

# Hitched & Hitched Again: A Comedy of Marital Mayhem ( Elysia and Tarquin) - Chapter 201[ 611 words ]

It was the kind of terror that runs deep in the bones when facing a murderer!

Tarquin frowned at her murderer-staring look, clearly displeased.

Quickly averting her gaze, Elysia shoved a lunchbox into his hands,

“This... This is Elijah’s breakfast. I’ve got stuff to deal with back home, so.... I gotta run.”

With that, she turned and sprinted away, as if a murderer was hot on her heels.

Tarquin watched her retreat, his expression darkening.

Benjamin humed over and asked, “What’s up with Ms. Thome? She seemed all flustered when she left. She didn’t even respond to my hello”

Tarquin pushed the thermos into Benjamin’s arms. “I need a smoke!”

With that he stormed off.

Benjamin was puzzled. “What’s going on here? You two had a row? She’s all panic-stricken, and you look like you’ve been wronged big time. It’s been just a moment, and you’re at odds again?”

Everyone knew that Elysia had saved Elijah, and Tarquin’s attitude towards her had completely changed. They even embraced each other emotionally in the ambulance...

It was a silver lining that everyone around Tarquin was relieved to see.

Lowell and Keaton were even more enthusiastic, wishing the two could just get married on the spot.

If they got together Tarquin wouldn’t have to suffer the pangs of unrequited love anymore.

They believed that Elysia could bring Tarquin happiness, much more than that woman whose whereabouts were uncertain.

And yet, just a few hours in, they were at odds again?

Tarquin stood on the balcony, smoking, his mood sour.

Allegra misunderstanding him didn't bother him much, but Elysia's misunderstanding really got under his skin.

He summoned Lowell and asked, "What exactly happened last night?"

Lowell was Tarquin's right-hand man, with a status similar to his own.

However, his temperament was entirely different from Tarquin's. Lowell was about the same height as Tarquin, similar in personality – both were men of few words and rather cold demeanor.

Lowell responded emotionlessly, "By the time I got there, Lionel was already dead, killed by an enemy."

"Which enemy?"

"Last month, Lionel and a buddy had their eyes on a college girl, dragged her into a hotel, and assaulted her. The girl reported to the police, but without evidence, nothing could be done. Instead, Lionel and his friends slandered her, claiming she was promiscuous and that she had seduced them for their money, and later tried to blackmail them. The girl was dishonored, her reputation ruined, and she was expelled from school. A few days ago, she found out she was pregnant, so she confronted Lionel and got beaten up and assaulted again. In her rage, she committed suicide. The girl was an orphan, living only with her brother. They were very close, and her brother happened to be serving in Military Courtyard. Last night, taking advantage of their drug use, he sneaked into the room and injected Lionel with a lethal dose."

Tarquin frowned and asked, "if those guys harassed his sister, why did he only kill Lionel?"

Lowell replied tersely. "The exact reason is unclear, but Gideon had approached him before the incident."

Tarquin was silent.

That explained why only Lionel was killed while the others were spared.

Gideon wanted only Lionel dead!

Gideon was using Allegra's situation to warn the Bradford family to stay in line and not mess with Elijah.

At the same time, he was drawing fire towards Tarquin!

With Lionel's death at this critical time, no one would suspect Gideon. They'd all think Tarquin killed Lionel to avenge Elijah!

Only those close to him would know that murder wasn't his style. If he disliked someone, he'd just make their life a living hell.

## **Hitched & Hitched Again: A Comedy of Marital Mayhem ( Elysia and Tarquin) - Chapter 202[ 647 words ]**

“Nobody knows for sure, but ever since the incident, Gideon’s people have been on the hunt for that girl’s brother. I reckon they’re aiming to silence him for good.”

Tarquin furrowed his brows. “Find him and send him to Charlie’s,”

Lowell asked, “To Charlie’s to chip rocks?”

“Better than ending up dead at Gideon’s hands.”

In today’s world, life’s already stacked against the poor. If you’ve got money and power, you’re set. Without it, you’re nothing. Too many have suffered and died in silence, just like that girl!

Lionel’s death was a heavy sin, but why should her brother pay the price?

The darkness in society runs deeper than most folks realize, with only glimpses shown in movies.

Rich brats like Lionel, with their endless dirty deeds, are a dime a dozen!

His death should be a cause for celebration!

That girl’s brother is not a criminal here; he’s a hero!

But Gideon’s clever, using others to do his dirty work. Looks like Tarquin had been too lenient with him lately. Time to crack him down again!

Meanwhile, Elysia returned home and immediately burrowed into her blankets, shivering.

She was terrified.

Though she wasn’t sure if he had actually killed anyone, the fear was real.

Normally, if someone was falsely accused, they'd defend themselves. But when Allegra accused him, he stayed silent.

Why didn't he refute it?

Deep down, she believed he was the murderer.

The thought of dealing daily with a murderer was enough to terrify her, especially given her timid nature.

And what about Allegra's threats? If she couldn't cure Elijah, would he turn on her? After all, the greater the hope, the greater the disappointment.

Now, he was filled with hope for her.

Elysia's mind was a mess, torn between feeling wrong for presuming guilt without evidence and the fear of getting too close to that man, which felt increasingly dangerous.

The next day, Elysia still went to the hospital to deliver breakfast for Elijah. But she didn't go to Elijah's room directly. She asked Benjamin to deliver it instead, and she kept up with Elijah's condition through Benjamin.

It was clear she was avoiding Elijah's father.

Benjamin, puzzled, took the food to Elijah's room and asked Tarquin, "What's going on between you and Ms. Thorne? Why is she avoiding you?"

Tarquin looked up and asked, "She was here?"

"Yeah, came and left. Here, she asked me to bring breakfast for Elijah."

Tarquin's mood soured immediately.

Benjamin said, "With Elijah's situation, I thought this might bring you two closer, maybe even patch things up. Why did it only last a day? We're all in this together; why not just clear the air?"

Tarquin scowled, "You might consider her one of us, but that doesn't mean she feels the same. Stop wasting your time warming up to someone who's cold."

Benjamin was taken aback. "What do you mean?"

If she saw Tarquin as one of her own, she wouldn't lump him in with the Bradfords and misjudge him.

"Not everyone can be considered 'one of us'. Don't cheapen yourself."

Despite his sharp words, Benjamin suggested, "Whatever the issue, bring it out into the open, instead of this silent treatment."

“Who’s giving silent treatment?”

“She’s avoiding you, and you are making snide remarks behind her back. If that’s not silent treatment, what is?”

09:47

Tarquin frowned, “If she wants a silent treatment standoff, she’s got to be in my league first.”

Implying that Elysia wasn’t even qualified to have a silent treatment with him.

Benjamin was speechless again, but before he could say anything else, Tarquin had already left the room.

Feeling down, Tarquin decided to crash Allegra’s memorial service for Lionel. Normally, funerals took a few days of preparation, but given Lionel’s unique circumstances, both the higher-ups and Gideon were eager to have him buried as soon as possible.

So, the funeral was set for that morning.

## **Hitched & Hitched Again: A Comedy of Marital Mayhem ( Elysia and Tarquin) - Chapter 203[ 531 words ]**

Tarquin was in a foul mood, and as his right hand man, Lowell saw right through it. Driving down the highway, he tried to lighten the atmosphere.

“Tarquin, if something’s eating at you, why don’t you just hash it out with Ms. Thorne? No point in bottling it up. You keep this up, and it’s clear Ms. Thorne’s feeling it too.”

Tarquin’s reply was icy. “And what’s her discomfort to you?”

Lowell’s smile was strained. “Nothing, but it’s obvious she’s getting under your skin, and it’s tough watching you like this.”

“And you’ve seen this how? What, are you psychic now?”

Lowell barely managed a chuckle. “Come on, even an idiot could see it! Ms. Thorne’s been a godsend to Elijah, and besides, she’s a lady. Even if she’s at fault, we could afford to be a bit more gracious and give her some slack.”

“Nola’s been good to Elijah too. Am I supposed to bend over backwards for her as well?”

“That’s different. Nola Slater and Ms. Thorne aren’t in the same league. Nola’s efforts are, well, laughable, but Ms. Thorne’s a stand-up

woman.”

“If she’s so great, from now on, you can stick with her and leave me be!”

Lowell sighed. Every time Tarquin had a spat with Elysia, he’d turn into an unreasonable kid.

“Tarquin…”

“Zip it!”

The funeral was a spectacle.

The Bradfords were abuzz with whispers at the sight of Tarquin.

“Why’s he here?”

“No idea. Didn’t hear about him being invited. Maybe Gideon requested his presence?”

“Hardly. He wouldn’t be that senile. Inviting him’s like asking for trouble.”

Tarquin hadn’t been invited; he came unasked.

His arrival sent a chill through the Bradfords, who watched him, uneasy and silent.

Allegra, weeping in front of the chapel, saw Tarquin and screamed, “Why are you here? Who let you in? Get out! Lionel wouldn’t want you here, get out!”

Tarquin ignored her. He wasn’t there to mourn Lionel.

Gideon, seated prominently among the guests, caught Tarquin’s approach.

Tarquin, hands in pockets, walked over, ignoring the murmurs of the crowd.

But no one dared say a word, only Allegra’s hysterical cries filled the air.

Lowell moved to the chapel, lighting a candle for Lionel on Tarquin’s behalf.

Gideon frowned at Tarquin. “Why did you come?”

“I’m here for you,” Tarquin replied, lighting a cigarette and taking a seat.

“You could’ve just called. You know Allegra’s got a bone to pick with you! Lionel just died, and here you are, adding to her grief. She’s still your aunt, your dad’s sister.”

Tarquin scoffed. “Her son’s death isn’t on me.”

Gideon was puzzled. “It sounds like you’re suggesting Lionel’s death was my doing.”

This piqued everyone’s interest, no one wanting to miss out on the drama.

Tarquin didn’t hesitate to give them something to talk about. He summoned Lionel’s father Larry, the folks from Verity’s side of the family, and even the elders to join in.

Gideon, clueless about Tarquin’s intent and visibly annoyed, pressed, “What are you trying to do?”

“Some things don’t add up. Thought I’d get some clarity from you here, Grandpa.”

“Why air this in front of everyone? Couldn’t you have said it over the phone?”

09:47

## **Hitched & Hitched Again: A Comedy of Marital Mayhem ( Elysia and Tarquin) - Chapter 204[ 582 words ]**

“Talking face to face is the only way to make things clear”

Gideon was visibly upset. “Then out with it. What’s the deal?”

Tarquin’s expression was nonchalant as he said, “I just wanted to ask you what you were discussing with Mike before Lionel’s incident?” Mentioning Mike caused Gideon’s expression to shift dramatically! He glared, eyes fixed intently on Tarquin.

The crowd, keen observers all, sensed something was amiss, stirring whispers among themselves,

“Who’s Mike?”

I think I know. A while back, Lionel and his crew bullied a girl. She ended up taking her own life, and Mike was her brother.”

“Does this mean Lionel was killed by Mike?”

“He’s just a nobody. Without someone backing him, he’d never get close to Lionel. I bet he’s just a pawn, there’s gotta be a mastermind behind the scene.”

Everyone turned towards Gideon, their eyes filled with varying degrees of suspicion.

Gideon's face turned beet red as he yelled, "Nonsense! Tarquin, are you suggesting I had Mike kill Lionel?"

"No, I'm just curious why you were meeting Mike before the incident and why you sent people after Mike afterward. What could Mike possibly have done to offend you so much, Grandpa?"

Tarquin might as well have had silencing a witness written all over his face.

Gideon, struggling for breath, his composure lost, retorted, "What are you talking about? I don't even know this Mike."

Calm as ever, Tarquin produced a photograph. It showed Gideon and Mike in mid-conversation.

The evidence was as loud as a slap to the face.

Gideon stood up so fast from his chair it might as well have been a jump.

The crowd was in shock.

Tarquin didn't outright accuse Mike of being the murderer. But with the conversation taking this turn, the Bradfords, sharp as they were,

got the gist

Tarquin then reverted to his usual cold demeanor "Elijah is my life. Whoever dares to target my Elijah won't face death from my hands, but a fate worse than death!"

He rose, looking down on Gideon. "And another thing, don't treat me, Tarquin, like a fool. If you're planning to use me or frame me, you better check if you've got the brains or the means for it!"

With that parting shot, he left.

Silence enveloped the room.

After what felt like an eternity, Allegra suddenly lunged forward, grabbing Gideon's wrist, kneeling before him with eyes brimming with tears. "Dad! Tell me, what's going on?"

Gideon, gasping for air, pushed Allegra away, roaring, "You believe Tarquin's divisive words? Foolish

With that, Gideon left the scene, escorted by his bodyguards.

Allegra was heartbroken as she screamed, "Dad! You've destroyed your own daughter! You might as well have taken my life directly..."

The rest of the Bradfords exchanged looks between Allegra's despair and Gideon's retreating figure, shocked! They all thought Tarquin was behind Lionel's demise, but now...

Back in his car, Gideon passed out from sheer rage, revived only by a quick-acting nitroglycerin pill administered by his confidant.

The confidant tried to soothe him, "Sir, please calm down. Although Tarquin publicly accused you, he has no proof! Without evidence, it's just his word against yours. No one will believe him!"

"Quick, get in touch with Baby ET's Support One. I want to talk to them today! As long as they're willing to support me, I'll hand over that item today!"

Mentioning the item, the confidant's eyes widened as he asked, "Sir, are you sure?"

"Do it- Gideon's voice was a hysterical roar.

## [ 638 words ]

### Chapter 205

Elliot was in the midst of a typical day of kindergarten when the smartwatch in his pocket buzzed, with a squint, he excused himself and headed to the bathroom.

His attention had always been on Tarquin and people around Tarquin, making it easy for him to spot when Gideon reached out.

Gideon's confidant messaged him. Hey, my boss urgently needs your skills. We've attached a token of our sincerity. Please check it

t]

Elliot squinted at the image that popped up, taken aback by what he saw.

Gideon wanted to use that item

Item for a deal?

Did Gideon even grasp its value? Did he know how rare it was?

Even Elliot and Tarquin didn't have it!

Rumer had it Tarquin had been on a wild goose chase for this item, with no luck so far.

But with this item, what couldn't they achieve?

What was Gideon planning that he needed Elliot, when he had such a trump card?

After a moment, Elliot typed back, [With that in your hands, you could do anything. Why come to me?]

The reply came swiftly, My boss said it's great, but it's a one-shot deal. Using it on the wrong thing would be a waste.]

Meaning, trading it with him could accomplish more.

Elliot got it Gideon was indeed a sly fox!

[I'll make a deal, but I only agree to help you with three tasks, within my moral and legal boundaries, and within my capabilities.]

There was a brief pause before the response came, [Deal! How shall we deliver the item?

[I'll send you a location later Just leave it there, and someone will pick it up).

[Great! My boss hopes you can swiftly uncover who breached the Bradford Group's security and swiped billions from the Bradford family's dealings overnight]

Elliot squinted again, tasked with investigating himself...

Revealing his identity to Gideon was off the table! But he couldn't just pin it on someone else; he had to maintain integrity.

How to reply needed careful thought.

[That's the first task. I'll get you the information as soon as I have it. Elliot replied.

[Thank you, looking forward to a fruitful collaboration]

Elliot didn't respond, lost in thought as he stared at the photo of the item.

is going

ing all out against Tarquin! And this item was exactly what Tarquin had been searching for

Gideon was

What if he leaked hints of its existence? Tarquin would surely make a move, offering terms for it!

Could he use it to make Tarquin divorce his mom?

After all, as precious as the item was, it paled in comparison to Elysia's happiness.

Pondering, Elliot toyed with his smartwatch for a bit.

Soon, the news that Gideon was trading the item for the services of a top hacker, was buzzing in Tarquin's ears.

Tarquin, in the middle of an executive meeting, stormed out upon hearing it. Back in his office, he demanded. “Is this reliable?”

Lowell showed him the tablet. “Absolutely. It all over the dark web, posted by Baby ET’s Support One himself.”

Using ‘Baby ET’s Support One’ as his alias, known simply as Mr. E. Elliot had stirred the dark web with a post, using the image Gideon

sent him

[With the right offer, ill make your wishes come true!]

The comments section exploded with shock and envy.

(OMG! It’s surfaced again! Shocked!]

[Who’s asking Mr. E for a favor with such a bounty? Must be a matter of great importance)

[Only someone influential could possess this, could it be the government?)

heard our government has one, and it’s been coveted by foreign powers and traitors! Could this be It?

is the government fecing a dilemma, hoping Mr. E can solve (17)

Others exclaimed

I thought it was a myth, but it’s reall To possess it means... OMG! I’ve been living under a rock!]

## **Hitched & Hitched Again: A Comedy of Marital Mayhem ( Elysia and Tarquin) - Chapter 206[ 693 words ]**

Tarquin was scrolling through his tablet with a determined look. “Make contact now!” he commanded.

Lowell knew Tarquin had been on the hunt for this for a while, and he understood the reason behind it, but

“Given Mr. Ex fondness for the item, he might not be willing to part with it even if we want it.”

“We’ll make him an offer he can’t refuse. Let him name his price!”

Hmm, and what about Gideon? If he’s asked Mr. E to find the person who breached our system, and that person is both talented and wealthy, it could spell trouble for us if Gideon gets to him first”

Tarquin frowned. Forget him for now Let’s secure this item first!” .

“Alright then.”

Lowell began to reach out to Baby ET’s Support One“ .

But despite sending numerous messages, there was no response.

Tarquin was visibly annoyed by this!

Little did he know, Mr. E was actually his eldest son. At the moment, his son was surrounded by a group of little girls, too busy to respond to his messages,

his favor.

It was recess, and the girls were showering Elliot with gifts in an attempt to win One girl offered him chocolates, another gave him a pack of marshmallows, and there were those who presented stickers,

colored papers, and even Play Doh

“Elliot, if you accept my gift, you’ll have to marry me, okay? A man of his word can’t go back on his promise!”

Elliot was baffled. Did I accept? Did I even say anything?

Before he could speak up, another girl chimed in, “Elliot can’t marry you because he just got my has to be my husband. He can only have one wife, so if he mamies me, he can’t marry you!”

“But I want to marry him too!”

“Then go find Evan or Emmett.”

“No way, Evan and Emmett already have their crushes”

marshmallows. If he eats my treat, he

Evan and Emmett’s crushes were none other than their beloved mommy. They declared their undying love for her and her alone!

Elliot had said the same, but these girls weren’t having any of it

“What do we do then? We all want to marry Elliot!”

“I’ve got an idea. Let’s ask Elliot’s mom to have more kids just like him, then we won’t have to fight over him.”

“Right, that’s a great plan.”

So, the girls surrounded Elliot, saying, “Elliot, when you go home today, could you talk to your daddy and mommy? Tell them to try harder and have more kids like you. That way, we won’t have to fight over

you.”

“Let’s see, one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine! Nine more, and that should be enough for all of us!”

“We’re not asking for much. Even if the new kids don’t look like you or Evan, resembling Emmett would be fine too.” “Elliot, our happiness is in your hands. Please talk to your parents tonight and get them to work on

Elliot was exasperated. He wasn’t a fan of the constant chatter from the girls.

But his mommy had taught him that a boy must always be a gentleman, especially towards girls, and treat them with respect. With a sigh, Elliot replied. “I’m afraid I have to disappoint you. My daddy and mommy won’t be having any more kids.”

“Why not?” the girls pressed.

Elliot couldn’t tell them his parents were considering divorce. Instead, he said, “Because my daddy... he’s not capable anymore.”

“Ah? Not capable? Is your daddy sick? Is he dying?”

“No, he’s not dying anytime soon. But he’s got a condition that means he can’t have more kids with my mommy”

And so, the news that “Elliot’s daddy can’t have kids anymore” spread like wildfire throughout the kindergarten.

Even the kids in the younger classes heard about it!

Some of the girls were particularly emotional. The thought of Elliot’s parents not being able to have more kids, and thus their chances of marrying him dwindling, brought them to tears.

09:29

“I don’t want Elliot’s daddy to be sick. I want him to have more kids, waaah...”

“I want Elliot’s daddy to have kids too! Wasah...”

# Hitched & Hitched Again: A Comedy of Marital Mayhem ( Elysia and Tarquin) - Chapter 207[ 640 words ]

The rumor mill was running wild, and by the time it reached the teacher, Mr. Miller, it had morphed into something utterly bizarre.

“Mr. Miller, you’ve got to call the principal. Let him have a word with Elliot’s dad. The poor guy’s in a bad way, and he can’t have kids

wnymore...

Mr. Miller was taken aback by the news

While he comforted the little girl, wiping away her tears, he said, “Don’t cry, Shoy Elliot’s dad in a man, and you know, men don’t give birth to babies.”

“But i want Elliot’s dad to have babies! And he needs to have nine of them”

The teacher was puzzled. “Why nine?”

Because we’re short by nine husbands”

The innocence of children, Mr. Miller thought. When Blossom heard this, she had just taken a sip of her coffee.

And she spat it out! All over the colleague she was gossiping with.

She didn’t even pause to apologize before blurting out, “The schoolgirls want Elliot’s dad to have babies?”

“Yep! That’s the talk of the day. Our little girls have been in tears over it! Didn’t you hear the wails downstairs just now?

“I thought I heard something, but I had no idea it was over this... Are they all calmed down now? What did you say to them?”

“I had Elliot tell them that he’d talk to his dad when he got home, to take good care of himself, and maybe, just maybe, try harder to bring these nine sons into the world.

Blossom was in stitches!

First she nearly choked on her drink, and now, she was dying of laughter!

Elysia couldn't believe her ears when she heard the story.

It was ridiculous, exasperating, and yet, somehow, hilarious.

The world of children is simple and yet so fantastical, their thoughts so wild and free

But thinking of Elijah, her smile froze, and she couldn't help but sigh

While most children's worlds were full of vibrant colors and life, Elijah's was a desert storm of confusion and fog.

Elysia"

Hearing her name, Elysia snapped back to reality

Callum had taken a seat across from her. He had reached out to her for a meet-up today, mentioning something important to discuss.

They decided on a coffee shop near the hospital, conveniently where she had just finished delivering lunch to Elijah, making her arrival at the cafe slightly ahead of Callum.

"Sorry, the parking was a nightmare, took me forever to find a spot," Callum said.

"It's alright, I've only been here a minute myself."

Callum signaled for the waiter, ordering two cups of coffee before he began apologetically. "About that mess with Tarquin, I'm really sorry. I'd just gotten back from abroad when Tarquin hit me up asking for a favor. Didn't think much of it until it was too late."

"I never saw it coming, either."

To think Tarquin, of all people, capable of such deceit! She had him pegged as a man of integrity, never imagining...

"You and Tarquin go way back?" Elysia asked.

Callum nodded. "I met him overseas, and I have known him for years."

"Weren't

you educated here?"

"Yeah, but my family moved abroad early on. I met Tarquin before I came back for university. He's been overseas for a while too."

“Ah, that explains it And Tarin?”

That meeting, Tarquin was a no-show but Tarin unexpectedly appeared. Before she could probe further, Elijah had his emergency. Callum hesitated, not wanting to deceive Elysia, especially since she was close to Winona.

After that day, Keaton had filled him in on Turquin and Elysia’s situation.

Though Keaton hadn’t shared much, he got the gist: Tarquin had concealed his true identity from Elysia, going by Tarin!

09:29

Callum fumbled for words, “Met him overseas too.”

“He’s been abroad?”

“Yeah, his family was well-off.”

“Well, they were. But now they’re bankrupt

## **Hitched & Hitched Again: A Comedy of Marital Mayhem ( Elysia and Tarquin) - Chapter 208[ 593 words ]**

Callum remained silent for a moment, sipping his coffee awkwardly to ease the tension before turning

“I heard you were looking for Tarquin. If you trust me, you can tell me, and I’ll pass the message along”

Elysia’s lips quivered slightly, but she shook her head in refusal,

Bound by a secret marriage and a non-disclosure agreement, she couldn’t even confide in Blossom, let alone anyone else.

“I need to speak to him in person.”

“Well, you might be disappointed then. He doesn’t seem to want to see you lately.”

Elysia frowned, her frustration bubbling over.

“I don’t get it. Even if he’s swamped, he could make time to see me! It feels like he’s avoiding me! I’m not some kind of monster, what’s so hard about meeting me?”

Callum was just as clueless about Tarquin’s reasons and could only offer a helpless shrug

Seeing that Elysia wouldn’t divulge her reasons for wanting to see Tarquin, Callum didn’t press further, steering the conversation elsewhere.

“Don’t be too upset. Tarquin is a hard man to read. When he’s ready to see you, he’ll reach out. Just be patient. I came here not just to apologize but also to ask about Winona’s overseas movie shoot. What did Zane and Blossom tell you?”

The mention of Winona cooled Elysia’s temper slightly.

“Is there news about Winona?”

Callum frowned lightly and said, “The news I’ve got might be a bit different from what you’ve heard, so I wanted to check in with you.”

Elysia tensed up, recounting to Callum what Zane and Blossom had shared with her.

Callum shared, “Winona’s agent did indeed hype up a secretive big project, telling everyone to stay tuned for a blockbuster surprise! But word on the street is, she’s been gallivanting abroad for over a year, with no news of her working on any new film.”

“How could that be? Could it be that only the actors had to sign NDAs and not the agent? But Zane clearly said he couldn’t even reach Winona’s agent

“It’s either Zane lied, or there’s something up with Winona’s side. I had my people check, and there’s no record of Winona leaving the country.”

Dysia’s heart skipped a beat! She widened her eyes, “Are you sure about this?”

“Positive! Winona hasn’t been spotted, and if I’m not mistaken, she didn’t even leave Jindale City.”

“Crash-”

Elysia accidentally shattered her coffee cup, spilling dark coffee all over herself and the floor.

Stunned, she stood up, frozen in place.

Callum quickly asked. “Are you okay?”

The waiter rushed over, assuming her pale face was from the shock of breaking the cup, and reassured, “No worries, miss. I’ll get you another cup right away”

After the waiter cleaned up, Elysia sat back down, her brows furrowed. “If Winona didn’t leave the country, or even Jindale City, why hasn’t she contacted anyone? She didn’t reach out to Blossom and Zane, not even her parents. Wait, have you tried contacting her agent?”

Callum’s expression grew complicated, “Her agent’s gone off the radar.”

“What do  
you mean?”

“Right after I found out Winona hadn’t left the country, I tried reaching her agent. But the calls go unanswered, and there’s no reply to messages. Even her close relatives and friends can’t reach her,”

The waiter brought over a fresh cup of coffee, and Elysia, trembling slightly, took a sip.

The coffee was bitter, but she couldn’t taste it, feeling numb.

She had been harboring doubts about Winona’s disappearance for over a year. Now, those doubts intensified

Something might have truly happened to Winona

## **Hitched & Hitched Again: A Comedy of Marital Mayhem ( Elysia and Tarquin) - Chapter 209[ 559 words ]**

After parting ways with Callum, Elysia wandered the streets, lost in thought and deeply troubled.

The situation with Winona weighed heavily on her mind.

Winona hadn’t left the country, she might not even have left Jindale City, and now even her agent was unreachable.

These odd circumstances all pointed to one homifying conclusion: Winona was in trouble!

Images flashed through Elysia’s mind, unbidden and terrifying.....

Dark, filthy basements hidden away from the light of day.

Disfigured performers on the stage of a bustling circus.

Cold merciless iron cages.

Bleached bones scattered across desolate wilderness.

Even girls being trafficked to the Myan District...

Each image sent shivers down Elysia's spine. She was already faint hearted, getting scared for months on end by a single horror movie. Now, with these gruesome images flooding her mind, she was petrified.

She tried to reassure herself, "Winona's fine, Winona's fine, stay calm!

But no matter how much she tried to convince herself, the terrifying images kept surging forward...

"Screech-

"Honk! Honk! Honk!":

A black sedan suddenly swerved towards the guardrail, causing other vehicles to slam on their brakes in a panic!

People honked their horns in frustration, cursing, "Learn how to drive, psychol

"If you wanna die, go do it somewhere else! Damn, scared the hell outta me!"

Ignoring everything, the driver of the sedan, after failing to break through the guardrail on his first try, reversed and, with increased speed, crashed through it again!

Realizing the danger, bystanders yelled, "Lady, run! It's dangerous!"

The roaring engine of the sedan and the shouts of the crowd snapped Elysia out of her daze.

Seeing the black sedan charging towards her, her eyes widened in terror!

In her panic, she froze, unable to

move.

Holding her breath, she watched the sedan approach, screaming in fright, "Aaah-

"Crash! Boom-"

A van suddenly appeared, slamming into the black sedan and leaving a huge dent in its side.

Realizing things weren't going his way, the sedan's driver tried to flee, turning the steering wheel frantically.

But the van didn't give him a chance!

Backing up a few meters, it accelerated again, ramming into the sedan and sending it flying.

After tumbling through the air, the sedan crashed to the ground with a heavy thud

The van didn't stop there; it powered forward, pushing the sedan towards a tree until it was completely wrecked.

Passersby and drivers, forgetting to scream, stared in shock at the scene unfolding before them, as if they were watching a live-action Fast & Furious movie!

The driver of the sedan, his legs useless and covered in blood, lay unconscious in the wreck.

Tarquin glared at him before unbuckling his seat belt and calling Lowell, "Here, near the hospital on Minster Road Wake him up and get some answers before the cops show up!"

It was clear the driver was targeting Elysia, intending to kill her

If Tarquin hadn't received a call from Benjamin about Elijah waking up and decided to visit the hospital, Elysia might have ended up a casualty of the sedan's rampage.

After giving his instructions, Tarquin hurried out of the van and ran towards Elysia.

Elysia stood frozen, pale as a ghost.

Tarquin approached. "Elysia!"

Elysia looked up, her face a picture of shock. She was already pale, but now she was even more so,

Her lips trembled, unable to utter a sound.

## **Hitched & Hitched Again: A Comedy of Marital Mayhem ( Elysia and Tarquin) - Chapter 210[ 530 words ]**

"Hey..." Tarquin said, hoping to offer Elysian few comforting words, but before he could finish, she collapse into his arms like a house of cards caught in a gust of wind

The ordeal with Winona had already scared her half to death, and this latest fright had shattered her last bit of defiance. Her heart couldn't withstand the immense terror and she lost consciousness entirely

Caught off guard, Tarquin instinctively reached out to catch her Elysia felt as light as a feather and as fragile as a leaf in the wind in his arms. If he let on, she would surely fall.

Tarquin, unaware of the situation with Winona, thought she was merely scared by the recent accident. Without overthinking, he scooped her up in his arms and dashed toward the hospital

The streets were choked with traffic, paralyzed in the rush hour. Not even bikes or scooters could squeeze through the congestion

The hospital wasn't terribly far, but on foot, it felt like miles.

Tarquin, desperate ran with Elysia in his arms. Her as dangled lifelessly, swaying with his movements like a limp doll

Sweat beaded on Tarquin's forehead as he called out to her "Elysia, wake up! Elysia! Elysia"

Elysia teetering on the edge of consciousness, saw nothing but a vast fog before her eyes. It felt like floating in the clouds, weightless and adept

"Elysia stay with me" a firm voice called from behind, sounding like a parent summoning a child who hadn't come home for dinner

Confused Elysia looked back but saw no one, only a hand reaching out through the mist.

The hand was strong and well-shaped, the kind of hand you'd expect from a handsome man.

The voice came again, more urgent this time. "Elysia"

It sounded almost angry, as if ready to scold her for not responding sooner. Yet, Elysia wasn't afraid, the voice reminded her of a strict but caring guardian.

She drifted toward the hand and placed hers in it. The grip tightened immediately, pulling her out of the fog.

Elysia coughed violently, her face turning red, but her eyes remained closed.

Tarquin kept running, glancing at her occasionally, relieved to see signs of her regaining consciousness but too worried to slow down He burst into the hospital shouting for help, "Quick, help!"

Benjamin, startled by the commotion, rushed over and asked, "What happened?"

“She got scared”

After a thorough examination, Elysia was taken to a room for recovery and placed on an IV to replenish her nutrients.

Lowell, arriving in a hurry, checked on Elysia first, “Ms. Thome alright?”

Tarquin, standing by the bed, grimaced, “She’s fine! What did you find out?”

“It was Allegra’s doing, probably still upset about Lionel. They needed someone to lash out at, and they chose Ms. Thome”

The Bradfords now knew that Tarquin wasn’t responsible for Lionel’s death, it was likely Gideon acting out of a grudge related to Elijah.

Allegra, not daring to confront Gideon or Tarquin directly, targeted Elysia because she had inadvertently saved Elijah. The logic was simple yet twisted: Elysia had to pay

Tarquin’s expression darkened with anger, but before he could respond, Elysia suddenly asked, “Who’s taking out on me?”