

When His Eyes Opened by Simple Silence Chapter 61

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Chapter 61

"Of course I know him! We used to go out for drinks together all the time! Did he tell you that he's really close to Chelsea?" Ben said as he deliberately mentioned the main point.

A hint of shock appeared on Avery's face as she said, "He said they weren't close."

"He lied to you, then," Ben said. "You have to really think about this. Why does he suddenly want to invest in Tate Industries? What's the catch?"

"Are you saying it could be a trap?" Avery asked.

Ben shook his head and said, "I'm just saying that you need to look at this from every angle. There's no such thing as a free lunch, and gold doesn't just drop from the sky. You and Chelsea just had a falling out very recently, and now her brother is interested in investing in your company. Aren't you worried?"

"I am," Avery answered.

"You have to think about this carefully... Anyway, let's eat," Ben said, then hollered, "Elliot! I'm done talking to your wife. You can come out now."

Avery almost choked at the sound of Ben calling her Elliot's wife.

Once she was seated at the dining table, Elliot chose a seat further away from her.

Ben brought over a decanter full of wine from the bar.

"Would you like some, Miss Tate?" he asked as he placed the decanter on the table and brought over three wine glasses.

Avery shook her head and said, "I don't drink. I need to work on my thesis later."

"Oh, I'll drink with Elliot, then..."

Ben poured a drink for himself and Elliot, then said, "It was a good thing you were around to take care of him when he got drunk the other night."

Avery coughed, then said, "I didn't take care of him. He was fine after a good night's sleep."

"I guess Elliot isn't a bad drunk. He's quiet even when he's drunk," Ben said. "He's not very good at expressing his feelings..."

"I think he's very good at expressing himself! He loses his temper every time he's unhappy. I've never met anyone who likes expressing themselves more than he does."

Ben sat in stunned silence, while Elliot's face instantly turned dark with rage.

"Let's eat," Avery said when she noticed his change in expression.

She picked up her knife and fork and gobbled up her food to shut her little mouth up.

She finished her food in less than five minutes and left the table.

Ben watched her leave and sighed, "Does she always eat that quickly?"

"She does," Elliot responded.

"Is she anorexic? She didn't eat much."

"Someone who's actually anorexic wouldn't touch their food at all."

"Oh... I guess she's watching her figure to get your attention."

Elliot raised his brows and asked, "You think she cares about what I think at all?"

If Avery really cared about him, she would not have embarrassed him earlier.

He used to constantly get enraged by her attitude, but his patience had increased significantly.

"It doesn't look like it... But her courage to say whatever is on her mind is exactly

why you like her," Ben said.

"When did I ever say that I like her?"

"Drop the act. It's just the two of us here. Besides, there's nothing wrong with liking a woman. Avery's more outstanding than a lot of other women..."

"Outstanding, my *ss. All she thinks about is having kids."

Ben was left speechless.

In the guest bedroom, Avery turned on her laptop but could not calm her worried heart.

Something was bothering her, and she could not help but feel like something bad was about to happen.

Her phone suddenly rang, and her heart immediately began to race.

She picked up her phone and Cassandra's name met her eyes.

How dare she call her?! She was sure that it was for nothing good!

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Could it be that they had spent all the embezzled money?! How was it possible for them to spend that huge sum of money this quickly?

Avery took a deep breath and answered the phone.

Before she could say a word, Cassandra screamed from the other end of the line, "Avery! Is the Super Brain program my dad developed with you? Give it to me now!"

It sounded like she was crying, and she also sounded terrified.

Something snapped inside of Avery.

"How dare you call me, Cassandra?! Your uncle embezzled Dad's money! Did you know that's a serious crime?! The police are investigating him right now!"

"What does that have to do with me?! I wasn't the one who took the money! I just want the Super Brain program! Bring it to me right now! You have to get it to me tonight!"

Cassandra's voice got louder and more hysterical.

Avery's brows furrowed at the sound of the background noise on the phone.

"Where are you right now, Cassandra?!"

Cassandra burst into tears and wailed, "Help, Avery! I'm at the casino with Cole... He's being held right now ... If you don't bring Dad's new program here, they're going to chop off his finger!"

"Casino? You're gambling?!"

Avery's face turned pale.

She had no idea that Cole was a gambler!

"What's the point of going into that?! Bring over the program and save him! Do you hear me? Do you want Cole to lose his finger?! Don't you love him anymore?!" Cassandra yelled.

Avery was already walking toward the door, but she stopped in her tracks when she heard Cassandra's words.

"Don't embarrass yourselves! Even if he was the last man on earth, I wouldn't give Cole Foster the time of day! He's being held back because he lost money, right? If that's the case, why don't you pay it off for him? Your uncle stole hundreds of millions from Dad. I doubt Cole lost that much!" said Avery as she walked to the bathroom.

Her head was spinning, and she needed to wash her face to freshen herself up.

"It's not like my uncle gave me any of that money!" Cassandra cried frantically. "Besides, they just want the program! Didn't you tell people that you gave it to Cole? Why did you say that when you never gave him anything? You did it on purpose to mess with him, didn't you?"

Avery had not expected Shaun to move this quickly.

Cole may be a loser, but he was still Elliot Foster's nephew at the end of the day. Shaun was more ruthless than she thought!

"They're keeping him because he gambled, right? Let me guess... Someone approached him asking about the program, he said he had it and used it as collateral, and now he's fallen right into their trap..."

Avery could see the whole thing clearly in her mind.

If Cole had not said that he had the program, why would anyone have funded his gambling?

If he did not gamble, how could he have gotten tricked in the first place?

Whose fault was this? It was his and no one else's!

"Ha! So you did do it on purpose! You're heartless, Avery Tate! He was so good to you when you were together! It looks like his love was all for nothing!" Cassandra chastised Avery.

"Yes! He was really good to me. While he was dating me, he was doing all kinds of shameless things with you... They're only going to chop off his finger; they are not feeding him to the sharks. This isn't the time for you to cry over him yet!"

Avery said coldly, then hung up the phone.

Her phone rang again less than a minute later.

This time, Cole's name was flashing on her phone screen.

Avery clenched her jaw, then answered the phone.

She did not go soft on him, but she wanted to hear him begging and howling.

"Avery... Avery! Save me! If you don't... I'm going to turn into a cripple! You never gave me the program... You never did!"

Cole was being held down, and his voice was filled with panic.

"Why did you say you had it if I never gave it to you? You're paying for your own sins, Cole Foster! I can't save you!" Avery said, then prepared to hang up.

"Avery! It's my uncle! Uncle Elliot did this!" Cole screamed suddenly. "Nobody else would dare touch me! Please beg him for me... I'm begging you!"

Avery was stunned.

Was this not Shaun's doing?

She suddenly remembered how Elliot had sent his bodyguard to the outskirts of the town to investigate what had happened the night she had been abducted.

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Chapter 63

Elliot knew everything that Avery had said while she was strapped to the lie detector!

Was he truly the one behind everything?

Did Elliot want to get his hands on Tate Industries' new program?

Cold sweat dripped down Avery's back as she thought about all of this. She hung up on Cole and walked out of her room.

Elliot and Ben were done with dinner and were smoking in the living room.

Ben immediately killed his cigarette in the ashtray when he noticed Avery.

"Do you want to join us, Miss Tate?"

Avery nodded and walked toward Ben.
Once she was standing in front of him, she said, "I'd like to speak with Elliot alone."
Ben was taken aback.
Was this her way of kicking him out?
Embarrassed, he stood up and said, "I'll leave now. You two have a good talk. You could take a walk outside, too. The weather's nice."
He hurried out of the house right after.
Avery sat down where Ben was sitting. She thought of how Cole was about to get his finger chopped off and that motivated her straightforward approach. "Cole just called me. He is being held at a casino, and someone wants to chop his finger off."
Elliot already knew this.
He received word about it from his people at the casino.
They said that Cole was going big on the floor that night.
"Are you sad?"
The sound of Cole's name escaping Avery's lips upset him.
"The people who are holding him think that he has Tate Industries' new system, so they lent him money to gamble with. Now they're asking for the program as compensation," said Avery slowly and clearly. "You are amongst the people who know that he has the program..."
"Are you suspecting me?"
Elliot's eyes turned cold as ash fell from the cigarette between his fingers.
"I'm just asking. If it isn't you-"
"It's me," Elliot smirked maliciously. "Will you get down on your knees to beg for him?"
Avery raised her brows and said, "Over my dead body."
Every muscle in Elliot's body tensed.
"You don't think I won't ask them to chop off his finger?!" he roared.
"
"Go ahead and do it."
Elliot fell silent.
"He used to tell me that I was the only woman he loved, but he's out doing god knows what with my sister tonight. If you cut his finger off, I'll light you a cigarette. How's that?" said Avery.
The dark gleam in Elliot's eyes turned ice cold.
It looked like Avery no longer cared about Cole Foster!
After all, he was a loser who had nothing to offer her now.
Elliot's phone rang moments later.
He glanced at the screen, then turned his phone off.
Avery's phone rang soon after. She looked at the screen, then pressed down on the power button and turned it off. The room was so quiet that they could faintly hear each other's heartbeats. After pondering for a while, Avery said, "Don't mess with me, Elliot. Otherwise, I'm dragging you down with me."

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Chapter 64

Avery would not hand over what her father had left to her to anyone.

She refused to let anybody take it from her.

Her words were harsh, but not only was Elliot not scared, but he also found it hilarious.

"What are you smiling at?" Avery asked when she saw his smile.

"You," he mocked. "You're self-righteous, arrogant, and you're digging your own grave." Avery could force herself to accept the first two, but what did he mean by her digging her own grave?

"Get back to your room! Just looking at you gives me a headache."

Elliot's face suddenly darkened, and his voice was low and deep.

"I didn't do anything. You must have a headache because you're sick," Avery said indifferently. "Don't you have a family doctor? Should I call him?"

"F*ck off!" Elliot growled through gritted teeth.

Avery returned to her room in a terrible mood.

She shut her laptop, walked over to the bed, and lay down.

She had fallen out of love with Cole a long time ago.

If it were not for Cassandra's phone call, she would have never thought about them nor would she have felt any of the emotions that she was now experiencing. The thought of Cole being a gambler and being in danger gave her a strange and complicated feeling.

All of her memories with him were ruined, and she even felt a little disgusted.

It was as if she was in some weird TV show where she was never truly in touch with reality, and she was living a lie.

In the midst of her jumbled thoughts, she fell asleep.

A car pulled up at the Foster mansion at 2 a.m. that night.

Mrs. Cooper was awakened by the bodyguard who was on night duty. She rushed into the living room to see Rosalie's furious face. "Get Avery Tate down here!"

Rosalie yelled before sitting down on the couch.

Mrs. Cooper immediately ran over to the guest bedroom.

A groggy Avery walked into the living room five minutes later.

The tense atmosphere in the room instantly woke her up.

"I always thought that you were an innocent little girl, but you have been lying to me all this time!" Rosalie snapped as she trembled with rage. "I never knew you dated Cole. Why didn't you tell me?! If I knew this from the beginning, I never would have made you Elliot's wife! This whole thing is preposterous!"

"None of you asked me about it, nor did you care about my feelings. You just treated me like a pawn. If you're upset that the pawn you chose was a tainted piece, then you only have your own self to blame," Avery said nonchalantly.

Rosalie shot to her feet and wobbled over to Avery.

"Fine, say I was wrong! But what do you have to say about framing Cole tonight?!"

'I framed him? Are you talking about how he got in trouble after gambling?'

Avery's retort left Rosalie at a loss for words.

You know very well that nobody would lay a finger on him if he didn't go looking for trouble himself. Instead of educating him, you've come to put the blame on me. This means that me being a part of the Foster family is a sin in and of itself."

Avery's eyes reddened as her emotions got the better of her.

Rosalie could no longer hold back and landed a hard slap on Avery's face.

The sound of her palm coming in violent contact with Avery's cheek echoed through the large living room.

Avery's cheek burned as hatred rose in her eyes. "Yes, I framed Cole on purpose.

He betrayed me and I wanted revenge," Avery said in a voice that was much clearer and more stable than before. 'Also, as long as I'm by Elliot's side, you can forget about having grandchildren.'

Rosalie raised her arm once again to give Avery another slap, but the energy suddenly escaped from her body and she fell to the couch..

Avery did not reach out to help her, but Mrs. Cooper rushed over. Elliot made his way over from the stairs immediately after. He was in a gray silk robe, and his face was chillingly stern. Avery did not want to see him at all. Not even for a second.

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Chapter 65

Before Elliot reached the living room, Avery quickly ran back to her room. Rosalie was having trouble breathing, and she felt like she was about to suffocate, but the sight of Elliot immediately calmed her down.

"Elliot... My son..." Rosalie weakly reached out her arm to Elliot, who hurried over and held her. "Divorce Avery Tate... Go tomorrow... Get a divorce..." Rosalie said with tears in her eyes. "I'm sorry... I'm sorry, my son... I was blind... I found you such a dirty woman..."

Elliot lifted his hand to wipe the tears off of his mother's face, then said, "Don't meddle in my affairs with Avery, Mom. You also don't need to bother with Cole." "Cole got his finger chopped off... He must be in so much pain! He said you did it, but I know that isn't true ... How could you do something so cruel to your own family? You're not that kind of person..."

"If you bring up this nonsense in front of me again, I'll get the driver to send you home right now," Elliot said with a frightening expression on his face. "I won't divorce Avery. Unless I decide to do so myself, no one can make me."

Rosalie dejectedly took in a deep breath, then said, "Did you fall in love with her? For her... You're willing to turn your back on your brother's whole family..."

Elliot let go of his mother, shifted his gaze to the old mansion's driver, and said, "Take my mother home."

After that, he turned and made his way upstairs.

Rosalie watched her son's back and could not hold back her tears.

How could he be so heartless?!

It was all Avery Tate's fault!

Elliot never used to be like this!

Avery's appearance had destroyed the relationship between uncle and nephew, which was what led to this whole fiasco.

Avery sat in bed with her back against the headboard and her head slightly tilted back.

Her cheek stung, and her heart hurt.

The bruise on her face would go away after a few days, but the pain in her heart might never disappear.

Even if she thought she was over it, if something triggered her one day, traces of that night would still resurface.

At 8 a.m. the next morning, Elliot sat at the dining table for breakfast.

He suddenly turned to Mrs. Cooper and said, "Call Avery down."

Mrs. Cooper made her way over to the guest bedroom but frantically returned moments later.

"Madam Avery isn't in her room. She might have gone out. Let me ask the front gate," Mrs. Cooper reported to Elliot, then walked toward the front yard. She returned shortly after and said, "Madam Avery left around six this morning. Should I give her a call?"

Mrs. Cooper was a little worried about Avery.

Rosalie's slap was not a light one.
Avery might look soft and gentle, but she was a proud woman.
Mrs. Cooper dialed her number but was met by nothing but the cold beeping dial tone.
"Her phone's turned off," Mrs. Cooper said in a low voice.
Avery left at 6 a.m., and she had turned off her phone.
She would not be upset enough to do anything stupid, right?
A slap was not reason enough to seek death, but some people might lose control of their actions when they were triggered.
Elliot's expression was stone-cold as he put down his coffee cup and left the dining room without a word.
He stopped in the living room, pulled out his phone, and called his assistant.
"Chad, look up Avery Tate's mother's phone number for me."
"Yes, Sir. I'll get that for you right away," answered Chad. Once he got Laura Jensen's number, he immediately dialed it. "Sorry, the number you are trying to call is not reachable. Please try again later."
What was going on? Both Avery and her mother had their phones turned off?!

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Chapter 66

Avery was in the middle of getting an ultrasound at an unknown county hospital.
"The babies are developing nicely... Come back for an anomaly scan when you reach the five-month mark," said the doctor.
"Thank you, Doctor," Avery said as she let out a sigh of relief.
"Don't mention it. I was really close to your mother back in school," the doctor said as she passed a copy of her ultrasound scan to Avery. "She told me that the father doesn't want kids, so you came all the way out here for your checkup... Avery, raising two kids by yourself isn't going to be easy!"
Avery took the copy of the scan, smiled, and said, "It's fine. I can do it!"
"As long as you're prepared."
"I'll get out of your hair now. I'll call you again before we come by next time," Avery said, then left the examination room.
Laura saw her walk out, then immediately walked up to her and asked, "How are the babies? Is everything alright?"
"Everything's normal. Are you tired, Mom? I'm exhausted!" Avery said as she yawned.
She had not slept the night before.
After leaving the Foster mansion at six that morning, she had met up with Laura and taken a three-hour, bumpy bus ride out here.
She almost fell asleep on the bus a few times, but she held on.
Now that the checkup turned out fine, a weight was lifted off of her shoulders, and she wanted nothing but to have a good sleep.
"Should we just get a room at a motel and rest a bit?"
Avery's tired face made Laura's heartache.
Avery shook her head and said, "It's going to take us another three hours to get back! We should just leave now."
"Let's get something to eat first. You haven't eaten anything all day. Aren't you hungry?" Laura said, then held Avery's hand and led her out of the building.
"I guess I'm pretty hungry," Avery said as she caressed her lower belly. "It feels a

little different from before. I'm not showing yet, but it feels hard here." She took her mother's hand and rested it on her belly.

"This is nothing compared to how it will feel when you start to show and reach the late stages of your pregnancy..." Laura said, then sighed. "Time sure flies by. They're already four months old."

"Right? It won't be long before they'll be born," Avery said. Excitement and worry flashed through her eyes as she said those words.

"Your divorce with Elliot... How is that going?" Laura asked.

Avery shook her head and said, "He's stubborn as hell. The more I bring up the divorce, the more he won't do it. So, I've decided never to bring it up again."

"Now that I think about it, I don't think I've ever officially met him!" Laura sighed. "What's there to meet? He's cold to everyone. Meeting him would just annoy you," Avery said softly.

Laura disagreed and said, "He's young and rich, so it's only natural for him to be spirited. He's not the same as us average folk, so you can't look at him from that point of view."

"Why do you think we're here right now, Mom? Why are you on his side?" Avery pouted.

Laura grinned awkwardly, then said, "Let's go eat. We'll leave after that."

On the way back to the city, Avery fell asleep with her head on Laura's thighs. While Laura was gently stroking her daughter's hair, her fingers accidentally touched her left cheek.

Avery took in a sharp breath and mumbled in her sleep, "Ouch... That hurts..."

Laura shifted her gaze to her cheek.

She would not have noticed anything if she did not look closely, but Avery had put on a thick layer of foundation

"What happened to your face, Avery?" Laura cried out, waking Avery up.

Avery opened her eyes and said, "What is it, Mom?"

Lauren touched her cheek, and Avery flinched in pain.

"What happened to your face? Who hit you? Was it Elliot?"

Laura's heart tightened.

"No... I fought with his mom last night... Why didn't I think of getting his mom to make him divorce me? I guess that did not work as well," Avery said nonchalantly.

"You stupid girl! Don't come up with something this ridiculous just to get a divorce!" Laura sighed, then added, "Why didn't you go get some medicine when we got to the hospital this morning?"

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Chapter 67

"I'm pregnant, so I can't just simply take medication," Avery said. "It'll be fine after a few days. I just need to cover it up with makeup for now."

"You... Get some more sleep!"

Laura patted her legs, urging Avery to lie down.

Avery shook her head and said, "I'm not tired anymore. I'll just look through my phone."

When she turned on her phone, she noticed the missed call from Mrs. Cooper. She thought of calling back, but the crowded bus was noisy. After some consideration, she decided to talk to her when she got home.

Suddenly, the day's headline popped up on one of the news apps on her phone.

It read, 'Cole Foster Carried Out of Casino in the Dead of the Night! Suspected of Owing a Loan Shark Money!'

Avery took a deep breath and clicked on the headline.

She saw the photos of the night before.

There was one of Cole being carried out of the casino, and one of him being taken to the hospital.

The familiar face next to him belonged to none other than Cassandra.

Avery had not seen her sister in a long time, but she noticed that she was dressed even more promiscuously than before.

If Cole had not gotten in trouble with the loan sharks, she probably would have spent the night with him at some fancy hotel!

Avery closed the news app and checked her messages.

She noticed a text from Tammy that read: (Avery! I almost slept with Jun Hertz last night! Sh*t! We were halfway there when my period came out of nowhere!

Avery was extremely shocked.

Avery: (Aren't you moving too fast?!)

Tammy: (We had a little bit too much to drink last night... Ugh! You should've seen his expression when I started bleeding... He was disappointed, but he still went out and got me a tampon.)

Avery: (Don't they have those in the hotel room?!)

Tammy: [... We spent the night at his apartment. I might have agreed to date him to find out what he's hiding, but I still have to make sure he knows what he's doing in bed!

Avery: [I see.]

Tammy: [Hehe. How's your husband in bed?]

Avery's cheeks flushed, and she changed the subject.

Avery: (My phone's dying. I'm going to charge it now! Tammy: [I bet you already slept with him! Otherwise, you would just say you don't know! Hahahaha!

Avery was so embarrassed that she shoved her phone back into her bag.

When the bus arrived at Avonsville three hours later, Avery first sent her mother home.

Laura was holding a big bag of groceries in one hand and a bag of fresh fruits in the other, so she passed the keys to Avery to open the front door.

When she opened the door, she saw someone was sitting on the couch!

Avery was so startled that she took a few steps back.

Laura was also in shock.

If she had not already seen photos of Elliot and knew what he looked like, she would have already called the cops.

Seeing their terrified faces, the bodyguard walked over to the front door and pushed Avery into the house.

He then took the bags of groceries from Laura and helped her take them into the kitchen. Laura's lips moved slightly as she hesitated about whether or not she should thank him.

"What are you doing here?" Avery said when she had composed herself. She walked over to Elliot and demanded, "This is where my mother lives. What do you think you're doing here?"

A shiver ran down her spine.

It was horrifying how easily Elliot had managed to look into her and her mother, and he even found Laura's exact home address.

Her privacy meant nothing to him. Elliot noticed the fear in her eyes, then said, "I'm here for you."

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Chapter 68

A few words from Elliot were enough to make the defensive walls around Avery's heart crumble.

She had left the house at six in the morning and turned off her phone. He could not reach her and came all the way here.

Was he worried about her?

"You must be Elliot," Laura said as she noticed the awkward air in the room.

"Avery was having a bad day, so I took her out to relieve some stress. She's fine now. Let me get you something to drink!"

"Mom!"

"No, thank you."

Avery and Elliot spoke at the same time, making the atmosphere even stranger.

"He's leaving now, so don't mind him. You should sit down and get some rest,"

Avery said as she led her mom to the couch.

She was subtly kicking out her unwelcome guest.

Elliot took the hint and stood up.

"I'll be going now. I'll come by one day to visit," he said.

Laura wanted to send him off, but Avery pulled her back and said, "I'm leaving now, too. Stay at home and rest, Mom."

She then got up and trailed behind Elliot.

Once they were out of the building, she turned to him and said, "Don't ever come here again."

Elliot's expression turned cold. He clenched his jaw as if he had reached the limit of his patience.

"I don't need you to pretend to care about me," Avery continued. "If you really care about me at all, then divorce me."

She then turned and walked away.

Elliot's eyes shot icy daggers at her slender back.

They were physically close, but their hearts could not be further apart.

At the hospital, Cole was rushed into surgery after being sent to the hospital in the middle of the night. If the dismembered finger was preserved well, there was a high possibility of recovery if surgery was done within the next eight hours.

He might never regain full function of it, but at least he would not be crippled.

After the night's surgery, Cole did not regain consciousness until two in the afternoon the next day.

The terror in his eyes made him appear as if he had been robbed of his sanity.

"Cole! Don't be scared! You're at the hospital now. You're safe! Nobody can hurt you now!" Olivia cried as she cooed at her son. "Your father has paid off the money you owed."

Henry did not look happy. He had to cough up a huge sum of money to pay off the loan sharks after all.

He always knew that his son was a good for nothing, but Cole had lost a ridiculous amount of money last night!

The tens of thousands that he had lost before were still within Henry's means, but he had lost over eight million dollars this time.

Of course, Henry did not pay back the full sum. Since they had already cut off Cole's finger, he only had to pay off half of the money.

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Chapter 69

"If you ever gamble again, I'll cut off both of your arms myself!" Henry snapped through gritted teeth.

"Why are you snapping at him? He just woke up! How could it be possible for him to lose all of that money by himself? I'm sure it was that brat, Cassandra Tate!"

Olivia cried, then walked out of the room and called Cassandra over.

Cassandra walked into the room, took one look at Cole on the hospital bed, and hung her head in guilt.

"Mom... Why are you blaming Cassandra? Someone deliberately set me up last night, or I wouldn't have lost that much money!"

Cole's voice was weak, but he was more lucid now.

"It was Uncle Elliot... Nobody else could have done this! He found out that I used to date Avery Tate and hates me to death now!"

"I know it was your uncle! He doesn't care about you or your father!" Olivia cried hysterically. "There's something wrong with him. He's not normal. We shouldn't provoke him!"

Henry shoved his wife aside and yelled, "What are you saying in front of an outsider?! Elliot and I don't get along because of our huge age gap! If your son had a backbone, Elliot wouldn't be able to squash him like a bug! Take a look in the mirror and figure it out for yourself! Just looking at the two of you is giving me a headache!"

He then turned and stormed out of the room.

Olivia burst into tears.

Cole felt like his head was about to explode.

"Don't cry, Mom! It's all my fault. I'm a closet! Why did you save me? You should have just let me die!"

"Elliot! Don't be like that... You might not be as business-minded as your uncle, but you're way better than him in my eyes!" Cassandra said as she held Cole's arm.

"Focus on recovering, for now, then we will come up with a way to take our revenge on him! Once he's dead, your father won't compare you to him again!"

Cole suddenly calmed down.

Olivia's wailing also came to a halt.

"Cole, you've seen Avery's true colors now, right? She's on your uncle's side now, so you should let her go completely! We should get rid of both of them! Once they're dead, your uncle's fortune will be ours."

Cassandra was revealing her ambitious character.

Olivia walked over and stared coldly at her, then said, "What do you bring to the table? I heard your mother took a fortune from the Tate family. Why didn't she help out with the loan sharks last night?!"

Cassandra pouted and said, "It's true that my mom is wealthy, but she's opening a new company outside of the country right now. By the time the business flourishes, our net worth might just surpass Elliot Foster's! The market overseas is much more promising than it is here..."

"Don't give me that bullsh*t! The way you two were gambling last night, you would have gone through any amount of money!" Olivia snapped.

"We won't do it again! Really! I swear!" Cassandra said, raising her hands in defeat as her eyes filled with tears. "We were just curious and decided to try it out. It won't happen again!"

"Cole is our family's last hope because Elliot won't have children," said Olivia. "Why is that? Is there something wrong with him?" Cassandra asked curiously. "I'm not telling you anything! You're not even my daughter-in-law yet," Olivia said coldly. "I'll only forgive you if you're able to help Cole from now on." "I'll do whatever it takes," Cassandra said confidently. "Just you wait. I'll show you what I'm made of."

That evening, Chelsea was sitting at a high-end restaurant with a glass of red wine in her hand.

She had no appetite, and her brows furrowed as she said, "Have you lost your mind, Charlie? Are you trying to break my heart by handing over that much money to Avery Tate? If you have too much money, then how about giving it all to me?"

Charlie shook his head and said, "I can give you however much you want, Chelsea, but you've misunderstood me. Does money have anything to do with how Elliot Foster hurt you? He messed with your feelings, so I'm just giving him a taste of his own poison."

"Ha... You want to try your luck with Avery Tate? Do you really think Elliot would let you get away with that? He loves her."

The more Chelsea thought about it, the more insane the whole thing sounded.

"Don't get yourself mixed up in all of this, Charlie. It'll be hard on me if you become enemies with Elliot."

"I never got along with him anyway," Charlie said nonchalantly. "I decided to invest in Tate Industries because they're not as bad as people think. Once I get my hands on it, I can turn the whole company around."

Chelsea glared at her brother and said, "Avery Tate is my arch-nemesis. Are you trying to piss me off by making money for her?"

"Look on the bright side. Don't you think she might just fall in love with me if I help her like this?"

"What if she doesn't? Don't get me wrong. You're an outstanding man, but I still think Elliot is more attractive," Chelsea said as admiration washed across her face.

"His assertiveness, his indifference, his self-control."

"Do you know how his father died?" Charlie scoffed. He swirled the wine in his glass, then said, "Elliot killed him."

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The admiration on Chelsea's face instantly vanished into thin air.

"I can't be one hundred percent sure about this, but I'm at least eighty to ninety percent sure of it," Charlie continued. "I never told you because I was on decent terms with him before. Besides, I figured that his merits could make me overlook this matter."

Chelsea felt a chill run through her entire body. It felt like an eternity before her trembling hand managed to bring her glass of wine to her lips.

"He might be impressive, but he has a huge disadvantage. You shouldn't worship someone like him. If you were to marry him, I'd be worried for your safety,"

Charlie said indifferently as he cut into his steak.

"I'm sure he had a reason for doing it... I don't believe that he's a bad guy..."

Chelsea mumbled after a moment's silence. "I would know if he was a lost cause. I spent all these years by his side, so I know him like the back of my hand."

Charlie chuckled at his sister's gullibility.

"There was a serial killer who was finally caught a while ago. He managed to get away with his crimes for over ten years. The whole time, he was working hard at a normal job, and everyone around him said that he was honest and kind..."

"Watch your mouth, Charlie Tierney!" Chelsea snapped. "I have my own opinions. Mind your own business!"

"I knew you couldn't handle me putting him down, which is exactly why I didn't say a word all these years," Charlie said with an innocent expression, then shrugged and said, "Keep holding on, then! When you decide to give up one day, our family will always welcome you back with open arms."

"I don't need that! I have my own properties."

"It looks like Elliot Foster pays you well," Charlie teased.

Charlie was the Tierney heir, so Chelsea had never asked for a penny from the family after she left and began to fend for herself.

"Everything aside, he's an amazing boss. Even if he will never belong to me, I'm still willing to stay by his side," Chelsea said, then raised her glass and added, "Good luck going after Avery Tate. I know you've never failed in pursuing a woman. I hope it'll be the same this time!"

"I'm confident it will be," Charlie said smugly as they clinked glasses.

A week later, Ben walked into Elliot's office at Sterling Group with the latest piece of first-hand gossip about Trust Capital to share with him.

"Charlie Tierney is interested in investing in Tate Industries, right? Rumor has it that Avery Tate hasn't given him a solid answer yet," Ben said with the widest grin on his face. "I also heard that he's been asking Avery out at every opportunity... He invited her out for dinner, asked her out for a hike, and even to an art gallery... It looks like he's pulling out all the stops, but it's too bad that Avery's been indifferent and ignoring all of his advances..."

"Mr. Tierney's finally met his match!" Chad chimed in. "He's an expert Casanova. Every one of his girlfriends has been more outstanding than the last, and they were all crazy about him. Even after he broke up with her, he still managed to stay on friendly terms with all of them. I didn't expect Miss Tate not to fall for his charms."

Elliot's face was stiffened with rage. He did not find the whole thing funny at all. The fact that Charlie Tierney was asking his wife out in the name of "work" was vile, disrespectful and a blatant act of shamelessness.

"She hurt her face and hasn't left the house in a week," Elliot said curtly.

Ben and Chad were taken aback.

"How did she get hurt?"

After a moment's hesitation, Elliot said quietly, "My mother hit her."

"What the hell? Was it because of that whole thing with your nephew?"

"Yes," Elliot said as he shifted his gaze away from his laptop screen. He picked up his cup of coffee, took a sip and said bitterly, "She hasn't spoken a word to me all week."

"Well, did you try to make her feel better after your mother hit her?" Ben asked. Elliot shook his head.

"Did you get her a gift or something to cheer her up?" Chad queried.

Elliot continued to shake his head.

Both Ben and Chad took deep breaths.

Any idiot would be able to figure out why Avery had ignored Elliot for a week!

"She wants a divorce. If I asked her what she wanted, she would say she wanted a divorce agreement;" Elliot said dejectedly. "If I tried to cheer her up, she would say that I was faking it and that I should divorce her if I truly cared about her."

He was afraid of making a move or saying a word because all Avery wanted from him was a divorce.

Ben and Chad suddenly felt sympathetic towards him.

Elliot was far better than Charlier Tierney in every aspect, but why was his love life such a mess?

At the end of the day, one could blame it on his lack of experience. After all, most things become easier to handle the second and third time around.