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Joshua fell into silence upon hearing Luna's question.

Truth be told, the only connection between him and Fiona since the start was the bone marrow that had been placed in Nigel's body at this point, but he did not feel like telling the truth to Luna.

He did not want Luna to think he helped Nigel in any way, and he did not want her to leave Banyan City feeling indebted to him or guilt-ridden.

He would rather she left with resentment toward him because this hatred would make her stay away from him, and she would finally be able to start a new life with the children.

"No answer for that?" Luna sneered, then turned to look outside the window.

She already knew this would be the outcome. Joshua had never been one to face his mistakes,

whether it was six years ago or at this very moment.

The rain continued to pour outside the window, so heavy that the windshield was blurred, and it grew increasingly difficult for the SUV to travel on the road.

Every time the car circled past some fallen trees by the roadside, Luna could not help but feel anxious. She used to be terrified of this kind of weather...but at this moment, she could not care less, as long as she could find Nigel and Nellie and protect them.

After three hours, the cars arrived at the district where Granny Lynch's hometown was. However, they stopped a few kilometers away from Granny Lynch's villa.

"Sir, the road in front has been blocked off. The cars can't possibly go through, so we'll have to walk."

Luna furrowed her brows and glanced at the direction ahead of her.

The road ahead of them was submerged with water up to calf level. In addition, there were rocks and tree branches strewn all over, so they had no choice but to continue the journey on foot.

Luna, Joshua, and the rest descended the SUVs. As soon as she got out of the car, Luna caught sight of Fiona's car parked a short distance away.

Clearly, the road had already been blocked off when Fiona arrived, and she, too, had continued her journey on foot.

"The engine's still warm." Lucas approached the car and reached out his hand to touch the side of the vehicle. "She can't have gone far. If we increase our speed, we might be able to catch up with her."

With that, he took out some raincoats and walking canes from inside the SUV and handed them around to everyone.

Luna watched as Zach and Yuri put on the raincoats and pulled up their pants legs, then followed suit. After putting on her raincoat, she bent down to lift her pant legs, exposing her slender, pale calves.

The bruises and wounds from the so-called physical therapy she had suffered at the mental asylum were glaringly obvious against her pale skin.

Joshua furrowed his brows at this sight. Then, he walked over, bent down, and helped lower her pants down.

Luna froze for a moment, then lifted her head to shoot him a displeased look. "What are you doing?"

Joshua glanced at her impassively. "Have you seen how dirty the rainwater is? Do you want to get an infection and lose your legs?"

Luna paused, then glanced at the puddle of water on the road, as well as the stream of water flowing continuously down the slope.

She remained silent for a moment as she contemplated this.

If the water seeped into the open wounds on her calves...then she might contract an infection and lose her legs.

However, they had no other choice except to walk into the village. If she did not go with them, she would be worried sick about Nigel and Nellie's whereabouts!

Seeing how anxious she was, Joshua let out a sigh and put on his raincoat. After pulling up his pants legs, he strode over to Luna's side and crouched down before her. "Get on my back."

Luna took a step back. "I think I should—"

"You're too slow, "Joshua said curtly. "If you want to find Fiona quicker, then stop acting like a prissy and get on."

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Luna had no excuse to refuse Joshua's offer. She let out an exhale, lowered herself down, and got onto Joshua's back.

Lucas witnessed with his own eyes the way Joshua's movements turned gentle as he straightened up with Luna on his back.

Joshua had never acted so gently toward anyone before, whether it was Alice or Fiona.

Carrying Luna on his back, Joshua started to make his way up the slope. He held onto Luna carefully through the few kilometers' journey and dared not make a single misstep.

Even after Lucas, Zach, and Yuri began to grow tired, Joshua continued onward with steady footsteps.

Luna noticed that the rest had slowed down and could not stop herself from asking, "Joshua, why don't you put me down? I can walk by myself for a bit."

The puddles of water were shallower the closer they got to the village, so even if she walked by herself, the dirty water would not seep into her wounds.

Since Lucas and the rest were already exhausted, Joshua had to be just as tired.

"I can still go on." Joshua curled his lips into a smirk. Then, he quickened his pace as though trying to prove his strength.

Lucas, Zach, and Yuri saw this and had no choice but to follow suit.

The five of them soon arrived at Yellowstone Village, the place where Granny Lynch grew up.

As soon as they stepped foot in the village, they caught sight of a large bungalow at the end of the end. It was clear that this was the house where Granny Lynch used to live in.

They finally made it!

Luna leaped off Joshua's back in excitement and immediately sprinted toward the bungalow.

Even though they did not run into Fiona on their way here, Luna guessed that Fiona had possibly taken a different route.

Besides, they had not stopped throughout the entire hike up here, so Luna was confident that Fiona could not have possibly arrived before them.

On top of that, the bungalow was quiet, without a single trace of any forced entry. Therefore, Luna was sure that she had made it before Fiona.

She even mentally prepared what she would say to the children as soon as she saw them: she would brag to them about how impressive Joshua's SUVs were and how quickly they had rushed to the scene to save them.

However...when she entered the villa, there was no one there.

The entire house was silent and empty.

If it were not for the backpacks in the living room, which Luna recognized as Nigel and Nellie's, she would have thought she had entered the wrong house. There were no signs of forced entry, no evidence of a struggle, nothing.

Even Granny Lynch's phone—the same one Luna had tried to call to no avail—was placed on the coffee table.

This scene made Luna's heart drop. If Granny Lynch had brought the children out, it was impossible that they would leave their phones behind...

Granny Lynch's phone was here, and Nellie's easel and Nigel's laptop were left behind as well...

Luna bit down on her lip as a bad feeling crept across her heart.

Was she too late after all? Had Fiona arrived before her?

Joshua ordered his men to search the entire house, but they could not find anyone at all. He, too, furrowed his brows as he continued to bark orders, "Lucas, go to the neighboring villagers and ask them if they noticed anything strange going on here."

"Yes, Sir! "Lucas replied obediently, then left with Zach and Yuri to interrogate the neighbors.

Luna plopped down on the sofa and placed her head in her hands somewhat helplessly. What did Fiona do to the children?

All of a sudden, Luna heard a knocking sound coming from below the sofa.

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Initially, Luna thought she had misheard it, but the knocking persisted.

She tilted her head to listen carefully, then realized that this was not a coincidence, that she had not misheard at all!

The knocking came from underneath the floorboards beneath the sofa!

Luna lifted her head and met Joshua's puzzled gaze. Clearly, he had heard the sound, too.

The two of them exchanged glances, then quickly jumped into action and pushed the sofa away. Once they got the sofa out of the way, they discovered a hidden door leading toward the basement!

The knocking was coming from the basement!

Joshua immediately picked the lock and pulled the door open. He took a step into the basement, then turned around and opened his arms wide. "Come on," he said to Luna.

Luna was so intrigued that she did not even have time to mull over anything. Instead, she leaped without a second thought, landing squarely in Joshua's arms.

In this cramped space, the two of them got lost in the sound of each other's breathing and heartbeats.

Luna could feel her face grow hot, and she blushed a deep shade of scarlet.

'What is wrong with me?' she scolded herself. 'You've already had three kids with this man! Why are you still blushing like a high schooler every time you get in close proximity with him?'

However, at this moment, they could not ponder over minor details like this any longer. Instead, they followed the knocking sound and entered the basement, using their phones as a light source.

Finally, at the far end of the basement, they discovered Granny Lynch, Nellie, and a few of the bodyguards and servants that Joshua had sent to the countryside with them, all tied up and restrained with ropes.

Nellie had instructed them to bang rocks against the basement floor, creating the knocking that led Luna and Joshua here.

All of them were tied up and gagged, so they could not make a single sound and had no choice but to resort to measures like this.

Nellie was so relieved at the sight of Joshua and Luna that droplets of tears fell out of the corners of her eyes. She continued to struggle against her bonds, crying at the same time.

Luna could not help but feel devastated at this sight. She quickly rushed over, pulled Nellie into her arms, and removed the gag from Nellie's mouth. "Are you okay?"

"I 'm fine! " Nellie, finally able to speak and breathe comfortably, immediately let out an exhale. Then, she cried, her forehead beaded with sweat, " Mommy, please go save Nigel, quick! Fiona has taken him to the top of the mountain! " Luna felt a chill go down her spine.

As soon as she entered the room, she had already noticed that Nigel was missing. Only Nellie and Granny Lynch were here.

She had wanted to ask Nellie if Nigel had sneaked out to get help since he was the calmest and most level- headed among the three children.

However, it turned out that Nigel had been taken away by Fiona.

Luna bit down on her lip and tried to suppress the worry in her heart. "Nigel..."

"Fiona brought some burly men over and claimed that she wanted to kill us, especially Nigel. Nigel tried to buy us some time by offering to go with her alone so that she wouldn't bother us. Initially, Fiona didn't want to, but Nigel managed to convince her, so she tied us all up and locked us here in the basement and left with Nigel! "

With that, Nellie grabbed onto Luna's hand and lifted her head to glance at Joshua. "Daddy, I've never asked for much from you, but please, save Nigel! I 'm begging you! Please don't let Nigel get hurt because of your precious Ms. Blake any longer. I'm begging you! "

As soon as she said this, Nellie almost got down onto her knees.

Joshua was so shocked by this that he took a step back, then lunged forward and pulled Nellie into his arms with a pained expression. "Do you really think Daddy is such a bad person? Nigel's my son, too. I'll never leave him!"

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With that, he released Nellie and stood up. "I'm going into the mountains."

He did not know what Fiona was planning to do by taking Nigel hostage, but since it had already happened, he had no choice but to counter.

Joshua turned around and glanced at Nellie with an expression of determination. "Don't worry. no matter what happens, I '11 bring Nigel back with me."

As soon as he said this, Joshua strode out of the basement.

"Joshua! " Luna's voice rang out from behind him as soon as he exited the room.

Joshua turned around.

Luna was still standing within the room. She reached out her arm toward him and said, "Pull me out of here. I'm going with you."

Joshua glanced at Luna, taking in her thin frame. A few days ago, she was so weak that she could not even walk by herself, but at this moment, she was willing to go into the mountains with him amid a thunderstorm.

Joshua remained silent for a moment but did not reach out to grab her hand. "I can go by myself."

The weather was so bad that he did not want her to risk hurting herself if there was a natural disaster.

"Why do you want to go by yourself?" Luna narrowed her eyes and fixated her frosty gaze on him. "Are you going to save Nigel or your precious Ms. Blake?"

A pained expression flashed briefly through Joshua's eyes.

He could not believe that at this moment, Luna still thought the reason he wanted to go into the mountains was to save Fiona.

Did she trust him that little?

He lowered his head and glanced at Luna once more.

The look in her eyes was crystal clear and determined, as though telling him that she did not trust him at all.

"I have to go and find Nigel myself. I don't trust anyone else." Luna's gaze was unfaltering. "If you don't want to pull me up, nor take me along with you, Mr. Lynch, then I'll go by myself."

With that, she gripped the railing on the basement wall with both her hands.

However, Joshua could not help but notice her left hand—the one with the broken little finger—start to tremble vigorously.

Beads of sweat collected at Luna's forehead.

It was clear she was in tremendous pain, but she still clutched the railing tightly in an attempt to pull herself out of the basement.

Joshua's expression darkened at this sight. Finally, he let out an exhale and could not bear to watch any longer, so he strode over, grabbed hold of Luna's right arm, and pulled her out of the basement.

As soon as she landed back on her feet, Luna let out an exhale of relief. Her entire head was covered in sweat, but she wasted no time tidying herself up. Instead, she stormed out of the villa, dragging Joshua behind her.

The two of them made their way into the mountains according to the directions Nellie had given.

Before long, Luna caught sight of a shoe snagged on a tree branch. It was Nigel's shoe!

Luna bit down on her lip as soon as she saw this. She knew that Nigel had left this shoe here on purpose so that they could find him.

She immediately tucked the shoe away and followed Joshua on their remaining journey.

The mountain trail was steep and treacherous. On top of that, the bad weather conditions made the hike even more challenging than usual. Luna was almost blown off the cliff by the landslide and strong wind numerous times. However, every time this happened, she managed to evade harm by either her own determination or with Joshua's help.

Following the trail that Nigel had left behind, the two of them soon arrived at the peak of the mountain. "I didn't think you'd arrive so soon." Fiona's cold voice rang out as soon as they arrived at the mountaintop.

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When Luna lifted her head and took in the scene before her, she was so shocked that she almost passed out.

Nigel was tied to a giant rock at the edge of the cliff, his feet bare and his entire body hovering over a seemingly endless drop.

Meanwhile, Fiona leaned gracefully against the rock, her eyebrows raised slightly, a taunting smile playing on her lips.

She was holding a sharp knife in her hand, the light glinting off the blade in the rain.

"I thought you needed more time to catch up with me." Fiona sighed and lowered her head to fiddle with the knife. "I was even betting with Nigel on when you'd arrive. For every hour that you're late, I 'Il cut off one of the ropes holding him here."

With that, she turned and counted the number of ropes holding Nigel onto the rock. "Eight ropes. I've already cut one off, so there's only seven left."

Fiona turned and smiled at Joshua. "Look, Joshua; look how nice I'm treating your son. I prepared eight pieces of rope so that you could see him one last time. One rope for each hour, so eight hours in total. Eight hours is more than enough for you to bid him farewell! "

Luna was so unnerved by the scene before her, as well as how despicable Fiona both looked and sounded, that she almost lost her balance.

She could not fathom how malicious this woman was!

Fiona was insane!

Joshua pulled Luna into his arms and lifted his head to stare at Fiona coldly. "What are you trying to do?"

"Nothing much, just taking his life." Fiona curled her lips into a smirk and gazed at Joshua impassively. "You should know better than anyone why I'm taking Nigel's life, right?"

Joshua's arm, which was still wrapped around Luna, tightened upon hearing this, and his knuckles turned white.

He knew what Fiona was talking about.

She wanted to kill Nigel because the bone marrow inside him used to belong to her.

Joshua knew that better than anyone else.

He clenched his teeth and continued to stare at Fiona. "Whatever you want, I can give it to you."

"Is that so?" Fiona clutched her face with one hand and fixated her calm gaze on Joshua's face. "That was what you said to me in the past. You told me that you'd be with me until I died. Are you going back on your promise now?"

Joshua suppressed the rage in his heart and replied, "The reason I made that promise was that I thought you had a fatal illness and had only one year to live."

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Fiona sneered. "Does this mean you're going to abandon me now that you found out I 'm not dying anymore? Luna was right, Joshua. You're a flighty,

irresponsible scumbag. I used to think that if I stayed by your side, I 'd one day be able to steal your heart, but I now understand how naive I was to think that."

With that, she fiddled with the knife in her hand and lowered the blade to one of the ropes restraining Nigel—

This scene made Luna anxious. Then, just as Fiona's blade was about to cut the rope loose, Luna cried out in a shrill voice, "Fiona! If you want to take your revenge, then take it out on me! "

She bit down on her lip, released herself from Joshua's arms, and fixated her determined gaze on Fiona. "I was the one who tried to expose your lies, and I was the one who tried to collect evidence against you! None of this has anything to do with my son. You..."

Luna glanced at Nigel who, at this moment, was staring down at the endless abyss beneath him, his face pale with terror. Even though he was usually a calm and mature child, at this moment, his face was as pale as a ghost.

After all, he was only six years old. How fearless could he possibly be?