

# **After Divorce, She Becomes the Billionaire Heiress ( Sylvia and Cyril ) Chapter 41-50**

Released on April 25, 2024

Chapter 41 Continued Smears

“When you’ve played yourself, don’t come crying to me,” Cyril dismissed without even looking up from his work. “Now if that’s all, get out and stop bothering me.”

Jonathon had reached his limit. Since Cyril refused to help, he’d take matters into his own

hands.

“Just you wait and see. I’ll turn this around and unlike you, I’ve got nothing to hide all these years. I’ll dig up dirt on you!” Jonathon declared as he stormed off, determined to uncover Cyril’s supposed misdeeds.

But Cyril made no attempt to stop him, confident of his spotless history with Sylvia over their years of marriage. Her divorce request had shocked him enough without Jonathon’s

antics.

That afternoon, Jonathon issued a public statement stubbornly refusing to apologize and accusing Sylvia of equally shady behavior—how else could she have obtained so much evidence against him?

The absurd excuse earned him another barrage of outrage. People now attacked both Jonathon and his company without restraint. Conscious consumers even boycotted his products.

Still undeterred, Jonathon hired a private investigator to tail Sylvia. But after considerable pressure and expense, the detective only confirmed her routine of home, work and occasional mundane errands these past years, devoid of any scandalous entertainment.

Jonathon was baffled. How could someone live such an abnormally uneventful personal life?

Just then, he received an unexpected call from Bonnie. “I can help get what you want on Sylvia if you’re behind those online posts. Want to hear my idea?”

Jonathon nearly dismissed Cyril’s sister given her dodgy track record abroad that he’d tactfully overlooked out of brotherly loyalty. However, Bonnie clearly shared his

resentment of Sylvia. With no dirt from the investigator, perhaps she could provide ammunition against his sister-in-law. Jonathon recorded the call just in case before responding.

“What have you got? Cyril wants me to apologize to Sylvia after the fallout, but I've endured public outrage these past days tailing his wife only to find she's led an utterly dull life centered around him. Yet you want to target her? Quite interesting given she's treated you well enough.”

Bonnie scoffed as though he'd said something ridiculous. “Treated me well? If so, she

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wouldn't have exposed me and earned Cyril's rebuke. I'm offering to help since I know you have evidence too. But if not, no need to continue this chat.”

Jonathon itched to play Bonnie's words for Cyril. If he heard his own sister, he'd surely flip the table in outrage. How could siblings of the same family differ so drastically? Cyril built his career while the only notable thing about his sister was her lack of any redeeming quality.

“Using your brother's gun I see. But I understand your implication dear sister, no need to speak in riddles. I'm not stupid to miss your meaning.” Jonathon lazily rebutted.

Flustered at being seen through, Bonnie gritted her teeth. “So do you want the evidence or not? I'll give it to someone else if not.

Eager to cut to the chase, she pressed Jonathon for a clear answer. Either he wanted her ammunition against Sylvia or they had nothing more to discuss.

“Show me first. If it's useful I'll take it, otherwise don't blame me for not warning you. Digging up dirt on Sylvia is pointless once she gets pregnant. Don't drag me into your schemes.” Jonathon cautioned.

Bonnie scoffed again at his cowardice before hanging up and sending over a file of photos. But Jonathon's brows furrowed when he opened it. His intelligence felt insulted.

The images only showed Sylvia chatting innocuously with strangers in public, likely staged. Nothing remotely scandalous. Were all the brains in the family inherited by Cyril while Bonnie got only an empty shell?

Jonathon swiftly deleted the useless pictures. But first he could show them to Cyril.

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## Chapter 42 Sylvia's Warning

The next day, more "exposés" about Sylvia trended online, this time directly from Jonathon himself rather than the media. His petty revenge knew no bounds.

When Sylvia saw it at her desk, she laughed in disbelief. "Is he insane? How can he call this proof? It's a joke at best. Shameless to present this nonsense as evidence."

Juliette had shown her boss the posts, knowing Sylvia was too busy with work to notice such online drama herself. "I know, right? Some gullible people actually believe his claims that you met other men and cheated on Cyril! Ridiculous. Aren't you going to do something?"

Sylvia shook her head, unruffled. "Jonathon couldn't have dug this up himself. Someone must be helping him. Find out who." She had suspected Bonnie but wanted proof.

Juliette grinned, having expected this and already prepared the information. "Way ahead of you!" She presented her findings with relish. "Interesting, isn't it?"

Seeing Bonnie's involvement, Sylvia decided Cyril needed a warning to control his sister, or she might take matters into her own hands. Juliette chuckled at the thought of Sylvia disciplining Bonnie.

Sylvia removed Cyril's number from her blacklist and called him directly. He sounded when he finally answered, still dealing with Jonathon's fallout damaging his company. Another call from Sylvia surely meant more trouble for him to resolve.

weary

"Remember our last chat? I said handle your people instead of always running to me. What's the deal with Jonathon? If those posts were only for my viewing, stop wasting time. Last warning—rein in your sister or I'll personally mentor her." Sylvia gave an ominous ultimatum before hanging up.

Cyril's frown deepened, recalling Jonathon's unread "evidence" that he'd now regret. Clearly, this went deeper than he thought. Opening the email, Cyril saw it contained a recording.

Hearing Bonnie proposition Jonathon to target Sylvia using photos she provided, Cyril flushed angrily. His sister's vendetta over his rebuke was as foolish as her plot against someone out of her league. How had slippery Jonathon been outmaneuvered by Sylvia's unknown capabilities? Even her divorce terms exceeded Cyril's expectations.

Realizing Sylvia's restraint with this final chance to avoid direct intervention, Cyril rushed out without finishing work, demanding updates from his assistant about his wife

and sister's recent activities. Only Bonnie's unexplained nightly absences bothered him now.

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Overhearing of Bonnie's impudence, Cyril sneered. "So she stays out all night now? Gone wild after years abroad it seems and forgotten her way home." He strode off, assistant hurrying behind.

## Chapter 43 Obliterated

When Cyril found his foolish sister Bonnie the next morning after her night out clubbing, his sudden presence made her shriek.

Bonnie was furious at first for the rude awakening, ready to reprimand the intruder, until realizing it was her brother. Unlike others, she'd feared Cyril since childhood, obeying his every word and avoiding anything he forbade. So Bonnie could read his expressions clearly. "What's going on brother? You woke me up right after I got back from partying all night," she asked nervously, clutching her blanket to her chest and not meeting his eyes.

Noting how she concealed herself, Cyril's brow twitched but he spared his adult sister's dignity by not yanking away the covers.

"Do you ever consider the damage your online antics with Jonathon could bring our company? The trouble it invites?" Cyril kept his voice calm, hoping to reason with his grown sister. But Bonnie seemed oblivious to the gravity of her deeds, even daring to talk back to her angry brother.

"It's just payback for them forcing you to marry years ago. And I don't see the issue with exposing the truth?"

"You consider everyone a fool? Those photos clearly show random polite exchanges, yet you present it as evidence? I think the booze has pickled your brain. As of today, you're confined home without access to your cards or money until you've reflected. I'm telling you, don't bother calling for help this time."

Cyril stormed off, fuming. His exit made him realize Sylvia had always acted strangely around his family, as if hiding something. He'd dismissed it as mere incompatibility that led to arguments, never considering Sylvia's home life over the years.

Now his own sister and friend targeted her with such practiced ease. Had Sylvia endured unseen troubles that shaped her retaliation? Cyril felt regret for the first time.

Enraged at losing her freedom and cards, Bonnie threw a tantrum destroying her room. Finding the doors locked, she grabbed her phone to call Sylvia. How dare that woman run to her brother! She would put Sylvia in her place!

Sylvia was surprised to receive Bonnie's call, having forgotten to re-block her number. But she smiled as Bonnie's shrieking rant reminded her of the family's impending misery.

"Tell your brother I warned if he couldn't discipline you, I would. His family will now pay dearly for this call and your past behavior towards me." Sylvia calmly promised

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Juliette walked in to find Sylvia reviewing an old proposal. "I thought you said that project wasn't viable months ago due to unrealistic scope and venues. Why consider it again now?"

"I was leaving them room to save face after the divorce. But since they prefer no mercy, be it. Rather than tolerate their provocations, I'll just obliterate their entire family." Juliette grinned wickedly. "About time they got their color. Play nice and they just remain shameless. Show them iron fists so they know who not to mess with!"

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#### Chapter 44 Snatching the Project

In the conference room, several people sat discussing plans for upcoming projects.

"Thoughts on pursuing Jimmy Estate? I think we should make it our next main development if no objections," Ingrid suggested while presenting documents outlining the proposal.

"Though the land area is substantial for demolition and rebuild, I recommend this alternative," Sylvia countered, showing her own file. "It's adjacent to the new train station, in an old housing district closer to downtown – very attractive location for homebuyers despite the sluggish market. We considered this long ago when Bruce was avoiding conflict with Cyril's interests. But after all this time unable to secure the deal, it shows Cyril still lacks capability."

Ingrid laughed derisively. "Are you joking? We looked into this before but couldn't make it happen for various reasons. Now you act like it'll be easy if we try again?"

Sylvia looked puzzled. "If you considered it once, why not revisit it? We'd just be snatching a project from someone else. Does our company not have the capital to outbid competitors?" Her daring words left them speechless. While possible for their company to acquire the development by outcompeting opponents, it could appear malicious.

Bruce finally spoke up. "Stealing others' business could be seen as predatory competition."

Everyone conceded he had a point. Such a massive undertaking was set to break ground with another company soon. Hijacking it now seemed suspicious.

But Sylvia knew the project should have begun construction a month ago. Cyril's efforts had stalled while distracted by Karena's scandals.

"Why assume predatory intent? The fact it hasn't started on schedule shows that company isn't capable. Why leave a project to those unfit to execute it timely?"

Her rationale made sense. Letting incompetents keep the lucrative deal helped no one. Who cared about ethical appearances when profit was at stake?

Bruce eyed Sylvia meaningfully. "Are you certain you want to seize this? It may require greater sacrifice."

He was surprised she'd suggest a venture originally granted to Cyril. But Sylvia just smiled.

"It was already ours to begin with. We're simply reclaiming it by any means necessary."

Her confidence and determination marked a departure from the marriage. Bruce grinned,

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pleased at the positive changes in his once docile sister.

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"You have a point, it was ours first. Let's take it back then." Bruce stated decisively after gauging the room. Though initially stunned, none could deny the value of resuming such a rewarding project.

"What do we think then? No issues taking this back under our control for greater profit?"

They'd evaluated immense earnings potential before abandoning it previously. Reviving such an advantageous scheme now would surely yield returns exponentially.

“I agree completely.”

“What agreement? We’d sacrifice more to seize this now. What’s the point?” Ingrid alone objected.

Sylvia eyed her calmly. “If you have personal rather than collective, business–minded objections, state them clearly. This guarantees profit well above costs for the company. Don’t let your grudge deny immense earnings at the company’s expense if you can shoulder the losses. But Jimmy Estate offers far too little.”

Her irrefutable rationale left Ingrid speechless once more.

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Chapter 45 Going official

Ingrid’s ugly expression showed her displeasure at the group’s disagreement. She was stunned anyone would oppose her suggestion, much less reject it outright.

If resuming this venture was good now, why had no one spoken up when it was previously abandoned? They just kowtowed to Bruce and Sylvia’s closeness, leaving others voiceless. Yet they readily fawned over Sylvia again now. Revolting.

“It’s settled then, we’ll proceed with this project,” Bruce concluded, hammering down the decision. Everyone else smiled agreeably, delighted at the prospect. Only Ingrid remained visibly unhappy as the meeting adjourned.

Bruce asked Sylvia to stay behind and questioned her resolve once alone. “I thought you’d let this go. Pursuing it today seemed like a passing impulse. But you’re truly set on snatching this from Cyril?”

Knowing her temperament all too well, Bruce still doubted Sylvia’s determination, fearing she might waver later and leave them stranded.

“I’ve made up my mind. Why shouldn’t I reclaim what he gained from me over the years? I won’t dwell on the past but do need to teach him a lesson after recent unsatisfactory handling. He must learn what forces not to provoke. Losing a couple projects he couldn’t have gotten otherwise should serve as fitting retribution.”

Cyril was no pushover but utterly overpowered by greater dynasties like theirs. This venture had been the Ivanovs’ initial choice before tossed as refuse that Cyril picked up. He could prevail among peers but never up the hierarchy.

Bruce grinned and nodded. “I’ve set things in motion to seize the project. Also, your second brother announced his comeback concert tour this morning. Claimed it was just



work schedules when I called but we know it's because he misses you and wants to visit."

Sylvia brightened at the news. "Second brother is the best! But he called you first? Hmph. Ask him to leave me tickets for his show so we can go together."

Bruce quirked a brow skeptically. "You sure he'd reserve tickets for you under your name? Better call yourself or he won't bother."

Her estranged brother surely resented Sylvia now and wouldn't indulge requests through

Bruce.

"You're right. I'll call second brother then. But he won't yell at me for being crazy and marrying that man right?" Sylvia asked nervously. Her brother's acid tongue notoriously

Chapter 45 Going fea

ripped into anyone. His temper explosions left no bystanders unscathed, even passing dogs berated.

Bruce laughed heartily. "Didn't he already last time you planned that wedding? This will just be reruns of the same scoldings. Why so worried now when it never bothered you before? Guilty conscience?"

Sylvia sighed reluctantly. "Of course I'm guilty now! Last time I could claim insanity but I'm sober and sensible so the criticism terrifies me."

"Fine, I'll call him after work and hope he goes easier this time." She braced herself for the inevitable confrontation.

Seeing her resignation, Bruce only laughed louder, drawing curious glances from employees outside the glass conference room unused to such mirth from the formidable tycoon.

Sylvia scowled and threatened to make him stop but Bruce just kept shaking his head while trying to restrain his chuckles.

"Enough! Get back to work and call your brother already. Best strike early rather than waiting longer right?"

Agreeing the sooner she called, the better, Sylvia exited Bruce's office and first noted their official website announcing the stolen development plans shrouded in diplomatic

wording. Industry insiders easily inferred the Ivanovs' next ruthless move. But none dared comment, knowing challenging them was beyond reckless.

Settling into her office, Sylvia steeled herself and called her brother at last. He deliberately let it ring awhile, clearly intent on aggravating her more before answering with blistering profanity.

Though initially stunned speechless, Sylvia started giggling at the expected vitriol, finding her brother's reliable temper as endearing as always.

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## Chapter 46 Fair Competition

"What work? You claimed no commitments when I called this morning. And if so busy, how'd you answer my call instantly anyway? Just admit you still care despite the harsh front," Sylvia retorted affectionately.

"Believe whatever makes you feel better, sister. Know I'm doing very well at the family company now, already at VP level thanks to recent success. Once established, I'll fund your biggest world tour ever!" She hoped to make her brother proud.

Balk went silent, weighing her bold statement's authenticity before scoffing skeptically.

"You expect me to take your word as assurance of such a senior promotion? I've learned not to trust your tall tales anymore. Besides, didn't you forbid any involvement from me back when insisting on that disastrous wedding? Consider us estranged."

Her thoughtless words still pained Balk. He had always doted on his beloved little sister, reserving front row concert seats facing him specially for her. Yet his cherished sibling cast family aside for another man, leaving him heartbroken.

"I'm truly sorry, brother. I was terribly rude and irrational back then. But I've changed, focused solely on advancing my career to redeem myself."

Sylvia desperately wanted to make amends for wounding her most caring brother. Hearing her remorse, Balk regretted maintaining distance, though she had brought this upon herself.

"Well, since you claim reform, I'll move past grievances. But obviously you didn't call just for apologies. Out with it then."

Trust her brother to see through any pretense to her underlying motive. He'd spoken to Bruce that morning so likely guessed Sylvia's aim already.

“Bruce mentioned your upcoming tour. Can you leave me front row tickets? I want to support you properly this time – with banners, light sticks, cheers, everything!”

Sylvia laughed, expecting her brother’s characteristic sarcasm before ultimate indulgence of her request.

Sure enough, Balk scoffed, “And why should I arrange anything for you? Go fight for tickets yourself if so eager.”

Before Sylvia could respond, Balk hung up, leaving her shaking her head in amusement. She knew despite his prickly words, he’d personally deliver tickets when her cherished brother inevitably relented, never neglecting her expressed wishes.

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After finishing that personal call, Sylvia resumed working, only to have an irate Juliette soon

intrude.

“Jonathon not only refuses apology but attacked our website statement of stealing the development. Cyril also messaged querying our intent.”

Sylvia glanced up impatiently amidst her tasks. “Ignore Jonathon. Those partnerships will shut down anyway. Tell Cyril it’s just fair market competition. If he disputes, he’s welcome to contend openly as well. May the best bidder win. Otherwise, silent compliance.”

Juliette left grinning, eager to issue those bold replies. Sylvia agreed to her informing the others about securing concert tickets later. But she declined wasting time meeting Ingrid, rebuffing the waiting woman’s requested audience outside her office.

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## Chapter 47 May the best win

Ingrid seethed at being denied entry due to inadequate credentials. As former VP, she’d accessed Sylvia freely. Everyone kowtowed now that the scheming temptress had seduced Bruce into appointing her.

Ingrid had expected that VP role after years of dedication. Yet Sylvia swooped in to steal the prize. She could never swallow such humiliation.

Noting Juliette's exit, Ingrid hurried after her and insisted on an urgent business meeting. She'd waited vainly long enough outside that office.

Juliette made no pretense of pleasantries with this woman she disliked. "Sorry, but she's too busy now for pointless chats. State your issue or just get back to work."

"This concerns the company so watch your tone! I'll report your insolence!" Ingrid threatened.

Juliette scoffed, unintimidated. "Company business my foot. But please, tell the big boss. Then we'll see who can't stay after all."

Rather than cower before Ingrid's backers, Juliette dared her to complain. Juliette would readily tattle first to Bruce about any troublemakers. Why pretend her best friend wouldn't soon assume control? She had no qualms settling scores immediately.

Recognizing Juliette indeed had such influence, Ingrid bottled her temper to avoid self-destruction. But she refused resigned acceptance.

"Quite bold. Let's see how long that lasts once I remove Sylvia. Then you'll both stop strutting around!"

Juliette paused, acknowledging Ingrid's prediction reasonable. Sylvia would hardly remain VP long before further promotion since Bruce clearly favored her.

"Correct, Sylvia won't keep this position long. But she'd never be ousted by you. You're far from replacing her." Juliette just smiled slyly and returned to work, ignoring Ingrid's presence like the other unsympathetic employees. Most welcomed someone finally standing up to the insolent shareholder-executive.

Seething at Juliette's snub, Ingrid stalked off impotently. By afternoon, damning exposés about Jonathon's family and company surfaced online, ensuring thorough humiliation.

With his enterprise precariously positioned, Jonathon desperately called Cyril again for help. But Cyril just reiterated apologizing as the sole solution, else worse would follow.

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"How did Sylvia become so ruthlessly capable after the divorce? She never demonstrated such skills before!" Jonathon couldn't grasp this overnight transformation.

His puzzled statement also reminded Cyril of overlooking Sylvia's situation. Indeed, her amplified prowess hinted at long-concealed talents. Had he completely misjudged her real competence all this time?

"My only options now are apology or waiting this out?" Jonathon asked anxiously.

"You can try the latter," Cyril conceded unconvincingly before lapsing into troubled silence. He couldn't predict when Sylvia might relent. What if she intended their utter collapse first?

While Jonathon agonized over groveling for forgiveness, Cyril desperately strategized retaining their lucrative partnership. The Ivanovs clearly outmatched him if competing freely. Last month's delays left this opening for them to exploit.

He must swiftly resolve this and satisfy stakeholders counting on the deal. Except the initial selection had defaulted to the Ivanovs, who later permitted Cyril's involvement. Why suddenly revert?

A startling realization crossed Cyril's mind about Sylvia's intimate closeness with Bruce. Had Bruce only abandoned the plan for his sister's sake? Impossible for the pragmatic tycoon...unless romantic motives overruled reason.

Cyril was at an utter loss. Progressing blindly could prove catastrophic.

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## Chapter 48 A Public Apology

Jonathan had always refused to apologize to Sylvia, which was causing their family company to deteriorate. Everyone wanted him to swallow his pride and apologize so that things could move past this incident.

At the very least, apologizing could help salvage their company. Any grudges could be settled another time – there was no need to fight for some fleeting satisfaction now.

But Jonathan was an extremely stubborn man. The more people told him to do something, the more he resisted.

During the years that Sylvia was married to Cyril, Jonathan had been meek and subservient, never daring to confront them directly.

Needless to say, Sylvia had been so submissive in front of Cyril. Jonathan saw her as beneath him and could not bring himself to apologize to someone so pathetic.

Plus, when they had gotten married, Jonathan had mocked and ridiculed Sylvia relentlessly. Now being asked to personally apologize to someone he had looked down on was too much for his pride.

He felt his whole family was deliberately trying to humiliate him and make him lose face.

Even Cyril came as a mediator, asking Jonathan to simply apologize to Sylvia.

“Why should I apologize to her? What exactly did I do wrong here? If she hadn’t done those things, why would there be photos in the first place? It just shows what kind of woman she is. I was standing up for you!” Jonathan insisted.

In Jonathan’s mind, Cyril had suffered immense grievances by marrying Sylvia. With Cyril’s status, he could have found someone much better. Their marriage must have been Sylvia’s

machinations.

Now that Sylvia felt she had the upper hand, she was targeting their family. As if Jonathan would swallow his pride and let that happen!

Cyril’s face darkened. He used to feel their marriage was a hardship to endure, but looking back over the years, it was not much different than not being married at all.

In their marriage, Sylvia was more like a vase that obediently stayed in the home.

—

a unimportant but indispensable decoration

Sometimes Cyril would use Sylvia to resolve problems, both in business and at home. Bringing her out served to mitigate many issues.

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So it wasn’t entirely accurate to say Sylvia was completely useless to him.

Jonathan’s words were nothing Cyril hadn’t heard before, but for some reason they rang false now. Perhaps because recently Cyril realized some things were not what he expected.

“If you were standing up for me, there’s no need. I can stand up for myself if I want to get back at someone. You shouldn’t get involved, especially since you created this situation yourself. Isn’t it only right Sylvia would retaliate?”

If Cyril was in Sylvia's shoes, he would definitely be angry too before the truth came out, and would strike back even harder.

So he felt Sylvia's reactions now showed some restraint out of consideration for his face.

"How can you stand up

for Sylvia now? You used to have such a different attitude about her. Just because you're divorced, suddenly you care about her feelings? Don't go too far!" Jonathan felt betrayed that Cyril had taken the other side when he was doing this for both their sakes.

Cyril's face darkened further. "If you had actual proof she wronged me, that would be one thing. But those photos you leaked clearly show her just greeting or helping a stranger. Do you take people for fools?"

"Listen, if you don't apologize now, things are only going to get worse for your family's company," Cyril said plainly, too tired to continue pleading. "Sylvia is giving you a chance to save face. If you apologize, your company might not become the laughing stock. You can't let it crumble just because of your stubbornness."

Jonathan wanted to argue more but knew the recent downturn at his company was bad. If things kept declining, the company would be in real trouble.

"Alright, I get it," he said begrudgingly. "No need to lecture me anymore."

Cyril felt unappreciated after coming to offer genuine advice. He should have just stayed away.

"Do it quickly – Sylvia's at the Ivan Group now. They have a charity gala coming up that she'll probably attend. Apologize to her there, but don't make a scene. And mean your apology, got it?"

Cyril felt drained from refereeing their messy conflict. He just wanted to help smooth things over but they kept complicating it.

Jonathan waved dismissively, still annoyed that he had to humble himself with a public apology. But fine, if that's what it took to fix his company's mess, so be it.

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Public Apology

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Cyril left after that, having said his piece. He had work to do and Jonathan was an adult, after all. No need to babysit him.

The Ivan Group did have a charity gala planned, holding one annually to donate significant sums. The gala doubled as a fundraising event.

Given the prominence of the Ivan name, everyone wanted access once word got out. Whether to actually contribute or simply network, attendees had personal reasons for going.

The event day arrived and guests streamed in, mingling for business opportunities even amid the altruistic air.

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Chapter 49 Tank his business

Jonathan had been scowling ever since he arrived at the charity gala, still fuming that he had to apologize to Sylvia at the prestigious Ivan event.

He couldn't understand her luck in cozying up with the Ivan empire. She didn't seem particularly cultured or impressive in the years she was married to Cyril – more like a housekeeper, obediently staying in her room and occasionally going back home to cook. What was so great about her, other than being docile?

Even though Jonathan knew he had to apologize, doing so to someone of Sylvia's station grated on him.

Upon entering, he spotted Bruce with a woman on his arm – none other than Sylvia herself. Bruce was carrying her bag, to the shock of onlookers unsure of her identity but surprised at their apparent closeness.

Jonathan gritted his teeth, incensed that she had snagged Bruce so soon after divorcing Cyril. He had underestimated her cunning.

"Behave yourself!" his father hissed, noticing his son's threatening demeanor. Causing trouble around Bruce would have consequences.

"I know what I should and shouldn't do," Jonathan huffed before stalking forward, his father unable to restrain him. This would not end well. The father hurried to find Cyril for help.

Bruce and Sylvia observed Jonathan's approach, his glare impossible to miss.



“What do you think?” Bruce asked, deferring to his sister on handling the situation. She could let Jonathan off if she wanted, though Bruce would make sure he still paid a private

price.

“If he comes to apologize, I’ll forgive him,” Sylvia replied. “But he ruined several of my overseas deals and embarrassed me. He won’t get off easy.”

Bruce doubted Jonathan would intentionally sabotage things here, but soon realized he had underestimated the man’s audacity.

Jonathan came right up to them, surrounded by several business partners chatting with Bruce. The men were puzzled by this rude interruption.

Jonathan bowed dramatically before Sylvia and Bruce, both taken aback.

“I sincerely apologize for spreading false rumors without knowing the facts. I was wrong

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and hope you can be the bigger person and forgive my family.”

It was an earnest apology, apart from the audience of peers.

Bruce saw now that Jonathan had deliberately made a spectacle. Sylvia likely expected this attempt to publicly disgrace her into forgiving him to save Ivan face.

With a sharp smile, Sylvia responded, “Since you’ve acknowledged your mistakes, I will forgive you, of course.”

Jonathan smiled too, confident she’d have to take the high road surrounded by so many people. His intent was obvious.

“Well, now that you’ve apologized, I assume you can be on your way?” Bruce said coldly, irritated by the posturing.

Inexplicably, Jonathan decided to further provoke Bruce. “I’d just caution you, sir, that the lady just divorced recently. You may want to console her.”

A stunned silence followed, appalled at his daring to lecture Bruce about Sylvia’s worthiness. “Is divorce so shameful?” Bruce retorted. “Wasn’t your wife filing for divorce recently? A good woman not cherished shows faults in her past marriage, not herself. It’s the ex- husband who likely needs consoling here.”

Jonathan was shocked at Bruce’s defense of Sylvia. Did he really favor her so strongly?

“I think that concludes today’s event,” Bruce stated firmly before leaving with Sylvia and abandoning the gala, no longer interested in charity facades.

The remaining guests were confused by Bruce’s dramatic exit and horrified at being left to deal with the fallout of Jonathan’s troublemaking.

Jonathan himself didn’t know what to do. The others clearly blamed him for ruining things and expected consequences.

When Cyril and Jonathan’s father arrived to overhear Bruce’s parting words, the father immediately collapsed in rage and distress at his son causing such chaos.

After the siblings left, Bruce made a call: “Tank all of Jonathan’s overseas deals.”

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## Chapter 50 His attitude

The day after collapsing from the overseas deals falling through, Jonathan’s father fainted again upon waking and hearing more bad news. He was already overwhelmed trying to salvage both domestic and foreign businesses. He couldn’t believe so much fell apart

overnight.

He wanted to ask Cyril for help but found him even busier, not intending to meet at all.

Finally, Jonathan cornered Cyril after work, unable to endure anymore.

“Instead of bothering me, think about resolving this yourself,” Cyril replied bluntly. “You brought it on with your offensive behavior last night.”

Though unaware of the exact details from the gala, Cyril knew enough from the aftermath about Jonathan’s inappropriate actions. Bruce’s retaliation made sense.

“But you never said anything when I bullied Sylvia before,” Jonathan argued. “Now you’re suddenly defending her over our years of brotherhood? Don’t tell me you regret how you treated her after the divorce. I’m telling you any regret is pointless. Sylvia is in this situation now regardless, and it’s got nothing to do with you!”

Cyril looked at Jonathan strangely. “What are you talking about? I never let you mistreat her. That was your own doing, so don’t blame me for it.”

“But your

attitude conveyed approval of how I acted,” Jonathan insisted. “You made it clear she didn’t matter to you either way. If it wasn’t for that, who would have treated her like this?”

Jonathan’s words gave Cyril pause as he carefully considered his past behavior towards Sylvia. He hadn’t thought anything was wrong with his treatment of her. But if even Jonathan was criticizing him, could his attitude have been an issue?

Reflecting back, he mostly disregarded Sylvia, keeping her at arm’s length. Those around him read his emotions clearly. Once they sensed her unimportance to him, their treatment of her changed accordingly. So was he largely responsible for her suffering today?

Cyril’s expression darkened at the prospect. It had never occurred to him that his indifference could spur so many consequences.

Seeing Cyril’s sudden displeasure, Jonathan worried about having spoken out of turn. ” What’s wrong? Did I say something incorrect? You don’t need to take it so seriously. You didn’t consider her worth caring about when you married anyway...”

“Regardless of how I saw her, Sylvia was still my wife,” Cyril interjected.

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When they married, divorce had never crossed Cyril’s mind. Marriage was for life in his eyes, If he wedded her then his duty was to fulfill that commitment.

So even if he disregarded Sylvia, separating was never his intent. How had things deteriorated to this point? While others undoubtedly played a role by worsening tensions, weren’t the fundamental issues due to his own failings?

Cyril dared not consider further, fearing a loss of self–control if he did.

Jonathan gaped in disbelief that such words came from Cyril. “Then why didn’t you make that clear before? At least saying so would have made people respect your wishes and be more considerate of her. How could anyone know you never intended to divorce? We all assumed you married unwillingly.”

This was painfully awkward. Everyone thought Cyril disliked Sylvia, leading to her mistreatment. Yet now he claimed he never considered leaving her. How preposterous!

Unable to respond, Cyril had never realized his deficiencies before. Unsure how to resolve this, he deflected, “Deal with your own matters first, then talk about others’.”

He promptly left without glancing back at Jonathan, who felt something was off but couldn't pinpoint what. With Cyril gone, he had no choice but to figure things out himself, though Cyril's reaction seemed oddly suspicious.

Rather than going home, Cyril headed straight for a bar, plagued by unwelcome thoughts that liquor might drown out. He felt awful, on edge.

Suddenly, a familiar figure entered that he couldn't stop watching approach and sit next to him. "Sylvia..." he uttered without thinking.

She flinched at his voice, neither confirming nor denying her identity.

Somewhat inebriated, Cyril started to reach out but caught himself, slumping over the counter instead.

Having finally tracked Cyril's location, Carina was shocked to find him drinking over Sylvia. How could he still care for someone he also despised? When Cyril hated Sylvia as much as she did, why would he call Sylvia's name now?

Taking a deep breath to steady her roiling emotions, Carina focused on what mattered – she was the one by Cyril's side right now, not Sylvia.

And after years of marriage, Sylvia had failed to earn Cyril's love, proof of her inadequacy. If she lacked the capability, then she should step aside.

Resolved, Carina helped Cyril up to a hotel room since they were above the bar. Cyril

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awakened with a splitting headache and discovered Carina sleeping next to him.