



Chapter 85

Brian entered the villa, shocked to see Mara and Claire's sister around. They were laughing loudly at the TV show they were watching. Claire's sister, Carrie, was wearing pajamas. Mara was also in her sleeping wear, but her face was still covered in makeup, and surprisingly, she had new pieces of jewelry on.

"Oh, Brian, son. How is your day?" Mara got up with a big smile. Carrie also greeted him and stood up.

A frown formed on Brian's face as he asked, "What's going on? Why are you all here?" 1

Claire walked out of the kitchen, bringing a bowl of popcorn. She smiled at him and first placed the food on the table. Then, she approached and kissed his cheek, revealing, "Babe, Ma, and Sis will be living here for a while to help me with the wedding plans. I hope it's okay."

Brian and Claire found another chapel for their small wedding, which will take place next Saturday. It was very last minute, so many things had to be coordinated with the wedding planner.

He did not necessarily like living with Claire's family, but he understood they were close-knit. He loosened his tie and said, "Yeah, sure. Just for the wedding preparations, right?"

"Yes, Babe," Claire answered.

"Okay," Brian agreed, and Mara and Carrie cheered. 1

His stomach growled after that. He looked at Claire and asked, "What's for dinner, Babe?"



"Dinner?" Claire asked. Her lips rounded, and she made a face before saying, "I was used to you eating at the office this late, so we ate all the food."

"What? Ate all the food?" Brian marched into the kitchen and inspected the fridge. He was shocked that it was almost empty. He turned to Claire and asked, "Didn't the maids buy groceries?"

"Yes," Claire admitted, "but we cooked a lot when my mom and Carrie arrived with some of our previous neighbors this afternoon. We gave them some of the food and ate the rest."

A groan left Brian's lips. He searched the kitchen cabinets, found two instant noodles, and said, "I guess I'll eat this."

He grabbed one and whipped up his noodle, but his mood was sour. When he sat at the nook table, Claire sat in front of him. He bitterly said, "Claire, when Riley was here, she always ensured I had dinner. Sometimes, she would bring me food if we were not together. To think she was working and taking care of her mom."

"Ah." Claire's mouth fell open for some time before she answered, "I'm sorry, Babe. I was so happy when Ma and Carrie were here, and I forgot."

Claire pouted, and her doe eyes looked like they were about to cry. She walked around the table and hugged Brian from behind, saying, "I'm sorry, Brian. I know I'll never be as good as Riley. I'm not like her, with a degree and knows how to cook. She is more mature, but I - I'm young. I don't have a lot of experience. This is all new to me. Please don't be mad."

Suddenly, Claire littered kisses on his face. She muttered, "I'm not perfect, but I am carrying your baby, Brian. I can give you a family, not Riley."



Claire felt his chest, and her hand landed on his groin. She said, "Let me apologize -"

"Stop," Brian grabbed her wrist and said, "It's not all about sex. I'm tired, Claire. Since Riley is no longer with the company, a lot is on my plate. Is it too much to ask for a warm meal at night and a clean and quiet house?"

Hurt flashed in her eyes. Her innocent face looked broken. Her lips trembled when she answered, "I'm sorry, Babe. It won't happen again."

She hugged him again and said, "I love you so much. Please don't be mad."

Brian responded later. He finished his cup of noodles and turned to Claire with a sigh. He questioned, "Do you know this man named William Barlowe?"

Instantly, Brian saw Claire's face pale. She averted his gaze and repeated, "William who?"

"William Barlowe," Brian answered.

"I don't think so. Why?" Claire replied.

Brian took out the ID from his pocket and showed it to Claire. He revealed, "The guard told me he left it this morning and had already visited twice. He drives a Bentley, and strangely, I recall someone driving a Bentley last Monday. Do you remember? I asked you about it."

"Bentley," Claire frowned. "Yeah. I remember."

"You lied to me about it, Claire," Brian said angrily. "You said he got lost, but how could he get lost twice? Why did he especially tell the guards he



was here to visit my house?"

Claire's face reddened, and for the first time, he noticed her struggling to find an answer.

"Well?" Brian asked again.

"Okay. Okay." Claire sighed, her eyes brimming with tears again. "William Barlowe is my godfather."

"What?" Brian leaned back, asking.

"He is my godfather. We haven't been in touch for a while - actually, he had forgotten to check on us. He was busy with his family, wife, and kids, but recently, he looked for us," Claire told the story. "He learned that I got involved with you and came here to scold me."

Claire looked heartbroken as she revealed, "The truth is, he was not supportive of my decision to get involved with you. He did not like that I came between you and your wife. He offered to help me and my mom move to another town and leave you."

"He said something like, there is so much trouble getting involved with a married man," Claire quoted with her fingers.

"But I'm already divorced," Brian pointed out.

"Exactly!" Claire said. "I told him that."

"We argued when he first came to see me. I tried to tell him I never knew you were married, but he still got mad. He thinks I should be a better person than this—oh, my god." Claire suddenly wept. "Even my godfather thought I had no morals."



"What? He said that?" Brian could not resist but clenched his fist at what he heard.

"But anyway, he came back to see me again this morning. He apologized, said he did a background check on you, and confirmed the divorce. So, it's all good now," Claire said, sniffing her tears away. "Don't worry."

"Why don't I - get that, and if he ever visits again, I will give it back to him," Claire said, pointing to the ID.

Brian held the ID and studied it closely. This William Barlowe was in his late forties. He drove a Bentley, which meant he had money. One more question lingered in his head: 'How did Claire have a rich godfather?'

"Does your mother know your godfather?" Brian asked.

"What? Of course!" Claire answered. "She -"

Before Claire could resume her words, Brian marched back to the living room and questioned Claire's mother, "Mara, do you know William Barlowe?"

Mara jerked up, hearing the name. Brian repeated, "Do you know William Barlowe, Mara?"



Lithyz



Author

June 27, 2024. Chapter 1-2. The second chapter will be after two hours.



36