

Beyond the Divorce #Chapter 41 - Read Beyond the Divorce Chapter 41

Chapter 41

Chapter 41 A Life–Changing Vow

I cried uncontrollably again because I wasn't as strong as I thought. I don't know where I got the courage to remain composed enough to take a photo before running out of the house.

Atlas hesitated momentarily before patting my back. His gesture was gentlemanly. Although he was a stranger, his comfort relieved me. The walls I had put up crumbled as I clung to him. Unexpectedly, I encountered him a few times today, and he saw how pitiful I was.

I didn't know how much time passed, but I eventually stopped crying. Perhaps my tears had run dry.

Atlas patted me again and looked at me profoundly. Soon after, I saw the sky brightening and realized dawn was approaching.

"Thank you, Mr. Pierce. I want to go to my friend's place at Amethyst Apartments," I said.

He embraced me and nodded.

When I appeared before Ivanna in such a miserable state, she could hardly believe her eyes. She rubbed her half–opened eyes, thinking she was hallucinating. "Chlo, you... What's happening? Weren't you supposed to go back to your hometown?"

I stepped inside and threw myself into her arms. "Ivanna..."

She embraced my stiff and cold body, leading me into the bathroom. "Don't say anything right now, don't cry. Take a hot shower, all right?"

I entered the bathroom, shivering as my teeth clacked against each other, I turned on the heater and stood underneath the warm water. The warmth helped me regain my senses when Ivanna knocked on the

door.

I changed into the dry clothes she gave me and saw she had prepared a bowl of ginger soup for me. Suddenly, I thought of Atlas, who had stayed with me throughout the night. I wondered if he would

appreciate a bowl of soup, too.

I passed Ivanna my phone. She looked puzzled, then realized what I meant. She was just as shocked as me when she flipped through the photos. Ivanna looked at me wide-eyed, her voice trembling as she asked, “A—Am I hallucinating?!”

She slapped herself, and I burst into laughter. My tears fell as I laughed until I nearly vomited again. Suddenly, I picked up a fruit knife from the coffee table and cut my arm.

Ivanna exclaimed, “Chloe!”

+15 BONUS

She snatched the knife and glared at me. I knew how frustrated she was with me. However, when the knife sliced my skin, it released waves of pent-up emotions. It was a bizarre sense of relief.

While I didn’t encourage self-harm, it seemed to provide a way to release my suppressed frustrations.

s

“Chloe, wake up! Is that scum worth your life?!” Ivanna yelled at me, “Have you ever considered what happens to your daughter if you die? What about your parents? Are they just supposed to fend for themselves?”

“You might find relief if you die, but what about Ava? She’s still so young. Are you okay with letting her fall into that scumbag’s hands? Will Melanie treat her well? By then, she’ll be worse off than death.

“As for your parents, they mortgaged their house, but you haven’t paid off the loan yet. If you die, can that jerk repay it? By then, you’ll leave them wandering the streets without a roof over their heads. 1

“Your parents will carry a load of debt and be ridiculed! They’re both teachers who value dignity. Have you considered that jerk and his bitch dancing on

your grave if you die? They'll enjoy everything you've built without lifting a finger.

They'll be living in luxury while abusing Ava. Your daughter will have nowhere else to go then!" Ivanna's scolding jolted me awake. She was speaking the irrefutable truth.

"Don't worry, I won't die! I'm not that weak" I clenched my teeth and said each word firmly.

Honestly, I hadn't considered dying. Even what I did at the river wasn't about dying. I just wanted to cleanse myself and regain clarity because I had lost my sense of direction and purpose. I sat in a daze, letting Ivanna tend to my wound and console me.

She handed me a glass of water, saying, "Have a drink and nap. We'll face this together when you wake up.

I accepted the water and downed it. Soon, drowsiness took over, and I gradually fell asleep.

It was already three in the afternoon when I woke up. I realized Ivanna had stayed beside me the entire time. The pain in my arm reminded me it was all real and not a nightmare.

I sat up and held my head, only seeing Matthew and Melanie entangled in my mind.

"Matthew, I will make your life a living hell!" I emphasized each word with unwavering determination.

Chapter 42

Chapter 42 An Unforgivable Sin

This would be my promise to live on and embrace a new version of myself.

Ivanna saw my determination and shook her head. She advised, "Have something to eat."

I nodded, and she strode out to prepare some food. Meanwhile, I gathered my emotions and fixed my appearance before leaving the room. After the meal, I told Ivanna, "I'm going to pick up my daughter."

“Are you sure? Why don’t you stay with me for a few days and calm down before doing that?”

I knew she was worried, so I looked at her and said firmly, “I won’t give up so easily. I’ll take back

everything that belongs to me!”

“Then how will you explain not leaving to see your parents?” Ivanna was still worried.

I remained calm and replied, “I have an explanation.”

Immediately after, I changed into my own clothes, picked up my bag, and checked my phone. Before leaving, I instructed Ivanna, “Please get that coat cleaned for me.”

“I’ll send you there.” Ivanna grabbed her bag, put on her shoes, and took the coat. On the way, she asked

me about my next steps

I shook my head and said, I haven’t decided yet, but I won’t spare them.”

As I unlocked my phone, a flood of notifications greeted me. I called my mother back and learned that my father’s condition had improved. I could hear the joy in my mother’s voice, and I sighed in relief.

Finally, luck was on my side.

I told my mother I would return after the hurricane and then hung up to recheck my phone, I saw several missed calls from Matthew but didn’t dare to return his call. Instead, I called my mother-in-law.

I informed her I hadn’t left, so she didn’t have to pick Ava up today.

Everything seemed normal when I reached home with Ava. Matthew saw us, and his face lit up. “Honey, Ava, you’re home! I made some food for you two. Wash your hands. Dinner’s almost ready.”

It was apparent he knew I didn’t leave yesterday. He approached and took the things from my hands. Afterward, he said, “I got home late after last night’s gathering, and my phone died. After charging it, I

forgot to turn it back on, so I missed your call.

“I thought you were calling to let me know you landed safely.” There was a hint of probing in his tone, called my mom early this morning and learned that you didn’t leave. Are you mad at me? I’ve been trying

”I

+15 BONUS

Matthew tried to embrace me, but I avoided him and took Ava to the bathroom to wash her hands.

Matthew followed and said, “Honey, don’t be upset. Do you know how worried I was when I couldn’t reach

you? Where have you been all this time? Did Ivanna pick you up?”

Although he spoke, my mind was full of sickening images of him and Melanie. I felt queasy and gently pushed Ava out of the bathroom before shutting the door. I suppressed my disgust and reminded

myself

to endure it.

I couldn’t ruin all my efforts and had to hold on for my daughter’s sake. After washing my face, I opened

the door and left the bathroom, saying, “Ava, let’s eat.”

Matthew was overjoyed. “That’s right, honey. Let’s eat!”

He approached me, and his hand accidentally grazed the bandage on my arm. I winced in pain, startling him. Only then did he notice the bandage. “Honey, what happened? Why are you injured? Let me see!”

I didn’t expect the man I had lived with for many years to be so skilled at feigning concern. I thought it was a waste that he didn’t enter the entertainment industry. He could’ve won many awards.

“Tell me, how did this happen?” He even raised his voice.

“What’s there to ask? Would this have happened if you had picked me up last night?” I stood my ground,

giving an equal performance.

Matthew’s eyes darkened, “What happened? I’m sorry, honey. Please tell me how you got injured.”

“Eat your meal. I don’t want to talk about it.” I softened my attitude a bit, worried about scaring Ava. I

carried her to her seat and grabbed a bowl to feed her.

Matthew paused, then reluctantly sat beside me. He tended to our meal, showing his caring and considerate side. Deep down, I knew Matthew wasn’t concerned about my injury. Instead, he was worried

about where I was and getting exposed.

Chapter 43

Chapter 43 Orchestrating a Chance Meeting

I overcame my trauma that night and lay on the tainted bed. To stay motivated, I repeatedly told myself

that overcoming all this was the first step to my revenge.

Matthew leaned over and wanted to hug me, but I pushed him away. I’m on my period. Don’t bother me,

please.”

He moved away and sighed, “I know it’s my fault you’re upset. Please don’t be mad.”

“Go to sleep. My mind’s back home, and I have no idea how my dad’s doing. I have nothing to be mad

about. Please spare me the drama,” I said, concealing my genuine emotions.

He smiled and leaned closer to give me a peck. “Don’t worry. Things will work out.”

I clenched my hand under the covers, feeling disgusted. I silently cursed, annoyed beyond measure because Matthew messed around with his sister. It made my skin crawl. I would've shattered his family's

reputation if I didn't need to reclaim what was mine.

However, I couldn't rush in recklessly. The money was gone, and the house wasn't even under my name. I

had promised Ava a big house, and I couldn't break that promise.

My mind was a mess as I tried to find the quickest way to regain control over my life. I didn't want to spend another moment with this sick bastard. Even sharing a bed with him disgusted me.

I was impressed by my composure and thankful I didn't give in to my rage last night.

The following day, I met Adrian to present my evidence and financial data. I briefed him on the situation's developments, and even he felt somewhat surprised. Still, he analyzed the current situation from a legal

perspective.

Despite evidence of his infidelity, my chances of winning were only fifty percent since he had solely

managed the company for years.

I asked if sibling relations could help my case, but Adrian said it would require confirming blood ties and only amount to moral condemnation. There wasn't a precise legal verdict, so it didn't matter who he

cheated on me with.

I repeated Adrian's words to myself, "I only have a fifty percent chance, huh? No, I want everything."

Matthew didn't deserve my forgiveness, and I was determined to make him pay.

Adrian advised gathering more evidence and preparing for the possibility of a courtroom showdown, so I signed a representation agreement with him. We also discussed some strategies I wanted to employ.

My objective was evident when I left the law firm. Whatever the circumstances, I had to confront them head-on. I needed to rely on myself to change the current situation.

Foremost, I had to regain control over Tanum Corporation. Knowing my enemy inside-out was essential for victory.

I returned to the office since it was the source of Matthew's success and failure. Every problem stemmed from this place, and I would end it here.

I began reconnecting with old clients, using Johnson as a bridge. Initially, he was reluctant and even a little dishonest. Although it took a while, I discovered his wife's whereabouts.

On the day she went for a prenatal checkup, I coincidentally went to the same hospital for a gallbladder checkup. The orchestrated chance encounter with Johnson's wife, Myra Starning, went perfectly.

We even went shopping together and bought numerous baby items for her unborn child. We had a delightful time. I also praised Johnson, mentioning my gratitude for his years of dedication to our

company.

Ultimately, we bought too many things and had to call Johnson to pick Myra up.

As we parted, Johnson witnessed how close Myra and I were. I knew Johnson's heart must've dropped.

Chapter 44

Chapter 44 Winning Over One's Heart

I intentionally recounted my trip to Matthew without withholding a single detail when I returned home. He beamed and praised me, "You're a wise partner. You're understanding and skilled at winning people's hearts."

However, I corrected him. “It’s not about winning people’s hearts, but about being kind. Speaking of Johnson, he’s done a lot for our family. It’s natural for a man like you not to notice these things, but women appreciate small gestures.”

Truthfully, I aimed my actions at dispelling Matthew’s suspicions. I knew this sly fox would become vigilant if I hid things from him, and he found out later, I had to break him down without revealing my intentions.

With this excuse, I frequented the wives of those clients, laying the groundwork for my future. To Matthew, I employed womanly tricks, which were nothing more than having meals and doing our nails together.

Although I hustled, he thought it would amount to nothing. Still, he praised me a few times, “This is good because everyone gets to know each other. I’m out there managing while you’re the queen of the household.”

Naturally, Matthew enjoyed my role. Meanwhile, I planned to make him pay a hundred fold.

During dinner that evening. I asked, “When will we get the money for the house?”

“Soon, once we finalize the payment for the Waterland Project,” He casually replied.

“Hurry up. I’m uneasy about the money not being in the account.” I voiced my concerns, looking at Matthew, “Don’t take this lightly. I’ve been eyeing a couple of good houses lately. Why do you seem so

indifferent about it?”

“Nonsense, how could I be? I said it before. The project investment is for a big payoff,” He deflected.

I spoke confidently, “Making money is important, but so is Ava. Do you think I want to buy a house just for myself? Won’t you live there too? Schooling is a big deal now that Ava’s growing up. We can’t let her lag.

behind, can we?”

In short, I wouldn’t let him rest until that money was back where it belonged.

Since Johnson realized how quickly I could reach Myra, he became extra cautious and attentive. He

would immediately respond whenever I called.

At that moment, some good news arrived. The bidding slots for the ATL Empire projects were finalized,

+15 BONUS

This news shook Matthew, and Johnson reported the former's reaction, Initially, Matthew hadn't taken it

seriously, so he handed it to me. Unexpectedly, a random occurrence had brought such impressive

results.

Getting nominated meant one thing. Regardless of whether we ultimately secured the contract, it was

evident that Tanum Corporation could register itself alongside big companies like ATL Empire.

It established Tanum Corporation's foundation in the city's building materials industry to a certain extent.

After much deliberation, the company decided that such a significant project required Matthew's direct

involvement.

As for the development company he had initially put all his effort into, they required upfront investment. It gave Matthew a headache since financing inherently carried risks. It was a grand scheme, and the final

reckoning could be pretty different, even with high profits.

I summed up the situation from the last briefing. The only way we could outshine two other companies

and reach the final stage was if I had the upper hand in holiday products.

If Matthew took over, he probably wouldn't fare well. Although I didn't want to relinquish control over this project, he was the ultimate decision-maker. Suddenly, an idea struck me.

The coat. It seemed like I needed to reach out to Atlas again.

Chapter 45

Chapter 45 The Cocktail Event

With that thought in mind, I called Ivanna and asked about the coat. She exclaimed, "Oh, I forgot it's still at the dry cleaners!"

"Don't worry about it. I'll pick it up myself," I hung up and was about to get up when I remembered not having Atlas's number.

I sat back down and searched for it on my laptop but failed. I couldn't find a trace of Atlas. It seemed he wasn't a significant figure at ATL Empire. Otherwise, he wouldn't be this elusive.

As I recall, his presence and charisma were extraordinary. However, for a company as big as ATL Empire, anyone they hired wouldn't be lacking.

Before I could figure out how to get Atlas's number, I received a call from Matthew, asking me to come to his office.

When I arrived, I realized he wanted me to cross-reference the information from my last visit to ATL

Empire. I explained things to him, ensuring we left no stone unturned. After all, this was a significant deal,

and Tanum Corporation was my brainchild.

I couldn't allow any actions that contradicted Tanum Corporation's development. I specifically reminded

Matthew to focus on the exclusive new product line.

Before I could finish explaining, Johnson entered and reported to Matthew. He mentioned an industry

association cocktail event after receiving an invitation and a attendees list.

I glanced at the list and hatched a brilliant plan. It was an excellent opportunity since many major companies were on the list, so I volunteered to accompany Matthew to the event. Although he wasn't

keen on the idea, I insisted on broadening my horizons.

He eventually relented, and we attended the event together.

I rarely attended such gatherings in the past, often leaving the public appearances to Matthew. After all,

he was the head of the family in my eyes, and I was content to remain in the background.

Still, he was no longer the same Matthew I knew. I couldn't afford to let go of any opportunities that

allowed me to connect with this industry.

At the event, I spotted Atlas. He carried himself well, not less impressive than the portly CEOs present. He stood beside an elegant middle-aged man, conducting himself with composed grace.

I discreetly inquired and discovered that the middle-aged man was Nick Wright, the General Manager of ATL Empire's Genovia headquarters. He was the key figure who should've appeared during the bidding

I chuckled because it meant Atlas might be his assistant or something similar.

Many clients I recognized attended the event, maintaining long-standing relationships. They seized the opportunity and asked about my retreat over the years.

I stood beside Matthew, playing the role of a doting wife. I mentioned I had been focused on family life.

Meanwhile, Matthew was charming and treated me with care. Although our company wasn't large, his charisma and demeanor held their own against anyone. He chatted and laughed, his manner polished.

1

Still, looks could be deceiving.

Just as we put on a public display of affection, Atlas followed Nick toward me with a glass of wine. His

deep gaze swept the crowd, finally settling on me.