

The Princess and the Pauper (Arabella)

Chapter 1161

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Chapter 1161

Sure, Crystal meant well, seeing Logan and Taylor in danger, she just wanted to help.

But what if Carol was just an average girl, who hadn't gotten herself into any trouble, would this even be happening?

"I don't approve of your relationship,' Louisa said bluntly.

"L side with your mother' Kenneth said, avoiding his son's heartbroken gaze.

"Dad, Mom. You don't understand Carol. She's a wonderful person. She's the only one for me for life. I only want her."

"The Collins family will never accept her' Louisa stated firmly, "Give up on this idea. I'd rather you stay single your whole life than

bring such a dangerous person into our home. Your life will never be the same. Once she's recovered, find a way to talk things out with her."

Louisa was just about to leave after her speech.

"Mom, Carol has many good qualities."

"Don't you understand yet? I don't want anyone close to me to end up like Mr. Alger's daughter, scarred and lying on an operating table. I don't want to feel the pain of losing a loved one. Those people, their influence is widespread. If you marry her, it's like setting a time bomb in our home. You never know when or where it will go off. Can you neutralize one bad guy? What about a hundred, a thousand, ten thousand? Even one slip could drag her life into an irreparable abyss.

She didn't want to experience the pain of losing friends and family. Wasn't she allowed to?

"Mom, I understand your concerns. I can handle this."

"How will you handle it? With what? Can you guarantee perfection? Not a single slip? Clark, if you're tired of these rich girls and want to marry an ordinary girl, I'm all for it. But someone like her, who could bring danger to those close to her, I can't let her

come into our home."

Louisa wasn't worried about herself, but rather, feared her children, parents, and in-laws would suffer.

Losing any of them would be unbearable.

"Calm down, don't let your anger affect your health."

Kenneth hadn't finished comforting her when Louisa left, leaving behind a cold and determined silhouette.

All Kenneth could do was tell his son, "Crystal used to visit us often, always bringing a bunch of things.

After Bella and Serena

went off to college, the house felt empty. It was Crystal who kept us company, even going for spa days and afternoon tea

sessions with your mom. The last time I had a backache, Crystal brought over homemade soup, a massage chair, and even

arranged for a top-notch doctor to come over. I'm telling you all this to remind you that even if you don't have feelings for her, this

girl who sincerely cares about you and your parents is now lying in the ICU because of your girlfriend's enemies. Don't you think

you should at least show some concern? Consider how Alger and Celeste feel."

After he said his piece, Kenneth hurried off to find his wife.

Clark leaned against the wall, as if the harsh reality had struck him hard.

In the ICU, Tears silently streamed down Carol's face.

She had heard all the arguing outside.

She knew it was her fault, causing so much trouble for those around her. If it hadn't been for her, her foster parents wouldn't have died.

"Dr. Bella, Dr. Bella." a nurse noticed something was off and quickly called out softly, handing Carol a tissue to wipe her tears,
"Please, don't cry."

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The argument that had just transpired echoed in the ears of the nurse, and she was filled with sympathy. But Arabella didn't hear it. She was on the phone with Grandpa Beck, confirming their research findings.

Grandpa Beck relayed the results of several tests to her, and she shared her input. It was Grandpa Beck's job to tweak accordingly.

Hearing the nurse, Arabella asked the person on the phone to hold on, then turned to the nurse, "What's up?"

Suddenly, the sound of a single beep echoed from the EKG, as Carol gave up hope of survival, her eyes closing.

"Damn, the patient has no will to live," the nurse said urgently. "Dr. Bella, what do we do?"

"Grandpa, get the antidote here as soon as you're done!" Arabella hung up the phone, immediately diving into the rescue work.

"Hey, I didn't finish. This antidote hasn't passed the final test. If there are any side effects, who's responsible?"

Unfortunately, Grandpa Beck's last words were cut off by the dial tone. He tried calling Arabella twice more, but she didn't pick up. She must've been busy.

Clark was waiting outside, and soon enough, he saw several doctors rushing to assist Arabella.

Clark was growing anxious, unsure if something had happened to Carol. The moment the door swung open, he rushed to peek inside, but he couldn't see anything. All he could hear was the nurse's voice, saying the patient was in critical condition.

He knocked on the door frantically, shouting, "Carol, Carol, you must hang on! You promised me, you said you would stay with me forever. Carol, you can't back out now!"

"Sir, I'm sorry, could you please lower your voice?" A nurse emerged from the room, pleading. "You're disrupting the doctors."

"How's Carol? Nurse, is she okay?" Clark asked anxiously.

"The patient has lost the will to live, probably because of your argument."

"No, I need to go in and explain"

"I'm sorry, sir, but it would be best if you wait outside. Any explanation at this point would only salt her wounds.

Let Dr. Bella handle this."

The nurse shut the door again, leaving Clark desperately waiting outside.

Time passed, thunder roared, and the sky grew dim. A storm was brewing.

The branches of the trees by the road were shaking heavily, and the temperature dropped. This winter seemed especially cold.

Clark sat from noon till night, not knowing how he made it through. All he knew was that the two girls connected to him were in the ICU, their fates unknown.

Meanwhile, Crystal, lying on the hospital bed, suddenly called out, "Dad."

At first, Alger thought he had misheard, but when he looked up, he saw his daughter had indeed opened her eyes slightly. Tears welled up in his eyes instantly.

He quickly leaned in, "I'm here. Your mom and I are both here, and Mr. and Mrs. Collins too. Are you feeling okay? Should I get the doctor to check on you?"

"Yes, yes, I'll get the doctor." Celeste quickly rang the nurse's bell, and the nurse went to get Arabella. Looking at her daughter's battered body, Celeste felt a mix of heartache and relief, "You're finally awake, you scared me. It's okay now, it's okay."

“Mom. Crystal's voice was still weak, but she managed to put on a small smile, “Don't cry.” Celeste didn't want to cry in front of her daughter, but when she heard these words, her tears flowed freely.

Her daughter was badly injured, yet she was the one comforting her.

“Mom, I want to go home.”

Upon hearing this, Alger and Celeste were stunned!

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Was this what they call "the last rally"?

It was reminiscent of the time when Alger's Uncle Jerry was gravely ill. One day, when he was on the brink of death, he suddenly became lucid and asked to be taken home. His family quickly fulfilled his wish, and after one last look at the home where he had lived for so many years, he peacefully closed his eyes.

The older generation often said that those about to die have one final request: "I want to go home."

"No, sweetheart, we're not going home. You're not well yet. We need to stay here for your treatment.

Once you're better, we will

take you home." Celeste held her darling daughter's hand, tears streaming down her face. The thought of losing her daughter was too terrifying to bear.

"Dad, Morn." Crystal tried to grasp her parents' hands, but she was so weak. Her voice was barely above a whisper, each word an evident struggle.

"In this life, I'm so proud to be your daughter"

Hearing these words, Alger and Celeste broke down in tears.

"After I'm gone, don't cry. Don't be sad."

It was as if Crystal was leaving her last words, painstakingly uttering each word of advice.

"Live your lives well. I'll just be in a different form watching over you from heaven, being with you."

"Silly girl, what are you talking about? You're going to live, perhaps even live longer than us; Celeste sobbed, "Stop talking about such morbid things. Are you thirsty? Let me get you a glass of water."

"Mom, let me finish." Crystal seemed to be failing, pausing for a while before continuing, "Don't blame Clark or Carol. Promise me, don't harm them."

Shaking her head, Celeste cried uncontrollably, "No, no, don't say any more."

"Promise me." Crystal was struggling to breathe, but she insisted on getting a response, "Promise me!" Seeing his daughter in such agony, Alger was heartbroken, "Okay, I promise, as long as."

Before he could finish, the door suddenly burst open. Clark, upon hearing that Crystal had woken up, was the first one to rush over.

He was even faster than the doctors.

"Crystal." Clark stood there, weighed down by guilt. Tears filled Crystal's eyes. She tried to muster a smile, but her strength was quickly leaving her. She could barely make out Clark's face.

All she knew was that the man who had rushed in was Clark. He sounded anxious and worried. She forced a smile and with her last bit of strength, managed to utter three words, "Be happy." Tears streamed down Clark's face. Beep. Beep. Beep. The monitor flatlined. The medical team ushered them out. Alger and Celeste were inconsolable. After updating Carol on the situation, Arabella rushed back to join the resuscitation efforts. Kenneth and Louisa's eyes were filled with tears.

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Arabella's movements finally came to a halt, and the actions of all the doctors in the room followed suit. All the medical equipment indicated that the patient had completely lost vital signs. There was no hope left.

Arabella glanced at the clock on the wall, and solemnly announced, "Time of death, December 28, 7:23 p.m."

The doctors and nurses in the operating room all bowed their heads in silence, bidding the patient their final farewell in this manner.

Scenes from the past kept replaying in Arabella's mind.

"Arabella, I heard you just moved back home. How are you settling in?"

"I heard you used to live in Summerfield too. It's been ages since I last visited. Shall we go for a shopping spree sometime?"

"Let's go to the Cave Diner!"

"Do you mind if I chat with you on WhatsApp?"

Crystal's voice and laughter were still lingering in her mind.

Tears welled up in Arabella's eyes as she pulled the tubes out of the girl and the bed, covered her with a white sheet, and said in a hoarse voice, "Take her out."

The movements of all the doctors and nurses were silent, but the unseen sadness was overwhelming. When the door opened, Celeste saw her daughter covered with a white sheet. She was hit with a wave of grief, tears streaming down her face.

Alger couldn't believe his eyes until the gurney was pushed in front of him. He trembled as he slowly lifted the sheet.

The girl's face was pale, lying peacefully on the gurney, motionless.

Alger's hand trembled as he placed his finger under his daughter's nose. There was no breath. He moved his hand to her neck.

There was no pulse.

One moment she was talking to him, the next she was gone.

"Crystal!" Alger broke down, throwing himself onto the sheet, crying his heart out.

"How could you just leave us like this? How could you bear to abandon your parents? How is your mother going to live without you?" Celeste clung to her daughter's body, crying uncontrollably.

Kenneth and Louisa were heartbroken. They couldn't believe that such a lively, bright, and intelligent girl was suddenly gone.

Their tears flowed uncontrollably.

Clark, standing to the side, had red-rimmed eyes.

Tears rolled down his cheeks.

In his mind, he kept seeing Crystal's brilliant smile and hearing her cheerful voice.

"Clark, what have you been up to lately?"

"Lunderstand a girl's mind better. Next time you guys go out, take me with you. I promise to make your sister happy."

"Your mom bought me lots of beautiful clothes, I'm so happy."

"Clark, did I say something wrong to upset you? I'm sorry"

Clark's shoulders shook as he looked at the girl lying on the gurney. He remembered the cold morning when she came to see him with breakfast.

"know Carol is in your heart, and I know you'll never like anyone else in this lifetime. I'm just clinging to the hope that I could

maybe change your mind. I do like you. I used the excuse of being 'bros' to get close to you.

Now that you two are back together, I sincerely wish you happiness. Even though I can't be your girlfriend, and I can't get over

you quickly. Just knowing that she's back and your smile will be even brighter than before, that alone satisfies me."

"Clark, as long as you're happy, it doesn't matter who you're dating, even if it's not me. Although, it does hurt a little"

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Clark felt as if his world had come crashing down.

"This is the breakfast I made for you. If it receives your approval, then I feel their purpose has been served."

"These clothes and dresses were given to me by your aunt last night. Given my status, it's not appropriate for me to return them in person. Could you please pass them on and thank her for her kindness?"

"I've recorded some of the likes and dislikes of your uncle and aunt in this notebook, along with some of their favorite hangout spots. I've arranged for VIP memberships for them, and I've noted down the passwords and security questions for these cards."

"Now that you have a girlfriend, unless it's a group activity, I won't show up in case there might be any misunderstandings. Take care of yourself and don't forget to look after your girlfriend. I'm off now. Be happy!"

Clark slid down the wall, his hand over his eyes, his shoulders shaking violently. He was inconsolable.

"Baby girl, what am I supposed to do? The rest of my life is still so long, how am I supposed to live?"

Celeste wept bitterly, her heart filled with indescribable pain. "How could you let me bury my own child? You promised me, said

you'd take me to Oakridge City after you finished your work. How could you lie to me? Get up, get up, my girl."

"Open your eyes, and I'll give you anything you want, Alger sobbed uncontrollably. "Crystal, my lovely girl, can you hear me? If you wake up, I'll do anything you ask of me. Please, wake up. I've never begged you for anything before, just this once. Wake up and look at me, okay?"

"You can't leave us like this." Celeste cried uncontrollably.

Seeing the couple in such a state, the nurse wheeling the gurney looked at Arabella with a difficult expression.

Arabella motioned for them to leave.

Celeste clung to the body of her daughter, her voice choked with emotion as she began to sing, "Twinkle, twinkle, little star, how I wonder what you are."

This was Crystal's favorite song when she was little, the first song she learned on the piano.

As Celeste sang, she was reminded of her daughter's lively and adorable figure. Tears streamed down her face as she continued, "Up above the world so high, like a diamond in the sky."

The girl on the bed was now motionless, her hands starting to turn cold.

Celeste touched her hand, feeling her fading warmth, and suddenly let out a gut-wrenching cry. Her daughter was gone.

Her precious girl, whom she had raised, was suddenly gone.

Gone for real.

Really gone.

Celeste was devastated, unable to bear this enormous loss.

At that moment, Louisa's phone vibrated incessantly. She didn't want to answer it, but the caller was relentless, calling repeatedly.

She was forced to swipe the screen, holding back her tears, only to hear the voice on the other end.

"Hello, is this Mrs. Collins? The CVO Fashion Medicinal Elixir that Crystal ordered for you has arrived in Summerfield. Are you home right now? Can we deliver it?"

The CVO Fashion Medicinal Elixir was exclusive to the royal family.

Kenneth had worked himself too hard when he was young, and now suffered from aching shoulders and neck.

Sometimes, the pain kept him up at night.

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A month ago, Crystal had pulled some strings and pre-ordered a decade's worth of medication, which would be delivered annually to Reflections Villa.

When Louisa picked up the phone, she broke down into uncontrollable tears. The maturity and empathy of Crystal cut into her heart like a sharp knife.

"Mrs. Collins? What's wrong?" The person on the other end of the line was utterly confused by Mrs. Collins"

sudden outburst, their voice filled with concern.

"Hello, Mrs. Collins, are you okay?"

Seeing that Louisa's wave of sorrow was far from over, Arabella excused herself to change out of her sterile suit and sanitize her hands.

Romeo prepared a bowl of warm soup, ready to serve it to her as soon as she came back. "Here, drink some."

From last night at 10 o'clock to tonight, Arabella had been working for a straight 21 hours without a break, either trying to save Crystal or Carol.

In between, she had barely had a bottle of milk, let alone a chance to sit down or catch her breath.

Seeing the tired redness in her eyes, Romeo murmured sympathetically, "The chef has prepared dinner fresh.

Let me feed you."

Arabella drank a bowl of soup, already feeling somewhat exhausted. "I'll speak to Clark for a bit. Then I'll leave"

"Alright."

Romeo thought to himself that the girl must be completely worn out, too tired to eat, which made him feel even more sympathetic.

"Bella, Louisa noticed that her daughter looked quite haggard, hastily wiped away her tears and lovingly said, "You must be exhausted. I'll have the driver take you home, and I'll ask the chef to prepare whatever you'd like for dinner. What do you fancy?"

"No need to go to any trouble. Romeo has already taken care of it. But Clark..."

Arabella glanced at the man sitting in the corner of the room, his shoulders hunched, as if he had fallen into a deep pit of despair and couldn't pull himself out.

"Leave Clark." Louisa said, seeing his distraught state, "You shouldn't worry about him. Mr. and Mrs. Alger must be very upset.

Your father and I will stay here with them. You go on home."

"I'm sorry to have put you through this" Kenneth said, filled with guilt.

"It's no trouble."

Arabella went over to Clark, crouched down beside him and gently consoled, "Let it all out. Crying will help."

Clark looked up, his eyes bloodshot and filled with confusion. "Why?"

Why did those men have to be so cruel to Logan, Taylor, and Crystal?

They had three hostages. Why weren't they simply using them to force him, or Carol, or Bella to show up?

Why did they have to torment those three hostages so mercilessly?

What did they gain from all this?

"Before, they wanted to capture the people close to us to force us to reveal ourselves,' Arabella explained in a soft voice. "But that's not the case anymore."

Clark looked at her, his eyes red and swollen, not quite understanding.

"It seems like they want to see the people close to us die one by one, to make us suffer the pain of losing our loved ones."

Carol was seen as a "traitor" by them. If they couldn't capture her, they'd harm the people around her, which would also cause Carol to suffer.

And Arabella was targeted by them because she had "meddled" in their affairs multiple times and helped Carol escape.

Of course, they wouldn't let Clark off the hook either. It was because Carol was with Clark that she had the idea of "betrayal", wanting to leave them and stay with Clark till the end.

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“The next target is those close to me,” Arabella stated calmly, her demeanor detached as if the subject at hand was unrelated to her.

It was at this point Clark realized why his sister had been so reluctant to reveal her identity as the heiress to the Collins family fortune.

Not to mention, her aid to Carol had brought her immense trouble and danger. Just her status as the head of the family meant she had to keep a low profile.

If everyone knew her true identity from the start, those who couldn't capture her would naturally target her friends and family.

Her family was always surrounded by bodyguards and her own men discreetly protected their parents. However, not all friends and family were constantly protected. There were always oversights and moments of vulnerability.

With Arabella's power, she could protect a portion of the people around her, but how could she possibly protect them all?

"We all need to be careful next' Clark warned hoarsely, "I will find their IP addresses, bring them to justice, and avenge them."

"Right, Arabella replied gently, "I've given Carol the antidote. We didn't have time for a final test, but it's better than nothing. Carol should wake up in 24 hours. I overheard the nurses say she heard your conversation with Mom and Dad. You should think about how to comfort her."

"Thanks,' Clark responded gratefully, his eyes reddening, "Without you, I wouldn't know what to do."

“Just call me if you need anything.”

Although under normal circumstances, Carol wouldn't wake up tonight.

Just in case.

Arabella wanted to clarify it beforehand.

“I should go now, Arabella announced, standing up, “I'll leave this to you.”

“Don't worry.”

Arabella left with Romeo.

After a busy 21 hours, she finally checked her phone in the car.

There were many missed calls and unread messages, mostly from her uncle, grandmother, and May.

Sampson: [Bella, have you arrived at Reflections Villa? Are you tired from the twelve-hour flight?]

Belinda: [You just left, and I misses you already. Do you still like the gift? I didn't have much time, so I wasn't sure what to get for you. I heard your parents and uncle bought you a lot of clothes and bags, so gifting those seemed redundant. The box contains a small token of my affection, I hope you like it.]

May: [Ms. Bella, have you arrived at Reflections Villa? The old lady has been missing you a lot during your absence. I miss you too, and look forward to your next visit.]

After she replied to their messages, her phone vibrated again before she could open the box from her grandma.

It was Sampson.

"Bella, your mother told me there was an incident at the Temple family's place. You performed surgery on their daughter right after getting off the plane last night. You also saved another person, and have been busy for 21 hours straight."

Arabella, sensing her uncle's concern, reassures him, "I'm not tired."

"You silly girl, always throwing yourself into others' problems without taking care of yourself. When you get home, eat something, take a shower, and rest well. don't wear yourself out."

Before Sampson could finish, Belinda took the phone, "Bella, I am going to nag one more time. You must eat something first, get a massage if your hands are sore, take a good shower, and relax in bed. Don't wear yourself out, or I will be heartbroken."

"Alright, got it."

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"Get some rest, Granny. I'll hang up now.' After ending the call, Belinda sighed deeply. "She could really use a massage right about now."

Inside the RV.

Romeo removed Arabella's shoes, asking her to lie down and rest for a while.

Covering the girl lightly with a blanket, Romeo massaged her slim arms, gently saying, "Sleep a bit."

Arabella was exhausted. She closed her eyes and was soon deep in slumber.

In her dream, she heard nurses talking. One moment they said Carol was in trouble, and the next, they claimed Crystal was in trouble.

Arabella ran back and forth in the long corridor, feeling dizzy from busyness.

Romeo continued to massage her as she dreamed. Seeing her brows knit together, he knew she was having a bad dream.

"Bella, Romeo caressed her face, his voice soft, 'Don't be scared. No matter what happens, I'm always by your side.'"

Her brows gradually relaxed, as if she could hear his comforting words.

Romeo continued to massage her hands and feet. After holding surgical instruments for so long and standing for such duration, they must be sore.

Time ticked away.

When Arabella opened her eyes again, she found herself still in the RV. "Are we there? Why didn't you wake me up?"

"I wanted you to sleep a little more," Romeo continued to massage her, "Look, it's snowing outside."

Under the streetlight, snowflakes fell gently. Arabella noticed that this was the streetlight outside Romeo's house.

The RV was parked outside his house, not driven in. To reach the garage, they would have to go down two slopes and make several turns. Any significant movement might wake her up.

So Romeo had asked his staff to park the vehicle outside.

"What time is it?" She asked.

Seeing her sit up, Romeo wrapped her up in the blanket, afraid she'd catch a cold. "It's a little after four"

"Have I slept that long?"

"You were exhausted, and your body is drained" Romeo gently brushed her hair, his voice soft, "Are you hungry?"

"Let's eat something"

While Arabella was sleeping, Romeo had asked the chef to prepare some food and bring it to the RV. A dozen dishes were kept warm. When opened, each was her favorite.

"Cover yourself with the blanket. It's chilly at dawn. Don't catch a cold." Romeo picked up a fork, "Let me feed you."

Despite the heating on in the RY, it was still cold. Arabella was wrapped in a blanket, only her head showing.

She looked adorable.

Romeo's gaze was full of affection. "You'd look good even in a burlap sack."

"So, should I wear a sack when I go out?"

"No way, too revealing."

Arabella couldn't help but chuckle, watching him scoop up food, "Aren't your arms tired?"

"Not at all. I could feed you not just this meal, but for a lifetime."

Under the warm light, Romeo fed her, bite by bite. Suddenly Arabella remembered something, "Did Clark call you?"

"Yes, he asked me to take good care of you. He said he'd call you once he woke up."

Seeing Romeo continuing to feed her without eating himself, Arabella couldn't help but ask, "Haven't you eaten since morning?"

Romeo gave a slight smile, "I'm not hungry"

Arabella picked up a fork and offered him a piece of meat.

Romeo was surprised yet pleased, taking a bite, "It tastes even better when you feed me."

"Want me to feed you more?"

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"No way. I can't let you." Romeo pulled her hand back under the blanket, "You've had enough for one day."

"Just do your job in the future. Don't worry about me." Arabella was referring to him waiting for her day and night at the hospital.

"What's more important than you?" Romeo looked into her eyes, enunciating each word, "You didn't sleep, didn't eat, and spent a full 21 hours in the OR. I worry about you."

"Worried I'll collapse from exhaustion?" Arabella couldn't help but laugh, "I'm not a child. I know my limits."

"In my heart, you are still a child." Romeo fed her another spoonful of soup, "So young, yet carrying a burden heavier than anyone else's. Sometimes, I wish you'd take it easy, mind your own business more, and care about yourself."

"But I have you to look after me, don't I?"

"There will always be times when I can't look after you enough."

Arabella noticed a change in his mood, "What's wrong?"

Romeo was reminded of Arabella at the hospital today, she had only consumed a bottle of milk, and that too only because he had handed it to her. Arabella didn't want him to worry, so she chugged it down all at once.

If he wasn't there today, would she have gone 21 hours without eating?

The mere thought of it pained him.

"It's nothing." Romeo concealed the worry in his eyes, not wanting to burden Arabella with his worries.

"Alright, I know you care about me." Arabella laughed, her eyes sparkling with a tender light, "Today was an exception, won't happen again."

"Your promises never come to fruition."

She had promised him before that she wouldn't risk danger, that she wouldn't get hurt, that she would take care of herself, not to worry him.

"Next time, even if you're busy, you're not allowed to skip meals."

"Okay."

After some time, Romeo held her as they watched the snow falling outside, the pristine snowflakes fluttering down.

Romeo breathed in her scent, "It feels like we've known each other for a long time."

Their companionship felt as natural as a couple who had been together for decades.

"I feel the same way. Arabella watched the falling snowflakes, feeling as if time was slowing down once again.

Having someone by her side gave her life a new layer of meaning. It was nice.

After a while, they parked the RV in the garage.

Romeo wrapped a warm coat around her and carried her into the villa's elevator.

This residence, called Bella Villa, was something he had bought specifically to be closer to her, near the school.

It had a bedroom, a walk-in closet, a hot spring bath, a lab and everything he prepared for her.

Romeo carried her into the bedroom.

"I want to take a shower."

Romeo fetched fresh clothes for her and prepared a bath. Only after reminding her of a few things did he leave.

It was still dark at five in the morning, but a light had entered Arabella's world that had been gloomy for years.

Meanwhile, Clark stayed by Carol's bedside, awake all night.

He hacked into the surveillance of the area around the street where the incident took place. He sorted out all the information and movements of the people involved and sent it to the police.

Some of the hidden culprits were also found.

After a while, he heard some devastating news.

During police interrogation, someone confessed that over twenty people were involved in violating Crystal's innocence.

Throughout the ordeal, the name Crystal kept crying out was: Clark.

"Clark, rest assured. These people will be punished."

Clark's eyes reddened again, his fists clenched tightly, his voice tinged with anger, "Are all those scumbags caught?"

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Chapter 1170

"We've got nineteen of them. We'll have the rest by noon tomorrow."

"I'm on my way."

As soon as Clark hung up the phone, he called over the couple of staff who had recently been taking care of Carol at home.

"Keep an eye on her. If any emergency happens, contact me immediately."

"Understood, Mr. Collins."

Clark sped to confront the scum, fists clenched, ready to beat them senseless.

Perhaps his fists weren't enough.

Clark used everything within his reach to hammer into them relentlessly.

"Spare us, please" one of them pleaded, "We were just following orders."

"Did your bosses order you to touch her?"

"N-no."

"She's just a defenseless girl. Why couldn't you leave her alone?"

Clark picked up a chair and smashed it onto the man. The chair splintered upon impact.

The man was drenched in blood, looking up at Clark with fear in his eyes, wanting to back away but lacking the strength to do so.

Clark grabbed him again, beating him over and over. "You wanted trouble with me? Well, here I am.

Come at me."

Clark proceeded to give them a thorough beatdown.

"Any man who lays a hand on a woman is no man at all."

Clark slammed one of their heads into the wall.

"Are you even human?"

The man was barely breathing, yet Clark continued to pound him with his fists.

"Calling you beasts would be an insult to beasts."

After what felt like an eternity, Clark looked around at the room filled with battered bodies, his eyes welling up with anger.

A group of lowlifes bullying an innocent, cheerful girl.

He remembered Crystal's radiant smile and bubbly personality.

Clark wanted nothing more than to bury them alive!

"Mr. Collins, your hands are injured," Someone noticed as Clark left the room and quickly approached him, "Should I get you a band-aid?"

"No need." Clark said, just before getting in his car to leave, "Make sure to keep torturing them."

"Understood."

On the other side.

Alger and Celeste stayed by their daughter's body, tearfully sleepless.

Their most precious part of their lives was gone.

They felt empty.

"Celeste, if you don't want to eat, at least drink some water.' Louisa sobbed, "How can Crystal rest peacefully if you're like this?"

"I want her to be restless." Celeste's dry eyes welled up with tears again, "I want her to feel guilty and restless. I want her to wake up."

Louisa felt even more heartbroken upon hearing this.

She knew that Crystal would never wake up again, her body had already turned ice-cold.

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