

## Once Cast 137

### Chapter 137 Morning—After Pills

“Mrs. Winter, take a bath first. I’ll tidy up in here.

“Mrs. Winter, no matter how angry you are, don’t punish yourself for someone else’s mistakes.”

Aella forced a blink.

Emma helped her out of bed; Aella’s legs trembled.

She lay in the tub for a long time.

It was the first time Tyrone had forced her.

He was relentless. Even when she cried and begged, he didn’t stop—like she’d committed some unforgivable crime.

When Emma finished cleaning the room and changing the sheets, she came to help Aella dress -and froze at the “marks” on Aella’s skin.

Once everything was in order, Aella lay back down. “Emma, please buy me a box of emergency contraception.”

Emma hesitated. “What if Mr. Tyrone finds out ... ?”

Aella told her Tyrone didn’t want a child and had reminded her to take it before he left. Only then did Emma dare go.

After Aella took the pill, sleep dragged her under.

Emma stood outside the bedroom door and didn't leave for a second.

Tyrone didn't come back that night.

At first light the next morning, he returned.

Emma hurried to meet him. "Mr. Tyrone, you're finally back."

Tyrone glanced toward the main bedroom, worry obvious in his eyes. "... Is she any better?"

Emma sighed. "Since yesterday noon, apart from taking the pill, Mrs. Winter hasn't had a drop to drink."

His brow slanted tight. "Pill?"

Seeing his face change, Emma ventured carefully. "Mr. Tyrone, didn't you remind Mrs. Winter to take the morning-after pill?"

His hands at his sides clenched. "It's fine here. You can go."

Emma hesitated. "I'm only a servant, but I watched you and Mrs. Winter grow up. Those pills are hard on the body. She's young, but not made of iron."

She added, "The grits I made are in the dining room. Please persuade her to eat a little."

After she left, Tyrone stood there, eyes shut against the fatigue.

She had always loved children.

After they married, because she wanted a baby, she'd tried to push it.

He'd once worried she was too young, too carefree, and made her take the pill.

Since then, every time he touched her, he handled the contraception himself.

Yesterday morning, in a rush of anger, he hadn't used anything.

She was furious with him—didn't want his child—so she'd taken the pill on her own.

He stood there a long while, then pushed into the bedroom.

The room was neat and spotless. Aella on the bed was unnaturally quiet.

He walked to the bedside.

She was turned away, curled under the covers.

Tyrone undid his suit buttons and sat on the edge of the bed.

One lying down, one sitting, backs almost touching. The huge room felt suffocatingly still.

In the end, he spoke first. "Emma cooked grits. Get up and have some."

Aella's lashes trembled against shut eyes. She didn't want to open them.

Tyrone rose, went down on one knee, and gently turned her toward him.

Her sleep strap had fallen aside; the bare skin exposed showed bruises in uneven shades of blue and purple.

The sight stopped him cold.

Yesterday morning, faced with her finality, he'd lost control.

He had never imagined they'd end up like this.

Never imagined he'd force a woman—let alone the girl—next—door who became his wife.

His eyes burned red at the corners. He looked away.

Kneeling there, he steadied himself for a long time before he could push the surge of emotion down.

He gently fixed the strap and helped her sit up.

He draped his suit jacket over her shoulders. "Aella, I know you're not asleep. Open your eyes."

From now on, he wouldn't let her run wild.

Boneless with exhaustion, Aella leaned against him and forced her eyes open.

One look and she shut them again.

He bent and carried her to the dining room.

He set her in a chair. She opened her eyes once more, propped against the backrest.

The table was laid with a full breakfast. She had no desire to take a single bite.

Tyrone tested the temperature of the grits, and lifted a spoon to her lips.

She didn't open her mouth. He set the spoon down and placed the plate in front of her.

His voice was flat, stripped of warmth. "Eat, then rest. Tomorrow night is Leadverse Group's annual gala. You're coming with me."

Aella's mouth tugged in a numb, joyless curve.

So the urgent push to feed her was just to make sure she'd be presentable for Leadverse's gala tomorrow night.