

The Rewritten Love A Second Beginning Chapter 71 - 100

Chapter 71

Zach's phone started to vibrate in the quiet wardroom. He took the device out of his pocket and saw that it was Hayson. He then went out of the room to answer the call.

"Father..." "Madelyn got into trouble at school. Go see what's going on!" Hayson sounded a little angry. "Madelyn? Okay... Got it." Zach's tone was soft, but his face was solemn. After Hayson hung up the phone, Zach realized he couldn't leave Jadie alone at the hospital, so he called Kevin.

"Mr. Jardin," said Kevin as soon as he picked up.

"How much longer until you're done with work?" Zach asked.

"The meeting just ended," Kevin replied.

"Go to Vetrocloud High School right this instant."

"Did Ms. Jent get into trouble again?"

"Bring her back to the apartment once you've sorted everything out."

"Alright, Mr. Jardin."

"This is not the first time Ms. Jent has gotten into a mess, but she's really being very inconsiderate here. Why would she cause trouble in school this time? Especially with the daughters of three big companies' CEOs. We haven't even finalized the contracts with these companies yet, and it seems like we will never be able to do that now. She got into a fight with the daughter of another company's CEO the other day because of a dress, and a multi-million-dollar deal was called off as a result. When will Ms. Jent stop worrying Mr. Jent and Mr. Jardin? Mr. Jardin always has to help clean up her mess.'

As Kevin thought about it, he quickly rushed to Ventrocloud High School. He found the conference room next to the principal's office with ease. The door to the room was made of transparent glass, allowing Kevin to see what was going on inside. However, the room was soundproof, so he could not hear what they were saying.

Kevin had not expected to see such an exciting scene as soon as he entered the room. Madelyn had climbed onto the conference table and was pulling another girl's hair. Kevin took a deep breath of cold air and thought, 'How much effort will Mr. Jardin have to put in this time to appease the other party's father?'

'If Mr. Jent had come down here personally and saw this, Ms. Jent would be dead.'

Suddenly, the elevator door opened to reveal a teenager sitting in wheelchair. He pushed his way out of the elevator as several men in black suits carrying briefcases followed him into the principal's office. Kevin took a quick glance and realized that the person looked somewhat familiar.

Half of Madelyn's face was swollen at that time, but she still had a fierce gaze in her eyes. Though, it did not seem to add to her case. "Say it! Say it again and you'd best believe I'll go over and hit you!"

Michelle cried and hugged the lady next to her, saying, "Mom, look at her! Look at my face, my hair... Look at what she's done! Do something, Mom. Please... You must do something. about her!"

Kevin pushed the door open and entered the conference room. There were around seven or eight people trying to hold Madelyn back. She was acting like a lunatic at that point.

"Excuse me, everyone," Kevin said out loud.

“I thought someone else would be here. Where’s Hayson Jent, Kevin? His daughter beat my daughter up, and you’re the one who showed up? Are we unworthy of him coming down here in person?”

“It’s not like that, Madam. I was asked to come and solve the issue. I would like to apologize on behalf of Ms. Jent’s behavior. Mr. Jent said we would try our best to compensate for everything that had happened.”

Kevin noticed that Madelyn had a severe bloody scratch on her face and messy hair. However, the three other girls were not in any better condition.

Zach usually showed up when Madelyn got into trouble, but this time, Kevin was the one who came. ‘He must be with Jadie right now,’ thought Madelyn. ‘She got hurt, after all. Zach must be heartbroken.’

“Compensate? How? With money? And you said Hayson cared about what happened? Hah. Jent Corporation is a shitty company. Tell Mr. Jent that if he doesn’t come over right now and apologize to me while kneeling on the ground, I’ll tell my husband to call off the deal between our companies. I recall having Jent Corporation take on one of our projects, but I assure you, anyone can do it.” Michelle’s mother sneered.

“Please calm down, Mrs. Linney. Ms. Linney and Ms. Jent are still kids. It’s normal for friends to fight with each other. I don’t think we should let this affect our business relationship and disrupt the harmonious bond between the two companies,” said Kevin.

The woman slammed her hand on the table and said, “I’m telling you right now that there’s no harmonious bond anymore. Call Hayson and have him come down here!”

“No one wants to befriend a dirty, uneducated person like her! Jent Corporation is literally run by a bumpkin! Who the hell do you think you are, Madelyn? How dare you hit me? Didn’t your father teach you not to pick fights? I’ll never forgive you, even if you

bow down to me and apologize. And you. You're just the Jent family's lackey. Who are you to speak to us like that?" Michelle added.

Kevin pushed his glasses up with his finger and said, "Please watch your language, Ms. Linney.

Michelle smiled disdainfully. "What? Am I wrong? You're just a mutt in the Jent family!"

Just as she said those words, everyone saw a shoe fly across the room and hit Michelle directly

in the face.

"AH-"

"Michelle-"

"Madelyn Jent!"

Everything started to get out of control again.

Kevin stared blankly ahead as someone yanked down his shoulder. Madelyn had found a golf club out of nowhere and walked up to him while missing one of her shoes.

Michelle wanted to go up to her and fight back, but she got scared after seeing Madelyn holding the golf club.

Madelyn pointed the club at her with her red lips slightly curved upward. "You claim to be the young lady of a powerful family, yet the words that come out of your mouth are so foul. Do you have no shame?" she said.

Several teachers who were there to keep the situation calm were stunned when they heard what Madelyn said. It took them a while to react. “What are you doing, Ms. Jent? This is a school. We have rules here. How dare you do something like that in front of us. Are you trying to get yourself expelled?” One of the teachers immediately said.

Madelyn decided to go all out now that the matter had come to this. Though, beneath her strong appearance was a timid little girl. Her legs were trembling under her skirt.

Mrs. Linney grabbed the golf club in Madelyn’s hand, stepped forward, and slapped her in the face. “That’s for hitting my daughter. What makes you think a lowly thing like you can even think of touching her?”

Madelyn stumbled to the side with half of her face red and swollen. The slap sounded heavy. Kevin had wanted to block the blow, but it was too late.

The young lady of the Jent family covered half her face with her hand. It was numb. “So what if I’m a dirty low life? If I remember correctly, Mrs. Linney, you hit someone when you were drunk driving, causing him to be paralyzed in the lower body. And a five-year-old died because of you. Do you remember that?” she said in a cold voice.

Mrs. Linney’s expression changed drastically upon hearing that. Her expression turned as pale as a ghost.

Chapter 73

The people listening on the sidelines seemed to have learned a shocking secret, and the atmosphere in the conference room became ominous. Even Michelle could not believe her ears. “Don’t spew baseless nonsense, Madelyn.”

Madelyn looked at her and everyone’s expressions indifferently.

Both the Lampreys and the Luperts did not dare to say a word.

“Would you like me to go into more detail?” Madelyn asked.

“Shut up! That’s enough! How dare you threaten me, Madelyn? How much did Hayson tell you?!” Mrs. Linney suddenly exclaimed.

“Oh God, it’s true!” Jenny said as she covered her mouth. Her mom also covered her mouth and shot her a fierce glance.

The Linney family was more powerful than the other two of the three families present. They were just there for support.

Michelle looked at the person beside her in disbelief and said, “Mom, why don’t I know about this? Is it true that a child died? How did you resolve this matter? Why would you drive while you were drunk, Mom? I... I don’t believe it... She must be lying...”

Michelle could not accept the fact that her mother, who loved her the most, had killed someone while driving under the influence. ‘It’s against the law!’ she thought.

Madelyn did not say a word. Instead, she turned to Jenny’s mother and said, “And you, Mrs. Lupert... Three years ago, your husband-

“Okay, Madelyn. That’s enough. I apologize for my daughter’s actions and behavior toward you,” Mrs. Lupert said as she took off her jade bracelet and stuffed it into Madelyn’s hand. Here. I’m sorry.”

“Sorry, everyone. We have to go. Jenny is not feeling well today, so I have to take her home.”

Jenny was then dragged away by her mother without knowing why. Her mind was blank.

‘Did

Mom and Dad...’

Mrs. Lamprey was terrified that Madelyn would start revealing her secrets after the Luperts left, so she said a few words and took Lorrie home. Before they left, she gave Madelyn her Patek Philippe watch.

“Mom, say something! Is what Madelyn said true?” Michelle questioned the person next to her with a trembling voice.

There was a cold look in the woman’s eyes with a hint of fear as she clenched her teeth and said, “Well done, Madelyn.”

After that, she grabbed her purse and walked away in a daze.

Only three teachers were left in the conference room at that time. When the door closed, Madelyn let go of the golf club in her hand and fell to the floor. She sobbed while she wiped her tears away, trying to not let anyone hear her cries.

Kevin looked at the trembling girl and reached out, wanting to comfort her, but he did not.

‘Who knew that Madelyn, who has never been afraid of anything, would have a moment of weakness?’

That was the first time Kevin had seen Madelyn defend someone and cry.

‘And I thought she didn’t have a heart...’

Chapter 74

Ethan’s assistant entered the principal’s office and told them everything that had happened in the conference room, word for word. Everyone except for Madelyn was there. “...And that’s what happened, Mr. Arnold.”

Ethan nodded, and his assistant stepped aside. Suddenly, the atmosphere became cold. The girls' mothers sat on the couch, not daring to speak. Ethan's aura was overwhelming. The invisible force was pressuring everyone present. Even the air felt different.

"I want to see signatures on that contract in half an hour."

"Yes, Mr. Arnold," said Leyton-Ethan's new assistant.

The very moment he had stepped out of the house, Ethan had decided to take back what was rightfully his.

'It's the only way I can protect her.'

No one dared to speak at that time. The women did not know why Ethan would want to meet them, especially since they were not in charge of their husbands' companies.

"Mr. Arnold, I have no say in the company's business, but... May I know why you're terminating the contract?" One of the women asked in a weak voice.

"That's not a question you should be asking," Ethan said coldly while he left the room. His wheelchair was wired with newly developed technology that could move on its own with the click of a button.

Ethan was supposed to be in the hospital getting surgery, but when he found out that Madelyn was being bullied, he rushed to the school without much thought.

Outside the office, Ethan heard a girl crying. He silently looked at the person who had tears streaming down her cheeks. The conference room door was open, and he wheeled himself in without Madelyn noticing.

"Why are you crying?" he asked, his tone extraordinarily soft.

Madelyn sniffled as her sobs came to an abrupt halt. Teardrops were hanging from her long eyelashes, and her eyes were wet. She was kneeling on the ground as she stared blankly at the person who just came into the room.

"W-What are you doing here?" Madelyn wiped her tears on her sleeves and asked.

Her nose was red, and her voice sounded hoarse. She was the only one left in the room. All the teachers had left, and Kevin had gone out to answer a call.

“I was just passing through,” Ethan narrowed his eyes and said. He saw the bruise on Madelyn’s face and frowned. “Does it hurt?”

Madelyn pursed her lips and nodded as tears fell from her lashes. “It does.”

“Are you okay?” Ethan asked with a hint of pain in his voice.

Madelyn was actually feeling better, but when Ethan asked her the question, she could not help but feel aggrieved.

‘Why is my life so difficult?’ she thought, and droplets of tears began to fall once more.

Ethan was wearing a black shirt and a pair of suit pants today. His sleeves were half up, revealing a mysterious tattoo on his arm. Madelyn had never seen that tattoo before. It covered his entire limb, including his hand and fingers. Ethan reached out to touch Madelyn’s face with that cold bony hand, wiping her tears away with his thumb.

Madelyn could not take it anymore. She was not as strong and brave as she had imagined herself to be. She envied Michelle and the others for having mothers who cared for them when things went wrong and fathers who loved them when they got home.

‘Why don’t I have what they have? Mom died at an early age, and my father... Well, Father’s never really liked me. Even his words of concern are fake. I have a brother... But he’s never there for me. I’m all alone...’

Meanwhile, Kevin was talking to Zach on the phone. Zach had taken Jadie home and had his men pack her things from school to go. He began to deal with Madelyn’s situation as soon as Jadie fell asleep.

“M-Ms. Jent... Why don’t I give the phone to her, Mr. Jardin? Maybe you can try talking to her,” Kevin said, distressed.

Zach was not in the mood to comfort Madelyn, so he said in an icy tone, “Once everything’s settled, no need to bring her here. Just send her to the Jent residence.”

Chapter 75

“Yes, sir...”

Kevin did not hang up the call, putting the phone directly into his pocket.

On the other end of the call, Zach walked to the kitchen and poured himself a glass of water. Just as he was about to hang up, the sound of Madelyn crying suddenly came from the phone.

‘So, there was another man besides her...’ he mused.

“No one will bully you anymore... Stop crying...”

Ethan’s embrace was warm.

And her heart too, became to warm up as well.

He was the first person to speak such comforting words to her.

Zach would never comfort her in her times of sorrow and would only complain that her crying upset him. He would always tell her to go somewhere else if she wanted to cry.

“Can I lean on you for a bit?”

Madelyn’s voice trembled.

Ethan smiled a little as he opened his arms to her. “Any time, any day. It’d be my pleasure.”

So, when Kevin walked in, he saw Madelyn crying in another man’s arms.

This left him stunned and confused. He was at a loss for what to do in such an awkward situation.

On his end, Zach’s expression darkened as he listened to Madelyn crying.

Ointment was applied onto her face and the medicine bag, which Ethan had bought, was still

in her hands.

They had only met for the third time, and she was already hugging him and crying in his arms. She even soaked his shirt, and even more embarrassingly, her snot was on it too.

Aside from this, Madelyn also knew that she would not escape a beating this time, so...

She decided to have Kevin drive her around a bit.

Once she was in the car, she asked, "Do you think my father knows about this?"

Kevin looked at the person behind him and nodded. "You can tell him directly if you feel aggrieved. On the surface, he might not seem to care, but he'll definitely help you deal with this in secret."

Madelyn sat in the car as she looked at the sea view. They were now at the border between

Ventropolis and Brightpearl.

The painting in her room was of this exact scene. It had been painted by her mother.

"... Let's not add on to his troubles. He's already so busy."

"Kevin, when we get home later, can you just help to restrain Father a little...?" Madelyn bit her lips.

Kevin gritted his teeth and sighed. "I'll do my best."

"Sigh... forget it... Whatever happens, happens. It's all because of me anyway. Kevin... let's go back."

"Alright."

Along the way, Madelyn saw an ice cream truck and she got Kevin to stop and get two ice cream cones.

She gave him the blueberry flavored one while she kept the strawberry for herself...

She was a girl after all, so it was no loss if she got something nice to eat before she got punished.

By the time they returned to the Southern Haven Villas, it was already dark.

She had asked for a day off from cram school today.

After entering the door, Madelyn held her bag and instantly caught whiff of the scent of smoldering cinders the moment she stepped in.

Everyone else was seated on the dining table.

Madelyn then entered, hiding behind Kevin.

Seeing this standoff, Kevin had goosebumps all over. "Mr. Jent, sir, the matter is settled. Ms. Jent knows that she's in the wrong and has apologized to all of the madams."

Hayson looked at Madelyn through Kevin and said, "Thanks for the trouble. You may go back."

"Will do, Mr. Jent." As he turned to leave, Kevin gave Madelyn a wink, as if to say, 'Prepare yourself'.

Hayson did not even bother to look at her as he picked up his cutlery and started eating. "Go down to the study and kneel on the ground."

Madelyn looked down. “Yes, Father.”

Rosario gave Madelyn a worried look. It was beyond her ability to help Madelyn this time.

Chapter 76

Madelyn knelt on the cold white ceramic tile as the floor glimmered. She looked at the scratching scar on her face and gently stroked her hand over it, feeling a tingling sting.

The study was awash with the smell of sandalwood and her nose felt a little uncomfortable.

At this moment, she heard the sound of approaching footsteps and she immediately knelt straight up and clutched her clothes tightly. She knew what was coming for her next.

Soon, the door was opened as Hayson walked in with Zach and Jadie following behind.

“Do you know what you’ve done wrong today?” Hayson walked past Madelyn and lit candle in prayer.

up

Madelyn lowered her head as Zach’s silhouette enveloped her by the corner of the atmosphere in the study was oppressive and made her breathless.

gaze.

The

She said meekly. “I shouldn’t quarrel with my classmates.”

Hayson took the cane down from the wall and walked toward Madelyn as he faced the cane

toward her.

Madelyn was trembling in fear and as she heard Hayson's voice from above. "Nine million from the three agreements, and including my own money, thirteen million. Do you think I should use discipline on you or not, Madelyn?"

Jadie, who was standing behind Zach, was so terrified that she took a few steps behind him.

"Yes, everything's my fault. I was unable to control my emotions; I shouldn't have caused trouble like that. You're right to discipline me, Father!"

"Turn around."

Madelyn shifted around. There was no one to save her now. 'Zach?'

She had never counted on him to help her.

Hayson raised the cane up high and swung down with a powerful stroke. The first strike sent a general numbness across Madelyn's back. She could not feel the pain at first, but when the second strike landed, she could feel the skin of her back tearing apart, then came the third,

fourth...

Madelyn held on and did not cry in pain, nor did she allowed a tear to be shed...

She had already long shed all of those worthless tears away.

By the twenty-third stroke, Madelyn could no longer feel any pain.

Thirteen million...

This amount of money was worth more than a person's life in Hayson's eyes. She had seen his will and all of the inheritances were to be given to Zach.

Forty-two strokes and Madelyn's back showed several blood marks as she laid on the ground and fainted from the pain. Yet, the very same pain woke her up again.

Jadie held tightly onto Zach's hand, lowering her head and not daring to look.

At this very moment, Hayson's phone on the table rang as his raised hand stopped. Zach brought the phone over for Hayson to answer, and he looked at the phone number before answering the call by habit.

It was an unknown number. He then pressed to answer. "Hello? Who's on the line?"

"The Arnold Corporation..."

"Yes, I'll definitely make it to the appointment on time."

Hayson gave Madelyn, who was on the ground, a conflicted look. "That's enough for now. Go back. Remember to watch your mouth, and remember what you should and shouldn't say... If I ever learn of you speaking about this to others, I'll make sure you won't be able to speak for the rest of your life."

Madelyn placed her hand on the ground as she got up with much difficulty before turning around. "Yes, understood."

The words she shouldn't speak were obviously those words that would give others leverage over him.

It was because Madelyn blurted out those words in a fit of anger.

She too had considered the consequences and forty-plus strokes were already her limit.

Chapter 77

Madelyn walked out of the study and Rosario, who was waiting outside, immediately walked over when she saw someone came out from the room. "Madelyn... How are you holding up?"

Madelyn's face was rather pale. "I... I'm fine. Don't worry about me, Rosario. Do you still have any painkillers?" Her voice was getting weaker and weaker, and as the last words left her mouth, Madelyn fainted altogether.

Jasmine, who was hiding in a corner, saw this scene, and when she saw Madelyn faint, she did

not step forward but instead turned and went downstairs.

She saw the wounds on Madelyn's back. 'Isn't she his own daughter?'

'Why did he beat her like that?'

By the time Madelyn woke up the next day, it was already noon.

She was lying flat on her stomach, and she could feel a chill on her back. When she saw her back exposed, Madelyn immediately pulled the blanket over herself, but it was quickly pulled away by someone else.

"Don't move. Unless you want me to reapply the ointment."

Madelyn felt something was wrong as she looked down at her chest. Instead of listening to him, she shrunk into a ball fearfully as she covered herself up with the blanket and sat up. This is my room! Who allowed you to come in here!?"

This was the first time she had spoken to him with such a furious tone.

Zach was holding a tube of ointment and there was still some ointment left on his hand. What, you're not calling me brother anymore?"

"Zach, I'm your little sister! And I'm naked now! How can you do this!"

'He must've seen it! He must've seen it!'

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The clock on the wall showed it was twelve noon and Rosario would go to the market to sell vegetables at this hour while Hayson would most likely be out socializing or on a business trip. It was not the weekend today and no one was at home, so that was why he dared to do as he pleased!

"Madelyn, is this how you speak to me now?"

She immediately retorted out of reflex. "So what? I'm no longer a little girl, so please, can you NOT enter my room just as you like?"

Zach frowned with displeasure, his eyes cold. He gave Madelyn a glance before turning around and leaving the room.

Just as he stepped out, he closed the door.

Madelyn immediately grabbed the pajamas beside her and put it on.

'What right does he have to be so brazen? Isn't he supposed to be a one-woman man?' Doesn't he only have Jadie in his eyes? Why did he needed to take off my clothes and break into my room again under the guise of applying the ointment?'

Who knew what sort of things he could have done while she was asleep!

Zach was walking downstairs just as Rosario came back. "Mr. Jardin? Did you just come out from Madelyn's room?"

Zach gave out a cold, distant aura, his face icy as he went downstairs without even paying her any regard. Rosario seemed to have noticed something as she hurried over and opened the

door.

The person inside suffered another shock as she thought Zach was back again.

When she saw it was Rosario, Madelyn was instantly relieved.

“Madelyn, did Mr. Jardin come in earlier? He didn’t see anything, right?”

Madelyn was puzzled. “What’s the matter, Rosario?”

Rosario then replied, “Before I left for the market, I applied the ointment on your back and took your clothes off. I thought no one would come so I didn’t put it back on. Mr. Jardin didn’t see anything, right?”

“Mr. Jardin’s face looked rather grim when he was coming downstairs. Did you say anything to him?”

Madelyn thought to herself, ‘What?! It seems like there’s been a serious misunderstanding!’

Chapter 78

Not long after Zach left, Jasmine brought in some pastries. She took a look at Madelyn’s wounds and said some words of concern before leaving.

Even after taking the painkillers, Madelyn was still in pain and still could not sleep at night.

She was woken up by a nightmare in the middle of the night. She was sweating profusely and since she was unable to move or turn around, her drowsiness was soon lost.

With the passing of time, her chest started to hurt badly, so she used a pillow to cushion it.

She was only eighteen, and her chest growing too big was not a good thing.

When she looked at the time, it was only half past three.

Madelyn woke up to go to the bathroom and unbuttoned her pajamas. As she looked at the crisscrossing wounds on her body, it was much better than before aside from a few spots that were still swollen red.

She was sweating so much and with the summer heat, her entire body was sticky, so she took a simple bath, making sure to avoid getting her wounds wet.

After changing into another set of pajamas, she walked to the balcony to get some cold air.

There were only a few stars out that night and the moon was particularly bright.

The lights on the third floor of the villa opposite were turned off, and Madelyn felt that she had not seen him for a long time now.

It was just used to be a vague silhouette.

She had no idea where he had gone.

She just hoped that he would not do something stupid again.

In the SereneCare Hospital, the operation had been completed after going on for six hours straight.

Ethan was still under anesthesia and was still in a coma, his legs bandaged with gauze.

“Doctor, how is the young master doing?” George asked.

The primary doctor said, “Based on his current condition, the operation has been very successful, but we cannot discount any outlying post-operation risks, so we need to keep him in the hospital for a while for some further observation.”

“Then...how long will he need to recover?”

“It’ll be based on the patient’s physical condition. It may take three, five, or even ten years for it to fully heal. With that lengthy recovery time, I would not discount the possibility of any

sequela. After all, considering how long the delay in treatment has been, a successful operation is already a miracle in itself.”

“Thank you, doctor!”

“Don’t mention it. Just doing my job.”

George quickly made a phone call.

The call quickly connected.

“Ma’am, young master’s operation is a success.”

“Alright, take care of him in the hospital. I’ll visit after the banquet tomorrow. Remember to

give him whatever he wants, and make sure he doesn’t lose his temper if at all possible.”

“Yes, ma’am!”

After getting his orders, George hung up the call.

After returning to the VIP ward, the person in the ward had awakened as Ethan, dressed in hospital garb, placed his hand on his chest, as if he had just woken up.

“You’re awake, young master? Do you feel any discomfort?”

Ethan said with a low and weak voice. “I’m fine. You can go back. Thank you.”

“Rest well, young master. I’ll come visit again tomorrow.”

“Yeah.”

After he left, Ethan grabbed his mobile phone from under the pillow.

He then opened up his contacts.

Their chat log was still at the same stage last week.

He thought that she would be asleep by now and back then, he would not have disturbed her at this hour. But now... Ethan could not help but send her a message.

[What’s up...?]

Madelyn, who was lying on the chair and had almost fallen asleep was immediately woken up by the sudden notification sound.

She picked up her phone and squinted as she looked at the message and to her surprise, it was from Ethan.

She then subconsciously looked at the villa opposite her.

She then replied. [Dreaming]

As she sent the message, Madelyn asked, (You're not at home today?)

Ethan responded. [Yeah, I'm at the hospital for something. Why aren't you asleep yet?]

[I can't sleep, so I'm just sitting on the chair for a while. Why are you in the hospital? Feeling unwell?]

[It's nothing. Just an ordinary cold.]

Chapter 79

Madelyn curled her legs up as the light from the phone screen reflected in her eyes, looking at the words not knowing what to say to him.

She then sent him some words of concern. [Since you caught a cold, rest up. Remember to stay hydrated and take your medications on time.]

[Will do.]

[Sleep early then. Good night]

[Good night.]

Now that she looked back, she had nothing to meet Ethan for.

From the very beginning, she simply wanted to save him and did not plan to have much more interaction with him.

It was because... she had always planned to leave this place and start a new life in another.

Perhaps she would never return to this place again.

It was only by leaving this place that Madelyn could free herself from the Jent family, free herself from Cecilia... and start a life of her own.

Ethan was not in her plans. If she were to have any deeper entanglement with him, she was afraid that it would only end up being more trouble.

Madelyn let out a yawn as she suddenly felt sleepy. After getting back onto bed and thinking of the better life she would have in the future, she quickly fell asleep.

After resting at home for a few days, her wounds had almost healed.

Madelyn was still asleep when she heard a knock on the door.

“Madelyn, wake up. Come downstairs to eat!”

Madelyn mumbled in reply. “Let me sleep a bit more.”

“Wake up. Sir and the others are already waiting for you downstairs. Come, be a good girl and listen!”

When she heard that, all of her sleepiness went away as Madelyn got out from bed. “Got it. I’ll get up now.”

She grabbed her clothes and went to wash up and took less than ten minutes to get downstairs.

She held the handrail as she trotted downstairs.

She then saw a group of people seated at the dining table.

Even Zach and Jadie were here.

Today was the weekend, and Jadie was resting.

The silent yet heavy atmosphere made Madelyn almost resistant to go over. Ever since the day she misunderstood Zach and said words that made him angry, he had ignored her for quite a number of days now.

She dragged her heavily footsteps and sat on Jasmine's place.

Today, there was a large feast of dishes.

And that confused her.

'What day is it today?'

"These are all the stuff I love."

This was also the first time Hayson had not admonished her for sleeping until this late.

As she sat on her seat, Hayson looked over and asked. "Have the wounds healed yet?"

Madelyn nodded, "Almost fully healed. I'll be able to go to school tomorrow."

Rosario then served her a bowl of soup.

Hayson then said, "Go to Cecilia's room later and pick a nice dress. I'll take you and Zach to a dinner banquet tonight."

Madelyn's mind instantly went blank. "Father... can I not go?"

'I should've told him I'm still not well!'

"Even if you have a broken leg, you still have to go. There will be many young scions attending today, so just go and see if there are any suitable ones. You're not getting any younger."

Madelyn immediately interjected, “Father, I only just reached adulthood and I’ve not even completed my degree. Isn’t this too early?”

“We can discuss it first and you can get married after you graduate. I’ve discussed this with Zach, you will stay at Ventropolis for your university, there’s no need to go to Lorville.”

“Why...”

Madelyn only felt something was roiling within her and making her upset and as she saw Jadie serving Zach something into his plate.

She suddenly wanted to flip the table.

And ask him why he went back on his promise!

“Father, we’ve talked about this before!”

Chapter 80

“You’re trying to negotiate with me now?” Hayson frowned.

Madelyn said angrily, “It’s you who went back against your words. Father... I’m already an adult. Can you stop deciding everything for me? I’m not your puppet!”

“Talking back now, huh!?” Hayson slammed the cutlery onto the table. “Did I raise you like this, to talk back to me, huh?! Don’t you dare forget who’s the one supporting you right now! Let’s see you survive without spending a single penny of mine!”

Madelyn’s brow shuddered. “So, if I don’t stay in this house and if I don’t spend a single penny of yours, you’ll no longer interfere in my affairs?”

“Hah, feeling tough now huh? The punishment last time wasn’t enough, I see. If you want to die that much, then I’ll see it done!” Hayson stood up and had already pulled his belt out.

Hayson was a stickler to rules and protocol and this was the first time he had flared up like this against Madelyn.

Jasmine immediately stopped him. “Hayson, what are you doing? Madelyn is just saying words out of anger. Don’t you worry, I’ll definitely talk sense into her!”

“Madelyn... hurry up and apologize to your father!”

“Why should I apologize? I dare you to beat me to death! What right do you have to order me around like that!?” Madelyn roared.

“What did you say? I dare you to say that again!” The belt in Hayson’s hand was about to smash down and he only stopped when Jasmine interposed between them.

Madelyn quickly ran out to shield Madelyn. “Madelyn, you silly girl, all sir does is for your own good.”

“My own good? My own good?! So, everything I’ve done since I was a child needs his approval? What other father acts like him? If mom was around, she’d never do that to me!”

Hayson walked over and a slap landed with a brutal impact. “Your mother was a bloody whore. I should’ve killed you right there and then when she gave birth to you! You really think you’re something now, eh? I dare you to get lost from here and never come back!”

Half of Madelyn’s face was numb and soon the pain assailed her as her face started to swell.” Alright. You said this yourself...”

“GET LOST!” Hayson yelled.

“Madelyn-!!!”

“Stop right there! No one goes after her! If I find out anyone one of you dares to help her, I’ll kick you out as well!”

Madelyn was still wearing her pajamas and slippers and had nothing else on her.

The entire hall fell into an awkward atmosphere.

Hayson then sat down in a huff before yelling angrily, “Eat!”

Rosario glanced worriedly at the silhouette that had run out of the door into the distance.

Jasmine put some food into Hayson’s plate as she said, “Hayson, what are you doing arguing with her so early in the morning? Madelyn’s still young and she doesn’t understand your intentions. She has nothing on her, where can she go?”

“Zach, go get Madelyn back. What if something happens to her...?”

Before Zach could even speak, Rosario interjected, “Let me do it! Madelyn’s listened to me ever since she was young. I might be able to persuade her to come back.”

Madelyn ran and then fell asleep at the door; her palms were so scratched it reflected how much of a mess she was.

“Stand right there!”

“I want to see just how tough she can really be! Without my money, where else can she go? Better still if she just starves to death outside and never comes back!”

“Sir!” Rosario exclaimed.

“Shut up! Another word from you and you can get lost as well!” Hayson hissed.

The meal finally ended unhappily in silence.

Jadie sat in the car and Zach put on the seatbelt for her.

“Zach, shouldn’t we go look for Madelyn? It’s dangerous for her to be alone out there.”

Zach’s eyes and expression were impassive as he turned the steering wheel and fit the accelerator.

“The princess has gotten too comfy living in a big house and doesn’t know what dangers lie outside. Don’t worry, I know her... She’ll come back.”

‘How many times has Madelyn ran away from home now?’

‘She still ends up coming back obediently every single time. If she wasn’t a member of the Jent family, her life would be worth nothing.’

He wanted to see how long Madelyn, who had nothing, would last this time after leaving the Jent household.

Three minutes?

Or three hours?

A sarcastic smirk appeared on Zach’s face.

‘Madelyn, you’d better not disappoint me!’

Zach did not see Madelyn as he drove toward the Jent residence.

Chapter 81

Zach was contemplating where she might be hiding. However, before long, Jadie's voice broke the silence, directing Zach's attention to a figure standing near a large truck. "Zach, look! It's Madelyn," Jadie exclaimed, her voice tinged with both surprise and concern.

Slowing down the vehicle, Zach saw Madelyn getting into the vehicle.

"Goodness gracious, why is Madelyn leaving with strangers? Has something happened to her? Should we contact the police?" Jadie's words tumbled out in a rush, her concern palpable.

Zach averted his eyes, a contemplative silence enveloping him as he focused on the task of driving. "No need," he finally replied, his voice subdued.

"Are you saying we should we just leave her be like that?"

Zach remained silent, his attention steadfastly fixed on the road ahead.

As the truck accelerated, its tires kicking up a cloud of dust, the distance between them and Madelyn swiftly expanded. Jadie could sense the car picking up speed, and a part of her longed for Zach to slow down, if only for a moment. Yet, she understood that he was determined to pursue the truck, leaving her no choice but to endure the increasingly intense ride.

As their car approached the traffic light, it abruptly switched from green to red, signaling them to stop. Zach, however, made a bold decision to run the red light, racing through the intersection. Yet, as he skillfully maneuvered around the corner, they were met with a disheartening sight-the truck they had been chasing had vanished without a trace.

"Zach, we've lost them. What do we do now?" Jadie's voice quivered with uncertainty. She looked at Zach in a panic only to see his eyes were gloomy and sent a chill down her spine.

Zach's mind swirled with a blend of frustration and suspicion. 'Madelyn Jent, what kind of games are you playing this time!?'

Meanwhile, inside the truck, Madelyn stole a quick glance at the rearview mirror, her heart pounding with a sense of relief. They had successfully evaded Zach's pursuit.

How she wished she could let Zach realize that she had not been lying from the very beginning when she had said she wanted to leave. She had learned a lesson on the matter of Jadie. So, she hoped that in view of their friendship, Zach would stop thinking about her.

It had hurt to be beaten once again.

Madelyn was fortunate to encounter a kind-hearted couple, a long-distance delivery driver and his wife, who were more than willing to offer her a ride. Explaining her situation to them, Madelyn lied to them that she had engaged in a heated argument with her father and was now determined to search for her long-lost mother. Sympathetic to her plight, the couple readily agreed to let her join them on their journey.

1/2

After a forty-minute drive, Madelyn found herself standing in front of the decrepit old building. Expressing her gratitude and bidding the couple farewell, Madelyn embarked on her solitary path. Relying on her memory, she navigated through the desolate streets, which emitted a noxious odor emanating from the nearby sewers.

Soon, she found a very familiar sign and stopped in front of that building.

There were no elevators in this building, and she had to take the stairs to get to the sixth floor.

Along the way, Madelyn had lost a slipper and so she limped as she walked, and her knees still

hurt a little.

Finally, she found the house number she was looking for.

She then found the key under the flowerpot on the balcony facing the door.

"Hello, who are you? Why have I never seen you before?" A forty-odd year-old woman suddenly walked out from one of the other units, with a basin of clothes in hand.

“My

mother is living here. I’m here to look for her,” Madelyn replied.

“You’re Rosario’s daughter? Oh, what a good girl. To think that she has such a pretty daughter. Why haven’t I heard her speak of you before? What’s your name, little girl?”

“I’m Madelyn Jent, ma’am.”

“Oh, oh, a good name. Have you eaten yet? How about you join me?”

“Thank you, but I’ll have to decline. I’m a bit tired and want to rest a little. I’m waiting for my mother to come back.”

“Oh, okay. Remember to come over my place and play some time.”

“Okay.”

Madelyn walked into the apartment and found it well organized, although somewhat rudimentary. There was no living room, only a bed and a bathroom. The nicer part of the apartment unit was that it had a balcony.

Chapter 82

This was a house that Rosario was renting on her own. It was super cheap, with rent only costing about fifty bucks a month.

The location faced south and had good natural lighting. If Rosario had not rented this place, Madelyn would have ended up without a roof above her head.

This was the second time Madelyn had come here. The first time was because Zach had bought Jadie a pretty dress in secret, but he had never bought anything for her before. After she had found out and confronted him about it, Zach had simply just hissed at her.

There was no way a princess like Madelyn could handle being treated like that. As a result, she had left home angrily.

That was the first time she left home, and at the time, Zach had not tried to coax her back, as she had cut Jadie's dress, which made him furious.

So, Rosario had brought Madelyn, who had been throwing a temper tantrum, here while on the way back.

However, because she could not stand the environment here and thought it too dirty, she had finally given up and went back home in the end, because she was too used to being pampered

back then.

But, as long as Rosario had not said a word about this place, they would never find her here, and that would be fine for her. Even without a degree, she could still go out to work and do some odd part-time jobs. She would still be able to live decently enough.

There was dust on the table, so Madelyn took a bucket of water and cleaned up the house. She changed the sheets and watered the plants outside.

After doing that, she took a set of Rosario's clothes and went to the bathroom to take a shower.

When the water touched the wounds, Madelyn hissed in pain and tried to avoid the wounds. touching water as much as she could.

Without a hot water supply, she could only bathe with cold water.

After that, she used a yellowed but still clean towel to wipe her hair dry.

After leaving the Jent residence, Madelyn felt an unprecedented amount of freedom.

She then lay on the bed for a while.

As time passed, she felt asleep, and by the time she woke up, it was already dark outside.

In a daze, her stomach started to growl at the most inopportune of times.

So she got up and made herself a cup of instant noodles. As there was nothing else, she had to

1/2

eat it just like that.

Yet, even when she was in such a state, Madelyn did not feel that her life was difficult.

As long as she had something to eat, it was fine.

In her previous life, she had been chased out of Ventropolis by Zach, and not too long later, she had been diagnosed with advanced cancer. To afford treatment, she had sold all of her

assets from the divorce.

Forget cup noodles, the only things she ate back then were simply just scraps, or in the worst- case scenario, she would just starve...

So, she was much, much more appreciative of what she had now than in the past. She knew that everything she had was not always so easy to come by

She turned on the TV and started watching some brain-dead soap opera. Before she even realized it, it was already eight o'clock in the evening.

In those days, they were still using black-and-white TVs...

At eight o'clock in the evening, still in a daze, Madelyn could hear the sound of the door lock being turning from the outside.

“That must be Rosario.”

Madelyn hurried over and opened the door. “Rosario!”

Sure enough, it was her.

Rosaria pulled out the key and said angrily. “Silly girl, I knew you’d be here. I bet you haven’t eaten for the entire day, right? I brought you your favorite dishes, come and eat them.”

Chapter 83

“I’m glad you understand!” Madelyn happily went up to her and hugged her.

She eagerly took the thermos from Rosario and sat down beside a small table.

“Why’d you come out here all of a sudden? Do you know how worried Mr. Jent and Mr. Jardin are? Go back tomorrow!”

“There’s no need for you to try and persuade me; I won’t go back. Besides, it won’t make a difference whether I’m there or not. They won’t worry about me.”

Rosario looked at the used pot and Worcestershire sauce on the kitchen counter on the balcony.

“This is what she’s been eating when I’m not around. How could she go through such a thing? She’s Ms. Jent!” she thought.

Rosario was a little heartbroken. After all, she had watched Madelyn grow up, so she was like her own child.

“Madelyn, is this all you’re having for lunch?”

Madelyn took a big bite of carne frita and nodded, “I don’t have ingredients at home, so I just made some noodles. But I think I added too much Worcestershire sauce. It’s a little too salty. Also... I think the Worcestershire sauce has gone bad. It tasted a little funny when I ate it!”

Rosario walked over and poked Madelyn’s head with her finger, “Why didn’t you check its expiration date? What if you get a stomachache from it? Don’t eat it anymore. I’ll send you home tomorrow, and you should apologize properly to Mr. Jent. Then this whole matter will be considered over.” ”

Madelyn’s hand, which was holding her cutlery, froze momentarily, “I already said I wouldn’t be going back. If you really insist on making me, I’ll leave right now.”

She set down the cutlery and stopped eating. Then, she walked toward the door.

Rosario immediately stopped her, “Madelyn, if you’re not going back, do you plan on staying at a shabby place like this for the rest of your life?”

“Why not?”

“This place is shabby and dilapidated. What’s so good about it? Madelyn, be good... Let’s go home, okay?”

“What about it? If you’re going to throw me out, too, then I truly won’t have anywhere to go. I don’t want to go home. I lost my home after my mother’s death. Rosario...can you not throw me out?” Madelyn lowered her head as tears streamed down.

“You silly girl! Why are you crying? Look around, Madelyn. There’s nothing here, and it’s tiny. It’s nothing compared to your house.”

Madelyn wiped her tears with the back of her hand.

“It’s alright. I’ll go find part-time jobs. I know how to cook, paint, and play the piano. Even if none of those work out, I can work as a waitress to support myself.

“You’re the daughter of a wealthy family! How could you even think of doing such things?” Rosario continued helplessly, “Stop crying now... Stay here if you want to! Tomorrow, I’ll buy you some groceries. I won’t be able to stay home and take care of you tomorrow; I need to go to Mr. Jardin’s place and take care of Jadie for a few days. Stay put here, and don’t leave the house if you don’t need to. It isn’t safe here at night.”

Madelyn nodded, “What’s happened to Jadie?”

“She got injured and hasn’t recovered. Mr. Jardin can’t take care of her,” said Rosario.

“He can hire a caretaker. Why’d he have to take you away? What ‘ll happen to me if you leave? You’re mine.”

Madelyn sniffled and hugged Rosario tightly.

Rosario stroked Madelyn’s long, soft hair, “I’ll only be gone for a few days. Once you’re back home, I’ll make all sorts of delicious dishes for you every day.”

Madelyn did not want to go back.

It was late at night. The curtains were thin, so the moonlight outside shone in.

Madelyn and Rosario slept on the same bed.

Madelyn knew she moved a lot when she slept and often kicked away the covers, so the two tucked themselves in separate blankets.

Madelyn had slept the entire day, so she could not fall asleep. She laid under the covers and stared at the ceiling as she counted her fingers absentmindedly.

‘Why’d Zach ask Rosario to take care of Jadie? Wasn’t she doing fine today? He’s surely doing this on purpose. Rosario can take care of Jadie for a few days, but she can’t keep on taking care of her. Rosario’s mine,’ she thought.

That night, Madelyn heard Rosario leaving the house when she was half asleep.

It was starting to get bright out.

However, after what seemed like less than half an hour, Rosario returned home again.

Madelyn smelled the aroma of delicious food.

Chapter 84

Rosario was cooking. Madelyn narrowed her eyes and glanced at the time. It was only six in the morning, and the sun was just starting to rise outside.

“What are you doing up this early? Go back to sleep for a little longer. The food will be ready in a bit.”

Madelyn hugged Rosario’s waist from behind and placed her chin on Rosario’s shoulder. Her narrowed eyes resembled a sleepy and cute kitten that had just opened its eyes. There was even a strand of hair sticky up on her forehead.

“What delicious food are you making?”

Rosario said, “It’s greasy in here. Quick, go back outside, and don’t get yourself dirty. I’ve already bought you toiletries. My place isn’t like your house, so you need to make do and use some generic brands for now. I’ll bring you your things tonight.”

“What’s wrong with generic brands? I like anything as long as you’re the one buying it.”

“Stop blabbering and go wash up. After I’m done with this dish, breakfast will be ready.”

“Alright.”

The pair of pajamas Madelyn wore used to belong to Rosario. Its design unmistakably outdated and tailored for the elderly. Yet, despite their antiquated style, the pajamas possessed a certain charm when worn by Madelyn.

Heading to the bathroom, Madelyn slipped her feet into transparent slides. After finishing her morning routine, she emerged from the bathroom to find that Rosario had already left without even having breakfast. Alone in the room, Madelyn settled down to eat.

Before Rosario left, she had reminded Madelyn to go to school and not to be late.

However, Madelyn had no intention of going to school that day. The thought of being expelled held little significance for her now.

Madelyn did not eat much, and just chucked the leftovers into the fridge. Her plan for the day involved exploring the surrounding area, hoping to discover anything else she might be able to purchase.

When Rosario left, she gave Madelyn few hundred bucks and told her to buy something with the money. Madelyn was not planning to just spend the money carelessly.

Madelyn wore Rosaria's old clothes and grabbed a canvas tote bag when she left the house. She had a cucumber in her hand, and her long hair was up in a claw clip. She did not look like a lady from a wealthy family at all.

“Oh?! Where are you headed, Madelyn?”

Madelyn locked the door, “I plan on taking a look around the area. How about you, Shelley?”

“Me? I'm about to do some laundry. Madelyn... Your mother's been living here for over ten years now. How come I've never seen you in the past?”

Madelyn chuckled, “I didn't go to school here, so I've barely had any time to visit. I have some free time now, so I came back to visit my mom.”

“I see! How old are you? Do you have a boyfriend yet?”

“I'm eighteen this year. I'm sitting for my college entrance exams soon, so I don't want to date for now. It's not the time yet.”

“Oh, but you're so pretty! You must have many boys chasing after you. It's okay for youngsters to date. It's better to date when you're still young... It's not much use for girls to go to college since they need to get married and stay home to raise their children. You might as well get married early,” said Shelley.

Then, she walked over, acting as if she knew Madelyn really well.

“Coincidentally, I've got a son who's around your age. His looks and yours are somewhat of a good match...”

The smile on Madelyn's face gradually fell, “Thank you for your kind intentions, Shelly. However, I don't have any plans regarding these matters for now. I'll be leaving now.”

“Eh? I think you’re quite the looker, so your future children will surely look beautiful. Why don’t you reconsider? We can offer you a hundred thousand dollars of dowry.”

Madelyn went downstairs and disappeared into the corner.

Shelley looked in Madelyn’s direction and rolled her eyes.

“Hmph! She’s so arrogant. She must think she’s a goddess... She’s like the other girls out there, so what’s there to pretend?”

Madelyn’s originally bright mood had been ruined.

‘I’m only 18, and she’s introducing marriage suitors to me?’ she thought.

Chapter 85

Madelyn had to admit it genuinely was a little disorderly around these parts. Well, not exactly disorderly; it was just the cleanliness here was not as good as in the urban area of Ventropolis.

The buildings here seemed run-down. The place was filled with dilapidated residential areas and

many street food stalls.

Madelyn wandered around and found that the food at these stalls was pretty cheap.

After she walked through the alley, there was even a large sea ahead.

This was the outskirts of Ventropolis. It was an hour’s drive to get to the neighboring city, Marisburg.

Madelyn ran to the beach in excitement. She closed her eyes and breathed in the crisp sea air.

She took off her flip-flops and stepped onto the sand. The seawater was a little chilly, but the sunlight above her head felt warm and refreshing.

Madelyn strolled barefoot along the sandy shoreline, her eyes fixated on the myriad seashells that adorned the beach. Their intricate patterns and vibrant colors enticed her, urging her to collect them one by one.

Just then, a voice, sharp and commanding, pierced the air above her.

“Hey! Who the hell do you think you are? Don’t you know this is my turf?”

Startled, Madelyn rose to her feet, her gaze drawn to a woman with braided hair and striking smokey eye makeup. The woman exuded an aura of strength, her arm tattoo accentuating her formidable presence. Her name was Alex York.

Still in a daze, Madelyn struggled to find her voice as Alex approached, swiftly snatching the

seashells from her hand.

“Where do you come from, you country bumpkin? Why haven’t I seen you around? What’s in your bag? Hand it over!”

“I…” Madelyn began, her words trailing off.

“Don’t you dare ‘I’ me!” Alex interjected.

With a swift motion, Alex seized Madelyn’s canvas tote and emptied its contents.

“All useless things. As expected of a country bumpkin.”

Alex had lost a card game. The group of men had the audacity to ask her—a woman—to come here and collect seafood for them as punishment for losing.

Alex was already filled with rage, and now she had the perfect outlet to release her anger.

Madelyn calmly picked up her canvas tote from the ground. She had no intentions of arguing with Alex and prepared to leave.

However, Alex did not plan on letting her go.

“Did I fucking say you could leave?”

‘Why does her tone sound so much like Forrest’s?’ wondered Madelyn.

“What do you want?” she asked.

Alex threw a shovel and bucket in front of Madelyn.

“Just your luck running into me. Dig up some seafood for me. Don’t even think of going home if the bucket isn’t full!”

Madelyn asked, “And why should I do that?”

“Because I don’t like how you look, got it?”

“Sorry, but I don’t have the time for that,” replied Madelyn.

“Hey, country bumpkin, don’t you know everyone here listens to what I say? Do you know what the consequences are if you don’t listen to me?”

‘Is she from some kind of local gang? Why do I keep encountering strange people like this wherever I go?’ thought Madelyn.

“Hey, Alex. Don’t tell me you haven’t even caught a single crab after this long.”

“Yeah! What’re we gonna eat tonight?!”

Madelyn saw a group of six to seven topless men walking shoulder to shoulder. They were covered in tattoos and clearly ignorant street thugs. Madelyn seemed particularly small and helpless when faced with the group of thugs.

“Oh! Where’d this little lady come from? She’s pretty good-looking. What’s your name? Got a boyfriend? Wanna go out with me?” a blonde-haired man who barely looked twenty said while giving Madelyn a sleazy look.

The group of men laughed.

‘How lewd. If I had known this would happen, I never would’ve come here in the first place,’ thought Madelyn.

Chapter 86

“Alex, Ajax, are you lot stirring up trouble again?”

Suddenly, a slightly chubby middle-aged man walked over from a distance. He wore flip-flops and had a stick in his hand.

He quickly walked to Madelyn's side and gave her a once-over. Then, he asked with concern, "Kid... Did they do anything to you?"

Madelyn shook her head, "Nope."

Meanwhile, Alex stood at the side with a look of disdain.

The man seemed to know Madelyn. He asked again, "Are you the girl Rosario brought back from the city? Mad... Mad something?"

"Madelyn Jent."

”

The man gasped and said, "Yes, yes, yes, Madelyn. When Rosario left earlier, she told me to look after you, but I was too busy and lost track of time. Don't worry. With me around, these hooligans won't dare to do anything to you."

He continued, "I'm telling you, Alex. You're a girl, can you act a bit more reserved? Why are you dressed up like this every day? And you guys! All you guys do is play truant! Hurry up and leave, or I'll whoop your asses."

Alex started smoking impatiently, "Hey, fatso. Why are you butting in when I'm talking to her? Mind your own business. You're already this old, yet you're still all hung up about some old hag. Tsk!"

"What did you say? Say that again, and I'll be sure your father teaches you a lesson when get home."

“Whatever I do is none of your damn business, you damn bastard. Just my darn luck,”

Alex

lifted her gaze and glared at Madelyn.

“Hey! You little rascal.”

“Darn it. Ajax, pack up the stuff. We’ll find a different location.”

you

Ajax picked up the items that had been thrown onto the ground. Then, the seven to eight men

left with their leader.

Madelyn said, “Thank you, mister! If it weren’t for you, I might’ve gotten in trouble.”

“Ah, it was nothing. No need to thank me. Rosario and I go way back. Remember, kid, don’t come here again in the future. This is their little gang’s haunt, so it’s not safe. If you want to explore the area, I can take you to other places.”

Madelyn nodded.

“Alright,” she said.

Madelyn picked up the seashells on the ground and placed them into her canvas tote.

Then, she left with Ajax.

During their journey, Madelyn learned that the house Rosario rented belonged to him.

Since the area was along the coast, Jeff Massey opened a restaurant and a supper place nearby.

The population here was small, so he did not make much money. He mainly relied on his rental income to make ends meet.

Jeff's wife had passed away when he was in his 30s, and he had remained single till now.

The group from earlier were locals. Due to the location's remoteness, people rarely visited, and the government did not care about them at all. Consequently, the locals had low incomes, and most of them were poor, working-class foreigners. A majority of them were illiterate and had not received much formal education. That was why the area was rather disorderly and lawless.

The two went to Happy Seafood Grill.

Madelyn did not go back and went to Jeff's restaurant for lunch instead. There were six to seven dishes, and the table was full of seafood. There were also many customers in the restaurant.

"Go ahead and start eating first. There's no need to wait for me. I just got some customers, so I'll go cook up a few dishes."

Madelyn stood up, "Mr. Massey, let me help you. I know how to chop up vegetables and wash them."

Jeff laughed, "You're a guest. How could I let my guests work? Hurry up and try these escargots I made. No one here can make them better than me. If you can't get the meat out, we have toothpicks for you."

Madelyn sat in a small private room. The room was not exactly crowded and had a floor-to-ceiling window at its side. One could see the sea here, and the view was impressive.

Madelyn noticed the carne frita placed in front of her, which even had scallions on top of it.

Madelyn picked up her cutlery and took a bite of the carne frita.

‘It actually tastes exactly like Rosario’s cooking. It’s so good,’ she thought.

Madelyn was absolutely famished. She ate her fill of the food.

After she finished eating, she grabbed a tissue to wipe her mouth. Soon after, she saw a group of people walking past from the corner of her eye. She looked over, and it was no other than

Alex and the gang.

‘I wonder if they saw me,’ she thought.

Chapter 87

‘But it seems like they’re also coming to this restaurant,’ she thought.

As expected, the door to her room was opened in less than a minute, and a group of people walked in.

“Oh?! You’re eating good! How come we never get such special treatment? You’re so biased, you old fart!”

“I’m starving. Dustin, get me a set of cutleries and a bowl.”

“Don’t you have hands? Why can’t you take them yourself?”

“Girlie, scooch over, girlie. I can’t get inside.”

Madelyn was speechless. She pulled her chair and made way for him.

Alex sat across from her, but her sitting posture was a little unsightly. She propped her foot onto the chair and promptly spun the carne frita on Madelyn's plate toward herself. Then, she started munching on it.

"The drinks are here," a skinny guy walked in and closed the door with his leg while carrying a carton of beer.

The once spacious room had quickly become cramped.

"That bastard. He never makes this for me when I ask him to, but now he's actually made it for you! You're really something!"

Suddenly, Alex turned to her.

She continued, "Hey, country bumpkin, you still haven't told me where you're from. Are you from out of town?"

One of the men with blonde hair said, "Alex, she's obviously a goody-two-shoes. Don't scare her."

"What, are you feeling bad for her? She's good-looking and isn't interested in you, so what's the use of speaking up for her? Shut your mouth."

Madelyn took the water jug and poured herself a glass of water. Then, she took a sip of water and set down the glass.

"I'm done eating. You all have a good meal."

Just as she was about to get up, a hand pushed her back down.

“What’s with the rush? We haven’t even started eating. Let’s chat for a little longer.”

Madelyn was not exactly afraid of these people.

‘Are they bad people? They just look like a bunch of hooligans. Real dangerous bad guys don’t act like them,’ she thought.

They did not scare her. Instead, they made her feel some way that she did not know how to describe; it was a feeling she had never once experienced.

“What do you guys want to talk about?” she asked.

The two men sitting beside her openly scrutinized her; one was blonde-haired, while the other was green-haired. One of them even laughed and said, “Alex, she isn’t even the least bit scared of you. You suck!”

“Shut up!” Alex had just finished the entire plate of carne frita. She licked her lips in dissatisfaction, “I won’t argue with you, on account of this good meal today. How does calling me boss and paying a 50-dollar membership fee to gain my protection on this turf sound? No one will dare to do anything to you if you shout my name out on the streets.”

Madelyn lifted the glass and smiled slightly, “I don’t have any money.”

“You could write up an ‘IOU’ if you don’t have the money. Call her boss, and you’ll be a part of our gang,” the blonde-haired man said as he placed his hand on Madelyn’s shoulder.

Madelyn looked at the hand on her shoulder, as she was lost in thought.

‘What would my father say if he saw me hanging out with these hooligans? He’d most likely break this guy’s hand first and then break all their legs one by one. He’s always been strict and has never allowed me to hang out with shady people.’

I remember the poor dirty stray dog I picked up from the roadside, he beat it to death himself with a golf club. Then, he even made me learn golf with that very same golf club. He told me it was alright to have a dog, but the dog had to be of a decent breed. Ever since that dog's brutal death, I've never had any pets ever again. I know that in his eyes, people are categorized into different classes. I just never expected it to be the same when it comes to dogs...'

Chapter 88

"Sorry. Please eat. I still have work to do, so excuse me."

Madelyn was used to being alone and did not believe in so-called friends.

This time when she left, the group of hooligans did not try to stop her anymore.

Madelyn left the room and Mr. Massey walked out wearing an apron as he held a dish in hand." Lassie, you're done eating already? Did they bully you?"

No."

"They may act like that, but those kids aren't so bad really. They just want to play with you."

"I know, Mr. Massey. I still have something to do, so I'll take my leave first."

"Okay. Remember to come and eat tomorrow, on the house. Just eat as much as you want."

Madelyn smiled and nodded. "Alright."

After she left, Madelyn went and bought some personal clothes and a few spare clothes and a few pairs of shoes as well. She got all of those items at cheap prices.

She was planning to stay here long-term.

In a blink of an eye, Madelyn had already lived here for almost three months. These days, she was working at Mr. Massey's restaurant as a waitress. The salary was fifty a day, which was not bad, and meals were provided as well.

There was little business during the day, and it would be a little busier during supper hours.

It was very tiring at first as her legs protested in soreness. But as time went on, she got

1.

used to

She had never done such a thing before, but it was just cleaning up the tables, so it was not particularly difficult.

Those days were a rare taste of freedom and peace for her.

There was no supervision, no comfort, no soft bed, no beautiful clothes...

Madelyn had gradually gotten used to the life of an ordinary person.

Her once fair and tender hands began to develop calluses, and since her hands would be soaked in water for long periods of time while washing dishes, her skin had also begun to peel

and looked rather hideous.

Rosario did not know that she was working in this restaurant.

That was also because Rosario had not come back for many days now. Madelyn assumed she

must have been busy taking care of Jadie.

That was fine too, Rosario would never have allowed her to do this, so she had to try to save up more money to plan for the future.

One night, at half past eight in the evening, a batch of diners had already left, and Madelyn cleaned up the table and carried a tub of bowls to be washed as she walked to the door.

There were a group of shirtless men still seated by the door. All of them looked like they were in their thirties and drunk, probably having drunk three or four crates of beer.

One of them looked at Madelyn with a lustful gaze as he mumbled in a drunken drawl, “Hey, look. That girl lives right beside me. I heard my mom say that she’s only eighteen, and she got expelled from school because she tried to sleep with someone. She starts washing clothes at around seven every morning, and it’s so noisy that I can’t even sleep. But damn, she sure is hot!”

“There’s no way, right? She doesn’t even look like the talkative type, and you’re saying she tried to sleep with someone?”

Those words were so loud as if they were afraid Madelyn would miss them, but there was no one else around. She heard every word.

Madelyn, however, had no intention of provoking a bunch of drunks.

“Yeah, Rogan, how do you even know about all this?”

“What’s there not to know? If she really was a good student, why would she be working here instead of studying?”

“Eh, just blabbering about it is pointless. How about we get her here and ask her ourselves?”

Chapter 89

Rogan immediately called out to her, his voice booming. “Hey, you! Madelyn! Come over here.

and take our order.”

Madelyn held the tub of plates and pretended to not hear him as she looked at a person about the same age as her.

Her name was Wonda, and she was also working here part-time.

Madelyn looked at her gloating face and then turned around to leave.

“Oi, I’m calling for you! Do you hear me?!”

Madelyn put down the tub and washed her hands cleaned before walking over with a menu.

“What would you like to order?” she asked, as she took out a notebook to jot the order down.

Five pairs of eyes all stared at her like hungry wolves staring at their prey. Those ill-intentioned gazes exuded a revolting malevolence.

One of them then said, “Babe, are you short on cash? If you are, just let me know. I have money.”

11

As he said that, he pulled out three hundred dollars from his wallet and put in on the table. “If you go out and play with me today, this money’s yours.”

A shrill laugh suddenly rang out.

It was from Wonda.

“I’m sorry. I’m just here to work a part-time job. I don’t provide such services. Would you like to order something? If not, I have work to do.”

“What work? There’s only us in the shop right now. Come on, sit and chat with us. Have a few glasses.” Another fat man said as he dragged a chair over and placed it by his side.

Madelyn turned around and left.

At this moment, someone slammed the table. “Hey bitch, what the hell are you being so pretentious for? If you really are a student, why would you even need to come here to work?”

Madelyn walked a few steps before stopping as she took out a pink diamond-lined purse out and flashed her student card before them. “Have a good look. This is my student ID, and that’s me on the ID. I’m a senior-year student of Ventrocloud High School. Get it? Please refrain from spreading rumors after this. Defamation is against the law.”

“Who the heck would believe you? You? Studying at Ventrocloud High School? That’s tens of thousands a year, and three years would’ve cost you a hundred thousand!”

Madelyn put away her purse. She really shouldn’t have tried to argue with this bunch.

“It’s none of my business whether you believe me or not.”

“Hey, watch your tone! You’ve been to school. Did your teachers teach you to speak to your elders like this?”

“If you don’t drink this glass and apologize to us, you can forget about leaving today.”

Madelyn put her purse into the pocket under her apron and turned around to leave, as she did not plan to pay them any more attention.

Suddenly, a powerful grasp grabbed her hand and pulled her over, Madelyn tumbled over and ended up sitting on the man’s leg. “What are you doing! Let me go!”

“Girl, don’t be afraid. We just want to talk to you, nothing else.”

Everyone else looked at Madelyn and laughed.

Wonda quietly shuffled into the kitchen and pretended not to see what was happening.

Mr. Massey was out delivering goods, and it would take a while before he returned.

She took the glass of beer and splashed it on the man's face as she pushed him away with force. "You damn bitch!"

The man instantly grabbed and tugged Madelyn's hair.

She immediately yelled in pain.

"How dare you splash that on me!?"

Chapter 90

That man tore Madelyn's clothes off her chest and her buttons came apart, revealing a white bra inside.

Everyone's eyes lit up in that instant.

Madelyn covered herself up and bit the back of the hand hard.

The person immediately recoiled in pain and let her free.

Madelyn quickly turned around and fled outside. Under the dim road light, she saw, much to her shock, Forrest, who was clad in a black T-shirt, with silver chains on his neck and his hands in his jacket pocket as he walked over with a cigarette in hand.

Jadie and Alex were walking with him.

She did not know why Jadie would be here, but she could not let Jadie see her or know that she was here.

Forrest was speaking to Jadie with his head down and should not have seen her. So, Madelyn quickly turned around and fled toward her home.

"Bloody hell, that bitch sure ran away fast."

Madelyn did not dare stop at all as she hurried home. Leaning against the door, she felt as if her heart was about to pop out of her chest. She was soaked in sweat and perhaps due to fear, her legs felt weak, and her entire body trembled.

She slid limp onto the ground, and it took a good while before she eventually calmed down, got up, and took a bath.

It was midnight, and Madelyn laid in her bed as she woke up in a daze.

She had been dreaming of the time ruffians had bullied her.

Those memories she wanted to forget had come surging back into her mind like a vicious tide. The images that flashed across her mind were extremely vivid.

The lights in the room were turned off and Madelyn curled up in her bed as she hugged her blanket tight and breathed heavily.

The incident from before seemed to have reared its head again....

She then turned on her phone which Rosario had smuggled in for her from home.

This was the first time she had turned it on.

Messages after messages soon popped up, all of them from Ethan.

From the past thirteen days, there were at least a hundred messages from him.

1/2

Most of them were him asking her what she was doing, where she was, and why she was not replying.

He also shared with her what he was doing on the daily.

Until the last message. [Madelyn, where are you? I'm worried about you...]

[I'm worried...]

Tears suddenly fell from her eyes. She never thought anyone would be worried about her.

To Madelyn, Ethan was just a familiar stranger. Yet, he was worried about her. That made her feel a trace of warmth she had never felt before.

Madelyn then responded, [I'm tired. Good night.]

Just as she was about to turn off her phone, a string of familiar numbers suddenly popped out. It was a call from Zach.

Yet, Madelyn did not want to pick up the call.

In Ventropolis, located at the heart of the city, a soft glow emanated from an open study door within a modest single-story building spanning three hundred square meters.

Seated at the desk, Zach held a stack of printed photographs depicting Madelyn's recent circumstances. Each image revealed a different facet of her life. A mixture of surprise and concern clouded his eyes. Never had he expected Madelyn would manage to survive in a remote fishing village for so long-

The photographs captured her diligently working at a restaurant, one image showing her serving dishes while another captured her squatting near the door, engaged in dishwashing duties.

'Is this really the Madelyn I once knew?' Zach wondered silently.

A notification popped up on his computer screen, indicating a message received at 12:43 a.m. When the phone hung up automatically, Zach smiled as he put down the phone. The time was

12:44 a.m.

‘Oh, Madelyn, it seems you have yet to suffer enough,’ he mused to himself. ‘A disobedient child shan’t have dinner. Why can’t you understand this simple truth? For what are you making yourself go through all these hardships?’

Lost in contemplation, Zach tapped his finger lightly on the desk’s surface. His attention shifted to the final photograph in the stack-an image capturing the lewd laughter of men as one of them tore at Madelyn’s clothes.

Chapter 91

Half a minute later, Zach pulled up another number. “Do me a favor.”

After giving out his orders, Zach gave Madelyn one last call.

He only heard the cold, robotic notification from the phone. “The number you have dialed is no longer in service.”

At three o’clock in the morning, a series of knocks rang out on Madelyn’s door. “Open up! I’m home, open up!”

Madelyn covered her ears and stare at the dark ceiling above.

She had lost count the number of times Rogan had harassed her in the middle of the night.

There was also the time he had stolen her clothes and underwear as well, and she had found them in the trash can downstairs the next day.

She had originally thought she could live here in peace, but if this continued, she felt like she would go crazy sooner or later.

Rogan was the local hoodlum and was the son of Mrs. Paul who lived next door.

Madelyn did not open the door and after a good while, he finally left.

The cacophony by her ear blissfully faded away.

That night, Madelyn did not sleep well at all.

By the time she woke up, it was already twelve in the afternoon.

Madelyn walked to the balcony, stewed some pork ribs, fish fillet and chicken fingers....

She then squeezed the washed clothes dry and hung them on the balcony.

As she held the clothesline in her hand, a window suddenly lit up in one of the houses that had been long uninhabited.

The buildings here were very close to one another, if the curtains in another house were open, one could see what was going on from their window.

All of a sudden, the window of the building on the opposite side opened.

And just as quickly, Madelyn saw Forrest standing by the balcony smoking.

Their eyes met.

Madelyn quickly reacted and hurriedly hung the last piece of clothes before walking over to turn the stove off and close the balcony door before pulling the curtain shut.

She was wearing a light-colored nightdress with nothing else underneath.

1/2

Madelyn quickly changed up and brought in the cooked food and started eating.

She did not plan to go to the restaurant today as she did not know when Forrest and Jadie would leave.

She did not want Jadie to see her here. Madelyn wanted to wait for them to leave before she herself leave this place, moving to Lorville to live with her grandmother.

This place was unsafe and unsuitable for her.

Madelyn suddenly remembered her purse and could not remember where it was.

She had placed it in the pocket of the clothes she had worn yesterday.

Yet, when she went to look for it, it was nowhere to be found.

It was not in the washing machine either.

Only then did Madelyn remember that she might have dropped in the restaurant last night.

She immediately put aside her food.

Without her ID in her purse, she would not be able to buy a ticket to Lorville, but the most. important thing in the purse to her was a picture of her mother.

Madelyn barely had any time to think as she ran out.

By the time she got to the restaurant, she immediately walked toward Wonda, who was preparing some vegetables, and asked, “Did you see my purse in the restaurant last night?” Wonda did not even look at her. “How is you losing your purse any of my business?”

The reason Madelyn decided to keep her purse on herself was because she knew that Wonda had a tendency to steal things.

Mr. Massey had dedicated lockers in the restaurant for each employee to store their items.

Madelyn had gotten Rosario to bring over her hand cream from her drawer in the Jent residence. It had been a gift from Jasmine and was a rather precious skin care product, with each bottle costing at least two hundred dollars.

Two hundred was already a big sum in those days.

One time, she had seen Wonda pretending to go to the bathroom and then secretly rummaging through Madelyn’s belongings, and she had even used the hand cream.

Despite her despicable actions, Madelyn could not retaliate against her in this situation. Without any solid evidence, she could not just accuse her like that!

Chapter 92

If she had lost it under normal circumstances, she could have just gotten it replaced, but not in this situation. However, she could not do anything without her identity card, and she did not want to go back to the Jent residence.

Madelyn had never had much patience for Wonda and usually just turned a blind eye her, which was much better than Wonda deserved in her eyes.

toward

If she still had her old temper, Madelyn would have shoved the trash can over Wonda's head by now.

“Wonda, I have my mother's photo in that purse, and it's very important to me. Also, there are important documents inside... If you want money, I can give it to you. Everything else in there is useless to you, can you just return it to me?”

Wonda kicked the trash can aside, and its contents spilled out. She snapped, “What's the meaning of this, Madelyn? What does your missing purse have to do with me!? I didn't take your wallet, so what are you accusing me for? If you don't believe me, then make a police report!”

Her voice was so loud that the entire restaurant could hear her.

Madelyn scratched her head in frustration as she said somewhat helplessly, “Wonda... I've never done anything to hurt you! If you want my hand cream, I can even give it to you. Just give me back my purse and I'll treat it like nothing's happened.”

“Madelyn, I'm saying I didn't take your purse! Why are you accusing me like this?!”

Mr. Massey heard the commotion and did not know what was happening, so he hurried over.” What happened?”

“Lass, aren't you working the late shift tonight? What are you doing here so early today?”

Madelyn responded bluntly, “Mr. Massey, I dropped my purse, and there’s a really important photograph inside it alongside my IDs. Also, I actually came to tender my resignation and go back to my grandmother’s place, but without my ID, I can’t even buy any tickets.”

“What’s the matter, lass? Why are you so eager to leave out of the blue?”

She did not want to talk about what happened last night, since thinking about it would just make her feel more distressed. Besides, she did not want to make a big deal of the matter either.

Madelyn tried to weasel out of talking about it, instead saying, “I just miss home. Can you help me make a police report for the lost purse?”

“What does your purse look like? I’ll get some people to help you look for it.”

Madelyn looked at Wonda, whose eyes were now red as she looked away impassively. “It’s a pink Chanel purse with a logo on it. My student ID and national ID card is inside the purse. The most important thing in there is my national ID.”

Mr. Massey let out a slightly dejected look. “It’ll be difficult to find your lost purse, and your Cha-what-its-name, must be pretty pricey. I suppose anyone who picks it up will not return it to you. How about this, just tell me how much you need, and I’ll give you the money.”

Madelyn bit her lips. “Mr. Massey, can you buy me a bus ticket straight to Lorville? I want to leave today.”

“Wow, are you really in that much of a hurry? I’m afraid it won’t be possible, at least not today. How about tomorrow afternoon? I’ll go buy the ticket for you tomorrow.”

“I guess that’s the only option I have,” Madelyn nodded. “Alright, thank you, Mr. Massey. You can deduct the bus fare from my salary.”

“Pah, don’t sweat the small stuff. But tell me, Madelyn, are you really leaving? Does Rosario know about this?”

“I’ll inform Rosario later tonight.”

Mr. Massey nodded. “Alright then. Give me a minute, I’ll calculate your remaining salary for the past few days.”

The amount Madelyn got was about two thousand, and this was a huge amount of money for

her.

Yet, compared to what Hayson had given her, two thousand was just the price of a skirt.

Chapter 93

Back then, all of her money had been handed to her on a silver platter.

It was now that she realized that earning money was not as easy as she had assumed.

The envelope with the cash in it was quite thick.

After calculating her wages, Mr. Massey went out to deliver goods.

Now there was only Wonda and her left in the restaurant.

“The reason I dared to say all those things about you, Wonda, is because I know what sort of person you are. Who you really are, and what you’ve done. Deep down, you know yourself better than I do. I just hope that you can truly let your tears and words be without

guilt. I know. I have no evidence, and perhaps I might be wrongly accusing you. If that's the case, then I apologize in advance.

But if

you did take it and you're hiding it from me, then you may have struck a jackpot. That purse is a limited-edition birthday present from my father, worth around three thousand dollars, but it will forever be a mark on your hideous, thieving character."

Wonda only let out a mocking laugh. "Madelyn, what the heck are you pretending for? You're just slightly prettier than me, and you think yourself some rich person's daughter? As if I would believe that purse of yours is actually worth three thousand. Why not just claim that it's thirty thousand then? If you really are the daughter of a rich person, why are you here. working part-time jobs?

I've seen my share of pretenders before, but none like you!

I wouldn't take your purse even if you gave it to me! And so what if I did take the purse? You have no evidence, what can you do to me?"

Wonda was not a good-looking person. Her figure was skinny, and when she put on a scowl her face looked scheming and insidious. It was this look that was really grating.

When she first came to this place, Madelyn had been nice to her and even gave the latter her skin care products to use, but Wonda was very greedy and had started to use them without asking her permission. So, Madelyn just reminded her that she needed to ask her permission. first before using her things.

After that incident, Wonda had started acting strange toward her, and even started smearing her reputation by calling her unhygienic and a harlot who spread her legs for multiple men.

Wonda had made her sound like something worse than a beast.

Madelyn was not even angry. She only felt pity and felt that Zach was right when he said that how one appeared was determined by what was inside them. So, a hateful person must also be a pitiful person, and a pitiful person must have something detestable.

“I just hope you can keep speaking to me with such a tone and attitude, and I hope you shall never be wracked by guilt in whatever you do...”

After Madelyn left, she returned to her place to pack her luggage.

Yet, she ran into Rogan, who was barring the way as she went upstairs. “Hey, girl, you’re back. What are you doing outside?”

“No need. Please step aside!”

“Oh, come on, no need to be so fierce. I haven’t even apologized to you about last night. I’ve made food already, so come join me and consider it my apology!”

Madelyn did not plan to acknowledge him at all as she prepared to leave from the other side. Yet, wherever she went, he stopped her...

“Come on, girl. We’re literally neighbors, so just come to my place for dinner.”

Madelyn did not respond. She turned around and prepared to walk downstairs, not wanting to

face off with him.

At this moment, Rogan grabbed her arm. “What are you leaving for? Come follow me home. I’m alone at home today...”

“Let me go! LET ME GO!!!”

Rogan was a six feet tall hulk of a man, and him grabbing onto Madelyn was as if he was grabbing a little bunny. To him, her struggling was nothing but mere amusement.

He then dragged Madelyn's thin body up the staircase toward his house.

“Rogan Paul, what do you think you're doing?! I'll scream, you know!”

“You'll scream...? Ahahaha... Try it then. You can scream your lungs out for all I care. No one will be saving you today.”

Chapter 94

“Let me go, you bastard! My father won't let you live if you lay your hands on me!”

Rogan let out a contemptuous laugh. “Your father? He's worthless, and he'll need to kowtow to me if he dares to show his face here.”

“Somebody, anyone, HELP!!!”

“Bitch, what the hell are you screaming for!? Your underwear is all lace, so why the heck are you pretending?” Rogan immediately slapped her.

Madelyn's face turned to one side by the impact as she opened her mouth and tried to bite back. Rogan tugged her hair and pulled her head back.

She then let out another scream.

Just at this moment, a man walked down from the staircase.

As if seeing a savior, Madelyn pleaded. “Help me, please, help me...”

The narrow staircase suddenly became cramped with the three people on it.

Rogan looked at the man menacingly, “Mind your own business, cunt.”

The man had a powerful and intimidating aura about him and was a whole head taller than Rogan. His expression was icy cold as he glared at Rogan and barked, “Let her go!”

“Fuck off!”

“I’ll not repeat myself again. Let. Her. Go.” The man’s voice was ice cold.

“And what if I don’t let her go? What are you gonna do? Don’t you know who I am? Around these parts, I can have you killed with a snap of my fingers!” Rogan let go of her hair and pointed at his nose.

Yet who knew, the man gave Rogan a kick down the staircase as the latter screamed as he tumbled down.

Madelyn too was shocked and saw Rogan lying flat on the ground unconscious, blood flowing

from his forehead.

Madelyn covered her mouth to prevent herself from screaming.

Before she could even thank the man, he had already left!

Madelyn quickly went upstairs in a panic and fumbled her keys out. However, due to the lingering fear from earlier, she was in such a panicked state she could not even hold the key properly and it fell onto the ground.

She did not have time to think and simply locked the door from inside, went to the cupboard

to take her clothes out and shoved them into her luggage.

Back then, she had truly been sheltered by the Jent household, and she did not know how sinister and dangerous the world outside could be!

Without her identity and without the Jent family, Madelyn did not know what sort of life she was about to experience.

Perhaps, she would encounter situations that were even more painful and grueling than this one.

Was she destined to be able to escape this fate of hers?

Was her fate just... that?

Madelyn squatted on the ground as a sense of helplessness gnawed at her heart.

Perhaps the debts she had owed the Jent family in her past life was now hers to pay back in this life.

Madelyn put away the clothes from the balcony and inadvertently saw on the opposite side, Forrest, clad in a black singlet, kissing and hugging Jadie on the balcony.

He lowered his head, then raised his gaze and watched as the person that had been packing things up walked back into the house.

It was four o'clock in the afternoon, and before Madelyn left, she left a letter on the table. Perhaps by the time Rosario returned, Madelyn would already be in Lorville.

After reading the letter, Rosario would understand everything that had happened, as well as the reason why she left.

As Madelyn dragged her luggage out, Rogan was still lying at the entrance of the staircase.

Whenever he regained his consciousness, he would definitely not let her go easily.

When he heard the sound of luggage being dragged along the floor, Rogan opened his eyes in a daze as he looked at Madelyn's departing figure.

“Bitch... just wait till I get my hands on you.”

As he let out a weak growl, he fainted once again.

Chapter 95

At a convenience store by the intersection, Madelyn spent two hundred dollars just to use the lady boss's identity card to purchase a ticket to Lorville.

It would take 16 hours by bus to get there and was quite the journey, but fortunately, that was the last ticket for the bus tonight and the only downside was the late departure, leaving only at 8:30 in the evening.

Madelyn had to wait another hour to get on the bus to the West Station, and it would be just the right time when she arrived there.

Yet just at that moment, a boom of thunder could be heard in the horizon, followed by flashes

of lightning.

The lady boss looked worriedly. “Girl, it’s going to rain buckets soon. How about you go tomorrow instead? It’s already so late, and I bet the bus to West Station will be delayed as well.

Madelyn bit her lips and said somewhat worriedly, “Ma’am, do you have a way to send me over there? I can pay you some more money.”

No way! It’ll take two hours just to send you there. Also, it’ll be a big downpour soon, and the

roads won’t be safe.”

“How about I give you another hundred?”

The lady boss’ eyes lit up but she quickly put on a rueful look. “No, no, a life for a hundred is...”

“Two hundred, if you really can’t do it, then I’ll just look for someone else.”

The lady boss quickly grabbed the two hundred and stuffed it into her pocket. “Just wait, I’ll call my husband to send you over.”

“Thank you,” Madelyn replied.

Soon, the boss came with a borrowed van.

The lady boss carried Madelyn’s bag and said, “Girl, you have to be careful, going somewhere so far. Make sure you don’t get yourself kidnapped. You’re so pretty and those kidnapers are specifically after young, vulnerable girls like you.”

Madelyn saw the lady boss' gaze and caught something inexplicable in it.

Just as she was about to take her luggage from the lady boss, she saw the boss on the driver seat letting out a smirk.

Madelyn noticed something was not right and through the van's window, she saw someone else inside the van.

“Hey, girl, what are you standing there for? Get in the van, stop wasting time.”

Madelyn then said calmly, “Wait, I left something at your shop, I'll go grab it.”

“Get into the van first. I'll help you take it.” The lady boss said as she tried to get Madelyn into

the van.

“It's just on the fridge right there.”

Just as the lady boss turned around to look for the item, Madelyn took the opportunity and fled toward Mr. Massey's restaurant.

The lady boss took a glance and saw nothing there, and when she turned back around, Madelyn had already run away.

“Shit! That brat got away! After her!” she yelled.

“What?!”

Rogan had originally just wanted to sit and wait for the prey to fall into his lap, but who could have guessed that the girl would be sharp enough to see through the ploy?

Earlier on, Rogan had fainted by the stairwell, and it was Mrs. Paul who found her son

bleeding on the forehead as she screamed for people to send him to the clinic.

The moment he had gotten out of the clinic, Rogan had looked for Madelyn all over town to settle his score with her.

The van quickly turned around and chased after her.

Madelyn desperately ran with every bit of her strength she could muster.

A crack of thunder rang from above and the lightning shone a light on her fearful face.

Rain soon came pouring down in heavy sheets.

Ice-cold raindrops fell on her, seeping through her clothes. The rain came suddenly and under the dim streetlights, the truck's high beam behind her looked like a ravenous beast chasing

after her.

The rainwater quickly accumulated into puddles on the ground as Madelyn stumbled into an uneven pothole and fell straight onto the pavement.

Chapter 96

Five people got out of the car. Madelyn propped her hands on the ground, staring back at their nauseating gazes. She backed away in fear.

“What... What do you all want...?”

She continued, “D-Don't come any closer! If you want money, I'll give you all of my money.”

Rogan smiled lewdly and slowly walked closer to Madelyn, “Fucking hell. I almost broke my bones because of you. You’re still trying to run...? Let’s see where you can run to now...”

“This stupid bitch. Why are you wasting our time talking to her? Just bring her to our turf, and the five of us can have some fun with her!”

“That’s right! I guarantee it’ll take less than three days to get her to submit to us completely. Soon enough, she’ll serve us and give us a few sons.”

Madelyn stood up with her trembling legs, “Do you realize what you’re doing is illegal?!”

The few men laughed wildly upon hearing her words. They asked in a mocking tone, “Illegal? Why don’t you take a look around and see where we are?! We’re the law around here.”

“This is madness. You’re a bunch of lunatics...”

‘I can’t let them get their own way. If I get into this car, the tragic events of my past life will happen again... My cries... My screams... Echoing in the warehouse,’ Madelyn thought.

The image of the few naked men smiling lingered in her mind and haunted her.

‘No... I don’t want this...’ she thought again.

A black sedan parked in a dark spot in the parking lot nearby. In the car, there was a man wearing Bluetooth earphones as he reported, “Mr. Jardin, the footage has been sent.”

“I’ve seen it.”

“Should we take action now? The group has laid their hands on Ms. Jent.”

“There’s no rush. I’ll go and settle things. Follow them!”

The windshield wipers moved left and right, making a squeaky sound. The display screen in the dimly lit car showed the footage of a few tall men laying their hands on a young woman.

Zach gazed at the footage and was in deep thought.

‘Madelyn, you were so determined to escape the Jardin family. Do you see the consequences of your actions now? You need to pay for making the wrong decisions! My princess, the world is dirty. It always has been this way. Isn’t it better for you to stay inside, pampered and protected? Madelyn Jent, all of this... is just the beginning!’ he thought.

In the footage, Madelyn’s shirt got torn into pieces during the process of fighting them off. She was covered in dirt, and all she had left on her was a close-to-see-through bra top.

Madelyn’s eyes were filled with despair. Even though she was clearly no match for them, she continued to fight back with all she had.

The men toyed with her as if she were a kitten. Madelyn was bruised all over. When she fell onto the ground, one of the men grabbed her by the head and forcefully shoved her into the

car.

Madelyn felt for a stone near her and hurled it at the man.

The man screamed in pain.

Madelyn took advantage of the men letting their guard down, and quickly got up from the ground. Then, she ran away.

“Oh shit! The bitch escaped!””

“After her!”

Elsewhere, a group of people took shelter from the rain under the eaves of a house. Jadie had a black leather jacket wrapped on her head. It was the one Forrest usually wore.

Chapter 97

Jadie stood next to Forrest and glanced at him. He only wore a black short-sleeved shirt.

“Aren’t you cold? You should wear the jacket instead!”

“I’m not cold. You wear it,” he said.

Claire stood next to Jadie and lightly bumped her arm, “Jadie, are you two dating? That was quick!”

Jadie said shyly, “Stop! We’re just friends.”

“You call this just friends? Stop lying!”

Meanwhile, Alex rolled her

eyes.

‘She’s so damn good at pretending,’ she thought.

Ajax noticed the odd atmosphere and quickly said, “The weather is so lousy! We finally got together after a while, and now it’s raining. The heavens are being so rude!”

“Rude? Who do you think you are, calling the heavens rude?! You’re gonna get struck by lightning,” Alex said.

The group burst into laughter.

“No way! None of us brought an umbrella. When’s it going to stop raining?”

“Who knows?”

“Hey, do you guys hear that? I think someone’s calling for help.”

“Calling for help? Are you sure you’re not hallucinating?”

“No. I really do hear someone shouting. Listen, Forrest...”

Everyone quickly fell silent. They seemed to really hear someone calling out for help amidst the sounds of the rain. There were also the voices of several men.

Forrest’s gaze turned icy. The person’s voice clearly echoed again in the back alley, “Help! Is there anybody...”

“You stupid bitch! Where do you think you’re going?!”

Ajax quickly recognized the voice, “Shit! That voice is clearly Rogan and the gang. They’re clearly trying to force themselves onto a woman.”

“Alex, doesn’t this woman’s voice sound like that girl who just came and talked back at you?”

Forrest said, "I knew Rogan was a no-good scumbag. That girl just turned of age... Forrest, should we go check it out?"

Forrest casually fished out a cigarette from his pocket and held it under his nose. He sniffed it and said, "Since when were you all so nosy?"

Jadie said hesitantly, "Forrest, why did I hear Madelyn's voice? She... Is she also here?"

Forrest lowered his head and looked at her with a smile, "That's none of your concern. Alex, you all stay here and wait while Ajax and I go buy umbrellas. This rain is going to last a while. We don't want you catching a cold when you get back."

Then, Forrest walked off into the rain with Ajax, the red-haired guy, the green-haired guy, and the rest.

After walking for a while, the few realized they were going the wrong way.

"Forrest, the convenience store is that way. We're headed in the wrong direction."

Forrest stood in the rain with reddened eyes, "Say another word, and I'll stick an umbrella into your mouth when we get home."

The three of them exchanged glances and obediently trailed behind Forrest without saying another word. The current situation was clear.

The green-haired guy shouted, "Forrest, guys, look! The girl's up there."

Forrest followed his gaze.

The rain did not look like it was going to stop at all. It was dark, so all they could see was a dark expanse of the sea with raging waves, and Madelyn, who stood by the cliff, had nowhere to

run.

She was forced to the edge of the cliff, which had sharp, craggy rocks below it. If she were to fall off the cliff and get swept away by the waves, there would be no chance of survival.

“Oh no! Mr. Jardin, Ms. Jent is being forced to jump into the sea.”

At that moment, there was a black Audi parked on the bridge that spanned across the sea. Its high beams were on as the person in the car observed the events happening down below.

“Fred, what do you think? Will she dare to jump or not?”

Fred Turner was Zach’s loyal subordinate.

“I don’t know, but if we don’t intervene, something’s going to happen to Ms. Jent.’

Zach mockingly tapped his fingers on the steering wheel as soft, slow music played in the car,

Chapter 98

“Keep running! Why’d you stop?”

“Come on, girl. Stop resisting and just follow us back. We won’t hurt you.”

Madelyn glanced at the raging waves beneath her. As the rocks under her feet fell, they were instantly swallowed by the waves. In the face of such uncertainty, she found herself

contemplating, ‘Am I scared right now? Perhaps I am.’

Memories flooded her mind—tragic deaths, betrayal, and the loss of cherished things. She had once believed she was the happiest person, but that dream shattered, leaving behind a gaping void of darkness, anguish, and torment.

‘I thought I could escape from all the tragedies of my past life in this lifetime as long as I let go of those things and those people... But now... I think I was wrong!’ She clenched her fists as she grappled with this conflicting realization.

‘My life was destined to be a tragedy from the very moment of my birth. It seems as though the heavens demand that I pay for all of Hayson Jent’s sins. All I yearn for is to live on and peacefully spend my days...’ She silently lamented her fate.

‘I’ve really tried my best to change everything from my previous life. I hoped for a better outcome, but things still ended up this way in the end. I’ve already experienced death once...

‘To me, death isn’t terrifying. Besides, if I were no longer alive, perhaps...the only person who’d be sad is Ethan. What a shame that I never got to meet him one last time,’ she concluded, her thoughts tinged with regret.

Ajax said, “Oh shit! Don’t tell me she’s really gonna jump? If she jumps, we won’t even be able to retrieve her body...”

Forrest walked faster and faster and eventually broke into a run. He shouted, “All of you, stop!

His voice was drowned out by the thunder. No one else heard him apart from them.

“Madelyn Jent! Don’t you dare jump!” He repeated, “Don’t you dare jump! Do you hear me?!”

“Oh shit! If she dies, we’re all done for when the police show up!”

“Stop putting on an act, you stupid bitch! Do it, then! I dare you to jump!”

“Stop resisting. It won’t do you any harm. Don’t risk your own life over such a small matter.”

Suddenly, Madelyn laughed sadly. She spread her arms apart, looked up at the night sky, and let the raindrops fall on her face. ‘If this is my fate, I no longer wish to repeat the same mistakes.’

‘Zach Jardin, I really am exhausted! Your grudge against Hayson from these two lifetimes. Can

we just settle it once and for all? Can you please treat me better in the next lifetime?’ She silently implored, ‘I really want to be your sister. I envy Jadie for having a brother like you...

Lastly, she whispered in her thoughts, ‘And... Farewell, Ethan.

Chapter 99

Madelyn leaned back and fell, the wind blowing against her face as if it were a knife.

Her body was wracked with pain all over.

Forrest shouted, “Madelyn Jent!”

“Oh no! Mr. Jardin, Ms. Jent is-” Fred uttered in shock.

Zach said, “Madelyn-”

“Oh fuck! Rogan, that woman actually jumped. We killed her! What should we do?!”

“This has nothing to do with me! I didn’t kill her! I didn’t do anything.”

Rogan looked down, and Madelyn was already nowhere to be seen. He was so terrified that his legs gave out, and he fell onto the ground. Meanwhile, the others had already run away in fear.

At that moment, Forrest arrived. He took off the only piece of clothing on him—a short-sleeved shirt and jumped into the water without a word.

“Oh shit, Forrest! Forrest actually jumped!”

Madelyn had fallen onto the rocks, and she bled out into the sea. The ice-cold seawater seemed to freeze her limbs, and her consciousness turned hazy. She felt like she was free-falling like a perishing star and falling to a place where she belonged.

It’s so dark... Mom, I’m cold...’ she thought.

Ajax anxiously paced by the shore.

“Call the cops! Quick, call the cops!”

Someone took out a cell phone and tried calling, “It’s not connecting. The signal’s dead because it’s raining.”

Ajax scratched his head in distress and continued pacing around anxiously, “Fuck...”

“What do we do?!” the

green-haired

guy

said in worry.

Ajax roared in annoyance, “You’re asking me? How the hell am I supposed to know? You two, go and get the others. Go get someone who knows how to swim. And get a phone. Find a place that has a good signal and call the cops. Then, we’ll talk.”

Alex and Jadie waited until the rain stopped. When they saw that Forrest and the others still had not returned, they sensed that something was amiss. And so, they went to the seaside.

As expected, they saw Ajax anxiously pacing around by the sea.

“Ajax, where’s Forrest?”

10

Ajax said hesitantly, “Forrest just jumped into the sea to save the girl.”

Alex widened her eyes in disbelief before going up to Ajax and grabbing him by the collar. Then, she kicked him to the ground, “Why didn’t you stop him? It’s high tide right now, he’s gonna die!”

Jadie covered her mouth and teared

up in worry, “F-Forrest...”

“Another person just jumped into the sea. We don’t know who it was.”

Alex teared up in desperation, “Forrest, you’re an asshole! If you die, I won’t let you off easily, even if you turn into a ghost!”

At that moment, the red-haired guy pointed to some spot in the distance. He was in shock and could not speak, “A-Alex... It... It’s Forrest!”

Everyone turned to look in that direction and saw Forrest holding a person in his arms as he walked out of the sea.

Everyone walked over to him. Forrest placed Madelyn on the ground. Then, he pinched her nose, leaned down, and gave her mouth-to-mouth.

“Forrest...”

Alex and Jadie immediately ran over to Forrest, who had turned blue from the cold.

Forrest sat up and started performing CPR.

“All of you, step back.”

Jadie was frozen in shock when she saw Madelyn. She did not expect the person to be Madelyn, who had been missing for nearly three months.

‘I can’t believe that all this time, she’s been here in this fishing village,’ she thought.

10 minutes later, there still was no sign of Madelyn regaining consciousness.

Alex could not help but say, “Forrest, stop it. She’s... already dead.”

“Get lost! If you don’t have anything nice to say, shut your mouth!”

Forrest had a dark, icy gaze.

Nobody dared to speak. None of them had ever seen him this angry before.

Forrest gave Madelyn a few more mouth-to-mouths.

He said, “Madelyn, you’ve already taken advantage of me. If you don’t fucking wake up, who’ll repay me? Wake up, Madelyn! Do you hear me?!”

Suddenly, the person on the floor moved.

“KEUGH!”

Madelyn coughed out a few mouthfuls of water. However, she was only momentarily conscious. She only saw the blurry silhouette of a man and did not manage to clearly see who he was before she closed her eyes and passed out.

Forrest breathed a sigh of relief and finally no longer felt as tense. Then, he quickly picked up Madelyn

Just then, several black cars drove over and surrounded them, and several bodyguards in black suits stepped out of the cars.

Chapter 100

Kevin held an umbrella and walked to the front of the car before heading to the passenger seat. He opened the car door, and a man in a perfectly tailored black shirt and slacks stepped out of the car. He exuded an air of intimidation.

The man stepped onto the ground with his black leather shoes. He was incredibly handsome, but his eyes were filled with danger.

Everyone seemingly had been intimidated by his presence and automatically made way for him when he approached.

Forrest met with his gaze just as he picked up Madelyn. When their eyes met, an unknown, suffocating feeling quickly passed between the two.

Zach walked over while Kevin held an umbrella beside him.

“Mr. Arnold, I owe you one for saving Madelyn’s life,” said Zach as he stuck out his head. However, Forrest seemed to show no intention of accepting his handshake.

“You owe me one. Don’t you forget it, Zach Jardin.”

Zach took the unconscious Madelyn into his arms.

They went to the Portsmouth Fishing Village Clinic.

On their way back to Ventropolis, they discovered that a section of the road ahead had collapsed. Since the route back was under repair, it would take a few more days before they could get back.

“Sorry, Zach. I didn’t mean to hide things from you on purpose. It’s just that I have exams coming up, and I felt a little stressed. I came out with my friends to have fun and was worried you’d be upset, so I didn’t tell you.”

Jadie stood before Zach with her head lowered and did not dare to speak. She looked like a child who had done something wrong.

”

Claire was worried Jadie would get reprimanded by Zach, so she stepped forward and said, Zach, I insisted on dragging Jadie out. This has nothing to do with her. If you want to blame someone, blame me.”

Zach did not blame her.

“Where have you been staying?” he asked.

Claire quickly answered, “She and I stayed at our friend’s house.”

Zach said, “Move out of your friend’s house tonight and stay at a guesthouse for now. I’ll send you back to school in a few days.”

Jadie nodded and fiddled with her fingers, “I understand, Zach.”

“Let’s go back home first! It’s almost sunrise. Let’s go back and rest for a bit.”

“How about you, Zach?” asked Jadie.

“I’ll wait for Madelyn to wake up.”

Jadie did not say anything more, “Then I’ll come and see you guys again tomorrow. You should get some rest soon too, Zach. Don’t tire yourself out.”

Not long after Jadie left, someone opened the examination room door. A middle-aged doctor walked out and said, “Are you the patient’s kin?”

“How is she?”

The man spoke in a dialect and replied in not-very-standard Venturian, “Not good. There’s a tear in her abdomen, but we’ve stopped the bleeding for now. All we can do here is conduct a simple examination. Once the roads are repaired, it would be best to take her to a bigger hospital for treatment and see if she has any other internal injuries.”

“Thank you,” replied Zach.

Kevin followed the doctor to retrieve the prescribed drugs.

Zach walked into the shabby examination room. Madelyn lay on the wooden bed with a pale face and closed eyes. She was so quiet it was almost as if she were dead.

The dimly lit room cast a slight glow onto her pale face. Zach stared deeply at her.

‘Madelyn Jent, you had hundreds of ways to continue living, yet you chose the most idiotic path. When did you stop fearing even death?’

Zach suddenly realized the person lying in front of him was more unfamiliar than ever.

“The Madelyn I know is usually stubborn and headstrong, but timid and weak. This time, she’s truly exceeded my expectations.”

Zach genuinely felt a soft spot for Madelyn when he saw her jump off. It was a feeling that had appeared out of nowhere.

He tucked her exposed hand under the blanket.

The rain outside stopped momentarily and started again.

“D-Don’t come any closer!”