

Midnight 751

Chapter 751

Dorothy couldn't shake the feeling that something was off.

But she knew Karen still had a soft spot for Jeffrey, and now with a baby on the way, a reconciliation seemed normal.

After all, Karen was safe with Jeffrey.

"Mmm," Dorothy pondered for a moment before advising, "Jeffrey, you better have squared things away with your ex. Karen's pretty sensitive, and you know how tough it was for her to take that first step towards you."

"I get it! Don't worry. I'll tie up all loose ends with Paige."

Dorothy furrowed her brows.

She had a nagging suspicion about Jeffrey's words—they had a hint of malice, even though he was smiling as he said them.

"Karen's pregnant; take extra care of her, especially with her diet. She's been sleeping a lot lately, eating less because of it. Keep an eye on that."

"Yeah, I'll get the best nutritionist for her! She's carrying my child; how could I neglect her?"

That was reassuring.

Dorothy could see just how well Jeffrey treated Karen. She let out a sigh of relief.

Her own nerves had been frayed lately, what with Karen's breakup and the threat of getting rid of the baby. Now that the couple was back together, it was like a weight had been lifted.

"Just don't fight again. Be patient with her; women can be a bit emotionally unpredictable during pregnancy."

"As if I'd dare. I'm just grateful she's back with me! And Dorothy, thanks for taking Karen downstairs yesterday."

"Don't mention it. I just thought you two should talk things through before making a decision about the baby."

Dorothy didn't probe any further about Everett's whereabouts and hung up the phone.

She had just checked out of her hotel room to return to her apartment when she received a call from a law firm.

"Hello, is this Dorothy Sanchez? This is West Legal Services."

West Legal Services?

The most renowned law firm in Eldorria City?

"Hello, this is Dorothy. What can I do for you?"

"We've seen your request for representation, and we're willing to take on your case! When would be a good time for you to come in so we can meet and discuss the details?"

Dorothy was taken aback by the sudden good news.

After steadying herself, she reminded the caller.

"Have you read my request thoroughly? The defendant is—"

"The Lopez Corporation, right? Yes, we've reviewed it and believe your evidence is very substantial. Plus, the case has significant implications. Winning could be great PR for our firm! After considering all factors, we'd like to take it on."

Dorothy still felt like she was dreaming.

She quickly asked, "Can I come to your office today to sign the representation agreement?"

Once the representation agreement was signed, the case would officially be in their hands!

She had had firms willing to take it on before, but they'd all backed out at the last minute.

So Dorothy still wasn't sure if they would take it on.

"Sure! Ms. Sanchez, are you available today?"

"Yes! How about in an hour? I'll bring all my evidence and documents to your office."

"Perfect! We'll be waiting for you."

After ending the call, Dorothy stood rooted to the spot for several minutes before rushing back to her apartment.

She had to get that representation agreement signed without delay!

Chapter 752

Until the very second the West Legal Services' seal was pressed onto the document, Dorothy's heart was in her throat.

But the process went incredibly smoothly, and the other party didn't hesitate for even a moment before signing.

"Do you... not want to consider it a bit more?"

"There's no need for that." The manager looked at Dorothy, a smile playing on his lips, "Ms. Sanchez, do you doubt our capabilities here at West Legal Services?"

Dorothy quickly waved her hands and said, "No, it's just that I'm a bit surprised."

"We lawyers shouldn't be too picky about the cases we take on, or else we betray the very reason we took up the mantle! Rest assured, Ms. Sanchez, we'll give it our all."

"Then I'm counting on you, Lawyer Ephraim."

"My pleasure!"

Ephraim stood up personally to see Dorothy out, watching her leave the law firm before returning to his office.

No sooner had he sat down than he dialed a number, his voice now obsequious and fawning, a stark contrast to his composed demeanor with Dorothy.

"Mr. Lopez, everything's been done as you instructed."

"Good."

...

Karen had no idea where Jeffrey had taken her, but it must still be in Eldorria City given the temperature felt the same.

He owned so many properties, so she couldn't tell which one it was.

Waking from her slumber, her instinct was to reach for her phone.

It wasn't there.

Panicking, she propped herself up, vaguely aware of footsteps outside the room.

Barefoot, Karen walked out to find Jeffrey standing in the villa's dining area, an austere look on his face, instructing someone who looked like a housekeeper, who nodded occasionally in understanding.

Jeffrey, catching Karen in the corner of his eye, strode towards her.

"Why aren't you wearing shoes?"

His brows furrowed, he bent down and scooped her up without another word.

Karen glared at him defiantly and asked, "Jeffrey, where's my phone? And where are we?"

"In our new home." Jeffrey declared as he carried her back to the bedroom, gently placing her on the bed, "Just wait here, I'll have the nutritionist bring up breakfast. Be good."

"I don't want breakfast! Give me my phone!"

"Not just yet. You need to eat something first." His face remained calm in the face of her resistance, tenderly stroking her hair. "You're pregnant, remember? No getting upset."

Karen was convinced Jeffrey had lost his mind. He was being irrational!

"Are you trying to imprison me?"

"What are you talking about? Why would I imprison you?" Jeffrey said with a helpless yet indulgent smile, "I just think you're not in the right state of mind right now. If I give you your phone, you'll want to call your parents or your brother to come get you, right?"

At that moment, Jeffrey seemed terrifying even with his lips curled in a constant smile.

"I don't want to be here. I want to go home!"

"This is your home." Jeffrey lifted her chin, forcing her to meet his gaze. "Here, with me, with our child, this is home!"

"You're sick. I don't want to talk to you." Karen pushed him away, intending to flee barefoot.

But Jeffrey's arms were long, and with a casual grab, he pulled her back onto the bed.

"Karen, I don't want to fight with you."

"Let me go! Jeffrey, you're illegally detaining me!"

But Jeffrey's laughter only grew stronger.

"Yesterday you accused me of coercion, today it's illegal detention, doesn't matter, I don't care."

Karen was left speechless in anger.

"Eat your meal nicely, and I promise I'll take you out for a drive, okay?"

Karen sensed something off in his words, so she pressed.

"Where will you take me?"

"How about the City Hall?" Jeffrey suggested, a hint of mischief in his voice. "What do you say?"

Chapter 753

Karen stared into his eyes, and it was clear this was no joke.

"I can't possibly marry you!"

"And who do you want to marry?" Jeffrey's face darkened with a sudden and terrifying shift.

"Karen, I don't want to lay a finger on Levi."

"Don't you dare touch him!" she blurted out, instantly seeing the flames of rage in his eyes intensify, so she quickly added, "This whole situation has nothing to do with him! Don't drag innocent people into this! I never liked him, okay? You've already beaten him up, so just leave him alone."

Never liked him.

Jeffrey clung to those words.

He let his harsh gaze soften, now looking at her with a mix of adoration and warmth. "Alright, I'll listen to you! How about I carry you to breakfast, huh?"

"No," Karen shook her head vehemently, "Jeffrey, I want to go back to my parents' house. Can you take me there, please?"

"No."

Jeffrey's response was immediate and unwavering, "I'll go back with you after our baby is six months old. Today, we'll just head to the city hall to get our marriage license, and then I'll give you back your phone."

He was so frightening, as if he had turned into someone else entirely!

"Jeffrey, can't you just stop this, please?"

Karen collapsed onto the bed, eyes welling up with fear.

Jeffrey reached out to wipe away the tears that threatened to escape and said, "Darling, as long as you're obedient and stay with me, I'll do anything you want."

"I don't want to go to city hall, and I don't want to keep this baby!"

"I know you're scared of the pain, so whether it's a boy or a girl, we'll just have this one," Jeffrey kissed the corner of her eye. "Don't reject me. I don't want to lose my mind with you."

Just like he had the night before.

He didn't want that.

The nutritionist knocked on the door, breaking the deathly silence of the room.

"Mr. Turner, breakfast is ready."

"Mhm."

Jeffrey turned his face to look at her, smiling gently. "Shall I carry you, or will you walk on your own?"

"I'll walk."

Karen caved. She knew better than to anger Jeffrey now; it wasn't the smart choice. Anyway, he would have to leave eventually, for work, or to deal with his parents! Plus, her own parents would realize she was missing and come looking.

She wouldn't be trapped for long.

Jeffrey and Karen made their way to the dining room. As soon as they sat down, his phone began to ring.

Karen glanced over instinctively, and Jeffrey casually showed her the caller ID.

"It's Paige."

He said it outright.

In Karen's presence, Jeffrey answered the call and put it on speakerphone.

Paige's hysterical voice came through immediately, "Jeffrey, it was you! You had my parents' hotels all sealed off, didn't you?"

"Yes," he admitted, expressionless.

"And did you have a hand in what happened to Arthur? Someone broke his arms and legs, he's facing amputation, and overnight, Arthur's family's accounts have been frozen, and they can't access a dime! Do you want him dead?"

Jeffrey laughed, leaning back in his chair with a lazy and roguish air.

"He said he looked down on me for my 'filthy money'; I just wanted to show him what this 'filthy money' can do."

"You're ruthless! Absolutely inhumane!"

"When you and he were conspiring against me, did you not anticipate this outcome?" Jeffrey's fingers intertwined, his gaze falling on Karen's shocked face. "You almost made me lose my child; this is merely a lesson."

Chapter 754

Listening to Paige's voice crack and strain on the other end of the line was enough to send shivers down Karen's spine.

For the first time, Karen realized just how much power Jeffrey wielded. He could easily ruin a wealthy family in Eldorria City overnight—apparently without a second thought to the law—and admit it with such nonchalance!

If Jeffrey could do that, then Everett, with his vast influence, could surely outdo him in madness!

Karen made a mental note that if she ever saw Kenneth again, she'd warn him to stop stepping on Everett's toes.

"Please... let Arthur go! Can you do that? This has nothing to do with him; I begged him to help!"

"You're begging me?" Jeffrey moved to sit beside Karen, winding a lock of her hair around his finger. "You better worry about your own family, the Taylors, first."

Paige's voice cracked even more, "Jeffrey, you've already had our family hotel shut down. We've suffered huge losses, and my mother's had a heart attack. She's in the hospital. Isn't that enough?"

"Of course not! Don't ask stupid questions."

Karen instinctively clutched at Jeffrey's sleeve.

He looked at her, arching an eyebrow. "Scared?"

"Yeah."

Without a second thought, Jeffrey hung up the call and patted her head. "No need to listen to that anymore. Let's have breakfast."

"Breakfast?" Karen thought, "How am I supposed to eat now?"

Sensing her reluctance, Jeffrey frowned at the nutritionist standing nearby and scolded, "This is terrible. Get out."

"I'm sorry, Mr. Turner!"

"It's not his fault!" Karen quickly grabbed Jeffrey's sleeve. "I'm just not hungry, so don't be hard on him."

"You need to eat something; you're pregnant."

The way Jeffrey coaxed her to eat was a far cry from the cold, ruthless man she had just witnessed.

"Shall I feed you?"

Karen shook her head. "No, I can eat by myself."

It was a meal filled with anxiety. Paige's calls kept coming, but Jeffrey had silenced his phone.

After they finished, Jeffrey stood up to put on his coat.

"Do you wanna rest a bit, or should we head to the city hall now?"

"Jeffrey, I'm feeling a bit unwell. Can I lie down for a while?" Karen could only think of this excuse to stall.

After all, she couldn't exactly rush out, pregnant and all, could she? And with her short legs, there was no way she could outrun Jeffrey.

"Then lie down, and I'll call the doctor," Jeffrey said, although he suspected she was stalling, he didn't call her out on it, considering she might truly be feeling unwell.

"No need for a doctor. I'll just rest a bit."

Jeffrey nodded and escorted her to the bedroom.

If it hadn't been for Everett's call, Karen would have thought Jeffrey intended to watch over her until she fell asleep.

"Everett."

Jeffrey stepped out of the bedroom to take the call away from Karen.

"You made your move?"

"Yeah."

Everett paused and then said, "Take it easy, and don't make a scene. I'll send some of my people to help you."

"It's okay. I want them to know."

"Jeffrey, don't be childish."

Jeffrey chuckled, "This way, no woman will think of getting close again. And if things go south, I've got your support."

Chapter 755

Everett's voice was a low rumble, "Just make sure you're in control."

"Yeah, you left Eldorria City?"

"At the airport."

Jeffrey clicked his tongue, "Alright, man, no stopping a lovesick fool, I guess! Since you've made up your mind, go on and do what you've gotta do. I'll keep an eye on Dorothy for you."

"Mm."

After hanging up, Jeffrey turned his gaze towards the bedroom door.

Today, even if he had to drag the city hall over here, Karen was going to become his wife.

...

In the airport's VIP lounge.

Everett put down his phone and rubbed his temples.

He hadn't slept a wink last night, just lying there beside Dorothy until dawn.

So right now, he was feeling pretty worn out.

Kevin, ever the perceptive assistant, quickly brought over a pillow and said, "Mr. Lopez, we've got an hour before boarding. Why don't you catch some sleep?"

"I'm okay. Someone's going to call."

His prediction was spot on.

Within five minutes, Jonathan's number flashed on the screen.

"I thought you said you were done interfering with this mess. Why the hell did you get Dorothy a lawyer?"

Jonathan was furious, his tone full of accusation and reproach.

"Trying to make sure no law firm will take her case, that's your strategy for burying this, huh?"

"Everett! Don't forget whose son you are! With all this happening, instead of helping your mother make peace with Dorothy, you're actually supporting Dorothy's decision to sue her?"

"I said it before, the court will decide the outcome. If you don't interfere, I won't. But you're the one who broke the rules first."

Jonathan growled, "So am I supposed to just let your mother go to jail, or even get the death sentence over this?"

Everett's lips barely moved, "An eye for an eye."

"Oh, 'an eye for an eye', huh? You know damn well Heather is the real troublemaker here. If you want retribution, take it from Heather; she deserves it! But your mom was just blinded by Heather's lies!"

Jonathan knew he was losing ground in the argument with his son and tried to negotiate in a softer tone, "Everett, give your mom a chance to make amends. I promise she won't lay a finger on Dorothy again!"

"Go ask Dorothy if she's willing to forgive. Her mother's the one who died."

Everett couldn't make that call.

"Everett, you know your mother's health is failing!"

"I know."

"And yet you still—"

"I've said more than once, 'Don't touch Dorothy. Stay out of anything to do with Heather.' No one listened."

If it weren't for his own mother, anyone else would've been laid to rest by now. How could he still tolerate her?

"I didn't realize Heather was that kind of person!"

"It's too late for that now." Everett's voice was hoarse from the sleepless night, "Dorothy and I are already over."

"Actually... if you could just let your mom off—"

"Do you think I have any face left to be with Dorothy?"

Everett's voice suddenly rose, each word biting and emphatic, silencing Jonathan in an instant.

"Do you have any idea how hard I've worked to win her over? More than a decade, cautiously drawing near, plotting with every ounce of my being, fearing the slightest discomfort for her! Finally, I convinced her to be my wife. Do you know how happy I was? For years, I've worked diligently for the Lopez Corporation, not a day of rest, just hoping one day I could bring her home to a family that would accept her! And what did you all do? You ruined everything!"

Chapter 756

Sitting beside Everett, Kevin couldn't help but feel his eyes well up with tears for him.

He had always known that Everett was head over heels for Dorothy, but he never imagined the depth of his love.

It was as if he had saved all his tenderness and patience for her alone.

Over a decade—that was a terrifying amount of time.

The long, solitary, unpredictable wait before Dorothy reciprocated his feelings must have been agonizing.

"If I could do it all over, I wouldn't want to be born into the Lopez family. So, don't touch her. Don't push me."

Otherwise, he didn't know what he might do.

...

Karen couldn't get a wink of sleep.

Jeffrey wished he could install cameras in the bedroom to keep an eye on her every move.

"If you really can't sleep, I can take you for a stroll around the yard."

Their villa was on the outskirts of Eldorria City, sprawling over a vast area, so the yard was like a park.

But since Jeffrey seldom stayed there, only a few servants maintained it, and it didn't have any exotic flowers, just the common ones you'd see anywhere.

Karen, of course, jumped at the chance to go outside.

At the very least, she wanted to see where she was.

She got up and followed Jeffrey out the door, only to realize she had been too naive.

The place was so big that she couldn't even make out where she was.

"Let's take a walk, then go with me."

Jeffrey noticed she was shivering in her thin clothing, so he took off his coat and draped it over her shoulders.

Karen looked up, squinting against the midday sun to see his handsome face.

It was the same face, the same easygoing expression, but it felt so unfamiliar.

"Do you really have to do this?"

"Karen, we've talked about this."

He hadn't started out this way.

"Can't we hold off on the paperwork? Give me some more time to think, will you?"

Jeffrey looked down at her, his lips curving into a thin smile. "The outcome won't change, so there's no point in thinking it over."

"I don't like this side of you!"

"I told you, after you're six months pregnant, I'll do anything you say. Then, your parents can hit me, curse me, and I'll take it."

Karen glanced at him, the corner of her mouth twitching.

Hit him? Curse him?

Was she supposed to forget all the heartache in that call from Paige earlier?

"You said before that Paige was set up, right? She didn't mean to deceive you."

"But if she hadn't set her sights on me to begin with, none of this would have happened."

Why should she suffer like this?

Karen's fear was evident, and Jeffrey was no blind man.

"That punishment you're giving out is way too harsh! That guy... what's his name? He'll die without the surgery, right?"

"Doesn't he deserve to? Karen, they should be grateful I stopped you before you went through with that procedure! If not—I would have them all pay!"

A cold sweat broke out on Karen's palms.

Realizing his words were too harsh, Jeffrey smiled, his expression instantly returning to his usual laid-back, roguish demeanor.

"Don't be scared. I'll never treat you that way."

He took her hand in his and rubbed it gently.

Karen pursed her dry lips and whispered, "Can you let them go, please?"

"No." Jeffrey's pupils contracted fiercely, "That guy named Arthur dared to curse my child, so he deserves to face the consequences!"

He could be affable and chummy when in a good mood, approachable even, but that didn't mean he was always nice.

Nobody except Everett could dare curse at him like that.

Chapter 757

"Death seems a bit harsh, don't you think?"

When she heard Arthur had been roughed up to the point of broken limbs, it was already brutal enough, but to think he couldn't even get surgery! Wasn't that basically a death sentence?

"Karen, you told me you were worried about my exes, scared they'd come back and stir up trouble! I figured making an example out of one would send a clear message."

Paige was somewhat of a name in our social circles, and word of this would undoubtedly spread like wildfire.

"But I never thought you'd go to such lengths!"

"I can't go through that kind of drama again, Karen. Do you get that?"

How could she not understand?

"Come on, let's go get married, sweetheart. Don't try to stall because it's pointless."

"But I'm not ready to get married!" Marrying Jeffrey now would be a complete whirlwind, a shotgun wedding!

And now that she'd seen what he was capable of, Karen was even more terrified of him!

Jeffrey was capable of locking her up, crushing anyone who crossed him into the dirt, never to rise again. Karen couldn't begin to imagine what would happen if he grew tired of her, wanted a divorce, and wanted to throw her away. If all these tactics were turned on her, what would be her fate?

It's one thing to be caught in the crossfire, but Jeffrey didn't just take down his targets; he uprooted them completely!

And Karen feared the repercussions could eventually reach her parents.

They were old; they couldn't afford to be dragged into her mess.

But...

Right now, she was trapped here with Jeffrey, and she knew that butting heads with him wouldn't help. The only person who could control Jeffrey was Everett, and probably not even his own parents could manage that. So, she had to find a way to reach out to Dorothy, to ask her to plead with Everett for help.

"You're not mentally prepared, I get it. Let's hold off on the wedding for now, until you're ready, then we can plan it properly."

Jeffrey's tone left no room for negotiation.

Although he spoke with a smile, he didn't leave her any wiggle room.

Seizing an opportunity, Karen quickly said, "I don't have anything with me right now! I didn't even bring my ID! How about you take me back home to grab it?"

"I got that sorted out."

"What?"

"I've arranged for everything to be taken care of." Jeffrey's lips curled slightly. "You don't even need to be there in person to register. But I just... felt it would be a regret. I wanted us to go to the city hall together, get our marriage license."

Good for him!

Why hadn't she thought of that?

In Eldorria City, Jeffrey, who could cover the sky with one hand, could easily sort out a marriage license, couldn't he?

...

At West Legal Services, Ephraim listed and printed out all the necessary preparations for Dorothy.

All she needed to do was follow the checklist.

Dorothy couldn't help but admire how they managed to run such a prestigious firm in Eldorria City. They really played in the big leagues!

Taking on a case involving the Lopez Corporation was something other firms shied away from, but not West Legal Services!

Dorothy had even considered, if she couldn't find a lawyer, she'd just go to the police and request a public prosecutor.

When Kenneth called, she was in the midst of drafting evidence descriptions on her computer.

Seeing his name, she paused.

"Kenneth."

"Are you busy?" Kenneth's voice was always so gentle and warm.

"Yeah, I've found a lawyer. A senior partner from West Legal Services took on the case personally."

West Legal Services?

"The firm from Eldorria City?"

"Yes!"

Kenneth fell silent for a moment before speaking, "Aren't they afraid of crossing the Lopez Corporation?"

Chapter 758

"Ephraim said he's not afraid, that he's going to do justice! We've signed the contract of engagement, and if he reneges on it, it's a breach of contract."

A law firm reneging on a deal? That would be a public relations disaster.

They'd never risk taking such a step.

"Ah, well, at least you've got a lawyer on board," Kenneth said, his brow furrowing with concern but ultimately letting the matter be. "Anyway, how about Karen? I've been trying her number, but no answer. Is she still sleeping?"

Dorothy hesitated for a moment, clearing her throat before responding.

"Well... she, uh, she and Jeffrey are back together."

"What?"

"Kenneth, I get it—you're worried Jeffrey might break her heart again. To be honest, I wasn't his biggest fan at first either, mainly for that reason. But after everything that's happened, I think Jeffrey's serious this time. And Karen really does like him."

At the end of the day, Karen's feelings for him were what mattered most.

Even if she tried to hide it, Dorothy could see it clearly.

Otherwise, why would Karen be so emotional? She'd tear up watching TV, get weepy over dinner, even let a few tears fall in the shower. Sure, hormones played a part, but it was more than that. She felt trapped, heartbroken, and couldn't stand the thought of losing the little one growing inside her.

“That Jeffrey’s a playboy, Dorothy. He’s been around the block—trust me, I’ve asked around. My buddies say he’s bad news!” Kenneth was, of course, protective of his cousin, and had done his own digging on Jeffrey.

What he found fueled his desire to see them split up for good!

And now, after all the drama of their breakup, they had reconciled?

“She knows all about his past,” Dorothy reassured him.

“So, I’m worried she’s been brainwashed! You know Karen—she melts at the sight of a good- looking guy, and damn it, Jeffrey is... well, he’s got that look.”

It pained Kenneth to admit it.

Whether it was Everett or Jeffrey, both men had looks that were undeniably striking.

“Karen isn’t as gullible as you think! Jeffrey really worked to win her over, and she kept him at arm’s length for ages! They broke up over a misunderstanding, and now that it’s cleared up, it’s only natural they’d patch things up. Don’t worry so much. Karen can make her own decisions.”

Dorothy chose not to delve into the specifics of the misunderstanding. It wasn’t a pleasant topic, and it would only make Kenneth more anxious.

“Just make sure Karen calls me when you reach her. I want to have a word with her myself,” Kenneth insisted, still uneasy.

Dorothy chuckled softly, “Will do.”

After hanging up, she opened WhatsApp and messaged Karen about Kenneth’s request for a callback.

Once she was done, she closed her laptop and walked to the window to take in the view below.

The neighborhood was bustling with residents from the nearby apartment buildings. The streets were lively with groups of people milling about.

She scrutinized the scene below, searching for a particular figure. Confirming his absence, she reluctantly turned away from the window.

Everett was truly gone. He’d even suggested she should go out for drinks with Kenneth next time!

This realization left Dorothy feeling as though a part of her heart had been hollowed out, the cold air whistling through the void.

Though she knew this day would come, no amount of preparation seemed to ease the pain.

Her phone interrupted her thoughts, its persistent ringing finally pulling her back to reality.

Dorothy answered to find Amanda’s voice, dripping with scorn and arrogance, on the other end.

“So, are you really going through with this lawsuit? Dorothy, get real. You don’t stand a chance.”

“If I were a sure loser, you wouldn’t be calling me right now.” Dorothy’s voice was even, betraying no emotion. “Right?”

Amanda was caught off guard by her composure and her voice pitched up in response.

“Do you think Everett will always protect you? Let me tell you, he is my son!”

“Yes, I know that.”

“Dorothy!”

“The outcome of this lawsuit isn’t up to you or me. We’ll just wait for the verdict. No need for any backchannel chatter.”

Without a hint of malice, Dorothy hung up the phone. She wasn’t one for nasty exchanges, finding them pointless.

If she got Amanda so worked up that she fell ill before the verdict, Dorothy would be the one under the microscope for blame.

Besides, Everett would be caught in the middle, and that would be unfair to him.

It really wasn’t necessary.

...

Karen agreed to get the marriage license.

It was the only way to get a chance to leave this place!

Besides, once at the registry office, she might find a better opportunity to escape. Jeffrey couldn’t possibly keep his eyes on her every second.

Since they were going to get the marriage license, Jeffrey had dressed up – suit and tie, hair perfectly styled, his handsome features sharp and defined.

Sitting in the car, he seemed excited, holding Karen’s hand a little too tightly.

In contrast to his eagerness, Karen remained silent. Resting her head against the car window, she didn’t utter a word.

“Feeling okay?”

Jeffrey sensed something was off.

“No.”

“After we register, I’ll take you wherever you want to go for lunch or shopping.”

Karen looked up, meeting his gaze. “Do you really have to do this?”

Jeffrey’s face darkened instantly, his eyes turning stormy.

“I’ve said it before, marrying me is a done deal. Sooner or later, we have to do this, so why the resistance?”

“But we hardly know each other!”

“We have the rest of our lives for that.”

Karen pursed her lips, knowing that arguing was futile.

When they arrived at the city hall, she had hoped for a chance to slip away amid the chaos, but to her dismay, Jeffrey had the place cleared out.

It was just the two of them registering.

“Mr. Turner, Ms. Miller, do you want to take a photo first?”

“Sure!” Jeffrey said, eager to pull Karen along.

“Wait!”

She suddenly shouted, then clutched her stomach, “Jeffrey, I need to use the restroom, okay?”

She tried to look as urgent as possible, fearing Jeffrey wouldn’t believe her.

Fortunately, Jeffrey didn’t overthink it and nodded. “I’ll take you there.”

“It’s okay. I can go by myself.”

With that, she hurried towards the restroom.

The moment Karen had entered the building, she’d scoped out the restroom's location.

Jeffrey instinctively started to follow but stopped after a step, letting her go.

Maybe she really did just need to use the restroom.

He didn’t want to press Karen too hard.

With the city hall surrounded by his people, why make her feel overly trapped?

Jeffrey stood still, pulling out his phone to check it.

On the screen were missed calls and pleading texts from Paige.

[Jeffrey, please, I’m begging you, leave my family alone! My mother is really on her last legs!]

[Can’t you show some mercy for the few months we were together? Please?]

[Jeffrey! They just issued a critical condition notice for my mom, are you happy now?]

Happy?

His lips curled into a sardonic half-smile.

Of course, he was far from satisfied.

Chapter 760

If Jeffrey was going to break the rules, he might as well go all the way!

That was the motto of the day for Jeffrey as he pocketed his phone, his face betraying no emotion. He casually glanced towards the restroom, silently keeping track of time.

He craved to give Karen space, to trust her completely, but he couldn't shake off the nagging doubt.

As soon as Karen slipped into the restroom, she frantically searched for an escape. The place was deserted. She checked the women's side, then dashed to check the men's. Her heart sank as she realized the only exit was the window opposite the entrance.

She clenched her jaw, eyeing the window with determination.

That was her only shot!

Time was running out, and she knew Jeffrey would come looking if she took too long.

Karen scrambled to find a rickety chair, gave it a shake to ensure it could hold her weight, and dragged it beneath the window.

Just as she was about to climb, footsteps echoed from outside the restroom!

Her heart leapt into her throat, and she darted into a stall.

After a moment, Karen realized it wasn't Jeffrey; the newcomer didn't call out for her or search around. Instead, the person headed straight into the restroom.

Tentatively, Karen knocked on the stall door and whispered, "Hello?"

"Who's there?"

A woman's voice responded.

Karen hurried over, "Hi, do you work here? Could I maybe borrow your phone for a quick call?"

There was a pause, then the woman said, "Sure, but wait till I'm done."

"Okay!"

It wasn't like Karen could rush her—the woman was in the middle of her business, after all.

Anxiously, Karen kept an eye on the door, hoping to get through to Dorothy or her parents, anyone who could help.

Finally, the woman came out of the stall.

"Here you go."

She handed Karen the phone.

"Thank you so much!"

Grasping it like a lifeline, Karen immediately started dialing Dorothy's number.

This could be the break she needed; getting Everett to rein in Jeffrey would be a game-changer.

As she was about to hit call, the phone was snatched from her hands.

Her eyes darted up, straight into Jeffrey's cold stare.

"Who were you trying to call?"

It was silence.

He twirled the phone in his hand, then turned to the woman who lent it, "Yours?"

"Yeah, that's mine!"

"Take it. And leave."

The woman, visibly shaken, nodded and scurried out of the restroom like a bat out of hell.

Now it was just Karen and Jeffrey. The air thickened with tension.

"I just wanted to let them know I'm okay..."

"Do I look like a fool to you, Karen?"

Her head shook like a tambourine. "Dorothy will worry if I don't show up! Isn't it normal for me to call her?"

"If I'm not mistaken, you were going to ask for help, and get her to contact Everett to deal with me."

It was silence again.

Jeffrey stepped closer, and Karen instinctively backed away, but she was quickly trapped by the wall, with nowhere left to go.

"Karen, cut the crap with me! I've told you, I don't want to hurt you. Just marry me, have the baby, and I'll do whatever you want after that."