

The Epic BD 661

Chapter 661 A Stranger on the Phone

Dexter was struck by a memory. When he first saw Heather, he thought she looked like Josie.

Could it be that she didn't look like Josie? Could she be the real Liana?

Dexter's heart thumped against his chest as he tried to process the idea that Heather could be Liana. He knew that seeing her again would cause a major emotional upheaval within him.

All the things he had done to her in the past would only add to the guilt he already felt toward her.

"I apologize for my bluntness, but I don't think it would be easy for the Olsen family to clarify her identity. as their family relations are extremely complicated."

Dexter massaged his temples, his headache pounding like a jackhammer. "We need to get Claudia and Heather together," he said, his voice strained. "If they meet, it will make our progress much smoother."

After a short pause, he emphasized, "It has to be Claudia."

She was the only clear-headed member of the Olsen family, unclouded by personal ambition or greed. She was the person most suitable to identify Heather's true identity.

"I understand," Larry turned around and walked away. After a few paces, he stopped and turned back "We've secured the partnership with Shawn Bastille. I heard that Morgan is absolutely livid."

Dexter's lips curled into a smirk. "He must be seething after losing his control."

The Olsen family was in complete disarray this year. Summer had been pushed to the brink by Zach Olsen's return. She was so overwhelmed that she couldn't focus on her plans to target the Russell Group. To make matters worse, she was also caught up in the Carter Group's latest debacle. It had been a challenging year for her.

Dexter had a meeting that night at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel to discuss the Russell Group's plans to build warehouses overseas the following year.

He had left his phone in the car, so he asked Moses to get it for him. The hotel was crowded, and Moses was bumped into by a woman in the elevator. The sudden collision between their bodies inadvertently caused both of them to drop their phones. Alarmed, they quickly picked up the phone closest to them without further inspection.

Unfortunately, they both had the same phone model, and they both ended up with the wrong phone.

After Josie showered, she called Dexter, but the breathy voice on the other end of the line was delicate and

coy.

"Who is this?"

Josie remained silent momentarily, trying to make sense of what was happening. She then noticed the noise in the background and took a wild guess at their location. "Hi, I'm looking for Dexter Russell. Could you please pass the phone to him?" she said calmly.

"You're looking for Dexter here? Are you his mistress or his wife?"

Josie could tell that the woman was intoxicated. She took a deep breath to regain her composure before replying, "I'm Mrs. Russell."

The woman at the other end of the call fell silent. Her calm and firm tone exuded a charisma that could only belong to the matriarch of the family. "What is your last name?" she asked timidly.

"Warren."

The woman finally believed her. "I see. Why didn't you join Mr. Russell here? Have you had dinner? It's really late now."

Everyone knew that Dexter was very protective of his wife, but she was from an ordinary family background and had no one with a strong standing in the social hierarchy to back her up. They didn't see the need to be intimidated by her because they thought she would be replaced in a few years.

Everyone who worked here knew about it.

That was why she wasn't bothered by her and treated her disrespectfully.

Josie was unfazed by the other woman's dismissive attitude. She stood her ground and spoke to her in a firm but polite tone. "I need to speak to Dexter," she said. "Please give him the phone. It will only take a moment."

Josie's politeness only seemed to fuel the other woman's arrogance. "Don't you know Mr. Russell is busy?" she sneered. "He has urgent matters to attend to. If I were you, I wouldn't bother him at this time. Men will eventually get tired of the same woman, so if you want to stay by his side for a long time, you'll have to be more compliant. After all, he is a powerful man who expects to be obeyed."

She advised Josie with a cunning grin playing at the corners of her lips.

Josie's eyes widened in disbelief as she listened to the other woman's words. She shifted her position on the bed and crossed her arms. "I've learned something new," she responded, her voice dripping with sarcasm. "So, tell me, what is your relationship with him?"

Chapter 662 The New Girl

The unexpected question caught everyone off guard.

Feeling humiliated and anxious, she hesitated for a moment before visibly flustering. "I'm his companion. he booked for the night!"

Companion? The word invoked various possibilities. Josie nodded slightly, "Oh, he's booked a companion? I must have missed that part..."

The woman on the other end responded smugly, "Hasn't anyone ever called you dumb, Mrs. Russell?"

"Hmm... you sound like the smarty pants here." Josie retorted before promptly ending the call.

Two minutes later, Larry received a message on his phone, 'Can you get someone to check on Mr. Russell's phone?'

Larry was left perplexed, having endured a lengthy negotiation meeting only to be bombarded with an ambiguous message.

He showed his phone to Dexter, saying, "It's a message from Mrs. Russell."

Furrowing his brow, Dexter powered on the phone Moses recently delivered and was taken aback to find a

woman's screensaver.

At that moment, everything clicked, and Dexter came to a supposition.

He had waited eagerly for Josie's call all night, but it never came. It turned out that the phone he held wasn't even his own.

Ten minutes later, the second floor of the Mandarin Oriental Hotel, typically bustling with servers and guests, was now shrouded in an eerie silence.

Upon hearing the situation, the manager hurriedly arrived and almost peed in his pants, "What's happening?"

"One of the new girls here provoked Mrs. Russell....

"What? How ignorant! How many lives does she think she has to dare provoke Mrs. Russell... She's practically asking for trouble!" The manager exclaimed angrily..

Dexter, the founder of Mandarin Oriental Hotel, had gradually distanced himself from its day-to-day management in recent years. However, it remained the most profitable company in the entire Wavery underworld. Its influence was respected and feared by both the realms of organized crime and politics.

If Dexter ever decided to cancel someone, it would spell their ultimate downfall.

Meanwhile, Dexter lounged on the sofa, idly tinkering with his phone. Equipped with an automatic - recording function, he pressed a button to replay the previous conversation.

After listening to it once, Dexter rewound and listened to it again.

"What? Don't you know? Even at this hour, Mr. Russell is still hard at work, handling important matters. If I were you, I wouldn't disturb him right now. You know how men can be-they easily grow weary of things and women. If you want to maintain your status as Mrs. Russell for longer, you must be submissive and heed the advice. Do you understand?"

The entire conversation played out for a grueling ten minutes, leaving everyone in the room holding their breath, paralyzed with fear.

"Hasn't anyone ever called you dumb, Mrs. Russell?"

Dexter listened to this segment three times in a row.

Even Larry couldn't help but feel a surge of nervousness.

One must know that Dexter wasn't one to look for trouble actively; most of the time, he couldn't be bothered. However, if he intentionally made someone's life difficult, that person wouldn't be in for a good

time.

"Who was it that answered my wife's call just now?"

Dexter pocketed his phone, his countenance turning increasingly ominous.

A heavy silence descended upon the room as no one dared to utter a single word.

Dexter maintained his composure and asked again because no one owned up to the mistake,

Finally, a woman cautiously stepped out from the crowd. Her drunkenness had subsided, yet she still stuttered as she answered, "It...It was... me..."

Larry carefully sized her up. The girl was undeniably young, attractive, and exuded confidence bordering on arrogance, but all that dimmed in the face of Dexter's commanding presence.

Dexter gave her a quick once-over and inquired, "So, what's your name?"

"...Mr. Russell, her name is Ruby Snitch, our newly hired waitress. The manager stammered.

Dexter cast another glance at her. "Ah, Ruby Snitch, the 'bitch' with a snappy stitch."

The manager was momentarily stunned, unsure if he should join in or maintain a professional demeanor

"How old are you?"

"She had just turned twenty."

"Is she your girlfriend?" Dexter suddenly posed a startling question to the manager.

"Huh? No, no, not at all, Mr. Russell! I'm not... I mean, you've misunderstood... The manager felt a wave of anxiety, sweating profusely.

"Then why are you sticking your nose in this waitress' business, answering for her mistakes?"

Chapter 663 Offending Mrs Russell

Once the culprit stepped up and admitted her guilt, the manager understood it would result in the girl's downfall.

For subordinates, having their supervisor's support was something to be grateful for. Still, if the supervisor refused, the subordinate's problem wasn't their concern or responsibility.

Ruby quivered in fear. Her previous arrogance towards Josie had now vanished.

She dared not lift her head and meet his eyes in Dexter's overpowering presence.

"I'm sorry for my actions, Mr. Russell. I didn't know my place and offended Mrs. Russell. You can punish me however you think is appropriate!" Ruby apologized in a flutter, bowing deeply.

Dexter gave her a cold stare and asked, "Which university do you attend?"

Ruby glanced at his expression and stuttered, "...D... D University."

Their eyes briefly met that moment, sending a shiver down Ruby's spine.

With just a few glances, this man towering over her could see right through a person's social background. And she knew nothing about him...

The absolute dominance of power was terrifying and humbling, making Ruby feel inferior and insignificant.

Dexter shifted his gaze away and instructed Larry, "Check if there's such a person at D University."

Larry was about to take out his phone when Ruby suddenly blurted out, "Mr. Russell... I, I didn't attend D University. I go to A University..."

Her voice trembled this time, reflecting her fear for the future.

The moment those words left her lips, the manager shot a disapproving look at Ruby, astonished that she would lie in front of Dexter. Did she have a death wish?

Dexter's unwavering stare bore into her, his face a mask of authority. He effortlessly saw through her attempts at manipulation.

"Ms. Snitch, trying to fool me won't end well," he cautioned with a subtle, barely noticeable parting of his lips. "It's best to drop the act when you're dealing with me."

Word on the street was that Dexter's influence in the nightlife scene was akin to a ruler in the underworld, and once he spoke his mind, there was no turning back.

And it appeared to be true.

Sensing that things were about to get out of hand, the manager quickly said, "Mr. Russell, please give her a chance. She's young and new to all this. She chose to work here at our hotel because her family has a sick relative, and she needed the money..."

The manager attempted to excuse Ruby's misconduct by highlighting her vulnerability.

Dexter glanced at him as if half-understanding. "Needs money, huh? I suppose so. I mean, what does a college student know, right?"

The manager forced a smile. "Exactly..."

"But," he suddenly changed his tone, "since you're working here, it doesn't matter if you're a college student or if you need money."

Ruby's heart sank.

Dexter raised his hand slightly, motioning to Larry. "Let the media know."

Then, the Daily Wavery would feature the story of a college student's downfall, enmeshed in a corrupted lifestyle, delving deep into and investigating the syndicate.

Dexter wouldn't even have to intervene personally. With a simple command, he could ruin a young girl's life.

Ruby crumbled to the ground, and Dexter didn't spare her another glance as he stood. up and left, glanced at the embarrassed-looking manager, and remarked, "Our hotel needs some serious cleanup, or it will eventually tarnish my reputation."

The manager took in a deep, unsettling breath.

Back at Mason Garden, it was already ten-thirty at night.

Yet, for a corporate high-ranking man like Dexter, returning home at ten-thirty at night. wasn't considered late; if anything, it was early.

Josie had fallen asleep, but she woke to the man's breath and gentle embrace from behind. "Did I wake you?"

She replied in a half-asleep, hoarse voice, "No, I'm a light sleeper."

"Is everything resolved?"

"Mmm." Dexter covered her with the blanket.

"All sorted now."

"Mmm." Dexter covered her with the blanket. "All taken care of now."

Chapter 664 Alluring Temptress

The word 'all' felt somewhat elusive.

Josie snuggled in his arms, feeling a sense of relief and comfort. "I'm happy everything's sorted out."

She intentionally left out the phone call issue because she knew once the text message was sent successfully, Dexter would handle it.

"You won't have to deal with situations like today again," Dexter said gently, brushing the hair off her face. "I'm sorry for putting you through that."

Josie's sleepiness gradually faded, and she playfully remarked, "So, did you hire a call girl today?"

The female workers at Mandarin Oriental Hotel were skilled and well-trained to captivate men. If Josie were to be compared with them, she wouldn't stand a chance. But fortunately, she didn't need to.

Dexter chuckled softly, no longer as distant as he was a moment ago. "Moses grabbed the wrong phone; it was just a misunderstanding. I didn't hire any call girl."

While looking at his chiseled face under the dimmed light, Josie's finger traced his cheek, brimming with affection. "And you won't in the future, right?"

"I won't."

She smiled.

Two days later, Josie stumbled upon the aftermath of Dexter's wrath on the front page of Daily Wavery – a story of a college girl succumbing to temptation and money.

"What's got you so engrossed in there?" A voice suddenly interrupted.

Josie glanced up in surprise as Laura sauntered into the office, rocking high heels and a dark green fitted skirt that showcased her long legs, exuding the allure of a temptress even in the bone-chilling December.

Josie's eyes sparkled. "I thought you were going to hand this studio over to me completely."

Laura's red lips curved into a playful smile as she nudged her. "You wish! I've invested a good chunk of money in it."

Josie looped her arm through Laura's. "Where have you been lately? Did you leave Wavery or something?"

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With Laura being a tad taller, she lowered her head and picked up on the reliant expression on Josie's face. A hint of hesitation flickered in her eyes. "I went on a vacation for a few days. Staying cooped up in Wavery all the time is just plain boring!"

"And you swung by the studio right after coming back?"

Laura beamed at her. "Devotion comes first."

They both settled down, each with a cup of coffee before them.

"I heard you were pretty gutsy and walked into the site and stopped the Carter Group's construction. Did that actually happen?" Despite not being in Wavery, Laure seemed to be well-informed.

Josie had no defenses against her and answered honestly, "They were using shoddy materials, and I had to stop them."

"Come on, using different materials isn't much of a big deal. You were so insistent on stopping them because..."

Laura's tone trailed off.

Josie furrowed her brow, "What do you mean 'isn't that big of a deal? When something goes wrong, it ruins lives. You know very well what happened with the Russell Group. How can you say it's not a big deal?"

How could Laura lightly brush it off as if it weren't a big deal?

Josie was getting upset, and Laura signaled for her to calm down. "That's not what I meant. What I meant was Carter Group is a competitor to the Russell Group. Wouldn't it benefit Dexter if Carter Group failed and got caught up in this matter?"

Laura had a point, and Josie understood where she was coming from.

Standing up, Josie walked to the floor-to-ceiling window. "I don't want to prioritize our competition over this. Besides, our studio is not a subsidiary of the Russell Group."

In her heart, this studio had no ties or affiliation with anyone or any establishment.

Laura walked up and patted her shoulder. "Of course, I get what you mean. But you went all out to stop it because of Arnold..."

They locked eyes, and she revised her wording, "...because of your compassion."

Laura's words struck a chord within Josie.

Despite Arnold's offensive words, deep down, she didn't want him to go down the wrong

Chapter 665 The Indulgence of the Companion

"You've seen how much he's helped me firsthand. At the very least, I don't want his project to fail under my watch," Josie explained.

Laura flashed a gentle smile. "Josie, you're such a sincere person, but sincerity doesn't seem to carry much weight in this industry."

Josie smiled back. "I don't mind. As long as I'm true to my conscience, that's enough."

"Are you not worried that Dexter will be upset if he finds out? This could be the perfect opportunity to bring down the Carter family once and for all," Laura pointed out.

"He won't," Josie quickly responded, addressing the doubt. "and I don't think he'd want to achieve victory at the cost of bloodshed."

Laura neither agreed nor disagreed, and her gaze suddenly shifted to the high heels on Josie's feet. "I remember these shoes were sold out in Wavery. Where did you get them?"

Josie followed her gaze, "In Rivodia. He brought them back for me when he was on a business trip."

Her words carried a deep affection from someone who held a special place in her heart.

Laura's smile slightly faded at the mention of Rivodia, "It's a nice place. I've been there. during my travels."

Unexpectedly, Josie asked, "How was it?"

"Unfortunately, it rained for a few days, which made it a bit disheartening," Laura replied.

Josie seemed to grasp Laura's sentiment, but not entirely.

When thinking about the place, Laura still felt a lingering pain in her heart.

As they had grown close and became confidantes, Josie probed, "Will you still be meeting Zach?"

Hearing Zach's name, Laura showed immediate disdain, "Yes, we haven't divorced yet, and I came back just to see him."

Josie offered emotional support, holding her hand and feeling her sorrow.

Laura shrugged as if to dismiss her feelings, "He has already made a blunder. He can't afford another public scandal unless he doesn't want to inherit the Olsen's fortune."

Josie felt puzzled, sensing that Laura's mind seemed scattered, like pieces of a puzzle she couldn't quite piece together.

Before she could inquire further, Laura suddenly said, "Guess who I saw in Rivodia?"

"Who?"

"It's Morgan Bastille."

The name made Josie visibly stiffen.

"What's wrong? Don't you know him? He's the psychologist you introduced me to," Laura said, catching Josie's somewhat shocking reaction.

"Oh, really? What about him?" Josie tried to act nonchalant as she turned around, picked up her coffee, and took small sips.

"I just found out he's the eldest son of the Bastille family in Rivodia and is set to inherit the family fortune."

"Where did you hear that?"

"Don't you know? I thought you two were friends?" Laura answered without directly addressing the question, trying to uncover their history from Josie's uneasy response.

Regarding Morgan, he was someone Josie never wanted to confront or acknowledge his existence, let alone have anything to do with him.

"We were college classmates, but I don't know him well."

Laura could easily discern the stark contrast in their reactions.

Josie's attempt to distance herself from Morgan was apparent, especially compared to his suggestive gaze and tone while mentioning her.

"He's not my psychologist anymore. He's now the heir of the Bastille family. And, honestly, it feels weird," Laura said.

"Since he's back in Rivodia, it's probably best not to see him again," Josie advised.

Laura remained emotionless behind her, lost in her thoughts as she mumbled, "I think so too."

The somber rain in Rivodia seemed to envelop her in a sentimental haze, and the man's indifferent voice echoed in her ears, "Laura, you said I'm your medicine. Don't you think you should offer something in return to deserve me?"

She shuddered in the rain. "What do you want?"

"Nothing much," he beamed,

"Just everything about Wavery.")

Chapter 666 Spare Me, I'm Exhausted

After half a month of hard work, Carter Group completed the government project three days ahead of schedule.

On the completion day, numerous government officials and Carter Group executives gathered for the ribbon-cutting ceremony while Josie stood inconspicuously in a distant

corner.

As she watched those people show off and act all fancy, Josie finally felt a sense of relief as the project had concluded smoothly, without any mishaps.

With only ten days until the New Year, the studio decided to go on an early holiday.

Josie mostly stayed at Mason Garden, keeping her father company, and occasionally dropped by the Russell Group to support Dexter while he worked.

Josie spent most of her time in Mason Garden, keeping her father company, and occasionally visited the Russell Group to support Dexter while he worked.

Today, she feigned exhaustion and used it as an excuse to avoid preparing for the Russell Group's annual meeting.

Josie playfully said to Dexter, "I'm exhausted. Spare me, please."

And Dexter smiled and indulgently rubbed her nose before letting her off the hook.

On the day of the annual meeting, she attended it alongside Dexter.

Even though they dressed modestly, their status naturally drew attention.

Many people came to offer toasts, and Josie confidently called out each person's name as they approached. She exuded the composure expected of Mrs. Russell, even when Dexter wasn't by her side.

The emcee on stage was the most notable project owner from one of Russell Group's investments this year.

Sporting an enchanting smile, she spoke with eloquence and grace.

Sitting next to Josie in the front row, she suddenly added, “Guess what? Our project’s investor isn’t only Mr. Russell but Mrs. Russell too. And on the launch day, he bought the first batch of products, especially for her.”

Josie smiled knowingly, catching the full implication it meant that even Mr. Russell was treated as a guest during their product launch.

The emcee’s choice of words was clever, subtly turning the tables on Russell Group at their very own event.

“Yes,” Josie took the microphone. She added, “when your husband first came to our house to discuss the investment with Dex and me, I was already blown away by the project’s innovation. He spent half an hour explaining the concept, and Dex took only a minute to sign and agree to invest.”

As Josie delivered her words, her polished manner and eloquence left a strong impression on everyone present, and they exchanged subtle glances, recognizing her wit and skillful presentation.

With a skillful turn of phrase, Josie subtly implied that the emcee and her husband were eager to promote the project. At the same time, Dexter’s quick decision to be on board. showcased their enthusiasm. It was a shrewd move that clearly demonstrated who had the advantage.

The emcee reluctantly followed the crowd and joined in the applause, but her expression clearly revealed her displeasure.

Rumor had it that Josie lacked influential connections and came from an ordinary. background, leading some to believe she was easily influenced. Little did they know that Josie was like a rose with thorns a gentle exterior hiding a fierce spirit. Prick her a little, and she’d prove her strength.

Shortly after, Dexter returned to stand beside Josie.

Having heard her speech and witnessed the room’s amazed reaction earlier, he couldn’t help. but feel an immense sense of pride as he observed the woman he had mentored now basking in the spotlight.

Dexter felt reassured, knowing that Josie would stand up for him. They held hands, their understanding of each other’s emotions flowing effortlessly without the need for extensive words.

The annual meeting hit its midpoint, and the music invited everyone to the dance floor. Amidst the festive atmosphere, someone teasingly suggested that Mr. and Mrs. Russell share a dance. Blushing slightly, Josie softly replied, “I don’t know how to dance...”

With numerous eyes on them, Dexter calmly held her hand and offered, “My wife isn’t feeling comfortable dancing today. But if everyone’s willing, how about we present a musical piece instead?”

Josie glanced up, intrigued.

“Woohoo!” The crowd burst into applause.

Guiding her to the stage’s piano, Dexter heard Josie whisper, “Can you play the piano?”

She was completely unaware of his piano-playing ability.

Dexter gently squeezed her hand, "Moonlight Sonata, shall we?"

Chapter 667

Beethoven's famous piece was no stranger to Josie. She nodded confidently.

Seated side by side at the piano, their eyes met, and the captivating melody flowed from their fingers, enchanting the entire audience. Despite never having rehearsed together, their four-handed duet displayed an extraordinary level of harmony, as though they were one musician.

The sight of a handsome man and a beautiful woman sharing their musical talent was a sight to behold, prompting many to capture the moment on video.

Following the performance, even Josie was pleasantly surprised by how flawlessly it unfolded. She shared a knowing glance with Dexter, who looked at her with fondness and understanding.

"Tired?" he asked.

"A bit."

"Then let's go home."

Hand in hand, they left the venue.

Shortly afterward, a video of their performance at the annual meeting went viral on social media, becoming the talk of the town.

Though the video was a bit blurry, it displayed two people flawlessly playing the piano, looking remarkably in sync.

Gone were the days of mocking Josie's qualifications and doubting her as Dexter's wife. Now, she was recognized by everyone for her outstanding qualities, and she held the role with utmost confidence.

The streets were filled with festive cheer as the New Year was on the horizon. Sitting in the car, Josie felt restless. She held on to Dexter, urging him to take a walk.

Unable to resist her, he helped her change into comfortable shoes and put on a coat before stepping out of

the car.

"You know, having peaceful days like this felt like an unattainable fantasy, something I didn't even dare to dream of in the past," Josie said, strolling alongside him, her arm wrapped around his.

"So, now that you've got everything you wanted, are you happy?" Dexter adjusted his pace to walk beside

her.

"Definitely! My father has finally come around, my studio is doing well, and having you in my life makes it all perfect."

"Oh, so I'm ranked last?" Dexter teased with a grin.

Josie playfully held onto his arm, "No way! You're my number one!"

"Being ranked the last doesn't matter to me anyway, Dexter reached out and affectionately pinched her cheek, noting she had gained some weight, which pleased him. "How about having a child next year?"

The question had an air of jest, but his gaze showed sincerity and yearning.

Josie stared at him and nodded happily, "Sure, let's do it"

Dexter was pleasantly surprised by her enthusiastic response.

"We lost our child this year. I don't know if he or she would be willing to come back to us again."

The memory of the loss weighed heavily on Josie's heart every time she thought about it.

Dexter held her close, his embrace comforting. "You're perfect. Our child will come back to us soon."

"Really?"

"Absolutely."

The moon hung high, casting a gentle glow on their path. Despite the happiness, Josie couldn't shake off a sense of impending danger.

At that moment, Larry, who had been discreetly following them, stepped forward and said, "Mr. Russell." He handed over a phone with an incoming call.

Dexter shot a warning glance at Larry. He didn't want to take the call tonight, but knowing that if it weren't urgent, Larry wouldn't have disrupted his time with Josie.

Josie understood and said, "You should take the call first."

Dexter nodded, took the phone, and moved aside to answer the call.

Josie stood there, idly rubbing her arms, and an unfamiliar number popped up on her phone while she waited. She answered hesitantly, "Hello?"

"Hi, Josie," a voice tinged with resentment came from the other end.

She froze and remained silent.

"You played four-handed duets with another man with the piano skills I taught you." It was a cautionary statement.

He had seen the video.

Morgan sneered, "Did you think of me during the serenade?"

Josie closed her eyes and coldly replied, "No."

"Hey, Josie." It was a warning. He had seen the video, and his resentment was on the brink of spiraling out of control.

Chapter 668 But You Left First

"I already said no."

Josie felt no obligations toward Morgan in any way, "You left first, so you have no right to question me."

There was a moment of silence on the other end, and only heavy breathing could be heard.

After a while, Josie was finally released from Dexter's grip, which had now turned cold.

She grew impatient and said, "There's nothing left for us to talk about. Bye."

Josie was quick and decisive, but she caught on to Morgan's last words before hanging up, "Does Dexter know that I'm the one who taught you to play the piano?"

She observed Dexter standing tall in the chilly wind, still bogged down with the phone call.

Dexter had no inkling of the situation, and she wondered how furious he would be if he learned the truth.

She walked up to him and heard Dexter say to the other end of the phone, "Keep an eye on it, and make sure there are no mistakes."

As the call ended, he turned around, and his cold expression hadn't yet softened when he met Josie's innocent face. Both froze for a moment.

Josie was equally taken aback. Her prepared words momentarily choked up, "What's going on? You look upset."

Dexter lowered his eyes, his tone visibly softened, "Just some petty company matters."

Josie was perplexed but slightly nodded, choosing not to press the issue.

Dexter pulled her closer. She glanced at him, wanting to say something but hesitated, "Dex..."

"Hmm?" He waited expectantly for Josie to express herself.

However, observing Dexter's continued sullen demeanor, Josie deduced that he must be under immense work pressure. Suppressing her urge, she shook her head and said, "It's okay. It's getting too chilly out here; let's head home."

Dexter let it slide.

Josie made a mental note to explain everything to Dexter when the right opportunity arose.

As the New Year drew near, Paul grew restless at Mason Garden and expressed his desire to go for a walk. Josie had to accompany him to the supermarket to buy ingredients for the upcoming celebration.

With some free time, Paul seemed more relaxed. "Will Mr. Russell's grandfather join us on New Year's - Eve?"

"Of course," Josie replied, then hesitated. "but given his old age and frailty, I thought it would be more comfortable to celebrate the New Year at the Russell Manor. How does that sound, Dad?"

"That sounds good to me," Paul agreed.

Josie teased him, "You're the most accommodating and open-minded dad ever!"

"What's so funny about that? Don't you think so?" Paul chuckled, and they both shared a laugh.

Amidst the cheerful atmosphere, Josie brought up a more serious topic, "Dad, were you a doctor before?"

At this question, Paul's expression suddenly turned solemn. "Did you peek into the box I kept, Josie?!"

She raised her hands in surrender. "I just opened it and took a quick look and happened to see your medical license."

Paul playfully pointed his finger at her, testing her, "Oh, just a quick look?"

Josie's gaze wandered. "I also saw a few thousand dollars in there..."

Josie looked guilty but wasn't angry at all. She probably didn't see what was at the bottom, which seemed to ease Paul's frowning expression. "That's my pension money, don't even think about stealing it."

Josie laughed, "Who wants your money? But you still haven't answered me. Were you a doctor before?"

Regarding this question, Paul clearly didn't want to say much. "Huh? It happened so long ago... I can't seem to recall anything about it."

"How could you forget? This..."

Paul suddenly picked up his pace, appearing to be avoiding the topic. "Why would I joke about this? Mentioning it gives me a headache. Let's not talk about it anymore."

Josie had no choice but to fall silent, frowning at the old man's fading figure, feeling somewhat helpless as she thought he was acting like a child.

The Russell family was grand, but Dexter had no plans to participate in the ancestral rites this year.

After all, they were about to send Yanis in, and it would be too awkward to meet now.

Old Mr. Russell had no objections. "I'm old; it's up to you to decide for the Russell family now. Whatever you say goes."

Chapter 669 The New Year's Gift from Dexter

Picking up on the disgruntlement behind his words, Josie remarked, "Grandpa sounds upset."

Dexter continued typing away on the keyboard, dealing with business matters. "Family ties run deep. It's normal for him to be upset."

"Grandpa is already at the age of the heavenly mandate. His children are also in their old age. He probably doesn't want to see this kind of situation happen in the family." Josie carefully chose her words as she poured him a glass of water.

"Nobody ever wished for this." Dexter looked up. "Yanis should have known that this day would come when he plotted against me with outsiders."

He had always sought revenge for any harm done to him, especially when it was inflicted by a family member.

Josie nodded.

“So, are we still returning to Russell Manor for New Year?”

Dexter’s fingers hovered over the keyboard, pausing for a moment. He then took the water glass from her hand, gently placed it on the table, and reluctantly pulled her into his arms.

“Yes.”

Josie curved her lips, sitting on his lap and running her fingers through his slightly prickly hair.

“Do

you

think I’m crude?” he mumbled, burying his head in her embrace and savoring her sweet scent.

“No,” Josie whispered. “you had a tough time in Spain, and I understand.”

“It’s not just that, Dexter carried on, saying, “if that incident hadn’t happened, you wouldn’t have come to Spain with me, wouldn’t have had a car accident, and wouldn’t have begged Mark to help me. Jo, you don’t need to burden yourself with those memories. I’ll remember them for you.”

In Dexter’s mind, Yanis and his accomplices were to blame, and he was determined to make them pay.

Upon hearing this, a warm feeling rushed through Josie’s heart. She might have endured hardships, but she was never forgotten by him.

Wavery had an uncommonly snowless and warm winter with clear and calm weather this year. The Russell family lived in peace, and on New Year’s Eve morning, Josie received two gifts: one from Dexter and one from her father.

Paul slipped one thousand cash into an envelope and gave it to Josie. It felt substantial when she touched it. Half-jokingly, she quipped, “Dad, please don’t tell me you’ve given me all your pension money.”

Paul playfully flicked her forehead. Take it, and stop asking questions!”

Josie was delighted.

It had been ages since she received any special gifts, but this year she got two. It wasn’t just about the gift but the feeling of being cared for that warmed her heart.

Next, she picked up the one from Dexter, which felt thin. Playfully dissatisfied, she teased, “Dad is so generous. Why are you so stingy?”

Dexter chuckled, leaned in, and planted a kiss on her lips. “Open it and take a look.”

Curious, she tore open the envelope, finding a bank card inside.

Josie was taken aback.

"The pin number is our wedding anniversary, Dexter added.

Josie raised an eyebrow. "How much money did you load on it?"

"You and your money fixation. Well, go to the bank and check it yourself."

Josie held onto him, and Dexter had no choice but to gesture the numbers-two and four.

She turned her head; twenty-four matched her age this year.

"Two thousand four?" she asked.

Dexter got up and left.

"Twenty-four thousand?" Josie held his hand and probed.

Dexter affectionately pinched her cheek.

She took a wilder guess, "It can't be two hundred and forty thousand, can it?"

That would be the bonus for the two projects she completed!

The man sighed. "Two hundred and forty million."

"Ah!" Josie exclaimed, utterly flabbergasted, "Why in the world would you give me so much money?"

"It's a New Year's gift from me." Dexter stayed calm, gently patting her head. "The little girl is growing up; she deserves a grand present."

To him, this money wasn't a significant sum. He always wanted to ensure Josie had something for security in case of emergencies and when he was not around.

"It's too much, Dex..." Josie still couldn't believe it.

"Just take it."

Dexter was undoubtedly wealthy. Josie couldn't help but wonder about the extent of his personal fortune. and how many more two hundred and forty millions he had in possession.

Chapter 670 Something Had Happened!

"Dexter, you know we never signed a prenuptial agreement. If we divorce, you're not subject to paying me any alimony," Josie said playfully, holding her face thoughtfully.

It was New Year's, and Josie wanted to amuse him with her witty response. "You're quite the expert at calculations, aren't you, Josie?" Dexter teased, looking at her with affection.

She gave him a playful doe-eyed look. "The Russell family's legal team never loses. You can ask them," Dexter confidently stated, knowing they wouldn't let her take a single penny.

"You seem disappointed. Do you really want a divorce?"

Dexter sealed her words with a kiss as if he couldn't get enough of her.

Breathless from the kiss, Josie repeatedly shook her head, signaling she didn't want a divorce.

In this gap, Dexter suddenly lost his focus for a moment. He remembered the divorce agreement he had signed with Paul... Hopefully, that agreement will never be brought up.

As the day passed peacefully, the couple and Paul gathered at Russell Manor to celebrate the New Year together.

Henry still appeared upset, evident from his expression. Still, with the cheerful atmosphere and many people around, the anger eventually dissipated.

After the New Year's Eve celebration, Josie hurried to the courtyard to play with fireworks. Dexter joined her, looking at her dotingly as if Josie were his daughter.

Amidst the vibrant fireworks display, Dexter suddenly said, "I don't think we should have a daughter together."

Josie looked confused. "Why? Are you against having daughters and only prefer sons?"

"I'm afraid if she looks too much like you. I won't be able to let her go and might even stop her from getting married in the future."

Each word felt like a glimpse into the distant future, spanning over twenty years.

Josie blushed, tiptoed, and delicately brushed off the debris from the fireworks that had fallen onto his hair.

Dexter could hear the rhythm of her heartbeat and instantly leaned forward, kissing her tenderly.

This kiss under the enchanting fireworks seemed to stretch on forever. Eventually, Josie was left breathless and nestled her head in his arms.

She heard his hypnotizing hoarse voice saying, "Jo, our third year together is coming."

Unbeknownst to them, two years had flown by, and Josie's heart was pounding with excitement too.

Just then, Dexter's phone in his pocket suddenly rang. She took it out for him, and it was an anonymous number.

Dexter glanced at the phone before reaching out to answer it.

He turned slightly, leaving Josie puzzled. She had a feeling that he seemed to be under some psychological

pressure.

Anxiously, she approached him. "What's going on?"

There was a strange cryptic look in his eyes, making it hard for her to discern.

Dexter gazed fondly at Josie, forcing a smile. The office has some last-minute matters to deal with. Tonight, I may have to leave my lovely wife to sleep alone."

Upon hearing that, Josie immediately breathed a sigh of relief. She thought something serious had happened. "Alright, Mrs. Russell approves."

Dexter leaned down and gave her a tight hug. "Wait for me to come back."

"Be careful on the road."

He entered the manor, explaining to his grandfather and Paul, who were watching TV, before stepping away and turning back to catch a glimpse of Josie.

She stood under the colorful fireworks, looking radiant and full of life.

With a warm smile, she waved at him.

Only then did Dexter get into the car.

For some reason, Josie felt that he was acting strangely, but she couldn't quite put her finger on what exactly seemed amiss.

She thought perhaps she was just being paranoid.

After Dexter left, Josie spent some time watching television with the elders. Suddenly, her phone rang.

It was Laura calling.

Without much thought, she answered, "Happy New Year, Laura!"

Laura spoke in a hushed voice, "Something bad happened!"