

The Epic BD 161

Chapter 161 Apollo Acknowledges Them as Family

Alice was dressed as Tanner, and the identification documents she used belonged to her as well.

"You're here, Alice." When Jane opened the door, she couldn't help but feel her heart ache upon seeing Alice's haggard state. "You must be tired from the journey, right?"

"I'm fine. I'm going to check on Pierce." Alice smiled as she looked at Jane, but it was slightly forced. Although she was usually skilled at masking her emotions, it was difficult for her to do so whenever she faced her brother.

"Okay." Jane's eyes darkened, her tone turning downcast.

Alice didn't say anything in reply and walked into Pierce's ward.

Although it looked like a regular residential ward from the outside, it was filled with cutting-edge medical equipment, and there were also specialized doctors making daily visits, putting the ward in a much better condition than even the most advanced hospitals.

For the sake of her brother, Alice had done everything she could. However, seven years had gone by, and Pierce was still unconscious.

As she gazed at Pierce lying on the bed, her usual mask left her face, and her eyes reddened in an instant. She walked over and bent over before the bed, the corners of her lips twitching slightly as she looked at the unconscious man. "Pierce, it's been seven years. Aren't you done resting yet?"

There was a beat of silence as Alice gazed at Pierce before her lips twitched. There was an attempt at a smile, but the tug of her lips didn't bear the impression of a smile at all, and the sight was all the more tragic to look at. Even Jane, who was standing off to the side, only felt her eyes turn hot with tears.

Although the arc on her lips didn't look like a smile, she still tried her best to force them upward. "I know you haven't gotten enough rest yet, Pierce, so rest well."

However, this single sentence made Jane unable to hold her tears back any longer, causing them to flow freely down her face.

Alice's eyes were brimming with tears as well, but she still fought to keep the corners of her lips lifted upward. "There are some things I was waiting for you to deal with once you woke up, but now, I have no choice but to resolve them."

At this, her words came to a slight pause, and when she opened her mouth next, her voice had turned slightly softer. "Pierce, can you wake up when I'm done with everything? Praise me like you did when we were younger, and tell me that I did a good job."

Seven years had passed since she took everything on herself, but she had to be strong. She couldn't loosen her guard in the slightest, nor

did she dare to. It was only in front of Pierce that she could let up her act and allow herself to appear weak. How she wished for Pierce to wake up right now.

Jane covered her mouth with a hand to suppress her sobs, but her tears gushed down her face fiercely.

It had been seven years, but she knew more than anyone else what Alice had gone through. Seven years ago, Alice faced everything alone in order to protect Pierce. In these seven years, countless people had been sent to murder her.

Seven years ago, Alice was only eighteen, and she was a princess basked in love and affection before she turned into an adult. The Alice back then had an enviably perfect life and she was both pure and naive.

However, she was struck with the cruelest fate in just a single day, and she was forced to grow up in that one day. Jane still remembered the first time Alice got hurt. It had barely been a month since they arrived in Cliaria, and they weren't even able to settle down before Elijah sent someone to end her life. Back then, she had not expected the attack, resulting in her getting terribly injured.

When Alice woke up and realized the circumstances, she did not cry. She only sat by Pierce's bedside and said in a soft voice, "Thank goodness Pierce wasn't the one who got hurt."

Ever since then, Alice kept every single piece of information about Pierce tightly hidden, and it was also from that moment that she did everything she could to make herself even more powerful.

In the past seven years, as those people had repeatedly sent their minions to end Alice's life, Jane witnessed her gradual change from a spoiled and sheltered princess into a cold-hearted woman who barely batted an eyelid when faced with an assassination. However, despite everything she had been through, Alice's heart had managed to remain kind.

Although she was constantly met with struggles, and even though she was treated so unfairly, she still rescued another person's child and put her all into raising that child. Jane firmly believed that if someone else were in Alice's shoes, they wouldn't have been able to act as she had.

"Jane." Alice rose to her feet, wiping the tears off Jane's face for her.

After the car accident seven years ago, Jane visited Pierce at the hospital without anyone knowing and said to Alice through reddened eyes, "Let me see Pierce. Whether he's alive, or... dead, I still have to see him."

Alice was acquainted with Jane, but before that incident, she always assumed that Pierce had a one-sided crush on her. However, the moment she saw Jane, she instantly realized that she loved Pierce deeply as well.

Then, Jane followed them to Cliaria. Throughout the span of seven years, she remained by Pierce's side and spent her days taking care of him.

In fact, Alice yearned to call Jane her sister-in-law, even if it was to provide some form of support as a family member or to comfort her psychologically.

However, she was unable to say this selfish wish of hers aloud, afraid that if Pierce never woke up, this title would turn into a burden constricting Jane instead.

"Alice, did something happen? You must have a reason to be here." As she had already heard Alice's words earlier, Jane could guess that something was up.

"Yeah." Alice slowly nodded her head. "It's about time to confront Glenn Group."

She took out the documents she had prepared and placed them by Pierce's bed, after which she slowly closed her eyes to suppress her emotions. Then, she opened them and held Pierce's finger, stamping his fingerprint on the document she had prepared.

She could replicate Pierce's signature. Although she had always been waiting eagerly for him to regain consciousness, her experiences over the past seven years had given her a habit of preparing herself for everything. Because of that, she had long since learned to imitate Pierce's handwriting.

Of course, it was definitely not enough to only have Pierce's signature, not even with his seal. After all, these things could be forged while others could easily deny their authenticity.

However, fingerprints couldn't be falsified. Pierce's fingerprints could be easily found in the company's previous contracts, and as long as they matched, those people would have no choice but to acknowledge it.

Meanwhile, Jane stood off to the side and watched. When Alice was finished, she reminded her softly, "You should watch out for yourself. Those people aren't human; they can do anything."

"Yeah." Alice nodded gently. She understood the Woland Family more than anyone else, and she knew that her actions would certainly force them into a corner.

However, this was a step she had to take. Even if Pierce hadn't awakened, she would take all the responsibility in order to ensure that he was out of danger.

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It was fine even if Pierce was still unconscious. As long as Alice took care of everything, she would be able to keep him out of danger.

After finishing what she came for, Alice did not rush to leave. As there were just too many things she had to deal with in Rodcaster, there was no saying when the next time she would see Pierce again was, and so she wanted to spend more time with him.

Sensing her thoughts, Jane quietly left the room to give her some space.

As Alice sat by the bed, she did not say anything and only gazed at her brother silently. She yearned for him to wake up, but she didn't want him to go through the dangers she was experiencing either.

Moreover, she had no idea if Pierce could hear her speak, and she was afraid that he would be upset if he knew what was going on, so she decided to keep some things to herself.

Just like that, Alice stayed by his side for two hours, and it was only when Jane called her for dinner that she left the ward.

Worried about the two children, Jane couldn't help but ask while they were having their meal, "How's Apollo and Caroline?"

Of course, the purpose of her question was not purely out of curiosity, but she also wanted to distract Alice a little so that she would not be wallowing in despair.

"Jane, Caroline found her family." The reason why Alice had not informed Jane beforehand was because she was worried that their calls would be intercepted. However, she did not hide anything now that they were together.

After seven years, Alice now completely treated Jane as her family.

"Really? That's a relief." Jane didn't pry any further and purely felt happy for Caroline.

Alice looked at her and added, "I also helped Apollo find his biological father."

Jane paused in her tracks, her eyes staring intently at Alice as she pressed, "Apollo's biological father? Who is it?"

Jane knew that there were too many threats around Alice, so she always had her guard up for all these years, and she would not stick her nose into things that didn't involve her. However, she just couldn't hold it in any longer when it came to this matter.

"It's Keith Rowland. He saved me seven years ago." Alice's explanation was curt, but it made everything crystal clear.

"Keith Rowland? Is that the Rowland Family I'm thinking about?" Jane was momentarily stunned before her eyes gleamed. "In that case, will you let Apollo acknowledge them as his family?"

In Jane's opinion, if Apollo admitted his relationship to the Rowland Family, they would be able to help Alice out as they were a kind-hearted bunch.

Alice

had spent many difficult years all alone, and yet there was nothing she could do to help besides taking care of Pierce. Hence, her heart ached for Alice, and she yearned that there would be someone who would lend her a helping hand and take the burden off her shoulders so that she would not be bearing everything alone anymore.

"If Apollo wants to acknowledge them, I won't stop him. I told Apollo that I made an appointment with Keith when I arrived, and they should've already met by now." As Alice continued talking, the pain on her face finally dissipated somewhat.

Although Apollo was only seven years of age, he had strong opinions, and Alice completely respected his wishes.

Alice would not communicate with the outside world when she was with Pierce, and she would even switch off all of her devices whenever she visited in order to ensure his absolute safety. As she headed straight for Pierce's quarters after disembarking the plane, her phone remained switched off the entire time, leaving her unable to check on Apollo's situation.

However, she knew his capabilities well, and the Rowland Family were decent people. If Apollo wanted to acknowledge them as his kin, it would most likely go smoothly. In fact, he might already be at their residence. As she was about to tackle the Woland and Yeager Families soon, she would be able to rest easy if Apollo had the Rowland Family's protection.

"Good, good." Jane bobbed her head, her mood clearly lifted by the news. "When are you going back?"

"I have a flight tonight, and I'll reach Rodcaster tomorrow at noon." Knowing that Jane was concerned about her, Alice let out a chuckle. "Don't worry, Jane. I've already settled everything in Rodcaster, and I can start the plan as soon as I arrive."

"You must be careful." However, rather than reassuring her, Alice's words caused Jane's heart to soar to her throat instead. "Alice, I understand your wish for revenge, but your safety is the most important. You must stay safe for Apollo's sake and also your brother's."

Jane did not want Pierce's situation to become a burden on Alice, but she had no choice but to say this as she knew all too well how important Pierce was to Alice, and it was only her bond with him that would stop Alice from going off the deep end.

"I know." Alice lowered her gaze. That was right—for Apollo and Pierce's sake, she would definitely not allow anything to happen to her.

However, now that she had returned to fully confront the Woland and Yeager Families, she couldn't stay by Caroline's side any longer. There was a possibility that she might have to leave the Knights earlier than expected; she might have to bring her wedding day with Ethan forward.

"Alice, if the Rowland Family helps you, don't turn them down. After all, they're Apollo's family, so it's not wrong for them to avenge his grandparents." Jane knew Alice too well, and she wanted to lift her burden even just by a little.

Hearing that, Alice lifted her eyes to look at Jane. "This is my business in the first place. We shouldn't involve Apollo in this, much less the Rowland Family."

"Alice, you can relax a little sometimes. Don't be too strict on yourself, and don't be too cruel to yourself either..." Jane attempted to convince her.

"Jane, if there are debts that I'm unable to repay, I can't let myself take on that debt." Alice gently interrupted her words.

When Keith saved her life seven years ago, she had already owed him her life. Although he had proposed to her and James had even shown up at her door to ask for her hand,

and as well, there was no way she could marry Keith. Even if he was Apollo's biological father, she could n't marry him for that reason either. Hence, what she had to do now was to maintain her relationship with Keith so that there wouldn't be any attachments between them.

Since she was unable to give Keith what he wanted, she would not give him any false hopes. After all, leading someone on only to reject them later was the most despicable thing a person could do.

Jane gazed at Alice, her lips twitching as the words she wanted to say sat on the tip of her tongue. However, she could only let out a small sigh in the end. She understood Alice, and she was well aware that once Alice made a decision, no one was able to make her change her mind.

Alice was scheduled for a night flight, so after finishing her meal, she went to spend some time with Pierce before she headed to the guest room to catch some shut-eye. As she was in Pierce's living quarters, her phone remained off from start to end.

Meanwhile, Ethan was on the brink of a meltdown from searching high and low in Rodcaster for her.

"Mr. Knight, we still haven't found Young Madam Knight," Caleb reported for the umpteenth time. They had nearly turned the entire city over in their attempts to find Alice, but she was nowhere to be seen.

Ethan held his phone in his hand, where a string of numbers was shown on the screen. He had dialed this number so many times he couldn't keep track, but not a single one of his calls went through as the other end was unreachable.

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"Keep looking." Ethan's deep voice carried a trace of hoarseness as he realized that the only thing he could do now was carry on with the search.

Afraid to say anything else, Caleb hastily took his leave.

"How's it going? Do we still have to look?" Liam, who was passing by, could catch the gist of what had happened upon seeing Caleb's expression.

"Yes." Recalling Ethan's expression, Caleb added, "Hurry up and start looking. If we don't succeed anytime soon, Mr. Knight will lose his mind."

"We haven't been able to find Young Madam Knight with this method at all. I think that there's a high possibility she isn't in Rodcaster. If we keep looking..." Liam voiced his concerns objectively.

"But we don't have any information of Young Madam Knight leaving Rodcaster." Caleb instantly cut him off.

"That's why I find it weird. Something's off." Liam couldn't help but mutter under his breath, "I'm starting to think that there's witchcraft at work."

"That really may be possible. What else could make Mr. Knight act like this?" Sam joked, "Young Madam Knight really has Mr. Knight wrapped around her finger this time."

“That’s Young Madam Knight you’re talking about. So what if she has him wrapped around her finger? What about it?” Caleb reached out and tapped them with his fingers. “You talk too much.”

“Strange things happen all the time, but particularly this year. Who would’ve thought that Mr. Knight would turn out like this?” Sam’s laugh turned even jollier.

“Hurry up and get looking. If we still don’t find her, you probably won’t live to see tomorrow.” Caleb extended a leg and sent Sam a kick. Did they think Ethan was someone they could make fun of?

Hence, Ethan’s men continued to scour every corner of Rodcaster for a day and a night, but they were not met with any success.

Meanwhile, Alice returned to Rodcaster at around 3.00PM. Using Tanner’s identity as usual, she left the airport and headed straight to Galerprises.

Galerprises was registered under Archie’s name, and Alice had attended an interview there a while ago, earning herself a job as a female assistant in the project department.

Of course, she used her identity as Alice Woland to do so.

There were two reasons why she went to Galerprises—firstly, it was to politely reject Ethan’s offer for her to work at Knight Group some time ago. She entered the Knight Family for Caroline’s sake, and she would eventually

leave one day, so she couldn’t get too attached to Ethan. Secondly, she also needed a disguise.

Currently, Alice was still dressed as Tanner, and she entered the company with this identity before taking a private elevator to the top floor where Archie was waiting for her.

“You’re finally back.” Archie let out a small sigh upon seeing her. “I’ve already taken care of everything on Mr. Lector’s end. I’ll bring the documents over to him in a while and act according to the plan.”

“Okay,” Alice replied softly as she retrieved the documents she prepared and handed them to him.

Archie glanced through them roughly, then let out a scoff. “Since everyone in the Woland Family insists on having a death wish, we’ll fulfill their wishes now.”

Alice remained silent. If her guess was right and the Woland Family really did have a third party behind their back, she had no clue how this issue would end.

After putting the documents away, Archie turned to her again. “Recently, the Yeager Family has been quite active. Bruce has even participated in the bidding for the Riverwale project.”

“Bruce put in a bid for the Riverwale project?” Alice frowned slightly. “Does he have enough funds? Does he even have a tender that meets the requirements?”

Just the traps she set up in Woland Group for Bruce were enough to keep him busy even if he hadn’t completely fallen for them yet. How was he still able to bid for the Riverwale project?

“The money came from Thomas. Since Yeager Corp is in so much trouble and can’t operate as usual anymore, he probably wants to place all his hopes on Woland Group. As for the tender, I’m pretty certain that he doesn’t have one.”

"You removed everyone with the slightest bit of skills in Woland Group beforehand, and anyone who's able to deal with this matter has long left Yeager Corp, so who would be there to write up a tender for them? I have no idea what Bruce is thinking."

A trace of derision appeared in the corner of Archie's lips.

"Bruce really is useless. Even without the traps you set up for him, he failed at managing Woland Group."

"Woland Group is a train wreck under his leadership. Moreover, he's only realized the problem with the working capital now, but not the rest of the traps you set for him in the company. When he finally notices them, I'm afraid he'll be done for."

Alice was not surprised by any of these issues as all of them were within her expectations. "Just let them kick up a fuss on their own. We'll take care of Woland Group first."

"Sure." Archie was used to heeding her orders over the years and did not protest. "What are you planning now? Since you're dealing with this matter as Tanner in order to prevent the Woland Family from finding anything related to Pierce, are you planning to show up as Tanner and start facing them head-on?"

Alice pursed her lips lightly and fell silent for a moment before saying, "I still have to tackle some issues as Alice Woland."

She was still worried about Caroline—as her trip to Claria was sudden and rushed, she was only able to speak to her through the phone. Hence, she still wanted to see Caroline again as there were some things that she had to make clear to her. Besides, she had to get to the bottom of things with Ethan as well.

"All right. It just so happens that Mr. Affleck from the project department has some business to attend to at Royale, so it's perfect for you to make use of your identity as the junior assistant. You can just change back into Alice and head over with Mr. Affleck." When it came to Alice's decisions, Archie never once doubted them and only had nothing but support for her.

Whilst he spoke, Archie couldn't help but let out a laugh. "This disguise of yours really is clever. As expected of you to have the foresight to apply as a junior assistant in the project department ahead of time."

"Okay." Alice felt that this plan was more than perfect as well.

Then, she changed into her usual attire and left Galerprises with Mr. Affleck to head toward Royale.

Soon after, Caleb received news of her whereabouts. "Mr. Knight, we've found Young Madam Knight. It seems that she's currently at Royale."

"At Royale? She's still at Royale?" Ethan's eyes flashed. Had she always been at Royale without leaving?

"Yes, Young Madam Knight did leave Royale two days ago. I just found out that she came out of Galerprises as she signed up for a job there recently and is currently working in the project department. I was told that the employees at Galerprises have be

en working overtime these days because of the Riverwale project, and the information I have now is that Young Madam Knight has been putting in extra hours at the company for the past two days,” Caleb reported.

He felt extremely conflicted as he said this. After all, they had spent two days turning Rodcaster over to look for Alice, and Ethan had been searching high and low for her like he’d lost his mind, only to find out she’d been working overtime at Galerprises.

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They had checked all of the vehicles, hotels, and residential areas, as well as every single surveillance footage they could get their hands on. However, it was a fact that they had not gone looking for her at every company. After all, who would’ve thought that Alice was in Galerprises and had not left for two entire days? It didn’t make any sense.

Ethan didn’t think too much of it, nor did he have the heart to at the moment. After hearing the news, he immediately jumped to his feet before he got into his car and sped away.

As he had left too hastily, he didn’t even take Caleb with him, leaving him to watch helplessly like an abandoned puppy as Ethan’s car drove into the distance.

On the other hand, Alice had originally planned to head to Royale with Mr. Affleck and go through the motions before leaving as she was just an assistant in the project department at the moment. Besides, Archie had already informed Mr. Affleck beforehand.

Alice knew that Caroline was tender-hearted and sensitive, and she was worried about her, so she planned to rush home to see her.

However, just as she was about to leave, she bumped into Bruce in the hallway. Or, more accurately, Bruce blocked her path.

Alice’s gaze darkened. What was Bruce doing by stopping her at a time like this? Had he noticed the problems in Woland Group and realized that it was her doing?

Bruce stood in her way, squeezing a forced smile on his face as he gazed at her in a way that he assumed was gentle and affectionate. “Alice, are you working at Galerprises now?”

“Yeah.” Alice lowered her head, her eyes as dark as an abyss. She could catch the gist of the reason why Bruce was looking for her.

Bruce must be seeking her out because he saw her with the project manager of Galerprises earlier. As he wanted to bid for the Riverwale project as well, there was a huge possibility that he wanted to find out what was going on at Galerprises.

When Bruce heard her admit to the truth, his eyes gleamed for a split second. “I saw you with Mr. Affleck from the project department earlier. Are you in Galerprises’ project department?”

Alice didn’t deny his words. “Yes.”

As a matter of fact, she didn't want to waste any of her time on him. However, there was something on her mind, which was the reason why she wasn't rushing to leave.

Bruce's eyes clearly brightened, and his voice carried a trace of hope when he spoke next. "Then, do you know about Galerprises' tender regarding the Riverwale project?"

"I'm just an assistant, an errand girl. I'm not too sure," Alice replied naturally without a hint of guilt in her

tone.

"Alice, I know that you like me, and you always wanted to marry me." Bruce took a few steps toward her, his eyes boring into her lovingly.

His words snapped Alice out of her thoughts, and she whipped her head upward to look at him, nearly unable to hide the dumbfounded expression on her face. How thick-skinned could this man get?

Meanwhile, Bruce had no idea what she was thinking and even assumed that she was swooning over his charm. Curling the corner of his lips upward, he flashed her a smile and said in a sweet voice, "Alice, as long as you manage to obtain Galerprises' tender document, I'll marry you."

Alice stared at him, the corners of her lips twitching.

Oh my god, what's with my luck? It's one thing to bump into this disgusting thing, but why do I still have to listen to him spewing gross nonsense? What did I do to deserve this?

At that moment, Alice was considering punching the daylight out of him just to prevent him from saying anything that would disgust her even further.

She

even balled her hand into a fist, but she soon loosened it in the next instant. As she was about to confront the Woland Family, she was worried that they might have a third party backing them and afraid there would be unforeseen dangers ahead of her. While she would not personally show her face in the incident regarding the Glenn Group, the Woland Family or the third party supporting them would definitely keep a close eye on her.

If she, in a situation

like this, were to continue to be involved with Bruce and even steal Galerprises' trade secrets out of her infatuation for him, anyone would think that she was just a 'lovestruck fool, and no one would suspect her.

That way, she could better cover her tracks and lay low, making her even more capable of protecting Caroline, Apollo, and Pierce. Hence, this was the perfect plan for her.

Besides, this would directly impact the Yeager Family as well as speed up the process of the plan, ending things sooner and thoroughly removing the threat. It would be a waste to miss out on this opportunity to kill two birds with one stone. Since Bruce presented himself to her on a silver platter, there was no blaming her for this.

Meanwhile, Bruce was still coaxing Alice with a sweet tongue. "Don't worry, Alice, I'll definitely keep my word. As long as you get the tender document, I promise that I'll marry you and give you a grand ceremony."

At that moment, Ethan had coincidentally rushed upstairs and was at a corner not far away from them. Thus, he caught wind of Bruce's promise loud and clear.

Immediately, Ethan's eyes darkened, turning cold and oozing with murderous intent.

*Bruce, you d*ckhead, do you have a death wish? How dare you say that you want to marry my wife?*

Ethan's eyes narrowed dangerously as he lifted his foot with the intention of striding over and sending Bruce flying with a kick.

However, just then, Alice spoke up. "Okay, I promise you."

The leg that Ethan had lifted came to a sudden halt in midair and froze in place, the shock causing him to forget to put his foot down.

What... What did she just say? I promise you? What did she promise? What on earth did she promise to Bruce?

Ethan's hand clenched tightly around the stair banister, and his foot finally touched the ground. However, he was no longer in a hurry to walk over to the two and only remained frozen on the stairway without budging an inch, as if he were glued in place.

"Really, Alice? You really promise me?" Upon seeing that Alice had agreed, Bruce was clearly elated.

However, there was a trace of mockery in his eyes. He knew that this woman liked him and would do anything for him like the fool that she was. There was no way he would marry an idiot like her, but as she still held some value to him, he was still obligated to appease her.

"Alice, I just know that you're the best. Don't worry, I'll definitely treat you well. Once everything's done, I'll marry you and take good care of you." From the way Bruce was able to spout these empty words so smoothly, it was clear that he had his fair share of experience in doing so.

After spewing his sweet lies, he didn't forget to get back to business either. "Alice, try to find a way to steal the tender document for me when you go to the company tomorrow."

"But I'm just an assistant, I don't have access to such an important document." Although Alice had already come up with the perfect plan in her mind, she naturally still had to put on a show.

"Just give it a try. If you can't do that, we'll think of another plan. Remember, follow my instructions; I'll contact you soon." Bruce trusted Alice even more after hearing her words, and he was currently gloating inwardly. He didn't expect things to go so smoothly.

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Bruce proved himself to be quite skilled in coercion as he added, "Alice, I bought a present that I wanted to give to you, but I wasn't able to meet you. I'll let someone send it over to you tomorrow, so be good."

In order to get his hands on the tender document, he was still able to immerse himself in the act.

“Okay,” Alice replied softly before she lowered her head. Though it looked as if she was being meek and infatuated with him, her eyes were filled with cold mockery.

Damn, *where did Bruce get all his pride and confidence from?*

If it weren't for her plan to conceal herself in order to protect Apollo and Pierce even better, she would've already sent him flying to a different planet by now.

“Alice, I still have some matters to attend to. Go home for now and wait for my present tomorrow.” Bruce was particularly satisfied with Alice's behavior as well as smug, assuming that he had everything under his control.

He had plans with someone else, so he left after finishing his conversation with Alice.

As she watched him leave, Alice secretly took a deep breath and exhaled slowly, and it was only by repeating this a few times that she managed to swallow her disgust. After she calmed down, she strode forward again, but as she turned the corner, a pair of long legs that were blocking her way entered her sight.

These legs were lean and shapely, and the well-fitted slacks they were wrapped in enhanced their seductiveness. After admiring the pair of long legs, she remembered with a jolt that she should take a look at their owner.

Her gaze trailed up the aesthetically pleasing legs before she was met with a face that was quite familiar to her. The face was just as visually appealing, but alas...

Ethan leaned slightly on the wall, his feet casually placed on the ground as his eyes bored into her. There was a cigarette clasped between his slender fingers, but it was unlit.

“What a coincidence, Mr. Knight.” Alice was momentarily taken aback, but she still greeted him with a smile. After all, they had signed the papers and lived under the same roof, so it would be quite impolite for her to ignore him after bumping into him headfirst like this.

However, how long had he been standing here? Did he hear anything earlier?

Alice looked at the unlit cigarette between Ethan's fingers, wondering if he had just come out and hadn't had the time to light it, or if it was unlit because he had overheard something.

Ethan stared at her without speaking, and he didn't show any other reaction either.

Alice blinked, recalling that their relationship could not be revealed to the public. In that case, she should pretend that she didn't know him, shouldn't she?

Thus, she straightened herself and trained her eyes to the front, preparing to walk away.

However, just as she was about to walk past him, Ethan reached out and grabbed her all of a sudden. Before she could react, he had already pinned her onto the wall beside them.

Ethan braced his arms on the wall, enveloping her in a classic wall slam. However, it was clear that it was not his intention as his body was not touching hers at all.

"Do you still remember who you are?" Although the position they were currently in was the complete opposite of proper, Ethan's expression couldn't be any more serious. His voice was deep and grave, and the air that surrounded him was ice cold.

He'd looked for her for two days and two nights and hurriedly rushed over once he received news of her and what did he get? Her talking about marriage with another man? Did she forget her identity? She was now his wife, his lawfully wedded wife!

"I do." Alice nodded obediently as she looked at him with an adorably clueless expression.

"Tell me." It was almost as if there was a halo of glowing light rippling in the depths of his eyes, but it was so faint that it could not be seen clearly under the dark night.

Since she answered in such a docile manner, Ethan was suddenly looking forward to hearing her answer. In fact, he had never believed that she had feelings for Bruce. Perhaps she had other reasons for promising him earlier.

"I'm your temporary wife, ready to retire anytime..." Alice replied without any hesitation, the words flowing smoothly and quickly out of her mouth as if it weren't her first time uttering them.

Besides, her retirement was most likely descending upon her soon as she was preparing to talk to Ethan about ending their marriage early.

Ethan stared at her, his eyes darker than the night sky. He was exuding a frosty chill, and under the flickering light, it seemed to cast a sharp shadow over him. His hand, which was on the wall, crushed the cigarette between his fingers into scraps that scattered on Alice's shoulder.

Temporary wife? Ready to retire anytime? How did she come to such a misconception? How dare she have the nerve to think about retiring all the time? And why am I getting the urge to throttle her?

Looking at the cigarette scraps that fell on her shoulder, Alice blinked. All of a sudden, she had an illusion that Ethan might wish to crush something else into pieces—for example, herself.

No, it must be an illusion! After all, she was sweet and obedient, kind and caring, as well as understanding, so she would definitely not be wrong! She was just telling the truth as it was and was even going along with his wishes, or was he worried about her causing trouble for the Knight Family?

Ethan could have overheard her conversation with Bruce, so he might have been afraid that she would do something that would affect the Knight Family.

"Don't worry, Mr. Knight. I won't cause any trouble for the Knight Family." Alice declared her stance understandingly.

Although they had signed the marriage papers and she was living in the Knight Residence, she had never thought of taking advantage of them. If it weren't for Caroline, she wanted more than anyone else to cut off all ties with Ethan.

“Do you think that you alone... can cause trouble for the Knight Family?” Ethan narrowed his eyes and growled in a deep voice, the frosty aura that emanated from him causing the surrounding temperature to drop as if there was a gust of cold wind blowing toward them.

Even if she sent the sky crashing down, it still wouldn't be a problem for the Knight Family. Besides, she was now one of them, and yet she was talking about causing trouble for them? Her courteous words were like a huge cotton wad, causing Ethan's chest to feel stuffy.

'''

Alice was rendered speechless. *Is this a show of power? Am I being put in my place again?*

Inwardly reminding herself that she was a sophisticated and well-mannered woman, Alice sent him a polite smile. “Mr. Knight, I still have other matters to attend to. Can I leave?”

However, Ethan continued to stare at her, neither budging an inch nor saying a single word in reply.

Alice glanced at the position of his arm that was braced on the wall and bent over slightly, carefully making her way out.

She didn't want to stay with him any longer—he wasn't gentle nor caring, and not only was he unable to keep a conversation going, but he had a sharp tongue as well. Who would want to spend more than a minute around him? Besides, she had already decided to end their marriage earlier. She would no longer have any ties with him in the future..

She shifted away, trying her best not to touch him or rub against him in any way, but she had just made it halfway when his long legs moved and pressed themselves between her legs.

Before she could stop herself, her body immediately came into contact with his legs. Moreover, she just so happened to be dressed in a short skirt today.

“What are you doing?” Alice yelped, her voice even cracking from her surprise.

Chapter 166 What Happens When Ethan Loses His Temper (3)

As the position the two were in was just too suggestive and embarrassing, Alice dared not move all of a sudden. Hence, she froze in place and stared at Ethan with her eyes widened.

However, while Ethan's legs did not move any further, he didn't show any intention of moving them away either. Was he doing it on purpose? Either way, she couldn't spot a single trace of abashment or discomfort on his face at all.

Alice's ears flushed red at their awkward position.

“Can you move your legs away?” Alice had clearly gotten meeker, and her voice had turned softer as well. This position was just too suggestive and embarrassing.

Did he not notice at all?

As a matter of fact, Ethan was not as calm as he seemed on the outside. The moment his legs touched her body, he felt a spark course through his body. At that moment, he even had the urge to press her against the wall and fiercely capture her lips with his. If it weren't for her look of wariness and caution, he might've already kissed her.

He quietly let out a sigh, thinking that she must've been born to antagonize him.

Ethan felt another wave of frustration upon recalling her talks of marriage with Bruce from earlier. He didn't believe that she wanted to marry that man, not even for a second. However, from her words, it seemed that she was genuinely planning to steal the tender document for Bruce. What exactly was she up to?

Not only did Ethan refuse to move his legs away, but he even pressed himself closer to her. "Have I ever told you that the Knight Family will never allow ourselves to be compromised?"

He had no clue why she would agree to Bruce's request, but he wanted to tell her that now that she had married him and joined the Knight Family, she didn't have to compromise herself, no matter what the situation was.

Alice was a little confused and assumed that he was talking about Caroline. "I remember, but I've never allowed Caroline to get hurt. I raised her with my own hands. I would never let that happen."

Ethan's eyes darkened at her words, his teeth gnashing against each other. So, she had never treated herself as a part of the Knight Family? She married into their family and became his wife, but she had never thought of herself as one of them?

"Are you a part of the Knight Family?" Ethan suppressed his emotions and growled through his teeth. "No," Alice said without the slightest hint of hesitation, replying to him at the speed of light.

Ethan's heart lurched, and he only felt as if there was something wedged in his chest, making him unable

to breathe.

She was his lawfully wedded wife and the daughter-in-law of the Knight Family, but she was now telling him that she wasn't a part of his family? Right now, he had the urge to crack her head open and see what exactly was going on in her mind.

Due to Ethan deliberately leaning in closer to her, the distance between them shortened, and his legs were now in direct contact with her skin. *This sensation...*

"Can you please move for now?" Alice's body was still

stiff from fear of moving an inch, but because she did not budge, she was still touching him, and the feeling was just too strange.

“What if I don’t?” Ethan, who had always been calm and collected, had no idea how childish he was being.

They were a duly married couple, so what was the problem with their current actions? He thought it was normal; why should he move?

Alice immediately whipped up to look at him with a pair of wide eyes that were filled with confusion. Was this the Ethan that she knew?

They were already a breath away from each other, and as Alice was slightly taller than average and Ethan was slightly bent over, her suddenly raising her head caused the distance between their faces to be pulled even closer than before.

Her red lips appeared before his eyes, slightly parted and fanning her warm breath on his face. Perhaps due to her astonishment, she was a little out of it, and her expression carried a naive seduction that she didn’t even notice she had.

Ethan felt his throat constrict at the sight, his eyes turning dark. The urge to seal her lips with his was overwhelming him.

Just then, Alice spotted someone else walking toward them from the other end of the corridor, and she subconsciously spoke up. “Someone’s coming.”

Looking at her crimson lips and her tempting yet unaware look, he immediately pressed Alice tightly against his chest, not wanting anyone to see her like this.

When she was pressed against his chest, Alice first froze for a moment before she recalled that their marriage was a secret and they couldn’t let any outsiders find out about their relationship, so Ethan was most likely hiding this fact. Hence, she quietly went along with him and kept still in his embrace.

Ethan’s lowered eyes bored into the woman who was meekly leaning in his arms, a smile slowly and uncontrollably curling his lips upward. She really was adorable when she was obedient.

Ethan pressed his lips to her neck, feeling the warmth of her breath and the softness of her skin, and the frustration that had been clogging his heart dissipated immediately. As her pale and smooth skin filled his sight, he was unable to resist the urge to gently nibble on her neck.

Instantly, Alice froze all over. While her face was buried in his chest, her eyes were blown wide open. What was Ethan doing? Was he biting her? Was he really biting her? He wasn’t trying to bite her head off, was he?

In fact, Ethan was not applying any force, nor did he dare to. However, even though he was being gentle, he noticed that a layer of sweat was covering his forehead. He realized that when it came to Alice, it was as if all of his self-control had disappeared. As he’d thought, this little fox really was a curse to him!

As the man walked over from the other end of the corridor and saw the two of them tightly pressed against the wall, he let out a laugh. “Buddy, you should get a room. You’re embarrassing the poor girl.”

“You’ll never find a partner if you’re this eager...” The man paused slightly before he added, “And I mean a good partner. You don’t even know how to respect others, so how could you expect her to genuinely like

you back?”

“With the way you’re acting, if the girl is willing to accept you, she’s either after your money or your body. Women are more open-minded than men nowadays, you know.”

Ethan’s eyes gleamed at his words. Even if she was after his wealth or his body, it was fine as long as she was after something he had.

“Look at you, buddy. What do you think a woman would want from you...”

The man was just about to continue his long-winded speech when Ethan turned around slightly and sent him a glance.

The man’s next words got jammed in his throat as his eyes widened. He looked at the man before him as if he had seen a ghost. “M—Mr. Knight?”

I’m not seeing things, right? Mr. Knight is holding a woman in his arms and kissing her?

Ethan’s hand pressed on the back of Alice’s head as he shielded her tightly from view. He glanced at the thunderstruck man, suddenly asking, “Why don’t you tell me which part of me she’s after?”

“W—

Which part?” The man was still in a dumbfounded state and was unable to return to his senses. As he met Ethan’s eyes, he subconsciously took a few steps back.

Chapter 167 Ethan’s Seduction (1)

“W—

Which part?” The man was still in a dumbfounded state and was unable to return to his senses. As he met Ethan’s eyes, he subconsciously took a few steps back..

However, he was

able to quickly collect himself and reply, “If it’s someone like Mr. Knight, any woman would be head over heels for you. What else could they be after?”

Ethan’s lips curved upward slightly, his arms still tightly trapping Alice in his embrace. “Let’s go home.”

The man was once again stunned into silence. Was Ethan planning to take this woman straight back to the Knight Residence? Didn’t the rumors say that he usually didn’t have any interest in women? If that were the case, why was he taking a woman home from Royale so openly? The rumors were all a lie!

away

Meanwhile, Alice continued to lean in Ethan’s arms obediently, allowing him to escort her from Royale. He only released her from his grip when they arrived at the car and opened the passenger seat door for her, indicating for her to get in.

Alice didn't refuse as she was already planning to visit Caroline at the Knight Residence. As she sat in the car, she thought about Ethan biting her earlier and wondered why he did that.

Once Ethan got into the car as well, he noticed that Alice was spacing out, as if her thoughts had drifted far away, and she didn't even spare him a glance when he entered the car.

Ethan quietly exhaled. Head over heels for him, his foot! He was well aware that if he didn't take the initiative, the woman before him would not even utter a word to him.

"Where have you been these days?" *Forget it, I'll just be assertive for once.* Besides, he was extremely curious about where exactly she had gone for the past few days.

At the sound of his voice, Alice returned to her senses and turned to look at him.

Before she could speak, Ethan added, "Don't tell me you've been working overtime at Galerprises. You can lie to others, but don't try to lie to me. I don't want to listen to any lies."

Alice jolted, her eyes glinting. "Then I won't say it."

This matter involved too many things, including Pierce's safety. Besides, she didn't want to deceive Ethan with lies either, so she decided not to say anything at all.

Ethan's chest tightened at her straightforwardness. Great, just great! If he hadn't been driving, he felt like he might've bitten her head off, just like what he nearly did at Royale.

In fact, he still wanted to say something—at least to let her know how he felt—until he recalled when she said she wouldn't like him, and she was even preparing to retire from being his wife at any moment. If he really did tell her something at this moment, his little fox would most likely run far away from him. *Forget it. I'll just take it slow.* She was already his wife anyway, and they still had the rest of their lives ahead of them.

"I heard from Caroline that your brother has been in a coma ever since a car accident befell him seven years ago." While he could hide his feelings, he still had to talk to her about Pierce; he really wanted to help her out.

A flash darted past Alice's eyes before she gently nodded. "Yeah."

At first, she had never told Caroline about Pierce as she was still a child, and she was afraid that Caroline would not be able to keep a secret. However, Caroline was a shrewd brat and snuck into her car once, following Jane to Pierce's living quarters where she ended up finding out about him. However, Alice moved Pierce away after that.

"I know a neurology specialist who might be able to help. Find a time that's good for you, and I'll send him over to take a look at your brother." In fact, Ethan had already contacted this neurologist two days ago, but this matter got delayed as he hadn't been able to contact Alice.

“Okay.” Alice’s eyes brightened. She knew Ethan’s capabilities well, and the people he contacted were definitely not just anyone. While she could reject his help in other matters, she couldn’t turn him down when it came to Pierce.

“Thank you.” At that moment, her heart was filled with gratitude toward Ethan. It had been seven years, and there was not a single second where she was not yearning for Pierce to open his eyes again.

She had thought of every method on the face of the earth, but none of them worked. However, what if the doctor Ethan had found did, and what if Pierce could wake up after all?

Alice felt a shimmer of hope once again. “I owe you for this; I’ll definitely pay you back in the future.”

On the contrary, despair filled Ethan’s heart at her words. As her husband, wasn’t it par for the course for him to do these things? However, he soon let out a small breath to calm himself down. *Get used to it, Ethan Knight. If you don’t, she might end up driving you insane.*

Once he had comforted himself, Ethan turned to look at her. “Make sure to keep it in mind and take your time.”

It was not a bad idea to let her remember his favor; he was just afraid that this heartless little fox would not take anything to heart. As for everything else, he could just take it slow so that he wouldn’t force her into a corner.

As soon as Alice arrived at the Knight Residence, Caroline immediately pounced on her. “Mommy, you’re finally back!”

“Yeah.” A gentle smile bloomed on Alice’s face as she looked at the elation on Caroline’s face.

At first, Alice planned to make it clear to Caroline after returning to the Knight Residence that she would start using Tanner’s identity in the future and carry out the second half of her plan.

At this moment, however, she couldn’t bring herself to say the words when she saw Caroline’s delighted expression. Besides, she was now planning to go along with Bruce’s plan, and she would still be using her identity as Alice, so she could still spend a few more days with Caroline.

Britney, who had been sitting in the living room, stood up. “You’re finally back. Caroline has been talking about you for all of the two days you weren’t at home.”

Although there was a smile on her face, it clearly carried a look of conflict as well.

Alice glanced at Britney. She could sense her worry, but as a matter of fact, Britney did not have to worry about her at all. This time, the point of her return was to end her marriage with Ethan early, putting an end to things. However, as Caroline was still present, she did not say anything else.

Following that, Alice took Caroline upstairs and coaxed her to sleep when she received a text from Ethan. His message was simple yet direct, and it only contained a single sentence—‘Come to my room.’

‘Do you need anything?’ Alice didn’t want to head over at all.

She hadn’t had a proper rest in the past few

days, and all she wanted to do right now was sleep. Besides, she had already decided to bring forward the end of her marriage with Ethan, so she naturally wanted to avoid getting involved with him any further as much as possible.

However, Ethan didn't seem troubled and replied, 'Let's talk about the neurologist.'

Seeing that, Alice immediately opened her half-shut eyes and shot up, her fatigue disappearing as she speedily changed her clothes and headed to Ethan's room. Upon reaching his room, she knocked on his door.

"Come in." Ethan's low voice sounded from inside.

Hearing that, Alice pushed the door open.

Although it had been some time since she moved into the Knight Residence and she had always been staying on the second floor with him, it was her first time stepping into his room. Ethan's room was vast, and the decor was well-matched to his tastes. However, Alice's attention was not on his room's decor, but rather on the fact that Ethan was nowhere to be seen.

Chapter 168 Ethan's Seduction (2)

Alice's attention was not on his room's decor, but rather on the fact that Ethan was nowhere to be seen. Just as she was wondering where he had gone, the bathroom door opened, and Ethan walked out.

Ethan might have just finished taking a shower as his body was still dripping with water. He wore a bathrobe that hung precariously from his frame, and the loosely knotted sash that seemed like it would come apart any moment held the bathrobe together, but only barely, sloppily covering his waist. Droplets of water slowly rolled down his half-exposed chest, continuing down his body until they disappeared at...

Alice stood frozen in place, her eyes trained on Ethan, the shock causing her to forget to react all of a sudden.

Meanwhile, Ethan seemed to be unaware of what was wrong with his attire, and he proceeded to walk toward her just like that until he came to a stop directly in front of her. At this distance, she could clearly count every single droplet of water on his body, as well as.....

Alice blinked once, then twice. Was this something she should be seeing? In fact, was this even the Ethan that she knew? So, this was how he acted in private. Did she show up at the wrong time? However, Ethan was the one who had texted her to come over. Or, perhaps he didn't expect her to show up so soon. After all, she arrived here at lightning speed; as soon as she heard that it had to do with Pierce, she immediately headed to his room without wasting any time.

At that moment, Alice was a little out of it, so she completely forgot about what Lydia had told her two days ago.

As Ethan looked at the clearly distracted Alice, his lips curled upward slowly, and he asked deliberately, "What are you spacing out for?"

Alice blinked rapidly. Wasn't it normal for her to space out in a situation like this? Wasn't it?

She quietly let out a breath, trying her best to avert her gaze from Ethan's body as she got straight to the point. "Mr. Knight, did you ask me to come over to talk about hiring a doctor for my brother?"

"Yeah," Ethan replied softly. He remained standing in front of her without moving, and he didn't seem to have any intention of slightly pulling his bathrobe shut.

presence was

Hence, even if Alice was doing all she could to look away from him, it was impossible for her to completely avoid him due to their close proximity. Even if she turned away from him, his still tightly enveloping her, making her feel like she was about to suffocate from nervousness.

"Let's talk about it." As

if he couldn't sense the problem at all, Ethan even approached Alice a little more, shortening the distance between them.

Alice secretly let out a breath, telling herself to remain calm. This was Ethan's bedroom; he was in his own bedroom, and he had just taken a shower. Hence, this was all normal. If anything, it was her fault for showing up so soon.

While it

didn't occur to Alice that Ethan was doing it on purpose *at all*, she couldn't just waltz up to him and fix his bathrobe for him. Besides, she had seen everything, so what was the point of that? It was better to quickly get their talk over so that she could leave.

As Ethan looked at Alice's evasive gaze and her evidently flushed neck, a smile appeared on the corner of his lips. Did that mean his seduction worked? At the very least, she was still affected by his... body!

Not daring to show the glee on his face too openly, he pretended to get down to business as if nothing had happened. "I've already contacted the neurologist in Cliaria. Should I send him over, or..."

Alice quickly picked up where he left off. "I'll send someone to take Pierce over to him."

She wasn't doing this because she suspected Ethan, but because she was always cautious when it came to Pierce. Besides, she wouldn't go with him either. If she showed up, she would definitely bring danger to Pierce. Hence, she decided to let Jane take him to receive his treatment instead.

As she talked about

Pierce, Alice completely discarded all her embarrassment, and she stopped looking away from him, meeting his gaze instead.

While her eyes were trained on his face, the difference in their height made it so that if her gaze shifted even by an inch, she would catch sight of his bare chest that was dripping with water.

Though she tried her best, she was ultimately unable to hold herself back. Letting out a small breath, she then lifted both of her hands and reached out to him.

Ethan's eyes flashed rapidly as he watched Alice extend her hands to him. Was she finally giving in to his temptation and about to do something to him? They were a lawfully wedded couple, so it would be perfect.

ectly reasonable if she really intended to put her hands on him, and since it was reasonable, he should and would not refuse.

As he looked at Alice's approaching hands, his eyes evidently darkened, a look of expectation appearing in his gaze.

And yet, in the next second, Alice grabbed his bathrobe and quickly yanked both sides together, pulling it tight around him. Then, she grabbed the sash and tied it firmly into a knot, so firmly that it forced the breath out of Ethan. Her movements were quick and decisive without the slightest pause, and most importantly, her hands only touched the bathrobe from start to end and did not come into contact with him at all.

Ethan looked at her, a little dumbfounded. Was this... normal?

Meanwhile, Alice could finally relax, relieved from her embarrassment.

Seeing that Ethan was clearly dumbstruck, Alice gave him a kindhearted reminder.

"You should still learn to protect yourself even if you're a man. I'm only telling you this for Caroline's sake."

After all, now that Caroline had returned to the Knight Residence, Ethan was currently her father. If he were to be caught up with an unruly woman, she was afraid that it would hurt Caroline.

Ethan narrowed his eyes at her with his lips slightly pursed, so furious that he didn't feel like speaking to her.

She's reminding me on Caroline's behalf? So, she only did that because of Caroline? Do I have to thank her, then?

Alice paused for a second before she added, "After all, not everyone can keep their hands to themselves like me,"

Ethan let out a vicious exhale.

Damn you for

keeping your hands to yourself! I don't need you to do that! You hear me?! She'll be the death of me one day! Why did he decide to marry a woman like this? It really was just his luck! In other words, was his seduction a complete failure? Did it not work at all? Did she not feel anything when she saw him like that earlier?

Ethan huffed in exasperation, wanting to bite her.

"Mr. Knight, send the neurologist's address to me so that I can send someone to take my brother there." Oblivious to the despair Ethan was feeling, Alice continued, "If there's nothing else, I'll be heading back to rest."

After she finished speaking, she prepared to leave after seeing that Ethan was not replying.

Ethan huffed viciously, then took another deep breath. What else could he say?

Chapter 169 Why, Ethan Knight (1)

What else could Ethan say? So, instead of stopping Alice, he just watched her leave the room.

After she left the room and closed the door, he began contemplating. *Am I not good-looking enough? No, it can't be; I looked pretty handsome when I checked myself in the bathroom just now. So, am I not sexy enough? No, that shouldn't be the case either. I adjusted myself in the bathroom to look my sexiest. Was I just not seductive enough, then? No way! Didn't they say that was the most seductive posture? So why did it end in failure? Why?*

Meanwhile, Alice looked back after closing the door behind her. She felt that something was odd about the man tonight, but she didn't think much about it; she was so weary that all she wanted to do right now was sleep. After going back to her room, she fell at once into a deep, dreamless sleep until early morning.

On the contrary, Ethan lay awake in bed, tossing and turning all night until dawn.

The next day, Alice received a text message from Bruce shortly after she got up. Reading the romantic text message, she almost threw up in disgust. Still, she had to keep on acting. Of course, the focus of the text message was still to ask her to steal the tender document, to which she merely replied, 'OK' Despite promising to do so, she didn't do anything.

Nevertheless, she went to work at Galerprises as usual.

That night, Bruce called her right away. The moment she answered the phone, he asked in a voice dripping with tenderness, "Alice, how's it going? Did you get your hands on the tender document?"

"No, I didn't," Alice replied at once. As she didn't have to pretend over the phone, her face was stony and grim at this moment.

Bruce suggested, "Alice, how about you make an appointment with Mr. Affleck for me tomorrow? I have something to discuss with him." Now that the tender opening was just around the corner, he was really burning with anxiety.

Alice's eyes flickered slightly. *Should I say he's too stupid or too clever?* "Okay," she replied nonetheless. Since this guy came up with such a request, she might as well go along with it. After all, if she was going to put on a show, she had to pull out all the stops for it.

"That's great! Let's make it tomorrow, then. Just make the appointment at Blue Moon Restaurant at noon tomorrow." With clear delight in his voice, Bruce set the time and place of the appointment without caring whether it would put Alice in a tight spot. Apparently, he did use his brains a little, for Blue Moon Restaurant was owned by him.

Consequently, Alice made an appointment with Mr. Affleck at Blue Moon Restaurant for real.

Mr. Affleck was dumbfounded. He didn't want to come at all, but Archie ordered him to come over and play along. Although he didn't know what he was supposed to play along with, he couldn't defy Archie's orders. Therefore, he sat at the dining table, all confused.

Darting a glance at Alice, who was seated across from him, he got even more confused. *What the hell is going on here? Why would Alice get me to meet with Bruce? Well, it's reasona*

ble for her to arrange a meeting between us. Everyone knows that she loves Bruce, after all, so perhaps s he wants to do something for him. But why would Mr. Moreno agree to it?

Just when he was confused, Bruce came in. "Mr. Affleck, let's not beat around the bush. I got you here today because I want Galerprises' tender document on Riverwale. Just name your price, Mr. Affleck," he said, negotiating terms explicitly right away.

Mr. Affleck's eyes blinked

rapidly. Is this getting started already? Wait, should I say yes or turn him down? Mr. Moreno didn't give me any clear instructions on this before I came! He turned to look at Alice, who slowly sipped at her tea as though she were oblivious to this. His heart clenched. So, what *the hell's going on here?* Without getting any instructions, he had no choice but to act as he thought fit, saying, "Sorry, but as a member of Galerprises, I have both a responsibility and an obligation to protect everything about the company. Please behave yourself, Mr. Yeager." With that, he stood up and left instantly.

After leaving the room, he heaved a secret sigh of relief. It's probably *okay for me to act like this, right? But what exactly does Mr. Moreno mean?*

In the private room, Bruce was visibly surly, stupefied by Mr. Affleck's outright refusal. Looking at Alice, who was slowly sipping at her tea, he managed a forced smile while suppressing the anger inside him. "Alice, seems like I have to depend on you after all," he said, trying to show as much tenderness as he could. "Alice, we only have three days left before the tender opening, so we can't afford to tarry. You've got to get hold of the tender document as soon as possible." He got some inside information that Galerprises' tender document was the best, which was why he wanted to take advantage of it.

At the same time, Caleb came to Ethan after getting the news of what had happened. He reported, "Mr. Knight, Young Madam Knight is having an appointment with Henry Affleck, the project manager of Galerprises-" He paused for a moment. After studying Ethan's expression for a moment, he added, "At the same time, she's also having an appointment with... Bruce Yeager."

Ethan's hands froze. He raised his eyes, which were gloomy. *Is she really going to help Bruce Yeager? Why? What on earth is she trying to do? I don't believe she really wants to marry him. Smart as Little Fox is, there's no way she can't tell that Bruce is trying to use her. So, what exactly is the purpose of her playing along with Bruce like this?*

He had still yet to find out what was going on with her sudden disappearance several days ago. He knew that she was hiding something from him and wouldn't tell him about it, so he had to uncover it by himself. Since it was only through the things she did that he could truly find out what was wrong, he didn't stop her from helping Bruce, nor did he even ask her about it. But now that she was helping Bruce for real, he felt really uncomfortable about it, even if he knew she might have other reasons for doing so.

His eyes narrowed slightly. Suddenly, he asked, "Is Archie Moreno personally in charge of the case?" Knowing that Alice was working at Galerprises, he looked into the company and found out that it was registered under Archie's name. It was only recently registered, but it was doing very well.

Caleb knew who Archie was. Even though they had rarely met before, he had some understanding of the latter after the past few days of investigation.

“Yes, he is,” replied Caleb immediately.

Ethan’s eyes stared ahead thoughtfully. After pondering for a moment, he replied, “Never mind.” He now understood what Archie was capable of. The case was under Archie’s charge, so what was Bruce trying to do under Archie’s very nose? The matter probably wouldn’t be simple. As for Alice, he would like to see what on earth she was trying to do. Besides wanting to know what she had up her sleeve, he also wanted to understand her better through the things she did. As for whether she would get into trouble... no matter what kind of trouble she got into, he would always be there for her!

Chapter 170 Why, Ethan Knight (2)

Caleb then said, “Mr. Knight, we have yet to find anything else about the paternity test that Young Madam Knight got done last time. That being said, I guess the test was probably done on Pierce Woland and Old Mr. Woland.” Although he had been tracking Alice down over the past few days, he didn’t neglect Ethan’s earlier instructions on the paternity test either. However, Lydia was really good at keeping things confidential, so they didn’t manage to find out or elicit anything from her.

As Alice had talked to Keith previously, Caleb even suspected whether the man had something to do with it. After that, however, the incident about Charles broke out. Now that they knew Pierce was still alive, he surmised that Alice might have had the paternity test done on Pierce and Charles. If that really were the case, the test would have little to do with his boss.

Ethan’s brow furrowed slightly. If what Caleb said was true, it would actually make sense. Furthermore, given Alice’s situation, it was unnecessary for her to have a paternity test done to spite him. Even so, he didn’t want to give up just yet. He wanted to dig deeper; perhaps they would find something else. “Keep looking into it.”

Meanwhile, at this very moment, the Glenn Group was being turned upside down. Staring at the few people before him in complete stupefaction, Elijah yelled, “What nonsense are you talking about? No way! This can’t be possible!”

Mr. Lector, the attorney, looked very serious. “Mr. Woland, here are the documents signed by my client, Mr. Pierce Woland. All of them have both his signatures and his handprints. As for his fingerprints, we’ve had them identified by a professional agency, so we have a professional document proving that they’re indeed his.”

Elijah was both unwilling and unable to accept something like this. “No way! Pierce already died seven years ago. Who knows where you guys got these documents from?”

Mr. Lector’s expression remained unchanged. “I spent two days getting all the identification done and going through all the formal procedures. Mr. Woland, I can produce all kinds of legally valid evidence to answer your suspicions.”

Elijah was not only useless at doing business; he was useless at other things, too. “Who can be sure that these documents were signed by Pierce recently? They could’ve been signed long ago! Yes, that’s right! They must’ve been signed long ago. Pierce already died seven years ago, so these must’ve been signed long ago. They’re surely not valid anymore after such a long time!”

Mr. Lector handed a document to him immediately. "Here's the report of the fingerprint identification. It proves that all the fingerprints on these documents were made within the last three days, which means these handprints were made by Mr. Pierce Woland within the last three days."

Elijah instantly threw the report aside. "No way! This can't be possible! I don't believe this! I'm not gonna acknowledge this. The Glenn Group is mine, and I'm the only one who calls the shot here! I won't acknowledge anything else."

Mr. Lector replied, "Mr. Woland, I'm an attorney appointed by Mr. Pierce Woland. If you refuse to cooperate, I'll have no choice but to deal with this by legal means, by which time I can't guarantee what kind of trouble you'll get into." The underlying threat in his words was clear enough. Moreover, he had some law enforcement officers come with him today.

A good-for-nothing wimp, Elijah dared not shoot from the hip again for a moment. He also knew he wasn't justified in having the Glenn Group to himself. He didn't have to be afraid in the past when Pierce was dead, but what if Pierce were still alive? The man could take back everything with just a single word. "Where's Pierce? Get him to come out and show himself! Is this how he's trying to get rid of me? I'm his

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uncle!" He was unwilling to leave in such a way. If he were to do so today, he might really end up losing everything.

Mr. Lector **was** already used to seeing shameless people like Elijah, so he didn't even bat an eye. "Pierce Woland has appointed me to deal with everything and sent specialized personnel to take over the company. As for your fate in the company, Mr. Woland, it's up to the person in charge of the company."

Only then did Quinton step forward after quietly waiting aside the whole time? "I'm the person appointed by Pierce to be in charge of the Glenn Group. Starting from now, I'll take over the company. As for you, Mr. Elijah, Mr. Pierce Woland has ordered that you be fired and driven out of the company immediately." Elijah never thought he would get driven out of the company at once. In an instant, he angrily swore, "How dare you! I'll see who dares to get me out of here! Who are you to do this to me? Where's Pierce? Tell him to come and see me!"

Quinton immediately summoned the security guards. "Guards, get him out of here." *It's totally unnecessary to be polite* with such a scoundrel.

As a consequence, Elijah got thrown out of the company by the security guards. He almost spat blood in anger, but he couldn't do anything about it. So, he had no choice but to go home to Charles to discuss the solution with the latter.

Charles was also both shocked and furious upon learning about this. "Pierce's actually still alive? He wants to take back the Glenn Group and has banished you from the company?"

“That’s right! They had the security guards throw me out of the company right away.” Elijah foamed at the mouth at the mention of this.

“Where is Pierce? Get him to come and see me! I don’t believe I can’t do anything about him as his grandfather!” Charles’ face darkened visibly with a hint of cruelty in his eyes. “I thought he already died seven years ago. Who would’ve thought he’d be lucky enough to survive?”

Elijah replied, “Dad, Pierce never showed up the whole time. He appointed an attorney to handle it, so I didn’t get to see him at all. Say, if Pierce is still alive, why didn’t he show up?” Obviously, he couldn’t figure

this out.

Charles frowned slightly. “You mean Pierce never showed up?”

Elijah nodded repeatedly and replied, “Yeah, he never showed up. He appointed somebody to deal with everything.”

Charles’ eyes flickered for an instant. “Something’s odd about this. Since Pierce didn’t show up personally, we can refuse to acknowledge this.”

Elijah, a good-for-

nothing, was clever this time. “No, we can’t. Pierce didn’t show up, but he had everything arranged perfectly. They’ve gone through legal procedures and had specialized law enforcement officers come along with them, so it’s not up to us to refuse to acknowledge it.”

Charles’ face went through several expressions of anger. “How impudent! How dare he do this to us!”

Elijah didn’t know to appease the old man, though. He just wanted to ask Charles for advice. “Dad, what should we do now?”

Charles was smart enough to have it figured out. “If Pierce really is still alive, we’ll surely lose the Glenn Group. This is really gonna be troublesome.

Elijah knew to make his choice at this critical moment. “Actually, the Glenn Group didn’t make much money in the past few years. We still have so many good items and so many family properties in our hands, all of which can be sold for money. What about we give up fighting for the company?”

Charles replied. That’s all we can do for now. Give me some time to think about other solutions.” Cunning as he was, he was just an uneducated old man from the countryside. For a moment, he couldn’t come up with any good solutions.