

Shadows 621

Chapter 621 Blair's Desperation Russell had already taken enough pain from Tilda. If Blair suffered the same kind of hurt Russell once did, he feared his wife's body wouldn't handle it. The emotional weight could ruin everything-her health, their plans, all of it. Blair's eyes stayed fixed on Tilda, too many questions bottled up inside. Especially after what happened today-how could she just walk away? "Wait, honey," Blair said firmly. "I need to ask Tilda something." Russell's face tightened. "Darling, look at her. Do you really think Tilda will talk calmly with us right now?

No matter what you ask, all you'll get is more harsh words. Don't do this, okay? go home." Please, just listen to me. Let's go! We should Then Russell barked, his voice nearly a growl, "Justin, quick! Take your mom and get her out of here!" The sharp command snapped Justin back to his senses. Justin gritted his teeth, fighting the dark storm inside him. He pushed Blair's wheelchair, ready to leave. As long as they didn't see Tilda-kept far away-the pain wouldn't come back. He wouldn't break down. He couldn't cause his family more trouble at a turbulent moment like this.

But when Blair saw them trying to pull her away, she steeled herself-and suddenly lunged for the nearest table. "Blair?!" "Mom?!" The move was so sudden no one expected it. Blair planted her hands on the table and tried to push herself up with all her strength. Her legs, though, were still weak. She couldn't hold herself. Her muscles gave out, and she collapsed to the floor. "Blair!" "Mom!" The restaurant erupted into chaos. Russell hurried over and helped her up. His voice shook.

"Blair, why would you do this to yourself? Do you really want to break my heart?" "I'm sorry, honey. I have to do this. I have to talk to Tilda," Blair insisted. "Don't take me away. If fate put us together, I must speak to her now. Otherwise I won't be able to sleep tonight." "Darling, you ..." Russell's chest hurt so much he could barely breathe. He felt helpless and suffered from seeing Blair like this. Then- Clap. Clap. Clap. Suddenly, someone began to applaud. Tilda walked up with a crooked smile, whistling as she clapped at Russell and Blair. "How touching.

The two of you clowns, putting on a little show right in front of me. You know what? I always thought you two lived in some strange fantasy world, chasing illusions to make up for your emptiness. And now I see I was right." Her mocking words cut deep. Both Russell and Blair's eyes flickered with pain. Theo stepped forward, his voice sharp. "Mr. and Mrs. Jenson, why put yourselves through this? Tilda doesn't want to see you. Why refuse to leave and humiliate yourselves? You should leave now.

You both have reputations to protect-dragging this out will only make things worse for everyone." Astrid quickly stepped forward to help Russell lift Blair from the ground. "Uncle Russell, Aunt Blair, please go. Don't trouble Tilda anymore. Leaving her alone is the only way you can show you care. Stop with the guilt trips and tragic displays. Don't force her hand." Astrid hated being caught in the middle. Russell and Blair had treated her well since she was a child. The sight of the old couple suffering tore at her heart.

But wrong was wrong. No one could forgive for Tilda. The only choice left was for them to walk away. "Astrid, I know... I know this makes me look selfish, humiliating, and even pitiful," Blair said, her voice trembling. She turned back to Tilda. "But Tilda, I need to ask you one thing!" She clutched her chest as she spoke, eyes full of desperate hope. "You turned down the chance to become part of Crown Group, didn't you? Why? Why would you refuse?" From her view, being adopted by the Lowells and stepping into Crown Group's power would've been nothing but good for Tilda's future.

Crown Group was stronger than the Jenson Group, and it would have been the perfect revenge. But Tilda said no. Blair clung to the thought that maybe, deep down, Tilda still had a tiny space left for the Jensons. They say the deeper the love, the deeper the hate. She remembered when Tilda first came back to the family-those feelings of hope, excitement, and even nervous joy weren't fake. They were real, straight from her heart. Blair had made plenty of mistakes, but if Tilda still carried even the smallest thread of love, then Blair could hold on to hope.

Maybe she could correct her wrongs and make things right. But reality crushed that hope like ice water pouring over her head. "Do I owe you an answer?" Tilda's eyes were sharp. "Who do you think you are? You're nothing but a cripple now!"

Chapter 622 The Beast "Do you really think dragging your ruined legs in front of me and playing the victim will make me soften? Blair, since when did you beg in such a pathetic way? Even if you jumped off a building right now, I wouldn't give you a glance. You're ruining my dinner with friends." Ruined... Cripple ... Those words hit Blair. Her face went white. She had always tried to be strong and hopeful to face everything. Blair always told herself that being alive and having her family was the greatest blessing.

But now she'd gone from healthy to someone with a crippled right leg. She didn't know if she'd ever walk the same again. It stung. A sharp, constant ache under her skin. She pushed through tests and therapy. She sweated but still couldn't feel her right leg. She wanted to be independent and took care of herself with her own effort, but she still had to keep her husband and son close so they could look after her. When she closed her eyes to rest, she realized she had become a burden, no longer the proud person she once was.

Hearing Tilda say those words so bluntly felt like someone snapped her wings. It shattered every scrap of pride she had left. It forced her to face the fact that she had become a burden. "Enough, Blair. Don't say another word. Let's go." Russell felt as if his heart had been torn out. Since Blair's accident, how could he not notice the pain she carried as her husband? Even though she always worked hard, stayed cooperative, and never complained, he knew what it cost her. A healthy, proud woman had been reduced to this-how could her heart not be torn?

But Blair forced herself to stay rational, hold on to hope, and keep her family from worrying. She carried it all on her shoulders. Now, hearing Tilda throw those words at her was worse than death-like grinding salt into an open wound. "No! I have to ask!" Blair's voice trembled, but she pressed on. "Tilda, why did you turn down Malcom's offer? Tell me why!" She had already braced herself to be humiliated. She could endure the pain, even if it cut her to pieces. What she couldn't let go of was the need for an answer. Tilda's eyes were ice.

"Because I've already found something more important than that deal. I found real family. The people around me now-my friends, my seniors, my mentor-they're my true family. Not you. You people reek of greed. All you talk about is profit, and you use 'family' like it means nothing." Her voice sharpened. "Blair, since your leg is broken, focus on your recovery. Stay in your lane being a cripple. Don't drag yourself in front of me again. You're nothing but an eyesore." More important ... Family? Blair's eyes turned glassy. But she was Tilda's real mother.

She was the one who carried Tilda for nine long months. She was the one who went through the pain and risk of childbirth. There were many times Blair almost died giving birth because of her age, Everyone told her not to have another child. "You already have seven sons," they said. Isn't that enough? At your age, the risk was too high. Even Russell feared something would happen to her. Blair had fought everyone's opinion back then. No matter how dangerous it was, she insisted on giving birth to Tilda, She wanted her daughter to have a chance at life. It was Blair who carried the burden.

Without her, Tilda would not even exist. How could Tilda treat everyone else as more important than her mother? Without realizing it, Tilda's words struck the deepest wound in Blair's heart. Inside her, there was always a hidden madness, locked away like a caged beast. Blair had controlled it well, helped by years of smooth sailing and a happy marriage. She had never given that madness a chance to surface. But now-after being humiliated, rejected, hurt by Tilda again and again-Blair felt herself slipping.

Tilda was driving her to the edge of insanity. "Tilda!" Blair cried, her voice breaking. "The whole world can condemn me, but not you! I am your mother! I gave you life! Without me, you wouldn't even exist! "You hate me, I know. But look at me now. My right leg's crippled. I don't even know if I'll ever stand again. If this is punishment, haven't I suffered enough already? Seeing me like this- doesn't your heart hurt at all?" She clutched her chest, her eyes red and wild, her voice raw with hysteria. "Blair?!" Russell's stomach dropped. A terrible sense of dread swept over him.

As the man who loved Blair most, he knew her better than anyone. He knew the madness that lived inside her, the "other side" she kept buried deep. When Blair was pushed to the edge, she became like a porcupine-every spike out, hurting anyone who dared to come close. And now Russell saw the signs. She was about to lose control.

Chapter 623 A Slap That Shook Everyone "Mom, please calm down. Don't get so worked up, okay?" Kyla stepped forward, crying hard as she tried to comfort Blair. When Blair saw her daughter's tear-filled eyes and heard her desperate plea, her wild expression softened a little. "I'm sorry, but I don't pity you. Watching you suffer and end up disabled-it almost feels like karma had caught up with you. I can't deny there's a twisted satisfaction in that. If you really want to be treated badly, I'll give you all the harsh words you want. I'll say whatever it takes to hurt you! "Kyla, take your mom.

You two better get out of here. Your crying's so annoying. It's driving me crazy. Stop acting pathetic! You're making me sick." Kyla's face froze. She turned her head and pleaded, "Tilda! I know this is my fault. I shouldn't have come into this family and made you mad. If I leave-" Smack! Before she could finish, a slap cracked across her face. 11 The burning sting spread instantly, leaving a bright red handprint like a brand on her cheek. Kyla's head snapped to the side. Her eyes trembled in shock. I... I got slapped? In front of everyone?

She never imagined Tilda would actually hit her here, with all these people watching. Tilda shook her hand, eyes cold and full of disdain. "I'm sick of hearing your fake apologies. Keep whining in front of me and I'll slap you again. I'll keep slapping you until you're too scared to open your mouth." There wasn't a hint of a joke in her voice. If anything, her words carried a sharp edge of menace and murderous intent. Kyla had never seen this side of her. She was so scared that she shrank back, her knees felt weak, and her lips turned pale. "Kyla! "

Blair rushed over, holding her daughter and checking the red mark on her face. Then she glared at Tilda, her voice filled with anger. "Tilda, this is too much! This family wronged you, but Kyla is innocent! Why are you hurting her?" "Mom, stop," Kyla sobbed. "It's okay. Tilda has every right to hate me. If I hadn't stolen her place in this family, if I hadn't taken all the love that should've been hers, she wouldn't have cut ties with our family.

None of us would be in so much pain now." Kyla leaned into the moment, crying harder, playing the victim like she had no choice but to carry the blame. At first Justin and Russell felt a flicker of pity when they saw Kyla take a sudden slap from Tilda. Kyla hadn't been wrong; she was only pleading for Blair. But Tilda had hit her out of nowhere. But when Kyla started talking like that, any sympathy and heartache

vanished. She wasn't as innocent as she sounded. It was all an act. Kyla didn't realize everyone except Blair had already seen through her act. And she kept playing along.

Russell patiently said, "Blair, that's enough. Let's go. Tilda won't listen." Russell worried Blair might spiral into madness if Tilda kept pushing her. He helped Blair to her feet. Then Blair glared at Tilda. "Tilda! Apologize to Kyla." Tilda paused as if she'd heard the world's funniest joke. She raised an eyebrow with a mocking smile. "What did you just say? Say it again." Blair didn't hesitate. "I said you need to apologize to Kyla." Haha ! Hilarious ! Tilda almost laughed out loud. Seeing Blair so determined, with the wild light in her eyes, struck her as ridiculous.

Blair had just claimed she pitied Tilda and wanted to make things right. Now she was demanding Tilda apologize to Kyla? If that wasn't crazy, what was? Clearly, she was delusional-beyond cure. "Mom-please don't do this," Kyla begged. "You and Tilda already have enough grudges between you. Tilda hates me. Don't make it worse for my-" Her words were cut off when someone grabbed her hair and yanked it hard. She cried out in pain as Tilda shoved her to the floor. "Kyla!" Blair gasped.

She hadn't expected Tilda to strike again, and it happened so fast no one could stop it. "Kyla, I already warned you. If you kept whining and making me sick, I'd slap you. I meant it. Don't test me." Tilda's voice was cold and flat. "Tilda..." Kyla's face twisted in pain. The scar on her cheek showed again. She clapped a hand over her face and bowed her head, desperate to hide how terrible she looked. Any more exposure would only bring worse shame. "What's wrong? Can't even show your face, huh?" Tilda sneered. "Let everyone see how your ruined face looks when it twists.

Look how much you resemble a monster. If I were you, I'd stay home and hide. Why parade around and make yourself a joke? Why embarrass yourself?"

Chapter 624 Words That Cut Deep Tilda's words came sharp and merciless. Every word hit the deepest wounds in Kyla's heart. It was like pouring salt on open cuts until she could barely breathe. "TILDA!" Blair nearly lost her mind. If not for the tiny shred of control left, she would've slapped Tilda across the face to defend Kyla. Sinful! Absolutely sinful! And yet, the one person Blair owed the most in this world was Tilda. Why was Tilda so heartless? How could she keep hurting them-her own sister and her mother? "If you want to lose it, don't lose it in front of me.

Isn't this your fault? If you hadn't come parading in front of me, none of this would have happened. Your precious daughter wouldn't be humiliated like this!" Blair choked on her words as Tilda pressed harder. Her eyes widened in anger. "How could you say that! You're twisting the truth!" Tilda didn't back down. "Let me make this clear. You just said you carried me for nine months and gave me life. Fine. Even if we cut ties, I won't treat you the same way I treat Kyla. Otherwise, you'd twist it and spread lies about me. But Kyla? She's different.

I have no ties to her at all." Her voice grew sharper. "If you keep coming after me, then I'll go after Kyla. If she's really that precious to you, then stay out of my sight!" Her words struck Blair where it hurt. Even though Blair's heart ached for Kyla and she wanted Tilda to apologize, she couldn't say a word now. Because if she spoke up for Kyla, Kyla would only end up suffering more. Theo was fed up with Blair's endless nagging and wild behavior. "Mr. and Mrs. Jenson-didn't

Stop bothering Tilda!" He used to respect these two. After all, they started from nothing and built Jenson Group into a giant. They stayed united as a couple, loved each other deeply, and raised what looked like a close, happy family. Unlike other powerful families that fought over money and power, the Jensons had seemed different. In the business world, their story had been told like a legend, admired by many. But now Theo realized he had given them too much credit. They weren't worthy of his respect at all-especially Blair. He even began to doubt she was truly Tilda's mother.

Was this the same woman who once stood beside Russell, a strong partner who helped build Jenson Group? She looked foolish, hysterical, and shallow. Worse than an angry woman shouting on the street. Blair claimed she wanted Tilda's forgiveness, but her actions always favored Kyla. Was she delusional? Did she really think her fake tears and self-pity would move anyone? To Theo, it was disgusting. This woman wasn't worthy of being Tilda's mother. She didn't deserve Tilda. "Uncle Russell and Aunt Blair, please just leave!

Stop making this worse!" Luckily, this was happening at Sky Dining, where the place was almost empty. The servers kept their mouths shut, only watching from the side. This was the ugly fight of a powerful family, and nobody dared to get involved. If this scandal ever got out, it would spread like wildfire. Tilda didn't care. If anything, the Jensons were about to get exactly what they deserved. "Blair, please, I'm begging you." Russell whispered, begging in a way that stripped away all his pride. "Let's just go.

Don't do this anymore." Hearing her husband beg like that, Blair finally forced herself to hold back her rage-for Russell's and Kyla's sake. "Tilda, don't forget," Blair snapped through clenched teeth. "You owe me. You'll never be able to pay it back! I gave you life. You survived by feeding from me, and that's the only reason you stand here today. Every insult you throw at me, every way you shame my family, every time you hurt Kyla-you only get that chance because of me!" Her voice trembled with fury.

If she didn't spit out those cruel words, the fire inside her would burn her alive and take everyone around her down too. Tilda said nothing. She just stared at her like she was a lunatic. And honestly, Blair did look insane. No wonder she had given birth to sons like Dominic and Howard-two-faced and rotten

to the core. A dark thought ran through Tilda's mind. Was the DNA test wrong? She wanted more than anyone for it to be wrong. There was no way she could be Blair and Russell's daughter.

She didn't look like them, didn't act like them. No-she didn't deserve a family like them. Tilda prayed her real parents were someone else. That this whole thing was a cruel mistake. But deep down, she knew the truth. She'd secretly tested it again and again, and the answer never changed. She was the child of that vile couple. Their blood ran in her veins. It was a fact she couldn't erase, no matter how much she wanted to. "Mom? What's going on? Why are you still here?" Darel, Kayden, and Wade finally showed up. They'd waited too long. When their parents never returned, they came looking.

Chapter 625 A Sudden Collapse Everyone froze when they saw the sharp tension between Tilda and Blair. Blair's hair was a little messy, her pupils red, and her face twisted with madness. It was a side of their mother that no one had ever seen before. They had no idea what was going on. "Mom..." BANG! Something hit the ground hard. Everyone turned toward the sound. It was Justin! He had collapsed on the floor, clutching his chest, gasping for air, and unable to speak. "Justin?!" "Justin, what's wrong?!" The scene instantly fell into chaos. "It's hyperventilation!"

He needs to lie down now, and then we have to call 911 for help!" Astrid shouted. She'd taken medical classes before and recognized it immediately. This kind of attack usually came from overwhelming pain or sadness. If not handled quickly, it could stop his breathing-and it could be fatal. Astrid's eyes flicked to Tilda. She knew exactly why Justin had broken down like this. It was because of Tilda. And yet, Tilda stood still. Her medical skills were the best among them, but she had no intention of helping. With Justin in danger, no one cared about Blair and Tilda's fight anymore.

The Jensions rushed to carry Justin out, calling for the restaurant's medic for emergency treatment and dialing 911 to have him taken to the private hospital owned by the family. The once lively scene was now quiet, leaving only Tilda, Astrid, and Theo behind. "Man, what a mess," Theo sighed. "This is all my fault, Queen. I never thought the Jensions would be here at Sky Dining tonight. If I had checked, none of this would've happened." "This isn't your fault," Tilda said softly. "Maybe it's fate.

I've run into the Jensions in ways I never could have imagined, again and again. Maybe I owed them some kind of debt from another life, and I'm paying it back in this one." Her gaze darkened, and she let out a quiet sigh. If she had risked her life for Russell in another lifetime-suffering abuse, humiliation, depression, and suicide, only to die in flames and be despised at her grave-then maybe that had been the debt she owed the Jensions. But this time was different. That debt was already paid. She wasn't turning back. Her plan would stay the same.

Now it was the Jensons' turn to pay for their sins. Tilda noticed the worry in Astrid's eyes. "Astrid, go," she said. Astrid looked surprised. "Queen, you ... " "Since I know your true identity and still accepted you into the Comet Squad, it means I'll accept all your feelings too. I can never forgive my family-we've reached the point of no return. Forgiveness is impossible between us. But you're different, Astrid. They're still your family. They never did anything to you that can't be forgiven." Her voice softened. "If you're really worried about them, then go.

I'll be fine with Theo by my side. You don't have to cut ties with family who cared for you just because I did." Astrid said nothing. She met Tilda's eyes and saw the understanding there. Touched, she gave Tilda a quick hug. "Thank you, "Co, Tilda said gently, "I'll go check on them." Astrid left. Theo turned to Tilda, looking miserable. "Hmm, Queen, are we still eating?" "Of course," Tilda said with a faint smile. "I've been looking forward to tonight's Flonche-style dinner. How could I not?"

She sat down and pressed the service button. Theo hesitated, then sat across from her. He couldn't help but speak. "Queen, you yourself too hard." "Don't push" "I'm not," Tilda said calmly. "I already found things that matter far more than the Jensons ever could. Don't I look happy? I have my mentor, my partners, and my friends." Theo sighed, then smiled. "Alright. If that's how you feel, then no more gloomy talk. Since Astrid can't be here tonight, I'll keep you company." Justin was rushed to the hospital and taken straight into surgery.

Everyone waited outside in fear. "How could this happen? How could Justin just collapse like that?" Blair panicked when her son suddenly passed out. Astrid sighed quietly. "Aunt Blair, hyperventilation usually comes from deep emotional pain. You kept fighting with Tilda just now. Justin must've seen everything. He felt desperate but didn't know how to stop it. That stress probably triggered the attack."

Chapter 626 Masks of Guilt Darell opened his mouth like he wanted to say something, but stayed silent. Justin had already shown signs of his autism creeping back. Now he was struggling with hyperventilation. But saying that out loud would only add to everyone's worry. "I'm sorry, it's my fault. I don't even know what happened. How did I lose control like that? I promised myself that no matter what Tilda said, I'd stay calm." Blair held her head in her hands, drowning in guilt. She'd gone to face Tilda knowing she'd be humiliated.

She thought she was ready. But in the end, she lost herself, turning into a complete wreck. Russell tried to comfort her. "Blair, don't think like that. This isn't your fault." Kyla crouched in front of her mother, tears streaming down her face. "Yeah, Mom, please don't blame yourself. We're already at the hospital. Cousin Astrid treated Justin on the way here. He's strong. He'll be fine." "Kyla, I'm sorry. I failed you and Justin. I caused this. Does your face still hurt?" Blair gently touched the red mark from Tilda's slap. Her eyes filled with pain. "It doesn't hurt. Not at all, Mom.

What hurts more is my heart. It's all my fault. I ruined this family. I hurt you, Dad, my brothers ... even Tilda. I don't deserve to be a daughter in this family. Tilda's so much stronger than me. She deserves it

more than I ever could." Kyla's tears rolled down faster and faster until she was sobbing uncontrollably. "Sorry, Mom. I need the bathroom." Without waiting for Blair to respond, Kyla covered her face and ran off, disappearing down the hall. Blair clutched Russell's chest and broke down. "W-why is this happening to our family? Why?" Russell couldn't answer.

He just held her close, patting her back in silence while grief spread through him like poison. If they had known things would come to this, they never would have made those choices. Their mistakes were unforgivable. There was no hope to hold onto. Watching Kyla continue her act, even knowing who she really was, they couldn't say a word. Watching Blair nearly lose her mind, then come back to herself only to be crushed with guilt, while still trapped in Kyla's lies—it was unbearable.

They all wore false masks, moving across a stage like actors in a play. Every action rehearsed, every word scripted. Nothing was real. Just like Tilda had said. They were clowns and maniacs, broken and pathetic, without even realizing it. Maybe Tilda leaving their family was the best thing that could have ever happened to her. She escaped this hell. She didn't end up like them, living in shame, neither whole nor human. Astrid stood off to the side, watching Russell's family fall apart. Her heart ached, but she had no right to say anything.

All she could do was wait quietly with them for Justin's surgery to end. Darell clenched his fists, finally making up his mind. "Brothers, I'll leave things here to you. There's something important I need to take care of. I'll be back soon!" Kayden and Wade stared at him in shock. "Darell? Justin's in this condition; what could be more important than this?" "Trust me," When they saw the seriousness in Darell's eyes, the two went quiet. After a pause, they nodded. "Alright, go ahead. We'll look after everyone." "I'm counting on you!" Without another word, Darell turned and hurried off.

Meanwhile, Tilda and Theo dinner at a leisurely pace. Tilda took a sip of wine, dabbed her lips with a napkin, and said, "The flavor really is good. This chef they hired must be exceptional." "I heard he used to run a Michelin three-star restaurant in Flonche. He's got 30 years of nearly now and still working the front line, always pushing for something new. The owners must've gone to great lengths to bring him here." Theo relaxed as he spoke.

When he saw Tilda enjoying the meal and not looking upset, he finally let out the breath he'd been holding. He had worried the earlier run-in with the Jenson's might have ruined her mood. If that had happened, he would've felt guilty for suggesting Sky Dining. When they and stepped out of the elevator, they suddenly ran into someone. "Tilda ..." Darell came rushing up, out of breath and drenched in sweat. He'd been stuck in traffic, but finally made it—just in time to catch her.

Chapter 627 Vent Some of His Rage Tilda's expression darkened. "You really want more trouble? Darell, keep it up and I won't hesitate to wreck that pretty actor face of yours." Theo barked, "Mr. Jenson, that's enough! Can't you see she wants nothing to do with you? Have some self-awareness! Why are you still pestering her? Do you need to get hurt before you stop?" Theo was furious; the Jensons' antics had him at the end of his rope. A flash of sympathy for Tilda cut through his anger-dealing with that family was maddening.

Even after she'd cut ties, she was still dragged back into their mess by blood and obligation. "Mr. Theo, I didn't come for you. I came for Tilda!" Darell didn't look at Theo; his eyes were locked on Tilda. "Justin's having breathing trouble, and his autism symptoms are coming back ... You saved him once. You gave him hope, the dream of becoming a pianist. You were his light." "Darell, if you've lost your mind, go see a doctor. I'm not taking you in. I don't deal with crazies." "I don't even remember doing any of that. And if Justin is sick again, that's not my fault.

You're his brother-you should be by his side, making sure he doesn't die. Talking nonsense to me won't save him!" Darell shot back, "No. I had to tell you. If Justin relapses, it won't be fixable unless you forgive him. You're the only one who can help. You're his salvation and the wound he won't speak of. You're the knot in his heart!" Darell saw it with painful clarity. Even if Justin's breathing improved, what about the autism coming back? Justin loved Tilda so fiercely it choked him; his pain showed just how much she meant to him.

She'd been his hope and his guide, and now she'd become the family's enemy. Just thinking about it broke Darell. "Oh, so according to you, Justin's doomed. Great. Go get him ready for the funeral. I'll send flowers. I'm not staying here to waste my time..." Tilda tried to step around him. Darell flinched as if struck by cold; he couldn't believe her cruelty. But when she turned to leave, he lunged and grabbed her arm. Tilda froze. What ?

Even with the strength he summoned, he shouldn't have been able to reach her so easily. Yet she made no move to pull away. Her face stayed ice-cold. "Darell, let go." "Tilda, Mom and Dad got what they deserved for hurting you. But Justin is innocent! He never hurt you. When he came back to Slosa and found out you cut ties with the Jensons, all he wanted was to make things right, to make you forgive the family and come home. "Are you really punishing us for Mom and Dad's sins? That's not fair. Do you want Justin to die before you'll stop?" "Yes! I want him to die! I'm that cruel!

Haven't you seen who I really am? Why do you keep bothering me?" Tilda kicked him hard in the stomach. Darell couldn't dodge. Pain twisted his face as he sank to his knees, but his hand still clung to

her arm. "Let go of Tilda!" Theo lost it and landed a savage punch on Darell. Finally, he let loose some of the fury he'd been holding back. The Jensons' brazenness had driven him to the edge. Darell's face went numb under the blow, but he didn't release Tilda; he clung as if his life depended on it. Theo tried to pull her free, clawing at Darell's grip, but it was unnaturally strong.

"You bastard! You really want to make this hard? Don't think I won't beat you!" Theo rained blow after blow on Darell's face. Soon, Darell's face was a bloody ruin, cuts splitting the corners of his mouth and eyes. Even then, he didn't let go of Tilda's arm. He didn't dodge. He didn't fight back. It was as if releasing her would be the end of him.

Chapter 628 Seek His Own Redemption Darell didn't flinch, no matter how many punches landed. Losing here meant giving up something more important than his own life. "What the ... Theo froze. He wasn't trying to kill Darell, but the guy acted like he couldn't even feel the hits. Theo had pulled his punches at first, but Darell never lifted a hand to defend himself-he just took every punch square in the face. As an actor , his looks should have been the one thing he protected most . So how could he stand there and let his face get wrecked without even blinking ?

Tilda's eyes narrowed, a dangerous light flickering in her gaze. "Darell, trying to get yourself killed? You think I'll go easy on you? I can't just kill him out in the open - that would stir up too much trouble . But there are plenty of ways to make him suffer in private . Does he really think he can push me this far and walk away untouched ? In the end , his biggest mistake - both then and now -was trusting Kyla in that final moment , leaving me to die in the fire . He never even looked back . If he keeps pushing , I won't hesitate to leave him half - dead . Blood blurred Darell's sight.

His right eye was swollen shut, and with the left, he fixed a single gaze on Tilda. "No, Tilda ... my gut says if I let go now, there's no turning back." His grip on her arm tightened. He couldn't let go, "No turning back? You love using that line. There was never any turning back! "And no matter what you say, I'll never forgive the Jensons. If you're here to beg me to visit Justin in the hospital like Russell did, forget it. Justin isn't Blair, hiding behind some delusion. "If I went to see him and said even one harsh word, he'd sink deeper into depression.

Do you really think that would cure him? One wrong thought and he might actually end his life. Then you'd only have photos left to remember him by." Tilda's cutting words sliced through Darell's hand like knives. The pain was nearly unbearable. He didn't even know why he was still holding on. In more than 20 years of life, he had never felt this desperate. He had taken hit after hit, his face beaten and swollen. His looks were his biggest asset, yet he was willing to risk it all just to hang on.

Her words left him breathless, but his arm never moved. Why am I doing this ? Then it hit him-the dream from last night. That hazy vision returned, showing him an ending in another world. The pain wasn't only Tilda's-it was the Jensons' too. In that moment, Darell seemed to understand what he'd been clinging to. He couldn't fight the dream, but he couldn't stop Tilda from walking away either. So... maybe it was time to be selfish, to try for his own redemption. To end the nightmare, he had to uncover the truth the dream showed him. "Tilda... do you remember the first time we met?

I told you about this long, strange dream? You said you didn't know anything... but my instincts told me you did. You knew the real reason. And that's why you truly despise the Jensons, why you want to cut us off completely." If he couldn't uncover that root, he'd never know how to save the Jensons or win Tilda back. Tilda's expression stayed cold. "I told you, I don't know what you're talking about. Are you really so desperate that you're clinging to some dream as an excuse? Pathetic." Darell slowly let go of her arm. "Tilda, I finally get it.

That tangled dream isn't some curse or disease-it's a gift from God. It's meant for me to save the Jensons. "This ... is something only I can do," Looking into Darell's steady, determined eyes, Tilda realized he had sensed and "confirmed" something. Those dreams, in his mind, were tied to her past life. He claimed that in the dream, Tilda died in a fire. And that was exactly how her previous life had ended. Darell wasn't reborn, but he seemed to have some strange ability-to tap into the past or a parallel world.

After Tilda's death in flames, he could glimpse the Jensons' fate through his dreams and piece together the truth. Even Zorana acknowledged Darell's uncanny gift.

Chapter 629 Your Crazy Fans Might Kill Me If this were the old Tilda, she would've laughed off all that supernatural talk and written Darell off as completely unhinged. But after being reborn, Tilda had learned there are forces in this world that defy explanation. Science couldn't explain everything. She no longer cared what happened to the Jensons in her past life; her only aim now was to prove her worth in this one and to live happily. Darell's threats didn't scare her in the slightest. "Theo, let's go." Tilda turned and walked away without hesitation.

Theo wanted to give Darell one last kick, but seeing how beaten up he was, he held back. The man had already been punished enough, and the injury would take time to heal. He spat on the ground. "Don't you ever bother Tilda again, or I'll beat you every time I see you. Dead serious." Then he hurried after Tilda. "Tilda, wait up 11 "Tilda! When I find the truth, I'm coming for you again! This is how much I mean it!" Darell pulled his car keys from his pocket. Theo and Tilda froze, unsure what he intended. Without warning, Darell dragged the jagged end of the key across his own cheek. "Darell!

You're out of your mind!" Theo lunged, trying to stop him, but the key scored a bleeding cut across Darell's face. Flesh split open, and blood ran freely. The wound looked brutal enough to make anyone flinch. Fortunately, Theo grabbed the keys in time; otherwise, the gash would have been permanent, a scar to ruin Darell's face for life. Darell was an actor-this kind of madness could destroy his entire career. Seeing him still trying to harm himself, Theo seized the bloody keys and clamped down on his wrist.

"What the hell are you doing?

No matter how hurt you are, don't do this to yourself!" Fans Might Kill Me "Tilda, I want my acting to prove I chose the right path. I want people to see me for who I am. This face and my Jenson name opened doors for me. "If this face ever blocks my dream, I'd rather ruin it myself. It's my choice. I want you to see how this story ends. "When the truth comes out ...

I feel like something will quietly change." Summoning the last of his strength, Darell wrenched his arm free, stuffed the keys into his pocket, and walked off with blood still streaming down his cheek. He moved as if nothing else in the world mattered. "That guy ... What ... Tilda ... " Theo stared after him, tense and worried. After that near-suicidal stunt, Theo feared Darell might do something even more impulsive once he'd gone, maybe actually kill himself. Although Theo hated how the Jensons treated Tilda, he never wanted anyone dead. "Darell ... you really take after Blair.

Like Dominic and Howard, you got her madness in your blood. I'm glad I have Jenson blood too; I can't deny it. But at least I didn't inherit her crazy genes. "You're reckless like your mother and brothers, but I see your resolve. When you find out what that weird ending in your dream means, tell me. "Theo, take Darell home." With that, Tilda slid her hands into her pockets and walked away, leaving both men behind. Darell froze. What did she just say? She asked Theo to take me home ? Did my reckless stunt finally move her? He didn't dare think too much.

Even the tiniest sign of Tilda's mercy brought tears of gratitude. He knew he was acting nuts, like a puppy about to be abandoned. But after hurting himself, he was weirdly calm, as if it was totally normal. Tilda was cold toward him, although he had never done anything to deserve it. If it were anyone else, he'd be furious. Now, even a little kindness from her felt like a lifeline. Might Kill Me Maybe, like Tilda said, he had Blair's blood and her madness, making him a mix of insanity and Stockholm Syndrome. "Guess I'm just unlucky. Let's go.

I'll take you to the hospital to get patched up. Otherwise, if anything happens to that superstar face of yours, your fans will kill me."

Chapter 630 Weird Man Theo muttered under his breath as he half-dragged Darell toward the nearest hospital. They couldn't risk going to just any clinic-only one of the Woodward Group's private hospitals would do. If anyone snapped a picture of Darell looking like this, it would explode into scandal. Truth was, Theo wanted nothing to do with Darell. All he wanted was to go home, collapse on the couch, and sleep for twelve hours straight. But if he ditched him now and Darell pulled something even more reckless ... Well, he didn't need that kind of trouble.

He sighed in frustration. What a nightmare . If I'd known today would turn out like this , I would've stayed home and played video games . Darell kept his mouth shut and didn't resist as Theo hauled him along. After all, Theo was Tilda's friend, and she'd told him directly to make sure Darell got home safe. Normally, Darell would've insisted on patching himself up. But this time, he held back. He knew Tilda would only worry if he fought it, and he didn't want to add to her stress. Besides, showing up at the Jenson estate like this was out of the question-he needed an excuse that made sense.

The next morning at 9 a.m. sharp, Tilda arrived alone at Serenity Abbey on the outskirts of Slosa. It wasn't pilgrimage season, so the place was quieter than usual. The city of Slosa had a massive abbey downtown, always thick with incense and jammed with tourists and worshippers. But Tilda hated noise. On Una's advice, she chose a smaller abbey in the countryside-lively enough to feel welcoming, but not overwhelming. She didn't really believe in God, but she had a "better safe than sorry" mindset.

After the chaos of the past weeks, she wanted somewhere to breathe, pray, and clear the shadows from her mind. April air in the Slosa hills was still cool and sharp. She wore a sporty jacket over jeans, white sneakers, and tied her hair into a neat ponytail as she started up the hill. Half an hour later, she reached the abbey gates. Dong ... The bell tolled, slow and sonorous. Step by step, she climbed the stone stairway, passing crimson walls and a gold plaque reading Serenity Abbey.

Smoke curled from a great bronze incense burner, carrying a faint fragrance on the wind. Tilda drew in a deep breath, letting the incense mix with the crisp mountain air. The bell's steady rhythm echoed through the hills, birds darted between the trees, and the rustle of leaves seemed to sweep her thoughts clean. This was a peace no city could give her. Already, some of her weariness had slipped away. She walked through the abbey gates, passing young monks in training. Each gave her a polite bow and a quiet, "Peace be with you," before going on with their chores.

Admiration flickered in her eyes. In a world where so many monasteries had been sold off or commercialized, these monks had chosen humility over comfort and devotion over profit. She'd heard of priests in mansions with luxury cars, but here-in this quiet, timeworn abbey- she saw the dignity of true

faith on their faces. A few young novices peeked out from the shadows, their gray habits hanging loose on small frames, wooden rosaries bouncing at their waists. Their wide-eyed curiosity and round cheeks made her want to laugh and scoop them up. She smiled, crouched down, and waved.

Most of them scattered shyly, but one lingered. After a pause, he folded his hands like he'd seen the others do and murmured, "Peace be with you, sister." Tilda reached out and brushed his cheek. It was soft and warm. "You're precious," she said gently. "Are you studying here as a novice?" The boy shook his head. "No, I'm a model. I came for a photo shoot. But there's a strange man who comes here a lot. After the shoot, he tells us stories." "A strange man?" Tilda frowned, already bristling. She was ready to march over and scold whatever adult had left the kids to wander around unsupervised.

If something happened, or if one of them was taken, it would be too late. Just then, a voice called, "Nick, don't run off!" "Mr. Bell!" Nick Lynch's face lit up, and he darted toward the voice with a grin. Tilda turned sharply, ready to confront "Mr. Bell," furious at the thought of someone so careless. But when the man's face came into view, she froze. "Wait... Devin?!" It was Jude's biological father. Even Devin looked taken aback that anyone had recognized him.

He had stayed under the radar in the Bells for over 20 years and was basically invisible. The outside world had long forgotten Devin, once the fourth son of the Bells.