

# Mr. Edwards' Unraveled Life

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## Chapter 691

Norah walked slowly toward the boss. He propped himself up with his hands, instinctively scooting backward, a flicker of fear in his eyes.

This girl could really fight.

And she didn't hold back—she was brutal. The boss was in agony, especially his lower back. He suspected she might've even broken something.

"Don't... don't come any closer," he stammered. "If you lay a hand on us, the organization behind us will never let you go."

Norah smirked. "You think I'm that naive? Even if I let you go now, your organization's not going to spare me. And let's be honest—are you really that important?"

Let's face it, this group was nothing more than the organization's errand boys.

If they pulled off the job, everyone would benefit. If they didn't, no one would get anything.

"And even if I did let you go," Norah continued, "do you really think you'd make it back alive?"

The boss fell silent.

He gritted his teeth, then made a bold decision. "You're right. So if you let us go... we won't go back. In exchange, I'll tell you the organization's secrets."

"Boss!" his men shouted, panicked.

If they weren't already injured, they would've rushed over to shut him up.

You can joke while you eat, but you can't eat while you joke.

They might be skinned alive for failing the mission—but at least they'd be alive.

Betray the organization, though? That meant certain death—and their families might be dragged down with them.

Norah stopped a few steps away. “Seems like your team doesn’t take orders very well. There’s a police station nearby. If I call now, the cops will be here in five minutes. I’m guessing you don’t even have legal status here, do you?”

She wasn’t exactly sure what this organization was, but considering Sophia was a foreign child, their headquarters were likely overseas.

These people probably snuck in illegally.

No IDs, attempted murder—yeah, their fate wouldn’t be pretty.

“Tell me—what’s the name of your organization? And why are they targeting my family?”

Norah genuinely didn’t get it.

She and Kevin kept to themselves. They hadn’t crossed anyone. Why were they being hunted?

And these people didn’t just want to scare them—they were ready to kill a baby. They were after her entire family.

“Our organization is called... Shadow Organization,” the boss said grimly. “We targeted you because the Edwards family has money. You messed with our boss’s business before. Taking someone’s money is like killing their parents. Now he wants payback.”

“That’s it?” Norah frowned, then kicked him again. “Do you realize how many lives you’ve hurt?”

“I know. If I had a choice, I wouldn’t be doing this. But we’re all orphans. The organization took us in when we were young. We were trained in the shadows. Disobeying means torture and death. Please, now that I’ve told you the truth... can you let us go?”

Norah didn’t respond.

She stood still, lost in thought.

After a moment, the boss tried again. “I can tell you a secret—about a treasure. Whoever finds it will be rich—like, country-level rich. Please, come closer. I’ll only tell you.”

It was a tempting offer. Most people wouldn’t resist the bait.

And sure enough, Norah was intrigued.

She stepped forward.

The boss seized the moment. He whipped out a micro-syringe and jabbed it into her arm.

He never planned to betray the organization.

So what if Norah could fight? She was still just a woman—easy to fool.

He made up the treasure just to trap her.

Once the drug kicked in—it only took five minutes—Norah would be the one on her knees, begging them.

Kevin doted on his wife. Once they had Norah, he'd have no choice but to cooperate. When the mission succeeded, they'd all be rewarded handsomely.

But just as he started fantasizing about the future—

Everything went wrong.

Norah yanked her arm back, stomped on his already-injured foot, snatched the syringe, and plunged it into his arm instead.

The entire move was flawless.

The boss stared at her, stunned. “How... how did this happen? You didn't believe me?”

No way a normal person could've reacted that fast.

There was only one explanation—Norah had seen through him from the start. She probably hadn't believed a word he said.

“How could I ever trust someone like you?” Norah sneered. “Your guys were tense before you started talking. The moment you did, they all relaxed. There's only one reason for that—you were lying.”

You can't fake micro-expressions.

And the treasure? Total nonsense. If he really knew where it was, he'd keep it for himself. Why share it?

“The name of your organization? Probably fake, too. Doesn't matter—I'll find out. Oh, and this syringe?”

She lifted it and gave it a shake.

She hadn't used the full dose earlier—she'd saved some on purpose.

With lab testing, they'd figure out exactly what this mystery drug was.

“You evil woman! You’ve got a heart like a snake! Any man who marries you is doomed! No one would want a woman like you!” the boss shouted, totally defeated.

His final trick had failed. He couldn’t stand. He had no weapons. He was done—completely at her mercy.

Norah ignored the insults.

Better to be cursed for being ruthless than to lie there and beg for mercy.

While waiting for the cops, she pulled out a bag, carefully wrapped the syringe in paper towels, and sealed it inside. No risk of getting pricked.

## **Chapter 692**

Over on Kevin’s side—

After the meeting, Kevin picked up his phone to call Norah.

She should’ve been home by now, so he dialed their house number.

It rang a few times, then a little voice answered. “Dad!”

“Hey, Cooper. Why are you answering? Where’s your mom?” Kevin’s voice instantly softened.

“I don’t know.” Cooper sighed. “She left earlier and never came back. I was gonna ask—why did Mom stay with you so long?”

Kevin frowned.

That didn’t sound right.

Norah had left right after dropping off some documents. Even if she made a couple of stops, she should’ve been home by now.

“Cooper, is everything okay there? Anyone strange come by?” Kevin’s tone sharpened.

Something wasn’t right. He needed to get home. Fast.

Cooper yawned, walked into his room, and pulled up the security feed. “Dad, the yard’s clear. Just the two bodyguards walking around. Everything looks normal. My sister woke up—Aunt Wang fed her, I played with her, now she’s asleep again.”

He gave his dad a full update, but he could sense something was off.

Kevin didn’t ask questions unless there was a reason.

Cooper remembered the car ride when Sophia got sent to the embassy—he'd overheard the men in black.

Were they trying to hurt someone?

Everything seemed fine at home... but wait. Mom still wasn't back.

Cooper's heart sank. "Dad, please go find Mom. I think something's wrong. She promised me KFC. She never breaks her promises. She wouldn't stay out this long. I'm scared something happened."

"I hear you, Cooper. Don't worry. Nothing's going to happen to your mom—or to me. We'll both come home safe, okay?"

After hanging up, Kevin immediately tried calling Norah.

But she was at the police station. Her phone was silenced as she gave her statement.

Kevin called again. And again. Still nothing. His anxiety shot through the roof.

Then he remembered—the GPS tracker on Norah's car.

He opened the app, located her vehicle, and sped over.

When he got there, only three cars were parked. Norah's was blocked in, sitting far in the back.

The place was deserted. Blood stained the ground.

His chest tightened. Was that Norah's blood?

Sweat broke out across his back.

He reminded himself—Norah was trained. She could fight. But there had been multiple cars. More than one attacker.

If he'd been there, she never would've been in danger.

He searched the area, calling her name, asking around. Nothing.

Just as his hope was slipping away—

"Kevin."

Norah's voice.

He turned and rushed to her, wrapping her in his arms. “You scared the hell out of me. I couldn’t reach you—I didn’t know where you were. I thought something happened...”

If anything had happened to Norah, he didn’t know how he’d survive it. Cooper and Reina needed their mom. They were just little kids. Without her... how could they be okay?

“I’m sorry,” Norah whispered. “I had to give a statement. My phone was on silent. But I’m okay now, really.”

Kevin pulled back and scanned her. His stomach dropped.

“You’re bleeding.”

“There’s no injury. It’s not my blood,” she said, rolling up her sleeves. “See? Just a few bruises.”

Kevin still wasn’t convinced. “This isn’t over. They’ll come after us again.”

Norah looked him straight in the eye. Her voice was calm but firm. “Then we’ll fight back. I’m not scared—not as long as I have you. You’ll protect us, Kevin.”

No matter who they were up against, she knew they’d face it together.

“I turned them in to the police,” she added. “They didn’t say much, but I got this.”

She pulled a wrapped syringe from her bag and handed it to Kevin.

“They tried to inject me with it. There’s still some liquid left. Can you get it tested?”

“Absolutely.” Kevin slipped it into his pocket.

Norah didn’t say everything—but he could tell it was a close call.

If that stuff had gotten into her system...

He couldn’t let anything like this happen again.

“Let’s go home. The kids are waiting,” he said, guiding her to the car.

“Oh, and if we pass a KFC, can we stop? I promised Cooper. The food I got earlier is cold. I want to bring him something fresh.”

Kevin didn’t hesitate. “Of course.”

On the way home, they talked quietly. Eventually, Norah brought up Ophelia.

“I wonder how she and Kian are doing. They’ve probably been busy. She helped watch the kids last time—I never thanked her properly. I should invite them out sometime.”

## Chapter 693

Norah wasn’t planning on having dinner just yet.

Things with the organization still hadn’t been resolved. If they went to see Ophelia and Kian now, wouldn’t that just draw the organization’s attention to them?

That wasn’t helping—it was putting others at risk.

“I’ll contact Kian once I get back. The company has a new project, and I’d like to bring him on board.” Kevin wanted to help Kian, and he also trusted his character.

Big or small, Kian always handled his projects with full dedication. He was never careless or lazy.

“Forget it. Just focus on driving. I’ll message Ophelia directly. They’re probably busy right now anyway.” Norah pulled out her phone, opened her chat with Ophelia, and sent a cute emoji.

There was no reply, so she didn’t follow up.

Soon, the car pulled up at home. Norah grabbed the KFC and headed inside. The moment she stepped through the door, Cooper ran over.

He didn’t care what she was carrying. He wrapped his arms around her. “Mom, why’d you come back so late? I was really scared. I thought something happened to you!”

“Mom’s fine. There were just too many people at KFC. Everything was sold out, so I had to wait a while longer,” Norah said, glancing at Kevin as they shared a quick look. It was a white lie.

Neither of them wanted to worry the kids.

Cooper let out a deep sigh, like a little grown-up. “Okay, that’s a relief. But next time, if it’s like that again, just come home. We don’t have to eat KFC.”

They had plenty of snacks at home, and their daily meals were always great. He didn’t need a burger that badly.

“You’re the sweetest, most thoughtful boy.” Norah picked him up and spun him around.

Cooper held tight to her shoulders, his legs dangling as he spun in the air. He burst into laughter, completely thrilled.

While Norah spent time with Cooper, Kevin went over to Reina, gently lifting her from the cradle and cradling her in his arms.

Back when Reina was first born, Kevin didn't know how she liked to be held and accidentally woke her up a few times.

But practice made perfect. Now his grip was just right. Reina stayed fast asleep, even blowing a tiny bubble.

Kevin couldn't help but laugh.

He just wished he had a camera on him to capture how adorable she looked right now.

"Sis, I want to see you too!" Cooper hopped out of Norah's arms and trotted over to Kevin.

He slowed down and lowered his voice, "Dad, I want to hold my sister too."

"Sure, just be careful."

Kevin gently passed Reina to Cooper, keeping his hands underneath her the entire time in case anything happened.

Cooper might've been young, but he was already good with babies. And Reina seemed to like him too—she slept even more soundly in his arms.

He gazed at her in awe. After a while, he handed her back to Kevin. "I wish she could grow up faster so I could share my KFC with her."

"You're awesome, Cooper. Such a good big brother." Norah never missed a chance to encourage her son when he did something kind.

As parents, she and Kevin just hoped their kids would grow up close and always look out for each other.

After a few laps around the living room with Reina in his arms, Kevin gently laid her back in the cradle and handed her over to Wang Ma to watch over.

Dinner was ready, and the three of them sat down together and ended the night with smiles and laughter.

After dinner, Cooper went off to watch cartoons. Norah, feeling a little bored, picked up her phone.

That's when she saw Ophelia's reply:  
**[Kian and I are going to the Civil Affairs Bureau next Monday. We're getting our divorce certificate.]**

Norah couldn't believe her eyes.

They'd been doing so well. And just recently, Ophelia had shared the happy news that she was pregnant. Why were they getting divorced now?

She even wondered if Ophelia's account had been hacked. Or maybe it was just a game of truth or dare.

**[Are you serious? This isn't funny. Divorce isn't something to joke about.]**

**[I'm not joking. I'm serious. I *want* the divorce. I *need* the divorce. And nothing's going to change my mind.]** Ophelia was holding her phone, feeling a wave of frustration.

She couldn't tell her parents—they'd only praise Emilio again and hint she should move on from Kian.

And she didn't feel like talking to anyone else.

After thinking it over, the only person she felt she could open up to was Norah. Norah had two kids and would understand.

**[If you're free now, can we talk over video?]**

Norah was already curious, so she went to the bedroom, shut the door, and started the video call.

Ophelia's face popped up on screen.

Compared to their last meeting, she looked noticeably thinner and more worn out. One look, and Norah's heart sank. "What happened? Did you guys fight?"

That couldn't be it.

They were married. Even if they had disagreements, they should be able to work things out.

And how could Kian see Ophelia like this and not do something?

"I wish it were just a fight. But it's over, Norah. We're filing on Monday, and after the one-month cooling-off period, we'll be done. No going back." Ophelia's voice was calm, but heavy with exhaustion.

She had tried to push the feelings away, to convince herself she was fine. But when the world got quiet, the pain always came rushing back.

"Ophelia, you've always been there for me. If you trust me, talk to me. Maybe I can help." Norah didn't want to jump in and tell her to fix things—she needed to understand first.

So Ophelia told her everything. About how Mrs. Paterson kept interfering. About the pregnancy. And finally, she stood up and showed her now-flat belly.

**Chapter 694**

Ophelia stood in front of the mirror, gently pressing her palm against her stomach.

“A while ago, I was starting to show. Just a little bump. But now... nothing.”

No baby. No extra weight. Nothing left.

Norah was stunned. Her voice trembled, “The baby... you lost the baby?”

There’s no pain like losing a child.

She knew how much Ophelia had looked forward to that baby. As a mom herself, Norah felt her own heart break right then and there.

But in a moment like this, words felt completely useless.

“Yeah,” Ophelia whispered. “At first I was numb. Couldn’t even think straight. But after I got off that operating table... everything became crystal clear. His mom always looked down on me. So why did she suddenly start being so nice?”

Her voice turned cold.

If she could go back, she would’ve slapped herself for believing in any of it.

Why had she expected anything different from Mrs. Paterson? She never liked her. Pregnant or not, she was never going to be the daughter-in-law she approved of.

“What about Kian? How did he take it?” Norah asked softly.

“I don’t know. Honestly, I don’t care anymore. The baby’s gone. And so is the relationship. Even if Kian cuts ties with his mom—it won’t bring my baby back.” Ophelia let out a long sigh.

She had thought it through.

Blood’s thicker than water. No matter how mad Kian got, he was still her son. And Ophelia didn’t have proof. Just suspicions. Even if she had proof, what would it change?

Sue her? Ask for compensation?

What was the point?

It wouldn’t bring her baby back.

“It’s okay. Don’t overthink it. Just take care of yourself.” Norah’s voice was soft. “Some people say if a baby and mother have a deep bond, they’ll find their way back. Maybe next time...”

“I hope not,” Ophelia interrupted, her eyes dim. “I don’t deserve him. I failed him once. He deserves a better family.”

“Don’t say that. No one could’ve predicted this. Who would think a grandmother could be so cruel?” Norah still couldn’t wrap her head around it.

Mrs. Paterson had likely caused her own grandson’s death.

“Let’s not talk about it anymore,” Ophelia said, her voice low. “There’s no proof. Just a gut feeling. Either way, Kian and I are over.”

She paused, then asked, “Would it be okay if I came and stayed with you for a few days?”

The Edwards home was big—one more person wouldn’t be an issue.

“If you don’t mind, I can even help out with Reina. She’s so sweet.”

Norah hesitated.

She wanted to help, she really did. But with everything going on...

“To be honest, we’re being watched. Reina was poisoned by another kid. And I was attacked by criminals just today. I’m afraid if you stay here, you’ll be dragged into it.”

“I’m not scared,” Ophelia said firmly.

She had her reasons for wanting out.

“Think about it. One—they probably already know we’re friends. Two—I’ll bring bodyguards. If anything, we’ll all be safer together.”

She couldn’t stay at home anymore.

Emilio kept showing up, playing nice in front of her parents. It made her sick. But her parents liked him, and she didn’t have the heart to tell them the truth.

She’d already caused them enough pain.

Now that she was back home and getting divorced, how could she start a fight again?

So she stayed quiet.

But she couldn’t live like that. She needed to get out, even for a little while.

“Then come,” Norah said. “I’m home most of the time anyway. We can talk, relax, maybe start a new hobby. It’ll be better than moping around all day.”

After they hung up, Ophelia didn’t waste a minute—washed up, changed clothes, packed her suitcase, and went downstairs.

Her parents were sitting on the couch, chatting.

“I don’t know when she’s going to heal,” Paloma said, staring at the TV. “She’s barely eating or sleeping. I can’t take it.”

Brody puffed on a cigarette. “We’ve done what we could. This divorce is ridiculous. Dragging on for a month. Back in our day, you could get it done the same day.”

“Don’t get me started,” Paloma grumbled. “That stupid cooling-off period. One party can even cancel the process. I bet Kian’s stalling on purpose.”

They had given Kian more chances than he deserved.

And what did he do? Leave their daughter broken and grieving. Even without the full story, they could tell—Ophelia had suffered.

Brody suddenly slammed his fist on the table. “He’s got some nerve. Doesn’t he run a company? If he won’t let her go, we’ll make sure no one does business with him again.”

He meant it.

Kian had used their daughter for business. That was over.

Upstairs, Ophelia came down with her suitcase. “Mom, Dad—I’m heading out for a few days. I just need to clear my head. Don’t worry.”

## **Chapter 695**

“Ophelia, where are you going?” Paloma stood up quickly and rushed to her daughter’s side.

Brody stepped in too, grabbing her suitcase. “We’re not stopping you from going out for a bit, but it’s really late. You should be getting to bed.”

“I’m not just going for a walk. I’m staying over at a friend’s—Norah’s place. You know her.” Ophelia brought up Norah on purpose, hoping it would ease their concern.

Brody and Paloma exchanged a look. They knew Norah, sure—but they weren’t comfortable with her leaving.

They remembered how Ophelia and Kian had first fallen in love when she stayed at the Edwards’ house.

And now, just as the divorce was about to happen, she wanted to see Norah again? What if Kian was there too? What if she got sucked back in?

They couldn’t risk it.

“Sweetheart, maybe don’t go tonight. Norah’s got two little ones—she’s probably exhausted. You showing up might add to her stress. Why not stay home tonight? You can sleep with me,” Paloma said softly, looping her arm through her daughter’s.

She just wanted to be close to her for a little longer.

Mr. Labrie nodded in agreement.

Ophelia knew what they were thinking and let out a quiet sigh. “I’m going alone—just me. I know Norah’s busy, which is why I want to help with the kids. I’ve taken care of Reina before.”

Paloma softened a little. “How long are you planning to stay?”

She had her reasons for asking. Before having Ophelia, she’d suffered a miscarriage. That grief had never gone away.

So when Ophelia was born, she gave her all the love she had.

Now, Ophelia had lost her own child. Maybe being around another baby could help ease that pain—just a little.

“I don’t know yet,” Ophelia said. “I’ll stay as long as I need to. Could be a while.”

“Alright. But it’s too late for you to go alone. I’ll drive you,” Brody said firmly.

He needed to make sure that punk Kian wasn’t anywhere nearby. And if he was, Brody had no problem chasing him off—by any means necessary.

“Dad, can you also get me some real bodyguards? Guys who can actually fight. Like, one man taking down ten would be ideal,” Ophelia added, remembering something Norah had said over the phone.

That made Brody laugh.

“Don’t worry—I’ll get you ten of them if you want. The real deal.”

He meant it. He’d pay top dollar for serious muscle. If Kian showed up again, they’d beat him down first and ask questions later. Brody would gladly cover the hospital bill.

Anything for a little justice.

“Thanks, Dad. Let’s go now, or you’ll be home way too late.”

On the way to the Edwards’ house, Brody kept giving instructions. “I’m also hiring a private chef for you. You need proper meals. Take care of yourself.”

At home, he always made nutritious soups for her himself.

Now that she'd be staying somewhere else, he didn't want her cooking or relying on someone who might not care as much. Having a chef made sense.

"You really thought of everything," Ophelia said softly, touched.

She felt lucky to have parents who cared so deeply.

Brody held her hand. "It's not about planning things out. It's just love. Real love means wanting you safe and happy. Always remember that."

Ophelia nodded. "I will."

She'd been through so much. If she didn't wake up now, she'd just be burying herself deeper.

As they neared the Edwards' home, Ophelia sent Norah a text.

Norah met them at the door. "Hi, Uncle Brody. Sorry to trouble you so late. Would you like to come in for tea?"

"No need. You young people have plenty to talk about. I'm heading back to your aunt so we can enjoy our peace and quiet," Brody said with a grin.

He'd be back in the morning with the bodyguards. They'd be like human surveillance cameras—Kian wouldn't get anywhere near.

After he left, Ophelia and Norah walked toward the villa together.

Halfway there, Ophelia stopped. The night was pitch-black, and the wind was strong, dust blowing into her eyes.

She wiped her face and looked at Norah. "Do you think I'm being ungrateful? My parents are getting older. They should be relaxing, enjoying life. But because of me, they're still so worried."

"No way. You love them more than anyone. You've never shut them out," Norah said gently, rubbing her back.

Ophelia couldn't hold it in anymore. Tears streamed down her face.

At home, she didn't dare cry during the day—she didn't want to upset her parents. And at night, she held back so she wouldn't wake up with swollen eyes.

But now, with Norah beside her, she could finally let it all out.

Norah stayed with her quietly until she finished crying. Then she pulled out a wet wipe and gently dabbed her face. "Let it out. After that, get a good night's sleep."

“Will you come with me to the Civil Affairs Bureau on Monday?” Ophelia asked. “I don’t want to face Kian alone. And I know Teresa will be there.”

Just saying her name made her heart ache.

She didn’t get it. Why would a woman like Teresa choose to be the other woman? What was so appealing about being someone’s mistress?

“Kian wouldn’t bring her,” Norah said quickly. “That would be crazy—especially on the day you’re finalizing the divorce. He’d be burning the last bridge.”

She knew Kian. He wasn’t that reckless—or at least she hoped not.

“Well, we’ll see,” Ophelia said, wiping her nose. “Even if he doesn’t bring Teresa, he’ll probably come with his mom. And honestly? I believe this now: There’s no marriage a mother-in-law can’t ruin.”

She let out a bitter laugh. “I just got unlucky with mine.”

## **Chapter 696**

Norah gave her a tight hug. “Forget all that. You’re here now—let’s focus on something good. How about a garden barbecue tonight?”

“Sure,” Ophelia said, managing a smile. “But can I see your kids first?”

“Of course,” Norah said.

In the living room, Reina was wide awake, eyes full of curiosity. Cooper ran over, waving a rattle. “Sister!” The jingle made Reina giggle.

She reached for it, but Cooper teased her, holding it high. “Come get it!”

Reina’s little arms flailed but missed. Her face scrunched up—and she started crying.

“Don’t cry!” Cooper said quickly, handing her the rattle. “I was just playing.”

Reina quieted down, clutching it, and shook it under Cooper’s guidance. Her laughter came back, eyes crinkling with joy.

Ophelia watched, a little envious. “Norah, this is my dream life. Not riches—just this. Family. Kids. A home that feels warm.”

“You’ll have it,” Norah said. Time would heal her. Her job was to help her get there.

Cooper twirled around. “Aunt Labrie, good evening!”

“Hey, you,” Ophelia said, scooping him up for a kiss. “You’re such a big boy now. Let’s go see Reina.”

She carried him over to the cradle and gazed at Reina. Her heart melted. So sweet, so precious. She set Cooper down and gently held Reina, softly humming a lullaby.

Aunt Wang walked over. “Miss Labrie, let me take her. You’ll wear yourself out.”

“She’s getting sleepy,” Ophelia said, handing her over reluctantly. Reina wasn’t hers—she couldn’t hold her forever.

“Wife, I’m done with work,” Kevin said, stepping out of the study. “Free tomorrow.” He nodded at Ophelia. “You two chat—I’m heading to bed.”

“You should go too, Norah,” Ophelia said. “I’m tired. I think I’ll sleep early.”

Their family’s warmth made her feel like an outsider. Her marriage was over—she didn’t want to bring her sadness into their happiness.

“You eat tonight?” Norah asked, concerned. She could still see the traces of earlier tears.

“Yeah, at home,” Ophelia said. “I’m a grown woman—I can manage.”

“If you get hungry, just ask Aunt Wang for a snack,” Norah said, walking her to a cozy guest room with a dressing area and private bath.

“Thanks,” Ophelia said sincerely.

Alone, she opened the window. The wind was sharp and cold, stinging her face.

Her phone rang—it was her dad.

She answered, and her eyes welled up immediately.

“Ophelia, you okay over there?” Brody asked. “I’ve got the bodyguards and a nutritionist coming tomorrow. Don’t shortchange yourself, okay? I want my healthy girl back.”

His words hit her hard. “Dad, don’t go overboard. I’m just here for a couple of days. After Monday’s divorce, I’ll leave.”

“What’s wrong?” Brody asked, instantly worried. “If something’s off, I’ll come get you now.” He grabbed his keys.

“No,” Ophelia said quickly. “Norah and Kevin are great, and their kids are adorable. But I feel like I don’t belong. Their family’s so perfect—what am I doing here?”

“Come home,” Brody said. “Your mom and I are okay on our own, but we’re happiest when you’re with us. You’re what makes our family complete.”

Ophelia hesitated. “I have that downtown apartment. Maybe I’ll move there, get a pet.”

“Ophelia, you’re not strong enough yet,” Brody said firmly. “Stay home for at least six months.”

To him, married or not, she’d always be his little girl.

## **Chapter 697**

Brody had his own plan. If Ophelia moved out, how could they steer her toward Emilio?

“Dad, I’ll visit every day, or I’ll have a nutritionist come to my place. Please, just let me do this,” Ophelia pleaded.

Brody finally nodded, giving in.

That night, Ophelia barely slept. The bed was soft, but her mind was overwhelmed with anxiety.

By morning, Kevin and Norah had made a warm breakfast, setting out a plate for her.

“Norah, I’ve been thinking,” Kevin said as she set the table. “Kian wouldn’t cheat. There’s got to be some misunderstanding in all this.”

Norah nodded silently. Their marriage was still young, their bond solid. A divorce felt like such a waste. But she hesitated. “Ophelia just lost her baby. She’s emotionally fragile. I understand her pain—I just can’t push her to take him back.”

“I could call Kian,” Kevin offered. “Clear things up, maybe help smooth it over.”

“Wait,” Norah said. “I’m dropping Cooper off at kindergarten tomorrow, then going with Ophelia to the Civil Affairs Bureau. I’ll talk to Kian in person. It’ll be clearer face-to-face.”

She frowned. “I’m curious about this Teresa. What kind of woman knowingly plays the mistress?”

No one respected a homewrecker—and Norah was no exception.

Kevin smiled. “I’m with you, always. No woman in this world could ever take your place.”

His heart was full—with Norah, Cooper, and Reina. There was no space for anyone else.

“We’re basically an old married couple now,” Norah teased. “I trust you. Now let’s get this food out before it gets cold.”

“Wait,” Kevin said, suddenly serious.

Norah paused, thinking something was wrong. But he just kissed her on the forehead.

“I love you.”

Cooper’s voice broke the moment. “Mom! Dad! I’m starving!”

Norah gave Kevin a playful shove and whispered, “He’s right there—behave. Kids are sharp these days.”

“You’re right,” Kevin said, smirking as his eyes lingered on her lips. After all these years, he still adored her.

“Charmer,” Norah said with a roll of her eyes. She carried the tray out and set it down. “Cooper, wash your hands before eating.”

“Already did!” Cooper raised his hands proudly. “Teacher showed us—super clean!”

“Big kid,” Norah smiled, lifting him into his chair and peeling his egg.

Kevin poured milk and handed a glass to Ophelia.

“Thanks, Mr. Edwards,” she said.

“Don’t mention it,” Kevin replied. “Eat up.”

Ophelia stayed quiet, watching the family laugh and chat. Jealousy quietly crept in. She and Kian once had that. Endless conversations, shared laughs—especially when she was pregnant. Without his mother’s interference, their baby could’ve brought them that kind of happiness.

With Kevin home, he played with Cooper and Norah. Ophelia held Reina, but once the baby drifted off to sleep, she gently laid her in the cradle and slipped off to her guest room. She felt like an outsider, watching a happiness that used to be hers.

She stayed in the room all afternoon, only coming out for dinner.

“Didn’t sleep well lately,” she told Norah. “Just trying to catch up.”

After dinner, she retreated again, lying awake until midnight. When morning came, the alarm jolted her up. She got dressed, packed her things, and left with Norah to take Cooper to kindergarten.

The school wasn’t far. At the gate, a little boy was throwing a tantrum. “I want to go home! I want my parents! This place sucks!”

The security guard didn't dare restrain him—no one wanted to risk harming a child. Parents were quick to anger when it came to their kids.

The boy broke free and ran toward his parents, crying.

Cooper, his little backpack bouncing, ran up to him.

"Kindergarten's fun! There's food, games, friends. You ever play Eagle Catches Chicken?"

The boy sniffled, shook his head. "No."

"Sticky Bubblegum?" Cooper asked.

### **Chapter 698**

Cooper rattled off more games, and the boy kept shaking his head—his tears forgotten.

"What are those?" the boy asked, his curiosity piqued.

"Come with me," Cooper said with a grin. "We'll play them all with the other kids."

The boy stood up and grabbed Cooper's hand. "Okay, I'll go."

His parents let out a relieved sigh, thanking Norah and praising Cooper.

"They're classmates now," Norah said. "They might even become friends. No need to thank us."

Pride filled her chest as she watched Cooper lead the boy inside. She and Kevin had raised him well.

Once the kids were inside, Norah and Ophelia drove to the Civil Affairs Bureau.

Ophelia's hands were clenched in her lap, nerves frayed. Had Kian been with Teresa this whole time? His parents wanted Teresa as his wife—just like her parents had tried to push her toward Emilio.

The drive felt endless. When they finally arrived and parked, Norah stepped out with her.

They waited outside until Kian showed up—alone.

"Ophelia, it's been a while," Kian said, eyes red.

How had things gotten this bad?

Ophelia took a step back. "Let's not talk here. Let's just get a number and get this over with."

Kian gave Norah a brief nod. She returned it, but held back her questions for now. They went inside together.

The place was packed. Some were registering marriages, others—like them—ending one.

They took a number and waited in line.

“Ophelia, please don’t do this,” Kian said. “I love our marriage. We fought so hard to be together. Ending it like this—it’s such a waste.”

“I already told you,” Ophelia said firmly. “If you can bring back our child, I’ll stay. Otherwise, I’m done.”

Marriage had always meant everything to her. She would never bring up divorce lightly—but once she did, there was no going back.

“Ophelia,” Kian whispered, eyes full of pain. Losing her was breaking him.

His phone rang. It was Mrs. Paterson.

He ignored it.

But she kept calling—again and again. He silenced it, but the screen kept lighting up.

“Go ahead and answer it,” Ophelia said. “We’re divorcing. No need to walk on eggshells around me anymore.”

Another month and they’d be strangers. Their ties—gone.

Kian finally answered, worn down. “Mom, what is it?”

“Where have you been?” Mrs. Paterson’s voice was laced with worry.

Ever since Kian brought up the Rhodiola, she’d had her husband dispose of it and sent Emilia to distract him. The evidence was gone—he could search all he wanted and never find it. Still, she panicked when he stopped taking their calls. And now, on divorce day, she couldn’t stay quiet.

“Don’t forget about the Civil Affairs Bureau,” she said.

“You called nonstop just to remind me I’m here?” Kian asked, incredulous.

He looked around—some couples were getting married, others breaking up. Yet here was his mother, urging him to divorce and already lining up a mistress before it was even final. What a joke.

“Ophelia’s the one who wanted the divorce,” Mrs. Paterson said, pushing the blame. “What, you think she’ll actually take you back?”

Ophelia *had* said the word. But only because she was heartbroken. Only because she couldn’t take his family anymore.

Kian didn’t argue. His mother never listened, never reflected on anything.

He looked at Ophelia again. After today, they’d have to wait a month. Then she might disappear for good.

“I’m here,” he said quietly.

Back at the hospital, Mrs. Paterson looked at Teresa by her bedside and chirped, “Good. After you’re done, come visit me. I’m weak—you’re all I’ve got left.”

Kian ended the call without responding. “Home” should feel safe. But he’d rather be at work dealing with sharks than deal with her.

“Your mom got what she wanted,” Ophelia said. She hadn’t heard the call, but the tone was obvious. “We’re done. Go be the loyal son.”

The pain of losing their child still burned—fueling every bitter word.

## **Chapter 699**

Kian didn’t flinch at Ophelia’s jab. Guilt tore through him. “I’m sorry, Ophelia. I really am.”

“No need,” she said, rising to her feet. “I don’t want your apology. Don’t waste it on me. Our number’s been called—let’s get this over with.” She walked with Kian to the counter. “We’re here to file for divorce.”

The staff member looked at them. “Are you both sure about this?”

Ophelia gave a firm nod.

Kian stayed silent, his face showing hesitation. The staff noticed and leaned into their duty to help couples reconsider. “Arguments happen. Divorce isn’t always the solution. Plenty regret it—some even end up remarrying.”

“We’ve made our decision,” Ophelia cut in. “Please move forward with it.”

Her tone left no room for discussion. The staff nodded. “There’s a one-month cooling-off period. You can cancel anytime during that. Afterward, you’ll get the certificate.”

Ophelia thanked her and walked out.

Just as they reached the door, Emilio appeared holding a bouquet of bright red roses. Norah, who had followed Ophelia, froze when she saw him. She glanced at Kian. This was bad—whatever chance Kian had to win Ophelia back just went up in smoke. And Emilio? He was circling like a hawk.

“Ophelia, congratulations on your fresh start,” Emilio said, holding out the roses.

She hesitated. “Emilio, what are you doing? Take those and leave. People will get the wrong idea.”

They had just filed for divorce—accepting flowers from another man at the Civil Affairs Bureau? That would look terrible.

“I want people to see how incredible you are,” Emilio whispered, leaning in. “Losing you was his mistake. If he can’t value you, someone else will.” He shot Kian a smug grin.

Kian’s fists clenched. He knew Emilio’s angle—he’d pulled this same act in the parking lot. If Ophelia chose a good man who truly loved her, Kian might’ve stepped back for her sake. But Emilio? Rich, polished, and completely fake. He’d chase her just to drop her. Kian couldn’t let that happen.

“Don’t take his flowers,” Kian snapped.

“Who are you to tell me that?” Ophelia fired back, turning toward him.

Before Kian could respond, Teresa rushed over from a taxi. “As your ex-husband,” she cut in, “Miss Labrie, you’re still married. Accepting another man’s flowers? That’s cheating.”

Ophelia almost laughed. Cheating? Her? What about Kian and Teresa? She and Emilio had nothing going on—but even if they did, Teresa, the mistress, had no right to speak.

“Who said you could come?” Kian barked, furious. He shoved Teresa back. “This has nothing to do with you. Get out of here.”

“Kian, wake up!” Teresa cried. “She’s been cozy with him even before the divorce. Can’t you see what’s happening?”

But this wasn’t just about Kian anymore—she’d tipped off nearby entertainment reporters. Mrs. Paterson wanted headlines, and Teresa delivered. Gossip about the Labrie heiress? Irresistible clickbait.

“Teresa!” Kian shouted, barely holding back. He couldn’t stand Ophelia being dragged through the mud.

Ophelia had had enough. “Cut the drama. It’s pathetic. We’ll get the certificate in a month. Your girlfriend can’t wait to make it official, so go on. Don’t drag me down. Let’s move on.”

“Kian, losing her was your loss,” Emilio added, slipping an arm around Ophelia’s waist. “You never deserved her. Good thing she’s finally free.”

Kian’s glare zeroed in on Emilio’s hand. He wanted to cut it off like a butcher with pig’s trotters.

“Miss Labrie, letting your lover trash your husband?” Teresa shouted gleefully. This was the perfect scandal. It would blow up online and maybe even tank Labrie stock. Ophelia would never forgive Kian after this.

Norah stepped forward, but Ophelia shot her a look that made her stop. “Let it go,” she said calmly. “I don’t argue with dogs. Norah, go home to your daughter.”

“And you?” Norah asked.

“Emilio’s driving me,” Ophelia said, easing her concern. The public chaos was overwhelming—Norah gave a silent nod and walked away.

Ophelia followed Emilio to the parking lot.

## Chapter 700

Kian watched them walk off, his heart shattering. He wanted to pull her back, hold her close—but what right did he have now?

“Kian, I’m a woman—I know how girls like her operate,” Teresa said. “She’s already with another guy but won’t let you go. You’re just her fallback.”

“Shut up,” Kian growled, fists tightening. “I don’t hit women, but you’re really testing me.”

Teresa bit her lip. Why was Kian still so obsessed with Ophelia? She backed off, knowing pushing further would only make things worse.

Instead, she made a call. “Got the footage I asked for? Good. Post it. I’ll send the rest of the payment.”

The payout was generous, and the marketing account she hired worked fast. Soon, Ophelia’s name shot to the top of trending searches. The post featured a clipped video of her leaving the Civil Affairs Bureau while Emilio gave her flowers. Teresa added photos Emilio had sent to Paloma, piecing together a damning timeline.

Netizens went wild:

**[Miss Labrie was cheating before the divorce? Beach dates and flowers? Shameless!]  
[So gross. Getting flowers right after filing? Embarrassing, not romantic.]  
[Straight-up cheating. Seeing someone else while married.]  
[Who knows how many men she’s been juggling? Poor husband got played.]  
[He stayed silent, took the hit. Without the paparazzi, she’d walk away clean.]  
[It’s all about money. She’s rich—he probably endured just to get paid.]**

Emilio saw the comments first. His assistant looked nervous. “Mr. Fletcher, should we suppress the trend?”

“No,” Emilio said, closing his laptop. If he helped now, Ophelia might thank him—but she’d still keep him at arm’s length. Better to let her fall apart first. Then she’d come to him—and hate Kian even more.

But the outrage wasn’t spreading fast enough for his liking. So, he paid trolls to stir things up even more.

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### **Labrie Residence**

After parting ways with Emilio midway through the drive, Ophelia returned home. “Mom, Dad, I filed for divorce today. We’ll get the certificate in a month. I’m moving to my apartment. Please don’t worry.”

“If you’re moving, we’re helping,” Paloma insisted. “You’re not doing this alone.”

Ophelia didn’t want to trouble them—they were aging and busy—but their insistence was firm. Turning them down would only hurt them. She gave in. “No heavy lifting. I’ve got movers. Just keep me company.”

Brody and Paloma nodded. Movers hauled the boxes while Paloma made her bed, layering it with soft sheets. “You love a comfy bed. I brought extra sets—make sure to change them often.”

“Mom, I’m not a kid anymore,” Ophelia said, holding her hand. “It’s my turn to take care of you.”

Brody’s phone rang. His face darkened as he hung up and opened his social media. One look at the trending topic and his temper flared. “That bastard Kian!” he snapped. Everything Kian’s family had done to Ophelia—and now this? Dragging her name through the dirt? If they didn’t have money, she’d be ruined by now.

“Dad, what happened?” Ophelia asked, concerned. “Why are you talking about him?”

Kian better not be bothering her father too.

“It’s nothing,” Brody said, pocketing his phone. “Rest. Your mom’s here. Don’t worry about a thing.”

He couldn’t let Ophelia see those awful comments.