

CEO's Regret After I Divorced

Chapter 239: Chapter 239 Midnight Confessions

Ethan's POV

I stared at my phone in disbelief after Maya hung up on me. Well, that went spectacularly bad. I'd been so busy calculating how to get her to London that I'd completely forgotten she might react to being kept in the dark about Serena's entire identity.

"Shit," I muttered, running a hand through my hair.

A soft snicker came from behind me. I whipped around to find Zoe leaning against the doorframe, watching me with that insufferable know-it-all smirk she's perfected since childhood.

"How long have you been standing there?" I demanded.

Zoe raised her mug of tea, steam still curling from the surface. "Long enough to witness the magnificent crash and burn of whatever that was." She sauntered over and dropped onto the couch beside me. "So that's the infamous Maya Carter?"

I groaned. "Was I that obvious?"

"Please." She rolled her eyes. "You've mentioned her name approximately forty-seven times since you got here. And you just had that pathetic puppy dog look on your face while she was verbally eviscerating you."

"She didn't eviscerate me," I protested weakly.

Zoe's eyebrow shot up. "I could hear her yelling from across the room. I believe the phrase 'what the hell' featured prominently."

The moonlight filtered through the windows, casting long shadows across our family's sitting room. Outside, London sprawled beneath us, twinkling and alive despite the late hour. Inside, I was nursing both my lingering hangover and freshly wounded pride.

"I don't understand women," I sighed dramatically.

"Clearly." Zoe took a sip of her tea. "You told her Serena—her best friend in the entire world—is actually a long-lost Quinn heiress with amnesia, and you expected... what exactly? A calm 'oh, that's nice' response?"

When she put it that way, I could see the problem. "I thought she'd be excited about the proposal."

"Men," Zoe muttered with disgust. "Always missing the point."

Eleanor wandered in then, her hair piled in a messy bun and wearing fluffy slippers. "Are we having a midnight therapy session for Ethan's love life? Because I want in."

"I don't have a love life," I grumbled.

"Exactly the problem," both my sisters said in unison, then high-fived each other.

Eleanor flopped down on my other side. "I heard yelling. Maya?"

"How does everyone know about Maya?" I demanded.

"You talk in your sleep," Eleanor said, patting my knee condescendingly.

"I do not!"

"Oh Maya, your design aesthetic is so revolutionary," Eleanor mimicked in a dreamy voice.

Zoe joined in: "Maya, let me explain the proper way to catalog fabric swatches."

I threw a pillow at Eleanor's head, which she dodged easily. "I have never said either of those things!"

"The look on your face right now," Zoe laughed, pulling out her phone. "I need to capture this for posterity."

I lunged for her phone, but she twisted away. Our mother's voice cut through our squabble like a knife.

"It's nearly midnight. Why are all my children acting like toddlers?" Mom stood in the doorway, arms crossed but with an indulgent smile.

"Ethan's girlfriend hung up on him," Eleanor volunteered helpfully.

"She's not my—" I began.

"It's Maya Carter," Zoe added. "Serena's friend from New York."

Mom's eyes softened. "The designer? The one you've been talking about for months?"

Great. Even my mother knew about my embarrassing crush. "I was just trying to invite her to Serena's birthday party. Ryan's planning to propose then."

Mom's eyes widened. "A proposal? Here?"

I nodded. "That's the plan. But Maya's furious that no one told her Serena's true identity."

"Well of course she is," Mom said, sitting down in her favorite armchair. "That poor girl has probably been worried sick about Serena since she left New York."

Zoe nudged me. "See? Even Mom gets it."

"She'll come," Mom said confidently.

"How can you be so sure?" I asked.

"Because," Mom said with the patient tone she uses when explaining something obvious, "she loves Serena. And she's probably already booking her flight while pretending to still be angry with you."

Eleanor nodded. "The 'I'm too mad to talk to you' act is just to make you suffer."

"Which you deserve," Zoe added cheerfully.

I sank deeper into the couch cushions. "I'm surrounded by emotional terrorists."

Mom laughed softly. "Welcome to life with women who care about you, darling."

We sat in comfortable silence for a moment before Eleanor spoke up. "So what's the plan for this proposal anyway? Please tell me Ryan isn't just going to get down on one knee at dinner like some boring corporate merger."

"Actually," I said, starting to feel excited again, "he's going all out. "

"What about the ring?" All three women leaned forward eagerly.

I smirked, enjoying my moment of power. "You'll just have to wait and see."

Zoe threw the pillow back at me. "Ethan Quinn, you tell us right now or I swear I'll show Maya your middle school yearbook photos next time she visits."

I blanched. "You wouldn't."

"Try me," she challenged, eyes glinting dangerously.

I weighed my options and quickly surrendered. Some battles weren't worth fighting. "Fine. It's a custom design. Sapphires and diamonds in a platinum setting that mirrors the constellation visible the night they first met."

The collective "aww" from my family members was both gratifying and slightly embarrassing.

"Maybe there's hope for you men after all," Mom said, standing up with a yawn. "Now all of you, bed. We have a proposal to prepare for."

As we all headed upstairs, my phone buzzed with a text. I pulled it out, heart racing when I saw Maya's name.

"Flight lands at 10 AM. You're picking me up. And I'm still furious with you."

I couldn't help the ridiculous grin spreading across my face. Mom was right. She was coming after all.

"What's got you looking so smug?" Zoe asked, pausing at her bedroom door.

I showed her the text.

"Told you so," she said with a knowing smile. "Now you just have to figure out how to grovel properly when she arrives."

I frowned. "I don't grovel."

"You will," Eleanor called from her room. "And you'll like it!"

As I closed my bedroom door, I realized they were probably right. And the worst part? I was actually looking forward to it.