

A Farewell 271

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"Mr. Holcomb," Ivy interjected, "Ian is just worried that you'll be upset with Sag. It was just a slip of the tongue. Please don't be mad at him for that." "Ivy, why are you speaking up for them? I heard from your father that you've been through a lot because of Sage. Don't you hold a grudge against her?" Leo inquired.

Ivy glanced at Ian, who remained stoic, and told the truth, "It was tough at the time, but I know that Sage cares a lot about Ian. Plus, her family spoiled her when she was growing up, so she can be impulsive. So I won't hold it against her."

"Look at you! You can't even control your wife. I can't believe you would let her stir up trouble everywhere and cause Ivy so much pain! Why can't you act like a man?" Leo reprimanded his son.

Ian retorted calmly, "Well if you're so manly, why are you always so lonely?"

"Ian!" Leo fumed.

"Excuse me." Ian walked into the house.

The smile on Ivy's face faded as she watched Ian walk away. Even though Sage hid it well, she noticed her awkward gait and the overly thick foundation on her neck. It was clear that things had veered off its original course again.

"Is this all you've achieved after being back in the country for so long?" Leo asked coldly.

Ivy turned back to Leo and looked at him apologetically. "My apologies, Mr. Holcomb. I want to be with Ian, but I can't rush things and risk him growing tired of me."

"I supported you when you wanted to return to Haldon and join Holcomb Corporation. How do you expect me to invest in your projects when you can't even win Ian's heart?" Leo was very displeased.

"You're right, Mr. Holcomb. I am incompetent. I'm very grateful for your support in matters regarding Ian. I shouldn't have asked you to come back for such trivial matters, but I'm genuinely out of options right now."

Ivy continued, "As you've seen, Ian has developed feelings for Sage. I've tried everything I can think of, but I can't seem to break them apart."

Her expression became pitiful as

she said, "Mrs. Holcomb Senior has never been fond of me, so I can't be around her very often. The project is for a relative of mine. The current situation can only be changed if he succeeds.

"However, my father's company could only survive thanks to your and Ian's help. I can't come up with such a large sum of money, so I can only ask for your help, Mr. Holcomb."

Leo responded apathetically, "I can

provide the funds. I don't care about your plans or how you intend to carry them out, but you've got to take some serious action to put Ian in a tough spot."

"I'll do my best, Mr. Holcomb." Ivy was puzzled. "But Ian's your son, Mr. Holcomb. Why are you going after him?"

"Just focus on your tasks. You don't need to worry about anything else," he said sternly.

"I understand, Mr. Holcomb." Ivy lowered her head and nodded softly. No one noticed the cold glint in her eyes.

Meanwhile, Sage found Linda in the living room, where Josephine was massaging her shoulders. "Happy birthday, Grandma! I wish you all the happiness in the world and a long, long life. May you grow younger with each passing year," Sage said as she approached Linda.

Sage started massaging the elderly woman's shoulders after asking Josephine to take a break. "My stomach was acting up when I was halfway there so I decided to go to the hospital."

"That's good to hear. You have no idea how anxious Ian looked when he left last night. He scared me. I thought something had happened to you," Linda said.

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She truly owed it to Ian last night. Otherwise, not only would she have been physically hurt, but those indecent videos would've been all over the internet by now. There was no way she could be sitting here, conversing peacefully with Linda.

"Sage, it's obvious that Ian cares about you now. Are you really not going to give him another chance?" Linda still wanted to fight for her grandson.

Sage shook her head resolutely. "Grandma, what's done is done. Ian helped me last night, but that doesn't change the fact that we're getting a divorce. I'm going to the court with him tomorrow."

Linda shook her head as she had expected that. "Alright. I won't try to persuade you anymore."

The elderly woman squeezed Sage's hand and said, "Don't overdo it. You just went to the hospital last night. Sit down and rest."

"It's alright, Grandma. I'm not tired." Sage wanted to spend more time with Linda as she wouldn't be able to take care of her as her granddaughter-in-law soon.

"Grandma, Uncle Owen called me just now and told me Grandpa's not feeling well, so he won't be able to attend your birthday party. But Uncle Owen will come over with Aunt Susan later," she said as she massaged Linda's shoulders.

Linda smiled and said, "We're family. There's no need for such formalities. This isn't a grand banquet either. It's just a gathering for everyone to enjoy themselves. I can't take the hustle and bustle, so I came in here to enjoy some peace and quiet."

"Grandma." Ian walked in as the two were talking. When he noticed Sage massaging his grandmother's shoulders, he hurried over to her, took her wrist, and took a look at it before saying, "Go and get some rest. I'll take over."

"Oh, so now you know how to take care of your wife." Linda glared at her grandson. "What took you so long?"

"Grandma-" Sage was about to speak up when Ian cut her off.

"You're right, Grandma. I wasn't a good husband in the past."

"It's not your fault. I was the one who forced you to in the first place." Sage then turned to Linda and said, "My uncle and aunt should be here soon. I'll go and take a look, Grandma. She didn't want to be in the same space as Ian. Otherwise, she would think of Ivy and get mad at him."

Linda was well aware that she was just making excuses, so she could only nod and say, "Okay."

The elderly woman swatted her grandson's hand away after Sage left. "Go away! You're so clumsy. You're not even half as good as Sage."

He looked outside as he withdrew

his hand. Well? What are you waiting for? Go and be with your wife!" Linda snapped, unimpressed. Ian didn't refuse either and got up to follow Sage.

Owen and Susan had indeed arrived and were already chatting amicably with the Holcombs. Sage didn't want to join in the fun, so she found a quiet spot to sit down in.

noticed Ian walking toward her. Ian stood tall and handsome, with chiseled features. Even in such a grand setting where everyone was dressed to the nines, he was still the most dazzling one.

He held a steaming cup of coffee in his hand, which seemed to add a touch of warmth to his stern demeanor.

Sage accepted it and asked in confusion, "Why are you out here as well? Weren't you supposed to be inside with Grandma?"

"Heavy-handed? As if. Grandma probably still wants us to get back together," she thought. "Go and greet your relatives then. I'd like to sit in silence for a bit," Sage said.

"What is it?"

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Ian didn't tell her what it was right away. Instead, he said, "Don't take my father's words to heart. He's never pleased with anyone. It's not just you." Sage chuckled. "Is that so? I think he's quite pleased with Ivy."

He remained stoic. "Uncle Ron used to be the steward of Holcomb Estate. My father trusts him, so he's got a soft spot for Ivy."

"That's none of my business," she sneered. "After all, I won't be his daughter-in-law anymore starting tomorrow. What exactly were you going to say? Ian stopped beating around the bush and brought up the issue in Colville. Sage's attention was instantly piqued.

Ian explained that he stopped by the police station to gather some information before he went to the hospital the day before yesterday.

"Terry looked into it, and it turns out that those two guys were just regular street racers who used to zoom around town with their crew.

"That day, they took a shortcut through the pedestrian street for a race. I've given all relevant information to the local authorities who will interrogate them and look into it. They will notify me if there are any updates."

Sage was a little skeptical. Hadn't she already turned down his offer to help the other day? "So, are you looking into this for me, or are you attempting to clear Ivy's name?"

"Sage, what does this have to do with Ivy? I'm looking into this because you're eager to find out the truth."

Ian grimaced. "I let all your nonsense slide in the past. Why did you say that in front of Dad? How on earth did you get the impression that I would marry Ivy?"

Because it happened in her previous life. "In my previous life, you divorced me for Ivy and didn't allow me to leave the psychiatric hospital because you were afraid that I would ruin your wedding," she brooded.

Sage figured he just hadn't realized he had feelings for Ivy because she wasn't stirring up any trouble in this life. "Didn't you go to Ivy after you drank the spiked soup Grandma had someone send over last time?" she asked.

Ian sneered. "Sage, do you seriously think so lowly of me?"

Usually, she did not. But he was drugged, and she didn't give in. Hence, she wasn't sure what he would do under its influence. Plus, she hadn't heard from him for two days back then. Then, she stumbled upon Ivy's posts on social media.

He could tell what was on her mind.

He couldn't help but grip her chin and say through gritted teeth, "I went to the hospital when that happened. Do you want me to pull up the medical records and show you? So you asked Delilah to cause a scene because you thought I was with Ivy all those days?"

Ian was furious. "Ivy told me that Uncle Ron wanted to have dinner with me that day. When I went over Uncle Ron had something to do and left, so Ivy was the only one there! Since you were so concerned that you sent Delilah to cause a scene, why didn't you just ask me about what had happened?"

It turned out that Ian didn't go to meet Ivy alone. Ivy's social media post was specifically aimed at her—she just wanted to rile Sage up. She would undoubtedly fall for it at Delila's instigation. Ivy genuinely knew how to push her buttons.

Sage could only blame herself for being stupid in her previous life. She couldn't see through all these mind games. Sage shook Ian's hand off and said, "I didn't ask Delilah to do anything. She went off on her own to stir up trouble for me."

Sage calmed down a little. "Ian, I

know you're looking into the incident at Colville for me and patiently explaining all this to me because you don't want to get a divorce. But ask yourself this-how much longer do you think our marriage would last if I didn't mention divorce?"

"That's true. Of course, you wouldn't bring it up yourself," she said sarcastically. "You would just push me to my limit with your cold, distant demeanor until I couldn't take it anymore. Then, I'd either pick a fight with you or just suggest ending our marriage by myself."

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"No matter what I do, you are always the one in the right. Ian Holcomb, don't you think that is worse than suggesting divorce yourself?"

Ian's dark gaze landed on Sage. "I told you I'd attempt to meet your demands in the future. Besides, you clearly have feelings for me. We're not at the point of no return."

"I'll admit that the feelings I've developed for you over the years won't just disappear overnight, but those feelings aren't enough to keep me going," she said.

"I'm exhausted, Ian. I genuinely don't want to be a part of your life anymore. If you have even an ounce of guilt or feelings for me, please sign the divorce agreement as soon as possible."

Ian gazed at her for a moment when he heard that. He then tossed the tube of ointment that was in his pocket at her before walking away.

"What were you and Ian talking about? Did you guys fight?" Layla walked over while Sage stood in a daze.

"What brings you here?" Sage twisted open the ointment.

Layla took a seat beside her and grumbled, "My mother dragged me along to see if there are any eligible bachelors today." Susan would never miss an opportunity to find a rich husband for her daughter.

"What do you want?' Sage asked as she applied the ointment to her wrist. Their relationship wasn't at the point where they would just chat idly.

"What happened to your hand?" Layla asked.

"It's none of your business. Just get to the point."

Layla pouted. "Last time, Ian said he had friends in Padova City. I was wondering if he could give me their contact information."

"Why didn't you ask him yourself?"

Layla flushed in embarrassment.

She didn't feel comfortable asking Ian for a favor after what she and Sage had said about him in the bathroom last time. "You're his wife! You should be the one to ask him! That way, you can't accuse me of attempting to get close to him!"

Flustered, she continued, "Are you going to help me or not? Last time, you said you'd help me go abroad. Was that all just talk?"

Sage resealed the ointment and glanced at Layla. "What good will their contact information do you? Have you even gotten Aunt Susan's permission to go abroad?"

"Not yet, but I've almost convinced

my father. I'll keep working on them. since they have been in a good mood lately. My mother will come around eventually." Layla beamed. "Either way, I want to know more

about Padova City so I can have a better idea of what to expect."

It was obvious that she was determined to go abroad. After all, she was attempting to convince Owen while doing her research on the college ahead of time.

"This is a piece of cake for Ian. Why wouldn't you be able to get him to agree?" Layla mocked. "Looks like you don't mean anything to him after all." Sage rolled her eyes at Layla. "Why don't you ask him yourself, then?" Layla was rendered speechless by Sage's retort.

Layla scoffed. "Don't you have his contact information? Why don't you ask him yourself?"

Layla held back and told her that Henry still checked in on her every day, but he hadn't shown up in person in a while. Sage figured he was probably tied up with a project.

Layla explained that someone had introduced them to a major spice order. Maven Corporation's revenue for the year would double after completing this order.

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Sage's heart skipped a beat when she heard that. All of a sudden, she recalled the huge order Delilah had mentioned.

Previously, her grandfather had warned her uncle about it. But because she had been accompanying her grandfather in Colville for the past few days she had forgotten about it. Could Layla be referring to the order from the Strombergs?

Sage rose to her feet abruptly and told Layla, "Let's talk about your matters later. I need to find Uncle Owen now."

With that, she went and found Owen. He was engaged in a lively conversation with Ian's relatives, and he had a smug look on his face. Sage apologized for interrupting them before pulling her uncle aside.

"What on earth are you doing, Sage? This is not how we do things." Owen was displeased.

Sage asked, "Uncle Owen, did the Strombergs introduce you to a big business deal recently?"

Owen's face lit up when he heard that. "Oh, so you've heard about it! Lovell's such a nice guy. He still remembers the favors our family did for theirs in the past. This time, he hooked me up when his friend needed an order."

"Is it still in the works, or have you already sealed the deal?" she asked anxiously.

"We've worked out all of the terms. We're going to sign the contract tomorrow."

Sage heaved a sigh of relief. "Uncle Owen, it's only been a few days, and it's such a huge deal. Yet, the other party agreed to your terms so readily. Aren't you worried that there might be something shady going on?"

Owen looked at her, slightly annoyed. "What do you mean by that? What could possibly be shady? The other party came in good faith and is friends with Lovell. It's only natural that the negotiations went smoothly."

Sage patiently explained, "Uncle Owen, I'm not questioning your judgment. However, I came across a news article a while ago about someone who was in a similar situation to you. There were major complications when it came time to deliver the goods, and the company went bankrupt."

Owen was still doubtful. "Oh? That actually happened?"

"Uncle Owen, could you ask your secretary to send me a copy of the contract later?"

Sage continued, "I have shares in

Maven Corporation as well.

Obviously, I want it to do well. It

won't hurt to let me take a look at the contract. If there are any problems, I can point them out to

you. Besides, you can just ignore me if you think I'm off base."

To Sage's relief, Owen eventually agreed to her request after a bit of back and forth.

Even though the banquet was only attended by close friends and family, there were still seven or eight tables full of people. The lawn was adorned with colorful lights, and there were plenty of dishes on the table.

Sage sat down at a table with Linda after a brief ceremony. Leo, Ian, and several elders from the Holcomb family also sat at their table. Linda also took the initiative to invite her uncle's family to join them.

Many came over to toast to Linda during the meal. Ian drank all of them on behalf of his grandmother.

"Ian, you should really ease up on the alcohol!" Susan chided Ian after he had another drink. "You guys è have been married for over a year now. I'm sure you've had your fun. Don't you think it's time to start thinking about having children?"

Susan then turned to Leo. "I think he should cut back on the alcohol and focus on preparing for parenthood. What do you think, Mr. Holcomb?"

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Sage felt a little awkward. She wasn't afraid that others would find out about their divorce. However, it was Linda's birthday after all.

It was a joyous occasion, and she didn't want to ruin it for everyone. Moreover, her uncle and aunt had always been against the idea, so she didn't want to cause any more problems.

Moreover, she had just snapped at Leo a few hours ago, stating that she would get a divorce with Ian soon. However, her aunt unexpectedly started talking about having children in front of him. Sage figured she must've seemed hypocritical in Leo's eyes.

"Dad, didn't I tell you that Sage just blurted that out in the heat of the moment?" Ian said calmly before Sage could respond.

"As their elder, shouldn't you encourage them to reconcile when they disagree? How could you say something like that?" Linda added reproachfully. "Grandma, "

"

"Don't mind him, Sage. He's always been this annoying," Linda cut Sage off.

Leo didn't utter a single word after that. After all, it was his mother who had reprimanded him. However, his expression darkened.

"We're still young, Aunt Susan. We haven't thought about having kids yet," Ian told Susan.

Despite the awkward atmosphere, Susan wasn't one to shy away. "That's alright, you can always start thinking about it now! Ian, you're 27. You're not young anymore."

His gaze briefly lingered on Sage's face before he calmly responded, "It's Sage's call."

Susan continued, "We all know that Sage loves you very much. I'm sure she'll be willing to start a family with you if you're—"

"Aunt Susan, it's Grandma's birthday today. She's the star of the show. Could you please not push the limelight onto me?" Sage couldn't help but remind her.

"What? When did I do that?" Susan retorted defensively. "I'm looking out for Mrs. Holcomb Senior as well. I'm sure she'd love to have a great- grandson."

Linda chimed in with a smile, "Sage didn't marry Ian to carry on our family line. I'm not in a rush. Let's just go with the flow."

Susan dropped the subject after that. Sage, on the other hand, was touched. Linda really was the best.

Everyone began to leave after the

banquet ended. Susan pulled Sage aside before she left and asked, "Why did your father-in-law mention that you and Ian are getting a divorce? Where did he hear that from?"

Sage answered, "I told him."

"Sage Joyner!" Susan choked out in disbelief. "Are you attempting to stir up trouble again?" She never knew when to let things go.

Sage figured her aunt might even go

to Linda again. Hence, she could only patiently coax her. "Alright, alright. Let's just say I was throwing a tantrum. You guys should head back now!"

Susan didn't suspect much, probably because her love for Ian was so deeply ingrained in everyone's mind. Susan lectured Sage for a bit before leaving.

Just then, Layla walked over and raised her phone in front of Sage signaling to her that she was waiting for her message. After seeing them off, she found Ian waiting for her up ahead.

"Did Aunt Susan give you a hard time?" he asked.

Sage added, "By the way, you mentioned that you had a friend in Padova City who knows a lot about the colleges there. Layla wants you to introduce her to them."

"Why don't you and Ian just the night?" Linda suggested while holding Sage's hand. "Sage, you promised to spend time with me yesterday. You wouldn't go back on your word, would you?"

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"No way. As long as you don't find me annoying, Grandma, I'll definitely drop by more often to see you."

It was just one night, anyway. Sage didn't mind staying one last night. Plus, she meant it when she said she would come to see Linda in the future.

However, Linda wasn't pleased when she heard that. She asked as if she had already known, "Did Leo give you a hard time again this afternoon? I know you're a well-mannered young lady, and that you wouldn't have shut him down."

Sage was touched when she realized just how much Linda understood and trusted her. She couldn't bear the thought of leaving Linda behind. "I wouldn't exactly call it a hard time. After all, I was at fault, too," she said.

Linda didn't press any further and asked Sage to accompany her to her bedroom. Josephine took out a box from the safe and handed it to Linda before she left the room.

Linda opened it and took out a necklace. It was made of platinum and had a beautiful emerald pendant.

"Sage, I wanted you to wear this at your and Ian's wedding, but..." Linda fell silent before handing the necklace to Sage, "no matter what happens with you and Ian, I just want you to be happy."

Sage didn't dare to take it. "Grandma, you've already been so kind to me. I'm so grateful. I can't accept any more gifts from you."

"It's just something small," Linda said with a smile. "Come on, squat down. Let me put it on you."

Sage could only bend down and let Linda place it on her neck. She felt like she couldn't refuse Linda's kindness after sharing so much. The emerald pendant was heavy and cool against her skin. Sage felt goosebumps all over as she stood back upright. "Thank you, Grandma."

"It's not your fault that your marriage failed. It's not your fault for pursuing love. It's Ian who didn't cherish you."

Linda held her hand and said lovingly, "I would've loved for you to stay as my granddaughter-in-law, but I can't force you to do that. After all, marriage is about seeking happiness, and so is divorce."

Tears streamed down Sage's cheeks. "Thank you, Grandma."

The two of them talked for a little while longer before Sage asked Linda to go and rest when she noticed how tired Linda was.

Sage then went back to the room Linda had prepared for her and Ian. The room was decked out in red and pink, like a newlywed couple's honeymoon room.

However, she and Ian had only spent one night there. Ian used work as an excuse and went through his emails for the first half of the night before sleeping on the couch in the second half. He didn't even come close to the bed, let alone touch her.

Ian was already lying in bed when Sage walked into the bedroom. He must've had too much to drink as his face was flushed, and his eyes were a little glassy. His tie was loosened, and a few of the top buttons on his shirt were undone, revealing his muscular chest.

Sage took off the necklace and stowed it away in her bag. "Layla told me that she's already contacted your friend in Padova City. Thank you."

Sage was worried that there would

be some kind of trap as it involved a large sum of money, so she flipped through the pages carefully and read every single word. Strangely enough, the contract seemed to be in order. Sage decided to read it again.

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Sage turned over and realized Ian had walked up to her at some point and was currently pointing out the flaws in the contract.

His long arm almost touched her nose as he gestured at the computer screen. She couldn't help but catch a whiff of the cedarwood and alcohol on him.

"Don't look at me. Look at the contract." Ian turned her head with his hand. Sage rolled her eyes when she noticed his tone and actions were like those of a teacher teaching his apprentice. However, she didn't protest and turned her attention back to the contract.

The problems he pointed out made her feel as if a light bulb had been switched on in her head. They were all difficult issues to spot, but he was able to point them out at a glance. No wonder he was able to manage Holcomb Corporation so well. Ian really was capable.

Sage was able to identify and correct the problems in the contract under Ian's guidance. She then sent the revised contract to her uncle.

Sage stretched after she was done. She was exhausted, and she wasn't feeling well either to begin with. In addition to that, she had a long day. All she wanted was to take a shower and go to bed.

Ian was sitting beside her with glassy eyes. He gazed at her with an unreadable expression. "You've never shown any interest in your family business, and you've always told me to stay out of it. So why are you now suddenly so invested in it?"

Sage responded matter-of-factly, "I didn't want you to get involved because I didn't want to rely on you constantly. It's only natural for me to be invested-it's my family business, after all."

Ian felt a sense of unease growing in his gut as he listened to Sage, who seemed to be drawing a clear line between them. He pursed his lips and went to bed without another word.

Sage ignored him, grabbed a set of pajamas from the wardrobe, and stalked into the bathroom. The hickeys on her body were starting to fade, but the ones where Ian had bit her hardest were still dark. Sage cursed under her breath as she put on her pajamas and stepped out of the bathroom. Ian was already asleep, sprawled out on the bed when she stepped out. He hadn't bothered to cover himself or take off his shoes.

His breathing was steady, and he looked much less imposing when he was asleep. The coldness and arrogance he usually wore like a mask were gone. The night light shone on his handsome face and made him look extremely captivating.

Sage recalled the only other time she had spent the night here. She had pretended to be asleep until midnight before she crept over to Ian's side. She gazed down at his handsome face and couldn't resist stealing a kiss.

Sage smiled wryly as she thought about how low she had sunk. Then, she grabbed a thin blanket and settled onto the couch. She was so exhausted that she fell asleep as soon as she lay down.

While she was asleep, she felt something wet and sticky touch her cheek. Sage wanted to open her eyes, but she was too tired and ignored it. Sage awoke the next morning to sunlight streaming in through her window. Checking her phone, she realized it was already past 9:00 a.m. Her uncle had replied to her message, saying that he'd had his assistant revise the contract. He had also asked her to thank Ian for him.

Sage was worried that her uncle wouldn't take her seriously, so she dropped Ian's name and said he had looked over the contract and made some changes. This tactic seemed to have worked.

Sage was sure that the other party wouldn't want to sign the contract once they reviewed it. But in any case, once this was all over, she would have to thank Ian. After freshening up, she headed downstairs to find Ian.

It was the day the couple had agreed to get a divorce. Sage wanted to go straight to the court to get the divorce certificate.

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However, Ian was nowhere to be found when she reached downstairs. Sage called him, assuming that he was at the office, but his phone was powered off. She also couldn't get through to Terry's phone.

She eventually called the secretary's office at Holcomb Corporation and learned that Ian and Terry had gone on a business trip to deal with an emergency. Even the secretary had no idea when they would return.

Sage thought it was a huge coincidence that Ian was away on business on the day they were supposed to get the divorce certificate.

She couldn't help but feel like Ian had done it on purpose, but she also knew that Ian wasn't the kind of person who would come up with an excuse like that just to avoid getting a divorce.

Mulling it over, she decided to unblock Ian and send him a message. "Why'd you go on a business trip all of a sudden, Ian? Please don't tell me you're going back on your word."

"When will you be back? Why didn't you tell me in advance?"

Sage was aware that she wouldn't get an immediate response from Ian. She wanted to find Linda to vent her frustrations, but Josephine told her that she usually prayed in the morning and wouldn't be free.

Sage had no choice but to give up. Besides, she knew that Linda wouldn't help her force Ian to sign the divorce papers.

Just then, Shane called to tell her that the other party had taken the bait. Hence, Sage decided to leave Holcomb Manor. Josephine watched her leave before she went into the chapel to report to Linda.

Linda was holding onto the cross Sage had given her when she said, "That rascal has finally come to his senses. He picked the right time to go on a business trip."

"Mrs. Holcomb Senior, Mrs. Holcomb seems very upset. Don't you think her relationship with Mr. Holcomb will worsen because of this?" Josephine inquired, worried.

"Those two are already at rock bottom. I'm sure it can't get much worse than this." Linda continued, "Sage is determined to get a divorce. I doubt this trick of his will make much of a difference."

Josephine was puzzled. "Mrs. Holcomb has always been in love with Mr. Holcomb. Why does she want to get divorced all of a sudden?"

The elderly woman shook her head

and said, "It's not her fault. It's already quite impressive that she was able to stick it out for so long. It's Ian's fault for neglecting her for too long. That's what drove her to this."

"Do you think Mr. and Mrs. Holcomb will be able to get back together in the future?" Josephine asked.

Linda sighed softly. "I can't say for sure. Let's just leave it up to fate."

Meanwhile, Sage arrived at Shane's office. He was still lounging at his desk, looking nothing like a businessman. When he noticed her, he tossed the contract over at her and said, "It's done."

He paused before continuing, "I

followed your instructions and offered Henry a sweet deal. He's on

board and is now gearing up to launch the project." Sage was very pleased with his efficiency

"By the way, I have all the necessary documents from Professor Braun. Once you sign the contract, we'll be able to start marketing the drug," he added.

Sage tucked away the relevant documents and said, "Alright, I'll reach out to Professor Braun right away and aim to have the contract signed within the next couple of days."

Sage recalled the request Shane had made in the past-once this was over, she would have to perform a drum solo for him.

"No can do," he responded lazily.

"The HR department has decided to arrange for Giselle to be your assistant. It's not work, but the drum solo was a condition you agreed to. You can't go back on your word now, can you?"

Shane was a pain to deal with, and Sage didn't want to waste her breath on him. Hence, she cut to the chase and asked, "Fine. When are you free?"

Shane responded, "How about tomorrow? I'll give you two days to deal with the contract and work."

"You're not going to embarrass me in public or set me up for something, are you?" she couldn't help but ask she noticed Shane's mischievous smile.

He grinned. "Anyhow, you've agreed to it, so you'll have to jump even if there's a trap ahead."

In the afternoon, Sage swung by Collin's research institution to sign the contract. Then, she headed back to Farsight Investment to meet up with Shane.

"Alright, since we're all done, let's get celebrating!" He appeared to be in a good mood.

Sage politely turned him down. "It's alright. We'll have plenty of opportunities to celebrate in the future."

"But that's that, and this is this," he said. "I've already canceled all my plans for the day. You're coming with me, whether you like it or not."

"Are you using me to get rid of Ms. Rosethorn again?" she asked.

Shane took his car keys and said, "I'm not using you today. It's just a simple meal. You'll be starting next week, so consider this an early welcome to Farsight."

Sage decided to go to the parking lot with Shane when she noticed he wasn't up to no good. He drove while she sat in the passenger seat. The pair chatted for a while about work until Sage's phone rang, interrupting them.

Sage assumed it was Ian, but it turned out to be Tiana. Sage figured that she was going to ask her about her divorce since Linda's birthday had passed. "Tiana," she said as she answered the phone.

"What's up? Why do you sound so down? Let me guess... you weren't able to get the divorce, am I right?" Tiana said confidently.

Sage was a little annoyed when she thought of that. "He left for a business trip this morning. I have no idea when he'll be back."

"Just as I expected! Ian won't agree to divorce you that easily. So, what's your plan?" Tiana asked.

"I'll give him a call later and see what's up. He can't stay abroad forever," Sage said.

"In that case, does this mean it's going to drag on again?" Tiana asked.

Sage was a little surprised by Tiana's nonchalance. "I thought you'd attempt to convince me to reconsider."

"I'm not that dim you know!" Tiana

continued, "the past, I wanted you

to give yourself a chance because

you've held on for so long, and he

was beginning to have feelings for

you. But I won't try to talk you out of

it anymore.

"He claims that he and Ivy are just colleagues, but he goes nuts

whenever something happens to her. He suspected you were behind

Ivy getting injured at the party last either

time, and he didn't trust you

when Ivy had an allergic reaction to the medication. Who could put up with such a scumbag?" Tiana was

furious just thinking about it.

Sage chuckled casually. "Well then, thanks for not talking me out of it."

"Thanks, but I'm good. I don't need to vent about anything."

Sage could feel Shane's gaze on her as she bantered back and forth with Tiana. She hung up the phone after saying goodbye to Tiana. "What are you looking at? Haven't you had your fill? Or do you want to join in?" she asked.

"I'm not deaf. You guys were talking

so loudly. It was only natural for me

to listen in on your conversation." He

then arched his brow and asked,

"Are you really getting divorced from Ian? Talways thought you were just threatening it."

