

## Too Far 411

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"What is it?" Elliot asked.

"Five years ago, we... we had a baby together."

Elliot had one hand in his pocket as he stood in front of the French windows in the study, and when he heard what Hayley said over the phone, his eyes widened. "What are you talking about?"

"Our baby didn't manage to survive, but I was looking through my stuff and I found the sonogram from all those years ago. Our baby..." Hayley let out a heartbreaking sob. "I lost the baby at three months... I'm so sorry for not being able to keep him."

He was shell-shocked. He never thought that he had hurt Hayley more than she let on five years ago, and he didn't ever expect her to have gone through a miscarriage.

"I didn't know that I was pregnant at the time. I was always so overworked and tired, and by the time I found out I was expecting a baby, the fetal heartbeat had stopped." She was crying even more mournfully now on the other line as she went on to say, "It was all my fault. I didn't know I was having a baby. If I did, I would have done everything I could to bring the baby into this world."

"Stop crying," Elliot urged gently. "That's enough now. Don't beat yourself up over this; maybe this is just fate at work."

"I get really cold whenever winter comes around. The doctor mentioned that it's a side effect from the miscarriage. Elliot, I want to see you, right now..." Hayley pleaded, "Can you please come over and see me?"

He frowned. "Right now?"

"Yes, right now. I'm really, really unwell, and I want to see you. Please," she begged.

"Okay, I'll go over now," he agreed. He couldn't believe that Hayley had suffered a miscarriage that left her with such brutal side effects.

Presently, it was evening time, and Anastasia was resting in her bedroom when Elliot pushed the door open to come in. "I need to head out for a while. Mrs. Collins will come by later to make dinner."

"Oh, okay," Anastasia replied with a nod.

Elliot's dilemma was clear in his obsidian eyes as he gazed at her. He didn't want her to know that he was going over to Hayley's place because he didn't want to hurt her.

"What time will you be back?" she pressed.

"A little later than usual."

"Alright then. Go ahead." She didn't want to intrude too much upon his personal life either.

He gave her a long look, then turned and left.

Meanwhile, over at Summit Mansion, Hayley flew into her room and sat down in front of the vanity. She happily grabbed her cosmetic bag and began to put on her make-up so that she looked ready to welcome Elliot.

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The swelling and bruises on her face from the plastic surgery had healed over, and having gone through a rigorous skin treatment, she was glowing beautifully under the lights. A delighted smile curled on her lips, and she was entirely happy with how the procedure had turned out even though she bore some semblance to Anastasia now.

She carefully applied her make-up to create an effortless and natural look, then ran toward her wardrobe to pull on a stunning negligee that revealed just the right amount of skin. After that, she grabbed a white fur coat and draped it over herself to add a luxurious touch to her overall appearance.

When she was done, she sat on the couch and waited for Elliot to show up.

As night devoured the land, a black sedan drove into the front yard of the mansion. Elliot's elegant and towering figure stepped out of the vehicle. He was dressed in all-black, and there was an imposing air of nobility about him as he made his way up the path to the front door.

Hayley was peering at him through the window with unadulterated adoration. She had been wanting to claim this man as her own, in life and in bed, ever since she laid eyes on him. At the same time, she was admittedly flustered and nervous; she wasn't sure if he would take too kindly to her new face, but at the thought of how men often fell for beauties, her desire to be loved by him overpowered her fear and uncertainty.

Elliot opened the front door, which had been left unlocked, and walked into the house. He was greeted at once by the sight of Hayley lounging on the couch in the living room, the dim lighting overhead casting a warm glow over her skin as the thin blanket slid halfway off her torso. Just then, she looked up slowly, and her eyes lit up when she registered his arrival.

Upon taking a good look at her face, he stopped in his tracks. His eyes narrowed slightly as he appraised her, and for a moment, he couldn't believe what he was seeing.

He could see traces of Anastasia's delicate features on Hayley's face. Shock rippled through him as he belatedly realized that she had gone for plastic surgery. Just so she could look like Anastasia, he thought grimly.

"What's wrong, Elliot? Do you not like the way I look now?" Hayley looked crestfallen. "I know how much you like Anastasia, so I... I did my best to look like her. I did this for you. Please don't push me away after this!" She sounded like she might cry any time, though she was subtly pleading for his compliments.

"Plastic surgery comes with its risks, and there isn't a need for you to go to such lengths," Elliot pointed out as he sat down on the couch across from Hayley. He couldn't help finding it unsettling to see her looking like this.

"All I ever want is for you to love and notice me like how you do to Anastasia," Hayley muttered demurely as she bit down on her lower lip.

He frowned at this. "You really didn't have to get so much work done on your face just to suit my preferences."

She felt gutted. He wasn't behaving the way she thought he would at all, and he was still treating her with the same indifference as he did before she went for plastic surgery.

Without another word, she picked up a docket from the table and handed it to him, saying, "All the information about our baby is in there, Elliot. Take a look for yourself. I know it's been five years, but I... I still haven't moved past it."

He rose to take the docket, then opened it to pull out the sonogram. It had Hayley's name and the date written on it, and the timestamp showed that it was taken about three months after the incident at Abyss Club.

"Take care of yourself and rest up," Elliot said as he set the documents aside. When he looked up at Hayley again, it was with compassion and apology. "I'm sorry for putting you through the pain and the heartache. I'll hire a nutritionist to come by tomorrow to curate a special diet for you while you're recuperating."

At that moment, Hayley let out a low hiss of pain and doubled down as her hand pressed down on her abdomen. "It hurts..."

He stood up immediately and crossed over to her, urging, "Would you like to see a doctor?"

She clutched his arm and pulled him down on the couch, and he did as he was prompted. Then, she nuzzled into his embrace while he was distracted and snaked her arms around his waist, hugging him tight as she mumbled, "I'm cold, Elliot. Can you hold me, please?"

Elliot's gaze darkened as he reached for the blanket and draped it over her shoulders. He then offered flatly, "I'll go and turn up the thermostat."

"No! I just need your warmth," she insisted, still clinging onto him as her eyes fluttered closed. She wanted nothing but to breathe in more of his scent.

He stiffened before patting her shoulder awkwardly. Being touched by any woman other than Anastasia irked him to no end.

Suddenly, Hayley grabbed her phone from the coffee table and clicked into the camera. Then, she took a picture of herself snuggled up in Elliot's arms. She gazed up at him and explained, "Just so I can take a look at you whenever I miss you and you aren't around."

"I'll go and turn up the thermostat," he bit out coldly as he shoved her firmly aside. He marched over to the control panel on the wall where the thermostat was and turned up the heat in the living room.

Hayley stood up from the couch and let her fur coat slide down her shoulders deliberately, revealing the red negligee that she wore underneath. It revealed her skin in all the right places, and it was so short that she might as well be naked. She gave Elliot a helpless look, seemingly flustered by the loss of her fur coat.

At present, the sheer amount of skin she was revealing would have prompted any other man to abandon all sense of reason and rush up to her to devour every bit of her stunning, fragile beauty.

"Elliot, I'm cold..." She was like a child who couldn't even bend down to pick up her own coat. All she did was stand there and stare at Elliot imploringly, silently willing him to save her from distress.

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However, he was focused on turning up the thermostat, and when he finally turned to look at her, it was with an impassive expression that matched the frosty gleam in his eyes.

She dispensed with subtlety as she begged, "Elliot, hold me! Please!"

Having turned up the thermostat, he returned to her side and picked up the coat before handing it to her, swiftly blocking out the ample amount of décolletage that she was showing. In a cold and crisp voice, he said, "Don't bother using such tricks on me. A woman is only ever desirable and lovable when she loves and values herself first, got it?" He did not fall for her seductive charms and decided to lecture her instead.

It seemed as if the novelty of romance was lost on him.

Hayley was stunned by his rejection, and when she saw him grab his phone off the coffee table, she demanded, "Are you leaving?"

Needless to say, Elliot had already figured out the true reason she asked him to come over, and if seduction was all she had planned for tonight, he didn't think he had to stay here a moment longer. "If you're lonely and dying for company, you're welcome to bring home any man you want," he pointed out sardonically before he turned to head for the door.

"You're the only one I like, Elliot! Can't you just stay with me for a night? I'll give you anything you want!" Hayley cried as she shamelessly and desperately chased after him.

However, Elliot had already slid into his car and closed the door. Hayley hurtled toward him, but just as she was about to reach the door, he backed out of the driveway smoothly and sped off into the night, leaving her shivering in the cold breeze.

The fur coat on her kept her warm, but there was no thawing of the icicles that pierced her heart following his harsh rejection.

The courage she had summoned just to go through with the plastic surgery was all for naught; Elliot wasn't impressed by her new face at all, nor did he glance at it for even longer than a few seconds.

She couldn't understand why this was happening. He likes the way Anastasia looks, doesn't he? I've had all this work done just to look like her, so why am I still not good enough?

Gritting her teeth, she fished out her phone with a malicious gleam in her eyes and selected the picture she had taken earlier before sending it to Anastasia.

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With her chest rising and falling rapidly, she screamed into the night, "If I can't have you, Elliot, then neither can Anastasia!" She stormed back into the house and plopped down on the couch, grabbing the bottle of wine she had been drinking before Elliot's arrival, and threw her head back as she gulped down

the contents. However, at that moment, her eyes widened when she realized that the wine had lost its familiar tangy fragrance, and it seemed like it had been diluted with water.

Hayley stared at the wine in astonishment. Have I left it exposed to the air for too long? She filled half a glass with the wine and drank it, only to find that it was as tasteless as tap water.

Her hand flew to her throat as her mind scrambled for an answer. What's happening? Why can't I taste the wine?

As panic seized her, she hurried to the fridge and rummaged the drawer for a handful of cherries. She didn't bother washing them as she shoved them into her mouth. The sweetness of the cherries, which she was sure she had tasted just the day before, had been severely diluted, barely coating her tongue. It was as if her taste buds were degenerating.

She started to grow anxious as she ran into the kitchen. She had never cooked here, but the servants had stocked up the salt and sugar. Having found a bag of salt, she tore it open and shoveled a handful of it into her mouth. The saltiness ought to make her cringe and shudder, but she could not taste it at all, and she only became incredibly thirsty afterward.

"My taste buds!" She let out a frantic shriek. Then, she crouched down on the floor and clutched her throat. She couldn't believe that the plastic surgery had caused her to lose her sense of taste.

Without wasting another second, she dashed out of the house and into the garage, driving over to the hospital.

Meanwhile, Anastasia was curled up in bed with a good book, and she had spent the better part of the last few hours without her phone. Now that she wanted to check the time, she began to search for her phone.

Elliot's villa was huge, and it would take a while for her to find the phone she had so casually set aside somewhere.

It was only after she ventured down into the living room that she found her phone on the table next to the couch. She sat down to check the time, only to see that she had received a new message.

She clicked into it, and the contents made her eyes widen in shock. The text was sent from an unfamiliar number, and the picture that came with it was one of a woman, who bore a striking resemblance to her, snuggled up in Elliot's arms.

Anastasia did not miss the fact that Elliot was wearing the same clothes he had when he left the house earlier. When he said he was heading out, did he really mean he was going to some other woman's place?

## Chapter 415

She glanced at the woman in the picture again. Aside from the strong resemblance they shared, she was a little stunned to see that there was something unnervingly familiar about the woman.

Anastasia had no idea that Hayley had gone under the knife. More importantly, it had been a major procedure. It was only normal that Anastasia could not recognize her underneath all that make-up and raunchy outfit.

How did this woman get my number anyway? She even sent me this picture to rile me up!

She tossed her phone aside as frustration and anger welled up in her. Just then, she heard the sound of a car, specifically Elliot's, pulling up outside.

She fixed her murderous gaze on the door, and sure enough, it wasn't long before Elliot walked past the threshold with his car keys in hand.

Anastasia narrowed her eyes and crossed her arms as she stared at him like he was the guilty cat that ate the canary.

Catching sight of this, Elliot felt a chill run down his spine as he asked, "What's wrong?"

He had been happy to see that she was waiting on the couch for him, but when he caught the murderous look in her eyes, he began to wonder what he had done to offend her.

"Nothing," she bit out coldly. She smiled, but it did not reach her eyes as she drawled, "Did you have fun, President Presgrave?"

He raised a brow at her and countered, "Did you wait up for me on purpose?"

"Don't flatter yourself; I only came down for a drink," she said humorlessly as she rose to pour a glass of water for herself.

"I want a drink too. Pour one for me?"

"Unless your arms or your legs are broken, do it yourself!" Anastasia snapped as she took the glass of water she had poured for herself and went up the stairs.

Downstairs, Elliot gaped after Anastasia wordlessly.

For some reason, he felt like he was being abandoned. Women were perpetually unsolvable mysteries, and not even Elliot, with his businessman brilliance and intelligence, could figure them out.

He did not bother pouring himself a glass of water and followed Anastasia up the stairs instead. When he got to her bedroom doorway, he saw that she was seated on the couch on the second floor and asked, "Where's Jared?"

"Playing Legos," she answered coolly, deliberately avoiding his gaze as she flipped through her half-read book.

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At that moment, Elliot saw the glass of water on the table next to her and reached out to take it. However, just as he brought it up to his lips, she said curtly, "Don't touch my glass."

Seeing as he had already begun to drink from the glass, he gulped down a mouthful of water. He then narrowed his eyes as he asked, "Why not?"

When she saw that he had taken a sip, she shrugged and said, "Fine, drink the whole glass of water. I'll just go downstairs and pour myself another one!"

She was making it sound like he carried some infectious disease. We've already kissed multiple times, and all of a sudden she doesn't want me drinking from her glass? He was baffled as he sat down across from her. His piercing gaze was inquisitive as he asked, "I drank your water. Why should that stop you from drinking the rest of it?"

He had sensed her hostility from the moment he came home, and her passive-aggressiveness was making him nervous, not to mention frustrated.

"I don't want to talk about it," she muttered in annoyance, not wanting to say anything more after that.

"Why not?" he pressed. He was never one to beat around the bush be it in business deals or conversations. He would much rather have an open discussion when it came to solving problems, and he wanted to have a solution as soon as possible. "Is there a problem between us that I should know about?"

"You know what, I never should have saved you last night! Sure, what Aliona did was despicable and disgusting, but it wasn't as if you would be at a loss, right? You'd only have to put in some physical labor, but that's about it! She's the one who would have gotten the short end of the stick! Right?" Anastasia blurted out all of a sudden.

This only made Elliot more puzzled. However, before he could say anything, she went on to ask in all seriousness, "Did you think I was butting into your personal affairs last night and you secretly blame me for it?"

It was then that he realized they didn't just have a problem; they were having a crisis. Otherwise, she wouldn't take such a feisty tone with him at present.

Everything had been fine when he left home earlier, which meant something must have happened in between that made her lash out at him like this. He softened and asked in hopes of settling the matter amicably, "Anastasia, tell me what happened."

She took her phone and pulled up the picture she had received from the unfamiliar number earlier, showing it to him as she snapped, "Next time you decide to fool around behind my back, find a woman who doesn't look so eerily similar to me. It makes me sick."

Elliot narrowed his eyes slightly when he saw the picture. I can't believe Hayley sent it to her!

In a grave tone, he asked, "Anastasia, do you know who she is?"

"What, have I seen her before or something?" Anastasia was admittedly astonished by his question. She didn't think that the person he was fooling around with was someone she knew.

"That's Hayley."

"What?" Anastasia gasped. "That's Hayley?!"

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That explained why she had found the woman so familiar yet so strange at the same time. She never expected Hayley to have gone under the knife and gotten all this work done just to look like her. The

thought of this made her sick to the stomach; the person she hated and was disgusted by the most had decided to take on her face!

"She went for plastic surgery, and apparently, the procedure was done with your looks in mind," Elliot elaborated, sounding equally unsettled and queasy.

"Well, she certainly snuggled up real close to you, didn't she?" Anastasia mumbled unhappily.

"Don't get the wrong idea. I've never felt anything but guilt toward her, and I don't intend to let that progress into anything else," he explained in a low voice as he stared at her imploringly as if silently begging for forgiveness.

Naturally, Anastasia knew that Hayley had set this up and taken the picture just to spite her. Besides, if she were to look really closely, she could tell that Hayley was the only one who was doing all the hugging; Elliot did not reciprocate her gesture at all.

Wait! Why am I getting jealous here? She isn't someone I should be jealous of! Anastasia flushed as she pursed her lips. Then, she grew a little embarrassed as she offered sheepishly, "President Presgrave, would you like a glass of water? I'll go and pour you one right now!"

Upon seeing the sudden shift in her demeanor, Elliot knew that her anger had waned. He had to admit that the furious side of her piqued a certain fear and anxiousness that he had never felt before.

Anastasia, on the other hand, was not envious of the fact that Hayley's plastic surgery had been a success. After all, procedures like these often required a severe alteration of one's bones, muscles, and nerves. There was no telling if there would be any long-lasting damages that came from this.

"You're not upset with me anymore, are you?" Elliot got up and sat beside her with a hint of tentativeness in his eyes.

"I'm not upset! I did say some harsh words just now, but don't take it to heart!" Anastasia turned around and realized that she had no right to treat him that way.

"I'm going back to the room." Anastasia wanted to go back to the room and have some alone time.

However, as soon as she got up, a strong arm grabbed her wrist and yanked her down. In an instant, Anastasia fell onto Elliot's lap and into his arms.

"You..." Anastasia squinted her eyes, wondering what he was up to.

"Do you still hate me?"

"I don't hate you!" Anastasia lied through her teeth.

"That glass of water," reminded Elliot.

"That doesn't mean I hate you," Anastasia explained quickly.

"I don't believe it unless you prove it to me."

"How should I prove it to you?" She felt that there was nothing to prove.

"I have a way," said Elliot in a low voice as he clasped the back of her head and kissed her thin lips.



Anastasia's mind instantly went blank. How could he kiss her whenever he wanted to? Could he at least respect her?

After a passionate kiss, Elliot proved with facts that she did not despise him. Only then did he let go of her in satisfaction.

Without uttering another word, Anastasia grabbed her phone and entered the room. She needed some quiet time to herself!

She should think about the consequences first before messing with him next time.

The next morning, Anastasia received a call from Felicia while she was still in a groggy state.

"Anastasia, have you seen the news? Alice has been sentenced to five years in prison."

Hearing that, Anastasia's eyes immediately shot open, and she was now wide awake. "Five years?"

"Yeah! President Presgrave seems to have shown his temper this time, but Alice dug her own grave. She didn't just ruin her own future but was even sentenced to five years in prison. She deserves it, though. Besides her, Jacqueline has also been sentenced to three years of imprisonment." Anastasia could hear the hint of regret underneath Felicia's words.

However, when the case was applied to Anastasia, she didn't find them innocent at all. Alice was a vicious woman, while Jacqueline didn't know how to draw a line. As if it wasn't enough for her to steal Anastasia's work as her own, she even had to betray Anastasia!

If it weren't for Elliot's help this time, it would have been difficult for Anastasia to find proof of Alice's theft, not to mention the fact that Savill Jewelry Atelier had been supporting Alice in secret. Anastasia faced the risk of getting kicked out of the design industry and becoming a joke among the public. How cruel was that to her?

"Felicia, I think Alice is too ambitious and is always finding ways to replace you. There's no need to pity her," Anastasia uttered disapprovingly.

She remembered the kind acts of those who treated her well, but she would not pity those who treated her badly.

"You're right, Alice deserves to be punished. Those who have spoken ill of you in the company are now terrified. They've underestimated President Presgrave's love for you."

Anastasia instantly felt warmth filling her chest. Only those involved were more emotional.

"I know, and I'm grateful for what he has done for me."

"Okay, after you take over your father's company, I'll welcome you back. Besides, all the works that have plagiarized yours have been taken off the shelves, and your works have been re-launched."

"Thank you, Felicia."

“Savill is pretty unlucky too. Weren’t they supposed to be listed soon? Sadly, because of this incident, they’ve become bankrupt. I heard that the president even went to beg President Presgrave to let them go, but President Presgrave refused.”

“Is that so?”

“Yeah! He begged President Presgrave through various connections, and he even went to stop his car several times. I heard that he even kneeled on the ground while begging too.”

Anastasia wasn’t aware that the owner of Savill had done all those things.

As she lifted the blanket, Anastasia got out of bed. She glanced at her son and saw that he was still fast asleep, probably from the excitement last night.

After putting on another coat, Anastasia went downstairs. It was cold outside since winter had arrived. It was a foggy morning, and in the far distance, mountains could be vaguely seen spiking in the clouds.

If someone were to bring her a cup of warm coffee at that moment, that would be even more pleasant.

With that thought in mind, she smelled the aroma of coffee coming from the kitchen. There stood an elegant figure while he was cooking breakfast. He was wearing an off-white sweater and khaki-colored pants. This was the softest look Anastasia had seen on Elliot.

Usually, he wore dark-colored clothing, but today, he decided to go with a light and mellow-toned outfit. It was simply a domestic sight to see.

“You’re awake!” Elliot was wearing an apron, giving off the vibes of a househusband.

Anastasia walked up to him and discovered that a scrumptious breakfast had been laid out on the table. Elliot, on the other hand, was fiddling with the coffee machine.

“Take a seat. Breakfast will be ready soon.” As he spoke, Elliot checked the time.

While watching his back, Anastasia suddenly had the urge to hug him. With that thought in mind, she walked over on a whim, extended her arms, and gave him a back hug.

Elliot was slightly startled, but he wasn’t stiff. It was just a pleasant surprise to him. His eyes curved into crescent shapes, and the corners of his mouth lifted slightly.

Just like that, Anastasia hugged him for a while, indulging in his warmth early in the morning.

“Thank you for everything you have done for me.” Anastasia pressed against his firm back and uttered gratefully from the bottom of her heart.

Meanwhile, Elliot took the opportunity and reached out to hold her hand. He turned around, as if afraid that she would pull away once he faced her.

Anastasia’s arms stayed on his waist while his hands were placed lightly on her shoulder. After the two made eye contact, Anastasia lowered her head shyly.

“For me, it’s far from enough. As long as you give me a chance, I can do more for you,” Elliot uttered in a baritone voice while he reached out and stroked her hair. “Will you give me the chance to do so?”

As a response, Anastasia threw herself into his arms. His tender gaze overwhelmed her.

"I'm already by your side. Are you still afraid that you don't have enough chances to spoil me?" Anastasia raised her head and inquired with a smile.

Elliot kissed her hair and responded, "Wait a minute. I'll make breakfast for you and Jared."

"I'm so glad that Jared and I can have breakfast that you've prepared!"

Picking up a cup of coffee, she sat in front of the floor-to-ceiling window, waiting for Chef Elliot's breakfast.

Ten minutes later, Elliot came over with two plates of big breakfast. It was a nutritiously-balanced meal, and it smelled so good. Even the food plating was aesthetic.

Anastasia quickly enjoyed her meal. With him here, she had nothing to worry about.

"My grandma will be holding a banquet tomorrow to host some guests, do you want to come?" Elliot asked cautiously.

Ever since the incident with Riley last time, he was a little worried that Anastasia would mind going over to Presgrave Residence.

After pondering for a while, she nodded. "Sure! I'll come."

Hearing that, Elliot let out an inaudible sigh of relief. Thank goodness she was willing to go.

Meanwhile, in a mansion within the city, Aliona sat on the sofa with a sullen face, thinking about her following plans. After being interrupted by Anastasia last time, her good impression in front of Elliot had been completely ruined.

Lucas called to say that Elliot was furious now, and he didn't want to see her again.

Anastasia was the culprit. If she hadn't appeared, Aliona would have succeeded that night.

"Anastasia, you cruel woman!" Just then, Aliona saw the news. Because of her plagiarism, Elliot made a jewelry company bankrupt for Anastasia's sake and even sent two designers to jail.

Now, Aliona had to rebuild her good impression in front of Elliot so that when she gave birth to his child, Elliot would treat the child like his own.

What could she do now? She couldn't even contact her godfather.

Just then, a subordinate hurriedly entered from the outside to hand her a letter.

"Miss Aliona, Master Riley sent this from jail. Hurry up and take a look."

Aliona took it and immediately tore it open to check the letter, only to read several words that contained a vague meaning from Riley.

"Aliona, the situation doesn't seem to be in my favor. I want you to implement the final plan as soon as possible. Regarding the plan we discussed before, just do it boldly without any hesitation."

Aliona's heart skipped a beat when she read those words. The final plan that her godfather had mentioned was for her to get pregnant with Elliot's child and kill Elliot before the child was born. That way, the child would be sent to the Presgrave Family and become their only heir.

This was the quickest way to acquire the assets of the Presgrave Family. The Presgraves had only a few candidates for their heir, and Elliot was the family's only direct son. Since he had no children yet, whoever gave birth to his child would be considered a treasure.

Aliona held the letter and clutched it tightly with her beautiful nails. Was her godfather in such a critical condition already?

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Lucas had once told her that Elliot was investigating his kidnapping case back when he was a child, and Anastasia's mother had also been killed in the very same incident. Therefore, Elliot was trying his best to reopen the case.

That must be what her godfather meant by the situation wasn't in his favor. He was worried that Elliot might harm him in prison, or if Elliot found out what happened in the past, he would definitely make Riley rot in prison for the rest of his life.

"Miss Aliona, now that Master Riley isn't here, we will listen to your commands." The subordinate had a premonition that Riley was at a dead end now, and Aliona was the one who held Riley's foreign assets.

They could definitely reap the benefits by following her.

Aliona shut her eyes and ordered, "You guys may leave."

Her godfather would not let her give up just like that because Lucas was making sure that she didn't abuse her power. Lucas' son was still kidnapped overseas under the watch of Riley's subordinates, and she didn't even know where he was locked up in.

Moreover, she had not inherited her godfather's assets completely yet, so if she opted out now, it wouldn't be beneficial for her. She even had to bear the risk of being hunted down.

However, she could bet on Elliot. All she had to do was to give birth to his son and kill him to enjoy the billions of assets from the Presgrave empire.

"Tell Father that I will execute his plan." Aliona bit her lip, feeling ambitious.

To be able to work alongside a conspirator like Riley proved that Aliona didn't have an innocent mind.

At Summit Mansion, Rey had sent some men over to carry out investigations and monitoring works. Eventually, they managed to retrieve footage near the communication tracking address. It was a footage of a woman in a call, and she was standing beside the fountain.

According to the GPS location, Rey was pretty certain that it was her who had ordered the security guard to burn the Abyss Club's server room.

She was the only person who fit the timing and address, after all.

"Do you have any other footage? I want something clearer."

The security guard tried to search for other footage on the surveillance screens and zoomed in on one of the shots. In that specific footage, Rey could see the woman clearly and widened his eyes in shock.

Indeed, the woman in that footage was Hayley!

"Send me this video," Rey uttered calmly.

After he returned to the car with this information, Rey dialed Elliot's number.

"Hello?"

"President Presgrave, according to the GPS location, I just discovered that the person who ordered the security to set fire to the server room is Miss Seymour."

"What? Are you sure?"

"I'm sure it's her. I'll send the information to you in a while."

After returning to the study, Elliot received the footage sent by Rey. The woman on the screen was indeed Hayley, and she was on the phone.

Elliot trusted that there wouldn't be a problem with Rey's sources, and their tracking system under Presgrave Group was even bound to the satellite positioning system to measure accurate time and distance.

Why did Hayley order the security guard to burn down the server room? What secret was she hiding? Elliot's inner doubts welled up.

Perhaps Anastasia would know better about Hayley.

He then picked up his laptop and got up to find Anastasia. Currently, she was on the second floor reading a pile of material reports sent by her father. It took her a long time to digest a few material terms.

She was already feeling a headache since she wasn't fit to manage a company.

"Do you have some time to spare? I have something to ask you." Elliot sat opposite her and showed her his laptop.

Squinting her eyes, Anastasia looked at the woman on the screen, asking, "Isn't that Hayley?"

"Please forgive me for investigating the incident five years ago without your consent," Elliot apologized beforehand.

Hearing that, Anastasia was baffled. "Why do you want to investigate this matter?"

"I want to find that b\*stard and make him rot in prison." Elliot's eyes were cold.

Anastasia quickly recalled a recent call from the host who slept with her before. She knew that he was a time bomb that would explode by her side at any time.

By then, her reputation and her son's background would be heavily affected.

Therefore, sending him to prison could be the only way to end it once and for all.

“Did I tell you that it was Hayley who arranged for the host to sleep with me?” Anastasia raised her head without evading the question.

Hearing that, Elliot was completely stunned. It was the first time he had heard about this from Anastasia.

“Hayley was the one who framed you five years ago?” Elliot instantly widened his eyes in disbelief.

Anastasia recalled that she hadn’t told him about it before, so she nodded. “Back then, Hayley and my sister teamed up to trick me into going to the club. Once I entered the private room, there was already a man who dragged me in.”

## Chapter 420

Upon hearing the new piece of information, Elliot clenched his fists. What he heard from Hayley was that Anastasia had entered the wrong private room and was violated by a man. She even cut off her friendship with Hayley after that.

Between Hayley and Anastasia’s words, Elliot chose to believe in Anastasia without reason.

“Why didn’t you tell me before that Hayley had framed you?” Elliot felt incredibly guilty and blamed himself for believing in Hayley’s words.

“How could I when you’re so protective of her? I was worried that you’ll believe in her words rather than mine.” When Anastasia thought of that, she felt uneasy.

“Of course I’d believe you,” Elliot affirmed while looking into her eyes.

“Why did you show me this photo?” Anastasia inquired while staring at the screen.

“I asked Rey to check the surveillance footage of the night you were laid five years ago and discovered that a security guard burned the server room of Abyss Club. After checking the IP address as well as the call log of the security guard’s phone, we found out the person who instructed the security guard was indeed Hayley.”

Anastasia was equally as puzzled. Why did Hayley do it?

Was she trying to hide a secret by burning the server room of Abyss Club five years ago?

“Did you know that Hayley and I slept together in this same club?” Elliot spoke though he wasn’t willing to. After all, mentioning it always made him regret it deeply.

Once again, Anastasia was stunned to hear that, so she inquired, “How did it happen?”

“I was unprepared that night. I got caught in someone’s trap, and they wanted to create a scandal to blackmail me, so I fled to a private room. Hayley came afterward, and I took advantage of her under the influence of drugs.”

“Weren’t you intoxicated? How did you know it was Hayley that night?” Anastasia questioned out of curiosity.

“I gave her a watch afterward. She found me through the watch.”

“What kind of watch is it?”

“It is one of my custom-made watches. There is only one of it in the world, and it was in Hayley’s hands. She took it as a pawn in the second-hand market in March this year, and that’s how I found her.”

Anastasia couldn’t help but silently mocked herself. How could they both experience the same thing, but Hayley received Elliot’s materialistic compensation and apology while she wasn’t so lucky? The host she met was selfish and ruthless. He was blinded by greed, didn’t repent his mistakes, and even dared to threaten her!

That made her desperate to find that b\*stard and see what kind of nasty look he had. Even though he seemed ashamed that night and even offered his watch to her, she would never forgive him.

“Anastasia, I think you should know Hayley better than I do. Why do you think she burned the server room?” Elliot inquired.

Shaking her head, she answered, “I’m afraid only Hayley knows the answer.”

Since the host existed and even tried to threaten Anastasia before, she never thought about the possibility that Hayley had replaced her, nor did she realize that the b\*stard was sitting right in front of her.

“If someone called me, are you capable of finding out who this person was?” Anastasia wanted to rely on Elliot’s ability to find the host.

“Who are you looking for?”

“The host actually called me a few days ago and threatened me. If he calls me next time, perhaps you can help me find out who he is.”

“Give me his number. I’ll get Rey to check it for you right now.”

After fishing out her phone, Anastasia scrolled to the number that had called her a few days ago. Elliot quickly recorded the number and sent it to Rey for investigation.

“Actually, I could ask Hayley if I wanted to find this b\*stard. She has his information, but I know that she will refuse to tell me.” Anastasia hated Hayley to her bones.

After hearing Anastasia’s story, Elliot no longer had good feelings for Hayley. He didn’t even want to see her face from now on. Feeling guilty for her was one thing, but what she did to Anastasia back then was unforgivable. When he found out who the host was, he was definitely going to make Hayley apologize to Anastasia.

“I will find this person out and make him pay for his actions back then,” Elliot reassured her.

“Okay. Sorry for the trouble.” Anastasia took a deep breath.

She didn’t want to see the disgusting face of that man, yet she had to face him.

Meanwhile, over at Summit Mansion, Hayley had just returned from the hospital. Her tastebuds were still pretty bland, but she already requested an agency to inquire about her condition with several foreign doctors.

However, Hayley was still happy with her new, beautiful face in the mirror.

The only thing Anastasia had won over her since they were kids was her face. Hayley had always been like a leaf to a rose whenever she stood beside Anastasia.

Now, she had finally become a rose as well.

Just then, her phone rang. After glancing at the screen, she picked up the call and said, "Hello, Daniel."

"Miss Seymour, I just received news that Old Madam Presgrave will be hosting the annual family banquet tomorrow and inviting her friends and family. Has President Presgrave notified you about it yet?"

"What? Tomorrow?" Disappointment flashed in Hayley's eyes. Elliot hadn't even mentioned it to her.

"Yes. It's tomorrow afternoon at Presgrave Residence. There will be three tables for guests who have a close relationship with the Presgrave Family. I thought President Presgrave invited you, though."

"I want to be invited! Daniel, can you think of a way to let me in?" Hayley wasn't going to miss this opportunity. She had to be there!

"You may arrive early tomorrow morning without notifying President Presgrave. Once you're here, he will not chase you out in front of so many relatives."

Hayley thought he made sense. After all, it was time for her to reveal her new face beside Anastasia. Not only that, she should arrive early for the banquet, and she was pretty sure that Harriet wouldn't kick her out because Elliot had violated her before.

As she sat on the sofa, there was a hint of coldness in her eyes. She must not let go of this opportunity to go against Anastasia.

Then, she dialed Erica's number and said, "Erica, come over to my place tonight. I have a gift for you."

If she wanted to know anything regarding Anastasia, Erica was the most reliable person.

Hearing that there was a gift for her, Erica left the house immediately.

After arriving, she was shocked to see Hayley.

"Hayley, have you had plastic surgery?" She scanned her up and down in disbelief.

Hayley smirked. "Who do you think I look like?"

"You..." After taking a closer look, she blurted, "You didn't get surgery just to look like Anastasia, did you?!"

"Just praise my beauty already. I don't like to hear anything else," said Hayley as she gloated.

"Oh! You're so pretty! You're way more beautiful than Anastasia. Your beauty makes you look elegant! Anastasia is no match for you!" Erica quickly praised her.

Receiving those praises put Hayley in a good mood. She then pushed a bag that she didn't fancy in front of her, offering, "Here you go."



“Wow! This is so pretty! You treat me so well, Hayley. I’ve always wanted this bag, but I could never afford it.”

Now that she was using the money that Elliot had compensated her with, Hayley no longer fancied a bag like this. Straightforwardly, she demanded, “Tell me what Anastasia has been up to lately!”

“Did you know? My dad told me she was kidnapped, and the kidnapper is highly likely to be the culprit in her mother’s death.”

“Really? Didn’t her mother sacrifice to save Elliot, though?”

“Yeah! The culprit was Elliot’s uncle, a half-brother to his father.”

Hayley was stunned to hear that. Did that mean the culprit who killed Anastasia’s mother was someone from the Presgrave Family? That should be interesting! Shouldn’t Anastasia hate the Presgraves now?

While Erica continued blabbering, Hayley no longer wanted to hear her out; she already had her own plans.

If Anastasia hated the Presgrave Family, what would she do to them? She would definitely do something to hurt the Presgraves. For example, she might take the opportunity to take revenge on Harriet.

Last time, Hayley noticed that Harriet had been taking some kind of medicine. If something went wrong with her medicine, the blame would fall on Anastasia.

Hayley had always been a vicious person, and she was also a person who dared to act on it.

As long as she could separate Anastasia and Elliot, what else wouldn’t she do?

Just then, Erica’s phone beeped. When she picked it up, she saw a message from Alex that read, ‘Come to my place tonight.’

After reading the message, she smiled and replied, ‘Sure!’

Now that she and Alex had hooked up, their relationship was progressing rapidly. They had even slept together before.

Hayley went to bed once Erica left, but before going to sleep, she took out a watch from her desk. To her, it was the only thing she had that was possessed by Elliot before.

The watch contained Elliot’s presence, and it could provide comfort to her emptiness.

After switching off the lights, the watch suddenly glowed in a shady green color in the dark, its diamonds shining on the entire screen. The shape of a wolf’s head could also be seen in the middle of the watch.

Indeed, it was a beautiful timepiece.

Just like its owner, the watch shone in the dark, showing off its elegance.

The dark green luster paired with the wolf head was a totem of the Presgrave Family.

It was a watch that Harriet tailored specially for Elliot, so it was the only watch in the world.

In Elliot's mansion, Anastasia lay in bed thinking about her promise to Elliot about attending his family's banquet on Sunday. However, she didn't feel like bringing her son over.

Therefore, she decided to ask if her father had a day to spare for her son.

In her dreams, Anastasia unknowingly returned to that night five years ago. She felt that there were a pair of hands clasping tightly around her, and as she struggled, a faint green light flashed across in front of her. That was the only light source amidst the dark.

It was the watch that was glowing in green. Anastasia clearly remembered the wolf head engraved in the watch; in a moment of despair, she struggled to see the source of light emitted from the devil. Unfortunately, she wasn't able to see the man clearly.

The next morning, Anastasia contacted her father. Since Francis hadn't seen his grandson in a few days, he was eager to meet Jared again.

Elliot, on the other hand, agreed with Anastasia's decision. He even assigned his bodyguard to send Jared over.

"My grandma loves Jared. She says that Jared looks like me when I was younger." As Elliot watch the car leave, he heaved an audible sigh.

Anastasia was just trying to protect her son. If Jared were to attend a crowded event, he might be looked down upon as a child with a single parent.

"Sorry. I don't mean to not bring Jared over. I hope you understand," Anastasia explained as she raised her head.

"I understand. You don't have to apologize." With that, Elliot held her hand. "You're not allowed to dress like this today."

After glancing down at her outfit, she realized it was a little plain. "What should I wear?"

"Let's go back to the room. I'll pick your outfit." While saying that, he pulled her into the living room.

When they arrived in Anastasia's room, both of them stood in front of the wardrobe. Elliot had bought her many pieces of the latest trends and branded clothes, but she had never worn them. After swiping his slender fingers across the row of clothes, he finally picked an elegant lace dress. "Wear this."

After that, he grabbed another long trench coat and said, "And this."

Anastasia thought he had a good eye for fashion, so she agreed, "Okay, I'll wear them later."

"Wear them now!" Elliot folded his arms in front of his chest in anticipation. "I want to see how my taste is."

With that, Anastasia grabbed the clothes and entered the bathroom. After a while, she came out in the dress and requested helplessly, "Can you help me with the zip?"

Smiling, Elliot walked up to her back and pulled the zip for her. At the same time, he pecked her fair neck.

Feeling shy, Anastasia quickly entered the bathroom and grabbed the coat. Sure enough, the outfit looked fashionable and elegant on her. At the same time, it was eye-catching and pleasant to see.

"It looks good on you," praised Elliot. He then added, "That's because you look good in everything you wear."

Anastasia seemed to take his compliment well. Looking at the time, she inquired, "Should we be leaving now?"

"Sure! Let's go!"

"You didn't invite Hayley, did you?" Anastasia suddenly inquired.

"I won't invite her." Elliot didn't want to see Hayley now or ever.

At the Presgrave Residence, Hayley came uninvited, which gave Harriet a surprise. However, due to what her grandson had done to Hayley back then, Harriet greeted her as usual out of courtesy.