

Dumping My Billionaire Ex

Chapter 11

"I'll take every medium-sized piece of clothing in the store." Alanna said.

"Sure thing: the store manager replied. It made perfect sense for customers to buy what they wanted, and they'd make a sale without offending

Tinu.

"What?" Tina fumed, realizing Alanna was specifically snatching up all the medium sizes to s

to spite her

Even though they only had one of each style in medium, the total added up to about 400 thousand dollars, which could nearly buy a house in a small town.

Watching Alanna throw cash around just to stand up for Sharon, Tina stomped her foot in frustration and ultimately stormed out.

"Wasting your money on her isn't worth it. Sharon said once they were outside. She didn't see Tina as a threat

Alanna lazily replied, "She's only cocky because the Stanley family's loaded. I wanted to show her that money is no object to you. If you hadn't kept your wealth under wraps, they would've been eating out of your hand all these years. She still couldn't get over the hard times Sharon had faced over those four years.

Sharon was not only a mega influencer but also owned Bisney Entertainment. Alanna was merely managing it for her.

Sharon gave a bitter smile. She had thought about spilling the beans to Edwin, but every time she tried, he'd walk away before she got the chance. Over time, she just didn't bother.

That night, Edwin stopped by Ray's place. Ray's sister had just given birth to a baby girl, and they had a party to celebrate.

Leaning on the couch, Edwin watched Shawn Wilkinson, the brother-in-law of Ray, clumsily changing diapers without a care for his pricey suit, popping in and out with the

baby. Edwin suddenly thought of his daughter, Irene. He couldn't recall ever changing her diapers.

Sharon had forced him into marriage, billing him with nothing but rage, and the news of her pregnancy added to his humiliation and anger. He preferred to bury himself in work, inevitably neglecting Irene,

"Am I a bad father?" Edwin murmured to Ray

Ray paused his drinking and looked at him. "Um and a bad husband too

Edwin was taken aback. "It was not my choice," he huffed. He despised Sharon's manipulative ways during the forced marriage

Ray nodded. "True, but you're still her husband legally. Even strangers help each other in tough times, right? During delivery, she was bleeding heavily, and the baby's life was on the line. When I saw her, she was begging the doctors to use her blood to save her child. They said no, and she was so desperate she even shed tears

Edwin looked at Ray, disbelief in his eyes. "That happened?"

Ray said, "Yeah, Irene needed a complete blood transfusion due to an infection, and she had rare golden blood, which the hospital didn't have in stock. The situation was dire. They needed a donor fast, and Sharon was desperate. He knew because he was in the hospital too. He hadn't liked Sharon before, but that changed after he witnessed that scene.

Hearing this knocked the wind out of Edwin. At that moment, a flood of memories rushed back to him—Sharon's persistent call that he had brushed off, assuming she was up to her usual tricks.

But now it dawned on him that those calls must have been made after she gave birth to Irene, a desperate plea for help to save their kid. The realization struck him with a painful squeeze at his heart. Sharon's questions earlier today swirled in his mind. Without a second thought, he dashed outside.

Tilda and Edric were coming up the stairs just as Edwin rushed by. Tilda couldn't help but call out, "Edwin."

But Edwin didn't glance her way and left.

"What's going on? What did you say to him?" Edric fumed, confronting Hay-

Ray shrugged. "What could I say! Just Sharon's old stories"

Edric was livid. "You know Tilda came back for Edwin. Why bring all this up?"

"I just didn't want Edwin to be blind to his heart and make another mistake," Ray said, casting a meaningful look at Tilla. He said no more and

followed out the door.

Tilda stared at the now empty chair Edwin had sat in a storm brewing in her eyes.

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Sharon was concerned that a divorce might affect her daughter's mood, so she took extended leave for Irene. It was only today that she had brought Irene to kindergarten. "Goodbye, Mommy. Irene waved her little hand and walked into the kindergarten

Sharon watched her adorable daughter walk away, a heartfelt smile spreading across her lips. She didn't turn to leave until Irene was completely out of sight, and then she saw Edwin by the roadside

Edwin

never came to the school, so Sharon was curious about his presence. She approached and asked, "Mr. Stanley, what brings you here?!"

Edwin's

's gaze shifted slowly to her face, and for the first time, he closely looked at her. She had a petite, heart-shaped face with clean, delicate features. She was a beautiful woman, but she was too skinny, almost frail

"Why have you never mentioned the blood loss during Irene's birth and her needing a transfusion?" he asked, trying to be composed.

Sharon raised her eyebrows in surprise, not expecting Edwin to inquire about this

"What's the point of talking about it when you weren't there when I needed you" she said with a small laugh, hiding the sadness in her eyes.

Edwin fell silent for a while before pulling out a check from his pocket and offering it to her. "Consider this compensation."

Sharon looked at the check. It was a hefty sum, indicative of his generosity.

She had considered his reaction if he ever learned about that incident, hoping that he would apologize at least for Irene's sake, but he instead offered money. She finally realized that she should harbor no illusions about him,

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“No need,” she coolly declined, avoiding the check. “Let’s consider everything in the past as my fault. You’ve also wasted a few years because of me. Consider the money as already accepted and then returned to you as compensation for the trouble I caused you. From now on, we’re even.” With that. Sharon tilted her head and laughed,

Edwin was taken aback by her reaction. In his mind, Sharon had climbed the ranks by latching onto the Stanley family’s wealth. But now, she was Turning down the money he offered.

However, his surprise was quickly replaced by disdain when he thought about their past. His face darkened. “Think this through if you’re just putting on an act now. This is the last bit of kindness I’m showing you. Don’t think for a second I’ll be this generous again, no matter how much you beg

Hearing him suggest she was pretending chilled Sharon to the bone. “Mr. Stanley, you can rest assured. I’ll thrive on my own post-divorce. I doubt I’ll have the time to bother you, she replied with a mocking smile. Then she hailed a cab and hopped in. As the car drove away, her stern expression slowly faded, leaving a helpless smile.

During her four years with the Stanley family, she had always been sensible and fair. She couldn’t understand why Edwin thought she was always pretending

Alanna quickly found out about Edwin offering Sharon money and cursed him out for it. That jerk Edwin thinks he’s the only one with money the world, huh? You have to attend Bisley Entertainment’s charity auction this time and show him what you’re made of.”

Alanna always moved quickly. In less than a minute, she informed the planning department about Sharon making an appearance, sorted out her outfit and accessories, and even arranged a date for her. “Your date is going as your boyfriend. Trust me, the guy I picked will definitely make Edwin jealous.”

At the entrance to the auction. Sharon’s head buzzed when she saw the “boyfriend Alanna had prepared for her it was Randell. “Randall’s fans will kill me if they find out I’m his girlfriend,’ she thought.

Dressed in a white shirt and a navy blue suit jacket, Randall looked even more handsome, as if he were some noble prince. He approached shyly and handed Sharon a bouquet Hi. Sharon.”

“Hi, Randall,” Sharon said awkwardly. She wanted to change her “boyfriend” there and then, but it was too late.

Across from them, Edwin and Tilda came over, surrounded by reporters.

Catching sight of Sharon and Randall, Tilda deliberately stopped. “Mr Silva, aren’t you going to introduce us? The last time I saw you two at the ice rink, you seemed very in sync.”

What happened at the rink was supposed to be a secret, but Tilda’s mention was like broadcasting it to the world.

Probably following Alanna’s lead, Randall said with his trademark shy smile. This is my girlfriend.

“Girlfriend?” Tilda looked genuinely surprised. “How can that be? Just the other day, I saw you. Her voice trailed off as she glanced back and forth between Sharon and Randall. The implication was clear—with Sharon being a mother, it seemed unlikely she’d be daring Randall-

But Randall remained unfazed. “Yes, it’s exactly as you saw. Without another word, he nodded to Tilda and looked warmly at Sharon. “Shall we go

“Sure.” Sharon smiled and nodded in agreement

Though Randall was just a figure skater, he was quite famous. His striking looks and legendary performances over the past couple of years earned him fans worldwide.

The reporters had originally come for Tilda, but Randall dropping such big news immediately drew them to the new couple.

“Mr. Silva, can you share how the two of you met?”

“You two look great together. Any plans for marriage soon?”

“Mr. Silva, you’re only twenty–three–Aren’t you worried about how your fans might react to your public romance?”

“Mr. Silva..

in ordinary girl. Let’s not frighten her,” Randall gently reminded the reporters as he protectively kept Sharon close his side.

“She’s just an or

Sharon played along, bowing her head to feign timidity, trying her best to hide her face in his arms. Inadvertently, she caught a glimpse of Edwin not too far away.

Edwin was looking at her, his indifference replaced by a mocking smile. ‘Her claim of thriving without me seems to be just finding another man to Latch onto, he thought.

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Despite her resolve to ignore him, Sharon still felt a sharp pain in her heart

Perhaps because of Randall's impeccable reputation, the reporters didn't hold them back for long. After they entered the venue, Sharon breathed a sigh of relief

"I'm sorry, Randall. I had no idea Alanna would set this up. But don't worry. I'll get her to clear everything up as soon as we get back. Sharon said bluntly as the reporters couldn't enter the auction. She felt incredibly guilty for involving the innocent Randall

"It's okay" Randall smiled gently. "I'm happy to pretend to be your boyfriend, although I know I'm not worthy"

"Oh, don't say that, please," Sharon quickly said.

He's too kind. It's my mess, and yet, he's convinced he's the one unworthy. He always doesn't want to hurt anyone. Sharon thought and failed to notice the sincerity and wistfulness in Randall's eyes when he said those words.

But Edwin did notice. Following them a few steps behind and staying out of Sharon's sight, he heard their entire conversation.

He couldn't believe that Sharon didn't seduce Randall and that it was Randall who liked her. He thought Randall had poor judgment in women. But just then, something in him felt obstructed, heavy, and uncomfortable. The tender look in Randall's eyes when he gazed at Sharon kept replaying in his mind....

Besides being a figure skating champion, Randall was also Disney Entertainment's most popular male influencer. His presence at the auction was seen as representation for Disney Entertainment, and no one probed into Sharon's identity.

Although Sharon had appeared in the trending searches once, her photo was all blurry, and she had rarely been seen in public after marriage, so hardly anyone recognized her.

And whether Alanna had done it deliberately or not, only Randall's name was on their seating card.

Randall had just sat down when someone called him away, and Sharon began to study the auction items.

"How desperate are you to seduce a rich man that you won't even spare an auction!" A mocking voice suddenly rang in her car.

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Sharon looked up to see Tina walking in with Jasmine Stanley, her former mother-in-law. Tina was staring at her with contempt.

Not many people were entering at the moment, and most were mingling around, chatting with those they found interesting. Sharon was the only one seated.

Tina still remembered the humiliation she suffered at the clothing store and was furious at the sight of Sharon. She had been itching for a chance to give Sharon a piece of her mind.

“Tina” Jasmine called to her in a warning tone. She always cared about maintaining grace and nobility in public

With an evil twinkle in her eye, Tina ushered Jasmine toward the door. The auction hasn't started yet, Mommy Why don't you go check out the art exhibit?” The exhibit was happening simultaneously with the auction.

“That sounds like a good idea. Jasmine nodded and stepped away, though fully aware of Tina's intentions.

Sharon was not surprised by Jasmine's behavior; it was typical back during her time with the Stanley family. Seeing Tina return with a smirk, Sharon didn't even bother to engage,

However, Tina rudely snatched the auction catalog from Sharon's hands and tossed it on the floor. “You shameless bitch. Do you think you're part of Hisney Entertainment just because Alama covered for you once? Do you think a place like this is for someone like you? Get up right now!”

Sharon looked at Tina indifferently. And what if I don't?”

“If you don't?” Tina sneered. ‘I'll let everyone know you're here without an invite. Then the security will throw you out in front of everyone. Let's see which man would want you then” Tina stared at a set of cleaning staff clothes nearby, convinced Sharon had disguised herself to sneak in.

Sharon had noticed the clothes as well but wasn't one to meddle, so she didn't bother to have them taken away. “Is that so?” she asked coolly. She had never been intimidated by Tina. She only played nice before because Tina was Edwin's sister. Now that she was divorced, she felt no need to hold back

Since Tina was determined to make trouble. Sharon wasn't going to take it lying down. She feigned concern and asked, “Then... where should I sit?”

This played right into Tina's hands. She pointed to a spot in the back corner. "See that? That's old pervert Jenson's spot. Go sit there, and he'll notice you for sure. If he's in a good mood, he might even take you home as his seventh woman."

Jenson was notorious for his lechery, keeping six mistresses at home and messing around outside. He had even recently been diagnosed with AIDS.

Tina was not just trying to embarrass Sharon, she was maliciously putting Sharon in harm's way.

"That seat?" Sharon stood up slowly, not showing any sign of annoyance.

Tina sneered as Sharon got up, ready to lash out with more insults, but Sharon unexpectedly offered, "Why don't you take the seat then?"

"How dare you say that! Tina was fuming, her ego bruised. She felt like a high and mighty princess, and here was Sharon suggesting she sit in that disgusting spot next to an old, ugly man. The very thought was unbearable, and she raised her hand to slap Sharon.

Sharon caught her hand smoothly. "Ms. Stanley, this place is crawling with security cameras. You don't want to embarrass yourself, do you?"

Tina was all about keeping up her good-girl, high-class image. Even though she was boiling mad, she had to hold herself back. "You'll see," she snapped, not able to do much else. "I will make sure you end up sitting next to Jenson today. She shot Sharon a fierce glare and took off.

It wasn't long before Tina came back, this time with Randall's manager, Drake Buckley.

"Mr. Buckley, did you see? This woman doesn't even have an invitation, and she had the nerve to sit right next to Randall's spot, Tina complained and angrily pointed at Randall's name.

to leave.

Unaware of Sharon's identity, Drake approached on hearing Tina's complaint. "Miss, do you have an invitation? If not, I must ask you

"Well, I don't," Sharon responded calmly as she saw Tina's triumphant look. "But Randall's friend, and he asked me to sit here."

"What a joke" Tina laughed sharply, "Don't you know? Randall's got a girlfriend, and this seat is reserved for her, Who are you to take his girlfriend's spot" She had heard about Randall having a girlfriend but didn't know it was Sharon,

Sharon couldn't care less to explain and simply said, "This seat is indeed mine?"

Drake was uncertain due to Sharon's confident demeanor and could only phone Randall.

Tina was gleeful at the call "Just wait for Randall to put you in your place for taking his girlfriend's spot"

Soon, Randall was back.

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"Kandall, this shameless woman took your girlfriend's seat, Kick her out quickly." Tina said loudly. Just as she hoped it would, her shout did gather a crowd. She was thrilled about the chance to put Sharon in her place and said to the nearby security guard. "What are you waiting for? Toss her out"

Who are you to throw out my guest?" Randall spoke up, a rare sternness in his voice

"Your guest" "Tina's smugness froze, disbelief written all over her face. "How is that possible?"

This seat is reserved for Randall's girlfriend; So, Sharon is his girl, huh" she thought

Tina was a loyal fan of Randall, and upon hearing that he was dating, she had been quite upset. Now, to discover that his girlfriend was her despised former sister-in-law felt like a slap to her face. She trembled, nearly fainting with shock.

Randall ignored Tina and sat beside Sharon. You weren't scared, were you?"

"Not at all," Sharon said coolly, unfazed by someone like Tina.

The commotion there attracted Cary Horton, the person in charge. He approached with a displeased look at Tina and tried to soothe the situation.

"Mr. Horton, Alanna said she would be joining us shortly. Could you move this chair next to Jenson's, please? Alanna will sit here later." Sharon gestured to Gary

Though Cary wasn't clear about Sharon's role, he knew to follow her instructions after Alanna's call. He promptly moved the chair Sharon pointed out to the back, right next to Jenson's

Seeing her seat paired with Jenson's, Tina shook like a leaf. "How... how dare you!"

"What's going on? Jasmine returned just in time to see a fuming Tina and asked

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Embarrassed by the situation but realizing she had no choice, Tina decided to leave the event. This was Bisney Entertainment's turf. If she kept this up, it would only make it more difficult for her to save face.

"Mom, let's just go," she said without further explanation and pulled Jasmine toward the exit.

Sharon just curled her lip dismissively and, as if nothing had happened, went about her business

It wasn't long before Edwin and Tilda made their entrance and found seats right next to Sharon.

"That woman is Sharon, right?" someone murmured, recognizing her. "Didn't she marry Mr. Stanley? What's going on..."

Over the

past four years, although Sharon kept a low profile, during the time Tilda cheated and was caught red-handed by Edwin and the reporters. It was Sharon who stood by Edwin's side, declaring she was Edwin's current girlfriend and that they were planning to get married. The incident caused quite a stir back then, leaving quite an impression on everyone.

Gossip began to swirl around the venue as glances shifted between Sharon and the trio of Edwin, Tilda, and Randall.

"Thanks for your concern, but we're divorced, Sharon stood up and clarified openly. As Randall's girlfriend for the day, she couldn't afford to have people think Randall was tangled up with a married woman.

Edwin, who had maintained a cold face, suddenly frowned at Sharon's announcement. He looked visibly upset, thinking Sharon was gloating about attracting another man so quickly after their divorce.

Sharon didn't care for what he thought. After her statement, she sat down and continued to discuss the auction items with Randall,

The auction soon began.

"Edwin, I want that crown. Tilda whispered as the auctioneer unveiled the final item.

That crown was the most expensive item of the evening, and it was also something Sharon had planned to bid on. She had always harbored a dream of wearing a crown at a grand wedding with the person she loved. Though the dream had faded, her fondness for crowns had not.

When Tilda expressed her desire for the crown, her eyes darted toward Sharon, a provocative glint on her beautiful face.

"So she's noticed my interest in the crown, huh? She took my husband; now she wants the crown I like. I won't let that happen," Sharon thought to

herself.

As Tilda raised her bidding paddle, Sharon also lifted hers.

The bid is now at 102 million dollars, 1.64 million dollars..." announced the auctioneer on stage.

The crown had started at a high price, and only Tilda and Sharon were bidding against each other.

Considering what had happened between them before and the fact they were now vying for the same crown, something so symbolic, everyone around looked at them with a meaningful gaze.

The price soared quickly to 4 million dollars.

"Ding" Sharon's phone suddenly rang, an incoming message catching her off guard. It was from Edwin. She was surprised he even had her number.

His message was short and to the point. [Don't overestimate yourself.] It was cold and blunt as ever. Clearly, he thought Sharon lacked the means to purchase the crown and was bidding out of spite.

Sharon sneered, unbothered by what he thought. She raised her paddle again. "8 million dollars,"

"Wow." The crowd gasped as the bid jumped from 4 million dollars to 8 million dollars in an instant.

Tilda slowly lowered her paddle, her face showing a resigned yet pitiful expression

- million dollars,” Edwin suddenly took Tilda’s paddle and said in his deep, resonant voice,

His bid elicited gasps of surprise. 8 million dollars was already a significant amount, and no one had expected another counter–bid.

sharon looked toward Edwin. ‘So he’s jumping in because I’m challenging his beloved? So true love means protecting someone from even the slightest hurt,’ she thought. “He’s here to defend Tikda, but I’m under no such obligation!

Without hesitation, Sharon added, “10 million dollars”

The price continued to escalate rapidly, reaching 18 million dollars- a figure well beyond the crown’s value.

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“Ms. Cress, may I propose a discussion?” Tikda suddenly stood up. “I truly adore this crown and want to wear it on my wedding day. Could you please let me have it and stop the bidding?” she pleaded with apparent sincerity. Then she glanced at Edwin, totally putting on an act of compromising for love.

Sharon pursed her lips and thought, “If I don’t give in now, they’ll surely think I’m not over Edwin and that I don’t want them to get married. It’s just a crown. Let them have it.”

Suddenly finding the competition meaningless, Sharon put down her paddle.

“18 million dollars once, 18 million dollars twice. 18 million dollars.....

Just when everyone thought the crown would go to Tilda and Edwin, a clear, resolute voice called out a new bid, “20 million dollars!”

Chapter 15

Wis

Mandall.

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Everyone inhaled in surprise as all eyes turned to him. Sharon looked at him, equally astonished.

“Mr. Silva, you... Tilda looked over, puzzled

Randall stood up. “Ms. Gill, I know you want to wear it for your wedding, but I plan to marry, too, and my loved one really likes it. I have to win it

for her.

This time. Edwin didn’t bid again. He just shot Sharon a glare before he took Tilda by the hand and left without a word.

Having won

won the crown and paid for it, Randall handed it to Sharon, “Sharon, this is for you

“You won this for me?” Sharon was taken aback. She really thought he bought it for his loved one in his heart.

“Yeah.” Randall nodded with sincerity.

“Are you out of your mind! Spending 20 million dollars just for it?” She was aware that this amount was almost all of Randall’s savings. This crown isn’t worth that price. You didn’t have to do this foolish thing,” she said.

“It may not be worth the crown, but you sure are, Randall said seriously, his eyes shining

Sharon felt she saw affection in his eyes, but she quickly dismissed the thought,

At the entrance of the auction house. Tilda, struggling slightly with her dress, caught up to Edwin. “Edwin, it’s just a crown. It’s okay,” she said. considerately.

“I didn’t bid for you,” Edwin responded coldly. The sight of Sharon bidding for the crown had reminded him of the night they got married when she had regretfully mentioned wanting a crown at her wedding

Although they were divorced, Edwin wouldn’t allow Sharon to be embarrassed if he knew she couldn’t afford it. He first warned, and when that didn’t work, he decided to buy it for her. And even when she wanted to bid against him, he didn’t care. He would consider the crown a parting gift for the divorce.

But the outcome wasn’t as expected, Sharon already had a man willing to spend a fortune on her. The more that man was willing to spend, the worse it made Edwin look in comparison.

'It was Sharon who schemed to have me marry her in the first place. Why should I be good to a woman who played me?' he thought. But for some reason, he felt inexplicably heavy-hearted.

Tilda looked around awkwardly. She aimed to show herself as generous and tender, but Edwin's blunt words crushed that image. Fortunately, there was no one nearby, or she would have been utterly humiliated.

Sharon ultimately accepted the crown but had Alanna transfer 20 million dollars from her account to Randall's.

Randall returned the money that very night. "Sharon, if it weren't for you, I'd probably be rotting away somewhere right now. If you're really about squaring up, then I can't stay at Disney Entertainment any longer."

She just wanted to return the money; why does it have to be so hard? Sharon thought to herself.

Although there were no reporters at the auction, word that Randall dropped 20 million dollars to buy Sharon a crown still spread like wildfire among the elite.

Tina lost count of how many phone calls she received in the morning, all about the same incident.

"Damn it. Sharon is just a cast-off from the Stanley family, and Randall actually spent so much money on her. The thought of her idol spending a fortune on someone like Sharon ignited a furious rage inside Tina,

"Has Randall gone blind! Not to mention that Sharon is good for nothing. She's divorced with a kid. If I were him, even looking at Sharon would feel sick," Jasmine said, her face dark.

She had already heard about the humiliations Tina faced the day before and felt that Sharon dared to stand up to them because of Randall. "Does Randall not know about Sharon's child! She's always been deceitful, she must have ticked Randall," Jasmine said.

"Randall knows," Tina said. Jasmine's words only made her feel worse. "Liar! That not only does he know, but he also took Sharon and that kid ice skating."

Knowing that Randall didn't mind i

ding Sharon's

having a child only pushed her further into despair. In Tina's eyes, she was so much more noble than

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Sharon. She was pure and a daughter of the Stanley family, yet when she confessed to Randall, he rejected her. The more she thought about it, the worse she felt.

buffer 100. Tina suggested to Jasmine

“Mom, ever since Sharon got divorced, she’s never let us be. We should make her suffer too.”

“Since Sharon left the Stanley family, don’t bother with her. We don’t want to make ourselves look bad,” Jasmine, who always cared a lot about her status, instructed Tina. “But there’s still something important we need to sort out with her.”

Initially, Tina felt enraged upon thinking Jasmine wouldn’t support her, but hearing Jasmine’s plan against Sharon, she brightened. “Mom, you’re the best. Hit her where it hurts, and she’ll suffer for it

Alanna was off work today and helped Sharon drop frene off at school before they went to scout out local kindergartens.

Irene didn’t like her current kindergarten, and Sharon wanted to seize the opportunity to change the environment, especially to keep Irene away from potential interference from the Stanley family.

As they walked and talked, they inevitably discussed the previous ni

night’s auction. When Alanna mentioned Edwin stubbornly competing with Sharon for the crown on behalf of Tilda, she was itching with. rage. “Edwin is useless; bullying you has been his greatest achievement. Luckily, Randall’s got some sense. He got you back your dignity and showed that brat how popular you are now.”

The mention of Randall made Sharon involuntarily sigh. The crown he bought for 20 million dollars was now a hot potato for her. He refused to take the money back, and she didn’t want to take advantage of him

Before Sharon could come up with a solution, her phone rang. She looked down and answered it. “Half past eleven, Starlight Cafe, be there an time, a cold voice said.

It wasn’t until the call disconnected that Sharon realized the voice was Jasmine’s

Chapter 16

“You’re divorced. Why even both

even bother with her?" Alanna expressed her displeasure upon learning that Jasmine wanted to meet with Sharon. Sharon stared at her phone for a moment. "Jasmine hardly ever speaks to me. If she's calling personally, it must be something important. I should go see what it is"

Despite her reluctance, Alanna still drove Sharon to the appointed meeting place.

When Sharon arrived, Jasmine was already there, seated with poise. She took a sip of her coffee and then coldly said without looking up, "Have a seat" Her indifferent face alone made Sharon feel inferior as if she were less than nothing in Jasmine's presence.

But Sharon, no longer as compliant as before, maintained a distance and said plainly. "Mrs. Stanley, please, just say what you need to."

Jasmine frowned, clearly disliking Sharon's lack of manners, but she didn't scold Sharon. Instead, she gestured to the person beside her. "Marvin The lawyer, Marvin Ruell, stepped forward, "Ms. Cress, since you and Mr. Stanley are divorced, it's time to decide the child's custody"

"The child? Of course, I'll be the one to take care of my daughter, Sharon responded without hesitation

"But she is also my granddaughter, Jasmine coldly reminded, her eyes filled with scorn for Sharon's ignorance.

Sharon sneered and said, "Mrs. Stanley, you finally remember you have a granddaughter. I

How rare

Siner Trene was born, Jasmine hadn't shown a shred of affection, treating the child as indifferently as she treated Sharon.

Sharon's words struck a nerve, Jasmine's face twisted with anger, but she quickly adopted an air of superiority as if she wouldn't stoop to argue Trene is a Stanley and must stay with us."

"But she's closest to me, Sharon retorted, "You could ask Irene and see if she prefers to stay with me or you

"What a child of three says doesn't count," Jasmine retorted.

"Ms. Cress, considering the hardship you endured during pregnancy and birth. Mrs. Stanley is willing to compensate you with a certain amount. You'd do well to take the offer; otherwise, if this goes to court, you wouldn't stand a chance with your current financial situation, Marvin threatened, placing a check on the table.

Seeing the amount written on it, Sharon couldn't help but laugh. They thought 200 thousand dollars was enough to compensate her for bearing a child for the Stanley family.

Clearly, Jasmine was here not just to discuss custody but also to humiliate her with the 200 thousand dollars

"Who says Sharon doesn't have the financial means?" Alanna had been watching from nearby, fearing Sharon would be at a disadvantage. She couldn't hold back any longer and stepped in. With a lift of her chin, she waved her phone and said. "Bisney Entertainment just dropped 40 million dollars to establish a growth fund for Irene. Every expense of hers will come out of this. I think 40 million dollars should be enough to raise her till she's eighteen, right?"

"Um..." Marvin's eyes widened with shock.

Jasmine's previously indifferent façade shattered, her eyes bulging in surprise.

"Now that Sharon has adequate financial resources to support Irene, coupled with her being the primary caregiver and Irene's dependence on her, Mr. Lawyer, do you still think Sharon doesn't stand a chance?" said Alanna. In this situation, Sharon was clearly poised to win.

Marvin looked helpless as he glanced at Jasmine and shook his head.

Sharon and Alanna left side by side, having no interest in staying any longer to argue with Jasmine.

I can't believe Bisney Entertainment is willing to invest 40 million dollars to stand up for Sharon," Jasmine was still fuming after returning home. She had Marvin check the matter, and to her dismay, it was true. Her usual grace faltered, and her expression soured.

I heard Alanna is just an employee; there's someone else who owns Bisney Entertainment. Did Sharon hook up with the boss of Bisney Entertainment? Tina dilined in indignantly.

"Such a large sum surely meant the boss was involved Thinking about this, she stamped her foot in annoyance and added, "How could Sharon be so lucky that she's suddenly getting all this attention from men after her divorce?"

The buzz about Randall spending 20 million dollars on a crown for her hasn't even cooled off, and now here comes the bug shot from Bisney Entertainment dropping 10 million dollars for her daughter. It's like they're trying to one-up each other, Tina thought, her jealousy showing this keeps up, Sharon's gonna steal my dunder. I'm the daughter of the Stanley family, how can I stand by while someone I can't stand outdoes

Tina was beside herself with irritation and hastily rang up her confidante, Clara. "You have to help me. Clara. Think of a way to get rid of that shameless Sharon, she said after briefing Clara on everything

"You're saying she's involved with the boss of Bisney Entertainment?" Clara's voice revealed a hint of delight. Now that's interesting. As far as I know, the boss of Bisney Entertainment has been married for four years. She seems to be the mistress, huh?"

"He's married?" The news dispelled Tina's frustration, and her mind raced with a new idea. "Clara, do me a favor..."

Chapter 17

wearing

Today was the day to sign the contract. Shawn, as the representative of the partnering company, didn't show up until ten. Moreover, he was wearing a baby carrier and cradling his newborn daughter in his arms.

to everyone, yet a hint of pride on his face.

"Sorry, guys, got held up feeding the little one," Shawn apologized with a bow to every

With that, he held his baby close with one arm while he picked up the contract with the other. The baby might have felt uncomfortable and started to fuss and cry.

Shawn immediately put down the contract and gently patted his baby's back to soothe her.

Seated across from him, Edwin watched this scene with clear disgust on

face. "Can't the

nha f

e Wilkinson family afford a nanny to watch the kid?"

Shawn, far from embarrassed, looked at him reproachfully, "Come on, you're a dad too. Don't you understand the joy of just having a child?" Shawn's words caught Edwin off guard, leaving him speechless for a moment. Although he'd become a father earlier, he had never really looked after Irene. At first, he was too busy with work, and later, when Irene got older, she'd hide whenever she saw him. Edwin might not have been in debt to anyone, but he did owe his daughter.

After the contract was signed, Ray couldn't resist reminding Edwin, "Well, even for the kid's sake, you shouldn't have split with Sharon. Do you really think anyone will truly

cherish your daughter after she's away from her own family? Aren't you afraid she'll end up too pitiful?"

"What's the use of talking about it? The marriage is already over" Edwin replied gloomily.

"A divorce can always be reversed, can't it?" said Ray

"Yeah, that's why Sharon was so determined to divorce, Edric chimed in and smacked his phone against the armrest of his chair. "See? Just now, Sharon made a statement clarifying her relationship with Randall. She says they're just friends, and she's always seen Randall as her little brother?"

Hearing this, Ray immediately checked his phone, and true enough, there was Sharon's clarification statement via Randall's Twitter.

"I'll bet you anything that Sharon's gonna show up at that entrepreneur dinner tomorrow night. She'll sweet-talk Edwin, apologize, and then hint they should make up," Edric said. He believed all those rumors about Sharon, Rocky, and Randall were just tricks played by Sharon to get Edwin back.

"If she can pull that off, it could be an opportunity, Ray said, looking at Edwin meaningfully and giving his shoulder a firm squeeze. "She might have her schemes, but she was always devoted during the marriage

Perhaps because of Edric's words, all of Edwin's close friends showed up to the entrepreneur dinner the next day. Aside from Ray, Shawn, and Edric, two others had especially returned from abroad.

As predicted, Sharon showed up at the event. She looked delicate and adorable in her outfit. Her white dress perfectly covered her knees, and her matching high heels showcased her slender, straight legs. However, she was so thin it almost made her look fragile, her delicate face lightly made up and all the more emphasized her petite and helplessness.

Edric lifted his chin in disdain. Told you so. Within thirty seconds, she'll definitely come looking for Edwin. His lips curved into an ironic smile.

Edwin had been silently sipping his drink. Even though he didn't say anything, he put down his drink when he saw Sharon walking toward him. And there was no Tilda by his side today like usual,

to unfold.

When people around them saw Sharon walking over to Edwin, their faces revealed understanding as they waited for the drama to u

Edwin lifted his chin out of habit, curious to see what kind of play Sharon might put on to apologize.

“I’ve been waiting for you for a while. Perhaps because of her outfit, Sharon’s words sounded full of grievance, making her look more pitiful.

Edwin morted and said, “If you’re not sincerely here to apologize, then you should...”

But before he could finish, Sharon walked past him and toward another non, Only then did Edwin realize she wasn’t there for him at all.

Tim sorry, Got caught in trafic.” Across from Sharon, the man was mature and relaxed, revealing a pleasant uncle,

Everyone was silent.

The man meeting Sharon was Blake Peay, Alanna’s fiancé and also Sharon’s good friend. They’d been close for so many years that they were indi like family than friends, and it reflected in their eyes when they were talking

Sharon had been so focused on seeing Blake that she hadn’t even noticed Edwin on her way, and the daredged Edwin hail anger burnungg in lús

Chapter 17

“It’s a bit noisy here. Let’s chat over there“, Blake suggested as they left together. Though they weren’t holding hands, their proximity and intimacy paved the way for all kinds of assumptions

Edwin didn’t know what was happening with him. He gripped his fist an hard that he didn’t notice he’d crushed his glass until the shards sliced his skin, and the sting snapped him back to reality.

“Oh my, you’re hurt!” Someone reached out, gently holding Edwin’s cut hand. “You need to be more careful.”

Chapter 18

Seeing Tilda, Edwin showed no pleasure. “Why are you here?”

“Tilda looked at him and said, “1..”

“I’ll take care of this Edwin had zero patience tonight, Without waiting for hilda to hnish, he pulled his hand away and stormed off.

“Good thing you’re back, or Alanna would’ve driven the crazy” In a quiet spot, Sharon spun around to show off her outfit, speechless. This look was something Alanna had strongly pushed her into. She said it was meant to trigger every young guy’s protective instinct at the event and help Sharon find someone who’d want to protect her for life,

Blake knew Alanna could be quite the mischief-maker behind his back and smiled helplessly. “Where are she and Irene?”

“They’ll be right here,” Sharon said, and Alanna and Irene appeared at the end of the corridor at the same time

Delight sparked in Irene’s eyes when she saw Blake.

“This is Mr. Peay.” Sharon quickly said.

Irene confidently walked over and grabbed Blake’s hand. Hello, Daddy”

A flicker of embarrassment crossed Sharon’s face.

Blake, probably never expecting to suddenly be called dad, froze. However, Alanna laughed and said. “Yeah, nothing wrong with that Now that she was Irene’s godmother, Blake could be Irene’s godfather

Hearing Alanna’s words, Irene felt justified in her address. She pointed toward the shimmering lights ahead and said, “Daddy, let’s go play over there

Blake, happy to indulge Irene, scooped her up. “Alright, let’s go play over there.”

Sharon watched as Irene was convinced by Alanna, a headache brewing. She was about to go after them when she unexpectedly caught sight of Edwin nearby.

Edwin’s expression was dark as he stared at Sharon with piercing eyes. Is this how you teach our daughter? To call every man she sees Daddy?” He remembered the last time Irene had called Randall Ducky.

He didn’t mean to follow Sharon to see her all happy with another man. He was there to take care of his wound but happened to see this scene.

“You’ve got it all wrong. Even though he sounded pretty harsh, Sharon just had to try and clear things up. “Irene was just...

“It’s fine if you want to degrade yourself, but leave the kid out of it Edwin cut her off harshly before she could finish.

Sharon understood at that moment. He never believes me. What’s the point in explaining! I’m no longer with the Stanley family, she thought.

A cold smile appeared on her face. "Do you know why Irene wants to call every man she meets Daddy? Because you never let her call you that. She wants a dad just like any other kid, so she sees any man who shows her kindness as her father."

"What

nonsense

sense are you spouting? I never stopped her from calling me that Edwin looked down on Sharon even more, thinking she was making up absurd lies.

Sharon's smile turned bitter. "Have you forgotten? What did you say that time when Irene ran up and called you Daddy!"

Irene developed slower than other kids due to an infection at birth, and she finally started to talk close to her second birthday. The first time she clearly called out "Daddy," Sharon was so thrilled she rushed to find Edwin. But Irene wasn't met with praise. Instead, Edwin showed her a look of extreme disgust and dismissed her with only one word. "Scram."

Maybe because of the memory, from then on, whenever Irene saw Edwin, she was intimidated and never dared to call him again.

The event was long past, but recalling it still made Sharon profoundly sad for Irene.

With Sharon's reminder, Edwin vaguely recalled there might have been such an instance. But his disgust was aimed at Sharon, he hadn't paid attention to what Irene had said.

"It's not good that she calls others Daddy, but Mr. Stanley, you should sort yourself out too. If you don't allow her to call you Daddy, don't prevent her from calling someone else that," Sharon composed herself and said firmly.

Having said all she had to say, she didn't want to linger even a second and chased after the direction Alanna and the others had gone.

Behind her, Edwin's palm was full of blood, but he felt no pain. His chest felt tight, making it hard for him to br

breathe

0

Chapter 18

After playing in the lights with Irene for a while. Alanna got called away by Blake.

Formidable and majestic on her live streams, Alanna attracted countless devoted fans, but she became meek as a kitten in Blake's presence.

Now that she didn't have to deal with Alanna's demands, Sharon rubbed her forehead and heaved a sigh of relief. She really wasn't interested in the fancy entrepreneur dinner. When Alanna and Blake left, she had no intention of staying either and bent down to pick up Irene

Irene had been playing with Alanna all day and was now sleepy, rubbing her eyes. Not long after they set off, she fell asleep on Sharon's shoulder.

Sharon affectionately patted Irene's head and sped up toward the parking lot. Before reaching her car, she saw Edwin standing by the side of the road, obviously about to leave as well. She acted as if she hadn't seen him and turned her face away

However, Edwin stepped forward to block her path. "Let me give you two a ride home

Chapter 19

Sharon glanced at the sky, it wasn't raining. "No, thanks," she refused promptly.

Edwin's already sour expression turned even grimmer. "It's hard to hail a cab here. You really want the kid to get chilled by

the wind with you?"

Sharon had driven there, so getting chilled wasn't the issue. But it wasn't safe just to let Irene sleep loosely in the car seat. Considering this, she finally paused and followed Edwin to his car

Noticing the wound on his hand, Sharon stopped him as he was about to open the driver's door. "Maybe I should drive you just take care of Irene in the back

"You know how to drive?" Edwin looked surprised.

She had been part of the Stanley family for four years, and Edwin didn't even know she could drive. It spoke volumes about his neglect of her. Without saying much, Sharon just nodded and took the keys from his hand.

Edwin didn't press further and settled into the back seat. When Sharon

handed over the child to him, he looked utterly at a loss

"Just support the child's head, Sharon said, adjusting his arm to rest the child's little head against his chest.

Edwin froze, daring not to move. He looked down at the child's rosy cheeks against his chest and her fine, fluffy hair, and a touch of tenderness crossed his heart.

Sharon said nothing more, got in the car, and started the car smoothly.

Not wanting Edwin to know where she lived, she drove to where it was easy to catch a cab and stopped. "We're here. Thank you, Mr. Stanley She then took Irene from his arms and left.

I will make up for what I owe Irene, but my daugh

daughter doesn't need someone else to be her father.

"Sharon!" Edwin called after her from behind. "1 » That's my bottom line.

"Well, Mr. Stanley, I'm curious how you plan to make it up to Irene. Sharon stopped, looking at him with a half-smile

"I'll have the divorce canceled tomorrow. You'll move back with the Stanley family, and I'll try to spend more time with Irene," Edwin said,

"Cancel the divorce?" Sharon was genuinely surprised by his words. "Will Ms. Gill agree to this decision?"

"Why does she need to agree?" Edwin said. He would get pretty impatient every time he had to deal with Sharon.

"You're engaged to her. It's a basic respect for your fiancée, isn't it?" Sharon replied.

"Engaged?" Edwin was caught off guard, but he didn't explain and simply said, "Just do as I say. You don't have to worry about the rest."

Sharon was used to Edwin's cold attitude and didn't get mad, just tilting her head. "Then let me ask you something I'm more concerned about, Mr. Stanley. Are you canceling our divorce because you love me?"

Tim doing

to give the child a complete family, B Edwin said without hesitation, almost like a warning-

all of this just to

Sharon burst into laughter. "Mr. Stanley, do you really think having both parents is the best deal for a child? You haven't experienced growing up in a single-parent family.

How do you know it's not good? I grew up without a mother, but I never felt unhappy. My father gave me all his love and only ever asked for my happiness," she said.

"Yes, we were married for four years, and Irene is three now. Go and ask her if she's been happy these years. She's afraid that trouble will come my way if any of you at the Stanley family are unhappy, and to keep you all pleased, she's forced herself to be sensible and even give up dancing, which she loves most. You really want her to keep living in such a repressive environment, huh? Are you trying to drive her insane? Sharon choked up as she spoke.

"All that can be changed" Edwin didn't see it as a big deal.

"And what if it changes! You don't love me. What will Irene think when she grows up? She'll feel that she is the reason we're together and that she's

to blame," Sharon said.

way to make it up to Irene.

Edwin fell silent. Until Sharon told him this, he thought this was the best way to

"Mr. Stanley, don't worry. I'll take good care of Irene. Carrying Irene so long made her arms sore. Sharon nodded toward him and walked away

Edwin didn't go home but went to Tilda's place instead.

Chapter 19

When Tilda saw Edwin, her eyes sparkled with excitement. "Edwin, you're here. Come

Edwin didn't move, he just showed his phone to her. "Delete this photo from Twitter as soon as possible"

Tilda looked down and saw the tweet suggesting they were going to engage. "I'm sorry, Edwin. I just thought of our past days and posted it impulsively," she explained and examined Edwin's reaction "Actually, it's Sharon's fault. If she hadn't blurted out things and made me embarrassed back then, we wouldn't have broken up.

"Don't drag Sharon into this," Edwin reminded her coldly. He didn't want to hear that name again tonight. "Besides, we ended things four years ago. We are just friends now," With that, he turned and left.

but just

Behind him, Tilda gripped her fingers tightly, her pretty face twisted with anger. Since she came back, she never brought up reconciling but, subtly played it coy with Edwin,

waiting for things to naturally fall into place. I thought Edwin had the same idea. However, he's now stating boundaries between us. Is it because of Sharon? she pondered as her phone suddenly rang.

Annoyed, Tilda answered anyway.

A leisurely voice came from the other end. "Do you know the interesting thing I just heard: The high and mighty Edwin has proposed to cancel the divorce with his ex-wife. Considering our past, I thought I'd give you a heads-up. Don't lose your Mr. Right again this time."

Chapter 20

This news was like a bolt from the blue for Tilda.

a. She had traveled a great distance back for Edwin, and despite his attitude earlier, she hadn't felt completely hopeless. But now, with Edwin proposing to cancel the divorce with Sharon. Tilda could no longer stay calm. 'So it's all because of Sharon, she thought.

She clenched her fists so tight that her nails pierced the skin, and her palms were filled with blood.

A deep hatred welled up on Tilda's beautiful face. "It was because of you that Edwin and I broke up four years ago. And now, this again? Her voice was eerily calm, as if she was talking about something trivial, but the cold smile on her lips was chilling

Moments later, she walked over to the computer, pulled up a message that had been sitting in her inbox for days, glanced at it briefly, and clicked

on a link...

Sharon wasn't planning on reporting to work at Bisney Entertainment, but as the boss, she decided to visit the company.

Dressed in white and radiating a fierce elegance, Alanna saw Sharon and snapped her fingers. "Hey, I got some juicy gossip about your ex-husband, Interested!" she said excitedly.

"Nope." Sharon replied nonchalantly, picking up a report to read.

Ignoring Sharon's lack of interest, Alanna sat down and began, 'Last night. Tilda's computer was hacked, exposing a lot of stuff. Apparently, implicated in forging contracts. The scandal's blowing up big time, and if it turns out to be true, it might be the end of Tilda

Creating fake contracts often meant tax evasion, and there were plenty of scandals involving big stars and tax evasion—all ending with their careers ruined.

The news was indeed explosive. Even with her lack of interest, Sharon was momentarily stunned and forgot about the report

Teeks good, doesn't it? Alanna raised her fist, looking like a winner. "Evil deeds meet their due end. If it weren't for you back then, she would've been disgraced long ago. Instead of being grateful, she even ruined your marriage. She deserves to be punished. Justice never fails to show up"

Sharon only nodded and didn't say much. Tilda coming back wasn't the real problem; her marriage was doomed because Edwin didn't love her. Tikla just made the end come quicker.

"I was just trying to help Edwin out back then. I never even thought about Tilda," Sharon said truthfully.

"Yeah, but if you hadn't spilled to the media that they were done and you and Edwin were talking marriage, do you think she could've just walked away like that? Do you think she would've done as well as she has these past four years?" Alanna said.

Back in the day, Sharon and Edwin somehow ended up having a one-night stand, and just as they dealt with it and came out they ran into Tilda. The reporters caught her red-handed, all disheveled, with a guy under the covers. It was super awkward.

Tilda and Edwin were publicly engaged at that time, and everyone knew it. You're in showbiz. Have you ever seen a star caught cheating and smiling on screen? While you were getting the cold shoulder and misunderstandings from the Stanley family, she was living it up overseas. Her fame didn't suffer, and her career flourished. It's fine if she doesn't thank you but she's even going around playing the victim. I've seriously never seen someone as shameless as her, Alanna said, visibly upset.

Knowing Alanna was standing up for her, Sharon hugged her. "Thanks, girl."

"A thanks isn't enough. We're celebrating this. I want barbecue, the super spicy kind," Alanna said.

"Okay, barbecue it is, the super spicy kind. Sharon immediately took out her phone to search for nearby barbecue restaurants

Just then, the phone rang. It was Zelda Carroll, Irene's kindergarten teacher,

Sharon quickly answered, "Ms. Carroll, is everything okay? Are you calling at this time because Irene is unwell?" she asked.

“No, that’s not it? Zelda’s voice came through with a hint of hesitation. “It’s just that Irene’s father came and wanted to take her away... Could you come over, please!”

Sharon was quite surprised to hear it Edwin wanted to take Irene, ‘Shouldn’t be busy dealing with Tilda’s contract issuer What does he want with Irene? But she didn’t have time to think it through. After briefly speaking to Alanna, she hurried to the kindergarten.

Upon arrival, she didn’t see Irene.

Zelda stood at the side and looked helpless. “The child’s father insisted in taking her, and with his status... we really can’t argue, so...

Sharon had guessed this coming from the Stanley family and made it clear to Zelda that only she and Alanna could pick up Irene. But it still happened anyhow....

10:59 AM

Chapter 20

She couldn’t grasp why he’d have the nerve to take the kid after everything she said. Knowing Zelda did her best, Sharon didn’t trouble her but said, I’ll handle this,”

She got in the car and headed to Stanley Manor, a place soaked in the Stanley family’s history, a dream spot for many. But to Sharon, it felt like a prison. She wouldn’t even think of stepping there if it wasn’t for Irene.

The butler, Fred Jennings, saw her and hesitated. “Ms. Cress, what brings you here?”

“I need to speak with Edwin, Sharon said politely

Even though the Stanleys didn’t think much of her, the servants there were always kind. “Mr. Stanley just made it clear you’re not allowed in, Fred said with a helpless shake of his head

Sharon didn’t attempt to force her way in but responded, “Then, could you relay a message to Mr. Stanley for me! If I call the police or alert the press, it will make a scene and won’t look good for anyone. I doubt he would want the Stanley family’s matters on the news.”

Perhaps her words worked. Minutes later, Edwin appeared in his usual black attire, looking unapproachable with his stern face and dark eyes.

Sharon didn’t want to waste any time and approached him quickly. “Where’s Irene! Why would you...

“From now on, stop looking for Irene. She doesn’t need a mother who’s as indecent as you.” Edwin interrupted before she could finish, his tone filled with even more disdain.

“Indecent?” Sharon was utterly puzzled. “Wasn’t everything clarified?”

“Get her out of here, if she tries to force her way in, call the police” Edwin told Fred. He didn’t want to engage in further conversation.

He turned and walked inside. His heart was heavy with unease. “Sharon has been complaining about my negligence, making herself look nice. Yet behind the scenes, she’s done such disgusting things. I know she won’t change. My guilt over these past few days has been needless,” he thought.

Though reluctant, Fred had to call security to get Sharon out.

Sharon was unwilling to be apart from her daughter and accept this label of “Indecent” thrown upon her, but she was no match for the bodyguards. She was thrown outside the closed gates, the doors concealing the world where Irene was.

Sharon was anxious, and her eyes reddened involuntarily when she realized Irene could be scared inside the Stanley family’s home. “Fred, do you know what happened?” she asked.