

Knowing My Ex-Wife After The Divorce Chapter 26

At the kindergarten entrance, Ryan walked out with his backpack on his shoulder, his face Hank 11e spotted karen sanding by the door, looking lawricast, but he chose to ignore her

and walked on

karen was already in a foul mood, and being ignored only made her angrier. She stepped right in front of the little boy. "Hey, you brat! I'm here to pick you up, could you at least show a lile gratitude?"

Ryan kept his cool and replied, "I'm more used to the driver picking me up"

Karen glared at him. "You little brat! You really don't know what gratitude is, do you? You're nothing like your mother!"

"She's not my mother," he shot back.

"The paternity test says Elle is your mother! Do you think you're too good for her just because of her background? Hah! Without Elle, you wouldn't even be part of the Reese family!" Karen rolled her eyes. "What an ingrate!"

Ryan ignored her, his attention wandering. Suddenly, he noticed a car nearby with its window rolled down and bolted toward it. "Mommy!"

"Hey! You little brat! Don't shout like that! You don't even call Elle 'Mom'! Wait, the car!" Karen yelled.

Natalie heard the yelling behind her and turned just in time to see the same kid from the airport running toward her, dangerously close to a moving car. Without thinking, she flung open the car door and rushed forward.

There was a street between them, and the traffic light was still red.

"Mommy!" Yara screamed in fear.

Natalie focused on reaching Ryan, grabbing him just in time to pull him out of the way, narrowly avoiding a car that almost hit them.

The driver slammed on the brakes and jumped out, fuming. "Can't you teach your kid to look for traffic lights? What kind of mother are you?"

Natalie felt like her arm, which was hugging Ryan, was about to snap, and now a stranger was yelling at her. As she was about to respond, she noticed Ryan trembling in her arms. He looked terrified, his face pale.

The driver kept ranting, "Not my fault if you can't teach him how to cross the street! If something happens, it's on you-people like you, getting hit, that's on you!"

Natalie who the difere an iry glare. "Are you done? Just get lost!"

The boy crecend the urret against the light. If he got hit and died, people would just brush it off a bad lock. The driver wouldn't take much blame. But the thought of how close the child wat to losing his life tightened her stomach.

Shorked into silence by her glare, the driver huffed and walked away. Natalie turned her attention back to Ryan, her voice gentle and soothing. "Are you hurt anywhere?"

Before Ryan could say anything. Karen barged in, her face red with anger. "Who told you to touch him? Hand him over!"

Natalie scoffed and shot her a cold look. "Do you even know how to watch a kid? He almost dred just now, and you didn't even try to help!"

Natalie had seen Karen standing just a few feet away when Ryan was in danger. If Karen had rushed over sooner, she could have saved him. But instead, she waited until after Natalie's conversation with the driver to approach. It was obvious she didn't want to take any responsibility.

A flicker of guilt crossed Karen's face as she straightened up. "That kid was running wild. How is that my fault?"

Natalie rolled her eyes, too frustrated to deal with someone so irresponsible. But then she felt something warm and wet on her hands.

Looking down, she was shocked to see blood soaking through Ryan's shirt from where he was grazed earlier.

"Mommy, it hurts..." Ryan said weakly, his eyes fluttering shut as he collapsed into her arms.

Natalie's heart raced; she didn't understand why she felt so worried.

Karen stormed over and sn**d Ryan from Natalie's arms, furious. "This is all your fault! You can't even save a kid! If anything happens to Ryan, it's on you!" she muttered furiously as she marched away with him.

Natalie glanced down at the blood staining her hands. With her medical background, she noticed that Ryan had lost quite a bit of blood but was otherwise okay, thanks to her protection. The injury looked like it was from where he had tried to shield her with his back. That brave little guy was still thinking about protecting her.

Later that evening, Natalie got a call from Tobias, as she had given him her new number.

“Ryan is fine,” he said, his voice calm. “I checked the footage from the street cameras. Thanks for your help.”

Natalie felt a wave of relief. “I’m glad he’s safe. Just make sure you keep an eye on him. Elle and her friend can’t be trusted, she warned.

There was a short silence on Tobias’s end before he replied. “Understood. I’ll handle her friend. Her role in this was part of the issue”

That made Natalie feel better. At least someone else would be more reliable than Karen.

Then, Tobias suddenly added, “Ryan was conceived through IVE”

Natalie was taken aback. “IVF? That does make things safer.

“I never slept with her,” he said out of nowhere.

Natalie blinked, shocked. “Tobias has never been with Elle? That’s a surprise, she thought.

“Well, Elle’s health isn’t exactly suited for that kind of thing. You’ve had a rough time over the years, haven’t you?” Natalie said, knowing that Tobias wasn’t the kind to shy away from intimacy. It must have been hard on him to hold back all this time.

Tobias’s expression darkened at her words. “Even if she were healthy, I wouldn’t want to.”

“Wow, you can’t be saying you’ve only been with me, Mr. Reese, and that you only want me now? It’s the 21st century. Do you think I’d buy that?” Natalie laughed, a hint of sarcasm in her voice.

There was a pause, and then Tobias responded slowly, “Of course it’s not just you.”

“Yikes, that’s a letdown. I thought you were all about me by now, like I’m the only one on your mind,” Natalie teased. If Tobias could be so obvious about wanting her, she could flirt a little too. Did she really think he was only focusing on her? Of course not.

After a long silence, Natalie checked her phone and saw that the call had dropped. She shrugged, thinking, ‘Guess he couldn’t handle a little playful banter.

Still, she figured after her little tease, Tobias wouldn’t want anything to do with her anymore. A satisfied smile spread across her face.

Just then, her phone buzzed with another call. It was Elle, calling on the new number she had just given out.

Natalie rolled her eyes. 'Great, so Tobias couldn't wait to share my number with Elle?' she thought.

Natalie answered the phone, and Elle said immediately, "Wow, you even changed your number. If Tobias hadn't mentioned it, I wouldn't have even known."

Natalie rolled her eyes. It was clear Elle was just trying to stir the pot. 'Is she trying to show off her connection with Tobias? Please, I'm not gonna fall for that,' she thought.

Knowing My Ex-Wife After The Divorce Chapter 27

Natalie felt completely indifferent, almost wanting to yawn.

"I really appreciate you saving Tobias's and my child. There's an exclusive ladies' gathering tomorrow. You should definitely come! A famous piano master will be there, and it'll be a great chance for you to see what the high life is like," Elle said, her voice sweet but heavy with condescension.

Natalie really wanted to say that without Tobias, Elle wouldn't be anything special. But the reality was, Tobias really belonged to Elle.

"That sounds fine. I'll be there," Natalie replied, setting her phone down. As it turned out, she had already planned to go to that gathering. 'Elle's tone was less brash than usual. She must be with others, trying to maintain some sort of reputation. But why should I care? Just let them play their little games,' she thought.

Meanwhile, Elle's eyes flickered with a cold spark before disappearing just as quickly. She turned to the man beside her and said softly, "Don't worry. Natalie will definitely show up."

"Ha! That little brat, just wait until I..." Howard started, but he trailed off when he noticed the beautiful woman beside him. He quickly swallowed his words, forcing a smile instead. "I'll talk to her nicely. Thanks for your help, Elle."

"No problem. If there's nothing else, I'll be on my way," Elle said with a polite smile, picking up her purse and walking away with grace.

Howard smirked as he watched the girl walk away, then spat on the ground in disgust. "Does she really think she's special? If she hadn't stepped in for Natalie back then and pretended to have saved Tobias, she'd be six feet under by now."

The gathering was happening at Merrion Mansion downtown, and Natalie arrived by taxi that afternoon.

Maddie was also on the guest list. After arriving, she found a cozy corner to snack on some food. When she spotted Natalie, her face lit up with joy. She jumped out of her seat and waved, rushing over. "Natalie! There you are! I've been waiting for you!" Maddie exclaimed.

Natalie smiled back, noticing that Maddie had been sitting alone while everyone else mingled in small groups, laughing and chatting.

"Honestly, Maddie, for someone from the Carter family, she really doesn't know how to socialize," one girl said, her voice dripping with sarcasm.

"Right. She still thinks she's some kind of big deal. I said hi to her earlier, and she totally ignored me. I think she thinks she's better than everyone else."

Lock in who she's talking to with that legitimate daughter from the Guzman family. Maddie's admirers are really slipping" a third girl commented

"Seriously, stay away from them. You don't want to get dragged down to their level."

The girls clearly didn't hold back, and Natalie frowned at their comments. Maddie grabbed Natalie's arm and shrugged it off. "Don't pay any attention to them. They're not worth your time."

Karen, who was among the girls talking, caught wind of this and laughed. "Oh, please. Your family doesn't have that kind of power over us!"

Maddie shot back with a grin, "Sure, you guys are untouchable, but at least I haven't been called out by Malcolm."

Natalie almost laughed out loud. Yesterday's events were clearly a sore spot for Karen, and that jab made her face turn an awkward shade of green.

Maddie stood tall, pulling Natalie aside for a moment. "You know, the gossip about yesterday is making the rounds. Malcolm represents the entire Sullivan family. Plus, it's the first time anyone has heard him say he didn't want to see someone. I thought Karen would lay low after that, but look at her. She's just walking into trouble," Maddie whispered.

Natalie still didn't quite understand all the drama of their elite circle. "So, Malcolm's opinion carries that much weight?"

"Absolutely! He's got more influence than Tobias, especially since the Sullivan family is pretty much untouchable in the political scene," Maddie explained.

Natalie nodded, a bit shocked by that revelation.

Karen noticed everyone around her suddenly backing away, clearly afraid of getting on the Sullivan family's bad side. Just then, Elle walked in.

"Elle..." Karen called out, hurrying over to link arms with her.

Elle's expression changed slightly, and then she smoothly sidestepped, avoiding Karen's grasp and instead wrapping her arm around another girl's. "Karen, the teacher is almost here. Let's start practicing the piano. You can go first."

Karen's attention shifted instantly, and she didn't notice anything off. Nodding eagerly, she said, "Alright, I'll play! Elle, listen and see if I've improved."

Elle smiled sweetly. "Of course!"

The other ladies quickly gathered around Elle, each pulling out their own sheet music and starting to play. They had a name list for that. Elle shot a knowing glance at Natalie.

In their social circle, playing the piano was basically a must, and everyone here had to be good at it. No one wanted to fall behind.

Maddie leaned in and whispered to Natalie, "The international piano master is coming soon. I really hope he can give me some tips."

Natalie smiled, knowing that Maddie had loved the piano since she was a child, and she played it remarkably well. "He will definitely give you some good advice," Natalie said seriously.

Suddenly, Maddie burst out laughing. "Natalie, you look adorable when you're being so serious like that."

Natalie let out a small sigh. She was just saying what she felt.

"Wait, is someone missing from the list? It looks like there's one more person who hasn't played yet," Elle said as she flipped through the names.

Karen leaned in to look closer. "There are twenty-seven ladies here... but only twenty-six names on this list. Who's the missing one?"

Elle scanned the crowd, her eyes darting around. Then she exclaimed, "It's Natalie."

"Seriously? She's not on the list. How did she even get in?" Karen squinted, a hint of suspicion in her voice. "She didn't sneak in, did she? We made it clear that only people who can play the piano are allowed. If you can't play, you need to leave."

Maddie heard this and was ready to stand up for Natalie, but Natalie grabbed her and shook her head.

“But they...” Maddie started to protest.

“Looks like we’ve got a gatecrasher here. Server, please escort her out,” a stuck-up girl chimed in, eager to kick Natalie out.

Elle’s eyes sparkled with a deeper meaning as she stepped in just in time. “Natalie is someone I invited. Sure, she’s just an illegitimate daughter, but she’s still a lady from a prestigious family. Let’s give her a chance, please, for my sake.”

“Of course we respect Ms. Lightman’s wishes,” another lady chimed in. “But does she even know how to play the piano?”

Karen rolled her eyes dismissively, her arms around her chest. “Everyone knows the Guzman family’s illegitimate daughter is just a waste of space. She’s living off their money like a parasite.”

Elle couldn’t help but smile, knowing full well that Natalie couldn’t play the piano. That was exactly why she had set up this little trap today to make Natalie look foolish. And there was an even bigger “surprise” waiting for Natalie later.

“Come on, you’re taking this too far. When did we say everyone had to play? Can’t Natalie just come to listen?” Maddie said, sticking by her friend.

“This isn’t just any gathering. If you can’t play the piano, then you should leave. If it weren’t for your skills, you wouldn’t even be allowed in here,” Karen shot back, feeling more confident.

“You’re being ridiculous!” Maddie fumed, pulling Natalie closer. “Let’s just go, Natalie. Who needs to deal with them?”

“No, we can’t leave,” Natalie said, holding Maddie back. If they walked out now, Maddie would miss her chance to shine at an event like this forever.

Knowing My Ex-Wife After The Divorce Chapter 28

Natalie understood that Maddie suggested they leave together just to avoid her feeling awkward alone, but she didn’t want to go that far.

“Don’t wanna leave? Why don’t you play the piano instead?” Karen jumped in.

“You’re just trying to make things difficult for her,” Maddie said, shaking her head at Natalie. “Natalie, you don’t have to do this; they just want to humiliate you.”

“It’s fine. I’ll give it a shot,” Natalie replied.

As soon as she said that, Karen clapped her hands in delight. “Ms. good-for-nothing is going to play the piano! Just don’t try to trick everyone with T**kle, T**kle, Little Star;’ that won’t fly.”

“What should I play instead?” Natalie raised an eyebrow, curious.

“Why not go for the ‘Third Piano Concerto’ that Elle has been working on lately? Sounds good, right?” Karen suggested with a sly smile.

A lot of the ladies gasped when they heard the name. That piece was known as one of the hardest piano compositions in the world. Even famous pianists would prepare for ages before attempting to play it. No one was expecting someone to try such a tough piece today, and they certainly didn’t prepare the sheet music.

“Alright, I’ll play that,” Natalie replied calmly, surprising everyone.

Karen barely held back her laughter. “Great! I’ll get someone to grab the sheet music for you right now.”

Karen was convinced that Natalie had no idea about piano and didn’t understand how difficult that piece was. Otherwise, there was no way she would have agreed so casually.

Elle smiled softly. “Thanks, Karen; you’re a real sweetheart.”

Karen smile along, feeling a bit more relaxed. She wasn’t oblivious; she knew Elle had been keeping her distance today because of the drama with the Sullivan family. Clearly, she needed to do something to turn the situation around. She was aiming for the right target here. There was no way she was letting go of the support that Elle represented.

Maddie frowned, looking tense. “Let me play for Natalie!”

“Maddie, you can’t just play for her. If that were allowed, everyone would start bringing their friends in this way,” Karen shot back with a smirk.

“You’re just trying to make Natalie look bad!” Maddie snapped.

*

Natalie gave Maddie a reassuring look. “It’s okay I can handle it.”

“Ugh, Natalie, stop trying to make me feel better Do you even know how hard that piece is? I still can’t get it right,” Maddie said with anxiety.

As they were talking, the sheet music had just been printed and delivered. Natalie placed her fingers gently on the keys and settled herself comfortably.

Karen sneered, "Wow, you're picking up that pose pretty fast. Guess it's the only time you can look good."

The nearby girls couldn't help but laugh at her remark.

Maddie, clearly anxious about what was about to happen, clenched her hands tightly.

Natalie ignored the taunts, her slender fingers beginning to dance over the piano keys. Smooth notes flowed continuously, filling the room with a beautiful melody.

Elle and the others quickly went stiff with disbelief. 'How is this possible? How could Natalie actually play the piano? And she is really tackling the Third Piano Concerto?' they thought.

Maddie's eyes widened in shock as she watched Natalie at the piano; it was as if she was radiating light.

When the performance ended, silence hung in the air, everyone in a daze. Slowly, Natalie stood up, wearing a modest smile. "Sorry if that wasn't good enough."

Karen's face paled dramatically. Seeing Elle beside her looking equally shocked made her realize she had messed up big time. "That was definitely not good enough," Karen bit out through clenched teeth.

"That was incredible!" A gentleman in a stylish tailcoat strolled in, his golden curls cascading over his shoulders, radiating an artistic vibe.

"That was a fantastic performance; wouldn't you agree, Mr. Reese?" The man was the famous pianist everyone had been waiting for, Rex Emerson, and standing next to him was Tobias.

Natalie took a small step back, feeling a strong urge to leave. 'Why do I have to run into him again?' she thought.

Tobias casually said, "That was really good."

"Was that Ms. Lightman playing? That was impressive! I heard from Tobias that you've been practicing this piece a lot. Honestly, I wouldn't reach this level without proper prep," Rex commented.

Elle's smile looked shaky. "It wasn't me; it was Ms. Natalie Guzman," Elle corrected.

*

Tobias's eyes zeroed in on Natalie right away. "You can play the piano?!" His tone was cold, but there was a hint of surprise.

“Even Mr. Reese is surprised? Honestly, we couldn’t believe it either. This illegitimate daughter can actually play the piano, and she tackled one of the hardest pieces, Karen chimed in, her voice dripping with sarcasm.

Images from the past flashed through Natalie’s mind.

“Can you play the piano?” Tobias asked her.

“No,” she lied.

“That’s okay. I’ll teach you,” he said gently to her.

“You are the best.”

It had been a beautiful, quiet evening. He had his arm around her shoulder, his graceful fingers resting on her delicate hands, eventually intertwining with hers. They shared a kiss, and everything felt so romantic and perfect.

Snapping back to reality, Natalie lowered her gaze. Just then, a shadow loomed in front of her, blocking the light completely.

“Let’s play a duet,” Tobias said slowly, his tone leaving no room for argument.

Natalie felt an instinctive urge to refuse. “No, I…”

“Young lady, please play with Tobias. I’d love to see your skills. I didn’t catch the full performance earlier,” Rex chimed in gently.

Natalie’s lips curved into a reluctant smile, not really eager to agree. But then Maddie chimed in, “Come on, Natalie. Just say yes! This is an awesome chance to show off your talent! You can’t pass it up; if you do, I won’t forgive you for lying to me!”

Natalie thought silently, ‘I already told you I could play; you just didn’t believe me.’

At that moment, Tobias gestured for her to sit down. If she flat out refused, she’d definitely draw attention in this circle, so she reluctantly took her seat.

Tobias sat right next to her. His demeanor was less intimate than before, but the sight of his hands brought back a flood of memories.

“Let’s begin,” Tobias said, his voice steady.

Natalie pressed down on the keys. He did the same, and soon a beautiful melody filled the air, louder than it had been before.

*

“Why did you lie and say you couldn’t play the piano?” Tobias leaned in, speaking in a quiet voice that only she could hear.

Natalie shot back c**lly, “Is it really that hard to get? Don’t you like women who are clueless? So, that’s why I thought I’d just use all my charm to get you into bed and be that hot wife you enjoy.”

Tobias said casually, “I actually do like that.”

Natalie rolled her eyes. “Typical guy, she thought.

Suddenly, Tobias took her hand. Natalie froze, wondering, ‘What is he up to?!!

Just then, the lights dimmed around them. Taken by surprise, she found herself pulled closer, and his lips gently pressed against hers. No shocker there-it was the same guy sitting next to her, and his familiar scent enveloped her.

With her left hand held captive, only her right hand was free to play, and coincidentally, this segment required one hand from each player. Tobias’s left hand joined in on the melody.

The sound of the piano covered the tension between them, perfectly blending with their subtle flirtation.

Natalie’s heart raced, and she nearly lost her timing on the keys.

After breaking the kiss, she scolded him, “Tobias, don’t go too far!” If it weren’t for her pride, she would’ve shouted it out for everyone to hear

Tobias leaned in closer, his voice low and teasing. “Don’t you know me well enough? Don’t you know I really like who you are right now?”

Knowing My Ex-Wife After The Divorce Chapter 29

Batalle couldn’t help but chuckle, both amused and exasperated by his words. Tobias had that rare thrill-seeking, vile-playful, a little mischievous, and absolutely irresistible. She teased that thrill too, otherwise, they wouldn’t have clicked so well over the years.

If the lights came back on now and Elle saw him he’d be totally embarrassed. ‘Hmph! At this rate, Elle will eventually figure out his true colors. Natalie thought.

When the one-handed piano segment ended, the lights flickered back on, flooding the room with light. A playful nibble on her ear jolted her back as Tobias returned to his spot.

His expression was calm, and his fingers glided over the keys as if nothing had happened. He was breathing just as steadily as before. One'd never guess what he had ju done in the dark.

Natalie looked away and continued playing the piano coolly. She thought she was a decent actress", but it turned out Tobias was just as good. If he weren't so into sleeping with her right now, they could have easily been friends who understood each other perfectly.

As the final notes faded away, the other guests started talking about the power outage.

"That was strange. What happened to the lights? They just went out and then came back on like nothing."

"The waiter said it was a small glitch in the lights. But wow, Mr. Reese and Ms. Guzman really handled it well. Not a single mistake during the blackout."

Rex added, "Yeah, their timing was spot on. Tobias's piano skills are still amazing, and this lady held her own too."

Others looked at Natalie with a mix of envy and jealousy, while she quickly stood up and moved to the fa**st corner of the room, creating space between herself and Tobias.

Tobias had always been a piano prodigy, famous in school for his competition wins. People even called him the "Piano Prince." He usually avoided playing duets, claiming no one else measured up to his talent. But here he was, sharing the stage with her, but Natalie had zero interest in joining him. Besides, they had just shared a... rather reckless moment.

Elle's eyes darted toward Natalie. Spotting Tobias, she rushed over, her voice dripping with sweetness. "Tobias, can we play together too?"

"Sure, just pick a song you want to play," he replied quickly.

"I knew it! You're the best, Tobias!" Elle beamed, eagerly flipping through the sheet music.

Natalie chuckled, rolling her eyes at how he hadn't missed a chance to flirt with both of them. Then she spotted her friend Maddie staring at her with wide, shocked eyes, as if she had a million questions.

A chill ran through Natalie. 'Has Maddie heard our earlier conversation?' she thought and recalled how loud she'd been when talking to Tobias out of frustration.

"Wow, Natalie! Your piano skills are incredible! You should've told me sooner," Maddie said, a pout on her lips. "I want to play with you too, but Mr. Reese got to you first."

Natalie cautiously asked, "Is that why you're sulking?"

"This is a big deal!" Maddie insisted.

Natalie felt a wave of relief and smiled, "Just a moment ago, you were pushing me to play with him. Now you're the one upset?"

"I thought you'd get famous with a performance like that, but I'm jealous of Mr. Reese," Maddie admitted, her tone shifting. "You're mine, and I don't want anyone else to get you."

Natalie couldn't help but chuckle internally, "But he already got me 6 years... no, 16 years ago."

As they were chatting quietly, a waiter walked by with a tray full of drinks. Suddenly, he stumbled, causing a splash of colorful beverages to drench Natalie, who was dressed in white.

In an instant, her pristine outfit turned into a rainbow of stains.

"I'm so sorry! I didn't mean to!" the waiter exclaimed.

"It's okay," Natalie replied, shaking her head to reassure him.

"You've got to be more careful," Elle said, setting down her sheet music and walking over. "Good thing they have spare clothes here. You should go change."

This venue was popular among the rich ladies, so a dressing room was available for such accidents. With little choice, Natalie knew changing was a must; facing everyone like this would be too embarrassing.

Elle's eyes were filled with something unreadable. When the performance ended, Rex applauded, saying, "Great job! Ms. Lightman, your piano skills have really improved!"

Elle smiled at the compliment, but before she could fully enjoy it, Rex added, "Just a bit behind the performance of the earlier young lady."

Elle's smile instantly faded.

Maddie, catching this, burst into laughter. "That's right. Natalie plays the piano the best!"

Elle felt a pang of jealousy as her hands balled into fists. Karen quickly chimed in. "Who are you to judge? Do you even play better than Elle?"

Chiques ye

Maddie entered the room on "Don't you know the answer?" Maddie's skill at the piano was definitely wanted among the girls present.

Karen's expression darkened. She glanced at Elle, who looked increasingly tense.

"Well, let's see how this bold young lady performs," Rex said with an encouraging smile.

Maddie's face burned bright red. Elle clenched her jaw. Feeling the pressure of the situation, she couldn't stop Maddie from playing. She glanced over at Tobias, feeling relieved that he wasn't going to play with her. He simply sat there, calmly sipping his tea.

For now, Maddie wasn't the main concern. Elle was keeping an eye on the time, knowing Howard should have finished his task by now.

"Strange, why hasn't Ms. Guzman come back yet?" Elle wondered aloud after Maddie finished playing.

"Look who's watching Natalie!" Maddie shot back with a smirk.

Elle feigned innocence. "Well, she's my guest, so of course I should keep track of her."

"Elle is just kindhearted; that's why some jealous people pick on her," Karen said, giving Maddie a fierce look.

"I think I should go check on her," Elle said, a hint of worry in her voice. "Tobias, are you coming with me?"

"Not really," Tobias replied casually, showing no interest.

Elle's lips lifted slightly, while Karen added, "Come on, Mr. Reese wouldn't care about that kind of girl anyway. He's not going to bother with her."

Tobias stayed quiet, casually sipping his tea as though nothing was happening around him.

Elle and her friends arrived at the door of the dressing room, but strange, breathy sounds floated out from inside, making them blush.

They exchanged awkward glances, and then Maddie sensed something was off. Pushing her way to the front, she tried to open the door, but it was locked tight.

"Is anyone in there? Can you hear me? Open up!" Maddie shouted, her urgency growing.

The sounds from inside kept going, and Elle frowned with suspicion. "It sounds like there's more than one person in there. It seems like they're... being intimate."

Karen rolled her eyes. "Isn't it obvious? It's definitely Natalie with some guy in there, getting all lovey-dovey. Someone get the key! We need to open this door!"

A waiter rushed over, keys jangling in his hand. But before he could unlock the door, Maddie snatched the keys, putting herself firmly in front of the door and taking a deep breath.

Laddie, do you really think you can hold this door shut alone? There are too many of us for you to stop," Karen teased, a smirk dancing on her lips. "This kind of excitement is more fun with everyone around."

Knowing My Ex-Wife After The Divorce Chapter 30

Maddie was a bundle of nerves but did her best to keep it together. "Natalie would never do something like this."

"Come on, she's a love child. If she wants to ride the high life, she's gonna have to sell herself. It's just how it goes. We'll see which guy she ends up with," Karen said, a smug look on her face.

Maddie shot her a cold glare, anger barely hidden in her eyes.

Karen flinched but quickly stood her ground, crossing her arms defiantly. "I'm just telling the truth. I didn't say anything wrong."

Taking a deep breath, Maddie slipped the key into the lock and slowly turned it, her hands shaking. As the door creaked open, sounds from inside spilled out, too loud to ignore. The room was dim, but she could make out the outline of a couple wrapped around each other.

Just then, before Maddie could suggest keeping the light off, Elle chimed in, "It's pitch black in here. Let's turn on a light."

The lights flicked on. Gasps filled the air. Just moments before, Maddie had tried to block the doorway for the others, but it was no use. The group of rich girls spotted a man and a woman tangled together in a compromising situation. The woman was a total stranger, but the man was definitely Howard.

"Who the hell are you?!" Howard shouted, shoving the woman away.

The woman pouted, playing innocent. "Seriously? You saw me come in and just grabbed me. What did you think would happen? And hey, don't forget to pay me later." She calmly buttoned up her shirt, her occupation obvious.

Maddie let out a huge sigh of relief, glad it wasn't Natalie.

Elle's expression darkened as she stared at the chaotic scene. Karen couldn't help but shout, "What's happening? Where's Natalie? Wasn't she supposed to be here? Where did she go?" Just then, a calm voice called from behind them. "I'm right here! Did you need me?" Everyone turned to see Natalie standing at the door, looking perfectly fine in a new outfit.

"Why weren't you in this fitting room?" Karen asked.

Natalie shrugged. "I wanted to be, but when I arrived, a staff member said this one was taken, so I had to find another. I didn't expect this place to be so lively."

At her comment, both Elle and Howard exchanged awkward glances.

Elle cursed under her breath and walked over to Natalie. "We thought you were the one in there"

"Come on, if it had been me, you know Mr. Reese would've taken his guest somewhere else," Natalie replied and then turned to Howard. "Am I right, Mr. Reese?"

Howard frowned at that, too irritated to dress himself.

Maddie bounced over to Natalie, and Natalie said with a bright smile on her face, "How's the dress? Isn't it gorgeous? The clothes in that other fitting room were so pretty."

"Definitely! They look amazing on you," Maddie said, genuinely excited. As long as her friend was alright, she was happy, and that dress really was breathtaking. It was a long white gown with a diamond-encrusted neckline that struck the perfect balance between elegant and classy. The cinched waist highlighted her curves beautifully.

The others couldn't help but feel a hint of jealousy. The mansion assigned fitting rooms based on social status, and this one was clearly meant for someone of Natalie's caliber. It was unbelievable luck that she had run into someone else and ended up in a more exclusive fitting room. The dress she wore was clearly a limited-edition custom piece.

Completely unfazed by the drama, Natalie and Maddie strolled away, chatting about what had just happened.

Maddie started, "Natalie, Elle was really enthusiastic about this, and I think it's all her..." "It definitely is," Natalie jumped in confidently.

Maddie gritted her teeth. "I just knew it! It's so obvious! Why is she suddenly after you?"

“Honestly, who cares? She’s just making a fool of herself.” Natalie shrugged. She didn’t really care about Elle; if needed, she could easily put her in her place. But for Tobias’s sake, she decided to let it slide-for now. However, if Elle kept pushing her luck, Natalie wouldn’t care who was backing her.

Maddie continued to vent about Elle until they reached the piano room, where the gossip was in full swing among the other girls.

“I can’t believe Tobias’s uncle would be so bold, doing that kind of thing in public!” one girl exclaimed.

“Maybe he’s been having a hard time. I wonder how Tobias will deal with this,” another mused. After all, it was a serious blow to the Reese family’s reputation.

Tobias was off to the side, focused on a document that Jack must have delivered, as he somehow had shown up here.

Natalie barely glanced at them; Tobias was the same workaholic as always, but that wasn’t her concern.

“Hey, would you consider being my partner for my piano performance next month?” Rex approached her, a hopeful smile on his face.

Natalie paused for a moment and then shook her head. “Thanks, but I have no time.”

Rex’s expression dimmed a bit. “Really? Can you think it over? I really think we’d make a great team.”

Overhearing the conversation, Tobias looked up at them, a hint of coldness flashing in his eyes.

Not skipping a beat, Natalie pushed Maddie forward. “What about her instad?”

Maddie quickly shook her hands in protest. “No way! I can’t do that, Natalie! You’re kidding. right?”

Rex stroked his chin, thinking it over. “Actually, I think this lady could work, too. I heard her play earlier, and she’s got some real talent.”

From the back, Karen piped up, her voice loud and clear. “No way! Maddie can’t do it! It has to be Elle!”

Rex nodded, contemplating. “Ms. Lightman would be great too, but I honestly think Ms. Guzman is right. Ms. Carter has a natural flair. She has such good energy... His words clearly indicated he favored Maddie.

Elle's eyes filled with tears. All her effort couldn't go to waste. She turned to Tobias, her voice shaking. "Tobias, I really want to do this..."

Natalie thought Maddie stepping in was a sure bet, but Elle's plea complicated things. The opportunity with Rex was huge for Maddie, and Natalie genuinely wanted to help her friend shine. But with Tobias involved, things could get messy. If Elle asked, she knew Tobias couldn't refuse.

Taking a deep breath, Natalie resolved to fight for this opportunity, no matter the cost. "No." A magnetic voice broke through the chatter in the room.

Natalie felt like she had to have misheard him. 'Did Tobias just turn that down?' she wondered.

Elle looked equally shocked, staring at him wide-eyed. "Tbias, you she trailed off, not finishing her thought, thinking. Is he not going to help me?"