

When It All Fell Apart Chapter 03

“Ruby’s hosting a party tonight to celebrate her pregnancy.”

Before I could refuse, Ashton cut off any chance I had to say no.

“She’s been thinking about you a lot. She wants you to come and share in her happiness. Don’t be ungrateful!”

I simply sneered and agreed.

Anyway, it did not matter to me anymore. My heart was dead. I had contacted a divorce lawyer, and nothing Ruby did could hurt me now.

After we arrived, Ruby showed up fashionably late, perfectly dolled up, while I looked like a mess, having spent days in the hospital and not had a chance to clean up. In contrast, Ruby looked like a blooming flower, perfectly put together.

Everyone around her was fawning over her, showering her with compliments.

“Our beautiful artist Ruby is always so forward-thinking, turning down all those suitors just to become a single mom on her own terms.”

“Well, Ruby’s rich and independent. She can raise a kid by herself! She’s unlike those stay-at-home wives who ask their husbands for money.”

All eyes in the room slowly drifted toward me, some with mockery. Ruby laughed and ordered a round of drinks, saying it was her treat for the night.

Someone then suggested we play Truth or Dare to liven up the mood. When the bottle spun, it landed on Ruby first.

She pouted playfully. “I’ll pick truth.”

With a knowing grin, her best friend asked, “Ruby, since you’re having a baby through IVF, are you ever going to let the kid call Ashton ‘Dad’?”

Ruby placed a hand on her belly and flashed me a sly smile.

“Clara, I know this bothers you, and you’ve been upset with Ash lately, but don’t worry. I would never come between the two of you. After all, you know, if I wanted to marry Ash, you wouldn’t have stood a chance.

“But, if you can’t have kids, I’ll make sure my son takes care of Ash and you when we’re older. I wouldn’t want you to end up all alone.”

Everyone around the table praised Ruby for being kind and considerate, but I felt nothing. Especially in the past two years when Ashton's company began taking off, Ruby had stormed into my life, constantly showing up around Ashton.

At first, I was so shocked, angry, and jealous that I would get upset and argue with Ashton. However, time and time again, Ashton had chosen her over me. He told me I was being unreasonable and petty. He had even accused me of slandering them, so much that I had long since grown numb.

"I don't mind. In fact, if you want to go down to the courthouse right now and file for divorce, I have no objections."

Ashton's face immediately darkened, and he snapped, warning me to stop saying things to upset him.

I gave a calm smile. "You shouldn't flatter yourself so much. Do you really think you're that important to me?"

There was a flash of panic in Ashton's eyes, but he quickly regained his composure.

"Alright, enough with the attitude. Look at Ruby. She's considerate, understanding, and always thinking about you. I know I haven't been around much lately, but I'll be home for the next few days. Does that make you happy?"

Sensing the tension in the room, someone suggested we move on to the next round of the game. This time, the bottle landed on me.

Just as I was about to choose 'truth', Ruby chimed in before I could.

"I chose 'truth' last time, so let's mix things up and go with a dare this time!" she suggested.

I gave her a cold stare, watching her stir up trouble, but I did not care anymore. My dare was to kiss the first guy I saw when I walked out the door.

Without hesitation, Ashton shoved three bottles of alcohol in front of me.

"She's not doing that dare. She'll just take a penalty and drink these instead."

Everyone laughed, agreeing with him. After all, kissing another guy while your husband was sitting right there was not exactly appropriate.

Still, I stood up. "Why should I back down? Ruby's the one who suggested I do it, and I'm not one to chicken out."

Ashton jumped to his feet, his expression darkening immediately.

“Clara, are you trying to fight me on purpose tonight?”

I could not understand it. He did not seem to mind giving Ruby his sperm for her IVF, telling me not to make a big deal out of it, yet he was now furious because of some silly game.

Ruby quickly stepped between us, trying to diffuse the situation, but her gaze kept drifting to my stomach. “The alcohol isn’t that strong. A little won’t hurt.”

As soon as she said that, Ashton’s temper worsened. He popped open one of the bottles and tried to force it into my mouth.

“Everyone’s trying to make this easier on you, but you just have to ruin the mood, don’t you?”

Caught off guard, I choked on the alcohol as it spilled into my mouth. At the same time, thanks to Ashton’s rough movements, it splashed all over my face and into my eyes.

Then, remembering the baby inside me, I panicked. I tried to pull away, waving my hands to get him to stop. However, in my haste, I tripped on something behind me and fell hard onto the cold marble floor of the private room.

A sharp pain shot through my abdomen, and I cradled my stomach, screaming in agony.

Ashton’s face showed a flicker of concern as he reached out to help me, but he said dismissively, “It’s just a fall. You’ll be fine.”

That was when one of the girls screamed, “Blood! There’s so much blood on the floor!”