

Once Cast 134

Chapter 134 In the Car

Zera had only just settled into her seat when her anger lashed out.

Her voice cut sharp through the air. "How could you even think something that cruel?"

Her tone swelled with heat and force. "You are not Orson's real father. You already claiming him is unfair to your wife. I've carried this guilt long enough. Don't push me any further, I beg you."

Tyrone's tight brows softened ever so slightly. Zera caught it, and she rushed to steer the talk away. Her voice lowered, almost pleading. "It's the holidays. The park is empty. Why not see it as a gift for Orson? Stay for a while. Watch fireworks with him."

Tyrone gave a short nod. Zera's chest loosened with relief.

The park was quiet and bare. The holiday crowds had gathered elsewhere.

The driver knelt with the child, helping him set off fireworks. Sparks burst into the air, cracking and scattering like stars.

Zera looked at Tyrone. His face showed no joy. Guilt crushed her.

Her voice quivered. "I'm sorry, Tyrone. Tonight is my fault."

The words tumbled from her mouth in a rush. "You stood against your grandfather and admitted Orson as your child. You carried the pressure, yet you never told your wife. I've been so grateful.

"I never thought he would cling to you like this. He looks at you like you're his whole world. He depends on you.

“He keeps begging for a father. Sometimes he cries until he won’t eat for a whole day. I’m worn down. I can’t take it anymore.

“If only I had refused when your grandfather tried to force me to marry. If only I hadn’t given in after years of pain. If only I hadn’t chosen to keep him. Then this boy wouldn’t have been born into suffering.”

Tyrone’s voice steadied, heavy with calm. “Zera, you are not to blame. You kept him because you’re kind. None of this is on you.”

He lifted his wrist, checked the time. “It’s late. I’ll take

you

home.”

The car rolled them to their building.

The vehicle stopped, but Zera didn’t move.

She tested the waters. “He’s asleep. I can’t carry him. Could you take us up?”

The driver acted first. He opened the rear door. “I’ll carry the boy.”

Her plan shattered. She bit her lip and stepped out herself.

Tyrone reached home past midnight. At this hour, Aella should have been asleep.

He entered the code; the lock clicked open. As the door opened, the elevator chimed behind him.

Brad’s voice rang out. “Don’t waste your time. She isn’t home.”

Tyrone turned, disbelief dark in his eyes.

He refused to accept it.

Aella had promised him she would not stay out late again after her previous stunt.

Brad stepped out of the elevator and strolled after him.

The apartment was still as stone. Tyrone pushed open the bedroom door. The bed was empty.

His throat tightened. He left the room, pulled out his phone, and called. Her phone was dead.

His voice went low and cold as he turned on Brad. "Where is she?"

She had promised. No late nights. No ignored calls. No shut-off phones.

And now, one day later, every promise lay broken.

Brad rolled his eyes. "Why rush? You just came back yourself."

Tyrone stormed toward the door.

Brad blocked him. "Relax. Sayer may be trash, but Daniel is with her. She's safe."

Tyrone shoved him away. His bandaged wrist flashed white in the dim light.

Brad's smirk faltered. His tone grew serious. "You're hurt?"

Tyrone stayed silent.

The pain wasn't only his wrist. His back throbbed with fire.

Aella knew. She hadn't cared about that at all.

He checked her secondary card. His teeth locked when he saw the record. She had blown more than two million tonight at the Regal Club. She had bought drinks for seven people.

Well, well, well.

Look at her.

Tyrone sank into the couch. He lit a cigarette. Smoke filled his lungs, bitter and hot.

Brad clapped his shoulder. His voice was blunt. "You can't keep everything for yourself and expect her to take it. She's blowing off steam. She's moving on. Why can't you?"

Tyrone's jaw flexed hard. "She isn't moving on. She's begging for trouble."

Brad sneered. "Then kill her. The Reids have no power. They can't stop you."

Tyrone's glare turned sharp as knives.

Brad leaned back with ease. "It's the holidays. You left your wife on the street to play house with that woman and her boy. You call that love?"

Tyrone's voice snapped like a whip. "Orson is just a kid. He called me dad without thinking. What was I supposed to do?"

His voice dropped lower, thick with strain. "Aella can't hide a secret. If I told her Orson isn't mine, my grandfather would know in days. If he knew, he would crush Zera and the boy harder than six years ago."

Brad shrugged. "Then stop faking it. If you'll play father, marry her. It'll look real."

Smoke curled around Tyrone's head. His chest felt heavy. He dragged hard on the cigarette. His voice came out rough. "I will never divorce Aella. Not for Zera. Not for anyone."