

## ESCAPE FROM A SACTUARY FULL OF LIES

### 7 Chapter 7

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Subsequently, I was in a car accident that took everything from me. The future I had just reclaimed was gone. 1

During that time, I grieved so intensely that I barely functioned. Xavier, conversely, seemed almost relieved. In retrospect, he likely saw the accident as the perfect cover from the start.

Strangely, I felt a trace of relief as well. Perhaps it was for the best. A life tethered to a man who saw me as a collection of spare parts would have been an intolerable existence.

The Greek landscape was magnificent, and I chose to make it my new home. After securing a long-term lease, I settled into my whitewashed villa. It wasn't large, but it was airy and perfect for a solitary woman.

My life here was quiet yet fulfilling. To bring some life to my home, I adopted a stray dog I found on the beach.

The dog, with its peculiar habit of chasing the waves, was named Kima.

Her presence infused my quiet life with new purpose. Her daily antics kept me busy, constantly cleaning sandy paw prints from my floors.

Yet I never expected Xavier would find me here.

It happened on a day I was heading to a local dive shop to inquire about chartering a boat.

As I walked down the narrow, cobbled street, Xavier suddenly appeared, blocking my path.

"Miranda, I found you!" he exclaimed.

At first, I didn't recognize him. It had been three months since I last saw him, and his appearance was shockingly altered—gaunt, haunted, and a mere shadow of the powerful mogul I once knew.

Upon seeing me, his hollow eyes lit up. He moved toward me, his arms outstretched as if to pull me into an embrace. But I flinched back, dodging his touch.

I put more space between us, eyeing him with cold caution. "Stay away from me."

Xavier stopped, a raw pain flashing across his

face.

"Miranda, what did I do wrong? Why are you doing this to me?" His voice was laced with anguish, as if he were the wronged party.

"I leave for one day on business, and you disappear. You even left divorce papers. Have you stopped loving me?"

His voice held a sorrow that sounded almost real, as if he had suffered a great injustice.

It was clear he was still clinging to the hope that I didn't know the full story.

I pulled out my phone and played the recording of Jennifer's confession from my room at the center.

"Do you think he truly loves you? He comes to me whenever he can. Even with me so sick, he can't stay away. And by the way, on the day of your accident? He wasn't in some board meeting—he was with me at the hospital, holding my hand through a flare-up. He can't live without me anymore. If you have any decency, you'll grant him a divorce."



"Oh, and next week, Xavier is taking me to Monaco. His 'humanitarian trip'? It's to finalize the arrangements for my private transplant surgery. He's saving my life."

Xavier's face went white. He stared at me in disbelief.

"She... she told you everything?" he choked out.

I put my phone away and said coolly, "Now you know why I left. Consider my signature on those divorce papers my final gift. Don't ever contact me again."

With that, I turned to leave. But he grabbed my arm, his grip desperate.

"Miranda, wait. I didn't go through with it. I couldn't. You're the only one who matters."

His explanation felt like a cruel joke. I couldn't help but laugh, a harsh, bitter sound.

"We're already divorced. Who you choose to save is no longer my problem. You should go back to Jennifer now. I'm sure the life you promised her is waiting for you."

