

Wife Mask 291

Chapter: 291

Cole's eyes locked onto Myles, full of disdain.

Myles pushed up his thick black glasses and forced a shaky smile. "Mr. Evans, I'm not trying to start my own thing."

He meant it. Being Cole's assistant was way better than running some small-time startup. And even if he wanted to branch out, he'd never dare steal Cole's team.

But Cole raised an eyebrow, as if he wasn't buying it. With a half-smile, he pressed on. "Don't chicken out now, Myles. You want to try? I won't stop you. Hell, for old times' sake, I might even toss you some startup cash."

Myles clamped his mouth shut, choosing silence over saying something he might regret. He knew exactly what this was— Cole wasn't being serious, just using him as a punching bag to let off steam.

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Cole's eyes turned to ice as he gave Myles a cutting glance. The sarcasm followed right behind. "Myles, are you actually trying to stick your nose in my marriage now? You think just because I'm recovering from my injuries, you get to run wild?"

No further encouragement was needed. Myles swiveled forward and bowed his head, saying nothing more. It was clear. The more he said, the deeper the hole he dug. Staying silent was his safest bet.

The tension in the car could've cracked glass.

The driver kept playing the role of the dutiful chauffeur, eyes on the road and lips sealed.

In the back, Aron and Hugh were trying not to laugh out loud. They looked like they were on the verge of choking from holding it in. Usually, they were the ones catching heat from Cole while Myles got off easy. But today? Watching Myles take the verbal beating was its own kind of entertainment.

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The call ended, and Elliana stepped off the curb to hail a cab. The moment one stopped, she climbed in and gave the driver the hotel's name without a second thought.

Not long after, Elliana stepped through the glass doors of the Starshine Hotel. Hailee was already in the lobby, standing the second she spotted Elliana.

"Hey, Elliana," Hailee said, brushing crumbs off her jacket.

Without pausing, Elliana took the lead and walked them toward a room she had booked in advance.

Once they were inside, Elliana didn't bother with small talk. "Hailee, there's something you need to see. I want you to know what's really going on."

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Hailee tried to convince herself her eyes were playing tricks on her. Maybe it was just the fatigue. Maybe her brain had conjured up a cruel illusion, something born from stress and overthinking. None of it could possibly be real. Gripping tightly to that illusion, she shoved the phone back into Elliana's hand without looking and turned her back. "Elliana, I'm dead tired. I need sleep. We'll talk later."

Not saying a word, Elliana simply watched her.

As Hailee moved to leave, Elliana caught her wrist. "Hailee, don't run from this," she said quietly. "Pretending it didn't happen won't fix anything. You swore you'd face it—no matter what."

Before watching that footage, Hailee had been exhausted, but she'd still carried a fire. She'd gritted her teeth and marched forward, fueled by love and stubborn hope. But now, all of that was gone. Her face had gone colorless. Her posture sagged. Something inside her had gone silent.

"I'm not running away," Hailee whispered, eyes averted. "I just... I just need to lie down."

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Elliana met Hailee's stare and spoke slowly, refusing to let Hailee escape the facts. "He's Dunn Sampson—the son of Skyflower Hospital's chairman."

Hailee's mind reeled. Skyflower Hospital? That was the very place where Boris had spent weeks as a patient. If Boris was close with Dunn—the chairman's son—then he'd always had powerful connections at that hospital. And yet, he'd never breathed a word. All those desperate nights she

spent begging the staff for mercy, humiliating herself for another day's stay for Boris-Boris had let her do it, every single time, standing back in silence, watching her struggle.

A jagged laugh escaped Hailee, sharp with self-mockery as her lips twisted into a bitter smile.

Elliana pressed on, relentless, determined to lay bare every ugly truth. She nudged her phone over so Hailee could see the others in the photo—one by one, she named each person, methodically exposing their true identities. Each face belonged to someone privileged, coddled by wealth, another player in this elaborate charade. They'd all gathered to amuse themselves, treating Hailee as little more than a naive pawn.

Elliana's voice dropped, cold and precise. "Hailee, from the very beginning, you never stood a chance. Every moment with Boris—the so-called saving you in the car crash, his supposed heart condition—was all staged. Everyone in his circle and even the so-called hospital staff all played their part in this cruel farce."

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After hitting send, Elliana gave Hailee a subtle nod, telling her to stay composed and play along.

Taking the cue, Hailee steadied herself and spoke into the phone. "I'm doing everything I can."

"Then move your ass!" Dunn shouted. "If you can't scrape it up yourself, beg your dad to sell that rundown diner. Boris doesn't have time!"

"Alright," Hailee said quietly, her voice drained of all emotion.

That seemed to satisfy him, at least for now. "Once you've got the cash, head to the hospital immediately. Talk to the doctors about the transplant," he added before abruptly ending the call.

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A bitter shake of the head was all Hailee could manage. "No. If this were nothing but a twisted game for him, then it ends now. I never want to lay eyes on him again."

Elliana studied Hailee for a long moment, her expression unreadable. "Don't you want to fight back? Even just a Little?"

A hollow ache flickered in Hailee's chest as she shook her head. "What would be the point? I'm nobody. He's untouchable -a rich man's son with the world at his feet. I could throw myself into the fire, but I can't risk dragging my father in with me."

Boris had sunk so low that he'd tricked her and schemed to take her kidney without a shred of remorse. If she ever tried to hold him accountable, there was no telling what he'd do in retaliation. She could handle whatever Boris threw at her, but she couldn't risk putting her father in harm's way.

Her father had spent his whole life running Loftus's Comfort Eats, hustling day and night just to put food on the table and send her to college. Yet, every dime she'd made after graduation had vanished into Boris's sick, twisted scam. Not once had she set aside anything for her father—no gifts, no token of thanks. The weight of that regret gnawed at her now, sharp and inescapable.

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Elliana squeezed Hailee's hand, signaling her to keep watching the scene inside the room. "You came here to see the real Boris, didn't you? Stay and watch."

Hailee, following Elliana's advice, continued to peer through the slightly ajar door.

Just then, a low chuckle drifted out of Dunn's lips. "Boris, guess what that fool Hailee's doing right now?"

Boris's voice was casual. "What else? After your call, she's probably grinding herself into the ground—maybe even trading off her blood for my 'treatment'."

Hailee's vision blurred with tears. She'd donated blood to "buy" another day for Boris and even made it a point to keep it from him, not wanting her sacrifices to weigh on him. Yet, only now did it dawn on her that he'd been observing her every move, treating her desperation as entertainment.

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"Exactly what I needed to hear," Dunn said, tension draining from his shoulders.

Meanwhile, beyond the door, Hailee's face hardened. Without a backward glance, she strode down the hallway, her steps quickening until she was sprinting away.

At the end of the corridor loomed a staircase.

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As he hung up, he saw Hailee wiping her face angrily with her sleeve.

Elliana stepped in and murmured something to Hailee, and together, they walked away.

Merlin hesitated and then moved like a shadow behind them. He didn't want to be seen, so he kept hidden—just close enough to keep them in sight.

Ten minutes later, the two women sat down on a roadside bench.

Behind them stretched a wall of green bursting with flowers, their golden heads swaying in the breeze, filling the air with a gentle sweetness.