

When Love Is A Lie

Chapter 13:

Now, even after Julian had worn her down completely, leaving her spirit shredded, she kept her disillusionment tucked away. The last thing she wanted was to add to Laurence's burdens.

As Laurence gazed at his confident son and the quiet, ever-composed daughter-in-law, a sense of peace settled over him—though in some unspoken way, it felt incomplete.

A grandchild. That was the missing note in his symphony of contentment.

He came out with it, blunt as ever. "Well? When are you giving me a grandchild? I won't be around forever—who knows how much time I've got left?"

He dragged out that line every time they came by. Katherine had stopped answering long ago, leaving Julian to field the blow.

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Julian's brow creased. Not wanting to provoke his father, he kept his voice even. "It's not something we can rush."

"Three years, and still nothing? How much more time do you plan on wasting?" Laurence asked, pretending to be patient. "You're both in perfect shape—so what exactly isn't working here?"

Julian stayed quiet, his fingertip drumming lazily against the table, clearly gearing up to dodge the question yet again.

But Laurence wouldn't let it go. "Julian, just be straight with me—are you... having trouble in that area?"

A muscle twitched in Julian's cheek. "Dad, I'm twenty-six. Do you seriously think that's even on the table?"

Laurence wouldn't let it drop. "You never know. These things creep up on you, even if you're unaware."

Julian let out a tight breath, irritation flickering in his eyes as he turned his head toward Katherine.

She was peeling a tangerine, the very fruit that always turned his stomach. His mood soured even further.

He clamped his mouth shut, a decision that only fueled Laurence's suspicion. Turning to Katherine, Laurence prodded, "Kathy, is that true?"

The question caught Katherine completely off guard, leaving her frozen for a beat.

Was Julian impotent? How would she possibly know about it? Not once in three years had he stayed the night. They hadn't even shared a kiss.

Yet remembering how he'd behaved today, a jagged bitterness tore through her chest.

"I doubt it..." she murmured, drawing her brows together in quiet hesitation. That slight crease in her expression landed like a bomb. Laurence turned ghostly white. Julian's face, meanwhile, went hard and stormy.

Just a few offhand words—yet they landed like a slap, as if she'd ground his name straight into the dirt.

Julian's tone sliced through the room. "Katherine, you'd better think before you speak."

She held his gaze without flinching.

