

Wife Mask 261

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Besides, Jason had a major flaw—he couldn't live in the light. Cole was the face of the family, admired and known. Marrying him would bring status, recognition, and a wide, bright world. But Jason operated behind the scenes. For the family's safety, he stayed hidden. He rarely appeared in public, and few even knew what he looked like.

She knew if she married Jason, she'd live in the shadows as well. There'd be no grand displays, no public title. Even their children might have to be given to another couple, just to stay safe. But she loved the spotlight. She wanted to be known, respected, and admired.

While people thought she was favored in the Evans family, her life was far from easy. It was filled with silent frustration and quiet pain. No other suitor in the family held a candle to Jason or Cole. In the end, she had only two real choices. But the one she wanted didn't want her. And the one who wanted her wasn't who she truly desired.

ALL these thoughts clouded Trinity's mind, but none of them showed on her face.

Even though Cole disliked the drama caused by Irene, he still respected Jason. As the heir, he expanded the family's power openly. Jason, just two years younger, protected it from the shadows—and played a vital role.

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Elliana's mentor, Donovan, harbored an irreconcilable enmity toward Seth Moon. Those two would exchange verbal hostilities from a distance and escalate to physical confrontation within moments of meeting. Their incompatibility was absolute. The origins and timeline of their hostility remained shrouded in mystery.

Donovan had established the Star Society, prompting Seth to replicate the framework with Moonveil, eternally positioning themselves as rivals.

Donovan's loathing for Seth had evolved into a lifelong crusade to dismantle Moonveil. Seth matched this determination with equal resolve to destroy the Star Society completely.

The dilemma lay in Donovan's and Seth's equivalent capabilities, preventing either from gaining supremacy.

Later on, when Donovan had departed Ublento, Seth soon vanished, transferring their unresolved conflict to Elliana and Jason.

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Trinity kept up her righteous act. "We're family now. No need to be shy. If something's bothering you, just say it outright. Don't make things more complicated than they need to be."

Trinity's words carried a hidden accusation—that Elliana's pride kept her from admitting she wanted to participate, so she resorted to passive-aggressive comments instead.

After speaking, Trinity shot a calculated look toward Cole and Jason.

Jason's gaze turned colder as he looked at Elliana, his already poor opinion of her worsening thanks to Trinity's clever manipulation.

Trinity savored Jason's obvious reaction. But Cole's response caught her completely off guard.

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Seeing Cole approve her exploration and assign his head assistant as her escort, Trinity felt overwhelming joy, her face glowing with pure happiness. "Thank you, Cole!"

She then turned to address Elliana, "Elliana, I'm leaving to tour the estate."

Elliana responded with a slight smile. Trinity's performance outdid even Paige's dramatic skills. While Trinity's pointed look might have escaped others, she caught the underlying challenge with perfect clarity.

Trinity stood and left with Myles at her side.

Jason turned to Elliana. "Elliana, would you mind giving us privacy as well?"

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Cole raised a brow but didn't say a word. Elliana was still playing the frumpy, ditzy act, so it wasn't shocking that folks like Jason got the wrong idea. He figured there was no point in defending her or trying to explain. People Like Jason needed to see for themselves. And Elliana could handle anything thrown her way. So he stayed quiet.

Jason mistook the silence for agreement and pressed on. "Even our grandpa's insistence shouldn't have swayed you. You shouldn't have thrown away your happiness just for that stupid promise!"

Cole took a sip of the coffee Elliana had made and then said calmly, "Actually, I'm doing just fine. Happier than you think."

Honestly, happy was an understatement. Since Elliana gave her heart to him, life had felt like a dream. She was thoughtful, caring, and full of surprises. He couldn't have asked for more. But he couldn't go around bragging. He had an image to keep up.

Jason clearly didn't get it. Hearing Cole's words only made him more frustrated. "Come on, Cole. No man wants to end up with someone like Elliana. You're just enduring it, and that kills me. You should divorce..."

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"What was the result this time?" Cole asked.

Myles pushed his black-rimmed glasses up the bridge of his nose and let out a weary sigh. "Death Thorn's people took the diamonds."

In plain terms, Blaze Wildfire had taken the loss.

Cole didn't respond right away. He pressed his tongue against his cheek and stayed silent, letting the weight of the news settle in. This was seriously irritating.

On the surface, Cole wore the title of the Evans family heir in Ublento. Behind the scenes, though, he had his hands in several different ventures. And out of everyone he'd faced, no one had ever gotten under his skin quite like Death Thorn. The urge to crush that opponent, only to fall short every time, had driven him to sleepless, teeth-grinding nights.

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Cole sat beside her, slipping his arm around her. He kissed her ear softly and asked, "Who were you chatting with?"

"My best friend, Adah," she answered.

The name made Cole pause. It rang a bell. After a moment, realization hit. Allan's fiancée—the one returning from the some backwater town—was also named Adah.

Unaware that Elliana's best friend and Allan's fiancée were the same person, Cole chuckled and remarked, "Adah's a pretty common name. Seems like there are tons of them around."

Elliana caught the meaning behind his words right away. She looked at him with a knowing smile. "Maybe. But not in our circle."

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Her answer made Cole visibly happy. He smiled and leaned forward, planting a soft kiss on her lips. "You really are something else."

Cole glanced back at the photo and frowned slightly. "What happened to her tooth?"

Elliana didn't flinch as she continued spinning her tale. "Apparently, she had a run-in with a cow on the farm. Got kicked in the mouth. She didn't have much money, and she never had it fixed. But when she gets back to Ublento, I'll take care of the dental bill."

She even gave Cole's shoulder a firm poke to drive her point home. "Honey, you absolutely have to say something to Allan for my friend. No matter what, you've got to help make this match work."

Cole swallowed hard. He didn't dare make any promises. Adah and Allan couldn't be more mismatched. There was no version of reality where Allan would willingly go along with this.

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But she didn't expect the illusion to last for long. He was bound to snap out of it soon. After all, he wasn't the type to stay blind for long. Once the haze lifted, he'd put the pieces together—and then the anger would follow.

Elliana shot a text to Adah. "I think I pulled it off, but who knows how long the lies will hold?"

Adah responded right away, "How'd you manage that?" "With sweet nothings," Elliana replied, keeping it short.

Adah texted. "I've got a genius plan! When he figures out the truth, just kiss him. He'll be so dazzled that he won't even care about the lie!"

Elliana let her lips curl into a crooked smile but didn't bother replying to that one.

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Merlin answered with nothing more than a dry, "Cut it out!"

And then, a system notification popped up, showing Allan had left the group chat.

Despite Allan's dramatic exit, Manley wasn't finished. He kept going like a runaway train.

"This is pure cruelty! Did we all commit some great sin in a past life? Is this karma coming back to bite us?" First it's genius Cole marrying someone ugly, now Allan's headed down the same path?"

"I can't take this! What if I'm next? I swear, I can't do it. I'm all about the face. I'd rather drop dead than marry someone unattractive!"