

When Her "Death" Couldn't Break Him Chapter 11

When Her "Death" Couldn't Break Him Chapter 11

By _ / September 7, 2024

When Her "Death" Couldn't Break Him Chapter 11

Chapter 11 Give It Back To You

Cecilia felt a warm sensation in her right ear, as if fresh blood was trickling out. She stood frozen, unable to move.

Paula looked at her daughter, so feeble and incapable, and felt a profound sadness—not for Cecilia, but for herself.

She picked up the documents from the coffee table and handed them over to Cecilia. "Take a good look," she said. "This is the choice I've made for you."

Cecilia took the documents and read the bold title: Prenuptial Agreement.

She opened it and skimmed the contents: Ms. Cecilia Smith shall willingly marry Mr. Randy Larke, promising to care for him until old age, never to leave his side. Mr. Randy will ensure the well-being of Ms. Cecilia Smith's family by providing three hundred million in funds to the Smith family...

Randy Larke was a seventy-eight-year-old seasoned entrepreneur from Tudela. A string in Cecilia's mind felt as if it were wound too tightly, ready to snap.

Paula continued, "Mr. Larke has stated that he doesn't mind this being your second marriage. As long as you marry him, he will help the Smith family rise again."

Paula's hopeful eyes bore into Cecilia as she stepped forward, placing a hand on her daughter's shoulder. "Sweetheart, you wouldn't let me and your little brother down, would you?"

Cecilia's complexion grew increasingly pale. She clenched the agreement in her hand. "Nathaniel and I aren't fully divorced yet," she replied.

Paula waved off the concern. "Mr. Larke suggested that you could have the wedding ceremony first and register it afterward," she said. "Besides, Nathaniel doesn't love you. I respect your decision to divorce him."

Realizing that she couldn't salvage Cecilia's marriage to Nathaniel, Paula had decided to heed her son's advice—while her daughter was still young, she would maximize her worth.

Cecilia felt as though her throat was clogged with cotton. “May I ask you something?” she paused before continuing, “Am I really your biological daughter?”

Paula’s expression stiffened. The facade of her pleasant demeanor vanished as she began to chide Cecilia. “Had it not been for giving birth to you, do you think my figure would have changed? That I would have fallen from my pedestal as a world-renowned dancer? You truly disappoint me!”

Growing up, Cecilia could never understand why other mothers loved their children unconditionally, without any resentment or regret. Yet, her own mother wouldn’t spare her a shred of love.

Even now, she didn’t understand. But she had come to accept one thing—she no longer yearned for others to love her.

She carefully placed the contract aside. “I can’t agree to this,” she said.

Paula hadn’t expected her to outright refuse and was instantly infuriated. “How dare you reject me? Your life—it was I who gave it to you! Do whatever I tell you to do!”

Cecilia looked at her directly. “So, if I give my life back to you, does that mean I don’t owe you anything anymore?”

Paula was taken aback. “What did you say?”

Cecilia’s pale lips parted slightly. “If I were to return my life to you, would you cease to be my mother? Would I no longer owe you the debt of giving birth to me?”

Paula couldn’t believe her ears and scoffed coldly. “Fine. As long as you return that life to me, I won’t force you! But do you dare?”

Cecilia seemed to have made up her mind. “Give me one month,” she requested.

Paula felt as if she had lost her mind. She pushed the agreement back toward Cecilia. “If you’re too scared to die, then sign your name.”

After delivering these words, she walked out in her high heels. Magnus was waiting at the door, having overheard the conversation. “Mom, she’s not going to contemplate taking her own life, is she?” he asked.

Paula’s expression remained indifferent. “If she dares to die, I’ll give her credit for that! After all, she was raised by a nanny, not me. We’ve never been close. I’ve never really considered her my daughter.”

They hadn’t gone far, and Cecilia heard every word clearly. She rubbed her aching ears, sometimes wishing she could be deaf.

Alone in the room, she felt as though her life had been a complete failure—as if she had never truly lived for herself.

Feeling suffocated, Cecilia yearned to find an outlet for her emotions. That evening, she made her way to a bar. Seated in a corner, she nursed her drink, her gaze lost in the crowd engrossed in song and dance.

A man with strikingly attractive eyes and handsome features noticed her sitting alone and approached. “Are you Cecilia?”

Cecilia looked at him, not recognizing him. Compelled by some unseen force, she asked, “Do you know what it takes to be happy?”

The man was puzzled. “What are you saying?”

Cecilia took another sip of her drink. “The doctor told me I was sick and needed to cheer up, but... I just can’t seem to find happiness.”

Hearing this, the man—Calvin Reese—felt a pang of bitterness.

Does she not remember me? Also, what sort of illness is she suffering from that she needs cheering up?

“Miss, if you’re seeking joy, this isn’t the place you should be,” he advised. “Let me take you home.”

Cecilia smiled at him. “You’re a good person.”

Calvin watched her bitter smile, his emotions tangled.

What has she been through these past few years? Why does she look so... sad?

On the other side of the bar, Nathaniel was also present. Ever since he had filed for divorce from Cecilia, he had been letting loose every night, avoiding his usual routines. It had been a while since he returned to Daltonia Villa.

As the night grew late and everyone was preparing to leave, Stella noticed a familiar figure in the corner. “Isn’t that Ms. Smith?” she exclaimed.

Nathaniel followed her gaze and saw a man standing in front of Cecilia, engaged in conversation. His expression turned grim.

She’s drowning her sorrows in a bar and picking up men? I overestimated her. So, she’s just like that after all. Who was it that once declared they would only ever love me in this lifetime?

“Do you want to confront her?” Stella asked.

“No need,” Nathaniel replied coldly before quickly walking away.

Cecilia declined Calvin’s offer to escort her home. “I can manage on my own,” she said. “No need to trouble yourself.”

Feeling uneasy, Calvin watched as she walked away, keeping a safe distance behind her.

Nathaniel sat alone in his car, unbuttoning the top two buttons of his shirt, still feeling frustrated. Halfway through the journey home, he asked the driver to turn back.

As fate would have it, he crossed paths with Cecilia again. Nathaniel instructed the driver to stop the car and swiftly got out, heading toward her.

“Cecilia.”

The familiar voice sobered her up almost instantly. She looked up to see Nathaniel approaching, feeling as though she were in a dream. “Natha—”

“Mr. Rainsworth,” she corrected herself.

Nathaniel noticed, to his surprise, that Cecilia had put on light makeup that day. After they got married, she had never worn makeup. He had forgotten that he once told her he didn’t like women who wore makeup.

“Do you know what you look like right now?” Nathaniel asked, his thin lips barely parting.

Cecilia stared at him, seemingly lost in thought.

“You look like a ghost,” he said bluntly. “Who would even like a woman like you?”

Cecilia snapped back to reality, her voice hoarse. “I know no one likes me. I’m not expecting anyone to...”

A heavy feeling settled in Nathaniel’s chest.

“If there’s nothing else, I’ll be on my way,” Cecilia said before she continued to walk away.

Nathaniel wanted to ask her about the man she had been with, but the words stuck in his throat.

After all, we’re about to get divorced—there’s no need.

With that, Cecilia continued on her way home, alone, feeling the weight of the day pressing down on her.

When Her "Death" Couldn't Break Him Chapter 12

When Her "Death" Couldn't Break Him Chapter 12

By / September 7, 2024

When Her "Death" Couldn't Break Him Chapter 12

Chapter 12 Two Of A Kind

As Cecilia looked around, everything felt exceptionally unfamiliar. Once again, she had forgotten the way back.

She pulled out her mobile phone to use the GPS but struggled to recall the name of the place where she was staying.

Calvin had been following her at a distance, worried about her since Nathaniel had left. Seeing Cecilia standing alone, he couldn't help but approach her.

"Cecilia."

Startled, Cecilia instinctively thought that Nathaniel had returned. A glimmer of hope sparked in her eyes, but when she turned around, it was replaced by a sense of loss.

Calvin walked toward her. "Do you really not remember me?"

Cecilia gazed at him, struggling to place his face.

"I'm Fatso; have you forgotten?" Calvin prompted gently.

It was then that Cecilia remembered. When she was a child living in the countryside with Martha, she had a friend named Fatso. Calvin had been chubby and shorter than her back then, but now, he had grown into a tall, imposing figure with striking features.

"I remember now; you've changed so much that I hardly recognized you."

Reuniting with an old friend in such a foreign place brought a faint smile to Cecilia's face, though it was tinged with bitterness that didn't escape Calvin's notice.

"Come on, I'll take you home," Calvin offered.

After dropping Cecilia off, Calvin was surprised to discover that she was staying in a rundown motel. For someone from a prestigious family like the Rainsworth family, even after a divorce, she shouldn't have been reduced to such a state.

Cecilia felt uneasy. "Sorry for the trouble," she said softly. "I live here, but please don't tell Martha. I'm afraid it would worry her."

Calvin nodded, unsure of how to comfort her. It was late, and he couldn't stay indefinitely. After promising to visit her the next day, he left.

As Calvin drove away, he didn't notice the matte black Cadillac parked in the shadows beneath the building.

For Cecilia, it didn't matter where she lived. After Calvin left, she felt the discomfort from the drinks she had earlier, her stomach churning and her head spinning.

Nathaniel's cruel words echoed in her mind. "You look like a ghost! Who would even like a woman like you?"

She rubbed the makeup off her face and the lipstick from her lips, her pale skin flushing and swelling from the rough treatment.

After realizing she was suffering from depression, Cecilia had sought information about the condition. She knew that depression could lead to brain damage, causing memory loss and cognitive dysfunction. It could make a person dwell on unhappy thoughts, amplifying their distress.

Knock, knock!

The sound of persistent knocking echoed through the room. Cecilia thought Calvin had returned, so she got up to open the door. But the moment it swung open, her wrist was firmly grasped by Nathaniel.

He held her slender wrist so tightly that it felt as though it might snap.

"Cecilia! You've truly taken me by surprise!" Nathaniel's voice was harsh as he closed the door behind him and unceremoniously guided her to the nearby couch.

"So you've already chosen your next partner—no wonder you're so willing to let go!" His words were like daggers, cutting deep.

Seeing Calvin with her had ignited a spark of jealousy and misunderstanding in Nathaniel.

Cecilia couldn't comprehend why Nathaniel's first love held such a place in his heart, yet nothing she did seemed to reach him.

She looked straight into Nathaniel's furious eyes, her own reddening at the corners. "We're just two of a kind," she whispered.

The Smith family had deceived him in marriage, and Nathaniel had treated her with indifference for three years while still harboring feelings for his first love. Neither of them was nobler than the other.

Nathaniel had consumed some alcohol that night, and his entire being exuded the scent of liquor. He gripped Cecilia's chin, his eyes rimmed red as he murmured, "Who was he? When did you two meet?"

It was the first time Cecilia had seen him like this, and she suddenly laughed. "Are you jealous?"

Nathaniel's dark eyes narrowed as he retorted sarcastically, "Are you worthy of my jealousy?"

Cecilia choked back tears.

However, Nathaniel leaned in closer, persisting with his questions by her ear. "Did he have sex with you much earlier? Hmm?"

They had been married for three years, during which Cecilia had given up her job to follow the customs of the Rainsworth family. She had even turned down occasional invitations from friends. But now, Nathaniel was beginning to doubt her fidelity.

At that moment, Cecilia felt an unexpected sense of relief. "What do you think?" she countered.

Nathaniel was thoroughly infuriated, his burning hand moving downward. Cecilia's blood seemed to freeze as she struggled to comprehend what was happening. She wanted to resist, to fight back, but it was futile.

It wasn't until the very last moment had passed that Nathaniel finally calmed down.

Outside, the sky was beginning to brighten. Nathaniel looked at the thin and frail Cecilia, then his gaze shifted to the glaring red stain on the bedsheet. He couldn't quite describe the feeling in his heart.

Smack!

The sharp sound of a slap echoed through the room as Cecilia struck Nathaniel across his handsome face. The slap shattered all her past illusions of love.

She clapped her hands over her ears, unable to make out what Nathaniel was saying, and cut him off, "Get out!"

Nathaniel had no idea how he managed to leave. Scenes from the night before filled his mind.

Once he got into the car, he dialed his assistant, Mason. "Find out who the men in Cecilia's life are," he ordered.

Mason was somewhat bewildered.

After her marriage, Cecilia's world revolved around Mr. Rainsworth. Did she even know any other men?

Inside the motel, after Nathaniel left, Cecilia meticulously cleaned herself over and over again.

As their divorce loomed, they had finally experienced the essence of being a married couple. It was, when spoken aloud, both laughable and tragically ironic.

In the morning, around nine o'clock, Calvin brought over breakfast, oblivious to Cecilia's unusual demeanor.

"I left in such a hurry last night, I forgot to mention we have a vacant house in our property. You're welcome to stay there. It's not safe for a girl to stay in a motel."

Cecilia shook her head in refusal. It was difficult to repay human kindness, and she didn't want to owe anyone anything.

Calvin expected her refusal. "Either way, the place is vacant. You might as well move in—I'm not going to charge you rent."

"But I'll only need it for a month," she said.

"One month it is, then. It's certainly better than leaving it unoccupied," Calvin agreed.

He couldn't fathom why she claimed she could only stay for a month, considering they had plenty of time ahead.

As he drove Cecilia over to the house, she had nothing but a single, simple suitcase, devoid of any other luggage.

After getting into the car, Calvin and Cecilia reminisced about their childhood memories. Later, he shared what he had been up to over the years.

After high school, he had moved abroad, worked diligently while studying, and by the age of twenty, he had established his own company. Now, he was quite a wealthy businessman.

Upon hearing his rich experiences, Cecilia found herself reflecting on her own life.

After graduation, she had married Nathaniel and become a homemaker. She gazed at Calvin with admiration. "You're truly impressive."

"You were capable too. After you left the village, I kept track of you. I saw you on TV, and even witnessed you winning first place in the Youth's Piano Competition... You also sang, right? Did you know? Back then, you were my idol..."

Calvin didn't tell Cecilia about his struggles.

Back in the days when he was studying abroad alone, life hadn't initially been easy for him. He had picked up bad habits and fallen into a state of self-degeneration until he saw the news about Cecilia—a person born with a hearing impairment who had managed to achieve so much.

Ordinarily, the doors to the music industry would've long been closed to her.

When Her "Death" Couldn't Break Him Chapter 13

When Her "Death" Couldn't Break Him Chapter 13

By _ / September 7, 2024

When Her "Death" Couldn't Break Him Chapter 13

Chapter 13 Only Love

However, Cecilia had proven that, despite her disability, she could play the piano, dance, and sing just as well as anyone else. She was in no way inferior to those without disabilities.

These news reports had served as a beacon of hope for Calvin, helping him find the strength to pick himself up during his darkest days.

As Calvin recounted his own accomplishments, Cecilia found herself almost forgetting the person she had once been.

After Calvin escorted her to her place of residence, Cecilia offered him a small, grateful smile. "Thank you," she said softly. "I almost forgot who I used to be."

Calvin, noticing her fragility, took her out for a meal. Throughout the day, he considerably avoided asking about what had transpired after Cecilia's marriage.

After settling into her new place, Cecilia realized there were only a few days left until mid-May, the day she and Nathaniel had agreed to finalize their divorce.

Reflecting on the promise she had made to Paula, she journeyed to the graveyard one morning.

She first visited her father's tombstone. Gazing at the kind image of her father in the photograph, a roughness caught in Cecilia's throat. "Dad, I miss you so much."

A gentle breeze softly caressed Cecilia's cheek, bringing a bittersweet sting to her nose. "Dad, you'd be mad at me if I came to see you, wouldn't you?" she whispered.

She reached out, gently removing the fallen leaves from the tombstone, one by one. "I know I should be strong, but... I'm sorry..."

After standing in front of the tombstone for a considerable time, Cecilia finally decided to leave.

Before heading back, she bought an urn and visited a photography studio. Under the curious gazes of the staff, she had a black-and-white photo taken.

On the way back, she stared out the car window, lost in thought. Her phone rang, breaking her reverie—it was Martha.

"How have you been lately, Ceci?" Martha's gentle voice asked.

Cecilia forced a smile. "I've been doing well."

Martha sighed in relief but then scolded her lightly, "Who told you to sneakily give me money? I didn't use it—I saved it for you. If you ever want to start a business or something..."

Over the years, Cecilia had often sent Martha money in secret. Martha, being a simple country woman, had saved every penny.

Listening to Martha's concerned nagging, tears unwittingly covered Cecilia's face.

"Martha, could you pick me up and take me home like you used to when I was little?" Cecilia asked, her voice trembling.

Martha was puzzled. Cecilia repeated, "On the fifteenth, I'd like you to take me back to our home."

Though Martha didn't understand why she had to wait until then, she agreed. "All right, on the fifteenth, I will come to pick you up and take you home."

Recently, the hospital had sent Cecilia several messages, asking her to come in for a follow-up check. She had politely declined each one.

She had already decided to leave and didn't want to squander any more money on treatment. She glanced at her account, noting she still had over a hundred thousand left—money she planned to leave for Martha to use for her retirement.

The past few days in Tudela had been marked by relentless rain.

Calvin often visited her and noticed that her hearing impairment had worsened. Often, when he knocked on her door, she wouldn't hear him. Occasionally, when he spoke, she had to focus on the shape of his lips to understand what he was saying.

"Ceci, there's going to be fireworks by the river. Do you want to go see them in two days?" Calvin asked one day.

It took Cecilia a moment to respond. "All right."

In Tudela, it was a tradition to have fireworks by the riverside every Saturday. It was said that couples who watched the fireworks together would never part ways.

After she got married, Cecilia had once tried to see the fireworks with Nathaniel, but he had coldly rejected her. Despite having countless opportunities, they never did.

On Saturday, Cecilia and Calvin went to watch the eight o'clock fireworks.

Boom!

The dazzling fireworks lit up the sky, their beauty vanishing in an instant.

Cecilia gazed up at the sky, tears brimming in her eyes. "Calvin, thank you. I felt happy today."

Calvin looked at the frail and thin Cecilia beside him. Despite the smile on her face, he sensed that she wasn't truly happy. "I'll be staying in Tudela this year. From now on, we can watch the fireworks together every week," he offered.

Cecilia didn't agree because she knew she couldn't make that promise.

Half an hour later, the show ended. She declined Calvin's offer to walk her home, choosing instead to walk alone along the riverbank.

The streets were bustling with people, but despite the crowd, Cecilia thought she caught a glimpse of Nathaniel. As the people drew closer, she realized it wasn't him.

Ever since they parted ways, she had often mistaken others for Nathaniel. Whenever she saw someone who even slightly resembled him, she would think it was him.

At the crossroads, while waiting for the light to change, she noticed an entertainment news segment on a large screen across the street. The person being interviewed was Stella.

The reporter asked, “Stella, you mentioned that this time you returned to win back your first love. Have you achieved your wish?”

Facing the camera, Stella neither confirmed nor denied it. Instead, she said, “At eight o’clock tonight, he and I watched the fireworks over Tudela together.”

This was undoubtedly an announcement of their relationship. As Cecilia crossed the street, a song dedicated to Stella played on the television—Only Love.

Only Love... In my entire life, I’ve only ever loved Nathaniel. How did I come to like him?

She thought back to an afternoon ten years ago when she returned home alone. She saw Nathaniel from next door, wearing a white shirt.

She remembered how, back in school, after she had been bullied, Nathaniel’s intervention felt like divine intervention. There were times when their parents teased them, saying that when they grew up, they were going to marry each other...

There were so many memories. But even now, Cecilia couldn’t quite understand why she had fallen for Nathaniel.

Meanwhile, Nathaniel didn’t see the news. After finishing his work, he checked his phone, but there were no messages from Cecilia.

His eyes darkened slightly. He switched off his phone and tossed it aside.

Mason knocked on the door and entered. “Mr. Rainsworth, we’ve found out. The man’s name is Calvin Reese, and it appears he was Cecilia’s childhood friend.”

To Nathaniel’s understanding, and from previous reports, he had always been the childhood sweetheart in Cecilia’s life.

Mason explained that Calvin was someone Cecilia had met during her time in the countryside—someone she knew even before she met Nathaniel.

Nathaniel thought back to the man with the charming eyes, his brows furrowing slightly.

“Mr. Rainsworth, Mr. Sinclair is still waiting for you outside,” Mason said.

Nathaniel instructed, “Tell him I’m busy today.”

Mason was surprised.

Lately, Mr. Rainsworth has been spending his evenings with Mr. Sinclair and their wealthy friends. Why the change today?

Nathaniel took the executive elevator down to the underground parking and drove straight to the motel where Cecilia had been staying. But when he arrived, he found out that Cecilia had moved out a few days before.

Suddenly, Nathaniel felt a wave of agitation. He pulled out his phone and scrolled through his contacts. Just as he was about to call Cecilia, his phone rang. It was Stella.

“What’s the matter?”

“Nathaniel, I heard from Cecilia’s mom that Cecilia is planning to get married,” Stella said.

At her words, Nathaniel’s dark eyes narrowed.

When Her "Death" Couldn't Break Him Chapter 14

When Her “Death” Couldn’t Break Him Chapter 14

By _ / September 7, 2024

When Her “Death” Couldn’t Break Him Chapter 14

Chapter 14 The Last Day

After participating in the interview, Stella went to see Paula.

She discovered that Paula and Cecilia’s younger brother had planned to marry Cecilia off to an old man in exchange for three billion.

Seeing that Nathaniel was silent for a long time, Stella decided to stir the pot, saying, “I heard from Mrs. Smith that Cecilia demanded a betrothal gift of three hundred million. I really didn’t expect her to be that kind of person...”

She paused before adding, “They also mentioned that the cool off period isn’t over yet, so it’s not appropriate for her to get married. They’ll just hold the wedding ceremony first.”

Unbeknownst to Cecilia, her mother and younger brother were still busy planning her wedding. They didn’t take her previous words seriously.

Paula was convinced that Cecilia wouldn’t dare to defy them, just as she hadn’t in the past.

She had faced so many hardships growing up and never once considered leaving—this time. would be no different.

Magnus had already persuaded Randy to transfer the three hundred million betrothal gift in advance, which he then used to start planning his new company. He didn't feel the slightest guilt or that he owed anything to Cecilia.

One day, Cecilia received a text from her mother: Mr. Larke has picked the date; it's the fifteenth of this month. You have four days left, so prepare yourself well for your marriage. This time, you must capture his heart, understand?

Upon reading those messages, a wave of indescribable emotions washed over Cecilia.

The fifteenth....

It was a day of joyful reunion, the day she and Nathaniel had agreed to finalize their divorce, the day she was forced to marry Randy, and it was also the day she decided to leave the world behind.

Afraid she might forget, Cecilia took notes of these events in her notebook. After noting it down, she began writing her farewell letters.

Picking up the pen, she found herself at a loss for words. In the end, she left messages for Martha. and Calvin.

Once she finished writing, she tucked the farewell letters under her pillow.

Three days later, on the fourteenth, the rain was particularly heavy. Cecilia's phone sat on the coffee table, ringing incessantly.

The calls were all from Paula, asking where she was. They encouraged her to go home and properly prepare herself for the wedding.

Cecilia didn't respond. That day, she wore a brand-new dress in a shade of begonia and meticulously applied her makeup.

She wasn't unattractive—just too thin, with a face too pale. Looking at her reflection in the mirror, Cecilia saw a radiant and exquisite version of herself, as if she had traveled back in time to the days before she married Nathaniel.

She hailed a taxi and headed toward the cemetery. Stepping out of the car, she held an umbrella against the rain and slowly made her way to her father's tombstone, gently placing a bunch of white daisies.

"Dad," she whispered. The cold wind howled, leaving only the sound of raindrops hitting the umbrella.

“I’m sorry... I didn’t intend to come here, but I really had nowhere else to go.” Her voice trembled as she continued, “I admit, I’m a coward, scared of going alone. That’s why I chose to come to you... If you wish to scold me, then.

go ahead.”

After softly uttering her words, Cecilia settled herself next to the tombstone, hugging her body tightly. She unlocked her phone and was greeted by a barrage of malicious messages from Paula.

Paula: Cecilia! Did you really think you could escape by just hiding?

Paula: Magnus has already taken the money. Do you really think someone as influential as Mr. Larke would let you off the hook?

Paula: You better think it through. It’s far better to willingly marry tomorrow than to be discovered and forced into marriage.

“Know what’s good for me, huh?”

She read each message quietly.

In her reply, Cecilia wrote: I don’t want to go back. Tomorrow, come pick me up from the west suburb. I’ll be waiting for you all by Dad’s tombstone.

Upon receiving Cecilia’s response, Paula didn’t give it much thought. She assumed Cecilia had accepted her fate and finally stopped calling.

Cecilia relished the moment of tranquility. She spent the entire day sitting there.

As night fell, she took out the small wooden puppet her father had painstakingly carved for her when she was a child. She held it gently against her chest, using her body to shield it from the darkness and the rain.

As time ticked away, the distant chime of a clock struck twelve. The day had arrived—it was the fifteenth. Cecilia gazed up at the endless, dark sky, a bitter taste lingering in her mouth.

At three in the morning, with trembling hands, she pulled out a bottle of pills from her bag. At that same time, in Daltonia Villa Nathani–1

He was so weary that he pressed his temples and closed his eyes, only to be jolted awake by another nightmare—again about Cecilia. This time, he had dreamt of her death, and it felt so real...

Checking his phone, he realized it was only four in the morning. Nathaniel was deep in thought, knowing that day was the day the cooling-off period ended, and they had agreed to finalize the divorce.

He couldn't help but send a text to Cecilia: Don't forget, we're finalizing the divorce today.

When Cecilia received the text, her mind was already hazy. She mustered her strength to send a voice message, "I'm sorry... I might not be able to make it. But rest assured, we will definitely part ways..."

After her death, the marriage would naturally cease to matter.

Listening to Cecilia's voice message, Nathaniel inexplicably felt a sense of unease.

How could it be possible that Cecilia was dying? She can't bear the thought of dying, let alone divorcing me.

He couldn't believe it, so he called her.

Over the years, Cecilia had seldom received calls from Nathaniel. He was always a man of few words, usually communicating through text messages. He had hardly ever called her.

When Cecilia answered, before she could speak, she heard Nathaniel's icy words. "My patience has its limits. Wasn't it you who first suggested divorce? Are you backing out now because I didn't give you any money? Planning to marry someone else, huh? Three hundred million probably isn't enough, is it?"

A lump formed in Cecilia's throat, and suddenly, she couldn't hear anything at all. But as the end approached, she refused to admit to things she hadn't done.

Mustering her last bit of strength, she spoke into the phone. "Nathaniel... when I married you... it was never about your wealth. Thinking of divorce now, it's not about the money either... You might not believe me, but I have to say this... I had no idea when my mom and brother broke the contract. I wouldn't marry anyone now... not even for three hundred million..."

Her words came out in fits and starts. Hearing her, Nathaniel could tell there was a strong wind blowing on her end, accompanied by the sound of rain.

"Where are you now?" he asked urgently.

But Cecilia couldn't hear his voice. She just held onto the phone tightly, explaining over and over again. "If... If I had known what my mother and brother did, I would have never... chosen to marry you. If I had known... that you've always had feelings for

Stella... I would have never married you. If I had known that my father would be in a car accident on my wedding day, I... I wouldn't have married you."

From Cecilia's words, Nathaniel could hear the deep regret and discontent she had carried for years. He could discern just how much she regretted marrying him.

When Her "Death" Couldn't Break Him Chapter 15

When Her "Death" Couldn't Break Him Chapter 15

By [_ /](#) September 7, 2024

When Her "Death" Couldn't Break Him Chapter 15

Chapter 15 The Last Goodbye

The phone slipped from Cecilia's grasp, falling into the rain-soaked ground as its screen gradually faded into darkness.

Leaning against her father's tombstone, she clutched the puppet tightly in her arms, braving the relentless rain. It felt as if she could see her father approaching with a gentle smile on his face.

Those who loved deeply were idealists, while those who seldom loved were realists. Regardless of which one they were, in the end, there would always be regrets.

At Daltonia Villa, Nathaniel stared at the disconnected call, a surge of unease gnawing at him.

He dialed her number again but was only met with the cold, automated voice, "Sorry, the number you have dialed is currently unavailable. Please try again later..."

He got up, put on his coat, and was about to leave. But as he reached the door, he paused.

Cecilia is definitely playing hard to get. We're on the brink of divorce—why should it matter to me what she did?

Returning to his bedroom, Nathaniel found himself unable to sleep. Cecilia's words kept echoing in his mind.

"If... If I had known what my mother and brother did, I would have never... chosen to marry you. If I had known... that you've always had feelings for Stella... I would have never married you. If I had known that my father would be in a car accident on my wedding day, I... I wouldn't have married you."

Nathaniel found himself standing outside Cecilia's room, almost unconsciously. It had been over a month since she left.

He pushed the door open and stepped inside. The room was pitch black, and the emptiness felt suffocating.

He switched on the light. The room looked barren, devoid of any personal belongings.

Nathaniel sat down heavily and opened the bedside drawer. Inside, he found a small notebook.

On one of the pages, a single sentence was written: I believe that the one who truly chooses to leave experiences the greatest pain. This is because her heart has already endured countless struggles before she finally made up her mind.

Nathaniel scoffed coldly at the elegant handwriting. "Pain? All these years I've spent with you, don't you think I've suffered too?" he muttered, tossing the notebook into the trash.

But when he left the room, the notebook had been neatly placed back on the bedside table.

Nathaniel didn't sleep again that night.

On the other side, Calvin didn't sleep well either. He sensed that something was off with Cecilia over the past few days, but he couldn't quite figure out what it was.

Around four in the morning, he received a call from Martha. "Cal, could you please check on Ceci for me? I just had a really strange dream."

Calvin sat up, concerned. "What dream?"

"I dreamt that something happened to Ceci. She came to me, drenched from the rain, begging me not to forget to take her home," Martha said, her voice trembling. Tears streamed down her face as she continued, "I was terrified, but when I called her, no one answered. A few days ago, she told me to pick her up on the fifteenth. Something feels wrong..."

Hearing this, Calvin thought of Cecilia's recent behavior. He quickly got dressed. "Don't worry, I'm going to find her right now."

The two houses were close to each other. Within ten minutes, Calvin rushed over and pushed open the door to her room.

An eerie silence greeted him. The bedroom door was ajar, and the room was utterly bare. Cecilia. wasn't there.

At that moment, Calvin couldn't imagine where she could have gone.

Beside the pillow, he noticed two envelopes. He picked one up and opened it, finding, to his surprise, that one was a will addressed to him.

It read: Calvin, I've already transferred the rent to your card. Thank you for looking after me these past few days. You know, ever since I arrived in Tudela, I haven't had any friends. Before we met again, I thought I was such a loser, not even having a single friend. Thankfully, I met you again. You showed me that I wasn't as bad as I thought, and for that, I'm truly grateful... Please, don't be upset. I'm just going to see my father; he'll take care of me.

When Her "Death" Couldn't Break Him Chapter 16

When Her "Death" Couldn't Break Him Chapter 16

By [_ /](#) September 7, 2024

When Her "Death" Couldn't Break Him Chapter 16

Chapter 16 Desperate Measures

The other will was left for Martha, When Calvin opened it, he found an address written in the very last line.

Without wasting a moment, he dashed out of the room, his long strides carrying him quickly toward the car.

The drive to the western suburbs wasn't far—just over twenty minutes—but it felt like an eternity to Calvin.

He couldn't understand how someone who had once shone so brightly, radiant as light itself, could choose such a dark path.

Meanwhile, Paula was also on her way to the western suburbs, driven by the intent to secure three hundred million by fetching Cecilia for the wedding.

At the cemetery on the western outskirts, the rain poured down mercilessly.

Cecilia lay collapsed in front of her father's tombstone, the relentless downpour soaking her through. Her long dress clung to her frail frame, and she lay there, delicate as a wisp of duckweed, as if she might vanish from the world at any moment.

In the midst of the drizzle, Calvin quickened his pace, rushing toward Cecilia.

"Cecilia!" he called out, but there was no response.

The only sounds in the air were the wind and the rain. When Calvin reached her and took hold of her, he noticed the empty medicine bottle lying by her side.

With trembling hands, Calvin scooped her up.

She's so light!

He called out to her, panic rising in his chest. "Cecilia, wake up! Whatever you do, don't fall asleep!"

Without wasting any time, he began making his way down the mountain, carrying her as quickly as he could.

"Mrs. Smith, we've arrived," the driver announced as they pulled up to the cemetery.

Paula gazed out the window and saw an unfamiliar man holding... Cecilia. Her anger flared.

"You've got some nerve, Cecilia!" Paula snapped as she stepped out of the car, holding an umbrella against the pouring rain.

Dressed in a festive red gown, the hem now drenched, Paula marched forward with an impatient expression, ready to confront her daughter tightly shut. Paula froze in place.

"Cecilia..." She was about to ask what had happened, but then her gaze fell on the medicine bottle that had been carried by the wind. She quickly picked it up and saw the large characters on the label: Sleeping Pills.

At that moment, Paula remembered Cecilia's words from a few days ago. "If I were to return my life to you, would you cease to be my mother? Would I no longer owe you the debt of giving birth to me?"

The umbrella slipped from Paula's grasp, landing on the ground. She clenched the medicine bottle in her hand, staring at Cecilia in disbelief, her eyes wet with tears she could no longer distinguish from the rain.

"You ungrateful wretch! How dare you do this!" Paula's voice trembled with rage. "Your life was given by me!" Her red lips quivered as she spoke.

Magnus, who had been sitting in the car, saw his mother standing in the rain, staring down at the cemetery. He had no idea what was going on but rushed over, only to be stunned by what he saw.

He hadn't expected Cecilia would actually...

When he regained his composure, he was somewhat panicked, “Mom, what should I do? I’ve used all of Mr. Larke’s money to start a new company.

Hearing this, Calvin finally understood why the once cheerful and strong Cecilia had been reduced to this.

Paula’s grip tightened on the bottle, her gaze turning fierce as she glared at Cecilia. “I always said: we shouldn’t have had you! But your father insisted!” Paula’s voice was filled with venom. “Now look at what you’ve done. You’d rather die than let us live in peace!”

She roared in exasperation, “Why didn’t you marry first, then die? Why!”

Calvin couldn’t bear it any longer. Watching the mother and son, his eyes rimmed red with anger. “Get out of my sight!” he demanded, his voice cold. “Don’t make me repeat myself!”

“Who are you?” Magnus stepped forward, his tone challenging. “She’s my sister—what gives you the right to tell us to scram?”

Ignoring Magnus’s question, Calvin turned to Paula. “Mom, if we don’t get her to Mr. Larke soon, we’re done for,” Magnus reminded her, his voice laced with panic.

Paula, regaining her composure, set her jaw with resolve. “Get her in the car,” she ordered. “Even if it kills her, she must attend the wedding!”

When Her "Death" Couldn't Break Him Chapter 17

When Her “Death” Couldn’t Break Him Chapter 17

By [_ /](#) September 7, 2024

When Her “Death” Couldn’t Break Him Chapter 17

Chapter 17 How Dare You Kick My Son

“Okay.”

Magnus walked toward Calvin, ready to fight for Cecilia.

However, just as he reached out his hand, a strong force hit him, and he was kicked hard by Calvin.

Bang! Magnus was sent flying several meters away, landing heavily on the ground, clutching his chest in pain, unable to speak.

Seeing this, Paula hurried to help him up. She glared at Calvin, her eyes full of anger. "How dare you kick my son?"

Calvin held Cecilia in his arms, his eyes filled with coldness.

Rainwater dripped slowly from his hair.

He approached the mother and son as if transformed into a completely different person. Like a demon from hell, he spoke every word with precision. "Do you have a death wish?"

Paula and Magnus were both frightened by the man before them and remained silent, unable to respond.

As Calvin carried Cecilia away, he didn't forget to remind Paula, "Ceci's will states that she left a recording. In that recording, you agreed to have no further ties with her. You haven't forgotten, right?"

Cecilia didn't want to be her daughter even in death.

Cecilia knew the recording held no legal power and wouldn't officially sever their mother- daughter relationship.

However, she also knew who Paula truly was.

Paula cared about her reputation more than anything.

If the recording was released, she would forever carry the shame of being labeled as the woman who drove her own daughter to death.

With Calvin's threat hanging over her, Paula left in disgrace, taking her injured son Magnus with her.

Paula got into the car and looked through the rearview mirror at Calvin, who was holding her seemingly lifeless daughter. Her hand resting at her side clenched so tightly that she dug her fingernails deeply into her palm.

"Don't blame me for being ruthless. Blame yourself for being useless and not holding onto For a brief moment, she felt a sting of pain in her heart, but it quickly faded into cold. indifference.

Caring for Cecilia's death wasn't nearly as important as reporting the situation to Randy.

Meanwhile, Calvin hurriedly rushed Cecilia to the nearest hospital.

As Cecilia was wheeled into the operating room, the red characters reading “in surgery” made Calvin’s heart tighten with fear, unable to relax for even a second.

An hour into the surgery, the doctor urgently contacted the family. “The patient’s condition is critical. Where is her family?”

Calvin’s heart sank.

“What... what’s happening?”

“Are you the patient’s relative? Could you please sign the critical condition consent form? There’s a chance we might not be able to save the patient...” the doctor told him.

Calvin’s throat tightened, and his usual calm and gentle demeanor vanished entirely. He grabbed the doctor by the collar and lifted him up.

“In my world, there’s no such thing as critical condition. If she doesn’t make it through, your entire hospital will pay the price!”

He threw the doctor aside.

Before the doctor could respond, a group of well-known medical experts from Tudela hurried in, wearing white lab coats.

Seeing Calvin, they immediately bowed. “Mr. Reese.”

Calvin simply ordered, “Save her.

“Understood.”

The previously startled doctor finally realized that the hospital had encountered a truly powerful figure.

“Meanwhile, back at Rainsworth Group,

Nathaniel was distracted at work.”

Zachary, too, remembered what day it was today and asked, puzzled, “Weren’t you supposed to finalize the divorce today?”

Nathaniel paused, his sword-like eyebrows furrowing slightly.

Nathaniel felt a bit uneasy, but his tone remained indifferent. “Cecilia changed her mind. She told me early this morning that she wasn’t going

Zachary casually sat down on the nearby sofa and spread his hands with a mocking smile.

“I knew that deaf girl wouldn’t be so easy to deal with. She’s been playing hard to get all this time. If this drags on much longer, I say just file for divorce....”

He kept calling her “deaf girl“.

When Her "Death" Couldn't Break Him Chapter 18

When Her “Death” Couldn’t Break Him Chapter 18

By _ / September 7, 2024

When Her “Death” Couldn’t Break Him Chapter 18

Chapter 18 Regretting It

Nathaniel listened silently, his eyes darkening, yet he didn’t refute.

It was precisely because of his indulgence that his friend Zachary, his mother Elena, his assistant Mason, and even the servants at Rainsworth Manor never treated Cecilia as a person..

Zachary received a call and hurriedly left.

After he was gone, Nathaniel instinctively picked up his phone but saw no missed calls from Cecilia.

He dialed her number, but the same cold automated voice answered, “Sorry, the number you are calling is temporarily unavailable. Please try again later...”

Frustrated, he tossed his phone aside.

Nathaniel stood up and walked over to the floor-to-ceiling window, lighting a cigarette,

Cecilia’s words from the early hours of the morning still echoed in his ears. She had said she regretted it.

Nathaniel felt an inexplicable bitterness in his throat. He coughed heavily, and suddenly, he heard a woman’s voice behind him. “Nathaniel, you should cut down on smoking. It’s bad for your health.”

Nathaniel’s heart tightened, and he instinctively thought that Cecilia had returned.

When he turned around, it was Stella, dressed like a perfect housewife.

A flicker of light passed through Nathaniel's deep eyes as he asked indifferently. "Why are you here?"

Stella looked at him with a gentle expression.

"Mdm. Elena asked me to come. She knows about Cecilia finding someone new so soon and wants you to not dwell on it."

She was talking about Elena, Nathaniel's mother.

Four years ago, Elena and Zachary were in the same car when they were targeted by a rival company.

Elena lost a lot of blood, and at that time, the hospital had a shortage of type O blood. Cecilia also happened to be type O.

After making sure Zachary was fine, Cecilia donated her blood.

However, after the transfusion, she fainted from exhaustion.

Back then, because the Smith family was their benefactor, Stella did everything to ingratiate herself with Cecilia.

When she heard that Cecilia was in the hospital, she rushed over without hesitation to take care of her, and it was through this that she learned Cecilia had saved someone's life.

However, no one knew that during Cecilia's stay in the hospital, Stella "accidentally" took credit for being the one who saved Nathaniel's mother.

Stella had assumed that with such a life-saving debt, Nathaniel would definitely marry her.

To her surprise, Elena personally proposed an arranged marriage with Cecilia's family for the sake of her son's career and power even though Cecilia had a hearing impairment!!

And now, Nathaniel refused to have any connection with Cecilia. They had been married for three years, and there was still no child.

Elena had begun to lower her standards and even supported Stella and Nathaniel being together. Telling her that as long as they had a child, she could marry into the Rainsworth family.

Nathaniel looked at Stella and asked, "Who is her new lover?"

On the phone, Cecilia had said she wouldn't marry someone else for three hundred million.

Nathaniel couldn't believe that all her feelings for him over the years had been an act!

Stella hesitated.

"I don't know either"

If she told Nathaniel that Cecilia was being forced to marry an old man, he would surely show sympathy.

"Since you don't know, don't mention it again."

Stella froze for a moment, then nodded.

That day, Nathaniel remained distracted.

Late at night, in the intensive care unit of Tudela Hospital, Cecilia lay wearing a respirator, struggling to breathe.

She hadn't died. Calvin had gotten her to the hospital just in time, pulling her back from the brink of death

She glanced at Martha, who was crying beside her. She mustered all her strength to comfort her.

"I'm... not in pain, don't cry

She had always been a timid, weak person—even choosing to die by sleeping pills.

Looking at Martha, whose hair had turned white overnight, Cecilia felt even sadder and deeply

Martha choked on her sobs, gripping Cecilia's hand tightly. "Ceci, listen to me. Let's focus on getting better, then live a good life, okay?"

Cecilia couldn't make any promises.

Meanwhile, outside in the hospital corridor.

"Mr. Reese, after the surgery, we ran more tests and found that she is already around two weeks pregnant."

When Her "Death" Couldn't Break Him Chapter 19

When Her "Death" Couldn't Break Him Chapter 19

By _ / September 7, 2024

When Her "Death" Couldn't Break Him Chapter 19

Chapter 19 She Is Pregnant.

Outside the window, the wind howled violently. Cecilia placed her pale, slender hand on her lower abdomen, her gaze vacant.

Calvin had told her that the doctor had discovered she was pregnant.

This child couldn't have come at a worse time.

Martha looked at Cecilia, whose eyes were hollow, devoid of any will to live. She hardened her heart.

"Ceci."

Cecilia took a long time to come back to her senses and slowly turned to look at Martha. "Martha."

Martha's eyes were red. Her old, wrinkled hand gently brushed a few stray hairs away from Cecilia's temple. "Ceci, I don't have any children of my own. I've always treated you like my own daughter. I don't wish for you to be rich or powerful, only for you to live healthily. If my only daughter wants to die, how could a mother possibly go on living?"

Cecilia's eyes narrowed as she watched Martha pick up a fruit knife.

"I've cared for you until you were ten years old. After that, I couldn't be with you, and that was my fault. Now, I'll go apologize to Mr. Smith..."

With that, Martha started to slice her wrist with the knife.

Cecilia was startled. She used all her strength to stop her, but in her current state, she couldn't even get up. She was at a loss for words. "Martha, don't..."

Martha didn't stop.

As Cecilia watched the blood on Martha's wrist, her tears rolled uncontrollably down her face. "I won't do anything stupid anymore, I won't. Martha, please don't..."

Hearing Cecilia's promise, Martha finally stopped.

Her eyes were filled with red veins.

"Ceci, you've already repaid your debt for bringing you into this world. We no longer owe her or Nathaniel! From now on, you must live for the people who love you, for me, and for the child inside you!"

In the end, Cecilia decided to heed Martha's words, to live well for her and the child.

From this moment forward, Paula was no longer her mother, and she no longer had a brother.

Her only family was Martha and the child in her belly.

Martha hadn't wanted to force Cecilia into making a decision in such a drastic way, but she wanted Cecilia to live!

Cecilia had no say in her birth, yet she still had to bear the so-called "debt" of being brought into this world.

How could a true mother ask her daughter to repay her with her life?

During her hospital stay, Cecilia heard from Calvin that Paula had fled abroad.

She didn't feel sad.

Just like with Nathaniel, she had long wanted to settle the debt she owed Paula. From now on, they were even.

As for the child, Cecilia didn't want Nathaniel to know.

After all, this child was an accident.

She knew how much Nathaniel disliked her.

If he found out, he certainly wouldn't want to keep the child.

After three days in the hospital, Cecilia completed the discharge procedures.

She asked Martha to go home first. Once she had settled things with Nathaniel, she would follow her to the countryside.

On the day Cecilia left the hospital, it just so happened that Zachary was brought there by his father, George Sinclair to oversee some hospital matters, but he saw Cecilia with Calvin.

“Cecilia! Wasn’t she missing?”

Three days ago, on the fifteenth, was supposed to be the day Cecilia and Nathaniel finalized their divor

However, after the fifteenth, Cecilia had vanished without a trace. She didn’t show up for three whole days.

“Why is she at the hospital?”

It was rare for Zachary to show interest, so the director immediately ordered someone to investigate.

Half an hour later, Zachary received all of Cecilia’s hospital records, and he was completely shocked.

Sleeping pills... suicide? Cecilia is pregnant? Isn’t Nathaniel divorcing her recently? How did she end up pregnant?

“Are you sure this diagnosis belongs to Cecilia?” Zachary asked.

The staff member delivering the files nodded affirmatively.

Images of Cecilia leaving the hospital flashed through Zachary’s mind, accompanied by that unfamiliar man. The coldness around him intensified.

He had truly underestimated this little deaf girl.

Not knowing who the father of the child was, Zachary hesitated on whether he should tell Nathaniel.

In the end, he called Stella and informed her about the situation.

He owed Stella one. She was all alone, and only he could help her.

When Her "Death" Couldn't Break Him Chapter 20

When Her “Death” Couldn’t Break Him Chapter 20

By [_ /](#) September 7, 2024

When Her “Death” Couldn’t Break Him Chapter 20

Chapter 20 Rotten To The Core

Summer was often a time of torrential rain in the south.

In the days following her discharge from the hospital, Calvin frequently made time to visit Cecilia.

Due to the lingering aftereffects of the medication, Cecilia's health had worsened compared to before.

However, her mental state had improved significantly. Even when she had no appetite, she would force herself to eat a little more.

When she was with Calvin, she never once mentioned Nathaniel.

After being held onto for so long, some people bring nothing but pain when brought up.

Or maybe she simply didn't want to burden her friends with her negative energy.

When she was alone, Cecilia would often stare blankly at Nathaniel's WhatsApp at profile picture.

She didn't know how to broach the topic of divorce again.

On this day, Cecilia had just bought some groceries and was on her way back when a figure blocked her path.

Wearing sunglasses and a mask, her long hair flowing down her back, Stella was dressed in a striking long dress and high heels, giving off an imposing presence.

"Ceci, does Mrs. Smith know you're not dead?" Stella asked with a playful smirk.

Cecilia hadn't expected to run into her here.

The two of them found a quiet café and sat by the window.

Large raindrops beat against the glass.

Stella removed her mask, revealing her delicate face. "Don't worry, I heard from Zach that Magnus had taken Mr. Larke's money and had already fled with Mrs. Smith. They won't bother you anymore."

Cecilia had already heard this from Calvin.

Fearing retribution for failing to marry Cecilia off to the Larke family as agreed, Paula and Magnus panicked and fled abroad the same day.

Who could have predicted that the once-wealthy Smith family would become like stray dogs. because of a mere three hundred million?

Cecilia silently listened, showing no emotional reaction.

“What do you want to say?”

Stella’s gaze drifted down to Cecilia’s belly, which wasn’t showing yet.

She pinched her palm but decided not to expose Cecilia on the spot. Instead, she said, “Tell me, what will it take for you to leave Nathaniel? Name your price. I’ll give it to you.”

What arrogance.

Cecilia smiled.

Her calm gaze fixed on Stella. “I’ve been married to Nathaniel for three years, so our shared assets must be worth at least billions. Can you afford that?”

Even the most famous actresses might not have that much.

Stella was merely someone who had polished her reputation abroad but was rotten to the core on the inside.

Stella clenched her teeth in anger, stung by Cecilia’s disdainful gaze.

Of course, the woman before her had once been the most favored daughter of the Smith family, and money had only ever been a number to her.

Back then, Cecilia’s grandfather, the old patriarch of the Smith family, had even been known as the richest man in Tudela.

But now, Cecilia was nothing more than an abandoned woman nobody wanted.

That thought made Stella feel a little better, and her lips curled into a smile.

“You don’t know who sent me to talk to you, do you? Nathaniel’s mother specifically asked me to tell you that as long as you’re willing to leave, money is no object. Consider it... charity for a beggar.”

A beggar...

Cecilia thought back to how Elena had flattered her when she urged her to marry Nathaniel.

She said that only the daughter of the Smith family was worthy of Nathaniel and that she would treat Cecilia as her own daughter.

Suddenly, Cecilia didn't want to endure this humiliation any longer. She stood up. "Then bring the money first, and we'll talk."

She didn't need to think twice to know that Elena wouldn't give her a cent.

regret this."

As Cecilia walked away, she could hear Stella's warning behind her, "You'll regret

Back at home, later that night, Cecilia was half-asleep when the ringing of the phone woke her.

"I really overestimated you. How many million do you want? You disappear for a few days, and this is the scheme you come up with?"