

A Love That Waited In Silence

Chapter 1 Pregnant

Today marked the ninth time Evelyn Curtis had stepped into the bridal shop.

On the previous eight occasions, she had arrived by herself to try on the bespoke wedding dress her fiancé, Carsten Ward, had ordered for her.

The shop assistants, once lively and attentive, had slowly grown reserved, and in the end, they could only look at her with quiet sympathy.

"Miss Curtis... will Mr. Ward be joining you today?" the store manager asked carefully, a trace of pity lingering in her gaze.

Evelyn examined the woman in the mirror before her. The white dress embraced her figure flawlessly. Her fingers lightly traced the row of pearls sewn along the edge of the dress.

"He'll be here," she replied gently, yet with quiet conviction. "Today is our seventh anniversary. He said he would come."

The moment the words left her mouth, the door was pushed open.

A sharp burst of light flashed in Evelyn's eyes as she turned. But the smile resting on her lips stiffened instantly.

Carsten had come, but he was accompanied by Violet White.

Violet was the younger sister of Carsten's best friend, Kevin White.

Two years ago, Kevin had sacrificed his life to save Carsten. With his final breath, he had entrusted his only sister to Carsten's care.

After that, Carsten brought Violet into his household and looked after her as if she were part of the family.

From that moment forward, the warmth he had once shown Evelyn gradually faded.

Meanwhile, he showered Violet with attention, treating her like the most treasured person in his life.

"Carsten?" A suffocating pressure tightened in Evelyn's chest. "Why did you bring Violet with you?"

Carsten approached Evelyn, his eyes barely glancing at the wedding dress before he spoke flatly. "Evie, we have to reschedule the wedding. We need to hold it next month."

Evelyn stared at him in disbelief. "Next month? Why? The venue is booked, the invitations are sent, and the guest list is finalized. How could we possibly rearrange everything in just one month?"

"Violet is pregnant," Carsten replied, his tone so steady that it sounded like he was mentioning something trivial. "We can't afford to wait another two months."

For a moment, Evelyn thought she had heard him wrong. "Violet is pregnant? But what does that have to do with our wedding?"

She was fully aware of how much he cherished Violet.

Sometimes, he cared for Violet so deeply that even she, his own fiancée, couldn't help but feel a sting of jealousy.

Yet regardless of how close they were, Violet's pregnancy had no connection to their wedding date.

Carsten remained quiet for a brief moment before speaking once more. "The baby she is carrying is mine."

"What?"

Evelyn's thoughts erupted into a chaotic hum, and then, her mind went blank.

She stumbled backward a step, barely managing to brace herself by gripping the edge of the vanity.

She stared at Carsten, her entire body shaking. "What did you just say?"

Her voice shot upward, sharp and strained. "Weren't you the one who always said Violet was nothing more than a friend to you?"

Carsten cast her a detached glance. "Evie, calm down. It was only an accident."

His voice remained disturbingly composed, as though the matter held no weight at all.

He continued, "That evening, I was out drinking with clients and unknowingly consumed something that had been tampered with. Violet looked after me afterward, and while I was drugged, I mistook her for you."

Evelyn felt that the explanation was utterly ridiculous. "You mistook her for me? Carsten, do you hear how absurd that sounds? All these years, have you ever even been intimate with me? How could you possibly confuse her with me? You don't even want to touch me!"

Carsten's face darkened at that. "Evie, stop being unreasonable. You know perfectly well I never touched you because I wanted our first time to happen on our wedding night."

A hollow laugh escaped Evelyn as tears streamed uncontrollably down her pale face.

Seeing her distress, Carsten furrowed his brows as he reached out, attempting to soothe her by taking her hand. "Evie, don't worry. Violet is nothing but a friend to me. You're the one I plan to spend my life with-"

"Don't touch me!"

Evelyn yanked her hand away as though stung, retreating two steps.

She looked at Carsten with nothing but revulsion in her eyes.

"So what happens now?" She forced out a bitter laugh. "I came here alone to try on this dress like a complete idiot eight times. And today, the one time you finally show up, it's just to tell me you've betrayed me?"

Carsten turned his gaze aside, yet his voice came out cold and cutting.

"My parents believe that since you can no longer bear children, this might actually resolve the issue..."

He paused briefly before adding, "You should quit your job and concentrate on Violet's pregnancy for the next eight months. Once the child is born, we'll register it under your name and raise it as ours-"

Just then, a sharp crack rang through the room.

Evelyn struck Carsten across the face with all her strength.

A familiar spasm of pain twisted through her abdomen.

She clutched her belly, her fingernails biting deeply into her skin.

"Carsten..." she said, "look at me! Say that again."

Tears poured relentlessly down her face. "I can't bear children, but that is because of you! I ruined the very hands that could have made me an excellent surgeon also for your sake! I did it to save you!"

Desperation flooded Evelyn's eyes. "But now, you expect me to raise another woman's child? What exactly am I to you? Some convenient tool to deal with the consequences of your mistake?"

Carsten went rigid.

The fury from the slap faded little by little, replaced by a dull ache in his chest.

He stepped forward, intending to draw Evelyn into his arms.

But at that moment...

Violet hesitantly moved toward them, reaching out to take Evelyn's arm, her eyes shimmering with tears.

"Evie, please don't blame Carsten. This is entirely my fault... I couldn't stand seeing him suffer from the drug, so I couldn't bring myself to refuse him. I shouldn't have become pregnant with his child. But I swear, I never meant to take Carsten away from you. All I want is to give this baby a stable home after it's born. I'm begging you. Please agree to this."

As she spoke, she gripped Evelyn's arm.

Her fingers suddenly pressed hard into the inner side of her arm.

A sharp sting shot through Evelyn. Violet's nails tore into her skin.

"What are you doing?" Evelyn cried out in pain, instinctively yanking her arm away.

"Ah!"

Violet abruptly shrieked, stumbling backward two steps before slamming into the dresser behind her.

She then collapsed onto the floor, both hands clutching her abdomen.

Her voice trembled with agony. "Evie, why? I only wanted to apologize. Why did you shove me?"

"Violet!" Carsten hurried forward and pulled Violet into his arms.

He examined her anxiously. "Does it hurt? Don't be afraid. I'm right here."

Violet shivered against his chest. "My stomach hurts. Our baby... Will the baby be okay?"

"It will be alright!" Carsten murmured gently.

Then, he turned his head abruptly, his eyes sharp as blades aimed at Evelyn. "Evelyn! Apologize to Violet!"

Evelyn remained where she stood, looking at the blood seeping from the wound on her arm.

Then, her gaze shifted to Violet, who looked frail and helpless in Carsten's embrace.

All at once, Evelyn burst into laughter.

She doubled over from the force of it, tears spilling down without restraint.

"Carsten." The laughter slowly died away. She raised her tear-stained face. "Back then, when I took that knife for you and nearly died on the operating table, you held me just like that and said you would care for me for the rest of my life..."

Carsten's eyes wavered briefly, but when his gaze fell on Violet trembling in his arms, the trace of hesitation vanished, replaced by chilling indifference.

"That is a different matter. Right now, you injured Violet. I'll say it one more time. Apologize! Otherwise-"

"Otherwise what?" Evelyn cut him off, a derisive smile at the corner of her mouth.

She walked closer and stopped directly in front of Carsten, looking straight at the man she had loved for seven years.

She had once memorized every contour of his face in her dreams.

But now, all she felt toward him was icy revulsion.

"Carsten, if you care about her so deeply and want your child to have a proper home..." Evelyn's voice was soft, every word drawn painfully from her chest. "Then why marry me? Just marry her instead."

She lifted the veil from her head and flung it onto the floor. "I'll let you do that."

Carsten's eyes narrowed. "What are you saying?"

"I'm saying... our engagement is over. I have no desire to marry a man like you."

Evelyn's voice was steady. She seized the neckline of the gown and ripped it apart.

The delicate lace tore open. Pearls scattered across the floor.

The costly custom dress was reduced to tattered pieces in her hands.

She then flung the ruined dress at Violet.

"Isn't this exactly what you want? The dress belongs to you now! And so does he! May the two of you live happily ever after!"

Barefoot, she turned around and walked away without a single glance back.

"Evelyn! Stop right there!" Carsten shouted after her. "If you walk out that door today, don't even think about coming back to me!"

Evelyn's steps never slowed.

As Carsten watched her unwavering figure fade from sight, a strange panic surged in his chest, as though something precious was slipping through his grasp.

Without thinking, he wanted to chase after her.

But just then, Violet let out another weak groan in his arms.

When he looked down, Violet forced a fragile smile despite her pale face.

"I'm alright. Go chase after her, Carsten. And the baby... forget about it. I can't bear the thought of losing our baby. But if she truly can't accept this child, then

maybe I should just end the pregnancy. Even if it hurts... I can't destroy your relationship."

Tears streamed down her cheeks.

Carsten immediately gave up the thought of chasing Evelyn and held Violet gently. "Don't say such foolish things. How could I not want our child? I'll take you to the hospital for a check-up right away. As for Evie..."

A trace of impatience flickered across his face. "I've indulged her far too much. She thinks threatening to call off the engagement will make me give in. It's about time she learned how to behave properly."

Carsten softly wiped the tears from Violet's face, his tone resolute. "Don't worry; her tantrum won't last long. She would even sacrifice her life for me; she could never truly leave me!"