

Chapter 702 Search

Just as the confusion in the room peaked, Ruben hurried over, clutching his phone. "Bertram, quick! You have to see this—why would Jason send me such a strange message?"

At that time, the Evans family hadn't yet heard of Taylor's fall. No one knew what had truly happened.

The moment Ruben saw Jason's text, his gut told him something was terribly wrong. He replied right away, but got no response. He called Jason again and again, only to hear the endless ring. Wracked with anxiety, he rushed to find Bertram, desperate for answers.

When Ruben walked in and saw Irene's hysterical state, he froze. "What's wrong with her?"

"The doctor said she had a severe shock. She's not in her right mind," Bertram explained curtly, eager to change the subject. "Dad, what did you want to show me?"

Ruben handed him the phone. "Jason sent me this odd message, and now he won't answer my calls."

Bertram scanned the text and then looked at the raving Irene. His blood ran cold. His face stiffened, and he stumbled back a step. Whatever had broken Irene had to be tied to Jason. And for her to be in this state, it had to be a matter of life and death. He couldn't even bring himself to finish the thought.

Fearing Ruben might crumble from the possibility that Jason was dead, Bertram buried his suspicion deep.

"Dad, don't worry too much," Bertram said, forcing calm into his voice. "Jason probably messed something up at work. He's just blaming himself. I'm sure it's nothing serious. He only needs time to cool down."

Ruben thought about it. Jason was always steady and reliable. The explanation seemed reasonable. Some of his worry faded, but unease

still lingered. "Then I'll call Cole. Maybe he knows something."

"I'll do it, Dad. You should rest," Bertram insisted firmly. As Jason's father, a frantic worry was clawing at him. He had to be the one to get answers.

Ruben sighed and nodded. "Alright. Let me know what you find." With that, he turned and left.

Once Ruben was gone, Bertram addressed the others still lingering in the room. "Alright, the show's over. Get back to your business."

The small crowd scattered.

Once alone with Bertram, Jeff raised his eyes, voice tight with worry. "Dad... What's really wrong with Jason?"

Bertram's mask slipped. "Jason's in trouble. Big trouble. You stay here and watch your mother. I'm going to find out what's going on. And not a word of this to anyone."

Jeff gave a sharp nod. "I understand." Though young and once reckless, his time with Elliana had steadied him. He could be trusted now.

Bertram hurried into the study, shut the door with a slam, and dialed Cole's number.

Far away, Cole hadn't returned to Ublento since leaving Beakcliff. He had gathered a team of professional rescuers and was planning the search for Taylor through the night.

The forest below the cliff was a death trap. No one who'd entered ever made it out. A fall from that height left no chance of survival. Yet, Cole still pressed forward. Even if all they found was a piece of Taylor—or just torn clothing—it would be something.

Throughout all this, Elliana had stayed by his side. Cole had urged her to rest, but she refused. How could she possibly sleep now?

They were deep in discussion when Cole's phone buzzed with Jason's message.

Fear twisted in Cole's stomach upon reading the content. He immediately called Jason back, but just like Ruben, he was met with an

endless, unanswered ring.

Elliana, reading over Cole's shoulder, caught sight of the message. While he was still frowning in confusion, her fingers were already flying across her own screen, hacking a trace on Jason's phone.

Jason's phone was heavily encrypted, but for a hacker of Elliana's caliber, it was only a matter of moments.

When the location flashed on her screen, the color drained from her face. She grabbed Cole's arm. "Cole. Look."

Cole's eyes fell on the coordinates, and his breath caught. Jason's phone was at the bottom of Beakcliff. Jason was sharp and careful. He would never be separated from his phone—not unless he was incapacitated.

With the strange message and the location together, the brutal truth struck Cole and Elliana like a hammer.