

My Ex-Husband is Out of Control Chapter 19

Ella's POV

As I entered the dimly lit bar, the slap mark quivering on my cheek, I spotted my friend Trevis at the far end of the counter, starting the drinking without me. When he caught sight of me, he waved with a grin, looking cheerful and apparently not noticing the mark on my face,

"Hey," I greeted, sliding into the seat next to him.

Trevis glanced up, and that's when I saw the shock registering on his face. "What happened to you?"

I shrugged, trying to play it off. "Just a little misunderstanding."

"Who did it?" Trevis asked, concern lacing his voice as he leaned in closer.

I hesitated, remaining quiet. The bartender approached me, asking for my order. "I'll have a whiskey neat."

"Coming right up," the bartender replied, quickly preparing my drink.

Trevis continued to look at me curiously. He could tell at once that something was up, and he seemed to stifle his amusement at the way I was reacting.

I sighed, feeling a mix of embarrassment and frustration. "Long story."

Trevis couldn't contain his laughter any longer, and it echoed in the quiet bar. After a moment, he composed himself and said, "Well? Want to talk about it?"

Shaking my head, I was glad when the bartender handed me the drink. I quickly took a long gulp, actually appreciating the warm, burning sensation of the liquid as it went down my throat.

"Come on, this can't be another woman you cheated on in France!" he joked, chuckling. "You've only been here a short while. And aren't you still married, man?"

I knew that Trevis had gotten angry at me for getting married without telling him. After all, we went a long way back. We grew up together, and studied in the same high school, until he went off to study in France after graduation. We weren't always close, because I was pretty aloof back then,

Trevis, on the other hand, was always a bit envious of me when we were young, always following me around. So over time, we started hanging out more and our

band became strong

Of course I apologized to him already for that, explaining how the marriage happened fast and I didn't have time to tell everyone. It hadn't been a big celebration, anyway. In fact, it was sudden.

Hey, Elijah, it's fine, Trevis said, probably noticing my bad mood. He knew I wouldn't spill it out just like that. I wasn't the type. But it seemed he could read me well, because he mentioned Sophia right after. "Don't tell me you've been fighting with

our wife? What's going on?"

"Nothing. Let's forget about it."

Trevis shrugged. I really wanted him to drop it already.

"I remember when we were young kids, it was only Sabrina who could instantly sense this mood of yours." Trevis brought up. I stiffened at the mention of my childhood best friend.

He continued, "She really had a knack for calming you down and making you feel good again, right? You guys are absolutely connected! It was insane."

"Yeah," was all I said. But suddenly, memories from the past flashed in my mind. Sabrina Baker and I had been very close, and even at a young age, I loved her with all my heart. But then, one day, she went missing. I was devastated, and I had spent years searching for her along with her brother Chris – to no avail. Eventually, I just had to get on with my life.

"Wait, I just remembered..." Trevis abruptly said. "I met this girl today and I was thinking how she looked so familiar. Our design studio had a presentation earlier, and when this girl showed me her portfolio and I got to talk to her for a while, I realized she reminds me so much of Sabrina!"

was surprised, but I didn't think much of it. "There's a lot of girls who look like

Sabrina *

"Yes, but this one has a striking resemblance. I'm telling you! Maybe you should. as one of our interns."

come with me to my studio, because I plan to accept her. Maybe you should

Sure, I'm in Paris, anyway. How's business here?"

“Great!” he replied enthusiastically. “My studio’s been doing well and gaining popularity here. So when you go back to the US, I’m hoping we can work on a partnership. I’ll provide the designs for some of your projects.”

“Sure, I’d like that. We’re actually coming up with a European–inspired development. soon.

“That’s good. I actually met another American real estate developer during our exhibit at the Goldwell Institute of Art today and

“Wait, you were at the Goldwell Institute of Art?” I cut him off incredulously.

“Yes, why?”

“Uh, nothing, really,” I answered at once, not wanting to reveal my concerns to Travis. But knowing that Sophia went to that school, I got all excited. Perhaps Travis could be my ticket to visiting her there or “chancing upon her” within the campus. “That’s a really famous art school here, so it sounded familiar.”

“Yes, it is. Many of our in–house designers graduated from there. You really should visit the studio soon. And besides, I want you to meet that girl I’m telling you about.”

Since he mentioned her again, my thoughts shifted back to Sabrina. I haven’t been thinking about her for a long time now, ever since I’d gotten married and then almost divorced. I wasn’t sure if I wanted to meet anyone who resembled her.

But what if it’s really her this time? a small voice whispered in my head.

I finished off my drink with one gulp. Then turning to Travis, I leaned forward and asked, “What’s her name?”

“Julia Stanford. Have you heard of her?”

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Elijah’s POV

I shook my head, not wanting to delve into any more details about Sabrina or Julia. The rest of the night, my conversation with Travis was distracted.

“Hey, man, you seem really off tonight. Everything okay?” Travis asked with concern.

I sighed, swirling the drink in my glass. “I don’t know, Travis. Just a lot of stuff on my mind.”

“Emotional stuff?” he probed, raising an eyebrow. “Something to do with that slap mark on your cheek, perhaps?”

He was making it light, but I knew that he was becoming greatly concerned because I’d never been like this around him.

“Because I don’t think it’s work-related,” Trevis added. He was really quite perceptive. “You’re never like this when it’s about business. You would have tackled it head-on already.”

I

I shrugged, finishing my drink again and signaling to the bartender for a refill. I denied any issues but found myself drinking glass after glass, trying to numb everything that was bothering me.

As Trevis pulled out his cell phone and began typing, a suspicion crept into my mind. Was he messaging Connor? It wouldn’t be out of character for him to seek information through my assistant, who seemed to know more about my life than I did.

sometimes.

“What are you doing?” I asked, trying to sound casual.

Trevis looked up, a flicker of surprise crossing his face. “Nothing, just checking something.”

I raised an eyebrow. “Checking what? Are you texting Connor?”

Trevis hesitated, then shrugged. “Maybe. Just curious about what’s been going on with you.”

I shook my head, feeling a pang of annoyance. “Don’t bother. Connor doesn’t know anything. He has no clue whatsoever.”

Trevis looked intrigued. “Oh? And why is that?” I could sense that he was trying to fish out any information he could from me.

“Because even I don’t know what’s going on with me,” I muttered, taking another sip of yet another drink.

Trevis stared at me for a while in silence, probably not knowing what to make of it. Eventually, I gave out a sarcastic chuckle, raised my glass, and said, “Cheers” without any enthusiasm in my voice.

He shook his head, looking helpless, and asked the bartender to give him what I was having. “Let’s drink to that, whatever it is,” he told me, clinking his glass with mine before gulping it all down.

“Now that’s more like it,” I said, following his lead and finishing my current drink quickly too.

As the night wore on and the drinks kept coming, Trevis began to loosen up, his words slurring slightly as he leaned in closer.

“You know, Elijah,” he began, his tone more serious now, “you’re always like this. You never say anything, never communicate with anyone. If I were your wife, I’d be angry.

I

every single day.”

I listened to his words, the alcohol dulling the sting of his criticism. But his words hit home, stirring up thoughts I had long suppressed. I never realized that my reticence could hurt those who cared for me. Was I really so closed off, so distant?

Trevis continued to ramble, but his words became a distant buzz in my ears as I delved into my thoughts, contemplating the impact of my actions—or lack thereof- on those around me.

From a young age, I learned to rely on myself to solve problems. It seemed natural to deal with issues quietly, without seeking help from anyone. This self-reliance was my shield, protecting me from vulnerability.

But I seemed to have overlooked a crucial truth those who cared about me needed my care in return.

It was a revelation, a realization that hit me hard in that moment. I had unintentionally distanced myself from the people who wanted to support me, failing to see that my stoicism had left them feeling shut out.

“Hey, man!” Trevis suddenly said with a grin, interrupting my thoughts. “Why so quiet again? Are you thinking about Sabrina? Ohhh... No, no, no... I’m so sorry, I shouldn’t have mentioned it at all. I mean, she’s been missing for decades, and it’s not good for

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My Ex-Husband is Out of Control Chapter 21

Sophia's POV

I woke up with a start, my body tense. I had just drifted into a light sleep when the knock on the door jolted me awake. I glanced at the clock – past midnight.

For a moment, I lay still, listening intently, trying to make sense of the late-night disturbance. Burglar? Visitor? Or just a mistake?

I grabbed my phone, its soft glow illuminating the dark room, and dialed the police's number. But I didn't tap on the call button yet.

Slowly I tiptoed to the door, my heart pounding. The knock came again, louder this time, echoing through the silent apartment. I hesitated, unsure whether to answer. But a burglar wouldn't knock, right?

I looked through the peephole and saw the man standing there outside my door.*
Elijah!" I gasped in surprise. What the hell is he doing here again, and at this time of the night?!

Taking a few deep breaths, I was about to walk away and go back to sleep when I heard him call my name. For a while, I'd wanted to pretend it was just some bad dream. But then he knocked again. "Sophia?" he said.

Sighing, I went to open the door, not even caring that I was in my pajamas and probably looked like a mess. "Elijah, what are you doing here?" I immediately asked.

My eyes narrowed when I got a whiff of his scent – his favorite perfume mixed with the remnants of alcohol. His eyes were glassy and bloodshot too, so I knew that he'd

been drinking.

"You've obviously been drinking too much," I said with a hint of disdain before he could reply to me. ""Just come back when you don't have any alcohol in your system. Then we can talk." I certainly had no intention of dealing with a drunk man in the middle of the night, especially if that man was my ex-husband!

I began to close the door, but he stopped it with his hand. "I'm sorry for barging in like this, Sophia. But I just really wanted to know something..." His speech was a bit slurred, so I really didn't want to talk. But he was persistent. Taking a step closer, he blurted out, "Just tell me why you want this divorce so much even though you're pregnant with my child!"

Staring at him in disbelief, I realized I had no words to respond with. I felt so helpless.

We've been decussing this now for a long time, and I just wanted it to end so I could

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Elijah gaped at me in shock. But I wasn’t finished. “Why can’t you just let it go and let me be happy for once? I cried out, unshe

“But Sophie...”

I don’t let him out in. I kept on going, feeling as if I was an exploding volcano that couldn’t be controlled

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even just care... but I’ve long accepted the truth. So please, let’s not make it any harder then it already is. You’ve just gotten used to me like... like your assistant or your business or your money!”

I sighed as the negative emotions seeped out of me, replaced by numbness Th

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He frowned as he seemed to absorb my words. His eyes reflected pain, but maybe it was only his ego that was hurt.

Suddenly, before he could say anything, the phone in his hand rang. We both looked at it. Serena’s name flashed on the screen. Without thinking, I grabbed the phone and answered it.

“Serena? This is Sophie. Can you please come here to my house and take Elijah away?”

“What?” she responded, sounding taken aback

“Yes, he’s drunk and just came knocking late at night. Just come here already.” And with that, I ended the call and handed back Elijah’s phone.

He was bewildered. For a while, we gazed at one another, with him trying to search for meaning. But I was tired and defent. I didn’t even invite him in. I just wanted him to go away

“Sophia, I know you wanted a divorce because...” He spoke in a quiet and serious voice. But then he paused with hesitation before talking again. “Because I wasn’t there for you after you lost our baby. You were broken hearted and lonely and... But now that you’re pregnant again, I can take care of you, Sophia!”

“You think the main problem was the lost baby?!” I interrupted incredulously. “First of all, I certainly didn’t want a divorce just because of the babies. The problems started way before that! And second, I don’t think you really know why you want me back. Or if you actually want me back at all! You’ve obviously got issues, and it’s quite clear that you have a new girlfriend already too. So do us all a favor and stay away from me.”

I tried not to be affected by the flicker of pain that crossed his features. He opened his mouth to reply, but I didn’t let him speak anymore.

“Elijah, if you’re so obsessed about this pregnancy and the child I’m carrying, then I’ll just go to the hospital and end it.”

His eyes widened in shock. Just then, as if on cue, a figure appeared behind him in the dim hallway.

My Ex-Husband is Out of Control Chapter 22

Serena’s POV

Priiffinnngggg!

I woke up with a start. For a while, I thought it was morning already. But it was still dark outside.

It’s almost 3 am. Who the hell could be calling me?

The number was unfamiliar I answered it, anyway, “Hello?” I said in a sleepy voice, sitting up on my hotel bed.

“Hi” a low male voice greeted. “I’m so sorry to call you at this hour. My name is Trevis, and I’m a friend of Elijah’s. I got your number from his assistant Connor.”

“Oh, okay...”

"Listen, Serena, I was just wondering if you know whether Elijah got back to your hotel already?" He sounded worried. "It's just that we were together earlier and I noticed that his mood was a little off. He wasn't his usual self, and I'm just a bit worried about him."

I had already climbed off the bed and put on my slippers. "Let me check," I told Travis. "Hold on." I quickly went to the room beside mine and knocked several times on the door. There was no answer.

"He just suddenly took off while we were at the bar," Travis further explained.

"Oh, have you tried calling him?" I asked, beginning to feel perturbed.

"Yes, but he's not answering his phone."

My first thought was he might have gone to Sophia's place. That possibility made me frown and narrow my eyes. No, no, that can't be.

Aloud I said, "Thanks for letting me know. I'll call you if I hear from him. But don't worry, I'll be sure to find him."

As soon as we ended the call, I dialed Elijah's number, my heart pounding a little bit faster than normal. Pick up, Elijah, I pleaded silently as I went back to my own hotel room and began to pace back and forth. Come on, pick up! Pick up!

There was no answer. Shit, where could he be?!

I kept trying as the nervousness began to spread throughout my body. Finally, on the third call, he answered his phone. But before I could say anything, I heard a familiar female voice on the other end.

"Serena? This is Sophia..."

The color drained from my face. I almost dropped the phone. He really had gone to her!

It was like being splashed with ice on my face. I was suddenly very much alert. Elijah, who was supposed to be all high and mighty, still went to see her after everything that had happened! I couldn't believe it.

And when Sophia informed me that Elijah was drunk and asked me to come and get him, I didn't think twice. I simply grabbed a coat to put on over my sleepwear before rushing there.

I saw Elijah across the hallway, standing outside Sophia's door. I could hear their voices floating toward me, both sounding on edge. Sophia seemed distraught as they argued.

Meanwhile, it seemed incredulous that Elijah was the one almost begging her to be with him.

“Elijah, if you’re so obsessed about this pregnancy and the child I’m carrying, then I’ll just go to the hospital and end it.” I was shocked at Sophia’s words. Oh, my gosh! Did she really mean it?

When I checked on Elijah, my heart went out to him. I’ve never seen him in such a state of disarray!

But who told Elijah that Sophia’s pregnant with his child?! I wondered silently as I crept closer. And it seems like he cares about the baby! This can’t be! Could it just be the baby that he wants or does he really care about Sophia? Worse, does he love

her?!

I felt my heart rate rising, and I could sense both cold and warm sensations fusing inside my body and sending chills down my spine. This can’t be, I repeated to myself. If I’m going to break them up for good, I’ll need to start with this baby.

Eventually, Sophia noticed my presence. “He’s all yours,” she said flatly before closing the door. She didn’t even bother to say goodbye to Elijah, which brought me a sense of satisfaction.

Elijah looked at me helplessly. For the first time since I had known him, he appeared like a lost, miserable little boy.

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+25 BONUS

The next day, while we were having lunch together at the hotel, I noticed that he was quiet the entire time. At first, I tried to strike up various conversations about the business and other matters. But he wasn’t responsive at all.

“So... I met Trevis over the phone...” I opened up casually, wanting to lead the conversation toward last night’s events.

That caught his attention. “He called you?” he asked in surprise.

I nodded. “That’s why I got worried about you. Why did you go to Sophia’s? It was so late already.”

He looked away immediately. “Nothing important.”

“Nothing important?” I said incredulously, feeling frustrated too that he was acting like this. “It was past midnight!”

Suddenly, he turned to face me. He looked me straight in the eye and asked, “What do you know about the baby Sophia is carrying? Did you know I’m the father of that baby?”

“Of course not!” I answered defensively. Annoyed, I leaned forward and said, “But you should know that whether it’s yours or not, it won’t matter anymore because she intends to terminate the pregnancy, anyway.”

He was obviously taken aback. It was as if he was hearing it for the first time. “What did you say?” he asked, his eyes flashing with sudden anger. I saw his muscles tense and it seemed like I’d dropped a bomb on him.

“What did you say, Serena?!” he asked, raising his voice.

“I thought you guys agreed last night that Sophia would end the pregnancy,” I stated matter-of-factly. “And that she’s going to cut you out of her life completely.”

My Ex-Husband is Out of Control Chapter 23

Elijah’s POV

My eyes widened in alarm. I felt my heart plummeting to the ground just as I heard my breaths coming in short and

raspy.

“Don’t you remember what you said last night, Elijah?” Serena asked, looking anxious.

“I, uh...” My mind was a complete blank. I was so drunk last night that I couldn’t remember what had happened when I went to Sophia’s apartment. But I was pretty sure that we hadn’t talked about anything of that sort. “I don’t remember, but I know that Sophia would never do something like that. If she really said it, then she was probably just making it up or exaggerating to drive me away!”

“Well, it didn’t seem like it,” Serena responded casually. “I don’t think a woman can joke about something like that. And you know that Sophia’s not the type to drop empty threats. Besides, she already lost her baby once so perhaps it doesn’t really matter to her anymore, especially if it’s your child.”

Her words made my heart ache. It made me remember how Sophia and I met at the university, which eventually led to our first child together – an unplanned pregnancy that brought us into marriage in the first place.

I used to watch her closely as she made a presentation in class, noticing how she often bit her lower lip when she was nervous. Just like Sabrina, my childhood best friend. At that time, losing Sabrina still affected me greatly. I was still trying to search for her then, ever since she'd gone missing when we were kids. Sophia reminded me of Sabrina, so I found myself spending more and more time with her.

Sophia was sweet and beautiful and talented. I remembered how we'd gotten carried away at that graduation party, both of us having had a lot more to drink. Then a few months later, I ran into her at the hospital and found out she was pregnant. The memory was still vivid in my head.

"We should get married," I'd told her at once, being the responsible young man I always was. I knew and felt that it was the right thing to do. But I sure didn't expect her to say yes without much thought.

So we had that shotgun wedding... It was like a whirlwind romance that ended up in a forced marriage that neither of us was ready for. Damn, I didn't know how to feel. Everything just happened so fast!

We weren't wing together for long when she had an unexpected marriage. We lost The say, and found myself feeling lost too and sure about anything

"Your wife's too weak to see this pregnancy through the doctor had told me then." it seems like she's been six since she was a young child, so it's best that she rest for a year or two before you try again for another baby"

Since then, I didn't want her to do much around the house I didn't want her coming to the office because it would just stress her out. All I ever wanted was for her to be happy and healthy, especially when she was with me, even if we could not have any children anymore,

Looking back throughout the years, I realized that I'd never told her that. Perhaps she never felt that loved

I looked up and found myself meeting Serene's eyes, I snapped back to reality." Seene, I have to go. Thanks for having lunch with me, but there are plenty of things I

She looked disappointed and was about to protest when I stood up and said a quick goodbye, "Go shopping or sightseeing, Enjoy Paris, and I see you tonight again

Before she could answer, I exited the hotel restaurant already, still thinking about Sophie. She didn't want another child, I reminded myself, thinking back to that moment when I had suggested having another one. Afterwards, she'd asked for a divorce. And now that she's pregnant again with my child, she doesn't want to go through with it. What am I supposed to think about that?!

For the rest of the day, I went through the motions like a robot. I still had a little bit of a hangover, which felt like a stubborn headache ringing in my brain while I met up With our business partners and toured our future development area. Bitter thoughts of Sophia just added to the migraine and the feelings of discomfort.

That afternoon, I found myself drinking strong black coffee in an empty cafe across from our office. Maybe getting married was a wrong decision in the first place, I thought. We should never have rushed into it. I guess Sophia only married me because of the baby. She was young and confused and pregnant... No wonder...

Suddenly, a ping from my phone disrupted my reverie. I opened the text message and read it:

Hey, I've arrived in France. We can meet when you're free.

My Ex-Husband is Out of Control Chapter 24

Elijah's POV

It was Chris Baker who had sent me the message. Surprisingly, I found myself hanging out with him and Trevis at the bar on the ground floor of my Paris hotel.

"You don't waste any time, do you?" Trevis said to Chris, chuckling and shaking his head in disbelief at the same time.

"Wait, why did you suddenly come here, anyway?" I wondered with great curiosity and confusion.

"I told him about that girl Julia who resembled his sister Sabrina so much," Trevis answered for Chris. "Remember I also mentioned her to you? She has started her internship at my studio."

"Oh, that girl," I said dismissively, I had no intention of even meeting her because i just felt like it was far-fetched to consider she could really be Sabrina after all these

years,

Meanwhile, Chris was visibly excited, his eyes shining with anticipation. "I can't believe it, Trevis. If this is true, we might finally find Sabrina after all these years," he exclaimed, taking a sip of his drink.

Trevis looked a bit uncomfortable, clearly not expecting such a swift and determined reaction from Chris. "I hope I didn't get your hopes up too much, Chris. You know we've done this many times in the past, and they were all wild goose chases... I never expected you to suddenly fly here!"

But Chris was undeterred. "I have to see for myself. Even the slightest chance is worth pursuing," he replied, his voice filled with determination. "I can't afford to miss even a one-in-a-million chance." His eyes took on a faraway look, and he was probably thinking of his beloved sister who had suddenly vanished one day when she was only around ten years old.

Suddenly, images of Sabrina filled my mind. She was the only one who seemed to understand me, even after all the others I've met in my lifetime. A wave of sadness engulfed me as the pain of losing my childhood best friend came back to me.

I couldn't help but admire Chris's unwavering resolve. Sabrina had been missing for years, and if there was a chance she could be found, Chris was willing to take it. It somehow made me feel guilty that I had already given up

'sist five in the afternoon," Trevis told us "You can maybe catch her at Urban

It's

Next you go now. Unfortunately, I won't be able to join you as I'm meeting a client here in a few

NIT"

Let's get out of here, Elijah," Chris urged

is hesitant, but I still went with him.

The studio was located on the ground floor of a lovely brick structure, occupying quite a large space Chris was hurrying in front of me, ready to barge inside, when I heard him let out a short ony as he bumped into a woman couldn't see her face at first because he was standing in front of he

"Im so sorry" Chris said, picking up several books and design plates that had spilled on the floor and handing them back to her.

"It's alright." As soon as I heard the woman's voice, my heart began to poud crazily Sophia What's she doing here?

Of course Limmediately recognized my wife's voice. Slowly approached them from the back. Suddenly, Sophia's gaze turned toward me. Her eyes registered surprise, but she didn't say anything. I stared at her for a while, not knowing what to say

"I'm sorry, uh..." Chris repeated, looking mesmerized. "I didn't catch your name

"It's Sophia," she replied, returning her gaze to him. She seemed quite confused. Then glancing at me briefly, she said, "Sorry I have to go now." Before Chris could respond, she'd left already.

Chris followed her with his gaze. My eyes narrowed, wondering if he was interested in her. Didn't he recognize her as my wife? He could have seen a picture of us together in the past, but maybe he did not recall that.

"Sophia, not Julia..." Chris murmured thoughtfully. "That wasn't the woman Trevis was referring to, was she?"

"No," I answered curtly.

"Wow, she reminded me so much of Sabrina!" Chris exclaimed. "I mean, that was just a brief encounter and yet I felt like she had the same aura as my sister. Don't you think so too?"

"Hhmm... Yes, I agree," I eventually said. "Chris, that woman Sophia is my ex-wife. But I'm not sure what she's doing here at Trevis's company... But yeah, you're right. I

used to think she resembled Sabrina. They had the same attitude, same interests, same habits and mannerisms..."

+25 BONUS

Ready? That's something else. Perhaps we should arrange a meeting with her."

I watched Sophia's back retreating farther and farther away. Now that even Chris felt like she could be Sabrina, it got me thinking about the things I'd liked about her in the first place, things that reminded me of my childhood best friend.

"Come on, let's just find Julia while we're here," Chris said. "I want to meet her too."

Unfortunately, the receptionist informed us that Julia had already left the place.

Sighing, Chris led the way out. "I guess I'll stay a couple more days here in Paris. What about you, Elijah?"

I shrugged, uncertain about when I'll return to the US. "The project I'm overseeing here is pretty much in good hands and I'm done with the actual work I need to do in the business... But I don't know... I'm not sure when I'll leave France." In my mind, I was thinking about Sophia and how I felt determined to make peace with her first, to try to win her back and get her to come home with me.

Sighing, I felt defeated. It surely won't be easy to make her trust me again. What more to make her want to be with me again!

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“I bet you’re thinking about Sophia,” Chris guessed as we walked back to the car. Your ex–wife, right? I heard from Morgana that you’re dating Serena again. Isn’t she here with you too? Man, your life’s pretty messed up. How’s everything going?”

I frowned, wondering if it was my stepmom who’d assumed that or if perhaps Serena was the one who had implied that we’re dating. I knew that Serena and Morgana still talked often while we were here in Paris.

“We’re just friends,” I clarified. “Serena works at my company, so she’s just here to assist with the business.”

“I see. Well, maybe there’s something more there. You know it’s fine for you to move on from anyone connected to Sabrina. We’ve looked for my sister for so long, and I don’t want you to be tied to her memory.”

“Yeah,” I agreed nonchalantly, nodding. But deep inside, a spark had been triggered in my heart. I was silently going through the similarities between Sophia and Sabrina as we went back to my hotel.

Chris needed to go back to his own hotel. Meanwhile, as soon as I entered the lobby, I was surprised to find Trevis still there, talking animatedly with none other than Serena! They were standing very close to each other, and Trevis seemed to be

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gazing into her eyes intently.

+25 BONUS

When I came closer and they caught sight of me, they both grinned and waved. Trevis was chuckling as he asked me, “Elijah, you brought such a beautiful woman to the romantic city of Paris. If I were in your place, I would be happy every single day. Why were you so out of it the other night?”

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yes were shimmering as he glanced at the Eiffel Tower
artwork that peeked out from the folder was holding.

Have you been to Paris

I shook my head. “Not yet, but I would love visit someday. Or perhaps even study
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know a coffee shop nearby that has a beautiful mural of Paris.” he’d said And that
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Astead

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ANIL

My phone rang then. When i saw Serena’s name on the screen, I groaned loudly What
do you want this time?” I muttered under my breath.

I straightened up and answered casually Hello Serena

“Hello Soptuar As always, she had that fake sugary sweet voice on Hello’ve you been?

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Is she your friend before

“Why?” I asked narrowing my eyes

across your campus where Elijah and

*28 BONUS

know that he's still hanging around you, maybe trying to catch you or talk to you... I know of a way for him to stop harassing you Sophia."

Ruin't understand why Serena wouldn't just leave me alone and go on with her life. But my curiosity got the best of me. "How?" I asked.

see you in the next minutes, then you can find out." She put the phone down, leaving me no choice but to get ready and meet her in that cafe.

It wasn't long before we were sitting across from each other. Serena didn't waste any time with pleasantries. A small smile was playing on her lips. An evil smile, I would say. She was probably up to no good, but I still stayed and listened, anyway.

Have you heard of Sabrina Baker?" she asked directly.

She seemed quite happy. "Well, Sabrina is Elijah's long-lost childhood best friend and the first love of his life. She went missing when they were about ten years old, and Elijah was never the same since then. He spent years looking for her and only stopped when he met you.."

"Huh?" I was bewildered by this news, but I didn't want to show her. "So what? It has nothing to do with me. We're divorced, anyway."

"You're connected to Sabrina, in a way." Serena went on. "That's because you reminded Elijah of her. That's why he pursued you in college."

My heart began to thump hard. I didn't like where the conversation was going.

"Who knows? Maybe he even got you pregnant on purpose, so you'd want to marry him." Serena continued, her tone mocking. If you weren't similar to his dearest Sabrina, he wouldn't have bothered spending any time with you, you know. And it's the real reason that he married you! He told me so himself!"

The realization hit me like a ton of bricks. All this time, I had believed that Elijah genuinely liked me, that our relationship was built on something real. But now, as I sat in the café, I couldn't shake the feeling of devastation.

It became clear to me that Elijah never really cared about me. I was just a stand-in, a substitute for someone else. I was a mere reminder of this Sabrina, whoever she was, and it was because of her that Elijah had decided to pursue me. The thought was crushing

My Ex-Husband is Out of Control Chapter 25

Elijah, I always thought we'd see the Eiffel Tower together...

Without any warning, the thought just popped into my head had mentioned during our very first casual date.

—

an idea that he and I

As I sat in front of my apartment window, I gazed up at the Eiffel Tower looming majestically in the distance, my mind wandering once again to memories of my ex-husband.

"Is that your painting?" he'd asked me upon approaching me after class way back during our college days. His eyes were glimmering as he glance at the Eiffel Tower artwork that peeked out from the folder I was holding.

"Uh, yes."

"Have you been to Paris?"

I shook my head. "Not yet, but I would love to visit someday. Or perhaps even study and work there."

"I know a coffee shop nearby that has a beautiful mural of Paris..." he'd said. And that afternoon, the two of us got to know each other for the first time. And that was when I first told him that I was allergic to coffee, so he bought a chocolate drink for me

instead.

I forced myself to look at the book in my hand. I had been trying to focus on my studies, but I had not been successful the entire day. Seeing him recently at Urban Next Design Studio had stirred up unexpected emotions within me.

And that guy he was with... What was that about? Why was he staring at me as if he knew me from somewhere? I've never even seen him before.

My phone rang then. When I saw Serena's name on the screen, I groaned loudly. "What do you want this time?" I muttered under my breath.

I straightened up and answered casually. "Hello, Serena."

“Hi, Sophia!” As always, she had that fake sugary–sweet voice on. “How’ve you been? I was hoping we could meet today at that cafe across your campus where Elijah and I saw you before?”

“Why?” I asked, narrowing my eyes suspiciously.

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“I know that he’s still hanging around you, maybe trying to catch you or talk to you... I know of a way for him to stop harassing you. Sophia.”

I couldn’t understand why Serena wouldn’t just leave me alone and go on with her life. But my curiosity got the best of me. “How?” I asked.

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425 BONUS

I had let myself believe in something that was never real, and the realization left me feeling hollow inside. How could I have been so blind? So naive? The pain of the truth threatened to overwhelm me, and I struggled to hold back tears.

Serena's devilish smile grew bigger. "You know why he was so cold and distant when you were together? Because he realized that you weren't like Sabrina, after all! But out of duty, he decided to stay with you because you were pregnant. And so when you had lost the baby, he became more out of reach and he didn't treat you like a real wife..."

Her words pierced my heart like a sharp knife. But still I held my composure, not wanting her to see that she was getting to me and that this revelation was having a huge impact.

"And now it's the same," Serena went on mockingly. "It's about the baby again. He's pretty sure it's his so he feels responsible. He can't bear the thought of just leaving without a care. That's why he's been trying to reconcile with you, Sophia."

My eyes widened, but I knew she was telling the truth. She's right, I realized bitterly.

"You're smart, aren't you? Then you ought to know what I mean."

I stared at her silently, not knowing what to make of it. I knew what she was saying, but it was difficult to process it at the moment.

"Think hard about it, Sophia," Serena said before getting up and leaving. I was left dumbfounded, staring into the caffeine-free drink that Serena had ordered for me before I arrived.

Serena is well aware that I'm allergic to caffeine, and I don't even know her well. But Elijah whom I'd been married to for two years didn't know. How sad and pathetic.

After a while, I tried to gather my wits despite the rattling nerves. Still greatly confused, I returned home. And who should I find waiting for me outside my apartment building? Elijah!

When he saw me and began to approach, I held up my palm and shook my head. I didn't want to see him or talk to him. I was just too exhausted and confused to deal with him right now.

"Sophia, wait!" He called after me. I could hear his footsteps quickening behind me as I went to the direction of the elevator. "Sophia!"

I turned around with an exasperated expression on my face.

My Ex-Husband is Out of Control Chapter 26

Elijah's POV

"H-How did you know about Sabrina?" I asked, astonished.

"It doesn't matter, Elijah," Sophia quickly answered.

"But who told you about Sabrina?"

"Let me tell you the truth," she said with a sigh. "I never went missing as a child."

"Are you absolutely sure? Maybe you just forgot..."

"I'm not Sabrina, okay?" she cut me off, anger flashing in her eyes. "And whoever she is, I don't care. She's not a part of my life and neither are you!"

Her last words were so painful that I felt as if someone was literally squashing and twisting my heart.

Sophia furiously pressed the elevator buttons, eager to move away from me. After a short while, she let out a cry of frustration and headed toward the stairs. I went to follow her.

"Sophia, please let's talk about this," I cried. She didn't bother to turn around. Instead, she went faster, almost running away from me. "I need to know the truth..."

"I already told you!" she shouted when she finally reached her floor. She turned around to face me angrily. "I told you many times before, Elijah! Get the hell away from me and leave me alone!"

With that, she rushed to her door and slammed it behind her, leaving me stunned.

I gave out a loud sigh, feeling dejected and hopeless. Trudging away, I decided to just let her cool down first before trying again. Maybe I should give it a few days before I try to contact her again.

In the days that followed, I immersed myself in my business. At times, Serena was with me, but I tried to avoid her as much as I could.

One morning, I got a message from Connor, saying that he was able to squeeze out Sophia's new phone number from Kayla. Suddenly I was filled with renewed hope. Perhaps she'll be more willing to talk to me over the phone first?

I tried to call her several times, but unfortunately, there was no answer. I couldn't

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take anymore. I have to go see her

It was Sunday and I knew that she usually stayed home on this day. Hence I was hoping to catch her when I arrived at her apartment. I knocked several times, looking forward to speaking to her, rehearsing my opening lines in my head so that she wouldn't reject me at once.

No one answered the door. I knocked harder and calling her name. Was she just ignoring me?

Suddenly, the next-door neighbor came out from her unit. "Are you looking for Miss Bernen

Inodded. "Yes."

"Oh, she moved out yesterday

When she said that it felt like I'd been pushed off from a cliff. I plunged into darkness, left without even a tiny glimmer of light. "What do you mean?"

"She moved out for good from what I could tell. She even thanked me for being a good neighbor"

I felt my heart jump out of my chest. My knees began to buckle. I held on to the wall for support, afraid that I would collapse on the ground. And somewhere deep inside me confusion turned to wrath. It bubbled to the surface, filling every inch of my body, awakening all my senses.

Sophia had once again left me without a word!

While making my way down, I rapidly dialed Kayla's number. "Sophia's not here anymore!" I couldn't help yelling over the phone.

"What do you mean?" Kayla wondered, sounding quite concerned.

“She has moved out of her apartment! Surely you know where she transferred.”

“Oh! But she hasn’t told me anything. We haven’t spoken for a week because we’ve both been so busy.”

I took a few deep breaths, trying to compose myself. “Please, Kayla, you know how important this is for me,” I said slowly but with emphasis. “Just tell me, I need to talk to her.”

‘I don’t know where she went,’ Kayla insisted, sounding annoyed. “I already gave you her new number, and you know she’s going to get angry at me about it. Why don’t you use that to call her?”

“She isn’t answering!” I said with frustration

“Well, then, I guess that sends you a very clear signal, right?” she said sarcastically.

This woman was imitating. I let out a big sigh and inform me when you find out where Sophia went.” I reluctantly ended the call, though I still didn’t believe Kayla,

I dialed my assistant’s number. “Connor,” I said as soon as he picked up. “Please cut Kayla out of the projects she’s involved in.”

“What? Why, sir?”

“Now. Do it now.” I was adamant and angry

“Uh, right away, sir.” He was probably hesitant because Kayla has become one of our best designers so far. But I didn’t care at this time.

That night, I kept on turning and twisting in bed, unable to sleep. I fell into a slumber perhaps around three or four in the morning. And then I woke up with a heavy heart and a headache,

I need to find out where Sophia is, I thought with determination, quickly climbing out of bed and heading to the shower. After taking a bath, I tried to dial her new number again. It just kept on ringing. That made me even more determined to head to the Goldwell Institute of Art and try to look for her there.

I went straight to the administration office, where I was met with shocking news! Apparently, she’d taken a leave of absence and they didn’t know when she would be back

Damn! I thought, banging my fist on the counter. The woman sitting there gave me an odd stare. I excused myself and hurried out.

Just when I thought things couldn't get any worse, my phone rang. It was Kayla, and she was angry, "Why did you suddenly take me out of the Sinclair Realty projects?!"

I tried to remain calm and cool. "Kayla, I got feedback from the board and we all came up with that decision. Your services are no longer needed. I'm sorry."

"Yeah, right!" She sounded really furious. "You just decided this after I couldn't give you Sophia's new address?!"

"Don't worry, you'll be compensated for the last work you accomplished," I assured her, though I knew it wasn't about that. "We'll get in touch with you when we need you again."

"You know that this is part of some personal vendetta you have! I can't believe you'd stoop this low!" she cried over the phone.

I refused to feel guilty about it. I did not want to do this, but I needed to pressure her.

"Fine!" she suddenly shouted. "You want to know where Sophia is?"

My heart leaped as I waited in agitation for her to continue.

"My best friend is lying in the hospital right now, about to get rid of the baby that connects her to you." Kayla said harshly.

"She has suffered enough because of you. She doesn't want the baby."

My Ex-Husband is Out of Control Chapter 27

Elijah's POV

I arrived at the hospital that Kayla had told me about, my heart pounding in my chest. On the way, I had been so worried that I had almost run a red light and crashed my car. But now, as I rushed through the hospital doors, the only thought going through my head was that Sophia really didn't want our baby.

I hurried through the hallway of the maternity ward, passing by many pregnant mothers, each with a smile on their face. It only served to deepen the ache in my chest, knowing that Sophia was here too, but her situation was so different and she was feeling the opposite.

Am I the one who drove her to do this?! How could she not want our baby?!

As I arrived outside Sophia's room, I saw Daniel sitting there, looking at me forlornly. His expression was one of resignation, as if he had been expecting me.

"I need to see her," I quickly said, rushing forward.

But Daniel stood up at once and positioned himself between me and the door. "You can't. She specifically told me not to let you go in there."

"But..." I began angrily.

"She said no, Elijah. You have to respect that."

I found myself feeling torn. But I could tell he was telling the truth. It hurt badly, but he was right.

There was a large glass area on the door, and through it, I could see Sophia lying on the bed, looking really sick. There were tubes inserted in her nostrils, and she was connected to an oxygen machine.

"She's feeling weak and needs to recover," Daniel explained to me. "I think we should just let her rest for now."

"How bad is it?" I asked, my voice barely a whisper.

"The doctor said it's taking a toll on her body," Daniel responded, glancing through

the window at Sophia. "She's in bad condition at the moment. She has suffered a lot since she got pregnant, but now it's almost over. She'll get through this, but you shouldn't disturb her."

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we w

Sante doen want to be ampla Danesa She's done playing second best to your stove to your best

your current gated Serena She just wants to the her own how Elijah R here in Paris without you."

But she's not second best? argued.

**

"Perhaps that's what you made her feel And she's been sick and that's long now. Don't you get

That made me stop, and I tried to look at Sophie and Made pushed you hard, Sophia I just kept driving and my fault that you move out and leave of absence from school R's my fault that you that you decide

you

pregnancy I didn't consider your feelings and now as 200 cut me off completely from your life, even if at say

Now you're goodbye to d

Turning away from the door, I walked slowly down the hallway eat at harvest than the last. I knew that this was goodbye

a

the

Upon returning to the hotel with unshed tears stinging my eyes and piercing heart, I knew I had to leave. I couldn't bear to stay in Paris any longer immediately called my assistant. "Connor, I have to go back to the US at once Book me the earliest flight tomorrow"

That's when I heard a knock on my door. When opened it Serena came in with a huge smile, chattering about the meeting she'd attended with my close partners.

"We're going home tomorrow, Serena," I told her curtly, interrupting her little happy tirade. "Connor booked our flights"

She stopped talking. "Tomorrow? Why so sudden? What's the rush?"

I tried to compose myself, to push down "It's just time to get back home."

threatening to overwhelm me

Serena could see that I was not in the best of moods and didn't press further. "Is there anything I can do to help?" she offered looking concerned.

I shook my head, then started opening my luggage. "Just pack your bags and I'll see you in the morning."

I couldn't sleep well that night. When the sun rose, I stood up groggily and took a shower. My mind was swimming with thoughts of Sophia, and it took all of my self control not to run over to the hospital and try to talk to her again.

When I got down to the lobby, Serena was already there. To my surprise, she was standing together with Chris and Trevis

“Hey, man, are you going to be okay?” Chris asked, looking uncertain.

“Of course. All my business here has been taken care of. It’s time to go home.”

Chris nodded in understanding. “I’m staying for a while. If I hear or find out anything new about Sabrina, I’ll let you know.”

“Okay, thanks,”

Trevis stepped forward and shook my hand “See you when I see you, brother. But remember, I’m always here. I’m just a call away, alright?”

“Yeah, thank you.”

Serena smiled at them. “Thanks so much, guys. Perhaps we’ll see you again back home, Chris, And Trevis? Let us know when you’re coming to visit.”

They both smiled and nodded, and we said our goodbyes.

At the airport, Serena and I were walking when I saw someone familiar from afar. Kayla’s here! I thought in alarm. She must have just arrived in Paris!

She looked hurried and preoccupied, and also quite stressed. Her expression was filled with worry, and it seemed like she hadn’t had much sleep yet.

Before I could call out to her, Kayla hurried past us, not even noticing our presence. I watched her go, knowing that she was going to be by Sophia’s side, offering her support and comfort.

At least Sophia won’t be alone. Daniel and Kayla will be there with her. And soon I’ll be miles away, granting her the freedom that she wanted.

My Ex-Husband is Out of Control Chapter 28

et weak v/madscharged fo e hospital, but also relieved to be leaving

Betve mega have a surprise for you “Dane said as he and a nurse helped me

en to the one wheelchair

looked at bin in surprise And before I could say anything, my best friend Kayla wetsed to the room with a huge sme here!” she exclaimed, rushing forward took me a quick hug Oh Ave missed you sO NICH.”

Tatared at her in disbelief "You didn't tell me you were coming here! I thought you

Well/worked double time to make it here earlier. And it turned out to be a good shine because look at you! You definitely need me here"

I gave her a faint smile, grateful for her friendship and concern. "The doctor said I was/pot stressed out but I'm glad the baby's okay"

She was glad too. Well, did your pretend pregnancy termination plan work?"

Yeah Phnk so..st a little guy for lying and pretending, but it had to be done ! needed to keep Bligh away. "The stress and fatigue landed me in the hospital, but maybe it was all meant to happen."

As they wheeled me out of the hospital, Kaya handed me a small, brightly wrapped package. "Daniel and I got you a little something."

"Oh, you shouldn't have bothered" I said, astonished I opened the package to find a get well soon card Kit. Inside, there was a soft blanket, a scented candle, a journal, a box of chocolates, and a card signed by all my friends and colleagues. It was such a thoughtful gesture, and it brought tears to my eyes

"Thank you so much, both of you," I said, my voice choking with emotion.

Daniel smiled warmly. It's the least we could do. We just want you to feel better."

We headed over to my apartment, and as we walked in, I was greeted by more surprises. The apartment was decorated with balloons and streamers, and there was a delicious smell coming from the kitchen.

"We thought we'd cook you a nice meal," Kayla exclaimed, leading me to the table

ying is here without you"Dang sand apologetically. But remember

you gave me a spare key? That's what used

is

On 2's fre. The spot too much you germ really touched?"

thes

I sank into a chair feeling overwhelmed by her kindness. Despite everything had been though knew that with friends like Kayla and Daniel by my side, I would be

et a sense of peace wash over me alleviating my stress and weakness, as the three of us enjoyed the delicious meal together.

So I saw Elijah and Serena at the airport,” Kayla mentioned casually, breaking the silence. But I didn’t bother saying hi I was a hurry to see you.*

I felt a pang of confusion at her words. I didn’t know what to make of it.

seems they’re leaving France already,” Kayla continued, oblivious to my confusion I guess they’re heading back home.”

“Oh, I see. “I didn’t know what else to say. I felt somewhat relieved that they wouldn’t be around to bother me anymore and I could finally get back to my new life.

Daniel looked glad and relieved too. He placed his hand over mine and rubbed it gently and briefly.

“So what are your plans in Paris, Kayla?” I asked, changing the subject. I wanted to veer away from the topic of Elijah. As of this moment, he was once again an insignificant thing of the past. “Are you just vacationing or is there something else you’re targeting?”

Kayla grinned. “Yes and yes! I intend to tour your campus and attend an upcoming conference for designers. So you better get well fast, so we can go together.”

After dinner, Daniel excused himself, mentioning that he had work to do. Kayla and then settled onto the sofa, feeling the heaviness of the day lift a little as we relaxed into each other’s company.

“You’ve really been through so much, Sophia,” Kayla said softly, her voice filled with empathy.

smiled weakly, grateful for her understanding. My face was paler than before, the exhaustion of the past few days and the stress of being in the hospital still evident. !

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Passes for one layaecames with confidence Stegareneangard Chosenesses me that she would be with meeey sediteva, whether ve WETE IT USEIN he

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Tanks Soch But contintend to take to ong I want tack on ada

soon as possible

In the background of his video, I could see some of the employees and men free including Julia, waving at me and saying "Get well soon, Sogna" it was so heartwarming and I couldn't wait to get back

As I was about to say goodbye, I saw a familiar face in the distance approaching Julia. Where did I meet this guy again?! Tracked my brain for a memory of him.

"You're Julia?" I heard him ask. "Hello, my name is Chris Baker."

When I heard him say that, I froze. It hit me then. This was the guy who dropped by the studio recently with Elijah.

What did he want with Julia? And why was Elijah with him during that time?

Out of nowhere, a sharp pain pierced my abdomen. The color drained from my face as I dropped the phone and let out a scream