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Love Coming from the Least Expected

Chapter 171 - 175

I had a hard time painting the image I had in mind. After countless attempts, I decided to give up because none of the paintings I have produced could justify Christopher's pair of gleaming eyes.

In the end, I tore the paintings with a self-deprecating smirk.

It had been a long time since I last painted something. I couldn't get used to holding a brush, let alone having myself focused for the session. The only thing I had in mind was Autumnal Panorama.

Although I was conscious my painting wasn't as unworthy as they mentioned, I couldn't move on from the incident that had been bothering me for years.

Autumnal Panorama was sent back shortly after it was submitted. However, I wasn't made aware of it and thought I would soon acquire the result.

Nathan tore the painting into pieces before I could get my hands on it.

Overwhelmed by the shattered pieces I saw in the dustbin, I paid no heed to the details and failed to notice it was a replicated piece.

What makes you think you have the right to draw when you can't even contribute to the family?

Get the hell out of my sight at once! If you refuse to get married for the family's sake, don't consider yourself a member of the Tanner family from today onwards!

I thought I had shrugged those memories off my mind. It turned out they had long become part of my identity.

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Although I had long given up on Nathan, whenever he showed Yvette and Crystal the lovely side of his, I would get jealous.

He's my father, why do I seem to be the outsider instead?

I made up my mind to leave the hospital because I had enough of the place full of the lingering scent of disinfectant.

As that was the only place that might lead me to the answers to my queries, I was determined to make my way back at all costs.

The moment I retrieved my phone to acquire Sabrina's aid to leave the hospital, I hesitated because she had her own commitment. It wouldn't be wise to approach her for such a trivial matter.

In the end, I hailed a cab and acquired the nurse's aide to head downstairs. The nurse was conscious of my divorce. Thus, she had been taking great care of me during my time at the hospital.

When she brought me to the cab, she urged me to return to the hospital for regular check-ups from time to time. She even offered to drop by my place if I needed her help.

I expressed my gratitude with a smile. Her act of kindness had reminded me to not lose faith in others just yet.

Meanwhile, little did I know the ones following me would soon turn my life upside down.

It felt great to be back. I drafted a text with a smile and sent it to Christopher. I'll be waiting for you at home.

I couldn't be bothered by the fact Christopher and Monica had taken part in a party together because I had faith in him.

It would be fine as long as he told me nothing was going on between them.

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Shortly after I made my way into the elevator, two mysterious figures joined me. I requested with a bright grin, "I'll be heading off on the fifth floor."

One of them had their eyes glued to me in an odd manner. My heart started racing as I had a bad feeling about it.

Upon a simple glimpse, I noticed the surveillance camera was perfectly fine. Therefore, I told myself everything would be fine. The moment the elevator reached the designated floor, I brought myself out with the aid of the crutches.

When I was a step away from the entrance, someone covered my mouth and strangled me in an attempt to stop me from yelling for help.

No matter how much I retaliated against him, my effort was to no avail. After a few seconds of retaliation, I could barely catch my breath. When I thought I was about to pass out, the man moved away from me. His accomplice covered my mouth with an ether-infused handkerchief when I tried to catch my breath.

Consequently, I started feeling lightheaded and collapsed in between their arms with my head drooping over my shoulders. No longer could I feel my limbs as well.

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I could vaguely feel someone lifting me into a car. The bumpy ride to a certain somewhere was the only thing I could recall after I heard them starting the car.

As much as I wanted to shout for help, I couldn't. In the end, I passed out with fear lingering in my mind.

By the time I regained consciousness, I found out I couldn't even stretch my limbs because I was confined in a cramped and pitch-black space.

"Have you brought her back? Are you sure you have gotten the right person?"

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“I’m pretty sure because she looks just like the one in the picture!”

“Get her there and teach her a lesson immediately!”

When I heard the content of their conversation, I started shivering in fear. I must have gotten unlucky to be kidnapped when I was as poor as a church rat.

Who are they? Why have they abducted me?

I was certain no one would want to abduct me because of my limited wealth and connection. In other words, abducting me would just be a waste of their effort and time.

Someone once told me ether was usually made use of by the criminals to take out their targets. I couldn’t believe there would be a day I got to experience it firsthand.

I tried to reach my phone in an attempt to reach out to somebody for help, but I noticed it had been taken away from me.

The moment I heard the muffled sound produced when I accidentally knocked on the wall behind me, I ruled out the possibility of me being confined in a gigantic box.

While losing myself in the process of thought, someone pried the box open from behind and grabbed my hair, dragging me out of the box.

It took me a few seconds to snap out of confusion and bring myself up. Someone approached me and raised my chin against my will. He yelled, “She’s the one! Tie her up!”

I tried to flee, but I was taken into custody after a few seconds. They brought me back and tied me up as instructed.

I shrieked and asked, “What do you guys want from me? I’m just a poor woman! I can’t even afford to pay you anything!”

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“Ha! You’re not able to pay us, but someone acquainted with you can!” The man grinned and added, “I can’t believe you’re the wife of the almighty CEO! I guess you’re worth quite something, huh?”

Upon a simple glimpse at the men surrounding me, I saw the two at the elevator and another man standing next to them. That particular man remained silent and stared at me in the eyes with an eerie look.

I gulped and blamed Crystal for my misfortune. Had she refrained from displaying the affection she had for Lyle in the restaurant, these bunch of men wouldn’t have gotten their hands on my whereabouts.

Ugh! Why am I the one suffering because of someone else’s action? If they’re that capable, why don’t they abduct Crystal instead?

If Crystal has been abducted, Lyle will get them everything they desire! As for me, Lyle will just deem it a waste of his money!

I tried my best to calm myself down and negotiated with the vicious-looking man, “Aren’t you aware Lyle is filing for divorce with me? You won’t get anything if you abduct me! Why don’t you set me free? I’ll keep everything to myself!”

“You don’t get to order us around! Also, don’t try anything silly unless you wish to spend some quality time with my friends over there!”

He caressed my cheek with his fleshy palm. “I guess you’re quite a skillful one when it comes to having some raunchy fun, huh?”

I felt a chill running down my spine because of the disgusting thoughts they had. If they were to carry out the things they had in mind, I wouldn’t get to retaliate against them.

The only source of illumination available in the pitch-black room was the patch of sunlight coming from the hole above.

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As soon as they departed, I started surveying the surroundings to see if there was anything I could use to cut the rope. Unfortunately, luck wasn't on my side. I had no choice but to break the rope with brute force.

Spending time alone in the pitch-black room had sent me to the endless loop of despair. Christopher was my only hope. I secretly prayed he would notice something was wrong soon.

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It wouldn't be necessary for the man to threaten me as it would be impossible to break free. There was nothing that could be made use of to escape the spacious basement.

The desolate environment was so eerie I could hear my heart racing.

I started cursing Crystal for bringing upon my misfortune by exposing the messed-up relationship to the public, including the kidnappers.

A short while later, I could barely pull myself together anymore because the pent-up fatigue had caught up to me.

The kidnappers never returned after their departure, leaving me starving in the dark. My fear grew stronger as my stomach started growling.

Where are you, Christopher? Can you come over yet? You're the only one I can rely on! You have to save me! As long as you save me, I'll promise you whatever you have in mind!

It was a tormenting experience to be confined in a pitch-black room. When someone opened the door again, it felt as though an eternity had passed.

I could barely open my eyes because of the strong shaft of light. While closing my eyes to get used to the illuminated environment, I heard a woman's voice.

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As it was a familiar voice, I widened my eyes in disbelief and looked in the direction of the entrance.

Crystal was being dragged into the basement by a few buff-looking men. When they placed the equally startled woman next to me, she yelled, "Yvonne, are you the mastermind behind this? I will never succumb to you!"

I rolled my eyes in silence because I no longer had the energy to pick a fight with the shrieking woman next to me.

"Idiot!" I snorted at her in return and turned around, staring elsewhere to avoid engaging in a conversation with Crystal.

"Are you reprimanding me? Yvonne, you're such a jinx! Why the heck have you persuaded them to abduct me? What exactly are you up to? I'm telling you Lyle will never return to you even if I'm dead!"

If others were around, they would be shocked by Crystal's true color as she had always put on a considerate and adorable front when she showed up in the public.

Unable to withstand her remarks anymore, I rebuked, "Can you stop accusing me of something I have never done? Do you really think I'm as vicious as you are?"

Infuriated by my remark, she tried to kick me in return. "You know what? I'll get you back for today's incident! Lyle won't leave me alone, but I'm afraid that's not the case for you!"

Hello? I'm not waiting for that jerk, okay? I'm waiting for my one and only to rush to my rescue!

With that being said, he isn't in Avenport at the moment! Is he going to return to my corpse in a few days?

Irrked, I yelled at her in return, "Alright, I'm well aware you're having an affair with him. Why don't you keep that to yourself and stop bringing it up?"

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Suddenly, a man approached us and slapped me in the face. I was frustrated by the fact that he decided to take things out on me when Crystal had been yelling as well.

“Get in touch with Lyle and tell him his wife and mistress has been abducted! If he wants them back safe and sound, get him to prepare a billion! Warn him not to get in touch with the cops! Otherwise, we’ll allow him to make it to the headline with his beloved women’s death!”

A man reached for his phone and took photos of Crystal and me. He then proceeded to get in touch with Lyle and instructed him to meet them in the basement at five o’clock in the morning.

It turned out it had been twenty-four hours since I was abducted. That must be the reason my entire body had been aching since a few hours ago.

“Lyle will definitely rush to my rescue! Do you think you get to salvage your marriage by playing the victim in front of him? No way!” Crystal yelled at me with a provocative look.

I had no intention to carry on with the fight Crystal started because she wouldn’t stop mentioning Lyle when Christopher was the only one I cared about. It would be such a shame if I couldn’t get to meet Christopher for one last time before my death.

Lyle soon showed up with the demanded sum, but the kidnappers refused to set us free. They announced, “A billion for one of them!”

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He showed up sooner than I had expected. When I was about to experience an emotional breakdown because of Crystal, Lyle showed up in the basement.

The well-built man’s silhouette seemed so familiar, yet there was something odd about it. I couldn’t see his face, but I was certain he had his eyes glued to me for a few seconds.

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Lyle instructed in a callous tone, "I have brought you a billion as demanded! Set them free at once!"

"How am I supposed to ensure you're here on your own? You have brought quite a few bodyguards with you, haven't you?" Someone stepped forward in an attempt to take over the suitcase with a billion, but Lyle took a step back and requested, "I need to ensure they're safe!"

"Lyle, save me! I need you!" Crystal sniffled and looked at Lyle with a pair of welled-up eyes.

To my surprise, Lyle looked at me and asked, "Eve, are you okay?"

I gasped in silence when the kidnapper kicked me in the leg, instructing me to answer Lyle's query. As much as it hurt, I tried my best to resist the racking sensation I felt and answered, "I'm fine."

Lyle heaved a sigh of relief and handed over the kidnappers the hefty suitcase he had brought along. He seemed to have upheld his promise and brought them the demanded sum.

"I won't lodge a police report as long as they're able to leave safe and sound! On top of that, I promise not to go after any of you! Please leave at once!"

The three kidnappers gaped in silence at the presence of the suitcase of money. To be precise, I was equally inundated by the sum available.

No ordinary person could possibly remain calm in the presence of such an astronomical figure, let alone a housewife like me.

As the kidnappers went dead silent, Lyle repeated his question, "Can you set them free yet?"

"Wait!" Thrilled, the kidnappers' emotions were written all over their faces. They announced, "Initially, we're supposed to set them free, but the amount you have brought us only enables you to bring one of them away with you."

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Lyle rebuked with his eyes narrowing to a slit, "Don't you think that's too much? I have adhered to every demand of yours and brought the requested sum! Since you're after the money, it's better for you to set them free at once!"

Honestly, when he made himself clear and stood his ground, he seemed like the man I once had a thing for. However, I had long lost faith in him.

As a result, my heart started racing the moment the things awaiting the one left behind crossed my mind.

"Mr. Smith, that's quite a persuasive speech, but I don't think you're in a position to negotiate since they're currently under our custody! If you can't make up your mind, do you need my help to make the call on your behalf?"

Halfway through the kidnapper's orated speech, he ran the dagger across Crystal's neck and asked, "This is your mistress, isn't she? Do you think she's able to paint if I amputate her fingers?"

"No!" Lyle was at the top of his lungs. He added, "I'll get my assistant to bring another billion over immediately! Stay away from them!"

"I can't be sure if you're going to send the cops our way or not! Hurry up and make up your mind! Otherwise, I'll make the call on your behalf!"

The moment Lyle witnessed the kidnapper trimming Crystal's hair without any hesitation, he yelled, "Crystal!"

"Save me, Lyle! Haven't you promised to keep me safe for the rest of my life? You're not going to abandon me, are you?" Crystal started weeping with her eyes glued to Lyle.

When I caught him looking in my direction, I started stuttering as I was at a loss for words, "I-I—"

What am I supposed to tell him? Am I supposed to beg him to save me? Should I ask him not to abandon me when he had abandoned me for more than once? After much considerations, I asked, "Are you going to abandon me again?"

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When he heard me, he stared at me openmouthed. It was evident he was taken aback by my question. Seconds after he snapped out of bewilderment, he announced with his teeth gritted, "I'll bring you four billion as long as we get to leave!"

One of the kidnapers broke the silence, reprimanding Lyle, "Stop messing with us and make up your mind! Otherwise, we'll randomly take one of them away with us!"

Lyle kept glancing at Crystal and me with his face scrunched up. Never had he shown me the hesitant side of his.

Suddenly, Crystal broke the silence, asserting while sniffing, "Lyle, please bring Yvonne away with you! She's your wife! However, I'm afraid our child won't get to meet you! O-Our child—"

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"You're pregnant?" Lyle started trembling in fear. He looked at me in the eyes with an apologetic look. It was then I knew he had made up his mind.

He stuttered, "I-I'm so sorry, Yvonne! I'll owe you once and think of something to save you once I'm back!"

Once he finished justifying himself, he shot daggers at the kidnapers and yelled, "I'll be bringing Crystal away with me!"

His announcement sent to me a vicious cycle of despair. Thereafter, I went dead silent as he rushed over to Crystal's rescue and brought her out of the basement.

I was about to spend my remaining few hours in despair while they would start a brand-new day without me.

Why has it gotten to me again when his decision isn't that much of a surprise? Well, I guess luck was never on my side!

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As they strode their way out, Crystal beamed in satisfaction and mouthed in silence, "It's time for you to enjoy the upcoming session!"

I could feel my limbs turning stiff as the door was kept shut once again. A chill ran down my spine as the three vicious-looking men approached me as though they were up to no good.

"It's such a shame to be abandoned by your husband!" One of them started undressing me, exposing the undergarments I had put on.

"See! She's not even in her right mind anymore!" Another of them tore my shirt in half as he couldn't wait to feel my skin.

All of a sudden, I started retaliating against them. The racking sensation coming from my tied-up hands was nothing as compared to the tidal waves of emotions I felt. "What are you guys doing? Stay away from me!"

I had rushed over to Lyle's rescue over and over again in the past, but he had never hesitated to leave me alone whenever I needed him.

As someone removed my pair of shoes, I launched a powerful kick at him at the crotch area. Subsequently, he collapsed to the ground and crouched in pain.

"Ugh! You're such a useless man!"

"What the heck!" The struggling man brought himself up and slapped me in the face. As a result, I started feeling lightheaded.

Crystal was right! I'll soon end up being their tool to satisfy their lust because no one will rescue me!

As they surrounded me with lust written all over their faces, I tried my best to shrug their hands off me when I felt them. They seemed to be deriving pleasure through teasing me.

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They soon burst out laughing while inflicting pain on me by pinching me. They enjoyed seeing me groaning in pain. Unable to hold back their lust anymore, one of them grabbed my legs and raised them against my will.

I started trembling in fear as there was nothing else I could do to salvage myself. When the last piece of garment I had put on was removed, I could feel another man's legs around my thighs.

That was the moment I made up my mind to defend my dignity, even if it meant coming at the cost of my life. I started biting my tongue with all my might in an attempt to kill myself, but they soon figured out my plan and grasped my chin to stop me.

Consequently, my jaw was dislocated because of the men's brute force.

"You're such a stubborn b*tch! I'll let you have the best time of your life for one last time, even if you're dying!"

"Hahaha! I wonder if there's anything different from having it with someone from the upper echelon!"

"Hey, hurry up! We're still waiting for our turns!"

Someone, please! Christopher, where are you? Save me! I need you!

As torrents of grief streamed down my cheeks, I started wondering if I had the courage to move on after pulling myself through the humiliating session.

I was completely rendered incapable of motions as my legs were tied to the armrests of the chair. Soon, my entire face was drenched in tears and blood.

Why can't I even kill myself? Am I not even allowed to make the choice? C-Christopher!

When I thought that would be the end of my miserable life, someone barged into the basement and rushed over to my side, throwing punches at the men surrounding me.

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Although it was an intense session, I couldn't care less until I felt myself nestling in a man's embrace.

"I'm so sorry I'm late!"

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