

Hitched 791

Chapter 791

The young clerk at the city hall, not used to the big scenes of life, was so nervous his brain seemed to have checked out. Spotting Tarquin about to leave, he hurried after him, asking,

"Mr. Bradford, are you still going through with the divorce? Everything is set up; you can get divorced anytime, just head over, and you can have your divorce decree."

Keaton and the others, hearing this, stubbed out their cigarettes and rushed over,

"Dude, are you for real?"

They quickly covered the clerk's mouth and dragged him to a corner, giving him a once-over.

The clerk was visibly shaken, "What's... what's the problem?"

Keaton, with a sly grin, asked, "Just graduated from college, haven't you?"

"...Uh, yeah, just started my internship two months ago. How did you know?"

Keaton chuckled, "Your eyes, they practically sparkle with naive stupidity."

The clerk: "..."

Booker, trying to lighten the mood, said, "He means you're innocent. Have you ever been in a relationship?"

"Nope, never. Forever single."

"That explains a lot."

"Huh?"

"That explains why you lack a bit of... how do I put it... worldly wisdom."

It took a moment for the clerk to catch on to what they were implying, and he quickly tried to explain,

"Mr. Bradford was in a rush to get divorced, put pressure on us last night. Today, if he doesn't get divorced, it's going to be trouble for everyone! My boss even told me this morning that we had to make sure Mr. Bradford got his divorce decree today, or it would be my job on the line."

Benjamin said, "Things change, buddy. Last night, he was dead set on getting a divorce, but today, he'd fight tooth and nail not to! Mention divorce to him now, and he'll blow a gasket!"

The clerk: "... " People change their minds that fast?

Last night he was insisting on a divorce, and today he's dead set against it!

He wants the divorce, then he doesn't!

Booker, patting the clerk on the shoulder with a smile, said, "Looks like your boss pulled a fast one on you, putting the tricky job on the intern. But, kid, you might just have lucked out. Go back and wait; good days are ahead!"

Indeed, personally delivering the marriage certificate to Tarquin turned out to be a direct hit to his heart.

With how thrilled Tarquin was, the clerk was sure to be handsomely rewarded!

Outside the hotel, Tarquin was already driving off with Elysia on the open road.

Elysia, in the passenger seat, asked, "Where are you taking me, exactly? The kids are still back at the hotel."

"Don't worry about them. They won't vanish into thin air."

Elysia, exasperated, "Are you even their dad?"

Tarquin laughed, "They're old enough to take care of themselves. No need to fuss over them."

Elysia pursed her lips, "They're only five!"

"Well, that's not exactly toddlers needing constant care."

Elysia: "... " Fathers and their laid-back ways!

It's like that saying goes: If the kids are alive under dad's care, it's a win!

Elysia, giving up on arguing, pulled out her phone to call Elliot.

With so many strangers at the party and both parents gone, leaving just the kids, she was worried.

And Elliot's injury hadn't even fully healed yet.

But as soon as the call connected, Elliot reassured her, "Mommy, don't worry about us. Mr. Lowell and Benjamin are here. They'll take us back to the hospital later. You have fun outside for a few days, and don't worry about my injury. I can come out to play, so it's definitely okay. Just enjoy your time outside."

Elijah's young voice, earnest and deep, added, "Mommy, have a good talk with daddy. Let everything out."

Evan chimed in, "Yeah, Mommy, you tell him everything — fight if you have to, shout if you need to. We're not scared of him. If he talks back, I'll deal with him!"

Emmett, quite fond of Tarquin as a dad, decided to play it cute, trying to charm Elysia with his words.

Chapter 792

"Mom, Dad's got a whole lot of cash, you know? What's Dad's is Mom's, which means, you now have a whole lot of money too. Mom, you've finally made it, you're a rich lady now!"

Mom always dreamt about being loaded, fantasizing about living that upscale life. Now that she's actually rich, she must be over the moon!

Maybe now she won't be mad at Dad for keeping secrets about his wealth, right?

Elysia couldn't help but smile, feeling a warm glow in her heart.

Before she could say anything, Lowell's voice rang out,

"Ms. Thorne... oh, my apologies, Mrs. Bradford. Why don't you and Tarquin have a great time out? Leave the kids to me. I've got this parenting thing down now. You guys could take off for months, and it wouldn't be a problem."

Hearing herself called 'Mrs. Bradford' made Elysia's cheeks turn a deep shade of red!

Immediately after, Booker chimed in,

"Elysia, listen to me, you can't go easy on a man. After what he did, make him kneel on Lego bricks tonight!"

Benjamin jumped in, "Kneeling on Lego? That's letting him off too easy. Make it durians! Have him kneel on durians!" Keaton rolled his eyes, "Forget Lego and durians. Just ban him from the bed, and he'll be begging for forgiveness!" Elysia, at a loss for words, turned on the speakerphone and let Tarquin take over, "You, talk to them." Tarquin was driving, and hearing the boys' wild suggestions, he squinted his eyes and said,

"My wife is too kind-hearted to punish me, you guys are just talking nonsense!"

Hearing Tarquin's voice, the guys got even more excited,

"Tarquin, justice might be delayed, but make sure the bedroom isn't. Wishing you happiness, every single night!"

"Tarquin, Keaton bragged about going five rounds, you should show him seven, just to knock his pride down a notch!"

Benjamin, trying to sound serious,

"Stop giving crazy advice. Tarquin, there's no need to rush things in one night. Take care of your back and health for the long run. Ms. Thorne knows medicine, she'll understand. Take it easy tonight."

Their conversation was a mix of embarrassing and hilarious comments.

Elysia was blushing furiously, her face almost bleeding red.

She grabbed the phone, ended the call, and turned to gaze out the window, pretending to be interested in the scenery.

Tarquin glanced at her, swallowing hard and feeling parched, he reached for a bottle of water.

Their hearts beat faster in unspoken agreement.

Since getting together, they had shared countless kisses and even slept in the same bed, but had never taken their relationship further.

Because they weren't officially divorced, Elysia felt uneasy.

And if she felt uneasy, Tarquin had no desire to push her.

She was the girl he cherished above all others, and he couldn't bear to see her in any discomfort.

So, despite that one time six years ago, they had not been intimate since.

But now, things were different. They were officially husband and wife, and the uneasiness of the past was gone. Everything that was off-limits before was now within reach!

The temperature in the car seemed to spike, making it feel unbearably hot.

Tarquin felt a flush of heat, constantly drinking water to quench his thirst.

Elysia's cheeks were flushed, her palms and back sweaty with nerves.

Out of shyness, nervousness, or perhaps due to all the unspoken tension, both fell into silence.

The only thing that remained active was the underlying current of anticipation, playfully teasing their senses...

Chapter 793

Tarquin drove for miles until they reached the seaside.

Elysia pushed open the car door and stepped out, greeted by a sea breeze that instantly cooled her down, making her feel much more comfortable.

Tarquin walked over, a loving smile on his face as he took her hand and led her towards the beach.

There was a line of fishing boats, and among them, a flashy speedboat stood out.

Tarquin hopped onto one of the boats, grabbing a life jacket and goggles for her.

Elysia asked, "Are you taking me out to sea?"

With a smile, Tarquin said, "Not just yet. I've got a special place to show you first."

Elysia glanced out at the vast ocean, then back at the life jacket in his hands. "Where to?"

"My secret hideout."

"Really?"

"It's a place only my wife gets to see."

Elysia's lips twitched into a smile. "Out there on the water?" "Yep."

Seeing her hesitate, Tarquin asked, "Scared of the ocean?"

It wasn't so much the ocean that frightened Elysia; she didn't have thalassophobia. But as a child, she'd been dunked in a water barrel by Daphne and her gang, leaving her somewhat anxious around water, dreading that suffocating feeling.

She was the type to be cautious and a bit timid, content with playing on the shore rather than venturing out to sea.

"With me by your side, you've got nothing to fear!"

Tarquin's promise was firm. He gently helped her into the life jacket, fitted the goggles on her, and affectionately ruffled her hair.

"Trust me, I've got you covered!"

Quickly gearing up, he guided Elysia onto the speedboat, adding, "If you get scared, just hold on to me."

Elysia didn't move at first, but as soon as the speedboat took off, she immediately clung to Tarquin's waist. And she held on tight!

Tarquin chuckled, comforting her, "Relax, I'm the king of this part of the sea. Nothing's going to happen."

Elysia wrapped her arms around his waist from behind, but still couldn't help saying, "Can you, maybe, slow down a bit?"

"Sure thing." Tarquin slowed the boat to a crawl, giving her a sense of security to help her adjust.

Whether it was the warmth of the day or Elysia's own heat, the cool sea spray didn't make her feel cold at all.

Seagulls circled and called out above them, following along as they moved forward.

Tarquin whistled at them, and as if they understood, their calls became even more joyful.

A few of the birds, either overly excited or just show-offs, soared high into the sky before diving straight down into the water. Seconds later, they emerged, shaking off their drenched feathers, before flying up again, circling and calling out.

Elysia's attention was diverted, her fear momentarily forgotten, as she asked Tarquin curiously, "Do they know you?"

"Yeah, I feed them every time I come here. They love me. They get all excited when I show up."

After saying that, Tarquin whistled at them again, boasting loudly, "Silly birds, meet my wife, Elysia!"

Elysia rolled her eyes, playfully smacking his back, "Are you serious right now?!"

Suddenly feeling her grip loosen, Tarquin sped up.

Elysia quickly tightened her hold, "Hey!"

Tarquin teased her, "Hold on tight, don't let go, or you'll fall into the sea."

His tone was more childish than when he'd cajole Emmett, treating her like she was a three-year-old.

Elysia gritted her teeth and bit his shoulder gently, not really wanting to hurt him.

Tarquin turned his head to the seagulls, boasting, "My wife just bit me, did you see that?"

Elysia was at a loss for words. Was this really something to brag about?

After a while, as the sun began to set, Tarquin called out to her, "Elysia, look ahead."

Elysia, still wrapped around his waist, tilted her head to see a dark silhouette in the distance.

Chapter 794

"What's that? An island?"

"Yeah, your husband's."

"...You're taking me there?"

"That's the plan!"

The closer they got, the clearer they could see. Though the island was lush with vegetation, it had a desolate look to it, almost like it was uninhabited. Elysia, intrigued, asked, "Is this your secret hideout?"

"Yep." Tarquin parked the jet ski at the edge of the island, helped Elysia off, then secured the jet ski before taking her hand and leading her onto the island.

As they walked, suddenly, a wolf burst out from the underbrush, baring its teeth menacingly at them.

Elysia gasped, instinctively gripping Tarquin's arm tighter.

Tarquin chuckled and said, "Don't worry, that's Snow-Rage."

Before Elysia could react, Snow-Rage wagged its tail and ran towards them, howling softly.

Tarquin called its name, and Snow-Rage stopped, sitting obediently on the ground, tilting its head curiously as it looked from him to Elysia, its gaze darting back and forth.

Tarquin proudly introduced his wife to Snow-Rage, who then led the way.

Snow-Rage obeyed him, tail wagging as it ran ahead.

Elysia asked, "You raised it?"

"Not exactly. They're the island's natives. We had a few scuffles when I first arrived, but after I showed them who's boss, we became friends." Elysia pursed her lips, finally understanding where Evan got his fighting spirit from!

It all made sense now!

Just like his dad!

"Why call him Snow-Rage?"

Tarquin laughed, "Because he hates snow. Ever since he was a pup, he couldn't stand it. Whenever it snows, he goes berserk. So, I named him Snow-Rage."

Tarquin cleared the branches ahead to make a path for Elysia,

"I bought this island years ago. The animals here are familiar with me. You don't need to be afraid; they won't hurt you."

Elysia moved cautiously, looking down at her feet and then up at the canopy.

The trees swayed, with monkeys jumping from branch to branch.

Having lived in the wilderness for five years with her children, she wasn't afraid of the environment, but the sight of unfamiliar animals still made her nervous.

Seeing the monkeys, she couldn't help but think of the phrase "wild monkeys" and wished she had a stick for protection!

"Why buy such a desolate place?"

Tarquin held her hand gently, making sure she didn't trip over roots or get scratched by the branches,

"When I was seven, I was thrown into the sea in a plot against me. By a stroke of luck, I survived and washed up on this island. I lived here alone for a few days. Despite the harsh living conditions, I was incredibly happy.

It was far better than living in the hellish cage of the Bradford family. Ever since then, whenever I felt down, I'd find a way to come here."

He gave Snow-Rage a nod, indicating for it to keep moving.

"Growing up, I was disillusioned. I didn't like the people around me, nor the world itself. I wanted to escape, but I had unfinished business, too stubborn to just end it all. So, I endured life with the Bradfords, this place becoming my sanctuary. Whenever life got unbearable, I'd sneak away here to breathe, to cope.

Eventually, when I had the means, I bought the island outright. Now, it's my private retreat."

Elysia frowned at his words, spoken so lightly, yet she felt a deep pang of sympathy.

What kind of harsh living conditions could make a seven-year-old boy find solace in a deserted island?

What kind of torment must one endure to feel disillusioned with life?

Chapter 795

"Here we are," Tarquin announced suddenly.

Elysia snapped back to reality, her focus instantly captured.

Before them stood a strikingly modern beach house, its design a testament to architectural beauty. The front yard boasted a well-manicured lawn, complete with sun umbrellas and wicker chairs.

Had she been dropped here with no context, she'd never have guessed this place was on a secluded island!

A pack of wolves stood guard in front of the house, watching them. A few wolf pups, barely old enough to walk, stumbled towards Tarquin.

Bending down, Tarquin picked one up and squinted his eyes, "Haven't seen you in a while, and now you're out and about?"

Elysia quickly glanced at the mother wolf, who watched them with a gentle gaze, showing no sign of hostility.

The trust it took for the mother wolf to let Tarquin hold her pup was undeniable!

Elysia wasn't quite as brave, cautiously petting the little one on the head, thinking to herself how much Evan would love this place.

"Let's go inside," Tarquin said, setting the pup down and taking Elysia's hand as they walked into the villa.

The interior matched Tarquin's personality perfectly: modern, minimalist, and sophisticated, adorned in shades of black, white, and gray. After shedding their coats and changing shoes, Tarquin led her by the hand straight to the study.

They passed through a hidden door behind a bookshelf, descending into the basement.

It was vast, filled with all manner of things, resembling a miniature museum with its array of glass cases.

But these cases didn't hold treasures or rarities; instead, they contained items that seemed mundane at first glance.

There were stones with scratch marks, worn-out books, old paintings, and children's clothing...

Tarquin was excited, showing off his collection, "This stone has marks from when I first ended up on the island at seven. Each mark represents a day, five in total."

"This is a tooth from Snow-Rage, the beast that attacked me when I first arrived. We fought, and it nearly bit off my leg. I knocked out one of its teeth." "Over here are things belonging to my parents. I've gathered everything I could find."

"This was my father's pen and notebook, and these are unpublished designs from my mother."

"This is the only family photo with my parents and me. Don't I look just like Elliot, Evan, and Elijah did at that age?"

Elysia peered at the photo but was quickly pulled away,

"Elysia, come look. This is all about Elijah."

"This contains Elijah's baby hair and a clay imprint of his tiny foot."

"This is what Elijah wore for his first birthday, and this is the keyboard he picked out during a traditional ceremony."

"These are clothes and shoes Elijah wore as a child."

"And this contains videos of Elijah growing up."

There was so much to see, each item touching Elysia's heart, deserving of careful attention.

She was overwhelmed, unsure where to focus first.

Tarquin continued his enthusiastic tour until suddenly, he fell silent.

He stood before a display case, lost in thought as he gazed at a little pink dress.

Elysia saw the sadness in his eyes and instinctively wrapped her arm around his.

It was clearly a dress for a baby girl.

But Elysia didn't pry; this was his secret to share.

Tarquin's voice broke the silence, "This was for my sister."

Elysia was taken aback, "You have a sister?"

"Yeah, my mother was three months pregnant when she passed away. The scans showed it was a girl. I picked out this dress during a shopping trip, envisioning it for her. Our whole family was excited; my mother always dreamed of having a daughter. But my sister never got the chance to see this world."

Elysia frowned, looking at this handsome, strong man, moved and empathetic.

Being versed in psychology, she could read between the lines of Tarquin's actions and words, understanding the depth of his feelings.

Chapter 796

He was head over heels in love with her, so much so that words failed him whenever he tried to express his feelings. Unsure of how to make her understand the depth of his affection, he decided to share his most guarded secrets with her.

It was like he was laying his heart bare for her to see, a gesture to show her that his love was without reservations, that he was willing to share even the deepest, darkest corners of his soul with her.

His excitement was palpable, a clear sign of his nervousness. He was desperate for her to know the extent of his love, driven by the fear that he had hurt her deeply in the past. He was scared that she might still be angry, that she might leave him.

Elysia was touched, her heart aching for him.

"Tarquin," she said, using his real name for the first time.

At her words, Tarquin turned to face her, their eyes locking. The sadness in his eyes quickly turned to panic.

He thought she was about to confront him, to hold him accountable for his past actions.

But then, Elysia reached for him, standing on her tiptoes and kissed him. It wasn't a light, fleeting kiss but a clumsy attempt to deepen their connection.

Tarquin was taken aback, his body trembling at the unexpected intimacy.

Elysia, with her eyes closed and lashes fluttering, struggled to deepen the kiss, eventually biting his lip in frustration, looking up at him with a mix of annoyance and sorrow.

"Do you not want to kiss me?" she challenged.

In response, Tarquin pulled her closer, his kiss enveloping her with a passion that left no room for doubt.

He kissed her with fervor, and she didn't pull away. Instead, she wrapped her arms around his neck, matching his intensity.

With that kiss, she was telling him that she loved him just as deeply, that he had nothing to fear, that the past was behind them, and that she was his, completely.

Their kiss was passionate and prolonged, a testament to the depth of their feelings for each other. Between breaths, Tarquin choked out, "Elysia, I love you so much! And I'm so scared of losing you!" "I know," Elysia whispered back, her arms still around his neck. "I'm not going anywhere."

Tears streamed down his face as he apologized, the weight of his past misdeeds heavy on his heart.

Elysia silenced him with another kiss, forgiving him for everything - for the pain he had caused, for the lies about his identity, for the turmoil he had put her through.

She could have been angry, but his love for her and hers for him made forgiveness the only option.

Holding her tightly, Tarquin sobbed like a child, his emotions overwhelming him.

After a moment, Elysia led him away from the basement to a diving platform she had noticed earlier. It extended over the ocean from the terrace of the swimming pool, a terrifying height for Elysia who had nearly drowned as a child and had since been terrified of water.

Standing on the edge, she turned to Tarquin, "I almost drowned when I was little, so I'm scared of water, and I can't swim. If I fell into the ocean alone, I'd surely die. But with you by my side, I'm not afraid, because I trust you to save me."

With those words, she let go of his hand, leaned back, and fell into the sea with her arms outstretched.

Tarquin's heart stopped, "Elysia!"

He didn't hesitate, leaping after her...

As Elysia hit the water, calling out his name, she said, "Tarquin, I trust you with my life. Do you believe now that I've truly forgiven you? That I truly love you?"

Chapter 797

Tarquin was a complete mess of emotions!

His heart, once knotted with anxiety and guilt, now unraveled in a wave of pure love.

Tears blurred his vision; he could no longer see her clearly, but his heart's voice rang louder and clearer than ever.

Love her! So deeply in love with her!

To love her for all eternity...

"Splash-"

Elysia tumbled into the crystal-clear ocean waters.

Her entire body was instantly enveloped by the sea, the air around her consumed by water, bringing an overwhelming sense of suffocation.

She couldn't swim, and losing control over her body, she started to sink helplessly like a rootless leaf unable to command its own destiny, left at the mercy of the vast ocean.

Her eyes tightly shut, she couldn't see her surroundings, only feeling the currents swirling around her, her body continuing its descent.

In the past, she would have been terrified, frantically struggling for survival.

But today, she didn't struggle, didn't resist, closing her eyes and letting her body sink towards the ocean floor, towards the unknown, potentially dangerous depths...

Because she knew, there was a man who would dive in to save her.

Without a second thought, ready to brave the depths to rescue her.

Tarquin plunged into the water, spotting her instantly.

Her dark hair floated like silk, her white dress billowing around her, she was like a pure, unnamed flower blooming beneath the waves. Tarquin, worried yet enthralled, swam faster towards her.

Drawing close, he reached out to encircle her slender waist, lifting her into his arms, holding her close.

In that moment, even the ocean currents seemed to soften.

Elysia opened her eyes to find Tarquin's gaze, filled with deep affection and passion.

Their eyes locked, time seemed to stand still, the world around them fading away, leaving only each other.

In the water, their gazes intertwined, igniting the flame of love in their hearts without a single word spoken.

The fireworks of love burst forth in both their hearts.

The kiss, unexpected yet entirely unsurprising, enveloped them as they embraced each other, exchanging passionate kisses beneath the waves... A love, profound and unforgettable!

Their commitment made under the sea, their affection entwining above it.

They kissed their way to the surface, gasping for air, their gazes burning with intensity.

Tarquin, moved beyond words, felt a primal urge surge within him, becoming the alpha wolf of the wilderness...

He kissed Elysia again, fiercely, passionately!

While kissing, he lifted her in his arms, making his way to the shore!

Elysia wrapped her arms around his neck, responding with equal fervor.

From outside the villa to inside, they kissed their way to the bedroom.

Ignoring their drenched bodies, they tumbled onto the soft, large bed.

Tarquin, pinning her beneath him, his voice husky and low, "Elysia, I want... can we...?"

Elysia, her cheeks flushed, wrapped her arms around his neck, silencing him with her lips.

In that manner, she answered him: Yes, I agree!

A room filled with ripples, a tide of passion.

As the sun set, the sky was painted with hues of color, the fiery orange glow standing out, as passionate and unrestrained as a blazing fire. The sea, under the glow of the sunset, shimmered, dazzlingly beautiful.

The rhythmic crashing of the waves against the shore, the 'slap slap' sound mingling with the calls of seabirds, stirred the imagination...

...

Elysia woke the next afternoon, lazily opening her eyes to find Tarquin lying beside her, propped up on one arm, gazing at her. His eyes soft with affection.

Seeing her wake, his lips curved into a smile, "Wife."

Chapter 798

Elysia was still getting used to being called by such an endearing nickname by him, and even more so, his display of a chiseled chest and abs that were usually hidden under his clothes.

She wondered if he was too hot or just showing off, as his thin blanket was only covering his waist down, leaving his upper body bare for the world - or rather, for her eyes.

Despite having shared the most intimate moments together, waking up to such a sight was still a shock to Elysia's system, sending her heart racing and her cheeks flushing a deep red.

Embarrassed, she tried to cover her face with the blanket, only to realize she was as naked as the day she was born, with love bites scattered across her skin like a constellation of passion.

And he was just as exposed as she was!

So, she had inadvertently seen everything there was to see.

Elysia's eyes widened in panic, and she quickly scrambled out from under the covers, gasping for air, and grabbed the blanket to cover herself up tightly.

That left Tarquin completely exposed to the cool morning air.

Elysia's eyes got even wider, and in a moment of flustered defense, she kicked out from under the covers, sending Tarquin tumbling off the bed.

The thud of Tarquin hitting the floor was followed by a sharp intake of breath from Elysia.

Moving brought a sudden awareness of soreness throughout her body, especially her legs and lower back!

Mr. Bradford, having been unceremoniously kicked out of bed by his wife, quickly scrambled back up to check on her, concern lacing his voice, "Does it hurt?"

Elysia wanted to tell him to leave, but remembering his current state of undress, she hesitated.

Instead, she turned to glare at him, her face red with anger and embarrassment, and snapped, "You jerk!"

She couldn't remember how she ended up falling asleep, only that he had been as insistent as a hungry wolf, leaving her breathless!

Her clothes had been torn to shreds in the heat of the moment!

She faintly remembered passing out on the bed, but somehow she woke up in the bathtub, with no memory of what happened in between.

But even the faintest attempt at piecing together the night's events was enough to make her cheeks burn with embarrassment.

"I tried to be gentle, I swear..."

"Gentle my foot! Jerk!" Elysia couldn't hold back, grabbing a pillow to whack him with it.

Tarquin let her land a few hits, worried she might tire herself out, before taking the pillow from her to ask, "Do you need a doctor?"

"There's a doctor on this island?"

"I can make a call and arrange for one."

"No need! Where are my clothes?"

"How about you wear one of mine for now?" His own clothes were the only option since hers were beyond saving. Elysia glared at him through gritted teeth, "Just go get it! And put some clothes on yourself before you come back."

She pulled the blanket over her head again, refusing to look at him.

Tarquin, with an indulgent smile, got out of bed to fetch clothes.

He put on some casual home wear and picked out one of his shirts for Elysia.

Heading to the bathroom, he also grabbed the lingerie she had worn the night before, now clean and dry.

Approaching the bed, he hadn't even spoken when Elysia commanded, "Just leave the clothes on the bed and leave!"

Understanding her embarrassment, Tarquin compliantly hummed in agreement.

"I'll go make us some breakfast. You can get up and wash up. Oh, and I gave you a bath last night, so if you're feeling lazy, you don't have to shower."

He bathed her too???

Elysia hurled a pillow at him in response

Tarquin caught the pillow, chuckling at his wife's fiery spirit.

He placed the pillow back on the bed without another word, and headed out to prepare breakfast, leaving Elysia to her thoughts.

It was a while after the door closed that Elysia finally emerged from under the covers, wrapping herself in his shirt and heading to the bathroom.

There were no tears, no injuries, just a body aching from a night of unbridled passion.

Elysia couldn't help but feel miffed. After all, it was him who had been the active one last night; why was she the one feeling exhausted?

Chapter 799

After freshening up, Elysia glanced at the clock and realized it was almost 4 PM.

Her stomach was grumbling loudly with hunger.

She walked downstairs in Tarquin's shirt, and as soon as she reached the staircase, a delightful aroma hit her nose.

Her taste buds tingled with anticipation, and she quickened her pace toward the kitchen.

But upon entering, there was no sign of Tarquin, and the stove was off. Puzzled, she then heard the innocent yelps from outside.

It sounded like puppies calling out.

Driven by curiosity, Elysia stepped outside and found someone busy grilling.

The weather was pleasant, with a BBQ grill under a patio umbrella, sizzling with various skewers.

Tarquin, wearing board shorts and a white tee, expertly flipped the skewers, surrounded by a group of eager puppies drooling at the mouth.

Elysia's hunger intensified, feeling like she could devour a whole pig!

The quarrel from last night forgotten, she raced over to him, exclaiming, "That smells amazing."

Tarquin turned with a smile, his gaze unintentionally dropping to her legs.

Her legs were long, straight, and fair.

Under the guise of his shirt, they were even more striking.

His eyes narrowed with an intrigued expression.

Noticing his gaze, Elysia was about to snap at him when Tarquin suddenly shifted his attention and said to the puppies:

"Looks like the little scavenger is here, dinner time!"

He tossed some raw meat to the puppies to munch on aside and then picked up a few perfectly grilled skewers, blowing on them before handing one to Elysia,

"Take it slow, careful, it's hot."

As Elysia reached for the skewer, Tarquin playfully pulled it away, leaning in for a quick peck.

Elysia was about to scold him when he stuffed the skewer in her mouth, effectively silencing her.

She accepted the skewer and didn't forget to kick him lightly.

Tarquin's face was full of adoration, "Tastes good?"

"Mhm! Delicious!"

Tarquin's handsome face broke into a smile. He had heard that to win a woman's heart, you must first win over her stomach!

Taking good care of her appetite meant she couldn't stay away from him.

And since he had been a bit harsh on her last night, he knew he had some making up to do.

The weather was just right, not too cold or too warm.

After the barbecue, they strolled along the beach, video calling the kids and capturing beautiful scenes.

In the evening, Elysia expressed a desire to watch videos of Elijah as a toddler.

So, they curled up on the couch in the home theater, watching together.

Tarquin was a dedicated father, evident from the videos he had taken of Elijah.

He was patient and attentive, truly embodying the role of both mother and father.

He had captured Elijah's milestones, from birthdays to everyday moments.

Videos of Elijah's first attempts at eating, sitting up, calling out "Daddy," and taking his first steps...

Elysia curled up on the couch, leaning on his shoulder, alternately laughing and being moved to tears.

They watched all night but still hadn't seen everything.

She insisted on more, but Tarquin, concerned for her well-being, turned off the projector, suggesting they continue another time,

"Let's sleep now and watch more later. We have all the time in the world."

With her eyes teary, Elysia climbed onto him,

"Thank you for capturing these beautiful moments, allowing me to see Elijah's childhood."

Tarquin, leaning back on the couch with her in his arms, tenderly stroked her back,

"I'm his father. It's my duty. No need for thanks."

Elysia rested her head on his shoulder, silent for a moment before playfully biting his shoulder and neck...

Tarquin, tilting his head back against the couch, pulled her closer...

After making love twice in the home theater and once more in their bedroom, they woke up in the afternoon again.

This time, Elysia wasn't as hungry. Tarquin mentioned he had steamed some seafood for her and went downstairs to serve it, but she clung to him, not wanting to let go.

For some reason, she felt incredibly attached to him and didn't want to be apart.

Tarquin, indulgently patting her head, offered, "Shall I carry you down to eat?"

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Elysia buried her face into his chest, shaking her head, "I'm not hungry." "What do you feel like eating, then? You've got to eat something."

"Just wait a bit longer, let me stay like this for a while," Elysia murmured.

Hearing this, Tarquin felt his heart melt, "Alright!"

As Elysia nestled into him, she whispered,

"Imagine if we had never parted ways, I could have been there for every moment of Elijah's childhood, and you could have been there for Elliot, Evan, Emmett as they grew up."

After watching videos of Elijah's milestones the night before, her sense of regret deepened.

She lamented over all the moments of Elijah's life that she had missed...

Tarquin held her close, trying to offer comfort,

"Gideon tried to control me with marriage back then, setting me up with Daphne, who was supposedly incompatible with me according to some old superstition. I didn't care much about it, so I never paid attention. I always thought I was married to Daphne.

After coming back home, my first intention was to get a divorce. If it weren't for that incident at the airport, our paths might never have crossed, and we wouldn't have our children. It's been a series of fortunate missteps, but at least the outcome is good."

Elysia, her eyes teary, said, "Let's never part ways again!"

Tarquin tightened his embrace, "Yes, never again!"

After a while, Elysia couldn't help but ask,

"About that marriage certificate, I didn't know it was you because I had never seen it, never saw our picture together on it. Why didn't you recognize me either?"

Tarquin sighed, feeling like fate had played a strange trick on them.

"I remember catching a glimpse of it once, and it had Daphne's name. Looking back, it might have been a dream. I truly forgot about being married, it wasn't intentional to hide it from you. And about concealing my identity, I..."

"You don't have to explain, I understand," Elysia interrupted.

Tarquin swallowed hard, reflecting,

"Elysia, I'm so lucky it was you! Any other name on that certificate would have been a tragedy for me! Only with you, I could be genuinely happy!" "Me too, so fortunate, it's you!"

""

During their first three days on the island, they alternated between moments of intimacy, sleep, and eating.

It was only on the fourth day that Elysia started to take a real interest in the villa.

The villa had a strong sense of design and was filled with artistic vibes.

Something about it felt familiar to her, yet she couldn't quite place where she had seen it before.

That feeling of déjà vu...

She asked Tarquin, "Who's the mastermind behind this design?"

Tarquin replied, "My mom."

Elysia was taken aback, "Mrs. Bradford?"

Tarquin affectionately pinched her cheek, "You're her rightful daughter-in-law; you should call her mom."

Elysia blushed and corrected herself,

"Wasn't mom gone long before? How could she have designed a villa for you?"

"This was her last project, only two-thirds complete when she passed. I finished the last third, and that's how we got the blueprints for this villa. Do you have any thoughts on the design?"

Elysia spoke truthfully, "It feels familiar."

Tarquin chuckled, "Mom was a renowned figure in the design world. If you search for Elizabeth's name online, you'll find many of her designs." Elizabeth...

Elysia frowned slightly; every time she heard that name, it felt familiar, yet she couldn't recall when or where she had come across it before. But she was sure it wasn't online or through Tarquin.

It felt like something from many years ago!

Meanwhile, in a corner of Jindale City, someone was scrutinizing photos of the villa's exterior.

On the phone, a voice reported,

"We've confirmed Ms. Thorne and Tarquin are on the island, but the security is tight. It's challenging to approach, whether by sea or air. If we want to take it down, we need a better plan."

The man paused for a moment before saying indifferently, "Then let it be."

Hanging up, he took off his headset and stared at the phone screen, mumbling to himself,

"It's her design, a shame to destroy it."