

Hitched 751

Chapter 751

Elysia Thorne woke up before dawn, startled from her sleep.

Realizing she was still in bed, she quickly got up to check on her son.

Tarquin Bradford was still by the hospital bed, surprised to see her up so early, "Awake already?"

Elysia's focus was on her son, "Yeah, just woke up naturally. How's Elliot doing?"

"He's been quiet, sleeping soundly."

Elysia checked Elliot's pulse to make sure everything was normal before she could relax.

"You should get some rest, Tarquin. I'll stay with Elliot."

Her words were polite, but Tarquin couldn't help but chuckle, pinching her cheek, "Still half-asleep? Forgot Elliot is my son too?"

"Huh?"

"Why the thanks? He's my son too. You've been taking care of him for years without a word of complaint. Why would I find a single night hard?" Elysia froze for a moment before awkwardly smiling, "Guess I got too used to handling everything on my own, forgot I'm not alone in this." Tarquin gently tucked a strand of her hair behind her ear, his eyes filled with affection, "He's our son. Whatever it is, we'll face it together from now on. You're not alone anymore."

It was still dark outside, but Elysia felt like she'd just had a sweet treat, her heart blooming with warmth, "Alright, but you need to rest too. Staying up all night isn't good for you."

"I'm not tired yet. I'll rest when I feel like it. You should go back to sleep for a bit."

After saying that, he kissed her forehead.

Elysia blushed, instinctively glancing at Elliot before scolding him softly, "Don't start with that in front of our son."

Tarquin grinned, revealing a set of perfect white teeth, "Can't help wanting to kiss you..."

His actions became more suggestive as he gently caressed her cheek, his gaze turning fervent.

Elysia's heart raced, dodging the conversation, "I'll go freshen up. Then it's your turn to rest."

Tarquin watched her graceful exit, his throat bobbing as he stood up and followed, quietly closing the door behind him.

The temperature in the guest room seemed to rise...

Standing at the bathroom sink, Elysia's heart pounded, "What are you doing here?"

"Elysia..." His intentions were clear.

Her heartbeat quickened. He had tried to be playful before bedtime, and she had declined. Now, he seemed eager again.

"I'll just wash my face to wake up fully, then it's your turn to rest with Elliot."

As Elysia turned on the tap, Tarquin moved closer, seeking a morning kiss.

Elysia, back turned, trembled slightly, "It's still dark outside."

Tarquin stood behind her, hands on the countertop, encircling her between his arms and the sink, "Forget the morning kiss. How about just a kiss?" With his warm breath on her ear, Elysia's heart fluttered.

Wanting to quickly send him away, she turned and pecked his cheek.

Unsatisfied, he persisted.

Blushing, Elysia turned around, tiptoeing to kiss his lips lightly.

She intended it to be brief, but he suddenly took the lead, deepening the kiss...

"Elysia, let's just get a divorce," he said after they parted.

His voice was husky, filled with unspoken yearning, painfully endearing.

Elysia knew what he meant and how he felt, her face flushed and heart in turmoil.

They had just reunited as a family, and he was clearly happy. Having had a few drinks, his desires were heightened.

After being pushed away once, she couldn't bear to reject him again.

His restraint was out of respect, understanding, and care for her...

She understood him, cared for him, and his discomfort pained her. So, trembling, Elysia took the initiative...

When Elysia woke up again, it was already past nine in the morning, unaware of when she had fallen asleep. The first thing she saw upon waking was Tarquin.

He was leaning over, sneaking a kiss.

Elysia opened her eyes, startling Tarquin.

But he didn't back away, instead cheekily kissing her once more, smiling, "Awake? Hungry?"

He was brimming with energy, visibly delighted!

Elysia's mind raced with fragmented memories, her last clear memory being his voice calling her name...

Feeling parched and pushing him away to sit up, she asked, "Why are you here? Where's Elliot?"

"Benjamin Lawson took him for a check-up. Evan, Emmett, and Elijah are playing games. I came to see if you were awake. Did you sleep well? Want to sleep more?"

"No, I'm actually quite hungry. Can you make me something to eat? I'll come out in a bit."

"Sure!" Tarquin kissed her again before leaving, his spirits soaring.

Elysia, once alone, hurried to the bathroom to wash her face and calm down.

Instead of heading straight out, she paused in the bathroom to reflect on her marriage with Tarquin.

Her desire for a divorce was stronger than ever.

She couldn't keep him in suspense...

His patience was out of love and respect for her...

Feeling for him, Elysia made a call to the Royal Community,

"Please tell Tarquin, if he agrees to a divorce, I'm willing to..."

After stating her terms, Elysia hung up, sighing with a mix of relief and determination.

Convinced her offer would tempt Tarquin, she awaited his response, unaware of the call he was about to receive.

Chapter 752

Just as Tarquin was about to answer his phone, Evan came looking for him.

The little guy, with his big eyes twinkling, approached him with a bit of hesitation, "I wanna talk to you."

Tarquin's handsome eyes narrowed...

Without a second thought, he hung up the call from Royal Community. Didn't even bother to answer.

His mind was swamped with thoughts of Elysia and the kids, along with Keith and the mysterious man, his daughter, and Elysia's deadbeat ex...

He completely forgot that he himself was married, with a wife he had never met.

She was never on his mind, invisible like air, forgotten in his daily life.

Tarquin pocketed his phone, turning all his attention to Evan with a look of affection,

"What do you wanna chat about?"

Evan glanced towards the guest room, worried Elysia might overhear, and lowered his voice,

"About last night, don't tell Mommy, okay?"

Tarquin agreed readily,

"No problem. But... you gotta tell me the truth. Was it you who caused all that chaos at the Bradford estate last night?"

He had recently heard the news that the Bradford estate had gone nuts!

Crying, fainting, the works!

Gideon Bradford had wheeled himself down a hill in a frenzy, followed by a horde of servants - the scene was more dramatic than a movie.

His wheelchair flipped, sending seventy-something Gideon flying into a lake.

He didn't die or get much hurt, nor did he pass out, but from the hospital visit till now, not a sip of water, not a word, just in shock.

Allegra Bradford was wailing and vomiting in a loop, after supposedly eating something disgusting last night.

Verity Bradford was even weirder, fainting and waking on repeat, looking for reasons to faint rather than stay awake.

And the rest of the Bradfords? The women were howling like banshees.

The men seemed to have lost their minds, with some being so scared they couldn't "stand up" anymore.

Some found their kitchens reeking at night.

Others discovered their homes invaded by hundreds of mice - a total nightmare.

All in all, a night the Bradfords would never forget.

Evan pursed his lips,

"It was me. They were badmouthing my mom and brother! I just wanted to give them a piece of my mind, without getting physical." Tarquin thought, "...". He knew it. No one but Evan could've pulled off such a spectacle.

"Don't rat me out to Mommy."

Tarquin nodded,

"I won't tell your mom. I think you did the right thing. If someone doesn't bother you, you don't bother them. But if they cross the line, they can't be let off easy! The Bradfords started it, you getting back at them isn't wrong."

Evan's eyes sparkled, and Tarquin continued,

"But I gotta remind you, there's always a bigger fish. Just because you're tough doesn't mean you should be reckless. Whatever you do, be careful and protect yourself first."

Your parents gave you your body and health, keeping yourself safe is the best way to show love for your mom. She tells you not to fight because she's worried about you, she's looking out for you."

"I know! My mommy is the best!"

Tarquin added, "She's scared for you, so it's right not to worry her with some things. But from now on, you can keep things from her, not from me. Tell me first, and we'll face it together."

Evan looked at him, his dark eyes rolling thoughtfully.

Tarquin said, "I can fight too. I can be your backup, and if things go south, I can take the blame. I'm the adult, you're the kid. Elysia will definitely scold me, not you.

Not only can I take the blame, but I'll also cover for you and handle the aftermath so Elysia won't find out. So, if you include me in your plans, it's all benefit, no loss, right?"

Tarquin knew how to charm a kid. With that speech, Evan was both touched and excited, nodding in agreement, "Deal. If I have any trouble, I'll tell you. And if you're really that reliable, I'll have your back too when you need it." Tarquin smiled, "Deal!"

When Elysia came out after getting ready, she saw them chatting and laughing together.

Her curiosity shifted from the events of last night to their conversation, "What are you guys talking about?"

Evan blinked, unsure what to say, while Tarquin spoke up,

"Evan really likes me. He said you did right by choosing to be with me. He wishes us a lifetime of happiness."

Evan shot him a look, his lips twitching.

Dad was fibbing - he hadn't said that!

Even though they'd reached some common ground, the jury was still out on dear old dad!

Chapter 753

But right now, Evan couldn't defend himself because he was still feeling guilty about hanging out with the Bradfords last night.

All he could do was pout a little in agreement and quickly scampered back to his guest room after greeting Elysia.

Evan was so focused on giving the Bradfords a taste of their own medicine that he completely forgot to mention anything about mistresses or illegitimate children.

Elysia, curious, asked, "Evan's always had quite the opinion about you. What did you say to him that made him change his mind?"

Tarquin, with a smile, replied, "I just told him how much I love you, and Evan, touched by it, changed his stance."

Elysia: "..."

Tarquin, with adoring affection, pinched her cheek and took her hand, leading her to the dining room for breakfast.

He was in such a good mood, almost eager to spoon-feed Elysia, showering her with love.

The more he did this, the more Elysia blushed with embarrassment, almost wishing she could disappear.

But since she couldn't actually vanish, all she could do was glare at him whenever he insisted on feeding her...

...

The Bradfords had been causing a ruckus all night. After failing to find the culprit, they directed their anger toward Elysia. Without any evidence, they accused Elysia of being behind everything!

They even rationalized their accusation, claiming that although Tarquin had the means, such pranks weren't his style.

If Tarquin were to act, at the very least, it would result in severe injuries lasting days!

But the incidents from last night didn't cause any physical harm, only deep disgust and fright!

Clearly, it was a high-level prank!

They believed that with Tarquin's support and her grievances against the Bradfords, Elysia had a clear motive!

This only made them loathe Elysia even more, itching for revenge!

They were even more desperate to find Daphne Thorne, hoping to use Daphne's status as the rightful wife to deal with Elysia properly!

To the Bradfords' disappointment, Gideon's efforts to locate her overnight were futile!

Neighbors mentioned that the Thornes had moved away years ago.

The Bradfords, frustrated and furious, issued a strict command to find Daphne at all costs.

They wanted to get rid of Elysia but were wary of Tarquin, so they pinned all their hopes on finding Daphne.

Elysia was oblivious to all of this, let alone their frantic search for Daphne.

All she could think about was divorcing Tarquin.

Unfortunately, the conditions she confidently presented were met with silence.

Tarquin didn't rush to contact her as she had hoped!

After two days without any word from the Royal Community, Elysia began to panic.

That morning, with Tarquin away on urgent business, Blossom Blythe came to visit.

Unable to hold back, Elysia vented to Blossom, "I laid it all out for him, and he still ignores me. Does he not care about his leg at all? To the point of not treating it just to avoid divorcing me?"

Elysia was aware of Tarquin's disability even before their marriage.

The matchmaker had informed the Thornes that the groom was disabled, hence the generous dowry.

This was why Daphne refused to marry, and why her foster parents forced her into the marriage as a substitute.

All this time, Elysia had been pondering how to persuade Tarquin to divorce, eventually coming up with this plan.

She was skilled in medicine and thought she might cure Tarquin's leg condition.

She hoped to use this as leverage in negotiations.

She assumed that someone who had been disabled for so long would be eager to stand again.

But reality proved her wrong; Tarquin seemed indifferent.

Blossom suggested, "Is it possible he's already healed?"

"I heard he was seeking treatment abroad back then and didn't succeed."

"It's been over six years since then. It's possible he's already recovered, or else he wouldn't be so indifferent."

Elysia frowned, realizing that after six years, Tarquin, with his wealth, could have indeed found a cure.

If he was already healed, she had even less leverage for negotiation.

Suddenly, Blossom mentioned, "Didn't you say your husband prefers men? Elysia, you don't think you're his beard, do you?" Elysia: "?!?"

Blossom continued, "It seems highly likely. He likes men but doesn't want outsiders to know, so he uses marriage as a cover!" Elysia's frown deepened; this possibility seemed all too real.

"No, I must talk to him about this!"

"Do you know where he is?"

Elysia's lips moved slightly. She didn't know his whereabouts, but she knew where he worked!

She decided to confront him at the Bradford Group.

Chapter 754

Blossom said with a determined look, "If you know where he is now, I'm coming with you to find him!"

Elysia refused, "I'll go by myself. You stay at the hospital and help me take care of the kids."

She didn't want Blossom getting involved in her messy situation with Tarquin, much like she didn't want Tarin sticking his nose in. For them, the less they knew, the safer they were. If things really went south with Tarquin, didn't that just mean dragging them down too?

So, she was adamant about handling the divorce on her own, at least for now.

Blossom, worried, said, "That ex-husband of yours is a real piece of work. Are you sure you can handle him alone?"

"I'm not going to start a fight; I just want to talk to him calmly," Elysia reassured.

"Alright then, but keep your phone on. Call me immediately if anything happens. And remember, if the talk goes south, just come back. Don't try to stand your ground against him alone. Safety first. If things really go sideways, we'll come up with a new plan together."

"Got it!"

After making up an excuse to tell the kids, Elysia left the hospital.

She hadn't mentioned the divorce to the children, feeling it was an adult matter and not wanting to worry them.

Meanwhile, the kids were all caught up with the mysterious figure and Keith, oblivious to Elysia's distress over her crumbling marriage.

After Elysia left, Blossom, still uneasy about the whole situation, secretly dialed Tarquin. In her eyes, Elysia's ex was the worst of the worst, and she feared what he might do if provoked.

Tarquin was shocked, "When did she leave?"

"Just now."

"By herself?"

"Yes, Elysia insisted. I'm worried about her facing that jerk alone. He's been dragging his feet on the divorce. Can you think of any way to protect Elysia? Should we call the police first?"

Tarquin frowned, "You keep an eye on the kids. I'll handle Elysia's situation. I won't let anything happen to her."

Hanging up, he immediately dropped everything, grabbed his car keys, and stormed out. Lowell tried to follow, but was firmly told to stay. Tarquin was determined to handle this personally.

Not only did he intend to protect Elysia, but he also wanted a clear look at the man who had been a thorn in his side for too long. It was time for a direct confrontation.

Without alerting Elysia, Tarquin discreetly tracked her location and followed. He feared she might back out if she knew he was involved, given her reluctance to drag them into her personal issues.

Following the busy streets, Tarquin noticed Elysia's taxi heading towards an unexpected destination: the Bradford Group's headquarters. Puzzled, he thought, "Why there? She's supposed to be meeting that scumbag of an ex. What business does she have at the Bradford Group?"

Despite his confusion, he kept tailing the taxi until it stopped right in front of the Bradford Group's imposing skyscraper.

From his car, Tarquin watched with a mix of confusion and concern as Elysia stepped out, looked up at the towering building, and seemed to be taking in the sight of the corporate giant's headquarters.

Chapter 755

Tarquin couldn't shake off the suspicion that the scumbag worked at his company.

But he had heard from Elysia that her husband was disabled, and to his knowledge, there were no disabled employees at headquarters. Yet, Elysia wouldn't have come for no reason...

Tarquin was puzzled about where the problem lay. He stayed in his car, watching quietly from a distance.

Unaware she was being followed, Elysia stood in front of a grand and architecturally stunning skyscraper, feeling intimidated.

This landmark business tower, which obviously screamed wealth, belonged to Tarquin!

Rumor had it that just this headquarters building alone cost billions!

Compared to Tarquin, Elysia felt less significant than a speck of dust!

She wondered what Tarquin saw in Daphne... Given his wealth and power, one would expect him to match with a high-society heiress, right?

But then again, if Tarquin truly preferred men and needed a beard, choosing a woman from outside their elite circle might make more sense. Someone from a humbler background would be easier to manage.

Taking a deep breath, Elysia thought about how different their worlds were: hers so ordinary, and Tarquin's, unimaginably elite. Two people who should have had nothing in common were married!

Fate had a strange sense of humor!

Elysia wouldn't have dared to come directly to him if she wasn't desperate.

She had a man she loved, a child, and a desire to build a complete family with Tarin, which meant she couldn't be Tarquin's beard.

She had to talk to him!

This marriage had to end!

Elysia timidly walked towards the entrance, feeling small but determined.

As expected, a security guard stopped her at the door.

"Good morning, ma'am. May I ask who you're here to see?"

"I... I'm here to see Mr. Bradford."

"Do you have an appointment?"

"No, I don't, but it's urgent."

"I'm sorry, ma'am. Without an appointment, I can't let you in," the guard said, his tone professional, his face unreadable.

Elysia couldn't reveal her relationship with Tarquin; she could only say,

"Could you please tell him that a woman named Elysia is looking for him? He'll want to see me if he knows I'm here."

She hoped Tarquin would come out to see her now that she was at his office doorstep.

But the guard maintained his stance, repeating,

"Without an appointment, I'm unable to disturb Mr. Bradford. If it's truly urgent, please schedule a meeting."

So, even a message couldn't get through.

Elysia didn't realize that someone of Tarquin's stature wasn't easily accessible to just anyone. It wasn't possible for a stranger to seek Tarquin and be granted an audience just like that.

Otherwise, Tarquin would be swamped with requests!

Tarquin was a financial mogul; countless heiresses and high-flyers were lined up to meet him, yet only a few got the chance.

Feeling defeated, Elysia muttered an apology and walked away.

Since she couldn't go in to find him, she decided to wait outside for him!

He had to leave the office eventually, right?

Elysia was determined to see him today, no matter what!

Just as she was scouting for a good spot to wait, a familiar voice caught her off guard,

"Elysia?!"

Her heart skipped a beat upon hearing that voice.

Shocked, she turned towards the sound and saw a familiar face!

Chapter 756

Although the face before her had changed, as if touched by the skillful hand of a plastic surgeon, Elysia recognized her instantly.

After all, they had shared two decades of life together. Elysia knew her more intimately than anyone else.

The woman in question was Daphne, Elysia's sister, whom she hadn't seen in six years.

The long-lost 'lawful wife' of Tarquin Bradford that the entire Bradford family had been desperately searching for, and here Elysia stumbled upon her, right in front of the Bradford Group's towering skyscraper!

Their eyes met, and shock mirrored in both their gazes.

Clearly, neither had expected this chance encounter!

After a moment, Daphne, clad in her towering high heels, sauntered over, arms crossed, her attitude as disdainful as ever.

"Well, well, if it isn't the little tramp herself! I thought my eyes were deceiving me!"

Her words were laced with venom as she scrutinized Elysia from head to toe, her jealousy of Elysia's beauty barely concealed behind gritted teeth.

"You ungrateful snake! After all these years the Thorne family took you in, and you had the audacity to vanish without a word six years ago! We should've adopted a dog instead!"

Elysia's brows furrowed, her breathing quickened from the emotional turmoil.

Overwhelmed, she found herself speechless, her lips trembling, unable to form words.

Seeing Daphne brought back a flood of painful, repressed memories, reminding her of the dark times within the Thorne household...

The two girls who emerged from the Bradford Group building with Daphne glanced at Elysia, curiosity piqued.

"Annie, who's this?" they asked.

Annie was the new nickname Daphne had adopted.

After Elysia's escape, the Thorne family, fearing the scandal of the arranged marriage would be exposed, cut ties with her and planned to marry her off to some secluded village, to an old bachelor desperate for a wife.

Once Elysia had fled, the family, still wary of their secret being discovered, quickly took the dowry and fled abroad.

Only recently had they returned, not daring to reclaim their old lives, but instead settling in Jindale City to make a new start.

Daphne was here today for a job interview at the Bradford Group!

Having spent a few years at a less-than-reputable overseas university, she flaunted her status as an international student, believing herself to be above the rest.

She had set her sights on the Bradford Group, convinced that only a corporate giant and a sophisticated CEO like Tarquin deserved her 'talents'. Unaware of the Bradfords' identity, the Thorne family had been led to believe they were marrying Daphne off to a wealthy, disabled old man, thanks to the dowry and the vague details provided by the matchmaker.

Daphne, with a sneer, told her friends,

"We once took in a stray, no, even a stray dog would show gratitude, unlike her. We gave her everything, and she repaid us with disgrace, marrying a disabled old man for his money, then cheating on him and getting pregnant with another man's child. The old man kicked her out in a fit of rage!" The girls tsked in unison,

"Not even an old man could stand her, must be quite the player."

"She looks so innocent, but who knew she'd be so scandalous. Just goes to show, you can't judge a book by its cover."

Daphne eyed Elysia mockingly once more,

"Six years, and you're still dressing like a pauper. What are you wearing? Can't even spot a brand logo. Did you snag that outfit on a clearance sale or fish it out from a thrift shop?"

By late April, Jindale City had shrugged off the chill of winter. Elysia was dressed in a simple cream-colored midi dress under a camel long coat, her feet adorned in a pair of genuine leather low-heeled shoes.

Chapter 757

Elysia made a special effort to dress a bit more formally for her meeting with Tarquin, opting for an ensemble that screamed understated elegance. It was a gift from Tarquin himself, from the same exclusive tailor he frequented. This was not your run-of-the-mill brand; it was a high-end, bespoke service where money alone couldn't secure you an appointment.

To Daphne and her clique, who couldn't spot luxury unless it was branded across the front, Elysia's outfit might as well have been picked up from a thrift store. They scoffed at her, convinced she was living in squalor.

Without uttering a word, Elysia found herself the target of Daphne's ridicule. "You here for a job interview with the Bradford Group? What, you think this is some kind of shelter for strays? As if they'd let just anyone in. This is the Bradford Group, the cream of the crop, not some place for.....trash like you."

Her posse chimed in, questioning Elysia's qualifications. Daphne sneered, "She dropped out after a year of college. Doesn't even have a degree." Laughing, another added, "High school diploma and she thinks she can get into the Bradford Group? Dream on. Even us with our fancy international degrees don't have it easy."

A third remarked, "Saw security stopping her earlier. With her background, she's hardly fit to step through the door."

Daphne, feeling superior, went for the jugular, "And where's your little mistake? Too ashamed to bring him along? You should've gotten rid of it when you had the chance, you..."

Her taunt was cut short by a slap that echoed through the air, leaving a red mark on her face.

Elysia, breathing heavily and eyes ablaze, stood her ground. "My ties with the Thorne family were severed the day I married! You may have raised me, but we both know the truth of how I was treated. My conscience is clear. I owe the Thorne family nothing!

I've had no dealings with you for six years. To me, you're nothing more than strangers now. If you dare try to harm my child, I will fight you with everything I have. Never underestimate a mother's love."

With that, Elysia turned to leave, wanting no further conflict with the Thorne family. Yet, the sight of them still stirred a deep ache within her. "Trash, stay right where you are!" Daphne screeched, as her friends blocked Elysia's path.

"Think you can hit me and just walk away? Who do you think you are?" They lunged at Elysia, intent on grabbing her by the hair, but a sudden force sent them sprawling to the ground, nursing their wounds and cursing under their breath.

Their anger dissipated into shock upon seeing Tarquin. He wrapped his arms protectively around Elysia, his gaze burning with fury as he faced Daphne and her crew.

"The courage she has comes from me! What are you going to do about it?"

Chapter 759

They turned away a woman who could publicly lead the CEO around by the nose!

And after refusing her entry, they ogled her for a good while, even sneaking in a few whispers: "Man, that lady is stunning." Holy smokes, just thinking about it sends shivers down my spine!

A few young security guards were scared out of their wits and rushed to report the incident to the head of security.

The head of security, shaken up as well, immediately contacted the executive office.

Soon enough, the news reached Lowell's ears. Lowell, upon hearing it, pressed his lips together and said to Tarquin's assistant,

"Those guys at the door really have some nerve! They actually dared to turn away the boss's lady. I wouldn't dare!"

The assistant, shivering with fear, asked, "The boss's lady? Ms. Thorne is our boss's lady?"

Lowell didn't respond directly, piquing the assistant's curiosity. Unable to hold back, he asked,

"Hasn't Mr. Bradford been looking for his son's mother? How did he end up with Ms. Thorne? What's the deal between her and Mr. Bradford?" After a moment of thought, Lowell said,

"Don't pry into things you shouldn't, but you guys have to know, Elysia, she's your boss's queen bee! The big cheese!"

The assistant: "!!!!!!"

After turning her away, Lowell hurriedly called Tarquin to report the situation.

Tarquin, his mind preoccupied with Elysia, didn't answer and hung up.

He could tell Elysia was in a bad mood, a really bad mood.

Wrapped in a shroud of oppressive and negative emotions, she let out a sigh of relief as soon as their car left the Bradford Group and asked why he had suddenly shown up there.

He lied, saying he had business dealings with the Bradford Group and just happened to see her while he was there on some business.

She immediately furrowed her brows, nervously saying,

"Try to minimize dealings with the Bradford Group in the future."

He asked, "Why?"

She didn't answer, resting her head on his shoulder with her eyes closed, clearly not in the mood to talk.

He was full of questions but didn't dare ask.

All he could do was hold her close, quietly keeping her company.

As they neared the hospital, seeing that she was still not in good spirits, Tarquin softly asked,

"Do you want to go straight to the hospital to see the kids, or would you rather rest somewhere first?"

Elysia opened her eyes to look outside and said, "Let's not go to the kids just yet."

She was in no state to see them; it would only worry them.

"Shall I find a place for you to rest first?"

"Okay."

There was a hotel nearby. Tarquin booked a room and took Elysia to rest.

Upon entering the room, Elysia went straight to bed, not bothering to wash up or change her clothes, completely deflated.

Tarquin felt sorry for her but was clueless about what was troubling her. He could only lie beside her, holding her, and silently accompany her until she fell asleep...

After making sure she was sound asleep, Tarquin carefully withdrew his arm, tiptoed out of bed, and tenderly touched Elysia's face before tucking her in. He then took his phone and left the room.

Stepping out of the bedroom, his expression immediately darkened.

Frowning, his face grim, he stood on the large balcony of the top-floor suite. From here, he could see the Lawson family's hospital and distant mountains.

Tarquin lit a cigarette and took a few puffs before calling Lowell.

He inquired about what Elysia had said to the security guards and also asked for information about Daphne and the others!

He could tell Elysia's mood today had something to do with those women!

Lowell first recounted the incident with the security guards. Tarquin was surprised,

"She went to the Bradford Group to see me?"

"Yeah, that's what the security at the door said."

Tarquin: "..."

She wasn't going to see her husband? Why did she want to see me?

Chapter 760

Was her no-good husband actually working at his company? Elysia couldn't track him down to sign the divorce papers, so she was planning to have a word with him, his boss, to put some pressure on that deadbeat?

Tarquin mulled it over for a moment but couldn't quite grasp what Elysia was up to.

He didn't take it out on the security guard either. After all, the guard wasn't aware of Elysia's status; keeping her out was technically the right move.

"Make sure everyone gets the memo. If Elysia comes looking for me again, let me know immediately. Whether I'm in the office or not, she gets ushered into the lobby. We can't have her waiting outside!"

"Got it."

"Did you finish looking into those three women?"

"Yeah, they were here for interviews today, all of them studying abroad, one just got back from overseas. The other two have been back for a couple of months."

Tarquin's expression darkened, "Do any of those three have beef with Elysia?"

"Two of them have no connection to Ms. Thorne, but the one who just got back, Annie, we're still digging into her. There's something fishy about her identity."

The Thorne family were no fools; before heading abroad, they had a hacker mess with their identity records to avoid any blowback if the arranged marriage fiasco ever came to light.

So, when Lowell started digging, he couldn't trace anything directly to her. The investigation was ongoing.

Tarquin frowned, "Send me whatever you've found so far."

"Will do."

After receiving the digital files from Daphne, Tarquin studied them for a while.

There was no mention of 'Daphne,' just an English name: Annie.

Tarquin didn't recall her at all.

When Gideon had suggested he get married, he was abroad. Gideon had indeed sent him Daphne's picture, but he hadn't spared it a glance, merely noting the name: Daphne.

Knowing Gideon was up to no good, he naturally didn't care about Gideon's arrangements.

However, upon learning that the woman had been bought with money, he did feel a twinge of sympathy for her.

Two years of marriage, and though he hadn't gone back to see her or paid any attention to her life, he made sure she didn't lack for anything.

They were strangers with no grievances; there was no reason for him to torment her.

Of course, there was no love between them, and he had always planned on divorcing her!

Agreeing to the marriage and even sustaining it for two years was due to timing issues. He was still strategizing, not yet ready to outright confront the Bradford family.

Once he had taken over the Bradford Group and returned from abroad, his first thought was to divorce her.

To restore her independence and compensate her generously.

It was only upon his return that he discovered she was not the virtuous woman he had imagined...

Looking at the file of a woman he didn't recognize, Tarquin frowned and dialed Blossom,

"I'd like to talk about Elysia..."

Elysia's demeanor today had left him concerned, more sorrowful than angry, and he suspected it had something to do with this Annie.

Without Elysia saying anything, he hoped to glean some insights from Blossom.

Twenty minutes later, Blossom showed up at the hotel cafe.

Tarquin was already waiting in the booth, and from a distance, Blossom felt that familiar mix of awe and intimidation.

Not because he was terrifyingly handsome, but his aura was intimidating, radiating a 'keep out' vibe that chilled to the bone.

Knowing he wouldn't hurt her did little to ease Blossom's apprehension.

Sitting down across from him, she greeted him politely, then sat up straight as if she was a middle-schooler in front of the principal.

Her fear was matched only by her eagerness for news about Elysia,

"So, did Elysia and her good-for-nothing husband come to an agreement?"

Tarquin didn't bite, instead signaling the waiter to take Blossom's order.

He had dropped his guard around Blossom, treating her with an unexpected kindness.

Even though he was aware of a potential connection between Blossom and some unknown party, he had come to see her genuine care for Elysia and the kids.

Blossom wasn't the enemy.