

The Marvelous Elijah's Return By Rever Chapter 76

Chapter 76

What is Elijah doing?

The atmosphere at the conference table immediately grew intense as Mathew, Dean, Tommy, Eli, Elmer, Cora, and Amelia sat at the table the moment Dean uttered, "Mother has confirmed that Peach is hell-bent on marrying Elijah."

"This is all your daughter's fault," Elmer mumbled underneath his breath, rubbing his temple in frustration "What did you say?!" "It's Melina's fault for bringing that damn bastard into our lives... If she didn't bet on his ass, Peach and her mother would have still known their place beneath us, Tommy would have eventually driven those two out of the motel, and I wouldn't be losing my company to those two. Damn it!"

As Dean moved his lips to speak, his phone started ringing, causing him to pull it out of his pocket. When he noticed who was calling, he answered, mumbling, "Mason,"

"Who is Melina's ex-husband?!" Mason's voice boomed from the other side of the line, sounding furious. "Elijah? Why are you asking about him?" "Who is he, Dean?!"

A frown crept across Dean's face when he heard Mason's raised tone and then he sighed. "Are you drunk, Mason?" "No!! I am frustrated. But I am also curious about who the heck your daughter got married and divorced to!!" Mason's tone became even more enraged, which caused Dean's eyebrows to furrow, and his grip on his phone tightened slightly. Not wanting to bear the embarrassment of not knowing a damn thing about his ex-son-in law, Dean dodged the question with a, "Calm down, Mason... Why are you making an issue out of some bum?!"

Everyone around the table's attention was now fully focused on Dean, wanting to know who was the other person on the call.

"A bum!! A bum!! Okay, then tell me why the hell is that bum meeting up with Bryan Checks, and I just lost a million of dollars deal with Check because of him..." Mason's voice started to rise with each word. "Mason, please... I don't know what the hell you are talking about." Dean tried to convince him, but it wasn't going too well. "Tell me, Dean! Who is this guy?!" "Calm yourself, Mason."

"Haha!! It's true when people say... The people that you circle yourself around can either lift you or fuck you over!! And for you, Dean, you have screwed me over, by just the fact that we are friends!!"

"You are not making any damn sense right now, Mason! Stop acting crazy!"

A robust laugh echoed from the line, and Dean looked at everyone in the room in disbelief.

“I know that I am not making sense! And, that’s even more irritating, Dean!! But you know what, you and I are over as friends and business partners, and you should stay the fuck out of my life because this whole situation is your fault!!” Mason roared, his anger seeping into his voice.

“My fault?! Mason, calm down and speak to me like a sensible human being!! You’ve always had a temper, I get that, but I never thought you’d lose it like this!!” Dean yelled back at him, ignoring the looks that were being sent in his direction.

“I need to stay away from you and your family’s shit... Because it seems like there is more playing behind the scenes, and I don’t want any of it...”

“Mason!!”

The line abruptly cut off, and Dean looked over at his brothers, his expression blank as he tried to get over the sense of disbelief and uneasiness he was feeling.

“What was that all about?” Eli asked, crossing his arms.

“Mason is pissed... I don’t know why because he was acting like some kind of... nut job... But whatever happened, Elijah was involved and he’s behind Mason’s rage.” Dean finally replied, his gaze flickering between his siblings. “First, Mr. Fangio, and now, Mason...” Amelia uttered, frowning at her thoughts. “What is Elijah doing? Is he trying to hurt our family’s reputation?” “Just by his title of being Melina’s Ex, his scandals have harmed our family name. And now that Peach wants to marry him... Imagine what that would do to our family reputation! Our entire family legacy would crumble!!” Cora chimed in, her eyes widening.

Frowning slightly as a memory crossed his mind, Dean looked at his sisters and mumbled, “Mason mentioned that he was meeting with Bryan Check this afternoon...”

“What the hell?! What would he be doing with such a powerful man like Checks?!” Tommy exclaimed in disbelief.

“The real question here is what the heck is the relationship between Peach, Elijah, and Bryan... What are we missing and why is this guy becoming so damn twisted?!” Matthew interjected, shaking his head while staring at his younger brother.

Snapping his brows together, Eli pinched the bridge of his nose and exhaled sharply. “Right... We’re missing something big here. Something important... First, he’s a gold digger, and then in a gang, and now, he meets up with Checks...”

“Who is this guy?!” Elmer asked, rage boiling within him at every passing second, “What kind of shady fucker is he?!”

“Shady? True. We need to put him under close surveillance.” Cora murmured, frowning deeply “If we want to understand him and what his plans are.”

“Now, I know why Vlad got kidnapped after what happened to Fangio’s men, it makes even more sense that it was Elijah behind his kidnapping and not Bryan,” Dean spoke slowly as he continued to stare at everyone at the table “If my guess is true, he knows that we are onto him”

“Well, if that’s the case, I know another way to get him in our sight and under our watch,” Matt stated softly, leaning forward to rest his forearms atop the table.

The harsh wind blew against Elijah’s hair as he and Bryan stood on the balcony of the third floor, Bryan sipping his wine. “You haven’t said much,” He uttered calmly to Elijah, looking over at him. Lifting his chin slightly as his eyes trailed over to look down at Bryan standing next to him, Elijah cleared his throat before he asked, “We had lunch. Now, are you going to tell me what’s the update?” After glancing at Matt, Bryan took a sip of his drink before he turned his body towards Elijah and leaned against the railing, crossing his arms. “Do you want to be my date at an old man’s birthday party?” Bryan asked, sounding playful, and yet, Elijah could hear a certain level of seriousness behind those words. Silence fell between the pair as they both stared at each other and then Bryan chuckled lightly before mumbling, “It’s one of the five birthdays... Mr. Wessex Butcher is turning sixty, and I think his party is a good start for you to get the five’s attention.” “Hmm,” Elijah mumbled, his face unreadable as he watched Bryan’s smile grow wider. “When is this?”

“Next month, but I have been attending these for a couple of years now, and I thought to give you a heads up... The twenty-six of next month...”

“I see.”

There was a brief pause, and then a mischievous smile crept onto Bryan’s face, causing Elijah’s eyebrows to furrow as he inquired, “What?”

“Do you want me to book escorts for us for that night? It might make it more fun going with a hot young woman rather than just two men, going together. Do you have a preference for the kind of women you prefer?” Bryan questioned, smirking at Elijah’s expression. Subconsciously, Elijah’s gaze darted towards Matt, and he saw his man giving him a hard stare as if telling him not to do anything stupid.

“Thanks, but no,” Elijah told Bryan, his expression unchanged. “Why?... It’s been months already. Are you still hanging up on your ex-wife... Maybe it’s time for you to have fun.. enjoy your single life and the freedom that comes with it.” Bryan stated, placing a hand over his heart and gazing at Elijah’s profile with a playful expression.

Frowning silently at Bryan's words, Elijah drew a breath and mumbled, "We are done here." "Come on, man!" Bryan protested, laughing lightly.

Setting his glass on the table, Elijah eyed him for a second and then walked off, leaving Bryan dumbfounded

"Why? Are you not single?" He shouted after Elijah, Stopping in his steps, Elijah glanced at Bryan and raised a questioning eyebrow in response, and the answered, "Yes, I'm not."

"Who's the lady lucky enough to snatch the heart of the only heir of the Maxwell family?"

Bryan teased with a faint chuckle.

There was a long pause as Elijah held back his words, looking a bit hesitant at Bryan, and then said, "Peach Hayes," "Dude!!!" Bryan let out, staring in disbelief for about a couple of seconds. "Seriously?! I thought the rumors were lies... You were seriously together with Peach and Melina at the same time-"

"No, I wasn't. But I am marrying Peach soon,"

"Wow!!!"

Running his fingers through his hair, Bryan just stared at Elijah, seeing that he was honest and wondering what the hell was going through his head. "You are in bed with the enemy. I thought the Hayes are your foes?" Bryan laughed, completely shocked at what Elijah meant.

"They are... But not her. She's the only exception." Elijah responded in a low tone. "If you marry Peach, people are going to believe the rumors way more than they did back then..."

"I know."

Chuckling faintly, Bryan rested the glass against his bottom lip, taking a sip from his wine as he watched Elijah walk away with Matt, and then he smiled, mumbling, "What's your endgame here, partner? When I think I have you figured out, you do a complete 180 and throw me off. That girl must be special to catch your interest or is she more."

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Chapter 77

I want to do you right

As Matt drove the car in silence, he looked back at Elijah, staring out the opened passenger window, and then he mumbled, "I know you don't talk a lot about your marriage to Melina, but I think Peach is really in love with you..."

"You will think those words twice after being with a manipulative, twisted psychopath who is willing to do anything to get what she wants," Elijah mumbled, not taking his eyes off the

scenery. "Women know the power that they have... They use it like a weapon. They know how to wield it, to control it. To get them what they want."

Sighing, Matt turned around and looked at him for a second, seeing the pain reflected in Elijah's brown eyes as he said this before looking back at the road ahead, mumbling, "Not all of them are like that."

"I know. And I am hoping for Peach to just be Peach... I don't think I can handle her changing on me later because, to be honest, I am..." Elijah mumbled, pausing as he stared at a store and then blurted, "Make a stop over there." A couple of minutes later, he and Matt walked through the door of a jewelry store, and the inside looked highly polished with huge marble floors and glass ceilings. When they reached the counter, Elijah looked over at a sales clerk and said, "Hey, I am looking

for an engagement ring."

A smile made its way onto the clerk's face as she said, "We've got a great selection right here. The ones at the top price are twenty thousand dollars, the middle is fifty thousand dollars, the lowest is fifteen thousand dollars... What would you like?" "Do you have anything lower than that?" Elijah asked, still looking at the clerk. "A bit cheaper?"

The smile on her face quickly faded to hear him ask for a lower price because she judged him by his good look and thought he was someone who had money.

Suddenly, another guy walked over to the counter, dressed in a fancy velvet black two-piece suit, and she immediately turned her focus on him.

"Good afternoon, sir! How can I help you?!" She called as she tried hard not to stare at Elijah.

"I want to buy an Emerald ring. Do you have one here that is decent for my fiancé?" He uttered, smiling slightly.

“Excuse me... umm, we were here first. At least give us a few options to look at before you pay attention to another customer.” Matt interrupted and he glared at the clerk

Frowning silently, she scowled over at him and let out, “I did. And it’s not my fault that you two don’t have the means to purchase what I have shown you!”

Hearing the arrogance in her tone, another clerk looked over at Elijah and Matt with a sympathetic expression and walked over to them.

“Good afternoon, sirs. How can I be an assistant to you two gentlemen?” She asked with sweetness in her voice.

“We are looking for an affordable engagement ring,” Elijah stated bluntly, his gaze leaving

the other clerk as she scoffed and then focused on the lady. “Okay... Umm... We have Tanzanite, 600-1000, Aquamarine, 1000 dollars, Sapphire, 1200 2000, Fire Opal, 2300... Hmm, do you want me to go higher than that?” “No,”

“Okay, then... I will bring out a few rings in that price range.” Silently, Elijah watched her bent under the counter, and he noticed that she took out a large box, along with several others which she stacked up onto one side of the counter. After looking through them one after another, Elijah and she settled on a beautiful Aquamarine ring, and she whispered, “Your girlfriend is going to love it... It’s so pretty.” Seeing that she was so in love with the ring and not the price, Elijah smiled and then mumbled, “Can I speak with your manager?”

A look of worry immediately crossed her face, thinking that she had said or done something wrong, but she forced a smile and mumbled, “Sure... I’ll come back in a moment.”

Turning on her heels, she hurried to leave Matt and Elijah to themselves as she walked through a door leading to a backroom, while Matt kept quiet, watching Elijah and wondering what was going through his head. A moment later, she returned with a fellow, walking behind her, and they stopped behind the counter

“Hey,” The manager said, staring at Elijah, confused about what this was about, and even the other clerk seemed as confused as him, and yet, a sneer never left her lips. “Hello, umm, because of Mariah,” Elijah uttered, looking at the lady’s name tag “I would like to make a custom-made diamond set for my girlfriend for our upcoming wedding.” All three of the store employees’ eyes widened at Elijah’s words, and then the manager got over his shock and mumbled, “What budget are we working with?”

“Between five million to ten,” Elijah uttered, resting his credit card on the desk.

With a smile, the manager looked over at Mariah and mumbled with happiness laced in his tone, "Well, Mariah, your wait is over for a promotion."

"But sir... She's just a newbie! I have been here for five years..." The clerk muttered, looking from Mariah to Elijah, who ignored her.

Staring back at her manager, he suddenly shrugged his shoulders and said, "And during that five years, we have had a good amount of complaints about you... Also, I thought you were the one handling this desk... how did Mariah end up with your customer?"

"Well, the thing is... umm... boss... Hmm, I was serving this customer who came to buy an eighteen thousand dollars Emerald ring." She mumbled, not able to meet his gaze. "Wait, the ring is worth eighteen thousand?!" the guy blurted out, widening his eyes. Then he looked over at Mariah and mumbled, "Can you show me more affordable options as you did for this fellow?" "Sure thing, sir," Mariah responded softly, looking over at the man with a smile.

"Wait Umm, I can help you with that!" The clerk piped up, trying not to sound desperate and

eager.

The guy glared over at her and frowned, mumbling, "No, but no thanks. Your rude attitude towards this guy for going for a cheaper ring has made me not want your assistance on this one."

A scowl crossed her manager's face as he locked eyes with her and let out, sounding disappointed, "Nina, there is such a thing as too many complaints, and I think it's time we write you a letter... of resignation." Staring at her ceiling, Peach pouted softly, mumbling to herself, "He said he will be back soon, but it's in the evening already and he's still not home yet..."

Glancing at the clock, she bit down on her lip in worry, worrying that Elijah might be hurt again or had gotten himself in some serious trouble since it was only a few days after that traumatic afternoon.

Suddenly, a knock on her door startled Peach out of her thoughts and she stared to her right, mumbling, "It's opened." When the doorknob turned and Elijah walked in, a sense of pure relief washed over her, and yet, she couldn't help but pout at the sight of him. "Hey," He whispered, watching her lay there, just looking at him. "Can you please get off your bed and stand up?"

"What?" Peach questioned, furrowing her eyebrows as she tilted her head a little.

With his eyes boring into hers, his voice deepening as he let out, "Come here, please."

Nervous, Peach said no words as she slowly sat up, moving away from the edge of her bed and toward him as she started to feel her heart beating fast and her palms sweaty

When she was right in front of him, Elijah reached into his pocket and mumbled, "Umm... I want to do you right, by doing this the right way, so..."

Immediately, Peach held her breath, watching him go down on one knee as he pulled the box from his pocket and opened it, revealing the ring.

"Peach Hayes, will you do me the honor of becoming my wife?" he asked in a whisper, taking the ring out of the box.

Her eyes immediately got wet, a shaky smile made its way onto her lips, and she stood there, sobbing softly "It's so beautiful," Peach whimpered, her hands covering her mouth.

Then she inhaled deeply, getting a grip on her rising emotions, and stretched out her hand to Elijah, blurting out in excitement, "Yes!! Haha, yes, Elijah! I will marry you!!"

Faintly, Elijah smiled as he slid the ring onto her finger, letting out a sigh of relief when he realized it fit perfectly, and then he stood up, only to have Peach rush into his arms.

"I love it," She cried into his chest, holding tightly to him as tears began flowing down her cheeks.

Chuckling faintly, Elijah lifted Peach off the floor, her legs wrapping around his waist as she buried her face into his neck.

Holding her close, he breathed in her scent, enjoying the feeling of her warmth pressed against his body, and closed his eyes as he felt her crying like a baby while stroking her hair slowly.

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Chapter 78

What do you want?

Even though the atmosphere of the Hayes mansion was calm, their expressions as the family sat around the table were anything but peaceful.

Slowly, Madam Jewel set her glass down, then looked up from her plate at everyone else sitting with her.

“Iris, honey... It’s been a while since you have stopped by the mansion... I hope your father is not still mad at Josh.” Madam Jewel said calmly.

“Well,” Iris mumbled, holding back her words.

“If he is, we can try to explain it to him and make amends. But in all honesty, Josh really didn’t know that Elijah was in a gang and had so many men to his name, you know? It wasn’t like Josh knew what he did for a living... He didn’t know he was a thug.”

“The thing is,”

A nervous look crossed Iris’s face as she darted glances around the table and back to her grandmother-in-law, letting out, “My dad is still upset... I tried talking to him, but he wouldn’t listen to anything that has Josh’s name in it.”

There was a brief pause as Iris remembered how disturbed her father had been lately and mumbled, “He also said I should stay away from Elijah and not meddle in you guys’ family matters anymore because I would be better off if I just minded my own business.” Silent settled among them, and shock covered every one of the faces at the table. The other members of the family glanced at each other, not wanting to believe Mr. Fangio would actually tell his daughter to stay away from Elijah, instead of taking revenge like they thought he would do.

‘First Mason and now, Fangio... If we don’t handle this mess soon, our family is going to lose great contacts because of that scumbag!’ Dean thought bitterly, trying to suppress his anger. Slowly, Josh clutched his fork and stabbed at his food, rage rising in him as his jaw started clenching.

He took a deep breath before turning his head to glare at his grandmother when she said, “This Elijah guy seemed way more complicated and dangerous than we originally thought. Maybe you shouldn’t let your heart rule over your head again, Josh.” Seeing the hate glowing in her grandson’s eyes, Madam Jewel sighed, feeling her own sense of annoyance rise up. “Iris, my dear... Maybe I should speak with your father then since that is the case, and explain the situation with Elijah to him because it looks like Peach’s mind is set on marrying Elijah and we don’t want him to think our family has any good relationship with him,” Dean muttered after several minutes of silence.

“Yes,” Amanda agreed immediately.

Suddenly, Melina dropped her fork on her plate, causing all of the eyes of the family to turn to her as she suddenly blurted out in frustration, “This is ridiculous! I never thought he would take it this far.”

Nobody said a word to her because no one could guess what was happening in her head or what she actually meant by that, so the silence just dragged on after her words

“Hmmm, I don’t think that after everything that has happened... my father would want to talk about it with you guys or about Elijah, so maybe it’s best we gave him time,” Iris mumbled, breaking the silence that had fallen over them, her gaze flickering nervously between Josh’s anger expression and Mrs. Jewel’s nervous face.

The tension only grew thicker after that statement, everyone exchanging glances and keeping quiet to avoid saying something they shouldn’t say, while Mrs. Jewel looked like she was on the verge of losing her patience. Suddenly, Butler Gary walked into the dining room with his hands behind his back, bowing before saying, “Excuse me, Madam Jewel, Elijah, and Peach are here, requesting to meet you with a guy named Matt along with them.” Everyone’s mood became even tenser, especially Madam Jewel, who frowned slightly at the mention of Elijah’s name, like something forbidden had been said.

“Very well,” Madam Jewel sighed reluctantly. “Let them come in,” A dark expression grew on Melina’s face, and even though she felt like Elijah was beneath her standard and worthy of her, she still didn’t want to see him happy with another woman, especially not Peach. “Yes, madam.” Butler Gary replied, before turning around and exiting the room. “What do they want now, hun?!... Showing their faces here like this... Is Peach trying to ruin our mood by dragging that bastard with her?” Josh gritted through his teeth after a brief silence.

Just then, Peach and Elijah walked into the dining room, both wearing matching expressions of calmness on their face as they made their way toward the table with Matt, following closely behind them.

‘Who’s this guy... I mean, he was nowhere to be seen when Elijah was with Melina... So why recently? What is their relationship? How much does he know about Elijah?’ Elmer thought, studying Matt, standing by Elijah. It was clear from everyone’s expression that no one wanted them there, and yet, they all sat quietly, waiting for someone to break the silence first. Thinking about her last interaction with Peach two weeks ago and the embarrassment she felt then, Madam Jewel scowled at the sight of the couple, darting her eyes between Peach and Elijah.

The room was so awfully silent that Peach could hear her own heartbeat, and she eyed Elijah, feeling bad that he only came because of her and wondering what he was thinking. “I didn’t expect that everyone would be here,” Peach whispered, talking more to Elijah than the entire family. “I thought it was just going to be you here today, grand...ma.” “You two should sit,” Madam Jewel uttered in a stiff tone, ignoring Peach’s comment, pointing at two chairs directly beside Melina and next to Dean.

Not wanting to stay longer in such a toxic atmosphere, Peach eyed Elijah and mumbled, "I just came here because my mother thought it would be decent for us to

give you."

"Sit, Peach... No one is going to bite you or whatever," Madam Jewel interrupted, her voice cold. "So, you guys are free to join us."

In that instant, Elijah's cold gaze locked with Madam Jewel's, causing her to wince and avert her stare as she thought, 'It was stupid of us to overlook and disregard you when you were married to Melina, but this time around, we will learn from that mistake.'

"Mmm, okay..." Peach mumbled, giving Elijah a sideways glance, before looking away. Slowly, Peach took a deep breath and then calmly moved to sit next to Dean with Elijah, shooting him a worried glance.

But before Peach could pull out the chair, Melina stood from her seat and looked Peach in her eyes, asking calmly, "Can we talk?"

The sudden action caught everyone off guard, including Peach, and yet, her expression remained calm as she studied her cousin's face.

Looking over Peach's shoulder, Melina's eyes rested on Elijah, seeing a mixture of concern and annoyance in his icy gaze.

And Peach turned slightly around to stare at him too, but Melina's voice made her furrowed her brows when she heard, "As grandmother said, no one is going to bite you, Peach... I just want to talk for a moment, and then you can talk about why you came... After all, we are family before we started bumping heads with each other." Not for a second did Peach lose her composure as she shot her cousin a glare, and then looked over at the rest of the family, seeing that no one was interfering, and she muttered under her breath, "Fine..."

Watching Peach leave with Melina, a sense of worry washed over Elijah, knowing that these two can't co-exist in the same space without some sort of conflict between them occurring, and when he locked eyes with Matt, he immediately understood his boss' eyes movement and what he wanted.

"Excuse me," Matt mumbled before following Peach and Melina into the hallway but keeping his distance behind them.

Glancing once more at the rest of the family, Elijah noticed that their expression had become even more strained than it already was, but none of them said a word.

No one was calling him names, none of them were acting up, and none of them made any kind of attempt at arguing against him being together with Peach.

It immediately felt strange, and for him, their silence became a warning because the only thing more dangerous than a menace is when the person threatening you goes silent and shows no signs that could lead you to their next move.

But Elijah walked over to the empty seat, pulling it away from the table, sat down, and folded his arms across his chest, refusing to acknowledge the tense atmosphere and staring intently at Madam Jewel

“What do you want?” Peach asked after Melina, refusing to walk any further in the hallway with her cousin, halting in her steps and crossing her arms defensively as she glared at her

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Chapter 79

Remember that I asked you nicely first

With a scowl on her face, Melina turned around to look at Peach, and then she looked over at Matt, a few distances away from them, standing close to the wall, his back resting against the concrete, his arms crossed tightly over his chest.

“Who is he?” Melina asked her tone hard, making it evident that she wasn’t letting this go easily.

Knowing that the only reason she and Elijah were here was that that was what her mother wanted, Peach tried not to show anything on her face, trying her best to keep her emotions hidden.

“He’s Elijah’s friend,” Peach answered after taking a deep breath and calming her raging mind. “Elijah has a friend?” Melina scoffed in confusion, raising an eyebrow at Peach before glaring at Matt.

“What do you want, Melina?”

“Elijah,”

Silence fell over them, Peach holding her gaze straight ahead as Melina stared angrily at her, waiting for an answer, only finding it odd when Peach kept silent with an unreadable expression.

“I want Elijah back... After all, I was married to him first, and my feelings for him never left even after we were divorced.” Melina said, her voice becoming soft all of sudden.

For a moment Peach didn't reply, and the only sound that filled the hall was their heavy breathing, until finally, Peach spoke in a hushed voice, struggling not to lose her anger, "What are you saying, Melina?"

"I'm saying that I miss Elijah... So much... I missed him... And every time I look at him, I realize how much I was stupid to let him go... He was my first love... The one person who truly loved me, whom I truly loved... We were meant to be together... You know that... We are meant to be together..." Melina explained, her eyes beginning to tear up. "You still love him!" Peach scoffed in disbelief, unable to hide the hurt that filled her voice. but she didn't care.

"Yes..."

"What kind of twisted shit are you doing now, Melina?!"

A few minutes passed between the two women with neither making a move to say another word. Finally, Melina broke the silence.

"Take a look at our family, Peach... how much pressure they put on us to be perfect, to marry for money and not love, and not stray from the path that they planted in our way..." Melina trailed off sadly, tears streaming down her cheeks. "I let him go because I allowed the pressure from them to get to me, but now, I've realized that I can't continue living without him. Not anymore..."

"Melina..." Peach mumbled, a sense of annoyance filling her as she watched her cousin cry openly in front of her. "Who put you up to this nonsense? Was it madam Jewel.. your father

or was it a joint decision, like some sick meeting you guys held? Is that why you all are gathered here?!"

"No! Of course not... Love just doesn't die because you stop being together, Peach."

"Do you even know where you went wrong in you guys' relationship... Do you know what you did to him? How much have you affected him because of your deception?"

Deep down, Melina was frowning inside, annoyed by the question Peach threw at her, and by her inability to give an honest answer. But the fake tears in her eyes only became more apparent, causing Peach to sigh loudly, running her hand through her hair in frustration. "I know, Peach... and that's why I want him back, to make things right again. To start fresh... and love him as I wanted to do all these while, but was pressured into not doing." Melina replied softly, looking away from Peach.

"Elijah is not a thing that you can have when you want and toss when you don't... It doesn't work like that! Love isn't something you can just pick up whenever you feel like it, Melina." Peach said sternly.

“So, you are not going to let him go, even though he’s my ex-husband and I am your cousin, Peach... you are still going to be with him after knowing that I still love him... despite everything else I just said?” “Yes, and no! Also, I know that you cheated on him, Madam Jewel said that you got a couple of millions of dollars for being with him... I don’t know what she meant by that... and you don’t even know his friends... I don’t know what you are talking about or why you are doing this, but I am not giving Elijah up.”

“Peach!”

“This conversation is over, Melina!” With that Peach turned in her heels, but immediately stopped when she heard Melina whisper, “You know there are other ways to get him back without asking you to leave him, right?”

Even though she didn’t want to, her emotions hit hard at those words, a look of nervousness appearing on her face. Slowly turning her head to look back at her cousin, Peach whispered, “What do you mean?”

“The first time I ever met Elijah was at a bar, and that same night, we had sex... He couldn’t resist me then... Do you want us to put it to a bet that he can’t do it now?” Melina asked her in the most seductive way possible, staring directly at Peach.

“I’m not interested in your sick plan or game... Leave him alone, Melina.”

“You are scared, ain’t you? Shaking that he will fall... How long did it take him to have you... How long did it take him to want your body?”

Just for a moment, a look of insecurity crossed Peach’s eyes, and her face gave it away, making Melina scoff, mumbling, “He hasn’t touched you yet, has he?”

“Love is not the same as lust, Melina.” Peach replied, her expression showing that she was fighting hard to keep her calm.

“But does Elijah feel both for you?”

“Well, we are getting married two weeks from now, so I would imagine so.”

When Melina’s eyes darted towards the ring on Peach’s finger, she scoffed and said, “Remember that I asked you nicely first.” Darting his eyes around the table, Elijah’s gaze zone for a while, and then he stopped at Josh’s harsh look, giving him a death stare “So, Elijah. Since you are interested in one of my granddaughters again, how about answering a few questions for us?” Madam Jewel asked Elijah in an attempt to break the awkward tension around them, forcing a smile on her lips as she eyed him. “My mother is right. We can’t keep giving our girls to you when honestly, you are not more than a stranger to us and we are not sure if you’re trustworthy.” Dean said, his tone cold, as everyone at the table nodded along in agreement with him. Looking around,

Elijah saw that almost every single person around the table was giving him judgmental looks, and he snorted slightly, letting out, "I am only here because Peach is. I didn't come to entertain your thirst to interrogate me."

"You arrogant prick," Tommy muttered under his breath, shooting Elijah a dirty look, not bothering to say anything else.

"Albert is dead. We are Peach's uncles, and we deserve to know who the heck she's about to marry, especially since the reputation you have is bad enough already." Elmer stated, narrowing his eyes at Elijah. Studying their faces for a while, Elijah scoffed and then averted his gaze, not saying another word, dismissing them completely.

In a fit of rage, Matthew stood and slammed his hands onto the tabletop, startling everyone, causing Elijah to meet his eyes as he asked, "Who are you?"

"A man?" Elijah responded, his voice filled with amusement and mockery. "That's not what I mean!"

"It's not?"

When Mathew saw the corner of Elijah's lips twitching upward in a half-smirk, he grabbed the bread knife and threw it towards him, only for Elijah to catch it swiftly with his hand, his eyes locked onto Matthew.

"An eye for an eye. Ruin mine, and I will damage yours within a blink of an eye. Don't test my patience, Mr. Hayes." Elijah said, aggressively tossing the knife on the table, and it hit against the plate, making everyone flinch.

Then when he took his gaze off Mathew's shaky stare, Elijah saw Peach walking back into the dining room, and with one look at her eyes, he grew concerned.

Forcing herself to stay calm and emotionless, Peach walked over to where Elijah was seated, ignoring the glares that were directed at her from all sides.

Once she reached his side, she looked straight into Elijah's eyes and whispered in a hoarse voice, "Can we go home now?"

"Peach... didn't you come here to tell us something?" Madam Jewel asked, a confused look on her face as she watched Elijah stand from his seat.

"Yeah, but I don't think I want any of you at my wedding ceremony anymore." Peach

announced coldly, glaring daggers at each of their faces. Her words made Elijah even more surprised and concerned, but he withheld from showing it, instead lacing his fingers with Peach's own, and gently squeezing her hand. "Peach, come on... I don't know why you are changing your mind all of sudden, but this uncle of yours wants to

celebrate your marriage, even if your soon-be husband is not our favorite, so please share with us what you came to tell us..." Tommy suddenly pleaded with her, leaning forward in his chair, trying to grab her attention.

Immediately, Elijah became alert, knowing that Tommy being concerned about their wedding was more alarming than a good thing. "Peach, you heard your uncle... Tell us what you came to say to us!" Madam Jewel uttered, struggling against her bitterness.

At that moment, Melina walked inside, and when she locked eyes with Peach, Peach immediately darted her eyes to her bag, and without saying a word, Peach took out a mauve velvet box with an acrylic wedding invitation card in it.

"We are having a beach wedding." She let out, settling the box on the table, listening to the silence for a second. "I only got one for grand...ma, well, because I thought only her was going to be home."

With that, she and Elijah exchanged glances, before he led her out of the dining room, walking past Melina at the doorway, and she and he locked eyes for a second longer before he led Peach away.

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Chapter 80

The Marvelous Elijah's Return Chapter 80

They are all there

Gazing calmly at her reflection in the mirror, Peach just stared, trying to find words to describe what she was feeling as she smiled softly, whispering, "I'm getting married..."

Many mixed emotions were running through her mind, and some of them seemed a little too loud for her to be silent, but she was happy, ecstatic even.

For so long, it felt like this would be a day that would never come, marrying Elijah was something she never really thought would happen, but here she was, about to wed him.

"Why am I so shaky?" She giggled out nervously, not knowing how to handle the rush of emotions flowing through her as her heartbeat raised. "Peach, honey," Miss Grace's sudden voice echoed from outside her bedroom door, causing her to flinch slightly. "Can I come in?"

"Yes, mama," Peach called out, looking back at her door frame.

A second later, Miss Grace came inside, closing the door behind her with a smile on her face, crying softly, "My baby."

Since Albert died, it had just been her and her daughter, against the world without the comfort and protection of her husband, and now that Peach was about to get married too, she couldn't help but worry, feel sad, and yet, she was overjoyed. "Mama, I am going to cry if you start sobbing," Peach muttered, turning to look at her reflection once again and laughing softly as she wiped her tears away. Silence took over as Miss Grace walked over to her daughter, hugging her from the back, and resting her head gently on Peach's hair, smiling at her reflection. "Do you think papa will be proud of me is... if he was with... Umm, if he was right here beside you and me?" Peach whispered, tears slowly starting to form in her eyes, her heart breaking as she looked at her mother who was sobbing silently. "Of course, he will be, my dear," Miss Grace replied, kissing Peach's hair softly. "If anyone is capable of being proud of you right now, more than I am, it'll be your father." A calming silence took over as both mother and daughter uttered no words, and yet, a lot was said through raw emotion and silent tears.

After a moment passed, Peach pulled away from her mother's embrace, wiping her tears away and smiling brightly, but she felt a great sense of embarrassment as she chuckled nervously, mumbling, "How did you stay married to papa for so long... and how did you make him have eyes... only for you, umm... Also, how did you know papa still loved you after so many years of being together."

Averting her eyes away from her mother, for a moment, she continued to laugh awkwardly and scratch the back of her head shyly, and mumbled, "When he got mad at you, how did you keep the peace? Did he ever get sick of being together with you?" "Peach, honey," Miss Grace giggled, placing one hand on Peach's cheek and rubbing her thumb over her skin gently, wiping away any stray tears before smiling lovingly at her daughter "There is only so much you can do as a wife. Marriage depends on both sides to inake the relationship work."

"But you made it work for years, mama, didn't you?" "Of course... I and your papa made it work."

It grew quiet again as they stared into each other's eyes, neither daring to break eye contact and then Peach sighed out sadly and looked down, biting her lip before whispering, "I wish papa was here. He could've told me what made him stay with..."

With all the love she could muster, Miss Grace wrapped her arms around her daughter, pulling her close and whispering reassuringly, "Marriage is not a simple thing you can control, Peach, but I have seen you and Elijah, and I know you two can make it work."

A gentle knock sounded on the bedroom door, interrupting their conversation, and Peach's eyes immediately widened when she heard Elijah's voice, "Miss Grace, the stylists, and makeup artist want to know if Peach is ready for them." "Yeah, I am." Peach blurted out quickly, wiping off the last traces of tears. Even though Elijah had

been standing at the door longer than he intended and had heard more than he should, he smiled faintly, and his voice softened as he said, "Hey... umm... Are you nervous?"

"A bit," Peach let out, staring straight at the door.

"Honestly, I am nervous too, like a lot." "Really?" "Yeah, but I also can't wait for you to meet me down the aisle..." Just like that, those words caused a small giggle to leave Peach's mouth and she laughed lightly, feeling a warmth spread throughout her chest as she nodded, saying, "Me too!"

"Okay, I will leave you to do your thing because according to popular superstitions, it's bad luck for the groom to see the bride before the wedding. So I can't do what I really want to do right now..." Elijah teased, staring hard at the wooden door frame.

"Okay then, see you at the altar," Peach let out, smiling widely and blushing, wishing she could rush out of the room and stare into his eyes, wanting to see how beautiful they would look when he gazes into hers.

"I'll be waiting." Elijah uttered with a smirk before walking away.

When he got into the lobby, a sense of relief settled down in him, feeling glad that he didn't pressure Peach when she turned down the offer to do her set-up for today at some pompous hotel because after hearing what she said to her mother, her excuse was valid.

This motel is something that holds most of her memories with her father, the good and sad times, and her getting ready in place should give her that sense of Albert's presence and love. "She's available for you guys," Elijah said calmly, looking at the stylists and makeup artist in front of him

At one fifteen, the room door burst open as James, Matt, Ryan, and Rookie walked in on Elijah, admiring him, wearing a dark grey slim-fit tuxedo three piece suit.

"Wow, you are really going through with this!" James uttered, staring at Elijah's outfit "Yep." Elijah replied as he put on a light pink flower lapel on his blazer, smiling softly to himself.

Then after he got done, he looked at his men and smirked at how sharp they were dressed, Ryan and Matt, wearing Pink suits, and James and Rookie in grey "I have never been a bridesmaid before..." Matt playfully, chuckling under his breath. "Well, I can say, we both make one damn good-looking bridesmaid," Ryan responded confidently, earning a laugh from all of them.

Suddenly Elijah's phone interrupted them, making everyone go quiet as he picked it off the table and answered, "J, how are things looking over there?"

“We got eyes on the beach and the motel, and so far, everything seems to be going smoothly, but...” Jerome replied on the other line, and Elijah could tell he was stressed, especially from his tone. “The Hayes is here... umm... all of them.” “Seriously?!”

“Yes, boss, even Melina.”

Since Peach only had her mother, the wedding guests were mostly thugs that were invited by Elijah to bring a plus one with them to fill up the seats, so Peach won't feel sad over the empty spaces...

Because honestly, Elijah thought that the Hayes was not going to show up for her, not when she was literally going against them by marrying him. “Keep an eye on their every move, and do not let them out of your sight!” Elijah commanded, feeling frustrated that he knew that something was odd about the Hayes' attendance and yet, not knowing what it could possibly mean.

“Will do, boss,” Jerome replied before ending the call. The look of stress that suddenly clouded their boss' face made Matt, Ryan, and Rookie exchange looks with each other, wondering why he looked so agitated. “They are there,” Elijah spoke slowly, sighing heavily as he placed the phone back onto the table. “They're all at the beach.” “The Hayes?” Jame asked, raising an eyebrow at Elijah. “Yes,”

“That's not a good sign.”

“I know, James... I know.”

A frown crossed Elijah's face as he looked at Matt and said, “Today, you are not only Peach Bridesmaid, but also her bodyguard... Your eyes should never leave her side, got it?”

“Understood, boss,” Matt said, nodding at Elijah, feeling the atmosphere in the room quickly shifting into something more serious. “I don't know why they have all gathered there, but we can not let our guard down... so I need you two to stand watch over Peach and keep an eye out for anything suspicious, alright?” Elijah continued, staring at Matt and Ryan.

Even though he feared interrupting in such a tense atmosphere, James cleared his throat and said, “Elijah. we should probably leave right now, if you don't want your bride to arrive ahead

of you.”

A deep sigh left his lips as Elijah ran a hand through his hair and muttered, “Damn it... Okay... okay. Umm, Rookie and James, you two are with me.”

Then he eyed Ryan and Matt for a second, his eyes telling them how much he was counting on them before he looked back at James and said, "Let's go."