

The IVF Secret That Shook a Dynasty

Chapter 1

“Vivica, let’s get a divorce.”

At the candlelit dinner for their fourth wedding anniversary, Fletcher Sanford arrived late and dropped a bombshell the moment he sat down.

Vivica Lynn felt like she’d been struck by lightning, staring at him in disbelief. “Why?”

Fletcher hesitated before answering. “Riley’s back. She needs me.”

“Riley Zuniga?” Vivica was bewildered. “Didn’t she get married? She has two kids, how could she...”

Riley, her husband’s one true love, had brutally dumped him five years ago, marrying a wealthy heir in a whirlwind and settling abroad. The breakup had left a wound in Fletcher’s heart that had never healed.

The three of them had been college friends. Just a couple of years ago, mutual friends mentioned that Riley had her second child. With a rich husband, a son and a daughter, and a life of luxury, she was the very picture of success.

So why was she suddenly back? And why was she seeking out the ex-boyfriend she’d thrown away?

Fletcher was surprisingly candid. “Riley’s ex-husband was abusive and had a drug problem. They divorced six months ago. He got the son, she got the daughter. Now she and her little girl are back, all alone in the world...”

“Six months ago?” The shock hit Vivica again, quickly followed by a bitter realization. “So you’ve been sneaking around behind my back for at least six months?”

“No, we’ve just been in touch. I haven’t cheated on you. You know... I’m not capable of it.”

Fletcher’s face flushed with embarrassment at the admission. His inability to be a real man was the greatest shame of his life.

Vivica pressed her lips together, a strange mix of emotions churning inside her. For years, her best friend, Quintina Christie, had been urging her to get a divorce. Not long after their wedding, Vivica had discovered that Fletcher, so young and vibrant, was impotent. After much persuasion, Fletcher finally agreed to a full medical check-up, and the results were even worse than she’d feared. On top of his impotence, he had azoospermia—he couldn’t produce sperm.

At the time, Fletcher's mother was gravely ill, her dying wish to hold a grandchild. To fulfill his duty as a filial son, he had begged Vivica to undergo IVF, using a sample from a sperm bank.

The pain and struggle of that time were memories Vivica preferred to bury. Now, years had passed, their son was almost three, and Fletcher's condition showed no signs of improving. Quintina, a doctor, knew it was incurable and had repeatedly advised her to reconsider the marriage. A young woman living a celibate life for decades—it was a long, torturous road.

But Fletcher was a good family man, devoted to her and their son, and she could never bring herself to take that final step. She never imagined he would be the one to ask for a divorce.

After a brief, searing recollection of years of quiet sacrifice, Vivica let out a derisive laugh. "And an emotional affair doesn't count as cheating?"

Fletcher didn't argue, his expression resolute. "You can name your terms for the divorce. The house, the cars, cash, even shares in the company—it's all on the table."

"No room for negotiation?" Vivica asked calmly.

Fletcher looked at her, seeming to sense her reluctance. A shameless idea crossed his mind. "Well, if you wouldn't mind me moving Riley and her daughter in with us, we could..."

He didn't finish. Vivica shot to her feet, grabbed her glass of red wine, and flung it squarely in his face.

"We'll get a divorce," she seethed. "We split the assets fifty-fifty, and I get our son."

Fletcher sat there, dripping and humiliated, his head bowed. But at her last words, his head snapped up. "Fifty-fifty is fine, but Chaim stays with me."

"Are you shameless, Fletcher?" Vivica's voice rose with fury. "I'm the one who went through hell to bring Chaim into this world!"

The agony of IVF was etched into her memory.

Fletcher's demeanor turned cold and clinical. "I've spoken to a lawyer. You're a stay-at-home mother with no independent income, which makes you unable to support a child. Furthermore, since he was conceived via a donor, and considering my own infertility, the court will likely grant me custody if this goes to trial."

Vivica's brow furrowed, and she stared at him as if he were a complete stranger. "So, you had this all planned out. You were just informing me tonight."

A chill spread through her chest. She couldn't believe the man she shared a bed with could be so calculating.

"Vivica, you're still young," Fletcher said, switching to a pitying tone. "You can remarry, have as many children as you want. I can't. Chaim is the only child I'll ever have."

"You're right, you 'can't'! You're sterile and impotent. You've lived this long without ever truly being with a woman—what on earth does Riley see in you?"

Her outburst drew glances from nearby tables, diners turning with curious expressions.

"I bet she just sees you as a walking ATM," Vivica added, her voice laced with scorn. "And she loves that you can't have your own kids, so you'll have to dote on her daughter."

"Riley doesn't know about any of that," Fletcher said flatly.

"Ha!" Vivica's laugh was even sharper this time. "So, it wasn't enough to lie to me, you have to lie to your precious true love, too? Suddenly, I feel a lot better."

Fletcher's face tightened with barely suppressed anger. "That's enough, Vivica! We were married. I provided for you. Can't we just end this amicably? What's the point of all this?"

"Oh, there's a point," Vivica shot back, her anger reaching its peak. She no longer cared about the audience they had attracted. "Chaim was conceived with donor sperm. Biologically, he has nothing to do with you. You want a child? Go ask Riley to figure out a way to give you one. But if you think you can take the son I worked so hard to bring into this world, you can go to hell!"