

Hitched 1011

Chapter 1011

The mistress and her maid were oblivious to the presence in the tree.

Helen snorted with disdain, "She's been poked with hundreds of needles, practically turning into a pin cushion, and yet she dares to escape. Seems like we were too lenient on her last night!

We should've broken her legs, made her crawl on the ground like a dog with its tail between its legs!"

The maid chimed in, "I heard that if you want to make someone's life a living hell, you could soak the needles in saltwater before using them. Salt in the wounds, the pain would be exquisite!"

"Brilliant idea, we'll try that next time. Let that wench have a taste of real pain, see if she still dares to seduce Clayton! A sly fox, crazy and yet not tamed!"

Helen's blood boiled at the thought of Clayton's attitude towards Pamela and herself last night.

Because of that, she had tossed and turned, heartbroken till the wee hours.

She blamed all her misery on Pamela!

The maid added, "She's always been trash, even insanity couldn't change her. But I wonder what Mr. Hawkins sees in her, fussing over a lunatic. I heard Mr. Hawkins replaced all the servants and bodyguards in the main house overnight."

Jealousy gnawed at Helen. Clayton had never shown her such attention!

Not even a glance!

Before, it was one thing, but now, Pamela was insane. Was she really losing to a madwoman?!

"He thinks changing guards and servants will protect Pamela? Hmph, no matter how he tries, they'll all end up being loyal to me!"

"Of course, now that Helen's running the show in the Hawkins family's backyard, who'd be foolish enough to side with that nutcase?!" Helen's smile twisted into a grimace,

"Looking for her daughter, looking till she dies, she won't find her. Not even a bone to mourn over!"

"Exactly, that little wench must be long gone!"

"..." The mistress and maid exchanged venomous words.

Evan clenched his small fists, breathing heavily with rage!

They were talking about his grandmother!

They had beaten her, pricked her with hundreds of needles!

That's why she didn't go to the docks today, because they had hurt her!

And they dared to curse his mom!

Thinking they could push around his grandmother and mom because they seemed easy targets?!

Thinking there was nobody to stand up for them?!

The nerve! He, Evan Thorne, couldn't stand it any longer!

Evan's anger boiled over, not caring about revealing his position, he was about to jump down and give them a piece of his mind!

But he was stopped by a rugged-looking man.

Evan turned, his eyes questioning: What?!

The man gestured for him to look in another direction.

A young man, wearing a mask and glasses, was hurrying their way.

His rapid steps and furtive glances screamed trouble.

He rushed to Helen's side, panting, "Helen."

Helen, annoyed, "What's the rush? This place is off the radar, surrounded by my informants, we won't be discovered."

The man gasped for air, "Better safe than sorry. Clayton's back, we have to be cautious."

Helen pursed her lips, "Came up with a brilliant plan to off her?"

"Yeah, thought about it all night. To kill her without drawing attention, we have to tamper with her food. A slow-acting poison can go unnoticed, seems fitting."

Helen frowned, "You mean, poison her slowly?"

"Yeah!"

"And how long will it take for her to die?"

"At least three to five months."

Helen was dissatisfied, "That long?!"

Chapter 1013

Inside the house, Pamela was still in tears, insisting on heading to the harbor to search for her daughter.

Clayton was by her side, trying to comfort her. She was injured, and it was clear she couldn't make it to the harbor now.

Upon hearing about Evan, he momentarily calmed Pamela down, left the bedroom, and went downstairs to inquire about the situation. Seeing Evan, Clayton's heart skipped a beat!

The boy's features, at first glance, bore a slight resemblance to his own daughter!

Evan resembled Tarquin, but there was also something of Elysia in him, given she was his mother.

Clayton's thoughts instinctively drifted to a young Elysia, and a sense of familiarity warmly enveloped him.

He was about to ask Evan some questions when the boy suddenly burst into tears.

Running over, he clung to Clayton's legs!

"Grandpa, save me, there's a bad man chasing me, waaah..."

Before any formal introductions, Evan hadn't dared to call him granddad outright. Clayton froze, "..."

The assistant, seeing this, quickly stepped forward, trying to lift Evan away.

The little guy had smeared his runny nose all over Mr. Hawkins' pants!

"Little buddy, let me give you a hug."

"No, no, I want grandpa to hold me." Evan clung to Clayton's legs, refusing to let go.

As the assistant was about to say something, Clayton stopped him. His Irene, when she was a child, also liked to cling to his legs like this.

Clayton felt a lump in his throat, bent down, and picked up Evan, wiping away his tears with a loving expression, he asked,

"Stop crying for a bit, and tell grandpa, how did you end up here? Where are your parents?"

Evan sobbed,

"I'm not sure, I just know a bad man was chasing me, he ran after me, I was so scared, waaah..."

The Hawkins family's bodyguard explained,

"We found him crying and running, indeed someone was chasing him, and that person looked no good. We tried to catch him, but he jumped over a wall and escaped. Our people are still out looking."

Evan said, "He must be a person who kidnaps kids."

The boss, "... Me, a kidnapper? Thank you, meeting you is my pleasure!

Clayton furrowed his brows, then asked Evan again, "Where are your parents?"

"I don't know, they might be at the hotel, or maybe they're out looking for me."

"Hotel? You're not from Oceanopolis?"

"We're from out of town, we just arrived in Oceanopolis this morning."

The assistant asked, "Boss, should we hand the kid over to the police, let them find his parents?"

Before Clayton could answer, sudden noise came from upstairs.

Pamela stumbled out of the bedroom, and because of her severely injured knee, she fell as soon as she left the room.

"Pamela!" Clayton quickly put down Evan and ran upstairs.

Lying on the ground, Pamela murmured, "To the harbor, to find Irene, waaah, to find Irene..."

Evan's little brows furrowed, his heart clenched, "!"

This was his grandmother!

This was the woman who carried his mommy for ten months and gave birth to her with so much effort!

She really did look like mommy!

But grandma looked so pitiful, the Irene she was talking about, was that mommy?

Clayton had already reached the second floor, he quickly helped Pamela up,

"Did you hurt yourself? Why didn't you call me before coming out? Let's get you back to your room."

"No, no, I have to find Irene." Pamela resisted.

Clayton patiently tried to soothe her,

"Listen, let's get your knee better first, and once it's healed, I'll take you to the harbor to find Irene, okay?"

"Not okay, I want to go now, Irene is waiting for me there."

"Pamela, Irene isn't at the harbor."

"Huh? Then where is she?"

Clayton's lips moved, but he didn't know how to respond.

Pamela cried, "My Irene is at the harbor, let me go, I have to find Irene, waaah, I need to find Irene..."

Chapter 1014

Watching Grandma with those puppy dog eyes, Evan's heart was breaking.

He desperately wanted to tell her the truth, to reveal that mom was alive, and she was right in Oceanopolis! But the bigger picture demanded his silence. He had to bear it for now!

All he could do was silently whisper to Pamela in his heart:

Hang in there, Grandma. Mom's back, she might even be on her way right now. You'll see her real soon.

Evan sniffled, about to go upstairs to comfort Pamela, when a maid came in with a bowl of soup,

"Sir, your wife's soup is ready."

Evan's brows furrowed. This must be the infamous poisoned soup, huh?

Larry came over too, noticing Pamela's tears and feigned concern,

"What's the matter with Ms. Patel? Did she fall?"

He was about to head upstairs when Evan, with a dark look, subtly stuck out his foot, and 'thump'! Larry went tumbling down, face-first into the dirt!

He fell, dragging the maid down with him, the soup from her hands splashing right onto his head!

Larry groaned, a mix of the shock from the fall and the sting of the hot soup altering his expression!

Realizing Evan had tripped him, he turned a fierce glare on the boy, but before he could scold him, Evan burst into tears and ran upstairs,

"That Mr. Handsome is so scary, waaaah, he wants to hit me, he's a bad man, waaaah..."

Evan cried, glaring at Larry, You jerk, consider this a welcome gift. The real present is yet to come, just you wait!

Larry, looking up at Evan on the stairs, scowled. Such a small kid and already playing the victim first, huh?!

Where did this wild child come from?!

Clayton consoled Evan, "Don't worry, he's one of mine. Larry, did you get burned?"

Larry, swallowing his anger, got up and replied, "I'm fine, just a shame about the soup."

Larry eyed the spilled soup, his gaze darkening. They had specially added something to that soup!

Such a waste!

All because of this darn kid!

Fuming inside, Larry looked up at Evan, "Mr. Hawkins, since when did we have an extra kid in the house?"

"Just wandered in unexpectedly."

Clayton didn't elaborate, his focus shifting back to Pamela.

He noticed Pamela had suddenly stopped crying and was staring intently at the little boy.

After a moment, she excitedly pointed at Evan's eyes, saying,

"Irene, Clayton, Irene..."

Clayton knew what got her excited, responding, "Yeah, the kid's eyes do look like Irene's."

Pamela leaned over, smiling warmly at the little boy, clearly taken with him.

Clayton was pleasantly surprised!

Pamela had been restless for a long time, insisting on going to the docks before dawn. If not allowed, she'd cry. He was worried about how to calm her down.

He hadn't expected this little boy to divert her attention!

Worried Pamela's behavior might frighten the child, he was about to offer an explanation.

Before he could, the little boy stepped forward, hugging Pamela,

"Sweet Grandma, did you hurt yourself when you fell?"

Pamela, overjoyed, glanced at Clayton, quickly embracing Evan, shaking her head, "No hurt, happy."

"I like sweet Grandma too. You can tell she's a good person just by looking at her."

Pamela excitedly looked at Clayton again, "Clayton, happy, happy."

She was telling Clayton how happy she was!

Clayton, eyes misting, nodded, "Yeah, happy."

Evan felt a pang of sadness, realizing how just seeing their grandson made his grandparents so happy. If only they could see mom, they'd be even happier!

Hang on, Grandma and Grandpa. Mom's on her way, your dearly missed daughter is coming back to you!

Chapter 1015

"Grandpa, can I call my mom to come pick me up? I don't want to go to the police station. I'm scared I might run into that kidnapper again." Evan peered up with his big, clear eyes, asking Clayton.

Clayton nodded eagerly, "Of course, of course!"

The child's request was exactly what he wanted!

Pamela, seeing the little guy not crying and actually quite happy, naturally wanted to keep him around, to give Pamela more company.

Clayton, with a loving look, asked, "Do you have your parents' contact information?"

"Yes, I'll call her right now."

But the next second, Elliot's call came in first.

Evan couldn't step away, so he had to take the call in front of Clayton, quickly explaining his situation to prevent Elliot from slipping up,

"Bro, I was brought to a strange place by a kidnapper, but don't worry, I'm safe. There's a kind grandpa and a beautiful grandma here, they're good people. Can you tell mom to come get me?"

Elliot was just calling to check on him.

The brothers had agreed to not worry about the bad guys for now, focusing on getting to their grandparents' side to ensure their grandmother's safety. So Evan played along with the story of being kidnapped to make his way to Clayton and Pamela's side-secretly guarding his grandma!

Hearing Evan was with his grandparents, Elliot felt relieved.

With Evan there, no one would dare touch a hair on their grandmother's head!

Elliot said, "Mom was really worried when she found out you were missing. We've tracked you down through the GPS on your phone watch and are on our way now. Stay with grandpa and grandma, don't wander off."

"Yeah, tell mom not to worry, I'm safe."

Actually, he was reassuring Elysia that their grandmother was safe.

"I got it," Elliot said before hanging up.

To avoid causing Elysia any distress, they decided not to let her talk to Evan directly.

Evan turned his little face up to Clayton and said,

"My mom is on her way here. She tracked me down through the GPS on my phone watch."

"Alright," Clayton asked, "What's your name?"

"Evan."

"And your mother?"

"Elysia."

"Elysia... That's a warm name."

Clayton complimented, instructing his assistant,

"Let the doorman know, when a lady named Elysia comes looking for her child, let her in directly."

He simply praised the name, without imagining what kind of person she might be.

After all, he could never have guessed that this girl was the daughter he and Pamela had been desperately searching for over two decades! "Beautiful grandma, have you had breakfast yet?" Evan looked at Pamela and asked.

He suddenly remembered the bad woman mentioning 'starving,' guessing his grandma hadn't eaten yet.

Skipping meals wasn't good!

Mom always said, "People need food like iron needs steel; eating on time keeps you healthy!"

Though Pamela seemed lost, her eyes were still clear and bright, radiantly gentle, without a hint of malice.

She shook her head, "I haven't, have you?"

Evan shook his head too, "I haven't either, but I'm getting a little hungry. Beautiful grandma, could you share a bit of your breakfast with me?" Pamela immediately turned to Clayton, "Clayton, breakfast! Breakfast!"

Clayton was overjoyed, his eyes welling up with tears!

This was the first time in over twenty years that Pamela had actively asked him for food!

Ever since their daughter went missing, Pamela had lost her appetite.

Chapter 1016

If it weren't for his relentless efforts to coax her into eating, she might have starved herself to death by now!

Clayton's voice choked with excitement, "Yeah, time to eat, time to eat."

Evan, feeling sorry for his grandpa, tugged at Clayton's hand, "Grandpa, you haven't had breakfast either, have you? Let's eat together later." "Alright, alright, we'll eat together."

Clayton immediately instructed the housekeeper to hurry and prepare breakfast, making a special request,

"It's still early, and Evan's family probably hasn't eaten either. Please prepare extra, and treat them with the hospitality we reserve for esteemed guests!"

He didn't care about their status; anyone who could make his wife happy was a benefactor to Clayton!

They were Clayton's honored guests!

Larry, still in the living room on the ground floor, watched Clayton and Pamela's joyful expressions, a sinister look flashing in his eyes.

He had heard it all; they liked the kid because he reminded them of their daughter!

Anything remotely related to their daughter could bring them joy.

Talking about treating him like a godson, pah!

In their hearts, there was only their daughter, and he was just a stray dog they kept around.

When they were happy, he was treated well, but who's to say they wouldn't kick him to the curb on a whim?

They did sponsor his education and helped him find a job, true.

But if they really saw him as a godson, they wouldn't constantly be on the lookout for their daughter, nor would they be content with letting him stay at home, taking care of a lunatic!

Sure, they provided for him lavishly, giving him billions for spending money every year to do as he pleased!

So why should he be grateful to them? They weren't good to him!

They sponsored his education just to craft an image of benefactors for themselves!

He was better off making his own way!

After teaming up with Helen, he could make millions more in tips every year, and Helen even set him up with her niece, guaranteeing they could marry.

Once he married into a wealthy family, he would truly rise to the top, becoming a VIP!

These were dreams Clayton could never fulfill for him!

Clayton wouldn't plan for his future!

Even funnier was when Clayton found out he was dating Helen's niece, he actually disagreed, sternly telling him to break it off!

Clayton surely didn't want him to succeed; he preferred keeping him as a caged dog!

So, his betrayal wasn't ingratitude; Clayton never showed him any real kindness!

With these thoughts, Larry sneered secretly!

Looking at Evan, contempt flickered in his eyes once more.

Just because the kid bore a slight resemblance to their daughter, they were fond of him? They were happy?

They couldn't possibly be considering this wild child as their real grandson, could they?

Ha!

Their daughter had been dead for who knows how many years, and they still hoped for a grandchild?

Dream on!

Larry didn't think much of Evan, feeling particularly unlucky today!

His first attempt at poisoning had failed, a bad omen.

Steadying his nerves, Larry put on a facade of kindness and said,

"Mr. Hawkins, Ms. Patel needs to drink more soup to recover. I'll have another bowl prepared for her, shall I?"

Clayton nodded, "Yes, do that. And while you're at it, prepare some more, for Evan's family too."

"...Alright, I see Ms. Patel is in better spirits now, so I'll step out for a moment. Call me if you need anything."

"Sure."

Larry turned and left, not sparing Evan another glance.

After all, he could never have imagined that Evan was indeed Clayton's real grandson!

After all, Evan was just a little kid; who could have guessed that what followed would turn everything upside down?

Chapter 1017

Evan shot Larry a glare that could freeze hell over!

That backstabber, just you wait, I'll come for you later!

Evan turned his attention back to Clayton, his curiosity piqued.

"Grandpa, who was that bespectacled Mr. Handsome just now?"

Clayton replied with a gentle tone,

"Oh, him? He's pretty much family. You see, because of certain reasons, I couldn't always be there for your grandma over the years, and Mr. Handsome has been looking after her. I consider him like a son; he's been a great help."

Clayton had already included Larry in his will, appreciating his support for Pamela and their emotional bond.

Evan frowned, his expression a mix of emotions as he looked at his grandfather.

Oh, grandpa, you're too trusting, letting your heart lead too much!

Some people just don't appreciate kindness, born with a streak of ingratitude!

Evan, thinking of the bigger picture, didn't confront Larry right away, choosing instead to cheer up his grandma.

...

After Larry left the main house, Helen immediately met him in secret.

"Did she drink the soup?"

Larry, annoyed, "A wild child knocked it over!"

"Wild child? The one that popped up this morning?"

"Yeah, I was just bringing the soup in with a servant when the kid kicked me, and down I went, soup and all."

Helen frowned, "On purpose?!"

"Absolutely on purpose! If he hadn't tripped me, I wouldn't have fallen, and the soup wouldn't have spilled."

"Does this kid have some sort of backing?"

Larry scoffed, "He's just a few years old, barely out of preschool. What kind of scheming could he have? Must be a bad seed, it's in his genes! Don't worry, though, we'll have other chances."

Helen's expression darkened,

"I heard from the servants that Clayton ordered the kitchen to prepare a feast with all the trimmings for some VIP guests, what's all that about?"

"It's all because of that wild child. He resembles Irene Hawkins a bit, and they took a liking to him. Pamela even stopped insisting on going to the pier because of him!

Clayton's 'VIP guests' are that kid's folks, they're on their way to the Hawkins family to pick him up."

Helen's brows knitted tighter, "..."

Larry added, "If there's nothing else, I'll head out. With Pamela in good spirits, I'll try to get another bowl of soup to her." "Alright, go ahead."

After Larry left, Helen's face grew even stormier.

Her maid asked, "Ma'am, do you think there's something off with that child?"

Helen countered, "A child suddenly shows up, resembling Irene to some extent, don't you find that odd?"

The maid said, "I heard the child was kidnapped by traffickers and ended up at the Hawkins family by accident."

"I don't buy it! Why would traffickers bring him to the Hawkins family? And how did he escape from them at such a young age? Besides, the Hawkins estate is swarming with security, how did the traffickers get him in?"

"Good point, it doesn't add up. Should we look into the child's background?"

"Yes! And the resemblance to Irene is too coincidental for my liking."

The maid quickly added, "But it's not possible he's Irene's child, right? If Irene were alive, why wouldn't she just come forward herself?"

"Of course, he's not Irene's child. Irene's been gone for years, but..."

Helen paused, choosing her words carefully,

"Even if he's not Irene's, him looking similar is enough to irk me. Let's dig into the child's background quietly, and I want to meet his mother!" "Alright, should we bring them here for you to meet when they arrive?"

"No, we can't risk it with Clayton around."

Chapter 1018

"How do we meet?"

"...Simple."

Half an hour later, Elysia rushed to the Hawkins family estate, flanked by Elliot and Emmett.

Tarquin, Elijah and Baby couldn't make it.

Elijah was holed up in a hotel room, hacking into the Hawkins family's security system.

Baby had crashed the moment they arrived at the hotel and was still catching up on sleep.

Tarquin had pressing matters to attend to that morning, directly involving the Hawkins family's interests, making it inconvenient for him to show his face.

So, after a family huddle, it was unanimously decided that Elysia, along with Elliot and Emmett, would make the trip.

The Hawkins family's butler greeted Elysia and the brothers, leading them toward the main house.

Meanwhile, Helen was strategically positioned on the path they had to take, plotting a "chance" encounter with Elysia!

From a distance, as Helen's confidant spotted the group approaching, she remarked, "Madam, that's them."

Elysia was still a bit far for a clear view, but her simple attire was noticeable.

Helen scoffed, "As expected, not a piece of fine jewelry in sight. Clearly of humble origins."

"Yes, I've heard that Evan kid also dresses quite ordinarily. Definitely not from a wealthy background."

"An ordinary family producing a child that resembles the Hawkins heiress is luck on their part! Let's go see what the mother of a child who looks so much like the Hawkins family's jewel looks like."

Helen and her maid made their way towards Elysia.

The butler, spotting them from afar, hurried over with an enthusiastic greeting, fawning, "Madam, good day."

Helen, dripping in jewels and opulence, ignored the butler and strutted forward, looking down her nose at Elysia.

Hoping to intimidate Elysia, she was instead taken aback-

Upon seeing Elysia, Helen's heart skipped a beat, and she went pale. For a moment, she thought she was looking at Irene, who had disappeared years ago!

The butler, with a chill demeanor, introduced, "Ms. Thorne, this is our lady of the house."

He also hinted with his eyes that Elysia should greet Helen.

Normally, guests would politely acknowledge the hostess.

However, Elysia did nothing of the sort!

She clenched her fists, glaring death at Helen, wishing she could tear her apart!

Before arriving, Elysia had learned of her parents' plight and had seen photos of the Hawkins family members, including Helen.

She recognized Helen!

This was the vile woman who, in the absence of Elysia's father and with her mother out of her mind, had tortured her mother mercilessly! Her cruelty knew no bounds!

If not for the bigger picture to expose and deal with all those who had harmed her parents-Elysia would have confronted her right then and there! Seeing Elysia's defiant stance, Helen's heartbeat quickened, her breathing shallow,

"Take off your mask!"

Elysia stared coldly, unresponsive.

Helen suddenly flew into a rage, her voice several octaves higher, "Are you deaf? I said take off your mask!"

Elysia, fists clenched, retorted, "I'm not deaf. But why should I listen to you?!"

"This is my house, I am the lady of this house!"

"You're the lady of this house? Are you Pamela?" Elysia challenged with a sneer.

The butler hastily tugged at Elysia, his manner brusque,

"Ms. Thorne, this is Helen, not Mrs. Pamela."

Elysia immediately turned on him,

"Helen? Then why did you call her 'madam'? Isn't 'madam' a title reserved for the Hawkins family's matriarch? Apart from Pamela, aren't you supposed to use a prefix when introducing any other lady? Are you ignorant, or was it intentional?"

Chapter 1019

The maid's eyes bulged in shock at Elysia's boldness, clearly not expecting her to come out swinging like she'd just downed a shot of espresso on an empty stomach!

And to think this was happening right in the middle of Hawkins Manor, of all places. Who gave her the nerve to sass members of the Hawkins family? Even a stray dog knows better than to bite without checking if its owner is around. And here she was, a mere servant of the Hawkins family!

The maid wanted to retort, but words failed her.

Elysia wasn't wrong, after all. According to tradition, only when referring to Pamela could one directly use the title 'Mrs.'

Yet, when introducing Helen and the other women of the Hawkins family, they were merely called by their first names or as 'the third lady' and so on.

But since Pamela had been out of her mind for years, and Helen fancied herself the lady of the manor, they had taken to calling her 'Mrs.' in conversation to curry favor with her.

Elysia was well aware of the servants' attitude towards Pamela, which is why she had them in her crosshairs!

After her piece, she turned her guns on Helen,

"You, Helen, presume to be the lady of the Hawkins Manor? In the old days, that would be considered insubordination, punishable by a stint in the stocks!"

"Insolent! You... you..."

Helen was so angry she could hardly breathe, her face turning a shade of steel blue.

She had never imagined, not in her wildest dreams, that a woman of no significant background would dare speak to her in such a tone.

For over twenty years, aside from Clayton, Carl, and that old coot living up in the mountains, no one had dared speak to her like that! Insolent?

Elliot sneered quietly to himself. The audacity to bully granny and not expect mom to fight back was already showing restraint!

If it wasn't for the bigger picture, mom would have already given you a piece of her mind!

Elysia went for the direct approach, while Elliot opted for sarcasm,

"Scared me there. I heard tales that Grandma Pamela was a learned and kindly woman, not some cantankerous shrew! Guess those stories were right!"

Helen spun around to glare at Elliot, her eyes as wide as saucers.

Pamela, learned and kindly?

Her, a cantankerous shrew?

Fuming, Helen raised her hand to strike,

"You little brat, you and your mother are asking for it!"

A fierce glint flashed in Elliot's eye. Though he was no match for Evan, dealing with a shrew like Helen was well within his wheelhouse.

However, before Helen's hand could land, her personal maid intervened,

"Madam, please, calm yourself. We're in front of the main house, and they are Mr. Hawkins' honored guests. Look, Mr. Hawkins is coming over." Hearing this, Elysia and Elliot hurriedly looked up to see Clayton approaching, their breath hitching as their eyes widened in unison.

Elysia felt a warmth in her eyes, her body trembling: Is this man, my father?!

Elliot was equally moved: This is grandpa, my grandpa!

Seeing Clayton draw near, Emmett immediately burst into tears, crying as if his heart would break.

Helen and her maid were taken aback.

Clayton came closer, his brows furrowing at the sight of Helen's displeasure.

He bent down to pick up Emmett, "What's wrong, little buddy?"

Through his tears, Emmett wailed, "That mean lady... sob... she wanted to hit my mommy, and she wanted to hit my brother too. She said she'd kill us, sob... She's a wicked witch, so scary... sob sob..."

Helen glared, "Who are you calling a wicked witch?!"

"That would be you."

"You..."

At her shout, Emmett's crying intensified, "Scared, the wicked witch is so scary, sob sob..."

Chapter 1020

Clayton hadn't even noticed Elysia, as he was too busy confronting Helen with Emmett in his arms, "What on earth were you thinking?!"

Helen, feeling wronged, her eyes reddening, protested, "Why are you being so harsh on me? I'm the victim here! I just bumped into them and, being polite, said hello. But out of nowhere, they started yelling at me and even insulted me!"

Trying to suppress the excitement of seeing his grandfather for the first time, Elliot steadied himself and said, "She's lying. She claimed she was the lady of the house. My mom thought she was Grandma Pamela because she mistook her identity, and then she started yelling at my mom and even tried to hit us."

Of course, Helen wouldn't admit to it, "I did no such thing; they're framing me!"

Clayton's face turned ice-cold, "Framing you? How would such a young child know to make this up? If you're the lady of the Hawkins family, then what does that make Pamela? Pamela is just sick; she's not dead yet!"

"I didn't, I..."

"Even if Pamela and I were gone, you wouldn't be fit to be the lady of the Hawkins family. You don't even grasp the basic courtesy of hosting; you'd only bring shame to the Hawkins name!"

Helen burst into tears right there and then, so upset she even forgot to keep her tone respectful, "Clayton, you..."

Clayton, unforgiving and stern, declared, "From now on, stay in your own place in Verity and keep out of Pamela and my sight!"

"Clayton!"

It was bad enough she was barred from the main house; now, she was being told not to even be seen around.

And in front of others, no less!

Not a shred of dignity left for her!

Helen felt her heart shatter into pieces, broken beyond repair.

But Clayton didn't spare her another glance, turning instead to her personal maid with a cold look, "Take Helen back!"

When Clayton was angry, it was truly frightening. The maid, trembling with fear, quickly supported Helen and made a hasty retreat, "Let's go, Helen, let's go..."

Elliot watched their pitiful retreat with a sense of satisfaction.

He didn't miss the opportunity to throw in a dig at the servant who had shown them the way, either, "Grandpa, it wasn't just them. Even this person who showed us in called her 'the lady.'"

The servant shuddered with fear, stammering, "I'm so sorry, sir, I... I misspoke."

Clayton gave him a cold glance before turning to his assistant, "Contact the butler to have them dismissed, and pass a message to all the servants from me. Anyone who refuses to acknowledge Pamela as the lady of this house can leave!"

"Understood!"

Hearing his lucrative job was on the line, the servant immediately burst into tears, begging for mercy, "I was wrong, sir, please forgive me, just this once..."

The assistant signaled a nearby security guard with a glance, and the guard promptly stepped forward, covering the servant's mouth and dragging him away.

Finally, peace returned.

Only then did Clayton turn to Elysia, "I'm terribly sorry, Ms. Thorne, for the discomfort you've experienced at the Hawkins family. On behalf of the Hawkins family, I owe you an apology..."

He stopped mid-sentence, his breath catching in his throat!

For the first time, Clayton truly saw Elysia, and he was stunned, breathless!

Was he seeing Irene?

But how could that be? Was he still dreaming?

Clayton raised a trembling hand, rubbing his eyes vigorously.

Very cautiously, he opened his eyes once more to look at Elysia...