

Chapter 4

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The nausea surged up again. I tried to suppress it, but I couldn't stop myself from throwing up. This man was utterly disgusting, so repulsive it was unbearable...

After Xander drove off, Beverly hummed a tune as she headed upstairs.

I steadied myself for a while and dabbed some lipstick onto my pale face before stepping out of the car and knocking on the door.

Beverly opened it with a smile, murmuring, "Did you forget something?" When she saw me, her last word stretched out in a long, mocking note.

I stared at her coldly. I thought she would be scared or feel guilty, but instead, she brazenly slipped me up and down, smiling maliciously yet gently.

"Well, well... I was wondering who it could be. Turns out it's Xander's tasteless but hard-to-discard old wife." Her tone dripped with mockery. "Since you're here, why not come in and take a look around?"

She stepped aside, inviting me in like she was the rightful lady of the house and I were the one sneaking around, unworthy of the spotlight.

I could hear the sound of my ragged breathing, but my heart felt lifeless, as though it had already died. Mechanically, I walked in—into what I once believed to be the happiest little home for Xander and me—and found pairs of items everywhere. There were matching slippers, couple pajamas, and even toothbrushes designed to form a heart-shaped pattern when placed together.

Beverly didn't follow me. She didn't even care to trail behind and rub salt into my wounds. Instead, she lazily fiddled with the bouquet Xander had gifted her last night and mocked, "Really, why bother? From the moment you chose to forgive him, you should've known that in his eyes, you're just someone without boundaries.

"To him, as long as he doesn't divorce you, you'll forgive him for anything. Believe me, even if you expose him right now, he'll just apologize smoothly and beg for your forgiveness. And you'll forgive him. You can't leave him. After all, at your age, where else can you find such a wealthy husband?"

"Oh, and don't look down on me. In the end, we're the same, you and I."

The same?

I felt as though blood was choking me. I wanted to lunge at her and tear her smug face apart.

Xander and I had known each other since we were young. I'd worked tirelessly for his sake, running around and pulling all-nighters to help him succeed. Sure, he started from nothing, but he couldn't have made it without my support.

How dare she think we were the same? Nonetheless, her confidence was undeniable, so much so that I didn't even need to question it. It was clear; Xander had fed her his perception of me.

Maybe I'd been wrong all along. I forgave him because I loved him, but in his eyes, my forgiveness was purely for self-interest.

This man—this relationship of over a decade—had rotted away into a toxic, foul-smelling swamp, corrupted by his growing social status.

I strode past Beverly, heels clicking, and entered the living room. My eyes landed on a massive wedding photo hanging on the wall.

In the photo, Beverly wore a diamond-studded wedding gown while being embraced by Xander. Their backdrop was the famed Aegean Sea, painting a portrait of luxury and extravagance.

I thought my heart was already dead and numb, but seeing that picture made it seize painfully as if a hand were gripping my throat, leaving me gasping for air.

The photo that used to hang there was of me and Xander. Unlike theirs, ours had been simple. Back then, we were so broke we couldn't even afford the cheapest wedding package. We had taken ours on a random beach. All I wore was a plain white dress and a veil, and we just had a camera. That was our wedding photo.

I forced myself to stay calm, pulled out my phone, and snapped a photo of their wedding portrait.

At that moment, I came to a final realization. If someone was rotten to the core, they belonged in the trash.

Xander and Beverly had been cohabiting for a long time, long enough to constitute a de facto marriage. I'd take this evidence, contact a lawyer, and make sure those two scumbags ended up with nothing.

Beverly panicked when she saw me taking the photo. She instinctively tried to snatch my phone. She cradled her belly as if that would make me relent and hand over my phone out of pity for her being pregnant.

I sidestepped her, but she took advantage of my movement to shove me hard into the coffee table. With a loud thud, I hit the table's edge, and almost immediately, blood began flowing from between my legs.

For a moment, hatred flashed across Beverly's face.

I crumpled to the floor at her feet, my belly screaming in pain as I desperately reached for my phone. Even if this child wasn't wanted by its father, it was still mine. I didn't want to lose it...

Beverly's twisted laughter rang out. Just as my hand touched the phone, she stomped down on my fingers and twisted her heel viciously. The searing pain made me cry out.

Suddenly, the sound of the smart lock beeped. Someone had unlocked the door.

I looked up and saw Xander returning.