

## Shadows 541

### Chapter 541

" The money was taken just a few days ago . The paperwork is here , signed and marked by your mother's hand . Not even your grandfather knew why she borrowed so much or what she planned to do with it . " Preston , you are my son . Your sister is already hopeless . You cannot keep falling apart like this . " You know exactly what kind of family the Bells are. Jude , Marcus , and your grandfather are already closing in .

We have almost no room left to breathe . " " This time , even if we make it out alive , we will be stripped to the bone ." Ryan's words cut like ice . When he , he looked toward Daphne's body . After a moment , he turned his head away . The weight of everything pressed on him at once , leaving him restless and drained . He knew Jude would not strike at him while he was down . But Marcus's family would never waste a chance this perfect . Inheritance and power were battles where every obstacle had to be crushed .

If Ryan stood where Marcus stood , he knew he would have pressed his rival down without a trace of mercy too . And still , the aftermath of Sunlight Plaza loomed over him . Injured victims waited for help . Repairs had to be made . The family name and reputation needed saving . Daphne's debts . demanded answers . Enemies watched in the dark , ready to move . Preston and Rebecca could stay here , clinging to tears and the memory of someone who could . not return . Ryan could not . If Daphne had lived , he would have forced the truth out of her without hesitation . But now the moment was gone .

The dead could not answer , and there was no use in demanding anything of them . Preston's chest rose and fell hard as he fought for breath . 1/4 The sun climbed above the horizon .

It was half past seven . The holiday . Every member of the Jenson family stood outside the hospital room . Not one left . Not one rested . They endured together , waiting for Blair to wake . Russell was given permission to enter the ICU once more . He put on the sterile gown and stepped inside . Blair's vitals were steady now . If she lasted another twelve hours , she could be moved to a normal room . The doctors believed she would open her eyes soon . They told Russell to sit with her , to speak her name , to remind her of the life they had built together .

Even while unconscious , she would hear him deep inside her mind . The voice of the one she loved could spark her brain , and maybe , just maybe , bring her back faster . Russell dropped to his knees beside the bed . His eyes stayed on her pale face . Tears gathered again , spilling past his control , burning red around his eyes . 2/4 " You do not want to keep lying here while we all suffer in worry . The doctors said you should be waking . Blair , open your eyes .

Look at me ." He called her name over and over . His voice was thick with grief as he poured out every memory , every piece of their life together . Those who stood nearby wiped their eyes . Those who listened felt their hearts ache . Then at last- He heard a sound , faint but real . " Ru ... Ru ... It was beautiful . The broken whisper struck him like a blow , then filled him with wild joy . " Blair ?! You are awake ?! I am right here ! Right here ! " If her hand had not been bound to the IV line , he would have seized it with all his strength and never let it go . " Tilda ... Tilda .....

" I am sorry ... Mommy is so sorry " I truly am sorry .... " I am sorry , my love ... I still cannot let go ... My heart ... it hurts so much .. The name she called was not his . It was Tilda's . In that instant , Russell heard the truth behind her broken words . As Tilda's mother , Blair knew the ruin of what she had done . The guilt cut her soul to pieces , carving grief and regret that no one else could ease . Russell had believed he knew her heart . He had thought she was learning to set it aside . But now he saw the truth .

20:09 Wed , Oct 1 d It would cling to her all her life , no matter how much love she received , no matter how much happiness surrounded her . Nothing would ever wash it away . It would follow her until the end , carried with her into the grave . And so he realized- All this time , Blair had hidden it . She had swallowed her sorrow , forcing it down , just so her family would not worry .

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Shadows Tilda's Brilliant Second Life Even though the pain felt like a thorn driven deep into his chest , twisting and tearing every time it shifted , he did not waver . " Blair , I understand . If this is what you want , then as your husband , as the man who loves you more than anyone else on this earth , I will see it through for you . I " I will pay any price . I will make it happen . A fierce light burned in Russell's eyes . His mind was set .

It was the same vow he had spoken years ago , before Blair's parents , before Blair herself , and before the church altar . For the rest of his life , he would give her happiness . If she wanted the stars or the moon , he would climb into a rocket and bring them back for her . Russell stepped out of the ICU . Dominic and the others saw him leave and hurried over . " Dad , did Mom wake up ? Did she move ? " Dominic asked quickly . " You stay here with her . I have something important that I must take care of , " Russell said . His face was grave , his voice leaving no room for questions .

He turned and strode away . The Jensons stood frozen in place , staring at one another in confusion . " Something important ? Mom's condition is everything to Dad . Nothing could matter more than this , " one of them said . Dominic rushed after him . " Dad , let me do it . Right now , Mom needs you more than anything . The doctors said she needs to hear your voice , that it could help bring her back . You should stay here with her ." " Dominic , this is something only I can do . You need to listen to me . You and the boys stay here and guard Blair , " Russell said firmly .

" No one else is allowed to follow me . " His tone was final . " No. Dominic , he came to Tilda's apartment . I think he wants to talk to her , " Wade answered . " What ? " The voices on the other end filled with shock . " Wade , you have to stop him . At least try to make him think it through . No matter what Dad . says to Tilda , all he'll get back is pain .

" Dominic and the others had suffered enough humiliation . They could not bear to watch their father lower himself too . Russell was their father . He had given them life . He was the one who held their family together . No matter how much Tilda resented them , no matter how badly Russell had failed her , he was still her father . Without him , Tilda would not exist . 20:09 Wed , Oct 1 d He knew Tilda's temper . He knew his father would not find mercy here .

There would only be sharp rejection , words that would cut into him like blades .. Wade shoved money into the driver's hand and leapt out of the cab . He sprinted as fast as he could , racing to reach Russell before it was too late .

Chapter 543 Stop Him The piercing squeal of rubber against pavement split the air when the UberEats scooter skidded sideways and slammed into Wade . + Pears The blow rocked his body . His knees almost buckled as he threw his arms up over the back of his head , fighting to keep himself upright . The delivery man leapt off his scooter , fury blazing in his eyes . " Are you out of your damn mind ? " he shouted , his voice cracking with outrage . " You almost got yourself killed ! My order's ruined , my scooter's trashed , and you're paying me back . Every last cent !

" Wade looked down at his palm , skin torn and bleeding where he'd hit the ground . He didn't argue . He yanked his wallet from his pocket , pulled out a thick bundle of bills - over six thousand dollars - and shoved it into the man's hand before taking off toward Russell without another word . The delivery man froze in place , staring at the money like he couldn't believe what he was holding . That was far too much . The commotion pulled Russell's attention .

He had been seconds away from stepping through the front doors of Tilda's apartment building , but the sight of Wade , bruised , limping , and rushing toward him , made him stop in his tracks . " Wade ? " Russell's voice was sharp with shock . " What are you doing here ? " " Dad ... " Wade's breath trembled . I'm sorry . I followed you . I couldn't just let you come here on your own . I was scared for you . " His chest heaved as his words tumbled out . \* Please , Dad . Come back with me . Don't go to Tilda . Don't tell her about Mom .

Tilda already hates us , and if you push this , she'll only hate us more . She'll turn it on Mom too . " Pain colored every syllable , yet Wade still reached for his father's arm , clutching it as though he could physically drag him back . He couldn't stand to watch his father humble himself this way . Russell's eyes hardened with resolve .. " I know , Wade . I know all of that , " he said , his voice steady , though a tremor of emotion pressed against it . " But I have to see Tilda . This isn't about me . This is your mother's wish .

She may not realize it , but she told me herself . " His voice broke with conviction . " If Tilda were to come see her , if she spoke even one word to her , I believe Blair would open her eyes again . " " What ... Wade stood still , stunned . He had never imagined this came from Blair herself . He searched Russell's face and saw the unwavering determination there . His grip loosened , and his hand fell back at his side . " Dad ... when you went into Mom's ICU room , is that was what she asked of you ? Is that why you're here ?" " Yes , " Russell answered heavily .

" Blair's been burying her longing for Tilda all these never let us see it , but it's been there , cutting into her heart like glass . years . She " I thought she had forced herself to bury it , even if she couldn't forget . I thought she could keep living without Tilda . " But I was wrong . The moment she lost consciousness , she whispered an apology to me . That was when I knew . As her husband , this is the one thing I can still do for her ." Silence . Wade shut his eyes . When he opened them again , resolve shone in his gaze . " I get it .

If this is what Mom wants , then let me stay with you , Dad . " Both men understood what they were walking into . Tilda had never shown an ounce of pity for the Jensons . If she had , they wouldn't have carried their suffering this long . She wouldn't forgive . She wouldn't return . She wouldn't bend . But for Blair , they would try anyway . Together , Russell and Wade approached the security office at the building's entrance . The guards stiffened immediately . Even without knowing who they were , they could sense these weren't ordinary visitors .

This was the wealthiest part of Slosa , and the guards were used to recognizing power when they saw it . Good afternoon , gentlemen , one of the guards greeted politely . " What business brings you here ?

Entry requires a resident's keycard . " Russell stepped forward . " I need to ask about a resident named Tilda . Did she use her card to leave today ? " The guard's face darkened with caution . " I'm sorry , sir . We can't share information about the residents ' movements . That's private .

" Ever since Tilda's rise to fame , strangers had shown up almost every day , desperate to pry into her life . The guards had turned countless people away . " I'm her father , " Russell said , his voice hoarse with pleading . " Please . Help me reach her . Tell her I'm here . Tell her this is about something more important than my life , and I need to see her face to face . " The guard froze , eyes widening as recognition swept across his face . " You're ... " The stories rushed back . No wonder the man looked familiar . He recognized the guy the moment he spoke .

This was Russell Jenson , chairman of Jenson Group . Tilda's father . The man whose public fallout with his daughter had once been the scandal of Slosa . And now he was standing here , humbled and begging . The guard hesitated , torn , then finally gave a slow nod . " If you really are her father ... I don't know what happened between you and your daughter , but I'll try to reach her . I can't promise she'll respond , but I'll try . " The guard would rather not get into trouble over this . If Tilda tried to rain her wrath on them . he would bear the brunt of it .

Russell's shoulders eased with relief . " Thank you . I won't forget this . If you ever need me , I'll be there ."

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Rain and Tilda sat shoulder to shoulder on the couch , their eyes locked on the flashing TV screen as they waged war on the PS5 . The bluish light lit up their faces in quick bursts , while their fingers flew over the controllers with frantic precision . In the bedroom next door , Dane and Liam had sealed themselves in . They spoke in hushed . tones , their focus fixed on Dane's strange illness . Careful hands checked his body , while bottles and packets of medicine lay on the nightstand , waiting to be used . The plan was simple .

Once Dane swallowed the first round of pills , they would all head out together . They would wander the streets , breathe in the holiday air , and let the festive cheer of the holiday carry them . Mystro stayed behind in the game room . A sketchpad balanced across his knees , and his pencil . glided with sure strokes . The wide windows poured sunlight over the hardwood floor , and the air felt warm and easy . He kept drawing , capturing the two players caught in their laughter and competition . For a moment , the world itself seemed quiet and tender .

When he finally lifted the pencil from the page , Mystro stretched until his spine popped , thent let a tired smile curve across his lips . " It's . " " Let me see it ! " paper Rain and Tilda tossed their controllers onto the couch and hurried over . One look at the made their eyes go wide . Rain let out a breathless laugh . " This is unreal . Darell , you really are the best painter alive . It looks like something out of a dream ." Mystro chuckled , the sound low and warm . " If you both like it , I'll make copies when I get the time . One each .

No arguments . " That would be amazing ! " Before they could go on , a sharp buzz rattled across the table . Tilda's phone lit up with the word Security . She swiped to answer . " Hello ? What's happening ? " " Ms. Tilda ? " The guard's voice faltered , then steadied . " Here's the situation ... " In the security office , the guard cast a glance toward Russell and Wade . Then , word for word , he repeated what Russell had told him . Tilda's response came fast and cold . " Tell him no . " 1/4 20:10 Wed , Oct 1 " Ms. Tilda ...

please forgive me , but he really seems serious about this . Her voice snapped , hard enough to sting . " Bro , listen carefully . That man is not my father . I cut ties with the Jensons . We're nothing to each other now . " Whether he lives or dies has nothing to do with me . And I mean it . Don't let him come near me again . " She ended the call before the guard could say another word . The empty dial tone hummed in his ear , then faded . He let out a tired sigh and turned back to Russell and Wade . His voice was careful as he explained that Tilda refused to see them .

Wade's face barely shifted . His eyes fell to the floor , and pain hung there , muted but clear . " Dad I told you this would happen . Let's just go back to the hospital and be with Mom . " www Russell's hands balled tight at his sides . " You go if you want , Wade . I'm not leaving . I'll wait here until Tilda comes out . " " What ? Dad , why are you doing this to yourself ? " Wade's voice cracked under the weight of it . " It's an impossible task ! " Even if this is what Mom wanted , we've already tried everything . Isn't that enough ? " It isn't enough .

Not when I know she's right there . If she's inside , she has to step out sometime . " And when she does , I'll look her in the eyes and beg her myself . " " Dad . " Wade's throat tightened . He knew nothing he said would change Russell's mind . " Fine , Wade muttered . " If you're staying , then I'll stay too . " He could only stand with him . For Blair . He had no choice . The guard rubbed his temples , the start of a headache pressing down . " Mr. Jenson , please ... don't make this harder on us . " Russell's voice stayed firm . " We won't cause trouble . Let's go , Wade .

We'll wait outside . " " Alright ."

Together , father and son walked away from the office . Their figures stretched thin under the sun as they moved down the path . The guard stood still , watching until they disappeared , and a long sigh left him . apart , bitter What curse had fallen over the Jensons , that a family once whole now lay cracked apart , and broken ? Inside the apartment , silence pressed in . Rain and Mystro had caught enough of Tilda's phone call to piece things together . Mystro's lips thinned .

Tilda , are you sure you don't want to talk to them ? " " I told you , " Tilda said flatly . " I cut ties with the Jensons . Why bother meeting them again ? It's the holiday . I'd rather spend it with you . Why should I waste a single moment on them ? " They threw me away first . And now Russell thinks I'm some obedient little dog , just waiting for him to call me back . " He thinks I'll come running , tail wagging , begging for scraps . " Mystro , you promised to stand by me . Don't think I'm cruel . Don't think I'm cold . This is the right choice . It's the only choice I can make .

" Mystro spoke . " I know . I only worry you'll regret it later . But I told you before , I'll stand with you no matter what . " If this feels right to you , if you're sure you won't regret it , then I'll accept that ." His hand came down gently on her shoulder . He already knew about the Sunlight Plaza incident . He knew the Jensons had been swept into it . And he knew Blair , Tilda's mother , was in the hospital now , her life hanging by a thread . Russell had almost certainly come for Blair's sake .

And Blair was still Tilda's mother , no matter how much hatred filled the space between them . If Tilda turned her back now , if she refused to see her even once more , then she would never be able to undo it . Call Mystro wasn't afraid of the Jensons . He was afraid of what this choice might do to Tilda . He feared she would carry the weight of it for the rest of her life .

Chapter 545 Support Mystro felt it was his duty to remind Tilda again . " I know , Mystro . I do not regret it . I will never regret it ." Tilda turned to him and smiled with gratitude . She understood that he warned her for her own good . +8 Pearis If she let herself regret this choice , she would betray the second chance that fate had given her . In her last life , she had died in a fire and she had been abandoned and scorned . " Alright , Mystro , Tilda , forget that nonsense . Do not let the Jensons spoil our mood . When Dane and Liam come out of their room , we will go have some fun .

" Tilda smoothed Rain's hair and smiled . " Rain is right . That should be the most important thing for us today . " Soon after , Dane and Liam walked out and said the inspection was and they could go out . Back in her room , Tilda sat at the mirror and put on light makeup . The face in the mirror no longer looked cold and distant . Her eyes had once been like a frozen well . Now they shone like March snow melting into a warm stream . A soft warmth lived inside them . She looked less distant and more human . She had a new hint of gentleness .

The sight moved her and she chose to do a little more . She painted her lips with bright YSL lipstick , shade forty - six , and pressed her mouth together . softly . Her long hair fell loose and free , like wide brushstrokes on a painting , and it shone as it moved . She put on black thermal stockings and a limited edition brown leather trench coat from Chanel . Small diamond earrings from Victoria's Secret hung beautifully on her ears . She slipped on her slippers and left the room . When Dane and the others saw her , they all lit up .

would have been enough .. But when she arrived full of joy and nervous hope , her brothers met her with cold eyes and mocking words . They said she looked ridiculous and like a cheap copy . They said she was uglier than dirt and not worth even a finger of Kyla's . Russell and Blair gave all their praise to Kyla and called Kyla the real star of the day and their perfect little princess . No one gave Tilda a single look . She stood in the corner , clutching her skirt , and watched Kyla at the center being adored like a real princess .

The distance between them felt short but it was impossible to cross . In that moment , Tilda felt like a fool . Worse still , on the first day of the year , the family took Kyla out to visit relatives and left Tilda behind . They said Tilda was too ugly and that she would shame the Jensons if she went outside . They told her to stay home so as to not embarrass them . From that day on , Tilda cried as she wiped off her makeup and vowed never to wear it again . She convinced herself that she was truly ugly . She thought it was foolish to compete with Kyla .

She cared too much about how the Jensons saw her . Their words sank into her mind and they broke her down little by little until she lost all confidence . She drifted through life without aim and she sank in deep doubt that she could not escape .

You look beautiful , Tilda ." Rain's eyes flashed with surprise and praise , and he said what the others were thinking before they could speak . Liam laughed . " What is the occasion , Tilda ? You look so nice today . You are giving us a treat to look at .

" \* Because I am spending the holiday with the people who matter most to me . " We are going out , so I had to dress up . It is my first time celebrating like this , so I wanted to look my best . Now tell me which bag I should take . Help me pick the one that looks best . " Her gaze softened . Memories rose on their own . Before the Jensons accepted her , the holiday felt like any other day to Tilda . The only change was that the streets smelled warmer and the air carried the sharp trace of fireworks . At that time , life had been poor but she had been happy because her mentor was with her .

After he died , she stood alone again . She closed herself to others but she still wanted the warmth of people . That hunger for family drove her to find her blood relatives . She gave up her pride and she chased small bits of affection . She remembered her first holiday with the Jensons after they took her in . She had dressed carefully that day - new clothes and makeup that fit her face . The face in the mirror looked even more radiant than Kyla . She had a beauty and a calmness that could not be denied . Tilda did not want to fight Kyla .

She had truly treated Kyla as a sister even though they were not related by blood . Even when Kyla took her place, her family's favor , and the attention that should have been hers , Tilda did not protest . She had been starving for love . Having one more family member was a great blessing . That day , she only wanted to show herself and be seen by her family a little . That small

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His breath caught uneven in his chest . The aura that once marked him as a man of power was gone . As the head of Jenson Group , people had always lowered themselves before him , eager to please , desperate to win his favor . Never had Russell waited on anyone . And never had he waited for the daughter he once cast aside . It was nothing short of cruel fate .

Wade's sharp eyes cut through the crowd , and then he saw her . Tilda , mingling among the crowd . His heart slammed against his ribs , and the words left him in a rush . " Dad , it's Tilda . They're here ! " " Yes ... Russell's voice trembled , tangled with relief . But when Wade looked closer , his joy turned to stone . A sharp ache ripped through him like a blade . Tilda stood in the middle of five figures . She held Dane and Mystro by the arms , her smile shining with a happiness that blazed bright and real . It was a smile Wade had never seen when she was trapped in the Jenson house .

Back then , her smiles for him had been soft but lined with a quiet plea , a hidden need for approval she never received . Now , her smile was free of chains . It was whole , it was equal , and it was true . The four around her moved in rhythm with her , circling her as if she was the heart of their world . Every glance , every gesture , showered her with affection . 2/4 20:10 Wed , Oct 1 d They guarded her like something priceless . Like they were her real family . There was no place left for Wade . No space for the Jensons .

Not even a single nook or cranny Then something weird filled his heart . The feeling that rose in his chest was sharp and bitter . It was jealousy . Wade knew that . Before he could take another breath , Russell stepped forward . Wade hurried after him . " Tilda ! " Russell's voice cracked the air as he planted

himself in her way . " You . " Tilda's words sliced cold . Her glare blazed with fury . She had told them she never wanted to see them again . And yet here they stood , clinging to her , dragging their shadows into her light , ruining this day .

Her rage spilled out , and Dane and the others caught it . Their stares hardened , cold as steel , and pinned Russell and Wade in place . These two men were supposed to be her blood . Her brother . Her father . Yet they had been the ones to break her . Under the fire of those eyes , both men felt their power shrivel . Even with all their years of wealth and authority , the weight pressed them down like chains . Their instincts screamed . The people standing with Tilda were not ordinary .

with his white hair and blazing red eyes , radiated danger with every breath . And Mystro . He was the one who had crowned Tilda as world champion in art . The prodigy everyone spoke about with awe . Why are they walking at her side now , still bounding her like family ? Questions stormed in their minds , but no answers would come . This was not the time to ask . " Russell . Wade . " Tilda's voice cut sharp as glass . " Today is a holiday . I'm in a good mood now , but I will not let you ruin it .

" Get out of my way before I lose my patience ." Her fury simmered , barely held back . Dane and the others were the only thread keeping her from unleashing everything she carried . " Tilda , Blair ... your mother is in the hospital . She may never walk again . She might be crippled . for the rest of her life ! " She's unconscious . Even in her coma she calls out your name . She begs to see you . Please , Tilda . " Think of the day she nearly died bringing you into this world . Think of the nineteen years never stopped searching for you . Come see her , if only for that . "

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Russell threw away every ounce of pride ; the respect of a father , the authority of a chairman , and lowered himself before Tilda . She only looked at him with disdain . " Can't you talk straight , or are you just old and losing your mind ? Russell , I cut ties with the Jenson's a long time ago . " Quit saying she's my mom over and over . Think about it . After the way you and Blair treated me , does she even deserve to call her my mom ? " If you're trying to pull the family card , go play that game with your darling Kyla . Don't stand here making me sick .

Just hearing your voice makes me nauseous ! If you've gone insane , go see a doctor . I'm not here running a clinic ! " Tilda's patience snapped completely . Russell's brazenness was beyond belief . He actually said things like this without a hint of shame . Even without her past life memories , when she was dragged back into the Jenson's , Russell and Blair's behavior toward her ... Did they just wipe it all from memory ? She had been slandered , forced to prove her innocence , and Russell always defended Kyla , refusing to face the truth or give Tilda any justice .

He only wanted to cover everything up ! After that , Russell and Blair just kept suspecting and humiliating her again and again . It wasn't just one incident . So how could Russell now stand in front of her with such audacity and spout these words ? Did he even have a conscience ? Tilda truly doubted it ! " I know , Tilda , you despise us and this family . I've already dug into everything about Kyla . Back then , I was wrong about you ! " I screwed up , Tilda . I made the worst mistakes . The one truly guilty is me . Blair did nothing .

I'm not asking you to forgive , I only hope you'll go see ... Blair . Just once , that's all I beg for ! " " You've investigated ? Then you must know Kyla is still prancing around Jenson Villa like a queen . So you know her real nature , yet you still talk about guilt toward me while letting her stay ? " Russell , you're a hypocrite drowning in lies ! It's disgusting ! And you dare say Blair is innocent ? Innocent ? Who in this world is really innocent ?! " Tilda let out a mocking laugh .

" Tilda , you're misunderstanding . We all know who Kyla really is , but Blair is already eaten alive with guilt over you . If she learned the full truth about Kyla , I'm afraid she would collapse completely ! " Yes , Tilda , I see exactly what kind of person Kyla is now . If it takes me kneeling before you and apologizing for what I said in the past , I'll do it ! " " Please ... don't make Mom bear it . If she weren't dying and desperate to see you one last time , we'd never disturb you ! " Wade knew stepping in could make things worse , but he couldn't just let all the blame crush Russell .

If someone had to shoulder part of it , he would too . " Oh ... so that's why Kyla is still playing the role of the good daughter in Jenson Villa , putting on a family act with Blair ? " Unbelievable . Russell , Wade , your entire family is nothing but a disaster . Honestly , I'm grateful I never got brainwashed by you . Escaping you all was the smartest move I ever made ! " Dane , Mystro , Liam , Rain , don't mind them . Pretend they don't exist . We're leaving . " With that , Tilda pulled Dane and the rest with her and walked away .

She wasn't going to waste another second on these lunatics . What was the point ? " Tilda , wait ! " Russell reached to stop her , but a man in a crimson bespoke suit blocked his path . " Tilda gave you life and endured your filth all these years . Don't test her patience any further ! " Liam , who was normally calm and gentle with Tilda , finally snapped . His tone was filled with menace . Those hands of his had saved countless lives . But they had also sent plenty into the grave , stained with blood . His warning crashed down like a storm . " Don't force me to use violence .

" That single threat drilled into Russell and Wade's heads , freezing them stiff . A cold fear seeped into their bones , making their skin crawl .

recovered , Tilda and her people were already gone . " Dad , let it go . Tilda's never coming back . We've reached the end ." Wade stood beside Russell while trying to comfort him . This was the farthest they could go . Honestly , hadn't they already expected this outcome ? 18 Pears But for Blair's sake , they had swallowed their pride and bowed low before Tilda one last time .

Wade felt completely numb . Enough . This was enough . At that moment , Russell remembered the desperate request Blair had blurted out . He braced himself .

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if you're willing to visit the hospital and see Blair , I'll agree to anything you want ! I swear id " Russell shouted with all his strength . Those words made Tilda pause mid - step . Seeing the opening , Russell rushed in front of her , right under Wade's shocked gaze . I'm serious . I'll grant whatever you ask , just this once ! Only this time ! " Russell's eyes blazed with resolve , like a beast defending its mate . A fierce aura poured off him , making everyone else seem powerless .

" Russell , you only learn when you hit the bottom , don't you ? Fine . I don't care much about your vows , but there's one thing I'd enjoy seeing . Do you dare throw away your pride for your beloved wife ? " Go on , kneel before me , Russell . If you do that , maybe I'll think about visiting Blair ! " Kneel . Kneel down ... In front of the whole crowd . Tilda clearly wanted to grind Russell's dignity into the dirt . There'd be no coming back from it . Even Russell's face twisted at her demand , his body trembling . Wade's chest tightened .

He remembered not long ago , breaking down , kneeling at Tilda's apartment door with his six brothers . That kneeling had been out of remorse and shame toward his sister . But Russell ? He couldn't do this ! 20:11 Wed , Oct 1 d ... " You claimed you'd do anything if I agreed , but even this you can't ? Just empty words , Russell . You're nothing but a liar who never keeps promises ." This time , Russell had nothing left to defend himself against Tilda . Dane and the others figured Russell would never actually kneel .

If he kept spouting excuses , they'd just beat him down and leave . Russell bit down hard , his words forcing their way out as he said , " So ... If I kneel , you'll visit Blair at the hospital ? " " Kneel first , then we'll see . If you can't even manage that , then shut up and Tilda had barely , when .... Thud ! Russell dropped to his knees right before her . get lost ! " "I'm begging you , Tilda , please go see Blair at the hospital . Look , I'm kneeling , I'm kneeling ! " " Dad ! " Wade yelled in shock . He rushed forward to Russell's side . " Dad , what are you doing ?

Stand up ! Please , get up ! If anyone should kneel , let me do it . You can't ! " " No ... Wade , let me kneel . This is what Tilda demanded , and it's the debt I owe her as her father ! " Tilda , I lost you years ago , leaving you to suffer 19 years alone . Even if it wasn't intentional , I failed to protect you as your dad ! " And all those years when Blair desperately searched for you , I kept urging her to stop .. we finally brought you back . I still hurt you again and again because of Kyla ! When " I don't deserve to be your father !

In this family , Blair was the only one who truly held on ! This kneeling is my apology , my regret for everything I put you through ! " Russell cast off the last of his pride , laying down the armor of a father . He spoke honestly , overflowing with guilt and remorse toward Tilda . 20:11 Wed , Oct 1 d : The man who once acted untouchable , wielding his role as her father , demanding everything from her simply because he gave her life ... Even he was now on his knees , begging forgiveness . Just like Tilda had once done , degraded into a pathetic creature , begging for scraps of affection from her family . Too bad ... It was too late ! Far too late ! Tilda no longer felt pity , longing , or family affection for the Jensons . Even her resentment had thinned into nothing .

Because she had found people who mattered , a new hope . The Jensons had become a worthless shadow of her past . Wade saw Russell had made his choice . He said , " Tilda , Dad did what you demanded . Please , come with us to the hospital and see Mom . " Tilda lowered her eyes , and she smiled mockingly . Linking arms with Dane , she said , " Oh is that so ? Well , I refuse . " Her voice was light and playful .

#### Chapter 549

Now it felt like the bitter December wind had cut through Russell and Wade until their bones ached , as if they'd been locked in a freezer . " What ... What did you just say ? " Tilda , I already followed your demand and knelt down . Why won't you accept it ? " " I said I'd think about it . I never guaranteed anything . All I promised was that if you were willing to kneel , I'd consider it . " Well , I considered it . My answer's still no . Honestly , just looking at anyone from the Jensons makes me want to throw up ! " Wade's whole body trembled with rage .

" Tilda , that's too much . Why can't you keep your promise ? " " Why ? Didn't I pick that up from all of you ? Russell , you vowed that if I cleared my name , you'd investigate and give me the truth . " It's been nearly nine months now . Nine months ! You only figured it out recently , and yet you still let Kyla do whatever she wanted in the Jenson Villa ! " " And after I walked away from all of you , you still came chasing me , accusing me over and over . You think after that , I'd care about your so - called honor ? " Dane , let's leave !

" Tilda brushed past Russell , striding away without hesitation . She had said everything that needed to be said , treating Russell and Wade like fools . If Russell could still keep his pride intact after this ... Tilda would honestly admire just how little shame he had left . He'd be better off despising her and staying out of her life for good ! Dane and the others naturally trailed behind Tilda . No matter what choice she made , they stood by her without question . Just when they were about to leave , Russell suddenly seemed to recall something and let out a laugh .

Tilda couldn't care less about the old madman and only wanted to get away faster . 20:11 Wed , Oct1 d But then ... " So ... Tilda , you still care about me as your father , don't you ? You still admit the blood in your body comes from the Jensons ! " What ? A giant question mark practically appeared on Tilda's face . What the hell ? Was she not clear enough when tearing Russell apart ? Or had he finally gone insane from all this ? Seeing Russell act like that , Wade immediately assumed his father had lost it . " Dad , calm down . Forget it , alright ?

Let's just go back ! " Wade truly feared Tilda had driven Russell into madness ! " No , Wade , my head is completely clear . " She's my daughter , without a doubt . Tilda , you've inherited my way of handling matters . " After all this , I finally understand ... You keep claiming you despise the Jensons and don't want anything to do with us , but deep down , your heart hasn't left . " You'll always have i blood inside you . That's something you can't erase . That's why you unconsciously behave just like me ! " At that moment . Wade caught the flash of calculation in Russell's expression .

He began to realize what Russell was scheming . He was deliberately trying to provoke Tilda ! Dane and the others also sensed Russell's true intent . " Mr. Jenson , don't you think repeating this again and again is meaningless ? " Even if you drag Tilda to meet Mrs. Jenson , with the way Tilda feels about this family now , you can't guarantee she won't say something that could upset Mrs. Jenson and worsen her condition . She barely pulled through ; if anything happens , you'll regret it .

Jenson truly values Tilda that much , and you're worried about her health , perhaps it's safer not to let Tilda meet her at all . Mystro stepped in to add his view . To be honest ... He actually wished Tilda would agree to see Blair . That was why he hadn't stopped Russell from begging her carlier . For Mystro , whatever became of the Jensons didn't matter . What he wanted was for Tilda to avoid future regret . As long as she saw Blair once and cut ties completely , then even if Blair passed away , Tilda wouldn't have to carry that guilt . Not only Mystro . The others thought the same way .

That was the reason they hadn't interfered with Russell pressing her . If they had known what Tilda had suffered in her previous life They would have killed Russell on the spot without hesitation . There was no

way they'd allow him to keep spewing nonsense here . " Wade , let's go . Now that I know Tilda still cares for us , she'll come to her senses , and then I'll explain everything to her . That'll be enough for me . " I'm certain Tilda won't blame us . She'll probably feel relieved ." Russell ignored Mystro's warning , chuckled , and turned to walk away .

Wade gave Tilda one last lingering look before slowly following behind .

Chapter 550

Out of the Shadows : Tilda's Brilliant Second Life " I have to admit , Russell , your provocation is obvious , but it works well on me , " Tilda finally spoke . Russell and Wade instinctively glanced at each other . " Sorry , Danc , Mystro , Liam , Rain . You guys go pick a place to hang out for a bit . I need to step out , but I'll catch up with you later . " " Got it , Tilda . " Her three seniors seemed to have anticipated her decision all along . Going to see for herself was probably for the best .

At least she wouldn't regret being so resolutely cold today . " Tilda , are you sure you want to go ? " Rain didn't want Tilda involved with the Jensons . In Rain's mind , the Jensons were just as terrible as his own family . They were always forceful , and they had crushed all their emotions . Tilda reached out and gently touched Rain's soft , white hair . Her lowered gaze was calm and tender . " Don't worry . I'll be back soon . Listen to them , okay ? " Rain nodded quickly . " Yes , come back quickly . Don't give them a chance to hurt you . " " Hurt me ?

" Tilda whispered those words , and a small smile played across her lips . The smile was slightly mocking , with a hint of disdain . " Of course not . " Not anymore . Liam spoke up . " Tilda , it's still early . We can go with you . " " It's fine . I don't want to waste your time on people who don't matter . " People who don't matter .... Tilda didn't even emphasize the words , but to Russell and Wade , they sounded sharp and direct ...

Who Don't Matter cutting . It stirred a painful ache in their hearts .

And yet , Russell and Wade found themselves completely unable to argue . Tilda stepped past her seniors and stood before Russell and Wade . " Russell , let me compliment you first . You truly are a seasoned veteran . You hit the exact weakness I have in my heart . " You know I would never want to be like you . I wouldn't even want this blood on me . If I could , I'd drain it and start over . Not that I'd ever try to kill myself or hurt myself on purpose . " The day I severed all ties with the Jensons and left the villa , I made a promise to myself .

I would live better than anyone , be happier than anyone , bloom with my own brilliance , and live a life that's truly mine ! " This time , you'd better not regret letting me see Blair . And if anything happens , don't try to pin the blame on me ! " " Let's go , Tilda . No matter what happens , I'll bear the consequences alone . " Russell had made up his mind . No matter what happened , he knew letting Tilda meet the current Blair was the best choice . What if .... There was a tiny chance ? What if Tilda , seeing Blair's condition , softened and wanted to return to the Jensons ?

Even though Russell knew such a hope was incredibly slim , given Tilda's current attitude , it was like chasing a dream . But if a person can't even dream , then what's the point of being alive ? In the car , Wade had already told Dominic and the others that Tilda was coming to the hospital to see Blair . They were completely stunned . " No way , Wade ! Tilda ... She's willing to see Mom ? "

Dominic and the others thought they were hearing things . With Tilda's hatred of the Jensons , how could she care about Blair's well - being ?

" A lot happened . Anyway , Tilda's coming . We're heading to the hospital now . " Wade couldn't bring himself to mention that Russell had knelt before Tilda to convince her to come . " A - alright . The doctor just removed Mom's monitors and transferred her to a regular room . They said she'll regain consciousness soon . " Dominic paused and asked , " Is Tilda ... with you guys ? " " She said she didn't want to be in the same car as us , so she took a cab . She's following behind . We should reach the hospital in half an hour . " " Got it .

" After hanging up , Dominic looked at his five younger brothers . " ... That's what the call said . " For a moment , everyone was at a loss for words . Originally , when Wade told them Russell had gone to ask Tilda to visit Blair , they all thought he was asking for humiliation . They never expected Russell would actually get her to come . But now , their hearts felt even more uneasy . Darell sighed . " Honestly , I almost wish Tilda had just refused . It might have been better if she didn't come . " " Darell's right .

With Tilda's attitude toward us , she wouldn't react kindly no matter how Dad invited her . " " With Tilda's temper , I just hope she doesn't upset Mom . Mom's still weak after barely surviving , and I'm worried that Tilda's visit might stress her , making things worse . "