

Heartstrings On Fire Chapter 41 - 50

Chapter 41

Agnes and Kerri had just found a spot to sit when they were swarmed by a group of girls. Leading the pack was Cecile, who never usually showed her face in the school canteen, so her presence today was definitely for Agnes.

“Oh look, isn’t this our social butterfly?” was the first thing Cecile said when she spotted Agnes. “Agnes, you’re from a well-off family. Why would you need someone else’s sponsorship? Could it be because your dad remarried and no longer cares about you?”

Cecile and her gang were always the center of attention in school, and she intentionally spoke loud enough to attract curious stares. Everyone knew about Agnes’ family situation, but it was a public secret Agnes didn’t like to discuss.

Agnes’ face turned serious. “Cecile, are you just looking for trouble?”

“I couldn’t care less about who’s sponsoring you, Agnes,” Cecile retorted. “I just want to clarify something. Are you really with Prince? Does he know you’re being sponsored by Jared?” Cecile’s words were harsh and shocking, leaving everyone around stunned.

Prince of Lakeside College was the universally acknowledged hunk, Ryder.

Kerri stood up. “Cecile, stop spreading rumours! Agnes would never do that, and she doesn’t need anyone’s sponsorship.”

“Is she too scared to admit it? Im going to expose her true colours today,” Cecile shot back.

“Agnes. Suddenly, a deep and pleasant voice came from not far away.

It wasn’t loud but extremely charismatic. Everyone turned to look, and to their surprise, it was Ryder himself.

Ryder sauntered over to Agnes. Seeing him, Cecile’s face lit up with fascination.

“Prince.”

“Cecile, I’ve told you to leave Agnes alone,” Ryder said coldly.

“Dont you know Agnes is being sponsored by Jared? Prince, don’t let her fool you,” Cecile said.

“Agnes is not being sponsored. If you keep spreading this rumour, she could sue you for defamation,” Ryder replied.

“How do you know? Do you just unthinkingly trust her?”

“Jared is my uncle I know his business better **than** anyone else,” Ryder said flatly and coldly, leaving everyone speechless.

Ryder was popular mainly for his good looks. Few knew about his family background.

He was the only grandson of the legendary Whitfield family from Hillcrest City.

Cecile knew this, but she also knew Ryder was low-key and disliked unnecessary attention.

Yet, she didn’t expect Ryder to reveal his intentionally hidden identity in public to clarify his relationship with Agnes, which showed how important Agnes was to him. Ryder, however, didn’t want to say more. He turned to Agnes, “Come with me. I have something to tell you.”:

Agnes followed Ryder out.

With Cecile’s intervention, the rumors about her relationship should stop.

But now, her relationship with Ryder would be the topic of discussion.

Ryder’s fame at Lakeside College was equivalent to Jared’s in society!

Agnes sighed, feeling like a gossip magnet.

As they left the cafeteria, Agnes said to Ryder ahead of her, “You don’t really have anything to tell me, do you?”

She felt that Ryder was just helping her out of an awkward situation by bringing her away.

But Ryder turned around and said calmly, “Actually, I do.”

Agnes was taken aback, “What is **it**?”

“My mom wants to meet you,” Ryder replied.

Chapter 42

Agnes was even more baffled, “Why does your mom want to meet me?”

Ryder’s mom, Alyssa, was a big movie star She was **a** movie star when she was young and hit it big at 1B, even rumoured to have won best actress. A lot of people were crazy for her back then. But at the peak of her fame, Alyssa suddenly announced her withdrawal from the entertainment industry. She married a Chinese–American and had a son, Ryder, but they divorced after less than **three** years of marriage

The rumours about her were plentiful Apparently, Alyssa’s ex–husband was a big shot from Asia’s wealthiest family

Alyssa was also **a** fashion guru. After returning to China, she opened a fashion design company, and now she’s a leading figure in the fashion world, often gracing the covers of high–**end** fashion magazines.

With someone like that wanting to meet her, Agnes was filled with confusion and a bit of **fear**.

Ryder’s face suddenly turned red, and he said, “My mom wants to meet you because she thinks you’re my... girlfriend.”

Agnes was very anxious after hearing this How did this rumor get to the Whitfield family?,”

Agnes said. “Why didn’t you explain t? If you had outright denied it, it would have been fine.”

Ryder glanced at Agnes, “I did deny it, but she doesn’t believe me because you’re the first girl I’ve brought home.”

Agnes suddenly remembered that Ryder had claimed to have invited her to Tim’s birthday party to save her from an awkward situation. Even Ryder’s grandpa had given them a somewhat suggestive look

His mom must have misunderstood then.

Agnes felt at a loss for words. She absolutely couldn’t meet Alyssa, not just because she was Ryder’s mom, but also because she was Jared’s sister.

If they met in the future, it would be super awkward.

Agnes quickly said, “Since you didn’t explain clearly, continue explaining. If it’s not clear the first time, a few more times should do the trick.”

Ryder suddenly asked, “So, you don’t want to have anything to do with me?”

Agnes was taken aback.

With a cold look on his face, Ryder said, “I get it.”

Then he turned around and walked away, leaving Agnes dumbfounded.

What’s up with Ryder? His mood swings are seriously hard to keep up with..

Agnes didn’t really care. She hadn’t had lunch yet, so she planned to grab a burger outside the school.

But as she approached the school gate, she spotted a familiar Ferrari in the distance.

It was Elton’s car, a gift from Hancock Taylor for his 20th birthday three years ago.

Elton was standing by the car smoking. Agnes had no idea when he had picked up smoking.

Clearly, Elton also saw Agnes.

Their eyes met, and Agnes felt surprisingly calm.

Even she found it strange that seeing this guy no longer made her angry or hysterical. The wound that had once bled seemed to have scabbed over. Though it still hurt, Agnes knew that time would gradually heal it.

Elton had put out his cigarette and started walking towards Agnes.

Agnes simply stood there, watching him approach step by step.

She suddenly remembered when she was 10, 13-year-old Elton proposed to her with a diamond ring.

They were just kids then and had grown up together. They were very close, and Agnes happily accepted.

She later found out that the diamond ring had been stolen by Elton from his mom. It was Sarah's expensive engagement **ring**. He fooled his family into thinking it was stolen but refused to divulge its whereabouts when found out.

The Taylor family thought he had sold the ring and gave him a thorough scolding. They later found out that the cheeky kid had actually given the ring to Agnes.

Chapter 43

Those past events felt like they happened just yesterday, as if a long period had passed

Elton approached Agnes and said, 'Agnes, I really miss you'

Agnes **replied**, “We’re done, Elton Please don’t do this.”

Elton reached out to hold Agnes’s hand ‘Agnes, I know you hate me, but could you forgive me one last time? Agnes, I love you, I can’t live without you.”

But Agnes stepped back, looking up at Elton “Elton, we’re past the point of no return. Jenny is pregnant, you have to find courage. Don’t bother me anymore, things between us are long over”

Pain flickered in Elton’s eyes

As Agnes tried to leave, Elton blurted out, Jenny’s pregnancy was a fluke. She planned it. Agnes, please don’t ignore me, do you know how much I’ve suffered these days?”

Elton’s tone was almost child like at the end.

This was Elton’s way, every time he upset her, he would act like a child, despite being much older than her.

But Agnes used always to forgive him.

But now Agnes felt annoyed. “Elton, can’t you grow up? You are not a kid anymore. Haven’t you faced the reality yet? You think you can just apologize and everything will be fine? Also, Elton, I’m not the same person anymore, we...it’s impossible.”

They were at the school gate, and though it was noon and not many people were around, people started glancing over.

Agnes turned and ran back to school.

Eton chased after her, but Agnes quickly entered the nearby library, which was off-limits without a student ID, leaving Elton stuck outside.

Agnes found a corner and sat down. She was spacing out, but all she could think about was Jared’s face.

Agnes knew that even if Jenny wasn’t pregnant, there was no future for her and Elton, because there was also Jared between them.

Right now, Agnes couldn’t help but wonder, what was Jared doing?

Meanwhile, at Tim Tower, on the 60th floor, in the CEO's office.

A casually dressed guy pointed at Jared's face, bellowing, "I, Mr. K, am a top-notch hacker in the country, you called me here in such a hurry, I thought the Tim Group's secret system got hacked! And you want me to hack a campus forum? Jared, aren't you looking down on people?"

Jared, expressionless, slowly picked up a pen, signed a check and pushed it over: "A hundred thousand dollars, enough?"

Mr. K had already opened his laptop, sat up straight, and said seriously: "Just look at you. We've been friends for years. I can handle it right away."

Despite his words, he didn't hesitate to pocket the check.

In just a few seconds, Mr. K snapped his fingers: "Done, it's just hacking a small forum, want me to hack Lakeside College's official website too?"

"No need, but I need the real information of the anonymous poster," Jared stated.

"That's easy, give me half a minute."

Sure enough, half a minute later, Mr. K had dug up all the identity information of the anonymous poster.

Mr. K closed his laptop and said, "As a big company's CEO, your scandals have never stopped. I've never seen you take it so seriously, why would you care about a trivial campus rumor now?"

Mr. K took a glance, Jared had called him over just to take down a post, titled "Exposing the Relationship between Agnes and Jared, the CEO of the Tim Group".

Chapter 44

Jared replied calmly, "None of your business, dude."

Mr. K was **very** curious "Are you feeling a bit guilty for asking me to delete others' posts, huh? You didn't sponsor that college student, did you? I get it, man. Men have their needs, and you're at that age. But if Mamie ever finds out, she'll be heartbroken"

As Mr K rambled on, Jared suddenly looked up, an icy glare in his eyes, “You got a lot of free time, huh? How about I hook you up with a gig in the tech department?”

Mr. K immediately became wary, “No way, man I’m a free bird. I can’t bear the 9 to 5 life. Have got to bounce now, but if you need me for stuff like this in the future, just holler. I’m your guy.” With that. Mr. K swiftly exited Jared’s office, laptop in tow

Jared looked at the post Mr. K had found It was a student profile.

The name on the profile was “Jenny”

Jared pondered for a moment, then sent the entire profile to Agnes.

Agnes was spacing out in the library when she received the message.

She spent a long time staring at the information Jared had sent.

Her heart felt like it was being slowly cut open with a blunt knife.

Coincidentally, she received a message from Jenny at that moment.

Jenny: “Did Elton come to see you?”

Agnes didn’t respond.

After a while, Jenny sent another message, “Please, stop bothering Elton, okay?”

Agnes was furious when she saw this message.

Agnes quickly shot back a message: “Did you post the rumour on the campus forum that I’m being sponsored?”

Jenny replied instantly, “No. Despite our recent disagreements, you’re still my best friend in my heart.”

Agnes felt sick reading this.

Agnes immediately forwarded the information Jared had sent to Jenny.

Jenny didn’t respond for a long time.

Several hours later, late into the night, Agnes received a message from Jenny..

“Let’s meet **at** the Willowbrook Junior High School playground at 3 pm tomorrow. We need **to** settle things.

The next day was a weekend. Agnes slept **in** as she didn’t have classes.

She wasn’t planning on meeting Jenny.

But Jenny had the pictures of her and Elton, and she needed to get them **back**.

Agnes wanted to know what Jenny meant by ‘settling things‘.

At 3 pm, Agnes arrived at the Willowbrook Junior High School playground on the dot.

Willowbrook Junior High School was where she and Jenny had studied.

They met in the first year of junior high and were desk mates for three years.”

Agnes didn’t want to dwell on the past. She had taken care of Jenny, who came from a poor background and was often bullied, with all her heart, only to **end** up like this.

Jenny was already there.

Jenny was wearing a long white sweater, looking pure and beautiful.

She was no longer the girl people used to make fun of, and she was no longer the Jenny Agnes knew.

When Jenny saw Agnes approaching, she went to meet her.

Jenny said, ‘Agnes, I didn’t expect you to be on time.’

Agnes replied, “What do you want from me today?”

Jenny suggested, “Agnes, it’s been a while since we’ve been back to school. Want to take a walk?”

With that, Jenny turned and walked away.

Agnes hesitated for a moment, then followed.

They went to their old classroom, Class 1 of the first year. Even though it was a holiday, the classroom door wasn’t locked. Jenny sat down at a desk, her fingers tracing the surface, “Agnes, look, this is our desk. You can still see the marks you carved.” Agnes went over. It was indeed their desk. The corner of the desk had a small inscription, Agnes and Jenny, best friends for life.” Agnes remembered carving that inscription with the tip of a compass on a summer afternoon.

Back then, Jenny was upset because she was being bullied. She cried, saying she had no friends and no one liked her. So Agnes told her she wanted to be her friend and that she would always like her.

And then she carved that inscription. Looking back, all she felt was a pang of heartache.

Jenny **gently** traced the inscription, lost in thought, “Agnes, do you know that you were **the** first person who truly treated me as a **friend**. Do you know how happy I was? I really thought we

could be friends for life.”

Agnes remained silent.

Chapter 45

Jenny continued. “Back **then**, you were like an elegant swan in my eyes. Everyone in the class, boys and girls alike, adored you. I used to wish if only I could have even a tiny bit of **your** charm.”

Something seemed to strike Jenny. Those three years in middle school were the happiest time of my life. Because of you, Agnes, I felt I wasn’t just some ordinary bird. To be friends with someone as dazzling as you made me feel like I could shine too.”

Agnes responded, “But you didn’t truly see me as a friend”

Jenny countered, “No, I really did consider you my best friend. Remember the wish box we buried under the third tree? Want to take a look?”

Of course, Agnes remembered.

Back at middle school graduation, it was popular to bury wish boxes, mostly between couples.

But Agnes secretly bought one, made a wish with Jenny, put it in the box, and buried it under the third tree outside the playground. They promised to dig it up together in ten years. Jenny found the tree and dug up the wish box, which was rusted.

Agnes felt like her heart was being tortured. Those innocent and beautiful years she seemed to flash before her eyes.

Jenny had already opened the box. Inside were two intact notes.

Jenny first read the one from Agnes: I hope to travel and eat around the world with Jenny, to be best friends forever. Jenny looked at the note and smiled slightly, “Agnes, I’m touched you wrote this.”

Agnes stepped forward to take the note, “I was just naive back then.”

Jenny handed the other note, “Want to see what I wrote back then?”

In the end, Agnes couldn’t resist and took a look.

It read: I hope my best friend Agnes will always be happy and joyful.

Something struck Agnes’ heart. Tears welled up in her eyes, ready to fall, a sour feeling in her heart.

The handwriting was beautiful, and a heart was drawn in the bottom right corner of the note;

Agnes suddenly felt a profound sadness.

Agnes asked the person in front of her, “Why, why did everything change?”

She couldn’t understand why the innocent Jenny of the past was now competing against her, framing her, scheming against her. When did their friendship become so broken?

Jenny stood up and said, “Because of Elton. Come with me.”

Agnes followed Jenny, not knowing where she was leading.

Finally, Jenny took Agnes to the basketball stands on the playground.

step by step, they climbed to the top.

This was the best spot on the basketball stands, providing a clear view of every corner of the playground.

In the past, Agnes always brought Jenny here to watch Elton's football games.

Back when they were still in **middle** school, Elton was attending a nearby **high** school, but he always liked to come here after school to play football with a bunch of friends..

Of course, it was because of Agnes.

Back then, Agnes was treated like a princess by Elton.

After every football game Elton played, Agnes would go down to bring him water, all his **friends** knew Agnes, and Elton openly called her "my girlfriend".

They would laugh and play on the playing field while Jenny watched from the basketball stands from a distance.

Chapter 46

Jenny seemed lost in thought, reminiscing. "When we graduated from middle school, Elton threw you a prom. You invited me. I told you **I** didn't have a dress or heels. You took me to your closet and told me to pick **out** anything I liked. You helped me pick a white dress and a pair of pink heels. I felt like a princess, just like you, living in a castle. I was so **excited** to go to your prom that day"

Agnes remembered that day but also that **Jenny** didn't show up

Agnes said. "That day, you told me you weren't feeling well, so you didn't come."

Jenny said, “I was so excited that I went early. The venue was empty, except for Elton’s setting up. I had seen him many times over the three years, but that was the first time I had ever seen him up close. He was in a suit and looked like a prince from a fairy tale”

Agnes said, “So you fell for him at first sight, betrayed our friendship just to get closer to him?”

Jenny laughed, “Do you know the first thing Elton said to me?”

Agnes was silent

Jenny said. “When he saw me, he walked over. I remember the anticipation: I knew he was your boy friend. I didn’t have any inappropriate thoughts. I thought, since I was your best friend, I could be his friend too. But when he approached me, he frowned at me, then asked why I was wearing your clothes and shoes.”

Red faced, Jenny had replied, “Agnes lent them to me.”

Without missing a beat, Elton said, “Are you some kind of beggar? Don’t you have your own clothes? These shoes are a graduation gift I worked two months to buy for Agnes. You think you’re worthy of wearing them?”

The humiliation from that day still haunted Jenny.

Jenny said, ‘Agnes, do you know how it feels? It’s like Cinderella turning back into a frog after midnight. That’s when I knew we were from different worlds. You were living in the clouds, and I was stuck in the mud/Even when you reached **out** to help me, it only made me see more clearly my own inadequacies. That’s when I swore that one day, I would **reach the** top. And

I’ve done it.”

There was a hint of pride in Jenny's eyes, "Can you imagine what it's like when Elton sleeps next to me? When the man who once looked down on me is having sex with me, it's the greatest satisfaction. I feel like all my past humiliation have been vindicated. Even I'm the first... the first woman he's ever been with!"

Agnes said, "Let's got talk about this. I don't know what Elton said to you back then, but even if he did, it doesn't justify your actions. You care too much about what others **think**, and you're afraid of being looked down upon. But the freedom of your soul is more important than others' opinions."

"Agnes, it's easy for you to say that. You've had a privileged life. You don't know what it's like to struggle. Have you ever had to deal with the teacher coming to your house because you couldn't pay your tuition? Have you ever been the kid with patches on clothes while everyone else was talking about limited-edition sneakers? Have you ever had nothing but bread and cold water for lunch for an entire semester? You don't know what it's like, so you have no right **to** judge me!"

Chapter 47

Agnes said. "**Maybe I** haven't **been** through all that, **but I know even if I had nothing**, I wouldn't stoop that low."

Jenny scoffed, 'Agnes, **I'm** not as noble as **you**, **but you can't deny it**. I have a better shot at success. For people like us who grew **up** at the bottom, being **kind** only gets us kicked around. It's useless. If I didn't do this, how could I ever stand beside Elton, marry into a rich family, and get what I want?"

Agnes suddenly found the conversation tedious

She shrugged, “We **don’t** have much to talk about anymore, you have your values, and that’s cool. You live your life. I’ll live mine. You will marry into a rich family soon, and become a high–class lady”

Jenny laughed, “**But**, Agnes, I think I’ll need your help to marry into wealth.”

Agnes replied, “I’m incapable of that Don’t you already have Elton’s baby?”

Jenny admitted. This baby might get me through the doors **of** the Taylor family, but it won’t be enough to keep Elton. Only when he’s completely done with you will he really see me. Agnes, I told you today’s meetup was to end things once and for all, don’t blame me, blame yourself for being too naive.”

Agnes was left stunned.

Suddenly, Jenny fell backwards.

They were sitting in the basketball stands. The stairs were right next to them.

Jenny suddenly leaned back and then fell onto the stairs. A scream echoed as she tumbled down the steps.

Everything happened so fast. Agnes had no idea what was going on.

But as Jenny hit the ground, she screamed, “My baby! Agnes, why did you kill my baby, my baby..

A feeling of unease washed over Agnes.

Just as she expected, someone rushed over from afar. It was Elton.

Jenny was rolling on the ground, clutching her stomach, her white sweater stained red.

She kept repeating, “Agnes, why **did** you kill my baby? Why did you kill my baby?”

Agnes was shaking, but her mind was unusually clear.

She finally understood what Jenny meant by ‘ending things. She probably arranged for Elton **to** be here, timing and location all premeditated, just so he could witness this scene. Jenny’s scheming was frightening, but Agnes never imagined she would use her own child as a pawn. It was utterly ruthless.

Elton had already rushed over. Jenny was pale with a tear-streaked face and bloodied hands. She gripped Elton’s hand tightly, “Elton, our baby, Agnes tried to hurt our baby. Get me to the hospital, quick, take me to the hospital.”

Elton immediately scooped up Jenny, didn’t say a word, only glanced at Agnes, who was still on the platform, and quickly left with Jenny.

Agnes stood in place for **a** long time until the sun gradually set and night fell.

When Agnes finally walked down from the platform, her legs were numb.

In the end, Agnes went to Hope Hospital.

Hope Hospital was the closest to Willowbrook Middle School. Elton must have taken Jenny there.

Chapter 48

Once Agnes **reached** Hope Hospital, she asked around a bit and soon found **Jenny’s** ward Agnes headed over

She didn’t know why, but she was strangely calm at the moment.

She **wasn’t** even sure why she came here.

The door to the ward was open, and heart-wrenching sobs could be heard from **inside**

When Agnes stood at the door, she saw Jenny, Elton, and folks from the Taylor family.

Everyone was taken aback when they saw Agnes

Jenny picked up a pillow and threw it at the doorway. “Agnes, you criminal! Why did you kill my child! Why did you kill mine and Elton’s child!” Jenny’s voice was hoarse. She even tried to jump off the bed to attack but ended up tumbling to the ground instead.

Sarah stepped forward, “Calm down, will you? Look at your self.” She was Elton’s mom.

Sarah never liked Jenny She nearly fainted when she found out the girl was pregnant. But after all, it was Elton’s child, her grandchild.

But now, the child was lost. Looking at Jenny’s state, she felt pity

A nurse quickly helped Jenny back onto the bed.

Agnes walked in calmly.

Hancock Taylor, Elton’s father, sighed, “Agnes, why are you being so foolish? I know Elton did you wrong, but regardless, it was a new life for our Taylor family. This really breaks our

hearts.”

Agnes responded calmly, “I didn’t push her.”

Upon hearing this, Jenny yelled, “Agnes, are you still trying to deny it? Are you saying I purposely fell down the stairs to frame you? Elton saw it with his own eyes.”

Agnes really admired Jenny’s inner strength.

She did purposely fall to frame her, but no one would believe that since she was gambling with a life, even her own.

But still, Agnes said, “You know the truth. I won’t admit to something I didn’t do.”

Jenny was crying, “Agnes, I know you hate me, but you can’t do something like this. You pushed me down the stairs, you made me lose my child, and you still won’t admit your wrongdoings and want to frame me.”

Jenny pulled a recorder from under her pillow, “I’m a journalism major, so I always carry a recorder. I unintentionally recorded this. You’ll see, the Agnes you think you know is not as innocent and kind as you thought. You’ve been fooled by her seemingly kind exterior.”

Jenny hit play on the recorder.

Jenny’s voice was heard from the recorder: “Agnes, I’m sorry about Elton. I don’t want to lose **you as** a friend. Can you forgive me just this once? Can we still be as good as we were before?”

Then came Agnes’s voice, “If you want my forgiveness, then abort your child with Elton. Break up with him. Then we can be as good as before. What do you say?”

This recording was played several times before Jenny finally turned it off, already crying her eyes out, “Agnes, I just fell in love with Elton. What did I do wrong? I always thought of you as my best friend, but why did you do this **to** me. Why did you kill my child?”

Chapter 49

Jenny pulled a face of injustice and said to everyone, “**You** all heard it. That was recorded a month ago. Agnes has been trying to make me get **rid of the** baby, but I never thought she would do something so outrageous. Agnes, how could you be so heartless, you criminal...”

Agnes started to tremble uncontrollably again.

This deep-seated fear was surging from within her.

The recording was indeed from Agnes, but at the time, she knew Jenny’s intentions and said it casually, trying to shake off Jenny’s pestering

Agnes never thought Jenny would be so prepared. She must have seen this day coming from back then.

Agnes thought the person in front of her was too horrifying.

She wanted to say something, but her throat felt like it was blocked by something, and she couldn't say a word.

Hancock Taylor and Sarah looked at Agnes with shock and disappointment.

Jenny's crying echoed in the ward as she kept saying, "Agnes, why did you want to kill my and Elton's child? Agnes, I won't let you off. I will make you pay, you criminal..."

Hancock Taylor sighed and walked over to Elton, who had been silent.

Hancock Taylor asked, "This mess happened because of you. What are you going to do now?"

Elton hadn't really looked at Agnes from start to finish. Now, **he** finally spoke, "I will get engaged to Jenny."

Elton's answer surprised everyone.

Sarah was the first to react, "Have you lost your mind? She doesn't have your child anymore, and you still want to get engaged to her? We, the Taylor family, are the upper class of Willowbrook Town. Your future marriage should be well-matched. You can't be so reckless."

Elton firmly said, "I will get engaged to Jenny as soon as possible, then study abroad. Haven't **you** always wanted me to study business management in the US? I will take Jenny with me. Elton was resolute.

Sarah had never seen her son so desolate.

Perhaps he was too heartbroken. After all, it was his child.

And everything was triggered by Agnes, the girl Elton had liked since he was a kid.

Agnes didn't know how she walked out of the hospital.

But when she was outside, she felt like she had lost her soul.

She remembered Elton's last words to her, "Agnes, from now on, I owe you nothing, and neither does Jenny. From now on, we're strangers."

After Elton said this, Agnes turned around and left.

Her face was expressionless, but her heart was twitching, feeling somewhat numb.

Just as Agnes stepped out, her phone rang.

It was a call from Jared. But Agnes didn't want to pick up.

Agnes aimlessly wandered on the sidewalk alone, not knowing where to go.

Finally, she stopped outside a park.

Agnes sat on a bench by the road, her mind blank.

But her heart felt like it was being constantly cut by a knife. This dull pain made her limbs feel icy cold.

Agnes didn't know how long she sat on the bench until Jared appeared before her.

Chapter 50

Jared stepped **out** of his car and walked over to Agnes, leisurely taking off his trench coat and draping it over Agnes' shoulders. Then he sat down beside Agnes, his voice low

and slow, “Why didn’t you answer your phone? Do you know how worried I was?”
Agnes kept her head down, not saying a word.

Jared reached out and held Agnes’ hand

His palm was dry and warm Jared asked, “What had happened? Can you tell me about it?”

Agnes didn’t know where to start and remained silent.

Suddenly, Jared pulled Agnes into his arms, “No matter what happened, I’m here for you. Even if the world collapses, I’ll protect you.”

Hearing this, Agnes couldn’t hold back her tears.

When Mr. Taylor expressed his disappointment, she didn’t cry. When Jenny framed her, she didn’t cry. When Elton said he wanted to cut ties, Agnes didn’t cry either.

But when Jared said he would protect her, Agnes burst into tears.

Jared was taken aback, patting Agnes’ back like he was comforting a child, continuously asking her what happened.

Agnes cried for a long time, finally sobbing out the whole story to Jared.

Upon hearing this, Jared’s brows furrowed.

Agnes said, “I really didn’t push her. I don’t care about her framing me, but what saddens me is that the tiny life was innocent but couldn’t come into this world because of me...”

Jared said, “Agnes, punishing yourself for others’ mistakes is the dumbest thing. Jenny is a real villain, even hurting herself. Don’t feel bad about this, leave it to me. I’ll find a way to prove your innocence.”

Agnes suddenly stopped crying, looking at Jared, “You believe me?”

Jared’s voice was deep and serious, “Of course, I believe you.”

“Why?”

“No reason.”

For some reason, just because of Jared's words, Agnes felt less upset.

Jared said, "Stay away from Jenny for a while. Leave the rest to me. Trust me, I'll make her pay."

Whether Jared was comforting her or not, Agnes felt warmth in her heart:

Agnes nodded.

Jared said, "Let's go home. What do you want to eat? I'll cook for you.."

Jared's tone was like asking **a** child if they wanted candy.

Agnes blurted out, "I want seafood cream pasta."

Jared laughed, "I'll make pasta for you when we get home."

Agnes didn't expect Jared to actually know how to make pasta, and it was delicious, **up to** a professional chef's standard.

Agnes finished two plates of pasta in **one** go, almost overeating.

Jared didn't move a muscle, watching Agnes eat her pasta with a hint of a smile.

Finally, Agnes patted her stomach and said, "How do you even know how to make seafood cream pasta? Jared, is there anything you don't know?"

Admiration for Jared shone in Agnes' eyes, which made Jared feel good.

Jared laughed and asked, "Are you full?"

Agnes nodded vigorously.

"Do you feel better?"

Again, Agnes nodded hard, "There's nothing a good meal can't fix in this world."

Jared smiled at her.

Then he commanded, "Go wash the dishes."

Agnes naturally got up and started to clear the table. After a few steps, she suddenly turned around and asked, “Why aren’t you washing?”

Isn’t he supposed to make her happy? Why is he making her do chores?

Jared casually replied, “Have you ever seen a professional chef wash dishes?”

Agnes found his reasoning sound, so she turned around and went into the kitchen to wash the dishes.

In reality, Agnes still felt really upset. The sight of Jenny falling down the stairs and her clothes stained with blood kept flashing in her mind.

But having something to do always makes things a **bit** better.