

All Sins 161

Chapter 161

Olivia was so worried, fearing any misstep could lead to trouble.

Sensing her unease, Tyler apologized, "Sorry, my bad for not waking you up."

But to Olivia, his apology felt insincere, like he was just trying to get this over with without really caring. No one understood why she was so worried; no one could possibly understand her fear and anxiety.

"No, it's not you. It's me. I just don't get why you seem so against giving me a reminder," she said. Tyler's gaze turned cold.

Struggling to hold back tears, Olivia broke away from him and dashed off, narrowly avoiding a collision with Colleen, who watched her flee in bewilderment.

"What's going on, Tyler? Did you two fight?" Colleen wondered aloud.

"Don't start making things up." Tyler shot her a warning glare before handing her the club and storming off, leaving Colleen confused.

Tyler reached his room only to find it locked. He instructed his maid, "Get a spare set of keys!"

"Yes, sir."

Five minutes later, Tyler used the keys to open the door. Inside, Olivia lay with her face buried in the pillow. She looked up as Tyler entered.

He frowned and sat on the couch, keeping his distance.

Colleen followed them in, asking, "Olivia?"

"Out, now!" Tyler's glare silenced her. "And close the door on your way out!"

Sensing tension, Colleen quietly left the room, closing the door behind her. She realized she had inadvertently stepped into a warzone, so she chose not to confront him further and left the scene.

In the ensuing silence, Tyler approached Olivia, sighing softly. "I'm not great at smoothing things over, okay? If you think it was unfair to you,

think it was unfair to you, fine. I'll have the driver take you home."

Olivia turned away from her pillow, considering his words. What was that supposed to mean?

Tyler watched her silently.

After a while, she relented, "Okay. Thank you for

for your

consideration."

As she started to get up from the bed, Tyler reached out and grabbed her arm.

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"Are you sulking?" he asked.

Olivia wasn't exactly sulking. It wasn't just about him failing to wake her up—it was more about how he seemed to have taken his steam out of her lately. "No," she replied defiantly. "If there's nothing else, I'll be heading out. Thanks."

Tyler knew the real issue but didn't seem interested in fixing it. "Stay tonight. We don't want rumors starting."

They had just gotten "married," and with his dad back home, they had to show some respect. Olivia realized she couldn't act however she pleased without caring about consequences anymore.

After a moment, Olivia gave in. "Fine."

Tyler let go of her arm. "That's settled. You're free to do whatever else you like. There aren't many rules here."

He left, leaving Olivia feeling neglected. The IVF had been forced on them, so why was he treating her like she'd wanted this all along?

Meanwhile, Colleen had already started gossiping. By the time Tyler came downstairs, Maisy had heard everything. "Did you two have a fight?":

"Colleen told you?" Tyler asked.

"She said you made her cry!" Maisy glared. "How could you treat her like that? She's your wife, not one of your employees! You need to be more considerate. She's just a young girl who recently started college. You're more mature than her!"

Tyler nodded, trying to placate her. "Understood. I'll keep that in mind."

Maisy wasn't buying any of that, "Sure you will. Honestly, can't you treat her with a bit more enthusiasm? You just got married!"

Tyler's frown deepened, but he held back his retort. "I know. I don't need you to remind me,

Grandmother."

“Good. Off you go, then. I can’t believe I have to teach you how to be a husband.”

Colleen hadn’t just told Maisy; she’d also informed Ana. Tyler ran into them while wandering in the garden. He noticed his mother giving him knowing glances as Colleen rambled on.

Tyler glared at Colleen, who quickly shut her mouth.

Ana smiled as she arranged flowers. “Don’t worry, Colleen. Tyler loves his wife. He knows how to treat her right, doesn’t he?” She emphasized “loves his wife” loudly enough for Tyler to hear.

He looked on coldly.

Meanwhile, Olivia composed herself before leaving the room. Colleen approached her in the main

hall, hugging her arm. “Are you okay? Tyler didn’t mistreat you, did he?”

“N–No! He didn’t. Not at all.”

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Colleen wasn’t convinced. “No way! I saw you crying on your bed!”

Olivia spotted Maisy in the hall and approached her, grimacing a little. “Sorry, I woke up late today.” She felt embarrassed for being the only one who hadn’t been up early in the Harris household. It made her seem rude and messy.

Maisy frowned. “Sweetie, you’re apologizing for sleeping in? You were busy! It’s only natural you’d sleep in. When I was your age, I slept even more!”

Before Olivia could respond, Maisy added, “Now, if Tyler bullies you, just tell me. I’ll support you!”

“Yeah, we’ve got your back!” Colleen chimed in.

Olivia had no idea the situation had escalated beyond her control. She was starting to feel a little embarrassed.

Maisy beckoned her over. “Come here, child. I’ll treat you better than that silly boy. Can’t believe he upset you so soon after the wedding!”

Colleen pushed and guided Olivia to sit with Maisy.

Olivia realized she couldn’t explain herself anymore. Tyler hadn’t mistreated her at all. It was all in her head, but she had no way out of it now.

At lunch, Ana brought up the issue. “I heard Tyler mistreated you today. Is that true?”

“N–No! Not at all, Aunt Ana!” Olivia replied instantly.

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Ana put her fork and knife down. “Aunt Ana?” she repeated. Keith watched from the side.

Olivia shot a glance at Tyler, hoping for guidance, but he remained expressionless.

Keith seemed annoyed. He and his wife had always wanted Olivia to address them as

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as her

parents.

The atmosphere grew tense. Suddenly, Tyler turned to Olivia and casually remarked, “Old habits die hard, huh? Well, good thing there’s still a grace period for you!”

“Right. Mom, Dad,” Olivia said with great difficulty.

Keith’s expression softened. “Now that’s better.”

Ana smiled. “Now, Tyler may seem cold sometimes, but we all care for you as our daughter-in-law, alright?”

Olivia was silent, still adjusting to her new role.

Keith turned to his wife. “Wait, these two lovebirds had a fight?”

“Who knows? Why don’t you ask them yourself?” Ana chuckled..

“No

we didn’t fight. Colleen made it up,” Tyler interjected quickly.

Keith observed their faces but said nothing. There was only so much one could do in their child’s relationships.

Olivia couldn’t remember how lunch ended. They stayed at the residence for another day before leaving for Sandalwood Palace that night.

During the journey, neither of them tried to break the ice.

Chapter 164

The atmosphere was tense as Olivia and Tyler returned home without exchanging a word. Once inside, Olivia broke the silence. "I'm going back to my room now."

Tyler didn't stop her, retreating to his own space.

Throughout the night, Olivia couldn't sleep. The glint of her ring in the darkness taunted her, and though she contemplated removing it, she hesitated.

The next morning, Olivia asked Tyler from the doorway. "When are we finally getting started on IVF?"

"After we tied up all the loose knots."

Aware of the pending tasks after their marriage registration, Olivia nodded. "I see. Well, I need to go out for a bit," she stated plainly, not concealing her intentions to avoid a repeat of the Sereneville incident.

"Where to?"

"Just lunch with my friend."

Tyler noticed the absence of her ring. "Okay. Do you need a driver?"

"No. I'm fine."

"Suit yourself."

Returning to his room, Tyler immersed himself in work while Olivia prepared to leave.

At the restaurant, Olivia met Sophie, who greeted her excitedly. "Hey! God, where have you been?! I haven't seen you in a while!"

“Well, you know... This and that.”

Sophie took her hand. “Come on. The restaurant’s good, I heard. It’s new around here.”

As they entered, Sophie exclaimed, “C–Claude?!”

Olivia followed her gaze, spotting Claude dining with an elegantly dressed woman. Claude looked up, recognizing Sophie. “Sophie?”

Then, his gaze shifted to Olivia, and he grinned warmly.

“W–Who is this? Your d–date?” Sophie blurted out.

The woman observed them quietly. Claude rose, deflecting the question. “Whatever brought the two

f you here?”

of

“We’re here to eat.”

“Well, why don’t you join our table? It will take a while before they can get you a new table.”

Sophie, thrilled by the prospect of drama, eagerly accepted. “Hell yeah!”

Olivia, however, pinched her friend’s arm in protest. This was not the time to interfere!

Ignoring Olivia’s resistance, Sophie pulled her to the table.

The woman studied Olivia and asked, "Who's this?"

Claude's smile remained gentle. "My sister's friend.

Sensing a potential threat, the woman pressed further. "Is she close to you?"

"I treat her as my little sister," he replied softly.

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"Olivia? This is Maddie Zimmers," Claude continued his introduction.

"Hi, Ms. Maddie. I'm Olivia."

"Oh. Hi." Maddie quickly glanced away.

Olivia felt embarrassed, especially since she and Sophie had kind of butted into what seemed like a private conversation. Sophie seemed oblivious, though, and complained, "I can't believe you didn't tell me about this!!

Ignoring Sophie, Claude turned to Maddie, asking, "Do you want some tea?"

"Thanks. I'm a bit thirsty," Maddie replied.

Claude poured her a cup and then turned to Olivia. "And what about you? It's been hot lately,"

He poured another cup for Olivia before she could even respond. "T-Thanks," she said sheepishly.

The menu arrived, and Claude handed it to Olivia. "Take a look. You and Sophie can choose whatever you like."

Maddie's expression soured, and she stared at Claude in disbelief.

"What's wrong?" Claude asked.

Maddie clenched her fists. As a young lady from a rich family, she was clearly unused to being ignored. "...Nothing," she said through gritted teeth.

Olivia was surprised to be the first to get the menu, so she passed it to Maddie. "You should order first, Ms. Maddie. We can

wait."

Maddie stood up abruptly. "And what am I supposed to order? Your favorite food? Your favorite drink?"

Olivia and Sophie were stunned, and Claude's expression darkened. "What's going on?" he demanded.

"Why don't you tell me?" Maddie snapped, pointing at Olivia. "Who is she?"

"I told you, my friend."

"Why did you give her the menu first?"

"Because she's our guest," Claude replied.

"Then who the hell am I supposed to be?!"

Claude's eyes turned cold.

“You know what? Fine! I’m done. I don’t want to eat with any of you. At all!” As she stormed off, she knocked over the tea, spilling it toward Olivia. Sophie yelled.

Chanter tob

Olivia stood up quickly, but the tea had already soaked into her clothes.

Claude grabbed Maddie’s wrist. There was no hint of a smile on his face. “What are you doing?!”

“No, what are you doing?! You’re on her side now?!”

He released her and moved to Olivia’s side. “Are you okay?”

Sophie observed her brother’s unexpectedly caring behavior and pondered silently.

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Olivia gripped the edge of her dress tightly, “I’m fine,”

Maddie stomped her foot, incensed that Claude was more concerned about Olivia than her own anger. “Excuse me?!”

Claude ignored Maddie, focusing on helping Olivia and wiping away the hot water. Receiving no attention from him, Maddie stormed out of the restaurant, grabbing her handbag,

Olivia hadn’t anticipated things escalating to this point. She couldn’t stop Maddie from leaving

Sophie finally snapped out of her shock and approached Olivia, “Oh my god, are you okay?!”

Olivia felt the sting of the hot tea on her thighs, calves, and abdomen, but she suppressed the pain. “ I’m fine... B–But what about Maddie?”

Sophie stared at her brother expectantly,

“Whatever. She can go wherever she wants. We’re not a good match anyway,” Claude said dismissively.

Sophie reeled, understanding the underlying message.

Olivia, however, did not and remained fixated on Maddie’s departure. “No, you need to go after her! I’m okay, really. I’ll go home with Sophie.”

Claude held her hand. “She doesn’t matter right now. Here, let me check your injuries-”

Olivia grimaced.

“On second thought,” Claude corrected, “Let’s get you to a doctor.”

Despite Olivia’s protests, Claude insisted. As they made their way, Claude asked with concern, “Should we put some ice on it? Is it getting worse?”

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Sophie was a bit annoyed by her brother’s worry. “Just get her to a doctor, okay? Don’t fuss too much!

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Olivia and Claude fell silent. Sophie’s words carried an implied meaning, and both of them sensed it.

He glanced at Olivia and responded, “Right.”

“Hmph! This incident really ruffled your feathers,” Sophie teased, clearly enjoying herself.

Claude, choosing to ignore her, kept driving.

At the hospital, the doctor examined Olivia. “She’s alright, but she has some serious burns on her abdomen. She’ll need cream to help heal her skin.”

Olivia was surprised it was that bad. “Wait, really?”

“Yes, it’s important to start applying healing cream right away.

Claude felt guilty and concerned. “She doesn’t need to be hospitalized, right?” Comment by Lyndis Z. Yin: what the fuck? Hospitalized for getting hot tea scalding?

This novel’s scale of drama is kinda... weird.

One total reaction

Marianne Herrera reacted with at 2024-03-08 16:13 pm Comment by Marianne Herrera: Maybe the

tea is very hot haha “No, hospitalization isn’t necessary. But you could let her rest here for an hour or t Here, some ice packs will help.”

“That’s great. Thanks.” Claude turned to his sister. “Grab some ice for me, Sophie.”

Sophie knew it was best to give them some privacy. “Sure thing!”

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Claude hummed an agreement as Sophie disappeared through the door.

The doctor allowed Olivia to rest on a bed outside. Looking up at Claude, she said, "I'm really fine. Don't worry. I just need some rest." Comment by Lyndís Z. Yin: it was just being scalded by hot tea. I don't get the drama.

She attempted to get down, but Claude approached her. "Allow me."

He lifted her up in a bridal carry.

Olivia was stunned, instinctively trying to free herself, but Claude's hold was firm. He didn't smile as he explained, "I'm just taking you to the bed. Walking might worsen your injury."

Olivia panicked. Considering herself a married woman now, the thought of leaning into another man's embrace seemed wrong. "I—I—I'm really fine! Please, just let me walk on my own!"

Claude stopped her from squirming. "Relax, Olivia. I'm just taking you to the ward. I'd do the same for Sophie if she were hurt," he said seriously.

He gently placed her on the bed and asked softly, "Feeling better?"

Still rattled, Olivia stuttered, "I'm... okay. R—Really." She moved her arm away from his neck.

Claude sensed her discomfort, noticing how she avoided him. After a brief silence, he withdrew his hand and stepped back, ending the awkwardness between them.

Olivia returned to Sandalwood Palace, her head racing with thoughts. All she wanted was to retreat to

her room.

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The maid tried to greet her, but Olivia ignored her and hurried up the stairs. Once inside her room, Tyler emerged from his study, asking, "Is she back?"

"Yes, Mr. Tyler. She's in her room."

Tyler headed to Olivia's room, noticing the door was slightly ajar. As he pushed it open, Olivia, in the midst of changing, startled in panic. "T-Tyler!"

He was about to inquire about her day when he noticed her different dress. "You weren't wearing that earlier. Why the change?"

"Er, I spilled some hot tea on my dress, so I bought a new one," Olivia explained, flustered.

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"You spilled tea on your dress?" Tyler repeated skeptically. "Tell me how that happened."

Olivia felt a sense of dread. She hesitated for a moment before replying, "It was an accident. Someone bumped into me."

Tyler didn't seem convinced. He continued to stare at her.

"I... I'm tired. I want to take a nap," she added hastily, trying to change the subject.

Olivia had intended to change out of the tight dress Sophie had gotten her, which was rubbing against her injury and causing more pain. She grabbed her nightwear and headed to the bathroom.

But Tyler seemed to interpret her actions differently. "Why did you take off your wedding ring for lunch? Because you're worried that Claude would notice?"

Olivia froze, meeting his cold gaze. "I had lunch with Sophie!" she protested.

“And you need to change after that?” He marched into her room. “I thought I made it clear. You can associate with anyone—except him.”

Although his tone was slightly softer, his eyes betrayed his true feelings. “You’re not the same person you used to be. Remember your role here.”

Olivia was shocked. She finally understood what he was insinuating. “Do you... Do you really think I would...?”

He raised an eyebrow as she gripped her dress tightly, trembling.

“Go take a bath. Clean yourself up,” Tyler said.

“The reason I changed has nothing to do with Claude or what you’re accusing me of!”

“No need to explain. I’ll talk to your family about this matter.”

Her family?! It felt like she was being punished for a crime she didn’t commit!

Olivia stepped in front of him. “I didn’t sleep with him!”

Tyler stopped and looked at her.

“What do you take me for? Why are you acting like this is who I am?” she demanded. “I didn’t want any of this! So why are you treating me like I did? What did I do wrong? Tell me! Is it my fault our relationship has come to this?”

“And what if I do like Claude? What’s wrong with that? Don’t I have the right to love who I want, or is being your pretend wife some kind of prison?!” she shouted, her emotions breaking through. Tyler stared at her blankly.

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His lack of response made Olivia turn around. But before she could go far, he grabbed her forearm.”
Calm down. You’re getting too... emotional.”

She suddenly yelped.

Something was wrong. Tyler released her arm, noticing her trembling. “What’s wrong?!”

Olivia stepped back, keeping her distance to avoid any more sudden movements. His grip had been so strong that it had aggravated her injury, rubbing against her skin.

Tyler approached cautiously. “What’s going on?”

She held her abdomen protectively, retreating further.

Tyler took her forearm again, this time without force. He looked at her abdomen and realized it had to do with it. “Take your clothes off.”

Olivia hesitated, shivering.

“Take it off,” he repeated firmly.

Finally, she complied.

Tyler pulled her closer. “What happened here?” he asked, his gaze intense. He noticed the inflammation around her belly button, the skin irritated and injured. He carried her in his arms,

causing her to wince as she grabbed his shoulders tightly.

Covering her with her clothes, he carried her out of the room. "What's going on? Who did this to you?" he demanded.

Olivia trembled but said nothing.

Tyler's expression darkened. It was a side of him no one had ever seen before.

He descended the stairs, where the maid rushed to meet him. "What's wrong, Mr. Tyler?"

"Get the car ready. We need to go to the hospital."

"B-But I just got back from there!"

"I didn't ask you," Tyler retorted. After settling Olivia into the car, he asked, "Are there any injuries like this?"

She pressed her lips together, refusing to answer.

"I asked you a question."

other

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"None," she replied.

"The hospital, sir?" asked the driver.

"Yes."

Tyler waited as the doctor examined her. "The skin around her abdomen is sensitive. If she wears tight clothing, it could rub against the injury and cause pain. But there's nothing more serious than that."

"No other injuries?" Tyler confirmed.

"None at all," the doctor answered.

His assistant chimed in, "Will this affect procedures like IVF?"

Tyler frowned at her, and she fell silent. It seemed that was his main concern for bringing Olivia to the hospital.

"It's just a superficial injury. Nothing major. She can proceed with the procedure after she's healed,"

the doctor reassured.

"I see. Thank you."

The doctor left, and Tyler dismissed his assistant before turning to Olivia. "So, what happened?" he asked, as if their earlier conversation hadn't occurred.

Olivia looked away for a few minutes before replying, "A cup tipped over. Hot water spilled down the table."

"Who did that?" he followed up, his tone and gaze now a lot gentler.

Olivia closed her eyes. "Sophie and I ran into Claude and his date while choosing a place to eat. His date accidentally knocked the cup over."

“His date?”

Olivia remained silent.

“Let me guess. It’s a long story,” he concluded.

Olivia hadn’t expected any of this to happen. She thought of Claude as he carried her earlier, feeling a flutter of emotions, but she looked away, feeling bashful.

“What is it?”

Avoiding his gaze, Olivia replied, “Nothing.”

Tyler sensed something was amiss; her panicked expression was a clear indicator. His gaze

intensified, and upon seeing this, Olivia realized it was best to drop the conversation.

A hint of warmth returned to his face. “I was wrong to assume the worst. I’m sorry.”

Olivia didn’t respond, still feeling hurt by his accusations. They felt like attacks on her character.

“I know I said some things I shouldn’t have, but I hope we can move past this,” he continued.

“Why did you say those things so easily then? Why did you act that way? Did you really believe I would do something like that?” Olivia asked, searching his eyes for answers.

Yet, she couldn’t read anything out of them.