

Chapter 3

Two years ago, Luca started coming home later than usual.

He said he was expanding the family business overseas, that things were "just busy."

But now I know the truth.

He was busy building Bianca Rizzo's empire.

The pain hit me so hard I had to clutch my chest to breathe.

"What's wrong, sweetheart?" Luca stood instantly, his chair scraping against the marble floor. "You're pale. I'm calling a doctor."

Before I could speak, Bianca's voice sliced through the air like broken glass.

"Still playing the perfect wife act? Don't strain yourself, he gets tired of fragile toys fast. —"

The sound of the slap was sharp enough to silence the entire room.

Luca's hand came down across her cheek so hard that even I flinched.

"Say one more word," he said quietly, his tone deadly calm, "and I'll make sure you never speak again."

Bianca pressed a hand to her face, eyes blazing, but she knew better than to push him.

She left without another word.

The laughter slowly returned to the dinner table, but my skin felt cold.

I could feel Luca watching me, his hand covering mine, voice soft with worry.

"Baby, what's wrong? Let me take you to the hospital."

I pulled away. "I'm fine. I just need the bathroom."

But when I stepped into the hallway, she was waiting for me.

Bianca.

"You really think that slap means anything?" she hissed. "You're his wife, sure. But I'm the one who gave him twins. If I tell him they're sick, he'll come running. Want to bet?"

I didn't answer. I didn't have to.

Because when I returned to the table, Luca's face was already pale with panic.

He rushed to me, kissed my forehead. "Sweetheart, something came up at work. I'll be right back, okay? The manager has everything covered. Enjoy yourself."

I gripped his sleeve. "Didn't you promise to stay with me today? Please, Luca... stay."

Something flickered in his eyes — guilt, hesitation, maybe fear.

He looked at me like he knew leaving would cost him something he couldn't name.

But then he said softly, "I'll be home tonight. I promise."

And just like that, he was gone.

Half an hour later, my phone buzzed.

A message from Bianca.

A video.

I pressed play, my hands shaking.

Luca was there, feeding their children.

Bianca's voice floated through the recording:

"You bought her an island, Luca. I'm jealous. I want it for our twins' birthday."

He frowned. "No. That island was for Valeria and our child."

"You gave her an island as a love story," Bianca said softly. "Give this one to me — so our sons will know they weren't born from shame."

And then — he nodded.

Bianca looked straight into the camera, smiling that same cruel smile.

"See? Even the things meant for you are mine the moment I ask. You lose."

I sat there frozen, the phone heavy in my hand.

Every memory of his kindness stabbed through me like glass.

The way he once wrapped my injured hand in bandages, the way he carried me home through the rain —

everything he did for me, he could do for her.

I was done.

Tomorrow, I'd leave. For good.

That night, Luca came home to find me already in bed.

We'd never slept apart before. We used to wait for each other, even if it was dawn.

But this time, I couldn't bear to see his face.

He lay beside me, pulling me close, breathing against my neck.

"I missed you so much," he whispered. "It's only been hours, but it felt like years. If you ever left me, I don't think I could live."

"...Really?" I murmured, eyes closed.

He kissed my shoulder. "By the way, about that island — I found out it's not good luck for us. I bought two more. We'll pick one together, okay?"

I smiled faintly into the darkness. "Do whatever you want."

He hesitated, sensing something cold in my tone.

"Did I do something wrong?" he asked quietly.

"No. I'm just tired." I drew in a shaky breath. "Our anniversary is coming. Tomorrow afternoon, I'm flying out on a private jet. I ordered your gift overseas — I want to pick it up myself."

"You're pregnant, love. That's a fifteen-hour flight. Let me go instead."

I turned to him and smiled, the way I used to. "No. I want to do it myself."

That broke him, like it always did. "Alright. Whatever you want."

The next morning, he made me breakfast before leaving for work.

Before he walked out the door, I handed him a sealed envelope.

"It's for you," I said softly. "But don't open it until two days from now."

Inside were two things:

my pregnancy report,

and Bianca's video.

By the time the news reached him — that my jet had gone down over the Atlantic —

he would open it.

He would know what his betrayal had cost him.

He would know he'd killed the woman he claimed he couldn't live without.

And I wanted him to live every single day remembering that.

When he left, I packed my things and headed for the airport.

Halfway there, my phone buzzed again.

A message from Bianca.

"Hotel DeLuxe. He's here. Don't miss the show."

I shouldn't have gone. I knew what I'd find.

But I went anyway.

It was their twins' birthday.

The Moretti elders, the family's inner circle, all gathered around Bianca.

The waiters called her "Mrs. Moretti."

Luca didn't correct them.

He just smiled at her — that soft, familiar smile that once belonged to me.

Even his parents smiled. "If it weren't for Bianca," his mother said proudly, "the Moretti family would have no heir to carry our name."

"Luca, promise me you'll take good care of her."

He laughed easily. "When have I ever treated her badly? Whatever Valeria has, Bianca has too — jewelry, clothes, everything."

Something in me snapped.

Every sweet word he'd ever said, every kiss, every vow —
they all exploded inside me, leaving only ashes.

Everyone knew.

Everyone except me.

There was nothing left to fight for.

Nothing left to forgive.

As I turned to leave, I looked back one last time.

He was laughing, his arm around her shoulders.

I whispered under my breath, "Goodbye, Luca Moretti. Never again."

A few hours later, while he played with the twins, his phone rang.
"Mr. Moretti," his assistant's voice stammered, "your wife's jet—
it went down. Just past the Atlantic border.

There are no survivors."

Luca froze. The color drained from his face.

"What... did you just say?"