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Chapter 276 The Arrival Of Josephine

Sitting alone in the living room, I looked at the Doppler ultrasound from the check-up. Although I was only two months pregnant, and there was nothing to see, I was still happy.

Just when I was relishing in my bliss, the doorbell rang. I furrowed my eyebrows and went to open the door.

It was Michael's mother.

The sight of her caused my heart to sink as a sense of dread began to emanate through my body.

It took me a long while to regain my senses.

Forcing a smile, I greeted politely, "Mrs. Shaw."

"Ms. Garcia, are you going to make me stand while I talk to you?"

Josephine looked at me with an icy gaze. The annoyance in her tone was obvious enough for me.

In response, I quickly stepped aside and invited her in, "Mrs. Shaw, please come in."

Josephine Blackwood was Michael's mother. She would be my mother-in-law if I married Michael. Therefore, as her future daughter-in-law, I had to treat her well.

Josephine frowned at me before sidestepping me to enter the living room.

Standing behind Josephine as if I was a maid, I lowered my head and asked, "Mrs. Shaw, would you like some coffee or tea?"

"Plain water will do," Josephine replied without even looking in my direction.

"I'll go get it right away."

I hurried into the kitchen to get a glass of water and placed it in front of Josephine.

"Mrs. Shaw, please have some water."

Just as I spoke, I saw Josephine staring at the medical report on the table with a frosty expression.

I was aware that she refused to accept me still. I wondered what when through her mind when she saw the report.

"Do excuse me. I haven't got the chance to tidy up as I just returned home."

I quickly collected the reports on the table and put them away. I had never felt so nervous in front of Josephine before.

Glancing at me, Josephine remarked, "Ms. Garcia, I don't like to beat around the bush, so let me just give it to you straight. You are not worthy of Michael, and I object to your marriage."

I had expected this and was mentally prepared, but hearing it in person still made me feel miserable. I looked at Josephine and my nose began to burn.

"Mrs. Shaw, I understand that I've humiliated you and caused the Shaw family to lose fifty million for showing up at the wedding. I'm really sorry about that. But Michael and I genuinely love each other. I hope you can accept me."

Michael had already decided to be with me and my child, so I hoped that Josephine would welcome me into their family and give me her blessings too.

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"So you are well aware of the loss you caused to the Shaw family." Josephine stared daggers at me, incensed by my words. "Ms. Garcia, I bet fifty million is a huge amount to you and it's impossible for you to earn that money in this lifetime. Have you no shame to continue staying by Michael's side after what you've done?"

I could understand why she was furious, especially since fifty million was a huge sum of money. Standing in front of her with a pale expression, I had no way of explaining myself.

"I'm sorry."

Other than apologizing, I didn't know what else to say.

"Ms. Garcia, you promised me that you would stay away from Michael. But now, it's obvious you have broken it. If you keep your word, I can look past the fifty million loss. But if you continue to pester Michael, you will have to suffer the consequences." Her response sounded just like a threat. It was obvious that my apology had failed to earn her forgiveness.

Although I was just an ordinary person, I hated being threatened regardless of who was doing it.

I was infuriated by Josephine's words, but I forced myself to contain my anger on the account that she was Michael's mother.

"Mrs. Shaw, I agree that I have broken my promise to you, but there's no way I'm leaving Michael now. I love him, and my child needs him. I don't want my child to grow up without a father. The baby I'm carrying is your grandchildren too. Could you really bring yourself to let it live without its father?" I tried my best to persuade Josephine.

Prominent families placed a lot of emphasis on their legacies. I wasn't trying to use my child as a bargaining chip, but I just didn't want Josephine to object to our relationship anymore.

Anger swelled within Josephine at the mention of the child. She sprang to her feet and fumed, "Are you trying to threaten me with the child? Do you think I have to accept you just because you carry Michael's baby?"

The sight of her sudden anger caused me to panic. Realizing that she had misinterpreted my words, I quickly explained, "Mrs. Shaw, that wasn't what I meant. There's no way I would threaten you. You are Michael's mother after all. All I want is for you to accept me."

Josephine was a well-bred woman, but her disdain for me couldn't be any more obvious. I didn't know what else I could do to get her to accept me.

"Ms. Garcia, I believe I have made myself very clear. No matter what you say, I won't change my mind. The Shaw family will take care of your child, but you will never be my daughter-in-law!"

Josephine was adamant in her refusal to accept me. I was sad and angry at the same time. I was mad at myself for begging her. All I wanted was to be together with Michael. But somehow, it just seemed to be a gargantuan task.

"Ms. Garcia, I figure this house doesn't belong to you. Based on your financial ability, I bet you can't even afford to pay for the toilet. Obviously, you are clinging to Michael for money. I have seen many gold-diggers like you."

Scrutinizing the house's furniture, Josephine turned and looked at me with contempt.

As someone from a rich family, Josephine could easily gauge the furniture's worth with a glance. Given my salary, there was no way I could afford any of them. Therefore, a single look was enough to tell her that Michael had bought all of them.

Faced with Josephine's accusations, I had nothing to rebut, even though they weren't true at all.

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Chapter 277 Do You Enjoy Being Tormented

Staring at the furniture in the hall, I knew any single item would easily cost tens of thousands. Hence, I really didn't know how to answer her.

"Mrs. Shaw, I know that it's difficult for me to change how you see me, but I'm really not doing this for the money. My feelings for Michael are true. Why won't you believe me?"

I was getting anxious. No matter how I explained myself, she just wouldn't trust me at all.

"I won't believe a single word of yours, Ms. Garcia. If you know what's good for you, I'm sure you know what to do. If you insist on staying by Michael's side, you should prepare to pay the price."

Ignoring my explanations, she turned and stormed out at once.

I froze on the spot, and my heart was filled with misery. The purpose of Josephine's visit was to make her stand clear to me that she would never accept me no matter what I did.

Although she had left the house, it didn't make me feel any better.

I was too naïve to think that Michael and I could live happily together. With Josephine's objection to our relationship, I supposed Michael would be stressed out as well.

I sat in the living room. The joy I felt previously was nowhere to be found. Instead, my mind was filled with Josephine's warning. At that moment, I was terrified at the prospect that I couldn't really be together with him.

Just when I was imagining the worst, my phone suddenly rang. When I saw that it was Natalie on the line, I figured she must have found out about what happened the day before.

"Anna, you were amazing yesterday!"

Just as expected, the first thing Natalie talked about was my brazen actions.

If Natalie had called before Josephine's visit, I would have related everything to her. However, I was no longer in the mood to do so.

"Natalie, do you think I have made a mistake? Am I being too selfish?"

Josephine's appearance had caused my conviction to waver. After all, I had ruined Michael's wedding, caused the Shaw family to lose fifty million, and broken up their partnership with the Jones family. In summary, my actions resulted in huge losses for the Shaws.

I was no longer sure if my actions were right. Given the huge number of people who objected to our relationship, I began to wonder if I had made a wrong decision.

"What are you talking about? You love Michael very much. It's great that both of you get together. Besides, you are carrying his child. Even if it's all about giving the child a proper family, I still think you have made the right decision."

Natalie was obviously concerned when she heard my words. Perhaps she had sensed the uneasiness in my tone.

At the mention of my child, I began to calm down. I knew I had to persevere for the sake of giving it a proper family.

Holding the phone in silence, I didn't know what to say; I was still in a dilemma.

Seeing that I didn't respond, Natalie questioned me anxiously, "Did something happen? Is Michael not taking responsibility?"

The moment she shifted the subject to Michael, I clarified immediately, "No, Michael has agreed to marry me. He is not shirking from his responsibility."

Michael had been spoiling me non-stop since the day before, causing me to be filled with joy. However, Josephine's objection unnerved me as she was his mother after all. I was really worried that he would change his mind because of her.

"Since Michael has declared that he would marry you, why are you feeling so unsettled? You should prepare yourself to become his bride. Anna, I really didn't expect you to do something so courageous. In fact, I still find it unbelievable."

Natalie was relieved when she heard my explanation.

Nevertheless, I wasn't in the mood to discuss the matter any further. After chatting for a while longer, we ended the call.

In the evening, Michael preempted me just when I wanted to prepare dinner. Two servants had arrived and headed straight for the kitchen without a word.

I wasn't surprised to see them as I easily guessed that Michael had arranged it. However, I couldn't help but feel that he was being overdramatic.

I'm just pregnant and not paralyzed. Why wouldn't he let me do anything? All this while, he enjoys my cooking a lot. Does he not enjoy it anymore?

Dinner was ready in a short while. Although there weren't many dishes, it was still a scrumptious meal that contained most of my favorite foods.

The servants quickly left once they were done. I thought it was a good arrangement as I didn't enjoy interacting with strangers alone.

Soon, Michael returned home, looking tired. However, a faint smile tugged at his lips the moment he saw me, displacing the exhaustion he showed a moment ago.

"Are you bored staying at home alone?"

After washing his hands, Michael took a seat opposite me and gave me a gentle look.

"It's all right. I'm used to it already."

I still wasn't used to him treating me in such a gentle manner. It even got me thinking that I enjoyed being tormented. In fact, I felt more at ease when Michael spoke to me in his usual frosty tone.

Picking up his fork, Michael kept serving me more food. Although I had an aversion to meat recently, I felt the meat prepared for that meal was a lot more palatable than I expected.

When I glanced at Michael, I caught him staring at me with a smile. Instantly, I knew that the meat must have gone through a long preparation process to remove the fatty stench they originally had.

"Michael, I'm not used to you being so nice to me."

I couldn't help but comment when I saw the grin on his face.

The moment I let the remark slip, I wondered if I was a fool. Any sane girl would want their partner to treat them better instead of complaining about it as I did. I figured the exact same thought must have crossed Michael's mind too.

"Do you actually like it when I'm cold to you every day? Anna, do you enjoy being tormented?" he teased, breaking into a mischievous smile just as I had expected.

I rolled my eyes at him. Despite feeling annoyed, I didn't say another word. After all, I had never won a verbal battle against him.

"Michael, are you sure you want to be with me? What if your mother objects? Will you change your mind?"

Remembering Josephine's visit earlier, I gave Michael an uncertain look and got the burning question off my chest.

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Chapter 278 Wait For Me To Return

Caught by surprise, Michael froze momentarily before giving me a probing look.

"Did my mom drop by?"

Indeed, nothing could escape his eyes.

I lowered my head, my silence implicitly admitting it.

Michael's face clouded over. It was obvious to me that he was frustrated.

Just when he was about to answer me after a brief pause, his phone suddenly rang. When he took it out from his pocket and saw that it was his mother, his expression darkened even more.

Obviously, Josephine was calling Michael to get him to break up with me. I felt a little nervous as I wondered what his decision would be.

Looking at Michael, I clasped my hands anxiously and waited for him to answer.

"Hello, Mom," Michael answered the call plainly. His tone didn't betray the solemn expression on his face.

"Michael, come home at once. I want to talk to you about Anna."

When I heard Josephine's snarky tone over the phone, I figured she must be still exasperated with me.

Upon hearing his mother's orders, Michael snapped, "I'm busy and exhausted today. Whatever it is, we'll talk another day." He sounded emotionless. It seemed to me that both mother and son were not on the same page.

"Michael, you are getting more headstrong by the day. Do you really want to piss me off over a girl?"

Sitting opposite Michael, I could hear everything loud and clear.

Insecurity began to creep up on me when I heard Josephine's words. I was really worried that Michael would abandon me and my child because of her.

I lowered my head so that Michael couldn't see my nervous expression. However, as he was an observant man, my tense body didn't escape his notice.

"You should know that there's no going back once I've made my decision." Michael spoke in a soft voice, despite his furrowed eyebrows and firm stance. After all, he was talking to his own mother.

"I'm not feeling well. You should come back and visit me tonight. It has been a long time since you came home to see me. Do you even care for me still?"

Josephine stopped talking about me and quickly changed the topic.

Michael hesitated for a moment before he said, "All right, I'll be back in half an hour."

After the call ended, I looked at Michael anxiously. Although Josephine had changed the subject, I was certain that she would broach the matter with Michael when he got home.

"I'll head home for a while. You should get some rest," Michael said as he kept his phone and stood up from his seat.

When I saw that he was about to leave, I was overwhelmed by a sense of insecurity. I was terrified that all happiness I had in my hands would simply disappear.

Looking at him, I asked in desperation, "Michael, will you leave me and our child?"

At that moment, I needed to hear his reassurances. Or else, I would continue to be seized by fear.

Stopping in his tracks, he gazed into my eyes for a long while before answering, "No."

The firm conviction behind his reply managed to calm my fears. With his guarantee, I no longer felt insecure.

Smiling faintly at Michael with tears welling up in my eyes, I didn't know what else to say.

"Wait for my return," Michael replied with a smile before striding out.

After he was gone, I was still left worried. Since he was a man of his word, I was confident that he wouldn't leave me. However, I was now concerned about the difficult position he was in due to the pressure from his mother.

Without him around, I had no appetite. Nevertheless, I forced myself to eat a little more just so there would be enough nutrition for the baby.

After that, I waited in the living room. When it was already eleven, there was still no sign of Michael. I wondered what he had discussed with his mother.

If it were any other day, I would have gone to bed at this hour. However, I barely felt sleepy at all that night. I was tempted to give Michael a call but I was worried that his mother would hear it.

Time slowly ticked by. It was already midnight when I finally heard the door open.

Springing to my feet in delight, I rushed to the door, only to see Michael enter with a troubled look on his face.

"You're back..."

I could guess what Josephine had said. I was worried, but I didn't say much as I was cognizant of his bad mood.

Michael looked surprised to see me. The next moment, I saw him hide away his distraught expression.

"It's already late. Why aren't you asleep?" he asked calmly, walking toward me.

"I couldn't sleep while you were out."

Michael put his hand over my shoulder and led me back to the bedroom.

"Don't worry. I will keep my promise. No one can change my mind once I have decided on something."

Michael knew me best. Even though I didn't inquire about what happened in his home, he naturally knew what was on my mind.

"I'm sorry. I may have given you too much pressure."

Despite having received Michael's promise, I couldn't stop myself from wanting to hear him say it out loud. I didn't realize that I had somehow become so paranoid.

I insisted on asking for repeated reassurances even though I knew he was a man of his word.

"It's getting late. You should get some rest. I'm going to take a shower."

Michael saw how guilty I was and patted me on my back to comfort me. Then, he stood up and headed toward the bathroom.

Lying on my bed, I listened to the sound of splashing water while trying hard to calm myself down. I was confident that Michael would resolve the matter and I reminded myself to trust him.

When the sound of flowing water stopped, I closed my eyes and pretended to be asleep. Soon, I heard the bathroom door open.

It wasn't until Michael lay down beside me that I turned around and hugged him tightly.

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Chapter 279 Phone Call

Hugging Michael gave me a strong sense of security, and I felt like I could solve any problem that came my way.

Throughout the next couple of days, he left the house early and came home late, but never once did he neglect me. In fact, he even had the housekeepers prepare different dishes for me each meal.

However, the fact that Josephine objected to our relationship still left me feeling uneasy, and Michael coming home late every night wasn't exactly helping.

That night, I couldn't stand it anymore and decided to wait for Michael in the living room as I wanted to know what he had been up to lately. I didn't know why, but I seemed to have become a lot more sensitive ever since I got pregnant.

Michael finally came home when the clock was about to strike midnight, and he seemed really exhausted when he walked through the door.

I had thought of questioning him, but the words became stuck in my throat when I saw the state he was in.

Suppressing the burning rage in my heart, I walked up to him with a faint smile. "You're finally back."

"Why are you up so late? Didn't I tell you not to wait up for me if I'm home late?"

Michael frowned when he saw that I was still awake, but I could tell he wasn't actually angry at me.

"I... I couldn't sleep..."

I had wanted to ask him the burning question in the back of my mind, but I didn't know how to go about it all of a sudden.

"Is something the matter?"

Michael was a smart guy and knew something was up when he saw me stammering hesitantly.

"I..." I lowered my head after looking him in the eye. "You've been leaving the house early and coming home really late these days, so I wanted to know what you're so busy with."

I then glanced at Michael nervously as I didn't know how he would respond to my question.

"You stayed up so late just to ask me this?" Michael asked coldly.

I kept quiet and simply looked down in acknowledgement.

Although Michael didn't say anything about my behavior, I could feel that I was being a little unreasonable. Michael has already promised to be together with me, and yet I'm still questioning him like this... I bet he must really hate me for this...

Instead of getting mad at me, Michael simply looked me in the eye and replied patiently, "I've been busy handling the breach of contract and the preparations for our wedding."

I felt my heart racing when I heard him mention our wedding.

That's right... Michael is a man of his word. I should've trusted him fully right from the start.

When he saw me keeping my head low with a guilty expression, he walked up to me and patted my head as he said firmly, "I know what you're thinking, Anna. I always fulfill my promises, so stop overthinking things, okay?"

My heart continued to pound uncontrollably in my chest as I looked up at him and nodded profusely.

I was finally able to calm down after finding out what he had been doing lately and receiving his reassurance. I knew Michael would never leave me no matter what happened, and I no longer felt anxious the next time he left home.

In fact, I was even kind of excited as I knew he was making the preparations for our wedding.

That afternoon, I was watching some boring soap opera on television when my phone rang all of a sudden. A frown formed on my face when I saw Justin's name on the screen.

Justin and I hadn't seen each other for over half a year, nor have we contacted each other the whole time. I found myself feeling uneasy receiving his call so suddenly and declined it a few seconds later.

There was no need for us to remain in touch as we were no longer related. On top of that, I didn't like him at all.

In fact, I sometimes cursed at myself for dating such an irresponsible man like him.

I assumed Justin would know better than to call me again after I declined his call, but it seemed I had underestimated his shamelessness as my phone began ringing again immediately after.

The sight of his name flashing on my screen was really irritating, but I eventually chose to answer it. Let's see what Justin is up to this time.

"What do you want?" I asked coldly after answering the phone.

"I didn't think you'd answer my call, Anna! I thought you wouldn't talk to me anymore!" Justin's somewhat surprised voice came on the other line after a brief pause.

Justin was really good at sweet-talking people, and that was precisely the reason I had agreed to date him back then. A single compliment from him would leave me happy for days on end, but that was many years ago.

I had long since grown out of that phase, and he had hurt me so deeply that I hated him more than anyone in the entire world.

"Why did you call me? Is something the matter?" I asked, keeping my tone cold and emotionless.

"Are you free to meet up right now, Anna?"

Justin sounded a lot more serious when he heard how cold I sounded, and his request caught me by surprise.

Nothing good could possibly come out of him asking to meet up so suddenly like this. It's been over half a year since we broke up, so there's no need for us to meet up at all.

"I don't think there's a need for us to meet up ever again. Is there anything else you want to tell me? If not, I'll be hanging up now."

I hated Justin so much that I didn't want to see him in the slightest.

I wanted to hang up after saying that, but then Justin said, "Wait, don't hang up! I just want to see you once, Anna. I've been feeling guilty for a really long time, and I've wanted to apologize to you. Will you at least give me a chance to?"

He sounded really anxious and sincere, but it didn't have any effect on me anymore.

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Chapter 280 Get Back Together

"Look, a lot of time has passed since everything that happened. There is no need for you to apologize, and I don't want your apology either. Also, I hope you'll stop contacting me from now on," I said coldly as Justin could no longer touch my heart.

Not wanting to give him a chance to say anything further, I hung up on him immediately after.

Being betrayed hurt me so much that I felt like I couldn't go on, but thinking back made me realize I wouldn't have met Michael if not for his betrayal.

I once thought that Justin was the man I loved the most in life, but I was wrong as I only learned what true love meant after meeting Michael.

Although I no longer had any feelings for Justin whatsoever, getting his call all of a sudden still worsened my mood greatly because he had hurt me the most in life.

Having spent the whole morning at home, I felt like I was going to die from boredom and decided to go shopping with Natalie in the afternoon.

I then gave her a call and went downstairs after agreeing on a time to meet up, only to bump into Justin when I arrived at the entrance of my residential area.

I didn't know the reason behind his surprise visit here at Birchwood, but I didn't even want to see him at all.

"Anna!"

I was about to head back home when he saw me and began running toward me while shouting my name.

Pretending not to see him was no longer an option as he had already spotted me, so I stopped in my tracks and turned around to stare coldly at him.

"I've been waiting here since morning, Anna! I'm so glad I get to see you!" Justin exclaimed as he stepped up to me.

He looked like a stranger longing to be close, but all I felt was an urge to get away from him as quickly as possible.

"Why did you wait here? I've made myself very clear on the phone earlier, Justin. I don't need your apology."

The mere thought of his phone call earlier got me all agitated because I didn't want to have any form of contact with him.

Justin seemed a little upset when he saw how cold I was. He said after a long pause, "I know I've hurt you deeply in the past, and it's perfectly justifiable for you to hate me, but I still want to apologize anyway."

The look in Justin's eyes was gentle like when we used to be madly in love with each other. It used to make me excited for days on end, but it no longer had any effect on me.

"I accept your apology, and I'll be on my way now that you're done with it."

I didn't want to waste any more time and energy on him as I still had a shopping date with Natalie later.

Justin then blocked my path and asked with a pained look on his face, "Do you still hate me, Anna?"

Displeased by him standing in my way, I said, "You're overthinking it. I've long since gotten past that phase of hating you."

"Really? You don't hate me for hurting you so deeply back then?"

Justin looked at me with a mix of surprise and doubt on his face.

"Anything else, Justin? I've made plans, and I really need to go now!"

All I wanted was to stop wasting any more time and get out of there.

"Let's have lunch together, Anna."

The fact that Justin was treating me to lunch seemed really suspicious, so I rejected him instinctively.

"No, thanks. With the way things are between us right now, it's hardly appropriate for us to have lunch together. Also, please refrain from coming to see me here in the future because I don't want my boyfriend to get the wrong idea."

Given how petty and possessive Michael was, he would surely get mad if he saw me still in contact with my ex-boyfriend.

At that moment, the only thing I wanted was to be with Michael and avoid unnecessary trouble if possible.

Despite me making myself crystal clear, Justin stubbornly refused to give up.

"Anna, do you really not know why I came to see you?" he shouted desperately from behind when he saw me walk away.

"Why?"

See? I knew there was more to it! There's no way he'd come here just to apologize! I stopped in my tracks and glared at him.

"Anna, I know what I'm about to say will make me sound like an absolute scumbag, but... I want to say it anyway." Justin looked me in the eye with a serious expression. "I was misguided, and I wronged you in the past, but I realized after breaking up that you are the one I truly love. Every night throughout the past six months, I've been dreaming about you and the happy moments we shared. Anna, I have come to seek your forgiveness and get back together with you."

I stared wide-eyed at Justin as I wasn't expecting him to talk about getting back together.

However, I didn't really feel anything because I stopped loving him a long time ago.

I kept quiet and simply looked at him indifferently.

"Anna, what happened in the past was all my fault, and I realize that now. I also realized that you're the one I love, so will you please forgive me and give me another chance?"

Justin walked up to me and held my hand tightly as he said that, but nothing could possibly change my mind about how I felt toward him at that point.

I pulled my hand out of his grip and shot him a cold glare in response.

"We're over, Justin. I'm never getting back together with you, so you should just forget about it."

This man had betrayed me, and I wasn't about to put up with his betrayal like that.

No amount of sincerity could touch my heart if I no longer had any feelings for him.

My tone was cold, and I gave him no room for negotiation. Justin was so taken aback that he froze for a moment before breaking into a grimace.

He probably didn't expect me to be so cold toward him at our reunion. He was staring at me with an upset look in his eyes.