

Hitched 1451

Chapter 1451

Winona Newsom's heart was pounding, beating so fast it felt like it was about to jump out of her chest!

Caroline called from the first floor, "Winona, what was that noise?"

Winona forced herself to lie, "...It's nothing, I'm just binge-watching a show. I'll be done soon."

"Oh, just a show."

Her parents didn't think much of it and went back to their conversation.

Winona let out a long sigh and shot a glare at Keaton Huber, gritting her teeth, ready to tear into him.

But when she saw him pointing at his own hair with a questioning look, her anger deflated.

The haircut wasn't just bad, it was hysterically awful.

Winona mumbled, "You're the one who made me cut it!"

Keaton gritted his teeth. "But you didn't have to make it this ugly, did you?"

"That's because you turned your head!" Winona shot back.

Keaton's eyes widened. "So it's my fault?"

Winona glared. "Well, it's not my fault, is it? You forced me to cut it, and we agreed beforehand if you got mad, you broke the promise!"

Keaton felt wronged. "How was I supposed to know that a beautiful girl like you could be so clumsy!"

"You're the clumsy one! And you're getting mad, so you broke your promise!" Winona retorted.

Keaton scratched his head. "Just fix it, quickly. I can't stand this hairstyle for another second!"

"Right now?"

"Yes!"

"My parents are waiting for me outside!"

"It's fine, they won't rush you. Just hurry up."

Winona said irritably, "I don't know how to cut hair. What if I make it even uglier?"

Keaton pressed his lips together. "Trust me, it can't possibly get any uglier than this! If you don't fix it for me, I'll start screaming right now and let your parents and my parents know that you're hiding a guy in your room!"

"You...!"

Winona gave him a kick but felt helpless. She had him sit on the toilet and started improvising.

Before she could even out the haircut, Winona noticed a problem. "All the hair clippings are falling on you."

"It's fine, I'll take a shower when I get home later."

"But it's not fine for me!"

Keaton looked up at her instinctively. "Huh? Why not?"

"Besides falling on your clothes, the hair is getting all over the floor. Look, it's going

to be a pain for me to clean up," Winona said.

Keaton replied without thinking, "I'll clean it for you."

Winona pouted. "Yeah, no thanks. Either I go to your place later to fix it, or you find

a stylist yourself. You're not getting it fixed in my house."

Winona tossed the scissors onto the sink and, ignoring Keaton's expression, washed her hands of the whole mess. "You stay here in the bathroom. I'm going out."

Keaton looked at his disastrous reflection in the mirror and chased after her, hoping to make her finish the job. But just then, he heard his mother's voice from outside the room.

Janelle was saying, "We came here today not just to apologize, but also to ask you something."

"We truly adore Winona, and we were hoping to ask her to be our goddaughter. I wonder if you'd be willing?"

Keaton already knew about this, so he wasn't surprised. However—

Janelle continued, "To be honest, I used to hope Winona would be my daughter-in-law. But then I realized they aren't right for each other."

"That rascal son of mine is simply not good enough for a wonderful girl like Winona!"

"So we've given up on that hope. Now we just want her as our goddaughter. You can rest assured, we will absolutely cherish her!"

Keaton and Winona: "..."

Ever since Winona learned that

Janelle and her husband wanted to

been a bit Keaton she

set her up with had

ved around them.

She didn't want to disappoint them, so she was afraid to get too close.

Hearing Janelle say this, she felt a wave of relief. Now she could be close to Janelle

without any pressure. The affection was mutual; Janelle liked her, and she liked

Janelle.

Winona raised an eyebrow and teased Keaton, "A roast from your own mom is the

most brutal. You're really failing, huh?"

With that, she left the bedroom in a good mood.

Keaton was left reeling in her room. "..."

His own mother had just

trash-talked him in front of Winona's

parents! Just how much did she adore Winona?! It seemed his mom had completely given up on the idea of them getting together:

In the living room, Ridley and Caroline Newsom, seeing how sincere the Hubers were, immediately gave their answer. "Of course we're willing. As long as Winona has no objections we

certainly have no objections.

Chapter 1452

A goddaughter was a great idea! If she became their goddaughter, then Winona would practically be family anyway! That was much better than having their daughter become the Huber family's daughter-in-law! It wasn't that they had anything against Keaton, but in terms of relationships... he was too much of a player, completely unreliable!

"I have no objections either," Winona said with a smile, walking over to Janelle's side. "Janelle, Richard." Janelle looked at Winona, both happy and concerned, and began fussing over her with a series of worried questions.

Richard Huber, on the other hand, was a bit stunned. He had caught the scent of alcohol on Winona! The Huber family had a passion for fine liquors, so he recognized the aroma. It had to be from Keaton's great-grandfather's prized collection! Keaton had stolen liquor from the family cellar again!

Richard was seething with anger. That good-for-nothing, infuriating son of his was going to be the death of him! He couldn't explode right then and there, so he had to bottle it up.

Just as he was fuming, he saw a text message from his driver: 【Sir, the young master is in Ms. Newsom's room.】

Richard: "!"

He re-read the message, then instinctively glanced toward Winona's bedroom. Making an excuse about handling work, he stepped away from the group to call the driver.

"How do you know Keaton is in Winona's room?"

"I was having a smoke downstairs just now and saw them with my own eyes. The young master and Ms. Newsom seemed a bit flustered when they saw me, so I didn't dare to greet them."

"Just now?"

"Yes. If you didn't see him when you came in, he must still be in Ms. Newsom's bedroom."

Richard: "..."

After hanging up, Richard's mind was in turmoil. His son knew how valuable the liquor in the cellar was. Why would he steal it for Winona? And why would he be sneaking around in her bedroom? You don't just enter a young woman's bedroom like that! What could this be if not a budding romance?!

Richard grew more and more excited. He turned and walked back to the living room, telling Janelle, "Something urgent has come up at the company. Can we continue this chat another time?"

Janelle was displeased. "What's so urgent? I'm right in the middle of something important here."

Richard knew her "important thing" was making Winona their goddaughter. He said impatiently, "We can talk about it another day, I have to go."

Why bother with a goddaughter when a daughter-in-law was so much better! The Huber family was on the verge of having its line end. He had been praying to every saint he could think of for a daughter-in-law for the family!

He wasn't like Janelle. Janelle had become such a big fan of Winona that she thought her idol deserved a better man, so she'd switched sides! He hadn't switched sides! He'd much rather have Winona as the lady of the Huber house than as a goddaughter!

Seeing Richard's urgency, everyone assumed it was a real company emergency. Janelle couldn't argue and left with him. As soon as they were out of the Newsom house, she asked, "What on earth was that all about?"

Richard didn't answer. He first motioned for the driver to leave, then quickly pulled Janelle into Keaton's house next door.

Janelle was completely bewildered. "What are you doing?!"

Richard said, "Stop with this goddaughter business. Think about our family. It's

much better for Winona to become the lady of the Huber house!"

Janelle frowned. "That brat of yours doesn't deserve Winona! Besides, he doesn't like her, and she doesn't like him."

Richard retorted, "Says who? They're totally a thing! They've been seeing each other behind our backs. We might even get married this year and be holding a grandchild by next year! Haha Richard yet so carried away by his own words that he started laughing excitedly. Contént

Janelle looked at him skeptically. "Are you completely delusional? You must be

losing your mind from wanting a daughter-in-law so badly!"

"We'll just wait for our son right here," Richard declared. "You can ask him yourself

in a bit. If he dares to say he's not with Winona today, I'll break his legs!"

Stealing his great-grandfather's

liquor deserved a beating! Sneaking

into a young woman's bedroom

without a thought for her reputation, when they weren't even dating, deserved a beating! Of course if they were* dating, then no beating was necessary.

Janelle had no idea what had gotten into him. Completely baffled, she asked, "Where is our son?"

Richard pulled her into Keaton's bedroom and patted the sofa. "Sit here and wait. And keep your eyes on that window."

Chapter 1453

Next door, Keaton had no idea a beating was waiting for him. All he could think about was his hair.

After Winona left, he grabbed the scissors and tried to fix it himself, but the more he trimmed, the worse it got! It was an absolute disaster.

When Winona returned to her room and saw the hair clippings scattered everywhere, her blood pressure soared. She was about to yell at him when she saw Keaton's 'new' hairstyle...

"Pfft!"

She couldn't hold it in and burst out laughing.

Keaton's face darkened. "When you laugh at someone to their face, could you at least be a little quieter? Don't other people have feelings?"

He tilted his head, which only made Winona laugh harder. "Keaton, you... you... you've outdone yourself! You actually managed to create a high-fashion asymmetrical alpaca cut. Hahaha... There are pictures online, let me find one for you, haha..."

Winona actually pulled out her phone, laughing as she searched. "I can't breathe. Haha, I'm literally dying..." Keaton's face flushed a deep, mottled crimson with embarrassment and rage. He hadn't been sure he could fix it, so he had only trimmed along one side before giving up. The result was an absolute trainwreck. Unable to stand her blatant mockery, Keaton turned and walked toward the window.

Winona quickly called out, "What are you doing? You're going to jump just because I laughed at you a little?"

"I'm going home!" Keaton snapped.

Only then did Winona realize he had climbed in through the window.

Keaton saw that the Huber family's driver was gone. He opened the window to leave, but before he did, he remembered something and turned to say resentfully, "We're even for that time you needed stitches because of me!"

The wind ruffled his hair, and he even tried to flick his lopsided bangs.

Winona was practically crying with laughter. "Even, we're even! Be careful, I'm not responsible if you fall."

Keaton shot her a glare and climbed out the window.

Behind him, Winona's laughter followed. "Bye-bye, Mr. Alpaca."

Keaton: "... " His reputation was ruined! At least only Winona had seen it.

Their bedrooms were separated by just one wall. It was a bit risky, but not difficult to cross. Keaton nimbly returned to his own room. He was just about to head to the bathroom to even out the other side of his hair and call a stylist to come over when he turned around and saw his parents.

They were sitting side-by-side on the sofa, backs ramrod straight, staring daggers at him!

"Ah-!"

Before Keaton could scream, Janelle let out a shriek.

Keaton jumped. "Mom?!"

Janelle stood up and rushed over. "Son, how did you get in from outside? This is the third floor! And what happened to your hair?!"

Keaton was surprised. "Didn't you two leave? What are you doing here in my room?"

Richard cut straight to the chase. "Are you and Winona together?" The hair was irrelevant; the daughter-in-law was what mattered.

Keaton was stunned. "Who told you that?!"

Richard didn't beat around the bush. "Did you or did you not steal your great- grandfather's liquor for Winona?"

Keaton: "...Yeah."

Richard: "And did you just come from Winona's bedroom?"

Keaton: "... Yeah."

Richard became emotional. "If you two weren't together, you would never have stolen your

er

great-grandfather's liquor for her And you certainly wouldn't be. sneaking into a young woman's bedroom!"

Before Keaton could speak, Janelle asked, "You dragged me in here such a hurry saying they were

in

together. Is this what you based that on?"

"Yes!"

Chapter 1454

Janelle was speechless and tried to defend her son. "He stole the liquor for Winona because he knows we like her. He probably figured that even if he got caught, we wouldn't be too mad because of her!"

"And as for sneaking into her bedroom... wait, Keaton, why did you sneak into Winona's room?!" Janelle suddenly grew agitated as she spoke. "She's a young woman! Even if you don't care about gossip, she does!"

"No wonder your father said he'd break your legs if you two aren't together. You better explain yourself right now, or if he doesn't do it, I will!"

Keaton was at a complete loss. He said meekly, "Aren't you two being a little old- fashioned? What's the big deal about a bedroom? It's the 21st century, friends can hang out in each other's rooms..."

Janelle smacked him across the back of the head. "A girl's bedroom is not just any room you can waltz into!"

Richard added, "Especially not by sneaking in!"

Janelle nodded. "Right. If you and Winona are just friends, why did you have to sneak over? Why not use the front door?" She leaned in and sniffed. "And, what did you do in her bedroom?! You smell like Winona's shampoo..." Her eyes widened. "You took a shower in her room?!"

Keaton quickly explained, "I just washed my hair, I didn't take a shower! Can you please stop looking at me like I'm some kind of creep?"

Janelle was furious. "What kind of decent young man climbs through a window to wash his hair in a girl's room?!"

Richard chimed in, "Unless they're dating!"

Janelle faltered for a second, then glared at Keaton. She took out her phone and snapped two photos. "Tell me the truth about you and Winona right now! If you don't, not only will you get a beating, but I'll post these ugly pictures of you online for everyone to laugh at!"

Keaton: "... " Was this really his mother?

Seeing the 'ready to strike at any moment' attitude from his parents, Keaton didn't dare speak rashly. The last time, with the Beatrix Sutton incident, his dad had nearly taken a golf club to him while his mom tried to intervene, and he still barely made it out alive. This time, if they both teamed up they'd probably bury him in the backyard! Besides, his mom had photographic evidence.

She'd become obsessed with her celebrity idols lately; he had no doubt she would actually post his embarrassing photos online.

After mulling it over, Keaton let out a long sigh and said in a low voice, "Let's talk in the living room. The walls are thin, we don't want her to hear."

He managed to coax his parents out of the bedroom and sat across from them, ready to spin a tale. "In my eyes, you've always been such open-minded parents, so loving and..."

Richard cut him off. "Cut the crap! Tell us about you and Winona!"

Keaton pursed his lips. "Winona and I... we are together." Richard: "!" His eyes lit up. The Huber family was saved!

Janelle: "!" She was just shocked, unsure if she should be happy or angry Her son was with Winona, which should be a good thing. But how could this brat possibly be good enough for her idol?!

Keaton continued his lie. "The reason I didn't tell you is because Winona asked me not to. She's not sure if she wants to marry me yet, so she wants to keep it quiet."

"She said she wants to test me out first. If we don't work out, we can break up quietly without affecting our families and friends. If we do, we'll just announce our marriage and give you all a big surprise."

Chapter 1455

Of all the things his son said, the only words Richard heard were 'announce our marriage'!

He was so overjoyed he was on the verge of tears. "Son, you've finally done something right! In the thirty years I've been your father, this is the proudest I've ever been of you!"

"You're finally willing to settle down! The Huber family name is saved! I can finally die a happy man!"

Janelle's expression was conflicted. She wasn't happy, but she wasn't unhappy either. After a long moment, she said, "Winona is so exceptional, she must have high standards. How could she possibly fall for you?"

Richard didn't like that. He stood up for his son. "What kind of thing is that to say? No matter how flawed he is, he's still my son. He might be unreliable, but he's not completely useless. At least he's good-looking, right?"

Keaton: "... So, the only good thing about him was his looks? Both his mother's and father's love for him was present, but not by much.

Keaton continued his charade. "Okay, you two need to calm down. This thing with Winona and me... it's brand new. We've barely gotten started."

"For the sake of our future, I need you to keep this a secret. Don't tell anyone. If Winona finds out I spilled the beans, she'll definitely break up with me!"

Richard immediately nodded. "Don't worry, son, my lips are sealed!" He then warned Janelle, "Don't you go around spreading this. Keep it a secret for our son's sake. Don't ruin his big chance!"

Janelle's face was still twisted in conflict; she neither nodded nor shook her head.

Keaton tried to reassure her. "Mom, I know you adore Winona. Don't worry, whether we end up getting married or not, I will never let her get hurt. If we do break up, she'll be the one dumping me, not the other way around!"

Richard's face immediately darkened. He lectured his son, "What break up? Don't jinx it! Why can't you be more positive?! Now that Winona likes you, you need to hold on tight and do whatever it takes to marry her into the Huber family!"

Janelle shot him a glare and asked Keaton, "If you two are together, then what's the deal with that Alicia? Were you cheating on Winona behind her back?"

Keaton quickly explained, "Alicia was Winona's idea. It was a cover to hide our relationship. If I'm out there acting like a player, no one would

suspect us, right?"

Janelle: "Then why did she hit Winona?"

Keaton: "That's on us for not doing our homework. Turns out Alicia had a personal grudge against Winona."

Janelle was still skeptical, feeling that something wasn't right. "But....."

Keaton played his trump card. "Mom, think about it. If we weren't together, would Winona have slept in my bed?"

Janelle was stunned. "Slept in your bed? I thought you said she was staying in the guest room?"

Keaton shook his head. "Winona was afraid her parents would get suspicious, so she said she was in the guest room. The truth is, we've been sleeping in the same bed for a while now."

Richard was ecstatic. "Does Winona want kids? Tell her if she wants kids, we'll take

care of everything! We'll agree to any conditions she has!"

Janelle glared at him. "You go dream on! Winona is her own person, no one can force her to have kids!"

Richard backtracked. "I'm not forcing her! I just mean if she likes kids and plans to have them, we'll of course support whatever she wants."

"But just imagine, Winona giving you a beautiful little granddaughter who looks just like her. Wouldn't that make you happy?"

Janelle imagined it and a smile spread across her face. "If Winona decides she wants a baby, I'll spoil her absolutely rotten And you and Keaton better do the same. She'd be the absolute queen of this family!"

Chapter 1456

"Yes, yes."

Keaton's head was buzzing as his parents went back and forth.

He'd told them it wasn't even close to being serious, and they were already talking about kids!

After a moment of excitement, Janelle pressed on.

"...But when I offered to be Winona's godmother just now, she agreed right away. She seemed perfectly happy to just be an honorary member of the family instead of your girlfriend."

Keaton kept spinning his tale. "She only agreed to be your goddaughter so she'd have a reason to be close to you."

"Otherwise, she'd have to avoid you. If she didn't, people would start suspecting something's up between us. After all, why would she get close to you for no reason?"

"And look at my hair! Winona did this!"

"I let her do this just to make her happy! I don't care about my image! Have you ever seen me do that for any other girl?"

"And that crystal statue of mine? The one in the family vault? She kicked it, and it shattered, and I didn't even hold it against her."

"Plus, you both said a girl's bedroom is a private space. If Winona and I weren't together, would she have let me in?"

"With her personality, she would've shoved me down the stairs!"

Keaton had successfully convinced his mom. Janelle nodded. "That makes sense. I just can't believe Winona would fall for you! It's a real case of beauty and the beast! Good thing the beast is our son!"

Keaton deadpanned, "...Mom, are you sure I'm not adopted?"

"Oh, get out of here! Listen to me. It's a blessing that Winona likes you, so you better treat her right! If you dare do anything to hurt her, I won't let you off the hook!"

Richard chimed in, "Your mother's right. For someone like you, having Winona agree to be with you is like hitting the jackpot. You'd better hold on tight!"

"If you can bring Winona into the Huber family, you'll be the hero of our family!"

Seeing that he'd successfully fooled them, Keaton took a deep, quiet breath. He had dodged a bullet, for now.

He seized the opportunity. "From now on, don't pay any attention to the gossip you see about, me. Jell definitely just be a cover for my relationship with Winona."

"And don't say anything weird in front of her. Just treat her like your beloved

goddaughter and don't mention anything about me and her."

"Oh, and that includes my sister and Elysia Thorne. Don't tell them either. Not even they know yet."

"Young people like their freedom in relationships; they don't like elders meddling. If you say too much, it could hurt my chances with Winona."

Richard immediately declared, "As long as Winona is willing to have you, I won't say another word."

Janelle nodded in agreement. "I won't tell anyone either. But if you need anything to make Winona happy, just tell your father and me: We'll give you our full support and cooperation!"

Richard's expression changed, as if he'd made a monumental decision. "Come home later tonight. I'll give you a key to the wine cellar. Winona enjoys a good drink. Whenever she wants some, you can go gett for her."

Keaton said, "I have a key."

Richard shook his head. "Not that one. I'm talking about the cellar beneath the family vault."

Keaton's eyes widened. "We have a wine cellar under the family vault?!"

"Yes. Only a small portion of the collection is on display in the vault. The majority, all the best vintages, are kept in the cellar."

Keaton's eyes grew even wider. "How come I never knew about this?!"

Richard snorted. "You can't even find yourself a wife. What makes you think you'd be qualified to know?"

Keaton was speechless.

Chapter 1457

Richard spoke with the gravity of a patriarch. "The wine in that cellar has been collected by generations of the Huber family. The key is only passed down when one is ready to settle down and manage the family estate."

"I'm giving you the key early to help you woo Winona. You need to work hard and not waste my efforts!"

Keaton felt a pang of guilt. The old man was pulling out all the stops to help him win Winona over.

The guilt was small, though, and quickly overshadowed by his excitement.

He'd just told one little lie and managed to score the key to the secret wine cellar!

Not yet realizing what this lie might cost him, Keaton nodded eagerly. "Don't worry. With you and Mom supporting me like this, I'll do whatever it takes to win her over and make her a part of the Huber family!"

Richard slapped his thigh, looking happier than if he'd just closed a multi-billion-dollar deal. "That's the spirit! I have faith in you, son!"

Keaton just smiled.

His parents, completely convinced, left with Richard walking a little taller. His son had finally dropped that whole 'never getting married' nonsense. He could see the light again!

The Huber family didn't need money; they needed more people!

Everyone has their ambitions, and Richard's current ambition was for his son to step up, get a wife, and give the Huber family a kid or two! One would be great, but more would be even better!

After his parents left, Keaton pulled out his phone to call his stylist but was stopped by a picture from Winona.

It was a goofy-looking alpaca with big, dumb eyes and a side-parted hairdo.

[Look, don't you two have the exact same hairstyle?]

Keaton rolled his eyes, sent back a bloody knife emoji, and headed to the shower.

He had no idea that the truth will always out, and that his lie was bound to be exposed...

The next day, Elysia and Blossom Blythe came to visit Winona.

Winona was curled up at home in her loungewear, sorting through scripts.

Blossom glanced at the pile and was stunned. "Winona, are you going to be in 'Chronicles of Aethelgard'?"

"I'm thinking about it, but I haven't decided yet. I'm not sure which one to pick."

The sheer number of scripts was overwhelming. She couldn't take them all, she wouldn't have the time, and it would hold up their

productions. She planned an

choosing two.

Blossom, a big fan of TV shows, was in the know and chattered excitedly, "Winona, you're amazing! These hyped. They re

scripts are all hugely fore filming

already treading, ever

has started. Whichever one you do is guaranteed to be a hit!"

"Other people have to fight for these roles, and you get to pick and choose. You're

on another level. Your connections are insane!"

Winona said, "I don't have that kind of pull. These were an apology gift from Keaton."

Blossom froze. "Mr. Huber gave them to you?"

"Yep. His ex-girlfriend injured me, and he said he'd take responsibility, so I graciously accepted."

Blossom nodded seriously. "I have to say, Mr. Huber knows how to give a gift. This is way better for you than some jewelry!"

Winona praised him sarcastically, "No wonder he's such a player, and beautiful girls still flock to him. The man is a master at charming women."

Elysia asked curiously, "Is Keaton secretly dating someone?"

Winona shot back, "Who?"

Elysia shook her head. "I don't know. I heard it from Jess."

"Because of my mother-in-law's ashes, I've gotten to know a few respected priests recently. This morning, Jess called and asked me to ask one of them if their

congregation had any good singles groups."

"She said Janelle is going to church to pray that Keaton's new relationship will last forever and they'll never break up."

Winona was intrigued. "Jess said that?"

Elysia nodded. "Yeah, but she doesn't know who Keaton's girlfriend is either. Janelle

and Mr. Huber know, but they're being super secretive about it."

"They even told Jess not to ask Keaton and just to pretend she doesn't know anything."

"Also, apparently the few girls Keaton has been seen with recently are just a cover for his real girlfriend."

Winona was puzzled. "Keaton's always been open about his relationships. He's never been the type to hide things."

Chapter 1458

Elysia said, "Jess thinks it's weird too, but Janelle and Mr. Huber seem certain."

Winona wondered aloud, "Do you think Keaton tricked them?"

Elysia replied, "But I don't think Janelle and Mr. Huber are that easily fooled." Winona paused. "...Could it be because of Beatrix?"

"Huh?"

Winona explained, "Keaton told me yesterday that Alicia attacked me because of Beatrix..."

Winona recounted the whole story about Alicia and Beatrix, making both Elysia and Blossom frown.

Blossom said, "You really can't judge a book by its cover. Looking at Beatrix, with her image and personality, no one would ever think she'd resort to such dirty tricks!"

Then, a thought struck Blossom. "Hey, do you think Mr. Huber might actually have a secret girlfriend, but she doesn't want to go public? So he's respecting her wishes and keeping it quiet to protect her?"

"Or maybe he's planning to completely resolve things with Beatrix before making it public, so his new girlfriend won't be targeted by her."

Winona and Elysia exchanged a look. "...That actually makes sense."

The three friends spent the morning chatting about Keaton, Beatrix, and his mysterious girlfriend.

In the afternoon, Winona had to go to the hospital to have her dressing changed.

Blossom went back to work, while Elysia went with her.

Mindful of Winona's fame, they took a less-traveled path into the hospital, where they unexpectedly ran into Beatrix.

In a secluded corner, Mrs. Sutton slapped Beatrix hard across the face. "If anything happens to your sister, I'll personally send you to prison! You just wait, you little bitch!"

"We all put up with you because of your marriage to the Huber family, but now they don't even want you! What do you have to be so proud of?!"

"How dare you hurt your sister! You little brat, we've spoiled you rotten!"

Growing angrier, Mrs. Sutton slapped Beatrix twice more. She spat a few more vicious warnings before storming off.

Beatrix remained stone-faced, not saying a single word the entire time. She calmly wiped her tears, straightened her clothes and stepped out of the corner, heading for the hospital entrance...

When she saw Winona and Elysia, Beatrix's brow furrowed, her eyes filled with

hostility. After a moment of silence, she started walking toward them.

Elysia frowned. Winona narrowed her eyes.

Beatrix approached, ignoring Elysia and fixing her gaze directly on Winona.

She glanced at the wound on

Winona's head, offered no apology, and said coldly As you can see my life is far from happy. So have

nothing to lose. I'm not afraid to die."

"Stay away from Keaton, and I'll leave you alone. But if you dare to make a move on

him, I will destroy you, even if it costs me my life.”

"This time, you just needed a few stitches. Next time, I might just ruin your face."

"And let's see. With my history with Keaton, if I scarred you for life, do you think he'd

send me to prison? Would he kill me to avenge you?"

Beatrix spoke calmly, her words dripping with provocation.

Elysia was furious and about to speak, but Winona just laughed.

“What a coincidence. I'm not afraid of dying either. My ex-husband & nearly killed me, so I've already had a near-death experience. The thought doesn't scare me much

anymore.

“But... let me ask you this. Given our relationship, if you disfigured me, do you think

I would kill you?"

"After all, you're clearly not loved at home. If you died, you'd just be dead. No one would care."

"I highly doubt Keaton would come after me for revenge."

"But if you killed me, a whole lot of people would be coming after you."

"My parents wouldn't let you get away with it. My best friends wouldn't let you get away with it. My fans wouldn't let you get away with it."

"Because, you see, even without Keaton, I have plenty of people who love me."

"You, on the other hand, only have Keaton in your corner, and he doesn't even love you."

They say the cruelest attacks are the ones aimed at the heart. The more someone lacks love, the more they crave it.

Winona's words were like daggers, striking Beatrix right where it hurt.

Chapter 1459

Beatrix was no longer as calm. Her breathing grew ragged. "I heard he's secretly hiding a girlfriend. Is it you?"

Winona neither confirmed nor denied it, a sharp edge to her smile. "Sorry, but you don't have the clearance to know that."

With that, Winona pushed her sunglasses up, her beautiful eyes narrowing as she stared directly at Beatrix. A few seconds later, a mocking smirk touched her lips, a look of pure disdain.

Without another word, Winona lowered her sunglasses, linked her arm with Elysia's, and walked toward the clinic. She moved with the haughty grace of a black swan, elegant and untouchable.

Beatrix's hands clenched into fists, her chest heaving with rage as she stared at Winona's back, wishing she could tear her to shreds.

Elysia, sensing Beatrix's animosity, asked Winona, "I get that you wanted to hit her where it hurts, but why didn't you deny it? Now she'll think you're Keaton's hidden girlfriend and she'll definitely come after you."

Winona let out a long breath. "Keaton has helped me out a lot with the Zane Livingston situation. I've kept a tally of all the favors."

"If I have a chance to help him, I'm going to take it."

"I don't know if he actually has a girlfriend hidden away, but what if he does?"

"By not denying it, I make Beatrix focus on me. She won't go digging for Keaton's real girlfriend."

"By taking the heat for his girlfriend, I'm repaying Keaton for his help."

"Besides, Beatrix is the reason I have stitches in my head. We're already enemies, so a little more bad blood won't make a difference."

Seeing Elysia's worried expression, Winona smiled. "Don't worry. I've been in the entertainment industry for years. I've seen every type of woman there is. Someone like Beatrix? I'm not concerned at all!"

"She can throw whatever she has at me. I can take it! I'm not afraid of her!"

"Enough about her. After I get my dressing changed, let's go shopping. Tarquin's birthday is tomorrow. Are you ready?" Winona finished with a wink.

Elysia knew exactly what she meant, and her cheeks turned red, her attention successfully diverted.

"Let's go, time to change your dressing."

Winona laughed out loud, teasing her with a raised eyebrow. "Why are you blushing? It's just me. Come on, tell me everything."

"You're so annoying! Let's go!"

As the two friends joked and walked toward the clinic, they were

completely unaware that photo ne

of

then had already fallen into Zane's hands.

Zane stared at the picture of them together, his emotions swinging between fiery rage and intense passion.

Seeing Winona ignited his rage. Seeing Elysia ignited his passion.

Hiding out in a filthy, rundown neighborhood, he sent a reply to Beatrix.

[Once the funds are in place, you won't have to lift a finger. I have a way to kill her!

But you are not to touch Elysia!]

Beatrix replied, [What way?]

Zane: [You don't need to know.]

Beatrix: [She must die!]

Zane: [Don't worry. I hate her more than you do.]

Beatrix: [Once I have the money, I'll transfer it to the account you specified.]

Zane's eyes narrowed. He didn't reply.

He opened the photo again, his gaze fixed on Elysia, gently tracing her face on the screen, his eyes full of love But the moment he thought of arquin Bradford that love instantly turned to a deep, all-consuming hatred.

A voice called out from a distance. "Hey, you, the new guy from Zhinora! The boss wants you to clean the toilets. You in?"

Zane quickly put his phone away, a calculating glint in his eye. "Yeah, I'm in."

By evening, when Elysia got home,

the children were already waiting for her Clayton Hawkins and Pamel

PateDhad picked them up from preschool.

Seeing her, the little ones all ran toward her. "Mommy!"

Elysia smiled warmly, hugging one and patting the other.

Chapter 1460

"Did you have fun at preschool today?"

The little ones chanted in unison, "Yes!"

Baby said in her tiny voice, "Mommy, my brothers said it's Daddy's birthday tomorrow, so we don't have to go to school."

Elysia couldn't help but smile. "That's right. I'm letting you all take the day off tomorrow so we can celebrate with Daddy, okay?"

"Okay, okay! No school tomorrow, no school tomorrow! Grandpa, Grandma, Mommy said I don't have to go to school tomorrow!" The little girl was as happy as if it were Christmas. Among all the kids, she was the one who disliked school the most.

Clayton and Pamela played along, feigning shock. "Is that so? Our Baby doesn't have to go to school tomorrow?"

"Uh-huh, Mommy said so! If you don't believe me, ask her! Mommy, Mommy, quick, tell Grandpa and Grandma that I don't have to go to school tomorrow, right?"

Elysia's expression was full of affection. "Yes, yes."

Baby turned to Clayton and Pamela. "See, Grandpa, Grandma? You heard her!"

Clayton and Pamela laughed. "We heard, we heard. Baby can sleep in tomorrow. After you wake up, we'll go to the park and ride the carousel. Then we'll come back for lunch, and Grandpa will make you something delicious!"

"Yay! I want to ride the little pink horse."

"Okay, okay."

As the room filled with laughter, Elliot and Evan tugged on Elysia's sleeve. "Mommy, Daddy's birthday is tomorrow. Is he still not coming home tonight?"

For the past few nights, Tarquin had been staying at the family vault on the old estate.

Elysia wasn't sure. "I'll call and ask him in a bit."

Clayton said, "While you're at it, ask if he'll be back for dinner tonight."

"Okay."

Elysia called Tarquin. As soon as he answered, Baby piped up, "Mommy, don't forget to tell Daddy I don't have school tomorrow!"

Elysia laughed helplessly. "Okay, I know, sweetie."

She took the phone upstairs as Tarquin asked, "What's my Baby girl saying?"

Elysia reported, "She wants me to inform you that she doesn't have school tomorrow."

Tarquin sounded surprised. "Since when are you willing to let them skip school?"

Elysia retorted, "It's your birthday tomorrow, did you forget?"

Tarquin paused. "...I actually did. You're letting the kids skip school just to celebrate my birthday?"

"Of course. Celebrating my husband's birthday is the most important thing."

Tarquin's happy laughter echoed through the phone.

Elysia chuckled as she complained,

"Baby is only in preschool, she doesn't even have homework yet, and she already hates school.

are we going to do when she at

elementary school and has actual assignments?"

Tarquin wasn't worried at all. "I'll do them for her."

Elysia thought she'd misheard. "What did you say?"

Tarquin elaborated, "I'm not going to ruin my relationship with my daughter and give myself a heart attack just over homework. It's worth it."

"If she has too much, or if she really doesn't want to do it, I'll do it for her."

"And if I'm busy, I'll have her brothers help her."

Elysia rolled her eyes, but Tarquin continued, "Eating well, sleeping

time, and

staying healthy.com.t

first School is second Confer

Elysia wanted to argue, but she couldn't find the words. He actually made a good

point.

Changing the subject from their daughter, she asked, "So, you're finally coming back today?"

"Yeah, I'll be back tonight."

"Will you make it home for dinner?"

"I won't make it for dinner. I'm eating with the priests here at the old estate. Don't wait for me. I'll be back late."

"Okay. Oh, right, there's one more thing. Alicia attacked Winona because of Beatrix. Did you know about that?"