

## Once Cast 176

### Chapter 176

Aella rinsed the cup with hot water three times before finally feeling it was safe enough to use.

She raised it to her lips, ready to drink, when she caught Tyrone's dark eyes watching her. He slowly set his own glass down.

That simple motion made her uneasy.

By now, Zera should've already pushed all the blame on me.

But since coming home, Tyrone hasn't said a single word about it. He

even poured me some water himself.

Something is off.

Aella ignored her thirst and carefully placed the cup back down.

She forced herself to bear the dryness in her throat and went to shower. Tyrone didn't say a thing.

When she came out, the light in his study was still on.

Aella walked over to the minibar and stared at the water dispenser, hesitant. In the end, she didn't dare take a sip.

They weren't into sweet drinks, so the fridge only had milk and yogurt.

She grabbed an unopened bottle of milk. Just as she twisted off the cap, she heard footsteps behind her.

When she met Tyrone's steady gaze, she hesitated, then screwed the cap back on and put it down.

Without another word, she picked up her phone, texted Sayer, and waited near the door.

A few minutes later, Sayer arrived with two bottles of water.

Aella finally relaxed and drank half the bottle in one go.

That night, they lay in the same bed.

Tyrone's calm breathing was steady beside her. Aella didn't toss or turn, but sleep wouldn't come.

She'd made Zera try to drug him in front of all his friends, and it had failed.

Since coming home, and even lying here, he hadn't said a single word about it. He didn't even ask why.

The longer she thought about it, the stranger it seemed.

The next morning, Aella washed up and got ready for work.

Emma's voice came from the doorway. "Mr. and Mrs. Winter, breakfast is ready."

Tyrone was still in the walk-in closet, so Aella went to the dining room first.

She finished half a bowl of congee and got up to leave.

Just as she stepped out, Tyrone caught her wrist.

He turned to Emma. "You can go now."

Emma nodded, removed her apron, and left.

As soon as she was gone, Aella yanked her hand away. "Whatever it is, we'll talk tonight. I'm gonna be late."

Tyrone's gaze stayed calm and steady. "I already called in for you. You have the day off."

The moment she heard that, her temper flared. "You what? Who told you to do that without asking me?"

He just looked at her silently.

Their eyes met and suddenly, Aella felt dizzy.

Her knees weakened, and she grabbed the doorframe for balance as her body went numb.

Her gaze darted toward the table, where her half-finished congee sat. Shock filled her eyes as she turned to him. "Y—you actually..."

Tyrone stepped forward, catching her before she fell. "Now you'll understand what it feels like."

They stared at each other. Aella shoved him away and fumbled for her phone to call Brad.

Before she could even hit dial, Tyrone snatched it from her hand.

This time, anger flashed in his eyes.

As the drug started to take hold, Aella clutched his collar, her voice trembling. "Take me to the hospital! Please!"

He set her phone high up on the shelf, out of reach.

Supporting her as her strength faded, he spoke calmly, almost coldly, "That stuff you used—it's new. There's no antidote. Even if I took you to a hospital, they couldn't help."

Tears filled her eyes. She was furious and completely helpless.

She'd been careful, but somehow still ended up trapped by her own trick.

Watching her fight against the drug, Tyrone said quietly, "If you need help, all you have to do is ask."

Before he could finish, Aella bit his arm hard.

He didn't fight back. He just held her until she had no strength left and went limp. Then he lifted her in his arms and carried her away.

A few hours later, Aella slowly woke up.

Tyrone stood by the bed, already dressed, while she lay there, too weak to even curse him.

He leaned down and pulled the blanket up around her. "Lunch is in the kitchen. I have to go to the office. Get some rest."

He looked sharp in his expensive suit, speaking gently, like he hadn't just gone wild in bed a few hours ago.

Exhausted and angry, Aella shut her eyes without replying.

Tyrone watched her for a moment before leaving the room.

As soon as the door closed, she opened her eyes again.

She leaned over and knocked over the trash can beside the bed.

After counting the used condoms and wrappers inside, her expression eased a little.

Tyrone already has a son with Zera, so he won't want me pregnant.

But what if he wants to use a kid to tie me down?

Tyrone is sharp and unpredictable. I have to stay cautious.

"If you're that worried, just take the pill."

His voice came from the doorway. Tyrone walked in holding a glass of water. He tore open a pack of birth control pills right in front of her and handed one over.