

## Shadows 361

Chapter 361 Making It Official Tilda guessed right away what Una wanted to say . Earlier , Jude had messaged her , and Una happened to see it . But Tilda didn't feel like she needed to hide anything from Una . " We're not exactly together ... not officially . We're still in that early spark stage . I guess there's a chance we'll end up together . " " Tilda , I don't get it . Can you break it down a little more for me ? " " It's more than friendship , but not quite a full - on romance . We're almost there , but not quite . " Tilda herself felt lost at the moment .

After all that's happened , it would be a lie to say she hadn't fallen for Jude . She wasn't the type to lead someone on . She wouldn't have kissed Jude on Christmas if her feelings weren't real . But making it official was a big step , and there was a lot to consider . Jude was always certain about being together with her . He never wavered . Tilda felt like she really needed to make up her mind soon . She couldn't just keep stringing Jude along and become the kind of person she always looked down on . " I see .... " Tilda , maybe I'm worrying too much , but the Bells are so complicated .

They're not like regular families . " I just hope you really think it through before making any decisions . Once you marry Mr. Bell , there's no going back . " Knowing what Jude was like , he'd never let Tilda go easily . Una was worried that being together would end up hurting them both . Nobody wanted to see that . " Don't worry , Una . I'll handle it . " And honestly ... since when do I need dating advice from a pure , innocent college girl like you ? You've never even been in love before ! " You should go find yourself a boyfriend and gain some experience before giving me any tips !

" " Tilda ! You're so mean ! You're bullying me again ! " Just then , someone else walked into the shop . The man in the lead wore sunglasses and a suit that looked expensive . On his wrist was a Rolex Daytona , worth half a million dollars . The manager spotted him and hurried over . " Boss . " " I'm here with my cousin for dinner . Get us a table . " Nathan Bell took off his sunglasses and put them away .

He then called out to the man behind him , who was still looking at his phone , " Jarrett , hurry up and get in here . " " Oh ... " Jarrett texting and put his phone away . He was actually sending a message to his parents . Nathan was the son of his eldest uncle , Marcus Bell . As luck would have it , Jarrett's house had lost power earlier . Even the backup generator was out of fuel . Jarrett was the type who couldn't survive without the internet . No one else was free today , not even Zach . So he ended up coming out alone , planning to hang out in a café until the power came back .

He never expected to run into Nathan . Nathan insisted on bringing Jarrett to his new Cajun boil shop for dinner , and Jarrett had no way to refuse . When it came to Marcus's side of the family , Jarrett always kept his distance . Marcus was a cunning man , and as his son , Nathan was just as sly . They were the last people Jarrett wanted to mess with . Suddenly , he spotted a familiar face . " Que ... Tilda , what are you doing here ? " He ran over , all smiles . Tilda and Una were happily eating cajun boil . Seeing Jarrett , Tilda was a bit surprised , too .

" What are you doing here , Jarrett ? " Jarrett explained , " This is my cousin's fondue shop . I hadn't eaten yet , so he brought me over . " Nathan soon walked over as well . " Jarrett , is this your friend ? Hmm ... Miss , have we met before ? " Nathan's gaze landed right on Tilda . He looked at her like a predator sizing up its prey . That made Tilda's eyes go cold with annoyance . At the same time , she was running through everything she knew about Nathan in her head .

If I remember correctly , this guy is the eldest son of Jude's uncle , Marcus . " Oh , I remember now . You're the world champion who made headlines all over the internet - Tilda Jenson . You've made Cetherlanders proud . " I really enjoyed the art you created on the Motrar Girl Forum back when you went by Alias X . I'm actually a fan of yours . " It's an honor to meet you here , Ms. Tilda . " Nathan extended his hand to Tilda .. Tilda didn't even glance at him . She just replied lightly , " Thanks . " She made no move to shake his hand .

Nathan got the cold shoulder , but he didn't seem bothered . He smiled and said , " Ms. Tilda , you really do have a strong personality . " I like that . He didn't say those three words out loud , but his eyes made it perfectly clear . Una picked up on it and leaned in to whisper to Tilda . " This Nathan ... he must be one of the Bells , right ? It looks like he's interested in you . I think you'd better steer clear of him . " Right now , Tilda and Jude were on the verge of becoming a couple .

If Nathan started hovering around and stirred up trouble between her and Jude , things could get messy . " There are plenty of people interested in me . I don't really care , anyway ."

Chapter 362 Making It Official Tilda answered casually . Besides ... Nathan's " interest " in her was mostly about using her for his own gain . He simply thought Tilda's background could benefit him . Heh ... He's trying to use me ... That's interesting . " Nathan , that's a bit much , don't you think ? And Tilda , you're not usually like this ." Jarrett never thought Nathan would say something like that to Tilda the first time they met . It was totally unexpected . Nathan was nothing like his wild , carefree younger brother .

If anything , Nathan was cut from the same mold as his father , Marcus . After all , Marcus had raised him personally and had always placed high hopes on him . Even though Jarrett and Nathan were close cousins , he had never once heard of Nathan showing interest in any woman . Yet for someone as cool -

headed as him , Nathan actually said something like that to Tilda - on their very first meeting , no less .... " I'm actually X's biggest fan , you know .

I'm even an admin on the Motrar Girl Forum , in charge of the featured posts for X's work ." Almost as if he was worried that Tilda would not believe him , Nathan pulled out his phone and logged into the forum right there . No way , he was actually telling the truth ... Jarrett stared at Nathan in shock . He could barely believe Nathan was secretly into anime . " Don't look at me like that . I just appreciate beautiful things . I'm not really into anime , but as someone with . an eye for art , I can tell X's work - Ms . Tilda's work - is incredible . " Ms.

Tilda , you're a pretty big deal in Cetherland these days . You're a world champion , and with your identity as X , you have fans all over the world . " I never thought I'd actually get to meet my idol here , let alone have the chance to talk to her . I honestly feel honored . " Nathan said all this with utmost politeness , looking every bit the gentleman . While they were talking , the surrounding crowd started glancing over in their direction . A lot of girls shot Nathan looks of admiration .

I just overheard that the manager of this shop called this guy " Mr. Nathan . " This Cajun boil chain actually belongs to the Bells . So that makes refined , gentlemanly guy Nathan Bell , the most eligible bachelor in town ! Hailing from the Bells , one of the wealthiest families in Cetherland , Nathan was nearly 30 and had never been caught up in any tabloid scandals . Besides , he held a major position at DY Group and ran his own businesses as well .

Nathan and Preston couldn't quite measure up to Jude's striking looks or the fact that he'd become head of the Bells at such a young age , but they were still leading figures of their generation - second only to Jude . If a girl could marry into the Bells , she'd be set for life - that would be a lifetime of wealth and status waiting for her . That was why Tilda was getting all kinds of envious and jealous stares . And it wasn't like people didn't know about her world championship title . So what if she was a world champion ? Why does she get to have so many great guys chasing after her ?

And how can she just act like they mean nothing to her ? What a bitch ! Just then , Tilda spoke up . " I get how you feel as a fan meeting your idol . " But just to be clear , I'm not interested in any guy under six foot one , and he can't be over 25 either , sorry ." What Tilda said caught everyone completely off guard . Even Nathan - who always seemed calm , polite , and almost like he was wearing a mask - couldn't keep his expression together for a moment . His expression actually shifted for once . Jarrett nearly lost it . He had to cover his mouth to keep himself from laughing out loud .

Honestly , Nathan's only flaw was his height . He stood at five - foot - nine , a good two inches shorter than the Bells men , whose average height was five- foot - eleven . And he was pushing 30 and still hadn't gotten married , which sparked all kinds of speculation . Even their grandpa had nagged him more than a few times about it . In all the years Nathan had lived , no one had ever dared say something like that to him .

In fact , most women who got Nathan's attention would have been on cloud nine , feeling pretty smug about themselves . There was no way any of them would ever reject Nathan the way Tilda just did . That's Tilda for you - the Queen of the dark web ! She honestly acted like the Bells were nothing to her . Jarrett couldn't help but wonder ... What would happen if Tilda and Jude ever went head - to - head ? That would be a showdown worth seeing . It'd be nothing short of amazing ! " Well ... I hope I'll get a chance to change Ms.

Tilda's low opinion of me someday ." Nathan really lived up to his reputation - even when he was upset enough to want to curse someone , he still kept that perfect gentlemanly composure . He pulled himself together almost instantly . " You'd be better off forgetting about me . Why not use your charm on someone else who actually deserves it ? " After she , Tilda scooped up a piece of beef , dipped it in sauce , and popped it in her mouth . Her eyes lit up . " Una , this sauce I mixed is so good ! You have to try it ! " " Tilda ...

" Una just looked at her resignedly , completely at a loss . But ... This carefree and free - spirited Tilda is exactly the girl I know ! That's my best friend ! Looks like spending all those days in Motrar didn't change her at all . I'm so glad !

Chapter 363 You're In For a Treat At first , Una had been worried that Tilda might get tangled up with Nathan . If Jude ever found out about it , things would have turned into a total mess . She never expected Tilda to shut Nathan down so quickly and cleanly . " Jarrett , if you're hungry , sit down and eat . With my sponsor here , you're in for a treat . " " Ahem ... Nathan , what do you think ? " Jarrett hadn't seen the Queen in ages and really wanted to sit next to her . He wanted to take a ton of pictures and show off in the group chat .

But since Nathan had been the one to bring him here , he couldn't just ditch Nathan and go hang out with Tilda . Especially after what Tilda had just put Nathan through " Let's all eat together , then ." Nathan replied generously , acting as if he didn't mind what had just happened . " Oh , so you're staying for dinner too ? " Tilda looked at Nathan with a fake look of surprise . Nathan was speechless . He just raised an eyebrow at her . " Ms. Tilda , are you saying I'm not welcome here ? " " Of course you are . After all , you own the place .

So I guess everything we eat tonight is on you , right ? " " Of course . " Nathan didn't look pleased at all . When Tilda looked at him , it was like she'd just found herself a sucker . Given her X persona and the fact that she was the International College Art Competition champion , money like this didn't even matter to her anymore . But she still had to take advantage of him . It was true that Nathan was a fan of X. But he was far from obsessed with her . He just genuinely thought Tilda was attractive and suited his tastes .

With her current status , she'd be more than qualified to be his girlfriend . Even after she'd cut ties with the Jensons , she still had her fair share of connections . There were even rumors that she'd gotten involved with top lawyer Andy . Worse still , word had it that she'd put the Jenson Group's chairman , Russell , through hell - with Andy's help . There were even rumors that Alfie , Maurice , and Jude were connected with Tilda . There was no way Nathan wouldn't be interested in a woman like that .

Dinner started with all four of them sitting in awkward tension . Tilda , on the other hand , ate like nothing was wrong . She acted like she had no idea that the strange vibe in the room centered entirely around her . She started ordering the most expensive wine and food in the restaurant , not holding back at all . After all , Nathan was the one paying . She figured she should make the most of it . She wanted to get rid of him , but he just wouldn't take the hint . So she kept him around to pick up the check .

Nathan tried several times to strike up a conversation , but Tilda ignored him completely . She just treated him like air . Instead , she focused on chatting with Una and Jarrett right in front of him , as if Nathan didn't even exist . Even someone as well - mannered as Nathan eventually started to get annoyed . He poured himself a drink , downed half the glass in one go , then spoke in a cold voice . " Ms. Tilda , you really don't seem to like me very much ." " Nope , that's just your imagination . You're my fan , remember ? " Tilda finally decided to acknowledge Nathan .

She blinked innocently , as if saying- I don't mean to be rude . It's just that, in my eyes , you barely matter at all . You're nothing compared to Una and Jarrett . " I'm just a fan of Ms. Tilda , so I guess that means I don't deserve any polite treatment from you ? " " Hmph . " Nathan downed the rest of his drink in one gulp .. Then , he stood up and grabbed his suit jacket from the back of the chair . " Sorry , something just came up at the office .

I can't stay any longer ." As he spoke , he motioned to the restaurant manager . " Clear the bill for this table - it's on me . " " Mr. Nathan ! " With that , Nathan hurried out . The manager rushed after him . " Wow ... I can't believe someone could actually make Nathan this upset - only you could pull that off , Tilda . " " Besides that time when Nathan and Preston fought over toys as little kids , I don't remember

him ever losing control like this . He always kept his emotions in check . " Jarrett gnawed on his fork , staring at Tilda with pure admiration .

There's no question Nathan learned that fake , polite mask from his dad , Marcus . " To think he got upset so easily ... I guess I overestimated him . " He really doesn't measure up to his father , Marcus . He's not even half as smart as he is , " Tilda said , a note of contempt in her voice . Jarrett nearly blurted out exactly what he was thinking . Of course , you're the Queen of the dark web ! Nobody can compare to you ! No matter how impressive Nathan thinks he is , if Nathan's talented , he's no match for a legend like you ! You're the top hacker on the dark web .

Just that alone is way out of Nathan's league . 3 Meanwhile , Nathan got into his Maybach , His driver noticed he looked upset , but he didn't dare ask him about it . " Mr. Nathan , where should we go ? " Nathan spat out a single word from his clenched teeth . " Home . " " Yes , Mr. Nathan ! " Nathan sat in the back seat , gradually calming down . He replayed the image of Tilda's indifferent , flawless face in his mind . Soon , a faint smile curled at the corners of his lips . Tilda , huh ? She really is something . I was only mildly curious about her at first .

But seeing her treat me with such disdain and act like I didn't even matter ... now I'm even more intrigued .

Chapter 364 I Ran Into Kyla " One day , you're going to regret this ... " At that moment , Nathan looked every bit the predator , his desire to hunt fully awakened . He found himself more fascinated with Tilda than ever . He had never cared about things that came too easily . It was always the hard - to - get ones that felt like a real challenge . That was the only way to feel satisfied , the only way to really feel alive . That was how life was for the rich - with nothing left to wish for , they looked for fun in every way imaginable .

All they wanted was to find new thrills , no matter how much effort it took . Just then , Nathan's phone rang . It was Marcus calling . " Dad ? What's up ? " " We have news . Ryan went to Hetsa and caught Rebecca . Right now , he's secretly bringing her back to Slossa . " I figure , now that Rebecca's fallen into Ryan's hands , she's in big trouble . Even though she's his only daughter , after everything she's pulled , she's in for a world of hurt . " Your grandpa said we'll deal with Rebecca's mess after the New Year .

Given Ryan's personality , he'll do whatever it takes to protect his own interests and that precious son of his . " In the end , Ryan is sure to hand Rebecca over and let your grandpa decide her fate . " Nathan raised his brows . " Oh ? So what's your plan , Dad ? Are you thinking about protecting Uncle Ryan's family ? " " Even though Ryan and I aren't close , now that Jude's got a stranglehold on the Bells , this is the worst possible time for Ryan and his family to get into trouble . " If he goes down , I lose my shield . Nathan , things might change soon , so you'd better get ready .

" Marcus stood in his study , looking out at the bright moon , his eyes narrowed with the usual calculating glint . He knew better than anyone how dangerous Jude could be . So , whatever happened , Ryan's family couldn't go down now . At least , not yet . " I got it , Dad . Oh , by the way , I ran into Jarrett today - and Tilda too , you know , that world champion . That woman's actually pretty interesting . If we could get her on our side , it might not be a bad idea . " Marcus chuckled .

" Well , you're almost 30 , and you've finally figured it out . Settle down , find a good woman , and give me a grandson - sounds perfect . " Tilda , huh ... she's a bit young . Let her win a few more world championships before she's really worthy of joining the Bells as my daughter - in - law . " I heard she's close to Andy . You should try starting as friends with her , and if you can , get on Andy's good side , too . " Just don't be like your useless brother lose yourself chasing after women ! " Tilda had no idea about the storm brewing behind the scenes with the Bells .

She had just gotten back to her apartment and checked her phone . A notification from the Comet Squad group chat caught her eye . Someone had tagged her in the chat . Astrid wrote , " Queen , Rebecca's been caught . " " Oh , I see ." That was all Tilda replied . If Howard hadn't helped Rebecca hide , there's no way she would have lasted this long . Tilda had figured out where Rebecca was hiding long ago . She'd told the Comet Squad to keep watch . They were to report to her the moment anything happened . She just hadn't expected it would take so long to catch Rebecca .

Ryan's family was beyond hopeless . They were just a bunch of paper tigers . Clearly , among the Bells , Marcus's side was Jude's biggest threat . Tilda figured Jude must have heard about all this by now . Maybe he hadn't reached out because he didn't want Tilda dragged into this mess . She replied , " Forget about her . How's your homework ? Send it to me so I can check . " Zach jumped in first . " Already done , Queen ." Theo quickly added , " Same here . "

" All , Queen ." Just then , Jarrett chimed in , " Ahem .

Guess what ? I saw Queen today - and we even had Cajun boil together ! Are you jealous ? " He followed up with a flood of selfies . Tilda couldn't help but give a small smile . No wonder that kid kept sneaking photos at dinner . He is such a baby . Zach said , " Ugh ! You brat , why didn't you invite me ? I wanted Cajun boil with Queen , too ! " Great , now there are two babies in the group . Tilda rubbed her forehead . Maybe this Comet Squad could go far .... Maybe . " Oh , right , Queen , I found something pretty interesting . " " You remember Kyla , don't you ?

" As she read Astrid's message , Tilda frowned slightly . " What did she do this time ? " " Nothing bad ... I just ran into her at a hospital when I was there for a meeting . She was all disguised , sneaking in for a checkup . " After learning about Tilda's experience with the Jensons , Astrid had used her hacker skills to dig up dirt on Ryan's family . Anyone who'd spent time on the dark web had a talent for flying under the radar and picking up on details that others missed .

Chapter 365 Santiago's Acting Strange Of course , it was just a coincidence that Astrid happened to run into Kyla . Kyla didn't recognize Astrid at all . " I noticed she checked into an endocrinology specialist clinic , so I did some digging ... " " She's got all kinds of problems - hair loss , yellow skin , constipation , peeing too much ... Maurice quickly cut her off . " Astrid , I haven't even had dinner yet . Don't ruin my appetite ! " Jarrett just shrugged . " So what ? Those are pretty normal health issues .

But I thought Kyla was a freshman at Orica University , just like Queen . How can someone that young have so many health problems ? " Because of Tilda , everyone in the Comet Squad had done some digging into her biological family . Tilda replied , " She probably brought this on herself . When you do bad things , karma comes for you . Just ignore her - she'll destroy herself soon enough . " Even Tilda didn't think Kyla - the queen of acting sweet - would end up with so many health problems . Back during the World Championship , Kyla had paid the media to spread rumors about Tilda .

However , what she did backfired . In fact , it only made Tilda even more famous and helped her win the championship . That loss must have been a huge blow to Kyla .. That's right , Kyla . Keep it up . Only by going down this path will you finally betray the Jensons and team up with Tobias to save yourself . I barely have to lift a finger . Kyla will back herself into a corner . Once she does , my puzzle will be complete . Meanwhile , at the Jenson Villa- " Guys , welcome home ! " Kyla found out Kayden and Wade would be back tonight , so she went all out with her makeup .

She caked on foundation to hide her dark circles and tired face . Kyla knew perfectly well that Kayden and Wade had taken the trip to find Tilda in Motrar . But it seemed like nothing had come out of it . Most likely , they went all that way just to be shut out by Tilda . After the recent chaos , this was the only thing that made Kyla genuinely happy . Howard stood behind Kyla and greeted them with a gentle voice , " Kayden , Wade , welcome back . " As for Russell , he had to attend a social event that evening and would be back later .

He'd already let Kayden and Wade know in advance . " Sorry we've been gone so long ... where's Justin ? " On the plane , Kayden had thought it through and decided to tell Justin everything . After all , Tilda was the only girl Kayden had ever had feelings for . If Tilda really was Justin's first love ... Then Justin had every reason not to give up on her . If it were Justin , and he made up his mind , maybe he could do what

Kayden never could . " Justin left early today and hasn't come back yet . I heard he got some kind of important call .

" He sounded pretty excited and left without saying much . " Kyla pouted . " Yeah ... I saw Justin , too . I asked him what was going on , but he wouldn't tell me . He just said it was important and he had to check it out himself . " Something that could make Justin that happy , to the point where he brushed me off ... It must be about Tilda , right ? The thought made Kyla grind her teeth in frustration . She wanted nothing more than to tear Tilda's pretty face to shreds . Why should that awful woman get all the attention that should have been mine ? Kayden's heart skipped a beat .

Could it be ... Did Justin find out something about that video ? Is it the same thing I'm feeling - it's all connected to Tilda ? " If it's Justin , I wouldn't worry , " Wade replied . He was exhausted - both physically and mentally . Right now , he just wanted to drop off his luggage and sleep . Because ... Their trip to Motrar hadn't brought the results he'd hoped for . Instead , it had convinced him that Tilda would never look back . She would never forgive the Jensons .

" Now that Kayden and Wade are back , I need to text Santiago and fill him in ! " " Oh , by the way , Kayden , Wade , do you know what's up with Santiago lately ? I texted him a few days ago , and he took forever to reply . He was acting so distant . " " Do you think he got a girlfriend in Motrar and forgot all about his little sister ? " Kyla puffed up her cheeks , trying to look cute . " He probably hasn't been in the best mood . Maybe something's bothering him , " Wade said . It was strange .

Ever since Santiago came back three days ago , he'd barely left his room . He'd hardly come out at all . He hadn't even gone to the airport to see Kayden and Wade off when they flew back to Cetherland today . Santiago's strange behavior was definitely worrying , but Kayden and Wade had enough on their plates . They figured all the Jenson kids had the family's strong genes . Whatever happened , they'd get through it . Santiago wasn't the type to keep everything bottled up , either . If he ever ran into something he couldn't handle , he'd definitely reach out for help .

Chapter 366 Why Are You Home So Late ? Wade glanced at Kyla , sensing that something was off . " Hey , Kyla , you ... He hesitated , as if he wanted to say something more He just had this gut feeling that Kyla seemed different somehow . " What's wrong , Wade ? " A flash of panic crossed Kyla's eyes , but she quickly pulled herself together . With a sweet , innocent smile , she turned to Wade as if nothing were wrong . " It's nothing . I'm probably just tired . I need to take a shower and get some rest . " " You should .

Kayden , Wade , you two must be wiped out after such a long flight . Go get some sleep . " Howard and I will wait here for Justin and Dad to come back . I'll let you know as soon as they get home . " " Thanks , Kyla . " PTA Russell was on his way home in the car . He had just a social event and looked a bit worn out

. He hadn't gone to one of those gatherings in ages . Rubbing his brow , he let out a tired sigh . Still , he had gotten something out of it - he'd landed a new partnership .

Now he just wanted to get home and see his kids , hoping it would make up for the stress of the day . Just then , his phone rang . When Russell saw who was calling , he froze . Wait a second ... Isn't this the guy I sent to look into that trending news back then ? He'd nearly forgotten all about it . Back when Tilda left home , Russell had his doubts about Kyla because of what Tilda told him . But eventually , those doubts faded , because Kyla had shown such sincere emotion toward the Jensons .

Now , because of this call , those doubts flared up again . Even if it was just a little . Russell swallowed hard , feeling his heart start to race . Thud . Thud . It pounded so loudly , he could almost hear it echoing in the car . It felt as if the phone in his hand had turned into Pandora's box . If I open it . I might unleash a disaster that will destroy everything . For a moment , Russell couldn't bring himself to answer . The driver glanced at him in the rearview mirror and finally spoke up . " Mr. Jenson , aren't you going to answer that call ?

" The car was a bit dim , so the driver couldn't see Russell's face clearly . He figured , since Russell hadn't declined the call , maybe he wanted to take it , so he gently reminded him . Jolted back to reality , Russell pressed his lips together and finally answered the phone . " Hello ? " " Mr. Jenson , I've tracked down that chief editor . Also ... based on what I've found so far , you should brace yourself for the worst . " It looks like the trending news event was actually orchestrated by Ms. Kyla herself . " Russell didn't respond .

His gut feeling had been right all along . I really should have left this Pandora's box shut . What's coming out now is the kind of truth I never wanted to face . " Mr. Jenson ? " When Russell stayed silent , the person on the other end called out again . Even if it was hard to face , Russell had been the one who insisted on finding the truth . " I understand ... just focus on finding the chief editor first . " " Yes , sir . " The call ended . The car soon pulled up at the Jenson Villa . " Mr. Jenson , we've arrived .

" The driver spoke carefully . After spending so many years working for Russell , even without knowing the details , he could feel the heaviness in the air . Something bad must have happened - something Russell would have trouble accepting . " I'm tired . Let me sit here for a bit . Please don't say anything . " " Of course . " Russell closed his eyes , leaned back against the seat , and tipped his chin up just slightly . How am I supposed to tell the rest of the family the truth ? How can I tell them that we really wronged Tilda ?

We slandered her and drove her away from the Jensons ... Oh , what have I done ? And that the person behind all of it was the daughter we never once suspected - Kyla . How do I even begin to tell them ? The only comfort I have left is that the chief editor hasn't been caught yet . Hestlin Right now , the evidence only points to Kyla as a strong suspect . But deep down , I know I'm only lying to myself . No one else can know about this for now . The Jensons finally found some peace after Tilda left . I can't let that hard - won peace fall apart .

When Russell got home , Howard and Kyla were still waiting in the living room . " Dad , why are you home so late ? Was the party tiring ? " Kyla looked at Russell with concern . Russell wanted to answer , but the evidence from his investigation flashed through his mind . He managed a weak smile . " Maybe so ... it's been a long time since I've been to that kind of party ." Howard added , " Dad , if you're ever too tired , just let me know . I can go in your place . " " I'm not that old yet . Actually , I closed a few good deals for the Jenson Group tonight .

" Kyla's eyes sparkled , and she clapped her hands . " Dad , you're amazing ! "

Chapter 367 I Found Her . " Alright , I'm feeling a bit tired . Kayden and Wade are back , right ? I'll go check on them , then take a shower . " " Okay , Dad . " Howard watched as Russell headed upstairs . Only Kyla sensed that something was off with Russell . She just couldn't shake the feeling that he was keeping his distance from her . It must just be my imagination ... We had such a great time together on Christmas . Everything felt perfectly normal .

The next day , at Orica University- On Tilda's first day back on campus , she immediately became the center of attention - the university's hero . During the assembly in the auditorium , every university leader praised Tilda , calling her the pride of Cetherland and the university , a true world champion . Tilda stood confidently on stage , a calm smile on her lips . When it was her turn to speak , she delivered a poised and flawless speech . Her thoughts were well organized , and her words were clear and confident .

The entire audience cheered , clapped , and called out her name again and again . Kyla knew the university was holding a ceremony to welcome Tilda back on her first day , so she called in sick . All of Kyla's " best friends " did the same . After all , they had once helped Kyla try to frame Tilda . But the plan completely backfired on them . Now , the thought of having to watch Tilda bask in the spotlight was torture . They'd rather die than have to witness it . Wade and Clive stood among the crowd , watching Tilda command the stage like a queen .

It brought up all sorts of feelings , " Who could've guessed , back when we first met Tilda , that she'd become this accomplished ? " We really misjudged her , " Clive said with a sigh . Wade managed a wry smile . " That's her talent , not ours . " " Exactly . Tilda's incredible . You need to let go , too . A woman like her was born to shine - she'd never be content living in the Jensons ' shadow . " We were the ones who overrated the Jensons and underestimated Tilda ." Clive finally saw things clearly . Actually , Clive was a fan of X , too .

And he wasn't alone - anyone who had ever heard of X or seen her work would be a fan . Maybe they weren't obsessed fans or anything like that . But no one could forget X , that blazing genius who came and went like a comet . " It's just a shame ... we realized it all too late . " Wade looked down , hiding the sadness flickering in his eyes . The very day Tilda cut ties with the Jensons , she'd made it clear . It wasn't that the Jensons rejected her . She was the one who gave up on them . Once Tilda made up her mind , she never looked back .

At the time , Wade thought she was just being stubborn . He didn't believe anyone would walk away from the kind of wealth and status that came with being a Jenson heiress . But reality proved him wrong . All those harsh judgments he'd held against Tilda over the years now felt like invisible slaps . Each memory stung , sharp as a slap in the face , echoing painfully inside . While Tilda gave her speech on stage , Kayden stood silently at the fire exit . He watched quietly while holding his phone , his eyes flickering with uncertainties . That night on the Ferris wheel ...

could what I felt have been real ? Justin still hadn't come back . Kayden wondered ... had he really found his first love , the one who once saved him ? Lost in thought , Kayden's phone suddenly rang . It was Justin calling . Kayden's heart skipped a beat . He answered right away . " Justin , where have you been ? I haven't been able to get hold of you all night ! " " Kayden , listen ! I found her ! I found the girl who played that song back then ! " I've been gone all night just to confirm it ! It's true , Kayden , I swear !

" Justin's voice shook with excitement . Kayden was stunned . " Justin ... are you sure ? You really found her ? " How did it happen so suddenly ? We've been searching together for so long " I know , I was surprised too . That's why I went to see for myself . " She remembered everything about that piano piece , and she played it perfectly . " It's the exact song I heard all those years ago ! " Justin wasn't joking . Kayden knew that no matter how swept up Justin was , he'd never mess up something as important as verifying the girl's identity . " Justin , calm down . Where are you ?

I'll come find you ! " " I'm at home now ... I know you want to meet her . She's an incredible pianist - she just won the Chopin competition and is heading for the international stage ! " " Got it . I'll head back right now . " After hanging up , Kayden glanced back at Tilda on stage one last time . Then he turned and

left . Just as Tilda her speech , she caught sight of Kayden slipping away . She'd noticed him standing by the fire exit , quietly watching her the whole time .

Chapter 368 Liam Is Safe Tilda didn't care what the Jensons were thinking anymore . None of it mattered to her now . After heading backstage , Tilda's phone buzzed . A special dark web notification sound chimed . She arched a brow and took out her phone . She opened the message , a faint smile appearing on her lips . " Sorry it took a while , but I've broken through their signal blocker . " " Queen , you can hack in anytime , anywhere . " " Thanks . I owe you one . If you ever need anything , just ask I'll return the favor !

" Tilda sent Una a quick message , saying something urgent had come up and she had to leave . She picked up her Porsche Cayenne keys and left hurriedly . Meanwhile , Kayden had rushed back to the Jenson Villa . Justin was sitting on the living room couch , his whole face lit up with excitement . " Kayden , you're back . " " Justin , tell me what's going on ? Who exactly is your first love ? " " Of course , I've been waiting here for you so I could explain everything .

" After Justin telling the whole story , it all boiled down to one thing : the intelligence network he'd hired had finally found a lead . As luck would have it , Justin's first love - Genevieve Lichtenstein - was actually in Slosa ! After all that searching , Justin never expected she was a Cetherlander too . When he saw that video years ago , he'd assumed the girl playing piano was a Cetherlander living overseas , so he'd focused his search abroad . He couldn't believe he'd missed such a crucial possibility . Finding Genevieve was honestly a stroke of luck .

Kayden pressed his lips together . " After hearing Ms. Lichtenstein play that piano piece , you're sure she's the one ? " " Her age doesn't quite line up - Genevieve is already 25 , just like me .

But the girl in that video never showed her face , so we couldn't be sure how old she was back then . Still , when I heard Genevieve play the piece , it was exactly how I remembered it ! " It's been so many years , people change . Kayden , I swear , I'm thinking clearly . I'm not letting excitement cloud my judgment .

I know what I'm doing , Kayden ! " Kayden didn't respond . He closed his eyes , trying to clear his mind . Could I really have been wrong all this time ? I can't be certain now , and this is too important to rush . Besides ... If Justin's first love - the one who saved him - wasn't Tilda , maybe that was for the best . Otherwise , Kayden honestly didn't know how Justin could face the reality that Tilda would never forgive or come back to the Jensons . " Justin , I want to meet Ms. Lichtenstein in person . " Kayden looked at Justin with a firm gaze .

" Kayden , I know you have perfect pitch and heard that piece in the video , but after all these years ... nobody can stay exactly the same . " " Justin , this is important - you don't want to be left with doubts . You've spent years thinking about that girl who saved you , searching for her all this time . If Ms. Lichtenstein really is the one , and you two end up together , she might become your wife . But if you're wrong , that would be unfair to you , to the Jensons , and to Ms. Lichtenstein . " Justin was taken aback by Kayden's words . In the end , he agreed to Kayden's request .

Kayden asked Justin not to mention that he had perfect pitch when they met Genevieve . Justin knew what Kayden was thinking - he wanted to test her . Justin might be better at piano . But as an award - winning composer , Kayden had an edge over him : perfect pitch . If Genevieve made a mistake in her playing , Kayden's ears would catch it . Tilda was back in her apartment . Her fingers danced across the keyboard like butterflies in flight .

It didn't take long for her to successfully hack into the underground facility's cameras , thanks to the breached signal blocker . She slipped through each camera feed , searching for any sign of Liam . Finally , she spotted him in a blue - lit sterilization room . He looked exactly like Mystro's description . Liam was reading and jotting down notes . His expression was calm as he wrote with his long , slender fingers . His neat handwriting filled the page - dense , tiny characters . Tilda couldn't make sense of any of it . It must be Liam's own code for note - taking .

At that moment , Liam seemed to sense something . He looked straight up at the camera . Just for a second . Then he shook his head and went back to his notes . Maybe I'm just imagining things ... Tilda's lips curved into a faint smile . Too bad ... there's no way to send him a message . I really can't wait to meet Liam in person someday . For now , it seems like he's safe in that underground facility . Knowing I can watch over him from afar gives me peace of mind .

Chapter 369 I Found My Real Family. It was New Year's Eve . Orica University had already started its winter break . Tilda had spent the 30th hanging out with Una all day and told her she'd be making a trip to Hetsa . Since Tilda was going alone , Una initially wanted to invite her over to her place to celebrate New Year's together . But seeing that Tilda already had plans , Una was just happy for her . " Tilda , did you find a family that matters more to you than the Jensons ? " She vaguely remembered Tilda mentioning something about finding her seniors .

But Tilda never shared much , and Una never pried . That was just the kind of unspoken trust they had as best friends . Tilda's eyes softened . " Yeah ... I found my true family , ones that matter a thousand times more than the Jensons ever did ." Tilda had cut ties with the Jensons . But that didn't mean she was alone . She knew her mentor , Harvey , was still alive somewhere in the world . And little by little , Tilda managed to reconnect with the seniors she cared about most . From now on , when holidays like Christmas or New Year's Eve rolled around ...

She no longer had to worry about how to spend them . She just wanted to spend them with her real family . Soon , she arrived in Hetsa . Tilda had just stepped off the plane when she spotted Manfred waving at her . She waved back with a smile on her lips . " Mr. Parker , what brings you here to pick me up ? " And what's with the casual look - short sleeves , sweatpants , army boots ? Aren't you cold ? " " Why shouldn't I be here ? It's New Year's Eve tomorrow , and the whole base is off for the holiday .

" Guess it's just this old guy still on the clock ." After spending so much time with Tilda , Manfred had gotten used to the way young people did things . He was a lot less rigid than when they first met . By now , he really saw Tilda as part of his own family . " Where's River ? " Tilda was genuinely surprised by his absence . Someone that dedicated wouldn't just vanish for the holiday . " His sister's in the hospital . I told him to take some time off and go see her .

He wanted to stay and protect Professor Kerrigan to finish the lithography machine - said it was his duty to the country . " I finally convinced him to go today . People need to remember , you can't just give your family money and think it's enough . If you lose the chance to spend time with family , you'll regret it for life . " Alright , enough of that . Let's get going ." Manfred threw on his sunglasses . With his slicked - back hair , skull - print T - shirt , and thick gold chain , he looked more like a trendy forty- something than a retired general in his sixties .

Nobody seeing him would ever believe how many medals he'd earned . Soon , they arrived at Lab Seven . " Dane ! " Tilda rushed over and gave Dane a big hug . 11 Dane was in his lab coat and glasses , gazing down at Tilda with warmth in his eyes . He hugged her back and patted her head . " Alright , Professor Kerrigan , she's all yours . I'm off for my own break . " Manfred knew better than to stick around as the third wheel . Plus , he was ready to get home and enjoy time with his own family . After all , New Year's Eve was about reunion and new beginnings . " Thanks , Mr.

Parker ." Manfred waved as he left . Tilda looked around . " This place used to be so lively . Now it feels empty . " " A few researchers stayed , but they went to the city for the holiday . " Looking at Tilda , Dane's usually cold eyes softened . Ever since Dane got separated from Harvey , Dane had spent every New Year's Eve alone . Holidays never meant anything to him . All he cared about was his research . Not that he loved research for its own sake . It was just the only thing that gave his life meaning .

He'd lived like a machine , all emotion stripped away , with only his work skills left . But now , after reconnecting with Tilda , he felt something stirring in him again . Those old emotions , dormant for so long , were flowing through his veins once more . " Yeah , the city must be really lively now , with New Year's Eve coming up . " Dane , how's the lithography machine coming ? " # " It's almost done ... I think

we're about to break through . It could finally solve Cetherland's chip shortage . " Tilda , you've helped a lot .

Thank you ." Dane said indulgently while reaching out to ruffle her hair . " Come on , Dane , you're the one doing all the real work here . You're amazing for getting that machine this far . " " Oh , right - Dane , I managed to hack into the cameras and spotted Liam . Here , look . " . Tilda pulled out her phone and showed Dane the footage she'd recorded when she broke into the surveillance system . Even though it wasn't the real thing , seeing Liam alive on screen meant everything . Out of curiosity , Dane studied the man in the video closely .

Just one look was enough for him to know - the man in the video really was Harvey's student .

Chapter 370 New Year's Eve in Hetsa All of Harvey's students ended up picking up certain habits from him without even realizing it . Those little quirks became their own kind of trademark - a kind of invisible badge showing who they'd been taught by . Still ... Liam doesn't seem as adorable as Tilda . Tilda is simply more likable . And ... Now that there is a Liam in the mix , Tilda's attention will get spread out a little more ... Dane couldn't help but let his thoughts drift further and further .

For a moment , something flashed in his usually calm eyes - a hint of danger underneath . Liam had no idea that , even before they met , Dane was already weirdly competitive toward him . " According to Mystro , Liam is an incredible doctor . He's great at treating rare and complex conditions nobody else could handle . " As soon as he's out , we'll have him treat you right away ! " I did message Mystro to tell him the good news , but he hasn't replied yet . So annoying ! Maybe he's just busy ? " Oblivious to Dane's mood , Tilda kept chatting away excitedly .

She'd found another one of her seniors - one more person to rely on . The more seniors she found , the more love and support she got to enjoy . It's like piecing together a puzzle . Every time I find another piece , my happiness multiplies . Once they'd talking , Tilda decided to take Dane out for New Year's Eve . " There's a big New Year's Eve concert at the Hetsa Tower tonight , Dane , are you interested ? " But there'll be a huge crowd , so for your safety , I mapped out a route so we don't have to squeeze through everyone . " She showed Dane the plan on her phone .

Tilda had spent two whole days planning out the perfect route for tonight . She'd even hacked into the street cameras for live updates , mapping out every step . " Whatever you say is fine , " he said . 1/4 He had no objections . In fact , he was more than happy to let her take the lead . After a quick change of

clothes , they left the base together . Before long , they were in the heart of Hetsa . " Dane , try this - it's really good ! " Dane , look over there - churros , nachos , corn dogs ! It all smells amazing !

" These soft pretzels are really tasty , too . " Tilda dragged Dane through the bustling streets , sampling food after food . It was just nonstop eating . With the cold weather , every bite of hot street food felt extra comforting . She didn't care about calories or acne breakouts - she just enjoyed herself . Dane usually never ate stuff like this . Not because he was picky , but because he usually just ate whatever would fill him up quickly so he could get back to work .

As long as it was quick , didn't taste weird , and filled him up so he could get back to his research , he was good . At Lab Seven , every meal was prepared according to strict nutrition standards . This was his first time trying street food like this . At first , he was hesitant - the food looked a bit unhygienic to him . But seeing how happy Tilda was , he couldn't say no when she offered him a corn dog . He took a hesitant bite , and all sorts of flavors exploded in his mouth . Hmm ... It is actually more delicious than I expected . He took a few more bites .

It's like discovering a whole new world of flavors . He couldn't stop eating . Why does this corn dog taste so good ? It must be because Tilda gave it to me . That must be it ! Tilda noticed how much fun Dane was having , and her eyes softened . She'd had to get Manfred's permission to take Dane out for New Year's Eve . Manfred had always said that Tilda was the only one who could really make Dane relax . Everyone else could only help on the sidelines - they could never reach Dane the way she could . It wasn't that they wanted Dane to slack off .

They just hoped he could be a little more human . Tilda was the only one who could break through those walls . Everyone deserved to enjoy New Year's . Including Dane . Suddenly , Tilda's phone rang . She pulled the phone from her pocket and checked . It was Mystro . She answered right away . " Hello ? Mystro , where have you been ? You never answered my messages ! " " Sorry , I've been busy . Are you in Hetsa ? " His sudden question made Tilda glance around . " Yeah , Dane and I are at the city center . We're celebrating New Year's Eve ... " Alright , I have to go .

Talk later ." 11 " Wait ... What ? " Beep . Beep . Beep . " Seriously , what's he up to ? " And it sounded pretty noisy in the background , too .... Tilda was left wondering . " Don't worry about him . Let's just enjoy ourselves . " Dane had his own selfish hopes . Mystro had talked about joining them for New Year's in Cetherland . But if he didn't show up ... Then Dane would have Tilda all to himself .