

Wife Mask 211

Chapter: 211

Myles stood frozen, completely thrown by Cole's response and uncertain of his next move.

"Cole, aren't you going to rescue Elliana?" Manley asked hesitantly. Given Cole's personality, even if his feelings for Elliana were complicated, the moment someone threatened her while she carried the name Mrs. Evans, he would defend her. Besides, his feelings for her weren't exactly subtle. Plus, Cole loathed being threatened. Anyone who had ever pulled that off before had learned the hard way that it never ended well. What on earth was making him act like this today?

"Why should I rescue her?" At Last, Cole opened his eyes and cast a look at Manley. "She pushed me away. So why should I waste even a dime on someone who clearly doesn't want me? Do I look that desperate to you?"

He wasn't about to humiliate himself by pouring his resources into a woman who had already rejected him. That would be absurd.

The air in the room grew heavy. Nobody dared to utter a single word.

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Elliana didn't bother answering. Instead, she turned to Hailee with sincerity in her voice. "Hailee, I'm really sorry for pulling you into this. But I promise I'll protect you.

Hailee quickly shook her head. "Don't say that, Elliana. You're not to blame."

The aircraft soared through the night sky for six full hours before finally descending onto a luxury yacht drifting in the middle of the ocean under the cloak of darkness.

The plane landed smoothly on the yacht's deck, its doors swinging open as the staircase was lowered.

The men in black led Paige and Vivien down first and then turned back to bring Elliana and Hailee down.

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A slow, knowing smile curved across Paige's lips. "Farewell."

Elliana sneered inwardly. Paige was convinced this would be her final day alive.

"Move!" One of the men in black gave Elliana a harsh shove into the room. Hailee was pushed in right after.

A loud "click" echoed as the door locked behind them.

The room was pitch black, with no windows or lights to speak of.

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"Elliana, why are there so many deadly weapons in here? Are the people who took us actually pirates?" Hailee asked, her voice quivering.

Elliana picked up a curved blade, testing its weight in her palm. Her tone was steady as she answered, "Those men belong to an international crime syndicate. They're involved in everything-piracy, assassination, armed robbery, abduction, and blackmail. Nothing is off-limits for them."

Hailee's fear only grew stronger. "But you still haven't said-after you hide me, what are you going to do?"

To keep Hailee steady, Elliana gave a reassuring smile and softened her tone. "Don't you remember? They captured me because they want to use me as leverage against Cole. For that, they'll need me alive. They won't harm me until negotiations begin."

In reality, Elliana had no intention of waiting around. Once Hailee was safe, she was going to tear this place apart and bring every last criminal down with it. She knew the battle ahead would be savage-and far too horrific for Hailee to witness.

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Without needing a word, the armed men dressed in black instinctively backed away by two steps. Even though they had home-ground advantage, greater numbers, and rifles in hand, none of that erased the dread creeping over them. Standing in Cole's presence felt like confronting an entire army alone.

Trailing behind Cole were Myles, Aron, and Hugh.

Under normal circumstances, Aron and Hugh, as the heads of Cole's security team, would have led the way, checking every corner for safety before allowing Cole to step out with Myles.

But today was different. Fueled by unrelenting rage, Cole had no time for protocol. The moment the aircraft doors opened, he shoved Aron and Hugh aside and stormed out ahead of everyone.

That single move made Myles tense up, his heart skipping a beat. He quickly turned to Aron and Hugh and instructed, "Don't leave Mr. Evans' side for a second!"

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After receiving these commands, the leader had Allan, Merlin, and Manley scanned. Once the scan confirmed they carried nothing dangerous and that the aircraft held no additional passengers, he bowed respectfully to Cole and said, "Mr. Evans, please step inside."

Cole flicked the droplets of water off his coat and walked confidently toward the entrance of the yacht's cabin, the others moving in step behind him.

Typically, when the family members of the hostages entered the lair of the captors, they would tread lightly, doing everything in their power to appear submissive. Every word was carefully chosen out of fear that a single misstep might endanger the hostages' lives.

But Cole entered the scene as if he owned it. With one hand casually tucked into his trouser pocket, he strode in tall and composed, his gaze distant and full of authority. He didn't look at people so much as he looked past them, each step exuding a cold, untouchable presence.

Cole's presence turned the men with assault rifles into nothing more than clumsy amateurs.

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At ground level, every corner was guarded by men dressed in black, each holding an assault rifle, and in the shadowed sections above, even more gunmen stood ready. Together, they formed a layered, inescapable trap. If things went south, Cole and his group would be torn apart in seconds by a rain of bullets.

While anyone else might have been paralyzed by fear in such a situation, Cole remained entirely composed. His gaze held an edge of arrogance, even a glimmer of dark amusement.

Trailing close behind him, Myles, Aron, and Hugh stood like seasoned warriors, every inch of them alert and battle-tested. Their presence alone sent a clear message—Cole was well-guarded.

Allan, Merlin, and Manley, each a dominant force in his own right, appeared completely unbothered. They moved with ease, like spectators at a high-stakes game rather than players caught in danger.

Manley, in particular, looked the most relaxed, his hands tucked casually into his pockets, gum tucked between his teeth, his grin laced with mischief.

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From her hidden spot, Elliana caught the sentence too, her eyes fixed on the surveillance feed.

In their separate rooms, Merritt and Paige also caught every word.

But their interpretations could not have been more different.

The moment Merritt heard those words, the tight knot in his chest finally loosened. "Seems Like Luck's on my side today," he said. Yet, almost immediately, his brows drew together in doubt. "Still, I need to observe further. Maybe Cole is just lying. He could be playing down Elliana's value to keep us from harming her."

Paige's reaction was the complete opposite—she was overjoyed. She sprang to her feet and began pacing in excitement. Everything finally made sense to her. How could a man like Cole ever be interested in a woman as ugly as Elliana? That settled it. Elliana would be eliminated today. With Elliana out of the picture, no obstacles would remain. The title of Mrs. Evans would soon fall right into her hands.

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"You're overthinking it," Paige replied, her tone full of confidence. "Didn't Cole just say Elliana means nothing to him? So what are you so afraid of?"

"But just now, when my deputy suggested killing Elliana, Cole got furious."

"He's just putting on a show because his grandfather had forced him into that unwanted marriage with Elliana. If you reveal yourself now and handle things head-on, he might even feel he owes you a favor."

"But..." Merritt was still hesitant.

Growing impatient, Paige pressed him harder. "There's no time to waste! Cole hasn't figured out yet that you're the one behind this. Right now, he probably thinks it's some petty gang trying to extort him. If we let him keep thinking that, he might actually go on a rampage. But if you step forward now, he'll have no choice but to show you respect. You're still a major force in Ublento. Nobody wants you as an enemy."

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A heavy silence hung in the hall...

Cole's icy silence hung in the air, rattling everyone in the room.

A nervous tension crept over Merritt, his nerves stretched taut.

Watching from the surveillance feed, Paige felt a prickling chill crawl up her spine.

In the next room, Hailee turned to Elliana, her eyes wide with confusion. "Elliana, what's happening with Mr. Evans?"