

Game Over, Mr. CEO: Your Wife Is Done

A child.

A sharp, piercing pain instantly radiated through Winter's body, spreading to every limb.

On a late spring night last year, a drunken Chris had stumbled into her room by mistake. She could never forget how, in the heat of the moment, he had pressed against her ear and whispered her name.

She became pregnant with his child that very night.

After that, their relationship underwent a subtle shift. Although he still rarely came home, he hired a nutritionist specifically to oversee her daily meals. She truly believed that was the beginning of her happily ever after.

But last winter, when she was already eight months along, the baby's heartbeat suddenly stopped. The fetus died in her womb, and she was forced to undergo a termination.

Afraid she would be devastated, the medical staff would not let her see the baby even once.

She never got to say goodbye. She never got to touch his tiny hand.

During that time, no one dared to mention the word “child” in front of her. It became a forbidden place in her heart.

Now, hearing it again, she felt as though she had been plunged into ice.

Soft footsteps sounded on the stairs. A servant came up from downstairs.

“Mrs. Xander.”

Winter snapped back to herself. She wiped at her reddened eyes, steadied the tray in her hands, and stepped into the room.

The conversation inside stopped abruptly. The moment Mrs. Xander Sr. saw Winter, her brows knit with pain and regret.

If she had known Winter was upstairs, she never would have brought up the child.

She immediately turned to Chris, hoping he would go to her, but Chris stood there like a block of ice. He gave Winter a casual glance before turning to leave the room.

*

After Mrs. Xander Sr. had fallen asleep, Winter checked her temperature again and made sure the fever had gone down before leaving the room.

That night, Mrs. Xander Sr. insisted that Winter and Chris stay at the Xander estate. She even had the butler, Mr. White, personally escort Winter back to the guesthouse that had once been prepared as their marital home.

The house stood on its own within the Xander estate, a separate building meant for the couple alone.

Winter had no idea where Chris had gone. After leaving Mrs. Xander Sr.'s room earlier, he had disappeared completely.

He had never been one to follow orders. Now that he was firmly in control and no longer needed anyone's approval, he certainly did not have to listen to the family. It was entirely possible that he had already left the estate.

When she reached the bedroom door, Winter glanced back at Mr. White, who was pulling his phone from his pocket. She let out a quiet sigh.

“Mr. White, you should go get some rest.”

“I can’t, Mrs. Xander,” he said apologetically. “Mrs. Xander Sr. asked me to take photos as proof.”

Mr. White used to address her as Ms. Scott. After she married Chris, even though Chris had never openly acknowledged her as his wife, Mrs. Xander Sr. had made it clear that everyone in the household was to address her properly as Mrs. Xander.

It was obvious that Mrs. Xander Sr. wasn’t reassured at all.

Winter did not know what else to say. She stood at the door, completely drained, and let Mr. White take a couple of photos.

Mr. White nodded with satisfaction at the pictures.

“That will do. I can report back now. Mrs. Xander, please get some rest.”

As he walked away, Winter breathed a sigh of relief. At least Chris wasn’t there. She would have the room to herself.

As soon as she closed the door, Winter leaned against it and bent forward, clutching her right leg as pain made it tremble.

She had almost failed to hold it together.

Last night, the man had kicked her right leg hard. Three times. With that kind of force, two more kicks would have crippled her.

Once the police caught them, she would make sure he paid for it.

“Are you waiting for me to come over and carry you?”

A man’s cool voice suddenly broke the silence of the dim room.

Winter jumped in shock. She had not even had time to turn on the lights. She looked toward the sound, and a blurred figure gradually came into focus. A flash of light glinted off a pair of lenses.

Chris stood by the open window, leaning against the sill, a cigarette between his fingers.

Winter looked at him, emotions tangled and unreadable.

So he had not left after all.

He had come back to the room before she did.

It seemed they would be staying here together tonight.

If this had been the past, Winter would have felt flustered, her heart racing with shy anticipation.

But the image of the divorce agreement in the desk drawer flashed through her mind, along with Skyla's return. Whatever expectations she once had vanished completely.

She did not bother turning on the light. Enduring the pain in her right leg, she walked toward the sofa.

Forget it. She would just make do on the sofa for the night. Once morning came, everything would be fine.

Before she could even reach it, a sudden force yanked her sideways. She lost her balance and fell straight into a broad, warm chest.

Before she could struggle free, the arm around her waist tightened abruptly.

Chris's warm, damp breath brushed against her ear as he kissed her, sending an instinctive shiver through her body.

This was the first time Chris had touched her since last spring.

In a dizzy blur, she was pressed down onto the sofa. His body blocked out the light, his heat enclosing her completely.

The lingering, heated kisses left her with no strength to resist.

"Grandma said we should have a child."

The words hit her like a bucket of cold water.

Winter thought of the divorce agreement in the study drawer, then of what Mrs. Xander Sr. had just said. She turned her face away from his lips and looked straight into his eyes, eyes that seemed made to ensnare people.

Her throat felt as though it were being pricked by countless needles.

“Do you actually want a child, or do you just want whatever Grandma promised you in return?”

Chris seized both her wrists and pinned them above her head. With one hand, he removed his glasses. Without the lenses to soften his gaze, his eyes turned cold and sharp, like those of a predator.

This was the real Chris Xander.

“What difference does it make?” he said calmly. “When you insisted on marrying me back then, you should have been prepared for this.”

Winter’s face drained of color.

“Don’t you agree?” he whispered. “Winter.”

The tenderness in his voice only made the pain sink deeper into her bones.

A name spoken without love, steeped in mockery, felt like slow torture to her.

Chris knew exactly where to strike to hurt her the most.

He gave a low, mocking laugh and leaned down, easily stripping her of the last of her strength.

As her clothes were pulled open, Winter's body jerked violently.

Her mind instinctively replayed the scene from the night before, when she had been beaten. If not for a kind passerby, her clothes would have been torn apart then too.

In that moment, she could no longer tell whether the man in front of her was Chris, or the men who had attacked her.

"Don't!"

Like a cornered animal, she bit down hard on his neck.

In the dim light, Chris hissed in pain.

“So you’ve grown bold enough to bite now?” Chris sneered. His large hand clamped onto her jaw as he yanked off his tie, moving to bind her struggling wrists.

Suddenly, a phone rang sharply in the room.

A cold blue glow lit up the darkness.

The phone on the coffee table vibrated, slowly shifting its position. The caller ID came clearly into Winter’s view.

Skyla.

It was Skyla Jasper.

Taking advantage of his momentary distraction, Winter scrambled out from under him. Trembling, she pulled her clothes together, covering the large, dark bruises left from the beating the night before.

Dragging her injured right leg, she curled up in the corner of the sofa.

At that moment, the lamp beside the sofa snapped on.

Chris stood there, his tie hanging loose around his collar, two buttons of his shirt torn open. His Adam's apple moved as he swallowed.

The phone was still ringing.

Winter's face was deathly pale, making her reddened eyes stand out even more. She looked at him with open mockery.

She said coldly, "Your precious sweetheart is calling. Aren't you going to answer?"