Chapter 2

Several years later…

IVY

The disturbing beep sound of my phone breaks the silence of my surroundings. However, I didn't bother to look into it. What's new? I knew it came from my too-good-to-be-true husband.

I let out a sarcastic chuckle as I let myself have a proper rest. But the phone continuously beeped which irritates me.

I grabbed it on the side table and looked into it. I heaved a deep sigh and throw it on my side. Just like I thought, there's nothing new. The text message came from my husband.

I grimaced when I thought of the word: husband, saying I should go to the hospital and donate blood.

Great.

Donating blood is part of my married life with Wyatt Reed.

My phone beeped again and when I looked at it, it was a notification from the bank, stating that my card received another wire transfer from my husband. The amount of money can make my jaw drop, but who says I need money?

After three years of marriage with Wyatt Reed, all he made me do was to go the hospital and donate blood. He's active when it's all about donating my blood.

I donate, and he pays. So, is that normal for people who were married? I bet not. And the funny thing was, he treated me like a stranger. If not because of my blood, I was nothing.

And the blood that I donate or sells as he was paying for it, I gave it to Alice-the-bitch-Perez. And this month, they get blood from me thrice. It is too much that I can feel my body weaken.

Also, yesterday, I was soaked in the rain which makes me catch a cold and fever. That's why I only stayed at home, trying to have a good sleep on my soft comfy bed.

I was about to close my eyes again when I heard my phone beep for the third time. Frowning, I reached for it and my forehead creased when I read a message from an unknown number, stating: "There's no such thing as a real Mrs. Reed. For the past three years, you have brazenly held that position. However, did you get full attention from Wyatt? So, if I were you, I'd go out and get a rope and hang myself. Remember this, you're nothing more but a slut!"

Slut?

Am I a slut?

I gave up my family and friends for three years just because of this marriage, and now, someone will call me that word. The shock and anger linger inside me that I wanted to punch the person who just sent the message.

That kind of word is below the belt—especially since I knew that I was not like that. My grip on the phone tightened and suddenly I heard a beeping sound.

A snapshot of my husband sleeping blissfully, with his lovely facial characteristics making me swoon, appeared when I opened the message. And it was Alice Perez who was resting on his shoulder. Even though their eyes were close together, I was able to spot a disturbing difference.

Why does the corner of Alice’s lips was slightly raised? Geez, self, you’re imagining things again.

I was about to put down my phone when it rings. I frowned when I read the name of the caller. When I answered it, Eva Reed’s voice roared on the line, she’s Wyatt’s mother.

“Ivy! Have you lost track of the date? Hurry up and cook, the servant is off today!” she exclaimed which made me smirk, and then hung up the phone silently.

People around me that are connected to my husband were treating me like a slave.

When it comes to Wyatt, I have always been careful.

Everyone in the company of Wyatt thought that I couldn’t be a secretary, but I still did my best.

Wyatt’s mother and even his sister, treat me like their maid. They were odd and finicky to me. They let me cook, wash, and clean for them. And all of this, I didn’t dare to tell Wyatt to avoid trouble.

I’d grown accustomed to it by this point.

I am willing to put up with the ridicule of others for the sake of Wyatt.

And Wyatt thinking that everything was fine around me, seemed to have forgotten about me, his wife, except that I needed to work with his instructions on the company, asking me to donate blood and wiring me money.

I took a deep breath and heaved a deep sigh. At this moment, I’m tired that I seem to be unable to hold on.

From that photo and message, I knew it was Alice who sent it. And this is not the first time that Alice has gotten under my skin.

I was able to laugh off those cruel and mean-spirited comments from others, but that photo of Wyatt and Alice absolutely shattered my self-esteem.

Feelings of embarrassment and loneliness washed over me. Is it possible that three years of marriage was just a joke?

I frowned when an idea came to my mind. The relationship between me and Wyatt, this joked relationship should end.

I scrolled back to Wyatt's message. I made up my mind and didn’t hesitate to send these words to him: “Let’s divorce.” Then tapped the send button.

When I saw that it was delivered, I felt confident in that decision, despite the fact that I was in a daze.

And after a few seconds, my phone rang, and the word ‘husband’ flashed on the screen.

I can picture his face right now—seemingly confused and angry.

“Ivy…” my eyes widened when I felt that coldness in his voice, “What’s the matter?” he asked. Which makes me smirk. His voice became different all of a sudden, it became warmer. However, his next words seemingly boil my blood in anger. “You are free to set your price. According to the doctor, Alice is still in danger—”

“Wyatt, let’s meet at the Supreme Court,” she cut in and hung up the phone.

After a few seconds, a text message appeared in my inbox, stating that my bank just received another one million wire transfer from Wyatt which makes me laugh.

My frantic banter was accompanied by an overwhelming stream of my tears.

I waited for a couple of minutes before I decided to get up and change my clothes. I can’t waste time—I don’t want to prolong this anymore. I had enough.

Despite the fever and cold that I had, I still managed to get out of the house and took a cab toward the California Supreme Court.

Wyatt called twice while I was on my way but I didn’t bother to answer it. After that, he never dares to call me again until I reached the building of CSC.

I was sitting in the waiting area with a pale face, patiently waiting for him. And after an hour, he came with a frigid expression, looking down at me with his cold eyes.

I saw how he clenched his jaw as he approaches me. “What is your problem, Ivy? What exactly is the problem? Why do you need to think of this all of a sudden?” Madness lingers in his voice but I never dared to leave his eyes. He pinched the bridge of his nose and closes his eyes for a while, meaning he was trying to calm himself.

When he locked his gaze on mine again, I can’t help but to gasped and my lips parted in surprise. I don’t want the coldness in his eyes. I don’t want his blank stares… but I need to handle it to get what I want.

“Look, I know you donated too much for this month but I did pay you—”

“Let’s divorce,” I interrupted, lifting my head since I was sitting while he was standing in front of me.

I don’t want to say anything to him. All I wanted is for us to get a divorce. “It’s easy for us to get the divorce paper since we don’t have kids. We can only get it for an hour—”

“Don’t make things that you will regret later,” he uttered, wearing his deep chilly voice.

I scoffed as I stared at him. Wyatt is still the same, he got perfect features—a Greek god-like face and well-defined which fascinated me in the beginning. But the truth that he never dared to consider me as his wife, breaks me into pieces.

I don’t want to make him furious at me, but things will be different now.

Three years were enough to be his humble another half.

“If I will regret something the most,” I smiled wistfully. I thought of this many times and I wanted to get straight to the point, “that was marrying you, three years ago,” I uttered and stood up when I heard my name.

“Let’s go, it’s our turn now,” I added and started to walk to the office of the judge that will grant our divorce certificate.

“Are you sure this is what you wanted?” Wyatt asked, suddenly while he equaled my pace.

I glanced at him and nodded. I am already here and there’s no turning back.

The pain is too much that I need to choose myself over him.

I wanted to burst into laughter and cry out loud.

Wyatt agreed with the divorce. It’s not that I wanted him to stop me. That he will try to say something that might change my mind but I heard nothing but “Alice needs blood, she’s ill...” so, there was no reason for me to stop this anymore. I just found out my worth for him. I am nothing but a source of blood, and that was clear.

And here I am, holding the pen as I scribbled my signature above my printed name. Soon, after I finish signing, I let go of the pen since my hand started to tremble. When I looked up at Wyatt, his forehead creased as his gaze went down to my hand. I hide it then at my back.

Wyatt picked up the pen and swiftly signed above his name.

The judge then pressed the seal and signed it. And there, I can see the signed golden paper. Our divorce certificate.

We easily got one since it’s an uncontested divorce. We don’t have to go to the hearing since we both agree with it and we still don’t have any kids.

When we got their divorce certificate, I exited the room. I walked straight and didn’t bother to look back when suddenly, a force grabbed me by the arm, making me stop. I cursed inside my head before I turned to face him.

“Alice needs a blood transfusion today. I texted you earlier about it. You need to give—”

I scoffed which cut off the hum of his words. “Wyatt, I won’t waste another drop of blood for her. I don’t care even if she dies,” I uttered which makes his grip on my arm tighten. Seems he wants to squeeze it until my arm runs out of blood. I wiggled and he did let go of my arm.

I saw how anger came across Wyatt’s eyes and how he clenched his jaw. “Alice is sick and you dared to curse her like that?”

I let out a sarcastic laugh. For the last time, Wyatt has not forgotten my worth… Alice’s human blood bank.

“Don’t forget that the condition of our marriage, three years ago, was for you to donate blood at any time,” he asserted.

Hearing Wyatt’s words and being slapped by the truth, I was in excruciating pain as if someone had pierced my heart with a sharp knife.

Yes! I married him because I agreed to supply blood whenever Alice Perez needs it, making me the rare human blood bank!

Tears started to overflow in my eyes blurring my vision. I met his customary coldness under his sword brows with my glistening eyes. My haughty and callous laughter expanded my smile and my tears suddenly drip down my cheeks.

In hindsight, I should have clearly known that I am nothing more than just a lowly human blood bank.

I nodded as I wiped my tears away. “Don’t worry, I’ll make one final donation of my precious blood, and settle up any outstanding debt,” I asserted which makes him grin.

I gave one more look at Wyatt, unsure of what his grin meant, before turning around and leaving him.

As I stepped out of the building, I took a cab and make my way to the hospital. I paid for my fare and hurriedly stepped outside the cab. When I got inside the hospital, I walked my way towards Alice’s private room on the left wing of the hospital. I pushed the door and saw several nurses and doctors, surrounding Alice’s bed while they asked and checked for her precious health.

When I met Alice’s eyes, she flashed a smile at me. And I don’t know what to think of it if it’s genuine or sarcastic.

“Ivy,” she uttered my name as I approached her side, “you’re finally here. Look, I am still not in the best shape. I’m sorry if my health bothers you a lot. And I am worried that your body breaks down—”

“You send the text message, right?” I strode over with a melancholy expression on my face. I don’t want any diversion and came straight to the point.

Alice is the only person that I knew that will send that. And the photo is a piece of clear evidence.

Silence filled the room and just the beeping sound from those machines can be heard. I didn’t wait for her answer and just slapped her face which makes her scream in surprise.

WYATT

Feeling agitated, I massage my temple with a frown. I cussed inside my head. Something is not right with Ivy—why all of a sudden that she wanted a divorce? It was clear at the beginning that we agreed with the condition that she needs to donate blood.

I don’t know what to think anymore, I have too many problems that I need to face. I never thought that Ivy and I will come to this point.

After three years of marriage, I thought I knew her already. I thought that I will never do this thing.

I did feel guilty when Ivy needs to supply blood thrice this month, but I thought she was okay with it since I never heard any complaint from her.

Ivy is beautiful and charming. She’s kind and really suitable for me as my wife, despite the fact that she’s the supplier of blood for Alice. However, she suddenly filed a divorce which makes me upset.

Nonetheless, divorce doesn’t matter to me.

I shook my head and let go of the irritable feeling about what had just happened. Well, I know, Ivy will still run to me if she’s broke. I am sure that she will seek my help if she needs it.

When I can’t see Ivy, I then drive my car toward the hospital and walked my way to Alice’s room. Soon as I opened the door of her room, my eyes widened when I saw how Ivy slapped Alice in the face.

Anger filled in as I took a bigger step to approach Ivy's side and grabbed her by the arm. "What do you think you are doing, Ivy?!" I exclaimed in anger as looked into her eyes. However, she didn't reply.

I looked to the group of medical staff and dismissed them. They then get out of the room.

I glanced at Alice and saw a tint of panic in her eyes. Suddenly, her eyes filled with tears as she glanced at Ivy.

"Why are you accusing me? I didn't do anything. Y-You just misunderstood—"

"Don't pretend anymore, I know it's you," Ivy cut off as she sneered and looked at Alice.

I frowned when Ivy wiggled which makes me let go of her. She glared at me before she took out her phone inside her sling bag and scroll something into it before she threw it in front of Alice, which landed on the hospital bed.

My eyes widened as I looked at the screen of the phone. I stared exactly at the photo as a surprise, filled in.

I frowned and glanced at Alice. Alice's face flashes an unpleasant expression.

I knew that photo was secretly taken because I don't remember letting someone take one.

Yesterday, was a hectic day for me because of many projects and meetings to deal with at the company. When I visited Alice, I couldn't help but take a nap for a while.

I glanced at Ivy and saw how she snide a sly smirk on her lips. "As I said, I am here to settle everything." Her eyes pierced into Alice. "This is what you owe me, Alice," she uttered.

I could feel the madness in her voice.

Ivy laughs. Which I knew was sarcastic. "Don't worry, Alice… Wyatt and I were already separated. I hope you're already satisfied with it. And I wish you all the best in the future," she asserted.

This time, no matter how I think stupidly, I already understand how the photo got into Ivy. My eyes were covered with frost as I looked at Alice's frail face.

"I… I…Wyatt, it was just a misunderstanding. Ivy misunderstood it. I didn't do anything. I didn't take this photo," she said, stuttering as she grabbed Ivy's phone, "someone has framed me!" Alice exclaimed which makes me frown.

Suddenly, Alice pulled the hem of my polo. "Wyatt, I can apologize to Ivy. I swear, I really don't know who send the picture."

I pinched the bridge of my nose and let myself get calm. "Why do you need to exaggerate things, Ivy?" I asked as I faced her. "It's just a photo. You don't need to judge and make decisions just because of this photo. Did you want a divorce, just because of this?" I asked as I stared into her eyes.

I clenched my fist and sighed. "Let's talk about this after you donate blood for Alice," I said and walked towards the table to call the doctor using the telephone.

After a few seconds, the doctor came with a nurse on his side.

"Are you sure Alice needs another blood transfusion?" I asked which makes the doctor stunned for a moment.

I saw how the doctor glanced at Alice first before he nodded at me. “Y-Yes, Miss Perez felt dizzy and even collapsed earlier which makes her leg gets injured. Thus, she really needs a blood transfusion today,” the doctor said.

I arched my brow. “Injured? Then what are you waiting for?”

The doctor nodded. “Yes, yes… we’ll do it now, Sir,” he replied.

I nodded and looked at Ivy who was now staring at me. I saw how she let out a frail smile on her lips. And I am seeing a tint of pain in those perfect eyes of hers.

Does that photograph hurt her that much to decide to ruin the marriage that we had?

And how could Alice take that if she was beside me?

What if Alice was right—that someone framed her?

Unless I gave her a reason, Ivy shouldn't be making decisions on her own. That picture is worthless.

My forehead creased when I saw her close her eyes and massage her temple. I don’t know if I did feel it right earlier, but when I touches her, her temperature seems high. And it was just this time that I took a chance to scrutinize her. I know something is not right.

Is she sick?

I shook my head. Never mind. Maybe I am just overthinking.

Suddenly, Ivy moved closer to Alice.

I saw how she lifted and pulled down the white blanket, wearing her cold and domineering eyes.

My eyes widened a little bit when I saw Alice’s leg, wrapped in a bandage.

“W-What are you doing?” Alice asked as she moved inward, trying to move away from Ivy. However, Ivy formed smirked and suddenly pulled the bandage that was wrapped around her legs.

I stared at the wound I knew that it just came from a scratch.

“So, this is serious that you even need a blood transfusion?” Ivy’s mocking tone was visible in her voice.

“Ivy, you—Wyatt it’s not what you think,” Alice uttered as she turned to my side, “My body is weak and… and the blood transfusion makes me recover fast,” she added as she trembled, seems like Alice’s hiding something.

I was about to talk when Ivy laughed.

“Injured? Again? For about three to four times a month?” she asked sarcastically which makes me frown. “I see,” suddenly Ivy nodded her head and let out a smile, “you’re trying to drain my blood, right?” her voice was cold, “sorry, but I will not give you another chance,” she added and looked at me, meeting my gaze, “let Wyatt marry another woman to fit my place,” she asserted. And after that, Ivy left the room.

IVY

I slumped weakly on a chair in the corridor as soon as I exited the room, and I felt as if I had been abandoned by the entire world at that moment.

Tears streamed down my cheeks as I dialed someone’s number, my voice choking with tiredness as I tried to express my rage at what had just happened.

“Cooper,” I uttered, my breath was too heavy but I manage to get up.

Silence filled in for a while and then I wiped my tears away. “I wanted to go home,” I uttered as I started to walk away from Alice’s room. I don’t care if people are looking in my direction, watching how I look miserable.

Cooper groaned softly and his voice was conniving, “Where are you? I’ll pick you up.”

I put down the phone and continue to walk my way outside the hospital.