

Hitched 851

Chapter 851

The birthday cake's candles were snuffed out in an instant by a gust of wind!

Gideon Bradford burst into the room, bringing with him the cold fury of a snowstorm, uninvited.

He appeared before Kelsey Blackwood and Phineas Inkster like a specter, an unwelcome surprise in the night.

Phineas, who had never laid eyes on him before, was polite yet guarded,

"Sir, may I help you?"

Gideon ignored the question, his gaze fixed on Kelsey with a disturbing lightness.

Phineas frowned, about to speak, when Gideon blurted out,

"How much for one night?"

Both Phineas and Kelsey were taken aback, confused.

Without waiting for an invitation, Gideon took a seat, squinting at Kelsey, "I'm interested in you. Would fifty thousand be enough for a night? If not, I can offer more."

Phineas and Kelsey were stunned for a moment before Kelsey erupted, "Are you sick?!"

Phineas's anger flared uncontrollably. What sane man would tolerate such blatant disrespect?

He moved to confront Gideon, but Kelsey held him back.

To Kelsey, Gideon seemed like a lunatic; after all, in a society governed by law, who would act so brazenly?

"Just get him out of here, let's not ruin the mood."

Phineas, holding back his anger, attempted to expel the intruder, "You better leave now, or I'm calling the police!"

Gideon didn't even glance at him, continuing his harassment of Kelsey, "It's just one night. Why the fuss? Fifty thousand isn't enough? How about a million? Let's talk. If you refuse, well, you're refusing a toast only to drink a forfeit."

At this, Phineas couldn't contain his fury any longer and lunged at Gideon!

Suddenly, two bodyguards burst through the door.

Phineas, an average man, stood no chance against professional muscle. He took several hits, quickly subdued by the bodyguards.

Kelsey, realizing the gravity of the situation, reached for her phone to call for help.

Gideon snatched it away, smashing the phone before her eyes.

Kelsey was petrified, speechless.

Phineas fought back even harder, and as the bodyguards tried to drag him away, Gideon casually ordered, "Let him stay."

At a signal from Gideon, the bodyguards drew the curtains, locked the door, and proceeded to beat Phineas to a pulp.

His arms and legs were broken, ribs cracked.

Disaster struck without warning, a nightmare unfolding!

Kelsey, in tears, rushed to Phineas's side, "Phineas! Phineas..."

Phineas, blood frothing from his mouth, lay motionless on the ground.

He wanted to comfort his wife but couldn't speak.

He wanted to wipe her tears away but couldn't lift his arms.

He wanted to stand and fight but was paralyzed.

He wanted to protect her but failed...

All he could do was watch helplessly as Kelsey cried, as Gideon forcefully dragged her up, as she was assaulted...

Meanwhile, Quinlan Inkster was playing hide-and-seek with his siblings. He and his sister hid in a closet.

Terrified, he wanted to run to his parents, but his sister covered his mouth, holding him back, silencing him.

Seeing the chaos, one brother tried to save their father, the other their mother.

The eldest brother had his arm broken by a bodyguard on the spot.

The second, after biting Gideon, was grabbed by the throat and smashed against the wall, the violence reminiscent of a predator toying with its prey... The second brother's head was bloodied, consciousness slipping away as blood streamed down his forehead.

Kelsey screamed, rushing to her son's side, only for Gideon to grab her, tearing her dress in front of Phineas.

Before Phineas's very eyes, she was pinned to a table, her clothes torn off, assaulted from behind. Kelsey's screams echoed through the studio...

Chapter 852

Phineas was sprawled on the ground, shaking uncontrollably. His eyes, bloodshot, were locked onto the horrifying scene unfolding before him. His heart was ablaze with a furious desire for vengeance, yet he was utterly powerless.

All he could do was lie there, forced to witness his child getting hurt, to see the love of his life being trampled and violated.

He groaned in helpless anger, tears mingling with blood streaming down his face.

This nightmare dragged on from dusk till the wee hours of the night.

Gideon was a monster. He deliberately tormented Phineas by assaulting Kelsey in every conceivable manner, over and over, right in front of Phineas's eyes.

Kelsey's screams of hysteria gradually faded into silence. Her fierce resistance dwindled until she no longer had the strength to fight back. Phineas's eyes went from wide with rage to tightly shut, tears of despair streaming down his face.

What was once a blissful, loving relationship between Phineas and Kelsey had been brutally shattered by Gideon, casting them into a living hell.

From joy to utter despair, their lives were destroyed, leaving them with unresolved anguish.

Kelsey was tortured to death by Gideon, her body left in disarray, her eyes void of tears.

Phineas died of a broken heart. As a man, he could not bear the sight of his beloved being humiliated right before his eyes, powerless to intervene. It would have been a mercy to have killed him instead.

With his dying breath, he was still looking towards Kelsey, the pain in his heart unimaginable.

The Inkster family's two sons were murdered by bodyguards, their necks snapped on Gideon's orders.

"Gideon said, ""Root and branch, let's reunite them in hell.""

With that, he tidied his clothes, not a speck of blood on him, and left as if nothing had happened, even having the audacity to grab a slice of Kelsey's homemade pie on his way out.

To him, the lives of Kelsey and Phineas were inconsequential, no more significant than insects.

Gideon had no prior connection or grudge against the Inkster family. His vile act was spurred simply because he happened upon Kelsey by chance and was captivated by her beauty.

Because Phineas wasn't willing to trade his wife for wealth.

Because Kelsey refused to submit.

Because their young children tried to protect their parents.

Four vibrant lives were extinguished.

Quinlan, hidden in a closet, witnessed the fury of his father, the despair of his mother, the terror of his brothers, and the silent grief of his sister through the slits of the door.

His loving parents and brothers were gone, and the warmth of his home had vanished.

What remained in Quinlan's heart was the despair, helplessness, and sorrow of his family, along with Gideon's brazen arrogance.

Too young to bear such psychological torment, Quinlan fainted on the spot.

When he awoke, several days had passed, and he found himself surrounded by strangers, his sister nowhere to be found.

He was locked in a dark, damp room with other dirty, scared children.

Any attempt to find his family was met with violence.

Mentioning his family led to beatings. Crying led to beatings.

Some of the children around him were maimed and sent to beg, others had their organs harvested, and some ended up as corpses used for smuggling drugs.

The faces of the children around him changed, but their numbers remained constant.

As some died, new ones were brought in.

In a twisted sense, Quinlan was "lucky" for his looks spared him from worse fates. The traffickers merely beat him, avoiding serious injury, before eventually selling him.

He was traded like merchandise multiple times until he ended up with Maxwell and his wife, who took him to Hill Village.

By then, he was a shell of his former self, having survived the brutality at the art studio and the cruelty of the traffickers. At such a young age, his heart was filled with pain and fear.

So, he remained silent, too scared to speak, unsure of what could be said.

That is until he met Elizabeth Gonzalez.

Chapter 853

The moment he laid eyes on Elizabeth, he was reminded of Kelsey—her beauty, her gentleness, and the way her laughter was as warm and inviting as a freshly brewed cup of coffee on a frosty morning.

Elizabeth was kind to him, much like Kelsey had been.

His heart, previously shrouded in clouds, finally saw a glimmer of sunlight. The wounds on his soul began to heal, bit by bit.

He found the courage to speak again, to hope for a future.

He resolved to live well, to find his sister, to study law, and to become an attorney—to seek justice for his parents and brother!

Elizabeth said, if ever wronged, to wield the law as his sword!

Elizabeth also said, the law could protect the innocent and punish the wicked!

He believed her, wholeheartedly.

Everything seemed to be moving in the right direction...

But fate turned its wheel once more, and happiness slipped through his fingers again.

Kendrick appeared out of nowhere!

Seeing Kendrick brought back memories of Gideon, of those moments in the studio...

Afterward, Kendrick took him up into the mountains, and his barely healed heart shattered all over again.

This time, it wasn't just his heart, but his spirit too!

Before Elizabeth, he was a walking corpse.

After Elizabeth, he felt alive again.

But Kendrick turned him into something monstrous!

Elysia Thorne finished her story, and the car fell silent...

Neither she nor Tarquin Bradford spoke for a long while until Elysia, with tears in her eyes, finally choked out,

"Keith Garcia told me he only found out later what had happened after he passed out.

He said Gideon, to cover up his crimes, had his family's bodies disposed of. They were taken to a pet crematorium, thrown into the furnace with animal remains, and burned to ashes.

The studio was cleaned out, as if that horrific event had never occurred.

He said, sometimes, ordinary people mean nothing in the face of wealth, especially back in those days.

Death was just that-death, causing barely a ripple.

Like a speck of dust, silent in its coming and going, unnoticed.

He also said it's a tragic world where victims die in silence while the perpetrators live in splendor."

Elysia sniffed hard, her eyes burning with rage,

"How can there be people like Gideon in this world? Just because he set his sights on someone, and they didn't reciprocate, he took their life, their spouse's life, their children's life! How could he be so vile?!"

There was no deep-seated hatred, no misunderstanding, no conflict!

Just because Kelsey was beautiful!

Just because he desired her, he resorted to such twisted and cruel means, violating Kelsey and destroying a happy family!

It wasn't just Keith, the victim, who harbored hatred. Even as an outsider, she felt it!

She wished a lightning bolt would strike from the heavens and obliterate Gideon!

She had her share of hardships, but she had never wished death upon anyone-Gideon was the first!

Tarquin listened quietly, his brow furrowed, his expression grave.

He spoke candidly, "Demons walk among us. Gideon is not human; he's a demon!"

He detested Keith for hurting Elijah, for taking away his daughter and kidnapping Elysia, for the fact that their family of six remained separated!

But Keith had been driven to darkness.

Not Gideon. Gideon was born malicious, and his sins extended far beyond this.

If it weren't for his mother's ashes and the need to uncover the truth about his parents' demise, he would have already sent Gideon to prison 'to enjoy' his remaining years!

Tarquin comforted Elysia for a while before finally asking,

"Knowing Gideon, after committing such evil, he would leave no stone unturned to eliminate any loose ends. He would have investigated the Blackwood family, sought to kill Keith.

Keith was just a child then, powerless. How did he survive?"

Chapter 854

Elysia took a deep breath, her voice heavy with emotion,

"Keith himself didn't even know. He said after he blacked out, the next thing he knew, he was in the hands of some traffickers." Tarquin frowned, puzzled. "How?"

Gideon's security was sharp and cautious; it was impossible they didn't sweep the area while cleaning up the mess.

And Keith was so young, how did he manage to escape from under the noses of professional bodyguards?

"What about his sister?"

"No clue," Elysia replied. "Keith said when he woke up, his sister was nowhere to be found. He hasn't mentioned anything about her whereabouts since."

Tarquin was silent for a few seconds before asking another question, "Then why does he hate the entire Bradford family? This was Gideon's doing. What do the others have to do with it?"

Elysia grew agitated again, "Gideon is a monster, and so are the rest of the Bradfords..."

Keith's hatred for the rest of the Bradford family was not only because of Gideon but also due to Phineas' art studio.

After committing his atrocious acts, Gideon, in an attempt to destroy evidence, bought the surrounding property to build a luxury housing development.

This development was a project of the Bradford family, involving eviction processes, which meant the Bradfords had to negotiate with the property

owners.

The owner was an upstanding middle-aged woman, who had rented out the property. The lease wasn't up, and the studio was filled with Phineas' artwork; she couldn't just dispose of them. Now faced with eviction, she needed to consult with either Phineas or Kelsey.

Since they couldn't reach them, the Bradfords were unable to strike a deal with the landlady.

She insisted on waiting until she could get in touch with Phineas and his wife before negotiating with the Bradfords.

The Bradfords lost their temper, and so did the landlady.

The property was a cherished family home; the landlady had moved to the city for her daughter's education and was reluctant to agree to its demolition. She told the Bradfords she wouldn't negotiate any further; her property was not for sale.

Upon hearing this, the Bradfords resorted to foul play, ultimately causing the landlady's daughter's demise!

The landlady's daughter, a medical student on the verge of starting her Ph.D., led a disciplined life focused on her studies, barely having time for a boyfriend. Yet, the Bradfords drugged her and left her in a bar to be assaulted by multiple people...

They even recorded a video, using it to force the landlady to sign the eviction papers.

The Bradfords succeeded, but the landlady's daughter took her own life.

The landlady, having lost her husband early, had raised her daughter single-handedly. She was her world!

Barely alive, the landlady sought justice for her daughter but faced obstruction at every turn.

The Bradfords even leaked the video they had recorded, paying for media coverage to slander her daughter's reputation, claiming she was a regular at nightclubs despite her wholesome appearance...

The public backlash was immediate, with all manner of vile comments directed at the landlady's daughter.

Overwhelmed with grief, the landlady couldn't bear it and died suddenly at home.

Elysia's eyes were red with anger as she said, "Keith mentioned they used to rent the studio from the landlady, and their families were close. The landlady and her daughter looked after them.

Just because Gideon needed to cover up his crime scene, they insisted on building that housing development there!

The rest of the Bradford family might not have known about Kelsey's situation, but for their own gain, they used such despicable methods to destroy the landlady and her daughter!

So, he hates Gideon and the entire Bradford family. He says not a single one of them is good; they're all monsters!

Keith even said, before the Bradfords drugged the landlady's daughter, they had already violated her! How could people be so wicked? They deserve to die!"

Tarquin listened with furrowed brows, his face cold as he said, "The Bradfords are all influenced by Gideon. When the head is crooked, the rest will follow!"

Kendrick was different because he had been away studying, with little contact with Gideon, and later came under the influence of the kind-hearted Elizabeth.

Touched by Elizabeth's goodness, Kendrick had light and love in his heart, making him the exception.

The rest of the Bradfords, like Gideon, were twisted!

Elysia continued, "Eventually, the studio was demolished, the crime scene destroyed, and Kelsey's family was wiped out, just like that!

The landlady and her daughter also died, their deaths marked by injustice and slander. How tragic, how heartbreaking!

Two whole families destroyed, six lives lost, just like that!"

Chapter 855

Keith hit the nail on the head. Sometimes, in the face of wealth and power, the average Joe is as significant as a speck of dust."

Tarquin didn't argue. Nowadays, it's almost impossible for the common folk to stand against power, let alone years ago.

Back then, Gideon was in his forties, at the peak of his arrogance, believing himself untouchable due to his status and the societal norms of the time. But, as they say, what goes around comes around, right?

Fate has a way of balancing the scales. No matter who you are, if you've done wrong, you'll face your comeuppance eventually. Justice may be delayed, but it never fails to show up.

Tarquin tried to console Elysia, "Don't worry, they'll get what's coming to them."

Sniffing, with tears in her eyes, Elysia looked up at him, "Keith is guilty, yes, but the real villains are Gideon and those monsters from the Bradford family. Is there any hope for Keith if he stops now?"

Elysia was unaware of the dark dealings and the lives lost, feeling only sorrow for Kelsey.

Kelsey and Elizabeth surely wished for Keith to survive.

If Keith were to die, it would be the end of the Inkster family – a family that had suffered so much, with their youngest barely escaping death only to face it again.

"If Keith dies, there'll be no Inkster family left in this world!" she exclaimed.

Tarquin frowned, unsure how to answer.

He knew what Elysia was thinking...

But in a society governed by laws, the rules must be followed.

Keith might have his reasons, but he's implicated in a serious crime. No one can save him from that.

Even if they personally forgave him, the law won't.

Especially now that Keith is blinded by vengeance, planning for years, he won't simply stop.

He feared what Keith might do next.

Wanting to spare Elysia further pain, Tarquin shifted the topic, "Who told Keith about the pet crematorium incident and the landlord's ordeal? By the time Keith grew up capable of investigating, all evidence would've vanished."

"These couldn't have been uncovered by him alone; someone must've informed him. But who?"

Elysia shook her head, "He never mentioned. Do you think Keith is lying?"

"Not necessarily," Tarquin replied.

If Keith shared this with Elysia, he likely wasn't lying.

These events had indeed happened.

Now, he understood Keith's hatred towards Gideon and the Bradford family, and why Keith despised him because of Kendrick.

But what puzzled him was how Keith survived to fall into the traffickers' hands when Gideon wouldn't have allowed him or his sister to live. What became of his sister? Why was Keith alone with the traffickers, who dealt in far more sinister trades than just child trafficking?

Why was Keith sold off alone? Just because of his looks? That seemed far-fetched.

And the real reason was?

Moreover, it couldn't have been Kendrick who led him up Hill Village on that stormy night.

Who was impersonating Kendrick? What did they do to Keith to drive him to despair?

And another thing, Keith's elaborate plans for revenge must have cost a fortune. Where did his funding come from?

They suspected Keith was the mysterious benefactor, yet had no solid evidence.

The mysteries only deepened.

From what they knew, Keith likely had someone behind him. But was it Keith himself, or someone else pulling the strings? Why wait all these years instead of acting the year Elysia had her child?

Tarquin pondered deeply, resolving to first find his daughter.

Once she was safe, he could focus on unraveling these mysteries.

He was determined to clear the air, not just for Gideon's misdeeds, but to understand the feud between Kendrick and Keith.

Regardless of Keith being the mysterious figure or not, Tarquin was set on exposing whoever was behind him.

Both were a menace that needed to be dealt with.

Chapter 856

The next day, in Spirit Village.

It took Keith a full decade to craft this hidden paradise.

Nestled among mountains and rivers, the place was a sight for sore eyes, embodying the true essence of tranquility and beauty.

He achieved a picturesque scene at every turn, where nature and architecture harmonized perfectly.

Every brick, every blade of grass, and even the villagers residing here were all part of his meticulous design.

Spirit Village was his gift to Elizabeth, a tribute to the dreams she once harbored.

Thus, the village bloomed with Elizabeth's favorite flowers and plants, spreading their fragrance everywhere.

All buildings and their styles were inspired by Elizabeth's own designs, a testament to Keith's effort to keep her dream alive.

He also established a school and a library, dedicating them to Kelsey, another woman he held dear.

In this way, Keith surrounded himself with the essence of the two women he cherished the most.

Eventually, this place became the home for him and his precious little one...

Originally, when Keith took the baby from Elysia, he hadn't planned on raising her here.

This sanctuary was his soul's haven, a place too sacred and pure for a child borne of his enemy, carrying the Bradford bloodline. She was meant to be a pawn in his long game against Tarquin, not to live here.

But life often laughs at our plans, bringing forth the unexpected!

The little one, much like her mother Elysia, proved to be a formidable challenge.

Somehow, she took a liking to him. And not just a passing fancy - she was devoted to him and him alone!

No matter who else tried to take care of her, she would wail and refuse to eat or sleep, flailing her tiny arms and legs in despair until it seemed she might cry herself to death.

Her tears were a flood, and her cries could shatter the calm of any heart.

Exhausted and voiceless from crying, her tears would still flow freely, only finding solace in Keith's arms.

She would only calm down and sleep soundly when held by him. Only he could feed her, and only with him did her laughter ring with genuine joy. Reluctantly, he had to admit there was something extraordinary about their bond.

At first, he didn't care for her. She was, after all, Tarquin's daughter, and Keith, a self-proclaimed bachelor with no parenting experience, had never been fond of children. Her cries were nothing but a source of irritation.

But she was a crucial part of his vengeance against the Bradford family. He couldn't let her die. If she died, how would he control Tarquin, the most elusive of his foes?

So, he took it upon himself to raise her, and before he knew it, she had completely wrapped him around her little finger.

He became a super dad out of necessity, taking care of her single-handedly because she refused anyone else. Just like Tarquin had to juggle being both a father and a mother to Elijah, Keith found himself in similar shoes with the little one.

From the chaotic beginnings of not knowing how to do anything to mastering the arts of feeding, changing, bathing, preparing baby food, and even medicating her during sickness he learned it all.

Emotions are unpredictable...

The more he cared for her, the deeper their bond grew.

His love for her began the moment he decided she needed a name.

When he first took her from Elysia, she was nameless, a mere pawn in his game. Why bother with a name?

But as time passed, he found himself wanting to give her a name, and not just any name, but something beautiful.

Chapter 857

Keith racked his brain for over two weeks, coming up with hundreds of names before he finally settled on one: Baby. It was a name as simple and precious as it sounds, perfectly fitting for his treasure. Baby was, indeed, Keith's treasure.

As time went by, Keith heard an old saying that most kids can roll over by three months and sit by six. However, Baby, his little darling, was nearing seven months and still hadn't mastered sitting up on her own. This sent Keith into a frenzy of worry. He took her to several pediatricians, all of whom assured him that Baby was developing just fine. But Keith couldn't shake off his concern, leading to many sleepless nights spent scouring the internet for reassurance, even going as far as infiltrating mommy groups online under the guise of a concerned mother.

Finally, just shy of eight months, Baby sat up on her own. Keith's heart, which had been up in his throat for so long, finally settled back into its rightful place. He was so proud that he invited the neighbors over for a little viewing party, showing off Baby's new skill like she had won a gold medal.

But soon, Keith found himself caught in the trap of comparison, especially within those mommy groups. Anything another child had, Baby needed to have too, and more. He spoiled her rotten, decking her out in designer baby gear, even though she was far too young to even walk. Keith had become a boastful parent, always sharing but never revealing Baby's face to protect her identity.

The other moms in the group would often say Baby was born under a lucky star, to which Keith would beam with pride. He loved hearing people praise his daughter.

Then came the day Baby spoke her first word. "Daddy," she called him, as he was feeding her porridge. Keith was so stunned he almost dropped the spoon. "What did you call me?" he asked. "Daddy," she repeated. Keith's heart swelled with joy; it was a moment as thrilling as watching his favorite team win the Super Bowl.

From then on, his affection for Baby only deepened. It was as if she had officially accepted him into her heart with that single word.

However, reality struck hard when Keith was reminded that Baby wasn't actually his biological daughter but Tarquin's. How could he continue to use Baby as leverage against Tarquin if his feelings for her were so genuine? It pained him, but Keith knew what he had to do. When Baby turned three, he made the difficult decision to leave her behind and move to Jindale City, thinking distance would dampen his feelings.

Keith was confident that out of sight would mean out of mind. But life has a way of proving us wrong in the most unexpected ways. Despite his determination, Keith found himself rushing back to Baby faster than a speeding bullet. The story goes...

Chapter 858

Keith had just arrived in Jindale City when his little treasure burst into tears, wailing for her daddy and where he had gone.

His three-year-old girl, just as inconsolable as she was at three months, refused to eat, drink, or sleep, simply crying with her little mouth agape.

The nanny sent him a video, and the sight of his daughter's clear tears rolling down her tender cheeks like pearls off a string broke him completely!

He was in public when he found himself tearing up over her cries!

Without a second thought, he purchased a return ticket, determined to rush back the way he came!

From that moment, Keith knew he was utterly tethered to her; his little girl had him wrapped around her finger!

He loved his treasure, with all his heart and soul, despite her not being the sharpest tool in the shed.

She might have taken after Elysia in that regard, a bit slow on the uptake!

While other kids were making rapid progress, she was always a few steps behind!

When other toddlers were walking by eleven months, she took her first steps at thirteen!

Learning to write was a challenge for most kids, but with a bit of patience, they'd get it in a few days. But his little girl? Teaching her the number 2 took an entire month, and still, she didn't grasp it!

The frustration was beyond words. It was just the number 2, and yet, she couldn't learn it!

Teaching her anything more complicated, like spelling or foreign languages that made her snooze instantly, seemed like an impossible task!

He was on the brink of a meltdown, repeatedly trying to teach her, only for her to not get it and look at him with those big, teary eyes filled with incomprehension.

Her pitiful look made it impossible to even think about scolding her. It felt like it would be a crime to lash out at such a darling face!

So, what could he do but bear with it? When the frustration became too much, he'd rather hurt himself than lay a finger on her. Sure, she might not be the quickest learner, but she had a heart of gold, always thinking of him first whether it was with treats or toys. She'd occasionally plant a kiss on his face, cooing, "Daddy, you're my favorite," which absolutely melted his heart.

His once weary heart was revived because of her, his love for her growing stronger each day.

Eventually, after years of biding their time, they finally had the means to confront the Bradfords. It was time to act.

According to the plan, he had to leave Spirit Village for Jindale City for a while, meaning he had to part ways with his precious girl.

It was a tough decision, but vengeance was a must. Moreover, it was critical that Tarquin remained unaware of his daughter's existence, necessitating their separation.

To spare her feelings, he lied, telling her he was leaving to find her mommy. Once found, he promised to reunite them and never part again.

His little girl, longing for her mom and despite her reluctance to part from him, agreed.

Thus began their period of separation.

Those initial days were tough on Keith, with every waking moment filled with thoughts of his daughter.

He longed for the day when his quest for revenge would be over, and he could return to her side.

But as time passed, he began to resist the idea of using his daughter as leverage against Tarquin.

His daughter wasn't a tool for his vendetta; she was his to cherish, not exploit.

He decided to alter his plans, removing his daughter from the equation of revenge.

However, he knew this decision wouldn't sit well with his allies; his daughter was a key part of their strategy, and excluding her would surely meet resistance.

Chapter 859

So, he racked his brain for a solution...

And then it hit him: Elysia!

He knew Tarquin had been tirelessly searching for Elysia. If Elysia was still alive, she could be his leverage against Tarquin.

Elysia could easily become the ace up his sleeve, the perfect piece to topple Tarquin!

He truly regretted, now more than ever, leaving Elysia to fend for herself in the wilderness all those years ago!

He hadn't expected Tarquin to be so hopelessly in love. Just one night together, and he was smitten!

Had he known, he would have kept Elysia close, ready to use her as a bargaining chip against Tarquin when the time was right!

So, upon arriving in Jindale City, he immediately took a job at the daycare where Blossom Blythe worked.

At that point, he wasn't sure whether Elysia was dead or alive, but he was certain that if she were alive, she'd reach out to Blossom.

Working alongside Blossom, he kept his ears open for any news of Elysia while also keeping a close eye on the Bradford family, preparing for his revenge!

During this time, his daughter was living in Spirit Village.

The father and daughter stayed in touch, and with every call, his daughter would ask if he had found Mommy yet.

As his daughter grew, her longing for her mother only intensified.

Not wanting to disappoint her, he never gave her a straight answer.

Then, Elysia made an unexpected appearance!

While he was surprised, he was also relieved. Elysia's return solved two of his biggest problems!

With Elysia back, he could finally remove his daughter from the chessboard of his plans!

And he wouldn't have to worry about finding a mother for his daughter anymore. After getting his revenge, he could just bring Elysia back to meet his daughter.

It was a win-win situation!

So, he shared his plans with his confidant, who raised no objections.

Everything was moving in the direction he wanted.

Unfortunately, Elysia ended up falling for Tarquin, throwing a wrench in his plans.

He had no choice but to forcefully take her, intending to bring her back to his daughter, but then Tarquin snatched her away!

"Phew..." Keith sat in his car, gazing in the direction of Spirit Village, letting out a long sigh.

The two things he regretted the most were, first, getting outmaneuvered by Elliot Evan using Nola Slater, which led to Tarquin cornering him that night.

In a panic, he revealed the existence of his daughter to Tarquin!

He should have never mentioned it!

He should've kept his daughter hidden, forever out of Tarquin's reach!

Second, he regretted his arrogance, believing that Elysia could never fall for Tarquin.

From the moment he found Elysia, he should have used her to threaten Tarquin immediately, not slowly twist the knife!

Unfortunately, there's no cure for regret in this world...

Now, he had to move his daughter to safety first. She was his life, and he couldn't let Tarquin find her!

Spirit Village was no longer safe. He urgently needed to relocate his daughter somewhere else.

Once his daughter was safe, he could focus on his revenge!

As the car sped towards the entrance of Spirit Village, the look of regret in Keith's eyes faded, replaced by the joy of soon reuniting with his daughter. "When you see Daddy, don't mention anything about me getting hurt!"

He knew his daughter would be heartbroken and cry.

He had never pondered the significance of a woman's tears, but he knew his daughter's tears were like pearls, precious and not to be shed lightly.

He loved her smile too much to bear her tears.

Keith pushed open the car door, limping out with his injured leg, quickening his pace towards the village.

The village guard spotted him from afar and scrambled over, stammering,

"Keith, there's trouble. Your daughter's gone missing!"

Chapter 860

Keith's breath caught in his throat, panic clear in his eyes!

He shoved the person in front of him aside and stumbled toward home!

Their home, the one that belonged only to him and his darling!

Soon, Axel got wind of the situation and hurriedly contacted Tarquin,

"We've just hit Spirit Village, but got word that the kid's gone missing. Keith just entered the village."

Tarquin's expression hardened, "Missing?"

"Yeah!"

"Let's storm in. Search!"

Panic was evident in Keith. Tarquin was no less anxious!

The usually quiet village was suddenly abuzz!

The feud between Keith and Tarquin's folks was momentarily forgotten. No grievance was bigger than finding their darling! Both groups scoured the village, united in their mission to find the child!

...

Meanwhile, in Jindale City.

Evan Thorne had just sneaked out of the secure perimeter of Number One Mansion when he was forcibly shoved into a van.

Blake Thorne sat inside, surprised, "That easy?"

The thug who had grabbed Evan said,

"He came out on his own, just ran into us. Check if we got the right kid."

Blake scrutinized Evan's face,

"No mistake, this is Tarquin's boy! Let's get moving before Tarquin's bodyguards spot us, step on it!"

With that, the driver floored the gas pedal, and the van sped away down the alley.

Evan recognized Blake and was first surprised, then frowned,

"What do you want?"

He had just been missing his mom, sneaking out to see her.

He heard she was over at Fuyah Gardens, counseling a traumatized child, unsure when she would return.

It had been two days since he last saw her, and he missed her terribly.

But Mr. Lowell kept finding excuses to keep him away.

So today, he drugged Mr. Lowell to ensure a good night's sleep and slipped out.

He hadn't expected to be caught by two burly men just outside!

Without a word, they covered his mouth and bundled him into the van.

He thought they were bodyguards arranged by his estranged dad, so he didn't resist.

He knew Number One Mansion was surrounded by bodyguards.

He was puzzling over how he had managed to evade those bodyguards, only to be caught once out of the safe zone, and then he saw Blake! The man who had tormented his mom for twenty years, who should have been in prison, the big bad wolf!

Blake ignored Evan, clearly not considering him a threat.

He took out his phone and made a call,

"It's a wrap! We're on our way back... Just grabbed one, but one's enough! Sit tight until we get there, then we'll make our next move."

Evan frowned, unhappy, "Hey! I'm talking to you!"

Blake scowled, ending the call and glaring at Evan,

"You'd better behave, or I'll show you how I used to deal with your mom! And yes, she'd still have to call me 'Dad', you little brat..."

Harm his mom?

That struck a nerve with Evan!

With a scowl, he swung a punch!

Solid, harsh, and precise, he landed a punch right on Blake's nose!

Blake howled in pain, shocked, "You little devil, you dare hit me, I..."

"Thump, thump, thump!" Evan landed several more punches.

He didn't stop until Blake was bruised and bleeding, even knocking out a tooth!

Blake and the thugs were stunned, staring at Evan, "!"

Who would have thought a five-year-old could pack such a punch? So fast?

And was this the reaction of a kidnapped child?

Normally, a kidnapped kid would either cry or be easily bribed with candy.

What were Tarquin and Elysia feeding their son?

What had they actually kidnapped?!

A thug couldn't help but ask, "Kid, do you realize you're being kidnapped?"

Evan pursed his lips, "Kidnapped? You're trying to kidnap me?"