

When It All Fell Apart Chapter 08

As I thought about it, it became clear that Ashton was downstairs at the office again, putting on that dramatic act of his when he saw Ruby. He must have told the receptionist that he was my husband, which was why he was allowed inside.

Ruby seemed just as shocked to see him.

After her surprise faded, anger took over as she repeated to Ashton how I had bullied her.

“Clara has always been jealous of how nice you are to me! She’s just looking for a chance to get back at me!”

With all the curious eyes around us, Ashton looked a little embarrassed. “What are you talking about? Clara isn’t like that! Besides, can’t we just see things as they are instead of taking a mere employee’s word for it?”

Ruby stared at him in shock, as if she was seeing Ashton for the first time. “Are you actually defending her? You don’t believe me?”

I crossed my arms and watched the two of them argue, feeling a little surprised myself. Unlike before, Ashton was not blindly taking Ruby’s side. If it were in the past, he would have been quick to scold me.

“Ruby, can you stop being so sensitive? If there’s an issue, we can talk it out like adults. Charging in here acting like a crazy person is just embarrassing!”

His words felt eerily familiar—sensitive, overthinking, jealous, nitpicking, causing trouble... Those were the very things Ashton used to accuse me of.

Ruby stumbled slightly as if she could not take it.

“Who’s causing a scene at the office? I’m calling the police!”

At that moment, I turned my head to see Will approaching. As he stood next to me with a stern expression, I realized how different he looked without his usual warm smile. His serious demeanor was pretty intimidating.

Ruby stared at him for a long moment before it clicked, “Aren’t you the guy who took Clara to the hospital? So, you’re working here with her now, huh? No wonder you’re so arrogant.

“Clara, you’re not even divorced yet, and here you are, cozying up to your male friend. Aren’t you ashamed?”

The comment made everyone around look at Will and me differently. While they did not dare speak up, their eyes were locked in a frenzy of judgment. Some wore expressions of disdain, others looked disgusted, and a few eagerly typed away on their phones, ready to spill the latest gossip.

Ruby then glanced mockingly at my belly and said with malicious intent, “You two must’ve been hooking up for a while now, huh? That child you lost—was it his? Is that why you pretended to fall to get Ashton’s sympathy and guilt?”

“Smack!”

Ashton’s hand landed hard on Ruby’s face. The force of the slap was so strong that Ruby staggered, nearly falling backward before my colleague rushed to catch her.

With her hand on her reddening cheek, Ruby lost it. “How dare you hit me? Ashton, I’m pregnant with your child!”

My surrounding coworkers collectively gasped in shock, the news hitting them like a punch.

Ashton’s face turned bright red as he shouted furiously, “Stop saying things that give people the wrong idea! All I did was help you through IVF! We never slept together! Stop trying to ruin my marriage!”

I watched the chaos unfold, and while it felt satisfying to see the drama play out, it also struck me as utterly tacky and ridiculous. I could not believe I had spent so many years caught up with those people. It was utterly foolish of me to let them make me feel hurt and upset over their antics.

“Ashton, if you’ve got nothing better to do, just sign the divorce papers already. Dragging this out is pointless. And by the way, I’m not interested in being misunderstood as some kind of cheating, scandalous woman.”

Will stepped forward, placing himself between me and Ashton. “Miss Lowe, if you have any issues with the company’s decisions, feel free to take it to court or hire a lawyer. I’ll be ready to face you head-on.

“And as for whoever gave you the green light to steal art and leaked the company information to you, once I find out who it is, they’ll be dealt with severely and fired without question!”