

Love Like You Never Loved Before Chapter 40-49

Chapter 40

I was glad only a few close acquaintances of mine were male. Otherwise, Lyle would accuse me of having affairs with them.

The first time he confronted me, I was clueless about the things he had brought up as I was overly attached for my own good. I couldn't be bothered by his sarcastic remarks anymore. If he continued pushing his luck, I would sever ties with him.

Suddenly, I heard another commotion coming from the crowd as another bunch of strangers approached the hall. I noticed they had one thing in common – they were on their way to Christopher's side. The thing that shocked me the most was the fact they seemed to have great respect for Christopher.

All of a sudden, the onlookers said, "Wow! It turns out he's the one everyone's talking about! No wonder he seems so familiar!"

"He's so handsome! Others said he had been staying abroad to further his studies, but it turned out they were wrong! He had long made his way back!"

"I'm so honored to have him hand me a glass of wine just now! The Lane family is the talk of the town because of the tens of billions deal they have just sealed! Do you guys think he's here for those from the Tanner family? It's such a shame!"

My mind was all over the place when I heard their conversation. No wonder Wendy had been taking Christopher courteously. The Lane family was the one behind Avenport's success. Only those from the Miller family and the Goldstein family were on par with them.

Christopher greeted the crowd, including Nathan and Yvette, with his hands tucked in his pocket. As always, he had the same charming smile, but everything felt so different the moment I figured out his identity.

It turned out the differences between us were beyond my imagination. I was glad I managed to suppress the affection I had for him instead of falling head over heels just because of how well he treated me.

Otherwise, things might end up ugly because no way would those from the upper echelon take someone inferior like me seriously. I couldn't even deal with the douchebag from a second-rate member of the upper echelon, let alone a superior one.

I tried my best to play along with the crowd and forced a smile to conceal the concerns I had in mind.

Shortly after the banquet was commenced was a dance party. The host would join their guests for a dance. Thus, after a few minutes of pleasantries from Crystal, she started dancing in front of the guests.

The guests wouldn't stop applauding because of her uplifting speech and elegant dance. Conscious I would never be a match for her, the best fit I had put on could barely conceal the sense of inferiority. As the sweetheart of the family, Crystal had everything she would ever need, including everyone's attention.

A lot of bachelors couldn't wait to join their ideal better half for a dance. Even Lyle, who had been gawking at Crystal the moment she came into the room, was probably thinking of dancing with her. Aware of the thing he had in mind, I started inching away from the man.

After going for a round, Crystal stopped in front of Lyle and asked with a bright grin, "Lyle, care to join me for a dance?"

He nodded without a second thought. Thus, they waltzed across the floor in front of others as though they were a pair made in heaven. Meanwhile, the onlookers started sizing me up with a sympathetic look.

As much as it would hurt me, I had no choice but to force a smile in response. Otherwise, I would humiliate myself in front of others once again.

Why won't they stop staring at me with that look? I don't need your sympathy! No matter what that dancing duo is up to, they have to get rid of me! Otherwise, Crystal will be considered a mistress because I'm still Lyle's legal spouse!

Chapter 41

When I turned around, I noticed Christopher had been staring at me with a concerned look. However, I was glad he had resisted the urge to ask me to join him for a dance.

Once they finished dancing, Crystal brought Lyle back to my side and said, "Congratulations, Yvonne. I can't believe you have gotten married for two years. It has been two years since my last encounter with Lyle as well. I hope you won't mind having him joining me for a dance."

It was evident it was an attempt to assert dominance over me in disguise of words of blessings. She wanted to remind me she had known him for years while we were only married for two.

I decided to play along with the b*tch and answered, "It's not a big deal since you're my beloved cousin."

"You look so gorgeous today, Yvonne," Crystal complimented with a sincere smile, behaving as though she meant every word she had said.

"Oh, stop it. I'll never be as good-looking as you!" Actually, the moment those from the studio dolled me up, I was pleasantly surprised when I looked at myself in the mirror. It turned out I was still above average in terms of look.

"You stop it... Anyway, since our last meeting was ages ago, care to join me for a glass of drink? Consider it a drink of celebration for your marriage."

I was unable to turn her down as she gulped down her drink the moment she handed me mine. When I was about to finish mine, I felt someone pushing me from behind.

As I staggered and fell, Crystal was caught in the aftermath because she was right in front of me. I ended up spilling the entire glass of wine all over her dress. The moment I turned around, I found out Yvette was behind everything. She smirked at me, gloating over my misfortune and the things awaiting me.

“Crystal!” Scarlett and Wendy rushed over, pushing me away to help Crystal up.

Crystal looked at me with a pair of welled-up eyes, implying I was the one at fault for the mess she was in. I tried to explain it was nothing more than an accident, but Natalie slapped me in the face before I could defend myself.

“Yvonne, don’t you think that’s too much? Is it necessary for you to take things out on her just because she has asked Lyle to join her for a dance?”

I could still feel the tingling sensation coming from my swollen cheek after that slap. Meanwhile, Lyle rushed over to Crystal’s side, helping her up with a concerned look. He couldn’t be bothered by the fact his wife needed him even more than the woman next to him.

Although I was supposed to be immune by then, my heart still ached.

“Yvonne, Lyle and Crystal have always been friends! You can’t stop them from being friends just because he’s your spouse, can you? Of all the times, why do you have to pick on Crystal today?”

The pretentious Yvette rushed over to Crystal’s side and asserted with a pitiable front, “Aunt Natalie, a few weeks ago, Yvonne has miscarried! Please be considerate! I’m sure she’s just upset!”

“Huh? Am I supposed to bear the consequences of her own carelessness?”

Surrounded by a bunch of people, Crystal announced with a frown, “You guys need to stop blaming Yvonne because it’s my fault for being careless. I know she doesn’t mean it.”

Others would misperceive I was a despicable woman since Crystal went to the hassle of defending me. While some brought her upstairs to get changed, I became the laughingstock with my dress drenched in wine.

Chapter 42

I could barely suppress the urge to tell the onlookers it was Yvette’s fault because they wouldn’t stop making fun of me. However, it would not do me any good because that would make it seem like an attempt to blame others for my mistakes.

Out of the blue, Nathan yelled, “Hurry up and go get yourself changed! You’re embarrassing me!”

Within a few seconds, everyone turned around when they heard Christopher gasping out loud. I grabbed the opportunity and made my way. When I turned around, I saw Christopher completely drenched in wine, reprimanding the housekeeper.

I knew it was a favor he had done me to get me out of the nasty situation when I caught a glimpse of him winking at me. He was conscious that I was in desperate need of an opportunity to sneak away.

Once I returned to the garden, I took a seat under the tree and removed my pair of heels. I noticed that my ankle was already swollen. Considering the injuries I had sustained over the past few weeks, I thought my life couldn't get worse than it already was.

Out of nowhere, someone placed his coat over me. It was a familiar sensation, and upon a simple glimpse, I noticed it was Christopher again. He showed up and greeted me with a mischievous smile, "Can you look after yourself and stop getting into more troubles?"

"Well, isn't this the almighty Mr. Lane? Thank you so much for your advice." I intended to express my sincere gratitude, but I accidentally blurted it out in a sarcastic manner.

"Mr. Lane?" He repeated the way I addressed him with his brows furrowed. Irrked, he asked in return, "Can you stop acting in front of me? It's getting on my nerves for real."

I was rendered speechless because he was right – I had always been a coward around others apart from him. Horrified by the thought of falling in love with him, I was determined to stay away from him to avoid all sorts of uncertainties that would be in store for me.

"I'm so sorry!"

"Well, I'll forgive you for once." He patted my head fondly and said, "Are you sure you want to stay here when I have just escaped from a bunch of thirsty women?"

I was well aware I wasn't supposed to take a seat there. After all, others would definitely pick on me for meeting another man behind my husband's back.

"I don't want to return to the hall and see any of them." I looked in the direction of the hall and recalled I would have to make my way past the guests to get myself changed. Unwilling to be humiliated again, I changed my mind and decided to run away from them.

He looked at me and asked, "Hello? Isn't there some sort of secret tunnel that can lead us to somewhere else?" After he directed his question at me, he tried to massage my swollen feet, but I inched away from him due to the racking sensation I felt. "O-Ouch! Y-Yes!"

"Consider yourself lucky because it's your leg that's hurt instead of that non-existing brain of yours."

When I saw Christopher staring at my sprained ankle with a frown, I felt a sense of relief. He was an observant man that could easily notice things others couldn't. In fact, he was the first to ever believe in me.

Curious, I asked, "Don't you think I'm the one at fault for picking on Crystal?"

"Huh? Is that a joke?" He responded with his brows arched in confusion. A few seconds later, he leaned over and lifted me in between his arms, making our way past the woods. I nestled in between his arms and showed him the way to the secret route.

Standing in front of the tunnel that could barely fit an adult, I wondered if he would make his way through with me. The tunnel was made for Crystal's pet puppy she had years ago. In order to run away from the vicious ones, I had always taken cover in the tunnel when I was young.

Chapter 43

Christopher was taken aback by the so-called secret tunnel. After gaping in silence for a few seconds, he asked, "Is this the escape route you have been employing over the past decade?"

I leaned against his chest with my cheeks flushing when I recalled I had embarrassed myself more than once in front of him. He was always there when I was the most vulnerable in life.

In an attempt to defend myself, I rebuked while pursing my lips, "That's very rude of you when this is my only way to a temporary carefree life away from the vicious ones."

Christopher refused to make his way through the so-called tunnel. In the end, we climbed over the fence as though we were burglars breaking into someone else's place. Nonetheless, he couldn't be bothered and announced with his eyes gleaming, "Care to join me for an adventure?"

I felt a strong urge to cry as I couldn't believe he had given in to my absurd request. No woman could possibly turn him down when he had gone to great lengths to fulfill his better half's demand.

When I thought things would get worse, he showed up to my rescue and brought me away from the ones causing my pain. I felt a sense of serenity for the first time ever in my life.

He rushed me to a nearby clinic to get my sprained ankle treated once we fled. When the doctor tried to fix my leg, I started wailing due to the excruciating sensation. Unable to resist the urge to tease me, the doctor said, "What's wrong with the ladies nowadays? Can they stop whining over everything?"

The doctor's statement took me by surprise as he just teased a woman in her mid-twenties in front of another man.

"Who are you to speak when it isn't your ankle that's sprained?" Christopher deadpanned his reply, intimidating the doctor with a menacing aura.

I tapped on his hand and beckoned him to leave with me because it wouldn't be wise to pick on a middle-aged doctor over something trivial. Christopher lifted me in between his arms and brought me out of the clinic. I told him I could walk, but he insisted on carrying me back to the car.

Right then, a Maybach had been pulled over in front of the clinic the moment we stepped into the clinic. I was impressed by the fact he managed to get his car delivered to his location within thirty minutes.

Once we boarded the car, I noticed Zachary was the driver. Afraid others would see me in between Christopher's arms, I tried to move away from him, but my effort was to no avail. He wrapped his arm around my waist, indicating he would not let go of me.

I pinched him on his waist in an attempt to stop him. As a result, he held me firmly in between his arms with a frown. Running out of options, I decided to give in and enjoy the moment.

"You seem to be having a great time, huh? Have you any idea of the things I had to go through to run away from those thirsty women?" Zachary showed Christopher the stains that were all over his shirt.

Christopher chuckled and crossed his legs, teasing his friend in return, "Well, don't you think it's something you can be proud of? It means you're quite an attractive man!"

"Thanks, but no thanks! I don't need to be proud of something of that sort!" Once Zachary accelerated the car and departed, he asked, "Why do I feel like I'm a subordinate of yours instead of a friend?"

"Isn't it natural to do your friend in help a favor?" Christopher queried in return. He instructed Zachary to hurry up without any signs of remorse.

I thought that was the way best friends were supposed to interact with one another. On the contrary, Lyle and Christopher's so-called friendship seemed more like a friendship of utility rather than anything else.

Out of the blue, Zachary urged in a serious tone, "You had been spending most of your time away from home ever since your return six months ago. Your mother is searching high and low for you, and I'll be running out of excuses if you don't show up soon."

Chapter 44

"What's more important than life itself? If my mom asks you again, tell her I'm pondering about life."

"About life? Or about destroying life?"

"Or that, too!"

Christopher let out a manly chortle upon hearing my response. For some reason, his presence made me feel at ease. Shortly afterward, we arrived at a clubhouse, and he helped me get inside.

The apartment I once called home is now an empty shell where I spend long nights wondering what kind of fresh hell is going to take place when Lyle gets back.

Christopher was probably related to the owner of the clubhouse, as he led me through the backdoor and went straight up to the members' zone. I plopped down on the couch, too tired to lift a finger. As Zachary tried to make his way in, he was stopped by Christopher at the door. "Don't be the awkward third wheel. Make yourself scarce."

What a jerk. Zachary let out a long sigh. "You're such a horrible friend," he growled out before leaving the room.

When only the two of us were left in the private room, Christopher fetched me a set of clean clothes so I could get rid of my wet ones. Instead of turning around like a gentleman, the man just stared at me with unblinking eyes.

Feeling embarrassed, I finally broke the silence and gave him a nudge with my hand. "Can you please turn around? I'm trying to get changed."

"Haven't I already seen everything? Just get changed, or don't come crying to me when you catch a cold tomorrow," he said while scanning my body from head to toe.

"Just turn around, please!" It didn't feel natural to do that in front of a man.

"Alright, alright. As you wish." He finally turned around.

I was just about to slip out of my dress when he spun around and said cheekily, "Are you sure you don't need my help? After all, you're injured."

I threw my hands up at his tongue-in-cheek offer. "I've injured my leg, not my hands."

I cracked up upon seeing the disappointed look on his face. He was both a spoiled brat as well as a reserved and arrogant emperor, but right now, he reminded me of a child who had just been denied candy.

My phone rang just as I changed into clean clothes. It was from Lyle. I hesitated briefly before answering the call. "Yvonne Tanner, where the hell are you? Are you so desperate for men you're whoring around town?" he remarked callously.

I gritted my teeth. Such was my husband. As though it was not enough to watch me being bullied by others, he now called me to rub more salt in the wound. "You're right. To you, I'm nothing, aren't I? Since there's no going back for us, I may as well keep my options open and hook up with a few more suitors while I can. I'm about to get some action here, so, piss the hell off!" I barked into the phone before hanging up the call and slamming my phone on the table.

As I lay on the couch, I was overwhelmed by a sense of despondency. I forgot who I was and how I had fallen in love with Lyle in the beginning.

My heart still ached as I mulled over our exchanges over the phone. I had been in love with the man for ten years. During such times, he had transformed from a thirteen-year-old boy to an outstanding, successful man. If only I could turn back time...

If a dream that came true isn't followed by a happily-ever-after, I would rather remain the Cinderella who never found her Prince Charming. That way, I can at least still preserve the enchantment of love in my imaginative bubble.

“Christopher, I feel like drinking some alcohol. May I?” I took out a lollipop from my handbag and put it into my mouth. It still tasted sugary sweet, but it did nothing to assuage the emptiness I felt on the inside.

Chapter 45

“Alright, I’ll fetch you some,” Christopher said. In no time, he came back with two bottles of red wine and vodka.

Having worked in the line of sales that involved a lot of socializing in the past, I had built up a strong tolerance for alcohol. As such, I was still rather sober after downing half a bottle of wine. As I tried to gulp down the remaining liquid, Christopher swiftly removed the bottle from my hand.

He stared deep into my eyes as he chided, “Binge drinking is bad for you.” A glint of sorrow flashed across his eyes.

“Please let me drink. You see, I’ve had a crush on Lyle for ten years, and married him for two. Why is it that in his eyes, I’m nothing but a whore? Tell me, what have I done wrong?”

Christopher finally relented and handed the wine bottle back to me. As I resumed my drinking, I started telling him my story with Lyle; how I used to have a secret crush on him, how he always humiliated me, and how he then dangled hope in front of me.

Lyle, you’re so cruel. Why did you marry me if you didn’t love me? Why do you always give me new hopes when I think all is lost, only to crush them all by having an affair?

“Stop thinking about him. You can think about me from now on!” Christopher declared while holding out a wine glass to drink with me. I chuckled at his response, wanting to drown in his kindness.

I kept singing the song “Tomorrow Will Be A Good Day” while wiping away my tears. It’ll indeed be nice if I wake up to a good day tomorrow. “Christopher, sing with me. Sing ‘Tomorrow Will Be A Good Day’ for me, please.”

After becoming a little tipsy, I started loosening up. I knew he wouldn’t hurt me; I felt safe around him. It had been a long time since I was able to just be a girl around a man.

Christopher had an attractively dulcet and husky voice when he sang. When his gaze turned to me, he looked just like Prince Charming coming to life.

I continued to stare at him. As though being enchanted, I inched closer and closer toward him and extended my finger to rub playfully at his arched eyebrow. Instead of backing off, he pulled me into his arms.

I was now sitting on his lap, listening to him sing. The next thing I knew, our lips touched.

The kiss started off very soft and gentle. When I didn't resist, the kiss deepened, and I was drowned in his wine-scented embrace. Already more than tipsy at this stage, my hand reached for his collar and started tugging away at his tie.

The kiss grew more fervent by the second. When almost all the air from my lungs had been sucked out, his lips finally retreated from my mouth. They moved down to my neck and then collar bone.

When I snapped back to reality, I was already lying flat on the couch. Christopher's body was on top of me, and his hands were moving about around my body. Doubt flashed through my mind when his legs spread mine apart.

Sensing my hesitation, the man held himself back and covered me with a thin blanket. "I'm sorry," I uttered under my breath.

If we finished what we started, everything I had said to Lyle would become a joke. I couldn't bring myself to stoop to his level.

I wanted to leave Lyle, officially.

"Don't be. I understand," he mumbled while stroking my hair. "You should get some rest. After all, you just got out of the hospital. You shouldn't engage in strenuous exercises."

He was a thoughtful person. Not only did he care about my feelings, but he also watched out for my health. Seeing as I continued to stare at him, Christopher uttered, "What's the matter? Are you falling in love with me?"

Chapter 46

I was at a loss as to how to answer his question, so I decided to keep my mouth shut. Instead of pushing me for an answer, he pulled me into his arms and said goodnight. I closed my eyes but failed to shut out my imagination that had run wild. I thought about Lyle and how we always ended up being at each other's throats every time we met.

I also thought about Crystal and Yvette. Lastly, my mind was filled with Christopher. "Christopher, why are you so nice to me?"

The man let out a small smile and said, "I told you, I love you, little calf. It's only natural for me."

I didn't buy that reason. "I don't get it. You can have any woman you want, whereas I'm just a married woman. According to Lyle, a scrap."

Christopher swatted my buttock and said in a stern manner, "You're not a scrap." I blinked my eyes a few times, admiring his perfectly shaped chin.

"Maybe we have met before. You may even say that this is love at first sight."

We've met? I tried to search a few times in my mind for any distant memory of him, but my efforts were to no avail. The solemnness in his tone, however, suggested that he was being serious.

I smiled slightly. "I remember meeting you at one of Lyle's office gatherings. Did you fall in love with me then?" I asked jokingly.

"Maybe. Or maybe even earlier."

"Lies!" It was a beautiful lie, that a fine man would fall in love with me at first sight and want nothing but the best for me.

The next morning, Christopher insisted I finish some chicken soup before leaving the clubhouse. I took a few sips and realized that the soup tasted the same as the one I had in the hotel last time. "I must say, the quality of this chef is below par. If I knew it didn't take much to be a chef, I might have considered becoming one."

Christopher tried a spoonful and asked in all seriousness, "You don't like it?"

"It's alright." I shook my head. "My cooking skill is worse."

"I'll have the chef take note of this and make sure there's improvement next time," he told me firmly.

I let out a smile in return. The man appeared to be rather reluctant to part with me as I was leaving. "Make sure you call me if you need any help. Keep your phone on at all times. Do not ignore my text messages," he reminded.

"Okay." He only let me go after I had agreed to his set of conditions. I wasn't sure if I would contact him again, though. After all, he belonged to the Lane family. The idea of involving myself with such a prominent family was simply too far-fetched.

Not long after, I came back to an empty apartment. I recalled my last conversation with Lyle when he demanded to know my whereabouts. I'm not Crystal, so it's only normal that he is not waiting at home for my return.

Seeing the house in a mess, I started to clean it up. Lyle finally showed up as I was taking out the trash. His eyes were filled with contempt as he looked at me. "I want a divorce," he announced.

Even though I had thought about this scenario numerous times, it still hurt when the words were finally uttered. Unlike him, I couldn't easily discard the past ten years we spent like he could. I looked at the man I used to love and asked, "It's because Crystal is back, isn't it?"

"That's right. I don't need a woman of ill repute by my side. You're nothing compared to Crystal. If you still have any self-respect, just sign the paper. We can finally part ways then," he said, tossing a document in my direction.

I picked up the papers and the words "Divorce Settlement" jumped out at me. The words he spoke continued to ring in my ear. I'm nothing compared to Crystal. How hurtful.

Chapter 47

We had been married for two years, yet all that was left were the looks of disdain and ridicule in his eyes.

As I leafed through the papers, I came across the section where he listed down the reason for divorce. It was reported that I had engaged in multiple adulteries with different men during our marriage. There were also photographs attached to the report, including pictures of Benjamin and Zachary. I was very close to losing my mind when I saw all the attached pictures.

I couldn't believe how he could pen down such blatant hypocrisy in the form of an accusation. I let out a wry, derisive laugh. "Lyle Smith, you're such a shameless bastard! When you were busy twisting the stories in this paper, have you forgotten about your affair with Bianca Lewis?"

"Don't try to deny all of it, Yvonne. Just save your nonsense and sign the paper. We'll be done then," urged Lyle.

"I can't believe you would go to such length for Crystal. Do you think you can just lay all the blame on me so that you can walk out of this being the nobler one?" My chest was burning with rage.

By this point, all my remaining sanity had flown out of the window. "To hell with this paper! I won't sign this piece of crap. Do whatever you want with Crystal, but she will always remain a mistress!" I cried at the top of my lungs.

His expression darkened in the next instant, and before I knew it, he slapped me across the face. "Didn't you marry me because of money? If this is one of your dirty tricks to extort money from me, you can keep dreaming because I won't give you a cent! What are you going to do about it, huh?"

I put a hand over my burning cheek and stared hard at him. "Come at me if you have any real evidence of me having an affair. Otherwise, I'll expose the video recording of Bianca to the public. Let's see if Crystal will still want to marry you after that."

Lyle's expression was a lot more intimidating now that he was feeling truly threatened. Another slap landed loudly on my face. "B*tch! If you don't sign the papers today, I'll have you begging for me to sign it in the future!"

He then flew into a rage and pushed me onto the floor before landing more punches on my head and trying to tear away my clothes. My head started to spin as I realized this was the first time Lyle had escalated his violence toward me.

But I no longer feared him. At that moment, I felt nothing but a blazing rage as the man tried to force himself upon me. There was no way I would let him have a physical relationship with me as I only felt repulsed and sickened by him.

I was still struggling to free myself from him when my hand reached an ashtray on the coffee table and struck his head with full force. The glass ashtray fell onto the floor, shattering into pieces. Blood started to trickle down from his forehead as he looked at me in stun.

I took the opportunity to push him over and ran toward the couch. I picked up a vase behind the couch and gestured to throw it over if he dared make another move in my direction. Lyle still appeared dumbfounded. He looked at me with an inexplicable glint in his eyes.

I recognized that look. In the past, he had that exact look on his face every time he attempted to soften up after he blew a fuse. But this time, I wasn't going to let that stop me from getting away. I slowly took a few steps back until I reached the door. When I finally did, I turned and ran for my life.

The only thing I should feel thankful for was that I was wearing some old sportswear. I had changed into them to clean the house before Lyle got back, and they were thankfully still in one piece after I was tackled by him.

Honestly, I wanted to divorce Lyle more than anything. This marriage had left me with nothing but despair and sorrow. However, he shouldn't have tried to occupy the moral high ground and smear my name with false accusations.

At that moment, I came to a painful realization. Our relationship was already broken to a point where we wouldn't be able to end the marriage on amicable terms. I couldn't help but contemplate if I had ever understood him as I once thought I had.

Chapter 48

The sky was shrouded in darkness. Following the dark clouds was a strong gust of wind. My eyes were irritated by the sand carried in the wind.

Even the Gods are picking on me? The weather was fine a few minutes ago. Where can I go now? Fortunately, I had a stalwart friend that I could always count on.

After borrowing the phone of a pedestrian walking by, I gave Sabrina a call. Less than half an hour later, she arrived in her car to pick me up. Gazing at the palm print on my face, she turned livid. Sabrina wanted to give Lyle a piece of her mind but she was deterred by me. This is between me and Lyle. Getting her caught up in this would only exacerbate things.

"Yvonne, I don't even know what I should say to you anymore. You really ought to look out for yourself more. If things keep going like this, you'll end up being a divorcée," Sabrina lectured me while driving.

Although her words were a bit harsh, I knew she really cared about me. Out of all the high-born ladies I knew, she was the only one who was willing to put up with my clumsiness and be my friend.

Sabrina brought me to her apartment and gave me a change of clothes as she said, "You can't live like this anymore, Yvonne. You should divorce him. If he was shameless enough to hit you today, who knows what horrendous things he'll do to you in the future."

"I know you like him a lot, but you really need to put yourself first. Love isn't everything to a woman. Even without love, we can carry on just fine as long as we take care of ourselves," she continued.

Sabrina was worried that I would continue to love Lyle despite his cruelty toward me. I feigned a smile and shook my head before replying, "Actually, the thought of divorcing him has been in my mind for about two months now. However, for Grandma's sake, I tried to get along with him. Today, Lyle suddenly accused me of cheating and wanted to use that as a reason to divorce me. How can I divorce him now? It'll seem like I really did cheat on him."

My reputation will be ruined if I agree to divorce him now.

"What? How despicable can this guy get!" Sabrina was getting more and more riled up.

Right? I never would've thought he was such an abhorrent man. To my chagrin, I used to think he was the prince of my life. I can't believe I was jejune enough to be beguiled by him back then. I should've known better.

I was lost in thought as I struggled to fit into her clothes. Sabrina was thinner than me, so her clothes were a bit tight on me.

Seeing the somber look on my face, my friend queried, "So... What exactly do you plan to do now? Do you want to continue putting up with him?"

"Yes. I don't care if he doesn't give me any alimony payment. I just don't want to seem like I was really cheating on him." Thinking back, I would always try to come up with ideas to try to get a piece of his fortune for myself, but I simply couldn't care less now.

After staying in Sabrina's apartment for a day, I decided it was time to leave. I can't bother her anymore. She's got things she needs to do too. After Sabrina headed to work, I went back to my apartment furtively.

When I got back home, the mess had been cleaned up. Even the wedding photo of Lyle and I had been put back to its original place. I really don't get Lyle's intentions.

He fools around with other women all day long and says he wants to divorce me. But why does he still act nice to me sometimes? Does he think I will forgive him if he shows me kindness every now and then? What a joke! I'll never forgive him after what he's done to me.

I took out my luggage and started packing my things into it. As I was doing so, I realized that most of the things I had decided to place in my apartment were based on Lyle's preference. I always chose the ornaments and furniture he liked for my apartment.

If only he cared about me as much as I cared about him.

Chapter 49

After I was done packing, I grabbed the wedding photo and glared vacuously at it for a while.

When Lyle and I were getting married, we didn't have a wedding ceremony, so there weren't any wedding photos of us.

The wedding photo in my hand had actually been fabricated by me. I had taken a photo of me in a wedding dress and edited his image into the photo. Just like this photo, our marriage is nothing but a deception. Enraged, I slammed the wedding photo frame onto the ground, shattering the glass of the frame.

In the end, I took the fake wedding photo out from its frame and tore it to pieces. With my luggage in hand, I walked out of my apartment. As I was getting out of my apartment building, I couldn't help taking a few more glances at the third floor of the building.

I can't believe I'm still reluctant to leave this place after all that has happened to me here. My eyes were starting to tear up. I raised my head to prevent the tears from flowing down.

My only wish is to have a warm and happy family with a husband that truly loves me. Is that too much to ask?

I went to the bank to check my total savings. Agonizingly, there was only twenty thousand in my bank account. I can't even rent a decent house in Avenport with the pittance that I saved. Guess I'll have to rent a basement.

That being said, it's not like I haven't lived underground before. Back in university, I had to spend frugally every day to eke out a living. I lived in a basement back then. This isn't new to me.

I went to various intermediary agents in the attempt to find a basement with cheap rent, but to no avail. All the available places were too expensive for me.

Standing on the streets, I realized that I was truly homeless. Even though I have a husband and a father, there isn't a place I can ensconce myself in. How ridiculous...

Sabrina will be going out with her potential boyfriend these two days. I don't want to trouble her now. I guess I'll have to stay in a cheap hotel for the night. With that thought in mind, I set out in search of a hotel. When I arrived at the entrance, I was hesitant to go in when I saw the crowd of drunkards inside.

The men wolf-whistled when they saw me and even offered me a few hundred to sleep with them. How can I stay in a place like this! After a while, the rain started pouring again. Standing under the eaves of the hotel, raindrops were blown onto my face by the heavy wind.

With my teeth clenched, I went back inside the hotel to get a room. I requested a room that was isolated from other guests and quickly went inside my room. Thirsty, I poured myself a glass of water using the water bottle there. Just as I was about to drink the water, I noticed that the color of the water was a bit off.

Upon opening the cap of the water bottle, I was thoroughly revolted by what I saw. The inside of the water bottle was filled with toilet paper. After throwing the water bottle away, I laid down on the bed with a sullen look on my face. I took out my phone and started searching for job advertisements.

My grades in university were pretty good, so I was confident that I was going to find a job easily, but that was not the case. All the job advertisements that I saw required someone with at least three years of working experience. Having only one year of working experience, I was immediately rejected by them.

In dismay, I closed my eyes and fell into sleep shortly after. When I woke up, I was feeling ravenous and thirsty. I quickly opened the door and went outside to purchase a few water bottles. As I was in a hurry, I inadvertently bumped into another person around the corner.

The person I bumped into reeked of alcohol. He grabbed my hand and asked, "Five hundred for a night with a cute gal like you? I should've come to this hotel sooner."

"Let me go. I'm one of the guests here." I struggled to shake off his hand, but the drunk man thought I was teasing him. He let out a chuckle and pressed me against the wall.