

Too Much to Bear, My Love Chapter 171

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Elizabeth sneered as she stared coldly at Charlie. “Charlie Yard, I’ve finally seen your true colors. You love Olivia, and you pander to her son’s every whim. But you don’t even care that your own daughter is now facing a life and death situation in the operating room. What a great husband and father you are.”

Charlie looked defeated and sighed, “You’re being irrational, Elizabeth, and I don’t want to argue with you.”

Upon hearing that, Elizabeth’s face contorted even more with rage.

“Is that your guilty conscience, Charlie? You had a sordid affair with Olivia, and now you’re even covering up for her son. What? Are you afraid that if Oscar found out about it, he will look down on you for being a good-for-nothing hypocrite?”

Her words dripped with so much sarcasm that Charlie couldn’t stand it any longer. “That’s enough from you!” he bellowed.

Despite that, Elizabeth cackled even louder, to a point where she looked almost maniacal.

“Feeling guilty, aren’t you?”

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Charlie was silent. At this point, he knew it’d be impossible to talk sense into someone who was being unreasonable.

Elizabeth continued, “You are a heartless hypocrite, and that makes Olivia a shameless b*tch!”

As soon the words left her mouth, Elizabeth felt a tight slap to her face. She instinctively brought her hand up to where she had just been slapped and looked helplessly at Oscar.

Even Charlie was taken aback. He never expected Oscar to be that heavy-handed.

“Oscar, you... ” Charlie wanted to speak but eventually held his tongue.

Oscar’s expression was dark as he glowered at Elizabeth. “Mrs. Yard, I never expected Cassie to be suicidal. I will make it up to her, but please do not drag my

mother into this. She is a respectable woman, and I will not let you tarnish her reputation.”

Elizabeth could still feel the burn on her cheek right then. She was humiliated, but that slap did also knock some sense back into her.

With that, she straightened herself up and raked through her hair. It didn't take long before she regained her poise and composure. If it hadn't been the handprint on her face, one wouldn't have known that she had thrown a fit only a while ago.

“Oscar, I will never forget that slap from you. I won't hold you fully responsible for Cassie's suicide, but it is still a fact that Cassie tried to kill herself over you. You better pray that she pulls through this, or I won't let you off. Nobody bullies my daughter!”

Nonetheless, Oscar remained sullen throughout.

Elizabeth distanced herself further from Charlie as she looked silently in the direction of the operating room.

Because of Cassie, the relationship between her and her husband had become even more strained. Gone were the days when they still loved and supported each other.

The three of them paced outside for almost three hours before the light above the operating room door finally flickered off. A team of doctors made their way out, all of them exhausted after such a long procedure.

Elizabeth couldn't hide her anxiety as she rushed up to them. “Dr. Kane, how is my daughter?”

Dr. Kane's face took on a ghastly expression. On top of work fatigue, he was also exasperated at Cassie. It hadn't even been ten days since she got hospitalized, yet she had already caused so much trouble for the staff. More importantly, he was upset at the lack of care she had for herself.

“Mrs. Yard, your daughter is out of danger. But if she continues to have so little regard for her own life, I'm afraid there's nothing much we can do for her.”

Elizabeth's face fell.

Meanwhile, Charlie quickly stepped in to change the subject. “Dr. Kane, thank you so much for all your help today. I'll play host another time and buy everyone here a meal.”

That put a faint smile back on Dr. Kane's face as he politely took his leave.

Cassie was soon rolled out of the operating room by three nurses. Elizabeth was anxious to see her, but one of the nurses pulled her away. “Please calm down,

Mrs. Yard. The patient's condition is very fragile. We need to let her rest for now."

For the sake of her daughter, Elizabeth held herself back.

After that, Cassie was admitted to the intensive care unit as her condition needed close monitoring. She'd be transferred to a normal ward only if there were no other complications.

Charlie looked at his daughter through the glass with mixed emotions. It pained him to see Cassie in this state, but all he could do was to hope for the best. After a while, he turned to his wife. "Elizabeth, why don't you head home and rest? I'll stay here with Cassie."

When Elizabeth didn't answer, Charlie sighed. "Fine, you can stay here and watch Cassie. I need to speak to Oscar."

Elizabeth still didn't answer.

"Come on, Oscar. I want to talk to you." Charlie gestured for Oscar to follow him.

There was a brief hesitation on Oscar's part, but he eventually nodded and went along.

The two men found a quieter spot where they could sit and speak freely. But for the first two minutes, no one said a word.

Charlie was the first to break the awkward silence. "Oscar, I'm sure you can guess what I wanted to talk to you about, so I won't beat around the bush. What are your plans with Cassie? Be honest."

Oscar tugged at his hair in exasperation. "Honestly, I have no idea," he said solemnly.

Charlie shot him a dirty look. "Cassie had a miscarriage because of you. She slit her wrists because of you. And now all you can say is that you have no idea? I watched you grow up, Oscar, but I never thought you'd be this callous and irresponsible."

Oscar mulled over it for a while before replying, "Undoubtedly, Cassie's actions have stressed me out a lot. You're a man too, so I'm sure you can understand what it feels like when a woman you love constantly threatens you with her life."

Charlie grew silent.

Then, Oscar continued, "I'm glad that Cassie is fine now, but- "

"But now you don't wish to marry her, is that right?" Charlie finished his sentence.

Oscar furrowed his brows when he heard Charlie's reply.

"I'm really disappointed, Oscar. I had always thought you were a responsible man, so I was happy when you and Cassie started dating. I even had plans to let you manage the Yard Group once you got married." Charlie sighed deeply. "Unfortunately, Cassie was wilful and ran away to start a new life abroad. I was so mad at her for throwing away a good husband like you. Five years later, you married another woman, but we were still on friendly terms. The biggest mistake you made was getting back with Cassie."

Oscar's expression immediately changed.

"I don't wish to blame you either, Oscar. But Cassie did hurt herself because of you. That's how determined she is to marry you. As her father, I can't possibly watch her suffer."

After hearing that, Oscar felt even more overwhelmed with conflicting emotions.

He smacked his forehead in frustration. There were so many thoughts racing through his head that he couldn't make any sense of it.

After some time, he finally spoke up, "We'll talk about this again when Cassie recovers."

Charlie gave him a firm pat on his back. "It's not that I want to pressure you. But since you're back with Cassie, it's only right that you marry her. Extramarital affairs are taxing, and someone always ends up being hurt the most by it. Cassie has already suffered a lot. I don't think you'd want to see her suffer anymore, do you?"

Oscar's expression remained grave, but his eyes were burning with unwavering determination. "This is between Cassie and me, so we will resolve it ourselves."

"Oscar, I won't force you. But I still look forward to having you as my son-in-law. I hope you will consider that well."

Having said his piece, Charlie gave Oscar another pat on his shoulder before walking away.

Oscar remained in his spot, still fighting the wave of emotions and thoughts that plagued him. He eventually gave in and followed Charlie back to Cassie.

When Elizabeth saw them walking back, she scowled. Then again, how could her mood improve when her daughter was in the ICU? Seeing how tired and angry she was, Charlie decided to take matters into his own hands. "Oscar, we'll leave Cassie to you. Elizabeth and I need to take off to do something."

Oscar merely stared at Cassie and nodded.

Elizabeth, on the other hand, looked ready to throw hands. "Cassie will be fine with me here. I don't want to leave and risk losing my daughter again."

Charlie let out a deep sigh. His wife's stubbornness was getting on his edge. "Will you just listen to me for once? For our daughter's sake?"

Elizabeth thought long and hard about it but eventually still left together with Charlie.

As soon as they stepped out of the hospital, Charlie immediately called up Olivia.

"Hey Olivia, it's Charlie. It has been a long time, so I was thinking of asking you and Owen out for tea. It'd be good for us old friends to do some catching up too."

Olivia must have agreed to it because Charlie soon added, "Great! Let's meet at our usual place in about an hour."

Elizabeth was glaring at him the entire time. "Why did you call her?" she demanded.

"My dear, we've been married for more than thirty years now. I don't want to argue with you. If you really have Cassie's best interests at heart, then all the more you should stop throwing these tantrums," Charlie replied very patiently. "Since Cassie wants to marry into the Clintons, we should also manage the relations with Owen and Olivia. We wouldn't want Cassie's relationship with her in-laws to start on the wrong foot, would we?"

Elizabeth wasn't entirely pleased with this arrangement, but Charlie was right. They should smooth things over with Owen and Olivia to make sure they accept Cassie into their family.

"When you meet them later, please watch your attitude. After all, we're old friends. Let's not make things any more awkward."

However, Elizabeth still refused to say a word.

"If you're reluctant, I can go on my own," Charlie suggested.

"No, I'll go with you. That way I'll get to see how much of a prude Olivia is."

This time, Charlie stayed silent.

It took almost an hour of driving before the two of them arrived at their destination.

There was a sense of familiarity as they strode into the restaurant and immediately headed for their usual private room.

Owen and Olivia were already seated inside but quickly got up to greet them when they walked in.

“Charlie! Finally!”

“Sorry, we were held up by traffic. Have you been waiting for long?” Charlie asked apologetically.

Olivia smiled in return. “No, no. We’ve only just got here ourselves. Please, let’s sit and talk.”

The four of them took their seats and placed their usual orders of tea and pastries. After exchanging some more pleasantries, Olivia changed the subject. “Charlie, how’s Cassie now? I’ve been rather busy these few days, so I haven’t found the time to visit her.”

Charlie stiffened visibly, not knowing how to respond.

On the other hand, Elizabeth was understandably still in a very foul mood. Her tone was harsh when she spoke, “All thanks to Oscar, my daughter had a miscarriage and even slit her wrists to try to kill herself. Luckily, the hospital staff got to her on time. If it was any later, we might have lost her for good.”

Olivia’s eyes flashed with surprise and panic. “What? What on earth happened? Is Cassie all right now?”

Elizabeth was about to reply when Charlie grabbed her hand and interrupted, “She’s out of danger now. But she has to be kept in the ICU for observation.”

“Charlie, what exactly happened? Why would Cassie do such...”

Elizabeth was all riled up as she angrily pulled her hand away from Charlie. “Olivia, you should be asking your precious son what he has done. Cassie is in this state because of him. It’s only right that he takes responsibility for it.”

Olivia’s frown deepened as she turned to look at Charlie. “What do you think about all this?”

Charlie subconsciously averted his gaze, but his voice was solemn when he replied, “Olivia, our families are of the same socioeconomic status. So in that respect, Cassie and Oscar are very well matched. And besides, it’s been almost five years. Surely you can go easy on Cassie now? Once she marries Oscar, our Yard Group would fall under his management too. It’s win-win for him.”

The expression on Olivia’s face instantly darkened.

“I don’t agree,” she replied curtly. “I’m very sorry about what happened to Cassie, and I’m willing to compensate you for that. But I will not agree to Oscar marrying her.”

The fury in Elizabeth's eyes intensified. She looked ready to shred Olivia into pieces.

Charlie felt at a loss. "Olivia, you used to like Cassie and even looked forward to having her as your daughter-in-law. Why the change now?"

"I do like Cassie, and I wouldn't mind having her as my goddaughter. But Oscar is still married and even has a child along the way. We will never do something as heartless as abandoning our family. So again, I'm sorry we can't accept Cassie. Truthfully, I'm shocked that you'd even suggest this."

The moment Olivia said that, Elizabeth had had enough. She wasn't going to stand by and let them bully her daughter. "Don't go getting all high and mighty on me, Olivia. Oscar has to marry Cassie whether he likes it or not." She slammed the table in anger. "Nobody messes with my family. If you don't take responsibility for Cassie, I will unleash hell on your family."

Frankly speaking, Olivia had never seen a more unreasonable woman. She was just as upset, but after listening to Elizabeth's maniacal rant, she couldn't help but burst out laughing.

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Once Olivia had calmed herself, she turned toward Charlie. "Is that what you want for Cassie too?"

"Olivia, we've been friends for so many years, so I'll just speak my mind. Oscar has a wife, yet he still got back together with Cassie. I'm also against Cassie going to such extreme measures to try to win him back. But she's my only daughter, and I won't let anyone take advantage of her."

It was at that moment when Olivia finally understood the real reason for this meetup. Charlie and Elizabeth were so hellbent on having Oscar marry Cassie that they'd never take no for an answer.

The Clintons and the Yards have been family friends for so long. Who would have thought their relationship would become strained because of their children? If the Clintons didn't give in to their request, it might signal the end of their friendship.

Just then, Owen could sense Olivia's inner turmoil as he tried to coax her. "Charlie, I've always been fond of Cassie. I'd be more than happy to have her as my daughter-in-law. But we don't have a say when it comes to affairs of the heart. Shouldn't we leave it to them whether to get married or not?" he reasoned.

Elizabeth scoffed at Owen. "Are you kidding? Cassie is in the ICU because of your son. Is that not enough to show how badly she wants to marry him?"

"But what about Oscar?"

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Charlie and Elizabeth were stumped by that.

Owen was the voice of reason as he continued, "Charlie, I think you're rushing things a little too much. Why don't we wait till Cassie's recovered before coming together to think of a solution?"

Charlie was silent, but Elizabeth was quick to respond, "Are you saying your family won't accept Cassie? Even with the kind of relations both our families have, it's still a no from you?"

She thought she could get a rise out of Owen, but the latter remained calm and composed.

"When it comes to any relationship, it takes two hands to clap. So, it wasn't just Oscar's fault that this affair even started, though men usually bear the brunt of the blame. I agree he has to take responsibility. I just think it'd be better to wait till Cassie's discharged before we sit down together to discuss this."

Elizabeth crossed her arms in annoyance. "Unless you agree to Oscar marrying Cassie, there's no room for discussion," she replied coldly.

Both Olivia and Owen were livid, but Owen still managed to keep his tone casual. "Do we have to make things so ugly? Do our years of friendship mean nothing at all?"

"It's because we've been friends for so long that I'm laying all this out. My daughter is beautiful and capable. She may have many suitors, but she only has eyes for Oscar. As her mother, it's only right that I help fight for her happiness. If Oscar gets a divorce and marries her, we can still be friends. If he doesn't, then I never want to see any of you again."

Elizabeth was pushy, but she had also made her stand very clear.

The room fell into an awkward silence that instant.

Charlie tugged at Elizabeth in a bid to calm her down, only to have her rudely brush his hand away.

In the meantime, Olivia tried to keep her voice gentle yet firm. "I'm laying it all out here too, Charlie. Our family has only one daughter-in-law, and that's Amelia. We will make it up to Cassie as long as it's within our power. But I will never agree to her becoming the Clintons' daughter-in-law."

“Olivia, what do you take Cassie for? A beggar?” Elizabeth yelled.

Olivia merely furrowed her brows and looked on in silence.

“If that’s the case, we’re done here,” Elizabeth said as she stood and tried to leave.

Charlie pulled her and forcefully sat her back in her chair. “Please, let’s all calm down. I’m sure we can talk about this nicely without ruining our relationship.”

“I can accept all your terms, other than Oscar marrying Cassie.” It was clear that Olivia was never going to change her stance.

Elizabeth once again slammed the table and stood up. “Fine, then there’s nothing else for us to talk about.” She threw a glance at Charlie and continued, “Let’s leave. I don’t want to stay and be snubbed by them.”

At that, Charlie was both frustrated and apologetic. He never expected things to turn out like that. “Let’s all calm down for now. We can talk about this another day,” he said solemnly before following Elizabeth out of the restaurant.

Once they were out of earshot, Owen let out a deep sigh. “Olivia, our families have known each other for generations. Did you have to sound so harsh?”

Olivia sighed in return. She sat in contemplation as she sipped on her tea.

Almost a minute had passed before she spoke up, “A woman who would threaten someone with her life. Is that the kind of wife you want your son to have?”

That left Owen speechless.

He knew Olivia was right. It was frightening how Cassie could have so little regard for her own life. She attempted suicide because things didn’t go her way, and she had no qualms about letting Oscar take the blame for it. She had made it clear that her life or death entirely depended on Oscar’s next course of action and that, was even more terrifying.

“Call Oscar and tell him to come home,” Olivia instructed.

Owen kept his conversation with Oscar short and succinct once his call went through. He ordered his son to be home in an hour so they could speak with him.

As soon as he hung up, Olivia turned to him. “Dear, I hope you can be on my side. No matter what, I will not let Cassie be my daughter-in-law.”

Owen saw the determination in his wife’s eyes and nodded.

Both the Clintons then left the restaurant and made their way home.

They had only been home for half an hour when Oscar pulled up, punctual as always.

Owen and Olivia were already seated at the sofa, their expressions grim and solemn. Stephanie was coming down the stairs in a state of drowsiness when she felt the overwhelmingly tense atmosphere. That was all the wake-up call she needed.

She swallowed hard before approaching her parents. "Dad, Mom, what's going on?"

Olivia glanced at her without saying a word.

Meanwhile, Owen beckoned to the sofa opposite them and said, "Take a seat."

Stephanie looked at her parents warily. "Dad, Mom, who made you angry?"

Olivia frowned as she looked Stephanie up and down. "What is this that you're wearing? Is this how people of our status should be dressed? Go put on something decent!"

Stephanie was left bewildered as she looked down at the casual wear she was in. How is being comfortably and fully clothed not decent?

Feeling wronged, she looked at her father, but Owen only told her to listen to Olivia instead.

Stephanie had no choice but to comply.

When she came back down, Oscar had just entered the house with a very conspicuous wound next to his eye.

Her eyes widened in shock as she ran toward her brother. "Oscar, what happened to your face?"

Her outburst drew the attention of everyone else in the house.

Olivia noticed the wound right away but did not show any signs of concern like she usually would. She merely motioned for Oscar to take a seat.

"Dad. Mom," Oscar greeted politely before sitting down.

Stephanie joined her brother on the sofa, but she was still adamant about finding out the cause of his injury.

Oscar's expression was grave as he replied, "It's nothing. I walked into something accidentally."

Before Stephanie could say anymore, Olivia interrupted, "Steph, stop badgering your brother. Go out with your friends if you're bored. Your father and I need to talk to Oscar."

Stephanie pursed her lips in annoyance.

"Mom, I want to stay. I'm your daughter, not an outsider. There's nothing you need to hide from me if it concerns our family."

Olivia gave in and turned her attention to Oscar. She couldn't hide the fact that seeing her son injured pained her.

"Oscar, is your eye okay? Shall I get the housemaid to tend to it?"

Oscar shook his head. "Nah. It's just a small scratch."

Being a mother meant that Olivia could never stop worrying about her children. The more she thought about her son's injury, the more concerned she was. In the end, she got the housemaid to bring some medicine over so she could personally tend to Oscar's wound.

Once his wound was all bandaged up, Olivia's no-nonsense demeanor was back.

"Oscar, why don't you and Amelia head to Anglandur? I've already gotten everything ready. And once she gives birth, the baby will be registered as a citizen of Anglandur."

Even though his mother's words were shocking, Oscar remained unfazed.

Stephanie, on the other hand, became very agitated. "Mom, are you crazy? Why does Oscar have to go to Anglandur when he's doing well here? And if he does, who's going to manage Clinton Corporations?"

"Your father isn't that old. He's still perfectly capable of managing Clinton Corporations. You can see this trip as an extended honeymoon for your brother and sister-in-law," Olivia rebuked while glaring at her daughter.

"Are you joking, Mom? A honeymoon is for newlyweds, not for people who have been married for almost five years! Have you lost your mind?"

Owen's face turned dark as he turned to Stephanie. "Steph, go upstairs."

Nonetheless, Stephanie was indignant about the way she had been treated. She was about to protest against it when Owen repeated himself, this time even more sternly.

An exasperated Stephanie didn't have a choice but to march her way back up to her room, leaving her parents and Oscar alone in the living room.

After a sip of her tea, Olivia went straight to her point. "Oscar, I'm sure you know why I'm asking you and Amelia to go to Anglandur?"

Oscar nodded solemnly.

"Since you do, I won't beat around the bush. I want you and Amelia to leave the day after tomorrow. Your father and I will deal with the Yard family."

"I'm not going to Anglandur, Mom. I'm not a coward. I am the reason things have gotten to this stage, so I should be responsible for it. Let me handle my affairs with Amelia and Cassie," Oscar said resolutely.

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Olivia huffed at her son. "Oscar, the Yards have personally come to us demanding answers. Do you really think you can handle this on your own?"

Upon that, Oscar nodded.

"I have no doubts about your ability when it comes to running a business, Oscar. But you're indecisive when it comes to matters of the heart. You've already hurt two women because of that, and that's something I can't approve of."

After a slight pause, Olivia continued, "I have two reasons for wanting you and Amelia to go to Anglandur. First, it's to stop the Yard family from harassing you. Second, it's to ensure Amelia's safety. Knowing what Elizabeth is capable of, Amelia won't be safe here unless she has round-the-clock security. That's why we've decided it'd be better for the two of you to be in Anglandur."

Oscar drank his tea in one gulp before slamming his cup on the table in frustration.

On the other hand, Owen looked at his son and said calmly, "Oscar, listen to your mother. Go to Anglandur with Amelia. Once she's had the baby, we will go visit."

Oscar clasped his hands together in contemplation, his expression grave. He understood his parents only had his best interests at heart, but he still couldn't shirk his responsibility.

"Dad, Mom, I can't go along with your plan. Cassie did hurt herself because of me, so I can't leave her behind. I'm sure you wouldn't want others to think your son is an irresponsible coward, would you?"

Owen and Olivia held each other's gaze. Finally, Owen spoke up, "You really don't wish to go to Anglandur?"

Oscar shook his head.

Olivia sighed deeply. "Oscar, I don't care how you feel about Cassie and Amelia. But please don't forget that Amelia is your wife, and she's pregnant with your child. Your father and I have been looking forward to a grandchild for so long that if anything happens to either of them, don't blame me for disowning you. I won't force you to go to Anglandur, but you have to make sure Amelia will be safe."

Oscar frowned as he pondered. "I know, Mom. I will protect her," he reassured.

Standing up from her seat, Olivia sighed again. "Oscar, I'm very disappointed at the way you've conducted yourself these past months. I never thought you'd have an extramarital affair and get yourself entangled between two women. Regardless of the outcome, there will always be a loser in this situation. I've always been very proud of you, but your infidelity and irresponsibility have upset me greatly. I hope you'll reflect on yourself."

With that said, Olivia made her way upstairs, leaving Oscar with Owen.

Owen felt a little sorry for his son but knew that he was still in the wrong. He walked over to Oscar and patted his shoulders. "Oscar, the men in the Clinton family never let their wives cry. But you have, again and again. Even I have to admit that you've gone overboard this time, so don't blame your mother for being harsh."

Oscar was silent for a long while as he pursed his lips together. When he finally spoke, his voice was low and apologetic, "Dad, I'm sorry."

"Oscar, it's not me that you've let down. You have to think through this carefully. No matter who you choose, try to let the other party down easily. The Clinton and Yard families have been friends for so long. I don't wish for our friendship to end just because you couldn't control your hormones."

Hearing that, Oscar nodded his head lightly.

"I know you must be feeling awful," Owen said as he gave Oscar another pat. "Since your mother is still fuming, why don't you head home first?"

His parents had already told him all they wanted to, so there was no point in staying any longer.

Once he was back in his car, Oscar could finally release his pent-up frustration as he started tugging at his hair. He sat there deep in contemplation for a long time before finally driving off.

He had only made it halfway home when he got a call. After the call ended, his entire demeanor changed as he quickly steered his car and accelerated. In his mad rush, he even ran a few red lights, which led to a chase by the traffic police.

Even so, Oscar didn't care about anything as he continued to drive at a dangerous speed. It was usually an hour's drive to the Principal General Hospital, but Oscar made it in just twenty minutes.

He dashed up to the sixth floor and made a beeline for the operating room. A distraught-looking Tiffany was already there. "How's Amelia? How did she get into an accident? Wasn't she still fine this morning?" Oscar asked anxiously.

Tiffany stared listlessly at Oscar, her hands and feet cold. Her lips were trembling so much she couldn't say anything.

Oscar once again grabbed and shook her. "Tell me what happened to Amelia! Have you become mute?"

The woman took a big gulp and tried to calm herself down. "Amelia wanted to buy a few clothes for you and the baby, so she asked me to go shopping with her. We were about to cross the road when a car dashed out of nowhere." Tiffany looked close to tears as she continued, "I was walking in front with Amelia behind me. When the car came, Amelia pushed me away, and then she... she bled so much. She just lay there on the road so lifelessly."

Once she finished recounting the entire incident, Tiffany broke down into tears. "Oscar, do you think Amelia might..."

Color started to drain from Oscar's face, and the panic in his eyes intensified. Tiffany's recount was so vivid that he couldn't shake the image away. It was excruciatingly painful every time he pictured a lifeless Amelia lying in a pool of blood.

"No, no. Amelia will be fine," Oscar replied firmly.

Tiffany calmed down considerably after hearing that. "Yes, Amelia will be fine. She will definitely be fine!"

Oscar looked up at the light above the operating room, which indicated the operation was still in progress. It was so bright it hurt his eyes.

Then, Oscar took a deep breath and steeled himself for the call he was about to make. He dialed his home number and tried to keep his conversation as brief as possible. He didn't even let them have an opportunity to ask more before he hung up.

In under an hour, Owen and Olivia rushed to the hospital. Olivia had beads of perspiration on her forehead as she jogged toward Oscar and held on to his hands nervously. "Oscar, what happened to Amelia? You said she was in an accident? What exactly happened?"

"I'm not sure either, Mom. Amelia is still in the operating room. I don't know what her situation is like now."

Olivia burst into tears at that as she raised her fists and started punching Oscar. "What do you mean you don't know? I'm going to kill you after everything you've done. If anything happens to Amelia and she loses the baby, I no longer want you as my son!"

Yet Oscar just stood and let his mother take her anger out on him.

At the same time, Owen pulled Olivia into a hug and tried to calm her down."

She buried her head into his chest and sobbed even louder.

"What have I done to deserve this? My son can't tell right from wrong, and now, I don't even know if my daughter-in-law and grandchild are going to survive," Olivia mumbled between sobs. "This hurts so much. If I had known he would turn out like this, I wouldn't have given birth to this son. I'd have saved myself from so much pain."

Owen patted her on her back as he continued to coax, "There, there, Olivia. No one wanted this to happen either."

All of a sudden, Olivia pushed Owen away and pointed at him accusingly. "Have you been expecting this accident to happen? You'll have an excuse to kick her out of our family if her child is gone. All of you have been busy, haven't you? I finally have a daughter-in-law I like, but all you want to do is to chase her out. Why can't you just let me live in peace?"

Owen was overwhelmed with a mix of emotions and looked at his wife with hurt in his eyes.

Evidently, Olivia had said all that in a fit of anger, and she immediately regretted it. They had loved and supported each other for decades, but now they were fighting because of Amelia.

"I'm so sorry, Dear," Olivia knew she was wrong and apologized profusely.

Owen sighed before hugging his wife. "Olivia, I know how you're feeling now. But I wish you wouldn't think so lowly of me. We've been married for so long that you'd know better than anyone else my feelings for you. I can even forgo all my principles for you."

Olivia let out a deep sigh and remained silent.

The atmosphere outside the operating room was frigid, as everyone was still shell-shocked and worried about Amelia.

Just then, two police officers showed up and broke the silence. "Excuse me, are you the accident victim's family members?" the policewoman asked.

Oscar replied blankly, "I'm her husband."

"After our investigation, we have reason to believe that this incident was premeditated. We have issued warrants to bring in the driver, and now we're just here to take down your statements."

Oscar merely nodded.

Just then, Olivia interrupted, "Please, you have to catch the driver responsible for this."

The policewoman nodded and left after asking a few more questions with regards to the accident.

Olivia furrowed her brows as she turned to her husband. "Dear, I think you ought to call the police station and give them some pressure to bring in the culprit as soon as possible. I want to know who could be so bold to want to mess with our family."

Agreeing with Olivia, Owen immediately fished his phone out and made the call. After he hung up, Olivia asked, "What did they say?"

"They've promised to send out every police officer available to bring this driver to justice."

That was the best news Olivia had had the whole day. She once again turned her attention to the operating room.

The operation went on for hours, and before long, night had already fallen. Oscar looked at his parents in concern as he realized they had yet to have dinner. "Dad, Mom, why don't you go grab something to eat? It's already so late. You must be hungry."

However, Olivia was so full of worry and anxiety that her appetite had long disappeared.

"Why don't you go with Ms. Winters? She's been here even longer than us. I'm sure she must be hungry too," Owen suggested to Olivia.

"It's fine. I'm not hungry. I don't have any appetite anyway, knowing that Amelia is still in the operating room. But, the two of you should get some food. We wouldn't want you to fall ill," Tiffany quickly replied.

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Olivia shook her head.

Owen held her in his arms and said gently, "Olivia, let me take you to get something to eat. We don't know when Amelia's surgery will end. After the surgery is done, you still need to take care of her, so you will need your strength."

Olivia hesitated for a while but nodded her head eventually.

The two of them then left. Tiffany, who had her back against the wall and her head lowered, asked impassively, "Oscar, if Amelia miscarries the child, are you going to divorce her?"

Oscar tensed up instantly. He balled his hands into fists so hard that his knuckles turned white, and his veins popped.

He answered coldly, "Amelia will be fine."

At that, Tiffany's lips curled into a mocking sneer.

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"Oscar, you have no idea how precious this child is to Amelia. If she loses this child, she will break down completely, and your marriage will be on the rocks," said Tiffany. She paused before continuing, "The police have already said that this accident was man-made. Amelia mostly stays at home; she doesn't go out much. She does not have any complicated interpersonal relationships. No one would hate her to the extent of harming her and her child. Therefore, you know clearly who caused all this to come about."

Oscar raised his arms and tugged his hair. His eyes were shifting uncertainly, and his lips tightened into a line. It was unclear what was running through his mind.

Tiffany glared at him as she gritted her teeth and spat, "Do you know what I really want to do now? I really want to kill you! Back then, I should have just accompanied Amelia to go around borrowing money instead of letting her marry you. Throughout the five years she was married to you, she changed from a carefree girl to what we see now. From her appearance, one would think that she was a foxy vixen. But who would have imagined that deep down, she was pure and innocent! Ever since she fell in love with you, she had no interest in any other man. But you! You had unclear relations with so many other women! I really do feel sorry for Amelia. Now you got what you wished for. She got into a car crash.

We don't know whether she and her child will survive. Are you happy now? You can run off into the sunset with that lover of yours."

Holding his forehead in his hands, Oscar didn't say a word.

His silence angered Tiffany even more.

She rushed over and kicked his shins with all her might. She then shouted angrily, "Say something! Why are you pretending to be mute now? Your wife and child are inside! We don't even know if they will survive!"

The man remained silent.

Tiffany was more enraged upon seeing him not speak, and she kicked him even harder.

"Oscar, you coward! If you really felt nothing for Amelia, you shouldn't have done all those things to lead her on. You made her fall in love with you, but you keep getting entangled with another woman. If I were Amelia, I would hate you to death!"

Yet, Oscar was still silent.

Tiffany kept kicking him until she herself felt that it was meaningless due to his lack of response. She landed one last kick on him after coming to that conclusion on her own. Before she could retract her leg, a furious female voice shouted at her, "Hey! What's up with you? How could you hit someone like a lunatic over here?"

As soon as the sentence flew out, Tiffany was heavily pushed aside.

She staggered for a few steps before regaining her balance. Her eyes soon focused, and she saw that it was none other than Stephanie.

Stephanie held Oscar's hand anxiously and asked, "Oscar, are you alright? Why didn't you fight back when this woman was hitting you? Have you gone mad?"

"I'm fine," responded Oscar nonchalantly.

Stephanie grew flustered. "I saw from afar that this woman was hitting and kicking you. How can you be fine? Oscar, you are the most capable and most invincible person in my eyes. How could you just stand and let a woman hit you?" she demanded.

With a frightening look in his eyes, Oscar lifted his head and stated, "Steph, be quiet."

Seeing her brother like this, Stephanie felt unbelievable.

She growled out in exasperation, "Oscar, when have you become such a coward? You even chose to keep quiet at this woman's bullying. Are you still the brother I respect?"

"Shut your mouth," Oscar lowered his voice and scolded with a disgruntled expression.

Stephanie finally quieted down reluctantly.

Looking at Stephanie making a fool out of herself, Tiffany felt sorry for Amelia.

Amelia was fighting for her life in the operating room, yet her sister-in-law was dressed to the nines. Stephanie did not look like a person who was here to visit somebody. Instead, she looked as if she was attending a party.

It was unfortunate, having a sister-in-law like this who treated her with utter disrespect. Tiffany could imagine Amelia's hardship while living with the Clintons.

Tiffany crossed her arms and mocked, "Dear Ms. Clinton, do you know that your sister-in-law and nephew or niece are still in the operating room, fighting for their lives? You look as if you are about to go attend a party. Do you wish for your sister-in-law and her child to not make it?"

Upon hearing that sharp remark, Stephanie shot Tiffany a vicious glare. The former then scoffed with disdain, "Whether Amelia makes it or not is none of my business. Who knows whether the child is really legitimate? I would say good riddance if it's gone. She's just an unworthy and insignificant woman. If she's dead, it will be convenient for my brother to marry another woman."

Tiffany chuckled humorlessly. She had never encountered a woman who spoke so hatefully. Stephanie's words could really drive a person up a wall.

The woman didn't stop there. She went on to ask, "I heard Amelia was in a car accident. Did she die?"

Tiffany could feel her blood begin to boil.

She was about to tear that condescending smirk off Stephanie's face, but someone else beat her to the draw. Smack! Oscar had raised his hand and slapped his sister. The force of the slap whipped her head to the right.

Stephanie was dumbstruck for a few minutes. She could only look at Oscar with widened eyes full of disbelief.

Watching from the side, Tiffany felt cathartic. However, she winced from imagining the pain that must be shooting up Stephanie's face. Men were strong. It would be lucky if a direct slap like that did not lead to hearing loss.

Stephanie put down her arms. The handprint that was now on her left cheek was glowing red, and her cheek was beginning to swell.

"Oscar, did you just slap me?" Stephanie asked with incredulity.

Her brother looked at her icily and uttered one single word, "Apologize."

Stephanie could not comprehend anything. She did not even realize what she had done was wrong.

"Amelia is your sister-in-law. The child in her belly is your nephew or niece. If anything happens to them because of what you said, I will not forgive you." Oscar looked at his sister as he uttered every single word frostily.

Seeing the look in his eyes, Stephanie took a step backward with fear.

"Apologize," repeated Oscar.

Stephanie was scared silly, but she could not back down due to her ego.

"What I said was the truth. Once she dies, you can marry Cassie. No matter how I look at it, Cassie is way better than Amelia, who is a total nobody." Stephanie retorted stubbornly with her chin raised.

Oscar raised his hand once more. However, his sister held her head high and continued her speech with a mixture of anger and fear. "Oscar, even if you beat me to death, I will still say this. Amelia is no good for you. She does not deserve you. Cassie is the only one for you."

Oscar's hand stopped midair, and the look in his eyes shifted unpredictably. At long last, he lowered his hand and growled, "Get out!"

Stephanie was so shocked that she stumbled backward.

"Oscar, you're chasing me out?"

"Anyone who does not welcome my wife and child is not welcome to me," growled Oscar faintly, but anyone could see the truth in his words.

He was dead serious.

Stephanie bit her lips, feeling undecided. Ultimately, she realized the gravity of the situation and lowered that proud head of hers. "Oscar, I'm sorry," she said.

"I'm not the one you should be sorry to." In other words, he meant that she needed to apologize to Amelia.

Stephanie had never experienced such an amount of humiliation in her life.

She hesitated.

Without looking at her, Oscar ordered, "Steph, go home. Do not appear before me for the time being. I cannot guarantee that I won't hit you again."

As Stephanie struggled to extricate herself from the situation, Olivia's voice chimed in at an opportune moment. "What's going on?" she asked.

Upon hearing that familiar voice, Stephanie secretly breathed a sigh of relief.

Olivia and Owen walked over. Stephanie threw herself into her mother's arms and cried, "Mom, Oscar hit me."

Olivia felt the tension build in her forehead, and she let out a deep sigh. "Steph, cut it out. Your sister-in-law is still in the operating room."

At that comment, Stephanie felt even more aggrieved, so she let go of her mother. She sobbed, "Mom, you only care about Amelia. When are you going to remember that I am your daughter? She is just an unrelated outsider!"

Olivia's head continued to throb slightly. She frowned and said, "Steph, that's enough. Amelia is still fighting for her life. I have no time to put up with your tantrum. If you're bored, go home and wait for the news. Also, what's this you're wearing? Your sister-in-law got into an accident, and you dressed up so gaudily. Are you trying to let everyone know that you are hoping for something bad to happen to your sister-in-law and her child?"

Stephanie shrieked, "Mom, you are too biased! I hope Amelia dies in this accident! You wish to hold her child? You will only get your wish in your next life!"

She placed a hand on her face and left after saying that.

Olivia was so angered by her daughter's comment that her chest hurt. She held onto her chest, finding it hard to breathe.

Owen looked sullen. He held Olivia in his arms and stroked her back tenderly.

Tiffany felt that the day had truly been a mess. Amelia's accident was already worrisome. At such a dire time, Stephanie just had to stir up even more trouble and make the situation worse.

She sighed, "Mr. Clinton, I think you better let Mrs. Clinton sit down to rest."

Owen followed her suggestion and led Olivia to a bench, asking her to sit down.

With a gloomy expression, Oscar crouched down and asked with concern, "Mom, are you alright?"

Olivia soon exhaled a breath and felt a tad bit better.

She looked toward Oscar and said, "Don't mind your sister. She has been spoiled rotten by us. That's why she says what's on her mind bluntly, without a care for the feelings of others."

Oscar pursed his lips silently.

His mother sighed helplessly. Feeling unsettled, her chest started to ache again.

"Dad," said Oscar, "You should take Mom home to get some rest. I will keep an eye on things here. We do not know when Amelia's surgery will end. Everyone staying here and waiting blindly is pointless."

Immediately, Olivia shook her head and said, "There's no need. With Amelia in this condition, I would not be able to rest even if I went back. I am better off staying here. As long as Amelia is fine, it doesn't matter if the child is lost. Both of you are still young. You can still have children later on in life."

Tiffany was listening intently at the side, and warmth filled her heart at those words. These were the most comforting words she had heard all day. She felt glad for Amelia, learning that her previous efforts were not simply brushed aside.

Oscar did not say anything. He straightened himself and looked at the doors of the operating room silently. His thoughts were indecipherable.

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Amelia's surgery went on until two in the morning. When the sign above the operating room remained lit, the atmosphere in the corridor became even heavier. Nobody spoke a word. Only silence settled among them all.

Suddenly, the doors to the operating room parted. Two nurses rushed out in a hurry. Everyone tensed at the sight.

"Miss, how is my daughter-in-law?" Olivia asked, feeling scared and anxious.

The nurses responded hurriedly, "The patient is hemorrhaging. She is in critical condition. We need a blood transfusion. Who has the O blood type?"

"I do!" Olivia and Tiffany raised their hands simultaneously and exclaimed at the same time.

"Then the two of you come with me."

Olivia and Tiffany trailed behind the nurses. Oscar and Owen followed in apprehension as well.

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The two nurses did a quick body check for both women. Due to her heart condition, Olivia could not give blood. Tiffany, on the other hand, was fit as a fiddle, so they took her blood.

Tiffany said fearlessly, "Miss, please take more. As long as you can save Amelia, take as much as you need to. I am healthy. I can replenish the blood by eating more meat after this."

The nurses laughed at what she said, relaxing the tense atmosphere a little.

Under Tiffany's aggressive request, the nurses did take slightly more blood than they should. After donating a relatively big amount of blood, Tiffany was visibly pale. Her hands were extremely cold too. Olivia hugged her tight, her heart aching for the brave woman.

"Tiffany, are you alright?" asked Olivia.

The pale woman shook her head and answered a little feebly, "I'm okay. I'll be alright after resting. As long as Amelia can be saved, taking more of my blood is no big deal."

Olivia sat her down on the bench and turned to her son. "Oscar, go buy something warm for Tiffany to eat. She just donated a lot of blood. Her body is weak."

Oscar nodded and went ahead swiftly.

Olivia held Tiffany's hands tightly and thanked her. "Tiffany, I can't thank you enough for today. You are Amelia's savior and our family's savior. In the future, if you need anything, feel free to tell me. I will definitely do my best to help you."

Tiffany smiled and replied, "Mrs. Clinton, you're too kind. Amelia is my friend. We have known each other for many years. I only want her to get through this. I would willingly donate my kidney to her if she needed it. Our friendship is not something everyone can understand."

From that moment onwards, Olivia began to regard Tiffany with admiration.

She suddenly blurted, "I'll make you my goddaughter."

Tiffany's eyes widened, and she looked at Olivia, flabbergasted.

Olivia smiled and was about to say something when two nurses came out with a baby wrapped tightly in a bundle. Tiffany, Olivia, and Owen immediately stood up and rushed over. Olivia looked at the baby that was still sticky with blood. Her

eyes reddened at the sight, and her lips trembled. She was suddenly overcome with emotions.

Her lips trembled for some time before she found her voice. "This is my grandson?"

The two nurses nodded and said, "Madam, we need to bathe the baby. If you would like to watch, you may come over to the newborn nursery. This baby is the bravest baby that I have ever seen. Despite being in an accident, he was born without any complications. It's nothing short of a miracle."

The three of them let out a breath of relief. At least the baby was safe. Now they only hoped for Amelia to survive as well.

Olivia instructed her husband, "Dear, you stay put with Tiffany. I'll follow them to have a look at the baby."

Owen nodded in agreement and understanding.

After Olivia went with the nurses, only Tiffany and Owen were left to stand in front of the operating room. The atmosphere suddenly became deafening.

Owen was a man who looked graceful and gentlemanly. Even though he was over sixty years old, he knew how to take good care of himself. Therefore, he looked like a middle-aged man who was slightly over forty. On the whole, he was quite charismatic.

If it weren't for her close relationship with Amelia, Tiffany would have a good impression of him. However, Amelia's life with the Clintons wasn't as smooth sailing as it seemed on the surface. That was why Tiffany felt guarded around this man, even if he seemed refined.

Owen coughed a little and said gently, "Tiffany... Is it alright if I call you by your name?"

Surprise flashed across Tiffany's eyes, but she replied politely, "Of course."

He pointed to the long bench in the corridor and said, "I noticed you don't look so well. I think it would be better if you sit down and get some rest."

Upon hearing him say that, Tiffany was even more surprised. She had never expected Mr. Clinton, who was renowned to be ruthless in the corporate world, to one day speak to her so amiably.

She suddenly felt overwhelmed.

"Err... okay." Her response came slightly slow, but she sat down all the same.

Owen said, "Tiffany, it's all thanks to you today. Since Olivia would like to take you as her goddaughter, we will hold a party after Amelia gets well. We will invite

our good friends from the business community and introduce you to them. I have heard that you are a freelance writer. Coincidentally, I know a few CEOs of some publishing houses. We will also get you a reliable manager and groom you to become a top writer in our country.”

Tiffany was completely shell-shocked by now. She could not believe that Mr. Clinton was offering to support her. One must know that the man was considered a leader in the local business community. With his support, one could achieve success much earlier and face fewer obstacles. This was the kind of chance many people often dreamt of. She certainly did not expect that such a great opportunity would just fall into her lap.

However, Tiffany did not let the surprise get to her head.

She replied rationally, “Mr. Clinton, thank you for your kindness, but there is no need for that. I am just an ordinary person. Putting in my honest work and getting the pay that is enough to sustain myself is good enough. As for taking me in as a goddaughter, I think Mrs. Clinton only said it at the heat of the moment. It should not be taken seriously.”

It was Owen’s turn to be surprised.

People would normally coyly reject him when given this offer, but their eyes would still shine with desire. He observed Tiffany closely and found that she really did not want to have anything to do with the Clintons.

“Olivia does not speak lightly. She earnestly wishes to have you as her goddaughter. Being related to the Clintons would not only raise your reputation — it will also bring you unimaginable benefits. So many people dream of this chance day and night, but you’re letting it pass you by?” asked Owen tentatively.

At that, Tiffany let out a dry laugh.

She was acting restrained in front of Owen, but the look in her eyes was definitely earnest.

“Mr. Clinton, what I have to say next may seem pompous. Forgive me, but honestly speaking, I do not wish to have anything to do with the Clintons. If it hadn’t been for Amelia’s marriage to Oscar, I would not have agreed for her to get involved with your family in any way. The Clintons are a prominent family. The waters are too deep. Amelia and I are children from ordinary families. Just having a thousand or so to buy something slightly lavish would have made our day. Despite living in luxury, you never know when an accident may happen. Amelia, who is lying on the operating table right now, is proof of that.”

Pausing for a bit, Tiffany then said, “I thought a car accident like this would only happen in one of my novels. I didn’t expect it would happen in real life. To be frank, so many bad things have happened to Amelia. I am actually quite repulsed by the members of the Clinton family.”

As she said that, she smiled sheepishly. "Mr. Clinton, please take it as me speaking rashly because I'm still young. We should not go ahead with this whole goddaughter business. I do not want to be called a gold digger who is latching on to the Clintons for money."

Listening to her, Owen was surprisingly not angered.

Tiffany pursed her lips and suddenly added, "Mr. Clinton, I'm sorry. I have said too much. Perhaps it is because of Amelia that I am quite prejudiced against the Clinton family."

Owen shook his head and replied, "No, I think you are very truthful, and I admire your personality. You and Amelia are quite alike. I was too fixated on social standing, so I treated Amelia unfairly. Now that she is fighting for her life in the operating room, I reflected upon many things. I realize now that I really did mistreat her far too many times."

The look in Tiffany's eyes became complicated.

Owen peered at the sign above the operating room that was still illuminated. He suddenly sighed and said, "I should let my children live the life they want. If Amelia overcomes this obstacle in life, I will not interfere in her marriage with my son anymore. Too much interference on my end would only put me in a difficult position."

Tiffany chuckled lightly. Mr. Clinton was relatable like this. At least he was not as despicable as what she had previously thought.

Oscar soon came back with three sets of chicken soup and buns. He passed two of them to Owen and Tiffany. "Dad, where's Mom?" he asked.

Owen accepted the soup and answered, "Amelia has given birth to a son. Your mom has gone off to look at the baby."

The man's hand paused mid-action. His heart jolted at the news, and his blood pumped furiously. An indescribable feeling filled his heart. It was sweet and satisfying. He felt a flurry of emotions gather all at once and was overcome with fervor.

The thrill of officially becoming a father stunned him momentarily. The intense emotion he felt caused his ability to manage his expression to be thrown out of a window.

Tiffany, who was busy observing him, asked, "Oscar, why are you like this? Amelia gave you a son! Are you really that unhappy about it?"

Oscar finally regained his senses.

"Where's Amelia?" he asked; he was worried about her.

Tiffany's stony expression relaxed at his question.

Humph! At least you remembered Amelia first instead of being overjoyed at having a son. Otherwise, I would do everything in my power to stop her from being with you.

"She's still in the operating room. We don't know what's the situation in there," answered Tiffany in a low voice. She looked at the soup in her hands; it no longer looked appetizing.

The operation had gone on for far too long. The longer it was, the more despair filled them.

Oscar's expression was solemn, but he urged, "You better eat something. If Amelia wakes up and sees you looking as white as a ghost, she'll think I am bullying you again."

Tiffany nodded and took a sip obediently. She did not have any energy left to argue with Oscar. Amelia's uncertain condition had made her feel extremely despondent, so the soup she had in her hands seemed to have instantly lost its taste.

On the other hand, Oscar gazed at the operating room with his lips pressed together. The elation from becoming a father had receded. Deep in his heart, he felt a gap widen. It was like a piece of his heart was missing. He had a feeling that the most important thing in his life was slipping away. The feeling made him feel utterly terrified.

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Too Much to Bear, My Love Chapter 176 An Eventful Night

The operation ended at 4 a.m. The light above the door flickered off, and a group of doctors streamed out of the room, looking extremely fatigued. Oscar, who had been hovering just outside, was the first to approach them.

"Mr. Lancaster, how's Amelia?" Oscar asked anxiously. The woman's injuries from the accident were severe, and Robert had stepped up as the chief of Principal General Hospital to assist with the operation.

Robert looked grave. He shook his head and said in a low voice, "Amelia's injuries were too severe. It was a miracle that we were even able to deliver the baby without any complications. We've done our best, but Amelia's not entirely in the clear yet. If she doesn't regain consciousness within forty-eight hours, it's possible that she may remain in a vegetative state. It's also possible that she will..."

Robert trailed off. Everyone present, however, could fill in the missing pieces on their own. They were all equally unwilling to confront that fact.

Oscar's expression was unfathomable. Throughout his body, he felt his blood slowly turning into ice.

"Mr. Lancaster, you're joking, aren't you? Amelia's always been healthy and strong. Why would she suddenly be in a vegetative state?" Oscar pleaded, the sides of his mouth curling up into a smile that was more of a grimace.

At the news, Olivia's eyes reddened. Clutching onto Robert, she choked, "Robert, we've been friends for many years. Amelia's one of us! You have to save her. The baby was just born. He can't go through life motherless!"

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Robert's expression looked ghastly as he humbly replied, "Olivia, I've already done my best. It's out of my hands now."

Olivia staggered a little. At last, she was ultimately unable to withstand this shock that topped off the long, torturous night. With a flutter of her eyelids, she fainted dead away in Owen's arms.

Robert hastily examined her, then turned to Owen. "Owen, bring her to the room to rest. She's gotten too much of a shock. It's placed too much stress on her heart."

Owen swept his wife up in his arms and replied sternly, "Robert, no matter what it takes or how much money we'll have to spend, you have to save Amelia."

Robert smiled ruefully. "I'll definitely do my best. I must remind you once again, though, that Amelia's injuries are really too severe. It was enough of a medical miracle that the child survived and was delivered. You... perhaps you should still prepare yourselves for the worst."

Owen's face grew dark, but he nodded his head nonetheless. With a parting glance at Oscar, he headed off with his wife in his arms.

Robert patted Oscar's shoulders. "Be strong, Oscar. Amelia still needs you," he said solemnly.

Oscar looked defeated. He met Robert's eyes as if in a daze, then looked at the woman who was being pushed into the room on a hospital bed by a nurse.

How frail she looks! Oscar realized with a start as if it was his first time seeing Amelia all over again.

And she looks so pale. His heart aching at the thought.

Amelia's face, at rest, looked like a doll. There seemed to be almost no sign of life in her.

Oscar raised his hand almost sub-consciously to his chest as if he was trying to hold his heart together and stop it from breaking. For the first time, he felt every throb of his heart acutely. Each was a stab in Oscar's chest that incited tremendous pain.

He had followed dumbly to the intensive care unit. Standing outside, Oscar pressed his forehead against the glass window and gazed intently at the woman lying on the hospital bed within.

Oscar's fist clenched slowly, the veins on his arm bulging with the effort. His emotions whirled madly within him in a state of complete turmoil. Oscar felt as if his heart was being slowly wrung and felt suffocated. It was a pain that he would never wish on any other, nor hope to experience again in his lifetime.

Beside him, Tiffany darted a look at him. She then burst uncontrollably into tears.

As she sobbed, Tiffany shrieked, "Oscar, are you happy now? Amelia could be dead in two days! You can look forward to being with your lover for the rest of your life then! Aren't you overjoyed?"

Oscar's face was flushed.

Unable to cope with her agony, Tiffany unleashed it on Oscar in the form of unbridled fury.

Kicking and hammering his fists at Oscar, Tiffany blubbered, "Oscar, do you know what I hate most about you? If you don't have any feelings for Amelia, then don't lead her on! Why did you let her fall in love with you?"

Oscar submitted to Tiffany's abuse's in silence, his gaze remaining doggedly fixed on the glass. The sorrow in his eyes was immeasurable.

After a while, Tiffany had spent all of her energy lashing out at Oscar. Like a deflated balloon, her hands fell to her sides. She continued sobbing forlornly.

As she wept, Tiffany continued, "If anything happens to Amelia, what will happen to the baby? You Clintons are an unreliable bunch. If the baby falls into your hands, Amelia will be sure to blame me even if she's comatose."

Oscar remained silent.

Tiffany raised her head and glared at him through swollen eyes. However, when their eyes met, she did a double-take, her next words of accusation dying on her lips.

The look in Oscar's glazed eyes was one that Tiffany had never witnessed in any other. It was an expression of complete, utter despair.

Tiffany also turned to look at Amelia lying still on the hospital bed. She slowly sobered up.

After a long while, she turned back to face Oscar. At last, the question that had always been on Amelia's mind was finally voiced by Tiffany. "Oscar, let me ask you. Did you ever truly love Amelia?"

Oscar stood as if rooted to the spot. His eyes, however, betrayed the clamor in his mind.

He couldn't help but ask himself the same question. Did I ever truly love Amelia?

Oscar thought he did. Why else would the sight of Amelia lying on that hospital bed, faded and lifeless, incur such debilitating pain in his heart?

He nodded. However, the faintest gleam of uncertainty shimmered in his eyes.

Tiffany stared at Oscar. She felt a sliver of consolation at his desperation. Look, Amelia! Oscar does have feelings for you. Your love wasn't entirely unreciprocated after all.

"Oscar, since you did love Amelia, no matter what happens to her, please take good care of her baby. If you decide that you don't want him, give him to me. I may not be as well-off as the Clintons, but as long as I can still feed myself, I won't allow the baby to go hungry." Tiffany asserted.

"He's my son," Oscar said. Those three words, however, were laden with meaning.

Tiffany pursed her lips. "I hope you'll really treat him as your son, then. Not just another progeny."

She turned back to the window and lapsed into silence. Tension lay thickly like an impenetrable wall between them.

At the security firm, the atmosphere was likewise strained.

Gary reached out and gave Riley a tight slap on the face, bellowing, "Riley, you've really disappointed me! I had such high hopes for you when I sent you to Amelia's side to guard her. How could she have gotten into an accident barely within a day of your assignment? Are you that determined to run the security firm I'd painstakingly built up right into the ground?"

Riley's face was still burning from the force of the blow. She bit her lip, refusing to make excuses for her mistake.

Howard stepped forward. In a mild tone, he reasoned, "Gary, I think Riley didn't do it on purpose. Didn't she hunt down the driver that caused the accident? She's done her best to make amends. Can't you forgive her this time?"

Gary's face grew thunderous. It was a completely different look from the hearty, good-humored look he usually greeted them with.

"Howard, you should know the rules that our security firm operates by. Anyone who fails to protect our client will be punished. Riley allowed such an irreparable error to happen on the very first day of her assignment. There's no need to retain her in our firm." Gary said in a steely voice.

Riley's eyes widened. She looked at Gary in disbelief.

Howard and Xander were equally thunderstruck. The three of them had been with Gary right from the beginning. Their relationship was iron-clad, forged in the fiery trials of a company struggling to survive in its infancy. The ties between them resembled friendship more closely than that of an employer and his employees. Gary's resolute dismissal of Riley due to a single mistake was thus entirely unexpected.

Howard and Xander broke in simultaneously. "Gary, Riley didn't mean for things to happen this way. We know that the accident that happened on the first day of her assignment was intentional. No one could have foreseen that a car would defy the red light and charge headlong into her, hurting a few pedestrians as well. You can't blame Riley for this. She'd barely arrived by the client's side then after receiving the assignment. If we're talking about accountability, Riley's share should be forty percent at most. The other sixty percent is the client's fault."

Gary looked piercingly at the two of them.

"Howard, Xander, when did you learn to make excuses?" he accused.

"Gary, we're just speaking from our hearts. All Riley knew about the client was the material we got. She was completely unfamiliar with the client's lifestyle and habits. It was a plain misfortune that the client got into an accident on Riley's first day with her. You can't deny all the hard work that Riley has put in before this. It isn't fair to Riley at all if you fire her just like that," Howard and Xander argued fervently in one spirit.

Gary paused.

Riley's eyes were red, but she valiantly fought back the tears that threatened to spill over.

"Gary, are you really going to fire me?" Riley asked meekly.

Unsettled, Gary replied, "Riley, this was the resolution that our security firm was founded upon. As long as our clients get injured, the bodyguard assigned to the case must pay the price. Besides, your client was a little more than seven months pregnant and on the brink of delivery. This accident could have cost two lives. Firing you is already the lightest punishment I can give you."

The trio fell silent.

Riley bowed her head. "Gary, if both Ms. Winters and her baby's lives were both lost, as you said, I'll voluntarily resign from the security firm."

Gary nodded.

"Tomorrow, you'll come with me to the hospital. If Amelia is fine and is willing to forgive you, I'll consider letting you remain in the firm. Otherwise, I'm sorry, but you'll have to leave. Rules are rules. I can't set a bad precedent because of you," Gary said somberly.

Riley nodded mournfully.

Gary glanced at her, then moved on. "Where's that driver who caused the accident, then?"

Howard answered swiftly, "He's still being interrogated."

"Do a thorough investigation, then hand him over to the police. As for the mastermind behind this affair, you should know what to do about him," Gary ordered.

Howard and Xander nodded in tandem.

"Don't worry, Gary. Anyone who dares lay a hand on our clients will get what they deserve. If it's a man, we'll cut off both his hands. If it's a woman... she'll get to experience what it's like to be on the receiving end of a car accident." they chorused.

Gary nodded approvingly. "Be careful not to leave any evidence behind. I don't want our firm to get into any trouble with the police," he warned.

"Leave it to us, Gary," Howard and Xander answered resolutely.

Gary dismissed them with a wave of his hand. "Go back and rest, then. We'll discuss anything else at tomorrow morning's meeting."

"Sure, Gary." Howard, Xander, and Riley filed out of the room. After they left, Gary slumped onto his chair. He felt absolutely suffocated by the weight of everything that had happened. Gary cradled his head in his hands with his shoulders bowed.

Outside the room, Howard turned to Riley. "Riley, don't worry too much. Gary was trying to be professional and matter-of-fact. As long as your client forgives you, you'll remain in the company."

Riley, however, could not be cheered up. "Howard, nothing can change the fact that I messed things up. Excuses won't redeem me. I'm fine. The two of you should go on and sleep. I want to be alone."

Howard and Xander exchanged glances.

"We'll send you back. It's late. We can sleep right after all the way till morning," they offered.

Riley spoke in a voice so low it was almost a growl. Menacingly, she said, "Go on! I want to be alone. Can't I even do that?"

The two bodyguards could only look on helplessly.

"Don't be like that, Riley. We didn't mean it in that way. We simply didn't want you..." they wheedled.

Before they could finish, however, Riley turned around and ran off.

Taken aback, Howard and Xander took a moment to recover their wits before sprinting after her.

"Don't run, Riley! You can tell us anything," they called.

Noticing that they had given chase, Riley picked up her speed. She raced into the lift, its forbidding metal doors slamming shut right in Howard and Xander's face as they arrived before it, panting.

"Xander, what should we do?" Howard asked in anguish.

"Are you stupid? We'll take the stairs," the other man snapped, already running towards the fleeing woman.

There was no time to lose. By the time they reached the ground floor, however, Riley had already vanished.

"Shit!" Howard spat in frustration.

He raised an arm to his forehead to wipe his perspiration, and it came away dripping. After a few deep breaths, he said, "Let's go. Riley's obviously avoiding us."

"But she..." Xander began but was immediately interrupted by Howard.

"Don't worry. Riley can defend herself. Those homeless and drunk guys have nothing on her." he declared.

"I'm just afraid that she isn't in the right frame of mind. You know Riley's feelings for Gary. After hearing his harsh words today, who knows what she may end up doing in her despair?" Xander demanded in return.

"She won't. She's a reasonable woman. No matter how upset she is, she'll never stoop to doing anything foolish. Don't worry about her," Howard assured firmly.

There was nothing they could do. Confronted by their impotence, Howard and Xander turned on their heels and slowly headed back inside.

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Too Much to Bear, My Love Chapter 177 In Great Danger

After Amelia's accident, Oscar and Tiffany kept vigil the entire night. Weak from having given blood and utter exhaustion, Tiffany collapsed outside the intensive care unit. She, too, was admitted into a private hospital room to rest.

Oscar was thus the only forlorn figure left outside Amelia's room.

He was already in a terrible mood. Elizabeth, however, called him incessantly, as if she was hellbent on driving him mad. Oscar had to turn off his phone to get a moment's peace.

At around eight in the morning, Amelia began gasping for air. Her entire body convulsed with the effort to breathe. The various apparatuses in the room began beeping urgently, summoning doctors and nurses from all over. They dashed into the hospital room and Amelia was once again transported to the operating room.

Oscar leaned against the wall outside, staring intently at the door of the operating room. His emotions blazed through him like an inferno, devouring him from the inside. His heart never seemed to stop hurting. It was a torment that he knew he would never get used to.

The door of the operating room that separated him from Amelia felt solid, impassable. It was as if Amelia had already crossed over to the other side while Oscar was left behind, waiting. There was no way of knowing if she would return. There was nothing he could do to bring her back.

As Oscar waited, Gary appeared with Riley in tow.

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As Gary stood before Oscar, the latter merely glanced at him before lowering his head, clutching it within his hands. Oscar looked absolutely desolate.

"Are you Amelia's husband?" Gary asked formally. Perhaps it was because he was encountering his rival face-to-face for the first time, but the man's tone was unusually grim.

Oscar raised his head and looked carefully at Gary, affirming that the man standing before him was not someone he knew.

"I am. Who are you?" Oscar asked.

Gary extended his hand, saying evenly, "How do you do? I'm Amelia's friend. I heard she got into an accident and so came to visit her."

Oscar looked at Gary warily. Ignoring the man's outstretched hand, he replied, "We didn't tell anyone Amelia was in an accident. How did you find out about it?"

Gary smoothly answered, "Amelia and I are friends who share a business relationship. My subordinate was supposed to discuss a contract with Amelia yesterday, and they'd agreed to meet at a café. The accident happened nearby, and my subordinate witnessed the entire incident on her way to the meeting. After some investigation, we found out that Amelia was sent to this hospital. That's why we came to visit. We hope you won't object to us being here."

Oscar furrowed his brows. Wary of the entire proceedings, however, he had neither the time nor the energy to consider the suddenness of Gary's appearance nor respond in a suitably skeptical manner.

Gary pointed to the seat beside Oscar. "You don't mind if I sit here, do you?"

"Go ahead," the latter said curtly.

So, Gary sat down. Politely, he once again held out his hand towards Oscar. "I'm Gary. How should I address you? I don't want to be rude."

Oscar shot him a sideways glance, stiffening slightly. He was clearly unaccustomed to Gary's forthcoming manner. However, he knew he had to be courteous to a friend of Amelia's.

"I'm Oscar Clinton."

Gary was momentarily astounded. "You're a Clinton? You couldn't possibly be the sole inheritor of Clinton Corporations, could you?"

Oscar gave Gary a frosty look.

However, the other man continued nonchalantly, "It's no wonder Amelia was so in love. I can understand her infatuation now that I've seen who her husband is. The heir to Clinton Corporation is a legend amongst business circles. I've been looking for an opportunity to get to know you. Who would've thought it would be under such unsavory circumstances? My father knows yours, and he's always telling us about you. I've always seen you as a rival, in a way. You're far more impressive in real life, though."

Oscar merely glanced at him but remained silent.

Gary, however, was not prone to awkwardness. He tilted his head towards the operating room.

All his previous chatter had been merely to alleviate the tension that hung over the room.

"How's Amelia?" he suddenly asked with a look of concern.

As if he had finally stumbled upon a handhold, Oscar instantly opened up, "She's not doing great. The doctor said she might go into a vegetative state. Even worse, there's still the possibility that she may lose her life."

Gary clenched his hand into a fist, his throat suddenly feeling dry and hollow. He felt as if his voice had suddenly deserted him.

Just like that, the room descended into an abrupt hush.

Two hours passed without the two men realizing it, but the door to the operating room remained resolutely shut. Suddenly, Tiffany emerged from around a corner. She was dragging her feet a little and looked evidently unwell.

At the sight of Gary and Oscar sitting side by side with Riley standing a little way off like a child who had just been sentenced to the corner, Tiffany frowned.

"Gary, why are you and Riley here?" Tiffany asked.

Gary sprang up and helped her over to a seat, asking concernedly, "You don't look too good. Are you feeling unwell?"

Tiffany shook her head, then explained, "I donated blood to Amelia yesterday and felt a little weak just now. I'll be fine once I've gotten some rest. Why are you and Riley here?"

"Riley told me about Amelia's accident," Gary replied honestly. "She failed to take care of Amelia, so I brought her here to apologize."

Tiffany shook her head again.

"Don't say that, Gary. No one could have predicted this accident. No matter how superb Riley's skills are, she wouldn't have been able to outrun a car. Things happen. Don't blame Riley for it. If Amelia was awake, she wouldn't blame Riley either," Tiffany soothed.

At that, Riley finally met Tiffany's gaze. She'd always imagined the woman as her nemesis in her bid for Gary's affections. Riley was incredibly moved by Tiffany's speech defending her.

"Aren't you going to thank Tiffany, Riley?" Gary demanded.

Riley almost prostrated herself in gratitude. "Thank you, Ms. Winters!" she cried.

Startled, Tiffany waved her off. "No need for that, Riley. You did nothing wrong. There's no need to be so polite; you're making me feel embarrassed."

Riley straightened herself, her face rigid with a solemn expression.

Amused, Tiffany chuckled. "Don't look so stiff, Riley. Women should try to smile more. I know Amelia, and she definitely won't blame you at all. Besides, who could have anticipated this accident? That's the nature of accidents. Nobody can see them coming. There's no need for you to beat yourself up over it."

Despite her reassurance, Riley remained firm. "I'm very sorry nonetheless. I won't rest until Ms. Winters has recovered. When she has, I'll apologize to her in person."

Tiffany sighed. She knew how obstinate Riley, a few years younger than herself, could be.

Tiffany then turned towards Oscar and inquired, "How's Amelia?"

Oscar shook his head silently.

Tiffany said nothing but gripped the edge of her seat so hard that her knuckles turned white.

Four hours later, the door of the operating room finally opened. A swarm of doctors flitted out.

At once, Oscar bolted towards them. "Dr. Kane, how's Amelia?" he asked urgently.

Dr. Kane looked serious as he answered, "Mr. Clinton, Mrs. Clinton's condition isn't too good. We've done our best, but don't be too optimistic. It would be best for you to prepare yourself for the worst. If Mrs. Clinton can regain consciousness within forty-eight hours, there may be a chance for things to take a turn for the better."

Oscar's right hand twitched, and he felt the life utterly drain from his body.

Tiffany likewise reeled from the shock of Dr. Kane's prognosis. She seized Dr. Kane's arm and cried out wretchedly, "Dr. Kane, what do you mean? If Amelia doesn't wake up within forty-eight hours, what will happen to her?"

"In that case, her best outcome will be a permanent vegetative state. If things go badly, she may even stop breathing. No matter what, it's best if you prepare yourselves for the worst," Dr. Kane repeated.

After the doctors had dispersed and left, Oscar rushed into the room and gazed sadly at Amelia. She was lying on the hospital bed with an oxygen mask over her pallid face. Tenderly, almost inaudibly, he whispered in a voice full of sorrow, "Amelia."

"Mr. Clinton, please move aside. We have to send the patient to the intensive care unit," a nurse gently reminded him.

Tiffany crossed over to him. She tugged at Oscar in an attempt to get him to move aside, but he had planted his feet stubbornly beside the bed and could not be shaken.

"Oscar, stop causing a scene. Amelia's condition is unstable now. Don't make it worse," Tiffany warned.

Upon hearing her warning, the man took one last gaze at Amelia's wan face, then reluctantly let go of her hand.

Oscar followed the hospital bed with his eyes, straining after it until it vanished around the corner. Tears glimmered in his eyes as if they were mutely delivering his final farewell.

There was a dull, empty look in them. It was as if the man's spirit had fled down the corridor chasing after Amelia, leaving his body standing behind uncertainly.

Tiffany watched Oscar anxiously. She waved her hand in front of his eyes, demanding, "Oscar, are you all right?"

The absent look remained in Oscar's eyes. After a moment, they suddenly rolled back into his head, and his sturdy frame collapsed in a heap onto the floor.

Thoroughly frightened by the sudden change, Tiffany screamed, "Doctor! Doctor!"

Even after Oscar had been settled down into a room and placed on an IV drip, Tiffany remained visibly rattled. "Doctor, Oscar's fine, isn't he?" she asked in perturbation.

"He should be fine. It was just the lack of sleep on top of his emotional agitation. He'll be all right after a good sleep." the doctor replied.

Nodding, Tiffany said thankfully, "Sorry for troubling you, doctor."

After the doctor left, the woman leaned against the wall, spent. The multiple events that had happened one after another at breakneck pace had taken their toll on everyone involved.

Gary looked at Tiffany apprehensively, saying, "Tiffany, are you OK? You don't look too good yourself."

She shook her head in reply, saying, "I'm fine. It's just that everything's happening all at once. I wish... I wish I had a few more heads and hands to take care of everyone."

"I'll stay here with you," Gary suggested. "Riley, you head back to the office first."

The female bodyguard stuck her chin out and made as if to speak. However, Gary said with an air of finality, "Go back to the office. If there's anything, the three of you will deal with it. If there isn't anything urgent, don't call me."

Unable to rebut Gary, Riley left.

Tiffany felt slightly awkward in the face of the man's magnanimity. "Gary, there's no need for this. You're too kind to someone you've barely met a few times. I'd be ashamed to accept your help."

Gary shrugged Tiffany off. "How can I stand by idly when my friend needs my help? Besides, what's there to be ashamed about between friends?"

Tiffany was at a loss for words. "Gary, you know that's not what I meant."

"If that's all, don't worry. My firm is partially responsible for the danger that Amelia is in right now. If anything bad happens to her, we'll blame ourselves for the rest of our lives," Gary assured her.

The woman thus kept quiet. Words wouldn't salvage the situation. All she could do now was to embrace the facts and hope that Amelia would pull through.

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Too Much to Bear, My Love Chapter 178 More Serious Than He Thinks

Gary looked over to Oscar's unconscious body lying on the bed. "I suppose he's in love with Amelia as well?" he asked with a sigh.

Tiffany thought for a while, then answered slowly, "That's what I want to find out too, actually. After Amelia's accident, Oscar watched over her day and night. I suppose that shows he has some heart, at least. I've always seen Oscar as a firm, unshakeable man of iron. You can imagine my surprise when he fainted just now. I think he does love Amelia, but who can tell with these rich men? All I can hope for now is for Amelia to recover consciousness in time. She still has her baby to take care of."

Gary looked steadily at Tiffany.

After a moment's pause, he repeated, "Her baby?"

A faint smile hovered on Tiffany's lips. "The doctors delivered Amelia's baby last night. It's a healthy baby boy weighing approximately seven and a half pounds. His little face was red with crying, and he was yelling at the top of his lungs. The nurse said she'd never seen such a healthy child come out of an accident like that.

Maybe Amelia was using her own life to protect his. I'm sure that when Amelia wakes up to see her baby doing so well, she'll definitely be overjoyed."

Gary raised his hand. It hung in the air for a while before uncertainly patting Tiffany on her back. "Don't worry. Amelia will pull through this. I've heard stories of how a mother's love can overcome even the most insurmountable obstacles. I'm sure Amelia knows that her baby is waiting for her. She'll come back to us."

Tiffany nodded. The glimmer of worry in her eyes remained, however.

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The door of the hospital room was soon pushed open. Olivia entered with Owen by her side, supporting her. Tiffany immediately rushed forward to help.

"Mrs. Clinton, how are you feeling?" she inquired anxiously.

Olivia managed a smile. "I'm much better. I heard from the doctor that Oscar fainted. How is he? Is he all right?"

"Don't worry, Mrs. Clinton. The doctor said it happened he overworked himself. The shock of Amelia's condition worsening triggered emotional agitation within him. He'll be fine with some rest," Tiffany hastily reassured Olivia.

Olivia nodded weakly. She made her way to Oscar's bedside and tenderly caressed his face. However, the sight of her son lying unmoving in bed reduced her to tears.

Tiffany looked on helplessly. Forcing herself to speak calmly, she soothed, "Mrs. Clinton, please don't cry. The doctor said Oscar's fine. Besides, he's as strong as an ox. He'll wake up soon."

At the thought of people seeing her like this, Olivia quickly wiped away her tears. She then said slightly bashfully, "I'm all right. I guess I've been feeling slightly melancholic lately. I'm sorry to have alarmed you."

Owen embraced his wife. "Olivia, don't be like this. Amelia is still in the intensive care unit, and Oscar's now unconscious. They need us to take care of them now. We can't collapse ourselves," he said firmly.

Olivia leaned against Owen's chest, drawing consolation from his steady strength. However, she couldn't help but choke out a sob. "Within the span of two days, Amelia got into an accident and Oscar fainted. What's happening to our family? I feel as if the sky is falling down on us."

The man patted his wife on the back as one would a child. "Don't overthink things. Amelia will be fine. Our grandson still needs his mother and grandmother. You have to be strong for him too."

At this mention of her grandson, Olivia grew distraught. "That's right! Where's the baby? Dear, we haven't gotten anyone to look after him! He's still so small. We can't let anything happen to him!"

This time, Owen patted Olivia on the shoulder to mollify her.

"I've already hired two nannies to take care of him. Don't worry. No one will dare bully a grandson of the Clintons," Owen declared.

At that, Olivia heaved a sigh of relief. Her eyes then wandered onto Gary, who was standing beside Tiffany.

She smiled apologetically at the pair. "Tiffany, is this your boyfriend? He's rather handsome. You two make a good match."

Tiffany immediately rejected the idea, explaining, "He's a friend of mine and Amelia's. He heard about Amelia's accident and came to visit her."

Gary greeted Olivia most courteously. "Hello, Mrs. Clinton. My name's Gary Laird."

"Nice to meet you, Gary," Olivia said warmly. "Thank you for coming to visit Amelia. Among all of her friends, Tiffany is the only one I've met. I never imagined that Amelia would have such a handsome friend like yourself."

"Amelia's a very charming girl," Gary replied. "Even though she's married, she still attracts men and women alike."

Olivia smiled in agreement.

It seemed that Gary had gotten the woman's stamp of approval.

"Mrs. Clinton, you're a lot more friendly than I imagined you'd be. It's really Amelia's luck that she got such an open-minded, kind mother-in-law," Gary added.

Olivia's eyes darkened. "When Amelia married into our family, she suffered a great deal. I haven't been as good to her as I should have. If I knew this accident was going to happen, I would have treated her better from the start," she reflected dispiritedly.

The room fell into an uneasy silence.

At last, Olivia tossed her hair and remarked lightly, "Look at me spoiling the mood again."

No one blamed her, however, standing as they were in the hospital where the lines between life and death were so easily blurred. The furious struggle to live surrounded each individual in every room here. In this particular room, however, it was the presence of death that lingered.

Amelia's unstable condition had set everyone on edge. Between moments, they could only hope and pray that a miracle would happen rather than a tragedy, though the probability of the latter loomed larger. Still, the tiniest shred of hope was better than having none at all.

Oscar awoke after two hours. By then, only his parents were left in the hospital room. Tiffany and Gary had left in the meantime to check on Amelia.

Oscar didn't speak.

Olivia looked at him fretfully as she leaned over and said, "Oscar, are you hungry? Shall I get the maid to bring some delicious food over for you?"

The man on the hospital bed shook his head tiredly.

Olivia clutched his hand in hers. "Oscar, don't be like this. It makes me nervous. What are you thinking about?"

Oscar glanced at her, asking, "Mom, how's Amelia?"

Olivia's eyes were teary as she replied, "She's still the same. Mr. Lancaster came by just now to tell us not to be too optimistic about Amelia's condition. Even Anglandur's finest doctors won't be able to help."

Oscar was silent for a while longer. Then he spoke, "Mom, where's my phone?"

Olivia hurriedly passed him his phone and asked anxiously, "Who are you planning on calling?"

"I'm going to get in touch with Anglandur's medical team. With all the latest advancements in technology, they managed to save Amelia even after her accident. Surely they'll be able to work their magic again now," Oscar declared resolutely, punching in the numbers on his phone.

"Call them then. Your father has already contacted other overseas medical teams. Some of them have already boarded planes to make their way here. Hopefully, once they've arrived, Amelia's chances at survival will greatly improve," Olivia said buoyantly.

Oscar dialed James. His phone rang for a long time before someone else eventually picked up the call. After a few words from Oscar, James came onto the line.

"Oz, what's up?" James asked easily.

"James, Amelia got into an accident. Are you able to come over?" Oscar questioned urgently.

"I have two other operations lined up right now. I can only fly over to Chanaea after a good few hours," the man on the other side of the line said, frowning.

"James, can't you hand those operations over to someone else?" Oscar pleaded, his voice breaking.

"I'll try. If someone else is available, I'll definitely board the next flight into Chanaea," James promised, relenting.

"I'll be waiting to hear the good news then. James, we've been friends for so many years. Amelia's really on the brink of life and death now! I hope you can quickly come over to Chanaea. If you save her, I'll forever be in your debt," Oscar continued feebly.

At that promise, James chuckled. "Oz, have you really fallen in love with Amelia? When I last came back to Chanaea to save her friend, you insisted that you weren't. For the sake of your great love, I'll definitely make some arrangements and ensure that I get over to Chanaea as quickly as I can."

"Thank you, James," Oscar replied heavily. He was neither in the mood to elaborate nor respond to the man's lighthearted attempts to comfort him.

He hung up the phone.

"Oscar, did you call James?" Olivia asked.

Oscar nodded in response.

"James is very skilled. I heard he became a resident physician at his hospital very early in his career. If he operates on Amelia, I'm sure she'll be fine," Olivia muttered, her fears momentarily allayed.

Oscar, however, remained solemn. It was difficult for an onlooker to guess what thoughts were running through his mind.

His mother changed the subject briskly. "Oscar, I've gotten the maid to prepare something for you to eat. You need to keep your strength up."

Oscar had already swung his legs over the side of the bed and gotten up. "Mom, I'm not hungry. I'm going to check on Amelia," he announced.

Without waiting for her reply, he strode out of the room.

Olivia let out another long sigh.

Owen reached out and gave her shoulder a squeeze. "Don't worry too much. The children will take care of themselves."

"I used to resent how Oscar neglected Amelia for work and even for his relationship with Cassie. However, now that I see his heartrending despair over Amelia's condition, I almost wish he'd return to the cold-hearted man he was before. I can't bear to see him hurt like this," Olivia said sorrowfully.

Her husband was likewise troubled by Oscar's state. He'd witnessed Oscar's transformation with his own eyes from a high-spirited young man to this dull, melancholy individual now. Owen was terrified that if Amelia did lose her life from this accident, the emotional shock to Oscar might do him irreparable damage.

"Dear, I've always treated Amelia as my own daughter. However, now that her accident has affected Oscar so, all I wish is that he'd be as heartless as he was before. Do you think that's very selfish of me?" Olivia asked despondently.

"Stop thinking so much. It's only because you love Oscar too much. I think he himself doesn't know the depth of his affections towards Amelia. He isn't aware of his own feelings. I'm afraid that if she really dies, he'll..."

Owen trailed off. The words he'd left unspoken, however, were already written on everyone's hearts.

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Chapter 179 In Low Spirits

Olivia took a deep, long breath.

The only thing they could do now was to hope and pray for Amelia's recovery. Olivia had always cared for Amelia like her own, so she naturally wanted both Amelia and Oscar to pull through this dark period.

Owen patted her awkwardly. "All right. I'm still certain of what I said earlier. The children can take care of themselves. Everything will work out."

Olivia nodded, desperately trying to believe him.

At that moment, Oscar had run into Elizabeth shortly after he'd departed from his own hospital room. Elizabeth's face turned several shades darker when she caught sight of him.

Irate, the woman stormed towards the man, fuming, "Oscar, have you finally found it within you to care for Cassie?"

Oscar glanced at her icily. His tone was even as he replied, "Mrs. Yard, I have my own things to deal with. I'll leave Cassie to you."

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He made as if to continue, but Elizabeth adamantly stood before him, barricading his way forward.

Infuriated, she pressed, "Oscar, what do you mean by this? Cassie attempted suicide because of you! She's still lying there in the hospital. She's awake now, but you haven't even come over to visit. The doctor said she might have a tendency towards depression. Is this how you show your love to her?"

Oscar glowered at Elizabeth. He drew himself up to his fullest height and towered over her, looking incredibly intimidating.

Elizabeth suddenly felt a wave of trepidation wash over her.

The fear, however, quickly gave way to indignation at having been thus embarrassed.

"Oscar, what's going on? Cassie suffered so much because of you. Are you really going to abandon her just like that?" Elizabeth demanded.

Oscar felt his head throb.

"Enough, Mrs. Yard. I really do have something to deal with. I'll come over to visit Cassie when I'm done and apologize to her," he replied, feeling his patience grow thin.

Elizabeth, however, grew even more aggrieved at his answer.

"What do you mean by that, Oscar? Do you think Cassie's a beggar? If you don't visit her today, I'll never forgive you! She's all I have. If anything happens to her, I'll see to it that you suffer the same fate!" she declared.

Oscar slowly clenched his fists. He felt the rage within him threatening to boil over.

"Mrs. Yard, I've always treated you with respect. Do you think you're deserving of it, though?" he asked frigidly.

Elizabeth glared at him, speechless.

The man then exhaled a shaky breath. "Mrs. Yard, I'll be off then. I have things of my own to deal with," he concluded.

Elizabeth, however, remained doggedly in Oscar's way.

When she met his level eyes, her gaze softened slightly. Her voice took on a pleading tone. "Oscar, that was rather impulsive of me. Can you visit Cassie? She isn't doing well. I tried calling you and going down to your office to look for you but to no avail. I don't know what you've been busy with, but it's evident that you're avoiding her. If you'd ever truly loved Cassie, please visit her. She doesn't eat or talk much. The only time she opens her mouth is to ask when you'll be coming by. The doctor said she'll develop depression soon if she continues being like this. I'm begging you, Oscar! She's all I have. I can't afford to lose her."

Oscar felt his head throb even more.

The two women Oscar had ever had any real relationship with were both in trouble now. He was torn between them, but his heart pulsed with greater concern for Amelia. He was determined not to let anything happen to Amelia now that her life hung so uncertainly in the balance. All that he was willing to do now for Cassie was apologize.

"Mrs. Yard, I..." Oscar began.

He was interrupted by Olivia's voice ringing out from behind him. "Oscar, what are you still doing here?"

Oscar turned. Olivia and Owen then got a good look at Elizabeth.

As their eyes met, a look of disquiet appeared in Elizabeth's eyes.

The tension that hung in the air between the two women was so thick that one could almost cut it with a knife.

"Is Charlie here with you?" Olivia asked in a friendly manner, breaking the silence.

"He's in the room with Cassie," Elizabeth replied.

"Is Cassie awake? How is she doing?" Olivia asked apprehensively.

"She won't die just yet," Elizabeth snapped. Realizing that she sounded uncivil, she moderated her tone. "Olivia, Owen, we've known each other for a long time. I suppose we can say we're old friends. Please ask Oscar to visit Cassie. She hasn't spoken much since she woke up and neither does she have a strong will to live at present. The doctor said she might have depression. Oscar is perhaps the only remedy for her now. I believe that if he visits her, she'll recover much more quickly."

Olivia and Owen exchanged pointed looks.

"Oscar, since you're in the hospital, why don't you pay Cassie a visit? Your Dad and I will check on Amelia," Olivia urged after considering the matter.

Without waiting for Oscar's reply, Elizabeth seized on Olivia's words. "Is Amelia in the hospital too? Has she delivered? I remember that her due date wasn't within these few days, though. Did she give birth prematurely?"

Olivia shook her head. Vaguely, she mumbled, "She was feeling slightly unwell. She came to the hospital for a check-up."

Elizabeth didn't hide her clear skepticism. "Why don't I join you to visit Amelia as well? She's part of the Clintons, after all. Since she's here in the hospital, it's only right that I pay her a visit."

Olivia's annoyance was written clearly on her face upon hearing Elizabeth's suggestion.

Oscar, however, replied sternly, "Enough, Mrs. Yard! Stop behaving so shamelessly."

Elizabeth gaped at him for a moment before she scoffed, saying, "My daughter's almost got depression because of you. You Clintons have been here in the very same hospital, yet you chose to pretend as if she wasn't right under your noses. Did you call me shameless? Why don't you take a look at yourself?"

Olivia's eyes blazed. Is this woman really intent on burning this bridge? I guess she really hasn't given this much thought.

She had never expected Elizabeth to possess such a petty nature.

Sensing the heat between the two women, Owen stepped in. "Oscar, why don't you visit Cassie? After all, you had a part to play in this. As a man, you have to own up and bear the consequences of your actions," he ordered.

Oscar slowly released the balled-up fist he'd clenched up till now.

"Dad, Mom, I'll go take a look at Cassie then. Please take good care of Amelia for me," Oscar answered in a low voice.

Olivia nodded.

After Oscar and Elizabeth left, Olivia turned to her husband rather angrily. "What's wrong with that woman? I always thought of her as rather reasonable. She's always been so courteous and gentle. When did she suddenly become so narrow-minded?"

Owen patted her on the shoulder to pacify her. "Don't let her get to you. Cassie's her only child, and Oscar did, in fact, do her wrong. In any love triangle, women are bound to be on the losing end."

Olivia furrowed her brow. At last, she merely gave a sigh in resignation.

The couple thus proceeded in silence towards the intensive care unit. When they arrived, Tiffany immediately got up to greet them.

Olivia's heart ached as she looked upon Amelia's still body. Dismal, she turned to Tiffany and asked, "How's Amelia doing? Is she still very much the same?"

Tiffany nodded. "The doctor just came by. He told us that Amelia's immune system is still weak, so we can't enter the room just yet."

Olivia's eyes brimmed with tears.

At that moment, however, her phone rang shrilly. Fumbling, the woman took it out of her bag only to see Robert's name flash across the screen.

She hurriedly answered the call. "Hello, Robert."

"Olivia, are you and Owen free to talk? Can you make a trip to my office? There's something I'd like to discuss with you," Robert told her.

Olivia's heart skipped a beat. She had the feeling that Robert wanted to discuss Amelia's condition. She had a premonition, however, that the news would not be good.

"Sure. I'll come over with Owen right away," Olivia replied, her voice quivering slightly.

After she'd ended the call, she turned to Tiffany. "Tiffany, can I trouble you to stay here with Amelia? Owen and I are going to meet Mr. Lancaster for a while."

Tiffany nodded in agreement.

Once Olivia and Owen were gone, Tiffany's heart broke out in tumult. Upon seeing her so forlorn, Gary patted her on the shoulder. "Don't worry too much. Amelia will be fine. I'm sure of it," he said encouragingly.

Tiffany sighed. She took another look at Amelia, who was lying in the intensive care unit with tubes running through her body. A feeling of anguish coursed through Tiffany at the sight.

"Gary, did you know that Amelia is actually terrified of pain? Whenever she got a cut on her finger, she'd make the biggest fuss over it. After marrying Oscar, however, she became much more resilient. She looks as if she can stand up to anything, so no one knows how fearful she is inside. It's much more difficult to be the wife of a rich man than one thinks. It's not all about wealth and glory. Amelia used to haul me out for drinks, and when she'd gotten tipsy, she would tell me everything about Oscar. She really loves him, but he was always a difficult man to be with. I think he had something to do with this accident as well. Amelia's been brought so low because of him! She's always been vain, and I can't bear to think of her looking at herself now in horror. She's little more than a living corpse right now," Tiffany said.

As Tiffany ranted, she worked herself up into a frenzy. She ended her monologue abruptly as she began heaving with sobs.

Gary had rarely experienced the feeling of impotence he had at that moment. He could only watch, powerless, as Tiffany cried.

In desperation, the man fished out a cigarette from his pocket in complete disregard for hospital rules. He lit it and took a drag, saying, "Don't cry, Tiffany. I spoke without thinking. I don't know how to comfort you. Don't cry, okay? We can always talk about things. There's a solution for everything."

Witnessing Gary's clumsy but endearing efforts at comforting her, Tiffany felt strangely soothed.

Much to her own surprise, she couldn't help but smile.

"I'm sorry, Gary. I lost control of myself! Don't think too badly of me for it," she remarked, dabbing hastily at her eyes.

Gary dismissed her apology with a wave of his hands. He turned back forlornly towards the window of the intensive care unit.

It had never once crossed Gary's mind that Amelia, a shining creature, would one day be reduced to an inert patient on a hospital bed. He would have leered at the very thought. However, there was nothing he could do for Amelia now but stand helplessly by, worrying.

In the face of death, Gary's riches were little better than rags.

The entire mood outside the intensive care unit was downcast.

Tiffany suddenly raised her head to say, "Gary, you can't smoke in the hospital. You better put it out, or the nurses will be sure to."

Gary obediently stubbed out his cigarette against his shoe.

Too Much to Bear, My Love Chapter 180

[/ Too Much to Bear, My Love](#)

Too Much to Bear, My Love Chapter 180 I Will Jump If You Leave

When Olivia and Owen arrived at Robert's office as summoned, he directed them to the sofa. When they had settled down, he said solemnly, "Olivia, Owen, there's something I have to discuss with you."

Olivia answered briskly. "Robert, did you call us here to talk about Amelia?"

Robert glanced at their expectant faces, then nodded. "That was my intention. Amelia's injuries from the accident were more severe than I expected. We're lucky that the baby survived and is unharmed. However, Amelia has multiple fractures all over her body, and a few of her organs have been damaged. Most significantly, there's a blood clot in her brain that's compressing her nerves. If the blood clot doesn't disperse on its own, even if she regains consciousness, she remains at risk of going blind."

In that instant, Olivia felt as if her blood was draining from her body. She felt her hands and feet grow clammy.

“Robert, you’re not serious, are you?” The woman tried to summon a smile but succeeded only in producing a hideous grimace. “This isn’t a joke.”

Reluctantly, Robert affirmed, “Olivia, I wish it was too. We’ve known each other for so many years. You should know that I never joke about these things.”

Olivia was now used to regulating her emotions, so when she felt despair rise within her, she managed to contain it.

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“Robert, tell me honestly. What’s the probability of Amelia going blind? And even if she does, is there any of treating it?” Olivia asked.

“If the blood clot in Amelia’s brain manages to disperse, she won’t go blind,” the doctor said thoughtfully. “Otherwise, a cornea transplant is the only way to heal her blindness. The only difficulty is in finding a matching pair of corneas for her.”

Olivia clutched wildly at the tiniest shred of hope, crying, “Robert, the Clintons have lots of money. No matter how expensive it is or how many mountains we’ll have to move, we will find that pair of corneas for Amelia. I only want to ask, can’t that blood clot be removed from her brain with surgery?”

Robert shook his head. “The blood clot is in contact with too many nerves. If we forcefully operate on Amelia, we might land her in terrible danger. We can only wait for it to disperse or move.”

Olivia’s heart grew cold.

If Amelia indeed went blind, there was a likelihood that she’d remain that way for the rest of her life. After all, corneas were not an easy thing to acquire. Few people were lucky enough to find a matching pair within years. The majority, however, continued hunting for years. It wasn’t a problem that money could resolve.

Olivia dared not imagine the woman’s reaction to this news. She would be devastated.

“Robert, you’re the chief of Principal General Hospital. You’re also a dominant figure in the medical field. You must have a way to save Amelia! Don’t you?” Olivia’s voice caught as she gazed at the family friend seated before her.

Robert smiled ruefully. “Olivia, I’m only human. I may be a dominant figure in the medical field, but all the patients I’ve saved were those that I could. I’ve done my best, but Amelia’s injuries are really too grievous. It’s all in the hands of fate now. I’m sorry to be so frank with you. If there was anything I could do, I would have done it. Perhaps it’s best if you prepared yourself for the worst.”

At that remark, Olivia burst into tears. She did her utmost to restrain them but resulted only in quaking uncontrollably.

Owen hugged her in an attempt to provide her some sense of comfort. Mildly, he said, "Don't cry, Olivia. Robert's just talking about the worst-case scenario. Nothing's happened to Amelia yet, has it? There are still so many medical experts that we haven't consulted. We'll find someone to save her."

Owen spoke confidently, but his heart was racing nonetheless. Each minute that passed was another added weight to his heart. They were all conscious of the forty-eight hours Amelia had. If she doesn't wake up then... He did not want to think of Amelia lying in a vegetative state or even dying.

Olivia, however, continued crying. Owen looked at Robert, then said weakly, "Robert, we'll leave Amelia in your capable hands. Nothing can happen to her, no matter what."

Robert let out a dry laugh. "Owen, Olivia, don't be like this. Principal General Hospital will do its absolute best to save Amelia."

Owen was fervent in his gratitude. "Robert, let me express my thanks to you now. When Amelia has fully recovered, I'll surely throw a banquet for you to show my appreciation."

Robert chortled, and the tension in the room lifted somewhat. "Owen, is there really a need for such formalities between us?"

Owen merely smiled.

At this moment, however, Olivia straightened up and suddenly enquired about Cassie's condition.

Robert sounded rather vexed as he said, "I think Cassie is making a mountain out of a molehill. She's threatened suicide and self-starvation for a while now, and none of the doctors and nurses here in the hospital can do anything for her. The hospital can't get rid of patients, of course, but sometimes I wish we would. I've never seen such an uncooperative patient in all my years of being a doctor. I didn't approve of Oscar getting into a relationship with her from the beginning. It looks like she's eventually revealed her true colors. If Oscar really marries her, I'd fear for the Clinton family's peace of mind."

Olivia and Owen were incensed.

Oscar, away in Cassie's hospital room, was similarly seething.

He'd just arrived. Cassie, who had been lying ailing on the hospital bed, had immediately struggled to sit up in her agitation.

Her impulsive movements startled Charlie and Elizabeth, who had been sitting by her bedside.

Elizabeth quickly fussed, "Cassie! Are you really intent on worrying me to death? Stop moving around! Oscar, can't you come over? Are you trying to drive her mad?"

Oscar felt an immediate loathing for Cassie. The demure, sweet, occasionally impetuous girl that he knew her to be seemed to have been from another life. The woman before him now was a stranger to him.

Annoyed, Elizabeth remarked rudely, "Oscar, aren't you going to come over? Do you really want to watch Cassie die?"

Oscar, however, remained where he was. He was neither a child nor a greenhorn but a manager of Clinton Corporations. He had thousands of employees and their livelihoods under his charge. He was not about to be swayed so easily by Elizabeth's mere scoldings.

Charlie sighed as he looked upon this scene. He then said wearily, "Oscar, take a look at Cassie. She's evidently still hung up on you. Even if you don't love her now, you've been friends since you were little. On account of you two having been childhood sweethearts, are you willing to see anything happen to her?"

Hearing this, Oscar slowly crossed the room.

Cassie ceased her struggling.

She looked up at him dazedly. "Oz, you're finally here. I knew I was still the most important person in your heart."

Oscar's forehead wrinkled as he said curtly, "I've been busy these few days, so I didn't manage to find the time to visit you."

The woman lifted her head and held onto Oscar's arm earnestly. "Oz, I know you're busy with work, but I've really missed you. I was wrong. I shouldn't have slit my wrists. I couldn't bear the sight of you and Amelia behaving intimately. When I called you, she answered the phone and irritated me with her infuriating replies. I believed her and acted foolishly. I've since reflected on my actions. Don't be angry with me anymore. Don't ignore me! I really do love you," she declared.

Cassie's defensive speech merely inflamed Oscar's irritation at her.

He roughly shoved her hand aside and replied in a hostile tone, "Cassie, I see that you've recovered pretty well. You're not as fragile as Mrs. Yard tried to portray. I can rest knowing that you're doing fine. I have other things to do now. When I'm done with them, I'll come back to visit you."

Cassie turned frantic upon hearing that he was leaving. She tried to grab Oscar's waist and tore the IV drip on her arm in her frenzy. Seeing the spot of blood that appeared on Cassie's arm, Elizabeth quickly tried to constrain her. "Cassie, don't move! Calm down. I promise Oscar won't leave."

Once Cassie had been appeased, Elizabeth turned to her husband furiously. "Charlie, aren't you going to get the nurse?"

Charlie meekly got up and left the room. Shortly after, he returned accompanied by two nurses.

Due to their previous interactions with Cassie, the two nurses wore sour looks on their faces when they entered. However, only a neutral expression remained when they arrived at Cassie's side. The Yard family was influential, and the nurses weren't willing to offend them and risk losing their own jobs. They would remain cool and professional at all costs.

After replacing the IV drip, the nurses advised, "Ms. Yard, please be careful. Don't move around too vigorously."

The nurses then quickly took their leave.

Cassie leaned against her pillow and commanded, "Oz, sit down. Let's talk."

Despite her instruction, Oscar remained standing defiantly.

Cassie cast a pleading glance towards her mother, who softened and quipped, "Oscar, I'm begging you. Please talk to Cassie."

Oscar bit his lip. He looked momentarily disconcerted but sat down after a moment's pause.

Cassie then turned to Elizabeth. "Mom, can you and Dad wait outside for a while? I want to speak with Oscar in private."

Elizabeth nodded, then hustled out of the room with Charlie in tow.

Once they left, Cassie focused her gaze on Oscar. "Oz, can you sit a little nearer to me?"

The man showed no intentions to move.

Cassie continued gazing at him, saying pitifully, "Oz, are you still blaming me? I didn't mean to use my suicide as a means of threatening you. I was merely too distraught at the thought of you being with another woman. Can you forgive me for my foolishness this time? I won't dare to do such a thing again. If Mom has been causing trouble for you on my account, let me apologize for her behavior. I promise that was never my intention."

Oscar, however, remained unmoved with a frightening look in his eyes.

Cassie shrank under his hard gaze. "Oz, don't be angry! I apologize! I promise I won't do anything like that ever again. Please forgive me this one time. Your silence is scaring me," she cried.

Oscar turned his piercing gaze towards her. Cassie felt as if he was examining every inch of her and had found her wanting. She flinched.

"Oz, what's wrong? Why are you looking at me like that?" she asked, avoiding his gaze.

Then, Oscar finally spoke. "Cassie, you're an adult now. I believe you're mature enough to judge for yourself what's right and what's wrong."

Cassie blinked. She suddenly looked very hurt and small.

"Cassie, don't take advantage of my kindness. When it finally runs out, I won't be as patient with you as I am now," Oscar warned menacingly.

The woman turned as white as a sheet at that warning, and she gulped. "Oz, don't you love me anymore?"

Oscar replied evenly, "After everything you've done, I don't know if I can still love you anymore."

Terror flashed across Cassie's eyes. She lifted her hand to reach for his but abruptly halted at the sound of his low growl. "Don't move!"

Flustered, Cassie froze. She turned her affecting gaze onto Oscar as if questioning him for his brutality towards her.

"Cassie, we are two very different people with two very different mindsets. I think we should spend some time apart to think about things objectively," Oscar announced, getting to his feet. He towered over Cassie and looked down at her chillingly.

Aghast, the woman struggled to sit up once more.

Oscar, however, was quick to react. He roughly grabbed her hand just as it flew to tear the IV drip out of her arm.

Cassie, however, clasped his hand in hers and said longingly, "Oz, you still care about me, don't you?"

That made him scowl. "Cassie, enough. The more you behave like this, the further I want to get away from you. You weren't like this before. You aren't the Cassie I recognize."

Cassie broke into a sob, saying, "If you think I'm being too clingy now, I can change. I'll give you space. Just don't leave me, please."

Oscar felt his head start to throb. He was utterly mystified as to how things had turned out this way. How could everything have changed so drastically within these few months? He fretted. It was entirely beyond his capacity to think or even act.

"Cassie, take care of yourself. Don't think too much about things. We can talk again when you're feeling better," he finally told her.

"I don't want to talk. I want you to marry me! I want to be the only woman you love. As long as you promise to stay by my side, I'll do whatever you want and become whoever you want to be," Cassie implored.

Oscar disentangled himself from her vice grip. Before he could say another word, his phone rang. Fishing it out of his pocket, he saw that it was a call from James.

He immediately answered.

"Oz, I've gotten someone to replace me for my surgery here. I'll board the plane for Chanaea in two hours," James announced over the phone.

For the first time that day, Oscar found himself smiling with genuine happiness.

"Great! I'll be waiting for you then," he said, thanking his friend profusely. The two men discussed a few more logistical details before Oscar hung up.

Cassie looked at Oscar intently. "Oz, who was that?"

The man frowned and said shortly, "There's something I have to do. Have a good rest. Stop overthinking things. I'll be back to visit you once I'm done settling matters."

He then turned on his heels to walk out of the hospital room. In one swift motion, Cassie ripped out the IV drip from her arm and ran over to the window. She turned around and hollered, "Oz, if you dare take a step out of this room, I'll throw myself out of this window!"