

The Marvelous Elijah's Return

Chapter 148-151

The Marvelous Elijah's Return by Rever Chapter 148

what are you planning now As the lights from the cameras went off and on, Matt, Rayn, Rookie, Dice, Jerome, Larry, Rick, and a couple of Elijah's men kept Peach in the middle of them as they made their way out of the hospital parking lot. "Please get out of the way! We are not taking any questions!" Dice announced firmly as the reporter struggled to get a glance at Peach's face. "Mrs. Darius!! What's your intake on the news that your husband forced himself on Jessica Astor last night, at Senator Butcher's party?!" A news lady screamed from the back.

Eyes blurry with tears, Peach halted, her fists tightened at such words about Elijah, which Dice and the others had already filled her in on what happened last night. "Mrs. Darius, is it true that your husband bribed the police to side with him on this matter, and that's the only reason Mr. Butchen and his men got arrested last night?" Another journalist asked, pushing up to the front of the pack. "Members of Congress, like other citizens, are subject to investigation and prosecution for criminal misconduct and other statutory violations through the criminal justice system, initiated by Federal, State, or local public prosecutors, and conducted through the courts. My client was beaten badly by Mr. Butcher's men, and he has to own up to that." Jeff announced professionally.

Lips trembling as tears stained her face, Peach held back her tongue as her body shut down for a moment, and then she drew in a slow breath before walking off with Dice and the others.

The instant she stepped into the hospital lobby, her phone started ringing and she picked it up, "Mama,"

"Honey, are you with Elijah yet?" Miss Grace asked with urgency.

The tears Peach had been fighting to hold back freely streamed down her cheeks, not knowing how to process it all.

Since it was just this morning Dice and the others went back home to tell her the news that Elijah was admitted to the hospital and then explained to her what had happened at the party. At this point, between what the media was saying and what Rick and the others had told her, everything was still a mess in her head, and the only person that could fix it was Elijah.

“No, mama. We are yet to get to his room.” Peach said as she took a deep breath.

There was a brief pause, and then Miss Grace said, “You didn’t touch your breakfast and abandoned it to rush to the hospital, so I made James package them, and he and I will bring it over to you –”

“No... please don’t come here. The Paparazzi and reporters are all over the place. They are brutal. It’s best if James and you remained at the house.” Peach begged, trying to keep her voice calm,

“Honey, but your food...” “I will buy something from a cafe.” “You didn’t eat for days when your father—”

“Mama, please!!”

The rise in her voice shocked her so much, but when Peach moved her lips to apologize, all she could do was sob, and she suddenly squatted, pressing her forehead against her knees, the taste of her tears settling on her tongue as she cried silently.

“How’s his condition, Dice?” Peach’s memory of this morning haunted her mind.

“He suffered two bruised ribs on both sides and they had to put him in an induced coma, and it will take about three weeks before they fully heal on their own, but the hospital is going to monitor him for the first week before he can come home.” Dice words rang in her ear, causing Peach to whimper, even though she was fighting to not make a sound.

Immediately, Dice and the others built a tight barrier around her, making sure that she was secure from the eyes of those walking by. “Peach,” Miss Grace’s voice trembled with worry, but the concern in her voice was also laced with sadness.

"I am fine, mama. I'm just a bit overwhelmed, but I will be okay." Peach gained the strength to say, and then she wiped her tears with the back of her hand, sniffing so aggressively that it took her a couple of minutes to calm down. 1:

After a moment of silence on the line, Miss Grace's soft sigh echoed in Peach's ear before she heard her say, "I love you, honey." "Love you too." Peach whispered before ending the call. Then she suppressed her emotions, stood up, and as she started walking down the hallway again, she felt a bit better from the crying she did.

But when Dice stopped at a door, Peach froze, hearing him say, "They have a couple of machines on Elijah, but it's nothing serious... umm... the doctor said they are just there to monitor his heartbeat and breathing, and other stuff."

Silence followed his remark as he waited for Peach to say something, but she just stood there, not blinking "Mama, can I come in!" Her young voice played in her mind.

Then like a horror movie showing in her head, she recalled the hospital door open and Miss Grace stepping out, her eyes watery as she said, "I am so sorry, honey. But you can not go inside."

"Why?" The brokenness that she heard in her young self's voice made Peach's eyes burn with tears again, her lashes frozen open at the memory. "Because... Papa wouldn't be staying in this room anymore."

"Is he coming home?"

"No, honey. Papa can not come home with us."

The nausea feeling that suddenly swept through Peach made her clap her hand over her mouth as she turned away, running past Dice, focusing on the labels on the doors. Immediately, Ryan, Matt, and the others started chasing after her, trying to catch up to her, but Peach didn't stop until she saw the door labeled, "bathroom."

Immediately, she rushed inside, lifted the toilet seat, and gagged aggressively over the bowl for a while since she had not eaten anything. Then she broke down again, this time her cry was loud as she clutched onto her chest, desperately trying to get air into her lungs while holding back more tears that threatened to fall.

“Peach... should we get the doctor?” Matt’s voice echoed into the bathroom.

“No, please... I am fine! It’s a normal reaction, that is tied to a memory of mine! It’s nothing to worry about!” Peach shouted, resting her back on the bathroom stall and closing her eyes. “I will be out in a second.”

The silence in her bedroom was broken when the door suddenly busted open and her son rushed in, causing Madam Jewel to jump from her sleep. “What the hell, Dean!! Do you have a death wish?!” Madam Jewel screamed, glaring at her son. “How can you be sleeping when the entire country is shaking?!” Dean yelled back, throwing his hands in the air. “What are you talking about?” “Senator Butcher went to the police station last night.”

“What?! The congressman?!”

“Yes! Now, guess who put him there?”.

More drawn into the discussion now, Madam Jewel pushed the cover off her, sitting up in bed as she lashed out, “Just tell me already?!” “Elijah,” Dean said with a smirk.

Speechless for a while, Madam Jewel blinked once as she processed this news, and then her brows furrowed as confusion overtook her face and she mumbled, “Elijah did it?! That is unbelievable!! He isn’t capable enough for something like that!”

“Oh, he is capable. They said he bribed Mr. Bamford to make the arrest. The news is that he forced himself on Jessica Astor, and Sen. Butcher ordered his men to restrain him, but he put up a fight, so the Senator’s men beat him up to the point that he was in the hospital.” Dean said, excitement evident in his tone.

“That fool... He has bitten more than he can chew, and the bone is now stuck in his throat. Oh, Elijah... You stupid idiot... Don’t you know the price of being an arrogant bastard?” “They are going to chew him alive on this,”

Suddenly, Madam Jewel’s face fell into deep thought, not listening when Dean said, “The Senator is back home now, but he might be facing impeachment by the House of Senate. So many rumors had been flying around about –”

“Did you say Elijah is in the hospital?” Madam Jewel questioned, cutting Dean off. For a second, Dean paused, wondering why she asked that, but before he could respond she said, “What’s his condition?”

“Well, I don’t know. The reporters have not gotten any news on that.” Dean said, confused as he watched her get out of bed, “His men are overprotective of that.”

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After seeing the time on her phone, Madam Jewel looked back at her son and said, “I should go check on him then.” “What? You want to do what?” Dean blurted. “Visit him. Now, which hospital is he in?” “Well, the Stonewood Hospital... Why??”

With one nod, Madam Jewel ignored his words and quickly left her room, hurrying into her bathroom, and slamming the door hard, startling Dean. “Mother, what are you planning now!!” He shouted a moment later, knowing there was more to her excitement than just mere concern for Elijah.” “Get out of my room, Dean, and shut the door behind you!” Madam Jewel demanded, her voice muffled because of the shower running. Silently, he stood there, staring hard at the bedroom door, and then he mumbled, “Whatever your plans are, you better get him this time and not drag our family into deeper shit than it already is!”

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She’s coming for him “Beep... Beep... Beep...” That sound made Peach grip tighten on the knob after she had pushed the door open and saw Elijah lying in the hospital bed, wearing a blue gown. “They’re going to wake him up, right?” Peach whispered, unable to move from where she stood, swallowing down her fear.

“Yes. Mr. Darius was in so much pain last night, that’s why we had to put him to sleep, but he will awake. It’s just a twenty–four–hour thing. He is just sleeping.” Dr. Wilson’s voice startled her, making Peach jump back a little before she turned around to see the doctor holding a clipboard

A gentle smile graced his lips as he laughed softly, “Sorry for scaring you, by showing up from out of nowhere.”

“It’s fine.” Peach said, almost in a whisper, giving the doctor a weak smile as she slowly brushed her palm against her arm. There was a brief pause as Dr. Wilson stared at her puffy wet eyes, darting left and right. Then he softly sighed, widening his smile to comfort her, and then asked “Do you want to take this conversation inside?” With a silent nod, Peach walked into the room, her eyes fixed on Elijah’s face, the bruises on his forehead, along with cuts along his cheekbones, and an IV drip inserted into his arm.

“It’s a good thing no serious damage was done to his organs. He will be in pain for a couple of weeks, but that’s it. The ribs will heal in three weeks since the injuries are not that severe.” Dr. Wilson explained as he moved closer to the bedside.

A sense of relief was something Peach couldn’t let herself feel because she had seen two men in her life laid to this exact spot and the result was devastating.

“Your husband is fine with a ninety–eight percent chance of survival. I can assure you.” Dr. Wilson added, seeing how pale Peach suddenly became. “I’m sorry about what happened to him. But he’ll be alright.”

With a shaky smile, Peach nodded, walking over to Elijah’s bedside, and then she sat down, taking his hand in hers, squeezing lightly. Silently, Dr. Wilson watched her kiss the back of Elijah’s hand, and then he cleared his throat gently and said, “I will take my leave now if you don’t have any other questions.” Taking Peach’s prolonged silence as an answer, Dr. Wilson walked over to Matt, tapped him on the shoulder, and mumbled, “Can I speak to you outside?” .

“Sure,” Matt said, looking away from Peach and following Dr. Wilson into the hallway.

Once the door shut close behind them, Mr. Wilson sighed heavily and said, "You got to get her home... I have seen that look in her gaze in a lot of trauma visitors' eyes, and it's clear that this place is seriously affecting her, and she should be away from here before we end up having her as a patient rather than a visitor."

"I see... I will try my best to convince her to leave." Matt replied.

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"Thank you. And I appreciate your help in getting her away from here as soon as possible."

"No problem, doc."

When the door opened again, Peach's heartbeat raised, and she immediately looked over at Matt, asking, "What did he say... Was it about Elijah?"

"He said you need to go home, or else you are going to fall ill, and Elijah will wake up tomorrow with the news of you being admitted here too, so we have to take you home." Matt straightforwardly responded.

A hesitant look settled in Peach's eyes as she stared at her husband, and despite her not wanting to leave him, she knew that the doctor was right, and the last thing she wanted when Elijah woke up was for him to hear that she was sick, so she took a deep breath.

"Alright." Peach finally managed to choke out. Scarf wrapped around her head and dark shade hiding her eyes, Madam Jewel stood at the hospital front desk, feeling relieved that she was able to make it past the journalist and all the cameras with no one recognizing her.

"Excuse me," She whispered to the lady behind the desk, tapping her finger gently on the solid wood to get her attention. Looking irritated, the lady looked towards her with a sour look on her face, mumbling half heartedly, "Yeah, ma'am? Do you have a medical emergency?" "Which room is Elijah Darius in?" Madam Jewel raised her voice above a whisper, but still, maintained a low range.

"Why? Are you an immediate family?"

“Umm...”

“If you are not, I can’t allow you inside.” Walking into the lobby, Peach’s mind was running wild with so much that she just stared straight ahead, wanting nothing more than all of this to be a terrible nightmare that she was still stuck in.

“Katherine, stop running!” A lady desperately calls to a little girl who immediately stopped in front of Ryan.

The noise drew Madam Jewel’s attention, and she looked back, and the moment she recognized Elijah’s men, she faced her front, lowered her scarf over her face, and then bent her head.

“Madam! Are you his immediate family or not?” The receptionist at the hospital desk shouted out of annoyance, drawing a bit of attention to Madam Jewel and her.

But Peach was too drained to care about hospital drama, so she kept her attention ahead and continued walking, leaving the hospital with her men.

“Five hundred thousand dollars,” Madam Jewel finally said. “... to give me every detail about Elijah Darius’ stay at the hospital.... Firstly, what state is he in?”

A hesitant look settled on the woman’s face before she replied, “What do you want with his information?”

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“Do you want the money or not?”

“Well... currently, the doctor has him in a deep sleep until tomorrow before he will wake up.” Relieved to know that the nurse was willing to cooperate, Madam Jewel smiled, asking, “And the rest of the information?”

Drumming his fingers on the car wheel, Oliver was happy listening to music until he spotted Madam Jewel hurrying to the car and immediately turned off the radio, hardening his face.

After opening the passenger door, Madam Jewel threw her purse onto the seat and got in, slamming the door closed and locking it. Then she took out her phone, and started dialing a number as she grumbled angrily, “Where are you, Cora?”

“Mother?” Cora’s voice came over the phone, sounding very tired. “I am at work?” Eyeing her driver in the V-mirror, Madam Jewel hesitated for a while and then said, “How do you feel about dressing up as a nurse?”

“What?!” Cora exclaimed. “Why would I want to dress up as a nurse?” Rolling her eyes at her daughter’s naiveté, Madam Jewel said, “Come over to the house and let me fill you in on why.”

The sound of the door opening made Miss Grace rush from the living room, hurrying into the hall to see her daughter dragging her feet through the front doorway.

“Peach, honey,” Miss Grace cried, noticing how miserable and weak her daughter seemed. Just then James joined them in the hall, and seeing Peach, he immediately whispered, “She looked faint, Grace.”

“I know.” Miss Grace mumbled, taking Peach’s hand in hers. “Have you eaten anything?” “I am not hungry,” Peach murmured. But then she stopped, remembering Matt’s direct words, and then said, “James, can you please make me a soup with white rice?”

The joy that awoken in Miss Grace’s heart, hearing those words was pure, and she hesitantly said, not wanting Peach to be alone in a room that smells like Elijah, “Let’s sit in the kitchen while he makes it,”

A moment later, the mother and daughter were seated at the counter while James made the food, and Peach slowly rested her head on the cold tiles, closing her eyes as the tears flowed down her cheeks,

“Oh, baby... it’s okay...” Miss Grace cooed as she rubbed her daughter’s back and ran her fingers through her hair soothingly. “Elijah will be alright,” “That’s what the doctor said, but...” Peach trailed off. Then she abruptly jerked her head back, sitting up straight like she had fit all the pieces of the puzzle together, blurting out, “I remember you and father got a healthy survival rate for grandfather, and the next thing we knew, he was dead... It was the same for father, you were assured that he would survive, but we know what happened.”

She’s coming for him

“What are you saying now, Peach?” Miss Grace asked softly, worried as well. Quickly wiping away her tears, Peach’s gaze darted from off James who was staring at her in concern to her mother, mumbling, “My husband is not safe in that room, even with all those men watching him!”

Seeing how stressed her daughter had gotten, Miss Grace said softly, to calm her down, “Peach

“I am not insane, mama. She’s coming for him.” Peach said numbly, her eyes going cold at the thought. “She’s going to kill him too!”

Frowning at her mother, Cora stood in Madam Jewel’s room, waiting for her to explain herself, and then she stared down at the nurse uniform on the bed, the syringe, and a couple of syrups in a bottle.

“I am too old for a Halloween dress-up, mother,” Cora stated firmly, crossing her arms. “Why would you have me wear that?!”

“It’s not a costume, but a disguise.” Madam Jewel said. “Now, why would I need a disguise?!”. “Because...! I need you to sneak into the hospital tonight, and put this needle inside Elijah’s veins, pushing in every syrup into his body until the syringe is empty,” Silence immediately followed her words, and Cora just stared at her mother as if to say ‘are you serious right now?’

“He knows Cora... Doctor Williams has gone off the radar like some ghost since Elijah visited New City...” Madam Jewel said as the soul in her eyes slowly faded until there was just raw darkness, almost void. “My biggest guess is that Elijah is behind the doctor’s disappearance.” “You think Dr. Williams talked?” Cora asked, her eyes taking the same form as her mother, nothing but pure black.

“Elijah visited the doctor, and I don’t know what they talked about because Texan was not in the room with them, but the same day that Elijah left New City, the doctor and his entire family suddenly vanished like thin air. Do the math, Cora. He knows that Peach is the only blood-related relative to my late husband.”

“Why is he not saying anything then?” “Dr. Williams was a coward. I scared him into getting rid of all evidence. Only Meeks and I have the documents to prove a thing. Meeks is dead. So, even if Elijah accused me, it would be baseless words with no evidence. If he does accuse me his accusation against me will be nullified.”

“But that is not a guarantee that he will not talk and get our family in serious trouble.”

“No, it’s not.”

The mother and daughter went silent again. They stared each other down until Cora broke their stare first and took a deep breath, speaking again, “He has to die.” “Great minds think alike... I am grateful to have children who understand me.” Madam Jewel replied with a smile,

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“What are these syrups going to do to him?” “Increase Elijah’s blood pressure that will result in him getting a high fever, heart failure, and then his brain will die.”

There was a brief pause, then Cora sighed, mumbling, “Fine. I will wear the costume and do

it.”

“The receptionist said that Elijah’s room will be free by 1 am. Get in, do your thing, and get out quickly because he can wake up at any time tomorrow... I could do it, but I am too old for this.”

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The hospital was so quiet at midnight as Cora walked down the hallway, and the closer she got to Elijah's room, she could hear her heart pounding loudly in her ears, seeing all the men standing in line, guarding the room.

'Mother didn't tell me that this place was going to be swamped with his bodyguards... I feel like I am about to assassinate a president or something.' Cora mumbled in her head, adjusting the mask on her face to make sure no one recognized her. When she got to the door, she hesitated, wondering if any of them were going to stop her. But when no one said a word, she pushed the door open, walking calmly into the room, suppressing the nervous feeling in the pit of her stomach.

After she shut the door behind her, she turned to see Elijah lying on his back, his face away from her, directed at the right wall, and the pillows that his head wasn't resting on, blocking his face from her view.

Knowing time was not on her side, she walked over to the bedside, focusing only on his hand with the intent to get it done quickly so she could be out before the side effect of the drugs kicked into his body once she injected him. 'What's a waste of money, hiring all these fools just to die in such a simple way.' Cora laughed in her head, resting a kit down, and taking an injection out of it. 'Damn... Why is it so quiet?' Quickly, she rubbed cotton on his hand, picking a random vein on the back of his hand, and slowly, she inserted the needle into his skin. But before she could sink it deep, her heart jumped in her chest when he suddenly woke up, grabbing her hand. Immediately, she went into the state of "flight or fight," and she fought, trying to push it into his vein hastily, but he was faster in yanking it out of his skin.

Desperate to finish what she had started, Cora rushed for another injection from the kit, blocking out his voice and not paying attention to his face but his torso.

Not wanting to give up, she jumped him, rushed into the bed, and she and he got into a struggle over the new syringe, wrestling on the sheets until he managed to grab her wrist and flip her over his legs, straddling her waist, and before she could stab his neck with the needle, using her free hand, he held her other wrist, twisting it toward her and puncturing the syringe into her neck, breathing heavily as she stared down wide-eyed at him.

“You are not Elijah,” Cora whispered, finally meeting his eyes as he let go of her hand. “Who are you? What have you done?” Even though Elijah and the guys over her had a lot of similarities, when he got off her and Cora took a hard look at him, she could see that he was definitely not Elijah.

Slowly, she yanked the syringe out of her neck, seeing that it was empty, and she immediately scrambled off the bed, moving back slowly, “No, no, no... What did you do?”

The guy took out a walkie-talkie and spoke into it, saying, “Chief, we have one suspect. A female... I haven’t seen her face yet because she’s wearing a mask. But she tried to stab me with a syringe.”

“Okay... We are moving in.” Mr. Bamford’s voice came over the talkie. “I’m heading in now.” It took only a minute for the door to bash open, and Mr. Bamford rushed in with a couple of officers with him, and Cora saw his gun pointed at her head as he screamed, “Freeze!”

“Chief Bamford.” Cora tried to say, but it felt as if every muscle in her body had stiffened.

“Don’t try to run. The hallway is crowded with policemen, so I will advise you to take off the mask and tell me exactly who you are and what you are doing here because the last time I checked with Dr. Wilson, Mr. Darius should not be getting any IVs or injections at this hour.” Mr. Bamford spoke coldly, and Cora felt herself shrink under his intimidating gaze.

Darting her eyes around nervously, she knew from the number of men she saw in the hallway, making a run for it was a useless move and would not help her case. “Oh my, how clumsy of me! This isn’t room 7? I have a patient in that room that’s in desperate need of this shot and I have to give it now. Can’t be wasting valuable time here when a man’s life might be at stake because of my clumsiness,” Cora lied through her teeth, taking a step for the bed to get the rest of the two syringes in the kit.

“Do not take another step and remove the mask now.” Mr. Bamford commanded in his same cold tone.

Eyeing his hand that was slowly reaching toward the gun trigger, Cora took a shaky breath, before raising her hands and pulling the mask down, then she said, her voice soft, “I can explain.”

“The last time I checked Cora Hayes, you are not a nurse, but a CEO, so why are you here giving an injection to Mr. Darius?” Mr. Bamford asked. ‘Mother, you idiot! What have you done to me?’ Cora scolded herself internally, trying to figure out what to do next. Looking over to the fellow standing in the right corner, Mr. Bamford said, “Roldan, get doctor Wilson down here. I need him to test what’s in these syringes.”

Then he gave Cora a cold stare, saying, “Raise your hands where I can see it. Since you are being investigated for suspicious activity, we are going to detain you until we can figure out what you wanted to accomplish with these injections.”

“Chief, come on, since no one got hurt, can’t we let this slide for the right price? You can and your men can go home pocket full and I can sleep soundly in my bed tonight and not some filthy cell.” Cora cockily said, knowing that she needed medical attention, but afraid to let the police find out what was in these syringes. “I have my phone on me, so I can wire whatever your price is.”

Shaking his head like he pitied her idiocy, Mr. Bamford sighed and slowly took out his handcuff, saying, “Well, you just got caught on camera bribing a policeman, so...” Immediately looking around, Cora felt the effect of the drug kicking in, and after searching for a while, her eyes rested on a tiny red light going off and on. ‘Mother, I swear, if you don’t make Elijah and Peach pay for the headache they are causing this family, I don’t think I’m going to forgive you.’ Cora gritted her teeth as Mr. Bamford walked over to her.

Suddenly, her heart started beating really wild, and she knew what was happening, even

though she was trying to play off the symptoms, her body betrayed her and her breathing became shallow as she fought against his hold, struggling to breathe while he tried to handcuff her and then she suddenly dropped hard to the cold floor.

“GET A DOCTOR NOW!” Mr. Bamford screamed at his subordinate.

As the breeze gently blew the curtains, Peach stood at the window, watching the moon with her phone clutched in her grip. A soft breath escaped her lips before her ringtone interrupted the peace in the room, and she immediately answered, "Chief Bamford,"

"Sorry for doubting you... You do know your family. Cora was caught attempting to murder the doppelganger we put in the hospital bed in place of Elijah." Mr. Bamford's voice echoed in the speaker.

As her emotions awakened, Peach closed her eyes, trying to calm herself, her hands fisting tightly against her nightgown as she thought about how she would have been grieving her husband by now if she had overlooked how dark the evil surrounding her was.

"The syringe was full with a high dose of Amphetamines. Which is illegal... A High dose like that can cause irregular heartbeat, loss of coordination, and collapse, and if injected, it can create a sudden increase in blood pressure that can result in very high fever, or heart failure and death. Which is what Cora wanted to happen to Elijah. She had four of them to inject him with." Mr. Bamford explained further, and Peach held her breath.

"They were really going to kill him," She finally whispered, closing her eyes as she let the tears escape from her eyelids, and fall onto her cheeks. "Cora got into a fight with the doppelganger and he stabbed her with one of them in the neck Right now, she is in critical condition, and seeking treatment."

"I see,"

"If you still want to file the attempted murder charges against her, you can come over later today to get the paperwork done. With the evidence we have, there's a solid case to make."

"I will be there."

A soft groan made Peach turn around to stare at the bed, watching her husband slowly rub his eyes, and then she whispered, "I got to go. Elijah is finally awake." "Okay. Tell him to reach me once he's well enough for deep conversation." Mr. Bamford said before the call ended. "Babe?!" Elijah whispered, the pain from his bruised ribs still hurting like hell.

Rushing from the window, Peach hurried towards his bedside and sat down, mumbling, "Don't sit up. We had to move you home because your life was in danger, and I felt like you were safe nowhere else, but here." Stopping himself from lifting his body, Elijah frowned at the thought that his life was in danger and then asked, "What happened within the twenty-four hours that I was out for?" There was a brief silence, the only sound in the room being their steady breathing, and Peach lowered her head to avoid his gaze, before quietly mumbling, "The media is scared to go against the Senator and the Astor, so they are dragging your name in the mud. Umm... Cora tried to kill you by injecting you with four syringes of Amphetamines, but thankfully Mr.

Elgah Maxwell

Bamford and his men were the ones in the hospital and not you." "Wait, what?! Babe, rewind." Elijah gasped, pushing himself upwards slightly to look at her in surprise, hissing in pain. "I was restless leaving you in the hospital alone for a night, even if your bodyguard were there because of how my dad and grandfather died. So, I cried on Mr. Bamford to watch your room while you were unconscious. But he suggested that we still had to move you for your safety since we didn't know what to expect because I was just going with my gut feeling." "So your gut feeling was right. The Hayes strike." "Yes. Who knew they were going to attempt tonight." "You did, Babe."

"But what if I didn't... What if..."

Looking away from Elijah, Peach suppressed her tears, her fingers trembling violently as she looked back at him, "If I hadn't, you might have died, and I don't ever want to lose you... never. You're my whole world, Elijah Darius, and I am afraid of living without you. It is so scary to think about it."

Eyes widening, Elijah's breath hitched as he stared at her, his chest constricting painfully at her words. Then he reached out and tenderly caressed her cheek, his finger lightly grazing her lips, and then he said, "Elijah Maxwell... Peach, my full name is Elijah Maxwell, not Darius."

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Divorce A faint laugh left Peach's lips, her shaky eyes on Elijah, wondering if he was kidding or not, and yet the seriousness in his gaze told her what she feared.

There was so much emotion flooding her that Peach had no idea how to deal with it all. She did know one thing though, the feelings were too strong for her to be able to hold them in and pretend like everything was fine.

“I have this thing with my dad that requires me to keep my identity a secret and...” Elijah trailed off, seeing the hurt in her eyes as she darted her gaze away from him, her shaky hand nervously exploring the skin of her face. “Peach... I couldn’t tell anybody... I...” “It’s just a name, but why does it hurt so much to know that you lie about it, Elijah?” Peach whispered looking up at her once more. “How can just a name leave me with so much doubt about you, about us?”

Seeing her body shudder, Elijah reached for Peach’s hand, but she pulled back, awaking from the bed, and his heart ached as he let out, “Babe, I know you are mad—”.

“I am not mad, Elijah. I am hurt! Do you know how proud I was to be called Mrs. Darius every time? It’s not so much about the name... it’s the fact that you looked me sincerely in my eyes every time I called you that name, knowing I was making a fool out of myself... Are we even legally married then?!” Peach said, tears forming in her eyes as she wiped them away, trying to hide the sadness in her voice.

“Babe, I am so—”

“Don’t finish that sentence... Don’t you dare say you are sorry... Give me time to feel all these emotions you have caused me and process the fact that our marriage was a lie, and I am not wedded to the man that you are, but some made-up name!”

Overwhelmed with so many feelings, the frustration on Peach’s face was raw as she clapped her hand over her mouth, her tears rolling down her cheeks, as she tried to control her breathing, trying to contain the pain. “Okay... I won’t say it. But I am here and willing to mend this with you... So I am begging you to tell me how to fix this because I know that I messed up. You have every right to feel what you are feeling... But please don’t shut me out, Peach.” Elijah pleaded, slowly getting up from the bed.

“I can’t do this with you right now,” Peach muttered through clenched teeth, running her fingers through her hair. “I feel so dumb.”

Looking at her through moist eyes, Elijah watched her turn away from him, and as she headed for the door, he shoved the cover off him, pushing his bruised body to stand up, only to hear her say, "Please don't leave that bed. Dr. Wilson said that you shouldn't put pressure on the wound."

"Babe, come on. Let's talk about this, okay?... please!" Elijah begged, resting back on the bed, ignoring the pain as he watched her grab the knob. "Don't walk out the door... Babe! Come on! Let's talk, plea—"

But his words were drowned out by the slam of the door behind her, and Elijah fell back against the bed, tears falling onto his pillow as he closed his eyes, trying not to think of

anything else but her.

"Elijah is awake?" Miss Grace asked as she stood in the hallway with a cup of hot tea, and the look in her daughter's eyes as tears streamed down her face told Miss Grace enough. "What happened?" 2

"It shouldn't hurt this bad, mama!" Peach cried, covering her face with her hands as a small whimper escaped her lips.

Hearing her outburst echo into the room, Elijah squeezed his eyes, a sense of regret eating away at his insides. He never meant for things to go this far, for their relationship to get this far, and it still surprised Elijah how fast it took for her to win his heart and how easy it was for him to give himself completely over to her, to allow her to take over his life, his mind, and heart.

Straining his body, Elijah reached over to his phone on the nightstand, and once he got it, he scrolled until he reached the contact labeled, "Father."

After the third ring, the call got answered and immediately Elijah said, "Hey, Dad... I need your help on something."

“You are awake!” Mr. Maxwell’s voice echoed in his ear, laced with shock and excitement.” Since that’s the case, we can talk over coffee.”

“What?”

“I am in the country?” “What country?!” “I am in Syldavia.” 1

Head resting on her mother’s lap, Peach blew her nose in another tissue, mumbling, “I mean, how can he lie about his identity over and over in my face! And we are planning to have a child! So what?! Our son or daughter was just going to carry a made-up name!”

A small smile tugged on Miss Grace’s lips as she stared at her daughter’s face, not saying a word to let her work through her emotions.

“I feel like I shouldn’t be mad because we all knew he was lying about stuff about himself, but I thought we were finally at a point in our marriage where we fully trust each other, just for him to prove me wrong... and according to his birth certificate, we are not even legally husband and wife!... That’s the part that hurts, mama.” 1 “Do you think this is it?... This is something to call it quit over?” Miss Grace asked, stroking Peach’s hair gently.

Suddenly, Peach’s eyes widened, and she woke from her mother’s lap, staring at her like she had spoken a forbidden language.

“Do you mean, like divorce my husband?” Peach mumbled, all the emotions crowding her slowly fading as she stared at her mother in disbelief. “Technically, you two are not married... So you can just walk away from that liar.” Miss Grace said with a straight face, even though she was dying of laughter inside.
1

“Mama!!”

“What?!”

Divorc

“I am not going to break up with Elijah just because he’s now a Maxwell, instead of Darius. He’s still the same man... The same guy that stole my heart at first glance the first day we met... Honestly, he has become a way better version of himself since then.” “So, you are not leaving him because of his change of name?”

“No!”

Finally, a laugh came out of Miss Grace’s lips, her heart swelling with joy, and then she said, “ If that’s the case, then go talk things over with your husband and you guys fix it. Hesitating, as she rubbed her neck nervously, Peach drew a breath and whispered, “Do you think I overreacted?”

“No, you didn’t. Your feelings are valid. But I think Elijah is sorry, and it will be healthy if you guys don’t drag this out.”

Watching the sunlight creep into the room, Elijah sighed, and mumbled, “You idiot! Why did you wait this long and hurt her?”

Suddenly the sound of the door cracking open made him look to his right to see Peach slowly sneaking into the room, and when their eyes locked, his heart ached at her puffy red under eyelids.

“Hey,” Peach whispered with a pout. “Hey, love...” Elijah mumbled, afraid to say, “Sorry,” and yet desperately wanting to let it out immediately.

The silence in the room felt awkward as Peach approached the bed, and then sat beside him, stroking a loose string of hair behind her ear.

“So, Elijah Maxwell... Hmmm... Peach Maxwell... I don’t hate the sound of it.” Peach said, smiling faintly at her own joke. Suddenly, Elijah reached his hand under her chin, gently caressing her cheek as he

brushed some hair away from her eyes, looking deep in her gaze with a hint of guilt, confusion, fear, and more than anything... love.

"I am so, so sorry, Babe... for the lies, secretiveness, and... most of all, for hurting you so much. I am an idiot. Please don't hate me." Elijah said softly. "If you forgive me, I promise, no more lies. I will be your open book."

Sitting quietly for a few minutes, Peach nodded her head slowly, before she whispered, "I forgive you, Elijah Maxwell... That's the real one, right?"

As a faint laugh slipped past his lips, Elijah looked into her eyes, and then leaned towards her, pressing his forehead against hers, whispering, "Yes. That's my real name." Slowly, his hands wrapped around her waist as he pulled her close to him, holding her tightly, resting his chin on her head, "I love you, Peach Hayes." "I love you too, Elijah Maxwell." Peach smiled, letting out a content sigh, and closing her eyes, she snuggled closer to him. Like a light bulb had clicked one in his head, Elijah calmly uttered, "Oh, and, my father is in the country, and he's on his way here."

Divorce

"What!" Peach blurted out, all her nerve

