

Midnight 841

Chapter 841

After a warm shower, Everett lifted Dorothy back to bed.

Usually, by this time, she would be fighting to keep her eyes open, but tonight, despite her fatigue, sleep seemed to dodge her.

"Everett, do you still have work to do?"

"Just a contract to review; I'll be done soon. Why do you ask?"

Dorothy shook her head. "I'll wait for you."

Something in her tone caught Everett's attention, so he didn't get up. Instead, he lay down beside her.

"Is there something on your mind? The contract can wait till morning."

Dorothy's concerns were always his priority. She let out a resigned laugh. "No, really, it's nothing. I just wanted to talk, that's all! Every time... I fall asleep before we get the chance to chat."

"Alright then, wait for me. I'll be right back." Everett pushed himself up, grabbed his robe, and headed to his computer.

Afraid she might doze off, Dorothy sat up against the headboard and watched him work. It felt like a throwback to their early days in Swevia Country.

He worked; she watched.

Suddenly, Jonathan's words echoed in her mind. "All it takes is for you to agree, and you can spend your life with him."

Had she really won the Lopez family's blessing? But it was under such circumstances.

Still, if she hadn't been of use to them, would they have stooped to acknowledge her? Even now, their consent hinged on Everett's presence.

Otherwise, outmaneuvering an ordinary person like her would be too easy for them.

The lawsuit wouldn't have made it this far! And without any evidence, what chance did she stand against the Lopez family?

The video on the flash drive that she had clung to turned out to be nothing but a trap set by Heather. What leverage did she have against the Lopez empire?

"I'm done with work." Everett's voice snapped her out of her thoughts.

Dorothy looked up. "That quick?"

He chuckled. "A man doesn't like it when his woman says he's too quick."

Dorothy was speechless.

Everett shrugged off the robe and slipped under the covers.

"So, what did you want to talk about?"

"Um... I want to know about your childhood."

He frowned slightly. "My childhood?"

"Yeah!" Dorothy settled back, staring at the ceiling. "It must have been different from mine. You were happy, right?"

Everett, aware of her troubled upbringing, gently stroked her hair. "I won't lie to you. I did grow up under the intense gaze of many, and there were happy moments, but the pressure was immense, too."

She turned to him. "You felt pressure even as a child?"

"Of course. I was the only heir to the Lopez family, groomed from an early age."

From table manners to communication skills, even his sleeping posture had to be perfect. There was no room for error or personal whims.

"So, you must have been very obedient, right?"

"Not exactly. Most of the time, my parents... they had their way of teaching, and I had no objections, so there was no need for rebuttals."

The subjects and courses they arranged were for his own good, crucial for the business world he was to enter. Everett took his studies seriously, requiring no supervision, so the question of obedience hardly arose.

Dorothy smiled. "So you rebelling over me must have been a shock for your parents."

"Your arrival was indeed unexpected."

Chapter 842

Dorothy was, without a doubt, the most dazzling person to ever cross paths with Everett's life.

The desire to have her was crystal clear in his mind, just like Everett had always known he was destined for the business world.

He was a man who trusted his gut instincts. Once he made a decision, it was for life.

During the days when Dorothy was out of reach, Jeffrey tried countless times to drag him out for some fun, even going as far as vividly describing how thrilling flings could be and the pleasure one could find in the company of women. But the moment Everett closed his eyes, Dorothy's face filled his mind.

The thought of anyone else left him cold; his desire would vanish instantly.

Jeffrey even started calling him "the monk" behind his back!

Everett didn't bother to argue. He just kept on watching Dorothy from afar, kept her safe in his heart.

"You regret meeting me," Dorothy asked.

"I don't."

Dorothy pouted. "You've said it before, that you regret meeting me."

Everett sighed softly. "I just feel that if I hadn't barged into your world, turned everything upside down, you would've had a great future ahead."

Even without him to guide her and teach her, Dorothy had potential. She was bright – that had been obvious since middle school! Plus, she was always hard-working, never slacking off when it came to her job. She could've made something of herself in investment banking.

She could've made enough money to take care of her mother's medical bills and then find a suitable man to settle down with, instead of being caught in this difficult situation.

"Everett, life doesn't give do-overs. We met, and that's that."

"Yeah."

"What matters is what comes next." Dorothy squeezed his hand. "Think about all the effort and hardship you've put in since you were young; think about your future plans and the empire you built with The Lopez Corporation. Everett, you shouldn't be wasting all your energy on me."

Everett frowned. "What are you saying?"

"Stop wasting time on my issues. Your work should come first."

He finally understood. Dorothy had gone in circles just to tell him to stop meddling in her affairs.

He asked, "So tell me, when you say you're ready for anything, what does that mean?"

"See! I told you to leave it alone, and you're still asking." Dorothy turned away, feigning sleep with her eyes closed. "I'm tired, I want to sleep."

"Dorothy..."

"Let's sleep. When we wake up, Karen will have plans for us."

Everett's gaze deepened, knowing he wouldn't get any answers today.

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At the same time, in the early hours, Jonathan was lying awake in his hotel room.

Judging by Dorothy's demeanor, she wasn't the type to back down easily! Even after he laid all his cards on the table, she still insisted on proceeding with the lawsuit.

His phone was littered with missed calls from his wife. He hadn't picked up, mainly because he didn't know what to say.

The situation with Dorothy had been the cause of too many arguments between them lately, tensions flaring at the slightest provocation.

As dawn was breaking, Jonathan had his housekeeper book a flight back to Elysian Country. He planned to pack up and check out when his phone buzzed to life.

Expecting his wife, he was surprised to see Everett's name on the display.

"At this hour? Why aren't you asleep, Everett? You can't keep burning the midnight oil."

"Did you go see Dorothy?"

After coaxing her to sleep, Everett had been pondering the reason for her unusual behavior. But he didn't need to think too hard about it; his guess was spot on.

Chapter 843

Jonathan instinctively defended himself, "I haven't done a thing to her."

"You shouldn't be bothering her in the first place."

Jonathan remained silent.

"Dorothy is off-limits. Don't try to cross me by going behind my back with her!" Everett said. From the other end of the line, the flick of a lighter could be heard.

As the first light of dawn began to filter through the windows, Jonathan furrowed his brow, falling into a long silence before letting out a sigh. "Everett, go get some sleep. Quit smoking, will ya? We can hash this out, father to son."

He only had this one boy, his own flesh and blood. How could his heart not ache?

"There's no hashing out, and don't you dare pressure Dorothy into giving in." Everett's tone was resolute, clearly indicating he hadn't broached the subject with Dorothy.

Because Jonathan knew that if Everett asked her outright, Dorothy would agree, even if she didn't want to.

Out of affection or the years of Everett's unwavering devotion, she would rather lay beside her mother in the family plot than refuse him. And that was exactly why Everett hadn't asked. He didn't want to put Dorothy in a tough spot.

Jonathan said, "I just don't get it, Everett. Even if your mom and Heather are gone, Dorothy's mom isn't coming back! You all should grasp this – how the living move on is what truly matters!"

"I won't interfere with Dorothy's choices. Whatever she decides, that's how it'll be."

"And what about you two? Are you just going to call it quits?"

Everett paused, likely taking a drag from his cigarette. "Dorothy said she'll give me her answer after the trial."

"And what if your mom dies in prison, and Dorothy says with her vengeance fulfilled, she can be with you? You think you'll really be free of all bitterness?"

There was silence on the other end.

"Everett, I've said my piece. You need to think this through on your own!"

Everett didn't respond, merely ending the call.

Staring at the darkened screen of his phone, Jonathan lit up a cigarette, taking a few puffs, but it brought no relief.

Amanda's call came through again, and this time, Jonathan answered, knowing she hadn't slept a wink either.

"What did Everett say?" She asked.

"The same old story."

After a few seconds of silence, Amanda suddenly shouted, "He's willing to disregard even his own mother's life for that woman! Honey, I think it's time to cut the Gordian knot – there's no other way!"

"What are you planning now?"

"It's Dorothy's life that needs to be taken!" Amanda was clearly on the edge, her voice quivering with malice. "With her gone, everything will return to normal! My son will be my son, and I won't have to fear prison anymore!"

Jonathan massaged his temples. "Calm down."

"How can I calm down, Jonathan? Have you stopped wanting to help me? Are you going to abandon me too?"

"I haven't."

Amanda's hysteria escalated. "You're lying! Why didn't you answer the phone earlier? You're tired of me! Fine, fine! Just throw me in prison. Let me die there! Maybe when I was kidnapped, you should've never rescued me! Jonathan, I'm tired too. Just let me die."

"Don't talk nonsense! Nothing's over until it's over. There's always a way out." Knowing his wife was having an episode, Jonathan hurriedly hung up and contacted the doctor over at Elysian Country to check on her.

She had been having these attacks more frequently, each more severe than the last, sometimes even convulsing and slipping into deep comas!

Jonathan truly feared his wife might not last much longer.

Chapter 844

The next morning, Karen didn't peel her eyes open until the sun was high in the sky.

Every bone in her body ached, and every muscle groaned in protest. It was as if her limbs were staging a mutiny for the foolish decision to climb that mountain the day before.

"Hurting?" Jeffrey, lying beside her, had developed this sixth sense of waking up the moment Karen so much as twitched.

"Ugh, I'm pretty sure I'm bedridden today."

Jeffrey let out a resigned chuckle and pinched her cheek affectionately. "Told you to pace yourself, didn't I? But no, you had to be the Energizer Bunny."

Karen pouted. "When you're out having fun, you gotta go all in, right?"

"I surrender to your logic. What do you fancy for breakfast? I'll run out and grab it."

"Craving some of that egg and bacon sandwich from Heber's back on one of Everglow City's streets. Stumbled upon it last time I was visiting Dorothy."

Jeffrey's fingers danced over his phone, pulling up the address, and then he pushed himself out of bed. "Hang tight. I'll go fetch it for you."

Her heart warmed, Karen giggled. "Thanks, hubby!"

That endearment was music to Jeffrey's ears. He would fly back to Eldorria City if it meant bringing back a smile on Karen's face.

Watching him dress and dash out, Karen took her time freshening up before bombarding Dorothy with messages.

Karen: [Post-hike syndrome is real. Ouch!]

Karen: [Dorothy, you up yet?]

Everett: [She's sleeping. What's up?]

Seeing Everett pop up in the chat was a surprise.

Karen tried to add him as a friend, but no dice – his settings blocked friend requests.

"Tsk, a man of principles, huh?"

Dressed and restless, Karen decided to step out for a bit. She had barely entered the elevator when a familiar voice called her name.

"Karen?"

She instinctively turned towards the voice.

"Tristan? What are you doing here?"

Her heart sank. Of all places, bumping into her first love in a holiday resort!

"Oh, you know, the folks wanted to check out this new resort. Thought we'd spend a few days. What about you?" Tristan's smile was easy, devoid of any awkwardness as if he had just run into an old friend.

"Same here, just with some friends."

Karen's smile was strained, her mind racing for the elevator to hit the lobby so she could escape.

Tristan, oblivious, handed her his phone. "You changed your number, right? Let me have the new one."

Karen hesitated before pushing the phone back. "I don't think that's necessary. We don't really need to stay in touch, do we?"

Tristan's warm smile faltered. "I just wanted to be friends."

"I don't, so no number."

The elevator dinged open, and Karen made a beeline for the exit.

Tristan, quick on his feet, grabbed her arm. "Karen, wait!"

"Let go of me!" she snapped, ice in her voice. "Don't touch me. We're nothing to each other, and if you lay hands on me again, I'm calling the cops!"

Tristan hadn't expected such a fierce reaction. Sure, their breakup had been his fault, but the Karen he remembered was caring and kind. He had thought she would still have some feelings for him.

"Okay, okay, I'm not touching!" He released her quickly. "I just wanted to talk, that's all. Don't go."

"There's nothing to talk about."

Tristan took a deep breath, his gaze serious. "Karen, I owe you an apology. Let me say I'm sorry, will you?"

"An apology? I'd like to hear this."

Suddenly, a deep voice sounded from above Karen's head.

Chapter 845

Karen looked up as Tristan did the same.

"Who the heck are you?"

Jeffrey couldn't care less, simply lifting the bag of takeout he had brought back and flashing a smile at Karen.

"Got us some sandwiches. Were you coming down to meet me?"

Karen's heart raced with panic; she knew Jeffrey was a hothead. If he found out who Tristan was, fists were bound to fly!

So she nodded vigorously. "Uh, yeah! Let's head upstairs, I'm starving."

"Alright."

Tristan watched them as they were about to leave and felt a surge of urgency. Instinctively, he stepped forward, reaching out for Karen.

But Jeffrey, caught off-guard, swung a punch straight at him!

"Keep your fucking hands off my girl."

Tristan was floored, literally, taking a moment to gather his wits on the ground.

This was exactly the scenario Karen feared! She quickly grabbed Jeffrey. "Stop it, he just wanted to talk to me!"

"Talk about what?" Jeffrey's gaze was piercing, his anger barely contained.

No wonder he was mad.

While he was out fetching sandwiches, his wife was getting chatted up! And clearly, there had been some kind of past entanglement between her and this guy. He wasn't blind; he could see it.

He hadn't wanted to make a scene, to ruin the mood, but this guy had the nerve to touch Karen right in front of him! That was like dancing on a landmine.

"Karen, is he your boyfriend?" Tristan managed, sitting up from the ground.

"No." Karen, fearing another outburst from Jeffrey, quickly clung to his arm. "This is my husband. We're married, officially."

Tristan frowned.

Seeing Karen acknowledge their relationship cooled Jeffrey's rage a little.

"Got it? Fuck off before you get hurt, and stop bothering us."

"Let's just go, okay?"

Karen didn't want things to escalate, pulling Jeffrey away.

But Tristan, behind them, suddenly sprang up and shouted as if goaded. "Karen, I've never forgotten you since we broke up. I remember every tear you shed for me, every time you'd rush to see me after class, all the little ways you..."

He never got to finish his sentence; Jeffrey had floored him again, this time with a force that drew blood.

Karen was terrified, and the hotel security rushed over, trying to separate them.

But they were no match for Jeffrey's strength, especially in his fury. He was like a man possessed!

"Jeffrey! Stop, you're gonna kill him!"

"Jeffrey! He's out cold!"

Karen knew her pleas were in vain, and the guards couldn't hold him back, so she frantically called Dorothy!

Thankfully, she picked up, and Everett soon came down the elevator. With a steady gaze, he grabbed Jeffrey's wrist, his voice stern. "Don't commit murder in broad daylight."

Jeffrey's hands were covered in blood, both his and Tristan's.

After a look at Everett, the red in Jeffrey's eyes faded slightly, "Got it."

Dorothy quickly took Karen's hand, pulling her back. "What happened? Karen, don't cry, stop crying..."

"Dorothy... I'm... I'm scared..."

"It's okay, don't be scared! Security, call an ambulance, now!"

Tristan lay unconscious on the ground, teeth likely knocked out—some were visible on the pavement. As for the rest of his injuries, they were anyone's guess.

Chapter 846

Worried about Karen's condition, Dorothy gently guided her friend back to their room.

After all, Everett was there to take care of everything that followed.

Karen had been frightened by the violent encounter and couldn't stop crying, tears continuously streaming down her face, even without sobs.

"It's okay, Karen, the guy will be fine," Dorothy reassured her, patting her back soothingly.

"But... but there was so much blood... What if he's dead? Then Jeffrey will be a murderer!"

"People don't die that easily; he was just knocked out cold!"

Karen wiped her tears, her emotions a mix of anger and fear. "If he's dead, he asked for it, the lunatic! Provoking Jeffrey like that, what was he thinking? He... he didn't know who Jeffrey was or what kind of temper he has. If he had known, I bet he wouldn't have dared."

After all, not many people were truly seeking their demise.

Karen gradually calmed down and looked up at Dorothy. "Dorothy, do you think... do you think Jeffrey will be mad at me?"

"Why would he be? You didn't do anything wrong."

"But he must have figured out my past with Tristan."

"So what? It's not like he hasn't had exes. You never hid the fact that you've had past relationships," Dorothy comforted her with a hug. "Now, stop worrying! I'll call Everett to check on the situation."

Karen nodded in agreement.

Dorothy walked over to the window with her phone in hand and dialed Everett's number. He picked up after just two rings.

"He's alive; don't worry."

Everett knew exactly what Dorothy was concerned about.

Relieved, Dorothy responded, "That's a relief! And Jeffrey? Send him up to calm Karen down. She's pregnant and quite shaken."

"Will do."

Not long after hanging up, there was a knock on the door. Jeffrey stood there when they opened it, his right hand covered in dried, dark red blood - a stark reminder of the earlier altercation.

"Should I call a doctor for that?"

"No need," Jeffrey replied, his voice still strained.

Dorothy whispered urgently, "Karen's pregnant, so please, be gentle with your words and actions."

"Got it."

"I'll go find Everett. You two talk." Dorothy left, closing the door behind her for some privacy.

Back downstairs, the bloodstains had been cleaned up, and Everett was speaking with a man and a woman, his expression stern and imposing. Dorothy guessed these were Tristan's parents, and Everett was likely offering a settlement.

She didn't intrude, choosing to wait at a distance instead. Soon after, Everett saw her and walked over with his long strides.

"Hope I didn't scare you?"

Dorothy shook her head. "No, did you sort everything out?"

"Yeah, paid them off."

Karen had told her the whole story. The guy had it coming, challenging Jeffrey with his infamous temper.

"I couldn't stand that either," Everett interjected.

Dorothy instinctively looked up at him.

Everett smirked slightly, reaching out to play with her hair. "So, I assume you don't have any ex-boyfriends lurking around, right?"

"I'll have to think about that."

His eyebrows lifted questioningly.

Dorothy squinted her eyes playfully. "Just kidding! With you keeping such a close watch on me, I'd need an opportunity to even consider it."

"And yet, there are still plenty hovering around you, aren't there?"

The conversation had somehow circled back to her. How they went from talking about Jeffrey to discussing her own situation was a mystery!

Chapter 847

Everett pulled her into his arms, "Even though Jeffrey going off half-cocked like that was rash, if someone came at me with those words, we wouldn't be calling 911."

Dorothy blinked. "Then what would we be calling?"

"The hearse."

Dorothy was at a loss for words.

The terrifying thing about Everett wasn't the harsh words he spoke, it was that when he said something, nobody doubted whether he meant it.

"After all this commotion, looks like their evening plans are shot. Got any places you wanna hit up in Everglow City?"

To Dorothy, Everglow City was just another place to work, nothing special. But after a moment's hesitation, a location did spring to mind!

Both looked at each other, saying in unison.

"Dreamscape Hotel!"

"Dreamscape Hotel."

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Returning here, Dorothy couldn't help but feel a little sentimental. She took out her phone and snapped a picture of the entrance.

"The first time I saw Abigail here, I thought her eyes were so much like yours." At the time, Everett didn't dare to think too much about it, let alone guess that Abigail was his daughter with Dorothy!

"True, Abigail's eyes do remind me of mine, but she's got your facial structure. That's why I worry about being spotted when she's with me."

And as for Langston, well, he might as well have been a carbon copy of Everett; anyone who saw him would start second-guessing.

"What's the worst that could happen if we're found out? Dorothy, you always take on too much, always playing the tough gal."

Ever since he'd first met Dorothy, she was like this!

Back in school, everyone from the teachers to the students knew her situation. She could have easily asked the teacher for a pass to skip out on classroom chores or activities, but she never did.

After fulfilling her duties like everyone else, she would miss the last direct bus to the hospital, too frugal to take a cab, ending up walking the entire way.

Summer was one thing, but winter... Havenbrook City's winters were brutal.

"Everett, I thought after the divorce, we'd go our separate ways."

Which was exactly why she couldn't let Everett find out about the kids!

"No. We were never going to go our separate ways."

Dorothy laughed. "I know that now."

Their entanglement seemed destined to remain a tangled web for life.

Everett took a deep breath and held her tight. "Dorothy, when will you learn to rely on me?"

Not to always shoulder everything alone after the fact.

"What if I never learn?" She mumbled from his embrace.

"Then I'll teach you over and over until you do," He said with a smile.

She looked up at him with a smile. The next second, Dorothy's phone rang. Glancing down, it was a call from Karen.

Dorothy quickly stepped out of Everett's embrace and hit the answer button.

"Hello, Karen!"

"Dorothy..." Karen's voice trembled as she spoke, "Where are you... you need to come quickly..."

Dorothy's heart sank, "What's wrong? Stop crying and tell me what happened."

"I had a row with Jeffrey. He got angry, slammed the door, and left. And then... then I realized I'm bleeding!"

Bleeding...

Dorothy stiffened.

"Stay put at the hotel. I'm on my way back! I'll call an ambulance for you right now! Karen, don't be scared. I'll be there in no time!"

Chapter 848

After hanging up the phone, Everett had already hailed a cab. He was a sharp one, and from Dorothy's few frantic words, he grasped the gravity of the situation.

Once in the car, Dorothy's hands were trembling uncontrollably.

Everett gently rubbed her back. "Don't worry, it's going to be okay. The resort has a doctor on call, and Jeffrey had made arrangements just in case something happened to Karen."

Dorothy looked up at him with concern in her eyes. "Will Karen's baby be okay?"

"Let's see what the doctor says," he replied cautiously, not wanting to jump to conclusions.

"I'll call Jeffrey! He should be around the resort, not far off."

Dorothy nodded, "Don't rush into lecturing him. Let's make sure Karen is alright first."

"Yeah."

Everett dialed Jeffrey's number several times to no avail – either he didn't have his phone on him, or it was on silent.

Luckily, the cab got them to the resort quickly, and the ambulance was right on their heels.

Dorothy rushed into the room to find Karen in shock, collapsed on the carpet with blood all around her.

"Dorothy... am I having a miscarriage?" Karen's voice broke through the chaos.

"Stop, don't say that! The doctor's here, we're going to the hospital," Dorothy said, knowing she had to hold it together and keep Karen calm.

"It's going to be fine, remember what you said? Any kid lucky enough to be born to you won't be some delicate flower."

Karen nodded vigorously, her eyes red. "Okay."

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The emergency room doors at Everglow City Hospital were closed, leaving everyone in the dark about Karen's condition.

Dorothy paced back and forth, unable to sit still. "Still no word from Jeffrey?"

"He turned his phone off," Everett said, scowling as he got up to join her. "Don't panic. I've got someone checking the security footage to see where he might have gone."

How could Dorothy not worry? Karen was still inside, and the fate of the baby was uncertain.

"Jeffrey can be such a child when he's upset! How could he not think about Karen being pregnant?" Dorothy was fuming at Jeffrey!

The whole thing with Tristan was an accident, not something Karen sought out. And whatever Tristan said or did was beyond her control!

Even if you backtrack a mile, Jeffrey and Karen both had their pasts. Why couldn't he just accept that?

"Could it be... did Jeffrey lay his hands on her?" Dorothy's mind raced back to Karen's words.

She said they had a row!

"That, he would never. Jeffrey wouldn't go that far. He's just jealous.

"Just over jealousy? That's a bit much! And he already had his go at Tristan. Why go after Karen? I should never have..."

Dorothy was filled with regret for leaving them alone.

Karen was headstrong and wouldn't bow easily. With Jeffrey's reckless streak, he was far from acting like a soon-to-be father.

"Enough, Dorothy. You can't blame yourself for everything. What should you never have done? Anyone would've given them space to talk. Don't keep taking all the blame," Everett chastised her gently.

Chapter 849

Everett was always the rock, unshakable, but even he couldn't hide his distress at Dorothy's panicked state. He did not want her to be so bothered by this incident.

The world was a roulette wheel of chance, and nobody could predict where the ball would land, so why torment herself with the ifs and buts after the fact?

"I... I'm just so scared something's going to go wrong," Dorothy fretted, wringing her hands. "They're supposed to be getting married soon."

Her emotions were a tangled mess, a whirlwind of worries that refused to settle. The images that crowded her mind were too messy to make sense of.

Compounding her anxiety was the fact that Jeffrey was missing, and there had been no update on Karen from the emergency room.

Without any resolution in sight, Dorothy couldn't find peace.

Everett wrapped his arms around her in an attempt to soothe her nerves. Before he could utter a word of comfort, the sound of hurried footsteps approached.

Both turned towards the commotion.

It was Jeffrey.

"Everett!"

Jeffrey was a mess, stumbling as he ran towards them, gripping Everett's shirt as if it were a lifeline. "Karen, how is she?"

Everett's brow furrowed, his tone full of reproach. "She's still in the ER. No word yet. Where the hell have you been?"

"I..." Jeffrey's gaze fell, his jaw clenched. "I was so mad at myself, and I didn't want to take it out on Karen, so I went for a walk around the resort gardens."

He had returned only to find an empty room and a carpet stained with blood—Karen was gone. It was the hotel staff who had informed him that everyone had rushed to the hospital, and so he followed suit.

"What did you two even fight about?" Dorothy couldn't help her frustration, though she sensed it might not be the best time for a lecture. "I specifically told you to keep it together before I left!"

"It was... Karen said I was too hot-headed and that I shouldn't have beat up her ex. It made me so angry, thinking she was defending him, so I just..."

"They broke up years ago! And it was her ex who couldn't let go, can't you see that? Karen's pregnant, for heaven's sake! Didn't you know?" Dorothy couldn't hold back, her words spilling out before Everett gave her wrist a gentle squeeze, signaling her to stop.

Jeffrey had been staring at the ground, but now visible teardrops were falling on the tile beneath him.

"I'm sorry... I was too impulsive..."

"Let's just wait for Karen," Everett finally said, his voice steady. "See what the doctor says."

He guided Dorothy to take a seat while Jeffrey remained standing, lost in thought until he suddenly turned to her. "Did you tell her parents?"

"No, what could I say?"

They had all set out for a joyful vacation, and now they were here, in a hospital, with the baby's life hanging in the balance?

Jeffrey hung his head again. "I never imagined it would come to this. I remembered your words, so I didn't argue with Karen! It was just her lecturing me, calling me impulsive and immature... she even said she needed to reconsider marrying me. I was so mad I just had to get out."

Dorothy could imagine the scene, and somehow, she couldn't completely fault Jeffrey for walking away. Karen was always quick to speak her mind, never pondering how her words might land.

"Let's not tell her parents just yet. No need to worry them until we know more. Things might not be as bad as they seem."

"But I saw so much blood on the carpet." Jeffrey was genuinely terrified! He had braced himself to return and apologize to Karen, but now this...

"Family of Karen Miller, please?"

Finally, the ER doors swung open.

Chapter 850

The doctor had barely stepped out when he was suddenly met with an anxious Jeffrey.

"I am! I am her husband! How's Karen doing?"

The doctor glanced at him. "The patient is stable for now, and the bleeding has stopped."

Dorothy chimed in with urgency, "And the baby?"

"The baby is safe for the moment, but... it's going to need her cooperation. She should stay in bed until the birth, keep up with regular check-ups, and maintain a happy disposition. No more emotional roller coasters."

Hearing the baby was safe brought a wave of relief over Dorothy.

Jeffrey's mind was fixated on Karen as he pressed on, "Where is she? When can she come out?"

"She'll be wheeled out shortly, don't worry."

With that, the doctor returned to the emergency room.

Jeffrey stood rooted to the spot, eyes peeled for the moment Karen would emerge.

Behind him, Dorothy let out a sigh. Everett gently squeezed her hand.

“The doctor said it’s all right.”

“Yeah.”

“You haven’t eaten anything since you woke up. I’ll get someone to bring over some food,” Everett said, still mindful of her stomach issues.

Dorothy shook her head. “I can’t eat anything right now. I’ll wait until I see Karen.”

“No way. I don’t want you getting sick before Karen comes out.” Everett was adamant.

“If you don’t feel like eating, at least drink some milk.”

“Okay then.” Dorothy didn’t dare refuse again.

After a while, Karen was finally wheeled out of the emergency room.

Jeffrey hurried over and took her hand. “Karen, I’m so sorry...”

But clearly, Karen wasn’t in the mood to talk, silently pulling her hand back. Her hand still sported an IV needle; Jeffrey didn’t dare force it and simply let her be.

“Karen, how are you feeling?” Dorothy followed the gurney into the room before asking the first question.

“I’m okay.” Karen’s lips were pale, and she looked weak. “I’m sorry you’re worried.”

“What are you talking about?” Dorothy replied, then glanced over at Jeffrey, who stood there looking lost, “Karen, you rest up now. The doctor said you need to focus on keeping the baby safe. You can’t afford any more ups and downs. You need to keep yourself in check, okay?”

Karen nodded. “Mhm, can you guys ask Jeffrey to leave? I don’t want to see him.”

“I’m not leaving, Karen. I’ll stay right here with you!” At her words, Jeffrey rushed to the bedside.

“You can yell at me, hit me; I won’t say another word!”

But Karen just pulled the blanket over her face. “Dorothy, make him leave.”

“I’m not going!”

Dorothy felt helpless and turned to Everett with a pleading look.

He stepped forward and took hold of Jeffrey’s wrist. “Jeffrey, come with me for a moment.”

“But...”

“Aren’t you listening to me either?”

After Everett spoke, Jeffrey reluctantly bowed his head and followed him out of the room.

With the door closed, Dorothy spoke softly, "Okay, you can stop hiding now. The air's not good under there, and he's gone."

Karen finally emerged from under the blanket upon hearing that.

"Dorothy... with his temper, his impulse, and his resorting to violence... sometimes I really feel like I can't spend my life with him."

"Jeffrey just cares about you too much; he can't stand the thought of any other man being involved with you."