

Mr. Kane Got Blacklisted Chapter 1871

[Eleven Jewell]

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Keegan took a moment, glanced at Aldor, and dryly commented, "Marrying my sister doesn't mean a pay raise."

Their speechlessness reflected their surprise at his response.

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Keegan pondered, then added, "Once you make this choice, there's no going back."

Aurora's hopes sank. She had expected Keegan to be vehemently against the idea. 'How can he be okay with his subordinate marrying his sister? We're from different worlds, and I've been nothing but harsh to Aldor! Has Keegan lost his mind?' Trying to reason with her brother, Aurora pointed out, "Look at us, Keegan. Do you really think Aldor and I are a good match?"

Keegan's indifferent reply caught them off guard, "Aldor can handle being with someone below his standard. He's earned plenty of bonuses from me, after all."

Aldor was inwardly taken aback, thinking, 'I earned those bonuses on my own merit. Is Mr. Kane using them to justify this arrangement?' Aurora, feeling a mix of anger and disbelief, bit her tongue and retorted, "I should've just ignored this whole thing!" before storming off upstairs.

Aldor, left behind with Keegan, wanted to speak but hesitated.

Keegan, not even glancing at him, explained, "An engagement doesn't guarantee marriage. Grandma is merely providing a chance for you both to explore this. The final decision is yours."

He continued, "The Kane family doesn't force these matters. If it doesn't work out, I'll speak with Grandma."

Keegan understood Cordelia's intentions: she sought a dependable man for Aurora. That's why he considered Aldor -a man of ability, with a straightforward personal life and a record of staying out of conflicts.

Alder's composed demeanor was necessary to manage Aurora's more challenging personality.

Therefore, Keegan stayed out of it, knowing that whatever the outcome, it should be based on genuine feelings and mutual understanding.

Aldor was not inclined to advance in life through marriage.

Despite being surrounded by many outstanding women during social events over the years, some of whom had extended olive branches to him, he never once compromised his principles.

He was a smart man and naturally understood Keegan's implication.

He liked the idea of marriage but never thought he'd be the one who would get married.

He couldn't help but feel distressed when he thought about getting together with Aurora.

"Mr. Kane, would you reduce my pay if things don't work out? " Aldor pondered for a moment before asking.

Keegan's eyes twitched as he heard that. "One more word, and I'd cut your pay!" He sneered.

Aldor sealed his lips.

As Keegan finished speaking, he received a notification on his phone and nearly choked.

Stella had posted something on her social media.

[Will mixing these two together make it taste like the viral alcohol-infused latte?] Attached with the caption was an image of a cup of espresso, a bottle of high end liquor, and a plate of crabs in the middle.

Keegan's face darkened.

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Mr. Kane Got Blacklisted Chapter 1872 [Eleven Jewell]

[Happy New Year!] Lena commented on Stella's social media post.

Carter playfully replied, [Honey, you haven't wished me a Happy New Year yet.] [%&&] wrote Felicity.

[Did her post shock you into typing gibberish?] Vermont responded to Felicity's comment.

[Your alcohol tolerance is impressive. When Leighton and I get married, I'll prepare a few bottles of strong liquor for you,] said Nicole.

[WTF?] Leighton added.

Kayla commented, [It definitely tastes different. That bottle of yours could supply the nation's coffee shops for ten years.] Keegan went to Stella's direct message on WhatsApp, his expression serious.

Meanwhile, Stella lounged comfortably on the sofa, looking at her chat box with My Amnesiac Hubby while he was typing.

She was growing impatient. After five minutes, Keegan finally managed to send her a message. [What are you up to?] Stella felt annoyed. An entire evening had passed, and she was still waiting for Keegan to pick her up. However, he has yet to return.

Unable to endure it any longer, she made the post on her Twitter.

She could not believe that Keegan saw it instantly, yet she took five minutes just to ask what she was up to.

[Contemplating whether I should find a new daddy for the baby.] Stella replied.

Keegan called her the next second.

Stella picked up and heard him say in a deep and threatening voice, “Don’t you dare.”

‘Whoa. Someone’s feisty,’ thought Stella.

“Watch me. I’m the one carrying the baby. I can do whatever I want!” she snorted.

Keegan, rubbing his temples, asked with concern, “Are you still mad?”

“I’m not mad. Why would I be? Everything you do is for my own good. You’re great. You’re sacrificing so much for our relationship. I’m super happy,” Stella said sarcastically.

Keegan couldn’t help but laugh when he heard that.

Stella’s face darkened as she thought, ‘Why the hell is he laughing? Can’t he show me a bit of respect?’ “What are you laughing at? Am I that funny?” She said irritably.

“No. I’m just thinking you must have pretended to be very well-behaved before I married you. Otherwise, why would I have done that?” said Keegan.

Stella sneered in response, “Really? You must be pretty clueless. Want to know why you married me? It’s simple – you were lustful and attracted to my looks.

Not that hard to grasp, right?”

Keegan was silent for a moment. “Have you ever heard that beauty fades?”

Stella paused momentarily before murmuring, “No wonder my attraction to you isn’t what it used to be. I thought it was because you lost your memory, and I was exhausted. But it turns out you’re getting old and not as good-looking anymore.”

Keegan’s mouth twitched. ‘She sure has a talent for infuriating people!’ “I’m coming to pick you up now.”

“What for?”

Keegan chuckled, his voice carrying a hint of coldness, “To show you what this old man can do.”

Stella’s heart skipped a beat. She thought about how Keegan used to tease her when she called him old, and the tips of her ears turned red.

‘Keegan has been fluctuating between moments of amnesia and clarity recently.’ Thinking of this, Stella probed, “Do you want me to put on something from the closet on the east side of the master bedroom while I wait?”

Just then, she heard something drop on the other line.

Mr. Kane Got Blacklisted Chapter 1873 [Eleven Jewell]

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Mr. Kane Got Blacklisted Chapter 1874 [Eleven Jewell]

Darcie hesitated for a moment. She was sure Trevor had taken it before she let go. 'Did he do that on purpose?' she thought.

Thoughts of the plane crash filled her mind, and she was about to speak when a voice from afar interrupted.

"What's happening?"

Wenham had just finished paying his respects to his late wife. He was startled when he heard the commotion and walked over to see what was going on.

"I accidentally dropped the oats I made for Stella," explained Darcie. She then turned to Trevor, saying, "I'm sorry, Trevor. I thought you had it. Did you get burned?"

Trevor glanced at her inquisitively, withdrew his gaze, and said, "It's okay. It's just a shame Stella can't taste your food now."

He looked at his sister affectionately and said, "Sorry, sis."

Stella chuckled, "I think I've had my fill of Darcie's cooking for now. I couldn't have finished that bowl of oats anyway. Let's take the broken dish as a sign of good luck."

Wenham joined in, "Agreed. I'll have Sandra clean it up while you get Jaylene to come down and receive her present."

The mention of gifts made Stella's ears perk up. She blinked at Trevor as if saying, "We're getting presents?"

Trevor was somewhat amused. He wondered if Rainee had spoiled her. 'How could she be so eager for monetary gifts?' Sandra cleaned up the broken porcelain pieces, and Jaylene came downstairs.

She had changed into a light yellow dress, her hair loosely braided. Her light makeup gave her a somewhat elegant appearance.

Jaylene greeted Trevor warmly, but her eyes were cold when they landed on Stella. She didn't ask her anything.

Trevor was unaware of the argument between the two from the night before. He thought their discord was due to Keegan and couldn't help but feel some displeasure toward Jaylene.

On the other hand, Wenham was happy that his son had returned safely, and they would soon have a new addition to the family.

After receiving their gifts, Jaylene handed hers to Trevor and said, "I'm so glad you're safe. Here, I want to give you my present. May you have a peaceful and joyful new year."

Trevor lowered his gaze, accepted it, and said, "Thank you, Jaylene."

Jaylene breathed a sigh of relief, thinking the relationship between the two might have been repaired. But Trevor immediately turned and handed the present she gave him and his own to Stella.

"Hold onto these for me, sis."

In an instant, Jaylene's face turned unsightly.

Witnessing how easily Trevor handed their gifts to Stella, Jaylene clenched her fists and remained silent.

Stella raised her eyebrows, happily agreeing to hold onto the items for Trevor.

Darcie stood nearby and watched the exchange with an inquisitive look, occasionally glancing between the two.

Stella pursed her lips and said, "Trevor, can you help me move the pot of roses from the yard to my room. Spring is coming, and the weather will be warmer. I want to try to keep the flowers alive. Dad seems to really like that pot of roses." As soon as she finished speaking, Jaylene objected, "No, you can't bring it in.

My mom is allergic to roses."

Stella was surprised, "Darcie, you're allergic to roses?"

Darcie nodded.

Stella muttered in confusion, "That's odd. I've been using rose essential oil recently. If you're allergic to roses, wouldn't you react to rose-extracted essential oil too?"

Stunned, Wenham looked at Darcie subconsciously.

Darcie seemed calm, but Jaylene's face turned sour. "What are you implying?

Are you saying my mom's faking an allergy to roses just to keep Dad from bringing flowers home?"

Stella, astonished, quickly clarified, “Why would you think that, Jaylene? I was just curious. Allergies aren’t like asthma, right? They can’t just be faked, can they?”

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Stella’s words were a clear, undisguised jab at Jaylene’s previously feigned illness during the family reunion.

Jaylene’s face turned pallid with anger. “You-“

Possibly anticipating another impulsive remark, Darcie finally intervened, “Stella, the essential oil you have isn’t made from roses. I detect scents of sandalwood, chamomile, and wild orchid, but not roses.”

Stella hesitated, furrowing her brows. “That’s not right. They specifically told me it was infused with roses. I bought it because roses are my favorite.”

Trevor’s eyelid twitched. ‘Huh? Wasn’t she obsessed with sunflowers?’ “Some sellers might intentionally claim certain ingredients to boost sales, especially in the field of fragrances. Ordinary users find it difficult to discern the exact additives, making them vulnerable to deception. You can come to our company next time you want some essential oils. Tell me the fragrance you desire, and I can personally help you create a blend,” Darcie replied softly.

Stella smiled. “Oh, I see. Thanks for the explanation, Darcie.”

“You’re welcome.”

Darcie’s eyes flashed with a hint of contempt. It seemed that Freesia’s daughter had not inherited her extraordinary sense of smell. She couldn’t even tell the difference between the two.

“Since Darcie is allergic to roses, I’ll take the flower with me later. I’ll take good care of it for you, Dad. Maybe I can revive it. Is that okay?”

Wenham was overjoyed. “That’s great! Be careful when moving it. I brought it back from abroad, and it’s quite delicate.”

Stella wasn't sure if it was just her imagination, but she thought she saw a trace of gloominess flash across Darcie's face after her father's reminder.

Stella pretended not to see it and smiled. "I'd also keep your gift safe and sound."

As Stella went to her room to put away the presents, Trevor followed her.

He closed the door and asked, "Do you think her rose allergy is fake?"

While opening the gift, Stella replied, "I don't know. I was just fooling around with her."

Trevor looked puzzled by her statement.

Stella looked up and asked, "Trevor, did Mom like roses?"

"How did you know?"

Stella grabbed the photo album from the table and said, "There are so many photos of Mom with roses in here."

Even though they couldn't bring that rose inside, Wenham insulated it as soon as the weather turned cold. He treasured the plant dearly, checking on it several times a day and mourning over a fallen leaf for days. It was obvious why he adored that pot of roses so much.

Trevor nodded. "The plant in the pot is a dwarf variety Mom had cultivated. It's trickier to grow than regular roses because it's disease-prone."

"The flowers are sparse, but they're gorgeous when they bloom. After Mom passed, Dad's been taking care of it."

"He's actually very serious about it. From initially knowing nothing about flowers, he learned to fertilize, spray pesticides, prune, and graft the plant."

"Mom left seven or eight pots at the time. Once, Dad went on a business trip, and the weather suddenly turned cold. The housekeeper forgot to close the balcony window for several days."

“When Dad came back, the roses were all dead.”

When Wenham returned, his eyes were red and swollen as he tried to salvage what was left. Despite his efforts, not a single pot could be saved.

This incident had haunted Wenham for years. He searched for that variety of roses for a long time. Last year, while abroad, he finally found it and purchased it.

But Darcie was allergic to roses, breaking out in hives, so the plant had to stay outside. That particular breed, however, was fragile and couldn't tolerate heat or cold. It always looked a bit sickly.

Even so, Wenham went to great lengths to transport the roses to Rivera, hoping they'd take root there.

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Mr. Kane Got Blacklisted Chapter 1876 [Eleven Jewell]

Mr. Kane Got Blacklisted Chapter 1880 [Eleven Jewell] Stella recalled the days spent at the Saun family home.

Watching Wenham's tender care for the pot of roses, she noticed his demeanor softening. Was he seeing those roses as reminders of someone he lost long ago?' "Dad originally planned to build a greenhouse in the yard for them. He wanted to plant more roses, but then Darcie had an allergic reaction. So, he put that idea on hold," Trevor shared.

Stella gave a wry smile. "That's quite the coincidence, isn't it?"

Her skepticism lingered. Rivera's temperature rarely dropped below minus four or five degrees. Roses aren't that fragile. They shouldn't have perished after just two days of frost, even if they were a cultivated breed.

Of all the flowers, Darcie was allergic to the roses that Freesia loved so much.

The issue did not seem entirely coincidental.

“Trevor, why did you deliberately knock over that bowl of oats when we were downstairs? Did you find out something?” Stella asked in a low voice.

Trevor shook his head. “I’m not sure. The nurse said the person who approached them was a man, but Darcie has never been with any man.”

“Could she have hired someone?”

“Why would you risk using someone who isn’t a trusted confidant for something as serious as taking a life?”

Stella fell silent. It was true; only those with a common interest were truly reliable.

She felt a chill run down her spine. ‘If it really was her, then what kind of mindset did Darcie live with all these years?’ She shuddered at the thought.

“Stop thinking about it,” Trevor said, patting her head comfortingly. “Focus on taking care of the baby and yourself. I’ll handle everything else.”

Stella closed her eyes. If the plane crash resulted from foul play, it was likely that Darcie had taken precautions. Trevor’s investigation might put her in danger.

“Should we tell Dad about this?”

Trevor sighed. “And what would we say? We have no evidence, Stella. Dad cares deeply for his late wife, but he and Darcie have been together for twenty years. He can’t act on an unproven accusation. It might even make him feel guilty for suspecting her.”

After a while, Trevor added, “I’m not fond of Darcie, but I really don’t want it to be her. I was actually relieved when I found out it was a man.”

‘If it weren’t for the plane crash...’ Stella regained her senses and understood. Should Darcie be responsible for the incident, her father would likely be the most devastated.

Just as she was lost in thought, the sound of a car engine came from downstairs.

Trevor got up and said, “Let’s go. Keegan is here to pick you up.”

However, when they got downstairs, it wasn't Keegan who arrived, but Marshall.

He was wearing an all-white suit, standing in the living room talking to Wenham.

Stella's first instinct was to turn around and go upstairs.

But before she could move, she heard Marshall say, "Happy New Year, Stella."

Stella gave an awkward smile and replied, "Happy New Year."

Then she asked, "Why are you here so late?"

Marshall held up the bottle of wine. "I saw your post and thought, why not celebrate New Year's Eve together with a few drinks?"

Mr. Kane Got Blacklisted Chapter 1877 [Eleven Jewell]

Stella recalled the post she made to scare Keegan.

She was surprised to see Marshall at her house. 'Why isn't he celebrating New Year's with his family?' she thought.

However, she found it impolite to send him away, as he was already at the door.

Stella took the wine, thanked him, and smiled. "I just reposted someone else's picture for fun. I assumed that not many people would check their social media on New Year's."

"I just finished work and saw your update, so I thought I'd drop by and see you."

Stella was about to ask how he knew she was at the Saun residence, but then she thought about the previous post. She was afraid that Keegan would not be able to find her, so she shared her location. It was understandable that Marshall would know where she was.

"You're working on New Year's Eve?" Stella was surprised. "Is the law firm that busy nowadays?"

Marshall chuckled and shook his head. "Not really."

Everyone's on vacation. I just didn't feel like going home. My aunt is there."

Stella was stunned for a moment. Then, she understood.

Marshall's oppressive childhood was due to his younger brother's death, and Irene was the indirect culprit of all this.

For him, enduring the pain and forcing a smile to celebrate family reunions was excruciating, especially during the holidays.

Before Stella could speak, Darcie said, "We have some pierogies. Let me have the kitchen prepare a few side dishes while you guys enjoy your drink."

Wenham suddenly became cheerful at the sound of alcohol. "It's great that you came, Marshall."

'Probably because he brought wine,' thought Stella.

Darcie's unusual behavior was not surprising. Darcie's mind worked much faster than Jaylene's.

When Keegan tweeted the clarification regarding his relationship with Jaylene, Darcie knew that the two would not end up together. Since that was the case, focusing on the company was better than wasting her efforts on Keegan.

While Keegan was a good catch, there were other eligible bachelors in Rivera.

And, Marshall was one of them.

Marshall did not decline Darcie's hospitality and politely thanked her.

Trevor sat on the couch, secretly taking a picture of Marshall with his phone and sending it to his group chat.

Boredom crept over Vermont, as he joined his family for the New Year's Eve celebration dinner. He immediately perked up when he saw the text.

While the elders continued to boast about their children and grandchildren at the table, Vermont suddenly stood up.

Vermont's father, Greg, frowned. "You haven't spoken to your aunts and uncles all day. Where are you off to now?"

"I'm going to get my girlfriend. Didn't you say I can't come home for New Year's if I don't get married this year?" Vermont replied.

Greg was momentarily stunned and furrowed his brows. "I won't acknowledge those unruly women even if you bring them home!"

Vermont's sister-in-law laughed. "Garrett mentioned that Vermont is dating a cute, decent girl."

Vermont's mom, Diane, became interested. "Which heiress did you pursue this time? If you two are serious, I'll have someone go to her house and propose a union."

"She's from the village."

The whole family was in shock.

Vermont ignored them, grabbed his phone, and went upstairs.

Once upstairs, he called Keegan.

Keegan was almost at the Saun residence when he saw Vermont's name pop up. He answered the phone and heard him say, "Got anything new on your plate?"

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Keegan was perplexed. "Not really. Why?" "Well, your ex-wife had prepared quite the surprise for you," said Vermont.

Keegan's eyelids twitched. "What the hell are you talking about?"

Vermont snorted. "Trevor just posted a picture of Marshall at his house in the group chat. Don't you know what that means?"

Keegan furrowed his brows, and his face darkened.

“If your ex-wife is with Marshall, will the child she gives birth to have your last name or his? When the time comes, should we congratulate you or him?”

Vermont added.

Keegan gritted his teeth. “Shut your mouth!”

“Tsk. This is serious. I don’t earn money easily. Plus, my wife will likely control my spending in the future. I have to keep track of everything and reciprocate-“

Keegan hung up the call before he could finish.

Vermont smirked and texted Felicity. [Miss Bandit, wanna watch a show?] Felicity, who was also bored on New Year’s Eve, quickly replied, [What show?

Did you book the entire theater for Stella? How many movies are we watching?] Vermont was taken aback. ‘Ah. I shouldn’t have talked about watching a show.

Miss Bandit would surely be mad at me if I told her that there was no show.’ So, he said, [Yeah. I booked the place for next week. But, we’re not watching a movie today. We’re going to the Saun residence.] [Stella’s place? Let me go get ready,] Felicity responded.

“Send me your address, and I’ll pick you up.”

Felicity immediately sent her location. She was in a faculty apartment at Summit University.

When she returned from the balcony, she bid farewell to the people at the dining table. “Uh, dad, I’m leaving. My friend invited me to spend New Year’s Eve together.”

A middle-aged man wearing a light gray woolen shirt and metal-framed glasses frowned. “You haven’t eaten much.”

“I’ve been on a diet recently. It causes me to have a small appetite, so I’m already full.”

A guy slightly younger than Felicity sneered. "You should be losing weight. Look at how fat you are."

Felicity paused, and her gaze became cold.

Her father frowned and did not speak, but her stepmother said, "Felicity has lost a lot of weight. She just has a round face, as she takes after her mother."

After that, she asked, "Felicity, is your mom still living in the village? When you were in junior high, your dad wanted to bring you back here. The education quality in the village is definitely not as good as the ones in the city. But, your mom was stubborn. She scolded us over the phone. I honestly don't understand why she would do that. What's more important than your child's education?"

Felicity chuckled. "My mom rarely scolds people. She usually only reprimands bitches."

Her stepmother's facial expression changed, and her father slammed his hands on the table. "How can you say such things? Is that how Florence taught you?"

Felicity's already lukewarm heart turned cold at that moment. "You think my mom didn't educate me well. But, what about you? You said nothing when your son ridiculed me. Your wife mocked my mom, so I refuted her. But, suddenly, I'm in the wrong?"

The man's face turned ugly. "How dare you talk back to your elders?"

Felicity's stepmother tried to manage the situation. "Forget it, honey. It's New Year's. There's no need to argue with a child. She doesn't know any better.

She's just repeating what she hears."

"If you have something to say, just say it to my face, you bitch," said Felicity.

Her stepmother, who probably had never heard such vulgar language, was stunned.

Felicity's dad paled. He gritted his teeth and yelled, "Apologize!"

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“What gives her the right to criticize my mom? Mom took care of you when you were in school, yet your wife is the one who gets all the benefits. How dare she judge my mom? What kind of a person is she?” said Felicity.

“If it weren’t for your incessant calls, annoying my mom, and forcing me to come over every New Year, do you think I’d show up willingly?” she continued.

“I’ve said what I needed to say and had my meal. Please don’t contact my mom from now on. I can see that you’re doing well, and my mom is doing well too.

She hasn’t remarried, not because she has no suitors, but because she doesn’t want to encounter a jerk like you!”

After venting, Felicity was ready to leave.

“Stop right there.”

She turned around, intending to return the money her father had given her.

However, a figure rushed toward her and gave her a strong shove. Felicity stumbled and awkwardly fell to the ground.

She was in so much pain that her face turned pale.

Her half-brother had pushed her. Shocked by the sudden turn of events, her father hurried forward to help her.

Felicity dodged his touch and struggled to get up.

The young man shouted, “Who do you think you are? How dare you curse at my parents? I dare you to say it again!” Her father’s expression was conflicted. He wanted to ask her if she was okay, but her harsh remarks from moments ago made it difficult for him to utter words of concern.

Felicity put down her bag, suddenly moved forward, and gave the young man a shoulder throw.

Slam!

The room was then filled with screams.

The couple panicked and rushed to check on their son. Chaos ensued, as the family cried and cursed at Felicity.

Felicity ignored them, picked up her bag, and left.

As soon as she stepped out the door, she could not help but bend over. 'Fuck.

What a brat!' It was then that Vermont called her. "Miss Bandit, I'm here."

Felicity hunched over and spoke with some difficulty. "Hey, I can't walk very well right now."

Vermont was startled. "What happened?"

"My butt hurts," Felicity said with a strained voice.

"Is it hemorrhoids?"

"Get lost!" Felicity gritted her teeth. "I fell."

Vermont immediately became nervous. "Which building are you in and on which floor? I'll come get you."

Following that, Felicity gave him the specific location, and Vermont was there in a few minutes.

Felicity was leaning against the wall in the stairwell. The green light of the escape sign made her face look a little pale.

She burst into tears when she saw Vermont. "I can't walk," she said.

Vermont hurriedly picked her up and rushed to the hospital on New Year's Eve.

After a series of tests, it was found that her tailbone was fractured. She was told to undergo conservative treatment. The doctor on duty came over with a physiotherapy lamp to heat her backside.

When it was time to take off her pants, Felicity tightly held on to her waistband and turned to Vermont while blushing.” Get out,” she said.

Just as Vermont was about to leave, the doctor stopped him. “You have to keep an eye on her. Today is New Year’s Eve, and we don’t have many staff on duty.

If the lamp goes out, you two might need to shout for us.”

“I’ll shout by myself. I have a loud voice,” said Felicity.

The doctor then glanced at the bed next to hers. “As long as the patient in the next bed doesn’t scold you for it, sure.”

Felicity was taken aback.

Vermont cleared his throat and said, ’Til keep an eye on the lamp.”

Felicity clenched her fists and blushed. “If you dare peek at my ass, I’ll gouge your eyes out!”

“I wouldn’t dare to. There’s no way I can beat you,” chuckled Vermont.

Felicity turned away, took a deep breath, and said, “Okay. Go ahead!”

The doctor finished setting up the equipment and gave Vermont a few instructions before leaving for another ward.

Mr. Kane Got Blacklisted Chapter 1880 [Eleven Jewell]

Vermont chatted with Felicity for a while, gradually learning about what happened that night. He felt a sense of heaviness in his heart, and he reached out to pat her head.” You must take me with you next time. Your brother only bullies you because you’re short. Let’s see if he dares to do anything with me around.”

Felicity snorted, “Well, I did give him a shoulder throw. They should know that I’m-ouch!

“...that I’m a powerful woman.”

Vermont held her up and whispered, “Stop talking. Just rest and save your energy.”

Felicity closed her eyes. “Coming to the hospital to roast my butt on New Year’s is truly embarrassing.” “At least it’s not hemorrhoid surgery,” Vermont chuckled.

“Get lost!”

Vermont stood up and said, ‘TH go get you some water.”

“Kay.”

Once Vermont left, he knocked his head and thought, ‘Damn! She’s so fair!’ Meanwhile, Darcie had just finished cooking the pierogies when Keegan arrived.

Trevor opened the door, saw Keegan, and gave him a once over. “Did the gas prices go up?”

Keegan was taken aback. “I didn’t notice.”

“Oh. I thought the gas prices went up, and you were so stingy that you didn’t want to refuel your car. So, you came here on foot.”

Trevor’s reply rendered Keegan speechless.

He glanced at him and hummed, “Well, come on in. Or, do you want me to carry you?”

Keegan walked in with a gift in his hand.

Several more dishes were added to the table. Marshall and Wenham were engaged in a lively conversation with Jaylene sitting across from them. Stella was nowhere to be seen.

Keegan subconsciously glanced around.

Jaylene's eyes lit up when she saw him. "Keegan!" she called out.

Keegan withdrew his gaze and responded indifferently.

Marshall also turned around and acknowledged his friend with a slight nod.

After Keegan greeted Wenham and Darcie, Jaylene asked, "Have you eaten? If you haven't, I can ask Sandra to cook some pierogies for you." Keegan had intended to say that he had already eaten, but before he could speak, he saw Stella coming out from the kitchen with a plate of pierogies. He pursed his lips and said, "Sure."

Jaylene immediately requested Sandra to cook the dish for Keegan.

"There's no need to call her. I've cooked all the pierogies," said Stella.

She then glanced at Keegan and continued, "Do you want some veggies instead? Marshall arrived first."

Marshall politely declined. "Keegan can have the pierogies if he's hungry."

"Thanks. I am quite famished," said Keegan.

Marshall did not respond.

Stella's gaze lingered on him for two seconds before she placed the plate in front of Keegan. Then, she asked Marshall, "What would you like to eat, Marshall? I'll ask Sandra to make something for you."

"It's fine. I can eat whatever is left. I've spent my New Year's like this in the past."

Stella suddenly felt guilty for spoiling Keegan.

Wenham had a few drinks and was feeling good. "The past is in the past. This year, we are celebrating New Year's at my house. How can we let you go hungry? Just tell us what you want. If Sandra can't make it, we can go out to eat."

Marshall chuckled. "I don't have a specific dish in mind, but I saw Stella post a picture of strawberry pudding on her Twitter the other day. It looked delicious.

Any hints on where she got it?"

Trevor added wood to the fireplace and said, "Stella made it herself."

"Yeah," Jaylene chimed in. "We still have some strawberries at home. Stella, you should fulfill Marshall's New Year's wish. If Keegan hesitated, and the pierogi on his plate did not seem appetizing anymore.