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Chapter 327

With the icy blade of the dagger touching her neck, Heather instinctively flinched back. When she lowered her gaze to see the offending dagger, her breathing hitched.

She was someone who highly valued her life. To top it off, she also had people that she loved

"You won't dare." Heather narrowed her eyes, attempting to see how far Elise's limits stretched.

Elise curved her lips up, but her smile didn't reach her eyes. "You can try me."

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Heather could see from Elise's eyes that she had thrown all caution to the wind. In the end, Heather didn't push her luck.

Elise knew a little about fighting in the first place. Now that she had a dagger, she had the upper hand completely. Once she had ascertained that Heather wouldn't continue fighting, she finally moved on to the next step. "Get up," she threatened. Still holding Heather, she turned to glance at the door. "And open the door," she urged.

Heather obediently did as she was told, moving over to grab the handle. However, the door wouldn't open. "It's locked."

"You better not be playing any tricks." Elise actually didn't believe her.

"If you don't believe me, try it yourself." Heather raised her arms in surrender. "You're Matt's only chance of turning the tables. You think he'll let you escape so easily?"

Elise had enough of pointless blabbering. Matthew could come by any time now. She didn't have much time to waste. Every second was precious.

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“Turn around.” After getting Heather to stand with her back to her, Elise pointed the dagger at Heather’s back while she tried to open the door with her free hand. In the end, there was no miracle. No matter how much strength she poured in, the handle remained resolutely in place.

Heather smiled, pleased. “Matt’s going to come back soon. And before that happens, you better go back to the room, or I can’t guarantee what kind of treatment you’re going to receive otherwise,” she reminded.

Go back? Wouldn’t that be waiting around like a sitting duck? Elise wouldn’t admit defeat so easily. Thus, she put away her dagger and began to search for another escape route.

Heather, on the other hand, was no match for Elise. They both knew this fact deep down, so she didn’t escalate the situation any further.

Like she was watching a show, Heather coldly looked on as Elise searched from the kitchen all the way to the study with nothing to show for it. She once again mocked, “Stop wasting your time. This place is completely sealed off. There’s no other exit apart from that door.” In addition to that, that door was specially made. No blade was going to scratch that door, and axes wouldn’t be able to break it down. Other than getting its key to unlock it, there was no other way to get that door to open.

Elise returned to the living room once more and looked at Heather dejectedly, who was enjoying the show. These two are mad for constructing such a huge hidden space out of nowhere. Am I really never going to escape?

Just as Elise was about to fall into despair, Alexander’s familiar low voice sounded from outside. “Elise, are you in there?”

Elise’s eyes instantly lit up, and she whipped around. “I’m here! Alexander! I’m inside!” He found me. He really found me. She knew she could trust this man.

“Okay, got it. Don’t get overexcited.” Alexander unhurriedly calmed Elise before he continued in an unrushed manner, “I’m going inside now. Stand a little further away.”

“Sure.” Elise took a few steps back, leaving a few feet of distance between the door and herself.

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The next moment, something could be heard smashing away at the door. One strike, two strikes... Elise could even feel the floorboards shaking, but there was absolutely no sign of the door opening.

Not long after that, the smashing sounds stopped. Elise heard Alexander again. "Elise, hide. Find a room or stay far away from the door. Can you do that?" He deliberately made his voice louder.

Elise glanced around before nodding at the door. "Yeah. Is the kitchen far enough?"

"Yes. Go and hide. I'll go inside two minutes later for you." Having said that, Alexander disappeared. Elise quickly headed to the kitchen and locked the door to wait for her rescue soon.

Heather sat unperturbed on the couch as though she had just heard the biggest joke

in her life, waiting for Alexander to once again hit another dead end. She had said before that the door would not be opening unless unlocked with its key.

The next moment, though, there was a loud crash as the wall across her suddenly crumbled. Immediately after, an SUV rushed at her. Heather quickly raised her arms in front to shield herself. With the piercing sound of brakes screeching, the SUV stopped just a hair's breadth away from her. She barely escaped with her life.

Alexander opened the door of the vehicle and got out. Once he had determined the location of the kitchen, he quickly ran over and opened the door. The moment he saw Elise, all his defenses came crashing down, and he drew Elise into his arms without a care in the world. He held her tightly, wishing that he could have her permanently in his life.

"I'm here," Alexander said, his voice choking up.

"I know." Elise had never felt so safe before. "Thank you, Alexander."

Alexander shook his head, his large hand moving up and down as he patted her fluffy hair. "Sorry I came too late."

The sticky feeling he got when he touched her hand instantly made Alexander frown. That striking red on her hand when he looked down was like a knife, stabbing right into his heart.

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“What happened? Did you get hurt?” Alexander’s heart hurt, but he didn’t dare to touch Elise, fearing that he would hurt her

Elise had already weathered through the worst of the pain. By now, the pain had numbed, so she didn’t really feel anything much. She smiled as she shook her head. “It’s nothing, just a small scratch. It’s no big deal.”

But Alexander wasn’t going to easily give up on this matter. This place was completely sealed off, and other than Elise and that other woman, there was no one else here. He knew very well just who the culprit was, and a chill instantly rose in his eyes. He lifted a hand and gently placed it on Elise’s shoulder. “Wait for me for a bit,” he soothed. Subsequently, his lips curved up. Although he was clearly smiling, the rest of his expression was filled with cruelty. Retrieving Elise’s dagger, he took a deep breath before he headed to the living room for Heather, who still hadn’t calmed down from the initial shock.

As Elise watched his departing figure, she instantly understood what he was going to do. She hastily ran after him and pulled on his sleeve to stop him. “This has nothing to do with her. I actually hurt my own hand.”

Alexander’s anger had reached its boiling point. He simply thought that Elise was making up excuses because she was softhearted. He didn’t listen to her.

Elise could seemingly see the embers of fury in Alexander’s eyes burn larger and faster; he was close to losing control. Realizing this, she was both delighted yet panicked. In her franticness, she grabbed the hand that Alexander held the dagger with, forgetting her own pain as she held on with both her hands. “It’s true—I wanted to hurt myself to make them take me to the hospital so that I would get a chance to escape. Alexander, are you going to kill because of me? If you end up in prison and this happens to me again, who’s going to look for me?!” She was practically begging

now.

Having felt her warmth, Alexander instantly snapped out of his rage. Carefully, he held her face, her expression currently filled with both love and worry. “Don’t be scared. With me here, there won’t be a next time.”

With that, Alexander tossed a frigid look at Heather’s way before he turned to open the door of the SUV. Quietly, he carried Elise and helped her into the passenger seat before he moved

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over and got into the driver's seat. Start the engine, get ready, back up. Done. His face was icy as he stepped on the gas, as though this was the only way that would make him feel like he wasn't useless for not even being able to protect his beloved

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The sound of the engine got more and more distant. Heather stood on the spot for a full thirty seconds before she gradually came back to her senses. As she looked at the rubble and destruction on the ground, the first thing she thought of was that Matthew was certainly going to blame her for not being able to guard Elise well.

If Matthew thinks that I'm useless. I might not be able to stay by his side anymore. "No, I definitely can't leave Matt..." Heather mumbled as she began to pace around the space. Soon, her attention was drawn to the small fruit knife by the kitchen's entrance.

After just a second of hesitation, she walked over and picked up the knife. Then, she ruthlessly stabbed it straight into her left arm.

When Matthew drove back, he could see that the walls on the first floor had already partially caved in. Furious, he smacked his steering wheel. Did you escape again, Elise? Although it wasn't very likely, he still had a little hope as he revved the car. Once the car came to a stop, he immediately ran inside the house without even taking the time to pull out his keys.

The moment Matthew stepped into the living room, he promptly noticed that the door to Elise's room was wide open. His last hope was completely extinguished then. When he snapped out of it, he finally noticed Heather lying injured on the couch. Hunching over, he gently shook her. "Heather?"

Heather wasn't actually unconscious; it was just an act for Matthew. Seeing him panicking, she slowly opened her eyes. "Elise worked together with Alexander. She escaped after she stabbed me. I'm sorry..." she weakly explained.

Now that his chance to turn the tables was gone, Matthew was incensed. However, he couldn't let his anger show with the pale-faced Heather there. All he could do now was set

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this matter aside and help her up. "You aren't to blame. You were alone-how could you have possibly taken on both of them at once? Let's get you to the hospital first."

Meanwhile, at the emergency room, the nurse applied some ointment for Elise. After telling her about some things she had to look out for, the nurse left the room. Not long after the nurse left, Alexander came in.

It had been a long time since they saw each other. After experiencing the whirlwind

that was earlier and calming down, Elise and Alexander somehow ended up a little more polite and reserved with each other.

Elise pressed her lips together. In order to make Alexander relax, she said jokingly, "The nurse was really patient."

Alexander stood in front of her expressionlessly. He didn't speak, simply opting to look at her without moving. His dark eyes glimmered under the lights, an indiscernible glint shining in them.

It got awkward.

Elise wasn't a master at easing the atmosphere. So, she pretended to shrug casually and averted her gaze.

"You're always like this." Alexander's voice suddenly rang out, low and deep. Chastisement and exasperation could be heard in his words.

Elise looked up at him, her pretty little face scrunching up a little. She couldn't figure out how she had gotten on his nerves again.

Alexander could see through her confusion. Angry, he lifted a hand to pinch his forehead, but in the end, he deflated helplessly. He just wanted Elise to know that her safety was always the priority. Clearly, though, she didn't pay attention to that. Otherwise, she would have just patiently waited for him to save her instead of hurting her hand like that. Nonetheless, he knew that she didn't like him nagging her, so he had no choice but to swallow those words. When he neared her, he reached out and pulled her in for a hug.

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Ever since the day Elise was kidnapped, Alexander had been on tenterhooks. It was only now that he finally relaxed. From then on, he made a promise to himself that he would never let anyone take Elise away from his sight again.

After an unknown amount of time, Elise couldn't quite breathe from being hugged for so long. Just as she was about to remind Alexander to ease up, he released her.

"Let's go back first. This place is too close to where Matthew is. It's not safe." Alexander took off his jacket and draped it around Elise's shoulders. They then quickly drove away from the hospital.

Over an hour later, the SUV drove past the Griffith Residence's gates.

This wasn't Elise's first time here, but an awkward look still came over her face when she saw Alexander offer her a hand after the vehicle had stopped. Just because she

had just escaped from a dire situation didn't mean that some things could be easily overlooked. Madeline was the one uncrossable gulf between them. Having only just escaped from Matthew's clutches, Elise truly didn't want to go in and be treated like some pariah while bearing verbal attacks that never should have been directed at her.

Knowing what she was worried about, Alexander stretched his hand out further, his gaze sharp and determined. "Trust me, many things have changed since then. You won't be disappointed."

Elise looked at him. Under the sunlight, his face looked even more bewitching and lively. He looked like he had walked straight out of a painting.

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Just as Alexander said, that distant, excluded feeling that had kept creeping in her heart before didn't arise. Everything in front of her was real. He was right. There was no other person in the world who could have followed the trail and located her with just a wedding dress. With how well Alexander understood her, did she have anything else to worry about?

At that thought, the darkness in Elise's expression dissipated, leaving behind a faint smile. She placed her dainty hand in Alexander's. They then walked hand-in-hand into the Griffith Residence together, the place that she had repeatedly left in fear and panic.

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The rest of the Griffiths were currently busy at this hour. Madeline was the only one at home, nursing her injuries, and coincidentally, they ran into each other.

The moment their eyes met, Elise looked at Madeline. She attempted to trust Alexander and awkwardly twitched her lips up in an effort of goodwill.

Seeing her safe return, Madeline studied Elise; her clothes were disheveled and messy, unlike the image of the perfect daughter-in-law that she had in mind. Her first

instinct was to reject Elise, but then, she caught sight of the apathetic look in Alexander's gaze through the corners of her eyes. In the end, she sighed. With no other choice, she reined in her thoughts and nodded, accepting Elise's offered smile. "You're back at last. You've been through a hard time. Go upstairs and get some rest." She then called a servant over. "Mrs. Hilda, tidy up the guest room. Bring Miss Sinclair some clean clothes."

"Yes," Hilda acknowledged in a respectful tone.

Having said all she wanted, Madeline turned and headed for the couch in the living room, coffee cup in hand. She didn't even wait for Elise to thank her.

Everything took time. The fact that Madeline didn't reject Elise and allowed her to

stay was already the greatest concession she could make. As for when she would be able to sincerely accept Elise, there was still a long road ahead.

Madeline had just turned around when she heard Alexander speak to Hilda. "No need for that. Elise, you can stay in my room. Bring the things there."

Madeline paused before lowering her head to stir her coffee indifferently. After years of interacting with other upper-crust ladies, she had already trained herself to discern the truth behind a person's words and actions. She knew very well that Alexander had said that on purpose for her-he wanted her to know that Elise was not a guest in this house.

Elise initially thought that Madeline would make a stand and make some unreasonable demand, but to her surprise, Madeline didn't show any reaction after hearing Alexander. It startled Elise. By the time she snapped out of her shock, Alexander was already leading her upstairs by the hand.

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Elise nervously followed behind him. It wasn't until they had gone to the second floor and disappeared into the elevator that she was certain-Madeline had truly changed.

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