

Beneath His Ugly Wife's Mask: Her Revenge Was Her Brilliance

Chapter: 5

Everything tilted as he tossed her onto the bed, his body closing the space between them like a storm cloud rolling in.

The mattress bounced beneath her, his scent surrounding her completely, and she went still. With her horrible wig and makeup, was Cole seriously able to go through with it?

There was no denying it-Cole's looks had reeled Elliana in the moment they met. Her mind had gone places, spinning stories that had no business leaving the realm of fantasy. But the truth? When it came to intimacy, Elliana was a dreamer, not a doer. She might flirt with the idea, but following through had never been her style.

The moment Cole's fingers brushed the edge of her gown, instinct took over. Without thinking, she Lashed out, aiming a sharp slap straight at his face.

Cole reacted in an instant, his reflexes as sharp as a blade.

In the next breath, Elliana's balance slipped and she crashed to the floor, but not before Cole had already plucked off her veil—and her wig-with surgical ease.

A river of chestnut hair tumbled down her back, shimmering under the soft lighting like spun silk. In that moment, she didn't look real-she looked ethereal.

The mask she'd worn for years shattered in an instant. For fifteen years, she'd sold the lie-sickly, fragile, a girl with damaged hair and an unattractive face. And now, thanks to Cole, all of it unraveled in seconds.

One knee planted on the bed, Cole studied her like a puzzle piece he hadn't expected. Her glossy hair framed her face, still faintly marked from his recent move, and something in his gaze shifted-deep, unreadable.

The whispers had made their rounds through all of Ublento. People had claimed Elliana layered on makeup to hide her ruined face, and some even claimed they'd caught a glimpse beneath it, insisting her skin was scarred and terrifying.

However, moments earlier, Cole's fingers had brushed across her cheek, wiping away a smear of foundation. What peeked through wasn't mangled flesh—it was skin like porcelain, soft and smooth, as if even the air might bruise it.

Looking closely, Cole saw the truth. Her face was a work of quiet beauty—elegant lines, graceful proportions, and eyes that shimmered with depth like stars caught in motion. Underneath all that heavy makeup, she wasn't just attractive—she was striking. Without the camouflage, her beauty could've easily lit up a room.

Cole lifted an eyebrow, clearly entertained. The unattractive bride who had landed in his life out of the blue turned out to be a concealed stunner. Now this was getting intriguing.

Elliana noticed the perilous curl of Cole's lips, and a sharp wave of regret swept over her. She should've played it safer tonight. Too late now.

She had first believed that Cole, while dangerous, was the cold and controlled type. She pictured him as a composed man who wouldn't dare cross the line. But now she saw just how mistaken she'd been. This man was wildly unpredictable, swinging between polished gentleman and reckless rogue, impossible to get a read on. He could wear the mask of a composed aristocrat one moment and throw it off to become a reckless storm the next. Whatever scale of danger she'd measured him by—it wasn't nearly high enough.

Originally, Elliana thought tonight would be the last time she'd wear this ridiculously heavy and ugly makeup. She was ready to reclaim her identity and showcase her true self. But after meeting Cole, she knew better. With a man like him, keeping her true face hidden wasn't a choice—it was survival.

Cole broke the silence. "Could you explain what you were trying to do?"

Elliana fumbled for words. "I just... I didn't want to give you a lousy experience."

"No worries. Your face might be a mess, but that body's something else. I'll just switch off the lights and take my time enjoying it."

Elliana figured he was joking—until the room went pitch-black and her stomach dropped. He'd actually meant his words. She muttered to herself, "This bastard really has no shame."

She had barely a moment to respond before the shadow of his figure loomed closer. In a rush of panic, she bolted for the balcony, but the heavy layers of her wedding gown dragged at her steps. Quick and precise, he closed in once more and slammed her down, her back striking the unforgiving floor with a jarring thud.

Frustration boiled under her skin. Every fiber screamed to tear the dress off, toss it aside, and wrestle him down until one of them surrendered.

"Have you completely lost it, Cole?" Elliana snapped, fury cracking in her voice.

Most men would've run for the hills after seeing her made-up disaster of a face. But Cole? He didn't even blink. He was clearly wired differently.

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A low chuckle rumbled from his throat as he leaned in, his breath ghosting against her neck like a warning. His tone lowered, rough and laced with mischief. "We should make some noise." "Excuse me?"

"Grandpa's panicking that I'll leave you alone at the wedding night. He planted someone outside to listen in. If we don't put on a show, they'll be stationed at our door every night until you've got a baby bump."

"You asshole!" Elliana let out a breath of frustration. "If making noise is so important, then go make it yourself!"

The tension in Elliana's chest was impossible to miss—every breath sharp with fury. In the shadows, Cole's grin turned even more devilish as his hand traveled to her waist and gave her a sudden, sharp pinch.

"Ah!" Startled, she jerked beneath him, feeling a mix of pain and tickling.

Right then, the muffled footsteps outside finally drifted off down the hall.

Cole, however, showed no intention of letting her go. Instead, he leaned in near, his breath grazing her ear as he said, his tone thick with amusement, "Honey, you certainly know how to make some noise in the bedroom."

Flushed and fuming, Elliana swung for him again. Cole, sensing she'd had enough, lifted his hands in surrender and stepped away with a grin.

Crossing the room, he flicked the switch, flooding everything in warm Light.

The sudden glow made Elliana squint. Her vision took a moment to adjust, blinking through the haze.

She couldn't see herself, but right then, she sprawled on the floor, hair in disarray, wedding gown bunched around her. Chaotic, yes. But there was something untamed and magnetic in that moment.

Cole's gaze grew even more intense. "Well, is it your plan to keep lying there? You're beginning to make me wonder if you were just playing hard to get."

Elliana's breath hitched, but she didn't dignify him with a reply. She pushed herself off the floor, hauling the heavy gown with her as she stormed toward the dressing room.

Dozens of neatly hung outfits greeted her inside. Without hesitation, she locked the door, tore off the suffocating dress, and slipped into a black tracksuit. It felt like armor—light, easy to move in, and ready for anything. If Cole tried something now, she'd make him regret it.

The moment Elliana stepped out, she stopped cold. Whatever she'd expected—this wasn't it.

After his shower, Cole slipped into clean pajamas and made himself comfortable, stretched out like he owned the bed. The knot on his pajama top hung loose, exposing just enough of his defined chest and lean torso to make it feel intentional. It was hard to look away.

With how boldly Cole had been teasing her earlier, Elliana started to wonder if he was actually doing this on purpose, trying to tempt her.

For a moment, Elliana was at a loss for words. When they'd first crossed paths, she'd pegged Cole as distant and above it all, but tonight, he was anything but reserved.

Cole's eyes stayed on her, tracking every tiny shift in her expression like he was trying to read her mind.

There was something magnetic about Elliana. One moment, she was all charm and softness. The next, she lit up with fire and attitude. And then, without warning, she'd carry herself with a quiet, graceful allure. Every transformation had Cole's heart kicking

faster. He found himself wondering what kind of woman was hiding beneath all that awful makeup—and how stunning she might actually be.

People liked to treat Cole like he was carved from marble, like he was some flawless figure on a pedestal. But underneath it all, he was just a man who appreciated beauty - and a little fire to go with it. As luck would have it, the woman he married by chance might be exactly what he'd always wanted.

Cole had come to another realization. When it came to anything intimate, Elliana was completely clueless, turning red and flustered the second things took even the slightest flirtatious turn. That familiar impulse to tease her stirred once more. He gave the empty space next to him a light pat and said, "Honey, come to bed."

Elliana blinked, stunned. Was he actually serious about sharing the bed? A disbelieving smile tugged at her lips. Did he honestly think he'd get any sleep looking at her horrible make-up? Wasn't he even a little afraid she'd haunt his dreams?

She held her tongue instead of calling him insane, deciding it was wiser not to poke the beast unless she had to. With a forced smile, she said, "Well, what do you say we talk for a bit instead?"

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Cole raised an eyebrow. "What exactly do you want to discuss? The way you tricked everyone in the Jones family?"

Unfazed, Elliana retorted, "Or maybe how you mentally embraced yourself into marrying someone you can't even stand before setting off to the Jones family's residence..."

Cole's eyes narrowed as he studied her, standing there calmly. Did she really catch on to how much he hated Paige?

A slow, knowing smile tugged at Elliana's lips. She had noted plenty of details back at the Jones estate. She remembered how Cole subtly jerked his arm away when Paige latched onto him. Not once did his expression soften when Paige turned on the waterworks—instead, his eyes flashed with nothing but mocking iciness.

Moreover, right before they took off in the helicopter, he'd changed into a new suit and then tossed the one Paige had touched straight into the bin without hesitation. That wasn't ordinary dislike. That was raw, deep-seated revulsion.

Ever since then, a single question kept circling in Elliana's mind. If she hadn't interfered,

would Cole have actually married Paige?

Elliana proposed, "How about a deal? I'll keep your annoying admirers away from you, and in return, you don't mess with my life. Once we straighten out how we tied the knot, I'm gone. Fair enough?"

It sounded fair to her—a clean arrangement that benefited them both. She expected at least a nod. Instead, Cole collapsed onto the bed, shut his eyes like she didn't exist, and flicked the lights off without so much as a glance in her direction.

Biting back a curse, Elliana trudged toward the sofa, bumping her shin on the edge in the dark. She collapsed onto the cushions, too annoyed to care about a shower.

Hours passed in silence. Elliana drifted into sleep soundly.

Sometime in the middle of the night, Cole opened his eyes and slipped out of bed. Guided by the dim moonlight, he crossed the room and stopped in front of her, just watching.

The air carried a hint of Elliana's scent—clean and natural, untouched by perfume. It eased into his lungs and left behind a quiet, unexpected comfort.

Cole's mind wandered back to the feel of her against him earlier. She'd been so soft, her body yielding, and her slender waist had settled into his palm like it belonged there.

His hand hovered, inches from her cheek, the urge to wipe away the thick makeup growing stronger by the second. But just as he moved in, she shifted slightly. Startled, he backed away and returned to bed in silence, closing his eyes and feigning sleep like nothing had happened.

Damn. He didn't want to admit it, but part of him was genuinely scared of her catching him in the act.

The next morning, Elliana turned over on the plush mattress and woke up feeling unexpectedly well-rested. She thought she'd toss and turn all night in an unfamiliar place, but instead, she'd knocked out. Like someone had flipped a switch.

When she opened her eyes, the first thing she saw was Cole—already dressed, perched at the edge of the bed, and watching her like she was some kind of mystery he couldn't crack.

Elliana blinked, dazed and disoriented. Last she checked, she'd passed out on the couch. So why was she waking up in bed? Panic kicked in fast. She sat up and checked her clothes. The black tracksuit was still on, neat and untouched. A sigh slipped out before she could stop it.

Just as the tension started to fade, a new one crept in—Cole was clearly capable of anything, and that scared her more than she liked to admit.

Elliana usually trusted her instincts. They'd kept her safe more than once. But somehow, Cole had moved her while she was out cold, and she hadn't sensed a thing. Whatever trick he pulled, it worked—and she knew she'd need to be on guard from now on.

As if reading her mind, Cole let out a dramatic sigh, his tone laced with fake innocence as he said, "Honey, you climbed into bed yourself."

Elliana narrowed her eyes, not buying a single word of it.

Cole's eyes twinkled as he raised an eyebrow and grinned. "Actually, you didn't stop there. You stripped me down, cuddled up to me, had your hand on my chest, and whispered sweet nothings like 'darling'..."

"Shut your mouth!" Elliana shouted, her temper flaring before she could stop it. She could handle him being a smug flirt. But making up lies just to mess with her? That crossed the line.

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Still wearing that grin, Cole reached over and handed her his phone. "I took some videos. If you think I'm lying, go ahead and watch for yourself..."

Elliana hesitantly took the phone and pressed play on the video.

The screen lit up with a recording of Elliana rising from the couch in the dead of night, moving like a sleepwalker before crawling into the large bed.

In the footage, Cole had rubbed his eyes, his voice heavy with sleep. "Is everything alright?"

"Shhh!" Elliana had whispered, pressing a finger to her lips like she was keeping a secret. And then it all went downhill. She yanked off Cole's pajama shirt, hugged his waist like a stuffed animal, pressed her palm to his chest, and curled up against him with a sweet,

sleepy sigh. "Sleep tight, darling."

Elliana's face turned red with embarrassment as the video ended. Yesterday at the wedding banquet, she had given in and taken a tiny glass of wine, mostly to shut up one of the younger cousins who wouldn't stop pestering her.

Elliana was well aware she couldn't handle alcohol. Even worse, drinking usually came with the side effect of sleepwalking. She had thought one little drink seemed harmless at the time, but apparently, the effects had kicked in during the night. Trying to explain that "darling" was once the name of her childhood cat wouldn't help. He'd just laugh even harder. No way he'd buy the excuse that she thought she was cuddling a tabby in her sleep.

Elliana shot Cole a sharp look, choosing not to waste her breath trying to explain. "Let's say I was sleepwalking. Couldn't you have at least pushed me aside?"

Cole laughed under his breath, eyes twinkling with mischief as he nudged the phone back toward her. "You're not done yet. Play the next one."

A knot formed in her stomach. Still, she tapped on the next clip with dread.

In this video, Elliana had been practically glued to Cole, limbs draped around him like some lovesick octopus. From the bed, his voice came through the speaker, low and amused. "Honey, don't you think this is a little excessive?"

And then came the kicker—she had smacked his rear and said, "One more word and I'll spank you even harder!"

As the screen faded to black, Elliana sat motionless, cheeks blazing. All she wanted was to vanish.

Laughter spilled from Cole as he leaned over her. "You're adorably fierce. Throwing threats like that... How was I supposed to resist?"

Enough was enough. With a huff, Elliana tore off the covers and sprinted out of the bedroom like the place was on fire.

Cole was doubled over with laughter, his shoulders bouncing with every breathless chuckle. After diving under the covers and faking sleep last night, he had waited for the inevitable scolding. She had woken up, just as he feared. But instead, she'd given him a

night full of surprises.

In a blur of panic, Elliana darted into the bathroom. She slammed the door, threw the lock, and tugged at her hair like she could wring the embarrassment out. She muttered a string of curses under her breath. If anything, this was a brutal reminder—alcohol was never her friend.

She had just started pulling herself together when a knock rattled the door. Cole's voice drifted in, light and teasing. "Honey, time's ticking. The elders are waiting to meet us. Better get moving."

The wealthy Evans family had upheld its numerous traditions for generations. One of the most important came the morning after the wedding, when the newweds were expected to greet the elders properly—a small but serious tradition that meant respect had been given and approval was earned.

Elliana didn't need the reminder. She yanked the door open, determined not to react to the humor dancing in Cole's eyes. Her cheeks burned as she asked, "What do I wear?"

"I've got you covered." He handed over a bag.

Elliana snatched it, shut the door, and got to work. Shower. Outfit change. A fresh layer of makeup to seal the deal.

But her thoughts drifted, uninvited, back to the night before. Cole had made a move to her. Maybe her makeup hadn't been terrible enough. So today, she dialed it down even harder, dragging the brush like she meant it.

Once she was finally dressed, she cracked the door open. Spotting Cole just waiting by the door, she asked, "Where's my wig?"