

# The Unwanted Daughter: When Love Comes Too Late

## Novel Chapter 281 - Chapter 281 (English Translation)

Chapter 281 A Sister's Promise Chapter 281 A Sister's Promise Ivy stared straight at her , waiting for what she would say next . 55 ) +10 Free Coins Tracy spoke slowly , her voice steady . " She asked me to find you and tell you she was sorry . She couldn't keep her promise to climb Mount Glacier with you . " She said she opened a bank account under your name and saved all the money she earned over the years . The card is hidden in the kitchen ceiling at home . The password is your birthday . " She told me she never once regretted pulling you out of the snow that day .

What she did regret was leading you down the path of becoming a bodyguard , making you live every day on edge . " Tracy's words were firm , each one sinking heavy . " She said , knowing your temper , you'd want revenge . But she begged me to tell you - she doesn't want that . " She wanted me to look after you . To see you get married , have kids , build a family of your own , and live a safe and happy life . " Ivy's face stayed hard , but tears spilled down her cheeks , breaking through the steel .

Years of buried grief , longing , and fear came crashing out the moment Tracy finished speaking . Her knees buckled , and she fell to the ground before Yvonne's grave , sobbing uncontrollably . The empty cemetery echoed with her cries , raw and heart - shattering . Tracy's eyes stung red . She turned her head slightly , fighting back the wetness in her gaze . Yvonne , I brought Ivy to you , just like you wanted . Now you can rest easy . The wind swept through the trees , their leaves rustling as if answering her words , After what felt like forever , Ivy's sobs finally faded .

Her face hardened again , though her red- rimmed eyes gave her away - fragile , broken , but carrying a frightening resolve . She lifted her head toward Tracy . " Thank you for bringing me her words . And thank you for giving Yvonne a place to rest . " Then her voice dropped , cold and sharp . " Can you tell me who killed Yvonne ? " 1/3 17:37 Thu , Sep 25 Chapter 281 A Sister's Promise : A55 55 +10 Free Coins She wasn't stupid . It was just that back then , with Yvonne always standing in front of her , she could live like a carefree little sister , protected and spoiled .

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She never had to fight for anything ; she could afford to lag behind in everything . But now , with Yvonne gone , there was no one left to shield her . She had to stand on her own . Tracy stayed silent , deliberately avoiding answering her question . The graves without names , the people who vanished without a trace in that terrible place - it all screamed of something darker . But she gave Ivy no answer . After a long silence , she only asked , " You still plan to avenge her , don't you ? " Ivy nodded without hesitation . " Yes . My life was Yvonne's gift .

The only reason I'm alive is because of her . My one purpose now is to avenge her . " Tracy looked at her for a long time , then sighed . " You really are just like Yvonne . You're just as stubborn as

she was ." Helpless , she had no reason to deny Ivy's resolve . Still , there were things about the academy she could never reveal . So she chose her words carefully . " I promised Yvonne I'd make sure you lived a safe and happy life . If revenge is what you truly want - then whether it's Simon or Shawn , I'll help you ." She never mentioned the one who directly killed Yvonne .

That truth stayed buried in silence . Of course , Ivy noticed . She sensed there was more behind it , something darker . But she didn't push . It didn't matter . No matter what , she wouldn't give up . After she dealt with Simon and Shawn , she would uncover the actual killer herself . When Tracy finally left the cemetery , Ivy was still there , carving Yvonne's name into the stone . That moment belonged to the sisters alone , and Tracy had no wish to intrude . But she hadn't expected to see Ronald waiting outside , leaning against his car .

His mood was soured , his face was tight with frustration , his brows were furrowed , and even when he saw her , the lines didn't ease . 2/3 17:37 Thu , Sep 25 · Chapter 281 A Sister's Promise 55 +10 Free Coins He strode over , not giving her a chance to speak , and gently touched her neck . " Does it hurt ? " The sudden contact made Tracy flinch , but she didn't pull away . She finally remembered the cut Ivy had left on her neck . The sting flared , delayed but sharp . Yet under Ronald's worried gaze , she shook her head . " It's fine ." He frowned . " It's bleeding , Tracy .

The neck is too delicate . Don't tell me it doesn't hurt ." He knew she was used to pain. So was he . But he didn't want her to be numb to it forever . He wanted her to feel it when she was hurt , to cry when she was wronged - because that meant she was still alive , still human . But he didn't say any of that out loud . He knew that until the shadow of the academy was gone , the thorn buried in her heart would never come out . So instead , he simply pulled her toward the car . The first - aid kit was already waiting in the back seat .

After all , most of the bodyguards who protected Tracy were his people . The moment she stepped out of the car with a cut on her neck , he had been informed .

Chapter 282 The Weight of Respect Ronald disagreed with Tracy's risky decisions , but he never tried to stop her . +10 Free Coins He knew what mattered most to her was freedom - and what she hated most was when someone tried to take that freedom away for her own good . All he could do was strengthen his ability to protect her , giving her a wider space in which to live freely . Tracy could sense his quiet worry , even though he didn't say a word . This was precisely why she didn't mind Ronald placing his men among her bodyguards .

She never felt controlled , because what he gave her was genuine respect and freedom - straight from the heart . Faced with such respect , Tracy naturally chose to take a step back . " Should this ever happen again , I'll remember to take better care of myself ," she promised . Her words eased the tension in Ronald's face , and his expression softened . They didn't need many words - sometimes a glance or a small gesture was enough for them to understand each other . It was as if they shared the same unspoken rhythm , a bond deep in their souls .

Ivy had come to her in secret , and Tracy told no one about it . The next day , when people noticed the bandage on her neck , she only said she'd scratched herself while moving boxes . Because she'd spent the night handling Ivy's intel , she came into the office later than usual

. As soon as she walked in , she saw Erin surrounded by coworkers , everyone showering her with admiration . " Erin , you're amazing ! You actually caught the attention of Ms. Nicholls ! " " That's Ms. Nicholls - so many respected artists would do anything just to meet her , and she's taking a liking to you ?

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" I heard Ms. Nicholls is even considering taking you on as her last apprentice . Is that true ? " 1/3 17:37 Thu , Sep 25 Chapter 282 The Weight of Respect ( 55 ) +10 Free Coins Tracy had seen this kind of scene countless times . The name surprised her , but she didn't bother to get involved . She sat down , opened her laptop , and got to work . But Erin wasn't about to let it go . Spotting Tracy , she suddenly lit up , remembered something . like she'd just " Oh right ! If I recall , the person you admire most is Ms. Nicholls , isn't it ?

" Erin stepped out of the circle and stopped at Tracy's desk , her tone deliberately generous . " Wasn't your biggest dream to have your work seen by her ? Of course , Ms. Nicholls is very busy , but while she's reviewing my work , I could always ask her to look at yours too . " Then she tilted her head , her voice dripping with false kindness . " Tracy , do you want me to help you ? " " Anyone else in the industry would have jumped at the offer . They would have been grateful , maybe even tearfully so . But Tracy didn't even look up . She answered flatly , " Ms.

Nicholls wouldn't be interested in you . " Tracy knew Erin's talent all too well . And she knew Ms. Nicholls's character - there was no way she'd be taken in by Erin's mediocrity . Erin loved to stretch flimsy connections to make herself look more important , and while Ms. Nicholls surely had plenty of people like Erin bragging about knowing her , rarely did those claims ever reach her ears . Even if this little show of Erin's turned into a bigger joke , she had the Jackmans behind her- that was why she acted so fearless . Tracy's firm words landed like a strike .

Erin's smile froze , her face twisting as if someone had exposed her thoughts . She snapped , " I was trying to help you ! If you don't appreciate it , fine - but why do you have to be so sarcastic ? " You're unbelievable ! I try to be kind , and you throw it right back in my face ! " She stomped her foot in anger and rushed off before Tracy could reply . But just before she left , her eyes flicked toward the phone on Tracy's desk . 2/3 17:37 Thu , Sep 25 ... ( 55 ) , +10 Free Coins Chapter 282 The Weight of Respect Tracy caught it . Why was Erin so fixated on her phone ?

Tracy had already given her a chance with it once , and she hadn't done a thing . But now she was still eyeing it . What exactly was she after ? The question followed Tracy all day . That night , Ronald came out of the kitchen with the last dish and found her staring at her phone , deep in thought . " What's on your mind , CeeCee ? " he asked , puzzled by her expression . She didn't hide anything and explained what had happened . Tracy had people watching Erin's every move , and if Erin had been plotting against her , Tracy would've known by now .

But aside from her strange interest in the phone , Erin hadn't made a single move . Tracy couldn't figure out what she was after . Ronald took the phone gently from her hand and said

, " I'll look into this . What you need to do is take care of yourself - and eat . " Tracy sighed . Lately she had more than enough on her plate : handling a job she'd never dealt with before , keeping an eye on Andrew's schemes , dealing with Simon's tricks , and still chasing the truth behind Walter's car crash and Franklin's death .

Chapter 283 Broken Ties Chapter 283 Broken Ties Even the strongest body and mind can't handle so many draining tasks at once . On top of everything else , Tracy still had an unfinished illustration she had agreed to complete . +10 Free Coins Lately , she had been so overwhelmed with work that she hadn't updated her art account in a long time . Still , she didn't want to break her promise . She had taken the commission before deciding to join Jackman Enterprise , so she squeezed time from her busy schedule to work on it , even if progress was slow .

The client had always been patient , never rushing her . But Tracy still tried to send the first draft as quickly as possible . Within a minute of receiving the illustration , the client transferred the remaining payment- but only one - third of what they had originally agreed upon . The commission had included three illustrations , all featuring the same character but in different artistic styles , as if they were covers for a novel series . The original plan was to complete one illustration , receive payment , then move on to the next style , with the final payment at the end .

Now , this sudden action left Tracy confused . Just as she was about to ask , a message came from the client . " This one illustration is fine . I'll take it . No need to complete the rest . We'll stop working together after this ." Tracy had never encountered something like this before . Not knowing what to think , she quickly replied , " If something's wrong with the illustration , I can fix it . No extra charge . I'll revise it until you're satisfied ." " It's not about money , " the client typed . She watched the words " typing ...

" blink for a long time before a message appeared , " I don't like you ." The words left Tracy was baffled . She typed back , " Do you even know me ? " But the message never went through . The client had already blocked her . 1/3 17:37 Thu , Sep Chapter 283 Broken Ties Now Tracy was even more puzzled . +10 Free Coins This account was a secret - only Ronald knew it was hers . So how did this stranger possibly know who she was ? She went over everyone she knew , ruling them out one by one , but no answer came . What she didn't know was that the client wasn't someone close to her at all .

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In fact , they had only crossed paths once . It was Sylvia - Jane's niece . After blocking Tracy , Sylvia stared for a long time at the draft illustration she had received . No matter how she looked at it , the art style was painfully familiar . It looked just like the work of her old friend who had vanished years ago , the one she had searched for endlessly but never found . But that friend couldn't possibly have the same personality as this " T. " Her thoughts drifted back to Erin , whom she had met at Jane's birthday party .

Frowning , Sylvia unfollowed T's account and deleted the illustration . Some meetings in life are fleeting , she thought . She had already waited almost three years , and her friend had never returned . Maybe their bond had simply run its course . With a heavy sigh , Sylvia made

her choice . Picking up her phone , she called her editor . " I've decided not to wait anymore . Go ahead and announce the news - the comic adaptation of Cloudfall Tavern is officially moving forward ." Four years earlier , Cloudfall Tavern had been one of the hottest stories of the summer .

Audiobooks , short films , merchandise , and even TV adaptations had sprung up - but the comic rights remained untouched , tightly guarded by the author , ViaLittle . Rumor had it that when signing with the publishing platform , ViaLittle had even accepted a lower price just to keep the comic rights . Back then , Cloudfall Tavern was so popular that its comic rights became something everyone wanted . The hype was off the charts , and publishers and studios were willing to pay huge sums just to secure them .

People believed the reason ViaLittle had accepted a lower payout when she signed with her publisher was simple - she wanted to keep those comic rights for herself , saving them for the future . 2/3 17:37 Thu , Sep 25 ... 55 Chapter 283 Broken Ties No matter how much money others offered , she turned them all down . +10 Free Coins Her reason was straightforward ; before Cloudfall Tavern even ended , her friend had already sketched the characters in comic style . She had promised that the position of comic artist would be reserved for that friend .

The only reason the project hadn't been released yet was because of certain personal circumstances . So when ViaLittle suddenly announced that Cloudfall Tavern would officially begin searching for a comic artist , it shocked everyone . For fans , it felt like stepping back into that summer four years ago , and the internet went wild . Even Tracy , who had barely been online lately , heard the news . For a long moment , she sat dazed .

She had only been locked away at the academy for two years , but those memories felt like another lifetime , so distant she had nearly forgotten parts of who she used to be . Yet Cloudfall Tavern wasn't something she could ever forget . She had been the first person in the world - besides ViaLittle herself - to know the complete story . Because the friend ViaLittle had guarded those rights for her . The art set Tracy once cherished at the Jackman Villa had been a gift from ViaLittle . In the beginning , Tracy hadn't even studied comic art .

But ViaLittle believed in her , giving her time to learn and insisting on keeping the rights safe until Tracy was ready to take over the project . And Tracy hadn't let her down . While teaching herself to draw comics , she had worked side by side with ViaLittle to refine the designs of several of Cloudfall Tavern's key characters . 17:37 Thu , Sep 25

Chapter 284 The Stolen Identity Chapter 284 The Stolen Identity A 55 +10 Free Coins Just when Tracy had organized all the character sketches and was ready to hand them to ViaLittle , the Jackmans kidnapped her and dragged her into the academy . Those two years were so painful that much of her life before the academy became a blur . The artbook she prepared for Cloudfall Tavern disappeared , and she lost contact with ViaLittle . By now , ViaLittle had openly hired other comic artists and stopped waiting for her . Their friendship , it seemed , had reached its end .

The thought left Tracy hollow , as if someone had carved a piece out of her heart . Before Erin came home , Tracy had plenty of friends . But they had only cared about her identity as an heiress . When that identity was stripped away , they abandoned her . Only ViaLittle had

been her friend for who she truly was . They never knew each other's real names or faces , but they valued the bond between them . Yet with the academy watching her so closely and the two years of hell she endured , she and ViaLittle were destined to part ways . Realizing this fact didn't make it any easier to let go .

Tracy could only pour herself into work , keeping her mind too busy to dwell on the past . It was almost as if fate wanted to keep her occupied . Two days later , Ronald came back with a handful of photos . They were screenshots of Erin's social media posts , each one flaunting her " practice " artwork . It wasn't unusual for Erin to show off , but the drawings themselves looked strangely familiar . Tracy studied them closely - weren't these her own pieces , the ones she had posted online ? Ronald noticed her expression and slid one photo out of the pile .

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" Take a look at this one ." That post was just like the others - Erin showing off her art . But this time , the comments were different . 1/3 17:37 Thu , Sep 25 .. ... A55 Chapter 284 The Stolen Identity +10 Free Coins [These look exactly like the famous online artist T's work . Erin , don't tell me that's actually you . ] Erin replied sweetly , [ I don't like showing my face online , but since you're all my friends , I didn't want to hide it from you . Please help me keep it a secret , okay ? ] Tracy froze . " Erin is claiming to be T ? " She didn't know whether to laugh or be furious .

Back in college , Erin had stolen her drawings and then turned around to accuse her of plagiarism . That scandal ruined her reputation , left her treated like trash , and nearly destroyed her career in the art world . And now Erin was pulling the same trick again . In that moment , Tracy understood why Erin had been trying so hard to get her phone lately . Erin must have figured out that she was really T and wanted to steal the account . Since T never showed their face , whoever controlled the account was T . But Erin didn't realize that Tracy's phone didn't hold the account . Ronald had it .

He managed everything - the posts , the edits , and the uploads . Tracy had handed it over long ago so he could run it smoothly . Tracy wasn't foolish . Thinking back to the missing invitation and Erin bragging that Ms. Nicholls had personally chosen her , it wasn't hard to guess when Erin had discovered the truth . Ronald , sensing her anger , asked softly , " CeeCee , what do you plan to do ? " Tracy paused , then answered calmly , " She's showing off because she knows I don't have her contact . She thinks I'll never see it . Fine . I'll let her believe that . Let her climb higher .

" The higher Erin went , the harder she would fall . Ronald wasn't surprised . Watching the sharp gleam in Tracy's eyes , he smiled knowingly . " I figured you'd say that . " He picked out another photo . " Take a look at this one . " In the comments , someone had asked Erin when the next update would be . Tracy had been so busy that she hadn't updated T's account in weeks . Her inbox was already 2/3 17:37 Thu , Sep 25 ... : 55 Chapter 284 The Stolen Identity +10 Free Coins full of fans begging for new posts .

What she didn't expect was that even in Erin's circle of friends , there were people claiming to be T's fans too . Of course , Erin wasn't really T . She had no idea when the next update

would drop - or what it would even be . That wasn't something she could fake . But Tracy was going to make sure she found out . To send Erin a message , Tracy deliberately pulled out her sketchpad at the office . Sure enough , the moment the paper hit her desk , someone came over . " Ms. Yarwood , what are you working on ?

" It was Verity Hewitt - Erin's closest ally , the same one who had helped her steal Tracy's phone last time . Tracy acted as if she hadn't noticed the eager glint in Verity's eyes . She calmly unwrapped her pencils and said , " Haven't drawn in a while . My hands are itching to sketch again . " Everyone knew Tracy had studied art , so her explanation raised no suspicion at all . 17:37 Thu , Sep 25 d . Chapter 285 The Trap in the Garage

Chapter 285 The Trap in the Garage Chapter 285 The Trap in the Garage A 55 +10 Free Coins Verity leaned in with a smile and asked , " I haven't seen you paint , Ms. Yarwood . What are you planning to draw ? " Tracy pretended to ponder this for a moment . " Maybe a polar bear . I've come across a lot of videos of them lately . They're pretty cute . " Verity's eyes lit up . She hadn't expected Tracy to play along so easily . Usually , Tracy kept her distance from everyone . Unless it was about work , most people in the team rarely spoke to her .

Verity figured her attempt at small talk would just get brushed aside . In truth , Verity wasn't interested in Tracy's drawings . She was only there to sniff around for Erin , to see what Tracy was up to . Still , Tracy played along , answering every question and even offering more than she was asked . For instance , she mentioned she was considering auditioning for Cloudfall Tavern . In reality , Tracy had no intention of joining . She knew that her work as " T " online was entirely different from her usual art style .

If she suddenly switched to drawing comics , people would notice right away . And with Cloudfall Tavern being so popular , attention would naturally shift to Erin . Verity gathered plenty of information and , eager to report back to Erin , made a quick excuse to leave . She never noticed the way Tracy lifted her eyes and watched her back with an unreadable look . To make her words more convincing , Tracy even started sketching in the office . The outline of a polar bear soon appeared on her paper . Then her phone buzzed . It was a message from Ronald .

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He didn't write a word - just sent two screenshots of Erin's latest social media posts . The first post was a viral photo of an adorable polar bear with the caption . " Lately I've been 1/3 17:37 Thu , Sep 25 55 Chapter 285 The Trap in the Garage obsessed with these cuties . Thinking of painting one ! " +10 Free Coins Within minutes , it was flooded with likes and comments . Many cheered , [ Can't wait for your next update ! ] Erin replied to a few , dropping hints that her next project would indeed be about polar bears . The second post was a flyer for Cloudfall Tavern's hiring call .

Her caption read . " Life is all about new challenges ! " That post blew up even faster . The comments praised her as a genius , while Erin pretended to be modest , replying to almost every compliment . Tracy smirked , put her phone away , and folded up the sketch . The fish had bitten the bait . She had real work to do and no time to waste . Even though Erin's

presence was making the team atmosphere less professional , the project itself was still moving forward . And since Tracy was one of the few who stayed focused , she carried plenty of responsibility .

With so many eyes on her , she had to make sure her work left an impression - whether good or bad would depend on whether Andrew picked up on anything unusual . That night , after working late , Tracy was the last to leave . She stretched , packed her things , and headed out . Her car was parked in the lowest level of the garage , so she rode the elevator down like always . The doors slid open - only for two men to suddenly rush in . " You - mmmph ! " Tracy grew panicked . Before she could cry out , one of them pressed a cloth over her nose and mouth while the other grabbed her arms .

A harsh chemical smell burned her lungs , and after a brief struggle , her body went limp . Her eyes shut as if she'd fainted . 2/3 17:37 Thu , Sep 25 d Chapter 285 The Trap in the Garage ( 55 ) +10 Free Coins The men worked with practiced ease . Without hesitation , they dragged her into a plain white van waiting just outside the elevator . The windows were tinted black , and the interior was dim . They tossed Tracy onto the back seat like a piece of luggage . " Didn't think it'd be this easy , " one of them laughed . " Snatching someone from Jackman Enterprise ? Piece of cake !

" The two men laughed loudly in the front seats . " Man , this job's easier than I thought ! And on top of that , we got lucky - this woman's a looker ! " Caught up in their chatter , neither of them noticed that the woman lying in the back seat wasn't unconscious . Tracy's eyes had already opened . She knew Simon's plan — the time , the method , everything . There was no way she would let herself get caught off guard . Back in the elevator , she had already taken an antidote to counter the drug . On top of that , she had several trackers and listening devices hidden on her .

The van was dark , and the men were too far ahead for her to see their faces clearly . Not wanting to alert them , she slowly closed her eyes again and stayed limp , keeping the exact same position they had thrown her in . 17:38 Thu , Sep 25

Chapter 286 A Sealed Room 55 +10 Free Coins Meanwhile , inside a black SUV trailing the van , Ronald overheard the two men's conversation . His face was tense , his aura heavy , and something sharp flickered in his eyes . About thirty minutes later , the van finally stopped . Tracy was yanked out roughly by the two men . She cracked her eyes open just enough to glance around and realized they were at a hotel she knew all too well - Sometime Hotel . It was the same place where , after coming back from the academy , she had publicly beaten up Simon in front of everyone .

No wonder Simon chose this hotel - he clearly hadn't forgotten that humiliation . Tracy quickly shut her eyes again , pretending to stay unconscious . No one noticed her reaction . The men hauled her out of the elevator and down a long hallway . Just then , a door opened nearby , and two men in suits stepped out . The man in front had striking features and carried himself with an air of cold authority . He radiated the kind of power that made others lower their gaze . The second man , wearing thin - framed glasses , looked like his assistant .

As they crossed paths , the men holding Tracy instinctively bowed their heads and shuffled to the side , trying to be invisible . The cold , commanding man hadn't even glanced at them at first . He was ready to walk by- until his gaze suddenly caught Tracy's face . His steps faltered . It's her . The two men escorting Tracy exchanged nervous looks ; they grew worried . One quickly forced a laugh and said , " Little sister here ... Well , she hasn't seen her boyfriend in a while . She drank too much tonight , but lucky for her , she's got her big brother to look out for her .

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" 1/3 17:38 Thu , Sep 25 ... 55 Chapter 286 A Sealed Room +10 Free Coins The other caught on immediately and chimed in , " Don't worry . She's my girlfriend . I'll take good care of her . " They hurried off with Tracy toward the corner , their voices light and casual . The cold - eyed man stood there silently , watching until they disappeared from sight . Only then did he speak . " Look into this . " His assistant lifted his head , startled . They were supposed to be traveling under the radar in Cloudville . Getting involved could be dangerous . Still , he would never dare defy the order .

Bowing his head , he replied quickly , " Yes , sir ." ... Tracy , still pretending to be out cold , was taken into a room at the far end of the hall . Inside , Simon was waiting . He grabbed Tracy's chin , tilting her face toward the light . Admiring her beauty , he chuckled smugly . " Didn't think you'd ever end up in my hands , did you ? " Back then , Tracy had been bold and dazzling , always acting like she was above him . Even after her identity scandal , she had still treated him with indifference . What right did she have ? " Tie her up , " Simon ordered .

The men bound Tracy to a chair and blindfolded her . Then came the sound of shuffling and movement , as if they were setting something up . Tracy counted silently in her head and woke up at the right time , playing her role . She flinched and thrashed , eyes darting under the blindfold , giving the impression of panic . Simon's laugh came sharp and pleased . " Don't bother , Tracy . You're not going anywhere . " Tracy seemed to finally realize who had tied her up . She jerked in shock , her voice trembling with fear . " Simon ?! What - what are you doing ?

" Simon stepped closer , brushing his hand across her cheek with a smirk that made her skin crawl . " Funny ," he said . " I thought I'd keep your eyes covered and make it a little game . Didn't 2/3 17:38 Thu , Sep 25 .. : ୧୫ ( 55 ) Chapter 286 A Sealed Room expect you to guess me so fast ." +10 Free Coins His grin twisted darker . " Tell me the truth , tramp , weren't you always waiting for me to have you like this ? " Tracy snapped her head to the side , shaking off his hand , her brows furrowing deeply .

According to Ivy's plan , Simon was only supposed to tie her up and act as if he was going to kill her just to scare her . But the way he looked at her now , the tone in his voice - this wasn't part of the plan at all . Unease rippled through her chest . Slowly , carefully , she began working at the ropes around her wrists . As she thought through her next move , Ivy's voice suddenly rang out from across the room . " Mr. Dunn , this isn't what we agreed on . You've got five men crowded into a locked room with one woman . Planning to do that and even record it ?

Don't you think that's going too far ? " The words struck like ice . Behind the blindfold , Tracy's face went pale , her whole body rigid . The room was sealed . Men . A camera . In that instant , memories she had buried deep came crashing back , raw terror clawing its way to the surface . When she saw the file from Ivy , she had known Simon's threats would never be gentle , but this -this was something far worse than she expected . 17:38 Thu , Sep 25 .. Chapter 287 Simon's Cruel Game

Chapter 287 Simon's Cruel Game Chapter 287 Simon's Cruel Game 455 +10 Free Coins At the academy , Tracy had endured every kind of torment imaginable . Compared to that , Simon - spoiled since childhood and coddled by his wealthy parents - hardly seemed frightening . But she hadn't expected him to suddenly change his plan , turning to such a vile and disgusting tactic against her . Tracy bit down hard on her lip , silently reminding herself that she and Ronald had arranged everything carefully . Nothing should go wrong . And yet , her body trembled despite her will .

On the other end of the hidden transmitter , Ronald's expression darkened . He couldn't wait for the agreed - upon signal . He jumped out of his car and hurried after her , his eyes flashing with a murderous resolve . Simon , oblivious to it all , turned to Ivy . She had been at his side for years , never one to question his actions . That was why her words now made him frown , displeased , suspicion flickering in his gaze . A moment later , he convinced himself . Ivy might be tougher than most men , but she was still a woman . It wasn't surprising she'd feel uneasy about what was happening .

Simon waved a careless hand . " Don't waste your sympathy on someone like her . She tried to seduce Mr. Gill and broke Erin's heart . Of course I have to teach her a lesson she'll never forget . " His voice grew sharper , righteous even . " She once went crazy and bit me so hard I'll carry the scar for life . If others hadn't pulled her off me , she might've killed me then and there . So now , whatever she suffers - she deserves it . If I don't go hard on her , she'll never learn . " He spoke as if he were doing some noble deed for the world . Ivy pressed her lips together .

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Her cold expression didn't change , but anger burned in her eyes . She quickly dropped her gaze before Simon noticed , pretending to be swayed by his words . 1/3 17:38 Thu , Sep 25 Chapter 287 Simon's Cruel Game : 、 ( 55 ) +10 Free Coins Simon smirked . " If you can't stomach this , wait outside . Keep an eye out so nobody ruins our fun . " " No need , " Ivy replied coolly , her emotions already under control . " I'm your bodyguard . Wherever you go , I go . " Simon liked that kind of loyalty . His grin widened . " You just keep winning me over , don't you ? Haha !

Once we're done with this , I'll give you a raise . Stick with me , and you'll be rewarded generously . " Ivy showed no hint of flattery or joy . Her face remained rigid as stone . " Thank you , Mr. Dunn . " Simon chuckled , satisfied with her predictable reaction , then waved her aside and turned back to Tracy . He was eager to see her break , to hear her beg . Simon was so eager to see her break that he didn't notice Ivy shifting closer to Tracy's side , little by little . He grabbed Tracy's chin , forcing her face up with smug delight .

" Well , Tracy , now that you're in my hands , why don't you beg me ? " Her eyes were covered , leaving her in darkness . She could only sense where his voice came from . " Simon , what you're doing is a crime , " she said firmly . " You work at Jackman Enterprises . You know how much Andrew values the company . Once the truth comes out , the damage will be huge . Aren't you afraid he'll come after you ? " Simon chuckled . " Everyone here works for me . Who's going to talk ? You? If you dare , I'll post today's video online . Think you'd risk that ?

" Fighting back the sick feeling from his grip on her chin , Tracy asked , " Simon , you and I never had any real feud . Why go this far ? " His hand tightened . " No feud ? You hurt Erin - that makes you my enemy ! " Her voice dropped low . " So Erin put you up to this ? " Simon missed the bait in her words and answered honestly , " If Erin had the guts for this , you wouldn't be bullying her all the time . She doesn't dare - but I'll do it for her . " He released her chin , but his tone grew colder . " After today , let's see if you still have the guts to stand against her .

" With that , he yanked at her clothes . 2/3 17:38 Thu , Sep 25 d . Chapter 287 Simon's Cruel Game A 55 +10 Free Coins The sound of tearing cloth split the silence . Tracy's collar ripped open , baring the skin across her chest . The rush of cold air made her shiver . In an instant , memories buried deep in her mind came flooding back . Sweat beaded on her forehead . Her body trembled , not from the draft , but from the weight of that memory pressing down on her . She could almost hear that voice again - dark , mocking , " What a beauty . Still awake , aren't you ? It's no fun if you're not .

" Simon didn't notice . He just stared , stunned , at the pale skin now exposed . Her skin was fair - not the healthy kind , but the sickly , almost translucent paleness of someone who had lived too long without sunlight . 17:38 Thu , Sep 25 Chapter 288 Ambush and Corner

: Chapter 288 Ambush and Corner 55 +10 Free Coins Tracy had grown up pampered and protected , living a life of comfort . By all rights , her skin should have been flawless . Yet now , deep and terrifying scars ran across her chest . What the heck ? Simon froze in shock . Why did Tracy have such horrifying scars ? Before he could make sense of it , Tracy suddenly lifted her leg and kicked him hard between the legs . " Ugh ! " Agonizing pain contorted Simon's face . He doubled over , stumbling back with cold sweat dripping down his forehead .

His face turned grim , his hand trembled as he pointed at her , and his voice broke with rage . " Y - you witch ! You- " But the fury in his throat choked off before he could form a full sentence . By then , Tracy had already ripped free from the ropes , torn the blindfold from her eyes , and pushed herself up from the chair . Just as Ivy had warned , Simon wasn't alone . Five rough - looking men lingered in the room , their expressions cold and predatory . The hotel room looked ordinary enough , but a camera was mounted by the bed , pointing straight at where Tracy had been tied .

The dim lighting made the air heavy and the tension worse . On the table , two opened bottles of liquor gave off a faintly sweet scent , one that turned her stomach . To anyone else , it might have seemed like nothing more than alcohol . To Tracy , it was nauseating - too much like the memories she wanted to forget , When she hadn't seen the setup , she could force herself to stay calm , to trick Simon into talking . But now , staring at it all , she felt her grip on

reason slipping away . And then Simon's voice cracked through the haze , spitting venom . " Get her !

I want all of you to take turns with that bitch ! I'll make her beg for me to claim her ! " 1/3 17:38 Thu , Sep 25 Chapter 288 Ambush and Corner : 55 +10 Free Coins The five men didn't hesitate . Paid to do a job and promised pleasure as a reward , they rolled up their sleeves and advanced toward her with ugly grins . Their vile expressions shredded the last thread of calm in her mind . " Get away from me ! Stay back ! " she shouted , her voice trembling through the earpiece . Hearing her distress , Ronald quickened his pace toward the elevator .

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He couldn't see what was happening , but from her tone alone , he knew something was terribly wrong . Damn , Simon ! Just as Ronald was about to reach the elevator , several men carrying bats and daggers appeared from nowhere , surrounding him . The leader twirled a steel rod casually and sneered . " Well , well , Mr. Ronald . Long time no see . " Ronald's blood ran cold as he recognized their faces . Preston's men . If Preston's thugs were here , that meant Preston himself had to be nearby . And worse , he had anticipated Ronald's move , setting the ambush on purpose .

Meanwhile , Tracy's broken voice still came through the earpiece . Every word was like a slash cutting into Ronald's heart . His expression hardened . He didn't waste breath . With a sharp step forward , he drove his fist into the leader's jaw . He needed to end this fast . Tracy was waiting for him to save her . Tracy seemed trapped in a sealed - off world of her own , fighting back at anyone who dared to come near . She snatched up a chair and hurled it at the man charging toward her . But her mind betrayed her - the blow missed its mark , striking only his arm .

The man bellowed in anger , his face twisting , and he lunged at her even harder . Ivy's eyes flashed cold , and she was just about to move - when someone reacted even faster . Back at the academy , Tracy had lived in constant alert , always braced for sudden danger . So 2/3 17:38 Thu , Sep 25 ... Chapter 288 Ambush and Corner : A55 55 +10 Free Coins when the man came at her , her body moved on instinct before her mind even caught up . She had never trained formally , never studied combat .

But after countless real fights , she had built raw survival instincts sharper and more brutal than any structured system . The five men hadn't expected her to resist , much less fight back . One after another , they took hits , stumbling back and failing to lay a hand on her . But Tracy was still only one woman . Once the men grew wary , once they regrouped , the tide began to turn . She started to falter . One of them was about to grab her when , out of nowhere , a boot slammed into his stomach . Bang ! The man flew backward , crashing against the wall with a sickening thud .

He groaned , unable to get back up . Everyone froze in shock . They turned to see Ivy - Simon's personal bodyguard - standing firmly in front of Tracy . It had been her kick . Simon , still hunched over from the earlier blow , stared at her in disbelief . " You - you dare betray me ? " Ivy's face was as cold as ever , but now her hatred burned openly in her eyes . " I was

never loyal to you . So where's the betrayal ? " " You ... " Simon's expression twisted as realization struck . " This is about Yvonne , isn't it ? You've been lying to me this whole time !

" His eyes went wild , filled with rage . He spat at his men , " Take them both ! I'll double your pay ! " Money could make devils dance . And the men Simon had hired were already hardened criminals , the kind who lived on greed and violence . At his words , their eyes lit up , and without a second thought , they hurled themselves at Ivy and Tracy ,

Chapter 289 The Man at the Door Chapter 289 The Man at the Door +10 Free Coins As the company's top bodyguard , Ivy knew how to fight . But no matter how skilled she was , two fists couldn't hold off five attackers at once - especially when these men had some training of their own . Tracy could fight back , but something about her wasn't right . Her punches kept missing , her strength was fading fast , and Ivy was forced to cover for her . It was getting harder to hold them back , and worry clawed at her chest . What was going on ?

Simon had changed the plan at the last minute , but Ivy had warned Tracy beforehand . She shouldn't be caught off guard . That moment of distraction cost her . A club smashed against her side , and before she could recover , another man raised a heavy glass ashtray high above his head , ready to bring it down on her skull . Just as it was about to hit , Tracy threw herself forward , pulling Ivy into her arms and shielding her . Old memories blurred into the present . Pain and fear twisted together , and for a split second Tracy couldn't tell what was real .

But she remembered Yvonne - the one who had pulled her out of the darkness when she wanted nothing more than to die . She had promised Yvonne she would protect Ivy , to make sure she lived a safe , happy life . She couldn't break that promise now . Thud ! The ashtray crashed against her back with a sickening thud . Pain seared through her , snapping her into sharper focus . The man , frustrated by his miss , lifted the ashtray again , this time aiming for Tracy's head . Before it could fall , the door burst open with a deafening bang . Bang ! The thunderous noise froze everyone in place .

Even the attacker stopped mid - swing . A tall man with an air of cold authority stepped into the doorway . Light from the hall blazed 1/3 17:38 Thu , Sep 25 · Chapter 289 The Man at the Door A 3 ( 55 ) , +10 Free Coins behind him , casting his figure in sharp contrast . Dozens of guards poured in after him , quickly overwhelming Simon and his men . Standing in the doorway , the man looked like he had descended from the heavens . Step by step , he crossed the room toward Tracy . The blow from the ashtray had shaken some sense back into her .

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She blinked up at him , dazed , her heart pounding so hard it felt like a drum beating inside her chest . This man ... He reached her , bent down , and gently helped her to her feet . Concern flickered in his eyes . " Are you hurt ? Are you still with me ? " Are you still with me ? That deep , magnetic voice struck her like another hammer against her heart , making her whole body tremble . Tracy stared at the man in front of her , her eyes moving carefully from his brows to his nose , then down to his lips , as if she were trying to uncover some hidden truth from his face .

But what was she searching for ? Why did he feel so familiar ? Confusion , fear , helplessness - her emotions tangled and surged , threatening to drown the fragile clarity she had just regained . The man suddenly reached out and touched her forehead , his sharp brows furrowing . " Did the shock leave you speechless ? " When Tracy still didn't respond , he let out a quiet sigh and extended his hand to her . " Don't be scared . I got you . I won't let anyone hurt you ." He sounded helpless .

The icy , untouchable aura around him melted away , replaced by a warmth so unexpected that it was almost disarming , The cold , flawless figure now softened , and the change carried a kind of allure that was nearly irresistible . But as he moved to draw her into his arms , Tracy instinctively stepped back . 2/3 17:38 Thu , Sep 25 ... : A 55 Chapter 289 The Man at the Door The tenderness on his face froze . His hand lingered awkwardly in the air . +10 Free Coins For a moment , he looked as if her reaction had wounded him . He sighed heavily and started to lower his hand .

Suddenly , a strong force yanked him back . He stumbled several steps before his assistant rushed forward and steadied him , preventing a fall . When he regained his balance and lifted his head , his expression hardened . A wave of bodyguards in black stormed into the room . Leading them was Ronald , who rushed straight to Tracy . He grabbed her shoulders , his eyes scanning her anxiously . " CeeCee , are you alright ? Did they hurt you ? " Tracy slowly came back to herself . Her gaze settled on his worried face , and after a long pause she finally spoke . " I'm fine ...

But what happened to you ? " Ronald was in terrible shape . His hair was messy , his clothes torn in several places , his lip swollen , and blood trickling from a cut on his forehead . He looked like he'd just come out of a brutal fight . When Tracy managed to answer his question , Ronald finally let out the breath he'd been holding . She seemed shaken but not seriously hurt , and that was enough for him . This wasn't the time for explanations . His expression hardened as he turned to face the cold , elegant man across the room . Tracy was shielded completely behind him , out of reach .

The hotel room wasn't large , and now it felt even smaller . Simon's men were still there , but Preston and Ronald had each brought their own groups of bodyguards . The place was packed with men in dark suits , the heavy tension making it difficult to breathe . Ronald's eyes never left the other man . The sharp edge in his gaze carried both warning and hostility , and his voice was low and cold . " Preston , " he said . " It's been a long time ." 3/3

Chapter 290 Brothers at Odds Chapter 290 Brothers at Odds +10 Free Coins The curve of his lips hinted at a smile , and the dimples should have made him look sweet and approachable . Yet , somehow , the expression carried a sharp chill . Ronald hadn't expected any problems with Simon today - his plan left no room for surprises . What he didn't see coming was Preston showing up halfway through . Preston , however , didn't seem the least bit surprised to see him .

He calmly straightened his suit , smoothing the wrinkles from nearly stumbling earlier , then lifted his chin with that precise , perfect posture of his . His eyes shifted to Ronald . you " It really has been a while , " he said , his tone cool and elegant once more . " Where have been all this time ? Do you have any idea how long I've been searching for you , my dear brother ? " The last two

words carried an odd weight , layered with emotion Ronald couldn't quite pin down . Ronald met his gaze directly .

His smile stayed as bright as ever , dimples deep in his cheeks , but his eyes pulled him in like a void . " Looking for me ? How ? With words ? " His voice was playful , mocking . " Seems to me you've been eating well . Haven't seen me around , so your appetite grew ? " He knew Preston better than anyone . On the surface , Preston appeared calm and composed , but nothing bothered him more than his appearance . Sure enough , that polished , aristocratic air cracked in an instant . Preston's expression darkened , and his eyes sparked with anger .

" That mouth of yours hasn't changed - still insufferable . " Ronald's smile never wavered . " Funny . You say it like you've ever liked me . " The two stood only a few steps apart . One wore the easy grin of a college kid , bright and harmless . The other carried himself with the poise of a young elite , polished and confident . But when their eyes locked , sparks flew . 1/3 17:38 Thu , Sep 25 ... Chapter 290 Brothers at Odds The air grew tense , and everyone around them felt it . Nobody dared speak . Especially not Simon .

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55 +10 Free Coins He had only wanted to teach Tracy a lesson today - just to vent some frustration for Erin . He never imagined things would spin this far out of control . Worse yet , Ivy , the bodyguard he trusted most , had lied to him all these years . Rage simmered in his chest . He silently vowed that when this was over , she would pay for it . Still , Simon forced the anger down . He lifted his head cautiously toward Preston . " This ... this must all be a misunderstanding . " Desperation filled his voice . " My dad is Deputy CEO at Jackman Enterprises .

He set a curfew for me if I'm not home by eight , he calls the cops . If you two need to talk things out , please , take your time . Don't mind me . " - He thought name - dropping his father would get him released , but without Preston's command , the bodyguards didn't budge . But without Preston's order , they didn't budge . In fact , they shoved harder , forcing Simon to the ground . He yelped in pain . Preston finally glanced his way but gave no command to let him go . Instead , his eyes shifted past him - to Tracy , who stood sheltered by Ronald's side .

" You must trust Ronald a great deal ," Preston said , his voice low and smooth . " To use yourself as bait just to trap this man . But you're still a woman . " His face stayed cold and unreadable , but his voice softened . " No matter how much you hate this man , you shouldn't be taking such risks . My brother has always been reckless and childish ," To anyone else , Preston's words might have sounded like he was defending Tracy , maybe even showing her sympathy . But to her , they only sent a shiver down her spine . Tracy frowned , gave him one long look , then turned away .

She leaned on Ivy and said quietly , " Let's go to the hospital . " 2/3 ... 17:39 Thu , Sep 25 ... Chapter 290 Brothers at Odds : Then she looked at Ronald . " The rest is up to you . " 55 +10 Free Coins Ronald nodded . His smile was just as bright as before , but his eyes had softened , making him look like a well - mannered college kid . " Don't worry , CeeCee . I know what to do . " Tracy didn't answer . She left with Ivy , never once glancing back at Preston . She didn't thank him for stepping in . Tracy wasn't stupid .

With how much Ronald cared for her , he would've rushed in the moment he realized something was wrong - plan or no plan . If it hadn't been for Preston , she and Ivy wouldn't have been in danger in the first place . And if anyone was going to be the first to save her , it would always be Ronald . As for Preston's kind words , Tracy could hear the truth under them : he was trying to drive a wedge between her and Ronald . That was why she chose to ignore him completely . This man ... There was something unsettling about him . Preston noticed her coldness .

His expression didn't change , but his presence grew sharp and icy . Beside him , his assistant instinctively stepped back . After years of working for Preston , he knew this mood all too well . Whenever Preston was angry , someone always ended up paying for it . 3/3