Mr. Edwards' Unraveled Life chapter 261

Chapter 261

Kevin effortlessly lifted Norah and spoke in a deep, steady voice, "If you won't listen to me, I'll have to do this."

Norah frowned, clearly annoyed. "Are you some kind of robber?" she retorted.

Kevin's dark eyes flickered as he replied calmly, "Have you already forgotten last time? You were exhausted, almost miscarried, and I had to step in to help Bianca for a brief moment today."

Hearing this, Norah's initial irritation softened, though her skepticism remained. "And what does that have to do with me taking a taxi home?"

By now, Kevin had carried her to the car. Placing her gently down, he fixed his intense gaze on her. "What if something happened to you on the way? What if your stomach started hurting again? I couldn't let you go back alone—not with any peace of mind."

His words carried genuine concern, striking a chord in Norah.

Her lips pressed into a thin line as she remained silent for a moment. While she recognized Kevin's worry, doubt lingered in her heart, making her wonder if she was merely fooling herself.

Kevin's past actions were seared into her memory—wounds that hadn't fully healed. Despite this, she mustered the courage to say, "You pulled me earlier, and I'm fine. There's no reason to worry. I've learned my lesson—I'll take care of myself."

Still, Kevin refused to relent, his tone firm. "We're already here. Unless you want me to carry you again, just get in the car and sit quietly."

Norah met his gaze, noting the unyielding determination in his eyes. It was clear that he'd stop at nothing to get his way. Not wanting to create more of a scene, she begrudgingly got into the car.

Kian, who was behind the wheel, couldn't help but smirk as he observed their interaction. Though the atmosphere was tense, he sensed that their relationship had taken a step forward.

The corner of Kian's mouth quirked up further when Norah glanced at the rearview mirror and greeted him.

"Madame," he said, his voice laced with a teasing warmth.

Norah's lips tightened, and she quickly corrected him. "Kevin and I are divorcing. We've barely spoken in recent weeks, and the marriage certificate is already destroyed. This marriage is as good as over. So, stop calling me 'Madame.'"

Kian grinned but didn't agree. "You're still legally married. As long as that's the case, you're Mrs. Edwards—at least on paper."

Norah huffed. "Legally, maybe. But once a marriage falls apart, the title means nothing. Stop using it."

Kian, refusing to be deterred, added lightly, "I don't think your relationship is as bad as you say. Maybe it's just a misunderstanding."

Norah shot him a sharp look. "Misunderstanding? The title 'Mrs. Edwards' is nothing but a burden to me."

Kevin, who had been silent, finally spoke, his tone cold. "So, you don't want to be Mrs. Edwards anymore?"

"Not anymore," Norah replied bluntly, her voice steady.

Kevin's expression darkened. "When you married me, you had no problem with it. Now you think you can toss it aside whenever you want?"

"What are you trying to say?" Norah asked warily, unsure of where this conversation was headed.

Kevin leaned in slightly, his gaze piercing. "You've lied before to get what you want. What's stopping you from doing it again? For all I know, you might lie about the child being Steven's just to finalize the divorce."

Norah flinched at his accusation. She rarely lied—only when absolutely necessary—and the claim that Steven was the child's father hadn't come from her.

She turned to Kevin, her voice sharp. "If it's not Steven's, is it yours?"

Kevin's jaw clenched, his eyes narrowing. "And who is Anthony?" he countered. "Does he even exist, or is this just another one of your games to spite me?"

Her heart tightened, her fingers unconsciously curling into fists. Should she keep this secret forever? If Kevin cared enough, he'd figure it out eventually.

"He's real," Norah admitted softly, meeting Kevin's gaze with a rare vulnerability. "He saved my life once. When he shielded me from a gunshot, he became my hero—someone I'll never forget."

Kevin's fists tightened at her words, jealousy and frustration clouding his thoughts. "Enough," he snapped, his voice low and restrained.

Norah stopped, her lips pressing together as silence filled the car.

After a long pause, Kevin leaned back against the seat, trying to compose himself. "When were you held at gunpoint?" he asked. "I don't remember hearing anything about this."

Norah hesitated. If Kevin had truly investigated her past, he should have uncovered that incident—a tragedy that claimed the lives of several students and made headlines at the time.

"You didn't know me then," she said quietly. "Of course, you wouldn't know."

Kevin's brow furrowed. "An event like that would've been all over the news. Your family, friends, and teachers must have known. But there's no record of it anywhere."

Norah frowned. "That's impossible. It happened. Maybe you weren't thorough enough in your search, but I remember every detail."

Kevin's expression remained skeptical. "When you were sixteen or seventeen, you disappeared for an entire summer," he said, his voice heavy with suspicion.

"That's not true!" Norah shot back. "I stayed local during high school. I never went anywhere."

Kevin's gaze lingered on her, his doubt evident.

Norah sighed. "It's been years. Records get lost, memories fade. But I haven't forgotten the things that shaped me. If you think I disappeared, then your information must be wrong."

Kevin didn't reply, his thoughts a storm of unanswered questions and lingering doubts.

Chapter 262

Norah was adamant that she had never disappeared during a summer vacation. Her certainty gave Kevin pause, leaving him to question whether he had overlooked something significant.

The summer she was allegedly missing might not have been ordinary.

Unaware of Kevin's unease, Norah glanced at the intersection ahead and said, "I'm almost home. Just drop me off downstairs."

Kian smoothly brought the car to a stop at the curb.

Norah stepped out, turning back briefly. "Thanks for the ride. Get home safe," she said politely, her tone carrying a hint of finality.

Kevin stayed silent, lost in thought. Norah, noticing his preoccupation, didn't linger. She walked into her apartment complex without looking back.

Kevin's gaze lingered on her retreating figure, caught in an endless loop of unresolved questions.

"Kian," Kevin finally said, his voice low, "are we absolutely sure there are no gaps in Norah's background information?"

Kian, who had meticulously compiled the details of Norah's life to help Kevin investigate, replied confidently, "Nothing was left out. Everything we could uncover is there. Maybe she just doesn't remember—it's been a long time."

Kevin's expression darkened. "She remembers her high school years. Why wouldn't she recall something as significant as a summer-long disappearance?"

Kian hesitated. "That's a good point. But, sir, isn't Steven an old classmate of hers? Maybe he'd know more."

Kevin's jaw tightened. "I'm not asking Steven."

He had already dug into Norah's circle of classmates, teachers, and acquaintances. Yet, Anthony, the man Norah mentioned repeatedly, remained a mystery.

"Wait," Kian said suddenly. "What about Principal Norman? He used to be her homeroom teacher back then. He might know something."

Kevin's eyes narrowed. "Good idea. Set up a meeting with him immediately."

Meanwhile, Norah had returned home, slipping off her shoes and replacing them with her favorite fluffy bunny slippers. She flicked on the lights and collapsed onto the sofa.

But even in her comfort, her mind couldn't settle. Kevin's words about her supposed disappearance replayed in her head.

To distract herself, Norah pulled out her phone to text her family.

Her mother, Gwen, responded quickly, as always.

"Take care of yourself out there, sweetheart," Gwen texted. "Don't overwork yourself. Come home this weekend for dinner. Your dad misses you, though he'll never admit it."

Norah smiled faintly at the familiar warmth of her mother's messages.

"I'll come home," Norah replied.

But then Gwen followed up with something more pointed: "Have you finalized the divorce yet?"

Norah sighed. Her family had been urging her to cut ties with Kevin as quickly as possible.

"Not yet," she typed back.

Gwen didn't hold back. "Then hurry it up! Don't waste your youth on this mess. There's still time for you to start fresh. You deserve someone who treats you right. Trust me—when the right person comes along, you'll wonder why you even hesitated!"

Norah chuckled softly, touched by her mother's protective nature.

But Kevin's words lingered in her mind. On impulse, she texted her mother again.

"Mom, when I was in high school, was there ever a summer when I wasn't home?"

Her mother took an unusually long time to reply.

After ten minutes, Gwen finally responded.

"Who told you that?"

"No one," Norah quickly typed. "I was just curious."

"There's no such thing," Gwen replied firmly. "You've always been home during the summers. Don't let anyone fill your head with nonsense."

Norah exhaled in relief. Her family had strict rules, and it would have been impossible for her to leave for an entire summer without them noticing.

She set her phone aside, brushed her teeth, and headed to bed.

Kevin, however, was far from resting. He went straight to Principal Norman's house that evening, determined to get answers.

The elderly man was startled by the late-night visit but greeted Kevin warmly nonetheless.

"Kevin!" Principal Norman exclaimed as he opened the door. "What a surprise! Come in, come in. It's late—why didn't you call ahead?"

Kevin stepped inside, wasting no time. "I'm sorry for the unannounced visit, Principal Norman. I need to ask you something important about Norah."

Principal Norman raised an eyebrow but nodded. "Of course. What's on your mind?"

"Did anything unusual happen to Norah during junior high?" Kevin asked directly. "Specifically, did she ever get hurt, or was she saved by someone?"

The older man's demeanor shifted instantly. His expression darkened, and he hesitated before responding.

"Well... there was something," he admitted after a moment. "But it's not something we like to talk about. It was a tragedy that affected everyone."

Kevin leaned forward, his gaze sharp. "What happened?"

Principal Norman sighed heavily, adjusting his glasses. "Norah was kidnapped during a school trip. Several students lost their lives. She survived, but the ordeal left her physically and emotionally scarred. For her well-being, we agreed never to bring it up. Even if someone mentioned it in passing, we'd steer the conversation elsewhere."

Kevin's fists clenched as he processed the revelation.

"Do you remember this man?" Kevin asked, pulling a photograph from his pocket and placing it on the table.

Principal Norman's face went pale when he saw the image. His lips parted, but no words came out.

Kevin's expression hardened. "Who is he?"

Principal Norman swallowed hard, his hands trembling as he stared at the photograph.

Chapter 263

Principal Norman stared at Kevin for a long moment, his initial shock giving way to curiosity. He couldn't understand why Kevin was so invested in this story. "Why does this matter to you?" he asked, his tone edged with genuine confusion. "Even if the kidnapped girl wasn't Norah, how does it concern you?"

The principal's question didn't seem malicious, but rather a reflection of his own bafflement.

Kevin's sharp gaze softened slightly as he replied, his tone measured. "I'm investigating something, and this incident raised some doubts. It wasn't Norah who was kidnapped, but for some reason, she remembers it as if it were her. The girl had the same name as Norah. Why would she have this memory unless she's been made to believe it? Why hide the truth?"

Principal Norman's expression wavered.

Kevin leaned forward, his voice steady but probing. "This happened at the school you managed. Can you give me a proper explanation?"

The older man sighed deeply, his posture slumping under the weight of the conversation. "I'll tell you what I know, though I don't have all the answers," he said finally.

Kevin's gaze darkened.

Principal Norman picked up the photo Kevin had handed him earlier and studied it for a moment. "Norah's memory is definitely muddled," he said. "The confusion stems from the fact that the kidnapped girl shared her name—first and last. Her parents approached me back then, pleading for my cooperation. They insisted that whenever this incident was mentioned, Norah should be treated as if she was the one involved. To this day, I don't know why they insisted on such a charade."

Kevin's brow furrowed. "Why would her parents go to such lengths to hide this? Were they trying to protect her from something?"

"I don't know," Principal Norman admitted, shaking his head. "Norah was in high school at the time. Her family was adamant about keeping this buried. They believed she wouldn't dig into it and hoped she'd forget it entirely. They even asked me to ensure the topic never came up in any official records."

Kevin processed the information silently, his mind churning. "Did you ever worry she'd discover the truth?" he asked.

"No," the principal replied. "It's been years, and reports about the incident are long gone. She has no reason to look into it, and it's a memory she'd rather avoid anyway. Her family made sure to keep her in the dark."

Kevin's jaw tightened. He had stumbled onto this by accident, but now he couldn't ignore the implications. If Norah's memory was manipulated, was the mysterious Anthony also a fabrication?

Kevin pressed further. "Have you ever heard of someone named Anthony being connected to her during this time?"

Principal Norman furrowed his brow, thinking hard. After a moment, he shook his head. "No, I don't recall anyone by that name."

Kevin's eyes narrowed. The more he dug, the more likely it seemed that Anthony wasn't real—just another fragment of a false narrative.

"Thank you for your time," Kevin said finally, standing up.

Principal Norman rose as well, still puzzled. "You care about her so much. What's your relationship to Norah?"

Kevin met the older man's gaze without hesitation. "She's my wife."

The revelation left Principal Norman stunned. "I had no idea," he stammered. "If I've said anything inappropriate in the past, I apologize."

Kevin waved off the concern. "It's late. I won't take up any more of your time."

Principal Norman escorted Kevin to the door, still reeling from the interaction.

By the time Kevin left, it was early morning.

Norah, meanwhile, lay in bed, feeling the familiar pang of hunger. Lately, her appetite had grown, and her cravings leaned toward bold, spicy flavors. She groaned, too tired to get up but too hungry to ignore it.

Rolling onto her side, she tried to sleep again, only to be startled by a knock at the door. Dragging herself up, she shuffled to the door and opened it.

To her surprise, Kevin stood there, tall and imposing.

"You're back?" she asked, blinking in confusion. "Why aren't you home?"

Kevin stepped inside without answering, carrying a bag in his hand.

"What's that smell?" Norah asked, already recognizing the spicy aroma.

"Malatang," Kevin replied simply, setting the bag on the table.

Her eyes widened. "You bought this? For me?"

"Who else?" Kevin said, unpacking the bag and handing her a pair of chopsticks. "Sit and eat."

Norah hesitated, watching him carefully. Kevin was famously meticulous and disdainful of anything that didn't meet his high standards. Street food, especially something as messy as Malatang, was definitely not his style.

"You've never even touched this stuff before," she said, still skeptical.

Kevin met her gaze calmly. "You like it."

The simplicity of his answer left her momentarily speechless. She sat down and dug in, but the questions lingered in her mind. How did Kevin even know she liked this?

As if reading her thoughts, Kevin added, "My aunt mentioned that pregnant women often crave spicy food. I thought I'd give it a try."

Norah looked up sharply, her chopsticks pausing mid-air. "You went to buy this for me?"

Kevin nodded. "Of course."

Her heart softened, but she couldn't help teasing him. "You used to hate this kind of thing. The smell alone would've driven you away."

Kevin's expression didn't change. "I don't like it, but that doesn't matter. If it makes you happy, I'll do it. My preferences aren't boundaries—I can adapt for you."

Norah stared at him, her emotions swirling. Kevin's words, so simple yet sincere, left her unable to respond. For the first time in a long while, she felt truly seen.

Chapter 264

Hearing Kevin's words, Norah clenched her fists instinctively, her eyes darting away to avoid his gaze. She was afraid she might be reading too much into it. "If you care so much that you're willing to change, why do you care at all?" she asked hesitantly.

Kevin's expression softened as he replied, "Because you're my wife."

Norah's lips tightened, and she stirred her chopsticks in the spicy broth without eating. "Didn't I already tell you? I'm filing for divorce. Being a wife in name only doesn't mean much. You've never changed for me before. Why start now?"

Kevin didn't respond immediately. His piercing gaze seemed to weigh her words, and for a moment, he looked as though he was deciding how much to say.

Finally, he broke the silence. "I think I might be in love with you."

Norah froze mid-motion, choking on her soup. The fiery broth stung her throat, and she coughed violently, tears springing to her eyes.

Alarmed, Kevin sprang into action, quickly pouring her a glass of water. "Drink this!" he urged, placing the cup in her trembling hands.

As she gulped down the water, her tears blurred her vision, and her thoughts spun chaotically. Were these tears because she had waited so long to hear those words from him? Or was it just the sting of the spice overwhelming her senses?

Her breathing steadied, but the tension in the air lingered. Kevin, still concerned, patted her back gently. "Are you okay now?" he asked softly.

Norah nodded slightly, her voice barely above a whisper. "What... what did you just say?"

Kevin met her wide, startled eyes and repeated with unwavering seriousness, "I think I'm in love with you."

Norah averted her gaze, her emotions swirling. Once upon a time, hearing those words would have made her heart soar. But now, a bitter ache settled in its place.

Kevin, sensing her hesitation, gripped his hands tightly, nervous but determined. "You don't have to say anything," he added, his voice a mix of hope and apprehension. "Just know how I feel."

Norah's silence spoke volumes. Her heart was conflicted, torn between the man she had once longed for and the complicated reality they now shared.

Trying to distract herself, she resumed eating. But in her flustered state, some of the oily soup spilled onto her pajamas.

Kevin immediately grabbed a tissue and leaned in to wipe the stain. "Take your time. No one's rushing you," he said gently.

"Hm." Norah's lashes fluttered as she avoided his gaze, her hands trembling slightly. Her heart was a storm of emotions, and she couldn't make sense of it.

Kevin stayed beside her as she finished eating, quietly pouring her tea and handing her tissues when needed. Though he maintained his distance, his care was palpable.

Once she was done, Norah leaned back, feeling both full and exhausted. As her eyelids grew heavy, she glanced at Kevin. "Aren't you going home?" she asked.

"If you're tired, go rest," he replied. "I'll close the door when I leave."

Norah studied him for a moment. He seemed different—less domineering, more considerate, even a little cautious. With a small nod, she left him and returned to her room.

But sleep wouldn't come. She lay in bed, staring at the ceiling, her mind replaying Kevin's confession. His words tugged at her heart, but fear held her back. She wasn't ready to confront her feelings, not after everything they'd been through.

After what felt like hours, her door creaked open. She sat up abruptly, startled to see Kevin standing there with a glass of milk in his hand.

"What are you doing?" she asked, her voice tinged with surprise.

Kevin approached her, placing the glass on her nightstand. "Milk before bed is good for you. It's sweet and helps relieve stress," he said simply.

Norah stared at him, her thoughts a jumbled mess. Something about the scene felt oddly familiar, like déjà vu. She hesitated, then reached for the glass, taking a small sip.

The sweetness of the milk eased her nerves, but her head throbbed suddenly, a dull ache spreading across her temples. She winced, pressing a hand to her forehead.

"Are you okay?" Kevin asked, his concern immediate.

"It's nothing," she murmured, brushing off his worry.

Kevin watched her closely, then asked cautiously, "Norah, were you ever kidnapped when you were in junior high?"

The question hit her like a thunderbolt. Her grip on the glass tightened as she stared at him in shock.

"What are you talking about?" she asked, her voice trembling.

Kevin hesitated. "It's nothing," he said finally, as if deciding against pressing further. "Get some rest."

But Norah couldn't shake the feeling that Kevin knew more than he was letting on. Her heart raced as questions flooded her mind. Did he know about Anthony? Did he realize the truth behind her memories?

Her voice wavered as she asked, "You know about the accident I had in junior high, don't you? About Anthony—the one who saved me?"

Kevin's expression hardened. After a long pause, he replied, "Yes. There were robbers who broke into your school and kidnapped several students. You were one of them—the only survivor. Anthony saved you."

Norah's chest tightened. His words confirmed what she already knew, but something felt off. If Kevin knew about Anthony, why didn't he realize it was him?

Her voice quivered. "Is that all?"

Kevin looked at her intently, choosing his words carefully. "What else are you expecting me to say?"

Norah searched his face, desperate for answers. But Kevin only adjusted her quilt and said softly, "It's getting cold. Stay warm—it's important for the baby."

"Don't you resent this child?" she asked, her voice barely above a whisper.

Kevin paused, his tone gentle but firm. "I wouldn't dare—not when you've staked so much on having this child."

Norah's eyes glistened with unshed tears as she clutched her hands tightly. "You know about my accident, about Anthony... He's the hero who saved me..."

Kevin interrupted her softly, maintaining the lie he knew she needed to hear. "Yes, Anthony saved you."

Norah stared at him, her emotions in turmoil. Deep down, she couldn't help but wonder—did Kevin truly know the truth, or was he simply playing along?

Chapter 265

Norah stared at Kevin, his expression calm and detached, as if the weight of their shared history didn't exist.

Shaking her head softly, she murmured, "No," dismissing the unspoken question lingering between them.

Kevin didn't press further.

Lying down, Norah turned to her side, deliberately avoiding his gaze. Yet, her thoughts remained tangled. How could Kevin not remember that he was Anthony, her savior? Had he truly forgotten that part of his past—or worse, chosen to forget?

Even if his memory was failing, surely he'd recall his own name from back then. So, where did the truth slip away?

Her thoughts spiraled deeper into confusion, tightening like a noose until a dull ache settled in her temples. Frustrated, she squeezed her eyes shut, trying to block out the noise in her head.

Kevin tucked her in with a quiet gentleness. For a while, he stood there, watching her as if waiting for something to change. Only when her breathing steadied did he tiptoe out of the room, leaving her in restless solitude.

The moment Kevin stepped into the hall, his phone buzzed incessantly, lighting up with a dozen missed calls.

He dialed back, his jaw set tight.

"Mr. Edwards," a voice on the other end began anxiously, "the company's stock is down several points because of Bianca's scandal. Your phone's been unreachable, and we don't know how to proceed."

Kevin's grip on the phone tightened. "Any updates on Bianca?"

"None. She hasn't contacted the company since the negative press surfaced."

Kevin exhaled sharply, the weight of the situation pressing down on him. After a moment's deliberation, his tone turned resolute. "If she can't handle the fallout and clear her name, terminate her contract. Effective immediately."

There was a stunned silence on the line. "Are you certain, sir?"

"She's not just damaging the company's reputation—she's jeopardizing my family. This ends now," Kevin replied coldly, his voice cutting through any hesitation.

"Understood, Mr. Edwards," the voice replied, resigned.

Kevin ended the call and rubbed his temples, his thoughts clouded. He'd shielded Bianca for long enough. Now, she had to face the consequences of her actions.

Across town, Bianca lay in a hospital bed, still recovering from surgery. The news hit her like a thunderclap: the company was cutting ties with her.

Her hands trembled as she scrolled through the venomous comments online.

"Liar."

"White Lotus."

"She deserves this."

The words felt like knives, each one cutting deeper than the last. Bianca's face paled, and her breathing grew ragged.

Her frustration boiled over, and she yelled, "You're all cowards!" before flinging her phone across the room.

Jace, who had been leaning casually against the doorway, removed his mask and gloves with an air of indifference. "It seems like the world's finally catching up with you," he said, his tone light but his eyes sharp.

Bianca glared at him, her voice trembling with rage. "Where am I supposed to go now? The company's abandoned me, and I'm a public enemy!"

Jace smirked, pouring himself a cup of coffee. "Wasn't Kevin your safety net? He started that entertainment company for you. Surely, he won't let you fall."

Bianca's laugh was bitter. "For me? Maybe at first. But people change. Kevin doesn't care anymore. No one does."

Her gaze shifted to the bleak, overcast sky outside the window. "I've been left with nothing."

Jace watched her carefully, his expression unreadable. "Then take it back," he said simply.

Bianca's head snapped up. "What?"

"Reclaim what's yours. If you let them bury you now, you'll never rise again."

The spark of defiance in Bianca's eyes reignited. "You're right. I won't let them destroy me." She swung her legs off the bed, determined to face the storm.

"I'll drive," Jace offered, shrugging on his trench coat.

The streets were unkind.

The moment Bianca stepped outside, whispers turned to jeers.

"There she is—the liar!"
"How does she even show her face?"
"She deserves to rot!"

The insults hit like a barrage of arrows, each word sinking into her skin. Despite her sunglasses and mask, someone hurled a clump of mud, splattering her coat. Bianca froze, paralyzed by fear.

But Jace moved swiftly, stepping in front of her and shielding her with his coat. The mud landed harmlessly on him instead.

"Get in the car," he barked, his voice cutting through the chaos.

Bianca hesitated, then followed him, her hands trembling.

Inside the safety of the car, Jace discarded his soiled coat without a second thought. Bianca, still shaken, clung to the last threads of her composure.

"They hate me," she whispered, her voice cracking.

Jace glanced at her. "There's always a way out."

Bianca turned to him, desperate. "What do you mean?"

His lips curled into a sly smile. "You're sick, aren't you?"

Understanding dawned on her face.

The next morning, Norah woke early and turned on the TV, only to see Bianca's tearful press conference splashed across every news channel.

Bianca stood at the podium, her hair unkempt, her face pale and makeup-free. Bandages wrapped around her ears added to her vulnerable appearance.

"I know I've let everyone down," she began, her voice trembling. "I betrayed your trust, and I'm truly sorry."

She bowed deeply, tears streaming down her face.

Bianca explained that her deafness was a result of surgery to address a medical condition—one that caused severe ringing in her ears and sleepless nights. She claimed she had no idea her condition would be exposed during her recovery.

As for the video of her alleged bullying, Bianca denied any wrongdoing. Instead, she shifted the blame to Maxine, accusing her of spreading false rumors to boost her own popularity.

Bianca's performance was masterful, blending vulnerability with defiance. To some, she appeared sincere and remorseful; to others, her story reeked of manipulation.

Norah watched the broadcast in silence, her thoughts a mix of curiosity and skepticism.

Just as the press conference ended, a knock echoed through her apartment.

Expecting Kevin, she opened the door.

Her heart froze. The figure standing there wasn't Kevin.

Her breath hitched as recognition dawned, and she stiffened, her body caught between shoc and dread.