

CEO's Unwanted Wife

Chapter 1

"Congratulations, you're pregnant," the doctor's voice from earlier echoed in Emma's mind.

She lay curled under the silk sheets in the dimly lit bedroom of their upscale apartment, the weight of her newly confirmed pregnancy pressing down on her mind.

"Are you okay?" Alex's voice sliced through the silence and snapped her out of her thoughts as he stepped into the room, his tall frame casting a shadow while he loosened his tie.

Emma forced a weak smile, her heart thudding. "Yeah, just... tired."

He paused, his piercing gaze locking onto her. "Why'd you leave the office early today?"

Her fingers tightened on the sheet. "Nothing much. Met a friend at a café after work."

Alex studied her for a moment, his expression unreadable. Then, with a curt nod, he turned toward the bathroom. "Right."

Emma felt a familiar ache in her chest as she bit back the words she longed to spill.

She had so many stories to tell, small, seemingly trivial moments from her day, like the way the barista had drawn a tiny heart in her latte foam, or how she'd stumbled upon a street musician. She also wanted to share the silly mishaps, such as tripping over her own feet on the way to work and laughing at herself in the middle of a crowded sidewalk.

These were the pieces of her life she craved to lay bare, hoping they might spark a flicker of warmth in Alex's icy gaze.

But his distant expression, the way his eyes barely met hers, made her question if he'd even listen.

Would he roll his eyes at her rambling? Cut her off with a curt remark? Or worse, would he just sit there, silent and uninterested, letting her words fall into an empty void? Emma wondered if she'd ever find the courage to test his patience, or if she'd keep these little fragments of herself locked away, safe from his indifference.

The door clicked shut behind him, and Emma's smile faded, her chest aching as she stared at the empty space where he'd stood.

Alone again, Emma reached for the nightstand drawer, her fingers trembling as she pulled out the hidden pregnancy test report. Her voice whispered into the empty room, "How do I even tell you?"

Her mind flashed to last month, after a party, when their secret marriage had led to a moment of raw passion.

If his grandfather hadn't made that promise to her grandmother about this alliance after she saved his life all those years ago, she might never have had the opportunity to marry someone like Alex.

She bit her lip, murmuring, "It was just one night... but now this."

Tears welled in her eyes as she clutched the paper, the reality of their power imbalance and her unspoken burden crashing over her. "You don't even see me, Alex. Not really."

The bathroom door opened, and Alex emerged, droplets clinging to his chiseled frame, a towel slung low on his hips. Emma's breath caught as he neared, his presence commanding.

He leaned down, his lips brushing hers softly, his hand caressing her hair. "You're quiet tonight. Is something bothering you?" He murmured against her skin.

Before she could reply, his phone buzzed sharply on the nightstand. He pulled back, glancing at the screen with a flicker of irritation, then stepped onto the balcony without a word.

"Okay. I'll be there. Yes, got it." Alex ended the call.

Emma's hand fell to the sheets, her whispered plea lost in the air. "Please, don't go."

"I'll try not to be long." Alex said quickly, already halfway across the room.

She sat up, desperation tightening her chest. "Can you at least come with me tomorrow? To see Grandma? She's not doing well, and I—"

"No," he cut her off, "I am busy."

"Why are you always so busy, Alex?" Her voice cracked as tears slipped down her cheeks. "Why can't you just care for once?"

The next morning, Emma navigated the sleek, hostile corridors of Kensington Corp, her heels clicking on the polished floor of the glass-walled hallway. As Alex's executive assistant, she kept her interactions with colleagues to a minimum. Her professional attire masked the fragility beneath as she approached his office.

"You picked her up from the airport last night?" Daniel Turner, Alex's close friend, said from the other side. "Vicky's really got you running again, huh?"

Alex's reply was clipped. "She needed me. That's all."

"Need you all night?" Dan pressed, a hint of skepticism in his tone. "You know how this looks, Alex."

"Drop it, Dan," Alex snapped. "I handled it."

Emma's hand clutched the doorframe, her knuckles whitening as each word stabbed deeper. Her whispered gasp slipped out. "All night... with her."

Her chest tightened, the sting of betrayal raw as she fought to steady her breathing. "How could you, Alex? After everything?"

The door swung open, and Alex's voice cut through the haze, sharp and commanding. "Emma."

She turned, her eyes meeting his, the air between them thick with unspoken tension. Her voice wavered. "Yes, Mr. Kensington?"

His expression remained a mask of authority, cold and unyielding. "Get in here. Now."

Emma stepped forward into his corner office, the city skyline sprawling through the massive windows behind his desk, a stark contrast to the intimacy of their bedroom. Her heart raced with the weight of his apparent betrayal and the secret of her pregnancy burning inside her. "Of course," she managed, her voice barely steady.

Dan glanced between them, his tone neutral but pointed. "I'll leave you two to it. Got a call to make."

As Dan exited, Alex crossed his arms, his gaze piercing. "You've been off lately. What's going on with you?"

Emma swallowed hard, her fingers fidgeting at her side. "Nothing. Just... a little tired."

He stepped closer, his voice lowering. "Don't lie to me, Emma. I can see it in your face."

Her breath hitched, the urge to spill everything—about the pregnancy, about her heartbreak—clawing at her. "I'm fine. Really."

He didn't press further. Just looked at her for a long moment, then handed her a folder. "I need these reports finalized. Noon."

She nodded. "Of course."

She hesitated. "About last night..."

He shook his head. "Not now, Emma."

Her jaw clenched. "Okay."

He didn't look at her, his focus already on his laptop. "Close the door on your way out."

She stepped out, the door clicking shut behind her, the corporate buzz of the office swallowing her quiet exhale. "How do I keep doing this?" she whispered to herself.

Her fingers brushed against her stomach instinctively; the secret she carried was a heavy anchor. "I can't tell you yet. Not when you're like this."

The phone on her desk rang, snapping her back to the present. She picked it up, her tone professional despite the storm inside. "Emma Collins, how can I help?"

It was a routine call, but her mind barely registered the words, her thoughts circling back to Alex's unreadable gaze. "I'll have it ready," she said automatically, hanging up.

Her eyes drifted to his office door, the barrier between them feeling thicker than ever. "What am I even fighting for?" she whispered, her voice breaking.

Emma stood just inside Alex's corner office at Kensington Corp, the city skyline stretching behind his poised figure. His tailored suit hugged his frame, his focus buried in the reports on his desk. "Here are the reports you asked for." She stepped forward, the documents held tightly in her grip. Alex didn't look up, his piercing gaze fixed on the papers as he took them from her hand. "Thanks," he muttered, the curt word slicing through her like a blade. She lingered, fingers brushing...