

Love Like You Never Loved Before Chapter 171-180

Chapter 171

I had a hard time painting the image I had in mind. After countless attempts, I decided to give up because none of the paintings I have produced could justify Christopher's pair of gleaming eyes.

In the end, I tore the paintings with a self-deprecating smirk.

It had been a long time since I last painted something. I couldn't get used to holding a brush, let alone having myself focused for the session. The only thing I had in mind was Autumnal Panorama.

Although I was conscious my painting wasn't as unworthy as they mentioned, I couldn't move on from the incident that had been bothering me for years.

Autumnal Panorama was sent back shortly after it was submitted. However, I wasn't made aware of it and thought I would soon acquire the result.

Nathan tore the painting into pieces before I could get my hands on it.

Overwhelmed by the shattered pieces I saw in the dustbin, I paid no heed to the details and failed to notice it was a replicated piece.

What makes you think you have the right to draw when you can't even contribute to the family?

Get the hell out of my sight at once! If you refuse to get married for the family's sake, don't consider yourself a member of the Tanner family from today onwards!

I thought I had shrugged those memories off my mind. It turned out they had long become part of my identity.

Although I had long given up on Nathan, whenever he showed Yvette and Crystal the lovely side of his, I would get jealous.

He's my father, why do I seem to be the outsider instead?

I made up my mind to leave the hospital because I had enough of the place full of the lingering scent of disinfectant.

As that was the only place that might lead me to the answers to my queries, I was determined to make my way back at all costs.

The moment I retrieved my phone to acquire Sabrina's aid to leave the hospital, I hesitated because she had her own commitment. It wouldn't be wise to approach her for such a trivial matter.

In the end, I hailed a cab and acquired the nurse's aide to head downstairs. The nurse was conscious of my divorce. Thus, she had been taking great care of me during my time at the hospital.

When she brought me to the cab, she urged me to return to the hospital for regular check-ups from time to time. She even offered to drop by my place if I needed her help.

I expressed my gratitude with a smile. Her act of kindness had reminded me to not lose faith in others just yet.

Meanwhile, little did I know the ones following me would soon turn my life upside down.

It felt great to be back. I drafted a text with a smile and sent it to Christopher. I'll be waiting for you at home.

I couldn't be bothered by the fact Christopher and Monica had taken part in a party together because I had faith in him.

It would be fine as long as he told me nothing was going on between them.

Shortly after I made my way into the elevator, two mysterious figures joined me. I requested with a bright grin, "I'll be heading off on the fifth floor."

One of them had their eyes glued to me in an odd manner. My heart started racing as I had a bad feeling about it.

Upon a simple glimpse, I noticed the surveillance camera was perfectly fine. Therefore, I told myself everything would be fine. The moment the elevator reached the designated floor, I brought myself out with the aid of the crutches.

When I was a step away from the entrance, someone covered my mouth and strangled me in an attempt to stop me from yelling for help.

No matter how much I retaliated against him, my effort was to no avail. After a few seconds of retaliation, I could barely catch my breath. When I thought I was about to pass out, the man moved away from me. His accomplice covered my mouth with an ether-infused handkerchief when I tried to catch my breath.

Consequently, I started feeling lightheaded and collapsed in between their arms with my head drooping over my shoulders. No longer could I feel my limbs as well.

Chapter 172

I could vaguely feel someone lifting me into a car. The bumpy ride to a certain somewhere was the only thing I could recall after I heard them starting the car.

As much as I wanted to shout for help, I couldn't. In the end, I passed out with fear lingering in my mind.

By the time I regained consciousness, I found out I couldn't even stretch my limbs because I was confined in a cramped and pitch-black space.

“Have you brought her back? Are you sure you have gotten the right person?”

“I’m pretty sure because she looks just like the one in the picture!”

“Get her there and teach her a lesson immediately!”

When I heard the content of their conversation, I started shivering in fear. I must have gotten unlucky to be kidnapped when I was as poor as a church rat.

Who are they? Why have they abducted me?

I was certain no one would want to abduct me because of my limited wealth and connection. In other words, abducting me would just be a waste of their effort and time.

Someone once told me ether was usually made use of by the criminals to take out their targets. I couldn’t believe there would be a day I got to experience it firsthand.

I tried to reach my phone in an attempt to reach out to somebody for help, but I noticed it had been taken away from me.

The moment I heard the muffled sound produced when I accidentally knocked on the wall behind me, I ruled out the possibility of me being confined in a gigantic box.

While losing myself in the process of thought, someone pried the box open from behind and grabbed my hair, dragging me out of the box.

It took me a few seconds to snap out of confusion and bring myself up. Someone approached me and raised my chin against my will. He yelled, “She’s the one! Tie her up!”

I tried to flee, but I was taken into custody after a few seconds. They brought me back and tied me up as instructed.

I shrieked and asked, “What do you guys want from me? I’m just a poor woman! I can’t even afford to pay you anything!”

“Ha! You’re not able to pay us, but someone acquainted with you can!” The man grinned and added, “I can’t believe you’re the wife of the almighty CEO! I guess you’re worth quite something, huh?”

Upon a simple glimpse at the men surrounding me, I saw the two at the elevator and another man standing next to them. That particular man remained silent and stared at me in the eyes with an eerie look.

I gulped and blamed Crystal for my misfortune. Had she refrained from displaying the affection she had for Lyle in the restaurant, these bunch of men wouldn’t have gotten their hands on my whereabouts.

Ugh! Why am I the one suffering because of someone else’s action? If they’re that capable, why don’t they abduct Crystal instead?

If Crystal has been abducted, Lyle will get them everything they desire! As for me, Lyle will just deem it a waste of his money!

I tried my best to calm myself down and negotiated with the vicious-looking man, "Aren't you aware Lyle is filing for divorce with me? You won't get anything if you abduct me! Why don't you set me free? I'll keep everything to myself!"

"You don't get to order us around! Also, don't try anything silly unless you wish to spend some quality time with my friends over there!"

He caressed my cheek with his fleshy palm. "I guess you're quite a skillful one when it comes to having some raunchy fun, huh?"

I felt a chill running down my spine because of the disgusting thoughts they had. If they were to carry out the things they had in mind, I wouldn't get to retaliate against them.

The only source of illumination available in the pitch-black room was the patch of sunlight coming from the hole above.

As soon as they departed, I started surveying the surroundings to see if there was anything I could use to cut the rope. Unfortunately, luck wasn't on my side. I had no choice but to break the rope with brute force.

Spending time alone in the pitch-black room had sent me to the endless loop of despair. Christopher was my only hope. I secretly prayed he would notice something was wrong soon.

Chapter 173

It wouldn't be necessary for the man to threaten me as it would be impossible to break free. There was nothing that could be made use of to escape the spacious basement.

The desolate environment was so eerie I could hear my heart racing.

I started cursing Crystal for bringing upon my misfortune by exposing the messed-up relationship to the public, including the kidnappers.

A short while later, I could barely pull myself together anymore because the pent-up fatigue had caught up to me.

The kidnappers never returned after their departure, leaving me starving in the dark. My fear grew stronger as my stomach started growling.

Where are you, Christopher? Can you come over yet? You're the only one I can rely on! You have to save me! As long as you save me, I'll promise you whatever you have in mind!

It was a tormenting experience to be confined in a pitch-black room. When someone opened the door again, it felt as though an eternity had passed.

I could barely open my eyes because of the strong shaft of light. While closing my eyes to get used to the illuminated environment, I heard a woman's voice.

As it was a familiar voice, I widened my eyes in disbelief and looked in the direction of the entrance.

Crystal was being dragged into the basement by a few buff-looking men. When they placed the equally startled woman next to me, she yelled, "Yvonne, are you the mastermind behind this? I will never succumb to you!"

I rolled my eyes in silence because I no longer had the energy to pick a fight with the shrieking woman next to me.

"Idiot!" I snorted at her in return and turned around, staring elsewhere to avoid engaging in a conversation with Crystal.

"Are you reprimanding me? Yvonne, you're such a jinx! Why the heck have you persuaded them to abduct me? What exactly are you up to? I'm telling you Lyle will never return to you even if I'm dead!"

If others were around, they would be shocked by Crystal's true color as she had always put on a considerate and adorable front when she showed up in the public.

Unable to withstand her remarks anymore, I rebuked, "Can you stop accusing me of something I have never done? Do you really think I'm as vicious as you are?"

Infuriated by my remark, she tried to kick me in return. "You know what? I'll get you back for today's incident! Lyle won't leave me alone, but I'm afraid that's not the case for you!"

Hello? I'm not waiting for that jerk, okay? I'm waiting for my one and only to rush to my rescue!

With that being said, he isn't in Avenport at the moment! Is he going to return to my corpse in a few days?

Irrked, I yelled at her in return, "Alright, I'm well aware you're having an affair with him. Why don't you keep that to yourself and stop bringing it up?"

Suddenly, a man approached us and slapped me in the face. I was frustrated by the fact that he decided to take things out on me when Crystal had been yelling as well.

"Get in touch with Lyle and tell him his wife and mistress has been abducted! If he wants them back safe and sound, get him to prepare a billion! Warn him not to get in touch with the cops! Otherwise, we'll allow him to make it to the headline with his beloved women's death!"

A man reached for his phone and took photos of Crystal and me. He then proceeded to get in touch with Lyle and instructed him to meet them in the basement at five o'clock in the morning.

It turned out it had been twenty-four hours since I was abducted. That must be the reason my entire body had been aching since a few hours ago.

“Lyle will definitely rush to my rescue! Do you think you get to salvage your marriage by playing the victim in front of him? No way!” Crystal yelled at me with a provocative look.

I had no intention to carry on with the fight Crystal started because she wouldn't stop mentioning Lyle when Christopher was the only one I cared about. It would be such a shame if I couldn't get to meet Christopher for one last time before my death.

Lyle soon showed up with the demanded sum, but the kidnappers refused to set us free. They announced, “A billion for one of them!” Love Like You Never Loved Before Chapter 173

Chapter 174

He showed up sooner than I had expected. When I was about to experience an emotional breakdown because of Crystal, Lyle showed up in the basement.

The well-built man's silhouette seemed so familiar, yet there was something odd about it. I couldn't see his face, but I was certain he had his eyes glued to me for a few seconds.

Lyle instructed in a callous tone, “I have brought you a billion as demanded! Set them free at once!”

“How am I supposed to ensure you're here on your own? You have brought quite a few bodyguards with you, haven't you?” Someone stepped forward in an attempt to take over the suitcase with a billion, but Lyle took a step back and requested, “I need to ensure they're safe!”

“Lyle, save me! I need you!” Crystal sniffled and looked at Lyle with a pair of welled-up eyes.

To my surprise, Lyle looked at me and asked, “Eve, are you okay?”

I gasped in silence when the kidnapper kicked me in the leg, instructing me to answer Lyle's query. As much as it hurt, I tried my best to resist the racking sensation I felt and answered, “I'm fine.”

Lyle heaved a sigh of relief and handed over the kidnappers the hefty suitcase he had brought along. He seemed to have upheld his promise and brought them the demanded sum.

“I won't lodge a police report as long as they're able to leave safe and sound! On top of that, I promise not to go after any of you! Please leave at once!”

The three kidnappers gaped in silence at the presence of the suitcase of money. To be precise, I was equally inundated by the sum available.

No ordinary person could possibly remain calm in the presence of such an astronomical figure, let alone a housewife like me.

As the kidnappers went dead silent, Lyle repeated his question, “Can you set them free yet?”

“Wait!” Thrilled, the kidnappers’ emotions were written all over their faces. They announced, “Initially, we’re supposed to set them free, but the amount you have brought us only enables you to bring one of them away with you.”

Lyle rebuked with his eyes narrowing to a slit, “Don’t you think that’s too much? I have adhered to every demand of yours and brought the requested sum! Since you’re after the money, it’s better for you to set them free at once!”

Honestly, when he made himself clear and stood his ground, he seemed like the man I once had a thing for. However, I had long lost faith in him.

As a result, my heart started racing the moment the things awaiting the one left behind crossed my mind.

“Mr. Smith, that’s quite a persuasive speech, but I don’t think you’re in a position to negotiate since they’re currently under our custody! If you can’t make up your mind, do you need my help to make the call on your behalf?”

Halfway through the kidnapper’s orated speech, he ran the dagger across Crystal’s neck and asked, “This is your mistress, isn’t she? Do you think she’s able to paint if I amputate her fingers?”

“No!” Lyle was at the top of his lungs. He added, “I’ll get my assistant to bring another billion over immediately! Stay away from them!”

“I can’t be sure if you’re going to send the cops our way or not! Hurry up and make up your mind! Otherwise, I’ll make the call on your behalf!”

The moment Lyle witnessed the kidnapper trimming Crystal’s hair without any hesitation, he yelled, “Crystal!”

“Save me, Lyle! Haven’t you promised to keep me safe for the rest of my life? You’re not going to abandon me, are you?” Crystal started weeping with her eyes glued to Lyle.

When I caught him looking in my direction, I started stuttering as I was at a loss for words, “I-I—”

What am I supposed to tell him? Am I supposed to beg him to save me? Should I ask him not to abandon me when he had abandoned me for more than once? After much considerations, I asked, “Are you going to abandon me again?”

When he heard me, he stared at me openmouthed. It was evident he was taken aback by my question. Seconds after he snapped out of bewilderment, he announced with his teeth gritted, “I’ll bring you four billion as long as we get to leave!”

One of the kidnappers broke the silence, reprimanding Lyle, “Stop messing with us and make up your mind! Otherwise, we’ll randomly take one of them away with us!”

Lyle kept glancing at Crystal and me with his face scrunched up. Never had he shown me the hesitant side of his.

Suddenly, Crystal broke the silence, asserting while sniffing, “Lyle, please bring Yvonne away with you! She’s your wife! However, I’m afraid our child won’t get to meet you! O-Our child—”

Chapter 175

“You’re pregnant?” Lyle started trembling in fear. He looked at me in the eyes with an apologetic look. It was then I knew he had made up his mind.

He stuttered, “I-I’m so sorry, Yvonne! I’ll owe you once and think of something to save you once I’m back!”

Once he finished justifying himself, he shot daggers at the kidnappers and yelled, “I’ll be bringing Crystal away with me!”

His announcement sent to me a vicious cycle of despair. Thereafter, I went dead silent as he rushed over to Crystal’s rescue and brought her out of the basement.

I was about to spend my remaining few hours in despair while they would start a brand-new day without me.

Why has it gotten to me again when his decision isn’t that much of a surprise? Well, I guess luck was never on my side!

As they strode their way out, Crystal beamed in satisfaction and mouthed in silence, “It’s time for you to enjoy the upcoming session!”

I could feel my limbs turning stiff as the door was kept shut once again. A chill ran down my spine as the three vicious-looking men approached me as though they were up to no good.

“It’s such a shame to be abandoned by your husband!” One of them started undressing me, exposing the undergarments I had put on.

“See! She’s not even in her right mind anymore!” Another of them tore my shirt in half as he couldn’t wait to feel my skin.

All of a sudden, I started retaliating against them. The racking sensation coming from my tied-up hands was nothing as compared to the tidal waves of emotions I felt. “What are you guys doing? Stay away from me!”

I had rushed over to Lyle’s rescue over and over again in the past, but he had never hesitated to leave me alone whenever I needed him.

As someone removed my pair of shoes, I launched a powerful kick at him at the crotch area. Subsequently, he collapsed to the ground and crouched in pain.

“Ugh! You’re such a useless man!”

“What the heck!” The struggling man brought himself up and slapped me in the face. As a result, I started feeling lightheaded.

Crystal was right! I’ll soon end up being their tool to satisfy their lust because no one will rescue me!

As they surrounded me with lust written all over their faces, I tried my best to shrug their hands off me when I felt them. They seemed to be deriving pleasure through teasing me.

They soon burst out laughing while inflicting pain on me by pinching me. They enjoyed seeing me groaning in pain. Unable to hold back their lust anymore, one of them grabbed my legs and raised them against my will.

I started trembling in fear as there was nothing else I could do to salvage myself. When the last piece of garment I had put on was removed, I could feel another man’s legs around my thighs.

That was the moment I made up my mind to defend my dignity, even if it meant coming at the cost of my life. I started biting my tongue with all my might in an attempt to kill myself, but they soon figured out my plan and grasped my chin to stop me.

Consequently, my jaw was dislocated because of the men’s brute force.

“You’re such a stubborn b*tch! I’ll let you have the best time of your life for one last time, even if you’re dying!”

“Hahaha! I wonder if there’s anything different from having it with someone from the upper echelon!”

“Hey, hurry up! We’re still waiting for our turns!”

Someone, please! Christopher, where are you? Save me! I need you!

As torrents of grief streamed down my cheeks, I started wondering if I had the courage to move on after pulling myself through the humiliating session.

I was completely rendered incapable of motions as my legs were tied to the armrests of the chair. Soon, my entire face was drenched in tears and blood.

Why can’t I even kill myself? Am I not even allowed to make the choice? C-Christopher!

When I thought that would be the end of my miserable life, someone barged into the basement and rushed over to my side, throwing punches at the men surrounding me.

Although it was an intense session, I couldn’t care less until I felt myself nestling in a man’s embrace.

“I’m so sorry I’m late!”

Chapter 176

I could hear someone talking, but I had a hard time telling if he was a friend or a foe. The moment I could feel my hands again, I threw punches at him, yelling hysterically, "Stay away from me!"

"Eve, it's me! I'm Christopher!" Judging by the man's hoarse voice, I was certain he was equally anxious. Inundated by remorse, he kept me safe in between his arms.

At that point in time, the only thing I had in mind was to flee the scene. In another attempt to escape, I launched another powerful kick at the man, but my effort was to no avail because I was still confined in between his arms.

After one last attempt to bite the man failed because of my dislocated jaw, I tried to knock the man off with my head while yelling, "Just kill me! Kill me instead of humiliating me!"

"I'm so sorry for being late, Eve! It's my fault for not being there for you! I'm Christopher! I'll never hurt you!"

Who's Christopher? Oh! Is he the one I have been waiting for? He's the only one who cares about me, isn't he? I returned to my senses and stared at the man with a look of disbelief. He was in an equally pathetic with his forehead drenched in blood and his face puckered in despair.

He couldn't care less by his look and continued holding me firmly in between his arms. Over and over again, he caressed my back and assured me, "You don't have to worry because everything's over! I have taken out those vicious men!"

I repeated after him, "C-Christopher?"

He placed his blazer over me and asserted, "Yes! It's me! I'm here! I'll always be here!"

"Christopher!" As the pent-up emotions came flooding out, I nestled in between his arms and started wailing hysterically, "I'm horrified! I almost killed myself to end my misery!"

While Christopher brought the traumatized me out of the basement, I caught a glimpse of a few men in their military uniforms, including Zachary.

My pupils constricted in fear the moment I saw the men drenched in a puddle of blood on the ground. My heart skipped a beat, and I passed out after shrieking.

When I was unconscious, I heard a few people around me engaging in a heated discussion. They seemed to be having another fight. As much as I wanted to figure out the things going on, I couldn't open my eyes.

The faces of three vicious-looking men flashed back in my mind. They kept running their hands all over my body. In the end, they tore my clothes into pieces with lustful intentions written all over their faces.

I tried my best to run away from them, but I couldn't seem to shrug them off. All of a sudden, they pounced on me and rendered me incapable of motion.

I could feel blood splashing everywhere as soon as I heard several consecutive shots being fired.

"N-No! S-Stay away from me!" As I started shrieking in fear, I grabbed something and started biting it with all my might. I could feel my jaws aching, but I was reluctant to stop until I felt blood in my mouth.

Someone stopped me from moving around and held me firmly in between his arms. I felt a strong urge to cry when I detected the gentle kissed on my forehead.

He repeated himself in a remorseful tone, "Eve, you don't have to worry anymore because everything's fine! They're all dead as of now! I'll keep you company and safe! It will be fine!"

As the nightmare stopped haunting me, I could finally fall asleep. I was unsure if it had merely been a few hours or had it been a few days by the time I woke up.

I surveyed the surroundings and tried to reach out to someone, but the racking sensation coming from the jaw stopped me from speaking. On top of that, I could feel my eyes aching.

Zachary approached me and asked, "Hey, how are you feeling?"

I shook my head, asserting the anxious man everything was fine. Actually, Christopher was the one I had been searching for, but upon a simple glance around the ward, he was nowhere to be seen.

Unable to speak, I had to communicate with Zachary using body language. I made some noise because I was afraid he couldn't grasp the meaning behind it.

"You need to calm down because your jaw has been severely dislocated. In the upcoming few weeks, you won't be able to speak." Zachary proceeded to summon the nurse over.

As he couldn't get my query, I tried my best to form a complete phrase. "C-Chris—"

"I'm here!" Christopher barged into the ward and sprinted over to my side. Holding my hands, he repeated the same thing over and over again. When I heard him, I finally regained my composure.

"You don't have to worry because I'll always be here for you."

Chapter 177

His words worked like a charm and warded my concerns. After taking the prescribed medicine, I closed my eyes and fell asleep once more.

I ended up sleeping for three consecutive days. Zachary then told me I had been having a high fever ever since I was rushed to the hospital. The doctor once warned them to get themselves ready for the worst, but I managed to make it through the crisis.

After the routine check-up by the doctor, I turned around and asked, "Where's Christopher?"

My voice was still hoarse, but I no longer felt the pain bothering me on the day I first regained consciousness.

“H-He—” Zachary stuttered with his brows furrowed as though he was supposed to keep Christopher’s whereabouts confidential.

I could vividly recall Christopher’s forehead drenched in blood when he brought me out of the basement. As my heart sank to the bottom of my stomach, I asked, “Where is he?”

“Chris wants me to keep you in the dark, but I don’t think that’s necessary. When he couldn’t reach you, he noticed something was wrong. Immediately, we made our way back. Unfortunately, we were involved in an accident, but he insisted on rushing over to rescue you.”

After a few seconds of pause, he said, “Chris decided to keep you company since you had been having it rough over the past two days. In addition to excessive bleeding, the pent-up fatigue caught up to him. Thus, he passed out in the morning.”

When Zachary told me Christopher was still unconscious, I was on pins and needles. Thus, I begged him, “Can you please bring me to him immediately?”

Zachary took a step back and told me to calm down since I had gotten overly worked up again. “I’ll bring you over once the doctor’s done.”

I wondered if his response had something to do with my response while I was unconscious. It must have been something extreme to be able to intimidate him. I couldn’t care less and repeated my request, “Please bring me over to him immediately!”

After hesitating for a few seconds, Zachary nodded and answered, “Alright!”

Someone had to wheel me over in a wheelchair because I couldn’t stand on my feet just yet. When Zachary wheeled me into the ward, I saw the man on the bed.

I wheeled myself over and stared at the man in disbelief. He had a pale and haggard look with his eyes closed and his head swathed in bandages.

A few seconds later, I tried to bring myself up in an attempt to join him in bed.

The moment the blanket was uncovered, I caught a whiff of the stench of blood. Christopher’s wounds were worse than I had imagined. Zachary mentioned it was just an accident, but Christopher’s condition indicated otherwise.

The moment I nestled next to him, I caught a whiff of the stench of blood. Christopher’s wounds were worse than I had imagined. Zachary mentioned it was just an accident, but Christopher’s condition indicated otherwise.

Afraid of hurting him, I lay down next to him in silence after kissing him on the cheek.

My wandering mind finally became at ease when I caught another whiff of the familiar scent of tobacco exclusive to him. I started weeping in silence while lying next to him.

Although weeping wouldn't do me any good, it enabled me to take out the emotions I had been suppressing over the past few days.

Christopher had once again rushed over to my rescue. If it weren't because of him, I might not have made it out without being humiliated.

Had I been humiliated by those vicious-looking men, I might make the call to put an end to my miserable life instead of spending the rest of my life in horror.

"Hey!" All of a sudden, I heard Christopher's voice. Immediately, I looked at him and placed my head next to his. "Have I roused you from your sleep?"

"I just feel the urge to wake up since I can feel you next to me. I'm really glad you're fine." Christopher tried to hold me in his arms, but he could barely move around.

"No! Stop moving around! I'll move over!" I turned around and wrapped my arms around his waist and started reprimanding him, "You shouldn't have neglected your condition! Just leave the rest to nurse and take care of yourself!"

"I have to ensure you're fine. Also, I'm afraid you're going to disappear again the moment I leave." Christopher instructed in a callous tone, "Can you not resort to such an extreme countermeasure no matter what happens in the future?"

Chapter 178

It was the second time I brought up the attempt to commit suicide in front of Christopher. He seemed to be startled by my determination to take myself out in times of emergencies for real.

Conscious of his concerns, my heart ached. I answered, "Chris, I'll rather kill myself than living a life full of shame! Never will I allow others to take advantage of me!"

"If you don't stop it, I'm going to be infuriated for real!" Christopher glared at me in the eyes and repeated himself with a stern look. As much as he tried to force a strong front, he was pretty much vulnerable.

"No matter what lies ahead of us, we'll brace through everything together even if it's the end of the world! I want you to promise me not to give up on life!"

I nodded and started weeping again when the incident that had occurred over the past few days flashed back in my mind.

That particular incident wouldn't stop haunting me. As a result, I started wailing once again, "Christopher, I'm so scared!"

He was flustered as I burst into tears in front of him. As much as he wanted to hold me in between his arms, he couldn't.

In the end, he asserted while caressing my head, "I'm so sorry for raising my volume against you. It's my fault for not taking your safety into consideration. I should've kept an eye on you."

I shook my head and stammered, "It's not your fault! I'm just afraid of losing you as I don't think I deserve you! You're the only one I have, Christopher!"

"I will never leave you, okay?"

We spent the entire afternoon next to one another. I insisted on keeping Christopher company when the doctor dropped by for another routine check-up. The doctor even made fun of us and said we were a pair made in heaven.

Truth be told, as absurd as it might sound, I had always longed to be his wife. With that being said, it might just be another one of my unrealistic and ambitious goals.

I wouldn't mind being just another woman of his as long as I had the chance to stay with him. Nothing could possibly drive us apart from one another.

The moment I saw the appalling wounds, including the one on his chest, I found out it wasn't just another accident. It was a staged assassination meant to take him out. He almost had his lungs permanently damaged because of the shot.

"Miss, it's time for another injection. Can you please come with me?" The nurse repeated himself since I went dead silent again.

I shook my hand and inched away from the nurse, returning to Christopher's side.

Christopher showed me his hand and assured me everything would be fine, "It's not a big deal. In fact, it's not even going to hurt. See? I'm being pricked as well."

I looked at the nurse in the eyes with my lips pursed. A few seconds later, I brought up a seemingly absurd request. "Can you please get a female nurse to tend to me? I don't feel comfortable being around a male nurse."

Having a hard time comprehending the rationale behind the request, he arched his brows in confusion as though he. In the end, he showed me his tag and announced, "I'm one of the best around here."

Not even Zachary could approach me without startling me, let alone a stranger. I would feel tingling sensations all over my body the moment others came in touch with me. Thus, I shook my head and turned him down.

Christopher's eyes glinted when he recalled something. He instructed the nurse, "Please get another female nurse over to tend to her."

Once the nurse departed, he grasped my hand and caressed my cheek, asserting in a gentle tone, "It's time for you to leave everything behind because it's over."

I was glad he could easily rule out the reason behind my seemingly absurd request. I assured him, "I'll try my best to forget about it."

We ended up lying next to one another in the ward. As odd as it might be, it was one of the few best moments I had in life. I couldn't stop staring at Christopher in the eyes. After a short while, I yelled, "Christopher!"

He ran his fingers through my unkempt hair and asked in a hushed voice, "What?"

I repeated myself in a silly manner, "Christopher!"

"What is it?" he asked with a gentle beam.

"I just want to ensure you're here with me." Smiling, I carried on with the session for some time. I was glad he wasn't against the idea of playing along with me.

The session was brought to a halt when someone knocked on the door. I thought Zachary was at the doorstep, but Darius showed up and took us by surprise.

Unable to think of something that could get me out of the situation, my eyes widened in disbelief as my limbs started getting stiff once again.

Chapter 179

After spending the past few months together, I was serious about my relationship with Christopher. Nonetheless, the thought of his family members driving us apart once they figured out our relationship had stopped me from seeking their acknowledgment.

I might not get to join the Lane family as a household member even if I was the heiress of the Tanner family. To make things worse, I was just a pathetic woman whose husband had an affair with another woman.

On top of that, only a mere few were made aware of our actual relationship. As a result, my mind went completely blank when Darius showed up out of nowhere.

Similarly, Darius seemed to be shocked by my presence. He sized me up while standing at the entrance.

It would be fine if I was seated next to Christopher. At least I could make something up and tell Darius I was just here to visit his brother. Unfortunately, I was next to Christopher on the bed, nestling against one another.

Darius wasn't the mayor for no reason. He could carry himself as though it wasn't a big deal and made his way into the ward once he closed the door.

Shortly after he nodded with a smile, he took a seat on the chair next to the bed and started perusing the medical record that was placed nearby.

“What’s wrong with both of you? Can’t you guys take good care of yourself and stop giving me the shock of my life?” Darius raised his volume once he finished perusing the medical record.

“Darius, I guess I can’t keep anything from you when you’re the mayor of Avenport, huh? It has only been a few days since my return, yet you manage to figure out I have been rushed to the hospital.” Christopher held my hand, indicating it would be fine.

Instead of just lying around, I felt the urge to greet Darius. Thus, I blurted out the things I had in mind, “Hey, Darius—”

I couldn’t even finish my sentence when I recalled I had addressed him as though we were affiliated with one another. It was so embarrassing I couldn’t wait to get out of the ward.

“How are you feeling? Has the doctor mentioned anything else?” Darius did a great job keeping his emotions to himself. Instead of chasing the married woman next to his brother, he expressed concerns over my condition.

It turned into a question-and-answer session since I had run out of ideas to get myself out of the ward.

Shortly after he expressed concerns over my condition, Darius started reprimanding Christopher. Although he made it sound as though it was an ordinary conversation, it was evident he was irked.

“Chris, don’t you think you’re too reckless? I can’t believe you have initiated the mission to exterminate John and his party when not even the special force can take them out! Have you thought things through? What are we supposed to do if anything happens to you?”

Christopher glanced at me and answered in a serious tone, “I could’ve taken them out two years ago if I hadn’t been dispatched elsewhere prior to the commencement of the mission! Aren’t you aware of the number of lives that were involved back then? If I don’t take John and his party out prior to my retirement, who knows what’s going to happen to Zachary and my comrades?”

Darius yelled, “Oh! It turns out you’re still aware you’re going to retire soon, huh? Dad has always regretted his decision to send you to the army. Mom has picked on him for the precise reason more than once. You need to stop exposing yourself to unnecessary risk in the future.”

“Alright, I’m going to retire very soon. In fact, the memo has been delivered. In other words, I won’t get to interfere with their decision in the future. Is that enough to please my dearest brother? It’s time for me to take a nap. Why don’t you return to your office and tend to the things on your plate?”

Christopher sat upright and yawned over and over again. It was evident he couldn’t wait to chase his brother away.

Darius raised his hand and flicked Christopher's forehead. When he was about to leave, Christopher stopped him and said, "Darius, please keep Dad and Mom in the dark about my condition. Otherwise, they're going to pick on one another again."

"If you're conscious they're going to be worried about you, why don't you mind your behavior in the future? If it weren't because I had sent Monica to Coldbridge to deceive them, they would have long made their ways over."

Chapter 180

Throughout their conversation, I recalled Zachary once said Christopher was his supervisor in the army. It was safe to assume Christopher had returned to Coldbridge for something else other than a business trip.

Was that the reason I couldn't reach him when he was in Coldbridge? Ugh! I shouldn't have gotten jealous when Monica picked up the call on Christopher's behalf!

It was very silly of me to misperceive he had something with Monica! Christopher must have been occupied with different things and gone to great lengths just to call me! I shouldn't have dismissed his calls!

Wait! Did Darius just mention he had sent Monica to keep their parents in the dark? If that was the case—

Snuggling in between Christopher's arms, I stared at him and denoted in a hushed voice, "I'm sorry."

He caressed my head and asked with his brows arched in confusion, "Why are you apologizing out of the blue?"

I would never tell him I was jealous of Monica. Thus, I caressed his bandaged wounds to divert his attention.

"Well, I just feel like it. Christopher, I had the shock of my life when your brother showed up out of nowhere. I thought he would drag me out of bed and chase me out of the word. To my surprise, he was perfectly calm and expressed concerns over my conditions."

"Darius is the most understanding man I know. He has gotten married to his wife out of his own consciousness as well. He's the one I'm the least worried about in the family."

A glimpse was all it took for him to figure out my concerns. Pinching my nose, he teased, "Don't you think you're too much of a coward? Anyway, even if Darius is infuriated for real, you won't be able to tell it."

"What do you mean I won't be able to tell it? You're not indicating I'm an idiot, are you?" I scratched my head in confusion, wondering if it had something to do with getting others to acknowledge our relationship.

To be fair, not even those from an ordinary family could accept their son getting into a relationship with a divorcee, let alone the heir of a renowned family.

As I lost myself in the process of thoughts, Christopher added, "Darius has always been a calm and collected person. With that being said, things will get pretty messy if he's irked for real. He once brought his favorite pet puppy to school, but someone strangled it to death."

After pausing for a few seconds, he said, "Darius was able to pretend it wasn't a big deal and buried his dog as if he couldn't be bothered at all. When we thought he had moved on, he brought upon the misery of those who killed the dog a few days later."

"What happened to them?" Out of curiosity, I asked because Darius had always been pretty kind when he was around me. Nonetheless, I wouldn't be so naïve to perceive the mayor as an easy target.

Christopher shuddered when he heard my question. He pinched my cheek and said, "It's better to forget about it."

I decided to play along with him, but I was certain something bad must have happened to those who killed Darius' dog. Otherwise, Christopher wouldn't respond as such.

After spending another few carefree days in the hospital with Christopher, my condition had drastically improved. The doctor was impressed by my recovery progress.

I was discharged ahead of Christopher. Hence, I thought of making him something nutritious. After all, he had sustained excessive bleeding on top of his serious wounds.

The moment I returned from the supermarket, I caught a glimpse of a familiar figure standing at the entrance. Judging by the fact Lyle was completely drenched when it was merely drizzling outside, he must have been there ever since a long time ago.

After another peek, I decided to pretend as though I wasn't aware he had shown up. I carried on preparing the dishes I had in mind.

I wasn't surprised by the choice he made at all. However, he would never figure out the things I had to go through because of his decision. He couldn't be bothered as well.