

Hitched 321

Chapter 321

Elysia interrupted him, her brows furrowed tightly.

She didn't want Tarquin to discover the kids, and she didn't even like him; in fact, she detested him. But she never wished him dead!

"Always be cautious, but never malicious," she reminded herself. She never intended harm!

And if he were to die, what about Elijah?

Just losing his mother had changed Elijah so much already. If he were to lose his father too, how could he go on?

The man seemed not at all surprised by her response, merely sighing in regret.

"Well, that's a shame. Given his smarts, he'll soon uncover your secret. And what then? He'll surely fight you for the kids. Do you think you can win against him?"

At this, Elysia tensed up again, her tone becoming sharp.

"My kids love me. They won't go with him!"

"But kids are just kids. They can't stand up to their own father. If persuasion doesn't work, he could force them. Can you outforce him?"

Elysia clenched her teeth. "If it comes to that, I'll fight him with everything I've got!"

The man chuckled mockingly.

"Waiting to fight till then might be too late. Even if you don't want to kill him or take his life, you should at least strip him of his ability to compete with you. Like, making him a vegetable. If he's bedridden, unable to move or speak, even if he knows your secret, he can't do anything about it."

Elysia frowned. "Do you have a grudge against him?"

One moment talking about killing him, the next about turning him into a vegetable, it was clear there was hostility.

"You don't need to worry about that."

Elysia frowned deeper.

"I honestly don't want to know, but let me make one thing clear. If you have a beef with him, that's your business. He and I have nothing to do with each other! And just because my son looks like him doesn't mean he is my son's father. I..."

Before she could finish, her phone buzzed with a new message.

"Just read it," the man said.

Elysia paused, then pulled out her phone to check. A message from an unknown number had sent her a paternity test result!

The report showed a DNA match of 99.999999%, confirming a father-son relationship!

"Here is the paternity test report between him and your son. It's pretty clear."

Elysia's heart leaped to her throat!

Was he really that guy from back then?!!

Upstairs, Lowell had just taken the three kids into Tarquin's study and stepped outside to call the estate's security guards.

"Ms. Thorne is downstairs by herself. Be sharp, don't let her get hurt, and don't let her impulsively run up here. Tarquin is not in a good mood tonight and doesn't really want to see her."

The security guard unexpectedly said, "That's odd."

"What's odd?"

"Ms. Thorne seems to be talking to someone, but there's clearly no one beside her."

Lowell was puzzled. "How can she be talking to someone if there's no one there?"

"She's talking into thin air, but it doesn't seem like she's just talking to herself. It's rather eerie."

"What's she saying?"

"Can't hear from this distance, just watching her."

"And what is she doing now?"

"She's looking at her phone, seems like someone sent her a message. She's really nervous, just staring at the screen." Lowell thought for a moment, frowning.

"I'll go down and check it out. Meanwhile, get someone to review the surveillance footage around the complex."

Anything concerning Elysia mattered to Elijah, so it couldn't be overlooked.

Especially tonight, with the situation being delicate. Elysia was adamant about Tarquin not meeting her children, and Lowell had a feeling something big was about to unfold.

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In the study room.

The moment the three little ones entered, Tarquin's brow furrowed, and his heart skipped a beat!

He looked at the three kids wearing face masks before him, his expression a complex mix of emotions. It was an indescribable feeling, as if a wave of unfamiliar emotions suddenly surged within him, unsettling his very core. His blood boiled, and every cell in his body seemed to cheer and dance with excitement.

This feeling, it was reminiscent of five years ago, the first time he met Elijah! Back then, Elijah was wrapped in a cozy blanket, a tiny thing... Looking at Elijah had stirred the same emotions within him!

But Elijah was his son, so his excitement was understandable. However, these three kids were Elysia's, having no direct connection to him. Why the excitement?

Tarquin glanced curiously at the children, quickly focusing his attention on Elijah. Even though at this moment, Elijah's eyebrows seen above the mask resembled those of Elliot and Emmett, their auras were entirely different.

Elliot appeared mature and composed, his eyes slightly narrowed, giving off a powerful and enigmatic vibe. Emmett seemed timid and easily frightened, his eyes blinking rapidly, looking at Tarquin with a hint of apprehension and his eyes slightly red, as if he was on the verge of tears, clearly a crybaby at heart. Elijah, on the other hand, was cool and aloof. With a slight furrow of his brows, he exuded a chill... resembling a mini version of Tarquin!

So, the moment Tarquin laid eyes on him, his focus immediately shifted.

"What's your name?" Tarquin asked with a hint of suspicion.

Elijah's brow tightened as he pinched his palm to calm himself down. His gaze at Tarquin was laced with a mix of displeasure, anxiety, and a hint of exasperation. Displeasure, because Tarquin had made his mom cry! Anxiety, fearing his identity might be recognized, jeopardizing their plan! And exasperation, because he deeply wished for his parents to reunite, craving a complete family. Yet, his foolish dad was clueless!

He didn't realize his mom was his long-lost love! Because of his ignorance, not only did he fail to cherish mom, but he also upset her to tears! Such behavior, even if he were to beg and cry for mom's forgiveness later, she might not even accept it! If mom couldn't forgive him, they'd never be together, and what would become of him then? He was digging a hole for his own son!

The more Elijah thought about it, the angrier he got. Just as he was about to speak, Elliot beat him to it,

"This is my brother Evan. What about it?"

Tarquin's brows furrowed slightly, "Take off your masks. Let me see."

Elijah and Emmett tensed up a bit more, both eyeing Tarquin warily, "?!"

Elliot, however, was the first to remove his mask and then instructed Elijah and Emmett,

"Evan, Emmett, take off your masks too. No need for them indoors."

Elijah and Emmett glanced at Elliot, then followed suit, albeit hesitantly. They respected Elliot's authority, and despite their reluctance, they complied. Three faces, strikingly similar! Clearly, triplets!

Under Emmett's guise, both Elijah and Elliot appeared to have transformed, their original features obscured, mimicking Emmett's.

Tarquin eyed Elijah, his brows knitting together. Before the masks were off, he had his suspicions about this kid being Elijah. Now, it seemed it was just a similar demeanor. He scrutinized Elijah for a few more seconds then diverted his gaze. Subconsciously, he reached for the cigarette pack on the desk, pulling out a cigarette. Yet, before lighting it, considering the presence of children, he placed it back down.

Looking up, his gaze inadvertently drifted back to Elijah, suddenly asking,

"Do you dislike me?"

Something about the way this kid looked at him was off.

Elijah's brows tightened, but Elliot responded first, "It's not about dislike. It's just that you made our mom cry, and we're all quite upset about it."

Chapter 323

Tarquin's focus shifted to Elliot. He observed Elliot, thoughts drifting to the mature and composed Elijah he remembered from the family gathering. Yet, facing Elliot now... Tarquin dismissed his doubts and asked,

"Did I make your mom cry?"

"Yeah, you called her tonight and told her she couldn't see Elijah anymore. She was really upset."

"...She told you guys?"

"We had just gotten home when you called. Mom was crying a lot."

Tarquin frowned, "You all know about Elijah?"

"Mhm."

"Does she often talk about Elijah with you?"

"Almost every day, she mentions something about Elijah. My mom loves having heart-to-hearts with us. We're not just mother and sons; we're also best friends."

Tarquin frowned deeper, feeling a twinge of jealousy. Being a parent himself, Elysia could connect with her children on such a level, yet he couldn't! He too wished to have heart-to-hearts with Elijah, to be both a father and a friend, but he never had the chance! Elijah didn't like talking to him, and he couldn't find a way into Elijah's heart.

"How does she talk about Elijah?"

"Mom says Elijah is very well-behaved and understanding, just a bit quiet and not too expressive. She also mentioned how much she loves Elijah and that the feeling is mutual."

"So, she wants Elijah to be her son?"

At that, Elliot immediately retorted, "Are you suggesting my mom wants to take your son away from you?"

Tarquin's brow furrowed deeper, his gaze darkening at Elliot. Clearly, Elliot had hit a nerve. Elliot smirked slightly, his expression mocking,

"So, this is why you won't let my mom see Elijah? How childish!"

Tarquin's expression darkened further, embarrassed to be called childish by a five-year-old! Emmett was nearly scared to tears by his look, but Elliot stood his ground, coldly saying,

"By not letting my mom see Elijah, you've upset two people at once! From my mom's perspective, because she and your son like each other, you assume she wants to take him away, which is a huge misunderstanding! You've completely forgotten who it was that introduced my mom to Elijah in the first place! And why! Would you be happy if my mom didn't like Elijah, or if Elijah didn't like my mom? By

keeping her from seeing Elijah, she's both hurt and angry, probably cursing you in her mind! From Elijah's perspective, he finally found someone he likes, but you cruelly keep them apart. He must be angry, very angry! Elijah was raised by you; he loves you as a father, so he wouldn't curse you, but he might say something hurtful, like he doesn't want you anymore and wants to go with my mom..."

Tarquin watched Elliot with a complex expression for a while before asking,

"How do you know Elijah has said these things to me?"

Elliot answered openly, "Elijah told me himself."

Tarquin was suspicious, "You've been in contact?"

"Yeah, my mom hopes Elijah can get better, make more friends, so she gave me Elijah's contact. We've been in touch privately, we're good friends." "And do you know Elijah sees your mom as a mother?"

"Of course! We understand."

"Understand?"

"Yeah, our mom is the best mom in the world. She's kind, gentle, and sincere. Anyone who's met her likes her."

Elliot paused, giving Tarquin a meaningful look,

"If anyone doesn't like her, they must have a serious problem, a very serious problem!"

Tarquin was left speechless. Was this kid implying something about him?

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Tarquin stared at Elliot for a few more seconds before asking, "Would you guys be okay with Elijah becoming your mom's adopted son?"

Elliot shot back, "Why wouldn't we be? It would make Elijah happy, it would make Mom happy, and it would make us happy too! If it's something that brings joy to everyone involved, why would we have any objections?"

"... You're not worried about Elijah taking away some of your mom's love for you?"

Elliot rolled his eyes. "Getting another brother is something we'd celebrate, not worry about! You sure have a narrow mind!"

Tarquin was speechless.

Alright, alright, call him childish, call him sick, now call him narrow-minded! No wonder he's one of Elysia's. Must've been raised on bravery and boldness, huh?

"You're not keen on Elijah being my mom's adopted son, are you? Give me one good reason." Elliot narrowed his eyes.

Tarquin replied, clearly annoyed, "Because I don't want to end up with Elysia."

"Oh?"

"Elijah said if he becomes Elysia's son, that means I'd have to be her husband. I've only got eyes for Elijah's mother. I don't like Elysia, so there's no way I could be her husband. That's why I have to refuse Elijah's request!"

"Hah!" Elliot couldn't help but scoff. "Don't worry, my mom isn't into you either. She definitely wouldn't want you as her husband."

Tarquin frowned, about to say something when Elliot cut in sharply, "You're not smart enough for my mom. Not only does she think you're not a match, but I do too!"

Tarquin scowled, "You're saying I'm not smart?"

"Yeah, not smart enough."

"Who told you I'm not smart?"

"Do we even need someone to say it? Your actions have already shown your level of intelligence! Tonight, not only did you offend my mom, but you also angered Elijah. Now both of them are upset with you! But you could've achieved your objective without upsetting anyone. Why on earth did you make them both angry? It just goes to show you're not smart enough!"

Tarquin was skeptical, "...And you know what my objective is?"

"Just not to lose Elijah."

Seeing Elliot got it right, Tarquin immediately asked, "So, what should I do to achieve my objective without upsetting them?"

Elliot suddenly turned icy, "I don't feel like saying."

Tarquin narrowed his eyes, "...You don't want to say, or you can't?"

"Of course, I can! And it's a good solution too. I can help you handle this without losing Elijah or offending him."

"Then why not spill it?"

"Why should I help you? You made my mom cry tonight. I don't feel like helping you."

Tarquin was silent for a moment, "...If you really have a good solution, I can apologize to your mom and allow her to keep seeing Elijah."

Elliot smirked slightly; that's exactly what he was waiting for! Mom's tears tonight couldn't be in vain. He had to apologize, and he had to do it willingly.

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Elliot said, "It's not just about saying sorry. You have to make it up to her!" Tarquin frowned. "How do I do that?"

"That's your problem. You made her cry, so you have to fix it."

"...I'll try my best."

"No, trying isn't enough. You have to make sure she's happy."

Tarquin sighed.

After a moment of silent standoff between father and son, Tarquin spoke again, "If you really think I can handle this right, I promise I'll apologize and cheer her up!"

Elliot was skeptical. "Got any ideas on how to do that?"

"Yeah."

"What's the plan?"

"That's my problem to solve."

Elliot narrowed his eyes but didn't push further. "A gentleman's word is his bond!"

Tarquin responded, "I'll make it happen."

After settling on this, Elliot finally said, "If I were you, I'd center tonight's plan around Elijah.

When Elijah mentioned he wanted to be my mom's son, I was thrilled. It meant he was finally stepping outside of his world that, until now, revolved solely around his mother. It's a sign he's on the path to recovery!

And for his mental and emotional health, I'd support whatever makes him happy, no matter what it is."

Tarquin furrowed his brows. "So I should act as Elysia's husband just to appease him?"

Elliot chuckled. "Confident, aren't you? What makes you think my mom would agree to marry you just because you want to? She told you, didn't she? She's not into you, wouldn't even give you a second glance."

Tarquin was speechless.

Elliot continued, "If you were smart, you'd let my mom handle it. She doesn't like you, wouldn't want you as a husband anyway!

She's only willing to accept Elijah as her son, never you as her husband. So, before you start panicking, she'll take the initiative to talk to Elijah.

She'll make it clear to him that she doesn't like you, won't be with you, won't have you as her husband.

Even if Elijah feels disappointed, he won't be mad because he likes her too much to be angry with her or blame you.

Elijah won't be upset, my mom won't be upset, because the issue isn't with you. Neither of them will have a reason to be angry with you.

That way, you won't be frustrated, won't upset anyone!

And you won't have to worry about how to deal with Elijah's mental health issues without my mom. Sounds like a win-win, doesn't it?" Tarquin's eyes widened in realization.

It was a moment of epiphany. He finally understood his approach had been all wrong.

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The kid had a point; he shouldn't have butted heads with Elijah. He should've done exactly as Elliot suggested: support whatever Elijah did, even if it meant pushing Elysia to reject Elijah!

Imagine if Elijah had declared, "I'm aiming to be Elysia's son, and you, her husband."

And he'd replied, "No problem!"

Would Elijah still be mad at him? Would he still have spewed those angry words?

Of course not!

Then, he'd go to Elysia, mention the plan, and surely, as Elliot predicted, she'd seek out Elijah for a chat.

That way, he wouldn't have to marry Elysia, Elijah wouldn't blame him, and who knows? Maybe after Elijah hit a wall with Elysia, he'd come looking for a shoulder to cry on. It would've been the perfect chance for a heart-to-heart between father and son!

It would've been a win-win!

Tarquin regretted not thinking of handling it that way at the moment. Acting on impulse!

The room fell silent for a bit before Tarquin, squinting, asked Elliot, "Who's your dad?"

Elijah and Emmett shivered at the question, eyeing him warily, then shifting their gaze to Elliot. Elliot squinted back, "Why do you wanna know about my dad?"

"Just curious."

"Don't wanna say."

"...What does your dad do?"

"Don't wanna say that either."

Tarquin eyed him for a moment longer, genuinely impressed, "You take after your dad."

"Huh?"

"Your mom's a bit of a ditz, doesn't have the smarts. You must've gotten your brains from your dad's good genes." "Ha!" Elliot scoffed again, "My dad's not that sharp either. Him ending up with my mom was the luck of his life!" "... You don't like your dad much?"

"He's just a stepdad. Doesn't matter if I like him or not; I only care about my mom."

"A stepdad?"

"Yep, didn't raise me but ended up with a bunch of big sons anyway. Cheap way to be a dad, huh?"

Tarquin was curious, "Why didn't he raise you?"

Elliot stared him down, "That's a question for him!"

Tarquin frowned, feeling like Elliot's gaze was trying to see right through him!

It was like the kid was talking about him!

But they had nothing to do with each other; it couldn't be about him.

Tarquin honestly remarked, "Not raising your own kid makes you a lousy dad." "Yep! A lousy dad!"

This time not only did Elliot agree, but Elijah and Emmett nodded too.

No matter the reason, not raising your kid makes you a lousy dad!

He was scolding himself, and rightly so!

Suddenly, Elijah, unable to contain his agitation, blurted out,

"If I were you, I'd go all out to make her happy! Racking my brain to find ways to bring her joy! Never doing anything I'd regret later!" He was referring to Elysia.

Elijah was so frantic, as if he couldn't wait to make his own dad see,

Elysia is your one true love!

Snap out of it, step up, and go after mom!

If walking doesn't catch her, and running doesn't either, then crawl if you have to!

Whether it's playing the sympathy card or winning her over with love, just get her back at all costs!

Such an amazing mom, if you don't chase her now, what if someone else sweeps her off her feet?

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"Kid's freaking out, but the old man's cool as a cucumber."

Tarquin glanced back at Elijah, "So, you're telling me I'll regret not being nice to her?"

Elijah shot back, "You bet you will!"

"Why's that?"

"Because... if your son likes her, there's gotta be a reason, right? It proves she's worth the affection! Imagine if you end up falling for her and you've been a jerk to her now, you're gonna kick yourself later!"

Tarquin was adamant, "I won't fall for her!"

Elijah, frustrated, "But what if you do?!"

"That's not gonna happen!"

"I'm just saying, what if! What if!!!" Elijah was on the verge of losing it.

Tarquin remained aloof, a smirk on his face, "There are no 'what ifs'. I'll never fall for her in this lifetime."

Elijah was speechless. Stubborn old man! Stubborn old man! Stubborn old man!

Hopeless case!

And he's still smirking. Well, we'll see how long that lasts!

Elijah couldn't stand talking to Tarquin any longer, turning away with a scowl.

He couldn't bear to look at his foolish father another second!

Elliot knew Elijah was anxious, especially since Tarquin was emotionally clueless!

Elijah was so disappointed, he was sulking!

This wasn't the time for open-hearted reassurances for Elijah, all Elliot could do was give him a discreet nudge as a sign of comfort.

Then, he turned to Tarquin, asking seriously,

"Do you think my plan's solid?"

"It is," Tarquin admitted.

"Then don't forget our deal. Adults shouldn't lie to kids. You've got to win my mom over! And if you fail, don't come crying to us later wanting to see her or Elijah, because it won't happen!"

Elliot was bluffing to scare his own dad!

Tarquin frowned but conceded, "...I get it."

Elliot breathed a sigh of relief internally, feeling like they'd dodged a bullet for the night.

He looked at Tarquin, adding meaningfully,

"Elijah's battling his demons, and mom really feels for him, cares about him. She's genuinely nice to Elijah, not trying to use him to get to you or wreck the bond you two have. She's not your enemy; she's been your blessing!

Even if you don't like her, you should at least treat her with respect, be grateful. You shouldn't upset her, misjudge her!

Did you ever consider, without my mom, Elijah might totally lose it?"

Tarquin was silent.

Elliot decided he'd said enough, leaving the rest unsaid, having made his point clear.

"Think it over. We're gonna check on Elijah."

With that, he grabbed Elijah and Emmett, heading off to meet up with Evan.

No sooner had the trio left than Tarquin's phone rang. It was Lowell,

"Tarquin, it's bad! Ms. Thorne's in trouble!"

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Tarquin frowned, "What's wrong?"

"Ms. Thorne fainted!"

Tarquin's face darkened, "What happened?"

"I don't know, she just suddenly collapsed. She seemed pretty agitated before it happened, but I haven't figured out the details yet."

"...First, get Benjamin to take her to the hospital. I'll head there immediately!"

Before leaving, Tarquin stopped by Elijah's door and instructed,

"Elijah, Daddy has to go out for a bit. You play with Elysia's sons for now. If you get tired, you all can go to bed together." "...Got it."

The kids had no idea about Elysia's fainting episode. They assumed Tarquin was going out to apologize to her, so they didn't think much of it or worry.

They believed that since Tarquin had promised so confidently, he would surely make up with their beloved mom.

That's what Tarquin thought too.

However...

What they never expected was for Elysia to slap Tarquin hard across the face as soon as she woke up in the hospital, not giving him any chance to apologize!

Tarquin was stunned on the spot!

Lowell and Benjamin were so shocked that their eyes nearly popped out of their heads!

There's a saying, "Don't hit the face," because hitting the face is different from hitting any other body part.

An ordinary person's face is off-limits, let alone Tarquin's. It's absolutely forbidden!

Lowell had been with Tarquin for over twenty years and, aside from Elysia, had never seen anyone else dare to touch Tarquin's face!

The same went for Benjamin. He couldn't even imagine someone hitting Tarquin's face, let alone witness it!

Both were trembling, fearing collateral damage, and didn't dare to breathe a word, quickly leaving the room, leaving behind a slapped Tarquin and a slapping Elysia.

The atmosphere in the room was eerie...

Before Tarquin could unleash his fury, Elysia burst into tears, sobbing as if her heart was broken, utterly aggrieved!

Tarquin clenched his lips tight, glaring at her, fuming!

This was the third time Elysia had hit him in the face!

And it hurt more each time!

To her, his face was apparently worth nothing, there to be hit whenever she felt like it!

He thought Elysia's anger stemmed from him not letting her see Elijah, so he held back his rage, not letting it erupt.

"I'm warning you, this is the last time. If you dare again..."

Before Tarquin could finish, Elysia lunged at him!

She grabbed his shirt and started to pull it apart fiercely, attempting to rip all the buttons off!

She wasn't hitting him but was rudely, openly trying to strip him!

By her actions, it seemed she wanted to strip him bare!

Tarquin was shocked, quickly grasping her wrists and demanding coldly,

"What are you doing?!"

"Stripping!"

Tarquin was stunned. Stripping?

"What... what do you mean?!"

"Strip! Take it all off!"

Tarquin was even more shocked. Take it all off?

His mind was suddenly filled with bewildering thoughts, his Adam's apple bobbing, "Elysia! What are you trying to do?!" "Take off your clothes!"

"For what?"

Elysia, beyond explaining, stamped her foot in frustration and yelled, "Just do it!"

Tarquin's Adam's apple bobbed again, "Explain first. Why take off the clothes?"

Elysia didn't bother answering, instead, she bit down on his arm!

Biting hard!

Tarquin hissed in pain, shaking her off, "Have you lost your mind?!"

Elysia, seemingly insane, freed herself and lunged again to strip Tarquin of his clothes.

Tarquin was completely baffled, intending to restrain her, but suddenly his mind went blank! Before he could react, his body was falling towards Elysia.

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Both of them tumbled to the ground.

Tarquin passed out cold, and Elysia, retracting her acupuncture needle, shoved him away with all her might.

Without wasting a second, she rudely unbuttoned his suit and shirt, yanking it to expose his shoulder...

The sight of the deep bite mark on his shoulder made Elysia's breath hitch, "!".

It was only when she felt like she was about to suffocate that she finally let out a gasp, stepping back in horror...

It was really him!

It was really him!!

It was really him!!!

Trembling, shaking, retreating...

Even though she had always suspected it was him, suspicion was after all just suspicion-nothing compared to the shock, the fear, the anger that confirmation brought!

Memories flooded back, overwhelming her like a tidal wave!

She forgot how to breathe, as if she was drowning, retreating step by step to a corner, squatting down, staring at Tarquin in terror!

Fear, anxiety, anger, rage, injustice, resentment... all these negative emotions converged, pressing down on her like a mountain, making it hard for her to breathe.

When she could no longer hold it in, she lost control and screamed out loud,

"Ah ah ah-"

Lowell and Benjamin had been standing by the door the whole time. Hearing the commotion, they rushed in.

And then they saw it...

Tarquin, disheveled, lying on the ground, Elysia cowering in a corner, screaming her lungs out.

"Ms. Thorne?!"

"Tarquin!"

As soon as they spoke, Elysia suddenly got up, crying, and ran towards the door, only to faint again after a few steps.

Lowell and Benjamin were flabbergasted, "?!?!!!"

...

Half an hour later, Tarquin woke up.

Lowell was at the bedside. Seeing Tarquin awake, he immediately asked, "How do you feel? Are you okay?"

Tarquin instinctively touched the back of his head, feeling a needle-like pain at the back of his neck.

Lowell explained,

"You were probably knocked out by Ms. Thorne with an acupuncture needle. When we entered the room, you were already unconscious. Ms. Thorne was in a corner, screaming as if she was terrified. Seeing us enter, she tried to run but fainted as soon as she got up."

Tarquin sat up, noticing his clothes were open, and frowned, "?!"

Lowell continued,

"That's how we found you when we entered. Not sure if you undressed yourself or if Ms. Thorne did..."

Before Tarquin could speak, Lowell hesitantly asked,

"Tarquin, did you try to... with Ms. Thorne today? You're disheveled, and Ms. Thorne was so terrified. She was still screaming even in her unconscious state, shouting for someone to leave, then pleading, crying 'please don't, please don't'... Clearly, she was frightened, as if she was molested..." This 'someone' referred to Tarquin!

He suspected that Tarquin attempted to molest Elysia, and in her emotional turmoil, she defended herself by knocking Tarquin out with the needle. Tarquin's lips tightened in anger, his face turning black with rage as he snapped at Lowell,

"Did you leave your brain at home today?!"

"I... It's not that I'm overthinking. It's just Ms. Thorne's state... She kept saying 'please don't, please don't'..."

Please don't, please don't?

The scene from the airport lounge six years ago suddenly flashed through his mind!

Back then...

As if realizing something, Tarquin's brow furrowed deeply, and he turned to pull off his shirt, exposing his shoulder.

Seeing the deep bite mark, Tarquin's expression went through a rapid change!

It seemed like he realized something, his eyes filled with urgency as he asked Lowell,

"Where's Elysia?!"

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Lowell, a bit dazed, responded, "In the next room over."

Tarquin, in a burst of urgency, ripped off his IV and darted out of bed, heading straight for the door.

Lowell, under the impression that Tarquin was out for revenge after a misunderstanding with Elysia, quickly followed, trying to calm him down, "Tarquin, I think Ms. Thorne was scared out of her wits tonight. Let's not add to her fright, she already passed out twice! If anything serious happens, Elijah will have our heads. We're grown men, let's not stoop to petty squabbles with a lady."

Tarquin ignored him and strode into the next room with purpose.

However, Elysia was nowhere to be seen.

A wave of panic swept over Tarquin, reminiscent of the dread he felt six years ago when he couldn't find her at the airport.

"Where's Elysia?!"

Benjamin, still in the room, explained, "She just left, said it was getting late and she needed to pick up the kids."

Upon hearing this, Tarquin spun around and dashed out, determined to catch Elysia.

But just as he reached the door, a thought struck him, and he turned back to ask Benjamin, "Did you personally conduct the last paternity test?"

"Huh? Oh, yes! I did it myself, didn't let anyone else touch it. Why?"

Tarquin's brow furrowed deeper, but without another word, he hurried out of the room.

Once outside the hospital, his walk turned into a sprint, as if he was terrified of losing Elysia again.

Lowell hadn't seen Tarquin this frantic over anyone but Elijah in ages!

He had no idea what Tarquin wanted with Elysia so urgently, but all he could do was follow closely behind.

Tarquin caught up with Elysia at the hospital entrance!

Just as she opened the cab door and was about to get in, a large hand suddenly appeared, slamming the door shut.

With a loud bang, the door closed!

Elysia was startled, her heart nearly leaping out of her chest.

She had hurried away from the hospital, hoping to escape with her kids, Elliot, Evan, and Emmett, from his influence, but he had followed! The cab driver, equally startled and about to protest, caught sight of Tarquin through the glass and quickly drove off, sensing trouble.

It was clear Tarquin wasn't someone to mess with.

Elysia stood on the sidewalk, eyes wide with fear, facing Tarquin.

Tarquin, with furrowed brows and panting, towered over her.

In the cold winter night of Jindale City, the chill was biting, and passersby huddled in their coats, shivering.

Yet, both of them were drenched in cold sweat, their emotions running high.

Their gazes locked, filled with complex emotions - Elysia with a mix of nervousness, fear, anger, and sorrow; Tarquin with confusion and urgency, as if he had a thousand words to say.

In this tense silence, Lowell finally caught up, breaking the stillness, "Tarquin! Hey, Ms. Thorne."

Tarquin, trying to suppress his turmoil, grabbed Elysia's wrist and pulled her away to a secluded spot.

Elysia, panicked, resisted fiercely, "Let go of me! What are you doing?!"

Tarquin, silent and firm, led her to a small park inside the hospital premises, where a gazebo offered some privacy in the otherwise empty night.

Once she was free, Elysia quickly stepped back, her white coat stark against the night, eyes red and glaring at him, "What do you want?"