

Departure with a Belly Chapter 531

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Chapter 581 Is It Okay Now That You've Recovered?

Alaric spoke with a smile in his tone, and Victoria knew he was teasing her, but she couldn't help but want to defend herself. "I wasn't impatient," she explained.

Alaric continued to laugh. "Hmm, I got it. You weren't impatient."

Victoria had nothing to say, feeling like he was asking to be punched.

She retaliated by pinching his waist forcefully; of course, she managed to avoid Alaric's wound with her pinch.

"*Ouch!* Although the pinch didn't hurt Alaric, it still made him grunt.

His expression changed suddenly, and he swiftly grabbed her slender wrist as his voice turned deep and hoarse. "Stop messing around."

Victoria noticed his unusual reaction. At first, she thought she had hurt him with her pinch, but she realized it wasn't the case.

This was because his expression and actions didn't seem like someone in pain, but instead... *Is he enjoying it?*

Victoria had nothing to say. She thought it was just a simple pinch on his waist. Did he need to react

like this?

As she contemplated, she heard Alaric say, "If you keep pinching, I can't guarantee what I might do to you later in the car."

Victoria paused for a few seconds, broke free from his grasp, and muttered softly, "Perv ert."

The corners of Alaric's lips curled up slightly when he saw her cheeks turn pink. He said , "Don't forget we're married. We can do almost everything together."

Victoria remained silent before she said, "But right now, your body is still weak. Wait until you're a little stronger."

As she said this, he applied a bit of force to his hand and pulled her into his embrace, whispering ambiguously into her ear to finish his sentence.

Victoria sensed a surge of heat flooding her ears, but she was tightly embraced, unable to break free from his grasp. With no other option but to clench her teeth, she whispered , "Perhaps you should prioritize tending to your own wounds before discussing anything else."

Hearing her words, Alaric appeared to have a sudden realization. "Oh, so you're saying that once I've healed from my injuries, then it'll be okay?"

Victoria was speechless. "When did I ever say that?"

"Huh? Weren't you implying that just now?" he asked.

"I meant that you should focus on healing your injuries before thinking about other things, not..." The more Victoria explained, the more she felt puzzled. She decided to stop explaining and turned around, saying, "I'm not going with you."

Alaric quickly pulled her back upon seeing this "All right after all this teasing you're still shy? He

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chuckled softly and planted a gentle kiss on her forehead. "Let's get in the car now."

She glanced at him, and seeing that he had no intention of joking around anymore, she asked, "Are we leaving now?"

It was quite late, and she thought he would rest for the night before departing.

“Why not?”

He replied, “Don’t you need to rest and recover from your injuries? Well, after driving for two hours, we’ll find a hotel to stay in.”

At this, Victoria understood his intention. Alaric wanted to make some progress on the journey in advance, as two hours of driving could cover a significant distance.

The current time was neither late nor early; after two hours, they could freshen up and rest.

Victoria agreed to this suggestion. If she could rest, and since he would be with her in the car, it would be a good opportunity to relax.

After getting in the car, she asked again, “Did you bring your medication? You must change your bandage when we arrive at the hotel.”

As soon as Victoria finished speaking, she felt her nose being playfully pinched by him. “Don’t worry, of course. I brought it.” She breathed a sigh of relief.

As Alaric had mentioned, it was a two-hour drive before they pulled into a hotel, where they all stopped to rest.

Victoria continued to take on the responsibility of changing Alaric’s bandage. After a long day of driving, she was exhausted. After completing her tasks, Alaric went out to handle some matters. It took about ten minutes, and when he returned, he saw her lying on the bed, fast asleep.

The soft lighting in the hotel illuminated Victoria’s fair cheeks and cast a gentle, tender glow on her sleeping form.

Seeing this scene, Alaric instinctively wanted to lift her and place her on the bed, but as his hand reached under her armpit, he hesitated, thinking about how she had diligently bandaged his

wounds.

She had so much trouble bandaging my wounds and was always worried and fearful because of my injuries. I should take good care of myself and not let her worry anymore.

With this in mind, Alaric decided not to carry her. Instead, he helped her remove her shoes and gently guided her to the bed, after which he arranged the pillow and blanket for her. “Good night.”

Under Victoria’s careful bandaging and earnest instructions, Alaric’s recovery had been remarkably fast./

Previously, he would wake up with pain in his wounds, but waking up on that day, he noticed that the pain had significantly diminished.

He unbuttoned his collar and looked at his wound, his lips unconsciously curling into a smile. No wonder she insisted on him resting. The results were indeed impressive.

Lost in thought, Alaric saw the person beside him turning over to face him. As he looked over, Victoria slowly opened her eyes.

When their gazes met, Victoria, still half-asleep, instinctively asked, “How’s your injury? Is it better?”

At the sight of her waking up and her immediate concern for his well-being, Alaric felt a warm sensation in his heart. “Yes, it’s much better, thanks to you,” he answered.

After hearing him say it was much better, Victoria didn’t believe it and thought he was just trying to appease her. So, she sat up, pushed aside Alaric’s clothes, and examined his wound.

Alaric’s hand paused as Victoria leaned closer. He then tightened his lips and reluctantly said, “It’s covered with gauze, so you can’t see it.”

Despite knowing she couldn't see it, Victoria still tugged at his clothes and glanced inside before raising her head to question him. "How can you say it's much better when you can't see it?"

Alaric smirked. "It's a feeling."

"A feeling?" she asked.

He answered affirmingly, "Yes, previously, it hurt when I woke up, but today when I woke up, it didn't."

"I see." Victoria had a thought and asked, "Did the doctor mention how many times a day you should change the medication? Isn't once a day too little? Shouldn't we add another round? It might help you recover faster."

She wondered whether increasing the dosage would benefit his wound since they were changing the medication before bedtime.

After all, it's been overnight, so the medication should have been absorbed by now, right? Even if it hasn't been fully absorbed, it surely wouldn't be enough to last him the entire day today. How did I not notice it before?

With these thoughts in mind, she urged, "You should call your doctor now and ask. If possible, we can administer another round before we set off."

Seeing her anxious expression and insistence made Alaric somewhat helpless. Ultimately, he had to make a phone call to his doctor in front of her.

"At first, I didn't suggest increasing the dosage because I was concerned about affecting the wound when removing the gauze. Since you're feeling much better, we can increase the dosage, but be careful when removing the gauze"

Departure with a Belly Chapter 532

Afraid of Hearing the Answer?

After learning that Alaric was allowed another dose of medicine, Victoria re-administered the medicine to him before they set off.

As she carefully examined his wound upon unwrapping it, she realized he hadn't lied; his injury had improved significantly compared to when she first saw it.

She was quite satisfied with this outcome.

Unbeknownst to Victoria, Alaric was observing her gaze and actions. Seeing Victoria's contented expression, he raised an eyebrow. "Well, I didn't deceive you, did I?" he asked

Hearing this, Victoria glanced at him. "Yeah, but don't get too smug and reckless just yet. The medicine must be taken diligently, and the wound has to be treated properly so that it can fully heal. Otherwise, what will happen if there are any complications in the future?"

She carefully wrapped the gauze around Alaric's wound. "There you go."

"Alright, I promise you I'll take good care of it," Alaric promised.

After Victoria tended to Alaric's wound, they resumed their journey.

At this moment, it was still early, and there was a slight fog along the road. After getting in the car, Alaric took a small blanket and covered Victoria with it. "We have a few hours of travel ahead. You did not get enough sleep last night, did you? Take a nap in the car, and I'll wake you up when we arrive."

Victoria initially wanted to decline, but she did wake up early in the morning and was feeling tired, so she nodded and quickly fell back asleep.

When she woke up, the car had already stopped.

She saw the scenery outside the window, then looked at Alaric beside her, coincidentally meeting

gaze. "Are we here already?" she asked.

his

"Yes," he replied in a low voice. "Did you get enough sleep? Do you want to rest longer?"

While listening to Alaric, Victoria noticed that the driver wasn't in the car. It seemed like they had arrived quite some time ago.

"Have we been here for long? Why didn't you wake me up?" As she spoke, she casually glanced at her phone.

She discovered that it was already noon. Considering their departure time, she had probably been asleep for more than an hour since the car stopped.

Suddenly, Victoria felt a bit speechless.

"You were sleeping so soundly that I couldn't bear to wake you up," Alaric explained.

Victoria didn't know what to say to him, so she could only ask, "Have you been keeping me company here all this while?"

"Where else would I go?" Alaric gestured to his injured body. "Besides, I'm still injured, and you wanted me to rest, didn't you?"

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Victoria thought what he said was true. He was still injured and needed to rest.

With the conversation reaching this point, she didn't say anything further. Instead, she rubbed her eyes, patted her cheeks, and instantly felt more refreshed.

"Alright, shall we go out now?" she asked.

He replied, "Sure. Let's have a meal first."

"A meal?" Victoria was a bit surprised. "Where exactly are we?"

She glanced around and noticed a sign ahead indicating that there was a restaurant upstairs.

After checking the time, it was indeed time for lunch. Thus, it was probably better to get some food first.

Victoria and Alaric took the elevator from the parking lot and entered the restaurant together.

Victoria didn't have much of an appetite, so she only had a bit of food and dessert, while Alaric ate lightly due to his need for recovery.

During their meal, someone accompanying them approached Alaric and whispered something in his ear. Alaric paused, then put down his cutlery.

Victoria noticed the situation and sensed something amiss. "What's wrong?"

"It's nothing. Please continue eating." He refused to answer her question.

She replied, "I'm done eating."

Alaric was somewhat surprised. "Already?"

Victoria nodded. "Yes, I can't eat anymore."

Alaric glanced at the food on the table. Although she ate very little, her condition had improved compared to before. Moreover, she had slept well, and her pale complexion had regained some healthy color since returning to the country.

"Alright. If you can't eat anymore, don't push yourself. You can make up for it tonight," said Alaric.

"Okay," she responded.

After he had the person accompanying them settle the bill, he led her out of the restaurant. "We'll go over now, but..." Alaric raised his gaze slightly and looked at her. "He might not be very eager to see you."

Upon hearing this, Victoria froze. "Why wouldn't he want to see me?" *Wasn't he the one who kept me imprisoned all along? Why doesn't he want to see me now?*

Moreover, Victoria had no idea about his current situation. *Is he free, or is he being confined? If it's the second case, then...*

Various conjectures raced through Victoria's mind when Alaric suddenly held her wrist. "Alright, stop overthinking things. You can still see him even if he doesn't want to see you. You'll find out if he truly wants to see you once you arrive." Victoria agreed to this suggestion.

Upon arriving at their destination, Victoria discovered that it was a secluded place. She hadn't expected to find such a location in this bustling city. *Although the surroundings are serene, who would go through so much trouble to build a house near the foot of the mountain? There are no neighbors around. Wouldn't it feel strange to live here?*

Alaric, who was beside her, somehow saw through her thoughts from her expression and gaze. He proactively explained to the puzzled woman, "This is one of the Morison Family's properties."

"The Morison Family?" Victoria repeated.

"Yes," answered Alaric with a nod.

Although the environment was a bit strange, Victoria felt relieved. Based on the severity of Alaric's phone call the last time, Victoria thought she and Bane would meet again in a detention center or someplace else...

"What's wrong?" Once again, Alaric seemingly read her thoughts. "Are you surprised that he's here?"

“Well, I thought...” Victoria hesitated momentarily and refrained from continuing her words. She was afraid that her spontaneous remark would hurt Alaric.

He said, “Did you think I would call the police?”

She pressed her lips together.

“If I called the police and he wasn’t here right now, would you have resented me?” After asking, Alaric seemed afraid to hear her answer. He didn’t even wait for her to speak before immediately continuing, “Well, Bane’s grandfather intervened in this matter and has personally taken charge. For the foreseeable future, he will be kept under surveillance here. The exact duration is still uncertain, though.”

“Bane’s grandfather?” Victoria didn’t expect such a plot twist, but she still had some doubts in her mind. *If Old Mr. Morison is able to control him, why couldn’t he before? How did he gain control all of a sudden now?*

“Let’s go.” Alaric held her delicate wrist and led her forward. As they approached the entrance, Victoria exerted some force and pulled him back.

Alaric halted his steps as a result. “What’s wrong?”

Victoria asked him, “Why were you hesitant to hear the answer to the question you just asked?”

The grip on her hand tightened slightly.

She lowered her gaze for a moment, then looked back at him. “I already expressed my sincerity to you last time. Why does it seem like you still don’t fully trust me?”

Departure with a Belly Chapter 533

Departure with a Belly Chapter 533

Worrying About Losing

“No, answered Alaric. “I’m not doubting you.”

Victoria retorted, “Liar. If you believe me, why did you speak before I could respond? You just don’t want to hear my answer.”

She had analyzed Alaric’s thoughts, exposing him once and for all.

Alaric pursed his thin lips. He looked like he had no way of defending himself anymore.

Seeing him like that, Victoria said decisively, “Fine, then. It looks like you don’t want to hear my answer, so forget about it. Let’s go in first.”

With that, Victoria let go of his hand and stepped forward.

However, she hadn’t taken more than two steps when Alaric pulled her back.

“You’re going to tell me the answer, aren’t you? Why are you in a hurry to go in?”

Even though Victoria was held back, she didn’t look at him. “You don’t want to know, do you?”

“Who said that?” Alaric tightened his grip on her hand. It wasn’t painful, but it hurt nonetheless.

“Spit it out already, or I won’t let you go in.”

“You” Victoria bit her lower lip. “I’ve already confessed my truest thoughts to you, so you know the answer already.”

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“Is that so?” Alaric’s expression was indifferent, and there was a faint smile hidden in his eyes. “I think I know, but I’m not very sure. Perhaps I don’t have a sense of security in my heart, so I need your confirmation.”

Does he not have a sense of security?

When Victoria heard that, she widened her eyes in shock. She couldn't believe what she was hearing.

"You, without a sense of security?"

"Yeah, that's right."

"Aren't girls usually the ones who don't have a sense of security? You're a man, so why are you feeling this way?"

"So what if I'm a man? Boys have their weak moments too. Moreover, he trapped you by his side for so long, and I only got to meet you again after so long. Isn't it normal to not feel secure?"

He seemed to have a point.

Victoria blinked. "Alright, let's assume you don't feel secure enough. Allow me to tell you once again, very seriously—before I lost my memories, I didn't know if I would hate you or not. However, I'm certain that I don't hate you right now."

Victoria gripped his hand instead.

09:38 Tue, 18 Jul

In other words, you don't have to keep worrying about losing me."

Worry about losing her, eh?

The description made Alaric chuckle a little.

He was worried because he cared.

He had heard before that some people got easily worried in a relationship. He didn't care about those emotions back then, and he thought that he was someone who had complete control over his feelings.

However, when he was truly in love with someone, he realized he would worry too.

He wanted to keep her close to him, but he also feared that she wouldn't have enough freedom. If he loosened his grip on her, he felt worried that she wouldn't be safe.

At that thought, Alaric asked, "What about you?"

Victoria couldn't understand what he meant for a moment. "What?"

"Would you be worried about losing me?"

Victoria was stunned at his sudden question. For a moment, she didn't know how to answer him.

She wasn't particularly worried about Alaric. After all, he was already expressing interest in her. If she still felt worried at this point, it might be a little too much.

However, if she said no, wouldn't it hurt him?

After thinking about it, Victoria decided to voice her honest opinion.

"I'm not worried about losing you, but that's also because I trust you. Of course, I know that you're worried about losing me because you care about me, but things ended up differently, didn't they? Because of Bane's existence, you're worried that you'll lose me. If a woman stood between us, I might be the one worrying instead."

Victoria didn't mean anything by that, but Alaric's expression shifted when he recalled Claudia getting between them and even taking the credit for saving him, causing...

Of course, it was also his fault for not realizing it soon enough.

It was too late for regrets now. Alaric stopped thinking too much about the details as he gripped her hand tightly. "No matter what, I won't let any other person stand between us, be it a man or a

woman."

"Come, I'll take you

inside."

The villa was built by the mountainside. It was originally a little gloomy, but since Bane was under Old Mr. Morison's watch, the villa was surrounded by people. Almost every spot had a guard, so the villa didn't look scary now; it even felt a little bustling.

As soon as Alaric walked over to them, their leader walked up to him.

"Mr, Cadogan."

Alaric nodded at him.

"What brings you here?"

With that, the leader noticed Victoria by Alaric's side. When he spotted Victoria, the leader quickly realized something as he said, "Mr. Cadogan, Miss Selwyn, please wait here for a moment."

He turned around and hastily went in.

Soon, a familiar figure appeared in Victoria's sight. Victoria stood there relatively calm, but when she saw the man appear, she became emotional at once.

"Mr. Hudson!"

She never thought that she would see him again so soon, thinking it would only be they'd meet again.

ages before

When Ethan saw Victoria, a surprised look flashed across his eyes as he quickly walked over to them.

"Miss Selwyn." A smile appeared on his lips. He greeted Victoria first, then looked at Alaric and said, "You're here, Mr. Cadogan."

"Hello."

Alaric was quite courteous to the man who did everything he could to help Victoria. After greeting Ethan, Alaric even offered a handshake.

Ethan was stunned for a moment, perhaps not expecting Alaric to do that. After a few seconds of bewilderment, he finally shook Alaric's hand.

"Thank you for helping my wife when she was overseas."

Ethan looked at Victoria, who was smiling as she looked eagerly at him. He suddenly realized why the famously cold Alaric would suddenly shake hands with him.

No wonder.

"It's nothing. I just didn't want to see Mr. Morison committing more mistakes than he already had." Even though Ethan treated Victoria very well, he was indifferent toward Alaric.

After all, Bane and Victoria weren't the only ones spending time together in those five years. Ethan was there as well. He would accompany Victoria on different occasions and during her countless trips outside so they met each other almost every day.

People had feelings, after all. Even acquaintances would become old buddies after five years. Victoria had a nice personality void of haughtiness, and she truly cared about this assistant called Ethan.

As such, Ethan was more than willing to help her.

As for Alaric...

In Ethan's eyes, even though Bane was wrong for locking Victoria up, he just didn't want Bane to keep committing crimes. It didn't mean that Ethan would suddenly be best buddies with Alaric.

He also felt that if this man hadn't appeared by Victoria's side, she wouldn't be with any one else even if she didn't choose Bane. With time, Bane would naturally stand a chance.

Departure with a Belly Chapter 534

Departure with a Belly Chapter 534

I May Not Exist in This World Anymore

Now that the path was cut off, Bane couldn't find any hope, and that was how things turned out like this.

It was true that Bane was at fault.

In fact, Bane's actions were extremely wrong. However, he had been nice to Ethan, so Ethan only wanted to help him change. Ethan wouldn't join forces with the outsiders to attack him.

Alaric felt Ethan's distant attitude, so he didn't say another word after retracting his hand.

Victoria also sensed the change in atmosphere between the two, and she felt a little awkward.

However, Ethan didn't let the silence reign for long. After about ten seconds, he took the initiative to ask, "Miss Selwyn, are you here to see Mr. Morison?"

Victoria nodded.

"Yes, I am."

An exasperated look appeared in Ethan's eyes.

"If you're here to ask about his condition, I may be able to tell you a thing or two, Miss Selwyn. However, I'm afraid you won't be able to see him."

It was the same answer she received before coming here—Bane didn't want to see her.

Victoria had already expected this outcome, but she still felt a little disappointed after coming here in person only to be rejected again.

When Ethan saw the look of disappointment on her pale face, his heart ached a little for her.

“Miss Selwyn... Why don't you wait here for a bit? I'll go in and ask.”

“Can you do that?”

“Yes, I can try convincing him again. Please sit in the next room for now, Miss Selwyn.

I'll come over right after I've asked him.”

Ethan went in, and the leader from earlier came out. He led the two to the tea room at the side, where some snacks and tea were soon served.

Victoria had just eaten before coming over. She already had a small appetite, to begin with, and she was also quite full at that moment. As such, she couldn't stomach more food.

Still, to be polite, she took a cup of tea and tried taking a sip.

However, before the cup could touch her lips, Alaric grabbed her hand.

Victoria was stunned as she looked toward him.

She saw Alaric staring at the cup in her hand, his thin lips tightly pursed. In an instant, Victoria knew what he meant.

Because of the past events, he wouldn't allow her to drink anything served in this place.

09:39 Tue, 18 Jul

However, Victoria raised her head and coincidentally met the leader's gaze.

When their gazes met, the atmosphere was a little awkward.

Sometime later, the leader asked, "Are the refreshments not to your taste, Miss Selwyn?"

"I-"

"She has stomach problems, so she has to take her meals at regular times and in controlled portions. Alas, she can't even drink tea for now."

Before Victoria could say anything, Alaric spoke up and explained in her stead.

He had already put it like that, and Victoria understood his worries. If they switched places, she might be equally sensitive as well. Even though it might hurt some people, they had to be careful.

Victoria put down the cup and smiled faintly at the leader.

"Sorry."

The leader scratched his head, falling silent.

He had heard about Bane's deeds. Even though the food was completely safe, it was only normal for Victoria and Alaric to be wary of everything in Bane's house.

Once bitten, twice shy, and much less could be said about a serious incident of that scale.

Even though he felt mad about the injustice, it wasn't his responsibility to mind these things. He just had to do his job.

Victoria felt extremely awkward when the leader noticed her suspecting the food they offered. Alaric, however, was nonchalant about it. He looked completely at ease as if nothing happened.

Victoria waited for a long while before Ethan finally showed up.

When Victoria saw Ethan, she stood up on her own accord. "Mr. Hudson."

Ethan could naturally sense her earnest trust, so he treated Victoria nicely. His voice was gentle as well.

“Miss Selwyn.”

“How did it go?”

Faced with Victoria’s gaze, Ethan felt a little sad when he thought about the result. However, he couldn’t change the outcome even if he dragged it out, so he could only shake his head as Victoria looked at him sullenly. He didn’t say a word.

His behavior was as clear as day, and Victoria didn’t have to ask him to figure out the answer.

Victoria pursed her lips.

When Ethan saw her like that, he let out a sigh.

Miss Selwyn, Mr. Morison probably hasn’t thought things through yet, so he doesn’t want to see you at the moment. Maybe next time... I believe that Mr. Morison will eventually think things through someday.”

“I—”

Just then, Alaric, who was sitting quietly in his seat, suddenly stood up. He walked up to Victoria

his hands on her shoulders.

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“Since he hasn’t thought things through for now, let’s go back.”

After getting her shoulders grabbed, Victoria could only swallow the words she was about to say as she nodded.

Ethan looked at the hands holding Victoria's shoulders, then couldn't help but sigh in his heart as he angled his body to let them leave.

"Let's go. We'll have another chance in the future."

"Wait."

Victoria had only walked a few steps when she suddenly remembered something. She halted Alaric, then turned around and walked back to Ethan.

"Mr. Hudson."

"Yes, Miss Selwyn?"

Ethan thought that she hadn't given up, but unexpectedly, she just stared at him and said, "Thank you."

Her words caught Ethan off guard. He thought she was thanking him for persuading Bane on her behalf, but surprisingly, Victoria continued, "Back when we were overseas, without your help, I may not exist in this world anymore."

Even though a few days had already passed since then, at the mention of the incident, Ethan still felt worried and scared for Victoria's sake.

If he hadn't thought of the children in time and reminded Victoria about it, she...

Victoria might have gotten into danger, and Bane might regret everything. By then, he would have carried out a series of irreversible actions. Every time Ethan thought about that, he felt his head

hurt.

"Miss Selwyn, you don't have to thank me so much. I helped you for Mr. Morison's sake, so I'm grateful enough that you aren't blaming me for anything."

Victoria shook her head.

"How can I blame you?"

In Victoria's eyes, if it weren't for Ethan's words, she wouldn't have reignited her will to live, and she wouldn't have met her two adorable children again.

If she had forgotten everything and died in ignorance, she would regret it deeply if she passed on

As such, Victoria was endlessly grateful to Ethan.

However, she could see that Ethan was refusing to admit that he was helping her. He probably didn't want her to feel too indebted.

Victoria decided to drop the topic as she said, "Anyway, if you ever need my help in the future, just come to me. If it's something I can do, I promise I won't say no."

Even though she wasn't sure if her promise was worth anything, she wanted to repay the kindness he had shown her.

Ethan looked at her for a long while, then finally nodded.

"Okay."

Departure with a Belly Chapter 535

Departure with a Belly Chapter 535

Doesn't Dare to Face

With that, Victoria left with Alaric.

After she was gone, Ethan remained standing where he was. The leader from before came forward and told him about what happened in the tea room just now.

Ethan listened silently, and his face was still expressionless after the leader finished talking.

Noticing that he hadn't responded, the leader asked, "Mr. Hudson, do you think that we should-"

“Do what?”

Before the leader could say more, Ethan sternly interrupted him.

The leader was startled by the fierce aura Ethan suddenly displayed, so he shut up and stood where he was.

“Choose your words wisely next time. You’re leading so many people, so you should know better than spouting nonsense.”

The leader was upset about getting reprimanded, but he didn’t dare do anything. Hence, he had no choice but to suppress his rage.

After making sure that there was nothing else to attend to, Ethan got up and went upstairs.

He went straight to the room where Bane was grounded. When he arrived at the entrance, he saw Bane’s figure by the window with the curtains drawn shut.

The curtains were parted by a sliver, and Bane was observing the outside world through the tiny gap.

Victoria came, but he didn’t want to see her. Yet, he longed for her so much that he had to peek at her from a distance away.

Ethan instantly felt complicated emotions in his heart when he saw that.

He stood at the door for as long as Bane stood at the window. After a while, it seemed like Bane had entered his private world.

It was so

long that when Ethan walked up to Bane, the latter didn't notice Ethan's presence at all. "Mr. Morison, if you truly want to see her, why did you refuse to meet her just now?"

Ethan's voice suddenly rang out in the room. Bane, who was engrossed in his thoughts, narrowed his eyes and turned around to glare at Ethan.

"Who allowed you to come in?"

Faced with Bane's interrogation, Ethan could only explain, "Old Mr. Morison said that I should stay with you 24/7. They're gone now, so I have nowhere else to be."

Bane sneered coldly at Ethan's words.

"Is that so? I don't think you've been this loyal before, *Mr. Hudson.*"

When he addressed Ethan, Bane stressed every single syllable.

Ethan knew that Bane was talking about him letting Victoria go back then, so he pursed his lips for a moment before saying, "I've followed you for so many years, Mr. Morison. As long as you don't do anything illegal, I'll follow you forever."

After a pause, he continued. "Of course, if you disobey the law, I'll try my best to get you on the right track."

However, no matter how Ethan expressed his loyalty, Bane's lips remained curved in a cold smile. He didn't pay any heed to Ethan's words.

Bane drew the curtains so that the window was completely blocked, and the room fell into darkness.

Ethan watched Bane's actions, sighing helplessly in his heart before asking, "Why are you afraid of meeting Miss Selwyn, Mr. Morison?"

Bane smiled in disdain.

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“Don’t push your ideas on me. What do you mean, afraid? She wants to return to that man, so why would I want to see her?”

He spoke as if he didn’t care.

Ethan was silent for a moment before saying, “You’re just scared to apologize in person, aren’t you, Mr. Morison?”

Bane didn’t say anything, for those words seemed to have struck a chord.

Bane immediately turned around and glared at Ethan.

“You wronged her, so you’re scared of seeing her because you’re not prepared to apologize yet.”

Seeing that Bane was opening his mouth to deny it, Ethan quickly continued, “I’ve been with you long enough to know what you’re thinking. There’s no use denying it.”

Bane fell silent.

His dark eyes stared coldly at Ethan for a moment. Then, he spat cruelly through his thin lips, uttering, “Get out.”

Ethan, however, walked over to the couch in the room and sat down emotionlessly.

“Mr. Morison, have you forgotten what I just said? Old Mr. Morison wants me to stay with you 24/7.

Seeing Ethan’s bold attitude, Bane glared coldly at him, then turned around and went into another room.

When Bane was gone, Ethan lowered his gaze.

After leaving, Victoria sat in the car and gazed out the window. Alaric could only see her pale profile, but he didn't know what she was thinking.

09:40 TUG

The car was deathly silent. A speeding car would pass by and make some noise, but the silence quickly returned.

Seeing Victoria like that, Alaric said, "We can try again tomorrow."

Victoria was in a daze as she looked out the window, so when she heard what Alaric said, she paused for a moment before coming to her senses.

"Tomorrow?"

She looked at Alaric. "Are we coming here again?"

Alaric nodded.

"He has no reason to refuse to meet you, so there must only be one reason why—he doesn't dare face you."

Victoria was speechless.

"In other words, he probably still needs some time. If he won't see you today, we'll try tomorrow. If he won't see you tomorrow, then—"

Suddenly, Victoria held Alaric's hand.

"It's okay."

Victoria's voice was soft and gentle, and she also held his hand lightly. Alaric slowly looked up at her after his gaze landed on their hands.

"Since he doesn't want to see me for now, let's not go."

"Will you be happy if you don't explain things clearly to him?"

Victoria smiled in exasperation.

“What is there to *be* upset about? It’s not like I want to be with him. I’m happy enough to know he’s fine and that he’s just grounded.”

At the very least, he wouldn’t have to be taken to court or sent to jail. They chose to settle things in private, so this incident wouldn’t affect his life in the future.

When

she visited Bane the last time, she thought that he would be sent somewhere, and she was very worried for him.

Now, this outcome was the best ending she could ask for.

He wasn’t destroyed. Perhaps with time, everyone could return to their respective paths.

His unwillingness to see her was the correct choice to make.

At that thought, Victoria said affirmatively, “Let’s leave it at that. Why don’t we go home today? Or shall we stay another night here? After all, you told Nicole that it would take three to five days.”

Her words made Alaric feel all sorts of emotions.

As they chatted, he noticed that he was the one who wanted Victoria to meet Bane.

He looked at her quietly for a bit, then said, “We won’t make it if we go back now, so let’s wait another day. If you don’t have any place you’d like to go after waking up tomorrow, we can start our journey back.”

Victoria pursed her lips and didn’t say more.

Of course, she knew what Alaric meant by that.

He was worried that she wasn’t in her right mind when she made the decision today, so he wanted her to stay another night here. It wouldn’t be too late if she woke up and changed her mind

tomorrow.

She sighed to herself.

That was the only thing Victoria could do when faced with Alaric in this state. She never thought that he would feel so insecure about her. What had she done in the past that made him feel like this?

She felt as if her getting taken away by Bane wasn't the only reason.