

The Marvelous Elijah's Return By Rever Chapter 31

Chapter 31

Whatever that was

The room was quiet for a while, and Elijah studied Bryan's eyes, wondering if he was someone he wanted to risk the act of "mess around and find out" with at such a crucial moment in his life

"Understandable, and I respect your decision... But if I am not involved in some deep shit?" Bryan asked, arching a brow challengingly. Peeking at Matt again, Elijah hesitated, but when Matt twitched his brows slightly, he faced Bryan and said, "Then you got yourself a deal." "Well, I can drink to that," Bryan said with a small smile as he picked up Elijah's glass and reached it out to him.

But Matt tried to grab the glass and accidentally spilled it all over Elijah's coat, and when he noticed that, he exclaimed, "Oh, fuck! Sorry, sir!" "It's fine," Elijah said, reaching over for a napkin, and patting down his shirt and pants,

"I am sorry. I should have known better than to serve you a glass of wine that has been pulled without your presence." Bryan apologized quickly, feeling glad that it was a clear wine and it didn't leave a nasty stain on the jacket.

Scowling at Bryan, Matt narrowed his eyes at him and said, "I am glad you know... I am sorry, but for security reasons, I can't let you serve him anything not sealed or properly labeled, sir."

Knowing exactly what Matt was talking about, Bryan nodded, understanding that the fact he knew Elijah's real identity made him a potential threat, and it was going to take time for that to change, and things to ease between them.

That is why he didn't want to be honest with Elijah at first because he feared that he would be less trusted.

But that didn't bother Bryan because he knew nothing satisfactory happens without effort, lots of sweat, tears, and blood, and that is why he had to be sincere. After all, in it all, trust is the most important element.

"I should get home. I hate how I stink with the scent of alcohol." Elijah mumbled after a few seconds of awkward silence.

Then he stood from the leather couch and said, "Thank you for having me, Bryan. It's somewhat a relief to know your reason for wanting to help me."

"Will this meeting be the last of its kind?" Bryan asked and leaned back in his seat, feeling worried.

Meeting his eyes, Elijah paused for several long moments before nodding slowly, saying, "I hope it won't be."

"Trust me. Neither do I," Bryan told him sincerely, before standing from his chair and extending his hand to Elijah. Without any hesitation, Elijah grabbed his hand and shook it, and said, "Goodbye for now." With her head resting on the counter, Peach looked at the wall clock in the motel lobby and then sigh, mumbling, "What are you waiting for, huh, Peach?!"

Pouting, she closed her eyes, trying to stop thinking about Elijah and how it was getting dark outside, but her mind was racing with thoughts of him, even though she waited for it to stop because it leads to feelings that felt so wrong and yet right at the same time,

She had a crush on Elijah... A crush... It started as a small and harmless one, but now it has

grown bigger and stronger every single day.

She couldn't control it. It had taken a hold of her life, making her forget that he just got divorced... that he's her cousin's ex-husband, that it had just been days since they met.

How such a feeling could exist was beyond her, and that is something that scared her. She was afraid of rejection. Her mother was right. Rushing into something would only leave her hurt,

"How do I make my heart understand that though?" Peach whispered, covering her face with her hands.

Suddenly, the sound of the front door opening got Peach's attention, and she immediately raised her head to see Elijah and Matt, walking into the lobby. Standing to her feet, Peach wiped her hands on her pajama pants nervously and walked over to them, but then the smell of strong alcohol aroma on Elijah made her frown and furrowed her eyebrows as she thought, "He's drunk?" "Hey, Peach," Matt said, walking off, leaving the both of them alone. Pouting at Elijah, Peach hesitated before asking softly, "How much did you have to drink?"

"None," Elijah said with a weak smile.

Then he walked off, leaving Peach pouting after him as she mumbled, "Liar."

After getting to his room, Elijah got undressed and headed to the shower to wash the smell of alcohol off him before getting dressed into a pair of clean shorts and an oversized white t shirt.

As he was about to get in bed, a knock on his door made Elijah frown slightly, walking away from his bedside and over to the door.

When he opened it, Peach was standing there looking at him, holding a bottle of water and pills in her hands.

“You might suffer from a hangover tomorrow if you don’t take some pills to help with the headache,” Peach informed him, handing him the bottle of water and the pills. But Elijah didn’t accept it and just stared into her eyes for what felt like forever to Peach, and she nervously smiled awkwardly, mumbling, “What? Do I have something on my face?” “How can you be a filthy rock, when when I look into your eyes all I see is diamonds,” Elijah whispered, not taking his gaze off her as she blinked repeatedly, wondering what was happening ‘Is he drunk talking?’ Peach thought, shaking her head and smiling, but she was still nervous. But her eyes suddenly widened when Elijah rested his palm on her cheek, his gaze still locked onto hers, and he slowly leaned closer until their lips were only inches apart. Feeling his breath touching her pinkish lips, Peach could feel her heart beating fast and her breathing getting heavier and her palms becoming sweaty.

Then she realized the smell from his breath didn’t reek of alcohol, and she whispered, “You are not drunk, are you?” When Elijah slowly shook his head, Peach subconsciously tiptoed to meet his lips and claimed them, tasting his mouth with her tongue, and as she kissed him passionately, Elijah wrapped his arms around her waist and pulled her flush against him, deepening their kiss.

Tempting, every inch of her body was aroused, and the bottom dropped from her hands along with the pills, hitting the ground with a thud, breaking the intense kiss.

“I am sorry,” Peach whispered, realizing what she had done, and lowering her head as she avoided eye contact with him.

But Elijah took her chin in his hand and lifted her head so they could meet each other’s eyes, and as their gazes met, Elijah didn’t hold back and pulled her close by her hips, his eyes never leaving hers, claiming her lips as he kissed her deeply, pressing himself harder against her body.

Her heart was thumping wildly as he pushed her against the wall. They were now in the hallway, and anyone could see them at any second. But Peach wasn’t caring, because his kisses were making her dizzy, and she could taste the faint traces of mint on his tongue, and she knew he had brushed his teeth just now.

Her hands slowly went up to his hair and entangled her fingers in it, as he gently bit her lower lip, making her moan softly.

The sound echoed through the hallway and into her ears, making her cheeks burn, and Peach pulled back, staring up into his eyes.

Their breath mingled together while they stared at each other intently, and Elijah's eyes softened as he mumbled, "I don't know what this was, but just know that I wanted it too as you did."

Then he brushed his fingertip against the bruise he left on her lip and said, "Good night, Little buddy. Thanks for the water and pills."

Speechless, Peach sluggishly rested her back against the wall, smiling, and watching him walk back to his room door, picking up the bottle of water and pills before heading into his room.

"Whatever that was," Peach whispered, brushing her palm against her arm nervously as she stared at the ceiling. "I don't even know what that was either."

After a moment, Peach entered her room, shutting the door behind her and locking it.

Then she sighed heavily, running her hand through her curls as she sat down on her bed and looked out of her window, watching the raindrops fall gently on the glass.

Then she grabbed a pillow, and screamed silently into it, falling backward onto the mattress, burying her face in the pillow as she cried, "I kissed him. What is wrong with me?!"

'But he kissed you back,' Her subconscious argued. "Yeah, but then he referred to it as 'whatever that was.' Come on! It's clear he isn't into that or more than a kiss!"

'Mama was right.'

I know! Don't you think I know!! Tell my stupid heart that, though! It's the reason why I'm acting like this!"

"So, what now?" Curling her body into a ball, Peach hugged her pillow tighter against her chest as her shoulders shuddered lightly and whispered, "I don't know. Play pretend and act like it never happened or it doesn't matter, I guess,"

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Chapter 32

A month is what you have

The sound of hums echoed from the kitchen as James bobbed his head to the beat of the music in his mind while frying the eggs.

“James, I feel healthy enough now to cook for you guys. You shouldn’t be in the kitchen.” Miss Grace said as she walked toward him with a smile on her face.

“I know... Being a butler is not my only job, I was a chef...” James blurted out, pausing as he turned to look at her.

“You are a butler? Who’s Butler...? Why are you here if you are supposed to be working as someone’s butler?”

“Because...! Well... Because I got fired. You see when you love a job and it gets taken away from you... well, you never really recover from it.”

With a look of pity on her face, Miss Grace smiled weakly and mumbled, “You poor fellow. Now, I understand your love for my kitchen.”

Laughing nervously, James studied her kind eyes, rubbed his neck, and mumbled, “Well, thank you for understanding.”

There was a long pause as they stared at each other, and then Miss Grace sniffed the air, crying out, “James the egg is burning!” With a look of horror on his face, he quickly jumped into action while grabbing the handle of the frying pan and taking it off the stove as soon as possible.

The smoke detector started screaming as James stopped the smoke by beating the frying pan with a towel, feeling nervous while listening to Miss Grace laugh out loud at him being so clumsy. “Good morning?” Elijah said as he walked into the kitchen looking confused and slightly worried.

“What is that bad odor?” Rookie blurted out, scratching his neck as he tried to smell the air. “James just burned our breakfast...” Elijah teased, looking at the nervous look on his butler’s face.

“James ruined breakfast?! Woohoo!” Matt mocked as he followed Ryan into the kitchen.

“So, are we spending today on an empty stomach?” Ryan laughed, picking up on the other’s desire to tease James because this was the first time he had burned something. Smiling sheepishly James muttered, “Sorry, I’m sorry...” “Come on guys. It’s not fair to tease poor James,” Miss Grace said, trying to stop herself from

m chuckling along with the others. Feeling the humorous atmosphere in the room, James couldn't help but giggle at his mistake too, and then said, "Since everyone is awake..."

There was a brief pause as he gazed at the faces in the room and then he let out, "Is Peach still asleep."

Scratching his brow, Elijah darted his gaze away from the others as the thought of him kissing Peach popped into his mind for a second and his heart thudded against his chest.

The kiss wasn't meant to feel so damn right to him when he knew it was wrong in all sense,

but

the moment their lips touched he felt like he was drowning in nothing but feelings and passion.

And if that moment was to happen again, he didn't think he would have a second thought and not make the same mistake twice.

Shaking those memories from his mind, Elijah looked over at Miss Grace as she said, "I will

get her."

His gaze followed her until she disappeared out of the kitchen, and then he looked back at Matt, staring intensely at him.

"What?" Elijah asked, feeling uneasy under the intensity of his man's stare. "Nothing. You just seem a little distracted, is everything alright?" Matt asked, lowering his gaze a little. Elijah shook his head and replied, "Of course everything is fine... why wouldn't things be?" The sound of a gentle knock on her door made Peach cover her head with the sheet, and then she heard her mother's voice, "Peach, darling... Are you awake..? Breakfast is ready." "I am not well, mama! I will not be coming downstairs today..." Peach shouted back nervously. Then she pouted and let out a sigh of frustration, mumbling, "Or ever." The entire night, she spent it thinking about how she was going to face Elijah. But now the morning is here, she didn't think she could do it anymore.

And it wasn't helping that her mind was torturing her with thoughts about what happened last night, and the rush of emotion that came with it was overwhelming her. When Miss Grace turned the knob and realized that the door was locked, she frowned and said, "Honey, how sick are you... is it severe?"

"No, it's not. I just have a slight headache." Peach lied, hoping that her mother bought it.

“Okay, but you can not stay in here without eating, so promise me when you feel much better, you will come downstairs.” Pressing her lips together, Peach pinched the sheets, knowing there is no way she could hide away from Elijah forever. But at least a couple of hours sounds better than seeing him now and pretending like last night never happened. “Okay,” Peach called out, “I promise.” Sighing, Miss Grace turned away from her daughter’s door and walked away, feeling a bit worried about her. When she got to the dining hall, and Elijah’s gaze fell on her, seeing that Peach wasn’t with her, he blurted out his thoughts, “Where is Peach?”

“She wouldn’t be joining us. She isn’t feeling well.” Miss Grace said with a worried expression as she sat down between James and Ryan.

Without his approval, his emotions began clouding his judgment as they did yesterday, and his sense of worry and anxiety only grew stronger after hearing of Peach’s illness. Frowning his brows with a look of worry on his face, Rookie commented, “How serious is it?” “Should I make a hot bowl of soup for her?” James added concern laced through his voice. Miss Grace shook her head, trying not to sound anxious as she answered, “It’s just a slight headache. She will be out later.”

The way James, Rookie, Ryan, and Matt sighed in relief made Elijah realize his men cared for Peach greatly and that her personality was infectious to them.

After Breakfast, as James was clearing the table with Miss Grace, Elijah stood up from his seat looked over at Rookie, and said, “Follow me,” As he walked off, Rookie took a deep breath before waking from the chair and walking after him.

Nervously, Ryan, Matt, and James gazed at Rookie’s back until he faded out the dining hall doorway, and then they eyed each other, trying to figure out what Elijah wanted to tell him.

Once Rookie entered Elijah’s room, shutting the door behind him, he looked at him with a concerned look on his face.

“Boss?” Rookie called out gently.

“Bryan Checks,” Elijah began, leaning back on the chair. “I need to know every single detail about this man. When you are done investigating him, I should know his blood type, and how many toes he has on his feet... I should know him more than the woman that gave birth to him.

The pressure from such a request, especially from Elijah, sent shivers down Rookie’s spine and he gulped nervously as he spoke, “Uh... Yes, boss.”

This was the first assignment he was getting from his boss, and with the background, Elijah was from, he knows his career could either thrive or flunk depending on how well or how terrible he does his investigation.

“A month is what you have. Whatever financial requirement you need for this job, I will give it to you,” Elijah said as he looked at Rookie, giving him an encouraging smile.

Taking a deep breath, Rookie nodded his head as he blurted out, breathing down his nervously, “Thank you, sir, I appreciate that.”

Although a month was a lot of time, Elijah knew Rookie was new to the country and it would take him a while to become familiar with the people here and to work with them. Also, a man as powerful as Checks won't have his life as an open book and it would take a while for Rookie to figure things out about him. This was his first big move to establish himself, and it needed to go perfectly. And having the wrong kind of person could very easily affect that. Leaning forward, Elijah rested his elbows on his knees and said, “Rookie,”

“Yes, boss! He answered eagerly.

“Do not leave a single stone unturned. Remember your objective... Find all information about Checks, and report back to me once you have finished. I want every dirt you can find on this guy. Got it?”

“Yes, sir. I understand.”

Humming happily, Miss Grace took her time dusting the lobby of the motel, trying to get her mind off her daughter's behavior, even though it was hard since she kept having the sudden urge to go up and check on Peach.

Suddenly, the sound of a knock on the front door startled Miss Grace and caused her to drop the rag she was holding. Then she turned around and headed over to the door, and the moment she opened it, her face grew pale and her body froze where she stood.

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Chapter 33

I never cheated on you

A frown crossed Miss Grace's face when she snapped out of her shocked state and mumbled stiffly, “Melina... What are you doing here?”

of course, she wasn't excited about seeing her since the incident at the hospital, and of course, even though her father is second to Peach's dad, Melina hardly has a sense of respect for her or her daughter. "Can I come in?!" Melina asked impatiently, seeing that Miss Grace was blocking her way. Although she wasn't someone who liked confrontation, she knew if Peach knew Melina is here, it would stress her daughter up, and the fact that she was sick, the last thing Miss Grace wanted was to see her daughter upset or her headache worsen.

"I am sorry... but whatever you have to say, tell it to my face, right out here." Miss Grace uttered firmly, trying to sound as intimidating as possible because she didn't want Melina arguing with her about this.

But just like the brat that she was, a faint laugh escaped from Melina's lips, making Miss Grace's eyes narrow with anger. "You don't expect me to stand under the sun and have this conversation with you," Melina said, raising one eyebrow. "It's only nine o'clock in the morning, Melina. The sun is not even shining. So why are you acting like it's midday already?" Miss Grace retorted in annoyance.

Sneering, Melina's eyes narrowed, and with her hands tucked into her pockets, she said, "Can we just take this conversation inside and talk like civilized people, huh, Grace?!"

"I said, 'No.' So if you won't tell me why you are here, you should leave right now. Don't waste my time." Miss Grace replied, crossing her arms.

Taking a long, angry look at Miss Grace, Melina didn't plan on accepting 'No,' for an answer. So after a few seconds, she decided to ignore her words, and just push past her to enter the motel. "Melina!" Miss Grace yelled angrily, grabbing onto her by the arm and yanking her backward, pulling her back outside.

The shocked look on Melina's face was soon replaced by anger when she saw Miss Grace's fingers wrapped around her arm, and then she yanked her hand loose and glared at Miss Grace with fury and anger in her eyes.

"What do you think you are doing?! Who do you think you are to put your hand on me!" Melina blurted out angrily. "Why are you acting like this, huh?! Why are you so disrespectful to me?!" Miss Grace yelled angrily. As Melina moved her lips to speak, Elijah appeared at the door since the commotion had attracted his attention, and the moment her eyes rested on him, Melina's face darkened. "Uncle Tommy was right. You do stay here!!" Melina exclaimed, glaring at Elijah. "I can't believe this,"

A dry laugh left Melina's mouth, and she continued, shaking her head, "What? I divorce you. and you found the next person to leech off?"

Frowning at those words and knowing what Elijah has done for her, Miss Grace shook her head and said, "Elijah is no loafer, and he is not "I was not addressing you, was I?" Melina interrupted her sharply. "Don't talk to her like that, Melina," Elijah said calmly, yet his frustration with his ex-wife was evident in his tone.

The sight of him in a casual t-shirt and shorts with messy hair, and slippers on his feet had irritated her to the point where she couldn't stop herself from saying something to provoke him.

"Are you doing this to aggravate me? Moving in with my least favorite people and dangling my cousin in front of my nose to prove something, huh?! What are you trying to prove?!" Melina demanded, taking a step closer to Elijah and looking him directly in the eye.

"Keep Peach's name out of your nonsense. I don't know what is wrong with you, but you should get some help or hire a therapist and stop trying to be a nuisance to everyone around you." Elijah said, trying to remain calm, but he felt the rage within him rising.

Those words were so unexpected and so blunt that it made Melina freeze completely at his words, and her eyes widened and her mouth hung open a little in shock.

For years, he pampered her, took her every whim without complaint, and even went to great lengths to please her whenever she asked him, but the tone and words he used just now, were completely different. There was no warmth or any gentleness in his voice... Instead, it was pure anger, coldness, and disappointment.

It was clear to Melina, that Elijah was fed up with her behavior, and that he wanted nothing to do with her. It was obvious from the way he talked to her, and from the look in his eyes.

But her ego hated the fact that he could throw her to the curb so quickly, and she was mad. No, furious that he could turn away from her like that, and she didn't know whether she was going to burst into tears or explode in anger, "Was it you who got the chief of police down here to interfere with the reporters who were only doing their job?!" Melina pressed, trying her best not to break down in tears or show the anger she was feeling. The truth of who had the guts to challenge her was what she came here to find out, and she didn't want to leave without getting the answers she needed.

"Go home, Melina," Elijah said in annoyance.

"If you think you are going to get the same advantage with Peach as you had with me just because she's a Hayes, you are dreaming!!" Melina yelled, clenching her fists tightly. "She is just the wash-out version of me, and will never-" "Will never be you. That's good then. I never want to meet another woman like you again in my life, ever." Elijah cut her off.

Seeing the hurt in his eyes, Melina frowned and said, "You make it sound like I was a terrible

wife. I allowed you to stay in my house, give." "You don't know how you hurt me! Do you have a heart beating somewhere in your chest, Melina? You don't know how much pain it caused me to know you cheated on me, to find out that I wasn't enough for you!" Elijah yelled in an enraged voice.

Stopping in her steps, Peach clenched her fist lightly, hearing the ache in his voice as she tried to control her own emotions.

Her eyes were fixed on Elijah's back, and yet from his tone, she could imagine the look of hurt on his face and it broke her heart.

'Maybe I should have ignored the noise and stayed in my room because this feels wrong, listening to them fighting,' Peach thought, clutching her fist tighter before she took a deep breath, forcing her heart to calm down. Darting her eyes from Miss Grace to Elijah, Melina chuckled nervously, shocked that he would express himself like that, and she mumbled, "You are being delusional now. I never cheated on you, Elijah!"

A bitter laugh escaped from Elijah's lips, and he turned towards Melina, giving her a cold stare. "Of course, you didn't. But we both know what the truth is, don't we, huh, Melina?" Elijah asked with a hint of sarcasm and irritation in his voice.

Melina's expression hardened as her eyebrows scrunched together, and she said, "Why are you making it sound like what I said isn't the truth."

"Because it's not, and I can stand here all day and waste my breath explaining how I feel, but that would be pointless. You never listen to me anyway, and honestly, I am past conversations like that with you." Elijah said with an emotionless expression.

A sense of embarrassment filled Melina's stomach upon realizing that the situation was going south and that she might have gone overboard, so she shoved her hands into her pocket and walked off, heading to her car.

Sighing out his frustration, Elijah ran his hand through his messy hair and looked at Miss Grace who was still standing there, staring at him with a look of pity on her face.

It annoyed him because he didn't want anyone to see him as vulnerable as he was today or pity him, and he hated that.

"Damn it," Elijah muttered under his breath, turning away from Miss Grace and then stopping when his gaze rested on his men, and then on Peach.

Their eyes locked, and the tension between the two increased as Elijah frowned slightly, and she swallowed hard, avoiding his piercing gaze.

Silently, Elijah stepped away from the doorway and walked past Peach, not looking at her once. Looking back, a look of worry shadowed Miss Grace's face when she saw the bruise on Peach's bottom lip, and she cried, "What happened to your mouth?" "It's nothing, mama. I accidentally bit my lip a bit too hard." Peach said with a weak smile, looking back to see Elijah's back fade into the hallway. A frown crossed James' face as a sense of anger rushed through his body and he growled, "Elijah's ex-wife is such a pain in the ass."

"The annoying thing is, I don't think this is the last we are going to hear from her..." Ryan grumbled darkly. "Yeah, it's not going to be the last we see her, and just the thought of seeing her again is stressing me out..." Rookie responded while running his fingers through his short hair. "Do you guys think the boss is okay?" Matt whispered worriedly as he glanced at the others.

To all my readers, I am sorry to announce that new chapters will not be updated today or tomorrow. I have been seriously sick, and my medication has been helping me gain the strength to write, but my body is not in the best condition today, and I would like to take a brief break. Updates will resume when I feel okay a bit day after tomorrow.

Thanks for Your understanding, for the gems, and reviews, and for supporting this novel. I appreciate it all. I promise more great chapters to come once my health is a bit better.

Sincerely,

Author Rever

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Chapter 34

His parents are dead

The Subaru Forester sped through the huge open gate, and drove through the yard, into the garage, and then Melina hit the brake pedal hard.

Her little interaction with Elijah had her in all her feelings, and her mood was a mess as she pushed the car door open and stepped out onto the concrete of the front walk. In front of her was a two-stories, enormous fancy mansion with glass panes and a white wraparound porch. Palm trees were lining the driveway and an immaculate flower bed along the side.

The frown she had on didn't leave her face even after she got to the front door of the mansion and hit the doorbell.

As she was about to ring it for the second time, someone opened the door, and she was met by a tall man in his late sixties with graying hair that wore a light black three-piece suit with a tie that matched his neatly brushed hair perfectly. "Miss Melina, how lovely for you to visit... Good morning." The butler spoke quietly, a smile plastered on his face.

With a sour expression on her face, she pushed past him, entering the house as she asked, "Where is my grandmother?!"

Butler Gary shook his head at her rudeness, even though it wasn't the first of its kind, and he closed the door before facing her.

"Madam Jewel is inside the living room, Miss Melina." He replied politely. "And my parents?" Melinda raised her voice a bit at that last question.

"Your father has left for work, I believe, and your mother... Well, I haven't seen her this morning, to be honest."

"Well, take me to my grandmother!"

Melina's aggressive and demanding ways were nothing strange to Grey because he had served the Hayes family, long before Melina or any of the grandchildren were born... long before Mr. Hayes betrayed his wife.

"Sure, Miss Melina. Please follow me." Butler Gary responded calmly as he walked past her.

It didn't take long for them to get to the all-white, marble living room, and when Melina saw her grandmother, sitting on a chaise lounge in the middle of the room with one leg crossed over the other, a book in her lap, she rushed past Butler Grey. "Melina," Madam Jewel looked up, eyes narrowed and mouth pressed into a thin line.

She set down the book and stood from her seat, her eyes never left Melina's figure as she asked, "What are you doing here? You're supposed to be in the office... at work."

"Grey, leave us!" Melina ordered without looking away from her grandmother. After bowing slightly to Madam Jewel, Grey turned away from both of them and walked out of the living room.

Seeing from her grandmother's expression that she looked displeased with her, Melina stopped herself and looked at her feet.

For several moments the two women stood there awkwardly, neither saying a word.

Finally, Madam Jewel sighed deeply and sat back down on the couch, and then she motioned for Melina to sit beside her.

Silently, Melina approached her grandmother. After sitting next to her, she placed her hands in her lap and waited for whatever lecture Madam Jewel was going to give her. When she remained silent for so long, Melina finally dared to look up and meet her grandmother's gaze.

"I told you when you decided to marry that lowlife because of some stupid bet with Jessica that it was going to end badly, and yet here we are." Madam Jewel said, shaking her head.

The statement made Melina feel uneasy, but she remained quiet and let her grandma continue speaking

"I don't know why we expected anything different from you..." She continued. "You've always been like this... stubbornly refusing everything I tell you to do. Is it because your father is my

first born... huh? That's why you are so stubborn, isn't it?"

"Grandma, it was a couple of million dollars bet. Of course, you didn't expect me to not agree to marry that guy. And I'm sorry that it ended like this, but I don't regret it." Melina muttered, staring at her own hands in her lap. "After all, Jessica has wired the money to me."

When her grandmother furrowed her brows, Melina pouted and said, "Also, Jessica's father is the chairman of TMX incorporation... Their family is not just wealthy, they have an extremely high reputation. Of course, I was going to marry some stranger for her amusement and some good cash."

Even though Madam Jewel was mad about how ugly the situation had been getting recently, she knew Melina was right, and how important her granddaughter's friendship with the Astors was for their family.

"I have seen the news... Couldn't you allow this entire matter to go? It wouldn't kill you, would it? To let this thing fade in the background. Did you have to make a spectacle out of a terrible decision on your part!" Madam Jewel scolded her, her tone stern.

"Grandma!" Melina exclaimed, surprised by her outburst.

"I don't need that cockroach you married to still have his name attached to our family and keep bringing scandal to the family name!"

“Then it’s not just me you should be getting mad at! Peach is now seeing him... She and her mother are hooked up on him. They even have him leeching off them, and he stays at the motel!”

The name, “Peach,” made madam Jewel stiffen, and her expression grew darker, her face growing harder.

It was like that name triggered something in her mind, and soon after, Melina heard Madam Jewel whisper, “Why are Grace and her daughter suddenly getting involved with this family

again?

“I don’t know. Maybe to prove something to us or something else. But what I don’t understand is why choose my no-good ex-husband! Are they trying to join forces...” Melina paused, noticing that her Grandmother looked less than pleased and more troubled than she usually did “This your Ex, Elijah... Who is he?”

“Huh?”

A tense silence followed those words. The air was thick with tension between them, and Melina nervously scratched her neck, feeling uncomfortable being under her grandmother’s glare.

Finally, Madam Jewel broke the silence, and she gave Melina the coldest glare as she asked, “Who is your ex-husband, Melina?! Like... What are his parents’ names? Where is he from? Who is he related to?!”

A sense of uneasiness came over Melina once more, making her even more worried than she already was, and she felt a lump forming in her throat. Of course, she didn’t know much about Elijah. She didn’t care to know. Marrying him and winning her money was the only thought on her mind. She never asked him in-depth about his life, or anything important about him... And she sure as hell wasn’t planning on ever asking about it. “His parents are dead.” Melina lied with a bold face, forcing a smirk across her face. She knew that if she told the truth, her grandmother’s wrath would be doubled... and maybe even tripled if she found out that she knew nothing about the man she called “Husband” for years.

“So he’s just a nobody with no backing and no future prospects.” Madam Jewel scoffed dismissively. “What’s his last name?!”

“Darius,” Melina said, remembering the one thing she did ask Elijah about.

“Darius... I don’t think I have heard of that family before... That means he’s truly unknown. What makes you think he could be useful to Grace and Peach?”

"I'm not sure, Grandma. But the chief of police recently helped them with the reporters issue.

Another silent pause occurred, and then her grandmother sighed heavily as she began to speak again, "Bamford doesn't wiggle his tail for anyone. So this must be a big deal. I'll see what I can find out."

"Thank you, grandma." Melina nodded softly, giving a faded smile.

Frowning at her granddaughter, Madam Jewel shook her head and said, "Until we can find out what is going on, I advise that you stop giving that useless man a chance to continue ruining

our family's image... And don't waste time on your ridiculous media plots. Do you understand?!

'I have already accomplished what I needed to... Peach and Elijah's reputations are ruined, and mine is now intact.' Melina thought, feeling satisfied with herself as she nodded at her grandmother.

"For now, I will let Peach and her mother be. But if I find out that they are coming for our family, then I will have to act, I promise." Madam Jewel said firmly, her lips tightened firmly.

A smile made its way onto Melina's lips as she nodded at her grandmother, knowing full well that Madam Jewel meant every word.

"Thank you, grandma," Melina said, hugging her grandmother tightly with a grin.

The sound of footsteps immediately filled Melina's ears, making her break contact with her grandmother. Her attention was instantly shifted to the direction of the door, where she spotted her mom.

"Good morning, mother." Martha greeted Madam Jewel humbly before focusing on her daughter after her mother-in-law had nodded in response to her greeting.

Seeing her brought a wide grin to Melina's face, and she said to her grandmother softly, "May I be excused?"

When Madam Jewel nodded, Melina grabbed her bag and walked toward her mom, whispering, "Let's talk somewhere else."

Quietly, Martha followed her daughter out of the living room and into the hallway before she finally asked, "Why are you here so early? You know the old lady doesn't like when you guys don't show up at work!"

"I needed grandma's help." Melina replied simply before continuing, "Miss Grace put her hands on me this morning when I went to the motel to talk with her."

A look of raw anger flashed across Martha's eyes and quickly disappeared without a trace. "What?!" she whispered angrily. "How dare she?!"

Shrugging her shoulder, Melina pouted with sadness in her eyes, and Martha gently patted her back as she said, "Don't worry. Your father will hear about this the moment he comes home."

The Marvelous Elijah's Return By Rever Chapter 35

Chapter 35

There's a serious problem

A gentle knock on the door made Mr. Bamford look up from the case file on his desk and stared ahead, calling out, "Come in."

When the door opened, his secretary Lucy entered his office with a soft smile, saying, "Sir, there's a visitor for you."

"Who?" Mr. Bamford replied without looking up from the case file, still reading through the information about the crime he was currently investigating.

"Madam Jewel Hays," "Hmm,"

The pen in his hand dropped on the sheet as he lifted his head slightly to glance at his secretary with an eyebrow raised.

Then he rested back in his seat and sighed softly, "Send her in,"

"Yes, sir," Lucy said with a nod.

Silently, Mr. Bamford watched her walk out of his office and waited until she closed his door before turning his attention back to the papers on his desk.

A couple of minutes went by, then the door opened again, this time to reveal Mrs. Hays. She had her hands tucked into the front pockets of her black fluffy coat as she stepped inside before closing the door behind her.

"Mrs. Hayes," Bamford greeted her politely as he placed a bookmark between the pages of his work folder before closing it. "Chief, good afternoon." Madam Jewel smiled widely and stepped further into his office.

Gracefully, she took a seat across from him in one of the plush leather chairs in front of his desk and crossed her leg over the other.

"Frederick would be just fine, Mrs. Hayes." Mr. Bamford said calmly, sitting up straight as he rested his elbows on the table, clutching his fingers together.

"Well, Frederick, I am not someone that likes to beat around the bush or make idle chit-chat, so I am going to go straight to the point." Madam Jewel spoke slowly as she looked directly into Bamford's eyes, her dark brown orbs locked onto his. "Who made you interfere with the reporters at Paz motel?"

The office fell silent for several long moments, neither of them breaking eye contact.

Eventually, Mr. Bamford chuckled and shook his head as he leaned against his chair and said, "Now, why would Mrs. Hayes trouble herself with such trivial matters?"

"It's personal," Madam Jewel insisted, her voice taking on a tone of warning, which Mr. Bamford found amusing.

"And if I may ask," Mr. Bamford continued with a smirk, "What makes you think I have anything to do with these... 'personal' matters?" "We both know that what you did, was cross the line with us, Hayes, and also meddled in

something that was none of your business."

Her cold stare never wavered as she met Bamford's unblinking brown eyes, not even flickering

once.

Bamford simply let out another quiet laugh before raising an eyebrow at the woman seated opposite of him as he said, "I assure you, Ms. Hayes, you're wrong... Also, isn't Peach your granddaughter? How come helping her is defined as me crossing the line?" That question left Madam Jewel speechless for several seconds, staring daggers at the man before her. When she finally collected enough composure to speak, her voice had taken on an icy undertone, "Don't escape from the matter at hand."

"I am not, Mrs. Hayes. It just amazed me that helping the granddaughter of late Mr. Hayes would earn me a visit from his wife and put me on the spot with the family."

Mr. Bamford replied coolly while leaning back in his chair as if there was nothing particularly important that needed to be discussed.

Of course, Mr. Bamford knew the situation between Peach and the rest of the Hayes family, but playing dumb was the only way he knew how not to offend someone like Bryan Checks, and also, not have the Hayes up his ass.

Not wanting to waste any more time arguing with this man, Madam Hayes quickly changed tactics and asked the next question on her mind, "So who made you help my granddaughter, Peach?"

For the first time, Bamford broke his poker face, letting out a small chuckle, and said, "Madam Jewel, I was simply doing my job. That's all that was." "You could have just sent your men. But you were at the motel, doing fieldwork yourself." Madam Jewel narrowed her eyes, daring Bamford to disagree. "Well, as a 'Hayes,' you should know how important you guys' names are. So when I got the report that Grace and Peach Hayes were getting bullied by a bunch of reporters, I decided to step in and make sure they weren't harmed."

"Is that so?"

"Hmm umm."

The office remained silent for a few minutes, and Mr. Bamford refused to break the tense silence that now hung in the air.

Knowing that she wasn't going to get much more out of the chief, Madam Hayes stood up from her seat and said, "Well, I should not take up most of your time then, Frederick." When Mr. Bamford nodded, she woke from her seat and walked towards the door, turning to face him once more before exiting the room.

A sense of rage ate at Madam Jewel as she marched down the hallway, and as she was about to walk past Lucy's desk, she hastened to her feet and said, "It's a pleasure seeing you, Madam Jewel!!"

Immediately, Mrs. Hayes stopped and turned toward Lucy, glaring at her with a slight hint of irritation. Then she suddenly lost the frown and replaced it with a faint smile as she asked, "What's your name, young lady?"

A sense of happiness flooded Lucy's body as she smiled wide and exclaimed, "It's Lucy

"Well, Lucy, can this old woman ask you something important?" Madam Jewel asked politely. Lucy hesitated for a moment, wondering what was so urgent that Madam Jewel was asking for help from her, and she mumbled, "Uh, yeah! Of course, you can ask me anything."

Once again, a warm smile spread across Madam Jewel's face as she asked, "Who asked your boss to clear up the reporters from Paz motel?"

A nervous look swept across Lucy's face as she stammered, "Mmm... Well..."

"Well?" Madam Jewel pressed, clearly not impressed with her hesitance,

Suddenly, Lucy realized just how serious the situation was, and quickly blurted out two words, "Bryan Checks." "Bryan Checks?!" Madam Jewel asked and her expression immediately darkened, causing her eyebrows to furrow. "Yes. I heard my boss speaking with him over the phone about it."

"Are you sure?!"

"Positive."

A sense of great worry began to fill Madam Jewel's heart, and she nervously darted her eyes about before walking off hurriedly, leaving Lucy staring after her in confusion. When Madam Jewel stepped outside of the police station and got to her limousine, Oliver, her driver quickly helped her get inside and shut the door. The look of stress he saw on her face made him concerned because she looked pale and very shaken up.

After he got behind the steering wheel, he took a look at her dim eyes in the rearview mirror before glancing at the road and starting the car engine, driving away from the station. With a shaking hand, Madam Jewel opened her purse and reached into it for her phone, pulling it out.

Then quickly scrolled through her contacts, stopping at her first son's number and dialing it.

It took a few rings before his voice sounded over the receiver, "Mom, what's up?" "Dean, son..." Madam Jewel said, her voice laced with concern, "I want you to listen carefully okay, Dean." A couple of seconds went by with his deep sigh before he said, "Mom, I am in a meeting with

"Listen, Dean!!" Madam Jewel snapped harshly, cutting him off, "There's a problem... a serious problem... And I need you to alert the entire family that we are having a meeting at the mansion tonight over a family dinner, got it?!"

"What."

"Got it, Dean?!"

Another deep sigh came from the other end before her son said, "... Yeah, mom"

“Good.” With that, Madam Jewel ended her call and placed her phone in her lap as she stared blankly ahead of her.

Resting his phone on the table, Dean’s eyes darted to Tommy and then towards his three other brothers and two sisters.

“Was that mother?” Cora asked, looking up at her brother. It took a moment for Dean to get over his surprise with what Madam Jewel had told him and nodded silently, mumbling, “It was her, and she sounded so frantic that it made me worried.” “Mother sounded troubled...?” The youngest brother, Eli said, scratching his chin. “What could make her stressed like that?” “I am not sure. All she said was that the whole family has gotten called in for some sort of meeting over dinner tonight because there is a serious problem... which she didn’t tell me what it was.”

“That’s weird,” Elmer said, frowning slightly. The board room fell silent as everyone nervously looked at each other, hoping that one of their siblings knew what was going on and could fill them in.

Finally, Dean cleared his throat and said, “Well, you all should contact your children. Mother made it clear that she wanted everyone present at dinner.”