

A Farewell 141

Chapter 141

Ian's parents didn't even return from overseas after she was admitted to a psychiatric hospital. So there was no need for her to deal with her in-laws.

"It's okay. You should focus on your own matters," Sage said, comforting Tiana.

She couldn't help but add, "Actually, you've done very well. Even if they don't acknowledge you, you don't have to feel aggrieved."

"I just don't want Wilson to be distracted by these things," said Tiana optimistically. "But you're right, I have done very well. I'm sure they will eventually accept me as their daughter-in-law. After all, I'm so outstanding!"

Although Sage knew Tiana was being overly optimistic, she didn't want to dampen her spirits.

"Just love yourself a little more. If you can't handle something, leave it to Wilson. It's good that he's busy, but he can't just ignore everything because of that."

"I know, I know. Don't worry," Tiana responded.

After hanging up the phone, Sage let out a sigh. Tiana was too much like her old self. She was too stubborn to be convinced with only a few words. It would take time.

Two days passed in the blink of an eye. Due to the live broadcast, the alcohol poisoning incident at Mimosa had gained a lot of public attention. Although the other party insisted that Mimosa's liquor was at fault, they were hesitant to provide extensive test results.

Naturally, the court of public opinion favored Mimosa. Farsight Investment had also finalized the contract details with Mimosa, and the first payment was expected to arrive in Mimosa's accounts soon.

As long as Mimosa continued to grow and did not breach any major contracts, the subsequent funds would continue to be channeled in as scheduled. Even its IPO was

imminent.

Priscilla was very happy with the results and invited everyone in the company, including Sage, to a celebratory party.

Ivy was finally discharged from the hospital. When she saw the news of Mimosa signing a contract with Farsight Investment, her expression turned extremely ugly.

Sage had smoothly revived Mimosa and even successfully roped in Farsight Investment. She couldn't believe that Sage could do all that without the tacit approval or assistance of Ian.

With his influence, it would be effortless to bring down a company like Mimosa. Besides, Shane couldn't outwit Ian and secure

a contract if the latter didn't allow it.

He knew that Sage was one of the shareholders of Mimosa, which was why he had been so tolerant toward the company's affairs this time.

But Ivy couldn't understand why Ian, despite knowing that Sage was using her status as his wife to gain fame, indulged in her reckless behavior.

On top of that, why wasn't Sage reacting to any of the rumors online about Ian not loving her and intending to dump her?

Things were spiraling out of control. Originally, Ivy thought she could trick Sage into making a scene to make Ian detest her, but it turned out to be counterproductive. Instead, Sage ended up benefiting greatly from her scheme.

She was about to get into her car when a balding man approached her. “Ms. Shekdotter, care for a cup of coffee together?”

Seeing the impatience and urgency in Benjamin’s eyes, Ivy felt annoyed. However, she concealed this with a professional smile.

“Sure,” she answered.

The two headed to a cafe next to the hospital. Benjamin first expressed his gratitude for her help in resolving his troubles last time. Then, he mentioned his hope for Bolton Investment’s investment in his new winery.

Ivy rejected him outright and said, “Mr. Xenith, given the current situation, do you really think you are in a position to seek investors?”

Benjamin’s face immediately darkened, no longer concealing his resentment. He scolded, That bitch ruined my reputation, kicked me out, and used my misery to her advantage. She used me as a stepping stone for her success, and now I can’t even secure an investment. People in the industry are looking down on me both openly and secretly!”

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Ivy said, “Ms. Davis is not only highly capable but also has good luck. When she faced economic difficulties, someone helped her out. When sales were poor, they came up with ideas to hype her business up, and they even managed to secure investments for her.”

Benjamin immediately knew who she was referring to. In fact, he had come to her today intending to find out more about her.

“Why would Mr. Holcomb’s wife help that wretched woman so much? Did she do it at the behest of Mr. Holcomb?”

Ivy chuckled and said, "I'm not sure if it was Mr. Holcomb's intention. But you can have someone look into the truth behind the reports from the party that day and the true nature of the relationship between Mr. Holcomb and his wife. You'll get your answers if you do."

Although she was very vague with her words, Benjamin was a smart person who understood what she was trying to say—Ian's relationship with his wife was not good, and he wouldn't have cooperated with her to help Mimosa. 1

Satisfied with the answer he received Benjamin said, "Ms. Shekdotter, thank you for having coffee with me. When I expand and stabilize my winery, I hope that you will be a partner of

mine."

Ivy stood up and replied, "I'm also looking forward to that day. But before that happens, I hope you won't be crushed by your ex-wife."

Upon hearing this, a glint of coldness flashed in his eyes, but it quickly disappeared.

Priscilla was thrilled, so she decided to have a few extra drinks at lunchtime. Sage and her assistant had to carry her back to the office. After leaving Mimosa, Sage headed to the sports complex since it was still early.

Michael had specifically instructed her a few days ago to focus on the basics so she could excel in self-defense and kickboxing. Since she was originally there to keep fit, she wanted to stick to her training routine.

Just as she arrived at the sports complex, she bumped into Henry. He was sitting in the rest

area.

"Ms. Joyner, what a coincidence," he said when he saw her. Standing up, he continued, "I've been to several gyms around town and I still fancy this sports complex the most."

“The coach just said that someone like me, who has a good foundation level of fitness, is more suitable for practicing kickboxing. Ms. Joyner, you’re considered my senior here. Please take care of me in the future.”

Sage wasn’t surprised at all by this. She smiled faintly and answered, “I don’t think you’ll need me to take care of you. I’ve only trained a few times, and I haven’t even mastered the basics. But I’m open to friendly matches when we have the time.”

“No problem!”

“How have things been between you and Layla these past few days? Has she forgiven you?” she asked casually.

“I guess she has,” Henry replied, his face lit up with an affectionate smile. “She even came with me to the sports complex today. Look! She’s over there!”

Following his gaze, Sage saw Layla. She was wearing a knee-length skirt, with a designer handbag slung over her shoulder. Looking joyful, she was busy taking selfies with her phone.

“Layla, guess who I ran into?” Henry called out to Layla

Her smile instantly faded a little when she saw Sage. “What are you doing here?” she questioned.

“Layla, I asked Ms. Joyner about this sports complex. She said the training here is good, so I wanted to check it out. I didn’t expect to run into her here,” Henry explained proactively.

Layla snorted lightly and ignored Henry. She picked up her phone to take more selfies. It was then that Sage noticed the pair of dazzling diamond earrings that Layla was wearing. The exquisite craftsmanship and style looked very familiar...

She had sold those exact earrings at half price on a second-hand website two days ago.

Perhaps because it was cheap, it was snapped up the same day it was listed. Why were her earrings here with Layla now?

"Your earrings look nice. Where did you get it?" Sage asked.

There was a hint of pride on Layla's face as she replied, "You've got a good eye. These are go the latest earrings from Gorgine Fits. They are very hard to come by. Henry had a friend to great lengths to buy them for me."

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"As long as you're not mad at me anymore, it's worth the effort I put in," said Henry. His words were as sweet as honey.

Layla rolled her eyes at him and looked at Sage provocatively, saying, "Why are you staring at my earrings? Are you jealous? Does Ian not buy you earrings?"

"He did, but I threw them in the trash. They're the same ones that are now on your ears," Sage thought to herself. Of course, she didn't say that out loud..

Instead, she chuckled lightly and said, "I saw a similar pair on a second-hand website a couple of days ago. I was worried you might be wearing fakes, so I wanted to take a closer look."

After hearing her words, an awkward look appeared on Henry's face, and he quickly explained, "Sage, this is definitely not a fake. Although my friend lost the certificate, I took it to the official store for verification, and it's absolutely authentic!"

Sage comforted, "I only saw something similar. I didn't say that yours was fake. Don't worry too much. Besides, you don't seem like someone who would buy gifts for your crush from a

second-hand website.”

Henry exclaimed, “Of course not! I just didn’t want Layla to misunderstand. Next time, if she likes something, I’ll bring her to pick it out at the store together!”

“Ignore her. She just can’t stand me receiving gifts when she doesn’t. She’s just jealous!”

Although Layla’s words were aggressive, her tone noticeably lacked conviction.

“If there’s nothing else, I’ll go change and get ready for training,” said Sage, preparing to leave.

“Go ahead then, Sage.” Henry stood up and walked out with Layla. Turning to her, he asked, “Layla, are you hungry? Where do you want to eat?”

Ignoring him, she furrowed her eyebrows, as if pondering, something. She seemed to still be shaken by Sage’s words. Although their relationship had been strained since childhood, Layla knew that Sage wouldn’t casually lie about such things.

Sage also had a feeling that something was off. Layla wasn’t the type to be easily swayed by a pair of earrings. Why did she seem closer to Henry all of a sudden? What had happened in the past few days?

She thought of checking Layla’s social media but found herself unable to see any of her posts. Layla had restricted her account to “Chat Only”,

She was worried about Layla’s future, but the latter didn’t even treat her like a sister! Forget it. She could be with whoever she wanted!

Feeling angry at the thought, Sage vented her frustration on the punching bag, As she punched the punching bag with all her strength, the coach mistook her for someone

learning boxing and brought her gloves.

After spending two hours at the sports complex, she was dripping with sweat. As she was about to leave, she noticed a missed call from Layla.

She called back and asked, "What's up?"

With an unpleasant tone, Layla said, "This afternoon, you mentioned seeing my earrings on a second-hand website. Take a screenshot and send it to me."

Sage scoffed and rebutted, "I don't owe you anything. What's with the attitude?"

"Sage Joyner, don't act like we're still kids! Haven't you bullied me enough when we were kids?"

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"We're both granddaughters of the Joyners, but you have it better than me in terms of food, clothing, and even living expenses. Grandpa only spoils you and not me! I'm only asking you for a small favor, but here you are dragging your feet!"

Indeed, Donald favored her more. Sage understood that this affection stemmed from his pity for her lack of paternal love. However, if she and Layla had a dispute, Donald was always rational and never blindly favored her.

Susan's influence on Layla was too significant, which led to her deeply held resentment toward Sage. Unable to clarify these matters with Layla for the time being, Sage said, "I'll send it to you in a minute."

"You didn't seem interested in Henry at all the last time I saw you. How come you two are getting along so well now?" Sage couldn't help but ask Layla.

"Mind your own business!" Layla yelled and hung up.

Sage was rendered speechless. After sending the screenshot to Layla, she left the sports complex. As she got into the car, she felt like someone was watching her

from behind.

She glanced around but didn't see anyone suspicious. She assumed that it was just her imagination, so she brushed the thought aside and drove off.

Wanda hastily ran over and said, "Mrs. Holcomb, Mr. Holcomb is back and upstairs working in his study. I just brewed some tea. Could you please take the tea up to him?"

"Mr. Holcomb also complained about the pain in his hand and asked me to bring him some ointment. Mrs. Holcomb, could you help him with this as well?"

"Oh, by the way, Mr. Holcomb asked me just now when you'd be back."

Afraid that Wanda would continue nagging if she didn't agree, Sage took the tea and ointment from her. "Okay, I'll go."

door.

Ian's clear voice rang out from inside. "Come in."

She pushed open the door and saw him flipping through some documents at a spacious desk. There was a laptop open in front of him. With his brows furrowed, he looked serious and stern while exuding an air of professionalism.

Thinking that she was Wanda, Ian instructed without raising his head, "Just put

them down here."

Following his orders, Sage placed the tea and ointment beside him. Noticing that the person next to him wasn't Wanda, he looked up. Upon seeing her, a hint of surprise appeared in his dark eyes.

“Back already?” he asked casually. It used to be her asking him this question.

She averted her gaze and replied, “Wanda’s busy, so she asked me to bring these up to you.”

“Perfect timing. Can you help me apply the ointment?” he asked, extending his right hand toward her. His once pale skin was now peeling, wrinkled, and somewhat unsightly.

“Haven’t you been applying the ointment for the past two days?” she said while wrinkling her nose.

Annoyed, he let out a cold laugh and said, “Drop that disgusted expression of yours. Think about who I’m enduring this for.”

Sage didn’t want to dwell on that night’s events, so she said nothing and used a cotton swab to apply the medicine.

After she was done, Ian resumed his work. Meanwhile, she threw away the cotton swab, tightened the cap of the ointment, and hung around. She wasn’t in a rush

to leave.

This was how she used to be. She used to find excuses to stay in his study. Even if he asked her to leave, she wouldn’t get angry.

Instead, she would boldly suggest, “Ian, you’ve been reading those documents

for so long. Let me give you a shoulder massage!”

If he rejected her, although she would only feel a little disheartened, she almost always instantly came up with a new proposal.

“Then how about having some tea? It can refresh your mind!”

Only when he frowned and urged her to leave would she reluctantly depart.

In the past, Ian would find this kind of behavior from her particularly annoying. But now, seeing her dawdling and not leaving, he surprisingly didn’t feel repulsed. Instead, he was rather happy.

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“Stay if you want. Just don’t make too much noise. If you feel bored, read a book,

”said Ian.

Only a fool would want to stay here, Sage thought to herself. Then, she glanced at him and asked, “Can I borrow your phone for a moment?”

“Is your phone dead?”

“No, but I just want to go on Instagram. Don’t worry, I have no intention of invading your privacy. I can’t see Layla’s account, so I want to take a look using your account,” Sage replied truthfully.

Ian pursed his lips and unlocked his phone, handing it over to her.

“Thanks.” Sage took the phone and opened Instagram, where she immediately looked up Layla’s profile. To her surprise, Layla had sent Ian some messages, though he seemed to have ignored every one of them.

Pulling up Layla's Instagram profile, Sage confirmed that Layla hadn't blocked Ian as every update she posted was visible to him. Sage couldn't help but feel irritated by this. If it weren't for the fact Layla was family, Sage wouldn't even have bothered caring about her!

Suppressing her anger, Sage quickly scrolled through Layla's account. Layla loved posting daily updates, from what she had for breakfast to her night routine. She loved sharing various aspects of her life.

In particular, a post from two days ago caught Sage's attention. The caption read, "The meteor shower was beautiful. Things got really dicey. But luckily everything turned out fine in the end. Some people actually remember the little things you. say offhand (how cute)."

The caption was accompanied by several photos of the night sky. In one of them,

a faint silhouette of a man was visible.

While Susan might not have recognized the figure, Sage could easily tell it was Henry. So Henry had accompanied Layla stargazing the other night. What else had happened?

Without a doubt, Sage believed that the "dicey" situation Layla mentioned in her post was orchestrated by Henry.

Who would have thought that after his previous scheme went awry, Henry had devised yet another plan? No wonder Layla had accepted his gift and trusted him

so much.

Sage wondered if the earring incident earlier that day would help Layla come to her senses. She could simply have someone investigate Henry's background and show it to Layla.

But regardless of whether Layla would believe her, based on Henry's previous actions, he might resort to desperate measures that could potentially harm Layla.

Furthermore, Sage didn't want to alert Henry prematurely. Both Henry and Sandra were acting under Ivy's orders, so she wanted to use Henry against Ivy and let her taste betrayal firsthand.

Just then, Ian's phone chimed with a new notification, drawing Sage's attention. She glanced at it unconsciously. It was a message from Ivy.

"Ian, did your business trip go smoothly? I was discharged from the hospital. today."

"Who is it?" Ian noticed Sage furrowing her brow when his phone pinged and came to her side.

"See for yourself." Sage handed the phone back to him. "I'm done with it. Thanks."

With that, she turned and left without hesitation, as if her fetching tea and applying medicine for him was merely an excuse to ask for his phone.

Ian held onto the phone, staring at her retreating figure. A faint whiff of her lingering fragrance was left in the air as she walked away.

He opened WhatsApp and casually replied to Ivy's message before returning to his desk. It seemed like Ivy knew Ian's whereabouts better than Sage did.

Upon returning to her room, Sage noticed a delicately wrapped gift box placed conspicuously on the table.

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The box didn't seem like it contained jewelry, but rather some kind of ornament. Sage walked over and opened it, revealing an exquisitely crafted bunny-shaped desk lamp. It was made of crystal and red gemstones adorned its eyes.

When she pressed the switch, the bunny emitted a soft white glow from its body, while its eyes glowed a faint red. It was a beautiful and unique sight.

Recalling that night at the restaurant where she had reached out to touch a bunny -shaped lantern, she thought that Ian must have guessed that she liked bunnies and brought this back for her.

Although Sage didn't want to accept anything from Ian, this bunny was

undeniably adorable. It would be a shame to throw it away, so she placed it on her

bedside table.

After a tiring afternoon of training, Sage indulged in a relaxing bath. When she emerged from the bathroom, Wanda informed her that dinner was ready. With a towel wrapped around her head, Sage put on some comfortable loungewear as she headed downstairs for dinner.

Ian happened to come out of the study at the same time and was stunned by her attire. He cast several questioning looks in her direction.

Her skin was rosy and delicate, and combined with the pink towel wrapped around her head, this made her look charming and innocent. Ian had an

irresistible urge to walk over and pinch her cheeks.

Noticing him staring, Sage shot him a nonchalant glare and asked, "What are you looking at? Have you never seen a woman without makeup before?" After that, she strode down the stairs in her slippers.

Lately, Sage had been going bare-faced at home, and her clothing was also less. put-together. Ian had naturally seen her without makeup, but he hadn't seen her dressed like this after a bath.

By the time Ian composed himself and went downstairs, Sage had already started eating. She was scooping soup from a bowl with her right hand, while her left

hand held a drumstick. She looked like she was starving.

Looking content with the food, she said in between bites, “Wanda, your cooking is getting better and better! You’re reaching the level of a professional chef!”

Wanda beamed with joy. “Mrs. Holcomb, you’re too kind! You’re actually just starving after your afternoon workout. That’s why you find it exceptionally tasty.

“No that’s not it! Your cooking is awesome and there’s no arguing that!” Sage paused to drink some soup before adding, “You should come with me when I leave and keep cooking for me!”

“Mrs. Holcomb, what do you mean? Where are you going? Are you and Mr. Holcomb moving?” Wanda asked in confusion. She had never taken Sage’s divorce talk seriously, so it didn’t even come to mind.

Ian happened to approach the dining table at that moment, and Sage didn’t want to spoil the joyous atmosphere with an argument. So, she replied casually, Never mind. Wanda, why don’t you join us for dinner?”

Glancing at Ian, Wanda shook her head. “No thank you, Mrs. Holcomb. I have to be in the kitchen.”

Ian always gave off an air of aloofness, so Wanda would feel uncomfortable sitting with him. Knowing this, Sage didn’t pursue the matter any further.

“Sage, when will you stop bringing that up?” Ian stared at her and asked...”

Grandma interrupted us and tore up the divorce agreement. Do you still want to cause trouble?”

His words no longer caused Sage to feel angry as she had lost interest in arguing at this point. She resumed her meal without acknowledging him.

“You keep saying you don’t want to bind me with marriage anymore and that you want to give me my freedom. Since I’m the one who’s trapped in this hell, shouldn’t I be the one to ask for the divorce?” Ian pressed on.

He must have overheard Sage's video call with Tiana last time. Upon hearing his words, Sage lifted her head and responded, "As long as we both want the same thing, it doesn't matter who asks for it."

"Did I say I wanted this?" Ian questioned calmly.

Sage thought for a moment before responding. "Of course. Maybe you've forgotten, but you were the one who handed me the divorce agreement and asked me to sign it."

After finishing her soup, Sage continued, "You have no feelings for me. When I asked you if you were reluctant to divorce, you said it didn't matter. Why was that?"

Chapter 147

"Our marriage has been troublesome enough. I don't want to go through another uphill battle by getting a divorce. I'm busy with work every day. I don't want

outsiders speculating or questioning the reasons for my divorce, nor do I want to upset Grandma because of it."

Although Ian's reasons were quite legitimate, they made Sage chuckle. "That's okay, but signing a piece of paper won't be a hassle. Besides, there's no shortage of women who want to marry you."

Sage didn't mention Ivy, so Ian wouldn't think she was talking about her. "I believe your new wife will treat Grandma even better than I do. Grandma won't be upset then."

Although Linda cared for her, it was only because Sage was her granddaughter-in-law. Sage was well aware of this.

Ian was rendered momentarily speechless by Sage's words. "Sage, what exactly has suddenly made you so dissatisfied that you're in a rush to free yourself of this marriage?"

He had made it up to her for missing their fifth anniversary by letting her go on a shopping spree. As for his absence at home, he was recently trying to be home. whenever it was possible.

Not only had he moved his clothes to the walk-in closet for her to match their outfits, but he had even moved into the master bedroom to sleep with her.

These were all Sage's requests, and he had fulfilled them dutifully. He couldn't understand why despite all of this, Sage still seemed so unhappy.

Faced with his questioning, Sage grinned. "My biggest dissatisfaction is that you don't know what's making me dissatisfied."

At a loss for words, Ian stopped wasting his breath on Sage and began eating his dinner. The rest of the meal was eaten in silence.

The peace and quiet actually made Sage enjoy the meal even more. She ate her fill of chicken and soup and even finished a plate of pasta.

The other man, who had a slightly higher-pitched voice, said smugly, "Sign your name and press your fingerprint on this letter of guarantee, and we'll let you off!" As he spoke, he handed a piece of paper to Sage.

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Sage didn't dare to sign anything recklessly. So as she took the paper to make the two men lower their guard, she reached into her pocket to grab her phone to call the police.

But just as her fingers touched her phone, a hand suddenly reached out from behind and forcefully pulled her back.

"Ah!" Sage screamed in fright, swinging her fists and kicking with her legs blindly in an attempt to fight back.

“Hey! It’s me!” When Sage heard Ian’s voice, she stopped struggling.

She looked up and saw Ian’s face. However, because of how dim the streetlamps were, Sage couldn’t make out his expression clearly.

“How did you get here? Where are they?” Sage asked, her heart still racing.

Ian’s voice was grave. “They ran away. Why did you come to such a sketchy place for your walk?”

Having calmed down, Sage felt her legs go weak. She sat down on a nearby rock. I just happened to be passing by! Who knew I would encounter them? Call the police, quickly!”

Sage took out her phone, but Ian said coldly, “No need. The police won’t find any evidence here. I’ll send someone to investigate and handle it.”

“I have evidence!” Sage raised the piece of paper, but to her surprise, her hand

was empty.

Ian saw through her thoughts and explained kindly, “They were obviously experienced. As soon as they sensed something was wrong, they grabbed the paper and ran. They wouldn’t leave any evidence for you, to use against them.”

Earlier, Sage had been so focused on figuring out how to call the police that she hadn’t noticed the paper being snatched away, nor had she noticed Ian approaching.

“Let’s go home,” Ian urged.

Sage shook her head, saying, “Wait, my legs are weak. I need to rest for a little while longer.”

Ian gave her a strange look and crouched down in front of her. Sage couldn’t believe what he said next.

"Hurry up and get on!" Ian said impatiently.

Sage hesitated for a moment before obediently lying on his back. Ian held her legs and hoisted her up, walking forward with her on his back.

As she lay on Ian's back, Sage recalled being carried by her grandfather in the same way when she was a child. His broad shoulders and warm back gave her a sense of comforting security.

Now, lying on Ian's back, she found that his back was similarly broad, warm, and reassuring. She could even catch a faint whiff of his cologne.

Ian's steps were steady. Even though Sage wasn't heavy, he grew tired after carrying her for a while. However, he didn't ask her to get down nor, did he show any sign of annoyance.

"Ian, if only you had been this patient with me in my previous life- No! You didn't even need to show this much patience. Just a little less disgust and

indifference would have done.

"If you had treated me like you treated others, I wouldn't have been so paranoid and done so many crazy things.

"If only that were the case, I wouldn't have ended up being framed, sent to a mental institution, and suffering stomach cancer..." Sage thought to herself.

"Are you crying?" At that moment, Ian's teasing voice echoed in her ears and interrupted her thoughts. "You dared to bite and even fight against me. Why are you so shaken up by those guys' threats?"

Sage didn't even know when tears had started streaming down her face. She wiped them away with the back of her hand and said, "I'm fine now. Put me down.

Hearing her voice suddenly become cold and distant, Ian looked back at her. "Are

you burning bridges with me now?"

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Sage wasn't in the mood to bicker with him. If he wanted to carry her, so be it. She wasn't the one getting tired anyway. Having waited on Ian for so many years, she shouldn't feel bad about benefitting from him for once.

With this thought in mind, Sage fell silent and placed her hands back onto his shoulders, leaning back slightly to adopt a posture that suggested she was

making him her laborer.

Ian understood her intentions, and for a moment, he didn't know whether to be angry or amused. The two walked back home without exchanging a word,

maintaining this intimate, yet oddly, distant posture.

When they arrived, Sage prepared to get down to change her shoes, but Ian continued to carry her.

"Are you planning to carry me upstairs?" Sage asked.

Ian replied, "It's only a few steps away." With that, he carried her upstairs.

Wanda heard the commotion and came out. Seeing the affectionate scene, she smiled like a doting aunt before quickly retreating to the kitchen. All the while, Sage didn't know what to say.

Once they were back in the room, Ian finally set Sage down. His arms were a bit sore from carrying her for so long, and he massaged them. It was such an obvious hint, so Sage naturally understood what it meant.

The old Sage would have tenderly massaged his arms for him, shyly asking if he was tired. But now, she simply pushed him away and said, "Move aside. I need to use the bathroom."

Ian's patience was finally wearing thin. He chided, "Sage, I carried you for so long. Don't you understand the concept of reciprocity?"

Even if he hadn't earned it, he had still worked hard. Was she just going to ignore

that?

Sage smiled sarcastically. "Yes, you've worked hard. But I didn't force you to

carry me. What's more, when I told you to put me down, you insisted on carrying me. So if your arms are sore, that's your problem. I'm not obligated to massage them for you."

Just like how she used to serve him tea, run errands for him, and inquire about his well-being, Ian had never forced her to do so. She did it because she believed that it would move him.

That was why Ian had always treated her efforts with indifference. It was because everything she did for him, and every sacrifice she made, was of her own volition.

With his mindset, she could forget about asking him to return favors. Now, Sage was merely using his thinking against him.

Ian frowned at her words. "I just helped you, didn't I?" Normally, Ian wouldn't bother bringing these trivial matters up, but at this moment, he seemed inclined to argue. "Can't you at least massage my arms as a thank-you?"

Sage didn't deny his contribution. She walked to the bedside table, opened the drawer, and picked out a bank card. Then, she handed it to him. "There's a 100 grand in there. Go to a massage parlor and get a monthly subscription for arm massages."

Ian was momentarily lost for words. After a while, he stormed out of the bedroom. Meanwhile, Sage walked into the bathroom without a trace of guilt.

Such a hypocrite! He had always treated her like that. So why was he getting angry when it was directed at him?

But regardless, what happened outside really was dangerous. Since Benjamin had sent people to threaten her, he must have been really desperate. She wondered how Priscilla was doing.

Once she was done, Sage walked back to the room leisurely and dialed Priscilla's number. After confirming that Priscilla was fine, she told her about the incident.

"I'm not sure if it was Benjamin's doing, but for safety's sake, Priscilla, don't go out at night."

"That bastard! I'll teach him a lesson myself!" Priscilla was furious upon hearing that Sage had been threatened.

Sage stopped her by saying, "Even if you confront him, he won't admit it. It'll just give him a chance to frame you. I called mainly to remind you to be careful not to let Benjamin take advantage of you."