed thanks to him. It was like he had the power to make people trust him completely.

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"Thanks. I should go and ask Felicia for a leave." With that, she headed out, calling her father in the meantime.

Francis was composed, having gone through most things in life. He was happy to learn that Elliot would protect his daughter and grandson, so he reminded, "Anastasia, don't feel bad and don't let Young Master Presgrave think his kindness is for nothing. You and Jared just stay by Young Master Presgrave's side with peace of mind!"

"You be careful too, Dad."

"Don't worry about me! I've been through most things in life already. Situations like this are inevitable in the commercial industry," Francis comforted.

In actuality, the only reason Francis could act so calmly was that he had Elliot's help. Even if Lawrence was no good guy, he couldn't do just anything he wanted in front of the Presgraves.

Later, Anastasia lied to Felicia, saying she wanted to look after her father for a week, and Felicia approved her leave without a second thought. But she hoped Anastasia could finish the order worth ten million during her time off.

And Anastasia couldn't help feeling awkward. She wondered how Felicia would react if she knew this big client was the great President Presgrave upstairs.

After all that was settled, Anastasia decided to head home and pack some clothes before hiding at Elliot's. When something like this had happened, no ego in this world was more important than her son's safety anymore.

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Anastasia went back to the office after a quick pack-up and then called Elliot through the intercom.

"What time are you leaving? I'd like to see Jared."

"Meet me down at the basement car park in ten minutes," Elliot replied.

Ten minutes later, Anastasia moved the two suitcases from her car into Elliot's trunk. Rey, the assistant, now became Rey, the chauffeur, driving Elliot and Anastasia back to Elliot's place as the two sat in the back seat.

Anastasia was still reeling at the fact that she had to stay with Elliot for some time while she watched the view outside the window. Alas, what to do when life throws you a curveball?

"Take a good rest while you're at my place," Elliot said, the joy beneath his fathomless eyes unconcealable.

However, Anastasia still felt bad for troubling him. "Sorry for intruding, President Presgrave."

"Not at all." Elliot's face relaxed as he thought, How can you call this intruding?! He'd die to have her move in with him.

In actuality, he deliberately made things sound more severe than they actually were. Yes, Lawrence's men were digging into Francis's relationship with his family, but Lawrence himself was in deep sh*t right now, for he was pulling every possible connection to remove himself from a few women-missing- from-nightclub cases.

And if Anastasia hadn't spotted the spotter so coincidentally, he wouldn't be able to take her home so easily.

Anastasia gradually spaced out as she continued to watch the view outside the window. Then, when her current situation popped back into her head, she looked over to Elliot to find he was looking out the window and musing as well. Sigh, his handsome side profile was a sight to behold as well. After gawking for a few seconds, she looked away with a flushed face.

Elliot's mansion occupied the city's best terrain, for it was located near the sea and the hills. Plus, it was built on high grounds, so it was the perfect spot to watch the stars or view the cityscape. The entire mansion took up nearly half the hill, and it was designed by a renowned architect as well.

Anastasia had the privilege of coming once before, but she left in a hurry. This time, she managed to admire the view along the journey to the top of the hill. Amidst late fall, the mansion looked like a crouching gray giant.

Right as Anastasia got out of the car, she heard a familiar voice coming from the yard—it was Jared! Pleasantly surprised, she followed the voice to a garden, and through it, she found Jared playing soccer with two bodyguards on the field.

The little guy had no sense of strangeness, playing happily as though he was in his own home, and it got Anastasia mortified. This child is way too approachable!

"Jared!" she called out to him.

"Mommy! You're finally here!" Jared beamed in surprise and trotted to his mother when he heard her voice.

Anastasia pulled him closer and wiped the sweat off his forehead. "Is it really that much fun?"

"Mommy, Mr. Presgrave said we'll be staying here for some time. Is it true?" Jared looked at Anastasia with his big, round, innocent eyes.

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“Mommy! You’ra finally hara!” Jarad baamad in surprisa and trottad to his mothar whan ha haard har voica.

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“Mommy, Mr. Prasgrava said wa’ll ba staying hara for soma tima. Is it trua?” Jarad lookad at Anastasia with his big, round, innocent ayas.

Anastasia didn’t want him to know the reason behind it for fear that he’d have trouble socializing in the future. With that, she made up an excuse. “Yeah, because we have to fix some things at home, so we’ll have to crash at Mr. Presgrave’s temporarily.”

Elated, the little guy nodded. “Yay! We can live with Mr. Presgrave!”

Anastasia, on the other hand, had mixed feelings about this. She kept saying no to the debt he kept trying to repay, but at the same time, she constantly had to accept them. Would her mother get upset if she found out in heaven?

Anastasia felt absolutely awful. However, her circumstances weren’t giving her options.

She let Jared go back to his soccer while she entered the foyer. A few servants were busying away, and when they saw Anastasia, they greeted her, saying, “Miss Tillman.”

It seemed that the maids here had found out she and Jared would be living here for some time and even learned who they were.

Just then, Elliot approached her from the wing and said, “I’ve told them to prepare you and Jared each a room.”

“It’s totally fine if Jared shares a room with me,” she said hurriedly upon hearing his words.

To that, he teased, “What are you worried about? That I’d do something to you?”

Mortified, she deliberately said, “No, I trust you’re a fine gentleman, President Presgrave. You surely won’t take advantage of my vulnerability.”

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“Smart girl. The kid’s bedroom is right next to yours. Don’t worry. I won’t do anything to you,” Elliot reassured Anastasia as he headed upstairs.

Anastasia followed behind him to find not only the kid’s bedroom and hers were next to each other, but Elliot’s room was on the same floor as well, and very close at that.

Her luggage had already been brought up. With that, Elliot said, “I’ll ask the servants to help you sort your luggage out.”

“It’s fine. I can do it myself.” Anastasia wasn’t used to ordering servants around.

Elliot nodded at that and let her get to her luggage. After sorting out her own luggage, she put Jared’s clothing in the kid’s bedroom. At the end of the day, Jared was a growing boy. Though he hadn’t reached the age where they had to start setting boundaries, it was time to start training his independence.

Anastasia took a break after sorting everything out, and Hayley's warning popped into her head. However, she couldn't care less anymore. If Hayley dared bring that b*stard to her son, she'd immediately send that b*stard to jail. She would never forgive him for defiling her back then!

She would never forgive him for traumatizing her. That man deserves to rot in hell! Even if he was Jared's biological father, she would show him no mercy.

When Anastasia came to the living room balcony on the second floor, she discovered that she could see Jared playing from there. With that, she sat down and enjoyed the view. Meanwhile, the servants brought some fruits and afternoon tea over almost instantly. This is an A+ service right here.

Sometime later, Elliot came to the balcony and sat next to her, watching the little guy play on the field. "Jared seems to like my place a lot."

"Who wouldn't like a lavish mansion?" Anastasia retorted with a chuckle.

"So, are you saying you like it too?" he asked.

Elliot's question got her choking for a second, but she didn't choose to lie. "Of course."

With that, he suggested with a quirked brow, "Why don't I give you a chance to own it, then? Marry me, and this mansion will be yours."

Anastasia's mind turned blank for a few seconds, and she tried to steer away from the subject, offering him a piece of watermelon." The watermelon's really sweet, President Presgrave. You should try it."

Elliot took the piece of watermelon from her with some indignation. However, he didn't press on after taking a bite, for he didn't want to scare her away when she had just arrived.

"You sure have a lot of servants, President Presgrave!" Anastasia gushed. She had already seen about seven or eight of them from the moment she came.

At that, Elliot narrowed his eyes a little and explained, "They'll all leave in a bit. Normally, only two servants would come to make breakfast and dinner."

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Then, he was reminded of something, and with that, he turned to Anastasia. "C'mon, let me show you your studio."

Stumped, she asked, "What studio?"

"You'll know when you see it." Elliot got up and headed back inside, acting all mysterious.

Curious, Anastasia followed behind him to a double door on the other end of the floor, facing the yard. Elliot pushed the door open, letting the evening sun shine in, giving the room life. The space was decorated with plants and an elegant ivory work desk. What was more, the panoramic window wall overlooked the sea. Coupled with cozy furnishing, it surely was a designer's ultimate studio.

What a sight to behold. Surely no creative professional would say no to such a studio. It would be a treat to work in this space, as all the worries would disappear in a snap.

While Anastasia was taking it all in, Elliot's deep voice came beside her. "Do you like it?"

How could she not?! But still, she turned to him. "I can make do and work in my room. You didn't have to go through all the trouble of preparing a studio for me."

"There's no such thing as 'make do'. This will be your office from now on, and I'm still waiting on my necklace!" Elliot narrowed his eyes and looked at her with aspiration.

"Thanks." Anastasia didn't stand on ceremony anymore. She would only be staying here for a while, anyway.

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They had a hearty dinner that night, and by dinnertime, Jared was sweating buckets from having so much fun. Seeing so, Elliot ruffled the child's hair affectionately and asked, "Jared, do you like my place?"

"I do!" Jared said as he stuffed his mouth full like a chipmunk.

Anastasia couldn't help chucking under her breath in response. Great, Jared likes his house and his food!

After dinner, she brought Jared upstairs for a shower. The refreshing bath and a blow-dry of his short hair made the little guy even more handsome.

Anastasia had packed some Legos for him, so Jared entertained himself with them on the sofa in his bedroom. Meanwhile, she went back to her room and stood in front of the French windows that overlooked the night cityscape. A stunning light show was on display within the forest of tall buildings, making it a sight to behold.

She went to check on Jared at around 9.30PM and she couldn't help chuckling because the little guy had fallen asleep on the couch with the Lego bricks in his hands; his stomach was flat on the couch and his legs were touching the floor.

With that, she carried him to the bed, tucked him in, adjusted the air conditioning, gave him a peck on his forehead, and headed out before leaving the bracket light by the door on.

Right as she came out, Elliot happened to be walking toward her from the study and he asked in a soft voice, "Has Jared fallen asleep?"

"Yeah, he has," Anastasia whispered as she looked up at him. A hint of weariness enveloped Elliot after a day's work, making him look exceptionally lazy instead of the usual aloof guy that he was.

"You should turn in early too, President Presgrave," she said warmly before entering her room.

However, just as she closed the door, Elliot pushed it open and she couldn't help being stumped while he entered her room and carried a hint of intimidation with him.

Anastasia's heart skipped a beat reflexively, for he would always behave recklessly back in her home and now, they were at his place. He hadn't stuck to this habit still, had he?!

"Do you need something from me, President Presgrave?" Anastasia asked, feigning calmness.

"You haven't said goodnight to me." It was just a bloody random excuse.

She immediately said 'Goodnight' upon hearing so.

Elliot smirked in response. "Are you that afraid of me?" he asked as he sat cross-legged on the couch.

"Are you worried that I'll eat you up?"

"You're no beast, President Presgrave. You wouldn't eat a human being." Anastasia decided to play dumb.

"You're wrong because I would." He didn't want her to exalt him constantly.

She knew well that she wouldn't be able to chase him out anytime soon, so she sat on the edge of the bed to face him. "President Presgrave, my father and I are indebted to you, and we'll definitely repay your kindness in due time."

Before she knew it, her family had already owed him so much.

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"You haven't said goodnight to me." It was just a bloody random excuse.

Sha immediately said 'Goodnight' upon hearing so.

Elliot smirked in response. "Are you that afraid of me?" he asked as he sat cross-legged on the couch. "Are you worried that I'll eat you up?"

"You're no beast, President Prasgrava. You wouldn't eat a human being." Anastasia decided to play dumb.

"You're wrong because I would." He didn't want her to assault him constantly.

Sha knew well that she wouldn't be able to chase him out anytime soon, so she sat on the edge of the bed to face him. "President Prasgrava, my father and I are indebted to you, and we'll definitely repay your kindness in due time."

Before she knew it, her family had already owed him so much.

"I don't need you to repay any of it, but if you insist, I want..." Elliot latched his gaze on the woman on the bed as he spoke.

She was like a rose that had just bloomed at night under the lights and her features made her oval face stunning and alive. Her beauty was rare, for she would look stunning with either light or heavy makeup, and she could already have men falling for her even with just the light makeup.

Meanwhile, Anastasia looked curiously at him, waiting for what he would say next.

"You," he said firmly.

She blushed upon hearing his words, vexed that she had let her curiosity get the best of her. The hell, he wants me?! What flirtatious words!

Anastasia knew she had to chase him out now. "It's getting late, President Prasgrave. You should get some rest."

Of course, Elliot knew she was going to do that. Hence, he got up and said 'goodnight' to her before leaving.

Anastasia heaved a sigh of relief as she watched the door close, but what in the world was she actually afraid of? That he would behave recklessly or that her unyielding heart would get lost in him?

If she didn't have a son, or that incident five years ago had not happened, she would surely love a man with her entire heart—the 'till death do us part' kind of love.

Now, with Jared by her side, she didn't want to have anything to do with love. It wasn't that she had trust issues, but she had parental duties.

Chapter 267

Elliot was a good person, and he was also nice to Anastasia's son. Still, he wasn't Jared's biological father, so even if he could love her son unconditionally now, no one knew if this would change in the future.

She dared not bet on it. She always saw online news of women who remarried, but their children were shunned by the husbands' families. All in all, it would be best for single women with children to never get married.

At the Tillman Residence, Francis returned home after a busy day at work. As soon as he reached home, he summoned his wife. "Tell Erica to come down. I have something to say."

Naomi went upstairs and called her daughter over. Then, the two sat on the couch and looked nervously at Francis' stern expression.

"Hubby, what happened?"

"Lawrence might get revenge on me. So when you and Erica go out these days, be extra careful, or just don't leave the house if possible," Francis reminded them in a serious tone.

"Why would he get revenge on us?" Erica asked, puzzled.

"Why else? His company was bought by Presgrave Group, and he dared not take it up to Presgrave Group itself, so he could only vent his hatred on me. Just stay at home for the time being."

"What about Anastasia? Have you informed her about it?" Naomi asked casually. She thought that if Lawrence really wanted his revenge, he should do it to Anastasia and her son. Lawrence better kidnap the child and maybe get the child involved in a fatal accident or something.

Francis didn't understand the ulterior meaning of his wife's words, of course. He even thought she was worried about their eldest daughter! A smile flashed across the depths of his eyes as he said, "Don't worry about Anastasia and Jared. They are in a very safe place."

Erica was a little jealous as she said, "Dad, where have you taken them to hide?"

"It's not me who took them somewhere safe; Anastasia and Jared are living in Elliot Presgrave's home right now. They have countless bodyguards, and their security system is top-notch. No matter how skilled Lawrence is, he won't dare to mess with the Presgraves." Francis even felt somewhat proud as he spoke.

Naomi and Erica exchanged glances. Erica was obviously green with envy. How did Anastasia get so lucky that she would have the chance to live in Elliot's home?

She got so close to Elliot, so she could use every tactic she knew to seduce Elliot as much as she liked!

"How lucky she is! And that child too, getting to live in Elliot Presgrave's home." Naomi humphed in a weird way.

"Anastasia probably got her luck in exchange for her mother's life." Francis sighed. When he recalled his previous wife's heroic actions, he felt something weighing on his heart as well.

Erica went back to her room, an unspeakable hatred inside her. She grabbed her phone and dialed Hayley's number, intending to vent to the latter.

When Hayley received Erica's call, she was already lying in her luxurious bed. She couldn't go to sleep because of her troubles. She had money, a huge house, and a luxurious car now, but there was no one

she could show off to. She could only put on airs in front of strangers, but she couldn't show off to those people who used to look down on her and trampled her.

Erica was a littla jaalous as sha said, "Dad, whara hava you taken tham to hida?"

"It's not ma who took tham somawhara safa; Anastasia and Jarad ara living in Elliot Prasgrava's homa right now. Thay hava countlass bodyguards, and thair sacurity system is top-notch. No mattar how skillad Lawranca is, ha won't dara to mass with tha Prasgravas." Francis avan falt somawhat proud as ha spoka.

Naomi and Erica axchangad glancas. Erica was obviously graan with anvy. How did Anastasia gat so lucky that sha would hava tha chanca to liva in Elliot's homa?

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"How lucky sha is! And that child too, gattin to liva in Elliot Prasgrava's homa." Naomi humphad in a waird way.

"Anastasia probably got har luck in axchanga for har mothar's lifa." Francis sighad. Whan ha racallad his pravius wifa's haroic actions, ha falt somathing waighin on his haart as wall.

Erica want back to har room, an unspaakabla hatrad insida har. Sha grabbad har phona and dialad Haylay's numbar, intandin to vant to tha lattar.

Whan Haylay racaivad Erica's call, sha was alraady lying in har luxurious bad. Sha couldn't go to slaap bacausa of har troublas. Sha had monay, a huga housa, and a luxurious car now, but thara was no ona sha could show off to. Sha could only put on airs in front of strangars, but sha couldn't show off to thosa paopla who usad to look down on har and tramplad har.

"Hello, Erica."

"Hayley, are you free now? I want to chat."

"Of course! About what?"

"That b*tch Anastasia." Erica immediately swore in anger. "Do you know what a good life she's having right now? Hayley, do you know the Presgrave Family? That super rich one."

"Yes. They own that skyscraper in the city center called Presgrave Corporation."

"Yes, yes, Presgrave Corporation. Their current president is someone named Elliot Presgrave. Has Anastasia told you before? Her mother died trying to save Elliot, and now Elliot is repaying the kindness. Anastasia and her illegitimate son are now living such a good life that it pisses me off."

"Oh! How did the Presgraves repay her kindness?" Hayley asked curiously.

"Let's talk about it in terms of something close to me. My dad's company was almost bought by someone else, right? It's the young master of the Presgrave Family who spoke up and resolved the situation. Now, the person who tried to buy my dad's company is trying to get revenge on him, so my

mom and I are told not to go out in the meantime. But do you know where Anastasia went with her son? They went to live in Elliot's villa, and they're under his protection now!"

Chapter 268

Erica was furious as she spoke, and Hayley, too, was so enraged that she breathed heavily. She was both angry and terrified that Anastasia would move into Elliot's house with the excuse of hiding from danger.

Hayley thought she had managed to threaten Anastasia, but the latter didn't even take her warning seriously. If Erica hadn't told her, she would have no idea that Anastasia was living with Elliot right now and could be close to him 24/7.

"Say, Hayley, what if Anastasia suddenly marries Elliot one day? Will she get her revenge on us?" Erica's voice pulled Hayley back from her raging fury.

"Of course, Erica. If she obtains power, we will never live in peace. When that happens, she will trample both you and me, and we'll never recover in our entire lives." Hayley wanted to incite Erica's fear so that she would do something about Anastasia.

"Then what do we do, Hayley?" Erica finished talking, then said right out, "Do you know? My dad is trying to let Anastasia and her son inherit the company behind my and my mom's backs. We'll get nothing."

Hearing that, Hayley hastily advised, saying, "Erica, you and your mom have to guard against Anastasia. Perhaps this isn't your dad's intention at all. Anastasia might be playing tricks behind the scenes, so your dad could do nothing but let her have the company."

"I think so too. If not, why would my dad let that mongrel inherit the company?" Erica was quite simple-minded, and she believed everything Hayley said.

"Erica, are you very sure that Anastasia has moved into Elliot's house?"

"Of course I am! My dad said it himself." Erica was so pissed that she felt her internal organs writhing.

Hayley gripped her blanket tightly, ripping the high-quality silk fabric. The fear in her heart had manifested in the depths of her eyes. Even if Hayley pretended to be the victim five years ago, had fate still pulled Anastasia and Elliot together?

No, she had to change this fate. She had to get the position of Young Mistress of the Presgrave Family. If Anastasia got the position instead, Hayley's life in the future would be a disaster.

Perhaps when Anastasia had obtained power, she would make Hayley disappear entirely from the face of the earth. This would no longer be a question of the quality of life: her life itself would be in danger.

In Elliot's villa, Anastasia lay on the bed, tossing and turning as she tried to sleep. Perhaps it was the new surroundings, or perhaps the scenery outside was too beautiful. Either way, she couldn't sleep.

Anastasia got up, intending to check on her son to see if he had kicked his blanket off. She quietly creaked open the door and went out. As soon as she opened the door to her son's room, she was startled by the man behind the door. She was about to scream when the man's large hand covered her mouth, and she was pinned against the wall.

Elliot was wearing gray pajamas with his chest exposed, so his full, attractive muscles were on display. The strong and muscular shape looked exceptionally alluring under the lighting, causing Anastasia to look away in her panic, blushing.

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Why would Elliot be in her son's room in the middle of the night?

Elliot gave her a 'shh', then removed his palm from her mouth. He pulled the door open and led her outside.

As soon as Anastasia got out, she struggled free of his grip and questioned in a tiny voice, "Why are you in my son's room?"

"I was worried that Jared would wake up in the middle of the night because of his new surroundings, and he might get scared. That's why I came over to check on him," Elliot said in a low voice, looking at the woman who was also in pajamas.

Anastasia never expected to bump into him in the middle of the night. Hence, the pajamas she was wearing were of the silk and suspender sort. She didn't even wear her bra, and under the light, the man could see certain shapes.

Anastasia realized this a little too late, and she hastily covered her chest in fear. She warned in a low voice, "Don't look."

Elliot had seen all he wanted to see. A satisfied smile crept onto his lips because he had no complaints about the size and shape.

Anastasia had seen him pulling the blanket back on her son, so she didn't have to go in anymore. As she turned around to go back to her room, the man's long arm hooked onto hers and pulled. She turned right on the spot and fell into the man's chest.

Anastasia felt a little dizzy as she ran into his firm chest. When she looked up, she met the man's lowered and staring gaze. The lights in the corridor blurred the man's cold outline, and he actually looked... gentle.

Chapter 269

It was seductive and hypnotic, and Anastasia was dumbfounded for a while.

Anastasia struggled as if her life depended on it, unwilling to lose her sense of self in those eyes. However, right then, the man was already reaching out greedily and touching her exquisite face. "Miss Tillman, it's such a wonderful night. It will be a pity if we don't do something romantic."

Anastasia was in Elliot's arms now, enveloped in his fragrance. She was invaded by the fiery light in the depths of his eyes, letting down her guard a little. She fought to get her sense of reason back and reached out to push him away.

However, in the next second, the man lowered his gaze and cut off all her chances of escape. He kissed her forcefully, his tongue exploring her mouth and stealing her sweet essence.

This is horrible! Anastasia thought, but she felt her determination wavering. She was also holding back when she pushed him just now. What's going on?

Anastasia couldn't help but curse her hesitation, which was why this man thought her a vulnerable victim. That was why he would take advantage of her in the corridor in the middle of the night. But this man's kiss wasn't something she hated.

She actually experienced a sense of wonder and expectation. This man had dug out her hidden excitement and awakened her sleeping passion.

The kiss was like a fire that burned Anastasia's reasoning away. Some time later, in addition to their already loosely clothed bodies, the man's more dangerous spot had startled Anastasia back to her senses. She would only permit one kiss, and anything further than that would be considered crossing the line.

"It's getting late... Go to sleep!" Anastasia struggled and finally broke free of him, then turned her back on him, expressing her rejection with her entire being.

Elliot didn't force her. He just leaned in close to her ear and spoke in his alluring voice. "Whatever we left off tonight, I will continue in my dreams." Anastasia felt her mind explode. This man even wanted to dream of such things? When she turned around, only the aura of the man's hormones remained. The man himself had left.

It was just one sentence, but Anastasia couldn't stop blushing about it.

She felt dizzy as she lay on the bed, and the kiss came to her mind as soon as she closed her eyes. Her body was heating up for some reason.

What was wrong with her? She went to sleep in a daze, and she could no longer differentiate dreams from reality. No matter what, she was blushing both in and out of sleep.

The next morning, Anastasia opened her eyes and noticed that it was already late in the morning. She got out of bed in annoyance at the absence of her biological clock.

She went downstairs and prepared breakfast for the servants, whereas her son and Elliot were in the field. The little guy fell in love with this patch of grass, and once he got hold of a soccer ball, he could play there all day.

It had been a long time since she had time to relax and enjoy the morning. Anastasia found a spot from where she could watch her son play soccer, and then she sipped her morning coffee as she watched her son run around in the sunlight. This was one of her happiest moments as a mother.

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However, Anastasia still felt her attention drawn to the man in sports attire. He was wearing a gray top paired with black sweatpants. As he stood among the grass, he appeared large, mighty, and imposing. There was a constant, strong, and domineering aura about him.

Anastasia bit her lip and couldn't help but recall what happened last night. She was once again troubled, and she made up her mind that such things must never happen again.

Never!

She then mocked herself. She had sworn the exact same thing more than once, but it always seemed to fail. When faced with this man, no single oath she swore could be kept.

In another villa area, Hayley didn't get much sleep throughout the night. Her eyes were red as she took her phone and dialed Daniel's number. As soon as the call went through, she ordered, "Daniel, I want to see Elliot. Help me think of a way."

On the other end of the line, Daniel thought for a few seconds before answering, "This Saturday, Old Madam Presgrave will be celebrating her 70th birthday. President Presgrave is already preparing for it, so you can find an opportunity to let him know that you want to attend and celebrate Old Madam Presgrave's birthday."

Hayley was elated. "Really? Then what should I do?"

"You can look through old news articles; there should be reports of the exact time of Old Madam Presgrave's birth. You can ask President Presgrave to bring you to the celebration with him. He'll most probably agree," Daniel suggested.

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Chapter 270

Pleasant surprise flashed across Hayley's eyes, but she kept her tone cold as she said, "Got it. Report these things to me of your own accord next time. Don't wait until I ask."

"Understood, Miss Seymour." Daniel was extremely submissive.

After ending the call, Hayley took up her iPad and began looking for old news articles. Just as expected, she found an article dated two years back, a promotion article for Old Madam Presgrave's 68th birthday celebration. The celebration was quite grand that year, and it was all over the news.

A look of hatred appeared in the depths of Hayley's eyes. It was apparent that Anastasia would be attending as well.

Meanwhile, Anastasia had a serious lack of sleep last night. She felt sleepy as soon as she finished breakfast, and as she basked in the sunlight of the late fall, she began to nod off a little. After a slight nap, she heard footsteps, so she opened her eyes to see a smart figure getting close to her.

She immediately sat up and gazed at him, trying to look energized.

"How long did you stay up last night?" The man sat down beside her, a suggestive smile in his eyes.

He was a large part of the reason she lost sleep.

"I didn't," Anastasia said stubbornly.

"My grandmother will be celebrating her 70th birthday this Saturday. I want to invite you and Jared over to join in the festivities," Elliot started, his gaze tightly locked on her.

Anastasia blinked, then shook her head. "We won't be going."

"My grandma told me specifically to bring you and Jared, and also invite your father along."

Anastasia cried in surprise, "My dad is also on the list of people to invite?"

"Yes! I've already sent the invitations. He's coming." Elliot nodded.

Anastasia couldn't help but think of another problem. If her father was attending, then Naomi and her daughter might take the opportunity to come as well.

If the Presgraves didn't mention her father specifically, then the mother-daughter duo would definitely tag along to have a look.

As they spoke, Anastasia's phone rang. She gave it a look and realized that it was a call from his grandmother.

"A call from your grandmother." Anastasia looked nervous as she held her phone.

"Answer it. She must be inviting you to her birthday celebration." With that, Elliot got up and walked toward the little guy practicing his kicks on the field.

Anastasia picked up the call. "Hello, Old Madam Presgrave."

"Anastasia, are you busy? Has Elliot told you about my birthday celebration?"

"Yes, President Presgrave did," Anastasia replied in a respectful tone.

"Then I'll be waiting for you!" Harriet thought she would definitely come.

Anastasia was going to decline, but when faced with Harriet's enthusiasm, she really didn't know how to say no.

"Your father will be coming over as well. It's a good chance for me to meet your family," Harriet continued.

"Old Madam Presgrave, I—"

"Don't worry about the gift. I'll be happy enough to see you attend. I've been looking forward to meeting your son, so remember to bring him, all right?"

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Anastasia changed her thinking. Her father would be there as well, and she only had to join in the festivities and eat something nice. It was easier to accept than to decline the invitation, so she smiled and said, "Of course! I'll definitely be there."

"Good. I'll get Elliot to make the arrangements."

After hanging up the call, Anastasia secretly wished that her father would come alone, but she didn't have a right to interfere with her father's decisions.

At the Tillman Residence, Francis was having lunch at home. Naomi prepared some dishes, and after a few sips of alcohol, Francis couldn't help but mention, "Naomi, I'm joining Old Madam Presgrave's birthday celebration this Saturday, so get me a decent outfit for the occasion."

Naomi's eyes lit up as she asked immediately, "Are you the only one invited? What about me and Erica?"

"Why would you go?"

Erica was anxious at the side. "Dad, I want to go too. I want to see what it's like."

Naomi thought that the Presgrave's banquet would be a gathering of talented and famous people. It was a golden opportunity for her daughter to make friends in this situation, so it was a good thing for her daughter. What if a rich young man took a liking to her daughter?

"Francis, Erica and I will go with you!"

"Their guests are all top figures from the upper class. Don't humiliate me now." Francis shook his head.

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