

After All the Hurt, She Chose Herself

Chapter 10

As Aria finished speaking, a look of expected indifference appeared on Gideon's face.

Her? Participate in a clinical trial? She had given up a career in medicine for business and schemed her way into marrying him. She didn't have a shred of a healer's compassion.

She was just obsessed with money.

"Aria, it's not that you can't get pregnant. It's that you want more."

She was just leveraging her matching blood type with Lilith to bleed him dry.

Gideon reached out and pinched her chin, studying her closely.

"Henry told me Ms. Rowan was always so willing to play the charming hostess for a check. So, now I'm buying the use of your womb. Name your price."

Gideon didn't believe a word she said.

Aria turned her face away, exhausted.

It was true she worked hard to close deals, but it was never as sordid as Gideon made it sound.

When she had been helping him build his company, she had tirelessly networked and signed contracts, both for her commission and for the company's growth.

She had never done anything to betray him.

"Do you know why I never touched you all these years?" A flicker of disgust crossed Gideon's eyes. "Sometimes, I wonder how many men you've seduced before me."

"After all, reconstructive surgery is simple these days."

Aria's heart felt like it was being ripped to shreds.

She couldn't believe those words had come from Gideon. That night with him had been her first time.

Though it wasn't as wonderful as she had imagined, she truly loved him.

"Gideon, you can't humiliate me like this."

Tears welled in Aria's eyes, but she knew Gideon wouldn't feel any pity. He would probably think she was faking it.

So she discreetly wiped them away.

"We've been married for almost three years. If I were really so materialistic, why have I never asked you for a single cent?"

Aria felt like a complete fool.

She thought that by giving him her whole heart, she could earn his affection in return. But she was wrong.

Her heart had been mercilessly trampled by Gideon. Three years of marriage, a total wreck. She had received neither her husband's love nor a single dollar from him.

But what was the point of bringing up her sacrifices now? Since she had already decided on a divorce, she no longer cared what Gideon thought.

Gideon looked at Aria's slightly reddened eyes. She held her spine straight, whimpering pitifully like a cornered animal, and an odd discomfort stirred in his chest.

"So now you're trying a new tactic, playing the victim? I told you on our wedding day that I would never trust you again."

"Since you chose to marry me, it's your duty to bear my children. If you're unwilling, we'll get a divorce."

Gideon knew Aria would never agree to a divorce.

Just as she had said, if she walked away with nothing, wouldn't her three years have been a complete waste?

If she wasn't willing to have a child, then she had to be prepared for him to abandon her.

"Think about it carefully. If you don't have a child, you won't get a single cent."

With that, Gideon turned and left.

There was no need for him to humor her. She should be grateful for the chance to bear an heir for the Evernight family.

After all, the Evernights had always valued their lineage.

Aria bit her lip, wishing she could shove the divorce papers into his hands right then and there.

But she couldn't. She had to endure this last month before she could bring up the divorce.

She had nothing to show for three years of marriage. She couldn't lose this twenty million dollars too.

After calming herself, Aria slept until morning.

Although she had submitted her resignation, she still had to hand over her work before she could leave.

Her internal clock was precise. As usual, she made breakfast for herself. Her fingers instinctively reached for an egg to crack into the pan.

She paused for a moment, then put the egg back.

She was already planning to divorce Gideon. Why should she care about him?

In his eyes, she had never contributed anything anyway. Aria drove to the office.

"Ms. Rowan, you're finally here! There's a problem with the contract you submitted yesterday!"

The young assistant looked like she was about to cry, but Aria just frowned.

"The contract submitted yesterday? I don't remember submitting anything yesterday."

The assistant paused, then glanced uncertainly at the adjacent desk. "Weren't you supposed to be mentoring... Ms. Rowan?"

She hadn't agreed to mentor Lilith yesterday.

And she hadn't assigned Lilith any work. How could a contract have been submitted?

Lilith poked her fingers together guiltily. "Aria... after you left yesterday, I didn't have anything to do, so I took a contract from your desk to look at..."

"Was it the twenty-million-dollar contract?" Aria's gaze shifted to the assistant. "What exactly happened? Be clear."

The assistant stammered, "Well, the transaction amount was changed from twenty million to two million, and... Henry was the one who took Ms. Rowan to sign it."

So they had stolen her deal.

Aria laughed in disbelief.

Henry taking Lilith to sign a contract... what a brilliant idea. For a deal that large, the commission would be at least six figures.

Now that the final amount was ten times less, they were coming to her for a solution?

Why didn't they think of her when they were about to cash in?

Aria sat down calmly at her desk. "Whoever signed the contract is responsible. What does it have to do with me?"

It was a shame to lose that commission, though.

"Aria, get your facts straight. You were absent from work yesterday. I'm already being generous by not docking your pay. How dare you try to shift the blame? If you had been at your desk, would I have needed to take Ms. Rowan to sign the contract?"

Henry had been avoiding Aria out of guilt.

But hearing her refuse to fix the mess made him angry.

Mentoring Lilith was Aria's job to begin with. Now that Lilith had made a mistake, it was obviously her responsibility.

"No matter what you say, my name isn't on that contract. When the legal department gets involved, it won't have anything to do with me."

Aria flipped to the last page of the contract. Henry's flamboyant signature was there, a clear sign of his triumphant mood at the time. She smirked.

"What lovely handwriting you have, Henry. I just wonder if you'll still be a secretary here after this all blows up."