

Hitched 831

Chapter 831

Keith couldn't help but chuckle, "Listen, darling, it's not about you. I took Elysia for something precious, and it's none of your business. Don't flatter yourself thinking I'd use Elysia and that treasure to blackmail you.

As for our little feud, cool your jets. Once I've reunited Elysia with what she cherishes most, I'll come back for you, Tarquin. Then, you won't have to ask; I'll spill the beans. Just wait for me."

With those words, Keith ended the call and turned off his phone.

He rolled down the window and casually tossed the phone outside.

Elysia's phone was instantly crushed to pieces by a passing car.

Keith rolled up the window and drove off.

Something crossed his mind, his brows furrowed, and a fiery anger rose in his eyes, fierce enough to obliterate everything in its path. But the blaze was fleeting, quickly suppressed.

He sighed deeply, turning to look at Elysia with a softened gaze. She had struggled fiercely just moments ago, and to ease the escape, he had knocked her out. She was still unconscious.

Imagining the joy on his "treasure's" face upon seeing him and Elysia together, Keith couldn't help but smile again, eager to return.

Glancing through the rearview mirror at the car tailing him, a hint of scorn flickered in his eyes.

He picked up his own phone and made a call,

"Let's get this show on the road, stick to the plan."

...

When Elysia woke up, she felt like her stomach was in a twist, on the verge of throwing up.

Before she could even recall what had happened, she saw Keith.

Instinctively, she sat up with a jolt!

The sudden movement made the small boat sway.

Only then did Elysia realize she was on a fishing boat.

The boat was small, occupied only by a boatman, herself, and Keith.

Looking around, there wasn't a soul or another boat in sight, just the endless sea.

The sun had already set, it was late.

Elysia's heart raced, her memory still stuck in the morning!

Today, as soon as she arrived at the child's home, she saw Keith!

Keith was trying to soothe the child, attempting to communicate.

Elysia was surprised, "Keith, what are you doing here?"

Before Keith could explain, the child started acting up.

Keith said, "We'll talk later, let's focus on the kid now."

Elysia had no choice but to shift her attention to the child.

The parents thought Keith was a psychologist sent by a charity organization and never suspected anything.

The charity had told her they would send two people to communicate with the child at home.

A psychologist and an assistant.

But the real psychologist had been delayed by a traffic accident arranged by Keith.

After Elysia managed to calm the child down and had a chat with the parents, she finally turned her attention back to Keith. Keith suggested, "Let's talk downstairs."

Thinking Tarquin might be downstairs, she agreed.

But as soon as they reached the ground floor and she stepped out of the elevator, Keith suddenly took control of her!

He pressed a gun against her waist, whispering in her ear,

"I wanted to take you to see your daughter, so don't struggle. The gun is just for show, to keep Tarquin's men at bay and avoid any rough stuff."

Elysia's breathing went haywire, especially when she realized Tarquin wasn't downstairs. She panicked!

She wanted to see her daughter, but she didn't trust Keith and didn't want to go with him!

She struggled fiercely, eventually blacking out.

The more Elysia recalled, the more panicked she became, eyeing Keith warily, she demanded, "Is my daughter with you? Where have you hidden her?"

Chapter 832

Keith's voice was calm and reassuring as he spoke, "Don't worry, she's safe. I'll take you to her right now."

He then bowed his head, pouring some tea.

In the middle of the small boat, there was a tiny stove, on top of which tea was being brewed, accompanied by some snacks.

Keith handed Elysia a warm cup of tea and then offered her a tablet, saying, "If you're feeling seasick, take one of these. It should help. Looks like we'll be on this boat for several hours."

Elysia didn't take it. It was only when she looked down at the tablet that she realized her clothes had been changed!

Her eyes widened in shock, on the verge of questioning, when she heard Keith say, "Don't overthink it. I didn't touch you. A lady helped you change before we boarded."

Elysia's brows furrowed in confusion, "Why change my clothes?"

Keith replied with an even tone, "It's to better evade Tarquin's pursuit. Plus, with your medical skills, I was worried you might have needles or poison on you."

After a brief pause, he continued, "Don't worry, I've taken good care of the needles you had with you. I know they're valuable to you, so I didn't dare dispose of them."

Elysia was speechless.

Keith then took a warmed orange from the stove, peeled it, and handed her the segments, "If you don't want the tablet, eat some orange instead. It can help with seasickness and warm you up."

It was late May, a time when spring usually filled the air with warmth, but the temperature over the sea was lower, especially after sunset. The sea breeze felt cool against the skin.

Elysia neither took the tablet nor the orange. She looked around, only to see the vast sea surrounding them.

For someone who couldn't swim, there wasn't the slightest chance of escape!

Her phone wasn't on her either, undoubtedly taken by Keith.

Asking for it back was futile. She had no choice but to force herself to calm down and wait for Tarquin to rescue her.

After a moment of silence, Elysia asked Keith, "Was it you who took me to the hospital when I fainted after work five years ago?" "Yep."

"And was it you who took Elijah and my daughter away from me?"

"Yep."

"

Elysia's emotions surged, "Why? Why did you take away my children?"

Keith remained calm, "Because they are Tarquin's flesh and blood." Elysia glared at him.

"So, you have a vendetta against Tarquin? You took my children to threaten him? Then why raise Elijah under Tarquin's care instead of using him directly for leverage?"

Keith sighed deeply, poured himself some tea, and after a few sips, he slowly began to speak, "Because the slowest cuts cause the most pain. I wanted the Bradford family to be in constant turmoil, and for Tarquin to be in perpetual agony.

The Bradfords have always had a tradition of passing down their legacy to a single heir, and with Elijah's arrival, he became the little prince of the Bradford family, their future patriarch. This meant that no other member of the Bradford family would have a chance to rise to power, affecting their interests directly.

This would cause unrest and heartache among them, leading to plots against Elijah and endless conflicts with Tarquin, ensuring the Bradford family would never know peace.

As for Tarquin... raising Elijah himself means facing his pain head-on, living in a state of constant torment."

The Bradfords poisoned Elijah, and coupled with his obsession for his mother, he developed severe psychological disorders.

Tarquin spent his days by his side, caring for him, which of course, brought him pain and daily suffering.

Elysia was astonished, never having imagined Keith to be capable of such deep scheming.

In front of her, Keith still maintained his genteel and gentlemanly demeanor, but she had not expected to find a devil lurking within him.

Chapter 833

Keith flashed a wry smile, "Surprised I could be so cruel, eh?"

He glanced down, flipping the burgers on the grill with a self-mocking tone, "Who wants to be the villain? It's all about being pushed to the edge." Elysia frowned, "No matter what beef you have with Tarquin and the Bradford family, involving kids is out of line. They're innocent!"

Keith let out a long sigh, his response candid, "Hatred blinded me once. Just when you were unexpectedly pregnant with Tarquin's child, I took advantage, using Elijah as a pawn. If it were now, I wouldn't use a child in my schemes."

After saying this, he looked at Elysia with a smile, "You might not believe me, but I've actually grown fond of kids now."

Elysia's eyebrows knitted together tightly, "Keeping my daughter from us isn't using her in your schemes?"

Keith shook his head openly, "Not at all. If I wanted to use the little one for leverage, I would've done so long ago! I'm taking you to her now, simply because I want you two to be together. It has nothing to do with Tarquin. And as for Elliot, Evan, Emmett, and Elijah, don't worry. Once I've settled you and the little one down, I'll bring them back for a reunion. I'll try my best to treat them right."

Elysia looked straight at him for several seconds before asking, "Keith, what are you really up to?"

Keith's expression softened, "Me? I just want to give the little one a real family."

"...Tarquin is her father. If you want to give her a complete family, you shouldn't be keeping us apart. She should be returned to us."

Keith said, "She calls me 'Daddy' now. She's my daughter, and she's got nothing to do with Tarquin anymore. Once I've settled my old scores, we'll get married and raise the kids together."

Seeing Elysia hesitant to leave Tarquin, he thought, 'Might as well be a widower.'

With Tarquin gone, he could still marry Elysia, as the law would allow.

Elysia's expression was complex as she looked at Keith. His affection for their daughter reassured her, yet it also frightened her!

It was comforting because his love for the little one meant he'd never harm her, proving her daughter had been well-cared for all these years, unlike those tragic stories of abducted children.

But the more he loved the little one, the less likely he would be to let go. Taking their daughter back from him seemed nearly impossible!

And to hear him talk about marriage, raising the kids together... Elysia thought he must be mad!

A chill breeze blew over, and unbeknownst to them, the sun had nearly set.

Elysia sneezed, and Keith tenderly offered her a blanket, "Careful, you might catch a cold. Our daughter would be worried."

This time, Elysia didn't resist, wrapping the blanket around herself. She took a few sips of her warm tea to soothe herself before looking at Keith, "What exactly happened between you, the Bradford family, and Tarquin that you've spent so many years seeking revenge?"

Keith looked up at her, then out at the vast sea. His brows furrowed slowly, his gaze shifting from sorrow to suppression, and then gradually to fierceness.

It took him a while before he spoke, "Life hasn't been kind to you either. You must've felt the bone-deep pain of hardship. But...

Do you know what it's like to be healed and reborn from a heart-wrenching pain, only to be thrown back into the abyss once again?"

Chapter 834

Before Elysia could even get a word out, Keith turned his head, his eyes locking with hers as he said,

"It's like being pulled from a pile of corpses only to be thrown into the deepest circle of hell, where the pain seeps into both body and soul!" Elysia: "..."

Keith continued, "You wouldn't believe it, but I've known happiness, real happiness, just like your cats Elliot, Evan, Emmett, surrounded by love and

care.

If it weren't for the Bradfords, I'd still be basking in that happiness!

The Bradfords ruined my entire life!

They've hurt me over and over again, snatching away the people I loved, destroying everything!

They threw me into hell, pushed me into an abyss, snuffed out all the light in my heart, making life worse than death!

Tell me, how can they live so happily after committing such atrocities?

They've harmed the ones I loved most, wrecked my whole life, shouldn't I seek revenge?"

Elysia frowned, asking,

"What exactly did the Bradford family do to you?"

Keith turned his gaze toward the endless ocean, his expression a mixture of pain and anger as if recalling some sorrowful past.

His eyes gradually reddened, tears welling up.

Elysia watched as a single tear rolled down his cheek, surprised and shocked!

They say men seldom cry, but just the memory was enough to break him, a testament to the severity of his past!

She believed Keith; the Bradfords must have done something unforgivable for him to hate them this much.

After all, the Bradfords were known scoundrels, capable of any misdeed!

But not Tarquin!

The Tarquin she knew was just a bit hot-tempered, not a villain, not someone who would commit unspeakable acts.

"What did Tarquin do to you?" Elysia pressed, eager for answers.

Setting aside the Bradfords for a moment, she was desperate to know how Tarquin had wronged him.

Keith spoke with a detached tone, "He did nothing."

Elysia: "?!?"

Keith's voice grew colder, "But who asked him to be Kendrick's son? Who asked Kendrick to die so early? A son bears his father's debts; it's only natural. Whatever Kendrick owed me, his son should pay!"

Elysia was taken aback, "Kendrick? What did he do to you?"

Keith's tone became heavier, "He personally extinguished the light in my heart, turned my hope into despair, and pushed me, who had just found rebirth, back into the abyss!"

Elysia was puzzled, "?"

Keith stared at the horizon, slowly beginning,

"The year my family fell apart, I was just a kid, unable to do anything but cry in secret.

After the incident, I became seriously ill, was passed around several times in a daze, until I was taken in by the Millers.

They asked me to call them mom and dad, saying from then on, I would live with them.

They took me back to Hill Village, claiming me as their own son everywhere.

By day they showed me off, by night they couldn't stand the sight of me.

They could deceive others but not themselves; they wanted their own child but couldn't have one, so they took out all their frustrations on me. They beat me, every single day, mercilessly.

I dared not cry, make a fuss, or even speak, until one day, I met a beautiful woman..."

Keith's tone softened, a glimmer of light returning to his eyes,

"She was a volunteer teacher in Hill Village. The moment I saw her, I was reminded of my mother.

In my memories, my mother was just as beautiful, just as kind.

Both loved wearing simple clothes, letting their long hair down, reading books, cherishing freedom, chasing after the sun, and they both loved to laugh.

She was like a beam of light piercing through the darkness of my life.

She never scorned me for being dirty, nor for my silence.

Chapter 835

She would always clean my grubby little hands, and hold me close in her arms to tell me stories.

She encouraged me to speak up and would affectionately pinch my cheeks while praising me. When she was happy, she would even kiss my forehead.

If she saw other kids picking on me, she'd be the first one to step in and defend me, and then she'd do everything in her power to cheer me up afterward.

She wouldn't let anyone call me "mute." Instead, she gave me a new name, Aiden.

She was attentive and knew when something was bothering me. She would tell me, "Life has its way of balancing things out. If you're facing hardships now, happiness is sure to come your way eventually."

She said, "You can't live in the shadows of your past forever. You have to look forward."

She told me, "You're a blessed child, Aiden. I named you hoping your life would be filled with good fortune and smooth sailing."

When she found out the Maxwell couple was mistreating me, she was devastated. She held me tight and wept bitterly.

After crying, she stormed over to my house, almost getting into a physical altercation with the Maxwells!

She was so gentle, yet she would raise her voice against the Maxwells and cry for me.

Then one day, she suddenly told me she was leaving. She asked if I wanted to go with her.

She said if I agreed, she would talk to the Maxwells about adopting me. She wanted to be my mother.

Of course, I wanted to! I absolutely did!

She kept her word and truly spoke with the Maxwells.

I remember, after their talk, she took me to a field, running around in joy, spinning me in circles, and kissing my forehead fiercely, saying:

"Aiden, it's settled! Once the adoption is finalized, we're leaving. We'll be mother and son!"

"I'm going to be Aiden's mother. It's my first time being a mom. Aiden, you'll have to teach me a lot!"

She shared her plans with me. She wanted to take me on a trip first, to see all the beautiful sights our country had to offer, before moving abroad.

She said there were compelling reasons she needed to settle overseas, but she hoped I would remember what our country looked like.

She told me, "Your roots are here, no matter where you are, you should never forget your homeland!"

"Our country is so beautiful, we must see it before we leave!"

We were both so happy during those days. She was happy, and I was even happier!

The scars in my heart were finally healing. I had light in my eyes again, filled with hope for the future!

But all that happiness shattered with Kendrick's arrival..."

As Keith spoke, a frost seemed to form in his eyes, his fists clenched involuntarily, and his breathing quickened.

Elysia, unable to contain her curiosity, asked, "What happened with Kendrick?"

Keith paused for a moment before coldly saying, "Kendrick took her away. He took her away from me."

Elysia was shocked, "?!"

Keith gritted his teeth, "I hate him. He stole the happiness that was meant for me!"

Suddenly, Elysia recalled the unfinished sketch Keith had,

"The 'her' you're speaking of, is she named Elizabeth?"

Hearing the name Elizabeth, Keith's emotions seemed to calm down a bit.

His eyes softened, mixed with a touch of sorrow, "Yes, she was as beautiful as her name."

Elysia finally understood why Keith never completed his drawings.

He must be filled with memories of Elizabeth, yet also ridden with guilt.

After all, Tarquin was Elizabeth's biological son!

How could he treat Tarquin the way he did and still honor Elizabeth's memory?

When he missed Elizabeth, his heart must be heavy with guilt.

Elysia pressed on, "What exactly happened after Kendrick appeared? Did he prevent Elizabeth from adopting you?"

Chapter 836

Keith clenched his fists, taking a moment before he spoke, his voice laced with a mix of fury and fear.

"The day she came to pick me up, I was over the moon, stepping out of the house only to see Kendrick standing by her side.

I couldn't believe that the man she had mentioned was part of the Bradfords!

Seeing Kendrick brought back all my nightmares. I was scared of him, and I hated him!

I hated the entire Bradford clan!

But at that moment, fear overtook my hatred. I was terrified he'd hurt me or, worse, hurt her. I wanted to protect her!

I rushed over, crazily trying to pull her away, to get her as far from Kendrick as possible!

I even bit Kendrick, hoping somehow I could take him down!

But she scolded me sternly, telling me, 'Aiden, it's wrong to hurt people, let go!'

That was the first time she ever spoke to me like that. I was so hurt. I bit him trying to protect her, and she was angry with me?

I let go of Kendrick and ran back inside, curling up in a corner to cry.

She followed me in and told me she knew I was a good kid, that there must've been a reason for my biting Kendrick. She asked me what was wrong.

I was hurting and scared, and I couldn't speak.

Sensing my turmoil, she didn't press further. She said she'd wait for me at school, that whenever I was ready to open up, I should come to her.

She said keeping too many things bottled up inside was exhausting, and she was there to listen and keep my secrets.

Later, she and Kendrick left together, but not before warning Maxwell not to lay a finger on me, promising she'd come back for me tomorrow!

After she left, I spent a long time thinking and decided I needed to talk to her, to tell her all about my nightmares, to warn her about how terrible the Bradfords were!

But before I could see her, Kendrick came looking for me.

It wasn't her; Kendrick came alone.

That night, as heavy rain poured down, Kendrick showed up in a black raincoat, looking more terrifying than any demon!

Knowing he came behind her back meant nothing good. I ran as fast as I could, but he caught up in no time!

He overpowered me, dragging me towards the backwoods!

I was petrified, biting him again in panic. But he lost all restraint, hitting me so hard I thought my bones would shatter!

I fell to the ground, dazed.

He dragged me by one foot, uncaring if I lived or died, as rain and mud invaded my nostrils and mouth.

The path up the mountain was treacherous, branches and rocks battering me until I couldn't go on and passed out.

Before I lost consciousness, I heard him say he and Elizabeth would have their own kids, they didn't need a bastard like me!

Two days later, I woke up to find Elizabeth had left with him, abandoning me..."

Keith's face was a mix of self-mockery and sorrow, while Elysia looked utterly shocked.

She'd never met Kendrick, but Tarquin had told her about him.

Tarquin had described Kendrick as a gentleman, reasonable and kind-hearted, different from the rest of the Bradfords. He was benevolent, pursuing freedom and love, having broken ties with the Bradfords over Elizabeth and his disdain for Gideon's questionable morals and actions.

Such a man, she thought, shouldn't be capable of cruelty towards a child.

"A child left in the rain, dragged up a mountain by one foot... the very thought is horrifying!

"Are you sure it was Kendrick who dragged you to the backwoods?"

Elysia's skepticism was palpable, struggling to reconcile Tarquin's portrayal of Kendrick with Keith's harrowing account. Even if Kendrick wanted his own biological child over adopting Keith, surely, she thought, he would have discussed it openly with Elizabeth rather than resorting to harming Keith in secret.

Chapter 837

Keith scoffed, "Of course I'm sure. I'd recognize him even if he turned to ashes. That night, it was him!"

Elysia was speechless for a moment before asking again, "So, what happened after? Did you try to reach out to Elizabeth after you woke up?"

Keith's face was a picture of sorrow. "When I woke up, she had already left with Kendrick. By the time I heard from her again, she had her own family. She and Kendrick were living happily abroad, completely forgetting I ever existed."

Elysia frowned. If what Keith was saying was true, it indeed was a sad story.

Keith deserved sympathy, Kendrick was definitely to blame!

But...

That didn't prove Kendrick was the one who pushed him into despair.

It only showed Kendrick robbed him of a future happiness!

"After Kendrick took you to the back hills, did he do anything to you? How did he affect your life afterwards?"

Keith's expression hardened, as if a raw nerve had been touched!

Elysia knew instantly there was more to the story!

But she waited, and Keith remained silent, clearly unwilling to share.

With no way to press further, Elysia quickly reviewed Keith's story in her mind.

In essence, the Bradford family had once deeply hurt him, leading him to endure much suffering. Then, he met Elizabeth, who became his solace.

But fate played a cruel joke. Elizabeth's boyfriend turned out to be Kendrick, a member of the Bradford clan!

Kendrick hurt him again and took Elizabeth away.

In essence, the Bradford clan had wounded him twice, ruining his life!

But these were Keith's words. Without knowing the full truth, Elysia couldn't fully believe him, nor advise him.

She certainly wouldn't urge Keith to forgive the Bradfords.

She always believed advising forgiveness without knowing the full story was inviting divine retribution!

If Keith's story was true, he had every right to feel resentment and hatred!

But...

Elysia looked at Keith and said seriously, "I sympathize with what you've been through and understand your anger, but that doesn't give you the right to take my child away!

Do

you I have any idea what a child means to a mother?

Taking them away, separating us, is a cruel act!

You may be a victim in regards to the Bradfords, but to me, you're the aggressor!

Keith, grievances have their culprits, and debts their debtors. If you have grievances and hatred, target those who hurt you. Tarquin, our child, and I are innocent. You shouldn't direct your vengeance at us."

Keith frowned, "Tarquin is Kendrick's son; he's not innocent!"

Elysia responded, "But he's also Elizabeth's son! Hurting him is like hurting Elizabeth.

I don't know Kendrick well, so I can't judge his actions.

But Elizabeth, you know her! You know she's a good woman. You've never even spoken to her after the incident. How can you conclude she abandoned you?

You were unconscious for two whole days. Do you have any idea what happened during that time?

Yes, she left with Kendrick, but have you considered she might have had her reasons, something she couldn't share?

Just because you see her happy years later, you assume she forgot about you?

Keith, these are all assumptions without any basis."

Keith remained silent, his brow furrowed, before finally saying, "I've never hated her, nor resented her. It's the Bradfords I hate!" The problem still lay with the Bradfords!

Elysia couldn't help asking, "What exactly did the Bradfords do to you?"

Chapter 838

Keith gazed out at the horizon, murmuring to himself, "What on earth did the Bradfords do to me..." His eyes were rimmed red, his face etched with a sense of profound loss.

It was as if his heart was crammed full of sorrow, fragile enough to shatter at the slightest touch.

Elysia wasn't one to pry into others' secrets, but this was something she felt compelled to understand.

Only by unraveling the whole story could they find a way to address the issue at hand.

After a moment of silence, Keith shared his story with her.

A story not too long, but certainly heart-wrenching!

Elysia was stunned, struggling to grasp the full impact of his words.

Keith asked her, "So, do you think I should hate the Bradfords?"

Elysia didn't respond, but her mind was made up: Yes, hate them!

Those Bradfords, worthless as dirt, how could they...

Indeed, they deserved nothing less than death!

Keith, as if he could read her thoughts, cracked a smile.

He turned away, lost in thought for a while.

When he looked back at her, the sorrow and brokenness in his eyes were gone, replaced by the calm and collected Keith once more.

He poured her a cup of hot tea, offering it with a gentle hand.

Elysia, with furrowed brows and a complex expression, wanted to offer some comfort but found herself at a loss for words.

She had hoped to find a breakthrough to persuade him, yet now she found herself unable to speak.

Such an atrocious act, unbearable for anyone to endure!

She wasn't a saint; she was a flesh-and-blood human being, full of emotions and desires. While she could refrain from encouraging Keith to seek revenge, she couldn't bring herself to urge him to let go of his hatred.

If she had been in his shoes, she probably would have been blinded by vengeance as well!

Even if it meant destruction for herself, revenge would have been her only solace.

Elysia felt a surge of indignation, yet it was Keith who ended up comforting her.

"I'm not telling you this for your pity or to ask for your help. I just hope you can understand me, and don't be afraid of me. I'm not inherently evil.

I do harbor dark thoughts, but they are not directed at someone innocent, especially not you. I know you don't like me right now; you have feelings for Tarquin..."

At this point, Keith was deeply moved.

He had never expected Elysia to fall for Tarquin!

The harm Tarquin had caused her should have been enough for her to despise him, yet she bore no grudge and even developed feelings for him! Had he known this would happen, he would never have allowed her to interact with Tarquin.

For years, he had believed Elysia was dead.

He was the one who had sent her into the wilderness, fully aware of the harsh conditions she would face.

Remote and teeming with dangerous wildlife, survival for a woman who had just given birth was nearly impossible.

Driven by Tarquin's obsession with Elysia and his child's longing for their mother, Keith had regretted his actions more than once. He should have let Elysia live.

So, when he discovered that Elysia was miraculously alive, he was both shocked and overjoyed.

The joy came from knowing that as their child grew, the desire for a mother would grow too. With Elysia alive, he wouldn't have to worry about making up excuses to comfort his child.

And since Elysia shared a troubled fate, filled with resentment, he could use her to torment Tarquin!

His plan was to gradually get closer to Elysia, to make her fall for him.

Once she had feelings for him, he could use her to torture Tarquin.

After dealing with Tarquin, he'd take her to their child, who would undoubtedly be thrilled.

But plans are one thing, and reality is another.

Elysia, this woman, was an enigma!

Even after all the suffering Tarquin had caused her, she harbored no resentment!

Far from seeking revenge, the thought had never even crossed her mind!

Chapter 839

They tried to guide her so many times, but never succeeded. She didn't seek revenge; she just wanted to live a simple life with her kids. Was she big-hearted or just carelessly optimistic?

What's more puzzling, Elysia didn't fall for him but instead developed feelings for Tarquin...

With things having reached this point, he had no choice but to disrupt his own plans and forcefully take Elysia away.

First, he would take Elysia to see her treasures, hide them well, then return to settle scores with Tarquin!

"Phew..." Keith sighed deeply.

After a moment, he said to Elysia,

"Elysia, feelings can develop over time. It's okay if you don't like me right now. We have our whole lives ahead of us.

After I've sent the entire Bradford family to hell, I'll take you and the kids to a beautiful, secluded place where no one knows us. We can redeem each other and live out our days."

Elysia furrowed her brows at him, her lips moved, but no sound came out.

She felt sorry for him, but she didn't need his redemption. Her life was happy and fulfilled without it!

Nor would she ever fall for him!

She couldn't envisage a future with him!

She understood his pain, resentment, and hatred, but she couldn't reciprocate his feelings.

She had fallen for Tarquin, deeply and utterly. Her heart and eyes had room for no one else but him!

Her future belonged to Tarquin.

But Elysia kept these thoughts to herself.

At this point, she was practically kidnapped by Keith, and she didn't want to provoke him unnecessarily.

Speaking of being kidnapped, it wasn't an exaggeration. Keith claimed he was taking her to her daughter, but in reality, he just wanted to trap her and her daughter with him.

This was abduction, imprisonment!

In Elysia's eyes, Keith was a victim but also a kidnapper, a criminal!

His pitiful state and his gentle treatment of her couldn't mask his wrongdoing!

After a brief silence, Elysia asked him,

"You're fully aware of Tarquin's relation to the Bradford family, right? If what you say is true, and the Bradfords indeed deserve to die, Tarquin is innocent! He's nothing like them, never has he stooped to their level or harmed you!"

The sins of the Bradford family had nothing to do with Tarquin!

She couldn't persuade Keith to let go of his hatred, but she wanted him to redirect his vengeance away from Tarquin.

The Bradfords might deserve death, but Tarquin was innocent!

Keith frowned, repeating what he had said before,

"Being Kendrick's son is his crime!"

Elysia countered, "By that logic, are Elliot, Evan, Elijah, and your beloved treasures guilty too? They're Kendrick's descendants as well."

Keith denied, "The sins Kendrick committed, his son can pay for them. That's enough; I won't harm your kids, and I'd never harm the treasure. She's my life; no one can hurt her, not even me."

"Keith..."

Keith cut her off, "Don't try to convince me. I can't let Tarquin go. It's only fair, a father's debts paid by his son."

Elysia's brow furrowed even more,

"Did you consider that Tarquin is the biological father of your treasure? Hurting him would upset her, maybe even make her hate you."

"Would you tell her? Would you make her sad?"

Elysia: "..."

"And what about Elizabeth? Tarquin is Kendrick's son, but he's also Elizabeth's son! Can you bear to hurt Elizabeth's only child? Don't you feel any guilt?"

Keith frowned deeply, silent for several seconds before saying,

"In another life, I'll make it up to her."

Chapter 840

Elysia was pacing the room, her nerves frayed to breaking point.

"Reincarnation? That's just self-deception, Keith! You shouldn't have gone after Tarquin. You knew he was innocent, knew how much Elizabeth adored him. Hurting him won't bring you joy, only more misery."

"Why would I feel miserable? Sure, Tarquin didn't partake in the Bradford family's misdeeds, but I've sworn to bring down the entire Bradford clan. I can't just let him off the hook!

And he's Kendrick's only blood. If I spare him, who will spare me? Only with his death can I find release!"

Keith's expression turned dark and menacing,

"Do you have any idea how terrified and hopeless I felt when Kendrick dragged me into those woods?
It's a nightmare I can't escape from!

The Bradford family destroyed me, but Kendrick's betrayal hurt no less!

If, and I say if, after hurting me, he could've given her a bright future, I might have accepted it. But she was anything but happy, dying tragically young!

Because of him! All his fault!

He forced her to flee her homeland, to settle in a foreign land!

He let her die at her most beautiful age!

He couldn't protect her, couldn't give her the future she deserved, so why did he snatch her from me?!

Without him, she could've had a happy, beautiful life!

I despise the Bradford family, Kendrick most of all. But with him gone, I'll settle the score with his son. I want Tarquin to taste every misery, endure every torment before I'm satisfied!"

Elysia held her breath, staring at him in horror. This was the first time she'd seen Keith lose his temper.

His rage was frightening; his eyes bloodshot, his complexion ashen, every muscle in his face tensed like a beast unleashed.

A stark contrast to the sunny, handsome, and refined man she knew on any other day.

Keith, realizing he'd lost control, took a moment to compose himself before speaking again,

"Sorry for scaring you. You don't need to worry about my vendetta against the Bradford family. Stop trying to convince me. Just look forward to reuniting with our baby. As for Tarquin, forget him. He'll be dead soon."

Elysia panicked, "What are you planning to do?"

"It's none of your business."

"How can it not be? He's my husband!"

"Not anymore. From now on, you only have two roles: the mother of my child and my wife, Keith."

With those words, Keith stood up and walked out of the cabin.

Elysia, emotional, called out, "Keith!"

Keith didn't look back, "Even if I don't lay a hand on him, someone else will. He can't escape his fate! And I won't spare him either. Some things you can't stop, better not to think about them. Better think about our baby."

Elysia, gasping for air, wanted to threaten him but had no leverage. She tried to calm herself,

"Why not seek justice through the law?"

"The law? That'd be letting them off too easy."

Keith left her with those words and stepped out of the cabin.

Silence engulfed the small space once more.

Elysia felt a whirlwind of panic. Keith was beyond reason, hell-bent on revenge against Tarquin, and she couldn't sway him.

What to do?

Did Tarquin know about Keith's plot? Was he aware of the looming danger? Could he come out of this unscathed? Was he alright now?

Her mind was a tumult of questions and dreadful scenarios. She was terrified, utterly terrified.

Unbeknownst to her, night had fallen.

The sea waves crashed against the small boat, churning in the darkness, as if signaling the myriad dangers lurking beneath.

Keith, having asked the sailor for a cigarette, now stood at the bow, smoking.

Elysia couldn't see his face. There, shrouded in the night, he seemed as mysterious and eerie as the sea itself, radiating danger from every angle.