

# Once Cast-Off Wife, Now Untouchable Queen

[ 773 words ]

Once Cast Off Wife. Now Untouchable Queen

Chapter 80 Juneteenth Dinner

Aella couldn't stay quiet any longer after overhearing Tyrone talking to her parents.

+8 Pearls

She marched up to him, her expression cold. "You already got the divorce papers. You and Zera are basically living together. Keep pushing me, and I'll make your scandal public!"

Tyrone didn't flinch. "Today is Juneteenth. Grandpa asked me to bring you to the Winter Estate."

"That's not happening," Aella shot back.

He stayed calm. "Aella, you've got two choices—come with me to the Winter Estate, or I'll reserve a table so both our families will have dinner together."

"Spend Juneteenth with you guys? Forget it!"

Clyde stormed out of the room, grabbed a small stool, and charged at Tyrone.

Aella and her parents quickly stopped him before it got out of hand.

She turned to Tyrone. "Just leave. I'll go to the Winter Estate tonight."

Her family would never have peace while things with him were unsettled, and she needed to speak to the Winters as well.

Seeing her back down, Tyrone left the Reid Residence to avoid more conflict.

After he was gone, the Reids had no mood for the holiday.

By lunchtime, Aella noticed her parents' worried, downcast faces and didn't know how to comfort them.

That evening, Tyrone called, asking her to come downstairs.

The black Bentley was freezing. Aella tugged at her sleeves as soon as she got in.

“Too cold in here?” Tyrone asked, leaning closer.

She turned away in silence.

He grabbed a thin blanket to wrap around her, but she pulled it off in disgust.

Tyrone’s expression darkened. He tried again. Before she could yank it off, he pulled her into his arms with the blanket.

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**12:53 Thu, Oct 9 a**

Chapter 80 Juneteenth Dinner

“Let me go, Tyrone!” Aella snapped, struggling.

He held her tighter, locking eyes with her. “No married couple acts like us!”

Intimacy was out of the question. Even a simple hug from him made her recoil now.

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+8 Pearls

She broke free and yanked off the blanket. “You’ve been in love with your first love the whole three years of our marriage. Even before the divorce, you openly kept her and her kid around, giving them all your trust and affection. You let them keep provoking me. I’ve already been more than patient with you!”

Tyrone stared at her, stunned. “Aella, do you truly have to see it that way?”

She looked out the window. “You said something right in Zera’s ward.”

“What did I say?” he asked, frowning.

Aella replied, “If you’ve got nothing to say, just shut it.”

The air in the car was thick with tension.

For the rest of the ride, neither of them said a word.

By nightfall, the car finally pulled up to the Winter Estate.

A servant opened the door, and Aella stepped out.

Raine ran over excitedly. "Aella! I was so afraid you wouldn't come back!"

Virginia took Aella's hand and led her inside. "Aella, I had the chef steam some fish for you. Eat more later."

Tyrone followed silently, watching as his mother and sister each took one of Aella's arms and led her into the dining room. His expression flickered with mixed emotions.

Aella greeted everyone politely, keeping her manners even though Tyrone had betrayed her and their divorce was ongoing.

The table was filled with food, but she couldn't eat a bite.

She'd come back for Juneteenth with her parents. But now, her brother was injured, and her parents were worried.

She figured her parents were probably at home, too anxious about her to even eat.

Virginia kept filling her plate, and Aella thanked her automatically. Tyrone noticed everything.

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Chapter 80 Juneteenth Dinner

He handed her a bowl of soup, lifting the lid to check the temperature. "It's mushroom soup. Mom had the chef make it just for you."

Aella lowered her head, staring into her soup.

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+8 Pearls

your favorite

She couldn't stop thinking about Tyrone softly feeding grits to Zera at the hospital. Her stomach churned.

Fighting the nausea, she stood. "I need to use the bathroom."

She then left the dining room.

As soon as she was gone, Ralph snapped, “She comes home with a sour face and no manners!”

Virginia looked at Tyrone. “What’s going on with you and Aella?”

Tyrone stayed calm. “Don’t worry. We’re fine.”

Edwin snorted but stayed quiet.

Tyrone hesitated, then left the dining room.

After he left, Raine finally spoke up. “He tried to serve Aella food, but she didn’t touch a thing.”

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[ 789 words ]

Chapter 81 I Want a Divorce

+8 Pearls

She then added, “I just counted. Tyrone’s had seven drinks and hasn’t touched any food.”

Edwin got up, and Justin hurried to help him.

Aella stepped out of the bathroom and saw everyone gathered in the living room.

She hesitated for a moment, then walked over. “Edwin, Ralph, Virginia, I need to talk to you.”

Tyrone’s gaze sharpened as he grabbed her wrist. “This is between me and Aella. We’re leaving.”

She struggled to pull away.

After what happened with Clyde’s wrist, Tyrone was scared of hurting her, so he let go quickly.

She faced Edwin. "I've already hired a lawyer. The divorce process has started."

Everyone froze.

Ralph shot his son a glare, then turned on Aella. "If it weren't for Tyrone, you would've been finished when your family went bankrupt. If you want a divorce, you'll leave with nothing. Don't even think about taking a cent from us!"

Virginia sat on the couch, sighing over and over.

Tyrone stepped forward and held Aella's shoulders. His voice softened as he looked at her. "It's Juneteenth. Let's let them rest tonight. Whatever you want to say, we can talk tomorrow."

She shook her head. "No. I don't want to wait. I want a divorce now!"

They stared at each other. Tyrone's hands tightened on her shoulders unconsciously.

Aella broke free, scanning the Winters' faces. "After my family went bankrupt, Tyrone paid for everything. I've already given back one billion dollars to him. If we divorce, I'll take nothing. I won't take a single penny from the Winters."

Tyrone's eyes were bloodshot, probably from drinking, maybe from anger. He looked intimidating.

He tried to stop her, but she dodged. "We've known each other since we were kids. I want a peaceful end. But if you try to control me, I'll burn everything—ruin you, the woman you love, and both your reputations!"

When she tossed her wedding ring aside, Tyrone realized she was serious about the divorce.

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12:53 Thu, Oct 9

Chapter 811 Want a Divorce

He wanted to say something, but he couldn't.

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+8 Pearls

Aella glanced at Tyrone, then addressed Edwin and Ralph formally. "Mr. Edwin, Mr. Ralph, you know the situation. I have proof Tyrone cheated. If this goes to court, the

scandal will be public. You know what's at stake. Give me a clear answer by next Monday, or I'll see you in court."

With that, she left without looking back.

Tyrone chased her down the garden path to the front gate.

Before she could react, he scooped her up, shoved her into the car, and told the driver to *go*.

"Where are you taking me?!" Aella yelled, struggling.

His eyes were red, and he held her tightly. "Somewhere you can calm down."

Late at night, at Bluehaven Residences.

Tyrone had only recently moved into his new place.

He didn't give her a chance to escape and carried her straight into the bedroom.

By the time she realized it, he had her pinned to the bed, her hands held above her head.

Aella lay on her back in an embarrassing, suggestive position, her cheeks burning with anger. "Let me go, Tyrone!"

He held her wrists with one hand and gripped her waist with the other.

Maybe it was the alcohol, maybe something else, but his eyes were blazing.

He stared down at Aella, seeing the fury in her eyes. Their eyes locked, and the heat between them intensified.

His breaths grew heavier, and he leaned closer without thinking.

As their breaths mingled, Aella turned her head away.

He grazed her jaw with a soft kiss, but she fought back, biting his shoulder hard.

Tyrone winced from the pain, but he didn't let go.

A flicker of desire flashed in his eyes as he spoke quietly, testing her. "Don't leave tonight. I'll run a bath for you."

Aella could tell he'd had too much to drink.

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Chapter 81! Want a Divorce

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+8 Pearls

Whether he was truly drunk or just acting, she couldn't stay. "Tyrone, what about Zera? Aren't you worried about hurting her if you do this?"

Feeling her resistance, he slowly pulled back.

Aella seized the moment, rolling off the bed to put distance between them.

As soon as she mentioned Zera, he stopped moving entirely.

Suppressing her emotions, she headed toward the door.

In the living room, Tyrone blocked her way. "It's Juneteenth. You brought up divorce in front of the elders. Do you think that's appropriate?"

His calm, accusing tone made her blood boil.

She snapped back, "You cheated, had a kid, and you don't even think that's wrong! Why shouldn't I talk about divorce?"

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

[ 987 words ]

Chapter 82 The Woman He Protected

When Tyrone heard Zera and her kid mentioned, he frowned.

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+8 Pearls

He spoke again, this time clearly more irritated. "I'm done explaining things about Zera and her kid. If you want to fight with me, go ahead. But today's the Juneteenth. I don't want the whole family walking on eggshells because of us."

Aella stepped back, staring at Tyrone like she didn't even know him. "You hurt my brother for the woman you love. His wrist was hurting so bad he couldn't sleep all night. My parents, at their age,

had to take turns getting up to look after him. When I left this morning, the whole house was cold and quiet, no one even cared it was a holiday."

Aella's heart ached for her family, her eyes welling up. "You know today's the Juneteenth. You want your grandpa and your parents to enjoy it in peace."

Then she raised her voice at him, "So your family matters, but mine doesn't? Aren't my parents human too?"

Tyrone grabbed Aella's arm and pulled her closer.

He reached up to wipe away her tears. "So just because of this, you're gonna make a scene in front of my family and threaten to ruin me?"

Aella pushed him away in disgust. "How many times do I have to say it? This isn't about being petty or dramatic. I'm serious, Tyrone. I want a divorce."

Their eyes locked. Aella was crying out of anger now.

Tyrone stared at her in silence for a long moment. Then he grabbed her wrist again and pulled her into the study.

He opened a drawer and pulled out the divorce papers—and a bank card.

Right in front of her, Tyrone fed the divorce papers into the shredder, watching them turn into strips.

Then he held out the card to Aella and said, "I'm not denying Zera and her kid exist. And yeah, I used some of our shared money to help them. But it was just me trying to take care of them. That's it."

Aella refused to take the card. "Tyrone, stop lying to yourself. If you and Zera were just 'taking care of each other,' then what—your kid popped out of a rock?"

Tyrone didn't respond. Instead, he shoved the bank card with a billion dollars into Aella's pocket.

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Chapter 82 The Woman He Protected

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+8 Pearls

He changed the subject. “Zera and her kid stayed in our home, I know you hated that, so I moved out. From now on, we’ll live here instead.”

Aella’s face stayed cold as she refused him. “Tyrone, the only reason I haven’t exposed your scandal is out of respect for your mom, she’s treated me like her own daughter for over 20 years. But if you keep pushing me, don’t blame me when I burn everything down.”

Tyrone locked eyes with her and spoke slowly, enunciating each word. “Aella, I know you’re angry. I know it’s hard to accept Zera and her son right now. You can move out, take time to cool off, focus on your own career if you want, but I won’t divorce you.”

When Aella stayed silent, Tyrone stepped forward and gently grabbed her wrist.

This time, his voice softened without him realizing. “There’s still half a year left until the end of the year. You can take your time to think. If you come home, I’ll find a way to get your mom’s jewelry back. And that billion dollars, it’s yours.”

Aella didn’t hesitate. “Tyrone, you know me. Even if it’s something I once loved, if it’s been tainted, I’ll throw it away. And that goes double for a man who doesn’t love me, who betrayed me, who’s dirty from the inside out.”

With that, she pushed Tyrone aside and turned to leave.

The door swung open and she almost bumped into Brad.

Aella didn’t stop to greet him. She walked straight out.

Brad blocked Tyrone, who had chased after her to the door. “Another fight?”

Tyrone paused when he saw Brad. “She’s still furious. I don’t feel right letting her go back alone. Can you take her home?”

Brad gave a quick “Yeah,” then turned and ran after Aella, slipping into the elevator just before it closed.

At the entrance to the complex, Brad sweet-talked and half-dragged Aella into his car.

Brad kept sneaking glances at her. "Come on, tell me, what kind of crap did he pull this time to piss you off like that?"

Aella sat in the passenger seat of Brad's convertible, her gaze drifting off into the distance.

She asked quietly, "Brad, we've basically grown up together for over 20 years. Would you ever lay a hand on my brother just because of something a woman said?"

Brad pursed his lips. "Uh... Aella, how about we change the subject?"

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Chapter 82 The Woman He Protected

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+8 Pearls

Aella turned to glance at him, a bitter smile tugged at the corner of her mouth.

Then she asked, "Brad, would you give the woman you love the world... and give your childhood friend-turned-wife nothing but silent treatment?"

Brad didn't say a word.

Aella leaned her head back slightly, holding back tears. "Tyrone and I grew up together too. Over 20 years. We've been married for three. I thought even if he didn't love me, we'd still have that history between us."

She looked at Brad again, smiling through her tears. "I was wrong."

Aella said quietly, "If I'd known it would end like this, maybe I should've married you instead. At least then I wouldn't be in this mess."

Brad was stunned, totally caught off guard by what she said. "Aella, what if ... what if Tyrone had his reasons?"

Aella shook her head. "Unless he wants to, no one can make that decision for him."

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Chapter 83 Still His Wife

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+8 Pearis

Aella spoke again, desperation creeping into her voice. “Brad, please ... talk to him for me. Help me convince him to divorce me. I can’t take this anymore.”

Brad’s expression gradually shifted to concern. “Aella, you know what Tyrone’s like and how stubborn he is. If he says no, even the best divorce lawyers in the country might not be able to make it happen.”

Aella’s voice was calm, almost too calm. “If I can’t get out, I’ll just kill myself.”

Brad made sure Aella got home safely, then turned around and headed back to Tyrone’s place.

In the study, Tyrone handed Brad a glass of whiskey.

The two stood side by side in front of the floor-to-ceiling window. Brad broke the silence. “Wanna know what she and I talked about?”

Tyrone glanced at him sideways. “She asked you to talk me into a divorce.”

Brad smirked. “You’re only half right.”

Tyrone tilted his head back and downed the entire glass in one go.

His long fingers toyed with the empty glass, his voice unreadable. “Put Zera and her kid aside for a second, there’s nothing broken in my marriage with Aella.”

Brad shot him a look full of disbelief. “Zera and her kid are the crack, Tyrone. And it’s not a small one, it’s the size of a canyon. Are you sure you can keep this from falling apart?”

Tyrone turned around and sank onto the couch, pouring himself another drink.

“Aella’s always relied on me since we were kids. She just needs time to cool off, she’ll come around,” he said.

Brad sat across from him. “She has come around. Tonight she told me if she’d known you’d treat her like this, she would’ve married me instead.”

Tyrone froze, the glass halfway to his lips.

Brad sighed and tried to reason with him. “Tyrone, Aella’s been tagging along behind us since we were kids. She went from this sweet, carefree little girl to a beautiful woman, and in the end, you married her. She’s been in love with you for over 20 years, always by your side. You had no right to hurt her like this over that woman Zera, and then treat her with that cold, silent cruelty on top of it.”

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**12:54 Thu, Oct 9**

Chapter 83 Still His Wife

Tyrone narrowed his

eyes.

“She told

you

all that?”

Brad replied calmly, “That wasn’t even the half of it.”

The two men locked eyes. Brad’s expression turned serious. “She said if she can’t divorce, she’ll kill herself.”

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(77)

48 Pearls

Tyrone’s face went stiff.

He looked away, set his glass down, and tried several times before finally shaking a cigarette out of the pack.

A thin trail of smoke curled upward, blurring his view.

He spoke quietly. "When I married her, I weighed the pros and cons. But these past three years, I've done my best for her and for her family. Whatever she wanted, I gave. I don't have any vices, and I've never tried to control her. I honestly thought she was living better than most women."

He paused. "With the whole Zera situation, yeah, I crossed a line. But it's not nearly as bad as Aella's making it out to be."

Brad shot him a look like he was seeing a ghost. "Not bad? What, you need Aella to die in front of you before you get how serious this is?"

Tyrone lowered his head. "She won't."

She was too devoted to her parents. Even for Clyde's sake, she'd stay alive.

Brad, speechless for once, just stared at him in disbelief before storming out.

Late that night, Tyrone lay on his side in bed, reaching out to the empty space beside him.

A dull ache in his shoulder reminded him that Aella had been there not long ago.

The next morning, Aella went out to buy antibiotics for Clyde and ran into Zera by surprise.

Zera strutted in heels, wearing a skintight dress and flawless makeup, looking nothing like someone who'd just been hit by a car.

When she saw Aella, she walked right up to her. "Ms. Reid, how's your brother? Feeling any better?"

Aella glanced at her but said nothing.

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Chapter 83 Still His Wife

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+8 Pearls

When Zera didn't get a response, she turned and walked to a counter where she casually bought two boxes of condoms.

Outside the pharmacy, she caught up to Aella and pulled one of the boxes from her bag, holding it out.

With an innocent tone, she said, "You and Tyrone haven't seen each other in a while. I figured you might need these."

Aella's eyes slowly moved from the box in Zera's hand up to her face, right into that smug, deliberately provocative look.

Aella's lips curved into a cold smile, then suddenly, smack! She slapped Zera hard across the face.

The slap rang out sharp and clear. The box slipped from Zera's hand and hit the ground.

Aella's voice was icy. "Zera, last I checked, Tyrone and I are still legally married. If you think provoking me will get you anywhere, you're badly mistaken."

Zera held her cheek, struggling to keep her composure. "If I tell Tyrone you hit me, he won't let you off easy."

Aella picked up her phone. "Want me to call him right now and have him come over?"

Zera's eyes flicked to the small box lying on the ground. For just a second, panic flashed behind her calm facade.

She tried to recover, putting on a sweet voice. "Ms. Reid, I was just trying to be thoughtful. Since Tyrone's been spending most of his time at my place since I got back to the country, I figured it's been a while for you two. If he sleeps with you now and then just to keep you calm, I totally get it. I wouldn't be jealous over something like that."

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[ 1,006 words ]

## Once Cast Off Wife, Now Untouchable Queen

### Chapter 84 The Divorce Meeting

+8 Pearls

Just as Aella was about to walk away, Zera spoke up again. “Tyrone promised me he’d never let you get pregnant with his child. That’s why I figured you might need the box, I thought I was doing you a favor.”

Aella turned back and said, deliberately provoking her, “He did pin me down in bed last night, but he didn’t use that. I even told him to divorce me and make things official with you and your kid, but he flat-out refused. Maybe try whispering a little harder in his ear, get him to hurry up and divorce me so you can finally move up in the world.”

Jealousy flashed in Zera’s eyes. “Ms. Reid, you don’t need to get under my skin. Tyrone’s only holding off on the divorce for the bigger picture. We love each other. We understand each other. For Tyrone, my son and I are willing to go our whole lives without a title.”

Just then, a line of sleek black cars pulled up to the curb.

Aella’s brow furrowed when she saw Tyrone step out of one.

Zera quickly bent down to grab the box off the ground and stuffed it back into her bag. She smiled and walked up to him. “Tyrone, what are you doing here?”

Tyrone’s eyes locked on the clear handprint across Zera’s cheek. He stared for a few seconds, then said flatly, “I came to pick up my wife.”

Behind him, a car window slowly rolled down.

Zera caught a glimpse of Virginia sitting inside and instantly panicked.

Flustered, she rushed to explain herself. “Tyrone, I just came to grab some medicine and ran into your wife. I only said hello, that’s all.”

Without waiting for a response, Zera made up an excuse and hurried off.

Tyrone walked up to Aella, watching her face closely. “My parents are here. They want to meet with yours.”

Aella’s eyes followed Zera’s fleeing figure. “You’re not even gonna ask who slapped her?”

Tyrone frowned. “Aella, I’m talking about us.”

Aella didn't hesitate. "If this is about the divorce, save it. If you agree, we can go sign the papers right now. If not, I'll see you in court."

Tyrone's expression darkened. He lowered his voice. "My grandpa's here too, you know how he

is."

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12:54 **Thu, Oct 9**

Chapter 84 The Divorce Meeting

**77**

+8 Pearls

Aella lowered her gaze.

Winter Group was a publicly listed company, and her marriage to Tyrone had been officially announced.

Now that she was moving forward with legal divorce proceedings, Tyrone's cheating scandal would inevitably come to light.

Edwin, who cared deeply about the Winters' reputation and the future of Winter Group, would definitely step in and try to stop it.

It was clear now, there was no avoiding this meeting between the two families.

Aella knew Edwin and Ralph weren't coming with good intentions, so she quickly called Warren.

Ten minutes later, Aella opened the door and let the Winters into her home.

Their 3,000-square-foot government resettlement apartment felt cramped the moment the Winters stepped into the living room.

Miriam gently patted Aella's shoulder in reassurance, while Warren invited the Winters' elders to take a seat.

Tyrone walked straight over to Clyde, his eyes landing on Clyde's left wrist. "How's it healing? Do you need to go back for a check-up?"

Clyde shot Tyrone a hostile look and instinctively reached for a small stool, but Aella stopped him.

She pushed Clyde back toward his room. "They're here to talk about the divorce. Just stay in your room and let us handle it."

Clyde gave a small nod, holding back his emotions.

Aella closed the door behind her, gave Tyrone a quick glance at the doorway, and then turned toward the living room.

Tyrone's eyes stayed locked on her back, his expression unreadable. Silently, he followed her into the room.

In the small living room, the two families sat across from each other.

Aella sat next to Miriam, while Tyrone took the single armchair beside her.

Edwin gave Virginia a look, and she took the hint to speak. "We're here today to talk about the

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Chapter 84 The Divorce Meeting

divorce between our two kids."

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+8 Pearls

She hesitated, then forced herself to keep going. "Our families go way back. Tyrone and Aella grew up together, they've shared so many years and so much history. It would be a real shame for it to end like this."

She gave a polite, strained smile. "We didn't raise our son right, and Aella's the one who suffered for it. So we're here to apologize, sincerely. But more than anything, we wanted to hear what you think, and maybe ask if Aella could give Tyrone one more chance."

Miriam glanced at Aella beside her, then answered without hesitation. "No need to try. We fully support Aella's decision to divorce."

The moment those words left her mouth, every elder from the Winters' side looked visibly displeased.

Tyrone stayed quiet, his deep eyes locked on Aella's face, studying her reaction.

Aella sat still beside Miriam, silent and staring down at her lap.

If Virginia had come alone, maybe Aella would've believed they were here to make peace.

But Ralph and Edwin showing up? That was never a good sign.

Sure enough, Ralph's tone turned harsh as soon as he opened his mouth. "Back when your family went bankrupt, if my son hadn't stepped in, no matter how many kids you sold off, you still wouldn't have cleared that debt."

Aella couldn't take it and she stood up abruptly, but Miriam quickly pulled her back down.

Ralph kept going. "A fallen heiress marrying into the Winters? You don't actually think that wasn't marrying up, do you?"

Warren suddenly stood up, eyes blazing. "Sure, Aella marrying into the Winters was marrying up, but don't get it twisted. We didn't beg you to take our daughter!"

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[ 1,026 words ]

Chapter 85 Three Years, Not for Free

+8 Pearls.

Ralph scoffed. "If you know she married up, then she should learn to be grateful!"

Miriam shot back without missing a beat. "I don't care if the Winters are the richest family in Vleka. We're not letting our daughter stay in a marriage where she's treated like this. This divorce is happening no matter what."

Ralph's eyes flared with anger. "Since it's you people asking for the divorce, then she leaves with nothing!"

Aella looked up, and her eyes met Tyrone's deep, unreadable gaze.

Twenty years of growing up together. Three years of marriage. And now, he just sat there in silence, letting his family insult her and humiliate her parents.

A bitter smile tugged at her lips. It was getting hard to breathe.

She slowly stood and faced the Winters' elders.

"Mr. Ralph, whatever money the Reids owed the Winters, your son already calculated it. We've

we'll pay

the debt back prepared one billion. As long as he's willing to sign the divorce papers, immediately," she said, voice steady.

Tyrone remained seated. He didn't speak, didn't move, just kept his eyes fixed on her.

The air in the living room felt suffocating.

After a few tense seconds, Edwin gave a glance to the butler.

The butler stepped forward and placed a file of documents on the coffee table.

Finally, Edwin spoke. "I had someone go through all of Tyrone's financial records from the past three years. The money he spent on the Reids goes far beyond that one billion."

Warren and Miriam exchanged a glance. Without a word, Miriam got up and walked into the bedroom.

Aella immediately understood what they were doing. With tears brimming in her eyes, she pulled out the bank card Tyrone had slipped into her pocket the night before.

"If you've already checked the accounts, then you must know the exact amount," she said quietly.

Edwin's face hardened. "You want a divorce? Fine. I won't stop you. 1.45 billion principal, with interest, makes it 1.5 billion. Pay that back, then Tyrone can sign the divorce papers."

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12:54 Thu, **Oct 9**

## Chapter 85 Three Years, Not for Free

+8 Pearls

Aella's mind went completely blank. It hit her like a thunderclap, and her knees nearly gave out.

Miriam's set of jewelry had sold for exactly 1.5 billion dollars.

But if they handed all of it over to the Winters, not only would Warren and Miriam lose their financial security for retirement, Clyde's education would also be put on hold.

Tyrone reacted quickly, catching Aella before she collapsed.

His eyes, heavy with emotion, locked onto her pale face. His voice was low and hoarse as he softly called her name. "Aella ..."

He reached out to pull her into his arms, but Warren shoved him away and helped Aella sit down on the couch.

Aella looked up and saw Miriam walking out of the bedroom holding the bank card. Guilt washed over her and she lowered her head.

She had gotten involved with someone she never should've gone near—and dragged Warren, Miriam, and Clyde down with her.

Miriam took the card from Aella's hand and set it firmly on the coffee table. "We'll pay the money, write up a receipt. You can take both cards and leave," she said.

Edwin slowly stood up with the help of his butler. "Since your minds are made up, then there's no point in further discussion. The divorce can happen, but every bit of the fallout, the Reids will take full responsibility."

In other words, if Aella wanted the divorce, the Reids would have to return every cent exactly as it came.

To protect Tyrone's reputation, Aella would be the scapegoat—the problem, the headline, the one dragged through the mud.

Warren's face darkened, seething with rage. "You're going too far."

Miriam looked at Aella with pain in her eyes, tears threatening to fall.

Aella, her eyes red, tried to comfort them. "Dad, Mom ... as long as I can get out of this marriage, I'll do whatever it takes."

Tyrone turned his head away, staring off into the distance, his chest tight and heavy.

Edwin spoke again. "Next month, Winter Group has a hundred-billion-dollar signing ceremony with Leadverse Group. After that, I'll personally arrange the legal process for their divorce."

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12:54 Thu, **Oct 9**

Chapter 85 Three Years, Not for Free

He looked over at Ralph.

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Ralph immediately pulled out pen and paper and started writing up the receipt.

The butler stepped forward to collect the bank card.

Just as he handed it over to Ralph, Aella suddenly reached out and snatched it back.

Every pair of eyes in the room shifted to her.

Edwin narrowed his eyes. "What now? Having second thoughts?"

Aella shot him a glance, then turned to face Tyrone directly.

77

+8 Pearls

Something flickered in Tyrone's usually unreadable gaze. He stepped toward her, gripping her arm firmly.

Three years of marriage—he knew she couldn't bear to leave him.

But Aella looked straight into his eyes and spoke slowly, clearly, "I'll repay the principal, but not a dime of interest."

Tyrone's expression, which had just softened, froze.

Ralph scoffed, cutting in. "Do you have any idea how much 1.5 billion could've earned in Tyrone's hands over three years? We're only asking for a symbolic amount in interest, just a few tens of millions. If we calculated the real figure, your family couldn't afford it."

Aella ignored him completely.

Her eyes were red, tears threatening to spill as she stared at Tyrone.

No matter what, she had to protect Clyde's tuition money.

Her lips trembled, but her voice was steady as she said word by word, "With the way I look and the body I have, three years in bed with anyone would've earned me more than a few lousy millions in interest."

Her face was pale, her voice cracking with emotion. "I slept with you for three years. Don't tell me you really thought that was free."

Tyrone's eyes went bloodshot. "Aella, shut up!" he barked.

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12:54 **Thu, Oct 9**

Once Cast-Off Wife, Now Untouchable Queen

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[ 1,060 words ]

Chapter 86 Everything But Dignity

Three years of marriage. Countless nights together. And Aella just reduced all of it to something humiliating.

**77**

+8 Pearls

She broke down, laughing through her tears. "Since we go way back, I'll cut you a deal, 50 million for three years. Keep the interest. I'll pay back the principal. Let's get divorced."

With that, she handed the bank card to Miriam.

Still crying, she said, “Mom, that 50 million ... that’s the price of my body. You can’t give that away.”

Then she turned and ran, stumbling as she rushed to her bedroom. She slammed the door and locked it behind her.

From inside the room came the sound of muffled sobs, raw and uncontrollable.

Tyrone’s eyes were bloodshot as he pounded on the door. He threw his shoulder against it, trying to break it down. “Aella! Open the door!”

Clyde heard the commotion and came out of his room. When he saw Tyrone slamming his body against Aella’s door, he lost it. Injured wrist be damned, he grabbed Tyrone by the collar and punched him hard in the face.

“Clyde!”

Miriam rushed forward to stop him, afraid the fight would spiral even further.

Warren stormed into the kitchen and came back with a knife, eyes blazing. “Get out of my house!”

Tyrone stumbled back a step, face pale, panic in his eyes. “Warren ... Miriam ... Aella is my wife. I never meant for any of this!”

He had let Edwin push things—had stood by while they demanded repayment—only because he thought if she saw the truth, she’d give up on the divorce and come back to him. Yes, their marriage hadn’t started with love, but he had never disrespected her. Not once.

He thought this meeting between their families would clear the air. That he’d be able to take Aella home. He never imagined it would fall apart like this.

Virginia watched Tyrone, shocked. It was the first time she’d seen him so completely fall apart. Her eyes filled with disappointment—and something like heartbreak.

Ralph jabbed his finger in Warren’s face, threatening, “Touch my son, and I’ll make sure the

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Chapter 86 Everything But Dignity

entire Reid family goes down with you!”

Warren's hand tightened around the knife handle, his whole arm shaking with rage.

+3 Pearls:

He stood protectively in front of Miriam and Clyde, gritting his teeth. "I may be old and useless, but if anyone dares lay a hand on my kids, I'll fight them with everything I've got.

Edwin gave the butler a subtle signal. The butler quickly opened the front door to let the bodyguards in from outside.

"Let go of me!" Tyrone shouted.

He was strong, but not strong enough to take on several trained guards jumping him at once. With the butler, Justin Garraway, and Ralph also holding him back, Tyrone couldn't fight at full strength.

Justin, seeing that even with numbers the guards couldn't subdue Tyrone, waited for an opening, then knocked him out cold. The bodyguards carried him out.

Ralph shot Warren and Miriam a dark, threatening glare before storming off.

At this point, Virginia knew there was nothing left to say. She stayed silent and followed the others out.

Before leaving, Edwin threw down one last line. "Since she's already made her point, we'll drop the interest. I'll have my lawyers handle the divorce. From here on out, the Reids and Winters don't need to cross paths again."

Miriam, back turned to him, responded calmly, "Believe me, we're more than fine with that."

After the Winters left, Miriam knocked softly on Aella's door.

Aella opened it, threw herself into her mother's arms, and sobbed, whispering "I'm sorry" over and over again.

Working outside had taught her how hard it was to earn money. She knew she still had a long way to go in her field—so much to learn, so much to improve.

Right now, she couldn't support Warren, Miriam, and Clyde financially. That was why she had to make sure there was still some savings left for them. For the first time in her life, she had thrown away her pride for money. Even Warren and Miriam hadn't been spared.

Aella cried. Miriam cried. Clyde and Warren stood at the door, eyes red, one on each side.

An hour later, Tyrone came to at the Winter Estate.

In the living room, Edwin sat silently, saying nothing, while Ralph and Virginia argued loudly.

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Chapter 86 Everything But Dignity

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+8 Pearls

Tyrone's face was pale and grim. Ignoring the shouting, he tried to leave, but Edwin's voice stopped him.

Tyrone walked into the living room and stood silently in front of Edwin.

Edwin reminded him, "We've already reached an agreement with the Reids. After next month's signing ceremony with Leadverse Group, you'll get divorced. Until then, make sure you settle that Caldwell woman and her kid properly. And even after the divorce, you're not to reveal their identities."

Ralph, thinking Tyrone had done the right thing, chimed in, "Tyrone, that's exactly what a man should do. You're the Winters heir. You carry a heavy load. Feelings don't matter in the face of reality, and the last thing you can afford is acting on emotion."

Tyrone spoke wearily. "Dad, I know."

Virginia's chest heaved with anger. She pointed at Tyrone, eyes full of disappointment. "Tyrone, Aella married you and gave up her job to stay home because she trusted you. She filed for divorce because you cheated. How is that her fault? How could you treat her like this?"

Thinking of Aella's red-rimmed eyes, trembling lips, and that look of despair, Tyrone felt his heart twist painfully.

He lowered his head, his voice tight and muffled. "Mom, I never said she was wrong."

Tyrone collapsed onto the sofa, completely drained.

He leaned forward slightly, elbows on his knees, his long fingers running through his short hair.

Virginia walked over to him, her tone softer but firm. “Son, Aella wants this divorce. She’s taking nothing with her because she doesn’t want to make things harder for you, she’s trying to protect your dignity. She may be willing to walk away with nothing, but you can’t let her walk away empty-handed.”

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Once Cost-Off Wife, New Untouchable Queen

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[ 1,001 words ]

Chapter 87 Even Brad Can See It

Virginia snapped, “You controlled her, manipulated her, made her pay back every cent you ever spent on the Reids. Deep down, you never thought she was worthy you just wanted her to walk away with nothing.”

Tyrone stood up abruptly. “Mom, that’s not true!”

He couldn’t sit there any longer. He turned and walked out.

Three days later, in the afternoon, Aella was getting ready to head back to Tuspuyria.

Even after a few days of rest, she still looked pale and exhausted.

Clyde had already returned to school, and Miriam and Warren were walking Aella to the entrance of their neighborhood.

Aella gently urged them, “Dad, Mom, don’t worry. Daniel’s car will be here any minute.”

After repeating their goodbyes and reminders, Miriam and Warren finally turned and went back inside.

Aella stood at the curb near the entrance, texting Daniel.

When she looked up, she saw Tyrone stepping out of a nearby car. Her expression instantly darkened.

They hadn't seen each other in three days, and Tyrone clearly looked worse for wear too.

He walked toward her, each step heavy, and reached out to grab her suitcase. "I'll take you to the airport."

Aella pulled the suitcase back and took a step away, dodging his hand.

Even if she had been slow before, she had figured it out now.

When the Reids went bankrupt, Tyrone married her because she was easy to control. Easy to

use.

All these years, he'd just been waiting for the woman he really loved to come back.

He made her Mrs. Winter not out of love, but because she was a convenient cover.

Something flickered in Tyrone's eyes, but he stayed quiet. He stepped forward again, reaching for Aella's hand.

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Chapter 87 Even Brad Can Gerrit

**W7Z**

+ Pears.

Aella dodged Tyrone's hand again and walked to the curb, pulling her suitcase behind her.

A sleek black car rolled to a smooth stop. Daniel stepped out.

The driver loaded Aella's suitcase into the trunk while Daniel opened the back door for her.

Just as Aella was about to get in, Tyrone grabbed her wrist.

His expression was cold. “Why are you getting in his car?”

Aella turned to look at him, shook his hand off, and got in without a word.

Daniel adjusted his glasses with one finger and calmly offered an explanation. “Mr. Winter, don’t get the wrong idea. Aella and I are colleagues, and I’m simply looking out for her. There’s nothing between us, if that’s what you’re thinking.”

The casual way Daniel said it hit a nerve. It sounded uncomfortably familiar—like something Tyrone himself had once said. A sharp pang hit his chest.

Frowning slightly, Tyrone reached out to shake Daniel’s hand politely. “Thank you for taking care of my wife, Mr. Hill.”

Daniel gave a polite smile. “No need to thank me. Aella’s actually my junior from university, and we studied under the same professor. Taking care of her is the least I can do.”

Tyrone and Daniel were both from the same elite circle, living in the same city, so they naturally knew each other.

Tyrone stood outside the car, eyes fixed on Aella in the back seat.

After a brief hesitation, he leaned in slightly and gently closed the door for her. “Text me when you land.”

His voice was soft, like nothing had ever happened between them.

Aella smoothed back her long hair, but didn’t respond.

She knew Tyrone valued appearances.

In front of Daniel, he wouldn’t risk doing anything out of line.

Tyrone’s gaze lingered on her for a few more seconds before he quietly looked away.

Daniel offered a polite goodbye before getting in and driving off.

Tyrone stood there, watching the black luxury car glide into the fast lane and quickly disappear into the traffic.

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Chapter 87 Even Brad Can See It

But his eyes didn't move. He kept staring long after the car was gone.

Behind him, a white sports car rolled to a stop.

Brad stepped out, dressed in a cool, mismatched outfit and wearing sunglasses,

A 20

He walked up beside Tyrone, followed his gaze, and couldn't help but tease, "You could turn to stone waiting there, and Aella still wouldn't look back at you."

That lazy, mocking tone of Brad's snapped Tyrone out of his daze.

The two exchanged a glance and got into Tyrone's car.

Brad pulled off his sunglasses. "Skipped work just to see her off, huh? But she left in Mr. Hill's car without even acknowledging you. Did I get that right?"

Tyrone's face darkened as he lit a cigarette. "If you're not planning to use that mouth for anything useful, feel free to donate it."

Brad shot him a wicked grin. "You gave up your marriage, wrecked your family, and pissed off both sides of the in-laws, all for Zera and her kid. What are you waiting for? Go move in with your little happy trio already."

Tyrone's expression was cold enough to freeze glass. "I'm not letting anyone, family or not, decide how my marriage ends."

Brad watched him for a beat, then said seriously, "Aella loves you, yeah. But she's not an idiot. You lied to her, cheated on her with your first love, abused her emotionally, pulled power plays, even laid hands on her little brother. After all that? Any woman with an ounce of self-respect wouldn't come back."

Tyrone lit another cigarette, irritation tightening his jaw.

Then he spotted Zera walking toward his car from across the street, and his mood sank even lower.

Brad leaned in a little, lowering his voice. "Tyrone, unless I've got my timeline wrong, Zera's been staying with her brother and sister-in-law in Southpolis. That's at least a 30-minute drive from here. But Aella's only been back a few days, and Zera's somehow run into her two or three times already? You still think that's just coincidence?"

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[ 812 words ]

Once Cast Of Wife, Now Untouchable Queen

Chapter 88 The Other Woman's Fantasy

Tyrone wasn't stupid. He knew exactly what Brad meant.

GXO

48 Pearls

Brad grinned and teased, "Let me guess. Zera is gonna say she just happened to be passing by, saw your license plate, and thought she'd stop to say hi."

With that, Brad hopped out of the car.

A moment later, Zera waved at Tyrone through the window. "Wow, what a coincidence, Tyrone! I was just passing by, saw your car, and thought I'd come over to say hi."

Tyrone frowned, clearly not amused.

Seeing his face darken, Zera grew cautious. "Tyrone, can I come in for a minute? I just want to talk."

He hesitated, then gave a small nod.

Zera slid into the passenger seat and pulled a child's drawing from her bag.

Her tone softened. "Orson's teacher gave him a holiday project—everyone in the family has to draw a family portrait together. He secretly added you in. I filled in a few details. Can you help us color it?"

Tyrone didn't reach for the drawing or the colored pencils she handed him.

Instead, he asked, "You've been around this area a lot lately, haven't you?"

Zera's eyes flickered for a second before she recovered. "Not that often, just every day these past few days."

Tyrone's brows furrowed slightly, so she hurried to explain. "My sister-in-law's family lives nearby. Something happened over there, so I've been around to help."

The doubt in his eyes gradually faded.

His voice softened. "Zera, I shouldn't be in Orson's family portrait. There are things the kid needs to know. You can't keep hiding the truth from him."

Zera's smile froze.

Her eyes glistened red as she looked at him pitifully.

"Tyrone, Orson shouldn't have even been born. He's just like me—unlucky. All he wants is a dad. But you know what I went through for you these six years. I'll never have the courage to

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Chapter 88 The Other Woman's Fantasy

+8 Pearls

marry again. Please, just do him this one favor. I promise it won't happen again," she said.

She held out the colored pencils again.

Tyrone's lashes flickered. He lowered his gaze, silent for a long time, before finally taking the pencils.

He focused quietly, coloring the drawing with bright, cheerful shades.

When he was done, Tyrone handed the picture back. Zera knew better than to push further and got out of the car immediately.

As Tyrone's car sped away, a satisfied smile tugged at her lips.

As long as Orson existed, Tyrone would never forget what she had sacrificed for him.

Brad sat on the hood of his sports car, staring at her with open disdain. "You can try all you want, but you'll never get into the Winters' house. Be smart and give it up."

Zera glanced around, then strode up to him, forcing a friendly smile.

“Brad, we’ve known each other for years. Why are you always so hostile toward me?”

Brad spread his hands. “Hostile? Nah. I just can’t stand trash.”

Her expression stiffened.

Still, Brad was Tyrone’s closest friend. She didn’t dare offend him.

“Brad, I know you and Ms. Reid grew up together,” she said softly. “I understand you want to protect her.”

Brad cut her off. “Tyrone and Aella aren’t divorced yet. Calling her Ms. Reid just shows what you’re really after.”

Zera’s face darkened. “Brad, Tyrone and I have a child together. Is it so wrong for a kid to want to see his dad?”

Brad shot back, “Is it the kid who wants to see him, or is it you?”

Caught off guard, Zera’s eyes darted away. “I really was just passing by. I’m not forcing Tyrone to get a divorce or trying to ruin his marriage. He’s just being responsible, taking care of us. None of us are at fault. It’s just fate being cruel.”

Brad was speechless for a moment.

He reminded her, “Right or wrong, you’re still the other woman.”

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Chapter 88 The Other Woman’s Fantasy

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+8 Pearts

Then he went straight for the truth. “Neither you nor your kid are acknowledged by the Winters’ elders. Tyrone still hasn’t divorced Aella for you. Doesn’t that tell you everything?”

His words hit her like a knife.

Holding back her anger, Zera said stiffly, “Brad, no one can predict how feelings will turn out. Don’t you think you’re judging too early?”

Brad pursed his lips. "I think you've just read too many cheesy CEO romance novels."

Her face tightened in embarrassment. "What's that supposed to mean?"

Brad let out a short laugh. "Women like you—average looks, no family background, no degree,

no skills, but plenty of ambition—just love to fantasize, don't you?

"Fantasize that some rich CEO's gonna fall in love with a nobody like you."

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[ 878 words ]

Chapter 89 The Harsh Truth

+8 Pearls

"Fantasize that some rich CEO would fall for you while you're working as a nanny.

"Fantasize that some rich CEO would fall for you even though you had a kid before marriage.

"Fantasize that some rich CEO would fall for you after your divorce, with a child in tow.

"Fantasize that some rich CEO would fall for you after menopause.

"Fantasize that some rich CEO would fall for you while you're collecting your pension," Brad added.

Zera stood in front of Brad, feeling like a complete fool.

Her nails dug into her palms as she forced the words out. "Brad, I'm not like the other women in Tyrone's life. What we have is real."

No matter how she dressed up or tried to act confident, she always felt small in front of Tyrone's circle.

She hated that feeling.

Brad gave her a blunt reality check. "Zera, I'm just gonna be honest, so don't get mad. Back when Tyrone got kidnapped, you were hurt saving him. He's got women lining up for him. The only reason he dated you was because he put you on a pedestal."

Zera's eyes flickered uneasily.

She tried to smile but couldn't say a word.

Seeing her silent, Brad kept going. "Sure, Tyrone once thought about marrying you. He even fought for it. But tell me honestly, did he ever sleep with you?"

Zera turned her head, avoiding his gaze. "Brad, I know you're Tyrone's friend, but that's crossing the line."

Back when she was chasing Tyrone, he agreed to date her and even bought a ring to propose.

But every time she made a move, he found an excuse to stop her. He had never once touched her.

Brad said flatly, "Come on, we're all adults here. You were the first girlfriend he ever admitted to. If he really liked you, do you think he could hold back?"

Zera lowered her head, panic twisting inside. "Whatever happens between me and Tyrone is

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Chapter 89 The Harch Truth

none of your business."

+8 Fears

Brad didn't bother arguing. "Think about it, Zera. If Tyrone truly loved you, why hasn't he divorced Aella and given you a proper place in his life?"

He didn't wait for her to respond.

"Because to Tyrone, you and Aella aren't even in the same league. You can't compare."

Zera refused to accept it. "Sure, my family isn't rich, but Aella's family went bankrupt too. Tyrone paid off her debts. She's been married to him for three years, just a housewife living off him. How am I worse than her?"

Brad lazily picked at his ear. "Yeah, her family lost everything, but Aella went to top schools. She's got a better education, broader interests, a wider view of the world, and connections you can't even imagine."

He added, "She found out about you and still let you and your kid keep your dignity. That kind of grace? You'll never match it."

Brad looked her up and down. "And let's be real. Aella's beauty is famous in our circle. Look at yourself. What exactly do you have to show off?"

Zera bowed her head, biting her lip in humiliation.

Brad's tone softened slightly. "Zera, you know better than anyone whose kid that is. If you're

before you end

up with nothing." smart, take the money and walk

away

He climbed into his car and drove off.

Zera's body trembled. She grabbed a nearby tree to keep herself from collapsing.

What did Brad mean by that?

Did he know Orson wasn't Tyrone's biological son?

Now even Tyrone's friends looked down on her, not just his family.

She couldn't keep depending on him. She needed a job. She had to be independent.

She had to prove her worth and show Tyrone that she, Zera, could stand in his world.

One day, she would make him see that she was a hundred, a thousand times better than Aella.

Suddenly, Zera thought of that painting.

She pulled out the family portrait, snapped a photo, and posted it on Instagram.

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## Chapter 89 The Harsh Truth

👤

+2 Pearts

Caption: Family portrait painted by my husband and son. Feeling blessed.

A few hours later, in Tuspuyria.

Aella returned to her hospital apartment and immediately called her parents to let them know she was safe.

While replying to a message from Raine, she accidentally saw Zera's Instagram post.

Even through the screen, Aella could feel Zera's smug happiness.

Her heart still ached, but at least she could control it now. That was progress.

Scrolling further, she saw a message from Tyrone. A bitter smile tugged at her lips.

She tossed her phone onto the bed and went into the bathroom.

Time was moving on, and so was she. One day, she would rip Tyrone out of her heart completely.

The next morning, as soon as Aella arrived at the hospital, Daniel called her into his office.

He handed her a stack of files. "Here's a special case for you to review. You'll be meeting the patient soon."

Aella flipped through the papers, then hesitated. "Daniel, I'm not sure I'm ready to take on a case like this yet."

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[ 825 words ]

## Chapter 90 The New Patient

+3 Pearls

Daniel gave Aella an approving look. “Your private research on sleep–disorder treatments is already showing results in clinical trials. I’ve discussed it with the hospital. When you return at the end of the year, they will open a special department just for you. You’ll lead the team and receive a share of the profits.”

His words filled Aella with confidence.

She didn’t bother with formalities. “Daniel, thank you for helping me. I’ll do my best.”

She needed money. A lot of it. She had to buy back Miriam’s jewelry.

Daniel said, “Come on. I’ll introduce you to the patient.”

Aella reminded him, “Daniel, maybe we should ask Dr. Harrison to join us.”

Daniel stayed relaxed. “This patient is extremely picky. He’s got a bad temper and cares only about appearances.”

He added with a sigh, “He said Dr. Harrison’s hair was thinning and he didn’t have abs. Not only did he reject him, he even demanded the hospital pay him for an eye wash.”

Aella followed Daniel into the exam room. A young man sat casually on the desk, scrolling through his phone as if he owned the place.

He was tall, dressed in trendy clothes, wearing an earring and a ring on his pinky. His hair was dyed a soft lavender–purple that gave him a polished, high–end look.

Beside him stood a middle–aged man who looked like a butler, hands folded neatly in front of him, while several bodyguards in suits and sunglasses waited behind.

Daniel approached the butler. “Sebastian, Dr. Reid is here to see Mr. Locke. Please wait outside.”

Sebastian Stone spoke respectfully to Sayer Locke. “Mr. Locke, we’ll wait outside for you.”

Sebastian left with the guards. Sayer slowly put down his phone.

He leaned back against the desk, hands braced behind him, his posture lazy and confident.

His gray–brown eyes wandered over Aella without restraint. “She looks like something you’d put on a display shelf. You sure she’s a doctor, Mr. Hill?”

Aella frowned. It was the first time anyone had ever compared her to something meant for display and she found it downright insulting.

1/3

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Chapter 90 The New Patient

+8 Pearls

Daniel gave her an awkward glance. “Dr. Reid is our hospital’s sleep–disorder specialist. Mr. Locke, if you’re willing, she’ll be your attending physician.”

Sayer gestured at her. “Hey, expert, come here.”

Aella didn’t move. Her face stayed cold. “You’re the patient and I’m the doctor. If you can’t even show basic respect, you should find someone else.”

The human body was complicated, and to treat insomnia properly, the patient’s attitude matters.

Sayer was clearly difficult.

If she didn’t set boundaries now, it would be impossible to work with him later.

Sayer hadn’t expected anyone to stand up to him.

His expression shifted dramatically as he jumped down from the desk.

He walked right up to Aella, towering over her and filling the space with pressure.

Hands on his hips, he leaned closer and studied her face. “You’ve got more attitude than I do. What do your parents do?”

Aella met his gaze, realizing for the first time that some men could look more beautiful than

women.

Tyrone’s looks carried masculine strength and raw charm. This man, though, had a different kind of beauty–dangerous and mesmerizing.

Looking straight into those gray–brown eyes, Aella said calmly, “So, are you going to accept treatment or not?”

Sayer pointed at Aella, then at himself, made a theatrical spin, and looked at Daniel. “She’s a doctor and she dares talk to me like that?”

Daniel hesitated before saying, “Dr. Reid is Mrs. Winter.”

Sayer raised a brow. “Which Mr. Winter?”

Daniel replied, “From Aldoria, Vleka–the Winters. Tyrone Winter.”

Sayer let out a low chuckle. “Ha.”

Then he laughed again, three short bursts that made Aella’s skin crawl.

She really didn’t want to be associated with Tyrone anymore, but Daniel had already said it, so

2/3

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Chapter 90 The New Patient

she stayed quiet.

Sayer fixed his gaze on her. “Fine. I’ll take the treatment.”

He added, “If you can cure me, I’ll be your spokesperson.”

He laughed twice more, eyes glinting with amusement, the rest of his thought staying unspoken–and *if you can’t, I’ll make your husband pay for it.*

Aella kept her tone steady. “I can treat you, but you have to cooperate.”

+8 Peads

She didn’t know why Sayer agreed to treatment the moment he heard she was Mrs. Winter, but she needed a breakthrough case to build her reputation. She couldn’t afford to let this chance

1. go.

Sayer nodded. “I’ll cooperate 100%.”

Aella immediately ordered a full-body examination for him.

After Sayer left the exam room, Daniel reminded her, “The Lockes are one of the old Euravia aristocratic families. Mr. Sayer is the youngest grandson. He’s had insomnia for three years, and they’ve already hired every top doctor in the world.”

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[ 888 words ]

Chapter 91 Crossed Paths

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\* Pearls

Daniel said, “If you can cure Sayer, you’ll make a name for yourself and earn a real place in the field of sleep disorders.”

Faced with the challenge, Aella nodded. “Don’t worry, Daniel. I’ll do my best.”

The two of them left the consultation room and passed by a patient ward.

On the television inside, a financial news program was airing an exclusive interview with Tyrone.

Watching Tyrone on screen, dressed sharply and looking every bit the refined gentleman, Aella’s lips curved into a faint, mocking smile.

Who would have thought that a man who looked so perfect could hide his first love and an illegitimate child, yet treat his own wife so coldly and calculatingly, without an ounce of guilt?

She quickly looked away, her face expressionless as she walked out of the ward.

Tyrone had just finished the interview when a call came from Zera.

At ten o'clock that morning, they met at a coffee shop.

Tyrone glanced around. "Didn't you say Orson was begging to see me? Where is he?"

Zera looked down, clearly nervous. "I'm sorry, Tyrone. I mixed up the dates. Orson has a handwriting class today. I just dropped him off."

Tyrone frowned, his face unreadable.

Seeing that he wasn't heading upstairs, Zera hurried to explain. "Tyrone, I know meetings like this could easily be misunderstood. That's why I booked a private room on the second floor. There's something I wanted to talk about in private."

Tyrone hesitated for a moment, then followed Zera upstairs.

After serving their coffee, the waiter quietly closed the door behind them.

Zera spoke evenly, "Tyrone, to be honest, my brother and sister-in-law were afraid Orson and I would drag them down. They bought a house and left Vleka, leaving my mom behind for me to take care of."

Tyrone's expression grew colder. "Where are you living now?"

Zera answered, "I've been staying at a hotel with my mom and Orson for the past couple of

1/3

12:55 Thu, **Oct 9**

Chapter 91 Crossed Paths

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+2 Pearls

days, but don't worry. I've already rented an apartment near Orson's school. We won't trouble you."

Tyrone thought for a moment, then pulled out a card and handed it to her. "Take this. Buy a place in your own name. You'll feel more secure."

Zera shook her head right away. “Tyrone, Virginia was right. You and Aella aren’t divorced yet. It wouldn’t be right for me to take your money, and it wouldn’t be fair to her.”

She went on, “I’ve already signed with an influencer agency. I’ll start work in a few days. From now on, Orson and I will support ourselves and try not to bother you.”

Tyrone stared at Zera, his gaze complicated. He didn’t take back the card, but he didn’t say anything either.

Zera continued, “You’ve helped us so much lately. I can’t just sit by and watch you and Aella actually get divorced. If that really happened, I’d feel like the villain.”

Tyrone’s rigid expression slowly softened.

A strange sense of relief washed over him.

He said quietly, “Zera, this isn’t your fault. Don’t blame yourself.”

Hearing that, Zera’s eyes grew red with emotion.

She shook her head, her tone firm yet troubled. “Tyrone, how can I not feel guilty? Your marriage is falling apart because of me. I want to help, but I honestly don’t know how.”

Tyrone’s gaze was hard to read.

“You don’t have to do anything. I’ll handle things between me and my wife.”

Zera nodded obediently.

Then, in a softer tone, she said, “Tyrone, now that my brother and sister-in-law aren’t supporting us anymore, and after six years abroad, I don’t have any friends in Vleka, all I ask is that if one day things get really hard, you’ll lend us a hand for old times’ sake. That’s all I want.”

Tyrone promised, “Zera, I meant what I said. My promise still stands.”

Satisfied, Zera didn’t want to take up more of his time. “Thank you, Tyrone. Aella is lucky to have you.”

Tyrone lowered his gaze, hiding the emotions in his eyes.

If Aella were truly content, things between them wouldn’t have turned out this way.

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Chapter 91 Crossed Paths

+8 Pearls

When Tyrone and Zera walked out of the coffee shop, they unexpectedly ran into Aella's

parents.

The four of them froze for a moment, eyes locking.

Without missing a beat, Zera slipped her arm through Tyrone's and leaned her head on his shoulder. "Tyrone, I'm scared."

He replied calmly, "I'm here. They won't do anything to you."

Tyrone gently pushed her away. "You should head back."

He caught up with Aella's parents and reached out to help carry their things. "Dad, Mom, let me drive you home."

Warren's voice was cold. "No need."

The elderly couple held hands as they waited for the light to change.

Tyrone didn't insist or try to explain.

Still worried, Zera followed behind. "Tyrone, did Aella's family misunderstand something again?"

Just then, a black luxury car slowly pulled up to the curb.

Virginia and Raine stepped out and walked straight toward Aella's parents.

Virginia put on a friendly smile. "Hello there. What a coincidence running into you. Let me give you a ride home."

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## - Message On Whatsapp 92

[ 874 words ]

Chapter 92 The Slap

077

+6 Deads

Miriam turned back to glance at Tyrone and Zera, her face cold. “No need, Mrs. Winter,” she said flatly.

The older couple crossed the street without another word.

Raine spun around, anger burning in her eyes when she saw Zera standing next to Tyrone. “Mom! Tyrone’s with that woman—right in front of Aclla’s family!” she shouted.

Zera spotted Virginia and instinctively stepped back. “Mrs. Winter.”

Virginia didn’t hesitate. Her hand whipped out and landed a loud slap across Zera’s face.

Zera screamed and threw herself into Tyrone’s arms for protection.

Tyrone moved in front of her, shielding her. “Mom, what are you doing?”

Virginia glared at him, disappointment clouding her eyes. “Teaching her how to behave.”

Raine lunged forward and tried to grab Zera. “You little tramp, what are you hiding for?”

Tyrone caught Raine’s wrist and pushed her aside.

Raine stomped her foot, nearly in tears. “You betrayed Aella for this woman, and now you’re pushing me away because of her too. What kind of spell did she put on you?”

Tyrone’s face turned stormy. “Raine, stop making a scene.”

Virginia pulled Raine back and gave Tyrone a sharp look. “I want to see if you’d really turn your back on your own mother for this woman.”

Tyrone reached out, ready to protect Zera again, but Raine blocked him.

Virginia said nothing more. She just kept slapping.

The sound of her hand striking Zera’s face rang out again and again, drawing a crowd of onlookers.

Virginia had always been gentle and well-mannered. Even when Ralph cheated, she never lowered herself to hit the other woman.

But today, she wasn’t holding back.

Zera was completely helpless in front of her. She couldn’t even get a word out.

1/3

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Chapter 92 The Slap

+ Peari

With Tyrone and the crowd watching, she didn’t dare fight back or curse. She only dodged and begged for mercy.

Finally, Virginia grew tired and let go.

Zera collapsed onto the pavement, trembling all over, clutching her head as she burst into

tears.

Virginia pointed at Tyrone. “Do you even know? Six years ago, this woman took a 60–million- dollar check from your grandpa, dumped you, and fled overseas the very same night!”

Tyrone froze, his pupils contracting in shock.

He stared at Zera, disbelief written all over his face.

Seeing his reaction, Virginia immediately understood.

He must never have heard that recording she had kept.

Zera shook her head, sobbing as she crawled toward him. “Tyrone, it’s not like that. Please, let me explain!”

Tyrone slowly came back to his senses.

He forced himself to stay calm, bent down, and helped her up. “We’ll talk somewhere else.”

They were standing at a busy intersection with people filming.

He didn’t want the next morning’s headlines dragging the Winter name through the mud.

Virginia shook her head in disappointment, pulled Raine into the car, and drove off.

Tyrone led Zera to his own car.

Zera barely had time to fix her messy hair. Crying, she started to explain, “Tyrone, I did take your grandfather’s 60 million dollars, but I didn’t want to. He threatened my family’s lives and forced me to.”

Tyrone’s face darkened. “You’ve been back for so long. Why didn’t you ever mention this?”

Zera’s voice rose defensively. “He’s your grandfather, the person you respect most. How could I say something like that?”

Tyrone stared at her silently, his lips pressed into a thin line.

Panic welled up inside her as the silence stretched.

2/3

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## Chapter 92 The Slap

+8 Pearls

Her hands shook. “Tyrone, you know how much our relationship means to me—more than my own life. How could I ever cheapen it with money?”

Her eyes flickered nervously. “After Mr. Edwin forced me to leave, I was robbed on the way like they knew I had the check. They found it and just took it.”

way. It

Her words came out fast, desperate. “If I really had 60 million dollars, would I be living like this -so poor I couldn’t even afford treatment, having to come back and beg you for help?”

Tears streamed down her face. “Tyrone, I was young and stupid. I didn’t even think to keep any proof. I was terrified. It was my fault. I was too naive.”

Tyrone finally spoke. His voice was calm but distant. “Stop crying. I’ll have the driver take you home.”

He opened the door, stepped out, and closed it behind him.

Zera started to step out and explain, but Tyrone shut the door without hesitation.

Her hand stayed on the handle, fingers tightening as she froze in place.

After Virginia’s outburst, Tyrone would definitely start doubting her.

But Zera wasn’t afraid. She had planned for this.

The more he suspected her, the more he would investigate.

And the deeper he looked, the more guilty—and protective—he would feel toward her.

Standing by the roadside, Tyrone watched his black car pull away. He took out his phone and made a call. “Noel, look into Zera’s life overseas for the past six years. I want every detail.”

That night, Tyrone received a call from Edwin and requested him to visit the Winter Estate.

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[ 909 words ]

Chapter 93 The Investigation Is Completed

**77**

+8 Pearls

Raine was still pissed at Tyrone. “You already turned your back on your own family for that woman, so why even bother coming home?”

Tyrone’s expression darkened. “Raine, the older you get, the less manners you have. Is that really how you talk to your brother?”

Raine immediately shrank back and hid behind Justin.

Virginia stood up. “You could cut off your own mother—so what’s a sister to you?”

Tyrone pressed his fingers to his temple, clearly losing patience. “Mom, can you please stop interfering in my life?”

He added, “Zera is still Orson’s mother. If you stoop so low as to hit her in public, and the media catches it, what do you think happens next?”

Virginia’s face stiffened. “If they catch it, then great. Maybe that’ll help Aella get out of her misery faster.”

Tyrone lowered his gaze without answering.

Ralph turned on Virginia. "You're being reckless. Do you ever think about your son's future or the family's reputation?"

He went on, "Tyrone is the Winter heir. Everything he does has to serve the family first. He's right not to be ruled by emotion. He already gave that woman a chance—she's the one who walked away. What, do you expect him to grovel and beg her to come back?"

Virginia was so furious she could barely speak.

Edwin also stepped in. "You're the lady of the Winters, Virginia. How could you pick fights in public?"

Then, more coldly, he said, "If you want to achieve great things, you can't let feelings get in the way."

Virginia looked at the three cold, calculating men before her. She didn't dare talk back.

Since the dawn of time, kind people have never been the ones in power. Those who rule are never gentle.

Behind the glittering façade of high society is a world where the strong devour the weak and only the ruthless survive.

1/3

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Chapter 93 The Investigation Is Completed.

They speak with grace and refinement while doing things that would freeze your blood.

In their world, feelings mean nothing—morals even less.

+8 Pearls

They may look polished and elegant, but when interests collide, they show their fangs and tear. each other apart without hesitation.

And Tyrone had grown up in exactly that kind of world.

Virginia said nothing. She took Raine's hand and quietly left the room.

Tyrone felt a restlessness stirring inside him. After Virginia and Raine left, he quickly found an excuse to leave the Winter Estate too.

Later that night, at Bluehaven Residences.

Tyrone stood on a balcony in a dark robe, drinking with Brad.

Brad kept urging him, “Things are already this bad. Just divorce Aella and marry Zera. That way, everyone’s happy.”

Leaning on the railing, Tyrone frowned. “If Grandpa hadn’t treated Zera like that six years ago, she wouldn’t have built up all those walls. She only asked me to keep Orson’s identity secret to protect him. She’s a mother—I understand that.”

*Aside from that, Zera has never asked me for anything unreasonable.*

*Even when she and the boy moved into the villa, it was only because Aella pushed her into it. Zera just wanted Orson to have a father figure.*

*When she realized it was wrong, she apologized immediately.*

*Since then, she’s kept her distance. She’s never stepped out of line.*

*Now she’s completely independent—she’d rather rent a tiny apartment and make a living as a content creator than take a cent from me.*

*She did all that just to avoid more misunderstandings with Aella, to stop another argument about divorce.*

Brad looked frustrated. “Tyrone, everyone around you can’t stand her. Are we all wrong, and she’s the only one who’s right?”

Tyrone said flatly, “You all like Aella. You assume Zera came back with bad intentions. You were biased against her from the start.”

Brad gave him a look like he’d lost his mind. “So what—you don’t love Aella anymore? You love Zera? You can ignore Aella’s pain, but the moment Zera says something, you believe her?”

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Chapter 93 The Investigation Is Completed

A spark of irritation flared in Tyrone’s eyes. “Brad, all you people ever talk about is love and feelings. Don’t you think wasting your time on that nonsense is ridiculous?”

Brad shot back, “Didn’t you date Zera once? You met every week—weren’t you talking about love and feelings? Or were you meeting up for book club, discussing how to become better people?”

Tyrone admitted calmly, “I won’t deny it. Zera’s the only woman I ever truly cared about—the one I actually wanted to marry. I’ll admit that when she came back, it threw me off for a while. But love and marriage aren’t everything. She’s been gone for six years. I married Aella, and we’ve managed just fine.”

Even if Zera had once shaken him, he’d never intended to get back together with her or destroy his marriage for it.

A week later, in the CEO’s office at Winter Group headquarters.

Noel knocked and stepped inside, setting down a thick file in front of Tyrone. “Mr. Winter, the investigation is completed.”

Tyrone closed his laptop and opened the file. “Let’s hear it.”

Noel reported, “Six years ago, after Ms. Caldwell went to Tuspuyria for three months, she married a local man named Bruno Hartley, who had settled there. Six months later, she gave birth to a child.”

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[ 913 words ]

Chapter 94 Do You Want Something Else?

+8 Pearls

Noel hesitated for a moment before continuing, “According to our investigation, several neighbors and even Bruno’s relatives confirmed that during Ms. Caldwell’s marriage, she was abused not long after giving birth. The violence went on for four years.”

He went on, “During that time, she suffered three miscarriages from the beatings and was later diagnosed with depression. We’ve already obtained her medical and hospital records.”

Tyrone closed the folder slowly, then walked over to the liquor cabinet in the lounge and poured himself a glass of whiskey.

Noel followed him. “Four years ago, Bruno suddenly came into money, and the beatings stopped. But her hospital records from that year show that Ms. Caldwell’s depression hit rock bottom then.”

He continued, “A year later, Bruno overdosed and died. Even after that, Ms. Caldwell stayed at his family’s house. We’ve confirmed that during that time, her mother-in-law and sister-in-law constantly hit her and hurled insults at her.”

Noel added, “A year after that—just a few months ago—her mother-in-law tried to force her into another marriage. Not long after, Ms. Caldwell secretly took a gold bracelet from her sister-in-law, sold it, and used the money to buy a ticket back home.”

He finished, “We’ve checked every private account belonging to Ms. Caldwell, her mother, brother, and sister-in-law over the last six years. None of them shows any incoming transfers. Same with Bruno’s family—there hasn’t been a single transaction over 300,000.”

Tyrone’s expression darkened. His grip on the glass tightened until his knuckles went white.

*Zera didn’t lie to me.*

*She came back because she had nowhere else to go; she was out of options.*

That evening, in a small apartment complex in Southpolis.

After setting the table for dinner, Zera showered and changed into a new dress she’d just bought.

When a knock sounded at the door, she gave her mother, Shirley Caldwell, a look. Smiling, Shirley hurried over to open it.

As the door swung open, Tyrone stepped in. Orson ran straight to him, wrapping his arms around Tyrone’s leg. “Daddy!”

1/3

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Chapter 94 Do You Want Something Else?

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+R Pearts

Tyrone’s gaze lifted to Zera.

Her face went cold as she snapped, “Orson, how many times have I told you? This is Tyrone. Don’t call people that.”

Her sharp tone made Orson burst into tears. “No! I want Tyrone to be my daddy!”

Shirley immediately turned on her daughter, jabbing a finger at her. “I worked myself to the bone to put you through college. You disappear for six years, come back with a kid out of wedlock—do you know how much shame you’ve brought on this family? What’s wrong with the boy wanting a father? If you can’t give him a proper life, then why have him at all?”

Zera went pale, stumbling back a few steps.

She clutched her head as if the words physically hurt. “Mom, please, stop yelling at me!”

Tyrone’s expression hardened. He walked over and gently guided Zera to the couch.

Seeing that, Shirley quickly took Orson’s hand. “Come on, sweetheart, let’s go to the store. I’m gonna buy you a toy.”

After they left, Tyrone poured Zera a glass of water.

Her eyes were red as she murmured, “I’m sorry, Tyrone. I’ve already caused you enough trouble.”

Tyrone sat across from her and pulled a bank card from his wallet.

He set it on the table. “Zera, stop trying to tough it out. Take the card, find a decent place to live, and use the rest to take care of you and your son.”

Zera stared at the card, her lashes trembling.

She knew whatever was on that account—it would be more money than she could dream of.

But she’d already made up her mind.

She didn’t want his money. She wanted leverage.

The more he tried to make it up to her, the more she would refuse.

She wanted him to feel guilty—to feel like he owed her something.

Once Tyrone divorced Aella, she would take her rightful place as Mrs. Winter.

She’d marry into the Winters openly, the proud wife of the most powerful man in Vleka.

2/3

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Chapter 94 Do You Want Something Else?

77

+2 Pearis

Putting on a pained look, Zera said softly, "Tyrone, Orson and I have already caused you enough trouble. If I take your money too, how could I ever face you again?"

Tyrone's voice was calm but unreadable. "You don't want the money then what do you want?"

...

Six years ago, forced or not, Zera had taken 60 million from Edwin and kept it secret. That much was fact.

Even with everything she'd been through since, it was still worth testing her.

At those words, Zera almost lost her balance.

Her eyes widened in panic as she raised her voice. "Tyrone, what are you trying to say?"

Tyrone stood up slowly. "If my mother hadn't mentioned that 60 million, how much longer were you planning to hide it from me?"

Zera's eyes flickered. She rushed toward him, her voice trembling.

"Tyrone, I already told you—your grandfather forced me! I didn't tell you because I didn't want you fighting with him over me!"

Tyrone's voice cut sharply. "Zera, I hate people who play games with me. So just be honest—do you want money, or do you want something else?"

He put extra weight on those last two words.

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[ 938 words ]

## Chapter 95 Open the Door

Zera blurted, "I don't want anything!"

Tyrone asked, "Are you sure about that?"

Zera, sounding like she had nothing left to lose, said, "Of course, I'm sure!"

+8 Pearts

Her voice turned firm as she went on, "If you think I came back for your money, relax—I won't take a single dollar from you. From now on, I won't use another cent of yours.

"If you think I came back for you, then you can rest assured. Six years ago, I wasn't good enough for you, and six years later, I'm even less so. At least I know that much.

"We've been apart for six years and both married other people. The woman you married is elegant and beautiful, a thousand times better than I am.

"I've been married. My husband's gone now, and I have a child. All I want now is to live a decent life for his sake. I'm done chasing those silly, girlish dreams.

"I need to make money to raise Orson and pay for his school. I have to take care of my mom and cover rent and bills... I honestly don't have the energy or the mind to scheme against anyone."

As she spoke, Zera started to cry.

"Tyrone, tell your wife the truth about Orson.

"Just pretend I never saved you back then, and that everything I'm going through now is my own fault.

"If one day, Orson and I end up abandoned somewhere far away, or die under mysterious circumstances, don't worry too much about us—our lives are already ruined, and maybe death would be a kind of relief for us."

The darkness in Tyrone's eyes slowly lifted.

He walked over to Zera, his voice unconsciously softening. "Since I gave you my word, I'll keep it. Take care of Orson. Call me if you need anything."

Tyrone didn't say another word and left right after.

1/4

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Chapter 95 Open the Door

+8 Pearls

*Even after six years of hell, after everything she'd endured and lost, Zera still seems like the same gentle, kind woman she's always been.*

*I was worried for nothing.*

For a while after that, Zera kept to herself completely.

But to climb back into the wealthy circle and get closer to Tyrone, she threw herself into livestreaming, desperate for followers. She even maxed out credit cards to get cosmetic

surgery.

Meanwhile, across the ocean in Tuspuyria, Aella buried herself in work, cutting out all the toxic people and drama from her life.

In no time, it was early November.

On the first day of winter, Tyrone returned to the Winter Estate for dinner with the elders.

Edwin reminded him, "Tyrone, the paperwork between Winter Group and Leadverse Group is finalized. I've assigned Mr. Motley to handle your divorce. If you have anything to discuss, speak with him."

Tyrone set his utensils down, his tone instantly cooling. "Grandpa, I've said this before—no one decides my marriage but me."

Seeing the tension, Raine quickly tried to lighten the mood. "Tyrone, send me Aella's address overseas. It's her birthday tomorrow; I'll mail her a gift."

Tyrone just gave a short "okay" and left the dining room.

The next night, in Tuspuyria.

After a long day at work, Aella walked back to her apartment.

It was her birthday.

She spent the walk home talking to her parents on the phone.

They kept telling her to hang up and rest, but they never actually ended the call, as they were too worried about her. It made Aella's eyes sting with tears.

In that moment, she missed home more than ever.

She lied, "Dad, Mom, my coworkers threw me a little birthday celebration. Don't worry. I'm fine. I'll be back by the end of the year."

2/4

**12:56 Thu, Oct 9**

Chapter 95 Open the Door

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Standing in front of the elevator, she finally forced herself to hang up.

In the past, her birthdays had always been full of people.

Her birthday was November 8. Tyrone's was October 28.

She was a November Scorpio, while he was an October Scorpio.

Tyrone had never liked birthdays and rarely celebrated his own.

+8 Pearls

So when they were young, she'd always begged him to share hers, forcing him to blow out candles and make a wish with her.

Eventually, people just assumed they were both Scorpions with the same birthday.

Back at her apartment, Aella washed her hands and went into the kitchen to make herself a birthday cake.

Her phone, sitting on the counter, suddenly buzzed with a message.

It was from Tyrone.

Three simple words. "Open the door."

Aella froze when she saw it.

Tyrone never did anything without a reason.

Patrick had already submitted all the evidence to the court. The trial was set for next week.

The only reason Tyrone would fly to Tuspuyria in the middle of the night was to convince her to drop the case, all to protect his and Zera's reputation.

After thinking it through, Aella left the kitchen, turned off all the lights in the apartment, and went back to her bedroom.

Just as she was about to lie down, her phone rang.

It was a female coworker from next door, asking if she was home and telling her someone was waiting outside her door.

Aella sat quietly on the edge of the bed for a moment, then stood up to open the door.

Everyone in this apartment building worked at her hospital.

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Chapter 95 Open the Door

It was late, and she didn't want to keep them up.

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[ 887 words ]

15:51 Fri, Oct 10

Once Cast-Off Wife, Now Untouchable Queen

Chapter 96 Keep Holding Onto My Past

After all, Aella wasn't the one at fault.

Running away wouldn't fix anything.

Aella took a deep breath, opened the door, and met Tyrone's dark, unreadable eyes.

Finished

They hadn't seen each other in a long time, and for a moment, neither of them spoke. They just stood there, staring.

Aella used to be lively and talkative; she used to follow Tyrone around, always chattering. But now, she was silent and distant.

And Tyrone, who used to be cold and distant whenever Aella was around, was now holding a cake and walking up to her.

One stood inside. The other outside.

Tyrone finally said, softly, "Happy birthday."

Aella's eyes dropped to the cake in his hands.

Tyrone followed her down.

gaze

In an instant, memories flashed through her mind—beaches, cruise ships, flowers, a blueberry cake, and those glowing social media posts with the word "love."

Her chest tightened, her heart twisting until her face went pale.

Tyrone spoke again, his tone gentle. "It's your favorite—matcha cake. I brought it all the way from Vleka."

Aella's expression hardened. She pointed toward the hallway. "Take it away."

Tyrone frowned slightly, then lifted a foot as if to come inside.

That movement broke her restraint.

She stepped forward and grabbed the cake from him, her voice sharp. "I said, take it away!"

▯

Tyrone set the cake down, closed the door behind him, and caught her wrist before she could

move.

“I took a red-eye flight to be here for your birthday,” he said, eyes locked on hers. “And this is

you greet me?”

how

1/4

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Chapter 96 Keep Holding Onto My Past

**53**

Finished

Aella stared at the cake on the coffee table, her emotions unraveling.

Like someone possessed, she tried to throw it out, but Tyrone pulled her into his arms, holding her tight.

They struggled against each other, the tension between them snapping like a wire pulled too tight.

Aella fought back, shouting, “I don’t need you spending my birthday with me ever again. I’ll never touch anything that comes from you!”

Tyrone gripped the back of her neck, forcing her to meet his gaze.

“Aella,” he said, voice low, “we’re husband and wife, not enemies. How long are you going to keep this up?”

Aella’s eyes filled with tears, her lashes trembling.

Her voice broke. “The moment you secretly baked a blueberry cake for your first love, I stopped being your wife. Don’t pretend you care!”

Their faces were so close that they could feel each other’s breath. Tyrone’s chest tightened painfully.

He couldn’t stop himself from pulling her back into his arms.

His voice dropped, rough but soft against her ear. "From the day I married you, I was ready to stand by you for life. You're my wife, now and always."

He brushed a hand over her back, trying to calm her. "I brought you a birthday present. Want to see it?"

But the second he loosened his grip to reach for it, Aella slipped away.

She stepped back, her eyes cold and distant.

"Tyrone," she said quietly, "whether it's a gift or a person, I only want something pure—something that's completely mine.

"Anything tied to you I don't want it."

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Tyrone froze, his hand still in his pocket. Slowly, he pulled it out empty.

He just stood there, watching her in silence.

The silence dragged on.

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Chapter 96 Keep Holding Onto My Past

**53**

Finished

Finally, he asked, "Then what will it take for you to move past this?"

Aella took another step back.

She said tightly, "Your lies, the blueberry cake, the public love declarations, your first love, your illegitimate child... None of it is something I can ever get over."

Tyrone's expression darkened.

He took a step toward her. "If you're willing, we can still fix this."

Aella's voice rose, sharp and clear. "I'm not willing!"

Tyrone's face fell, exhaustion written all over it.

He reached out for her hand, but she shoved him hard. "My lawyer's already submitted proof of your affair to the court. The hearing's next week. If you don't show up, I'll make sure you see what it means when I fight back!"

Tyrone's brow furrowed. "You gathered evidence?"

Aella's tone went cold. "If you agree to a divorce settlement, that evidence won't matter."

The air between them grew thick and suffocating.

Tyrone grabbed the cake and placed it outside the door.

Then, closing the door again, he said in a calm, measured voice, "The cake's gone. Can we at least sit and talk?"

Expressionless, Aella turned her face away. "There's nothing left to say. Leave."

Tyrone studied her quietly, conflicted.

He reached up to brush a strand of hair from her cheek, but she slapped his hand away in disgust.

He caught her arm again, pulling her roughly into his arms.

Ignoring her resistance, he held her tighter, feeling how fragile and thin she'd become.

A dull ache spread through his chest.

His voice came out low and husky. "Aella," he said, "everyone has a past. Zera and the child are part of mine. You don't have to keep holding onto my past."

3/4

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[ 955 words ]

Chapter 97 Terrifyingly Heartless

Aella couldn't get free. She opened her mouth and bit down hard on Tyrone's shoulder.

He flinched in pain, his grip loosening just a little, but he still didn't let go.

Aella clutched the front of his suit so tightly that her knuckles went white.

Trying to steady her voice, she said, "You cheated on me while we were married—that's your present. You swore you'd take care of them forever—that's your future. Don't say I'm the one living in the past, Tyrone. You're the one who's dragged Zera and her son into your past, your present, and your future!"

Their eyes locked, the air between them thick enough to snap.

Tyrone finally spoke, trying to defend himself. "Looking after Zera and Orson doesn't mean I'm giving up on us. It doesn't mean I'm giving up on you."

He hesitated before adding, "I'll admit I made mistakes when Zera came back, but what's between us isn't what you think."

Aella stared at him, her face empty, her voice quiet.

"Tyrone," she said, "you're the one who said you wanted to marry Zera. You're the one who said you didn't love me. So if that's how it is, just let me go."

Tyrone's expression darkened, his face turning cold.

"Is love really that important *to you*?" he asked.

Aella almost laughed at how absurd that sounded.

Her eyes sharpened, her tone cutting. "You've been hung up on Zera and waited for her for years. You know better than me how important it is!

Tyrone let her go and yanked at his collar, frustrated.

"We just happened to run into each other again," he said flatly. "It's not like I'd been waiting for

her."

He remembered the reason he'd baked that blueberry cake and posted that photo—it was just to fulfill a wish she'd made six years ago on her birthday.

On one hand, seeing Zera again after all those years did shake him up a little.

On the other hand, Zera was sick and struggling with depression, so he wanted to comfort her.

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Chapter 97 Terrifyingly Heartless

**53**

Finished

That brief moment of emotion wasn't enough to make him lose control or make a real mistake.

The post he made for Zera had been up for only 60 seconds before he deleted it.

He hadn't expected Raine to see it, take a screenshot, and send it straight to Aella in that one

minute.

He'd claimed the child as his own only to protect Zera and Orson, so that Edwin wouldn't try to hurt them again like he did six years ago.

He had promised Zera he'd never reveal the boy's identity.

But Aella couldn't accept Zera, and she definitely couldn't accept the child.

Now there was no way for all three of them to coexist.

If they kept going like this, it would ruin them both.

Their eyes met again, and Aella's lips curved into a faint, bitter smile.

*Happened to run into each other again, huh?*

What a *convenient excuse*.

Tyrone stepped closer, his expression unreadable.

He gripped her shoulders tightly, keeping her from backing away.

“Aella,” he said, his voice low and steady, “all those feelings mean nothing if they don’t turn into something real. In the end, every relationship comes down to money and benefits. Tell me— can love *feed* you?”

He continued, “Compared to empty promises, don’t money, status, and comfort make you feel safer? I’ve given you a life without worry—the title of Mrs. Winter that no one can take from you. Isn’t that proof enough that I’m committed to this marriage?”

But Aella didn’t see it that way.

Looking straight into his eyes, she said, “Tyrone, what I want is to be your first choice. I want respect that doesn’t need to be begged for, effort that doesn’t have to be asked for. I want loyalty that shows in everything you say and do. I wanna feel like I’m the only one in your world. That’s what makes me feel safe. That’s what real commitment looks like.”

Her head felt light, her thoughts spinning.

Pointing at the door, she said tiredly, “I’ve been working all day, and I’m exhausted. I don’t have

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Chapter 97 Terrifyingly Heartless

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the strength to keep arguing or to listen to your excuses.”

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Finished

Her voice trembled. “From now on, stay out of my life. The farther away you are from me,

better.”

Tyrone stared at her quietly for a long moment.

Then he pulled a small jewelry box from his pocket and placed it on the dining table.

“Get some rest,” he said softly.

He turned toward the door but stopped halfway.

the

When he looked back and saw how pale and unsteady she was, his eyes softened.

Before he could stop himself, he walked back, pulled her into his arms, and kissed her forehead.

His voice came out low and rough. "Aella, happy 26th birthday."

Then he let her go and walked out of the apartment.

Aella turned and rushed into the bathroom, splashing cold water onto her face.

She remembered when she'd first fallen for Tyrone. Someone once told her that when two Scorpios got together, they'd either be soulmates or completely destroy each other.

Back then, she'd smiled and said proudly, "Then we must be soulmates."

They'd seemed perfect—same age, same temperament, same level of education.

But there was one thing she'd overlooked.

Tyrone's mind worked on a whole different level.

And with the way he'd been raised, he'd learned to be sharper, more logical—and completely, terrifyingly heartless.

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Once Cast-Off Wife, Now Untouchable Queen

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Chapter 98 Welcome-Home Dinner

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[ 876 words ]

Chapter 98 Welcome–Home Dinner

**53**

Finished

Aella had known for a long time that she and Tyrone weren't right for each other–she'd just been too afraid to admit it.

Aella turned off all the lights and sank onto the couch, completely drained.

Outside her door, Tyrone was still there.

Noel stood awkwardly in front of him, holding a cake. “Mr. Winter, you came all the way. Are you really leaving already?”

Tyrone leaned against the wall, lighting a cigarette. “If I stay, she won't be able to rest.”

Noel took a few steps back, clutching the cake tighter, and didn't say another word.

Tyrone said nothing either. He just kept smoking, one cigarette after another.

By midnight, he finally stubbed out the last one.

Straightening up, he looked at Aella's door and made a silent wish.

Every year on her birthday, the two of them would make a wish together, blow out the candles, and exchange gifts.

This year, all they'd shared were arguments and a breakup.

He stood there for a long time, dazed and quiet, before muttering, “Let's go.”

The next morning, Aella left the apartment right on time.

Even with a touch of makeup, she couldn't hide how exhausted she looked.

She noticed the cigarette butts scattered by the door and walked past them without a word.

She knew Tyrone well enough.

He was too proud to beg or cling.

If he hadn't needed her to keep up appearances for their family, he would've ended things ages

ago.

She was sure he wouldn't show up again anytime soon.

Aella threw herself completely into her work.

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Chapter 98 Welcome–Home Dinner

Before she realized it, the year was almost over.

During that time, Tyrone never reached out or came to see her.

**53**

Finished

Patrick had tried to push the divorce case forward, but Tyrone's legal team kept finding ways to delay it.

The Winters even countersued, claiming her evidence had been illegally obtained, and they went as far as to pressure her parents.

To protect them from the stress, Aella had no choice but to pause the proceedings.

At work, after months of treatment, Sayer's insomnia had finally improved. He could sleep naturally again without relying on medication.

He kept his word to Aella.

Soon, news spread through Euravia's upper circles that she'd cured his long-term, treatment-resistant insomnia.

Her name became known internationally in the field of sleep disorders.

Following Daniel's advice, Aella wrapped up her work abroad and decided to return home to start her own practice.

She didn't tell her family—she wanted to surprise them.

Her flight landed at dusk.

On the way home, she stopped by a bakery near the elementary school to pick up her mom's favorite rose pastries.

As she stepped out, the preschool across the street was letting out.

And there, among the crowd, she spotted a familiar figure,

Tyrone stood out effortlessly among the parents. He was tall, composed, and dressed in a sleek

black suit.

He crouched down to tie Orson's shoelaces, then tousled the boy's hair and lifted him up.

"Your mom's busy today. What do you want for dinner?"

Orson pointed excitedly toward the street. "Aella!"

Tyrone followed his gaze.

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Finished

Chapter 98 Welcome—Home Dinner

Aella stood across the road in a cream-colored coat, her tall frame outlined by soft waves of glossy hair. She looked effortlessly stunning and impossible to ignore.

Their eyes met.

Expressionless, Aella raised her phone, snapped a photo, and lowered it again.

Tyrone's expression darkened.

He handed the boy to the driver and started walking toward her.

But before he could get close, Aella opened the door of a cab and left.

They had been married for three years and spent half a year apart.

When they finally saw each other again, neither said a word.

Neither had imagined their reunion would happen like this.

“I want KFC,” Orson said, tugging on Tyrone’s leg, calling him a few times before Tyrone snapped out of it.

He picked the boy up and told the driver, “Take us to KFC.”

An hour later, Brad found him outside the apartment complex where Zera lived.

Pointing toward the gate, Brad asked, “Aella’s back in the country. Why are you here instead of seeing her?”

Tyrone shot him a look but didn’t answer. He just got into the car.

Brad called after him, “You still have that pink diamond ring you had made for her, right?”

Tyrone said evenly, “We already ran into each other—at the preschool.”

Brad frowned. “You ignored your wife for six months while she was overseas, but now you’ve got time to play dad to someone else’s kid? If I were Aella, I’d be done with you.”

Tyrone’s expression stayed calm.

“Zera’s mom had to go back to her hometown for work,” he said slowly. “She called and asked me to help out.”

Then, in his usual composed tone, he added, “Aella’s home for good now. There’s still time.”

Brad sighed. “Fine. I’m throwing a welcome–home dinner for her tomorrow night. Don’t make me drag you there.”

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Chapter 98 Welcome Home Dinner

The next morning, Aella received Brad's invitation. She declined.

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[ 931 words ]

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Once Cast-Off Wife Now Untouchable Queen

Chapter 99 Loosened Her Fingers

The reason was simple—Aella didn't want to see Tyrone.

Finished

Around 7 p.m., Raine showed up at the Reid Residence and turned on the charm, acting pitiful until Aella finally caved and agreed to go with her.

By 8 p.m. that night, they arrived at the Regal Club.

Raine pulled her straight into a private room.

A few women immediately crowded around Aella, gushing over her nonstop, their compliments almost painfully fake.

Aella glanced around. She recognized most of them—old faces from their social circle.

Tyrone sat in the center of the room, dressed in a dark, perfectly tailored suit. His posture was relaxed, but his presence dominated the space.

The empty seat beside him had once been hers.

Their eyes met for half a second before Aella looked away and took a seat at the far end of the couch.

That one small move was enough to make the whole room freeze.

People exchanged nervous glances, unsure what to say.

Brad forced an awkward laugh to break the silence. “Aella, Tyrone saved that seat for you. You’re sitting in someone else’s spot.”

you.

Aella’s voice was calm and cool. “Brad, of all people, you should know that Tyrone’s already a husband and a father. There’s no room left for me next to him.”

Her patience had been tested again and again, and every time she’d backed down, it only made them push harder.

If things couldn’t end peacefully, then she figured she’d go down swinging.

She had nothing left to lose.

The room went dead silent.

Tyrone’s expression froze.

Brad glanced at Tyrone and rubbed his nose awkwardly. “Aella, you and Tyrone have been

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Chapter 99 Loosened Her Fingers

married three years. That’s not really a joke you should be making.”

Sensing the tension, others jumped in to smooth things over.

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Finished

“Oh, come on, Aella. Tyrone’s crazy about you! If he’s ever had someone else, I’ll eat my own words!”

“Yeah, he’s the total package—he’s a successful guy and a devoted family man. Every woman here’s jealous of you.”

“Exactly! Mr. Winter’s got the cleanest record in town.”

Aella listened quietly, her face unreadable.

Then she looked Tyrone straight in the eyes. “We’re getting divorced. If you don’t believe me, ask him.”

Every head turned toward Tyrone.

He set down his glass, stood up, and walked over.

Without a word, he picked up her purse and grabbed her wrist, dragging her out of the room.

Out in the hallway, they faced each other, tension sharp as glass.

Their friends lingered at the doorway, watching in silence.

Tyrone's jaw tightened. "Let's talk somewhere private."

Aella met his eyes steadily. "There's nothing left to talk about. Unless you're planning *to* bring the woman you actually love, then maybe we'd have a real conversation."

Tyrone's face darkened.

"Aella," he said lowly, "why do you keep dragging someone else into our problems?"

Aella yanked her hand free and snatched her purse back.

"She's not someone else," she said coldly. "She's the woman you love and the mother of your child."

They stood inches apart, eyes locked, the air between them heavy with resentment.

Tyrone's lips twitched like he wanted to explain, but he stayed silent.

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Chapter 99 Loosened Her Fingers

Finished

Aella's tone hardened. "Tyrone, I don't care *if* you own all of Vleka or if the Winter Group's got the best lawyers in the country—it won't change the fact that you cheated on your wife and had a kid out of wedlock."

Her voice went icy. "I came tonight to remind you—if you don't show up in court in three days, I'll make sure you lose everything. And that woman you're protecting? I'll make sure she's branded a homewrecker for life."

Then she turned on her heel and walked away.

Tyrone didn't move.

Brad came out a moment later, pulled the pink diamond ring from Tyrone's pocket, and shoved it into Raine's hand.

"Go," he told her, giving her a light push. "Give this to Aella. See if she'll take it."

As Raine hurried off, Brad signaled to the staff downstairs to stop the music and start a song.

He pulled Tyrone aside to a shadowed corner on the second floor. "Listen. If she takes the ring, it means she still cares. If she doesn't, then it's over, and you should let her go."

Tyrone said nothing, standing tense and silent, eyes locked on the floor below.

Downstairs, Raine caught up to Aella and held out the ring. "Aella, Tyrone bought this a month before your birthday. He brought it tonight, but after the fight, he didn't get the chance to give it to you.

Please—think about the 20 years you've shared. Give him another chance."

Before Aella could reply, Raine pressed the ring into her hand and ran off.

Under the light, the pink diamond glittered beautifully in Aella's palm.

Through that shimmer, she saw flashes of their past—moments of warmth and heartbreak, laughter and tears.

Then the singer's voice filled the room, rich and full of emotion.

Aella recognized the song instantly.

She leaned against the wall, tilting her head back slightly, closing her eyes as she listened.

When the song reached its peak, she opened her eyes again.

Her gaze dropped to the ring in her hand. She raised her arm and loosened her fingers, letting the diamond fall to the floor just as the final note faded.

Without looking back, Aella turned and walked away.

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[ 849 words ]

Finished

From the corner of the second floor, Tyrone stood motionless, watching Aella's figure fade down the hallway. He didn't follow her.

Brad tried to talk some sense into him. "Tyrone, the divorce hearing's in three days. Aella just made it public in front of everyone. That's the second time she's tossed your ring—she's done. Let it go."

Tyrone didn't answer. He took the ring from Raine, slipped it into his pocket, and walked away.

Good news travels slow, but bad news spreads like wildfire.

By the next morning, every social circle was buzzing. Tyrone Winter's Affair Exposed—Love Child Revealed, Divorce in Progress!"

Tyrone was immediately summoned back to the Winter Estate.

In the grand living room, Edwin and his parents were waiting, along with both his uncles.

Ralph was furious. "I told you to end things with that woman ages ago! You dragged it out, and now look where we are. What did you gain from this?"

Ralph's voice got louder. "The whole upper circle's gossiping about us. They're all waiting to see the Winters humiliated!"

His uncles joined in. "Tyrone, you're the head of this family. If you don't deal with this properly, your and Winter Group's reputation will take the hit. Think about that."

Virginia sighed and tried to give Tyrone some advice. "Before the hearing, talk to Aella and end things peacefully."

Tyrone sat quietly across from the elders. His lips parted slightly. "Whether I divorce her or not is my decision. Even as family, you don't get to interfere."

A cane struck the floor sharply.

Edwin's cold voice followed. "Winter Group is a legacy built over generations. As heir, you can't afford a scandal. If you don't settle this quietly and cut her off, I'll deal with the Reids myself. Don't blame me then."

Tyrone, Virginia, and Raine all stood up at once.

“Grandpa!” Raine blurted out. “The Reids are Aella’s family—they’ve done nothing wrong! You can’t go after them!”

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Chapter 100 One Condition

Finished

Virginia stepped forward quickly. “Edwin, no matter what happens, Aella is still Tyrone’s wife. You should at least respect that bond.”

Edwin’s reply was sharp and cold. “This isn’t your place to speak.”

Tyrone’s gaze darkened. His voice was low, controlled. “If you lay a hand on the Reids, you’ll regret it.”

Justin helped the old man to his feet.

Edwin and Tyrone stood facing each other in tense silence for several seconds.

When Edwin finally spoke, his voice was even harsher. “Anyone who threatens your or Winter Group’s future will be eliminated. I don’t care if their last name is Caldwell or Reid.”

Tyrone’s fists tightened at his sides.

Edwin went on, “Before the hearing, make sure everything’s taken care of. Leave no loose ends. Otherwise, you’ll be the one paying the price.”

The two locked eyes for a long moment before Tyrone turned and walked away.

That night, at Bluchaven Residences.

Tyrone stood in his bedroom wearing a dark robe, the belt loosely tied. The collar hung open, showing the clean lines of his chest and the faint definition of his abs as he moved.

He held a glass of whiskey and stared at the wedding photo on the wall.

Aella, dressed in white, leaned against him, smiling bright and soft.

Behind him, his phone lay on the bed, the call still on speaker.

Brad's voice came through, calm but firm. "Tyrone, you know how ruthless your grandpa is. If you keep this going, Aella and her family will be the ones to pay. Let her go while you still can. Don't make her hate you."

The call ended, leaving only silence.

Tyrone stood there for a long while, eyes fixed on Aella's smiling face in the photo.

At last, he lifted his glass toward her image. "Mrs. Winter," he murmured, "welcome home."

The next morning, Aella received a message from Noel.

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Chapter 100 One Condition

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She was told to show up that afternoon at a specific address to sign the divorce papers.

Noel made sure to remind her to bring her lawyer.

Aella didn't hesitate. She contacted Patrick right away.

It was obvious Tyrone had told Noel to keep things strictly business.

So my *warning* that night worked.

*To protect his* reputation, the Winters' interests, and Zera and her kid, he's finally willing to end it.

At 2 p.m., Aella arrived with Patrick at the appointed location.

When she stepped into the conference room, Tyrone was already there.

Finished

He was dressed in a dark suit, sitting straight-backed, those deep, unreadable eyes naturally locking on hers.

Aella glanced at the two lawyers seated beside him, then sat down across from him.

Tyrone said nothing, just watched her quietly.

Patrick took out the prepared divorce papers.

Noel passed the documents to Tyrone's attorneys for review.

After they confirmed everything was correct, Tyrone finally spoke, his tone calm but steady. "The divorce can go ahead," he said slowly, "on one condition—you hand over every piece of evidence you have that could be used against me."

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**B**

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