

Hitched & Hitched Again: A Comedy of Marital Mayhem (Elysia and Tarquin) - Chapter 61[701 words]

Chapter 61

The pulse reading suggested no major issues.

Things are looking up at the moment. Just make sure not to ruffle his feathers when he wakes, and from now on, he shouldn't be left alone. This suicide attempt is just the

beginning; there will likely be more to come!

Tarquin furrowed his brow, troubled.

Something clicked for Elysia, and she dug into her bag, pulling out a small bottle of pills.

"If he has another episode and the sedatives don't do the trick, give him one of these. It should stabilize him temporarily,"

Benjamin gratefully took the bottle, inspecting its contents—pills concocted from traditional herbal medicine.

"What's this?"

Elysia hesitated to admit she'd made them herself, so she improvised an explanation.

"I got them from an old herbalist. They work wonders, I've tried them myself. If you're skeptical, feel free to consult another herbalist."

"Thank you," Benjamin said quickly.

"No worries. I won't be changing my number after I leave. If the kid runs into trouble, give me a ring. I'll help if I can."

Elijah's eyes reminded her of Elliot's—it was a connection she couldn't ignore. Plus, she owed them a debt of fifty million. She might not admit it with a happy heart, but a debt was a debt. She couldn't pay it back with money just yet, but helping their son would ease

her conscience.

Benjamin looked surprised. "You're leaving?"

Tarquin's frown deepened, throwing her a glance.

"Yeah, I came to Jindale City on business. I should be done by this afternoon, and then I'll

be off."

She was pretty sure she'd be able to get that sham of a marriage annulled by then.

"Where will you go?" asked Benjamin.

Elysia glanced at Tarquin subconsciously, not wanting to disclose her location in front of him.

"I haven't decided yet. I'll take the kids for a bit of a road trip before settling down."

Benjamin pressed, "You don't have a permanent place to stay?"

"Nope, we've been country living for a while, but I'm planning on city schooling for the kids. Just haven't picked the right city yet..."

Before Benjamin could respond, Tarquin suddenly cut in, "You're really leaving?"

Yeah,

"Huh."

"What's that look for?"

"People should keep their word. If you say you're leaving, leave. Don't just pay lip service."

Elysia frowned. “Who’s just paying lip service? I’m seriously out of here! What would I gain from lying to you? Why would I even want to lie to you?”

“Just don’t make me lose respect for you. If I see you around here again, I’ll laugh you out

of town.”

“Are you nuts? Rest assured, if I ever show up again, I’ll eat my hat!”

“Get lost.”

“You!”

Benjamin quickly stepped in to defuse the situation. “Ms. Thorne, don’t mind him. He’s just in a bad mood today.”

“So he gets to snap at people because he’s in a foul mood? Who let him get away with that terrible attitude?”

Tarquin shot her a chilling look, and Elysia clammed up.

She turned to Benjamin. “It’s getting late, and I’m on a tight schedule. I should ge

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Take care, Dr. Benjamin.”

Huffing, Elysia stormed out of the hospital room.

going.

Yet, as she walked away, she couldn’t resist one last glance at Elijah through the window. The thought of leaving stirred an unexpected ache inside her—she felt oddly reluctant to say goodbye to the boy.

But, then Tarquin’s voice cut through from the room, “If you’re going, then go. No one’s stopping you.”

Elysia thought, “As if I care about your approval. I don’t want you to stop me, you jerk! Let this be the last time we ever cross paths!”

Benjamin stepped out but couldn’t spot Elysia, so he returned to the hospital room. “What’s the deal, Tarquin? Don’t you want her help with Elijah?”

Tarquin remained silent, his face dark.

“She’s leaving, and you don’t even try to keep her around, just antagonize her. Alas! honestly think she’s a good match for Elijah. It’s going to be hard to find another lady with her qualities.”

A master of psychology, kind, caring, patient, and even a bit of a healer with her herbal know-how... A rare combination, indeed.

Hitched & Hitched Again: A Comedy of Marital Mayhem (Elysia and Tarquin) - Chapter 62[675 words]

Chapter 62

Tarquin’s voice was ice as he said, “She’s not going anywhere.”

He sounded so sure.

“Huh? Why not? She said she was leaving.”

Tarquin’s eyes were full of mockery. “Leave without getting anything in return? That’d be a bad deal for her.”

Benjamin was puzzled. “What do you mean?”

“She wouldn’t keep coming after me for no reason. She’s after something.”

“But I don’t think Ms. Thorne is that kind of person.”

“Appearances can be deceiving, everyone’s an actor.”

Benjamin hesitated. “Tarquin, why do I get the feeling you’re particularly resentful towards Ms. Thorne today?”

The results of the paternity test only deepened his dislike for Elysia. He thought back to that moment in the bar when she had kissed him and wished he could erase it from

memory

His prejudice took root from there. And her meeting with Gideon only added to his suspicions.

If she couldn't be of use to Elijah, he would have already cut her out of the picture.

Meanwhile, after leaving the hospital, Elysia immediately called the Royal Community to inquire about her divorce from Tarquin.

They asked her to hold on for a moment while they tried to contact Tarquin.

Elysia politely said, "Thank you for your efforts," and hung up.

She hailed a cab and headed towards the town hall to get in line for the divorce process.

On the way, she called her friend Blossom, who had just finished shopping and was buzzing with excitement.

"I'm going to see the kids now. Oh, I can hardly wait!"

Elysia chuckled. "I've told the kids, and they're looking forward to your visit too. They'll be waiting for you at home!"

"I can't wait either. Have you sorted everything out? Returned the money?"

"Yeah, just left the hospital. I've given that jerk the money."

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"What did he say?"

"He just said it was his grandfather's doing, then put on a cold face and was puffing with anger the whole time, never showing me a good side"

"That dog of a man. If I were you, I'd find a way to confirm whether he's really that bastard or not. If he is, we should take him down! Your husband's no good, and neither is he! If you let him off the hook, you're letting him off too easy"

In Blossom's eyes, Elliot and Evan's father was nothing but a criminal!

Elysia felt a pang of reluctance; after all, he was partly responsible for her tragic life. If it hadn't been for him, maybe she and Tarquin would have had a happy life together,

But she was scared. Scared that in trying to uncover the truth, she'd expose herself and set off a custody battle that could end everything. He was thriving while she was barely scraping by.

It was like a battle between the common folk and the one percent—how could the underdog possibly win?

Better to let it go.

Rather than getting even, the real solution was to finalize the divorce with Tarquin and settle down with her little ones.

The kids had to come first, she couldn't let them live a life of constant upheaval.

“Let's deal with him later. I'm off to the town hall to get this divorce.”

“You're sure about this?”

“Yeah, I'm sure. But I don't know how long it'll take. I'm going to queue up now. You guys. wait for me at home, and I'll call you when I'm done.”

“Okay, looking forward to your victorious return! Tonight, I'm treating you and the little ones to a feast to celebrate inheriting three great boys and to welcome you to the single life.”

Elysia smiled. “Alright, we'll toast to that tonight.”

“To not stopping until we drop!”

“Deal!”

With the divorce settled, she could get the kids registered and then move to a new place, find a job, find schools...

Life would finally get on track.

Elysia dreamed of a brighter future, a joy she couldn't hide lighting up her face.

But reality, as cruel as it is, was ready with a harsh blow from Tarquin.

Hitched & Hitched Again: A Comedy of Marital Mayhem (Elysia and Tarquin) - Chapter 63[655 words]

Chapter 63

She never would have guessed that a member of the prestigious Bradford family could be so utterly duplicitous.

He had agreed on a divorce, and yet, here he was, not going through with it.

After queuing for over two hours at the city hall, Elysia was fuming to learn that Tarquin had once again changed his mind about the divorce.

She was so angry she could have strangled him right then and there!

To back out, to break one's word, he was worse than an animal...

Despite everything, Elysia had held a certain respect for Tarquin, but today, she couldn't help but curse him up and down in her mind.

It took ages for her to calm down, her breaths heavy with rage as she stormed out of the city hall.

If it weren't for Blossom and the triplets waiting for her at home, she would have marched straight to the Bradford Group's headquarters or the Bradford family estate to confront them!

What kind of game was this, agreeing to a divorce and then refusing to follow through? It was outright bullying!

Taking a cab back home, Elysia felt another pang of distress when paying the fare. These last few days, she'd spent over a hundred just on taxi rides, and all for nothing—the divorce was still up in the air.

However, her sorrowful mood was quickly dispelled by the laughter echoing from inside

her house.

Blossom was playing with the kids, “Now tell me, isn’t your godmother just gorgeous?”

The triplets chimed in unison, “Gorgeous!”

“And am I not the cutest thing you’ve ever seen?”

“Super cute!”

“Do I not remind you of a fairy?”

“You’re a fairy!”

The peals of Blossom’s laughter threatened to lift the roof off the house.

Even Elysia couldn’t help but crack a smile, pushing the door open to join them.

The triplets spotted her and scrambled up from the floor, charging at her like little tiger cubs, shouting in chorus.

20.09

“Mommyl

“Mommyl

“Mommyl

Elysia echoed their calls, doling out kisses, one for each, perfectly fair and loving.

Blossom was beside herself with excitement, “The triplets are just too adorable and so handsome, too- I can’t get enough!”

Elysia chuckled, “Well, why don’t you have a few of your own?”

“No way, childbirth is painful and scary, plus I’m all about good looks. What if they don’t turn out as cute? It’s not like I can just put them back!”

Elysia teased her, “Your folks have only you for a daughter, and they’re eager for grandkids. You’ll have to have a baby sooner or later.”

“Not happening. No matter what you say, I’m their godmother now. When my parents get back, I’m taking the triplets to meet them and telling them, ‘Look at my three handsome sons!’”

Elysia smiled helplessly and asked, “What’s for dinner?”

“It’s all set—Jinpeach Restaurant, my treat.”

“That place? Isn’t it expensive?”

“A place any less wouldn’t do justice to my precious boys’ good looks. I’ve already reserved a private room, so no dilly-dallying. Get ready to go.”

Though Elysia was concerned about the cost, she didn’t want to dampen everyone’s spirits. She capitulated and told the triplets, “Go get changed; we’re going out for a feast with your godmother.”

“Yay, feast time!”

The triplets were ecstatic.

Once the kids were out of earshot, Blossom leaned in, “Congrats on ditching the deadbeat. Show me the divorce papers!”

Elysia’s face fell, “Didn’t go through.”

“What?”

“Shh, the kids don’t know about the divorce.”

Anxious, Blossom lowered her voice, “What happened? I thought you were finalizing it this afternoon. Why didn’t it go through?”

“He stood me up.”

Blossom anorted. “What’s his deal, anyway? He clearly doesn’t like you, yet he won’t let

1. go. Don’t tell me he’s doing this to get back at you? If that’s the case, it’s downright twisted.”

Elysia was just as baffled as to why Tarquin refused to grant her a divorce.

Hitched & Hitched Again: A Comedy of Marital Mayhem (Elysia and Tarquin) - Chapter 64[680 words]

Chapter 64

Tarquin seemed to have a distaste for her that ran deeper than the Mariana Trench. One would think he'd want to steer clear of her entirely, to draw a thick line in the sand

between them.

Yet, against all odds, he was sticking around like a burr on wool. It was as baffling as a snowstorm in July.

“You know what, he’s just bullying you. Spill the beans. Who is he, exactly? My folks will have a word or two on your behalf.”

Blossom’s parents were university professors, mentors to a legion of successful students spread across various industries, boasting an extensive network of connections. Thought them Blythe family wasn’t considered Jindale City’s cream of the crop, their reputation soared high in all circles.

Had they not been the embodiment of humility, they’d be a household name in Jindale City.

Elysia, however, shook her head. She knew better than to drag the Blythe family into a mess with the Bradfords, a family whose reputation in Jindale City was as murky as a stormy sea.

Rumors swirled that the Bradfords had more skeletons in their closet than a cemetery. Climbing to the top of the wealth ladder in this city was no cakewalk; they had their fingers in political and commercial pies alike, their reach extending into both the lawful and the underbelly of society.

And there was still the matter of a nondisclosure agreement in place; her lips were sealed. “I’ll handle the divorce on my own. If things truly hit rock bottom, then I’ll seek help from your folks.”

Blossom heaved a sigh. “Alright, but you

better promise to tell me if you’re in a bind. I

might not be the sharpest tool in the shed, but my parents sure are.”

Elysia appreciated the hands-off approach; it made their friendship comfortable, never too clingy nor too distant. The silent promise stood – whenever help was needed, it was just a call away.

Gratefully, Elysia nodded.

Blossom then changed the subject, “I’ve gotta be honest, those three tykes don’t take after you much. They’re the spitting image of their deadbeat dad. Alas, if only he were a stand-up guy, you two might have had a shot...”

Elysia cut her off swiftly, “Don’t even go there. I won’t be playing house with him, ever.”

20:10

She couldn’t forget how he’d coerced her, shattering her life to pieces. Not to mention his Icy demeanor – no matter how handsome, it was as inviting as a mausoleum.

Sharing a roof with him would be akin to dining with the Grim Reaper- no, thank you!

Besides, the disdain was mutual.

Blossom let out another sigh, her eyes swimming with concern, “Do you think you might’ve blown up Cupid’s temple in a past life or something? Is that why your love life’s a carousel of jerks? That ex- husband of yours, and then the kids’ father... sheesh.”

Elysia, though, managed a light-hearted response, “Not at all. My three little gems are the best boys anyone could ask for.”

Blossom brightened at the mention of the children. “That’s the spirit! Our boys are golden-

a sensation. You smart and handsome. Mark my words; if they went public, they’d be should try posting a video of them online, just to see.”

Again, Elysia shook her head. “No way.”

First off, she didn’t want her sons to worry about making money at such a young age. Second, what if their estranged father caught a glimpse of them if they went viral?

Their conversation continued when the ‘three musketeers’ emerged from the house.

Elliot was the picture of a miniature executive in his tailored suit, shiny shoes, and a bow tie at his neck.

Evan sported a cool, athletic look with black joggers, a black hoodie emblazoned with a fierce dragon, and a matching cap- the epitome of a street-style prince.

And Emmett, he’d gone for the trending look with a stylish kilt, paired with a white, vintage-inspired shirt and a bow tie, looking every inch the dashing young noble.

They were the very image of grace and youthful charm.

Hitched & Hitched Again: A Comedy of Marital Mayhem (Elysia and Tarquin) - Chapter 65[652 words]

Chapter 65

Blossom was practically drooling, her eyes wide as saucers. “Lord have mercy, I think I’m gonna cry.”

Elysia chuckled, nudging her. “What’s gotten into you?!”

Blossom put on a choked voice, “I just never thought... that these little rascals could scrub up so well. Sniff, sniff. No, no, this won’t do. I need a selfie, I need to blow up Twitter, I’m gonna be the brightest star of the night!”

Saying so, she cozied up to the three little tykes and went snap-happy, taking dozens of photos in rapid succession. She posted four updates back to back, each laid out in a perfect grid.

The first was a

about Elliot, with the caption, [My eldest.]

The second was all about Evan, [My middle child.]

The third was all about Emmett, [My youngest.]

The fourth was a family shot of all five of them, [Family of five.]

Considering the risk of the kids’ dad finding out, Blossom carefully pixelated the faces of the three little ones and Elysia.

All you could make out were their vague outlines.

Out of the dozens of photos, only in the group shot did she leave the eyes untouched. Blossom just couldn’t bring herself to hide them.

Their eyes were like deep oceans sprinkled with stardust – too beautiful to conceal.

Soon enough, Blossom’s Twitter was on fire. As expected, she became the night’s

sensation.

When inquiring DMs flooded in, Blossom replied with swagger: [They’re all my boys!]

When asked where she got them, she cheekily answered: [Found ‘em.]

[And where did you find them?]

[Not telling.]

[At least give me one.]

[No way!]

[Then I might just have to kidnap one. Quick, tell me, what color sack do they like?]

Blossom couldn't stop laughing.

Elysia worried she might actually pass out from it.

As for her boastful display, Elysia was torn between exasperation and amusement.

At seven sharp, they arrived at Jinpeach Restaurant.

It was the oldest, most characteristic, and priciest eatery in Jindale City. Many celebrities. and foreign dignitaries would dine there during their visits.

Blossom showed their reservation and followed the hostess to the front desk to check in: then, they were led to their private dining room.

From the moment they appeared, all eyes were on them. Even behind masks, their allure was undeniable.

Blossom had an air of erudition about her, a product of her upbringing in the Blythe family, and her cherubic figure added a comforting charm.

Elysia was naturally radiant, and years of living in the wild had left her skin fair and glowing; her entire being seemed to emanate a spiritual energy.

It's said that the land nurtures its people, and a girl raised by mountains and springs had a purity and freshness about her as a nymph descended to earth.

The word 'beautiful' was an understatement.

The three little ones were outright irresistible, the kind you'd want to whisk away at first glance.

The young, attractive server couldn't help but gush, "The three little angels are so adorable; they look just like child stars."

Blossom smiled, "We're not child stars, but we're still the most dazzling kids you'll meet."

The server nodded with a smile, “Indeed, you’ve stolen the spotlight the moment you arrived.”

After escorting them to the elevator and up to the top floor, a concierge led them to their private room.

Once the door closed, the little ones finally took off their masks.

Elysia had always told them to keep their masks on outside, citing the northern winter smog and poor air quality. But truthfully, she just didn’t want their father to spot them.

Despite all precautions, it had never crossed their minds that the server might know. Tarquin.

So when the server saw the kids’ faces, her smile froze instantly. “They... they...”

“Yes? What is it?” Elysia inquired curiously.

The server, in shock, swallowed hard, at a loss for words.

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The server couldn’t muster a word.

Hitched & Hitched Again: A Comedy of Marital Mayhem (Elysia and Tarquin) - Chapter 66[683 words]

Chapter 66

The three little ones were a sight to behold—two of them were spitting images of her boss, Tarquin, as if he’d been shrunk down to pint-size proportions!

But Tarquin was right next door, tucking into his meal. If these were his sons, why weren’t they dining with him?

And the word on the street was that Mr. Bradford had only one son.

Could it be that these two were Tarquin's secret love children?

The thought made the server's expression all the more animated, though she dared not pry into Tarquin's private affairs. To work at the Jindale Grand Hotel meant you knew when to keep your eyes open and your mouth shut.

Noticing Blossom and Elysia's gaze, she snapped back to reality and stammered an apology, "I'm so sorry, darlings. Your little ones are just so darn cute; I got a bit carried away there. My apologies."

Her explanation seemed to ease Blossom and Elysia's concerns. It was a common reaction from those laying eyes on the three munchkins for the first time.

"Can I interest you in our menu?" the server offered.

"We'll have a look ourselves first."

"Sure thing. There's a detailed description behind each dish, and there's a button right here that connects you to our service team. Just press it and let us know what you need, and we'll take care of it," she said with a smile before gracefully exiting the room.

Elysia immediately quipped, "We're already splurging by eating here, and you had to go for the room with a view?"

Blossom, ever the big spender, retorted, "First time treating my boys to dinner, of course, I'm going all out. If those two most expensive private rooms hadn't been booked already, I would have snagged them."

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"You and your extravagances," Elysia playfully chided. "It pains my wallet just to think about it."

"Oh, don't worry about it. I'm flush with cash; this won't break the bank. Look out there. Hasn't Jindale City changed so much?"

Elyola couldn't resist rising to her feet and gazing out the floor-to-ceiling window at the sprawling Jindale City below.

The city's nightscape was a dazzling array of lights, towering buildings, and bustling traffic—a testament to its prosperity.

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Once, she'd felt an integral part of this city. Now, she still loved it, but it was no longer her world.

Isn't that building new? I don't remember it from before."

"Which one?"

That tallest one, with the sphere on top. Looks like a pearl shining in the night."

"Oh, that? That's the Bradford Group's new headquarters. Just finished last year, I heard it cost a fortune, supposedly the most luxurious office building in all of the continent."

Elysia was taken aback, "The Bradford family's?"

"Yeah. The year you had your... incident, the Bradfords had their share of troubles, too. The Bradford Group was on the brink of disaster, nearly bankrupt. Then, Gideon stepped down, and the grandson, Tarquin, was called to take over the reins. He became the CEO."

Elysia's eyes widened in disbelief, "Tarquin... he's the current CEO of the Bradford Group?"

"That's right, everyone knows it. Didn't you?"

Elysia hadn't known; cut off from the world in the mountains, she had paid no attention to her nominal husband.

"Wasn't he the least favored? And... he's disabled."

"Word was he wasn't the golden boy, and yes, he's disabled. But what does favoritism count for when you're the only grandson in the Bradford lineage? Gideon's grandsons from his daughters might bear the Bradford name, but they aren't of the direct line. The aristocracy cares about that sort of thing, bloodline and legacy.

Besides, Tarquin's remarkable. The man's the epitome of determination despite adversity!

They say God took away his ability to walk but blessed him with a brilliant mind. When he took over the company in crisis, he turned the Bradford Group from a sinking ship into a business titan, multiplying its market value over a hundred times. He's a legend in the business world!

Tarquin quickly became one of the wealthiest men on the planet, topping the rich lists year. after year.”

Hitched & Hitched Again: A Comedy of Marital Mayhem (Elysia and Tarquin) - Chapter 67[691 words]

Chapter 67

Elysia's heart sank like a stone dropped into the depths of the ocean. One moment, she was a nobody, and the next, she had somehow transformed into the wife of a billionaire.

If it were anyone else, they'd probably be over the moon, right?

But her? She just wanted to cry.

The higher Tarquin's pedestal, the more power he wielded, the less she felt capable of standing up to him.

To everyone else, he was a titan, and if he refused to divorce, what could she possibly do against him?

Oh heavens, she thought, why not just take her out of her misery?

Elysia's sudden transformation into a picture of gloom didn't go unnoticed by Blossom, who mistook her friend's expression for shock at the bombshell news about Tarquin.

“You know, even though Tarquin's as handicapped as your hubby, stories about him could fill books,” Blossom said, not realizing the irony of her words. “He's never shown his face around town—no one knows what he looks like—but legends of him are everywhere.

But, my dear, he's like a prince from a fairy tale, and we're just average Janes. There's no need to be scared at the mention of his name. We don't cross paths with his kind, and he doesn't know us from Adam, so no worries!"

Elysia felt the urge to cry even more. How could she not know him?

She was his wife!

And not just any wife, but one accused of infidelity, who had so angered him that he demanded she leave with nothing but the clothes on her back!

Now, he was refusing to divorce her, clearly as a form of revenge.

What was she to do?

In a desperate attempt to keep her composure and not ruin the mood for Blossom and the kids, Elysia quickly made an excuse to leave. "I need to use the restroom. You guys go ahead and order; I'll be right back."

"You need the restroom?" Blossom pointed to a hidden door in the private dining room. "It's right there."

"I'd rather use the one outside. Is there one?"

"Yeah, sure."

"Great, you guys order. I'm not picky; I'll eat anything."

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With that, Elysia hurried out of the room.

In the restroom, she stared at her reflection, on the brink of tears. She had been planning on cornering Tarquin at his office to force a divorce, but now it seemed a distant dream.

He was perched at the peak of the pyramid while she was stuck in the mud.

It was like heaven and earth—how could she possibly fight back?

Elysia figured Blossom was right—she must have vandalized Cupid’s temple in a past life, and now her love life was an obstacle course.

She didn’t want to get married, yet she was forced into it.

Now she wanted out, and he refused to let her go!

She felt like she was cursed, a regular jinx magnet.

“Cash Thorne?” A familiar male voice suddenly echoed from behind her.

Elysia snapped out of her thoughts and turned around.

And there was Gage Slater.

Her heart skipped a beat.

Gage’s eyes widened the moment he saw her.

“Well, well, well, if it isn’t you! Fate does love to play its games, huh?”

His gaze was far from friendly, and Elysia instinctively tried to step away, but Gage snatched her arm with a sleazy grin.

“Running away? Scared I’ll bite? Please, everyone knows I’m Gage, the gentleman. Especially with a pretty little thing like you, heh.”

The stench of alcohol hit her, making Elysia’s stomach turn. She wanted to grab the hand soap and hurl it at his head but worried about the cost of such an impulsive act.

Instead, she wrenched her arm free and scolded, “Mr. Slater, I’d advise you to keep your hands to yourself!”

“Keep my hands to myself? Pfft, you’re a bartender, and you’re lecturing me on propriety?”

“Serving drinks isn’t the same as selling my soul. What’s wrong with being a bartender?”

“In my eyes, it’s all the same. You’re all just waiting for someone to take you home. You got lucky last time, but your luck’s run out today!”

Hitched & Hitched Again: A Comedy of Marital Mayhem (Elysia and Tarquin) - Chapter 68[622 words]

Chapter 68

Gage made a grab for Elysia with his greasy hands, intent on pulling her into a hug.

Elysia quickly stepped back, her heart pounding. “Touch me again, and I’ll scream for help!”

“Scream? Go ahead,” Gage sneered, a leering grin spreading across his face. “I’d like to see who’d dare stop me. Tonight, if I don’t have my way with you, I’ll eat my hat!”

With those words, Gage lunged at Elysia like a predator.

But as fate would have it, his foot slipped, and he met the floor with a less-than-graceful

thud.

“Fuck!” Gage cursed, wincing in pain.

Seizing the moment, Elysia dashed towards the bathroom door to escape.

Gage scrambled to his feet and grabbed a bottle of hand soap, hurling it at the back of Elysia’s head. The soap was in a fancy white porcelain bottle, and had Elysia not dodged in time, it would have surely cracked her skull open.

Elysia stood frozen, staring at the shattered white porcelain on the floor, gasping for breath as she faced Gage. His lustful demeanor was bad enough, but his violent tendencies were even worse.

“If you try running again, I swear I’ll finish you,” Gage threatened, his voice laced with fury. He had failed to bed Elysia multiple times, and it was driving him mad.

The more unattainable she seemed, the more he wanted her.

Fuming with rage, Gage approached Elysia, looking at her as if she were his prey, his to claim.

Elysia ran for her life. She had hoped to find help from the hotel staff, but the hallway was eerily deserted. She couldn't risk leading Gage back to her room, not wanting to endanger Blossom and the three little ones.

Just then, a door to one of the private rooms swung open.

Without a second thought, Elysia darted inside and slammed the door shut behind her. She braced herself against it, panting, "Help! There's an attack!"

The bustling room fell silent at her sudden appearance. The eyes that turned to her showed surprise, then shock, and a hint of something more profound.

Elysia was undeniably beautiful, with an exceptional poise about her. Raised in the countryside, she had the pure and unblemished look of a pristine gemstone, untouched by society's harshness, invoking an almost instinctual desire to protect her.

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Tarquin was sitting at the head of the table and puffing on a cigarette when Elysia burst in. He furrowed his brows. He had come for a meal, and here she was again, after swearing she'd leave that day. How ironic!

Keaton was seated beside him, and the moment he saw Elysia, his eyes narrowed into slits. As a notorious playboy, he was immediately smitten with her.

Without even a glance at Tarquin's expression, Keaton stood up and approached Elysia. "What's wrong, miss? What happened?"

Booker and Upton also stood up, but Keaton waved them off dismissively.

"Sit down, guys. With those faces, you'll only scare her more."

Booker and Upton exchanged a resigned look. It was clear Keaton was enchanted, and the others could only regretfully step back.

Though they were all well-off bachelors, none could compete with Keaton when it came to wooing women.

Keaton was the talk of Jindale City, with a love life more varied than a diner's daily specials. Not only was he wealthy, but he had the looks to match: a towering six-foot-three frame, broad shoulders, and legs for days.

And despite his pretty-boy face, he was far from effeminate. Like Tarquin, he was into fitness, lean but muscular.

Any woman would struggle to resist such a man.

Admitting defeat, the others let Keaton take the lead. However, just as Keaton reached Elysia's side, something stopped him dead in his tracks.

Hitched & Hitched Again: A Comedy of Marital Mayhem (Elysia and Tarquin) - Chapter 69[603 words]

Chapter 69

He stared at Elysia for a few seconds, then twisted his head to look at Tarquin with an enigmatic expression.

That unique scent, it was the same aroma that lingered on Tarquin last time.

This woman... she was the one tangled up with Tarquin.

Interesting...

There's an unwritten rule about not coveting a buddy's girl, and even though Keaton was a notorious playboy, he had his principles. When he looked back at Elysia, his gaze

immediately softened, becoming much more serious.

"Don't worry, Tarquin's right here. He'll definitely keep you safe."

With those words, Keaton returned to his seat, sidled up to Tarquin, and nudged him teasingly.

“Come on, your food’s here.”

Tarquin frowned and shot him a fierce glare.

Keaton leaned back in his chair with a sly smile, clearly enjoying the commotion.

The others had confused looks on their faces.

It was only then that Elysia noticed Tarquin.

Seeing him, she was surprised, too. She really hadn’t expected Tarquin to be in this private dining room.

This damned twist of fate was just too absurd. She had just told him that afternoon that if she ever showed up in front of him again, she’d eat her hat, and yet here she was in the

evening....

Talk about awkwardness. It was like trying to dance gracefully after stepping on a rake!

Elysia’s cheeks flushed a deep red.

Her fair complexion, now tinged with pink, made her look as if blossoms were unfolding on her face.

To the onlookers, she was a sight to behold.

Keaton couldn’t resist prodding Tarquin again, “What’s with you, man? Go on, pay her some attention. Look, she’s blushing.”

One said, “Tarquin, aren’t you going to introduce her?”

Another added, “She’s gorgeous. Is she your lady?”

One even stood up to offer his seat beckoning Elysia, “Come on, take a seat, ma’am.”

Esa et bon flustered and embarrassed, not knowing how to react. Her large eyes Buttered, her breathing uneven, and she looked utterly dazed and adorable.

Sweet and charming everyone was just about to envy Tarquin for landing such a beauty when he succeny let out a cold laugh, “Not leaving, then?”

Eysia wished the ground would swallow her up. Her face still red, she stammered, “Plans changed.”

Eysia other ip in frustration. What was that heh for? She was telling the truth!

If Tarquin didn’t follow through with the divorce, how could she possibly leave?

Annovec, she retorted, “Jindale City isn’t your property. I can come and go as I please; it’s

none of your business”

Her expression, tone, and words. To the onlookers, it was like she was playfully pouting. She seemed to be the classic case of spoiled and proud.

The group erupted into laughter. ‘Oh boy, Tarquin, can you handle it? Whipped much?’

Keaton stirred the pot further. “Why are you asking Tarquin? You should be asking the little leck here.”

Bysia was twenty–six but looked much younger, like an early–twenties college student, clearly younger than the rest

One of them turned to Elysia and asked. “Tell us the truth, how does our Tarquin measure

up?

Another interjected, “Are you crazy? You actually asked her?”

“Look, you’ve made her uncomfortable.”

“Don’t mind him, ma’am. The guy’s not right in the head.”

The term ‘ma’am’ nearly made Elysia choke. Their teasing was also getting on her nerves.

“Stop talking nonsense; I hardly know the guy!”

Keaton smirked at Tarquin. “Hear that, Tarquin? She doesn’t want to take responsibility for you. Could it be that you didn’t take good care of her? That sounded like dissatisfaction

to me.”

Elysia pursed her lips and glared at Keaton, speechless.

Hitched & Hitched Again: A Comedy of Marital Mayhem (Elysia and Tarquin) - Chapter 70[661 words]

Chapter 70

Why on earth does a guy as handsome as him even have a mouth?

And his buddy over there, was he born mute? Can’t he speak up?

“Quit playing dead, you talk!”

Tarquin flicked the ash off his cigarette and obediently uttered one word, “Scram!”

The crowd was absolutely bewildered.

Laughter in the private room came to an abrupt halt.

Elysia’s face flushed even more with embarrassment. She couldn’t stand the humiliation. Gritting her teeth, she stormed out!

Counting on him to save her? No way! She’d rather go down swinging with Gage.

Ugh! That old lecher Gage wasn’t worth her risking her neck. She was capable enough to end his lineage today!

Gage had been pacing the hallway for ages, calling his bodyguards to check the surveillance, trying to find where Elysia had hidden herself.

Suddenly, he spotted her and chuckled,

“No need to check the cameras. I’ve found her!”

Elysia gritted her teeth and bolted, leading him toward a corner. She was worried that Blossom and the three little ones would be scared if they saw this mess. She wanted to corner him and give him a

couple of jabs. Do the public a favor!

But just as she reached the corner, she was blocked by Gage’s bodyguards.

Panting, Gage caught up and grabbed Elysia by the hair, cursing, “You wench, trying to run?”

Elysia, in pain, kicked out. When she couldn’t hit Gage, she stomped on his foot instead.

Gage let out a howl of pain and, in a fury, grabbed Elysia by the throat and slammed her against the wall, nearly choking her.

The two bodyguards just stood by, watching coldly.

“Find an empty room. I’m gonna deal with her right here!”

The bodyguards nodded and left.

“You ungrateful bitch, being fancied by me is a blessing! In Jindale City, there’s nothing I want that I can’t get! Let’s see how you’ll run today!”

Elysia’s face turned beet red as she struggled to breathe.

“Scumbag! Your days are numbered!” She cursed inwardly.

Elysia was determined to rid the world of this vermin. She was about to unleash her secret weapon when she suddenly heard a cold snort.

“What the hell is going on here?”

Following the sound, Elysia locked eyes with a familiar face.

It was Zane.

Zane rushed over. Seeing Elysia, he was surprised. “Elysia?”

Elysia slowly retracted her weapon and looked at him for help.

Zane forcefully pried Gage’s fingers off and shielded Elysia behind him. “Mr. Gage, what exactly are you doing?”

Gage, fuming, snapped back, “And who the hell are you?”

“I’m the General Manager of the Newsom Group, Zane.”

“The Newsom Group? Oh, so you’re the guy who married into the Newsom family, the ‘kept man.’”

Zane frowned, and a hint of menace flashed in his eyes. He held back his anger and said, “You seem to have had too much to drink. Do me a favor and let her go. She’s my junior.”

Zane was Winona’s husband and their senior,

“Do you a favor? Who do you think you are? Even if your father-in-law came, I wouldn’t give him the time of day. Beat it.” Gage tried to push Zane away but couldn’t budge him and instead got his wrist caught.

Zane loomed over him by a good half a head and gripped his wrist tightly, his brow furrowed, his words deliberate. “Mr. Gage, you might not give a damn about the Newsom

of family, but what about the Bradford family? This is the Jinpeach Restaurant, property the Bradford family. You’re making a scene on their turf, smearing their reputation. What do you think the Bradford family would do if they found out?”

At that, Gage sobered up quite a bit. He fell silent for a moment, then darkly said to Zane, “You just wait!”

Then, he glared at Elysia. “And you, you wait too!”

With that, Gage stormed off, cursing under his breath.

Elysia clutched her throat, taking deep breaths to recover.