

Dumping My Billionaire Ex

Chapter 31

“What’s there to regret?” Sharon replied with indifference, masking the bitterness that seemed to sweep through her.

Even though she was divorced from Edwin, she didn’t want to completely burn bridges. Despite enduring so much humiliation for four years within the Stanley family, she had no intention of shaming them in such a manner.

If it weren’t for Edwin and the others of the Stanley family cornering her, leaving her no room to breathe, she would have preferred to handle Irene’s custody more mildly.

“Well, as long as you have no regrets, whatever happens, we’ll face it together, Alanna promised, patting her chest. She could see the weight in Sharon’s thoughtful eyes. She felt a pang of sympathy, but she knew some pains just couldn’t be soothed.

Sharon managed to dispel the sadness in her eyes and sincerely said to Alanna, “Thanks.”

“What for? We’re practically family. Alanna dismissed her thanks with puzzlement, not liking the formality.

Sharon leaned over and gave her a hug. Alanna was her childhood friend who had been with her through thick and thin. If it weren’t for her, these times would have been even harder-

“Enough. I won’t be able to drive if you keep hugging me like this, Alanna said, her tone feigning annoyance but her hand gently patting Sharon’s shoulder in silent comfort.

Feeling the comfort, Sharon allowed herself to momentarily drop the façade of strength and let her emotions flood her, permeating every inch of

her skin.

But the sadness was short-lived. Minutes later, Sharon lifted her face with a cheerful smile.

Seeing Sharon regaining her composure, Alanna said again. “Sharon, you know, stirring this up with the Stanley family definitely ticked them off. Edwin will probably target

Bisney Entertainment. Her eyes grow troubled. "We might not be able to stand up to him."

Despite any grudge against Edwin, Alanna had to acknowledge his capabilities. He was skillful and ruthless, second to none.

"Bisney Entertainment isn't exactly weak, but if someone's determined to play dirty, we won't be able to stand it. Working in media, Alanna knew too well how it worked. "These days, these in our business struggle with even the smallest schemes; Edwin will be far more cutting

"I know." Sharon nodded, her beautiful face showing no signs of panic or worry. She'd considered all the possibilities before acting, "Even without Bisney Entertainment, Irene and I can live without worries.

She'd saved a good deal of money and invested in prime real estate in major cities. Even if housing prices dropped, those in the center of major cities remained unaffected.

Sharon then looked at Alanna. "As for you all, capable as you are now, plenty of companies would fight to have you if you left Bisney Entertainment,"

She paused briefly before adding, "But I still suggest you, Rocky, and Randall set out on your own. With your current fame, working for someone else is a loss."

"Jeez, Sharon, don't tell me you've already got our startup funds ready" Alanna blurred out.

Sharon's hand paused inside her bag, right around a card.

Alanna guessed right. To completely free Irene from the Stanley family, Sharon had prepared for everything. But she couldn't leave those who stood by her through it all high and dry.

However, Alanna wasn't pleased. "Do you even consider me a friend? It's heartless to leave at a time like this, isn't it I won't stop Randall if he wants to leave, but Rocky and I will definitely stand by you to the end."

Alanna was hot-tempered and straightforward, not one to give up easily. She didn't hold Randall back because he wasn't just a live streamer but also a figure skater. His reputation was too important to risk any tarnish

"Sharon, you take a break. I'll keep watch over Bisney Entertainment these days. Alanna was ready for a fight, even if they lost to Edwin, they would make sure he suffered, too

en she once loved

And she wanted Sharon away for another reason—she didn't want Sharon to witness her cherished business destroyed by the man

to the core. That was too cruel to bear.

Understanding Alanna's intent, Sharon didn't refuse and nodded, and she thought it was a good opportunity to visit her father.

During her four years of marriage, her father had stayed away, knowing the Stanley family disliked him.

"Trene is already three, and she hasn't seen him yet. Besides, I should inform him about the divorce. Thinking this, Sharon promptly booked flights

Chapter 1

back home for herself and Irene.

Just after booking the tickets, Sharon's phone, which she seldom used, rang. Only a few close individuals knew this number of her

Confused, Sharon took out the phone, not recognizing the incoming call number. She couldn't help but wonder who it might be from.

After a moment's hesitation, she answered.

A familiar male voice came through from the other end. 'Is this Foxy Damon: I'm Ray Gildon, the head of the Gildon Group.

Sharon was momentarily taken aback, puzzled about how Ray had obtained her number.

She had opened this line for some essential contacts during her streaming days under the alias Foxy Damon. However, given her low profile, she rarely interacted with advertisers, leaving her contact largely unknown. How did Ray and this number? she wondered.

On the other end, when Ray's call connected, his heart was filled with joy. After all, the person who gave him the number mentioned that Foxy Damon hadn't used it in four years and was worried she might have abandoned it

Managing her curiosity, Sharon asked, "Yeah, how can I assist you?"

"Here's the thing... Ray quickly explained his purpose

Sharon's brows gradually knitted together as she listened. Ray had heard about her connections with Andrew, the business tycoon from Satisetion and wanted her to help them secure a deal. However, this deal was a joint project between Ray and Edwin

I'm sorry, but I must decline, Sharon replied without hesitation

Kay was taken aback. "Please, we would be immensely grateful if you could do us this favor. As for the compensation, it's entirely up to you." He mistakenly thought it was a matter of payment that made Sharon hesitant.

Sharon simply smiled slightly. "It's not about the money, Mr. Gildon. If there's anything else you need help with in the future, I might be willing to consider it. But not this," she said and politely ended the call.

Hay stared dumbfounded at the disconnected call, unable to grasp the situation. Toxy Damon refused this but is willing to help with something else? Was she just being polite, or did she mean it? It can't be true. We've never even met; she has no reason to be this kind to me," he thought.

Having overheard the conversation while driving. Alanna looked disapproving and said, "Sharon, are you serious? You've divorced Edwin; why bother with his friends?"

Sharon pursed her lips slightly. I can ignore the other, but not Ray He's helped me. She then held up her fingers. "Even twice."

The first time was when she was in the hospital giving birth and nearly bled out while frene was also hanging by a thread. The other time...

Chapter 32

Sharon didn't delve into thar thought further, but her heart still skipped a beat with a sharp twinge of pain.

Alanna drove Sharon straight to Bisney Entertainment, where Irene was also present. After the recent events at the Stanley family's place, Sharon didn't want to risk anything happening to Irene and hadn't sent her to school

Irene walked over, led by Randall. "Mommy" She charged into Sharon's arms. Although it had only been a few hours apart, she had missed her mother dearly.

Sharon bent down to catch her little body, the softness immediately melting the chill in her heart. Were you good, Irene! You didn't interrupt Mr. Silva's live streaming, did you?" she asked gently

"She didn't, Randall answered, his voice warm and reassuring. His flawless face showed a touch of care for Sharon, and his eyes smiled in a way that was just right.

“Mommy, I was very good.” Irene chimed in. Staying with Rocky and Alanna had shaped her into quite a lively person. But she secretly wanted Randall to be her dad. She thought that only if she was well-behaved would Randall like her more.

“Mr. Silva is handsome and kind, and he can do really hard dances on the ice!” Irene praised Randall out of the blue and glanced at Sharon with clear intention of promoting Randall to her.

Sharon saw right through her scheme but pretended not to understand. She gently tapped Irene’s nose. “I have something to tell you.

Irene could only wave her hand reluctantly, “Bye, Mr. Silva.”

Alanna pretended to be jealous. “So quick to ignore me for a pretty face, huh?”

Irene pouted and ran to Alanna, planting a kiss on her nose. “I didn’t forget you, Alanna. Look, I only kiss you like this. I’ve never kissed Mr. Silva.” She thought only her mom could kiss Randall

Alanna laughed and returned several kisses on Irene’s cheek before nudging her. “Well, go inside with your mommy.”

Sharon took Irene into Alanna’s office and closed the door. After setting Irene on a chair. Sharon held her shoulders gently and said. “I’ve made things clear with the Stanley family today. They won’t be taking you away anymore.”

“Really?” Irene’s face brightened. Her memories of the Stanley family were far from fond, and she disliked them more than ever.

“Mommy, they didn’t bully you, did they?” Concern quickly clouded her joy as she tenderly cupped Sharon’s face and checked it carefully. In her memory, Tina would slap Sharon whenever she was upset. Seeing no mark on Sharon’s face, Irene breathed a sigh of relief.

Sharon quietly observed her daughter’s caring gestures, her heart softening. Irene was the only one who cared for her at the Stanley family and comforted her whenever Tina hit her or Jasmine was mean

Sharon chuckled and held her daughter’s soft hand. “Don’t worry. They won’t bully me again. Also I owe you an apology.” She lowered h

her head in shame as she explained how she’d made the Stanley family give up on Irene. “Sorry, Irene. I set a poor example

Even if she kept quiet, Irene would eventually hear it from the Stanley family. Moreover, Irene and she stuck together through thick and thin. She wanted to maintain an equal relationship with Irene, not just the usual dynamic of elders and juniors.

“Mommy, you said I’m the daughter of Bisney Entertainment’s owner, and you are indeed the owner. There’s nothing wrong with that,” Irene replied. “So, you didn’t lie. You just changed the way you said it –

Her response took Sharon by surprise. When did this little one get so clever? She’s able to grasp such complex ideas, huh? she thought.

Irene noticed Sharon’s puzzled look and blinked triumphantly. “Mr. Jensen and Mr. Silva taught me a lot about streaming. They said it’s important how one grabs people’s attention with their words. I’ve been paying real close attention”

Pride shone on Irene’s face, and Sharon couldn’t help but find her daughter utterly adorable and laugh. She stroked her little one’s soft hair in

Trene’s really grown up. Deciding to break away from the Stanley family was definitely the smart move, she thought.

Just then, her phone started ringing. Glancing down, Sharon recognized the number all too well,

There was a time when she longed to call it yet never dared to even touch her phone, fearing the person on the other end would be displeased.

Now, seeing that number left her feeling nothing at all. She realized that once a person decided to dunge, they could become very cold. For example, she didn’t even want to hear the voice on the other end now.

Without a thought, Sharon hung up.

11:00 AM

On the other end. Edwin stared at his phone, the display showing the call had been disconnected. His face clouded with an indescribable alarkness. ‘She dares to ignore me after what she’s done, huh? he thought.

zealon. But Sharon’s bombshell that

He had left the house with anger bauning in his hear. For years, no matter the ordeal, he managed morning undid all his composure. Hours later, the anger inside him not only remained but grew more jutense

'She shamelessly got involved with me four years ago and declared herself my harem. That that was men because she loved me but to legitimize the child of Disney Entertainment's owner, huh? That hurts infinitely more than hearing she did it all for love, Talwin thenight.

Frustrated, he tried calling again but found his call blocked. His grip on the phone tightened.

At that moment, the door opened. Ray was

"I managed to contact Fosi Dimon, but she won't help us. What should we do next?"

Edwin seemed deaf to Ray's voice, and without a glance, he brushed past Ray and left.

Feeling the chilly vibe, Ray shuddered. "What's going on here?" he asked, looking toward Fabric and Tikla who were present.

with business, no matter how bad his mood was. But when Ray spoke just now, there was no

Edwin never let his personal feelings interfere with response from him.

What else can you expect? Being tricked for four years and raising somebody else's kill, how could he be happy?" Edwin said sarcastically. Of course, he was targeting Sharon. He briefly explained the situation to Ray.

"You keep saying Sharon is a good person. Is this your standard for people?" Edwin had long been irked by Ray's favoritism toward Sharon. However, he was now in a good mood because the worse Sharon looked, the less likely Edwin would recommit with her.

Across from Edwin, Tilda was also pleased with the turn of events. Now that even the chill isn't Edwin's, when do I have to worry about? As long as that one thing remains a secret, Edwin has to cherish and love me forever, she thought.

Getting up elegantly, Tilda walked to a quiet spot before she pulled out her cell phone and made a call, "You told me once that because of something, Edwin's been pampering me and granting my wishes and that he would never leave me. What is LIF

"The matter actually involves a person replied the voice on the other end.

"Who? Tilda asked,

Chapter 33

Tilda's grip on her phone tightened as excitement surged through her

Sensing her urgency, the man on the other end let out a sinister, low chuckle that sent shivers down her spine. "You're dying to find out? Come over if you really wanna know." His voice was laced with desire that he didn't bother to hide.

17)

Tilda's face flushed with anger. "That's impossible"

"Well, if you don't wanna know, forget it. But The man's voice trailed off. He deliberately paused, enjoying the torment.

Impatient and fuming, Tilda was about to hang up when his voice came through again "Take care of your throat, sweetheart. Don't be losing that voice of yours

"What do you mean?" Tilda pressed, but the line went dead as the man hung up first

Standing in the hallway, Tilda was left with nothing but guesses, and her face darkened. However, she couldn't make heads or tails of his words. 'He always likes to say these kinds of ambiguous things. But I feel like he's hinting at something this time; she thought.

She didn't call him back. Given the lessons from four years ago, she was steering clear of any danger, intent on proving her wholehearted dedication to Edwin

Tomorrow was homecoming day, and Sharon was a bundle of nerves. She didn't even dare call her dad to let him know.

During her four years of marriage, out of fear of upsetting the Stanley family, she hadn't reached out to her father. He'd raised her all those years, and she'd given nothing in return,

Sharon went shopping to pick up some nice things, and Alanna had also asked her to take some nutritional supplements back home.

After packing up, they lay on recliners watching TV. The show playing was a variety show, the host delivered a dramatic monologue before excitedly introducing. "Next, please welcome tonight's mystery guest.""

As soft music played, the door at the back of the stage opened. The spotlight focused, and a figure emerged, dressed in a flowing chiffon dress, hair cascading down her shoulders, revealing striking features.

As soon as Alanna saw her face, she snored. "I can't believe they let trash like her on my favorite reality show. I don't want to watch it now."

At the same time, Sharon recognized the woman as Tilda, and her eyes darkened.

Tilda's pretentious presence drew applause, and the host shouted, "Oh! My queen!

"Oh, come on, please stop teasing me, Tilda replied with a coy smile, and the cameraman gave her an extreme close-up on purpose.

"If anyone like her can be called a queen, the standards must really be on the floor," Alanna snapped, harboring no love for Tilda. Not wanting to affect Sharon's mood, she sharply turned off the TV.

"Don't worry about me; I've been immune to her for a long time," Sharon said lightly, noticing Alanna's concern.

"She's just so annoying. From now on, any show she's on, count me out," Alanna said, slapping the armrest next to her and then gazing at Sharon. "In terms of looks, you're way prettier than Tilda. You're sweet and smart. You could leave her in the dust. What did Edwin ever see in Tilda that he loved her so much?"

Sharon was just as puzzled about it.

Initially, Edwin was blind and sent to the remote s

small city where Sharon lived by the Stanley family. That was where they met, Later, Edwin went back to get treatment for his eyes, and they parted ways. By the time she saw Edwin again, Tilda was already by his side. Before she became famous, Tilela wasn't as pretty as she was now, but falwin was genuinely into her, treating her like his precious treamire.

The memory that stood out the most to Sharon was when Tilda wanted sweet potatoes. They were just out of the oven, scalding hot, but Edwin, armingly oblivious to the heat, held them with his hands, blowing on them and feeding Tilda bite by bite.

Looking at Edwin's reddened palms, Sharon could even feel the sting. And now, the memory only brought a bitter sting to her heart,

"Maylar she's got something special about her; Sharon said. Now divorced from Edwin, she didn't feel like guessing anymore.

Alanna snorted with disdain. "Special? Her acting is really stiff. If it wasn't for Edwin pushing her career, she couldn't even land a supporting role, let alone win the Best Actress award. The only thing she's got going for her is that voice of hers. Bus. Alanna glanced back at Sharon. "Have you ever noticed! Your voice and Tilda's, they sound alike"

"Do they?" Sharon cleared her throat and offered a light smile. "I never really paid attention

Chapter 34

Edric, clearly impatient, pulled out his phone. "You think I want to come to a place like this?" He looked around with obvious disdain as if it was some dingy hole. Just listen for yourself.

Sharon caught the implication in his words and stepped over to listen. What Edric played was a voice message. Urgent and familiar, Tilda's voice said. "Edric, do you know where Edwin has gone? I've been looking for him and can't find him anywhere. I'm a bit worried. Can you help me look

for him!"

"So, Edric showed up at my door in the middle of the night to help Tilda find Edwin? Sharon thought with a light chuckle. It made sense. Edric always looked down on me. Back in the Stanley family's place, he'd avoid me whenever he saw me. He's always been a man about his comfort, I never imagined he'd stoop to knock on my door for Tilda. By the way, Tilda is really lucky. Before, Edwin was utterly devoted to her and would forgive her anything. And now, Edric is running around at her beck and call"

Just as Sharon was about to inform Edric that Edwin wasn't with her, Tilda's second voice message played. "Edric, never mind, I found out where Edwin is. He's at the Serene Hotel and so is Rocky."

Just then, Alanna's phone rang. She answered, and her face instantly darkened. "Damn it, Edwin."

Sharon and Alanna rushed to the Serene Hotel. The door to room 1032 was slightly ajar. Inside, Rocky sat on the bed, shirt unbuttoned, revealing his chest. His usually cheerful face was clouded with anger.

Opposite him sat a cold, tall man stretching out his legs casually, fiddling with a lighter. It was Edwin. He wore no expression and remained silent

the whole time.

Sharon gasped as she entered, taken aback by the scene

Alanna came running in afterward, frustratedly running her hands through her hair.

"Damn it." At the sight of them, Rocky growled, staring at Edwin, "Edwin, why do you have to frame me like this?."

Edwin stopped playing with his lighter and leaned forward slightly, his icy gaze never landing on Rocky, "Did I tell you to sleep with her?" His eyes shifted toward the woman next to Rocky,

The woman was in disarray, barely covering herself with a blanket. It was clear what had happened before.

Frantic. Alanna scolded, "Rocky, how could you let this happen?"

—

Rocky's handsome face was etched with injustice. "I didn't bring this woman here. Nothing happened between us."

"... I'm his fan, and I have been into him for a long time, the woman whispered.

Sharon knew Rocky well. Though he was a playboy, he had his principles and would never get involved with a fan. But Edwin's presence complicated matters. Not one to make aimless moves, Edwin was clearly up to something that could ruin Rocky-

Sharon approached Edwin, "What are you really after herer"

Without a word, Edwin checked his watch, cold as ever. Then he stood up and left.

Sharon took a deep breath and followed. "The one you're angry with is me, so direct it at me, Rocky's innocent. Please leave him out of this she wid softly and blocked his path.

She had underestimated Edwin's ruthlessness. She thought, at most, he'd shut down Bisney Entertainment. She never expected him to target her friends

"I'm after your lover, not you," Edwin finally said through clenched teeth, visibly upset. A man's affairs should be settled by men. He might not love Sharon, but he wouldn't allow her to carry another man's child under his name. "Get him out here," he added.

"The boss of Hisney Entertainment is me," Sharon said truthfully.

Edwin chuckled coldly. "He didn't take responsibility for his kid, and now i

that there's trouble, he's pushing you forward. Sharon, this is the man you

Sharon knew he wouldn't believe her and decided not to dwell on it. "I didn't decrive or use you. When we got intimate, it was my first time, and you saw that for yourself!

so, you cheated because I failed to satisfy you

y you during our marriage? Before she could finish, Edwin cut her off. He looked at her coldly. "You were the one eager to marry me. You should have put up with it even if I failed to satisfy you. What right do you have so complain, to flirt with another guy, and to have has a huld?" His words weer harshi and tourtul

11:01 AM D

Chapter 14

Despite feeling wronged, Sharon had never wanted to marry Edwin. Back when things happened between her and Edwin, she accidentally became the third party between him and Tilda, She felt deeply ashamed, so she planned to escape and never return to this city. The only reasons she stayed and married him were for him.....

These memories overwhelmed Sharon with a sense of injustice, and she fought hard to hold back her tears from spilling.

She looked at Edwin with a hint of mockery in her smile. I certainly have no right to carry another man's child, but what about yours? Do you even care about that? You haven't forgotten, have you! The day after our wedding, your family's doctor discovered I was pregnant. They even did a further check to make sure the child was a Stanley, But what did you do to that child? On the way to visit your father's grave, because of a call from Tilda, you kicked me out of the car and left me alone on a snowy road. You never cared about us"

ch she wouldn't have had the courage to confront if she wasn't pushed to the extreme

She was forced into b today.

bringing up those painful memories, which

The snow was coming down so hard that day, piling up on the ground within moments. In that remote location during such weather, it was impossible for anyone to pass by. To make things worse, her phone and purse were left in the car. For a moment, she thought she'd freeze to death there. If it weren't for Ray passing by, she might be dead

Recalling all this, Sharon closed her eyes tightly

Even after Ray saved her, Sharon was sent to the hospital for hypothermic shock. Her pregnancy was nearly lost, and her progesterone levels dropped to frightening lows. She fought tooth and nail to keep the child, enduring immense suffering. Due to this. Irene suffered from extremely low immunity, resulting in a blood infection immediately after she was born.

"You didn't want your child, so I had to go have one for someone else." Sharon composed herself, and her tone was cold. The pain Irene endured was because of Edwin. A little shame on him was more than deserved.

"Edwin, you hate me for trapping you into marriage, but you benefited from this marriage as well, didn't you? To profit and then play the victim, what is that? Shameless

and childish!" Sharon had been blunt with Edwin after their divorce, but her words were never as cutting as they were now. Edwin

was at a loss for words, stunned silent.

No longer wanting to stay with him for another second, Sharon walked back toward the room. As she turned, she glimpsed a figure disappearing down the hallway, her lips curling in disdain before she firmly shut the door.

Just as Sharon entered the room, a sharp scream reached her ears. Turning toward the sound, she saw a shadow moving by the window, and her face instantly paled.

Chapter 35

The female fan who had been hiding in the bed somehow ended up on the windowsill. She sat on the open window, one leg dangling outside.

Alanna froze with shock: Rocky, on the other hand, acted fast, rushing to the window.

But

at the girl w

girl wouldn't let him touch her, crying nonstop. Every time Rocky tried to pull her back, she leaned further out.

Sharon tried to stay composed and told Rocky, "Rocky, come back here."

Rocky looked at the girl, unsettled,

Sharon shook her head at him. After all, the girl would only get more

more agitated with Rocky around..

Having no other choice, Rocky retreated with a heavy heart

Sharon approached the girl but kept some distance. "What's going on? Why are you doing this

The girl was sobbing. It's all clear to me now. Because of me, Rocky might never be able to livestream again. It's all my fault. I might as well be dead"

"This isn't your fault. Please come down. Sharon said, trying to reason with her.

The girl just shook her head repeatedly. "No, this is all my doing"

From across the room, seeing how stubborn the girl was, Alanna shouted, “You think dying solves everything? If you die, you’ll only bring more trouble to Rocky What’s he supposed to do then?”

Alanna’s rebuke made the girl even more upset, her cries growing louder. She was trembling so much that a strong breeze might have blown her

away.

Sharon’s head was pounding. Think about it. This is the tenth floor. If you fall, you won’t survive. It’ll be a miserable end-

Hearing this, the girl froze. She was still young and beautiful, obviously not prepared to meet such a violent end.

Seizing the moment, Sharon lunged forward and wrapped her arms around the girl’s waist, yanking her back inside. Alanna and Rocky rushed forward, and they together managed to pull the girl to safety.

They comforted the girl for a good while. Finally, with her eyes red and swollen, the girl was led away as per Alanna’s arrangements,

In the room, only the three of them remained, Still agitated, Rocky ran his fingers through his hair. All he did was take a shower, and suddenly, there was this girl in his room, and to top it off, Edwin caught them in the act. He was beyond frustrated.

Sharon went to him, squeezing his shoulder. “Don’t worry. I’ll figure something out for this mess. It won’t affect you.”

Rocky looked at her. “No need, Sharon. I hate being played. If Edwin thinks he can use me to force you into something, he can just quit it. I was getting tired of livestreaming anyway. Maybe I’ll just go back and take over the family business?”

Rocky came from a very wealthy family, but due to some friction and his laid-back nature, he had chosen the livestreaming life over the business world.

“What are you talking about?” Sharon knew he wasn’t serious. “You’re the mainstay of my company.

you leave, what am

am I supposed to do?”

The money Rocky made selling stuff in his live streams was nothing short of what he could get by taking over the family business.

A top-notch live streamer could whip up sales in just a few minutes that beat out what some whole cities could make in-store.

“Don’t worry, I already took care of Edwin, Just focus on your sales and quit worrying about anything else,” Sharon added.

Hearing Sharon’s claim of handling Edwin, Rocky was visibly worried. “Sharon, you didn’t agree to some unfair deal with him, did you?”

“No, 1 dulot,” she replied,

Rocky seemed to want in o press further, but Sharon had already arranged another room for him. “Get some rest. I need you fresh for the work

Normally, Rocky would tuow a couple of jokes her way, laut he was clearly not in the mood that night. He just nodded and left.

Left alone with Sharon, Alanna asked anxiously, “Is it truly handlede.

Sharon didn’t hide the truth from her and shook her head

11:01 AM

Chapter 35

“What do we do then? If Edwin can pull something like this, he’s for sure gonna do even crazier stuff, Alanna said.

“Don’t worry,” Sharon said with a comforting look. “Though I can’t handle this, someone else will take care of it for me.”

Sharon knew the figure she saw in the hallway was probably Tilda. If Tilda was smart enough, she surely knew what was best for her to do

Sharon and Alanna had a brief chat after that Concerned that the incident with the female fan might spread if seen by the others, Alanna decided to stay in the hotel for the night

Sharon left on her own. Just as she walked to the elevator, she noticed an elegant figure appear, clad in black with her face completely covered.

However, Sharon recognized the person immediately it was Tika

Tilda joined Sharon in the elevator without a word until the doors closed. She then said. “Ms Cress, can we talk?”

“Sure, Sharon replied.

Once downstairs, Tilda led Sharon into a dim, deserted corner before turning to face her. She removed her sunglasses to reveal a striking face.

“I’ve taken care of tonight’s situation for you, Ms. Cress. Edwin has agreed to let bygones be bygones as a favor to me,” Tilda said.

It was just as Sharon had anticipated.

Tilda then fell silent, holding her sunglasses and staring at Sharon with a sense of superiority.

However, Sharon showed no surprise or gratitude on her face—only a calm nod in acknowledgment

Tilda couldn’t help but let out a cold laugh. She thought. Typical a country bumpkin. I do her a huge favor, and she doesn’t even know to say thank

you

Feeling it was beneath her, Tilda didn’t bother saying another word to Sharon and just walked away with grace.

A few steps out, she suddenly paused. “Oh, and one more thing. Edwin has a temper. You’d better stay out of his way from now on

Sharon’s

again

snorted. From the moment she divorced, she had banished Edwin from her world. The last thing she wanted was to show up in his life

Sharon saw right through Tilda. She knew Tilda had been waiting for a thank you. But Sharon couldn’t have cared less because she felt it was unnecessary.

For one, although Sharon’s only intention back then was to help Edwin, Tilda would have been kicked out of the company without Sharon’s intervention, so in turn, Tilda owed her a thank you as well.

Besides, Tilda speaking up for Sharon in front of Edwin wasn’t about helping Sharon. It was all for herself. After all, only if Edwin completely cut off from Sharon and Irene could Tilda live happily with Edwin in the future

Not long after Tilda had left, Sharon's phone began to ring. It was Irene. The little one started to worry when her mom didn't come home so

Sharon quickly reassured her, "I'm on my way back now;

However, a hand suddenly grabbed her arm and forcefully dragged her into the darkness.

Chapter 36

Sharon raised her hand instinctively and swiftly delivered a backhand slap to the man's face.

Tilda, it's me!" The man cried out. He turned on the flashlight on his phone.

Sharon managed to make out a shape of a man with a crew cut. He wore a rough expression with a hint of arrogance.

The man was also able to see her face clearly in an instant, and his concerned gaze turned cold. He pushed her away in disdain. "What are you doing here!

person in front of her. "Edric Greenwood?"

Only then did Sharon recognize the person in

Evidently. Edric had mistaken her for Tilda. He took a big step back. The corner of his lip turned up in annoyance and he let out a huff through his

nostrils

He took the same paper towel and wiped his hands clean in front of her.

He didn't say it explicitly, but it was enough to let Sharon know that he was not happy to see her.

She knew better than to stick around and put up with his behavior, so she started to make her

Edric, however, interjected. "Are you really that desperate?"

way

BUL.

He flung the paper towel to the ground and stomped on it Twisting the napkin under his foot, he continued, 'Do you really think by pretending to talk and dress like Tilda, Edwin would be more interested in you?'

He kicked the twisted napkin away, gazing sidelong at her. He made no attempt to disguise the contempt in his eyes.

Sharon looked down at the Chanel dress she was wearing. It was not particularly luxurious or extravagant. Considering her finances, it wasn't a stretch to own a few of these

As for her voice, she recalled that Alanna had said something similar before.

Edric didn't let up on his vitriol. "Even an expensive dress can't make you look good. You should stop making a fool of yourself"

He stuffed his hands into his pockets and started to walk off.

Sharon stopped him. "Edric."

She walked up to him in a calm and collected manner and with a look of quiet amusement,

"Where do
you work?"

Edric wasn't sure he understood, so he looked at her in disbelief. How can anyone care about such trivial details after being mocked like that?

"You must have too much free time on your hands to stick your nose in other people's business so much" Her comment threw him off guard, and he turned red in embarrassment. His air of arrogance disappeared

Edric was able to get away with his savage criticisms in the past because of his friendship with Edwin. Sharon had held back at that time on her husband's account.

Now that she and Edwin were divorced, there was no reason for her to tolerate his friend's condescending attitude.

Sharon pursed her lips before letting a smile spread across her face. It was plain to see that she didn't think much of him.

"How dare you" He clenched his fists

Sharon didn't give him a chance to continue, promptly interrupting. "Do you think everyone who wears Chanel is trying to pretend to be Ms. Gilp

Edric's eyes wideurd. He was stumped. In his mind, Sharon was a meek and mild person, ignorant of the ways of the world. Even when he spoke harshly to her in front of Edwin, she never uttered a word in defence. Is this really the same person!

Edno had been born with a silver spoon in his mouth and was pampered ever since. He thought highly of himself and wasn't used to being ridiculed. His face became tense and tight, and anger raged behind his eyes.

Sharon wasn't about to stop though. She added, "Til also suggest that you get your cars checked out. You've heard my voice many times before but pull can't recognize it. Oli, while you're at it, get a brain scan too. As a respected miember of the Greenwood family, you have to maintain a certain level of intelligence. It wouldn't be good to become the butt of jokes in the communit

Then as if she had grown boord of him, the toward fier hair and walked out to big

11.01 AM

Chapter 6

Edric couldn't respond fast enough and stared after her as she left. Finally, when he regained his bearings, he slammed his fist down on the railing

Sharon returned home after finishing her errands. She scooped Irene up in her arms and closed her eyes contentedly.

They planned to head to her dad's home the next day so they'd have to get up early

Her sleep quality had actually been pretty poor.

When she lived with the Stanleys, Jasmine had ordered her to welcome Edwin when he came home. He always came back late, so she always wall up.

had

This was originally the servants duty, but at that time, she cared about Edwin and saw it as a chance to catch up with him at the end of his busy da so she had gladly agreed.

Edwin didn't think of it the same way as her, and would frequently lose his remper if the door wasn't opened immediately when he arrived. He didn't hesitate to kick the door repeatedly to announce his displeasure either

Sharon was afraid to sleep deeply for fear that Irene would be startled by the loud banging. She would rush to the door at every possible sound or movement that might indicate Edwin was arriving

Despite being greeted with nothing but his cold, indifferent face time and time again, she had no complaints.

On nights when he stayed out until the morning without notice, she had stayed up all night too, just in

She shook her head at the memory. What a silly person I used to be

CISC

She fell asleep as soon as her head hit the pillow.

Meanwhile, at Nexus, Edwin was drowning his troubles in alcohol. Sharon's words rang in his head,

When they got married, he never thought of her as his wife. To him, nothing had changed, and he had zero consideration for her welfare or even her existence.

Even during the ceremony, he was just going through the motions. When he got a call from Tilda, his instincts took over and he simply forgot about Sharon. The thought that Sharon might be pregnant or might not be able to return home never crossed his mind.

When she disappeared for a few days after that, he was also unconcerned. In fact, he actually thought it was better that way,

Sharon did return though. She was noticeably thinner and seemed unsteady when she walked, but he chalked it up to a pitiful act. He also turned a blind eye when Tina tried to pick a fight with her.

Could it be that she had actually had a miscarriage then?

Edwin was rational to the point of being cold, but he was not so heartless as to intentionally cause her to miscarry and leave her in the lurch.

His heart sank at the thought of such a possibility.

"Mr. Stanley" May greeted him as she walked in in civilian clothes.

She quietly surveyed Edwin and was surprised to see signs of tiredness on his face.

She chose not to ask after him, and instead conveyed in a low voice, "Regarding your request, I found out that there were one hundred and fifty eight divorces on the day your

divorce was processed. I checked out their personal information including their jobs, but none of them fit the profile of the head of Disney Entertainment”

May concluded, “I apologize for being unable to find the divorce record.”

Edwin’s grip on his wine glass tightened. He looked over at her with creased eyebrows, but in a flash, he regained his composure.

When he spoke again, his to

tone was flat and his expression was neutral. “This matter ends here, there is no need to investigate further

“Understood.” May’s tone lightened. “It just so happens that Tilda wishes the same thing. She had asked me to request on her behalf that you drop the matter. The two of you truly share a special bond”

Edwin suffered.

He did intend to stop pursuing the issue, but it was not just for “Tilda’s sake. The underlying reason was for Sharon herself,

Sharon was right, after all. No matter how terrible her plan made him look, there was no denying that the Stanley family came out on top.

He was willing to leave Sharon to her own devices. From now on, they would lead separate lives.

Chapter 37

May straightened her back and stood at attention.

—“I’m listening-

Edwin pondered for a moment, tapping his fingers

“Look into the person who donated their corneas to me back in the day

“Corneas?” May looked into his eyes.

She knew that Edwin had problems with his eyes and had his corneas replaced. She formed her next sentence carefully.

“It may not be possible to find out anything after all this time.”

Edwin mused slightly,

When he first went blind, he couldn't use regular corneas because of his medical condition, and he couldn't find a suitable donor. At one point, he had resigned himself to being blind for the rest of his life.

Then one day, out of the blue, a donor was found. Not only did they not take any money, they didn't even leave their name,

Just look into it. He said,

He kept score on grudges, and he was also not willing to owe anyone any favors, much less an anonymous person.

May stopped resisting and replied, "I'll get on it."

Edwin turned and left

May stared at his receding figure, her eyes betraying deep-running emotions.

It wasn't until someone tapped her on the shoulder that she snapped out of it.

Turning back to see who it was, May suddenly blushed. She looked like a deer caught in headlights.

"What are you looking at.

She averted her gaze in a panic, not daring to make eye contact "Nothing. I was just thinking

"Really? It looked like you might have a crush on Edwin-

"I would never come between you and Mr. Stanley May waved her hands in the air as if to physically dispel the idea.

The person in front of her was no other than Tilda.

Tilda covered her mouth and let out a laugh. "I was just messing with you, you don't have to look so frightened."

May observed her intently. There wasn't a trace of any ill will on Tilda's face. She was secretly relieved then and believed Tilda had really just been joking.

"So then what brings you here?"

In a black outfit and sunglasses, only the lower half of Tilda's face could be seen. At this time of night, it was obvious that she had dressed this way deliberately.

"I was a little worried about Edwin, so I came over to check on him. Her voice was warm and sweet

May smiled victoriously. "Don't worry, Mr. Stanley agreed to drop the matter regarding Sharon and the owner of Disney Entertainment."

She patted Tilda's arm and continued, "Mr. Stanley only listens to you, after all. He wouldn't have been able to swallow his pride otherwise, and who knows what lengths he would go to get back at the owner. When two powerful people go against each other, the outcome is unpredictable. I was concerned it would turn out to be a four-Jose situation in the end"

Tilda lowered her head slightly and sighed in relief. "That's good then?"

Although Sharon had shown proof that Irene was not the biological child of Edwin, "Tilda was not reassured. She recalled something that Edric had

told her.

He'd said that Bay once saved Sharon during a lizand, and even brought her to the hospital.

0

11:01 AM

Chapter 37

At that time, Sharon was two months pregnant.

If she had a miscarriage then, there was no way Ray wouldn't have known, nor would he have kept in from Edwin.

Edric had told her

r this out of frustration towards Ray. He thought Ray should have just left her to die in the cold.

Tilda, however, was not entirely convinced and still had some reservations. She had a nagging feeling that Irene may actually be Edwin's daughter.

She couldn't shake off this feeling no matter what she told herself. She was too jittery waiting for updates so she had come in the middle of the

night to see for herself,

“Mr. Stanley even instructed me not to mention the two of them from now on, so there’s no cause for concern anymore.” She squeezed Tilda’s hand. “Mr. Stanley is yours, and yours only.”

May added a final comment. “I hope you’ll continue to look out for me, Mrs. Stanley.”

Tilda giggled at this, but while she was overjoyed at the thought, she disagreed bashfully. “Don’t call me that nothing’s set in stone yet.

“What do you mean! Mr. Stanley has always been there for you. He’s always accommodated your every request. It’s only a matter of time before the both of you get married May was optimistic about their relationship.

Tilda frowned slightly.

“May, why do you think Edwin is so nice to me

She hadn’t thought about it before, taking Edwin’s affection for granted. As time passed though, she gradually came to wonder.

“It’s not absurd, you know, You’re attractive and have a voice like a nightingale, if I were a man, you’d be my type too. May answered logically.

Is that so!

Tilda considered May’s reasoning for a moment but was unable to draw a conclusion.

She gave up on thinking.

Whatever the reason, as long as Edwin loved her and wanted to be with her, that was enough, wasn’t it

The next morning, Sharon brought Irene to the airport at dawn. It was early, so Irene was still groggy with sleep

By the time they were waiting to board the plane though, she was completely awake. Her big eyes darted back and forth at her surroundings, and she was full of questions.

It was the first time in her life to take a plane.

Sharon answered her incessant questions patiently. As she looked at the curiosity sparkling in her daughter’s eyes, she felt a sense of adoration and tenderness for her

Most children from wealthy families wouldn’t think flying on an airplane was anything out of the ordinary.

Irene, on the other hand, was no different from the average child, apart from living with the Sunleys. In fact, she might

she might be worse of than the average child.

In other families, there were dosing grandparents and aunts and uncles. Family members that provide love and care and support for each other.

In the Stanley family, because of her, Irene had been subjected to the icy gaze and disdain of Jasmine and Tina,

As the plane took off, Irene jumped uneasily into the arms of Sharon and clung to her.

Her sparkling eyes were now red and teary Sharon could tell that she was scared,

She wrapped Irene in her arms and coaxed, "Don't be scared, airplanes are really safe. Safer than cars even"

Sharon distracted her with the clouds outside the window. Irene lifted her small face and saw the large clouds that kept retreating outside. She forgot her fears and looked on in amazement.

"Mommy, we're flying on the clouds. Did Alanna take you this high in the sky like this too?"

She was talking about the time before she was divorced, when Alanna had said she'd take Sharon flying.

The

innocent girl had no idea about the true meaning of those words, and simply believed that Sharon was going on a plane ride that night. Without clarifying her understanding Sharon nodded. "Yeali"

Chapter 38

Irene was so frightened that she shrank behind Sharon

Sharon picked her up swiftly and looked towards the woman.

The woman stared right back at them. "Who are you? What are you doing here!"

Her face seemed a little more relaxed than it had been just a few moments before.

She haphazardly smoothed her disheveled hair over the top of her head, revealing her face.

“Sophie” Sharon suddenly recognized her.

When the woman heard her name, she looked up and down at Sharon, sizing her up.

“It’s me, Sharon.”

Only then did Sophie recognize her, clapping her hands and covering her mouth in surprise. “Sharon, I haven’t seen you in years. You’re getting prettier and prettier every day, aren’t you! I almost didn’t recognize you because I thought you were a model or actress.”

Sharon gave an embarrassed smile.

Sophie then apologized. ‘Sorry, I threw the bucket earlier because I thought it was my deadbeat son. Are you guys alright’

“We’re fine.” Sharon’s thoughts were not focused on the bucket at all. She looked at the yard and house behind Sophie. “Where’s my dad? Doesn’t live here anymore”

Her heart lurched in fear as the alternative crossed her mind, and her voice was soft and watery.

“Your father is fine. Sophie saw the look on her face and could tell she was imagining the worst, so she hurriedly reassured her. He thought this house was too big for one person, and moved to a small house at the end of the road. My family is big, so he agreed to let us stay here.”

Sophie seemed self-conscious as she explained.

Even though they were tenants, she hadn’t paid a single penny in rent up to this day

Sharon’s father didn’t press her for money, so she assumed he didn’t care for it

Sharon wasn’t in the frame of mind to discuss this and simply requested. “Can you take us to see him”

“Yes of course.” Sophie was in his debt, so she was in no position to decline.

Sophie heaved and huffed as she lugged her heavysset body to the end of the road

A small store came into view. It was dilapidated and spartan, and didn’t even carry a signboard.

“Your F

father

is inside.” Sophic pointed to the store and said.

Sharon looked at the store.

Not only was it run down, it was also pitifully small.

There were seemingly random items piled up around the outer wall, most of which were actually toys she had played with as a child. Tricycles, scooters, skates

Looking at all her childhood knick-knacks, Sharon was overcome with emotion. Tears started rolling down her face.

Sophie made to call out for her father, but Sharon stopped her. “I’ll go in instead. She held on to Irene’s little hand and entered.

She walked along the yellowing hallway and reached a room.

Shoes were piled up here as well, except this time it was filled with shoe samples.

The room was exquisite and beautiful.

Irene looked at the various colors and styles of the shoes and couldn’t help but reach out to touch them.

Sharon didn’t see her father in the room, so continued making her way further back,

She found herself in a small backyard

11:01 AM

Chapter 38

There, a man sat with his back to her in front of an age-old shoe making machine. He was hunched over and operating it with his hands and feet

His movements were slow and deliberate, and his hair was completely grey and silver.

Sharon’s eyes were fixed on him. There was a familiarity to the figure and yet some stark differences as well, but she instantly recognized him as her father, Ethan.

Before she got married, he had only sported an occasional gray hair or two. He had broad shoulders and stood tall and strong. His reflexes were

swift and alert.

But now, he cut a smaller, frail figure.

“Dad.” She called out in an almost whisper, unable to contain the sadness in her heart.

The laboring man visibly paused

He turned slowly.

Sharon saw an aged face full of wrinkles. His features were soft thanks to years of meticulous crafting. He wore a pair of large, black-rimmed reading glasses. He could have passed off as a tenured academic.

He removed his glasses and observed her carefully, finally recognizing her. “It’s you... Sharon.”

“It’s me, Dad. It’s me! Sharon shortened the distance between them. She was emotional and wanted to give him a hug, but stopped herself.

Instead, she started crying.

Ethan held her hands and pulled her closer, and then cupped her face. “It’s really you, Sharon. You’ve come back. No wonder the sky seemed exceptionally blue today”

child why have you lost so much weight?*

He looked Sharon up and down and wiped the tears off her face, “My child, why have you

In Ethan’s memory, Sharon was strong and healthy, and carried some baby fat on her face. Now, her jawline was much sharper and she was terribly slender.

Sharon felt her guilt gnawing at her. Not only did her father not bear a grudge against her for marrying into the Stanley family, but he was worried about her health and well-being.

She felt like a failure of a daughter. She cursed at herself inwardly.

“You’re home now, that’s all that matters. Edian couldn’t contain his happiness.

He didn’t probe into her personal matters and instead offered to cook for her. “Tell me what you want to eat, I will make it for you.” He was more concerned about restoring her to a healthy weight.

Ethan had always doted on Sharon and pampered her since she was a child.

If there was something she wanted, no matter how difficult or absurd the request, he would try all ways and means to accommodate her.

Even with such a loving father, she had chosen to live with the Stanleys and put up with their ill treatment. She should have poured her heart and soul toward caring for her father and repaying his kindness, and instead wasted her time and effort on them. Her remorse overcame her and she started crying again.

Ethan comforted her by patting her back, like when she was a little girl.

It was a while before the two headed inside.

They walked in just in time to see

to see Irene.

Ethan's eyes lit up as he saw the adorable little girl. This child.....“

Sharon walks over to Irene and nudges her forward. “Dad, this is my daughter. Her name is Irene?”

introduced I

Ethan to Irene as well. “This is your grandpa. His name is Ethan”

Hello Grandpa Eilian” Irene greeted him happily.

What a lovely girl you are? Ethan responded in delight and lowered his body to hug her. “You're just as beautiful as your mother when she was a little girl”

This time it was his turn to cry.

Ethan knew he was thinking about how he had to raise her as a single father.

Chapter 39

Sharon worriedly asked for details. What do you mean?” Her heart was thumping wildly,

Sophie scratched her head. Her hair was disheveled and she looked just as confused. I can't say for sure. I just went to the store to pick up some cereal and saw your father buying a knife. I asked him what he was buying it for, but he ignored me and left. He didn't even look up at me,”

“Bought a knife and left?” She hadn't seen her father come home, let alone the knife.

What on earth did he need a knife for?”

“Your father is a man of few words, but he usually greets the other neighbors in the community. He seemed really out of character earlier. Sophie continued to express her concerns,

“Do you know if my dad has gotten into an argument with anyone recently?” Sharon feared the worst. Someone’s life might be on the line. including her father’s.

Sophie shook her head. “Ethan is patient and slow to anger, and he gets along with everyone. Plus, he’s not one to hold a grudge.

Sharon found no reason to disagree with Sophie. Her father never bothered much about anything besides her own affairs.

Sharon asked urgently. “Which way did he go?” She couldn’t figure out why her father needed a knife, and she became more anxious by the second.

“That way” Sophie pointed. I think he was headed to the bus station.”

“Bus station?”

They were in a small town where everything was within walking distance. People only took the bus if they were going out of state.

Is Dad planning to leave town?

Sharon asked Sophie to keep an eye on Irene in the house, and rushed off in the direction that she had pointed.

As she made her way to the station, she tried calling Ethan.

The call connected

“Dad, why aren’t you home yet?” Sharon asked as calmly as she could without letting on that she was aware he was planning something.

“I have some urgent business to attend to and won’t be back tonight. You and Irene can sleep in the bedroom. The sheets are new and I’ve already made the bed and prepared extra blankets.” Ethan skirted the question,

“What kind of urgent business is that?” Sharon tried to keep her voice even as she took long strides..

Again, Ethan avoided going into detail. He said, “Don’t worry about it. I’ll be back tomorrow. Get some rest tonight”

Sharon was aware that she was not going to get a straight answer from him, so agreed with him and hung up.

Exactly at that time, a car was driving by. She hailed it down and managed to hitch a ride to the station.

At the waiting area outside the bus station, she saw him sat there hunched over, a cigarette in his hand and sucking on it deeply.

He said

She noticed there were already a number of cigarette butts in the steel bin next to him,

Ethan might be a mere shoemaker without much education, but he was always neat and polite. He had never smoked, and he had never looked as disheveled as he did right now.

Sharon then saw he was carrying an unsuspecting, small black bag. She guessed that's where Ethan had kept the knife he purchased.

She rushed over and called out, "Dad, what are you doing here?"

When Ethan saw her, he froze slightly then hid his small black bag somewhat hastily. He got rid of the cigarette and rubbed his hands together to kind of clean them "Why are you here? Didn't I tell you to get some rest?"

"We couldn't possibly get any sleep knowing you write out here?" Sharon looked at him and then toward the bus station.

Where are you planning to go

Lihan looked away from her but made no attempt to answer

0

11:01 AM

Chapter 39

Sharon took matters into her own hands and went over to him, searching through his coat pockets and wallet, rummaging for a ticket

She looked at the destination on the paper ticket, written in capital letters. Her breath hitched as it dawned on her

“Dad, are you going to see the Stanley family?” Sharon recalled the face Ethan had made when Irene talked about her cooking. She realized he had been more upset than she thought.

Ethan remained silent.

“Dad, what are you planning? Are you going to kill Edwin?”

Sharon realized the gravity of her words and felt giddy with shock.

“I’m just going to find out the truth about how they really treated you.” Ethan said sullenly, his eyes red with grief.

He looked at Sharon with heartache. My beautiful, happy daughter married into their family and had to put up with all kinds of hardship and suffering,

Initially, he thought Sharon was just thin from dieting, but when Irene mentioned how good her cooking was, he realized that they must have worked her really hard. Or even worse, used her as a maid.

He hadn’t gone to visit the Stanley family all these years or contacted Sharon because he didn’t want to be an unnecessary burden on her. He never imagined that the Stanley family would actually go so far as to take advantage of her and abuse her.

Ethan’s confession felt like a sword piercing through Sharon’s chest. Sharp, painful, and relentless. She couldn’t hold back her tears.

She pulled on Ethan’s arm, pleading with him. “Dad, don’t go. There’s something I haven’t told you. Actually, Edwin and I... we got a divorce.”

“Divorced? Ethan was stunned for a moment. The news was like a bolt out of the blue.

Sharon nodded, confirming. “I’m sorry Dad. I should have listened to your advice from the beginning. I shouldn’t have gone to Edwin and I shouldn’t have married him in the first place.”

After all, Ethan had been against the marriage from the get-go. He made his disapproval very clear to Sharon then. In the end though, he relented at her insistence.

The outcome was not just her own physical and mental exhaustion. It even caused immense suffering to her own father. She was wracked with guilt.

Sharon hugs her father tightly and apologized between sobs.

Ethan returned the hug. His calloused hands stroking her hair like when she was a child. "Don't cry, my child. Divorce is not the end of the world. As long as you are safe, everything will be fine."

He was actually visibly relieved. He had never got over his doubts about the Stanley family. From the day she married, it was clear to him that they would not make things easy for her.

Ethan could not convince Sharon to give up the marriage, but he also imagined that at least they would not ill-treat her. He had gotten angry not just at the cruelty of the Stanley family, but also because of his own negligence towards his daughter.

The two of them finally went home together.

Sharon continued to play dumb about the knife, pretending not to know Ethan had bought it. She also quietly instructed Irene not to talk about their time with the Stanley family.

She couldn't imagine what would happen if Ethan found out that she was treated like a slave. She was his heart and his reason for living, if he knew about it he might really snap and kill someone.

After Irene fell asleep, Sharon sat with her father on the steps of the front porch, as they used to do in the past,

They reminisced while enjoying the cool breeze of the evening.

The conversation was peppered with laughter,

Sharon suddenly felt emotional as she looked into the

distance at the familiar view and then back at the smile on her father's face.

She had a warm home and a loving father, why did she leave all that behind?

After a while, they addressed the elephant in the room. Edan initiated the implc. So, what's nesut

Ethan already knew that Sharon had divorced without taking a single cent from the Stanley family. He wasn't com

worried about her future.

meened about that but he was

Chapter 40

Sharon was startled awake. In a dazed state, she thought for a moment that she was still living with the Stanley family, and Edwin was demanding

She leapt out of bed in one motion, barely missing a fall.

It was only when she rushed to the door and saw Ethan that she remembered she had already left the Stanley family and no longer needed to open the door for Edwin and welcome him home.

She rubbed her eyes to wake herself more as Ethan has opened the door.

A dark figure stood at the door.

Sharon was initially shocked, but after a closer look, she finally made out Sophie's face.

Sophie invited herself in and said gleefully to Ethan, in an exaggerated manner. "Hey Ethan, you u didn't make a scene yesterday, did you?"

Ethan looked at her, not understanding

Sophie continued "Yesterday, when Sharon found out that you bought a knife, she thought you were going to do something rash. She was so frightened. Sot What did you buy the knife for?"

Before Sharon could stop her, Sophie blurted out the truth.

A visible flash of embarrassment came across Ethan's face. He shifted uncomfortably.

"Sophie, did you need something?" Sharon hijacked her interrogation

Sophie hemmed and hawed. 'Oh... it's not a big deal. Don't worry about it.'" It was clear she was just fishing for gossip material.

Sharon kept a steady eye on her, making Sophic flustered as she tried to figure out an excuse for coming over. She spoke to Sharon, "So. how long are you planning to stay here?"

They're going to stay a while. Ethan answered on her behalf.

"Oh, yes, of course. A while." Sophie looked put off by the information. She added, "Well, you're lucky to have married into money. I'm sure you're not used to living in a small house like this

Sharon remained silent and merely continued looking at her.

Sophie pointed to a direction away from the town. "You know, there's a big, new hotel in the next town over, and they specialize in accommodating VIPs, like business owners or celebrities. It's supposedly luxurious. You should take your dad there, Sharon. Let him have a taste of the high life."

"I'm not young anymore, there's no need. Ethan rejected the suggestion flatly.

Sharon had been wary of Sophie and had her suspicions confirmed. Sophie was worried about getting evicted from her father's property. Ethan was a kind and even-tempered person, and she wanted to continue taking advantage of that so her family could live in a big house for free.

Sharon didn't p

plan on getting into this so early, but with Sophie in the house, she wasn't going to play dumb and let her continue to get away with it

Smiling at Sophie, Sharon promised, "Don't worry, Sophie. We won't move back to our old house. You and your family can stay as long as you

want

when she heard that. She beamed at Sharon and replied, "Rich people indeed do things differently from average folks

Sophie grinned like a fool w like us."

"Turning to her father, Sharon asked, "Dad, does Sophie pay the rent monthly or yearly!"

"Huh?" Sophie froze.

Sophie continued. "If they pay annually, you should give them a discount.

Sophie's expression stiffened beyond recognition. She started to regret making the trip.

Originally, she had just wanted to get the low down on last night and discourage them from moving back to the old house, but now she was being asked for relief.

She didn't give a straight answer. Instead, she made up an excuse and quickly made her way out.

In the morning after they had breakfast, Ethan led Itene to the back yard.

Chapter 40

His beloved shoemaking machine sat under an awning. Ethan took his position in front of it and turned it on. It creaked and squeaked and can

Irene was fascinated and observed every movement with wide eyes. Ethan started to work on adding soles to his shoes, and she watched quietly; only asking him some questions from time to time.

Ethan patiently answered every single one. Grandfather and granddaughter were getting along swimmingly

Sharon walked up to them and leaned against Ethan as she did when she was a child. She rested her head on his arm and felt it move as he wor

“Dad, you’ve been working all your life. Why don’t you stop?” She suggested.

For as long as she could remember, her father had sat at this machine, laboring day and night.

Yes, Grandpa Ethan. Mommy has opened a big company and she can afford to take care of all of us” Irene piped in as well.

Although shoe making seemed fun, Irene saw that Ethan had to thread a very thick needle through the sole repeatedly, and it looked incredibly tough. She worried about him too.

Ethan held Irene’s face in his hand, his lips spread in a wide smile, “Irene is only a little girl and already knows how to care for Grandpa. What a lovely person you are.”

Irene rubbed her face against Ethan’s palm, happy to be praised.

Ethan reassured her. ‘Grandpa is already used to doing this work. If I don’t use this machine ev

even for a day, it feels strange.

The shoes made by Ethan were durable and inexpensive, and have proven to be popular.

Sharon felt a mix of maternal pride and familial tenderness in her chest as she watched the exchange

I should have brought Irene back a long time ago. “The bond between them was undeniable.

Knowing that Ethan was unwilling to give up his work, Sharon did not pursue the topic and only said. "It's okay to continue if you want, but don't take on too many orders. And if you're tired, you must take a break "

"I know, I know." Ethan nodded obediently like a child.

Sharon and Irene laughed in unison.

Sharon had another idea. "Dad, why don't I buy a storefront for you, and a bigger house too? You should at least have a spacious and comfortable place to work."

"No, 110"

no." Ethan shook his head vigorously, "I moved here because the old place was too big. It felt empty and uncomfortable, like a waste of space,

Even after Sharon married, she still made sure that Ethan was financially sound. She had made regular deposits to Alanna's account. But Ethan was able to support himself, so he never asked for a single cent.

Thinking about how she hasn't been able to help her father out in any way, and even caused him to worry incessantly about her, Sharon's eyes reddened again.

Ethan continued to share his thoughts. "Still, I have to admit, I'm getting on in years, so my eyes and legs are not like they used to be, I'm afraid I'll be forced to stop working soon. Young people aren't keen on doing such tedious and detailed work, to the shoe making craft will probably die out,"

Ethan was trained and skilled in traditional shoemaking methods, which was a demanding process for most people, let alone for someone of his

"Mommy, why don't we help Grandpa find an apprentice? Irene suggested, waving her phone with her arm raised.

Sharon considered for

a moment and thought was a feasible idea.

She got to work readying the equipment for her livestream, setting it up in the yard.

Irene took out the fox masks, one for herself, and one for Sharon

"Grandpa, this one is for you" She gave the biggest one to Ethan. When they returned, she made a point of asking her mother to custom make the

She climbed onto a chair and helped put the mask on for

Ethan happily obliged, although he wasn't exactly thrilled with the look.

After the three of them put on their masks, Irene inspected them carefully before giving her approval.