



4:23

📶  

Chapter 19

4/9

Since I had made a reservation before coming, I went straight to my table after I had arrived at South Bay.
















However, I was surprised to see that Jared had arrived ahead of time.

He was dressed rather casually, exuding a classy demeanor as he sat by the window. He tapped his slender fingers against the table in a carefree manner.

“Sorry for being late!” I said as I took a seat right opposite him and called for the waiter to take my order.

He was initially staring blankly out the window. At the sight of me, he lifted his brows and a hint of smile fled

4:23

📶               

Chapter 19

5/9

across his face. "How could I be late on a date with a pretty girl?"
















It was actually quite rare to catch him with a smile. I pushed the menu toward him. "Has anyone ever told you that you look really gentle when you smile?"

He raised an eyebrow at my comment and gestured me to order from the menu first. His almond-shaped eyes narrowed slightly as he looked into my eyes. "You're the first person to say that."

I merely smiled and did not comment further. After skimming through the menu, I ordered a few dishes that I thought he would enjoy.



4:23

📶               

Chapter 19

6/9

After handing the menu back to the waiter, I sipped on my water. He did not say anything and merely smiled as he looked at me.

Puzzled at his demeanor, I put down the glass of water and asked, "Is there something on my face?"



His lips curved into a smile. It was apparent that he was in a good mood. "It's my first time dining with my best friend's woman. It feels..."

He paused and grinned from ear to ear. "Well, I'd have to say it feels quite great."

Birds of a feather flock together.



4:23

📶   60

Chapter 19

7/9

Naturally, the people around Ashton would not be as easy to manipulate.

I did not doubt his words, nor did I ruminate over his undertone. Seeing that he was not beating around the bush, I returned the favor by asking him directly. "If something comes up and I need your help, I believe that you would offer me a helping hand?"

He raised a brow and leaned back into his seat. "What kind of help are we talking about here?"

"Get me some medicine for women recovering from a miscarriage."

He frowned upon hearing my request.



He frowned upon hearing my request.

“Only this?”

I nodded. “Well, you have a good reputation. So is that a yes or no for the medicine?”

Chapter 20

With a frown, Jared stared straight into my eyes with his obsidian deep-set ones. He was contemplating whether I was being truthful.

I did not fret. I sat quietly as he tried to gauge me.

After some time, he finally spoke.

"Sure."

"Thank you, Dr. Crest." It was always a pleasure to deal with smart people.

Just throw them a look and they would have gotten the gist of it.

After the waiter had served our food,

4:23

60

Chapter 20

2/16

he shot a glance at me again. "Has Ms. Stovall always downplayed your brilliance this way?"

I chuckled at his remark. "Oh, you flatter me. It's just a small trick to protect myself. Besides, Ashton and I are really not meant for each other anyway. This is a really bad time to have the baby."

He had a few bites, seemingly pleased with my answer. "When do you plan to leave?"

I was taken aback and locked eyes with him. My plan was to deal with the baby and divorce Ashton. As for leaving J City, I really had no inkling as



4:23

Wi-Fi signal strength and battery level (80%)

Chapter 20

3/16

to where I should be headed at the moment.

He had even gotten the last step of my plan correct.

I paused for a moment, putting down the utensils in my hands. "Maybe in two months' time. I haven't decided on the place."

"Why don't you consider Q City? I think you'd fit in perfectly there." He put down his utensils and wiped the corners of his mouth. Maybe he was done eating.

I actually found Q City to be a good suggestion and nodded. "Yes, maybe I



should consider that." Even though Q City was modest in comparison with J City, the pace of life there was slower. If I were to choose someplace where I would spend the rest of my life, Q City was actually a viable option.

I was supposed to foot the bill but he was one step ahead of me. We walked out of the restaurant together and I said, "I owe you one. It's going to be my treat next time!"

"Well, I hope you would treat me at Q City then."

I was at a loss for words and merely smiled.

It was getting late and I should be

4:24

📶 📶 📶 📶 🔋 60

Chapter 20

5/16

heading home. He suddenly asked when he reached his car, "So the surgery has been scheduled?"

"Yes, tomorrow," I turned around and replied.

Why dwell on the course of our actions if the decision has already been made?

"Does Ashton know?"

"No, and I don't intend to let him know about it anyway."

He frowned, albeit making no comment.

After I started my car, I noticed that he



4:24

📶 📶 📶 🔋

Chapter 20

6/16

was in a daze right beside his own car.

I figured it was best not to comment about it. I drove back to the villa right after.

It was a ten-minute drive. I parked the car downstairs and did not get off as I took the divorce papers that Stacey handed over to me.

A wave of bitterness washed over me. I thought that I would only sign the divorce papers should Ashton ever put a knife to my neck. Never would I have imagined that one day I would willingly sign and hand this over to him.

Ashton had always been liberal with the terms in the event of a divorce. He



4:24

5G

Chapter 20

7/16

had promised me the villa and the yearly dividends from the Fuller Corporation shares.

I could not help but be amused as I looked at the terms of the divorce.




Maybe all along he had been thinking that I had only gotten together with him because of all these, and that there would absolutely no reason for me to refuse to sign the papers if he had given me what he allegedly thought I was after.

After looking at the papers for some time, I finally penned down my signature.

Back in the villa, the living room was all



4:24

📶   

Chapter 20

8/16

dark. I changed into slippers and reached out to turn on the lights. To my surprise, there was a man sitting in the living room.

He stared impassively at me with his deep dark eyes. I could not discern what was on his mind.

I looked at him and said slowly, "Why didn't you turn on the lights? Have you had dinner yet?"

He did not answer my questions.

"Where have you been?" His tone was icy, and there was a hint of displeasure in it.

"I just went to the office." I headed right into the kitchen afterward and said, "I'll



4:24

📶 4G LTE 60

Chapter 20

9/16

make something for you.”

Well, I guess he wouldn't have a hearty appetite after what Rebecca had done at the hospital today. Why should I care? He was about to leave anyway. What did it have to do with me if he were to starve to death?

I thought it was best to split on good terms. He had been someone whom I cared about for such a long time anyway. It would be in our best interests to leave behind at least some sweet memories.

I suddenly felt a chill down my spine after I was done cooking. I turned around and was greeted by his cold,

4:24

Wi-Fi signal strength, cellular signal strength, and battery level (60%)

Chapter 20

11/16

hard gaze.

“Wh- what’s the matter?” There was only contempt in his eyes whenever he would look at me. Somehow, it felt different today... It felt complicated. I did not know how to deal with it and panicked.

He did not reply, and I took that as because he did not feel like talking to me. So, I kept my mouth shut and cooked ramen for him. “We don’t have much at home, only eggs. You’d have to make do with that.”

I turned around and went upstairs to wash up. However, he suddenly spoke, “So do we make do with our marriage



4:25

Wi-Fi signal strength and battery icons

Chapter 20

12/16

too?"

Stumped, I felt a searing pain in my chest. I would have chosen to keep quiet some other time. However, today was different. My eyes went red at his words. "So what? Big deal. Haven't we been doing that for almost two years now?"

"Ashton Fuller. I'm saying yes to the divorce." I fished out the divorce papers in my bag and put them right in front of him. I felt bitterness creeping up inside of me. "I've signed it. You take a look at it and put down your signature too. Let's set a time and head to the Civil Affairs Bureau to make things official."



4:25

59

Chapter 20

13/16

I breathed a sigh of relief after getting those words off my chest. Looking at his handsome, chiseled face, I spoke, "Don't worry about the baby. I will deal with it in a manner that both you and Rebecca will find satisfactory."

One had to bear the consequences of one's actions.

A hint of fury fled across his face but it went unnoticed as I turned around to head upstairs. This may well be the last time we're having such a conversation in the villa.

I felt a sudden grip on my wrist. "Care to explain more?" The fury in his tone was apparent.

4:25

59%

Chapter 20

14/16

I knew he was getting mad, but still, I did not turn around. I tried hard to suppress the swelling emotions and said, "I'll get it done so that it won't affect Rebecca."

"Scarlett Stovall!" His grip tightened on my wrist as his fury reached a tipping point. "What's your plan, huh? To divorce me? To abort the baby? What's next? Are you going to leave the city?"

"What other choice do I have?" The tears welled up in my eyes streamed down my cheeks despite my best efforts at holding them in. "What else could I do? Ashton, haven't you always wished for me to agree to this? You've always wanted me to stay as far away



4:25

59%

Chapter 20

15/16

from you as possible right? What exactly am I doing wrong here? Isn't this what you've wished for?"

His gaze darkened. The iciness was even more apparent.

"You think you're really smart, huh?" He snorted as he pinched my chin with his slender fingers. I tried to shrug him off but he pinched down harder. The two of us were so close that I could feel his breath against my skin. "That is my baby. You do not have the right to determine whether it lives or dies."

"I don't have the right?" I chuckled, enunciating myself. "So does Rebecca have a say in this?"

have a say in this?"

"Stovall, you're playing with fire here!"

He narrowed his eyes at me, his gaze threatening.



Chapter 21

He let go of his hand, not exerting any force. However, I felt a searing pain extending from my chin all the way to my heart.

Even my toes were curling from the pain.

I had not yet recovered from getting drenched in the rain. The sudden confrontation and him abruptly letting go of me made me slump into his embrace.

His strong arms from the years of fitness training held me steady. I could clearly feel his muscles flexing as I

4:25

Wi-Fi signal strength icons and battery level icon

2/12

Chapter 21

leaned into his embrace. My energy was running low, and I did not wish to be entangled in a fight with him. So, I closed my eyes.



"Well, someone's gotten bolder. You even know how to play dead now!" His mocking voice rang in my ears. The anger in his tone was still apparent.

He tapped my cheeks repeatedly, and it was by no means gentle. However, I did not feel well and kept my eyes closed.

Perhaps he had regretted his actions, he carried me and brought me back to the bedroom after noticing that I did not respond.



4:26

📶  

Chapter 21

3/12

After he put me on the bed, there were no discernible movements.

I thought he just could not be bothered with me. However, after some time I heard him calling Jared. It sounded like he was asking Jared to come take a look at me.

So, he's not that heartless after all.

After about ten minutes, I fell asleep from the drowsiness. Still in a daze, I heard Jared talking.

"Ashton, you'd better think how you want to deal with the baby."

"It's getting late. You'd better head

