

Hitched 1571

Chapter 1571

"I can't believe it. That son of a bitch was faking it the whole time!"

"He's a master actor! He's more full of it than a Thanksgiving turkey!"

"Tell me, if you don't love me, why did you even chase me? For the money, haha, just for the money, he could put on an act for so many years, and he even wanted to kill me!"

"I don't get it. Even if he didn't like me, we've known each other for so many years. Don't we have any kind of friendship at all?"

"After all those years living together, didn't that mean anything to him?"

"He actually wanted to kill me. He's so cruel. How could he be so cruel? Tell me, how could he be so cruel?" She choked out, her voice dissolving into a fresh wave of sobs.

As Winona Newsom spoke, she started to cry.

Keaton Huber pulled a tissue and handed it to her.

"If you need to cry, just cry. I... I won't laugh at you."

Winona stubbornly retorted, "I'm not crying! I can't shed another tear for him!"

Keaton countered, "You're not crying for that scumbag. You're saying goodbye to this chapter of your life. Once you're done, it's a fresh start. Go on, let it out."

Hearing this, Winona let out a loud wail and burst into tears.

Keaton scooted closer to her. "You can borrow my shoulder."

Winona leaned on his shoulder and cried, "I'm just so sad. I get sad every time I think of him. That bastard!" She let out a broken cry, her voice hitching.

Keaton: "I get it."

Winona cried, her voice full of grievance, "I'm afraid of worrying my parents, Elysia and Blossom, so I don't dare show it in front of them."

"I haven't told anyone else, either. I keep telling myself I've moved on, but whenever I think of him, I still get angry and sad. I really..."

Keaton patted her head. "I understand completely. I used to be the same way, didn't tell a soul. But bottling it up only hurts yourself. It'll eat you up inside."

Winona bit her lip, large tears rolling down her cheeks. "I was with him because I loved him. I was only with him because I loved him!"

Keaton raised his arm and pulled her into an embrace, letting her cry her heart out against his chest.

"I really did love him..." she choked out, her voice shattering into a fresh wave of helpless sobs.

Leaning against Keaton, Winona cried and talked, letting everything out. She talked about her past with Zane Livingston, and about her anger and her pain.

Keaton gently patted her shoulder, listening quietly.

As two people who had both been hurt by love, Keaton understood her completely.

After she had cried it all out, Keaton spoke, his words slurred by the alcohol Letting it all out helps you feel a lot better. But if you want to completely move on, the most effective way is to distract yourself."

"You could throw yourself into work or school, just swear off love completely!"

"Or you could start a new relationship and leave the last one in the past for good." "But in my experience, those methods are hard to pull off in the short term. The wound is too deep. It's not easy to forget, and it's hard to fall in love with someone else again."

"If you want a quick fix, you could try messing around with other guys. We're all adults here. When it's time to let loose, you just let loose..."

"I'm not telling you to be a bad girl. This is just from my experience. It's a tried-and-

true method. If we weren't good friends, I wouldn't even be telling you this!"

"Look at yourself—you're a knockout

with a bank account to match. There's an endless line of elite bachelors who'd sell their souls for single night with you. Go out there and find a rebound. I guarantee you'll feel better afterward, You..."

Before Keaton could finish, Winona suddenly pulled away from his embrace. Her

face burned with heat as she stared at him.

Keaton froze. "...What's wrong?!"

Winona suddenly lunged, tackling him onto the couch and straddling him.

Without a word, she started trying to take off her clothes!

The long dress didn't have buttons, and she seemed to forget the zipper was in the back. She fumbled around her front for a while before finally

rabbing the hem of her skirt and pulling it up...

Seeing the top of her pale thighs instantly sobered Keaton up. He quickly stopped

her. "What are you doing?!"

Winona's eyes were hazy with drunkenness. "Sleeping with you!"

Chapter 1572

Keaton's eyes flew wide open in shock. "!"

He never in a million years thought Winona would pounce on him!

Keaton was freaking out. "Don't be ridiculous! I told you to go sleep with some hot guys to blow off steam, not to sleep with me!"

Winona caressed his face, a seductive smile on her lips. "You're hot too."

Her smile was hazy; she was clearly very drunk.

Keaton swallowed hard as he grabbed her wandering hand. "I know I'm hot, but you can't sleep with me! You have to sleep with someone else! Now get off me. I'll go make you something to sober you up."

He placed his hands on Winona's waist, trying to lift her off him.

But instead-

Winona quickly grabbed both of his hands, forcibly interlaced their fingers, and pinned his hands to the floor as she leaned down over him!

Before he could react, Winona pressed a quick kiss to his lips.

Keaton was horrified. "Winona!"

He raised his voice, and Winona frowned in annoyance. "Why are you being so mean?!"

Keaton's breathing was ragged. "Are you trying to get me killed?!"

She had scared him sober, completely sober!

Who was Winona?

She was the apple of his parents' eye, Elysia Thorne's best friend! If he slept with her in this ambiguous situation, how could he ever explain it to Elysia? How could he explain it to his parents? If he didn't handle it right, Elysia and his parents would literally kill him!

He might be a flirt who loved beautiful women, but he wasn't an idiot. He could mess with anyone, but not Winona!

"Listen to me, get off now. I..."

Before he could finish, Winona suddenly nipped his Adam's apple.

Keaton: "!"

Who could resist that?

Keaton let out a low groan as his hormones surged.

Fearing he'd lose control, he yanked his hands free, flipped her over, and pinned her down. "Winona, snap out of it! Do you know who I am?"

Winona looked at him with pleading eyes, on the verge of tears before she even spoke.

Keaton thought he had hurt her and quickly released her wrists.

The next second, she wrapped her arms around his neck and pulled him down hard!

Keaton lost his balance and fell on top of her.

Though he still had his wits about

him, he was still a man. This couldn't

continue. He gritted his teeth and

tried to scare her. "Winona, if

keep this up we cant event

f you

friends anymore

Winona, thoroughly drunk, shot back, "Are you even a man?" Keaton's eyes widened. "Shit!"

That was a low blow.

"Hell yeah, I am!"

Her eyes

were raw and bloodshot

from crying, and Winona asked, bluntly, "Then I want you. Are you going to give it to me or not?"

Keaton: "I'm not..."

Winona: "I've got money!"

Just as Keaton was about to respond, Winona added, "Am I not pretty?"

Keaton: "You're beautiful, but..."

Winona's eyes reddened. "So you're rejecting me?"

Keaton tried to explain, "No, it's not about rejecting you, I..."

"So you're just like him, you only like my money, you don't like me, right?"

Keaton: "?! " What the hell?

Winona's tears finally spilled over. "You're a scumbag just like Zane, you only like money, not me!"

Keaton immediately retorted, "I'm nothing like him! How can you compare a lowlife like that to me? And besides, I like money and

beautiful women. If it were it

woman, would

other

have hesitated for

a second!"

"But not us. We're friends. So I can't touch you, even if I'd touch anyone else. I..." Winona looked heartbroken. "You'd touch anyone but me? Am I that bad?"

Keaton froze, and just as he was about to explain, Winona suddenly pushed him off.

She sat up, leaned against the floor-to-ceiling window, and buried her head in her knees, crying.

This whole series of events completely threw Keaton for a loop.

Chapter 1573

He had dealt with countless women, and with others, he could usually play dumb. But Winona had left him completely and utterly baffled.

Keaton stood there, helpless. He never imagined that a heart-to-heart talk could end up like this!

He looked at his palms; they were slick with sweat. He had been scared to death! Then he looked down at his body's reaction, and Keaton grimaced and bit his lip. "Booze! I need a drink! Give me some booze!" Winona suddenly looked up at him. Her makeup was smudged, her hair was a mess, her eyes were red, and her eyelashes were dotted with tears. She looked pitiful.

Before Keaton could speak, she added, "Am I not even worthy of drinking your booze?"

Keaton: "...You wait right there. I'll let you drink your fill!"

He went and grabbed a few more bottles of vodka. "Anything else is off the table, but drinking is definitely on. I'll drink with you, all night long!"

They went shot for shot, and before they had even finished one bottle, Winona started going wild again.

She cried and laughed for a bit, then tackled Keaton again. "I just want to sleep with you. What am I supposed to do?"

As she spoke, her fingers drew lazy circles on his chest.

Her teasing made Keaton's heart race, his mind flustered.

His mind said no, but his body was telling a different story. That, combined with the alcohol, made it hard to refuse, even though he wanted to.

She was beautiful, her body was soft, her lips were soft...

Winona started crying again. "You don't want me," she whimpered, her voice thick with tears. "You're no better than Zane! You don't care about me all you see is the money. You're not even man enough to look me in the eye. You're just another pathetic coward!" Her voice rose to a desperate cry before dissolving into tears.

Keaton swallowed hard. He was drunk too, with only a sliver of reason left. He shook his head to clear it a bit. "Winona, do you know what you're doing?"

Winona stopped her hands and let out a drunken hiccup. "...Sleeping with you."

A dry lump formed in Keaton's throat. "Do you know who I am?"

Winona caressed his face, her smile seductive and alluring. "A hot guy. A super hot guy!"

Keaton insisted, "Say my name! Who am I?"

Winona looked at him, tracing the arc of his eyebrows, his sculpted

nose, and finally his lips "You're

Keaton! The most handsome man in

Keaton!

the world! The most, most handsome..."

Her lips met his again, clumsily trying to pry his open.

Lost in her repeated whispers of "most handsome," Keaton completely lost himself. With a grimace, he grabbed the back of Winona's head and deepened the kiss...

The temperature in the room soared, filled with the sound of rapid breaths and soft moans weaving together.

Outside the floor-to-ceiling windows lay the dark expanse of the sea. In the distance,

a lighthouse continued to cast its warm, steady glow...

In the early morning, Keaton woke up in a daze, his head throbbing.

Before his memories could return, he noticed the warm, soft body in his arms.

Waking up with a woman in his arms was nothing new for him.

Keaton wasn't surprised or shocked. He didn't even know who was sleeping next to him. He didn't pay it much mind, raising a hand to massage his temples while reaching for the phone on the nightstand to check the time.

The phone was the latest foldable model, but when he opened it, he realized the lock screen was different.

His lock screen was a selfie of his back, but the one in his hand was of a purebred German Shepherd!

The big dog was sitting on the grass, ears perked, eyes wide, looking majestic and incredibly cool!

But the next second, the display suddenly turned dark!

The screen went pitch black, and several streams of 'blood' dripped down the screen. In the center, a line of large text appeared: GET YOUR HANDS OFF MY PHONE!

Then a countdown appeared on the screen: 3, 2, 1...

Chapter 1574

Before Keaton could react, the ghost of a woman with blood streaming from her eyes, ears, nose, and mouth suddenly lunged out of the screen!

Keaton jumped, instinctively grabbing the phone and flinging it across the room!

The phone hit a picture frame on the wall with a 'bang—'.

The frame shattered, glass flying everywhere!

Keaton's hair stood on end, and goosebumps erupted all over his skin!

He quickly dove under the covers, hugging the woman in the bed tightly for courage!

He had been terrified of ghosts and spirits since he was a kid.

Winona, either woken by being squeezed too tight or by the noise, mumbled with her eyes closed, "What's going on?!"

Still scared, Keaton didn't recognize Winona's voice. "Shh, your lock screen scared the hell out of me. Let me just hold you for a second."

"Get off! I'm trying to sleep!"

Winona clearly wasn't fully awake. She pried his hands off and turned over to go back to sleep.

"Come on, let's cuddle and sleep."

Keaton tried to pull her back over, but her skin was so smooth and firm that he suddenly started to get ideas.

He nuzzled into the crook of Winona's shoulder, kissing her.

His hands also began to wander... his intentions crystal clear.

His actions disturbed Winona's sleep. Annoyed, she rolled over and slapped him across the face. "I said I'm trying to sleep, get lost!"

She was so tired her eyelids felt like they were glued together. She struggled to open them for a moment before shutting them tight again. She didn't even see who was next to her or know what had happened last night.

"Don't make me slap you again!"

She didn't realize she already had. After delivering her threat, she fell back into a deep sleep.

Keaton, having received a crisp slap, was stunned, shocked, and angry!

You don't hit someone in the face. That was crossing a line!

But before he could get mad, he got a clear look at Winona's face!

Keaton's eyes widened, his breath caught in his throat, and as if he'd seen a ghost, he rolled right off the bed!

That fall woke him up completely!

The events of last night came flooding back... they were drinking, then she pounced on him, and then he couldn't resist and slept with her!

They had gone at it from the first-floor window all the way to the bedroom...

Keaton was freaking out, his eyes wide with terror. He slept with Winona?! Oh my god-

Keaton couldn't believe it. He scrambled up, turned on the bedside lamp for a better look.

He carefully leaned over Winona and took a long, hard look...

Confirming it really was Winona, he despaired!

How could he sleep with her?

Seriously, how could he sleep with her?!

It's over, it's over, it's over. I'm so screwed!

Completely, totally screwed!

What did I do to deserve this?!

Keaton, facing reality, felt like he could just die!

However much fun he'd had last night, that's how much despair he felt now!

Winona was still fast asleep. Not daring to wake her, he turned and walked towards the bathroom.

The floor was littered with used tissues and condom wrappers, a testament to how intense last night's battle had been!

No wonder she was so exhausted!

Keaton's heart pounded, his chest felt tight, and his head ached fiercely.

There were cigarettes in the bathroom. He lit one and took a long drag.

This time, he had really screwed up!

It didn't matter who pounced on whom first; the result was that they had slept together!

Putting aside the pressure from his

parents and Elysia, just thinking

about Winona herself was enough

was enough.

Other girls could be paid off after a night together, but not Winona!

Trying to pay her off would be a disaster!

And now that they had slept together, how could they go back to being friends? How

could they ever have a heart-to-heart again?

Keaton smoked, growing more agitated with each thought, filled with regret.

If he had known this would happen,

he would never have brought her

here to drink, and he certain

wouldn't have told her to sleep with hot guys to de-stress!

Great. Now, instead of sleeping with someone else, she slept with him!

What now? What the hell was he supposed to do now?

Sneak out before she woke up? No, that was a coward's move!

And even if he ran, Winona would know it was him when she woke up. It was like committing a crime; the mistake was bad enough, but trying to cover it up would only make the fallout nuclear.

Chapter 1575

And even if he ran, Winona would know it was him when she woke up. It was like a DUI; the initial problem was bad enough, but if you tried a hit-and-run, it would get a whole lot worse!

Don't run, then. Beat himself half to death as an apology?

Even worse. He couldn't bring himself to do it!

Remembering how Winona had dealt with Zane in the end, a wave of fear washed over him. She wasn't going to pull a Lorena Bobbitt on him, was she?

Keaton's heart pounded in his chest...

He chain-smoked more than ten cigarettes, worrying for what felt like an eternity before he just gave up.

What's done is done. If a storm was coming, he couldn't stop it anyway.

Since he couldn't think of a good solution, then whatever happens, happens.

When Winona woke up, he'd hand her a knife. She could do whatever she wanted with him.

Just as long as she left his manhood intact.

Crushing the cigarette in his hand, Keaton went back to the bedroom.

He drew the curtains, turned off the bedside lamp, and slipped back under the covers, wrapping his arms around Winona to sleep some more.

He might as well enjoy it while it lasted.

It wasn't until the afternoon that Winona groggily woke up.

She yawned and opened her eyes, instantly realizing there was someone in her arms!

Winona's breath hitched, and she froze in fear!

What was going on?!

Although she had only divorced Zane a few months ago, she hadn't touched a man in two years!

The person had their head buried in her chest, so she couldn't see their face, but she could tell from the buzz cut that it was Keaton!

Winona's heart nearly leaped out of her chest in shock!

Carefully, tremblingly, she lifted the corner of the blanket and peeked inside...

One look was all it took before she quickly pulled the blanket tight again!

Neither of them was wearing clothes. It didn't take a genius to figure out what had happened last night!

She and Keaton... had slept together!

Winona's eyes widened, her mind buzzing.

Keaton was waking up too. He tried to emerge from under the covers, but Winona instinctively held the blanket down, refusing to let him out!

She was afraid of him seeing her!

But the next second, Keaton's voice came from under the blanket, "Winona, are you trying to suffocate me?"

Winona froze. He knew who she was?!

When his body brushed against hers, she remembered she wasn't wearing anything and panicked, kicking Keaton right off the bed!

Keaton landed on the floor, completely naked, and let out a pained groan!

Since he had already figured out what happened that morning, he wasn't shocked now. But he was still nervous!

He was scared, scared Winona would try to neuter him!

Seeing that Winona had wrapped herself up like a burrito, not even leaving her eyes uncovered, the knot in his stomach loosened a little.

He got up, picked up her underwear, and went into the bathroom. Two minutes later, he came out wearing a bathrobe um... I'm going to go wash up outside. I wait for you downstairs. When you're ready, come find me, and we'll talk."

"Also, you can't wear that dress. I don't have any women's clothes here. After you

shower, just pick something of mine from the walk-in closet to wear for now."

"I put your clothes in the dryer. They'll be fresh and ready for you by the time you're done showering."

Winona, hiding under the blanket, didn't respond. "..."

Keaton saw her phone on the floor went to pick it up, and saw it

was

dead. He plugged it in for her.

They had the same models

the charger was compatible.

He then cleaned up the broken glass on the floor to prevent Winona from cutting her feet when she got out of bed. After cleaning up, he left deliberately closing the door a little louder so Winona would know he was really gone.

Like he'd thought before, it didn't matter who initiated it. The fact was, they had slept together, and he had to take responsibility!

As for how he would take responsibility, he would let Winona decide.

Chapter 1576

The room was silent for a long while before Winona peeked her head out.

She turned on the lights, and once she was sure Keaton was really gone, she got out of bed, still wrapped in the blanket.

The moment her feet touched the floor, she collapsed back onto the bed.

Her whole body was a canvas of aches, her muscles so weak she felt like a newborn fawn.

She knew this was the price of last night's wild passion.

Winona grimaced and waited a moment, then forced her protesting body to the door

and locked it. Only then did she feel a sliver of relief.

Looking at the used tissues scattered all over the floor, the scenes from last night replayed in her mind...

It had been an intense battle, and the worst part was, she had started it!

Winona's cheeks burned with embarrassment.

She wasn't some delicate flower. She was an adult, a divorced one at that. Sleeping with a man wasn't the end of the world, but the key issue was...

How could it have been Keaton?!

They were best buds!

What the hell was this? How were they supposed to face each other now?

Extremely frustrated, Winona raked her hands through her hair, messing it up until she looked like a madwoman.

But then she remembered how calm Keaton had been, and she forced herself to cool down.

Why was he so calm?

No, that wasn't the point. The point was, if he could be so calm, why couldn't she?

So what if it was a drunken one-night stand? What's the big deal?

It's not like she was an eighteen-year-old virgin. She wasn't the one losing out here.

At least he was handsome, had a great body, good taste, and his skills in bed weren't half bad...

As for being friends... if it doesn't work out, then screw it!

Who needs it? Not me!

I'm better off on my own!

After successfully talking herself down, Winona glanced at the decorative clock on the wall. It was already past two in the afternoon.

That was one long sleep.

The used tissues and condom wrappers on the floor were an eyesore. She gathered them up and threw them in the trash.

After washing up in the bathroom, she opened the washer-dryer combo and pulled out her now-dry underwear to put on.

Then, wrapped in a robe, she went into Keaton's walk-in closet.

He said he didn't stay here often, but the closet was spotless with everything neatly arranged t

obvious someone came to clean regularly.

The wardrobe was full of clothes, all of them new-season designer brands.

Winona picked out a white short-sleeved shirt and a pair of casual pants.

The pants had a drawstring waist, so she could adjust them, but the legs were too long, so she cuffed them a few times.

Then she pulled on a light hoodie, rocking the full boyfriend look.

She was five-foot-seven, and Keaton was six-foot two. His clothes didn't fit her perfectly but the oversized style looked good on her.

Downstairs, Keaton was busy in the open-plan kitchen, dressed in a set of navy blue loungewear.

He was handsome and had a great physique. With an apron tied around his waist, accentuating his narrow waist and long legs, he looked like a scene straight out of a

romantic comedy. He was making a loving lunch for his lover where the billio

sweetheart.

Sensing movement by the stairs, he quickly looked up.

His throat tightened when he saw Winona coming down in his clothes.

Before, he'd always seen her as a star—beautiful, with a great figure, great style, and flawless skin.

But his thoughts were pure; he genuinely saw her as a friend.

Now, looking at her, his mind was flooded with images of her without these clothes on, writhing beneath him...

His throat tightened as he struggled to maintain his composure. Keaton wanted to look away, but he couldn't.

It was as if his eyes were glued to her.

It wasn't until a sizzling sound erupted from the pan that he snapped out of it,

fumbling to toss the contents and turn off the heat.

He quickly dumped the blackened, unidentifiable mess from the pan into the trash

can.

Then, trying to act composed, he said to Winona,

Chapter 1577

"Just a minute. I'll fry you a couple of eggs. We'll talk after you've had something to eat. Can't do this on an empty stomach."

He reached for the eggs, only to realize that the dozens of fresh eggs he'd just had delivered were all gone!

The pile of black stuff in the trash was the sum of his 'masterpieces.'

He wasn't much of a cook...

To be precise, it wasn't that he wasn't much of a cook, it was that he couldn't cook at all.

He'd never been in a kitchen before and had zero interest in it.

He was only attempting it today because of the special circumstances.

This place was far from the city, making food delivery difficult. And after their long night, Winona's energy was completely drained.

She hadn't eaten breakfast or lunch; she must be starving by now.

That's why he'd ventured into the kitchen, hoping to fry a couple of eggs to help her recover.

He had even looked up a tutorial video online. It looked so simple when other people did it.

Turn on the heat, add oil, crack the eggs...

He followed the steps, but not a single one turned out right.

It was a classic case of 'looks easy, fails hard.'

Keaton was mortified.

"...Fried eggs aren't that good anyway. How about some oatmeal? It's good for your stomach. I made you some."

He bent down to get a small bowl from the cabinet and went to serve Winona.

But as soon as he lifted the pot lid, Keaton froze. "!"

The 'oatmeal' in the pot was crystal clear; you could see right to the bottom.

He'd forgotten to add the oats.

He'd just boiled a pot of water.

Keaton: "..."

He was dying of embarrassment. He turned to Winona, looking like a big dog that

had just been caught doing something wrong.

"Maybe I should just take you out to eat?"

Winona caught her lower lip between her teeth. "....."

Keaton immediately said, "If you don't want to go out, I'll order delivery for you might just take

white, so you have to hang

bit

He frantically pulled out his phone to order, but Winona spoke up.

"Don't bother. I'm not hungry."

Keaton looked up. "It's the middle of the afternoon. You're not hungry?" "Nope, not hungry."

Winona walked down the rest of the

stairs. Under his gaze, she shoved her hands in her pockets and,

feigning composure headed for the entryway.

Seeing that she was about to leave, Keaton rushed over and grabbed her wrist. "Winona!"

Winona turned back. Seeing the hickey on his collarbone made her ears burn.

She quickly averted her eyes, pretending to be calm. "What is it?"

Keaton was half a head taller than her. He looked down at her, a look of complete helplessness on his face.

"Last night..."

Winona forced herself to say, "We're both adults. What happened last night is nothing to worry about."

Keaton: "..."

Winona continued, "It was just a drunken mistake. Don't take it seriously. It's already in the past."

Keaton studied her expression suspiciously. "You're not mad?"

Winona curved her red lips into a smile. "What's there to be mad about? It was mutual. It's not like you forced me. Are you mad?"

Keaton quickly shook his head. "I wouldn't dare..... I mean, no. I'm not mad."

"There you go," Winona said. "Now let go of me. I have things to do, I have to go."

Keaton didn't let go. He held her arm even tighter.

He was gripping her arm so tightly that the muscles in his forearm rippled with tension.

An image flashed through Winona's mind of last night, of him pinning her hands down, his body moving forcefully over hers...

The veins in his arms had been bulging just like that.

Winona's heart sped up. She swallowed discreetly and teased with a forced, lighthearted smile, "Keaton, why are you so uptight? This isn't like you. After all the women you've slept with you're really going to get hung up on a little drunken hookup?"

Keaton frowned, his expression serious. "You're different from them."

Chapter 1578

You're different from them...

Winona's heart skipped a beat.

She stared at him for a few seconds before her calm expression returned. "How am I different?"

Keaton's lips moved, but no sound came out.

Winona smiled, her tone gentle. "I'm just like them. There's no difference."

Keaton insisted, his brow furrowed, "You're not!"

Winona: "..."

After a moment of silence, Winona spoke again.

"As far as I'm concerned, what happened last night is over. I'm not going to dwell on

it. If you're thinking about taking responsibility for me, forget it. I don't need it. If you

want me to take responsibility for you, just tell me how."

Keaton looked down at her. "It's my responsibility."

Winona chuckled. "I told you, I don't need you to be responsible."

Keaton's voice was urgent. "From now on..."

Winona cut him off, her tone breezy. "It's up to you. If you want to stay friends, we

can still be good friends. We just have to forget about last night."

"If you think it's too awkward and you don't want to see me again, that's fine too. We

can go our separate ways and never look back. I'm okay with either."

Keaton's face darkened. Just as he was about to speak, his phone rang.

Winona forcefully pulled her arm from his grasp.

"Go answer your phone. I'm borrowing your clothes for now. I'll wash them and return them later. Oh, and let's keep this quiet."

With that, she put on her shoes, sunglasses, and a mask. She pulled the hood of the sweatshirt over her head, opened the door, and walked out.

Keaton stood there stunned for a long moment before finally chasing after her.

But outside the villa, there was no trace of Winona...

He went back inside, ignoring the incoming call from his mother to dial Winona first.

It went straight to voicemail.

He didn't know if her phone had died or if she had deliberately turned it off, but either way, he was in a foul mood.

Logically, Winona not making a big deal out of it was the best possible outcome, yet he didn't feel happy at all.

He couldn't quite name the feeling, but it was deeply unsettling.

It felt as if a huge chunk of his heart had been carved out...

His phone rang again. This time it was Booker Murphy.

Keaton answered. "What?!"

"Damn, what's with the attitude? Freaking out about the kid?"

"What kid?"

Booker yelled, "Don't you play dumb with me! My mom said you're pregnant!"

Keaton rolled his eyes. "Why didn't your mom say you were pregnant?"

Booker clarified, "No, my mom said your *girlfriend* is pregnant. Because of this my parents won't

stop nagging me, saying how they

wish could give them a surprise like that. They're so jealous of your

parents they could cry!"

"You used to be their favorite bad example, and now, what do you know, you're the

golden boy! They're telling me to learn from you!"

"Windham is getting an earful at

home to His parents told him if he doesn't produce a grandkid by next year, they're donating the entire Windham family fortune and not

leaving him a single cent!"

"You're a real piece of work, man. You didn't even give us a heads-up about something this huge. Are we even friends?"

Keaton was completely baffled. "What the hell are you rambling about?!"

Booker sounded offended. "You're unbelievable! We tell you all our secrets, but you

keep something as big as having a kid from us!"

"I'm not keeping anything from you!"

"Bullshit! The entire high society circle knows about it! And we're the last ones to find out!"

Keaton: "..."

His girlfriend was pregnant?

That could only mean Winona.

He always used protection with other girls. But last night, those two times downstairs with Winona, they been in such a rush that they hadn't had time to go upstairs for a condom. They'd just gone for it.

So, if anyone was pregnant with his child, it had to be Winona!

But they'd only slept together last night. There was no way she could be pregnant this fast!

A rumor. This was a pure, unadulterated rumor.

Keaton's face was grim. "Who the hell did you hear this from?"

Chapter 1579

So if anyone was pregnant with his baby, it had to be Winona!

But they'd only slept together last night. There was no way she could be pregnant this fast!

A rumor. This was a pure, unadulterated rumor.

Keaton's face was grim. "Who the hell did you hear this from?"

Booker replied, "I heard it from my mom. And my mom heard it from Mrs. Wallace!"

Keaton was stupefied. "Mrs. Wallace? I barely know her. How would she know if my girlfriend is pregnant or not?"

Booker said, "I don't know about that, but my mom said that after she heard it from Mrs. Wallace, she called your mom to ask. And your mom, she didn't admit it, but she didn't deny it either."

"The key thing is, there's hard evidence. Your mom's already started looking at high- end birthing centers. And based on the month she's booking for, it's definitely not for your sister."

Keaton: "..."

No wonder Richard Huber and his dear mother Janelle were so ecstatic last night, rolling out the red carpet and going to the family chapel to offer thanks.

And no wonder they were so furious later when he mentioned the possibility of breaking up with Winona!

They had misunderstood. They thought Winona was pregnant with his child!

To them, the 'possibility of breaking up' sounded like he didn't want the baby!

That's why Richard had gotten so angry he'd threatened to disown him on the spot, chasing him down as if he were a rebellious teenager again!

The realization hit Keaton with the force of a physical blow. He was speechless.

Booker yelled, "Say something! Don't just play mute!"

Keaton pressed his lips together. "Would you stop being such an idiot and believing every little thing you hear? It's a misunderstanding. My parents are just so desperate for a grandchild they've lost their minds."

Booker asked, "So it's not true?"

"No!"

Keaton hung up on Booker and immediately called Jessamine.

He had to clear this up and stop the rumor from spreading. Right now, it was just his girlfriend' who was pregnant. What if it eventually became Winora who was pregnant? What would that do to her?

She was a single, famous actress. A pregnancy rumor like this would be disastrous for her.

As soon as she answered, he asked, "Jessamine, I heard Mom's been looking at birthing centers?"

Jessamine didn't answer right away. After a pause, she whispered, "I was just with Mom. I was about to call you. You weren't answering your phone and you were driving Mon and Dad crazy!"

"They're saying Winona is pregnant, but that you don't really want the baby. What's going on?"

Keaton's head was spinning. "It's a rumor! Where did Mom and Dad even get this news?"

"Mrs. Wallace told them. She saw you two at that organic boutique bakery yesterday and even sent Mom a video."

"A bakery for pregnant women? Winona went there to buy you something because she thought you were at home!"

"But in the video, the staff called you a couple, and you didn't correct them. They mentioned Winona being in her early pregnancy, and you didn't correct them then either."

Keaton: "...It was all a misunderstanding. I swear, I'm not lying to you. Winona is not pregnant!"

Jessamine: "Are you sure?"

Keaton: "I'm positive!"

Jessamine's tone turned serious. "Then tell me the truth. Are you and Winona actually together or not?"

"We..."

He was about to say no, but then he remembered last night. Keaton scratched his head.

"Don't worry about us for now. The

point is, she's not pregnant! You

have to tell Mom and Dad right

away

hey have to

stop this rumor

from spreading. It could be really

damaging for Winona!"

The public often rushes to judgment. A pregnancy could be happy news, but Winona

was single. People would ask, who's the father?

Trolls would come out of the woodwork, accusing her of being promiscuous or

having an affair with a married man.

Either way, it would be bad for her.

Chapter 1580

Jessamine's tone was sharp.

"Mom and Dad didn't start the rumor, Mrs. Wallace did. She doesn't know the woman is Winona, so you don't have to worry about Winona's reputation."

"But Keaton, you know how much Mom and Dad want a grandchild. How can they handle this kind of emotional whiplash?"

"Mom was so excited she couldn't sleep all night! Dad was up before dawn, spending the entire morning in the family chapel in deep prayer."

"He was praying for you and Winona, praying that the baby in her womb would be healthy and safe!"

"They're in their fifties! This kind of stress is too much for their bodies!"

"Besides, several of their friends called Mom today to ask about it. Even though she didn't confirm it, they were already starting to congratulate her."

"Because of your chaotic private life, Mom and Dad have had to put up with a lot of mockery. Today, they finally felt proud for once. They were over the moon."

"And now you want me to tell them that Winona isn't pregnant, that there is no grandchild, that it was all just a big misunderstanding?"

"First of all, they have their pride. The 'big news' of a grandchild turning into a farce? They'll become the laughingstock of the entire social circle!"

"Especially Mom. She's already been looking at birthing centers. How is she supposed to face anyone after this?"

"You know how those social vultures are they'll tear Mom to pieces the moment they scent blood in the water. This will make her their new favorite joke."

"And second, Mom and Dad genuinely want a grandchild. Finding out the truth so suddenly... they'll be sick with disappointment!"

After her tirade, Jessamine added, "I know this isn't entirely your fault it was Mrs. Wallace's mistake-but you're responsible too. You were the one who started this whole charade with Winona, which made Mom and Dad misunderstand!"

"If you had kept your distance from Winona, and kept your other women away from her, then even if Mrs. Wallace had sent that video, they would have asked you what was going on first. They wouldn't have just believed it!"

"It's because they were already under the impression that you and Winona were together that they were so quick to believe she was pregnant!"

It seemed like Keaton had nothing to do with it, but in reality, he was at the center of it all.

If Janelle and Richard hadn't already

been

CouStaken about them being a

couple they never would have so easily believed that Winona was pregnant with Keaton's child.

It was Keaton who had told them he and Winona were secretly dating, and so... the misunderstanding had exploded.

Keaton's head was buzzing. "...I know I'm responsible. What do we do now? Winona really isn't pregnant!"

"How should I know? You're making me so angry, if you were here right now, I'd slap you!"

"Jess..."

Jessamine's heart softened. "You and your constant drama! We definitely have to tell Mom and Dad the truth, but we can't just drop it on them. We need to find the right time, the right words, or their health won't be able to take it."

Keaton let out a long breath. "You try to keep them calm for now. I'll think about how

to break it to them gently."

"Okay. And by the way, you'd better

start thinking about how you're

going to explain this to Winona. Regardless of the reason, being falsely accused to be pregnant when she finds out, she's going to take it all out on you."

"Right, right, I know."

Hanging up the phone, Keaton leaned back on the sofa and rubbed his temples.

He never imagined that his situation with Winona could spiral into this mess.

Before last night, there was nothing between them, and now a non-existent baby had already been rumored into existence.

The commotion was so huge that if he just came clean, his parents would become the laughingstock of their social circle.

Plus, their health couldn't take the shock. Fainting would be the least of his worries.

If something worse happened, he'd regret it for the rest of his life.

But the right time, the right words... that was going to be hard to find.

How could he tell the truth without humiliating his parents and without breaking their hearts?