

Chapter 53 Isabel's Dazzling Confrontation

"Isabel? What brings you here?" Kaleb frowned, clearly taken aback.

Isabel was just as intrigued.

She couldn't remember Kaleb ever owning property in this neighborhood, but the way he and Eva were acting suggested that house number 91 was indeed theirs.

Suddenly, a realization dawned on her—Kaleb and Eva were set to marry soon. Was this house going to be their future residence?

That thought triggered a wave of self-mockery within Isabel.

Isabel, you've known Kaleb since childhood; you were once inseparable. He was once your whole world. And now, the contrast in how he treats you versus Eva is painfully apparent.

When it came to their future home, Kaleb had never even considered making alternative arrangements. Isabel had always believed that simply being able to marry him and support him for life was enough. Nothing else mattered to her.

And here he was, throwing money around to buy a house for Eva.

"If you can live here, then why can't I?" Isabel retorted, shooting Kaleb and Eva a contemptuous glare.

Kaleb felt an uncomfortable knot tighten in his stomach under her piercing gaze.

At that moment, Eva chimed in, "Isabel, I heard your family kicked you out. You wouldn't ... you wouldn't have turned to selling yourself, would you? Is someone keeping you as a mistress?"

Kaleb's eyes widened in shock, filled with a mixture of disgust and disbelief as he stared at Isabel.

He recalled seeing her at Albert's birthday bash, where all the city's elite gathered. She had been part of that crowd. He had fleetingly wondered if Isabel had climbed the social ladder, but it was just a passing thought.

He believed he knew her well. Sure, she had done many hurtful things to Eva because of her feelings for him, but he couldn't fathom her resorting to something like that. So, he hadn't pursued the suspicion further.

As for the man she had kissed that evening, Kaleb assumed he was merely a pawn she had hired to provoke him.

But now, with Isabel standing right there and Eva's insinuations hanging in the air ... Could it be true? Has Isabel really stooped so low as to sell herself, engaging in something so abhorrent?

"Eva, I realize I don't hear you say nice things ever. You think I'm someone's mistress? Did you witness it with your own eyes?"

Isabel, sharp as ever, could easily see that Eva was attempting to twist Kaleb's thoughts in this direction.

She had observed Eva's manipulative tactics countless times before.

"I-I was just guessing," Eva feigned a look of innocence.

"Guessing? Eva, do you understand that making unfounded assumptions can subject someone to relentless judgment?" Isabel's voice was icy and unwavering.

Eva's eyes turned red, tears threatening to spill over.

"I'm s-sorry! I didn't mean to, I ... " Her voice trembled, and she struggled to maintain composure as tears welled in her eyes.

"Enough!" Kaleb shouted, pulling Eva into his arms. His expression was filled with hostility as he glared at Isabel. "Isabel, you're as cruel as ever! Eva is only concerned about you. If you can't appreciate that, then why do you have to lash out at her? What happened to the kind person you used to be?"

Kaleb's low growl felt like a barrage of sharp knives aimed directly at Isabel.

"You're talking about the old me?" Isabel let out a bitter laugh, but her smile quickly faded, leaving her face cold and unyielding.

Her lips parted as she spoke with a chilling detachment.

"She's gone."

Those simple words hung in the air, heavy with meaning.

The atmosphere thickened with tension.

Kaleb stared at Isabel, his expression blank, experiencing a rush of emotions he couldn't quite articulate.

Eva noticed Kaleb's stunned gaze fixed on Isabel and felt a surge of bitterness and jealousy swell behind her tear-filled eyes. She quickly masked her feelings with another feigned look of sympathy directed at Isabel.

"Isabel, I'm truly sorry for what I did, but I can't help how I feel about Kaleb. I can't imagine life without him. I know that sounds selfish, but I sincerely wish you find someone more deserving of you in the future," Eva said, her words artfully crafted.

On the surface, it seemed like she was offering Isabel a blessing, but the underlying message was clear: she and Kaleb were meant to be together, not Isabel.

"Is that so? Well, thank you for your kind sentiments. Kaleb is right; you really are kind," Isabel replied, her smile superficial, lacking any warmth or sincerity.

Isabel's response caught Eva off guard, leaving her momentarily speechless.

If this were the past, Isabel would have certainly unleashed her anger, accusing Eva of being a master at pretending. In those days, Eva often provoked Isabel on purpose, pushing her to the brink in front of Kaleb.

This behavior gradually tarnished Isabel's reputation in Kaleb's eyes, eventually erasing any affection he had for her.

However, since that fateful day in the hospital when she had been ruthlessly drawn of blood, Isabel had undergone a complete transformation. She had morphed into someone unpredictable, leaving her feeling bewildered.

Just like those earlier words—completely out of the blue, catching her off guard.

Isabel hadn't even finished her thought when she said, "I heard you're getting married soon, on the 18th, at the same hotel where Kaleb and I held our wedding."

The moment Isabel spoke those words, Kaleb and Eva's expressions changed almost in unison.

"I truly wish you both the best. It's wonderful to see love flourish. That's why I've decided to attend your wedding and personally offer my blessings."

Kaleb narrowed his sharp gaze at Isabel. "What are you up to?"

"Kal, why are you so on edge? Didn't I just say I'll be there to wish you well?" Isabel mimicked Eva's earlier tone, putting on a show of deep hurt.

This version of Isabel was all too familiar to Kaleb; it was the old Isabel, the one who often revealed her vulnerable side to him, the one who would affectionately call him "Kal."

Eva was closely observing Kaleb, and at that moment, she detected a softening in his expression.

All along, Eva had lacked the advantage that Isabel possessed. Isabel had grown up alongside Kaleb; not only that, but she had once saved his life. Those were qualities Eva felt she could never match.

The more she pondered this, the stronger her sense of urgency became.

She had no choice but to resort to her last-ditch effort.

Eva glanced up at the sun overhead, then pretended to feel weak by closing her eyes. Following that, she began to sway, like leaves fluttering in autumn, as if she were about to crumple to the ground.

Just as she was about to fall, a loud "thud" startled her, causing her to freeze and look ahead.

There lay Isabel on the ground, who had fallen first.