

Midnight 731

Chapter 731

Karen couldn't tell if it was the pregnancy, but she sure was sleepy these days.

She slept like a log until the evening shadows stretched long and dark.

Opening her eyes, she caught snippets of conversation outside, and a man's voice at that!

Instinctively, she furrowed her brow, straining to listen, half worried it might be her dad. But thankfully, it was just Kenneth.

Dorothy had flown back from abroad; it was a no-brainer that Kenneth would swing by. Karen could've bet on it.

"Hey, Kenneth, you made it."

Stepping into the living room, Karen clocked the off look in Kenneth's eyes.

She glanced at Dorothy and asked, "Did you tell Kenneth?"

Dorothy nodded. "Yeah, I told him about the breakup."

So, the pregnancy was still under wraps.

Karen flashed a knowing smile and plopped down beside Dorothy. "Kenneth, I would have told you myself, but you've been down lately. I figured this news might just make things worse."

"I knew it!" Kenneth scowled, his thick brows knitting together. "I always said that Jeffrey was bad news, but you wouldn't listen. Now you've had a good cry and seen the light?"

Karen stuck out her tongue. "I thought I'd give it a shot! He was sweet to me at first, but I guess..."

"There's a lot you didn't see coming!" Kenneth's tone was stern. "Lucky for you, you didn't get engaged. Do you have any idea how that would've affected your future?"

The difference between being a first-time bride and a second-time bride could scare off plenty of guys!

She could date freely before marriage, have as many boyfriends as she liked. As long as she wasn't married, she was still 'Miss'. But once it's on paper, everything changes.

Kenneth had been so mad when he found out Karen was thinking of getting engaged to Jeffrey that he wanted to give Jeffrey a piece of his mind, and Karen too, while he was at it!

"I get it, Kenneth. Lay off, will you? Dorothy's here, save me some face," Karen pleaded, knowing he could go on a lecture marathon as a schoolteacher. She quickly nudged Dorothy to exit stage left.

Dorothy, catching Karen's drift, chimed in, "Okay, Kenneth, she gets it. She broke up with Jeffrey, didn't she? Her spirits are already down, so no need to scold her anymore."

"You're always such a handful," Kenneth sighed, then turned to Dorothy, "About the lawyer thing..."

"I'll find someone myself, see who can help. If it really comes down to it, I'll apply for legal aid."

Dorothy had reached out to several law firms, but none wanted to cross the Lopez Corporation.

She knew the road ahead was tough, but she didn't expect to hit a roadblock right at the start.

"I'll keep looking too. We're bound to find someone."

Dorothy nodded, her resolve unshaken.

The evidence Everett had given her was damning, so a lawyer was just a formality.

Worst comes to worst, she'd take the evidence to the police, and get the press involved!

There had to be a way out.

Kenneth rose from the couch and said, "It's getting late. I should head out. Karen, take care of Dorothy, will you? Call me if you need anything."

"Sure, bye, Kenneth!"

Karen and Dorothy walked him out to the gate, watching his car fade into the night before heading back.

"Phew! Lucky you didn't mention the baby, or I'd have an earful!"

Dorothy gave a helpless smile. "You hadn't said anything, so how could I?"

The breakup was bound to come out sooner or later. It didn't matter much if she brought it up now or not.

Karen squinted into a smile, turning to head back in, when she spotted a vaguely familiar figure in the distance.

Chapter 732

Jeffrey!

Why on earth was he here?

Without a second thought, Karen grabbed Dorothy by the arm and dragged Dorothy inside.

She didn't want to see Jeffrey, not for any reason, not at all!

But how could Karen outrun Jeffrey, a man towering six-foot-three frame?

Within moments, she felt a firm grip on her wrist from behind.

"Karen, stop running!"

Hearing Jeffrey's voice, Dorothy finally understood why Karen had suddenly bolted.

She had been utterly clueless just seconds ago.

"Let go of me!" Karen snapped, whirling around to shove him away.

Jeffrey quickly released her, saying, "Okay, okay, I'm letting go! Just don't freak out, please!"

In her fury, Karen hardly heard his words, but Dorothy caught on quickly.

"Jeffrey, you shouldn't be here. You two are done," she pointed out, testing the waters.

"I... I was just checking up on her from downstairs. Didn't mean to intrude," Jeffrey stammered, his words faltering.

He had been at his wit's end trying to find Karen and had ultimately sought help from Everett.

But Everett had warned him not to let on about the protection detail he'd arranged for her, especially not to Dorothy.

"You're intruding right now!" Karen glared at him, tugging Dorothy to leave.

For every step they took towards the stairs, Jeffrey followed suit.

Dorothy knew some things had to be settled between the two, and as a third party, no matter how close, she had no say. So, she said frankly, "Karen, I'm going to head back. I think Jeffrey has something he wants to say to you."

"Don't you ditch me! I have nothing to say to him!"

"Karen! Didn't you say it yourself? Parting on good terms," Dorothy gently patted her hand, urging her to cool down.

After all, there had been real affection between them.

Even though the revelation of his ex's child was a tough pill to swallow, Dorothy felt Karen should at least inform Jeffrey about her decision to terminate the pregnancy. If anything went wrong, he, as the father, had a responsibility.

Karen's situation was different from her own; there was no deep-seated vendetta, no maternal murder to avenge.

"Dorothy!"

"Karen, just... can we talk for a minute?" Jeffrey's voice faltered when it mattered most.

He had been pacing downstairs for what seemed like an eternity, wanting a cigarette but worried about Karen disliking the smell, so he had resisted.

Now, after hours of waiting and not smoking, he still hadn't figured out how to knock on her door or what to say to her.

He feared his own words might only exacerbate things.

"I have nothing to say to you, Jeffrey. We broke up. That's it. Now leave."

Seeing Karen's rising temper, Jeffrey hurriedly said, "Don't get mad. I'll go. I'll just wait downstairs. If you decide you want to talk, I'll come back up, okay?"

"I—"

"Just have a chat. I'll head back," Dorothy coaxed, giving Jeffrey a look. "Make sure she gets home safe after you're done. It's getting late, and we wouldn't want any accidents."

"Trust me! I'll take care of her."

Dorothy, now convinced that he knew about the pregnancy, nodded and headed upstairs.

With Dorothy gone, Karen's attitude towards Jeffrey grew even colder.

"What do you want, Jeffrey? Can't you handle a breakup?"

Jeffrey's eyes locked onto her face, and they stood in a tense standoff for a few moments before he let out a resigned sigh.

"I admit it. I can't handle it."

Chapter 733

Jeffrey had prepared an outpouring of confessions, heartfelt truths, but at that moment, Karen had cornered him into silence, leaving him with just one line.

"So what now?"

Karen didn't want to drag all those issues out into the open, but he kept pressing, leaving her no choice.

"As long as we don't break up, I'll agree to anything you say, okay?"

"But all I want is to break up with you, cleanly and completely." Karen didn't look at him, her back turned to Jeffrey.

"Karen, ever since I've been with you, I stopped going out, and I haven't been involved with anyone else. Paige was just... someone I didn't know about! If I had known, I would've never let that child be born."

Karen scoffed.

"What's the use in saying that now? The child is already here. She's your daughter!"

"I can deny her. I can give Paige a sum of money, and have her take the child and leave, okay?" Jeffrey raised his hand in an oath. "I, Jeffrey, swear on everything that I will never see them again! From now on, you are the only one in my eyes and in my heart."

Once, such words might have touched Karen, but now they left her unmoved.

"This is so pointless, Jeffrey." She frowned, steadying her emotions before looking him in the eyes, "By doing this, I end up being the villain! I'm the one keeping you from seeing your child, the one breaking up a father and his daughter. Have you thought about that? Your daughter will grow up! Then what? How is she going to see me?"

"I... I just won't let her know who her father is!"

"Stop joking. Secrets have a way of coming out." Karen had no desire to play the villain.

She might not have experienced a life without parents, but empathy was enough to understand the hardships of such a life.

The harder the life, the deeper the resentment, and that could lead to trouble later on.

Karen didn't want any part of that.

"So tell me, what do you want to do? I'll listen to you! I could even take the child from Paige and have my parents raise her, so she wouldn't resent you! Or maybe... maybe... she actually..." has a serious congenital heart condition.

But Jeffrey couldn't bring himself to finish the thought.

He couldn't wish death upon his daughter, not when he had just learned of her existence.

"Jeffrey, I've said it before, I won't be a stepmother." Karen's stance was firm, "And my parents wouldn't agree either. I'll admit, that day outside the hospital, I was willing to give us a chance to

get back together, but that was before I knew about your daughter! These past few days, I've thought a lot, and I even considered accepting the reality, but in the end, I couldn't convince myself."

Karen took love seriously.

Even if it wasn't about 'till death do us part,' at the very least, she didn't want a third party always in the picture!

Paige would always be a special existence.

And as their daughter grew older, that special existence would become even more pronounced.

What would she do then?

Like before, if the child needed her father because of a serious illness, could she really keep stopping him from going?

Karen couldn't be that heartless, but it would make her feel uncomfortable.

Call her selfish, say she lacked compassion, but she just wasn't willing.

"Please go. Let's pretend we never met."

Karen turned to leave.

Suddenly, Jeffrey grabbed her sleeve, his eyes reddening as he looked at her and asked, "What about our child then?"

Chapter 734

Karen spun around with a look of utter shock on her face.

"You—"

"I went to City Hospital and checked your medical record."

Karen froze in place.

Jeffrey clenched his jaw, fighting to hold back tears that threatened to fall before Karen.

"The child I've been longing for... are you really going to end it?"

Karen didn't respond.

"Say something! Do you really not want our baby?"

Karen dug her nails into her flesh, avoiding his gaze. She feared that looking into his eyes would soften her resolve.

"It's over; it should never have been in the first place."

"Karen, you promised me. You said you'd have my child! You told me you loved me! How can the incident from two years ago make you take back everything you ever offered me overnight?"

Jeffrey stood before her, half-shrouded in darkness, exuding a silent, forlorn air. "I know I messed up before, big time, thinking nothing mattered more than a good time, and feelings were the last thing I wanted. But after I met you, I really wanted to change!"

Despite their short time together, Jeffrey had truly made an effort to revolve his world around Karen, aside from his hours at the office.

When she worked, he was there. When she went home, he'd grab his car keys and follow eagerly.

To get the blessing of Derek and Serena, he'd knelt without a second thought, offering the sincerest promise he could make.

But why did it all vanish so suddenly?

Now, back in that villa, Karen's presence lingered everywhere—they brushing their teeth together, playfully wrestling on the couch, and even in the bedroom, her scent filled the air. He was on the brink of madness, and that's why he decided to leave Eldorria City.

Karen's lips moved, but no sound came out at first.

Finally, the words she spoke were the ones he dreaded most.

"Just go, and don't come back."

"Can we keep the child, please? Dorothy, too, after leaving Everett, still had their child."

Karen suddenly looked up at him and said, "You think you're anything like Everett? He never laid a finger on any other woman! His separation from Dorothy was because of his mother, not because he did anything wrong! And you? Can you even count how many women you've been with?"

Jeffrey was speechless.

"Today it's Paige, tomorrow who knows? Jeffrey, do you even understand what I'm saying? I can't accept any of this! Once trust collapses, I'd live in constant fear, always dreading another incident. We'd argue, every single day, until we're both exhausted, sick of it all. If that's the case, why bother staying together?"

Jeffrey was at a loss for words.

He couldn't promise there wouldn't be more ex-girlfriends showing up, or old flames to extinguish.

"Jeffrey, if you're a man, you'll go back to Paige. She needs you more than I do right now, and so does your daughter."

"But I don't love her..."

"Does it matter who you love at this point?" Karen moved away slightly, her voice heavy, "You love me, but we can't be together."

"Karen..."

"Jeffrey, please, give me a chance to live my life. I'm still young; I don't want to be a single mom or fight over a man with other women. Just go, I'm begging you, okay?"

Chapter 735

Karen had finally had enough of Jeffrey's silence and decided to leave on her own.

With every step she took, he followed closely behind.

Annoyance flared within her.

"Can't you take a hint?"

"Yeah, I can." His voice was low, his eyelashes casting shadows over his cheeks. Thank goodness the evening was dim, the stairwell light barely punctuating the darkness, hiding the single tear that threatened to betray him. "I promised Dorothy I'd see you home."

"I can walk by myself."

"Just let me walk you, at least... walk our child home."

Karen's lips parted, but no harsh words came out. She resigned herself to his company.

The journey seemed endless, each step weighed down with the gravity of their situation.

It was rare for them to share such a quiet moment together. Jeffrey wished her apartment was higher, just a few more stairs to climb, and just a little more time for them to spend together.

But the stairs always come to an end.

They reached the front door of Karen's apartment.

When she knocked, the door swung open almost immediately. Dorothy had been waiting.

Seeing Karen, and Jeffrey lingering behind, she knew things were unresolved.

But then, how could they resolve something like this?

Karen couldn't possibly ask Jeffrey to make that kind of sacrifice.

"Come in," Dorothy said, reaching out to take Karen's hand. She gave Jeffrey a long, meaningful look, her lips pressed tight as she closed the door behind them.

"Dorothy, I'm doing the right thing, aren't I?"

"That's not for me to say. Whatever you decide, I'm here for you."

Dorothy had her own moment of impulse once, deciding to keep her twins. No regrets, but it hadn't been without its hardships, nearly costing her life in the delivery room. How could she now advise Karen?

She guided Karen to the couch and poured a glass of warm water.

Karen didn't take it, her eyes lifting to meet Dorothy's. "Jeffrey knows about the pregnancy."

"Yeah, I figured."

"He wants me to keep the baby."

Dorothy had guessed as much.

Karen's lips were tight, her throat constricted. "Do you know, the first time I went to the City Hospital maternity ward, seeing those pregnant women with their huge bellies, looking so tired but so happy. I thought, being a mother must be such a blissful thing, right?"

Dorothy pondered for a moment and then nodded. "It is a blissful thing."

"So, I really wanted to give Jeffrey a chance! After confirming the pregnancy, do you know my first absurd thought? I was wondering, who would our child take after more, me or Jeffrey? Ha, if it's a

boy, I hope he's more like me, so he won't grow up to be a cad like his father. If it's a girl, I hope she looks like him, with those strong brows and big eyes, bound to be as beautiful as Abigail."

Dorothy let out a sigh, gripping Karen's cold hands.

"Karen, so you want to keep the child?"

Karen shook her head. "I can't keep it. It's not about what I want."

"You do have feelings for Jeffrey."

"How could I not? What woman wouldn't be moved by his undivided attention? Even you, with your cool demeanor, were won over by Everett. And me? I don't have your beautiful face, so I never dared to dream that a man like him would chase after me, let alone be devoted."

Dorothy tried to speak several times but each time, the words just wouldn't come out.

It seemed nothing she could say would be right.

"Dorothy, I can't waver. I can't keep this child. Tell me I can't, can I?"

Chapter 736

Dorothy paused for a few seconds, her nod stiff and awkward. "Yeah, you surely know what's best for you."

"That's right, Dorothy! After all, if I became a stepmom, I'd be the fairy tale kind of stepmother!"

Dorothy watched as Karen forced a smile, entertaining herself with the joke. But it wasn't funny. Not one bit.

...

What they didn't realize was that Jeffrey hadn't left all night.

He had stood at the doorstep of Karen's apartment, exhausted, eventually sitting on the steps, leaning against the wall.

It felt like only by being there, he could be a little closer to her.

Anyway, it was better than going back to that cold mansion.

Come early morning, just as Jeffrey had barely closed his eyes, he sensed someone looming over him!

He jolted awake, looking up to see the figure.

"Everett! You—"

Everett, with his thick eyebrows furrowed, bent down to shush him.

"Keep it down, man. I can't let Dorothy see me."

Everett glanced at the apartment door with a low voice, "Come downstairs."

"Oh."

Jeffrey got up from the step, his legs numb and almost stumbled, nearly taking a spill.

The two towering figures, one after another, descended the stairs; both strikingly handsome, the kind that could steal one's gaze. Luckily, it was early, and the neighborhood was quiet. Otherwise, there would surely be some sneaky photos taken.

To avoid drawing attention, Everett had deliberately taken Kevin's car.

Jeffrey didn't waste a second. He asked as they got in, "Why are you back, man?"

Everett had shared his situation with Jeffrey, so the latter thought Everett would be out at Elysian Country for the time being.

"Can't stop worrying about her."

What else could it be?

"Man, you've got it rough," Jeffrey said after thinking for a moment, then added, "Rougher than me."

Everett glanced at him through the rear-view mirror, "Not as rough as you think, buddy. I've got two kids. Karen didn't agree, did she?" He could tell by Jeffrey's expression.

Jeffrey muttered under his breath, now cozy in the comfortable seat, his drowsiness returning full force.

"She begged me to let her go."

Everett said nothing, and just peered through the car window towards Dorothy's place.

"Everett, I'm screwed for life."

With Karen out of the picture, he felt he could never love again.

"Everett, can you just stop looking? Dorothy's not going to show up, man!"

Finally, Everett pulled his gaze away, shooting Jeffrey a frosty look, "You standing at her door isn't going to make Karen want to keep the kid."

"Jeez!" Jeffrey propped himself up, smirking, "Let's not cut each other down. We're both in the same boat of misery here. I won't call you out on it, but you can't tell me you didn't rush back because Kenneth was at this apartment yesterday, staying till dark. I won't expose you, so let's not go for the heart, alright?"

Everett's eyes darkened, his handsome face clouded with displeasure.

"Looks like you've come to terms with Karen not wanting the kid."

"What choice do I have? She doesn't want to be a stepmom, can't accept Paige's kid. I get it, it's tough. Whatever decision she makes, I have no right to blame her."

He hated himself for being so utterly powerless.

"So, the whole issue between you two is because of your ex's kid?"

"Seems so, otherwise she might have forgiven me."

Everett extended his well-defined hand, grabbing a lab report from the glove compartment and tossing it to him.

"What's this?"

"The blood test results of your ex's kid."

Chapter 737

Jeffrey picked up the report and glanced at it briefly, noting just two short items on the list.

The first line read: Blood Type ABO — O

The second line read: Blood Type Rh (D) — Negative (+)

"What's this about?"

"The kid's got Type O blood."

Jeffrey furrowed his brow, his face a picture of exasperation. "Do you really think I'm in the mood to care about what blood type she is?"

He was on the verge of losing his mind!

Everett, clearly more annoyed than Jeffrey but still patient, continued.

"At the company's mandatory health check-up, I remember you're Type AB."

"Yeah? Can't remember." Jeffrey tossed the lab report aside and leaned back, closing his eyes, "As long as the check-up didn't show any serious illness, why should I remember this stuff?"

Everett, frustrated by his friend's attitude, simply turned away and looked out the car window.

No movement from that window, curtains still drawn. Dorothy must still be sleeping in, she always did like to lounge in bed.

Jeffrey was nearly dozing off when he suddenly jolted awake.

"Wait a minute, why are you bringing this up all of a sudden?"

Everett wasn't one to beat around the bush.

He picked up the lab report again, scrutinized it, but still couldn't make heads or tails of it.

Everett spoke in a detached tone, as if discussing the weather, "Grab your phone, hit up Google, and look up what blood types the parents need to have to produce a Type O child."

"I'm AB, so maybe Paige is O. The kid probably got her blood type."

While Jeffrey spoke, he had already started searching on his phone.

Everett couldn't believe he had such a dense friend, whose school knowledge seemed to have gone with the wind.

"If either parent is Type AB, they can't possibly have a Type O child."

Jeffrey sharply looked up and asked, "Are you serious?"

"Just kidding." Everett's phone screen lit up at that moment with a call from Kevin.

"Mr. Lopez, I've sent the info you asked for to your phone!"

"Got it."

After hanging up, Everett glanced at the image on his phone and forwarded it to Jeffrey.

It was his medical report.

In bold letters, it read: Blood Type: AB.

"Damn!" Jeffrey cursed instinctively as he saw it, and in his haste to stand up, he banged his head hard against the car roof, "Ouch, that hurts!"

Everett frowned, gave him a stern look. "Did you accept the kid without a paternity test?"

Jeffrey, without thinking, blurted out, "Didn't you accept Abigail and Langston without a test either?"

"Get out of the car, now."

"No, wait!" Jeffrey quickly pleaded, "My bad, I'm off to the hospital to get it checked right now!"

This revelation felt like a lifeline to Jeffrey, and he was so grateful he could have kissed Everett.

If Paige's kid wasn't his...

Well, that would just be fantastic!

Just the thought had Jeffrey's hands shaking with anticipation.

"Get going."

"Right, right, I'm on it!"

Jeffrey hurried out of the car and sprinted toward his own.

Halfway there, he suddenly turned back and knocked on Everett's car window.

"Hey, Everett..."

Without even looking up, Everett said, "I'll stay here and watch. If Karen leaves, I'll let you know."

Jeffrey instantly squinted his eyes and smiled. "Everett, how can you be so damn charming! I absolutely adore you! If I were a woman, I'd marry you in a heartbeat!"

"Get lost."

Chapter 738

In the hospital, Paige had just coaxed her little girl to sleep when she sent a message to Huxley.

[She should be waking up in a couple of hours. You guys can come over for the paternity test then.]

It wasn't long before Huxley replied with a succinct [Okay.]

While Iris snoozed, Paige had hoped to catch some shut-eye too, but her phone buzzed to life.

It was Arthur, the guy Karen had seen at the last party, who had been relentlessly pursuing Paige.

"Arthur, you don't need to call me anymore. I never had feelings for you. The only reason I went out with you was to make Jeffrey jealous."

"Where are you now?"

"That's none of your business."

“I swung by your place, and your folks said you haven’t been home for days. What the heck are you up to?” Arthur pressed on, undeterred by her frosty tone.

Paige frowned and decided to lay it all out, “My daughter has been ill, and I’m at the hospital looking after her. Yes, I have a daughter! Can you stop bothering me now?”

“Which hospital are you at? General Hospital or the City Hospital?”

“It’s none of your business!”

She hung up abruptly and when she looked up, she saw a tall figure standing at the entrance of the ward.

Jeffrey.

He had come.

The embers in Paige's otherwise dull eyes ignited, “Jeffrey! Are you here to see Iris?”

“I’m here to find out whose kid she really is.” Jeffrey's eyes were filled with rage and scorn, fixed intently on her.

All because of this woman! She had caused such a rift between him and Karen.

How could he not be furious?

“She’s yours, Jeffrey! Even if you don’t want to acknowledge it, don’t slander me!” Paige started to raise her voice but then remembered Iris sleeping; she quickly got up and pulled Jeffrey out of the ward, “Your parents came looking for me. They want a paternity test. I never refused! You don’t have to keep doubting me over and over! Once the test is done, everything will be clear.”

Jeffrey grabbed her wrist firmly, “Fine, if you’re so sure, let’s do the test now!”

“The baby is sleeping!”

“We’re doing it now!”

Paige's brows knitted together, and she pursed her lips and said, “Alright, if now is what you want, then now it is. I’ll go get Iris!”

Soon, she returned with her daughter in her arms, who was wailing loudly.

Jeffrey went straight with Paige to get the paternity test done. They paid extra to expedite the process, and the results would be out in two hours.

He didn’t leave, opting to wait right there to ensure Paige didn’t pull any tricks.

Iris kept crying but eventually tired herself out and fell asleep in Paige’s arms.

Considering how Paige was acting now, so open and undaunted during the test, she really didn’t seem to be lying.

This left Jeffrey feeling a bit worried.

During this time, Huxley and Paloma also arrived at the hospital. Seeing that the test had already been completed, they decided to wait for the results together.

“You came to the hospital and didn’t tell me?” Paloma whispered to her son.

“Everett came back from overseas. He told me Iris probably isn’t mine.”

“Really?” Paloma’s face lit up with hope.

Jeffrey nodded and answered, “Yeah, so I came straight here.”

“If the kid isn’t yours, your father said he’d handle the Miller family for you.”

“I hope she isn’t.”

As the words left Jeffrey’s mouth, they saw the doctor coming out of the lab with two pieces of paper in hand.

“Jeffrey Turner, are you here?”

Chapter 739

"I'm here!"

At that call, Jeffrey hurried over.

"Here's the paternity test report. Take a look."

The doctor handed over the document. Huxley and Paloma leaned in to see, but Paige held back. She felt it was pointless.

Jeffrey's gaze dropped to the last line of the report where, in bold, black print, it read:

Based on DNA analysis, Subject 1 (Jeffrey) and Subject 2 (Iris) are not related as parent and child.

"Not related! Honey, look! Not related!"

Jeffrey stood frozen, but Paloma was the first to snap out of it, grabbing Huxley and exclaiming with joy.

At hearing this, Paige immediately came over with the child in arms, snatching the report, "Impossible... This can't be! Jeffrey, you're the only man for me!"

"Who knows now? " Jeffrey looked at her with an angry gaze. "Paige, do you have any idea how much you've ruined me?"

He almost lost his own flesh and blood!

But thankfully, thankfully, there was still time to set things right!

"No, this can't be!" Paige shook her head vehemently, then rushed to the doctor, grabbed his collar and demanded loudly, "The paternity test is flawed! Did the Turners pay you off?"

"Wha—No, absolutely not! We're legally accountable for these tests. We wouldn't dare!"

"This can't be! Jeffrey, I've only ever been with you! After you broke up with me, I never got over you. I held onto the hope that one day you'd see my true heart and come back to me. How could I possibly be with another man—"

"I don't want to hear any of this now."

Jeffrey turned to leave.

Paige blocked him and said, "You can't go! I suspect there's something wrong with this child, maybe... maybe there was a mix-up! I definitely had your child. If you didn't tamper with the test, then the child must be mistaken!"

Huxley and Paloma exchanged a look and for the sake of thoroughness, suggested, "Well then, Paige, why don't you and the child also get tested to see if there's a blood relation? Since we're all here, let's clear this up."

If it really was a mix-up, then it was another false alarm.

The possibility made Jeffrey's face become gloomy. "Yes, you two get tested as well."

"Alright, I will."

Paige went straight into the testing room with the child and the doctor.

Outside, Paloma squeezed Jeffrey's hand and said, "Jeffrey, there's hope! You and Karen might reconcile! It looks like this child really isn't yours!"

Jeffrey gripped the test report in his hand tightly, as if it were a royal decree absolving him of a death sentence.

But he didn't seem entirely sure.

"Mom, if the child isn't mine, Karen will come back to me, right?"

"Of course! Karen likes you! Don't worry, your dad and I will talk to her! The only wedge between you two was Paige and this child. Now that it's proven you're unrelated, of course, you can start afresh!"

Jeffrey looked down, his gaze fixed on the line of the report, his brow furrowed.

He thought of what Karen had said to him.

She said, "Today it's Paige, tomorrow it could be anyone!"

She said she was fed up.

"Mom, you have to bring Karen back!"

"I'll do everything I can!"

"Not everything you can, you must." Jeffrey's lips barely moved, his voice deep and hoarse, "She... she's pregnant."

Chapter 740

Paloma's eyes widened in shock. "What?"

"She's pregnant, but she doesn't want the baby."

"No way. That's not happening!" Paloma blurted out, nearly losing her balance. "Honey, come on, we need to head over to the Lopez's right now! That baby Karen's carrying is our family's flesh and blood; we can't let anything happen!"

Huxley, too, nodded in rare agreement, although his face was ashen. "Let's go. Sooner or later, we've got to deal with her family over this."

But Jeffrey grabbed his mother's arm. "Mom, Everett's keeping an eye on Karen for me. She won't be going to the hospital just yet. We need to wait for Paige's test results."

He couldn't bear the thought, but what if they really had the wrong baby? What if there was another child, his and Paige's?

Even though the possibility was slim, Jeffrey was scared.

He wanted to have definitive proof before confronting Karen.

"You're right, son, you're right! I got all worked up for nothing!"

After Paige provided her sample, she came out of the testing room and looked at Jeffrey, walking over. "I never lied to you. You're the only one for me! But I admit... that night two years ago at the bar, it was me who asked Arthur to get you drunk, then book you a room and hand me the key card."

Paige had the hope of carrying Jeffrey's child, deliberately choosing a day she was most fertile to seek him out.

She knew she could never have him, but her love was beyond control, so she wanted a keepsake.

"So, I'm positive that the child is yours."

Jeffrey remembered that night vaguely. It was indeed Arthur who had called him out for a drink.

He wasn't close to Arthur, just an occasional drinking buddy, but at that time, Jeffrey was living it up, and if he hadn't joined Arthur, it would have been someone else's party he'd be attending anyway. It was just drinks, after all, so he went.

And then Arthur had set him up with a woman, quite a stunner, telling him she was his for the taking, and he happily obliged.

There were gaps in his memory, but he faintly remembered that once in the hotel room, the woman insisted on keeping the lights off. Thinking she was just shy, Jeffrey let it be. But then...

The next morning, he woke up to find Paige beside him!

Jeffrey had panicked and bolted without a word, then quickly joined Everett on a business trip abroad, desperate to avoid any entanglement.

"Are you sure the man you slept with was me?"

"Who else could it be? To prevent any mix-ups, I only had Arthur spike your drink, while he drank iced juice disguised as liquor. So he wasn't drunk and couldn't have given me the wrong key card!"

Jeffrey felt a chill down his spine.

At that moment, he understood Karen's concerns.

In such a place, with hearts so unpredictable, if all his ex-girlfriends plot like this, would he not be swamped with children?

"Now you see, this child is definitely yours."

"Let's just wait for the DNA results."

Jeffrey was confused now, not wanting to sort through this mess.

"How could you, a young woman, do something like this? What were your parents teaching you?" Paloma was livid to hear her son had been manipulated.

But unlike her outrage, Huxley was calm, his focus solely on his son.

"Jeffrey, you remember what I told you before, don't you?"

"Yes, I remember."

"Now look at the mess you're in; it's all your own doing! You used to talk back, saying that living it up was what life's about. And now, you're just a pawn in someone else's game, aren't you?"