

## Chapter 3 Norah's Change

Norah clasped Juliana's hand, her expression lit up with a smile, seemingly oblivious to Sharon's harsh comments. "You seem to suffer from a bit of cough. I happen to know a soup will help soothe it. I'll give the recipe to the butler later."

Juliana, who had always appreciated Norah's compliant and thoughtful nature, warmly responded, "You're such an angel, Norah. Well, I'm not getting any younger and my health has been declining with age. My darling, you're the only one who shows such concern for my well-being."

Feeling ignored, Sharon's face turned pale as she mocked, "Oh, come on. Drop the act! Now that the divorce agreement is signed, you don't need to keep up the act. Do you honestly believe staying close to Juliana will grant you the right to continue to benefit from the Carter family?"

Before Norah could respond, Juliana interjected, "Norah has always been nice to us all since joining our family. She was by Derek's side throughout his coma, caring for him diligently. Not to mention, she had always treated both you and me with respect. Why are you being so ungrateful now, after all she's done for our family these past two years?"

"Juliana! Norah is nothing but a bastard from the Wilson family. Why do you continue to defend her?" Sharon stomped her feet.

Sharon glared at Norah, pressing, "Did I say something wrong? How does this bastard deserve to be Derek's wife? Had it not been for your and your husband's insistence on her marrying Derek, I would've never approved this woman. Plus, she's lived off the Carter family's fortune since the marriage. Naturally, she should treat Derek and us with respect.

Why do you make it sound like she did something great? Furthermore, she hasn't conceived in the two years since joining our family. You do want great-grandchildren, right? I bet Derek divorced her because of that."

Juliana's expression grew severe. "Sharon, watch your language. How can you speak such nonsense?"

Though taken aback by Juliana's stern expression, Sharon retorted, "I'm merely stating facts. Thankfully, she didn't conceive since that could have complicated the divorce. Any child of hers would be as unwelcome."

Juliana, visibly disturbed by Sharon's words yet gripping Norah's hand reassuringly, advised, "Ignore her, Norah. She's coarse and foul-mouthed. Please, I urge you not to be rash on the divorce thing. As long as I breathe, I only recognize you as Derek's wife. My husband and I really appreciate you. Don't fret over Derek's reaction. Focus on getting on well with Derek and leading a fulfilling life together."

Sharon, her eyes brimming with frustration, asked, "Juliana, what's wrong with you? Why are you and your husband always defending Norah? Damn! Norah, just accepting that you and Derek are over will be best for everyone."

Norah raised her eyes to Juliana, tears shimmering within them.

Juliana, maintaining her composure, asserted, "Enough of your nonsense, Sharon. You don't get a say in Derek's marriage. Stay out of this business. And allow me to highlight my appreciation for Norah to you once again. If you can't speak properly, get out of my face. Now!"

At this, Sharon's face reddened with anger and embarrassment, her lips tightly pressed, holding back any further objections.

Juliana then turned her attention back to Norah, asking, "What are your thoughts, Norah?"

Norah met Juliana's gaze, tears rolling down her cheeks as she struggled to speak. "I... I really appreciate it, Juliana. But, today I caught Madeline and Derek having sex in what used to be our shared bed... Plus, Derek's indifference to me has told me there's no point in continuing this marriage."

Juliana's complexion faded to a ghostly white, her face creased with worry as she said, "The blame lies with Derek."

Juliana held Norah's hands firmly, offering solace, "You've endured a lot over these last two years."

Norah remained silent, and a brief hush settled over the living room.

The next second, Sharon's loud voice shattered the silence. "Madeline, that slut, is back? Damn! Juliana, I'm heading out now. I've got to make that slut pay."

Sharon quickly snatched her bag and darted out of the living room.

Norah wiped her tears and smiled with relief, saying, "I'm fine. Really."

With a heavy heart, Juliana responded, "Well, I won't press further. Norah, please visit me whenever you get the chance. Your company alone is enough for me."

Tears gathered in her eyes as Juliana spoke. Juliana had grown genuinely fond of Norah, recognizing Norah's significance in Derek's recovery from his coma.

Norah tenderly wiped away Juliana's tears, acknowledging the genuine kindness she had been shown. "Will do. Well, I'll take my leave now. Please ask the maid to prepare the soup for you."

Norah left without looking back, unaware of the resolution in Juliana's eyes.

Juliana, dabbing at her eyes, instructed the butler, "Arrange for Derek and the others to come back to the Carter Manor tomorrow at noon."

The butler acknowledged, "Understood."

As Norah exited the Carter Manor, the family's chauffeur approached her. "Madam, where would you like to go?"

The chauffeur's manner remained polite, still regarding Norah as Derek's wife.

But with the divorce paper signed, Norah understood she had severed ties with the Carter family.

Norah glanced down at her phone, noticing a new message.

It was from her friend, Joanna Andrews. "Norah, are you available tonight to join me at the Glamour Club? I heard Madeline has returned, and Derek's throwing her a welcome party tonight. It's going to be quite the event. Let's make our presence felt."

Norah's response was brief. "Count me in."

Joanna's message was just a single question mark. Norah's swift agreement caught Joanna off guard.

Norah responded, "I'm officially divorced. So, I'm on my own from now on."

The chat went quiet for a moment, then Joanna's response came through, bursting with excitement and a flurry of exclamation marks. "Norah, where are you at this moment? I'll get you immediately! Just give me ten seconds, and I'll be there!"

Finding amusement in Joanna's enthusiasm, Norah sent Joanna a location in the Splendor Building and instructed the driver, "Please take me to the Splendor Building."

The Splendor Building was well-known in Glophia for being a hub of luxury, featuring top-tier brands from around the globe.

Upon Norah's arrival, she was warmly greeted. "Noelle, glad to see you. Are you here to hand over the design sketches?"

The lavish dressing room was filled with stunning haute couture gowns, each adorned with shimmering diamonds that caught the light.

Asodence's haute couture designer, Aaron Harvey, theatrically approached Norah, took her arm, and said, "It pains me every time I see you like this. Why hide your lovely face? You're the most exquisite flower, poised to blossom bravely."

Norah blinked and replied, "I second that, Aaron. Can you assist me with a makeover?"

Having expected Norah to retort, Aaron was on the verge of continuing the persuasion and suddenly froze at Norah's words. "Wait a minute. You... Noelle, are you truly contemplating a transformation? Oh my! Come to me was the finest decision you've ever made."

Setting aside the topic of design drafts, Aaron guided Norah to the makeup chair, saying, "Just stay put. I assure you, you'll transform into a dazzling woman when I let your natural beauty and irresistible charm perform their magic."

Aaron looked at Norah's simple outfit and tousled hair, then eagerly began her transformation with his makeup brush in hand.

By the time Joanna arrived, Norah was still getting her makeup done.

Joanna was familiar with Aaron. After greeting him, she settled into the nearby makeup chair and piqued, "Congrats, Norah, on your official return to your carefree self. Your loyal fan, Joanna, is all set and eager to follow your lead."