

Wife Mask 451

Chapter: 451

Since his childhood, Cole had shone with rare brilliance, his mind as sharp as it was intuitive. Ruben had seen it early and nurtured it, doting on him. Even when they later discovered Cole carried the gene for Psycephrenia—passed down from Sophie—Ruben had made his choice. Cole would be his successor. Bertram and Emmanuel had agreed, quietly and without resistance. They, too, recognized Cole's exceptional abilities.

For years, hope had lived beside fear—a fragile dream that maybe Cole would not have an episode. But now, that illusion had been shattered. None of them could predict what state Cole's mind would be in when he awoke. Psycephrenia offered no mercy. No cure for now.

Ruben closed his eyes, sadness carved into every line of his face. Then, after a long pause, he turned back to Myles. "Is it true that Cole intends to divorce Elliana?"

"That's right. Mr. Evans wrote the divorce papers himself and asked me to deliver them to Mrs. Evans. He told me to make it clear he doesn't want to see her again", Myles answered truthfully.

"Alas! Cole must have realized his illness was catching up with him and didn't want Elliana to suffer because of it. While he's still in control, he's trying to cut her loose," Ruben commented in despair.

Chapter: 452

Only then did it occur to Ruben that he'd blurted out too much in front of everyone, failing to protect the secrecy of the situation.

Ruben's intention had always been to keep everything under wraps, afraid that word of Cole's illness—Psycephrenia—might spread and damage his reputation.

A heavy silence fell over the room as Lance and Jeff stared at Ruben, both of them demanding answers with anxious eyes.

Curiosity outweighed compassion among most family members. Elliana's vanishing mattered only because she carried the Evans name as Cole's wife and the family's matriarch. Trouble in Podgend was a stain no one could ignore.

So many eyes boring into him left Ruben feeling cornered. Hiding the truth any longer would only spark more gossip, but honesty seemed just as risky.

Chapter: 453

When everyone was talking about Elliana's disappearance earlier, Darling had picked up on the bad vibes, pacing, restless and wide-eyed.

Now, with Elliana stepping into the house, safe and sound, Darling couldn't get close fast enough.

Elliana glanced down at Jeff, still clinging to her like a lifeline. His shoulders shook with the force of his sobs. She remembered this kind of crying-she'd only seen it once before, during that terrible showdown with the Hendersons.

"I thought you were gone forever," Jeff said, trembling. "I thought Podgend swallowed you whole. I thought I'd lost you." His voice cracked beneath the weight of his grief.

Jeff's words weren't fancy, but the raw sincerity behind them struck a chord with everyone in the room. This wasn't just concern-it was the kind of deep, unwavering emotion that came from truly loving someone. Once her sharpest critic, he now looked at Elliana like she hung the stars.

Chapter: 454

Elliana swept into the room and made her way directly to Cole's bedside. Her fingers found his pulse, and her trained gaze assessed each of his wounds with practiced precision. Only after she confirmed that Cole had stepped back from death's threshold did she allow herself to exhale the breath she hadn't realized she'd been holding.

Charlie seized the moment to speak up. "Mrs. Evans, your husband should have regained consciousness hours ago, yet he remains locked in this state. My professional assessment suggests he's deliberately choosing to stay under—as if he's running from something that terrifies him. Do you have any insights into what that might be?"

Elliana's head moved in a slow nod. "Dr. Hoffman, your instincts are absolutely correct."

She had reached the same devastating conclusion. Cole was deliberately keeping himself trapped in unconsciousness, fleeing from some demon that haunted the corners of his mind.

Ever since their escape from that underground labyrinth, something fundamental had shattered within Cole. Elliana couldn't unravel what had triggered such a_ profound transformation in him, or

understand why he clung so desperately to this artificial sleep. What terror was Cole so determined to avoid confronting? Questions multiplied in her mind like storm clouds gathering.

Chapter: 455

Elliana sealed the door behind her and approached with measured steps. "Ruben, tell me truthfully- what caused Cole's injuries to be so severe?" she demanded, her voice tight with urgency.

Ruben delivered his answer without hesitation or softening. "He inflicted every wound upon himself."

"What?" The word escaped Elliana's lips, her eyes widening with shock. "Why would Cole deliberately harm himself?"

Ruben drew in a breath that seemed to carry the weight of years. "Elliana, what I'm about to share represents a family secret that has never been spoken beyond these walls. But as Cole's wife, you possess the absolute right to understand the truth. I'll reveal everything."

Ruben proceeded to explain the burden Cole carried-his status as a carrier of Psycephrenia, a genetic condition so rare that most medical professionals had never encountered it.

Chapter: 456

A weight seemed to settle on Ruben's shoulders. "At my father's deathbed, he'd made me swear I'd always look out for my brothers. I've tried to keep the peace, but Carter's never been willing to accept that leadership forever fell out of his or his descendants' reach."

From where Elliana_ stood, Ruben's' situation looked impossible. Family business wasn't her battlefield, but her resolve was ironclad-if Carter dared to lay a finger on Cole, she wouldn't hesitate to retaliate.

Ruben's tolerance stemmed from the deep bond of brotherhood, but for Cole's generation, the ties of kinship were considerably weaker.

One thing nagged at Elliana-her gut told her that Carter might have been behind the Phantom Mercenaries' attack on Cole. She wasn't the type to make empty threats. If she ever uncovered hard evidence, Carter would regret attempting to eliminate Cole for the rest of his days.

ALL those relatives had pegged Elliana as a failure, unable to help Cole in any way. Now, while Cole lay unconscious, they were circling like vultures. Elliana decided to let those moron think what they wanted. She'd make sure they learned not to underestimate her.

Chapter: 457

Elliana turned her head, unsurprised to find the speaker was Derek Evans—Carter's youngest grandson. A pampered playboy with more ego than sense, Derek was around her age and wore his arrogance like cologne—loud and suffocating.

Derek's older brother, Clarence Evans—the one Carter was grooming to usurp the throne and seize control of this family—sat nearby, calm and collected, a stark contrast to Derek's immaturity.

Elliana let her gaze drift over Derek with cool detachment before addressing him, voice crisp and clear, "Kindly explain why you refused to acknowledge me as the matriarch of this household when I am the wife of the family head. Why do you think this isn't my place?"

Derek scoffed, his lip curling in open contempt. "First of all, your ugly face alone disqualifies you for the matriarch role. We need one to bring grace and glory to this family, rather than shame and gossip. Second, word has it that back in Podgend, you've caused nothing but trouble—you picked fights with Cole, threw tantrums, and ran off like a child. He had to send nearly all his guards just to locate you, which made him easy prey for the Phantom Mercenaries' ambush. Your reckless behavior endangered him and caused enormous problems for the Evans family. And now you dare parade around as his wife?"

Elliana's expression didn't flinch, but her eyes narrowed, razor-sharp. So this was the narrative they'd spun. If this twisted version of events stuck, she'd be painted as the root of the chaos. A scapegoat. And Carter? He'd seize the opportunity, punish her publicly, and then pivot to blame Cole for letting his judgment be clouded by a woman. It was an elegant little trap, engineered to strip Cole of his leadership. And Derek? Just a puppet on Carter's string.

Chapter: 458

Standing beside Elliana, Paulina's presence gave weight to every word Elliana spoke.

Toby was here too, with a team of bodyguards. He stood by the door, silent and unmoving, like a wall, keeping watch over the room.

As Elliana and Derek exchanged blows with words, Paulina kept her cool, but deep down, she was in awe. Now, she finally understood why Cole had fallen so hard for Elliana. It wasn't just Elliana's beauty beneath her disguise. It was her fire, courage, and poise.

Elliana could be sweet and playful when things were calm, teasing Cole with charm. But when it mattered, she didn't flinch. She stood firm and took control. She was everything a perfect wife should be.

Paulina was still cheering Elliana on silently when Elliana's voice snapped her back.

Chapter: 459

Derek froze in shock. Carter and Clarence had told him to say those things. Now he was about to get twenty lashes, and no one was stepping in?

In a heartbeat, Toby's men pinned Derek to the floor. A man in black stepped forward, whip in hand. Without a word, he brought it down hard on Derek.

Each lash tore into Derek's back, leaving bloody streaks behind.

Derek screamed. His cries echoed through the conference room. Blood hit the floor. Some family members looked away. A few trembled.

Carter and Clarence sat stiffly, fists clenched, faces pale. They were too shaken to speak.

Chapter: 460

Irene radiated with a triumphant pride that was impossible to miss. Every movement she made was charged with a quiet arrogance, her satisfaction shining through. She didn't bother to hide her delight-in fact, she shot Elliana a sharp, mocking glance, as if Jason's future as head of the Evans family was already decided, and with it, her own position as the family's queen.

Right now, to Irene, Elliana was nothing more than a trivial annoyance, barely worth her notice.

Elliana's lips twitched, holding back a chuckle. If Irene knew the truth that she was Death Thorn herself, would Irene faint on the spot? Not that she had any plans of revealing herself. She would just let Irene enjoy her little fantasy while it lasted.