

N Destiny 561

Chapter 561

"I'll hold you to that. Which day are you on?" Elliot began marking time like a hunter who had set the traps, sitting out, waiting for his game to fall into it.

At that, Anastasia hurriedly answered, "The first day..." She had to lie no matter what. "First day, huh," drawled Elliot. "Six days to go then."

She laughed up her sleeve as she buried herself in his arms, and Elliot lowered his head to kiss her cheek tyrannically yet dotingly.

"Alright, cut it out. Don't stay up too late." She left his arms, allowing him to return to his work, and as she left, he gave her a cheeky smack out of the blue, making her blush. Excuse me!

However, Elliot grinned, seemingly enjoying her reaction while she fled upstairs.

When morning came, Wanda hailed a cab to Tillman Constructions after having her breakfast at home, for she had assumed Anastasia would come bright and early.

"Sorry, | was wondering whether Miss Anastasia Tillman has arrived for work?" she asked after arriving at the guardhouse. "And you are?"

"I'm looking for her."

"Register, please."

"Im Wanda Garner." Wanda gave her name.

The guard happened to be Erica's man and he grabbed his phone, entered the guardhouse, and called Erica after learning who he was speaking to. "Miss Erica, Wanda Garner has arrived." "Do as I've told you and bring her to me," she ordered.

“Yes, ma’am. I’ll bring her right away.”

With that, he went out and said to Wanda, who had beers waiting outside. “You’re looking for Miss Anastasia Tillman, you said? Follow me. I’ll take you there.”

Wanda was already so eager to meet up with Anastasia that she boarded the golf cart without hesitation, and it wasn’t until the guard had driven more than a mile that she began panicking. ‘Sir, where are you taking me?’

“Miss Tillman’s up ahead. We’re almost there. In the security guard’s defense, he didn’t know he was banding a human life to Erica on a silver platter since he believed that Erica just wanted to see her.

“Is Miss Anastasia’s office in this area?” a curious Wanda asked..

The guard naturally wouldn't ask why Erica wanted to see this woman. His job was only to deliver, and he wouldn't want to offend Erica unless he wanted to lose his job.

Erica and Patrick had long arrived and

they watched the guard escort Wanda to

their building from the second-floor

window. “Miss Tillman’s inside. Go on in!” said the guard. Wanda was bewildered that Anastasia’s office was located in such a place, for it

looked obviously abandoned.

After she entered the building, the door suddenly shut behind her, and she turned around in fright only to see a man Erica’s birth father!

At last, she realized she had fallen into a trap. I've been brought to Erica! Erica descended the stairs while sneering, "You're one lucky woman, Mrs. Garner. Who'd have thought you could still live after falling into the sea."

"You're a monster, Erica Tillman. Do you really think I'll die so easily?" condemned Wanda as she pointed to Erica. As Wanda's focus was on Erica, it gave Patrick the perfect opportunity to grab her throat.

Unfortunately for Patrick, Wanda was strong, having gained her strength and muscles from doing house chores for years and she sank her teeth into his arm. "Ahhhh!" he cried out in pain and kicked her away.

Seeing so, Erica immediately charged toward Wanda, who shoved Erica away in turn, making her way to the second floor. The main door was locked now; there was no way she could escape from there.

She set her sights on the windows straight away after arriving on the second floor. "Dad, grab her. Don't let her get away," Erica shouted.

Patrick instantly pulled out the machete they had been setting aside for this and charged toward Wanda, scaring the wits out of her. Before she could register anything, a sharp pain came to her lower abdomen, and she fell back the next second and out of the window.

Though she had suffered an injury on her lower abdomen and also dropped from the second floor, she was still going strong, running toward Tillman Constructions while pressing on her bleeding abdomen.

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"Dad, she's getting away!" Erica shouted in terror. As anxious as Patrick was, he still dared not jump out of the window. "She hasn't gone far, Erica. I'll run downstairs and chase after her."

The area was deserted, for the warehouses here were all abandoned. Despite being seriously injured and also having fallen off a building, Wanda had one thing in mind: she couldn't die; she had to bring Erica's true parentage to light. Erica has to pay the price!

“Help! Someone wants to kill me... Help!” Wanda shouted feebly. Patrick had caught up with his machete, and his desire to kill Wanda had overthrown his reasoning at this point. No one else could know of his daughter’s

true parentage; this woman had to die! Just then a motorcycle was passing by, and when the man heard Wanda’s cries for help, he immediately turned in. “Help, help...” Wanda called out at once, seeing there was finally someone.

“What’s wrong, ma’am?” the man asked when he saw that she was covered in blood. “Someone wants to kill me. Please take me to Tillman Constructions’ front gate...”

Coincidentally, the man was an employee of Tillman Constructions. Without another word, he helped Wanda to his motorcycle and sped away.

Meanwhile, Patrick had hidden away, and cold sweat gathered on his forehead when he saw that Wanda had been taken away. Alas, he had failed his daughter.

Not minutes after Wanda had been taken to the front gates that a black Rolls-Royce pulled over, for a crowd was blocking the path.

“Miss Tillman, something seems to be going on in front,” the bodyguard notified Anastasia, who was seated at the back.

Worried about the commotion, Anastasia got out of the car and hurriedly squeezed into the crowd. Just then, someone shouted, “Miss Tillman’s here!”

Anastasia discovered the weak woman lying on the ground was none other than Mrs. Garner, who had been working in Tillman Residence for the longest time.

“Mrs. Garner?” She squatted down and couldn’t help being taken aback when she saw her bloody lower abdomen.

“Miss Tillman... | want to tell you a secret... Erica isn't your father's daughter...” The next second, Wanda's eyes rolled upward, out cold.

It took Anastasia a few seconds to recover from the shocking revelation, and she hurriedly turned to her bodyguard behind. “Take her to the hospital.”

With that, the bodyguard dashed to the nearest hospital. While Wanda was taken to the emergency room, Anastasia waited right outside, mulling over what Wanda

had just said.

Erica isn't Dad's daughter... Does that mean Naomi had her with some other guy? Dad definitely wouldn't be stupid enough not to do a DNA test before accepting Erica into the family. So Naomi tricked Dad, didn't she?

Anastasia was too little to remember anything at that time. So if Naomi really did do something, it would've been using Anastasia's blood in replace of Erica's to successfully pass her father's test.

Anger flashed across Anastasia's eyes as the thought crossed her mind. Even her father had been deceived for twenty-over years. This despicable woman, who had no blood relations with her family, drove her out of her own home and even seized her father's love for years!

Anastasia was so livid that her body started shaking. Also, why had Wanda suffered such a serious injury? Who did it to her? Anastasia stayed outside of the emergency room alone. She had wanted to tell Francis about it but decided against

it in the end, for she worried something would happen to him if he couldn't take the news since he had just woken up. Meanwhile, Erica drove back downtown with Patrick in nothing but fear and worry. Wanda had once again slipped from her fingers, so it was only a matter of time before Anastasia discovered the truth of her parentage.

And now, the one thing she had to do was to return to Tillman Residence, take all her mother's precious jewelry and bank cards, and hide them somewhere.

She had Patrick lie low in the meantime, asking him not to find anyone lately and steer clear of the police lest he dragged her down.

Never had Patrick imagined in all his life he would kill someone for his daughter. Worst of all, he had bloodied his hand without finishing the job. He would definitely be doomed if Wanda ever regained consciousness.

In the Tillman Residence, Erica charged into Francis' bedroom and ransacked the place, searching for anything she could immediately exchange for money.

However, it never occurred to her if she would ever have the chance to spend them after seizing them.

Chapter 563

All Erica ever thought about was money and living a lavish, comfortable life. In her twenty years of living in Tillman Residence, she only ever learned one thing—spending.

Life would be a living hell for her if she didn't have money. All credit to Naomi as well for successfully producing an incompetent daughter.

Lastly, Erica opened Francis' watch case and took everything in there away without hesitation. She decided that she would leave Averno and hide in a different town. For all she knew, Wanda might not actually hold her liable.

Back in the hospital, the doctors managed to revive Wanda. Fortunately, the wound wasn't on her vital organs, or she actually might not have survived.

Wanda had also woken up in no time, finding Anastasia standing by her bed. Because of Naomi, Wanda also snubbed Anastasia in many ways.

But who'd have thought Anastasia would one day be her savior.

“Thank you for saving me, Miss Anastasia. | owe you my life.” Wanda. knew she would've bled to death if she was brought here any later.

“Mrs. Garner, please tell me in detail. Why were you hunted, and who were they?”

With that, Wanda recounted the first time she overheard Erica and her birth father’s conversation, to Erica pushing her into the sea, up till what happened earlier in the day.

The story stupefied Anastasia, for she couldn't believe Erica disregarded human life and broke so many laws just to keep her true parentage under wraps.

“Mrs. Garner, you swear everything you've told me is the truth. Are you hiding anything?” Anastasia asked. “How dare I? | shall be d'mned to hell if | have lied to you!” Wanda was so agitated that she nearly passed out.

Anastasia sneered to herself when she saw Wanda’s sincere gaze. In that case, you shouldn’t blame anyone else when you’ve dug your own grave, Erica.

“Mrs. Garner, do you want to press charges against Erica?” she asked Wanda. ‘I'll pay for all your legal fees if you do.’ “B-But I’ve also blackmailed her for a million. I'll be put behind bars too, won't 1?” asked Wanda fearfully.

“You may have indeed blackmailed her, but you didn’t receive a single penny from her. | can have the lawyer defend you so that you'll receive the most lenient sentence. But if you do press charges, Erica and her birth father will have to spend at least ten years in prison,” Anastasia explained in detail.

Wanda was naturally shell-shocked and beyond furious when she had two near death encounters. Therefore, she instantly agreed with little consideration. “Okay, Miss Anastasia. We'll do as you say. | want to press charges against her. | want the father and daughter to be put behind bars.”

“That security guard is also their

accomplice. No one should be spared.” Wanda said with red-rimmed eyes. Poor Mrs. Garner, having to suffer this kind of torment when she’s at this age.

“I’ll dig into the guard. Don’t you worry.” uttered Anastasia to comfort her. “As long as you’re willing to press charges, none of them will be able to escape.”

Anastasia’s hatred for them was naturally just as intense. Not only had Naomi brought her daughter along with her and taken over her home, but the love that was supposedly hers was also taken away from her, leaving her childhood and adolescent years helpless, alone, and aggrieved. She, too, couldn’t let go of this grievance.

In no time, Wanda made a report to the police, who immediately looked into her incident from that morning and also declared Erica and Patrick wanted.

Anastasia, on the other hand, stood behind the window of Wanda’s ward and watched her relate her mishaps. Erica will be paying a heavy price for her misdeeds,

she thought, and all of this was due to her mother’s failed parenting. This time, it’d be too late for Naomi to regret her actions. That was if she even felt guilty.

Speaking of which, it had been a long time since Anastasia visited her stepmother. Since she happened to be available, why not let Naomi know of her precious baby girl’s fate and that Anastasia’s father had awoken?

In the detention house, Naomi had been brought to the visiting room, and when she saw the classy, stunning Anastasia through the bars, she lunged forward agitatedly. “Anastasia, Anastasia, are you here to bail me out? I’m sorry, Anastasia. I’ve learned my lesson now. Please drop the charges! Please, I beg of you.”

Chapter 564

Anastasia crossed her arms while sneering, exuding apathy. “I’ve come bearing news, Naori. It’s about your daughter.” “What?! What about Erica? Has she done anything wrong?” Naomi turned glum. “Your daughter is charged with attempted murder.”

“Impossible! My Erica doesn’t have the guts to do that. How dare she kill a human when she can’t even kill an animal? Don’t slander my daughter, Anastasia Tillman. You’re bullying her behind my back, aren’t you?!” Naomi blew a fuse.

“You’re right, she didn’t dare to murder in the past, but you’ve fattened up her ambition and courage so much that she can do anything for money now.” Anastasia snorted disdainfully.

“Anastasia, Erica’s still your sister, no matter what she has done. Please forgive

her, seeing that both of you have Francis’ blood running in your veins.” Naomi thought kinship could persuade Anastasia to overlook Erica’s faults.

However, the frost beneath Anastasia’s eyes only thickened after she heard Naomi’s plea. “I do have good news for you, though. My dad has regained consciousness.”

“What?! Francis has regained consciousness?! That’s great; I’ve missed him so much!” Naomi instantly feigned adoration.

Naomi had thought it through. If Francis had regained consciousness, he would definitely forgive her for even manipulating his will, seeing that they shared a daughter, or at least she thought so.

“But my dad doesn’t want to see you, much less forgive you for what you’ve done. Don’t get too excited just yet.” Anastasia crushed her hopes unambiguously.

Naomi turned grim in response.

“Anastasia, you’ve said nothing but terrible things about me to your father, haven’t you? But don’t go thinking you can drive a wedge between us. Besides, Erica is Francis’ daughter too! He won’t sit back and watch me go to jail.”

Anastasia was so livid that she was beginning to sneer. How could Naomi continue to act so unapologetically? "Naomi, are you sure you're right to call Erica my father's daughter?" Anastasia decided to drop the bomb on her.

Naomi panicked in response and shrieked, "How dare you, Anastasia. You can hate Erica, but I won't allow you to question her parentage!"

"Then do you know who your daughter attempted to murder?"

"Who?" Panic filled Naomi's eyes. "Mrs. Wanda Garner. Erica first tried to kill her by pushing her off a cliff into the sea. But because Mrs. Garner survived, Erica allied with a man to wound her with a machete, Wanna guess his name?"

Newman. Patrick Newman. I'm sure you're familiar with it." Anastasia smirked as she fixed her gaze on Naomi.

Naomi, seated on her chair, suddenly jolted and nearly fell over. Luckily she held a tight grip on the table. "I don't know any Patrick Newman."

"Erica has nothing to do with the Tillman Family. She's your daughter with Patrick Newman. Mrs. Garner discovered his identity when he went to Tillman Residence a month ago, and Erica, worried that her parentage would be exposed, lured Mrs. Garner to the coast and mercilessly pushed her down. After Mrs. Garner was saved, Erica then sought help from her birth father, Patrick. They lured Mrs. Garner to an abandoned warehouse this time and made another murder attempt. Mrs. Garner has already pressed charges, so you'll have company very soon."

Naomi began heaving upon hearing Anastasia's words. Shrieked dramatically, she seemed to be left with no choice. "Spare my daughter, Anastasia! I'll kneel. Please, spare Erica..."

"You married my father with a daughter that has no blood relation to him whatsoever and used my blood to trick my father into thinking Erica is indeed a descendent of the Tillman Family. All these years, your daughter was treated with nothing but love and affection while I-there's nothing any one of you can do to salvage all that I've lost. I want to see you pay the price for your wickedness."

With that, Anastasia turned and left, leaving Naomi to hold a death grip on the bars and scream, “Spare my daughter, Anastasia! She’s still so young... Please have mercy on her, please, | beg of you...”

Anastasia sneered to herself. Spare Erica? Never.

The police successfully tracked Erica to a high-end restaurant. She was enjoying a plate of perfectly cooked steak like she was still a socialite until the police walked in, where she turned fearful, causing the cutleries in her hands to slip and drop onto the floor.

Chapter 565

“Miss Erica Tillman, you’re now the prime suspect for attempting to assassinate Madam Wanda Garner twice. We're gonna have to take you into custody for further investigation.”

At that point, Erica’s face turned as pale as a sheet and everyone in the room had their eyes on her. Her mind was a complete blank and she shivered uncontrollably. In the end, she was forcefully dragged out of the door by the policemen.

“| didn’t kill anyone. | did not! She was the one who threatened me first! | didn’t mean to kill her...” she yelled out in a frenzy.

Meanwhile at Presgrave Hospital, Francis had made significant recovery as he could now get out of bed and move about; he had even gone to the gym once! He was now an agile man on his feet.

“I’m allowed to be discharged,” he spoke excitedly as he looked at his daughter who had just entered the room. “Dad, I’ve got something to tell you next. Please stay calm.”

“Just say it. I've faced death in the face, so there is nothing | can’t handle.” Francis heaved a sigh.

“Erica isn’t your biological daughter. She was conceived by Naomi with another man,” Anastasia voiced out frankly.

Though he swore he would be calm, Francis' expression was full of shock while he was significantly stunned. "What?! Are you sure about that?"

"I'm very sure. You can conduct a paternity test with Erica if you would like more confirmation." Anastasia was sure about this as she knew that Mrs. Garner' words were definitely worth trusting. Furthermore, Naomi's reaction also clearly indicated the authenticity of this matter.

At this moment, a flash of anger appeared in Francis' eyes. "I can't believe that she's lied to me for the past twenty years! She showed me a paternity test report back then. Was that a falsified report then?"

"Perhaps she used my blood to run the test back then," Anastasia replied.

He clenched his fist tightly and was extremely disappointed in Naomi's conduct. He turned to look at Anastasia with remorse filling in his eyes. "Anastasia, I'm so sorry for neglecting you all these years."

"Dad, this is all in the past, so there is no point in bringing it up. Right now, I just hope that you won't be lenient this time. Naomi has to face the consequences of her actions. Erica has also committed a crime and she's been taken into police custody for investigation."

"What?! Erica... What sort of crime?" Francis asked in shock.

In response, Anastasia repeated the incident regarding Mrs. Garner to Francis, who could not believe his ears that Erica was actually heartless enough to commit attempted murder. "She has the exact same personality as her mother. How can they be so heartless? I can't believe that she killed Mrs. Garner in order to conceal the truth about her

identity."

"Dad, I understand that she grew up under your care and you're attached to her, but could you leave this matter in my hands? Don't interfere in this." She did not wish for such a dilemma upon her father.

He then nodded in agreement. "Sure, I won't interfere in this. Just do what's best for everyone."

“Dad, I need you to cooperate in the investigation of Naomi’s case. You would need to be interviewed by the police regarding the matter of how she forced medications on you before you passed out.”

Anastasia reminded her father as she did not want any of his feelings and kinship toward Naomi to jeopardize the matter. She had already made up her mind to convince her father to file for divorce.

“You two should get a divorce once the investigation has been completed. I don’t want such a dangerous person staying by your side,” she suggested calmly.

The guilt Francis felt toward Anastasia intensified at that point. Right now, he was relieved that she was able to handle everything on her own. As such, he decided not to bother about the matter with Naomi and Erica. He would just leave everything in Anastasia’s hands.

“Okay!” Francis nodded. Since the situation had arrived to such a stage, there would be no point in him drafting a will anymore because there would be only one person left to inherit his fortune.

At 5.00PM, Anastasia suddenly received a phone call from Elliot. He mentioned that he was sending a car over to pick her up as today was the day he received his latest yacht, hence he wanted to bring her and Jared out to sea to have dinner.

Although she was busy with such complications, she convinced herself to relax and focus on accompanying Elliot and Jared for dinner.

“Miss Tillman, before we leave for the port, President Presgrave asked that you pay a visit to the gown boutique and change into a gown,” the bodyguard mentioned.

In response, Anastasia smiled and replied “Sure.” He’s arranged everything perfectly.

She changed into a purple gown at the boutique and looked stunning with a strong resemblance to a dark violet flower.

“Miss Tillman, I rarely see anyone being able to own this color as much as you do. It looks perfect on you!” the boss of the boutique praised candidly.

Chapter 566

“Thank you for your kind words,” Anastasia replied politely and departed.

Along the way, she enjoyed watching the lights lit up one by one, as if it was commanded by the dusk, as the night approached. She admired the scenic views along the way and her heart was never more at peace than this moment; it no longer felt heavy and she was full of anticipation to see the man waiting for her.

At the port, the sky had just darkened and the illuminated yacht stood out even more in the sea. It was very luxurious yet stylish.

The black car headed in the direction of the yacht and as Anastasia alighted from the car, her long hair was blowing in the wind. Her figure was mesmerizing under the shadows as she radiated confidence.

“Mommy!” She had just entered the cabin when she heard her son’s voice ring out happily,

He was also dressed exceptionally handsome tonight with a fitted tuxedo while radiating the aura of a rich little young man. Furthermore, Anastasia could tell that her son’s outfit was tailor made for him.

At the same time, she was quite taken aback because her son actually resembled Elliot a lot after the get-up. Is this all a destined fate?

“Mommy, you look so beautiful today!” Jared tilted his head slightly as he realized that his mommy was gorgeous. “Is that true?” Anastasia enjoyed listening to her son’s praises. “Of course! My mommy’s beautiful and that’s why I’m such an adorable and handsome child!” Jared chuckled gleefully.

She chortled after hearing his double entendre compliment. “I think you're taking this chance to praise yourself more than for me!”

At this moment, Elliot strode out from.

behind a door looking tall and mesmerizing. Although it was early spring, he was merely dressed in a white shirt paired with a dark-colored vest as he could withstand the cold. The tapered pants that he wore accentuated his long legs perfectly and the tautness of his legs was extremely charming.

The sight of him made Anastasia feel flushed. Wow, not many people can resist his body.

As soon as she realized that they were about to be engaged soon, she suddenly felt worried that she might not be able to withstand his passionate feelings.

Elliot focused his dark eyes on her and studied her intently with a smile on his face. She fulfilled all his criterias for a beautiful woman. Her imperfections naturally become perfections to him and ever since he fell in love with her, she became flawless.

Despite her apathy in getting closer to him-or at times, even avoiding him, these traits had become the reasons why he felt attracted to her.

“Purple suits you well,” Elliot praised her. “Really?”

“The only issue with the dress is the low neckline, but there aren’t that many people around tonight, so I’ll keep my jealousy to myself then,” he spoke up generously, as if she needed his permission on what to wear.

At that moment, Anastasia was speechless. I’ve worn dresses that are much more revealing than this! If this was something that he intended to patrol her on, then he would have his hands full as she was not conservative when it came to her dressing.

“Mr. Presgrave, I’ll head upstairs to have a game. Stay here and keep my mommy company. You guys can have some romantic time together.” After Jared said that, he ran up the stairs on the other side since he was already familiar with the yacht.

Aworried Anastasia glanced at him as Elliot comforted in a low voice, “Don’t you worry. There are bodyguards

upstairs, so they will keep him safe.”

It was then that she finally relaxed and enjoyed the feeling of being out at sea. The yacht sailed along the sea steadily and they remained close to the shores so that they could see the buildings all beautifully lit up under the night skies.

Anastasia’s frustrations from the past few days were finally released and she felt as if she was located in another realm, embracing the peaceful feeling.

A fine meal was also something worth being happy about and Elliot had arranged for a highly-ranked top chef to prepare dinner for them. The tender and juicy steak was paired perfectly with some fine wine. Jared, on the other hand, had an exceptionally great meal course too; Anastasia had always prided herself on being a great cook and satisfying his meals every day.

By the looks of things now, he seemed to have grown much taller and well-built from his stay at Presgrave Residence for the past month. Perhaps, he was even much healthier than when he was with her.

She was full of gratitude toward Harriet for taking care of Jared so well. At the same time, she also realized that Jared was a huge source of happiness for everyone at Presgrave Residence.

It was 11.00PM when they finally arrived back at the mansion with Jared sound asleep in Elliot's arms. Anastasia trailed along behind and stared at Elliot's broad and strong back. At that moment, there was a sense of security that welled up within her and she felt as if she could safely depend on him for the rest of her life.

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They placed Jared on the bed and Anastasia waited outside the corridor for Elliot to come out.

Elliot stepped out of the door silently. before he was led to Anastasia to the master bedroom. As soon as they entered the doors, he instantly took her into his. arms.

“There were too many people present. tonight. Finally, I can do what I wanted to do but was too shy earlier to do so,” he mentioned straightforwardly.

Before she could react, he had already raised her chin and cupped her tiny face to kiss her passionately.

Anastasia could feel the dominance and tenderness that he expressed. Finally, he was satiated and released her as she snuggled into his arms shyly and caught her breath.

I'll start making preparations for our engagement party, Elliot spoke softly in her ears in a low voice. “Okay, sure.” She agreed as she didn't want to make him wait any longer either.

The next morning, Francis, who hadn't appeared in public for quite some time, turned up at his company. The first thing he wanted to deal with was to sue his lawyer for amending his will without seeking consent from the client.

Colin definitely did not expect Francis to be able to regain consciousness and that there would be proof that he had received a bribe of a million in his bank account. Thus, there was concrete evidence of his crime.

As for Patrick Newman, he had been in a residential area before he was taken into custody that morning. He trembled hard out of fear as he never expected that he would have to pay such a huge price at this age for a daughter he hadn't even met for the past twenty years.

Inside the police station, Erica's face was as pale as a sheet, and her eyes were lifeless. In just one day, she had lost her arrogance, and all that was left in her was fear for her future and regret for her actions.

No one knew who revealed this matter to the press. Soon after it was revealed, the news with the heading. The second daughter of the Tillman Family, Erica Tillman, was involved in the murder of their servant, was trending in first place on the web.

Ever since Alex had been detained, Hayley remained holed up in a hotel room and she didn't dare to appear in public as she was worried that he would reveal something incriminating about her. After all, she had been by his side and concocted plenty of plots for him.

She was busy scrolling on her phone when she suddenly saw a piece of news about Erica. At that moment, she sat upright in shock.

“Erica murdered someone?” After she finished reading the news, she cackled loudly and was delighted by that.

“I can’t believe Erica would somehow end up in this state!” Hayley couldn’t stop cackling, and just then, she felt a dull pain on her cheekbones from laughing too much. Instantly, she clutched her face

and stopped laughing.

It was not evident from Hayley’s appearances, but she knew that several spots on her face required fixing and upkeep. However, she couldn’t afford that, so she had no choice but to continue tolerating this..

Originally, Alex was going to give her a few million, but now that he had been taken into custody, it meant that she had wasted her efforts for the past few days.

Hayley went into the bathroom and took a look at her face in the mirror, which. was still quite beautiful. However, she panicked as she studied her face intently. The bulge on her forehead was too prominent and couldn't be covered up despite the amount of foundation she applied to it. It was even more prominent when she looked at it from the side..

She hyperventilated as she racked her brain to find a way to obtain money. Suddenly, she thought of Elliot and wondered if she

could blackmail him into giving her money for that night five years ago.

She thought of the situation and mentally calculated that it had been several months since she did that despicable thing to Harriet, so perhaps he would forgive her by considering their past relationship. Right now, Hayley had no other option but to give it a shot.

She took a look at the time and it was only 9.00AM, so she decided to wait for Elliot at the underground parking lot of Presgrave Group. She had been to the parking lot plenty of times to know which spot belonged to Elliot.

After she freshened up, she made her way to Presgrave Group. She used to turn up there quite often, so the receptionist remembered her and didn't stop her from entering the place.

As such, she took the elevators and went directly to the underground parking lot. She hid close to Elliot's specific parking space and waited patiently.

Hayley was actually just trying her luck there, but unexpectedly, in merely ten minutes, she saw the lights of a familiar car turning in this direction. That was a distinct, elegant feeling exuded by a Rolls-Royce and she was elated to see that.

Elliot was here.

She quickly tidied her long hair and took out a vanity mirror to check her makeup under the lights. Subsequently, she tugged at her neckline to lower it since she wanted to appear gorgeous in front of Elliot.

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As soon as the car pulled over, Hayley rushed forward with a bag in her hand. However, the bodyguard, who had just gotten out of the car, stopped her. He warned, "Lady, stay back."

"I'm Elliot's friend, so step aside," Hayley replied quite righteously.

At that moment, the car door was opened, and the person who stepped out of the car elegantly wasn't Elliot. In fact, it was Anastasia who got out of the car.

Instantly, Hayley's expression changed, and she turned around to leave. However, there was a mocking voice that rang out from behind, "How can you be so shameless, huh? | can't believe you actually have the cheek to come and see Elliot!"

Hayley took a deep breath and turned around to glare at Anastasia. "Anastasia, you've forced your own sister into prison, so you're definitely the most heartless and ruthless person in the world!"

As Hayley spoke, she noticed that Anastasia was wearing a custom-made jacket and holding a limited-edition branded bag. In the past, Hayley had been introduced to the world of the top scions of society back then when she was using Elliot's money.

As a result, Hayley was able to estimate the cost of everything Anastasia had on her, and Hayley couldn't contain the rush of admiration and jealousy within her.

"Erica's not my sister. She was conceived by Naomi and another man. As for her current predicament, well, this is all of her own doing, so she deserves everything. Anastasia replied coldly.

At that point, Hayley was stunned. So Erica's not Francis' daughter? Is this one of Anastasia's schemes, or could this be true?

However, Hayley's main purpose here was to see Elliot, so she didn't intend to cause trouble. She responded, 'Anastasia, it's none of your business even if I'm here to see Elliot.'

Anastasia exuded elegance and there was a look of dominance in her eyes. She strode purposefully toward Hayley and warned the latter, "It's definitely my business because he's my man. Stay away from him!" Anastasia said this with a swagger.

Meanwhile, Hayley couldn't help but gulp. She couldn't comprehend when Anastasia had perfected such an imposing manner.

"Anastasia, you guys aren't even engaged yet, so you're not his wife. You have no right to stop me from seeing him," Hayley yelled.

"Inform the security guards that from now on, this person is not allowed to enter the lobby of Presgrave Group. Put her on the blacklist." Anastasia informed the bodyguard next to her. "Sure, Miss Tillman," the bodyguard affirmed.

At that point, Hayley's face was flushed with anger, and she retorted angrily, "Anastasia, stop being a big bully! How dare you! If you provoke me any further,

I'll contact your son's biological father and get him to come and meet his son. I'll let the whole world know that your son's father is a gigolo!" Hayley threatened. Anastasia loudly.

In response, Anastasia's expression darkened, and she clenched her teeth while slowly inching closer to Hayley. "You can try and do that to challenge me."

"I have nothing to lose at all, so why would I be afraid? I have nothing to fear at all... I..." Before Hayley could complete her sentence, Anastasia slapped her hard across the face.

There was a 'crack' sound that reverberated loudly.

"You... How dare you hit me, Anastasia Tillman! I'll sue you..." Hayley blew up.

Just then, the bodyguard came forward and stood protectively in front of Anastasia. He formed a protective barrier in front of her. Anastasia responded with a slight sneer. "I didn't hit you. Do you have any proof to

Anastasia threatened Hayley loudly. An ashen expression soon appeared on the latter's face, and she clenched her teeth. tightly to rein in her emotions.

"Did you guys see me hit her?" Anastasia asked the bodyguard next to her with a smile.

"No, all we saw was someone crazy losing her temper and being disruptive to you, Miss Tillman, the bodyguard responded.

At that moment, Hayley was so close to tearing Anastasia into pieces, and her chest heaved up and down from the anger.

Anastasia saw the oddity of Hayley's face from the lights that shone on her, and the former realized that the latter must have been in a rush to see Elliot get some money to fix her face.

"Kick her out. From now on, she's not allowed to step foot into Presgrave Group. After Anastasia said that, she turned around as she didn't want to look at Hayley's face.

"Anastasia, you shouldn't behave too smugly. I'm warning you. I've got a huge secret that | will never ever reveal to you in this lifetime. It's a secret about your son's identity! Haha! I'll only reveal it to you when you're on the brink of death. By then, you won't be able to rest in peace." Hayley cackled loudly as the bodyguards apprehended her.

Anastasia paused in her tracks and turned around to look at Hayley. "What secret is it?"

"| won't reveal a single word!" Hayley clenched her teeth.

Chapter 569

Knowing that Hayley was provoking her on purpose, Anastasia turned around and left while ignoring Hayley's resentful gaze that was piercing her back. It was under the escort of the two bodyguards that Anastasia exuded an air of a sophisticated rich woman as light shone upon her.

After that, Hayley was thrown to the street outside Presgrave Group by a bodyguard, who warned, "If you dare to come anywhere near the building, we'll call the police."

Now that she failed to meet Elliot, her initial plan of getting money from him. was also out of the window. The marks on her cheek were so evident that the stinging pain eventually became numb.

"Anastasia Tillman, you b*tch! | swear you won't get away with this!" raved Hayley toward the building. She went on and on like a delirious woman, drawing attention from the passersby who soon

became the targets of her anger. 'What are you looking at? Get lost!'

“Oh my! Look at her face! Her plastic surgeon must have hated her!” shouted a woman deliberately.

“Her forehead is uneven. You know your face is basically a jumpscare, right?” Another woman joined the fray. “What did you just say?!” Hayley glared at the two women..

“So what if we're talking about you?” one of them retorted fearlessly. “You must've escaped from an asylum!” added the other woman.

As the crowd began to point fingers at her in ones and twos, Hayley finally regained her senses and covered her face before making herself scarce in great haste.

When she saw her reflection in a mirror midway, the flaws, which she had seen in the bathroom, were more visible under the dazzling sunlight. Even she was shell shocked by her own hideous appearance.

| look so ugly in broad daylight!

Contrition pervaded inside her like a monster devouring her whole. Although her previous face was not exceptionally beautiful, she would still look nice with make-up after dressing up, thanks to her porcelain skin. However, it was all gone now. She did not even look normal at all!

“| need money. | need money for surgery...” Hayley covered her face and kept thinking about money.

She regretted so much for not withdrawing a few hundred thousand of dollars first after receiving Elliot's card. He would not have sounded her out anyway. | should've wised up back then!

Then, trepidation began to overwhelm her as an epiphany struck upon her. What if Elliot finds out that Anastasia was actually the woman from that night and not me? Is he going to demand me to pay back the few millions that I've spent? What if he does?! No. | must take this secret to my grave.

Since Francis was helping with the company affairs and Jared had started attending classes, Anastasia could take

some time to relax. She was rather free in the morning, so she came to Presgrave. Group to kill time. Right now, she was outside Elliot's office.

“Miss Tillman, you will have to wait for a moment as President Presgrave is still having a meeting.”

Anastasia smiled. “Not a problem. I'll wander around downstairs.”

As Bourgeois had moved to the first floor of the building, she had the chance to meet her ex-colleagues.

Everyone in Bourgeois welcomed her profusely the moment she stepped into the office.

“Miss Tillman, you're here.” “Miss Tillman, you look fabulous today!”

She gave them a polite smile in return before heading toward Felicia's office. Needless to say, Felicia was pleased to see her as she addressed Anastasia more appropriately.

“Boss, you've finally come to see me!”

A bashful Anastasia covered her mouth

while laughing. “I'm not the boss yet!”

“It's just a matter of time before you take the position.” Felicia was confident with her prediction.

Instead of denying that, Anastasia merely sat down and began a casual talk with Felicia. “How's the company doing lately?”

“We've transcended many jewelry brands with a considerable market share. That's the least that we should do under President Presgrave's guidance, isn't it?” Felicia replied while smiling.

Chapter 570

However, Anastasia actually knew that the ever busy Elliot had no time to manage Bourgeois at all. The accomplishment was simply thanks to the influence of the Presgrave Group alone. As though they had set sail on a sturdy ship, Bourgeois. would be able to burgeon without either of them lifting a finger.

“Oh, the jewelry showcase is going to be held this Friday. The final product of your design is out and it’s absolutely perfect! I’m sure it’ll cause a commotion that day,” informed Felicia.

Anastasia could not help the joy after hearing the news, for every designer treated their work like their babies. Thus, wouldn't one be proud and happy when their kids had procured such amazing achievements?

“You're exaggerating.” “The original plan was to use the usual

diamond mosaic, but President Presgrave said that diamonds of the best quality should do the trick. When I saw the final product for the first time, it was so

dazzling that I almost went blind. It is so gorgeous.” Anastasia was baffled. Why didn’t he tell me? “Really? Why did he do that?” She could not wrap her head around it.

“Probably because it’s your design!” exclaimed Felicia, who had caught a whiff of Elliot’s feelings for Anastasia after being in the company for so long. Still, she tried to keep her assumption to herself for now.

Anastasia nodded. “I will make sure to attend the showcase. I’m looking forward to seeing it for myself.”

Then, they continued chattering about Felicia, who finally found her true love, and a wedding was expected to be in May. Anastasia congratulated Felicia from the bottom of her heart.

“You might get married sooner than I will!” claimed Felicia.

Even so, Anastasia was not quite sure about it as their engagement ceremony was confirmed to be held at the end of the month due to Elliot's impatience..

After leaving Bourgeois, Anastasia went to the floor where Elliot's office was. Due to the high ground, one was able to relish the skyscraper view there.

Even if it was a rainy day, he could still enjoy the sunlight streaming into his office whereas others would have the raindrops pattering against their windows.

It did not take long before Elliot returned, which he then placed aside the documents in hand after noticing the woman on the couch.

"I heard that you've bumped into Hayley a moment ago. Don't mind her," he comforted. "I don't care about her, but I don't want her to see you either." Anastasia expressed her genuine thoughts. Elliot raised his hand and promised, "I swear I won't see her in the future."

It was not entirely possible for Anastasia to forget about what had happened five years ago. She should accept the past, yet there was an invisible needle deeply pricked into her heart to constantly remind her of the pain.

"Have you informed your father about the engagement?"

"Nope." She shook her head as it was a

decision done last night.

His finger brushed the tip of her nose. "Seems like you're not that excited about our engagement." She let out a wry smile. "I promise that I'll tell him today."

Only then was he satisfied. "We'll start preparing for the wedding right after the engagement."

Anastasia nodded in agreement, for she had accepted the fact that she could not escape from his palm.

“Let's pick up Jared together this afternoon.” Elliot was in fact registered as Jared's father in the school's record. “Sure! By the way, I'm going to the showcase this Friday.” “Okay. It's good to wander around too.”

On the other hand, Francis decided to visit Naomi at the detention center after having suppressed his urge to do so for the past few days.

With her hands fettered with a handcuff, she pounced on the iron railings vehemently as soon as she saw him. “Francis! Francis, you've finally come to see me. I'm so sorry. I'm really sorry. It's all my fault. Please forgive me.” Her eyes twinkled with hope as she knew that Francis was the only person who could save her. He was her last ray of hope and she no longer wanted to be imprisoned.

Gazing at the woman who had aged so much more than before, Francis recalled the ferocious words he had heard before losing his consciousness. Never in his

wildest dream had he imagined his wife to be so ruthless. He wished that it was a mere nightmare and it was simply her doppelganger attempting to kill him.

“One question, though. How could you bring yourself to kill me?” His face distorted in agony. you

“Francis, I was wrong! I didn't want to kill you. I-I was possessed! Francis, you know how much I love you, don't you? Haven't we gotten along well in the past twenty years?” The desperate woman slapped herself in the face. “I'm a sinner...”