

Once Cast 160

Chapter 160 Garbage Goes in the Trash Can

Tyrone changed into his slippers, took Aella's bag off her shoulder, and led her into the bedroom, making her sit at the edge of the bed.

He bent down, gripping her shoulders tightly. "Aella, I know. You can't stand Zera—you don't want to see or even care to deal with her."

They locked eyes for a few seconds, each staying silent.

Tyrone asked, "Be honest. Why did you have her bring me the medicine and then take her to dinner with you?"

Aella pushed him away and stood up.

She faced Tyrone, her tone more serious than ever. "Tyrone, you're the one pretending not to see what's right in front of you. I'm helping you, and I know you realize it."

Tyrone grabbed her by the back of the neck, pulling her closer.

He looked into her eyes. "How many times do I have to tell you? I only protect her so my grandfather won't cause trouble for them. Other than that kid, there's nothing between us. Don't take what I said in front of Grandpa so seriously."

He tried hard to explain, but Aella just smiled.

She asked, "Tyrone, isn't it true you and Zera have a son? You two will be raising him together for the rest of your lives."

Aella said, "You'll do everything you can to take care of them. Everything you have belongs to them—your body, your life, your time, your money, even your energy. Why pretend otherwise?"

Aella said, "You're willing to defy your grandfather, disobey your parents, and betray your marriage for them. Even I envy the way you feel about Ms. Caldwell. Can you stop acting like you're so innocent?"

As she finished, they stared at each other in total silence.

The tension in the room was suffocating.

After a long while, Tyrone asked, "Then tell me—what do you want?"

Aella gave a bitter little laugh. "If I cross you, you threaten me. If it's worse, you send me to jail. What do you expect me to do? What could I ... even possibly do?"

There was nothing left in her smile but burned-out hope.

A sharp pain stabbed Tyrone's chest, and he stumbled back a couple steps.

He tried to say something, but nothing came out.

He'd used every trick to keep her by his side.

But all he ever wanted was to save their marriage. He never meant to hurt her.

Watching him suffer, Aella said, "Tyrone, I know you can't admit how you feel about Ms. Caldwell—or stand by them openly—because of your grandfather."

Before Tyrone could speak, Aella thumped her chest and promised, "Don't worry. Go ahead and be with her. I'll take all the heat if anything happens. You never have to step up. I'll be the bad guy. I'll never let the woman you love get hurt."

With that, she turned and went into the bathroom.

She lay in the tub, eyes closed, feeling nothing at all.

This ending isn't worthy of how hard I loved.

So if anyone should feel regret, it's not me.

I used to think Tyrone was my safe harbor, the only person I could

count on.

But now I know better.

My safe harbor can be music, travel, books, or my work—just not another person.

It doesn't matter anymore.

I can love and I can let go.

I'm done with this relationship.

In the other bathroom, Tyrone stood under the shower, feeling the cold water run down his body.

He braced his hands against the wall, his shoulders slumped and his head down, looking completely defeated.

She hates me now.

She hates the threats, the games, the betrayal.

He took a long time to pull himself together.

When he finally brought the gift to the bedroom, Aella was already in bed.

They exchanged a silent glance. Tyrone left the gift on the nightstand and got in bed without a word.

Aella could feel how restless he was.

She asked, "Where's the medicine I gave you today?"

Tyrone said, "I left it at the office."

Aella just said, "Oh," and put her phone down. She then told him, "Just take a sleeping pill and make do."

Tyrone was speechless.

He reached for the gift box and turned to face her.

Aella rolled over with her back to him. "I have to get up early. I'm going to sleep."

Tyrone just sat there, still holding the gift, staring at her back.

As her breathing grew steady, his face only got darker.

With a loud smack, Tyrone threw the gift onto the nightstand.

With her eyes closed, Aella reminded him, "Garbage goes in the trash. Emma's too old to keep cleaning up after you."

Tyrone had nothing left to say.

He didn't sleep at all that night. He just lay there, staring at the ceiling.