

## A Farewell 181

### Chapter 181

Ian, who had been busy in the study, walked in after she showered and finished her skincare routine. Sage didn't want to talk to him, so she closed her eyes and pretended to be asleep.

The sound of running water could be heard from the bathroom. Shortly after, it stopped and Ian got into the bed.

Sage lay perfectly still, attempting to make herself invisible. But the next thing she knew, the covers were being pulled off her. Before she could react, Ian got on top of her.

"What the hell are you doing?" she asked angrily, opening her eyes.

His arms were propped up on either side of Sage, and his ink-black eyes were unreadable." Didn't you resent me for not fulfilling my duties as a husband? I'm making it up to you now.

"Ian Holcomb, are you out of your mind?" Sage pushed him, but he wouldn't budge.

All of a sudden, she remembered the self-defense techniques Michael had taught her. When Ian showed no signs of backing away and looked like he was going to force himself on her, Sage raised her knee and drove it into the middle of his thighs.

Caught off guard, Ian hissed and doubled over in pain. Sage seized the opportunity and pushed him away again. This time, she had no trouble doing so.

Sage, who had initially felt victorious, felt a twinge of embarrassment when she observed his tightly knitted brows, pale complexion, and the part of his body his hand was clutching. It seemed like she had unintentionally hit something she shouldn't have.

Truth be told, she hadn't meant to. In her desperation, she had raised her knee without much thought. Little did she know that... this would happen.

"Are you okay?" she asked worriedly.

His eyes burned with anger. "Are you out of your mind? How could you be so ruthless?"

He wasn't actually going to force himself on her. He just wanted her to tone down her

attitude and ask him to forgive her. There was no need to resort to such drastic measures!

Her sense of guilt vanished in an instant. "It was your fault for being so arrogant and presumptuous! Is that what you think I meant? I'll kick you in the balls if you dare to have such thoughts again!"

It was his fault for feigning ignorance when he understood what she meant perfectly. Sage had let him off the hook easily.

Ian gritted his teeth and snarled, "If something happens to me, Sage, you can forget about divorcing me in this lifetime! You will be a virgin for the rest of your life, and we'll just have to drag this out."

Sage was at a loss for words because that sounded like something Ian was capable of doing. She didn't care if she had to live as a virgin for the rest of her life. After all, in her previous life, Ian hadn't slept with her until she died. 1

However, she didn't want to be tied to Ian in this life. Hence, she walked over to him and asked with concern, "Are you in a lot of pain? Should I call an ambulance for you?"

"Get out of the way!" Ian was sweating profusely from the pain. He didn't want Sage to see him like this, so he forced himself to get up from the bed and storm out of the room.

Sage watched as he hobbled away with his back slightly hunched back. She suppressed her laughter until he slammed the door shut. It felt so good to see the arrogant man in such a sorry state!

Sage lay down on the bed and sent Michael a message. “The self–defense techniques you taught me seriously came in handy. Remember to send me some more practice videos when you’re free.”

Michael soon responded to her message, asking why she wasn’t asleep yet. Sage then asked him how he was doing in the competition.

In the middle of their conversation, a new message popped up on the screen. “Sage, I miss you. Do you want to go out for drinks?”

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Her brows knitted together when she noticed the way the sender had addressed her despite the unsaved number. Sage had a fairly good idea who the sender was.

“Sage, I’m at Above & Beyond. I ordered your favorite cocktail. I miss our nights out. drinking together.” Sure enough, it was Delilah.

Sage assumed she would stop bothering her after their last gathering. Yet, here she was, reaching out to her again. There was no way she actually cared about their friendship.

Above & Beyond was one of the most luxurious bars in Haldon. Delilah often held parties there to pretend that she was rolling in it. However, Sage was always the one who had to foot the bill. Could it be that she had one too many drinks and suddenly remembered her ” ATM“?

“Sage, you said you’d never be mad at me. You also said you’d give me a chance even if you were. Why did you go back on your word?”

She did say that. Back then, she truly regarded Delilah as her best friend. She was naive to think that their friendship would last forever. Little did she know that Delilah would team up with Ivy.

In reality, Delilah’s manipulations weren’t all that clever. However, she was desperate for Ian’s love, and she trusted Delilah completely. Hence, she heeded Delilah’s advice and tried to get rid of Ivy time and time again.

“Sage, I was in the wrong about what happened in the past. I want to make it up to you, so I asked my dad to reach out to a friend who works as a spice agent. He can order a large amount of spices from Maven Corporation for you.”

Sage was about to block Delilah’s number and go to bed when she received the message. She froze, her hand hovering over the block button.

In her previous life, the Strombergs had also introduced a business deal to her family. However, something went wrong during the delivery, and the other party refused to accept the goods. Maven Corporation had to pay a hefty penalty for breach of contract and didn’t dare to sell the goods to anyone else.

The goods ended up piling up in a warehouse. This incident tarnished Maven Corporation’s reputation and led to a lot of canceled orders. It was the start of the company’s decline.

In her previous life, she hadn’t given these things much thought. But in retrospect, if

Delilah had already teamed up with Ivy at the time, there was

a good chance Ivy had a hand in all of this. So it turned out that Ivy really went out of her way to bring Sage down.

Delilah suddenly called her, probably because she hadn’t been replying to her messages. ‘t been replying to her messages. Sage reluctantly answered the phone.

Delilah’s pitiful voice rang out. “Sage, I’m serious about this. Why don’t we go find your uncle after my dad and his friend sort things out? That way, your aunt won’t think you’re useless anymore!”

“How long will it take for your dad to finalize the deal?” Sage asked.

Delilah perked up when Sage didn’t turn her down. “I’m not sure, but my dad said it’d be a billion-dollar deal if it goes through. It’s worth the wait!”

Sage remained silent. She would never fall for this kind of trap, but her uncle might.

Her grandfather once said there was a suitable candidate for the position of vice CEO, but that person had already joined another company. So for the time being, the company was still under her uncle's control.

"Delilah, like I said before, our friendship is over. You don't need to go out of your way to help my family's business," Sage said coldly. "Please tell Uncle Lovell not to worry about us. Maven Corporation is pretty busy right now. Besides, Ian recently helped my uncle close a deal."

To her surprise, Delilah didn't snap or insist on discussing the deal further.

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Delilah kept apologizing to Sage and seeking reconciliation. She also promised to always consider her feelings and opinions in the future.

Sage wasn't in the mood to deal with Delilah, so she made up a few excuses and hung up on her. Feeling uneasy, she sent a message to her grandfather, asking him to warn her uncle not to be overly ambitious.

Exhaustion swept over her after she took care of these things. So, she laid back on her bed and soon drifted off to sleep on the newly changed bedding.

Sage was fast asleep when she felt something heavy on her waist. She tried to shake it off, but it wouldn't budge. When she opened her eyes, she noticed that Ian had slipped back into

the room.

His arm was resting on her waist, and she was facing him with her head nestled against his shoulder. The first thing that came into view was his sharp jawline.

Even though both of them were in their own blankets, she still felt uncomfortable being in such an intimate position. Hence, she abruptly pushed his arm away and sat up in bed.

Ian squinted at her groggily, closed his eyes, and went back to sleep. Sage was flabbergasted. How did she end up next to Ian when she clearly remembered she had fallen asleep on the edge of the bed?

It was still early. Ian, who was always disciplined and woke up early, looked like he had no intention of getting out of bed. But Sage couldn't fall back asleep. Thus, she put on a jacket and went to the kitchen to make the mille crepe cake.

The dough in the fridge had already risen, so Sage took it out and rolled it into strips. Then, she flattened it into discs. Then, she added the prepared filling and kneaded it into the

dough.

It still needed to be kneaded into strips, cut into mini balls, and pressed into the shape of small cakes before placing them in the oven. There were quite a few steps.

Ian came downstairs as Sage busied herself. His tall, handsome figure exuded an air of elegance that his loungewear couldn't detract from.

He walked toward her steadily. It seemed like she hadn't done a number on him last night since he was completely fine now. Ian halted right in front of her, towering over her.

"What brings you here?" she asked with a frown. Sage had never seen him enter the kitchen

before.

"I heard you're making mille crepe cake for Grandma. She called me and asked me to help you," he responded.

"It's alright, I can handle it." She didn't need or want his help.

"I don't want to be lectured by Grandma this early in the morning." Ian walked over to her, rolling up his sleeves. "What do you need me to do?"

Sage didn't see the need to shoo him away since he offered to help. Besides, she wanted Ian to understand how difficult it was to prepare a meal. Maybe if he knew that, he would appreciate her efforts and sacrifices if he ever met another woman who waited for him with dinner every day.

"Flatten this dough," she instructed him.

Surprisingly, Ian, who was usually in control, struggled with flattening the dough. It seemed like a simple task, but he snapped the rolling pin in half when he tried rolling the dough

with too much force.

"If you put any more muscle into it, you'll crush the countertop," she grumbled. "Stop what you're doing and spread the filling onto the dough I flattened out. Then fold it up."

Ian glanced at Sage and remained silent. He spread the filling onto the flattened dough, as per her instructions. However, he didn't do a good job—it was spread unevenly. He almost tore the dough apart when he tried to fold the edges.

"Hold it right there!" Sage groaned. "You're hopeless. Why don't you just go outside? You're making things worse! I'm afraid Grandma won't get to eat it at this rate."

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"Sage Joyner, did you just call me stupid?" Ian couldn't help but lose his temper because of her constant nitpicking,

"Are you sure you're not stupid? After all, you can't even handle such a simple task," Sage

said.

It seemed like the old her had thought of Ian as overly perfect and capable. If she had discovered his clumsiness earlier, she might not have liked him as much.

He snatched the rolling pin back from her when he noticed her shaking her head and sighing again. He ordered, "Stay out of it! I'll do it!"

Sage rolled her eyes. Ian was still as competitive as ever. Ian was the kind of person who

couldn't handle minor setbacks.

"Fine. I'll be waiting for your results then." Sage removed her apron. "Do you need me to tie it for you too?"

Ian looked at him coldly to express his disdain. However, Sage didn't push it. Instead, she told him that since Wanda wasn't home, if he soiled his clothes he'd have to wash them himself. Then, she folded her hands, leaned back, and watched as he kneaded the dough.

Ian had hoped to impress Sage and prove himself, but it was much more difficult than he had imagined. Eventually, he managed to press the dough into a disc, but it was uneven and even tore in some places.

Sage burst into laughter. She lifted the flattened dough, held it in front of her, and asked Ian, "Mr. Holcomb, what do you think is bigger? My eyes or this hole?"

Naturally, Ian knew she was being sarcastic. His expression hardened as he reached out to snatch the flattened dough back and re-knead it into a ball.

However, she had set the dough down before he could, and he ended up grabbing her wrist and pulling her into his embrace. He instinctively tightened his grip on her as she fell into

his arms.



Her forehead hit his chin, and she found herself wrapped in his embrace. Sage raised her head and was about to snap when she noticed a dusting of white flour on the tip of his nose.

It softened his usual aloof demeanor.

Sage couldn't help but laugh out loud as she imagined Ian's face on a puppy. She laughed so hard that her body shook, and her breasts began to sway as a result.

Ian, who had been suppressing his desire since the night before, couldn't resist any longer. He hoisted her onto the countertop and leaned in to claim her with a fiery kiss,

His kiss was passionate and wild. Sage, who was caught off guard, tried to back away, but Ian didn't give her a chance,

He clasped the back of her head with one hand and trapped her in his embrace with the other. Moreover, she was seated on the stove with his sinewy thighs pressing against her firmly, trapping her.

Sage cried out in protest and struggled vigorously. Yet, Ian paid her no heed and continued his relentless advances. He wasn't satisfied with just kissing. He seized her earlobe between his lips when she gasped for air.

The moist and warm sensation spread from her earlobe to her core, Overwhelmed by the unfamiliar yet thrilling sensation, Sage cried out, "I-Ian Holcomb!"

His eyes darkened with desire at her reaction. He seized her in another fervent kiss, his hand slipping into the back of her pajamas,

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His hand roamed across her supple back. Her skin was smooth and delicate as it was the

finest, most lustrous aventurine. Ian felt the flames of desire inside him grow stronger with each passing second.

Initially, he wanted to punish her, but he couldn't restrain his desires any longer. His hand slid from her back to her chest.

Sage squirmed and desperately tried to avoid his hand. However, Ian's strength was astonishing, and she couldn't use any of her boxing or kickboxing techniques in this position.

her Sage was no match for Ian, so she had no choice but to endure the discomfort and press body against his chest. Even though this brought them closer together, she managed to avoid his wandering hands.

His kiss softened just a touch, probably because he sensed her submission. Sage seized the opportunity and bit down hard on his lips. Ian let out a muffled groan in pain.

She expected him to flip out and push her away. But to her surprise, he seemed aroused by the unexpected act. Instead of pushing her away, he tightened his grip and greedily sucked

on her tongue.

The metallic tang of blood coated their mouths. Sage even felt his member growing harder with desire. She couldn't believe him. That horny bastard! Sage couldn't take it anymore and bit down on his tongue.

This time, he finally released her lips and said hoarsely, "Stop biting me!"

Struggling like a fish out of water, she gasped for fresh air and cursed between breaths, "You

.. jerk..." How the hell had he become so consumed by lust while kneading dough?

Ian felt that relentless desire surge within him again as he looked at her flushed cheeks and cherry-colored lips. However, her eyes were icy, her face was alert, and her arms were crossed defensively. Sage looked like she was going to fight him off if he dared to touch her again.

He was feeling very restless, but he wouldn't stoop to forcing himself on a woman. Since he came of age, countless women have tried to get close to him to get his attention, but he had never been interested. Even Sage, who used to cling to him all day long, never sparked any desire within him.

He had always possessed formidable self-control. So why had he started to feel this inexplicable desire to dominate Sage and reduce her to tears whenever he caught a whiff of her intoxicating scent lately? Could it be that her perfume had an aphrodisiacal effect on

him?

"If you don't move out of the way, I'll kick you!" Sage threatened, attempting to sound composed. Ian remained motionless.

"You sure have gone to great lengths just to impress me." His voice was raspy as he scoffed. He then released her and left the kitchen.

Sage was dumbfounded. What the hell? How could he spout such nonsense after he took advantage of her? She should've bitten him harder earlier and shut him up for good!

The kitchen was a mess. There was flour and dough scattered all over the marble countertops and floor.

Frustrated, Sage called Linda to complain. She told Linda that Ian had only made things worse by ruining the ingredients for the mille crepe cake, which meant she couldn't make it for her this morning.

Linda chided, "That little rascal doesn't know how to do anything other than work and earn money. Sage, you should ask him to do more when you're free. That way, he won't be a nuisance next time."

Sage fell silent. There wouldn't be a next time. She never wanted to cook with Ian again.

"It's okay. You don't need to redo it. I just had a sudden craving for it yesterday. I forgot that the doctor told me to eat less sweets anyway," Linda reassured with a smile.

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Sage wondered why Linda was in such a good mood despite the savory news.

After hanging up the phone, she looked at the messy kitchen and immediately arranged for a cleaner to come and take care of it. It was such a shame that Wanda was off today.

A woman who treated herself as a housekeeper as well would only end up with endless chores. Sage couldn't be bothered to be a virtuous wife who did all the work herself. She would rather take a nice bath and wash away the stench of that filthy man.

Meanwhile, Ian received a video call from his grandmother while he was in the study.

"Ian, what happened to your lips? It looks like it's bleeding," Linda asked, concerned.

Ian wiped away the blood and replied perfunctorily, "It's nothing. I just accidentally bit it."

However, Linda smiled knowingly when she heard that. "Sage bit you, didn't she?"

Ian narrowed his eyes when he thought of what had happened earlier. Sage had bitten both his lips and his tongue. He had just checked. She had bitten him until he bled.

Sage was going all out now. She didn't even falter in that situation.

"Why aren't you saying anything? Are you regretting your recklessness? Girls are like that. You've got to go along with what she wants. Only then she'll be happy."

Linda grumbled, "I've always told you to be nice to Sage, but you never listen! Now it's come to a point where Sage doesn't want to be with you anymore! Yet you're not even attempting to win her back. Furthermore, you just keep upsetting her!"

Ian was still in a bad mood. "I'm not so sure she's done with me. I think she has just changed her tactics and has gotten craftier now."

"You're going to be the death of me, you rascal!" Linda exclaimed in frustration. "She's almost at the point of no return! Yet, here you are acting all high and mighty. You will regret this in the future! Don't come crying to me then!"

Ian was nowhere to be seen, and the housekeeper arrived right after Sage had showered and returned downstairs. She crossed her legs and scrolled through her phone as the housekeeper cleaned the kitchen and the house.

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Donald had messaged her, asking if something had happened. Sage decided to call her grandfather and tell him that the Stromberg family wanted to introduce a business deal to

them.

"I thought the Strombergs changed their line of work a few years ago. How could they introduce such a good deal to us?" Donald asked.

"I'm not sure, but I'm worried Uncle Owen will want to go through with the deal once Uncle Lovell finalizes it."

"Don't worry. I'll talk to him and give him a heads-up."

Even though her grandfather had said this, Sage was still a little uneasy. After all, business was business. If there was nothing wrong with the contract, her uncle wouldn't refuse to cooperate, and she had no reason to stop him.

"Grandpa, have you a suitable candidate to fill the vice president role yet? Should I go to a headhunting company to spread the word?" she asked.

He responded, "It's not easy to find the right candidate. Plus, we don't want your Uncle Owen to find out about it, so that makes things even more difficult. Don't you think he'll find out if you go through a headhunting company?"

Her grandfather had a point. Sage pondered momentarily and said, "I'll reach out to them first. It's not like it'll be easy for them to find someone anyway."

After the housekeeper left, she spent several hours organizing the materials from Collin's research institute.

It was already past lunchtime when she sent the email to Shane, and she was a little hungry. Sage stretched and got up to cook herself a simple plate of pasta.

Sage was about to call Priscilla to ask about Mimosa when she received a call from Shane. Sage was a little surprised but answered the call nonetheless.

"Have you read through all those materials already?"

"Why would I need to read them?"

Shane teased, "You're really something, Ms. Joyner."

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Sage was perplexed. "What are you on about? I just sent you some rough information."



“Cut the act,” he teased. “Ian seems to be treating you well. He doesn’t look like he’s going to dump you.”

“Mr. Morrison, could you just get to the point?”

Shane crossed his legs and said lazily, “I just got word that Professor Braun has decided that you’ll be in charge of their drug promotion and distribution.”

Sage was stunned. “How’s that possible? Are you sure?”

She had just met with Collin yesterday, and he clearly wanted to work with Holcomb Corporation. Besides, Ivy also went to negotiate with them. How could he have decided to hand the project over to her after just one day?

Shane snorted. “My sources are never wrong. Either Ian cares a lot about you, or he’s giving you this as compensation because he’s going to dump you.”

Sage couldn’t be bothered to respond. Instead, she asked, “How’s the thing I asked you to do?” She realized that they would need to expedite the matter if Collin really gave her the distribution rights.

Shane grinned when he heard her question. “Don’t worry, Ms. Joyner. I’ll take care of it. They will willingly walk into our trap.”

“Thanks... I’ll catch you later.” Sage hung up the phone and immediately dialed Ian’s number.

The phone rang for several moments, and just when she thought Ian wouldn’t answer, deep voice came through the phone. “What’s up?”

his

It was especially quiet on his end, and he sounded like he had something else to attend to.

“Are you in a meeting? I can call you back later,” she asked.

“Just get to the point.”

“Fine.” Sage cut to the chase. “Are you seriously going to let me have the distribution rights to Professor Braun’s drug?”

“Damn, word travels fast,” he remarked. “I thought you wanted it.”

So it was true! She did want it, but why would he give her the project just because she wanted it?

“But-

A representative from Professor Braun’s research institute will get in touch with you. I have something else to do right now, so I have to go.” With that, he hung up.

Ivy looked at the man in front of her. “Was that Mrs. Holcomb? Are you really going to give her Professor Braun’s project?” Ian set his phone down and remained silent.

Ivy suppressed her emotions. “Ian, weren’t you the one who asked me to handle the negotiations and follow-ups just two days ago? Why did you suddenly hand it over to Mrs. Holcomb?”

“You can focus on the other projects then. Leave Professor Braun to Sage.”

“Don’t you think you still owe my team and me a convincing reason?” she insisted.

"I don't have any reasons. We've already agreed to invest in Professor Braun's research institute. We're just having Sage handle the operations. There's no conflict of interest there."

"But this is MY project! Even if Sage acquires the distribution rights, the profits will not benefit Holcomb Corporation!" Tears welled up in her eyes. This was the first time she had ever argued with Ian about work.

He looked at Ivy coldly. "It's just a pharmaceutical project. Its profits are limited. Even if other companies invest in it, our share will not decline. Why are you so set on this?"

"Why am I so set on this? Do you seriously not know why?" she asked with teary eyes.

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He frowned when he heard that. Ivy was usually graceful and composed. Why was she so emotional today?

"How should I know?" Tan retorted.

Ivy was green with jealousy when she noticed his indifference and the wound on his lip. However, she simply started weeping,

"Ian, do you remember when my mother was seriously ill? I was a wreck, and I practically begged for someone to develop a drug to cure her illness. At the time, you consoled me and said if there were such a miracle drug, you'd definitely buy it for me." Her eyes dimmed,

"Even though the drug developed by Professor Braun isn't the cure to my mother's illness, I still want to bring it to the market to fill the void in my heart."

It dawned on Ian that Ivy's insistence on getting this project stemmed from her mother. Even though he couldn't remember much about what had happened when they were young, he did recall Ivy grieving for a long time after her mother passed away.

“Ian, Sage doesn’t necessarily need this project. You could always just find a few more profitable projects for her to work on. Can I please have the distribution rights for just this drug?” Ivy pleaded with tears in her eyes.

This was the first time Ivy had asked him for something, so Ian hesitated slightly,

Sage had already gotten wind of this. If she found out that the project had been given to Ivy, she would definitely be pissed.

Although Ian couldn’t care less if she was angry or not, Sage had finally calmed down and stopped targeting Ivy. He didn’t want her to start causing problems again.

“Ivy, as long as the drug benefits the people, it doesn’t matter who’s in charge,” he said. “If it still upsets you, I’ll have my subordinates look into more pharmaceutical–related projects.”

Ivy understood that Ian wouldn’t let her be in charge of the project. Making a fuss wouldn’t help. In fact, it might even make him dislike her. Hence, despite her frustration, she decided to accept his decision.

Fortunately, Ian seemed a little guilty, and his demeanor softened.

Ian had been keeping his distance from her ever since Sage criticized her for having no sense of boundaries and sitting too close to Ian at Solaris Estate that day.

He even started addressing her as “Ms. Shekdotter” at work and only called her by her first name in private. However, he finally called her “Ivy” again that day, just like he used to in the past.

Thus, she nodded quietly, her eyes brimming with tears. “I understand.”

“Ian, do you regret letting me join Bolton Investment?” she asked lowly.

He looked at Ivy. “Why are you asking that all of a sudden?”

"It's just... I haven't accomplished much yet. I misjudged Benjamin's situation last time, too. What's more, I got injured at the party and upset Sage." Ivy lowered her head, tears streaming down her cheeks. "I feel like I shouldn't have returned to Haldon, and I shouldn't have appeared in front of you..."

Ian had rarely seen this side of Ivy. She was usually so confident and composed. He passed her a few tissues. "Don't overthink it. I never regret the decisions I make."

"Thank you, Ian." Ivy accepted the tissues and said hoarsely, "I'll head back to Bolton Investment first."

"Okay."

Ivy received a call from Henry as soon as she left the CEO's office and got into her car.

"Ms. Shekdotter, I've arranged everything. I'll make my move as soon as that old professor's granddaughter is out of school. That way, he'll have no choice but to hand over the

distribution rights."

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"Forget it. Something came up," she said coolly.

"What the hell happened?" Henry fumed. "Didn't you say that he adored his granddaughter the most? He'd hand over the distribution rights without a fuss and

ree to cancel the investment deal with Holcomb Corporation as long as we threatened him a little."

Her expression darkened. "This matter is already set in stone. It can't be changed. If we make another move, we'll arouse suspicion from others. All we can do is switch

O another project."

“Well, you’d better hurry up and find one! I need to prove my worth with a successful career, or Layla won’t give me the time of day!”

“Didn’t you brag about how skilled you are with women? I thought you said no woman could resist your charm. It’s been days, and you’ve made zero progress. Yet, here you are, making demands. Do you think I’m a fool?” she sneered as she listened to his demands.

“Of course not! I just need to work on a project to help you achieve your goals. Women these days have become astute. No matter how much of a smooth–talker I am, if I don’t have any accomplishments, it won’t fly,” he argued persuasively.

“Besides, it’s not only about winning her over. I also need to get past her parents and relatives. Who am I if I just fool around without a solid background?”

Of course, she understood the logic behind it all. She had always intended to play the long game to reel them in.

Ivy had always planned for Henry to start a business, but she had been preoccupied with other tasks recently and hadn’t had a chance to arrange

1. it. Now that Henri had brought it up himself,

it was indeed a pressing issue.

“I’ll sort it out. Just hurry up and win her over!”

“I hear you. I won’t let her get away.”

Sure enough, Sage received a call from Collin. On the phone, he told her that, although the project had been signed over to her, the drug would still be promoted under the name of the

research institute—CureX Pharmaceuticals.

Sage readily agreed to this. After all, this matter went much more smoothly than she had expected.

Initially, she didn't have high hopes and had already planned to keep an eye on Collin to ensure he wouldn't sign anything over to Henry if negotiations failed. Sage hadn't expected Ian to give up on the distribution rights voluntarily.

Although Sage understood the investment aspect, she would need a professional team to promote the drug. This wasn't something that could be done in a day or two.

After conversing with Collin, she called Shane and asked his subordinates to come up with a plan for the promotion of the drug.

"I can assure you that the drug is effective. Professor Braun's team has already tested it on a small scale in several hospitals, and the results have been positive," she said confidently.

Shane didn't refute her words. Instead, he asked thoughtfully, "Aren't you worried that Ian might give you a hard time?"

"Are you worried?" she asked.

He scoffed. "Me? Worried about him giving me a hard time? Is that a joke?"

"That settles it, then. We're in this together. If you aren't afraid, why should I be?"

Shane chuckled. "Alright, Ms. Joyner. You're really starting to grow on me. I can't wait for us to make some serious cash together."

"Thanks, Mr. Morrison." Sage was still upset about the incident at the restaurant last time, and decided to add, "And I hope you won't stir up trouble for me in the future."

Shane knew exactly what she was referring to and smirked. "How could that be considered as stirring up trouble? I was just messing with Ian."

"I'm sure you think that it would be more annoying for Ian because I'm his wife," she remarked sarcastically.

"Exactly," he agreed, as if he were oblivious to her sarcasm. "Of course, you should make the most of your current status while you still have it! You won't be able to use it after you're divorced."

## Chapter 190

Sage couldn't help but remind him, "Mr. Morrison, I'm the one who's divorcing Ian, not the other way around."

"Aren't you giving up on him because he doesn't love you back?" Shane asked mercilessly. "Sure, you might see yourself as 'moving on', but let's face it. It's no different from being dumped by him."

Sage was rendered speechless.

In the evening, Tiana, the busy bee, finally had some time to spare. "Sage, I heard about this awesome new bar. Let's go get a drink, and you can perform your special drum solo for me!"

Tiana added before Sage could respond, "You promised me, so you can't go back on your word now!"

Sage agreed reluctantly. "Sure thing. It's just a drum solo."



The girls met up at the bar. The first floor was a large open hall with some seating scattered around, while the second floor had private booths. There was a massive stage in front of the entrance on the first floor. When they entered, someone was performing on it, adding an

electric air to the atmosphere.

Tiana and Sage made their way to a table on the first floor. Tiana noticed a red mark on Sage's neck as soon as they were seated. "Is that a hickey? Who gave that to you?"

Sage subconsciously touched her neck. Ian hadn't bitten her neck this morning, so she was a little relieved. "What are you on about? It's not a hickey! It's just a bug bite."

"Oh, please. Do you think I'm an idiot?" Tiana scoffed. "That's obviously a hickey."

Sage pulled out a compact mirror and looked at the mark she noticed earlier that morning. "Do you have x-ray vision or something? How do you even spot these things? I've seen other people's hickies, but they're usually not this small and faint."

Tiana looked at Sage as if she had sprouted a second head. "Hickies do not always have to be big and obvious. A light kiss might only leave a small imprint."

Sage suddenly remembered the feeling of someone kissing her neck while she was half-asleep.

Could it have been Ian?

"Didn't you say that you've been rooming with Ian recently? I bet he kissed you while were asleep!" Tiana said, her eyes twinkling. "Did anything else happen?"

you

"No! We sleep in separate blankets!"

“Tsk tsk. Be honest with me, Sage. Is Ian impotent? Is that why you want to get a divorce?” Sage choked on her drink when she heard Tiana’s vulgar words.

“Calm down, Sage. It’s not like getting a divorce over this is something to be ashamed of. Us women have needs too.” Tiana reassured her as she patted Sage’s shoulder.

As she reflected on his reaction in the kitchen earlier that day, she concluded that Ian was perfectly fine. Sage was even shocked at how much a man’s member could enlarge.

Oh God. What was she thinking? Sage blushed and glared at Tiana. “Could you please stop having such dirty thoughts? I swear if you don’t stop, I’ll flip out, and you won’t see your idol anymore.”

“I believe you, I believe you!” Tiana exclaimed with her hands up. “For the sake of my idol, I’ll zip it!”

Their drinks arrived almost immediately after. Tiana handed Sage her drink and raised her glass. “To make up for standing you up a couple of times, I’ve bought a special surprise for you!.”

“What is it?”

“Look!”

Sage turned her head to look where Tiana was pointing.