

A Love Forgotten Chapter 41

Jocelyn whimpered, "I didn't mean that. Ms. York, you misunderstood me..." While sobbing, she furtively threw me a challenging look.

I looked at her expressionlessly. "So, you didn't mean to conspire with Elijah to steal my money?"

I turned to Elijah and scoffed. "Elijah, you're so disgusting that you made me throw up."

I wanted to leave right away. However, he suddenly grabbed my hand.

"Let go." My voice was cold.

But Elijah didn't let go. He was completely tense as he said, "Ari, nothing you heard was true. I didn't want to steal your money."

I sneered. "Alright then. Since you weren't stealing from me, give me back the money with interest." Elijah hesitated.

As expected, he couldn't bear to give up such a large amount of money.

I gave him a mocking glance and shook off his hand.

Suddenly, Jocelyn screamed, "Elijah, she took everything!"

As she spoke, she entered the closet to check.

When she saw the empty jewelry safe, with all the watches and limited edition Hermes bags cleared out, she let out a pained shriek. "Elijah, she took everything valuable

She ran over to me and glared at the large bag in my hand. "Let me inspect it."

I laughed. "Ms. Cornell, do you have the right to inspect my stuff?"

Jocelyn visibly froze. Then, she threw all sense of pretense and pointed at my nose. "Ariana, Elijah bought you all those things. They're not even yours.

I lifted the large bag and tossed it to her. "Take it then. They're junk that I've worn. If you like them, they're

yours

Jocelyn quickly opened the bag, but all she found was plain clothes. She went mad and tossed them back

to me.

“Not these. Where’s the jewelry? And those bags. You took them. Give them back!” She threatened, “Or else, I’ll call the cops.”

I simply stared at Elijah. “Mr. Linden, your lover wants to call the cops. What do you say?”

Elijah’s eyes gradually darkened. Without giving me an answer, he asked instead, “You’re leaving?”

I was annoyed. “Not only am I leaving, but I also want a divorce.”

Elijah suddenly laughed. Then, unexpectedly, he pushed Jocelyn out of the room and locked the door. Stunned, I watched him approach me.

At that moment, an inexplicable sense of fear rose within my heart.

Elijah walked over and backed me into a corner so that I was forced to face him.

His handsome face looked enlarged and distorted

I was scared. After all, he was stronger than me.

I started to regret telling Teri that I didn’t need help now.

Discreetly, I grabbed my phone to call the cops.

However, Elijah threw my phone to the ground and broke it.

The screen shattered, and the light on the screen faded away.

I yelled, “What are you doing?”

Elijah grabbed my arm. He was so close that his unbridled breath tickled my face.

I held back my disgust. "Elijah, if you're a man, let me go. You're giving me a hard time. Aren't you ashamed of yourself?"

But Elijah said nothing and simply stared at me. His voice was hoarse when he spoke, "Ariana, what do you want exactly? A divorce?"

I did not answer.

All of a sudden, he let go of me and took something from a slot in the closet.

I froze.

With malice in his eyes, he carried it over to me.

"If you take one step outside, I'll break this."

Chapter 41

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A Love Forgotten Chapter 42

I looked at the pair of emerald bracelets that had appeared out of nowhere.

The form of the bracelets was familiar, but I couldn’t recall who they belonged to. My first instinct told me that they must be very important to me.

Upon noticing my confused expression, Elijah took out a yellowed photograph.

After only one glance, I was thunderstruck.

It was a photo of my family!

It was a photo of me, my late grandma, Dad, Mom, and Jonathan,

In the photo, I was wearing a pink dress and was about ten years old. Meanwhile, Grandma—who was seated at the center—was dressed in an old-fashioned blouse with a kind smile on her face.

She looked ahead quietly, as if she were staring at me through the photo.

Suddenly, a loud bang went off in my head. Something had smashed through the railings of my memory

with a roar.

“Grandma!” My legs went limp, and I crumpled to the ground.

Elijah stared down at me coldly.

I looked at the emerald bracelets.

I remembered—Grandma gave me the bracelets before she died!

My voice shook as I said, “Give it back.”

a tear.

Elijah sneered, placed his hand on the yellowed photograph, and made a

I screamed, “Don’t tear it! That’s the only photo I have. It’s Grandma’s last photo before she died. That’s the only one!”

I rushed over to grab it, but Elijah held up the photo and the [bracelets](#). Every time I tried to jump, he held me down.

I

Elijah looked at me as if I was a clown as I failed time after time.

Frantic, I said, “Give it back. Give it back, please?”

Elijah was apathetic. “Are you still leaving then?”

My tears kept falling.

He then raised his voice, saying, “Are you leaving, or not? If you leave, I’ll tear up this photograph.”

As he spoke, he tore at it anyway.

Now, the photograph had been torn in two.

Screaming, I pounced over to catch it.

Tears blurred my vision, and I sobbed as I tried to put the photo back together.

Elijah was wretched. He’d ripped the middle, and Grandma’s face was split in half.

I couldn’t hold it in anymore and bawled. “Give me back my photo. That’s Grandma’s last photo. I don’t have any photos of her anymore.” I lost my composure and lunged at Elijah to hit him.

But Elijah was strong. He grabbed my hand, and pain shot through it.

However, I kept struggling.

I was going to kill us both.

Soon, Elijah could no longer restrain me. With a growl, he threw me onto the bed and pinned me down. For a moment, I couldn’t breathe under his weight.

Then, I heard his voice beside my ear. He sounded like he was pleading. “Ari, cut it out. Don’t leave, and I’ll return your grandma’s belongings to you.”

I looked at the emerald bracelets in his hand. My tears nowed unrelentingly.

I was distraught.

Grandma had raised me. Both my parents were busy traveling for work, and once I was seven, I was taken back to the city. But Grandma was worried and came with me.

Grandma was an illiterate old woman from the countryside and could only speak a rural dialect. People would tease her when she went grocery shopping.

In the city, she'd even struggled with using electric home appliances. But nonetheless, she took great care of me and my brother, especially me—she doted on me.

Early in the morning, she would make for me my favorite bread pudding. She would even make ravioli. When I headed to school, she would give me a warm egg.

She was an illiterate old woman. Yet, worried that I wasn't used to the food in the school cafeteria, she would come to my school by bus in the afternoon to feed me her homemade spaghetti. She would make sure my stomach was full before allowing me to return to the classroom.

When Grandma was with me, I was healthy and plump.

When Grandma was with me, I was a happy and beloved princess every day.

I was Grandma's "Aria", the most blessed Aria.

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But Grandma died when I was about ten.

Her death was quick.

In the hospital, she gave me this pair of emerald bracelets.

She had looked at me on the hospital bed, reluctant to part with me. She said, "Aria, I don't have much to give you. I've been wearing these bracelets ever since was young. When you find someone you like, treat these bracelets as your wedding gift."

I was choking with sobs.

On top of me, Elijah said, "Ariana, don't leave. We'll be okay."

I slapped him hard and glared at him. "We'll never be okay! You tore Grandma's photograph!" Trembling, I picked up the photograph as my tears continued to fall.

At that moment, the door opened, and Jocelyn looked at us on the bed in shock.

Her expression shifted. "Elijah, what are you doing?"

I took that chance to grab the bracelets from Elijah's hand.

I was about to run outside, but Jocelyn blocked me. “You’re not allowed to leave.” She stared at the bracelets in my hand in suspicion..

I noticed the greed in her eyes and instinctively hid the bracelets behind me. My eyes were blood-red as I growled, “Get out of my way.”

Perhaps Jocelyn was riled up because she dropped all pretense at that moment. She reached out to grab

what was mine.

However, I snapped and tried to hit her.

She shoved me. “That is not yours.”

In a fury, I bit down on her wrist, and Jocelyn let go in a pained yelp.

At the next moment, my face was slapped with a loud smack“.

Jocelyn became sober and launched herself into Elijah’s arms. She tearfully complained, “She bit me. Elijah, I was just trying to get back what was yours.”

My face quickly became red and swollen, and I could taste rust in my mouth.

I glared daggers at Elijah, who was looking down at me “You hit me...”

Elijah stared at his palm. Suddenly, he coldly said, “Ariana, apologize.

“Apologize?” I wiped the blood from the corner of my mouth and looked at him with derision. “These bracelets are my grandma’s! Who does Jocelyn think she is? How dare she try to snatch them from me.”

He said dispassionately, “You hurt Jocelyn, so you need to apologize.”

I spat out a glob of bloody saliva.

Jocelyn shrieked. I’d aimed the spit at her.

Elijah’s expression shifted, and he raised his hand again.

However, I simply looked at him coldly as if he was my sworn enemy.

Reason overruled impulse, and he put his hand down and said, “You want to leave, right?” His voice suddenly became vile. “Ariana, if you want to leave here today, leave on your knees.”

While protecting Jocelyn, he blocked the bedroom door

Meanwhile, Jocelyn nestled in his arms and sneered at me. She must have felt elated that Elijah was humiliating me like this..

I said, “No. I’d rather die.”

Elijah grinned. “Fine.”

He then snatched a bracelet from my hand and threw it onto the ground.

Instantly, the bracelet broke into pieces.

I wanted to scream, but my voice wouldn’t come out.

Shattered.

It shattered... Grandma’s bracelet.

I fell to my knees with a “thud“.

My hands shook as I touched the emerald fragments.

It was gone. The memento Grandma left me.

No. I still had one.

I snapped out of my daze, yet Elijah had already snatched another bracelet.

He held up the other bracelet. His expression was frighteningly cold. “Apologize, then crawl out. I’ll let you leave then.”

I went berserk. “Elijah, do you even have a heart?”

Elijah seemed crazed as well. His expression was terribly unfamiliar.

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“Do you not want it anymore?” The bracelet in Elijah’s hand swayed as though it was about to fall.

An invisible blade dragged across my heart at that moment.

I slowly got down on my knees.

By the side, Jocelyn sardonically said, “Oh, what a devoted granddaughter.” She then told Elijah, “Elijah, look how desperate she is for a divorce from you. She’s-

Elijah suddenly flew into a rage at her. “This doesn’t concern you. Get out!”

Jocelyn was startled. She wanted to cry, but she didn’t dare to do so when she noticed Elijah’s odd expression.

She looked me up and down, her eyes suspicious.

However, I acted as if I didn’t see or hear any of that and slowly crawled out of the room.

Under my knees was soft, premium wool carpeting. But it felt as if I was kneeling on a floor covered in glass shards.

It hurt.

It hurt so much.

Regardless, I wanted what Grandma had left behind, I wanted to have something of hers with me.

Tears relentlessly rolled down my cheeks and fell onto the carpet. I kept wiping them away, but my face remained wet. So, I quit trying and focused on crawling out.

It was a short distance, yet it felt as if it had taken me a lifetime.

Finally, when I was out of the room, I straightened my back and looked at Elijah. “Can you give me back Grandma’s stuff now?” I extended my hand.

Elijah’s voice trembled. “You were actually willing to crawl out just to leave this place?”

I repeated, “Can you give me back Grandma’s stuff now?”

I looked at the only bracelet in his hand with longing. Of the other bracelet, all I had were a few broken pieces. I couldn’t lose this one as well.

I deeply regretted coming here today. I should have been more careful when snitching Grandma’s stuff, but I messed up.

Why didn’t I remember them?

Elijah’s hands were shaking. He stared at me as if I had committed an unforgivable sin.

“Give it back,” I urged again.

Then, I abruptly said, “Do you want me to grovel? I’m begging you. Please give the bracelet back.”

At that, I threw myself prostrate.

Elijah's voice was strained. "You want your grandma's belongings that badly?"

My voice was tearful as I pleaded, "Elijah, please let me go. Grandma gave her things to me, not to you. Give it back. Please!" I broke down and madly knocked my head against the floor,

I truly had none of Grandma's belongings. Grandma had never taken a photograph before when she was.

in the countryside. But now, her only photo had been torn by Elijah.

She died when I was ten, and when I realized I could return to the countryside, her old house had been demolished. Now, an unfamiliar building stood in its place.

Her stuff had all been burnt or thrown away too. The only things I could find were our family photo with Grandma before she got sick and the bracelets she gave me.

I kept knocking my head on the ground, and I could feel something warm drip down from my head.

Then, I heard Jocelyn hesitantly say, "Give it to her. The bracelet is not worth much."

I looked up at Elijah once more. "Please give it to me. I won't ever stand between you and Jocelyn again. I don't love you anymore. I won't fall in love with you again. You're free, Elijah."

As I spoke, Elijah's face grew more upset.

I was about to keep begging when Teri's yells rang out from downstairs, "Elijah, you're bullying Ari again! Let go of her!"

"Slam!" A loud noise sounded downstairs

I looked over and saw Teri waving a golf club around, smashing a vase.

She yelled, "Elijah, let her go if you're a man! If you don't, I'll destroy this pigsty of yours!" The golf club smashed through the glass coffee table with a clatter.

Jocelyn shuddered. "Give it to her quickly. Call the cops! Call the cops!"

Once Elijah was distracted, I leaped up, grabbed the bracelet, and frantically darted down the stairs.

However, I ran too quickly and fell down a few steps.

Teri swiftly helped me up. “Are you okay? Are you okay, Ari? Your face... Your head...”

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Without saying anything. I grabbed Teri and ran out.

We reached the road and got into the car.

I was shaking all over as I clutched the bracelet, unable to speak.

Teri noticed my unusual behavior and resolved to slap me. “What is it? What happened exactly?”

I looked at Teri and cried as I showed her the tom family photo. “Elijah tore my family photo. He shattered one of the things Grandma left me.”

Teri’s expression shifted. After being stunned for two seconds, she cursed, “That fucking scum. I’ll break him.” She grabbed the golf club, opened the car door, and darted inside once again.

While listening to the sounds of things crashing and breaking inside, I tried my best to calm down. Then, I used Teri’s phone to make a call.

The call connected.

Logan’s voice was as gentle as ever. “Hello. What’s the matter, Ms. Stuart?”

I choked up. “Logan, it’s me. Could you come over? I...I might be in trouble.”

After saying that, I couldn’t control myself and started crying again.

Logan’s voice immediately became solemn. “Ari, where are you?”

So, I gave him my address. And before I could even tell him what happened, he said, “Stay where you are. Someone will pick you up in ten minutes.”

I wiped my tears away, feeling much calmer now. “Logan, where are you?”

I

When I saw the broken pieces of the bracelet and the photo on my knees, I burst into tears again.

Logan said, "I'm at the airport. I can't get there in time. Wait there."

With that, he swiftly hung up.

Meanwhile, I stayed in the car.

After a few minutes, Teri walked out just as a cop car arrived.

It seemed that Jocelyn had called the cops,

I pulled Teri into the car and locked the door.

Her hands were still shaking with rage. She looked livid as she said, "Ari, don't worry. I'll take full responsibility for this."

Ten minutes later, more people arrived.

Two well-mannered individuals circled the cops and talked for a while. Then, someone knocked on our door

"We're Wood Group's attorneys. He's Mr. Campbell, and my last name is Guzman. We'll handle the following legal affairs for the both of you."

Teri was stunned. I was, too.

Before long, we were brought to the police station. I had no idea how the two attorneys negotiated, but ultimately, we came out in less than an hour.

All the while, Teri wasn't worried about herself. Instead, she comforted me. "Ari, don't worry. I'm alright.

Don't feel bad about it."

But I felt guilty and said, "It was all my fault. I screwed up."

Teri sighed. "You didn't do anything wrong. Don't feel guilty."

After that, Teri was taken home by Mr. Campbell, while I was taken to the hospital by Mr. Guzman for a physical examination.

Once I was cleared, I was brought back to the Wood residence.

Back at the Wood residence, I saw Logan and a kind-looking old man with white hair sitting in the living

room.

The sprightly old man was dressed in a suit. His eyes were astute, and he appeared stately.

He was surprised when he saw me. "This is the girl from the York family?"

Logan replied, "Yes, she's Jonathan York's sister. She's been staying with me temporarily for the past few days.

Logan then waved at me. "Come and meet Mr. Pearson. He's the chairman of the chamber of commerce. He knows your father, and he's met Jonathan as well.

I had no idea who the old man was. However, since Logan had personally introduced him, he had to be someone important.

I bowed. "Pleased to meet you, Mr. Pearson. I'm Ariana York, Philip York's daughter."

Mr. Pearson looked at me carefully with a smile. "Oh, Philip's daughter is all grown up now."

I asked, "You know my dad, Mr. Pearson?"

He smiled. "Yes, I know him."

My tears welled up. I wanted to find out more, but the man was already getting up to leave.

He told Logan, "Regarding what you said, I'll head back and do some research with my people."

Logan's face didn't reveal much. He simply smiled, "Okay, I'll be waiting to hear from you, Mr. Pearson. Let me see you out."

The two then chatted as they walked out.

Meanwhile, I sat in the living room, staring dumbly at the emerald fragments and torn photo in my handkerchief.

I knew I had to look like a sorry spectacle. I was a wreck.

After showing Mr. Pearson out, Logan walked back in.

He noticed the stuff on my knees and approached me. Ari, what happened?"

Large drops of tears fell from my face, and I gave him a rough account of what had happened.

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As Logan listened to me, his face turned colder and colder.

I was deeply remorseful. "How could I forget to take Grandma's belongings? How could I forget? How could my brain forget?" I hit my head.

Logan grabbed my hand. "It's because you lost your memory. You only remember the things that happened before you were 18. You forgot everything after that."

I lowered my head and sobbed. "But I shouldn't have forgotten. How could I leave something so important at Elijah's home? I regret it so much."

Logan's voice was as gentle as usual. "Ari, don't be sad. The broken bracelet can be fixed. The photograph can be fixed too."

My eyes lit up. "Really?"

He smiled. "Really. When have I ever lied to you?"

I smiled through my tears. "Thank you. Thank you, Logan."

Logan then accepted a warm towel from a maid and helped me wipe my face.

The warm towel made me feel refreshed, and I softly thanked him.

Then, Logan suddenly pointed at my forehead. "What happened to your forehead?" As he spoke, his fingers brushed over my injured forehead.

I

I quickly dodged his touch. "It's nothing. I just groveled and hit my head on the ground."

Logan's brow furrowed slightly, and he asked someone to bring him some ice.

"Ice it for a while, or you might get a bruise." He paused. "Why are you always getting hurt and making me worry?"

I raised my head and glanced at Logan. His eyes were immensely deep. It was as if they were filled with starry sky.

Suddenly, there was a pang in my heart, and a strange feeling spread throughout my body.

"I" I faltered.

A sense of awkwardness filled the air.

Meanwhile, I pretended not to notice and continued wiping my face with the cooled towel.

Logan then took the items wrapped in my handkerchief and said, "Leave these with me. I'll get someone to fix them for you. They will be as good as new."

Though I was skeptical, I still handed him the things anyway.

Then, Logan glanced at me and asked, "You don't believe me?"

I promptly shook my head. "No, I believe you. I'm just... reluctant to part with them."

He smiled. "Reluctant to give them to me?"

For some reason, my face flushed red again. I swiftly changed the subject. "What brought Mr. Pearson here?"

Logan casually explained, "He came to visit my father, but my father's not home."

I was confused by his words. If Logan's father was not home, wouldn't Logan have told Mr. Pearson in advance? Was it possible that Mr. Pearson was actually here for Logan?

I looked at Logan in suspicion. He was checking the torn photograph and broken bracelet with his head bowed, so he didn't notice my gaze.

The longer I looked at him, the more I suspected that Mr. Pearson was here to see him.

However, Mr. Pearson seemed to be a man of high standing. He had come to the Wood residence at this time. So, could it have been for my screw-up today instead?

I was apprehensive.

After a while, Logan made a call, and soon, someone arrived. Then, they packed the items in a box and took them away.

I was told that the people who took the items were expert museum conservators. They even told me not to worry and promised to restore the items to their proper state.

I couldn't be more relieved. I was so relieved that I started worrying about how I could pay Logan back.

Then, once everything was settled, Logan told me to go upstairs and get some rest.

While on the stairs, I suddenly turned to look at him. He was standing at the foot of the stairs, watching me leave in silence.

I quietly asked, "Logan, how long can I stay here?"

Logan was slightly stunned. Then, he smiled. "You can stay here as long as you like."

I bit my lip and said, "I don't know how I can repay you

Logan pushed his glasses up. The lights in the living room illuminated the lenses, and I couldn't discern his expression

He waved his hand slightly. "Get some rest. We can talk about that later."

With that, he walked off.

It was only after a long while of blank staring that I turned and headed up the stairs.

A Love Forgotten Chapter 47

When I woke up the next day, Frank was already waiting outside my door with a nurse.

He looked at my new injuries and shook his head. “I shouldn’t have allowed you to leave. Mr. Wood gave me an earful last night.”

I felt guilty and replied, “I didn’t know I would come across Elijah either. Sorry for troubling you.”

Frank shook his head. “Yeah. You almost made me lose my job. Quit running around.”

I nodded

In truth, I couldn’t go anywhere either since this matter was still being processed at the police station. Moreover, I needed to recover from my injuries as well.

The Wood residence was huge, and it had a lovely garden too. There were also outstretched walls of roses in the garden,

However, just as I was admiring the walls of roses, Ruby appeared with someone I’d never want to see.

I frowned. “Ms. Cornell, why are you here?”

Ruby raised her chin and looked at me in disdain. “She’s my senior, and I’m a member of the Wood family. Why can’t I bring her here?”

So, I turned to leave.

Behind me, Jocelyn spoke softly, “Ms. York, I’d like to speak with you.

I raised a brow. “What could we possibly talk about?”

Without Elijah by her side, Jocelyn didn’t bother putting up the pure and frail angel facade.

She gave a half-smile. “We’ve never spoken before. Since you want a divorce from Elijah, and I want to be with him, we must have a lot in common.”

I understood what this was about—Jocelyn couldn’t wait to put her cards on the table.

I remained silent for two seconds before saying, “Alright, let’s talk.”

Jocelyn smiled. “As expected, you’re a smart woman, Ms. York.

“I’ve only got one thing to say. Divorce Elijah. I can get him to give you a larger share in terms of property division.”

I snickered. “Then how much do you plan to make Elijah give me, Ms. Cornell?”

She hesitated for a while then put up a finger. “10 million dollars.”

“Huh?” I laughed until my eyes were teary.

Jocelyn glared at me. “Is that not enough for you, Ms. York? I’ve already taken into account that you stayed with Elijah when he made his comeback. If you weren’t from the York family, you wouldn’t even get

a cent.

She moved closer to me, her expression smug. “I know a hundred ways to not only stop you from getting any money, but also put you in debt.”

I laughed. After patting my chest, I quipped, “How scary. Please have mercy, Ms. Cornell. Don’t make me

lose everything I have.”

Jocelyn smirked. “Ariana, I know you must be upset. But I’d advise you to be sensible. Take the money. and get out of Elijah’s sight. Otherwise, your reputation will be ruined, and you’ll get nothing.”

I couldn’t be bothered to talk any more nonsense with Jocelyn.

My face turned cold as I said, “Ms. Cornell, if you hadn’t learned math from your PE. teacher, you’d know that I put 50 million dollars into Linden Group five years ago. That 50 million dollars, converted into Linden Group’s stock, has a market value of over 100 million dollars.

*100 million dollars. And you’re going to convince Elijah to pay me 10 million dollars to get me to leave?” I chuckled. ‘Ms. Cornell, your tricks are too obvious.’”

Jocelyn looked livid as she clenched her teeth, “20 million dollars then. That’s enough, right?”

I smiled and said nothing.

But Jocelyn was intent on persuading me. “Elijah has fed you well for the past five years. You can hardly say that he mistreated you.

“Besides, can you get proof for the 50 million dollars? Can you prove that it was yours? You should know that if Elijah didn’t give you stock dividends, your 50 million dollars would be lost.”

I simply chuckled, but my heart was in pain.

I felt sorry for the person I was before losing my memory. I had sacrificed my money and my heart. I stayed with a man when he was trying to get back on his feet. Yet in the end, his mistress threatened to make me lose everything I had.

Observing my silence, Jocelyn assumed that I was afraid.

Her eyes glinted with delight as she continued, “20 million dollars is enough for you to live out your life in luxury. Even if you’ve been driven out of the York family, it would be worth it...”

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My anger was ignited yet again.

I glowered at Jocelyn’s exquisitely painted lips.

“What did you say?” I said.

Jocelyn huffed. “You’re no longer the heiress of the York family. Five years ago, the York family stated in newspapers that they had severed ties with you.”

At that moment, something erupted in my brain, and my head felt like it was splitting from the pain.

I clutched my head while my breathing quickened.

Jocelyn didn’t notice my unusual state and continued her mockery, “You can no longer get anything from the York family. All you can rely on is what Elijah gave you. So, Ms. York, you don’t have to hold on

anymore.

“Elijah doesn’t love you. He won’t give you what you wish for either. He won’t give you money, much less

love.”

However, the pain in my head was excruciating, so I couldn’t even hear what Jocelyn was saying.

All that was on my mind was those words, “Five years ago, the York family stated in newspapers that they had severed ties with you.”

Was that true? Why didn’t Teri tell me? Why didn’t Logan tell me?

I raised my head, tears already staining my face.

Jocelyn froze.

Then, I pointed to the entrance in the distance. “Leave. I’m done with this conversation.”

Jocelyn refused to give up. “Ms. York, I know you love Elijah, but he doesn’t love you anymore. There’s no point in forcing this marriage to continue.”

As I endured my severe headache, I sneered. “Ms. Comell, you’re mistaken. I don’t love him either. And I will divorce Elijah. But I won’t leave empty-handed.”

I wiped my tears and looked at her. “In our marriage, he’s the one who made a mistake, not me. I was the one who invested 50 million dollars, not you. What gives you two the right to make me, who has done nothing wrong, pay for everything?”

My attitude angered Jocelyn. She scoffed and folded her arms. “Fine. You’re as tough as I expected. You’d oppose me until the very end.

“We’ll see how this goes then. I’ll make you leave the Linden family with nothing.”

With that, she turned to leave.

I taunted her coldly. “If you’re so capable, get Elijah to divorce me. You’ve only come to negotiate with me because you couldn’t convince him. Seems like Elijah doesn’t love you all that much either. Otherwise, why would he have kept you waiting for five years?”

Jocelyn’s back became stiff, and her walk became unsteady as well.

Then, I watched her as she left in a flurry. By then, the stuffiness in my chest had somewhat subsided too.

After she left, I clutched my head.

My heart was pounding.

It hurt. It hurt so much. It felt like a knife was being twisted around in my brain.

My dearest Mom and Dad. My brother who doted on me the most.

Why did they cut ties with me?

Tears rolled down my cheeks.

I realized I had been too naive.

I was no longer related to the York family. So, what now? What should I do?

Just then, Ruby walked over and snidely said, “Ariana, I’d advise you to be tactful and leave quickly.” She looked at me with disgust. “You’re crying. All you know how to do is act weak and pitiful. I’m warning you, don’t use the same tricks on Logan. He’s out of your league.”

But I had no desire to speak with her. I just wanted to leave.

My brain was in a jumble. I needed to calm down.

Ruby trailed me like a ghost. “Ariana, your reputation has long been ruined. Even if you divorce Elijah, you’ll only be a hand-me-down. Logan has such a high status and is so remarkable. He’d never be interested in you.”

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Annoyed, I turned around and sneered. “He’s out of my league, but not out of yours, right? You wish you could marry into the Wood family, don’t you?”

As though I had seen through her hidden desire, Ruby flew into a rage. She snapped, “Ariana, you bitch! Do you think everyone is as shameless as you?”

My head hurt badly, and my heart was aching, I didn’t want to argue with Ruby, so I turned to leave.

Relentless, Ruby grabbed me. “Stop right there. We’re not done yet.”

I staggered.

Ruby then yanked down the collar of my dress, and my shoulders were exposed to the sunlight.

I quickly pulled it back up and scolded, “What are you doing?”

Ruby was startled. She still remembered that previously when she pushed me, she was driven out of the Wood residence. Now, she was much more civil with me and dared not attack me again.

“Oh, where did this fiery beauty come from? I love the flushed look on your face,” a languorous voice sounded from behind me. The voice was nonchalant and languid, much like a sunbathing leopard.

I furrowed my brow.

Just then, a tall figure ambled over from the living room entrance. Because of the backlighting, I couldn’t see his face, but he appeared to be enveloped by a ring of light.

He was dressed in a light gray blazer and snow-white dress pants. Three buttons on his shirt were left open, and a light gray silk tie rested untied on his neck. His entire being exuded a distinctive sense of ease and languor.

He walked closer to us, and I could finally see his face

I was stunned for a moment.

This man was gorgeous!

His deep facial features were as distinct as those of a marble sculpture. His prominent brows dipped into his sideburns, and his slightly narrowed eyes were enchanting.

He had a straight nose while his lips were thin and sensuous. His soft facial shape gave him a somewhat androgynous appearance too.

He raised his brow and looked at me with a half-smile.

His gaze pierced through my heart like a knife.

I was shocked.

This man bore some resemblance to Logan. However, while Logan's beauty was classic and gentle, that of a charming gentleman, this man's beauty seemed to be more unique.

I figured that he was related to the Wood family. Otherwise, he wouldn't have shown up here, nor would he look so similar to Logan.

Unsurprisingly, when Ruby saw him, she appeared as if she had spotted an ally. She rushed over to him and asked, "Norman, what's brought you here?"

The young man pushed her away with a grin. "Ruby, how could you argue with our guest? Where's your manners?"

Ruby's expression shifted. She pointed at me. "Do you know who she is? She's Ariana York! Logan brought her home. I have no idea why."

The young man walked to me, his insolent eyes scanning me up and down.

I couldn't stand his impolite gaze. My face turned cold, and I turned to go upstairs.

"Hey, Ms. York. Are you not going to say hi?" the young man spoke with a smile. "I'm Norman Wood. A musician."

I mechanically turned around. "Hello, Mr. Wood." Then, I looked at Ruby and drily said, "Please excuse me. I'm not feeling well, so I'll head upstairs."

Upon seeing that I was leaving, Ruby tugged at Norman and whispered, "Norman, kick her out. Kick her out."

However, Norman ignored her and simply followed me up the stairs.

I wanted to pretend that he was not there, but when he followed me to the door of my room, I couldn't stand it anymore.

As I held back my anger, I asked, "Mr. Norman, what are you trying to do?"

Norman grinned and placed his hand against the door

His eyes became even more alluring as he said, "Nothing. Ij Logan brought home is."

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Norman leaned in closer, and a faint floral scent wafted from him.

I turned my head away.

Everything about him indicated that he was a flirt. I had no doubt that if he wielded his charms, few women would be able to resist him.

I moved away slightly. "Mr. Norman, you're mistaken, I'm not Logan's partner." Upon saying so, my face flushed red.

In my 18 years of memory, I had never had a conversation like this. Moreover, I was defenseless against a man who was so good at flirting and so handsome at the same time.

And Norman could tell.

Purposely, he bent his head and let out a breath next to my ear. "If you're not his partner, what do you say to becoming mine?"

His warm breath tickled my skin. I shuddered and quickly took two steps back.

I could feel the blood rushing to my face as I said, "Mr. Norman, please behave yourself. I... I'm not here to look for that type of friend." I suddenly thought of something and added, "You're aware that my name is Ariana York, so you should know what kind of person I am."

Norman hummed in response, the curiosity in his eyes deepening.

He said, "I've heard about you. You're the York family's unruly lady." His tone was pleasant and melodious, yet his words were anything but. "Everyone says that you have a bad reputation. However, my reputation isn't great either. So, based on that, we're a perfect match."

My face darkened, and I rejected him flatly, "Mr. Norman, as I said, please behave yourself."

Norman could tell that my anger was genuine. He chuckled. “You’re angry? Don’t be. I’ll treat you to a feast.”

I was truly annoyed. This man was persistent.

I immediately pushed open the door and went in. However, just as I was about to close the door, it was blocked.

Norman rakishly held a business card between his fingers and winked at me. “Here’s my private number and WhatsApp. Ms. York, do me a favor and add me to your contacts.”

He was insane.

With a cold expression, I shoved him away and firmly closed the door.

Outside the door, his insouciant voice could still be heard.

“How feisty. She’s a tough egg, but I like her.”

I was so furious that I wanted to go out and beat him up, just as I had beaten up that shameless Porter.

But nonetheless, this was the Wood residence, and I was a guest.

That day, I stayed in my room and didn’t go out. I didn’t go downstairs for dinner either. I had no idea whether or not Norman, much less Ruby, had left. However, to avoid encountering strange people again, I chose not to have dinner.

A maid had knocked on my door several times, but I simply said that I wasn’t hungry and refused to eat.

When evening arrived, and the lights had dimmed, I finally fell asleep in my hunger.

That night, I had a dream.

In the dream, I was kneeling and crying at the York residence’s entrance.

“Dad, Mom, please forgive me. I’m sorry,” I bawled. “Let me in.”

“Ari, leave. You broke our hearts. You’ve disgraced the York family...”

I whipped my head around.

My brother, Jonathan, was standing behind me in the shadows. He was dressed in a black suit and holding a black umbrella. He looked glum and distressed.

I hurried to him. “Jon, please help me talk to them. I was wrong. I made a mistake...”

Jon gradually pried my fingers off him. His voice was so cold. “Ari, some mistakes are unforgivable.”

“No, no. Jon... choked with sobs.

“Ari, wake up,” someone was calling me.

I jolted awake to see a silhouette beside my bed.