

When His Eyes Opened by Simple Silence Chapter 131

Elliot's legs had been recovering well, and he was able to move around more freely with a walking stick

He got out of bed and walked into the closet to pick out his outfit for the day.

Most of his clothes were in dark shades and colors.

His brows furrowed as he took in the gloominess of his closet.

Elliot walked out of the closet after failing to pick out a suitable outfit, then gave Chad a call.

"Chad, I need a light-colored suit."

"Of course, Sir. Are you looking for something casual or a formal suit?"

"Something casual."

"Roger that. I'll get it ready right away," Chad said. "By the way, the jewelry designer you asked me to contact has finished the sketch you asked for. I've emailed it over to you. They can start working on it once you approve the sketch."

"Alright," Elliot responded.

He hung up, then entered his study and turned on the computer.

The upcoming New Year's Eve was the first one that he was going to spend with Avery, and he wanted to give her something special to commemorate it.

He clicked on Chad's email and opened up the sketch of the custom diamond ring he had commissioned

The ring was designed to resemble a snowflake, as Avery was like a snowflake to him- pure and angelic.

Over at Avonsville University, Avery and Tammy were having lunch after their morning rehearsals.

"Why did you back out of the dance performance?" Tammy asked.

"Dancing is too tiring. I'll just focus on my song," Avery answered, then glanced at her phone and asked, "Is your boyfriend coming to the concert?"

"He wanted to, but he won't be able to get in. He's not a student here, anyway. There's no way they'd let him in!"

Avery nodded in response.

"Is your husband coming? I heard that both of you have been stuck at the hip! Is that true? You never reply to my texts when I ask you about it," Tammy grumbled.

"Did Jun tell you that? When did he get so nosy? You should pressure him into focusing on his career and making more money."

"All I want is to be in a lovey-dovey relationship right now! By the way, did you tell your husband about going to graduate school abroad? I told Jun to keep it to himself, so I don't think he's told Elliot."

The light in Avery's eyes dimmed.

Tammy took one look at her and found her answer.

“Why won't you tell him about it? Are you worried that he'll stop you from going?”

Avery took a sip of water, then said, “I'll tell him after the new year!”

“Alright! So, is he coming to the concert or not? Ask him to bring my Jun along if he is!”

“He's coming.”

Tammy sighed and said, “Yet you won't admit that your relationship is going well! He is ditching his company's party and coming to our concert! Doesn't that tell you that he finds you more important than work?! Jun, on the other hand, wouldn't miss the company party for the world! So, your husband won't have to trouble himself with my Jun.”

Avery shuddered as goosebumps appeared all over her body.

“Can you please stop saying ‘your husband’ and ‘my Jun’? When did you get so cheesy?”

“I'm not wrong, am I? Elliot Foster is your husband, and Jun might not be my husband yet, but isn't it normal for couples to give each other pet names?”

Avery ordered some food, then passed the menu back to the waiter.

“Do you think he'll go on stage and give you flowers after your performance?” Tammy asked, suddenly looking to the night's concert with anticipation.

“How’s he supposed to get up there? With his walking stick?”

Tammy sighed, then said, “What a pity! I was hoping to see the two of you go public with your relationship in front of the whole college!”

“You need to quit it with all your romantic dramas,” Avery said, shattering Tammy’s fantasy.

“What kind of relationship do you two have?” Tammy said with furrowed brows. “You’re so boring! There’s no fun at all!”

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Avery did not react.

It was true that her relationship with Elliot was more boring than most.

Just last week, they had spent the entire time at home.

Elliot was either working in his study or reading a book in the living room.

Avery, on the other hand, was either writing her thesis or reading in the living room with him.

Elliot’s book was in a foreign language that Avery did not understand.

Avery was reading Professor Hough’s book on neurology.

She was sure Elliot would not understand a thing about it either, so she did not feel inferior to him.

“What do you think of my necklace?” Tammy asked as she suddenly took off the necklace she was wearing and showed it to Avery.

“It’s pretty. Did your boyfriend give it to you?”

“He did! It’s a Christmas gift. It’s even got my name engraved on it!”

“You can purchase jewelry which comes with a free engraving offer for under ten bucks,” said Avery in earnest. “You shouldn’t let these things go to your head!”

Tammy did not mind.

“It’s not about the engraving, I’m just happy that he got me something! When he stops being able to make me feel like this one day, I’d probably break up with him.”

Avery had nothing left to say.

“You’re acting surprisingly cold about this. Has Elliot never gotten you a gift before?” Tammy guessed. “He might be old and unromantic, but you’re still young! Can you stop being so morbid? If he won’t make the first move, then you should!”

Avery ignored Tammy and began to eat her lunch.

The concert kicked off at seven that evening.

Avery and Tammy were getting ready in the dressing room backstage.

“Avery! Is your husband?”

“Remember where we are!” Avery hissed as she glanced at their surroundings.

Tammy cleared her throat, then asked softly, “Is Elliot here yet? Has he called you? I took a peek at the audience just now, and it’s crowded out there. Where’s he sitting?”

Avery checked her phone and saw that there were no new messages.

A strange emotion hit her.

Was he not here yet?

He might not come after all.

“He didn’t call me. I don’t know if he’s here yet, nor do I know where his seat is. Just because he’s coming to the concert, doesn’t mean he wants to reveal his identity. He might even pretend not to know me if he sees me, and I’d do the same.”

Tammy was surprised, while Avery’s words extinguished her passion for gossip.

Elliot arrived on campus at eight in the evening.

Avery’s performance was the thirteenth on the program, which would be around an hour after the opening act.

Elliot timed his arrival perfectly.

He entered the performance hall under the protection of his bodyguard and campus security.

Elliot was dressed in a baby blue t-shirt, a casual, white jacket, and matching slacks.

He was not in a wheelchair, nor was he using a walking stick.

Since his legs were not fully recovered, he was walking at a slow but steady pace.

He looked as dashing as a prince straight out of a romantic drama!

Elliot caused a stir the moment he entered the hall.

Backstage, Tammy looked out to the audience and recognized him right away.

“Oh my god! I almost didn’t recognize him in that light suit! He looks so good!” Tammy exclaimed as she rushed over to Avery in excitement. “He’s here! He’s actually here! He definitely showed up for you! He’s sitting in the front row! Oh my god!”

Avery’s chest tightened.

She took a few steps towards the main stage and peeped at the audience through the curtains.

Elliot’s white silhouette shone like a beam of light and shot right through her heart.

“Avery! You’re up! Break a leg! Show your husband a side of you that nobody’s ever seen before!” Tammy cheered as she tapped Avery on the back.

Avery was on the verge of tears.

“Stop spouting nonsense, Tammy Lynch!”

“Next up is the diamond of the art department, Miss Avery Tate. She’ll be gracing us with her rendition of “Tim McGraw” on her guitar. Please

give her a big round of applause!” Once the host introduced her, Avery made her way to the center of the stage.

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Avery’s hair was pulled back in a simple ponytail, and she was dressed in a blue denim jacket over a long white dress.

With her guitar in her arms, she took a seat on the high stool placed at the center of the stage.

As she adjusted the mic stand in front of her, the room lights dimmed, and she was illuminated by the light of the spotlight that was trained on her.

The melodic strumming of Avery’s guitar began to echo through the hall, followed by her angelic singing

Her gaze did not search the crowd for anyone in particular, but she could feel a pair of eyes watching her intently.

Avery shut her eyes to immerse herself in her performance.

Soon after, the stage lights lit up and a colorful wave of flower petals floated down from the ceiling

The audience burst into wild, frenzied cheers.

Avery opened her eyes, her thick lashes fluttering.

Her face was a picture of bewilderment as petals rustled down in front of her eyes.

Nobody told her that there would be a flower shower during her performance!

Was this a last minute arrangement?

Avery's cheeks were hot with embarrassment, but she powered through the rest of her song.

Suddenly, a drone appeared out of thin air and flew towards the stage.

On top of the drone was a bouquet of flowers!

The audience broke into another roar of excitement.

Avery's heart pounded along with the enthusiastic applause and hurrahs.

· Tammy was so envious backstage that she began to sniffle.

“That old geezer sure has his ways!”

She had just called Elliot Foster boring that afternoon.

However, there was nothing boring about this flower shower and bouquet-sending drone!

Tammy felt like she was getting countless slaps to the face.

The drone stopped in midair right in front of Avery as she came to the end of her song.

With raised brows and pursed lips, she hesitantly picked up the bouquet of flowers from the drone.

Thunderous cheers and applause filled the room.

“Merry Christmas, everyone!” Avery said into the microphone as she held the bouquet in her arms.

Her gaze wandered through the crowd until it fell on the white silhouette in the front row.

“Thank you! Thank you, everyone!”

The drone flew off and the petals stopped falling from the ceiling.

Elliot, who was sitting in the front row, was also nowhere to be found.

It was as if it was all nothing but a dream.

Even now that she had awakened from the dream, Avery was still moved beyond words.

“Are you dating someone, Avery?! I bet the flowers were from your boyfriend! He even used a drone to give them to you! That’s so creative!”

“And that flower shower?! Your boyfriend prepared that, right? None of us got anything like that during our performances! That’s so romantic!”

Backstage, a group of people converged on Avery and surrounded her.

Tammy ran over and rescued her from the mob.

When they burst through the hall’s exit, a tall, muscular student stood in their path.

“Hey, Avery. I heard that you got out of a relationship recently... I fell for you at first sight when I was a freshman, but I’ve never had the guts to tell you. You’re about to graduate soon, So I—”

Before Avery could say a word, Tammy jumped in and shattered the student's dreams.

“She's taken! Who did you think arranged that flower shower just now? Also, did you think .that drone flew over and gave her that bouquet itself?!”

The student scratched his head, then said, “I guess I was too late again.”

At that moment, the sound of footsteps approaching came from behind them.

Avery turned and saw Elliot's handsome yet sophisticated face.

Under the pearlescent moonlight, his features looked particularly chiseled.

“Hello, you...”

The student watched as Elliot made his way to Avery's side, then tried to guess who he was. “You must be Avery's uncle?”

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Avery felt Elliot's body stiffen next to her.

His outfit had taken a few years off, however, people still wound up treating him like an older person.

It must have bothered him.

“I’m Avery’s,”

Elliot began to speak, but Avery interrupted him by grabbing his hand, then explained, “I don’t know this guy. It’s cold out here. Let’s head to the car!”

At the same time, Tammy pulled the male student out of their way.

Avery threw Tammy a look of gratitude, then helped Elliot back to the black Rolls-Roice.

“Your legs haven’t fully recovered,” she said in a concerned voice. “You shouldn’t be walking around like this.”

“It doesn’t hurt anymore,” Elliot said.

His eyes landed on the bouquet of flowers in Avery’s hand.

“There’s a gift in the bouquet,” he said awkwardly.

“What?” Avery said as she stared at Elliot in shock. “You got me a gift? I didn’t get you anything, though.”

The air around them turned thick with uneasiness.

They had spent the past week sitting at home.

How did he find the time to prepare a gift for her if he never left the house?

Elliot opened the door to the backseat of the car and let Avery in first.

“I didn’t ask for anything in return.”

His deep, sultry voice made Avery's heart skip a beat.

•In the car, she sifted through the flowers and found a small, pink jewelry box.

She opened it up, revealing the diamond necklace inside it.

It was a simple design, but the diamond itself... was huge.

Once Elliot sat down next to her, she could not help but tease him.

“I never thought you were much of a showoff before, but why do you have such tacky taste?”

“You don't like it?” Elliot asked as he locked eyes with Avery. “What style do you like?”

He assumed all women loved diamonds, and the bigger the diamond, the better.

Avery took out the necklace, placed it in her palm, and said, “Don't you think the diamond's a little too big? Larger cuts like this can make me look bulky.”

Elliot stared at her dainty, little hand and did not agree with her at all.

Everything looked good in her hands.

He had his own reasoning when choosing gifts, so he said, “I couldn't bring myself to give out something too cheap.”

“Pretend I didn't say anything,” Avery said as she placed the necklace back in the box.” Thanks for coming to the show.”

“You’re a good singer,” Elliot said.

Her angelic voice was on loop in his mind.

“Are you an art history major?”

Avery’s arms tightened around the bouquet. “Do you know why I decided to major in that?”

Elliot shook his head.

“My stepmother was the one who chose it for me. She told my father that it was an easy major, so he just went with it.”

Avery took a breath, then continued, “It doesn’t exactly have the best career prospects, though. Most of the people who major in art history at the college come from rich families.”

“Your father left you the company in the end. He wasn’t going to leave you without a future,” Elliot said.

“He never mentioned anything about it to me before he died. He cheated on my mother and was always indifferent when it came to me. I hated him.”

“Perhaps he thought that he had already let your mother down, so he didn’t want to do the same to your stepmother.”

“How would you know? Are all men like that?”

“Aren’t we talking about your father?”

“Even so, why do I feel like you can sympathize with him?”

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At the end of that sentence, Avery felt like they were on the verge of starting a fight, so she quickly changed the subject.

“Did you pick out your outfit to match mine tonight?” she asked.

She was wearing blue over white, while Elliot was wearing white over blue.

Avery’s jacket may have been a deeper shade of blue, but it was hard to disagree if anyone said they were wearing matching outfits.

Her question put Elliot on the spot.

Why did she have to state the obvious?

“Yes, I did,” Elliot answered truthfully, leaving Avery speechless.

When they arrived home, Avery took a shower first.

Once she was done, Elliot entered the bathroom.

While Avery was lying in bed with her phone, Elliot’s phone screen suddenly lit up. She picked up his phone and saw a text message from Ben.

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Avery could not help herself, and she tapped on the text message from Ben.

(Your wife’s got a great voice! It’s a shame she’s not a singer!)

Avery had not expected to be able to access Elliot's phone.

She would not have been able to get in if he had set a passcode, but he did not have one set up."

After Ben's text came through, he sent over a video of Avery's performance.

Tammy had sent her the same video earlier and told her that she was going viral on the college 's online forum

Avery returned to the home screen and placed the phone back where she had found it.

It was at that moment that her finger slipped and opened up Elliot's photo gallery, revealing the photos within

When Elliot emerged from the bathroom after his shower, Avery gestured at him, and he immediately sat on the bed.

"I suddenly feel like cooking. Should I cook for you from now on?" Avery asked.

Elliot looked at her, confused.

"Are you serious?"

"I am!" Avery answered with enthusiasm. "I can't guarantee that I'd be any good at it. I've never really cooked before."

"You could try tomorrow," Elliot suggested.

“Okay!” Avery responded, then glanced at his gray bathrobe and said, “You look good in light colors. You should wear it more.”

“I still got called your uncle, though.”

“How do you know he didn’t do that on purpose?” Avery teased, then cradled Elliot’s face in her hands and said, “You looked very handsome tonight.”

Elliot clasped his large hand over hers as a hint of suspicion flashed across his deep eyes.

“Why are you suddenly so passionate?” Avery’s cheeks flushed under his smoldering gaze.

She nestled her face in the nook of his neck, then uttered sweetly, “No reason. I just felt like hugging you.”

A wave of warmth enveloped Elliot’s heart at the sound of Avery’s words. He opened up his arms and wrapped them around her.

Time flew by after Christmas.

Elliot either spent his days working in his study or watching Avery cook in the kitchen.

Avery, on the other hand, spent all of her time and energy perfecting her cooking.

On New Year’s Eve, Rosalie called first thing in the morning reminding them to visit her.

Avery and Elliot took their time with breakfast, then headed out for the old mansion.

“Should we have lunch with your mother later?” Elliot suggested as he held Avery’s hand.

She had rejected his idea to bring Laura along to the old mansion.

Even if Avery agreed, Laura would not.

Avery flashed a smile at Elliot and said, “It’s fine. I just want to spend time with you today. It’s our first New Year’s Eve together after all.”

“There will be many more to come,” Elliot said.

Avery looked out the window and said, “Look at that snow! It’s perfect for making a snowman. Let’s do that later!”

Elliot was about to tease her for the childish suggestion, but he kept quiet.

He did not want to ruin her good mood.

After lunch, Avery dragged Elliot out to build a snowman.

The rest of the Foster family huddled aside and watched them from afar.

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It was the first time in years that they had seen Elliot laughing and behaving like a kid!

“Are you happy, Elliot?” Avery asked suddenly as she stared at the finished snowman.

“I am.” “I’m happy as long as I’m with you,” Elliot thought but kept those words to himself.

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Avery and Elliot went home in the afternoon to rest because they planned on staying up to ring in the new year.

Once Elliot was asleep, Avery opened her eyes and stared at his face.

She felt as if she could never watch him for long enough.

It was a shame that she could not stop time.

It would be perfect if everything could come to a stop at this moment.

When Elliot woke up around four in the afternoon, Avery was not next to him.

He got out of bed and went downstairs to look for her.

“You’re up!”

Avery was in the middle of making dinner.

“I’m thinking of making steak tonight. What do you think?”

Elliot stood at the entrance to the kitchen and watched as she worked away.

“How about I make dinner?” he asked.

“You cook?” Avery exclaimed with a look of surprise on her face, then took off her apron and said, “Be my guest! I’ve never tried your cooking before!”

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“I’ve never cooked before, but I can follow a recipe,” Elliot said as he took the apron from Avery. “Take a break in the living room.”

“Can I stay here and watch?” Avery asked with sparkling eyes.

Elliot did not refuse but pulled up a chair for her.

Avery sat down and enjoyed the show as he prepared their dinner.

Elliot gave off an air of expertise no matter what he did.

.When Avery dug into the steak Elliot made that evening, she was singing his praises.

“It’s even better than a five-star restaurant.”

“Maybe you haven’t been to many good restaurants.”

“Can’t you just accept my praise?”

“Sure. I think I’m a pretty good cook, too.”

Avery burst into laughter.

“I don’t like broccoli,” she said as she deposited the broccoli from her plate onto Elliot’s, and she took the cherry tomato from his plate and popped it into her mouth.

“Don’t be picky, Avery,” Elliot said earnestly as he chewed on her broccoli.

“I’m not! I just don’t like steamed foods.”

They took a stroll outside after dinner, then returned to the living room and watched TV.

Avery rested her head on Elliot's shoulder and dozed.

He woke her up at half past eleven and said, "Let's set off some fireworks. It's another half hour until the new year."

A wide smile appeared on Avery's face, but a hint of sadness flashed across her eyes.

They threw on their coats and made their way outside where the bodyguard was preparing the fireworks.

Before long, a dazzling display of fireworks covered the night sky above them.

Avery lifted her head and felt the night breeze brush her skin.

"I have something for you, Avery," Elliot whispered in her ear.

Avery turned to him and asked, "A gift? Didn't we agree not to prepare anything?"

Once again, she had not gotten him anything.

"It's something I ordered beforehand," Elliot said as he pulled out a red, square box from her pocket.

Avery guessed what it was without opening it up.

"We've been married for over half a year. This is your make-up wedding ring."

Elliot opened the box to expose the exquisite diamond ring within.

Avery's eyes filled with tears at the sight of it.

Elliot took out the ring, picked up Avery's left hand, and carefully slipped the ring onto her ring finger.

"It's beautiful," Avery whispered hoarsely.

"I'm glad you like it," Elliot said as his hand tightened around hers.

The vibrant fireworks continued to light up the night sky.

When the new year's countdown began to display in the sky, Avery got on her tiptoes and kissed Elliot's cold lips.

Elliot felt something wet on his face, then noticed the tears streaming down Avery's face.

He wanted to ask why she was crying, but the countdown came to an end, signifying the arrival of the new year. "Happy New Year, Elliot Foster," Avery choked as she loosened her grip on Elliot.

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"Happy New Year, Avery," Elliot said as he lifted his hand to wipe the tears off of Avery's face.

Avery took a big step back away from him.

“I’m leaving, Elliot,” she said coldly.

Before Elliot could react, Avery had already taken the diamond ring off her finger.

“I can’t accept this,” Avery said as she shoved the ring into the pocket of his jacket.

“I love you, but I can’t do this anymore.”

Avery lifted her head as tears trickled down her cheeks.

“You have photos of that woman on your computer and on your phone. I’m sure you have her in your heart, as well. I admit that you’re good to me, but you love her more. I won’t force you to explain yourself, nor will I make you give her up... Because I know that it would all be a waste of time,” Avery said.

“We’re done!”

This was not up for discussion.

Avery was informing Elliot of her decision.

Elliot was frozen in place, and his eyes were filled with disbelief.

Everything was going fine before this.

Avery was cooking for him every day and sleeping in his arms every night...

He thought that they would be in love for the rest of their lives.

When had she decided to break up with him?

Elliot had no idea.

It could have been after Christmas, or it could have been earlier than that.

“I’m leaving soon. I’ve hired a lawyer for the divorce proceedings. He’ll contact you after the holidays,” Avery said as she wipes the tears off her face.

She continued to step away from him, then said, “Let’s not see each other ever again, Elliot. Don’t contact me. Let’s just pretend like we never met!”

Avery clenched her fists and tried her best to hold back her tears.

She was merely curious the first time she saw the photos of that woman on Elliot’s computer.

However, seeing them again on his phone was the final straw for her.

The only photos on Elliot’s phone were those of that woman.

Avery could no longer run away from the harsh reality.

The man she loved had another woman in his heart.

Avery hailed a cab by the street.

Before she got in the cab, she could not stop herself from looking back.

However, there was nothing but the lonely winter breeze behind her.

Elliot did not run after her.

It was just as Avery had thought.

No matter how much she had tried to get Elliot to talk to her about the woman, he would never tell her anything, and she had seen it as impossible for him to give the woman up for her.

The tears that Avery held back rolled down her cheeks like an exploded dam.

She got into the cab, then said to the cab driver in a hoarse voice, “Take me to the airport.”

Laura had already moved out of her apartment and was waiting for Avery at the airport with their luggage.

The two of them would leave the city together in another two hours.

The cab sped through the night on the empty streets.

As Avery watched the city’s skyline flash by through the window, memories of Elliot-poured into her mind.

Everything felt so real, yet so ethereal.

Her heart was broken, and her tears would not stop flowing.

Avery felt a sudden pang of pain in her stomach as the babies kicked.

The children she shared with Elliot were now seven months old and will be born soon.

It was a shame that they would never meet their father.

Four years later, it was three in the morning when a light illuminated the dark master bedroom at the Foster mansion.

Elliot opened his eyes and picked up his phone from the nightstand.

When he saw that it was a call from Professor Hough, he immediately answered.

“Elliot...”

The professor’s voice on the other end of the line was weak.

“I-I’m afraid... I don’t have much time left... That matter we discussed... I’ll be leaving it to someone else... A student of mine... H-Her name is...”

What followed was the sound of a body falling to the ground.

Elliot leaped out of bed and felt his heart sink into an icy abyss.

There was no response no matter how many times he called out the professor’s name.

It was not until another hour later that he received a call from the professor’s assistant.

“Mr. Foster, I regret to inform you that Professor Hough has passed away from a chronic illness. I noticed that the last call he made was to you, so I thought you should know.”

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A week later, Avery was carefully inspecting the property models at the sales department of the Starry River Villas.

The salesperson noticed her youthful face, then asked, “Which type of property are you interested in, Miss? We have detached villas, townhouses, and semi-detached properties.”

“Do you still have any detached villas available?” Avery inquired.

The salesperson’s eyes lit up at her words, then said, “We do! There’s one left, and the square footage is pretty big. It’s over three thousand square feet... The price is also much higher than the townhouses and semi-detached houses, so—”

“Can we move in right away if I make full payment now?”

The salesperson nodded enthusiastically and said, “Of course! All of our villas are lavishly renovated and come fully furnished. All you need is your own belongings.”

“Alright. How much is it?”

“Four and a half million dollars. It’s pretty steep, but it’s the last detached villa left in the neighborhood. If you think it’s too much...”

Avery shifted her gaze to the other side of the room.

Laura was carrying Avery’s sleeping daughter, Layla Tate, so they needed a place to put up their feet as soon as possible.

Avery turned back to the salesperson and said, “Show me the place.”

The next moment, Avery left with the salesperson, leaving only Laura and the two children in the room.

Avery’s daughter was fast asleep in Laura’s arms while Avery’s son was standing next to Laura.

The boy's youthful eyes were twin black obsidian orbs, bright with caution.

He was wearing a cap, a loose, white t-shirt, a pair of gray jeans, and sneakers.

•His features were exquisite yet soft, making him look like a young prince out of a storybook.

A saleswoman walked over and offered two pieces of chocolate to the boy.

“How old are you, young man?”

“What's your name?”

“Is that your little sister or your big sister in your grandmother's arms?”

Hayden Tate did not respond to any of the woman's questions and simply turned his back to

her.

Laura flashed the saleswoman an apologetic look and explained, “I'm sorry. He's not much of a talker.”

“It's okay. Here's some chocolate for you,” said the saleswoman as she passed the chocolates to Laura.

She then glanced at Layla's sleeping face and said, “You have a beautiful granddaughter.”

Soon Avery returned from checking the villa.

She walked over to Laura and said, “The house doesn’t look too bad. Should we just buy it?” Avery had chosen this neighborhood as it was closer to the old Tate estate.

“It’s a little expensive,” Laura said with furrowed brows. “Your father’s old place cost under five hundred thousand dollars.”:

Avery chuckled and said, “I wasn’t even born when you guys bought that house! Things aren’t the same anymore.”

She then pulled out a credit card and passed it to the salesperson.

Twenty minutes later, Avery had signed all the necessary papers and left the sales building with her family.

The salespeople gathered together and gossiped away once Avery left.

“I didn’t expect that woman to be so rich! She actually paid for the house in full!”

“She’s so young and she’s already got two kids. I bet it isn’t even her own money!”

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“I guess... Her husband must be super rich since she’s so gorgeous.”

At the new detached villa, Laura carried Layla into the bedroom while Hayden trailed along behind them.

“Hayden, I’m going to get some groceries for dinner later. Can you watch your sister?” Laura asked. Hayden nodded, and Laura left the room without worry.

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“Avery, I’m going to get some groceries. Get some rest if you’re tired,”
Laura said.

Avery opened up their suitcases and took out their belongings one by one.

“Be careful out there, Mom. I’m not tired, so I’ll start unpacking our stuff.”

“Okay, I’ll head out now.”

Once Laura was gone, the house instantly fell into a calm silence.

Avery quickly finished unpacking, then got up and checked on the kids.

Layla was still fast asleep while Hayden lay next to her with his eyes shut.

When Avery left the room, she sighed as a hint of sadness washed over her face.

Hayden was a healthy child, but he was different from other kids.

He was a quiet boy that refused to speak to strangers.

He was already four years old, but he had never gone to school.

Avery had taken him for countless physical examinations.

Every single checkup came out normal, with the exception of his cerebral cortex being much more developed than the average person.

Hayden's problem was psychological.

However, even the psychiatrists they visited could not solve his issues.

It was a good thing that Layla was fine.

She might not enjoy talking to strangers, but she was at least capable of expression.

Avery's phone suddenly began to ring.

She picked it up and answered the call.

"Have you found a place to stay, Avery?"

On the other side of the line was Professor Hough's assistant, Wesley Brook.

"We did. Hayden and Layla are asleep, and my mom's out getting groceries," Avery replied. "When are you coming back? We should meet up when you do."

"I'll come see you when I get back," Wesley said, then his tone turned solemn as he continued, "There's something I need to tell you. About five years ago, Elliot Foster commissioned the professor to do something for him. It was a top secret matter that the professor didn't even reveal to me. About three days ago, Elliot Foster started gathering information on Professor

Hough's students."

“What is he looking for?” Avery wondered.

“When the police were investigating Professor Hough’s death, they found a recording of his last phone conversation with Elliot Foster. During that call, the professor told him that he would pass the case on to a student of his, but he died before he could mention a name. I’m guessing... You’re the student that Professor Hough was talking about.”

Avery was taken aback.

“There’s no way I’ll be able to figure out something that the professor didn’t manage to solve after five years.”

“No one else is more qualified than you are. Professor Hough told me once that your abilities have already surpassed his...” Wesley paused briefly, then continued, “I know you’re trying to avoid Elliot Foster, so I didn’t include your name in the list of the professor’s students. I only gave him a list of students who became doctors after they had graduated. Nobody knows that you stayed on at the professor’s lab once you had graduated. There’s no way he’ll be able to find out.”

“Thank you, Wesley!” Avery said as she let out a sigh of relief. “Drinks are on me when you get back!”

Her children were her top priority.

For the sake of their safety, she did not want to have any contact with Elliot.

“Don’t mention it. You’re in the same city as him now, so you need to be extra cautious.”

At 9 p.m. that night, Hayden and Layla lay in bed in matching pajamas.

The warm glimmer of the lamp on their nightstand twinkled in their bright, wide eyes.

“Did you find out who our dad is, Hayden?” asked Layla.

Hayden’s face was stern as he answered, “Cole Foster.”

“Huh? Is that his name?” Layla asked excitedly as she grabbed ahold of her brother’s arm.” How did you find out? What does he look like?”

Hayden’s brows furrowed, his cool expression was the spitting image of Elliot.

He got out of bed, and Layla followed right behind him.

Hayden opened up a photo on his laptop and showed it to Layla.

“That’s Cole Foster. That’s our father.”

He had hacked into Avonsville Hospital’s system that afternoon and found Avery’s medical records from four years ago. Her maternal health file at the time stated that the father of the children was Cole Foster.

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Layla’s eyes widened as she gazed at Cole’s photo on the laptop screen.

“Whoa! Our dad’s so good-looking!”

Hayden shut the laptop, then thought to himself, “So what if he’s good-looking? A spineless freeloader isn’t worthy of our mom!”

“When can we go see Daddy? Do you think he’d be happy when he finds out about us?”

The only concept that Layla had about their father was a pure one, as Avery had never once spoken ill of him in front of them.

Every time Layla asked Avery who their father was, Avery would always patiently answer, “You don’t have a father.”

Hayden climbed back into bed, lay down, and stared at the ceiling.

“He won’t,” he answered bluntly.

Layla was upset.

“Why not? It’s not like we want his money. I just want to spend some time with him!”

“Go to sleep.”

“I can’t sleep,” Layla huffed. “I want Dad.”

Hayden was disappointed in their so-called father, which put him in a bad mood.

“Shut up,” he snapped impatiently.

Layla immediately quieted down.

She could feel that her brother was annoyed, so she wrapped her little arms around Hayden, and cooed, “I’m sorry, Hayden. I didn’t mean to make you mad. If you don’t want to look for Dad, I won’t either.”

Hayden pushed Layla's arms off of him, then said in a much calmer tone, "I'll let you know."

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Layla ecstatically threw her arms around her brother once again and said, "Okay! I'll do anything you say!"

Avery stood in front of the floor-to-ceiling windows in the master bedroom and gazed blankly at the vista in front of her.

Four years had passed by in a flash.

It felt as if everything had changed, but it also felt like everything had stayed the same.

Avery had not been in contact with Elliot at all for the past four years, but they were still tied by the law.

Elliot had never signed the divorce papers.

Avery picked up her phone and called her lawyer.

"Ask him again tomorrow, Mr. Vaughn. If he still refuses to sign it, then please inform him that I will be taking this to court."

She heard her own calm and determined voice and could not help but recall the way she almost fainted from crying in the airport on the night she left four years ago.

What a fool she was!

Elliot was completely unaffected.

When she had left the country, she had looked him up online because she missed him.

That was when she saw all the news and photos of him attending all kinds of social events.

His world continued to turn even without her in it.

Avery moved on quickly after seeing how well Elliot was doing.

“Are you back in the country, Miss Tate?” asked Mr. Vaughn.

“I am.”

“Since you’re back, why not go and meet him yourself?” Mr. Vaughn sighed. “He stopped answering my calls a long time ago. I’m guessing he already blocked my number.”

Avery was surprised.

“However, if you insist on having me represent you, I can use a new number to contact him,” continued Mr. Vaughn. “To be honest, there’s a higher possibility of success if you meet him yourself.”

“In that case, please contact him using a new number!”

“Understood.”

Avery hung up the phone, then scrolled through her contacts.

Other than the fact that Aryadelle was her home, there was another reason had she returned to the country.

She wanted to rebuild the company that had gone bankrupt in her hands.

Not only did she want to rebuild Tate Industries, but she also wanted to make it even more glorious than it ever was.

She will get back every single penny and more that was stolen from her father.

She found the contact for the former HR manager of Tate Industries and dialed the number.