Chapter 751 Send Them Home

"What is it?" Tessa had a bad feeling about this.

At that, Remus expressed his thoughts bluntly. "You have to be on bed rest in Sawyer Residence until the baby is born, and after that, the child has to return to us. I will not allow the child to be under your care."

Tessa turned slightly upset after hearing his words. Give up my dreams and also separate me from my child...

"Sorry, I can't do that." She shook her head, and her gaze unyielding. "I won't leave the child with you guys, nor will I be on bed rest in Sawyer Residence. I'm a part of an orchestra, and I have rehearsals and performances to do. This is my hard-won chance, so I won't give it up."

Likewise, Nicholas frowned as he looked at his grandfather disapprovingly. "I will not stop Tessa from pursuing her dream, and we will raise the child ourselves. You don't have to bother yourself with this, Grandpa." He made his stance clear.

Naturally, their answer was within Remus' expectations.

"This is as far as I will compromise whether you two agree to it or not," he announced coldly as he remained motionless on the couch.

Tessa turned grim in an instant, and Timothy wasn't looking any better either.

He even thought the old man was being borderline ridiculous. What did he see his sister as?!

At that, he snapped, "Don't you think you're being high-handed, Old Master Sawyer? My sister is a human, not your family's breeding stock. Who are you to treat her like that?"

After taking a cursory gander at the young man, Remus sneered and said, "Since your sister has already married Nicholas, it's only right that she follows our rules. Feel free to leave if you can't accept it."

Remus' words latter words had undoubtedly infuriated Timothy completely, and he instantly wanted to take his sister away.

Kieran, who was good at reading people, noticed this before Timothy could do anything and hurriedly stopped the man by whispering, "Don't make things much worse for your sister anymore. Can't you tell that my grandfather's pissing you off on purpose so that you'll eventually take your sister away and never come back?"

After hearing Kieran's words, Timothy gradually calmed down as he looked at the self-possessed old man on the couch. However, it didn't mean that he wasn't still pissed.

Tessa, on the other hand, was still rather upset even if she had heard the two younger brothers' whispers. All she wanted was to be with the man she loved. Why was this impossible?

Nicholas' heart ached when he sensed the sadness his beloved was exuding, and he looked to his grandfather, speaking up for her with an indisputable tone. "It's my call where and how my woman lives, so you don't have to bother yourself with this."

Livid, Remus struck the cane in his hand onto the floor with a thud and reprimanded through gnashed teeth, saying, "Nicholas, have you forgotten your obligations to the Sawyer Family as its patriarch?!"

Nicholas didn't even spare Remus a glance. He turned to Tessa as soon as he was done speaking, only to be met with her worried gaze. "Don't worry, I've got this."

He then cooed, "You don't have to bother yourself with anything else either. You can continue to do whatever you like. As for the Sawyer Family, anyone who wants to inherit it can be my guest as far as I'm concerned."

Clearly, Nicholas was directing his latter words at Remus, who was predictably livid.

Likewise, Tobias and Stefania weren't happy either.

"This is absurd!" Tobias thundered.

However, Nicholas couldn't care less about his parents and grandfather's anger. "If being the patriarch of the Sawyer Family means that I can't be with the woman I love, then I'd rather give up the spot," he said plainly before taking a pause. "I've known that the entire Sawyer Family is my responsibility ever since I was a child, and I've never slacked even for a day. For this, I've sacrificed too many things, but I don't want my happiness to also be one of them."

Remus and the Sawyer couple were rendered at a loss for words, and it felt as if they had been choked after hearing Nicholas' words.

Seeing so, Nicholas ordered with a deadpan face, "Kieran, please send Grandpa, Mom, and Dad back home."

With that, he took Tessa out of the mansion without ever looking back at his family.

Chapter 752 I Will Always Be by Your Side

"Mommy, Daddy, wait for me." Gregory hurriedly chased after the star-crossed lovers seeing that they had gone far away.

Meanwhile, Timothy followed right behind.

After they were out of the mansion, Tessa grabbed Nicholas and asked worriedly, "Is it really okay for us to leave just like this?"

"It is." Knowing what his beloved was worried about, he comforted her by saying, "Anything that's in your favor will forever be okay."

"But—" Tessa still couldn't relax, but Nicholas stopped her before she could say anything. "That's enough. As much as the Sawyer Family is my responsibility, it can do without me, and I don't want you to suffer any grievances either."

Nicholas' words earlier in the living room popped into her head upon hearing so, and her heart couldn't help but ache for him.

She remembered how she had thought Nicholas was an emotionless robot the first time she met him.

"I'll stay by your side no matter what." She held his hands firmly.

Just then, Remus roared angrily from inside the mansion, bellowing, "Nicholas, come back here this instance!"

However, the latter continued to ignore it.

Following that, Nicholas took Tessa back to the apartment.

Tessa cooked up a simple meal since they hadn't had dinner. During the pleasant meal, the family of four said nothing about what happened in the mansion as though all of them had forgotten about the unpleasant incident.

"Here, have some more, Tess." Timothy scooped some food for his dear sister, leading Gregory to follow suit. "Mommy, you need to eat more for the baby to get enough nutrients."

Though Nicholas said nothing, he thoughtfully picked out the bones stuck on the fish before putting the piece of meat onto her plate.

Tessa, on the other hand, felt loved as she looked at the mountain of food on her plate.

Sometime after dinner, she took Gregory to the shower after seeing that it was getting late.

Meanwhile, Nicholas got a call from his brother, who still took the initiative to tell him what was going on in the mansion even though Nicholas left and disregarded his family.

"Nicholas, Grandpa's still mad. You guys should just stay outside for now, and I'll arrange for them to go back tomorrow."

Nicholas hummed a response and said, "Please help me take care of things in the company. I probably won't pay any attention to it for now."

"I understand." Kieran knew that his brother wouldn't return unless their grandfather gave in, and he had no objections to it.

After all, Nicholas had already sacrificed a lot on his behalf. What he could do now was to fully support his brother in his pursuit of love.

Of course, Nicholas wouldn't know Kieran had this notion, only exhorting, "Have someone take care of Grandpa after you guys go back. Call me if anything happens."

Just when Nicholas wanted to head into the bedroom, he found Tessa coming up to him as soon as he turned around.

"Is Greg asleep?"

"Yeah, he fell asleep a couple of minutes ago." Tessa nodded subtly and landed her gaze on the phone in Nicholas' hand. "Was that Kieran on the phone? Did something happen over there?"

When he saw her worried look, Nicholas took her to their bedroom as he comforted her, saying, "Nothing happened. You don't have to worry."

Though Tessa was relieved by the news, she still felt terrible as she reproached herself, "If only I were better, your grandfather won't be so against me."

"Don't say that. You're already outstanding enough." Nicholas pulled her into his arms and comforted her, not liking how Tessa belittled herself. "Trust me, I can sort everything out."

But—"

"That's enough, I can take care of everything that happens. You just have to stay by my side, rely on me, and don't give up."

Tessa stared into his fathomless eyes for some time before finally nodding softly. "I will always be by your side no matter what happens!"

Chapter 753 Talk Some Sense into Him

Nicholas pressed his forehead against Tessa's after receiving her declaration of love and mumbled melodiously, "I will hold you to your word."

"Be my guest," said Tessa as she stared soberly into Nicholas' eyes.

he kissed the pair of dazzling eyes, slowly making his way down, stopping at her lips.

Outside, Timothy hurriedly scurried away from the loving couple sharing an intimate moment.

He had come to talk to his dear brother-in-law about the Sawyer elder. However, he overheard the couple's conversation, and after listening to Nicholas' words, he thought there was no need for him and Nicholas to talk anymore.

Kieran very quickly made the arrangements the following day to send Remus, Tobias, and Stefania back home.

Before leaving, he even deliberately notified Nicholas, who came to the airport with Tessa in no time to see them off.

Unsurprisingly, Remus still had a problem with the couple, but Tessa wasn't bothered as Nicholas had successfully taken the load off her mind.

Just then, Stefania came up to Tessa and said plainly, "I'd like to have a word with you in private."

"What is it that you can't say here?" Nicholas looked at his mother with furrowed brows, evidently not wanting the two to talk in private.

Stefania was bothered by the fact that her own son was looking defensively at her.

However, she turned a blind eye to him and fixed her gaze on Tessa, who looked at Nicholas with a smile at that. "I'll be right back."

Alas, Nicholas could only agree. "Make it quick."

Tessa nodded in response and turned her head back to Stefania, asking, "Where shall we go?"

Stefania's gaze on Tessa was filled with incomprehensibly mixed emotions, and it wasn't until a moment later that she pointed to the seating area aside. "Let's talk there."

Tessa nodded in agreement and followed Stefania over.

Of course, Nicholas didn't feel comfortable about it and kept a close eye on them.

Kieran went up to his brother in the meantime and whispered, "Nic, are you really going to let the two of them talk in private? Are you not afraid of Mom giving Tessa a hard time?"

Nicholas only gave him a side-eye glance in response and turned his attention back to Tessa immediately.

Of course, Stefania noticed her eldest son's gaze, and she didn't know what to make of it.

"I really didn't expect Nicholas to go this far for you." Stefania sighed after the two sat down.

Tessa looked to the man standing upright not far away upon hearing Stefania's words, and her lips were laced with a loving smile that didn't go unnoticed by Stefania. After tucking her emotions away, Stefania got straight to the point. "Miss Reinhart, I have a feeling you don't know just how intense the pressure you'll face

is if you marry Nicholas. Every massive wealthy family has a complicated network, and the Sawyer Family is no exception. In fact, we are even more complicated than other wealthy families."

Tessa turned sober at that, and Stefania continued to speak upon noticing the change. "Nicholas' marriage bears the weight of many things. Someone will eventually come up and use this to make an issue of something."

Tessa chewed on her lips, not sure what to say.

Though she had never met any of Nicholas' relatives, she had an idea how serious things could get judging from how grave Stefania sounded.

Even so, she wouldn't leave Nicholas.

"No matter what, I'll stay by Nicholas' side and face the problem with him." She looked at Stefania with resolution.

The latter wavered when she saw the young woman's determination, but very quickly, she suppressed it and said indifferently, "I'm not telling you this because of anything. The ship has sailed, after all. It wouldn't be right of me to continue separating you two. I just hope you can put yourself in Nicholas' shoes more often and think about what's good for him, as well as try to talk some sense into him; see that he doesn't fall out with his family because of this."

Tessa was a little embarrassed, knowing she had taken things the wrong way. "I'll try my best to talk some sense into him."

Stefania nodded in response and looked toward Tessa's belly, exhorting, "Since you're pregnant, take good care of yourself and the baby inside you."

Chapter 754 Don't Fall Out With Your Family

Tessa nodded like a well-behaved school girl at Stefania's words, feeling both relieved and rejoiced.

She could tell her mother-in-law hadn't accepted her entirely, but it was only a matter of time since Stefania was now concerned about her health and the baby in her belly. After all, Rome wasn't built in a day either.

Nicholas had no clue what the two were talking about, and he couldn't help feeling distraught when his Tessa still hadn't returned to him.

When she finally did, he hurriedly went up to her and asked worriedly, "Are you okay?"

The more pressing question was if Stefania had given her a hard time.

Touched by how distraught he looked, Tessa held his hand and soothed him by saying, "I'm good."

Meanwhile, Stefania was watching from the side, and she couldn't help shooting an irritable glare at her son. "Relax, will you? I'm not going to chew her up."

However, Nicholas was unbothered as he scrutinized his beloved, finally easing his mind when he saw that she wasn't forcing a smile.

Soon, it was time for the Sawyers to board the plane, and Nicholas brought Tessa to bid them farewell.

Even at this time, Remus still held an aversion toward Nicholas and Tessa.

To that, Tobias and Stefania said nothing but only exhorted Nicolas to take good care of Gregory.

Keiran, on the other hand, didn't have many misgivings. "Take care of yourself, alright, Tessa? As well my brother and unborn niece too," he said while waving Tessa goodbye.

"I will, goodbye." Tessa bid him farewell with a smile.

Very quickly, the group boarded the plane home.

During the journey back to the apartment, Nicholas hugged Tessa while asking, "What did my mom talk to you about?"

"Nothing much, we just chatted casually."

Knowing he was worried about her, she looked up at him and said with a smile, "Relax, she really didn't say anything awful or unpleasant to me."

"Really?" He was skeptical.

Tessa chuckled to herself. "Really. Trust me, alright?"

Nicholas nodded and asked no more when he saw her bright smile.

Later, the two came home to find Timothy playing with Gregory in the living room.

"Mommy, Daddy, you're back." Gregory cheerfully ran up to the couple upon seeing them.

Tessa held the little guy and asked with a smile, "Did you behave while we were away?"

"I've always been a very good boy. Mommy, come and sit down. Don't stand, or you'll tire the baby," Gregory urged Tessa to sit on the couch, dreading that the baby in Tessa's belly would be exhausted.

As much as Tessa thought the little guy was being ridiculous, she was still touched, for she could tell the baby meant a lot to Gregory.

On the other hand, Nicholas and Timothy smiled dotingly as they silently watched the two interact.

"I should head back soon since Tess is okay now," Timothy announced out of the blue sometime after the family of four messed around in the living room.

Tessa nodded in acknowledgment, then seemingly thought of something and turned to Nicholas. "When are you taking Gregory home?"

"I don't want to go home. I want to stay with Mommy and baby," Gregory interjected before Nicholas could even say anything.

While speaking, Gregory even latched onto Tessa's arm, showing his determination.

At that, Nicholas smiled. "When did I say we're leaving?"

While Gregory was elated at the news, Tessa frowned.

She was worried that Nicholas was staying to upset his grandfather because of what happened the night before.

With that, she shot a hinting glance at her brother, asking him to take Gregory away so she could have a moment with Nicholas.

Timothy understood immediately and took the little fellow away from the living room.

Meanwhile, Nicholas naturally caught the siblings' silent conversation, and he held Tessa's hand, asking, "What is it that you want to talk to me about?"

"Are you not willing to go back because of what happened yesterday? If that is the case, I don't want you to fall out with your family because of me."

Chapter 755 Ants Gnawing At His Heart

Nicholas burst out with a chuckle. "You're overthinking it. I'm not going back because I want to take care of you. I will only worry about your condition if I go back. Besides, I want to spend this important moment with you."

After all, he had missed Gregory's birth. He didn't want to miss it again.

Of course, Tessa didn't know what was running through his mind, feeling rather happy after hearing Nicholas' explanation.

Over the next few days, Tessa returned to her hectic rehearsals.

Time flew by, and they were fast approaching the date of the performance.

With Nicholas and Gregory by her side, Tessa was in a rather good mood every day, and her morning sickness had become less severe.

Similarly, Hathaway would check up on Tessa's well-being in the orchestra every now and then, and she could finally ease her mind seeing that Tessa was looking better day by day. "It looks like your husband is taking very good care of you. You've even gotten chubbier at the cheeks."

Tessa reflexively felt her cheeks, smiling sweetly. "He is indeed very sweet."

As the two weren't being evasive, their interaction naturally didn't go unnoticed by Kathleen as the woman passed by, and she was filled with rage and revulsion.

She hadn't been doing too well either lately, but her mother was never as concerned with her as she was with Tessa.

Sure enough, it had to do with this b*tch, Tessa. This wretch had seized her mother's love!

While glaring resentfully at Tessa, a thought popped into her head.

She heard this b*tch was pregnant, which was good news for her.

With a child coming, she'd like to see how Tessa could still compete with her for the spot of the lead violinist.

Plus, now that she had a child, she wouldn't be able to seduce Scott anymore!

Of course, as rejoiced as she was, it still wasn't enough to offset her animosity toward Tessa.

After all, she still hadn't forgotten the humiliation the woman caused her!

That day, Scott, who hadn't appeared for a long time, came to the orchestra.

Though he wasn't touring lately, he was preparing for a solo violin recital.

"I haven't seen you in a long time," asked Hathaway concerningly when she saw Scott. "What have you been up to lately?"

"I'm working on a solo recital," Scott explained amiably while looking in Tessa's direction with a smile.

Hathaway didn't catch his subtle action but was instead surprised by the news. "You're opening a solo recital? How have I not heard about it?"

"I've been keeping it under wraps before this. Actually, I'm here today to give you guys the invitation." While speaking, Scott pulled out three exquisite-looking invitations and handed Hathaway her invitation. "I hope I'll have the honor of having you there."

"Of course." Hathaway accepted the invitation with a smile.

After nodding, Scott handed one of the remaining two to Kathleen. "This is yours. I hope to see you there as well."

"I'll definitely be there." Kathleen accepted the invitation gladly.

However, her smile was no longer as bright when she noticed the third invitation in Scott's hand

"Is this for Tessa?" she asked explicitly.

Scott nodded in admission while handing Tessa the invitation.

However, just as Tessa was about to take it, Kathleen started speaking sarcastically, "Aren't you pregnant now? I'm sure it'd be inconvenient for you to go."

"You're pregnant?" Scott looked toward Tessa with surprise as a hint of loss flashed across his eyes.

Meanwhile, Tessa shot Kathleen an icy glare, having no desire to acknowledge this unaccountable woman.

With that, she took the invitation from Scott with both hands, smilingly faintly. "I am pregnant, but as your friend, how can I not show up to your solo recital? I'll definitely be there on time."

On the other hand, Scott felt as though ants were gnawing at his heart when he looked at the beautiful, smiling woman.

Fearing his expression would betray him if he stayed for too long, he left after handing out all of the invitations, and Kathleen instantly chased after him when she saw that he was leaving in a hurry.

However, as Scott's mind was currently in a mess, he had no interest in having a conversation with her.

Chapter 756 Scott's Solo Recital

Kathleen's failed attempt at winning Scott over got her in a horrible mood, and she only felt even more resentful when she saw Tessa, thinking this woman was the bane of her existence. After all, she was well aware that Scott had a thing for Tessa.

At the same time, it got her even more bewildered. She was clearly more outstanding than Tessa, but no matter who, their gazes would only ever land on that b*tch.

"What does that b*tch have that I don't?!" Kathleen's malicious gaze at Tessa grew increasingly hostile as she became angrier by the second.

Tessa naturally sensed Kathleen's malice, but she turned a blind eye to it.

That night, dinner was ready by the time she arrived home after rehearsal.

While the family of three enjoyed a pleasant meal, Gregory related everything he did during the day to Tessa, who listened attentively with a smile and praised him every now and then. "That's awesome, sweetheart."

After dinner, the family of three took a stroll in the garden instead of retiring for the night.

Tessa and Gregory's laughter reverberated through the garden as the two messed around.

Meanwhile, Nicholas stood aside and beamed as he watched with a gaze filled with nothing but affection and adoration.

Later, when they got tired, a servant escorted Gregory back to his room for a quick shower before bed.

On the other hand, Tessa and Nicholas snuggled up in bed after a quick shower.

Scott's solo recital suddenly popped into Tessa's head, and she brought it up with Nicholas. "Scott came to the orchestra today, and he invited me, Miss Hathaway, and the others to watch his solo recital."

Nicholas didn't give too much thought to it and nodded. "In that case, I'll drive you there. Just give me a call when it's almost over, and I'll pick you up."

Tessa's heart swelled up with love upon hearing his words. "You're the best, hubby."

While speaking, she leaned over and gave him a peck on the cheek.

After recovering from his split-second stump, Nicholas clasped Tessa's waist and leaned in as he whispered, "Say that again."

Clearly, he loved the term of endearment.

Tessa blushed, having a hard time repeating it since she had blurted out those words without realizing it.

Nicholas naturally knew she was abashed, and he inched closer, urging her with his deep, magnetic voice. He said, "One more time, hmm?"

However, she shook her head, her face now crimson.

Seeing how abashed his love was, he leaned in for a kiss, enamored.

She returned the kiss with closed eyes, and the two shared a passionate moment.

However, just as things were getting heated, he suddenly pushed her aside and headed into the bathroom again.

They couldn't do anything since she was pregnant, and because of that, Nicholas suffered almost every day.

. . .

The following day, Nicholas picked Tessa up for dinner after her rehearsal before sending her to the theater entrance.

As it was approaching show time, many people had already arrived.

Nicholas couldn't help enjoining Tessa with worry upon seeing the crowd. "Be careful when you go in. Don't let them bump into you."

"Don't worry. I'm taking the VIP lane. It won't be crowded," said Tessa as she unbuckled her seatbelt. "I'm going in now. I'll call you later, okay?"

He nodded as he saw his beloved out of the car.

After getting out of the vehicle, Tessa headed straight for the VIP lane only to be stopped by a young man in a suit. "Good evening, Miss Reinhart. I'm Mr. Brooks' assistant, and Mr. Brooks has asked me to wait for you out here."

Tessa was somewhat surprised, for she hadn't expected Scott to send someone to escort her.

After giving her thanks, she followed the assistant inside and found that Hathaway and Kathleen had already arrived.

"Miss Hathaway, you guys are here early," she greeted the mother and daughter with a smile

"Well, we didn't have anything better to do, so we came early," Hathaway replied with a smile as she beckoned Tessa to sit beside her.

Kathleen's hatred for Tessa grew as she watched the affectionate exchange. However, she said nothing.

Chapter 757 What's Your Point?

After all, they were at Scott's solo recital, and she didn't want to cause trouble in front of her crush.

While they were chatting away, Scott ambled into the box in a white suit, looking like a prince from a fairy tale.

Kathleen was the first to discover him, and she immediately went up to greet him joyously, saying, "You're here, Scott."

While she gawked at him with eyes filled with unconcealed adoration, Scott put a friendly distance between them the entire time.

After a quick hello, Tessa handed him a bouquet and congratulated him by saying, "Break a leg."

Scott smiled while looking at the young woman's rosy cheeks and said gently, 'Thank you."

As she stood by the side, Kathleen made a mental note in her 'Reasons to ruin Tessa Reinhart' list as she watched the two interact.

The recital officially commenced at 8.30PM.

Tessa and Hathaway put their full attention on the stage while sitting in the VIP section.

Unsurprisingly, it was a spectacular recital, and Hathaway constantly praised Scott during the recital. "I swear Scott is catching up to me."

"Mr. Brooks is indeed amazing." Tessa nodded in agreement and burst into a chuckle when she suddenly recalled a scene of Scott practicing. "Remember how you said I always go all out when I practice? I think it's nothing compared to Mr. Brooks, though."

"Indeed, Scott does train harder than you do, and it's not without reason that he's able to be where he is today," Hathaway sighed.

Kathleen, on the other hand, didn't take note of their conversation but gawked at the dashing man on stage, deeply infatuated.

The recital ended two hours later, and just as Tessa and Hathaway were about to leave, Scott came over. "There's an after-party. Why don't you guys join us?"

Since Hathaway had graciously taken him up on his offer, Tessa couldn't quite turn him down, and just like that, the group went to the party which was packed with big-shot musicians.

Tessa was initially with Hathaway, but as more and more people showed up, the two eventually got separated.

While Tessa was finding a less crowded space to sit down, someone came to give her a toast, and just as she was about to turn them down, Scott appeared while saying, "She can't take alcohol. You don't mind if she substitutes it with juice, do you?"

With that, he had someone bring a glass of juice over, and Tessa drank it after thanking him.

The person who came to toast Tessa swept their equivocal gaze between the two upon seeing their exchange and removed themself astutely from the scene. "I'll leave you two to talk. I'll check out somewhere else."

However, Tessa and Scott didn't notice the person had mistaken them and began chatting after they left.

"How are you doing? Are you tired? There's a seating area over there; you can rest for a while if you're feeling drained." Scott was concerned about Tessa's well-being, and the woman didn't give too much thought to it either, only thinking he was concerned as a friend. "Thanks, I'm doing pretty good. I'll sit down if I do get tired."

After a nod, Scott changed the topic to music.

Meanwhile, not far away, Kathleen was frothing at the mouth as she watched the two interact happily.

"How dare this b*tch start flirting with Scott again?!" she mused through gnashed teeth, glaring daggers at Tessa.

A while later, she followed Tessa without a second thought when she saw the woman going to the washroom alone.

Kathleen found Tessa washing her hands by the sink as soon as she entered and immediately mocked enigmatically, saying, "How can you still associate yourself with men when you're already pregnant, Tessa?"

The latter frowned in response and thought this woman really had nothing nice to say.

With that, she shook her hands to remove some of the excess water and turned to Kathleen with an icy gaze. "I only think of Scott as a friend, but you can't seem to stop seeing me as your imaginary enemy. Are you actually thinking you'll lose to yourself or that you're afraid you're no match for me? What's your point in behaving like this all the time?"

Chapter 758 Kathleen Is Being Evasive

"No match for you? Who do you think you are?" Kathleen sneered furiously with a malicious gaze.

However, Tessa wasn't intimidated as she smirked. "If you're not afraid that you're no match for me, why are you coming up with so many petty tricks?"

A pang of guilt hit Kathleen upon hearing the accusation, but she still put up an innocent front and denied it. "What a joke. You think you're worthy of my time and effort?"

"Am I not?" Tessa chewed on the words while fixing her gaze on the woman in denial and suddenly came to an idea.

Since Kathleen had decided to bring everything to light, she might as well settle their feud once and for all, saving her from having to worry about this woman framing her constantly.

"Since I'm not worth your time and effort, why did you deliberately break my violin and set me up repeatedly?"

Seeing that Kathleen's face turned grim upon the confrontation, Tessa continued, "If not for Miss Hathaway, do you think I would've turned a blind eye to everything you've done? You should be thankful that you have a good mother!"

Kathleen flew into a rage out of humiliation as soon as she was exposed, glaring daggers at Tessa with her gaze ablaze. "You call that a good mother?! If she really has my best interests at heart, she should kick you out of the orchestra! I'm her daughter, me! However, she keeps defending a b*tch like you!"

"You think Miss Hathaway is defending me?" Tessa was rendered dumbstruck by Kathleen's words.

"Who else if not you? Me?" Kathleen taunted maliciously. "Sometimes, I really wish you'd never existed!"

Tessa covertly stood on guard when she sensed Kathleen's hostility, and at the same time, she thought she should just make some things clear with Kathleen when the woman had put it like that.

"First, Miss Hathaway might be defending me, but she's also protecting you. I can press charges against you for any sole incident you've caused me, leaving you with a criminal record. Do you think you'd still have a future if you're charged with framing a fellow musician?"

Tessa bore into Kathleen, hoping the woman would finally come to her senses and stop targeting her when she had already broken it down for her like this. "Second, does it not exhaust you to live like this? What's the point of rivaling other people all the time? Is it not good enough for you to just be yourself?"

She had just wanted to talk some sense into Kathleen, hoping she would stop heading further down into the blind alley, but Kathleen assumed Tessa was lecturing her and subsequently hit the roof. "Who do you think you are to lecture me?! You are in no position to tell me what to do!"

With that, she raised her arm, wanting to slap Tessa.

Alarmed, Tessa reflexively evaded but slipped and fell backward because the floor was slippery, causing her to panic.

She reached her arms out hoping to grab onto something, but it was too late as she fell.

As soon as she felt a twinge, she instinctively protected her belly and used her elbow to cushion the impact. Because of that, she was in excruciating pain as soon as she dropped to the floor, looking ghastly.

"Ouch..." The pain was so excruciating that she kept gasping for cold air on the floor, unable to get up.

On the other hand, Kathleen was petrified, for she never imagined something like this would happen.

After finally coming back to her senses, she felt inexplicably conscious-stricken and fled the scene when she saw Tessa groaning on the floor.

Lo and behold, she bumped into Scott and Hathaway as soon as she ran out, leaving Hathaway to reprimand her with a frown. "What are you doing, running around like that?" she asked.

Perhaps because of guilt or that Scott was next to her, Kathleen didn't defend herself and simply said bashfully, "Nothing."

Seeing so, Hathaway couldn't help thinking her daughter was behaving evasively.

Chapter 759 I Have a Problem With Her

However, before Hathaway could say anything, Scott spoke up. "Did you come across Tessa by any chance?"

Kathleen panicked, and her heart skipped a beat upon hearing his words.

Just then, Nicholas approached the group. He had come to pick Tessa up, but she was nowhere to be found.

"Miss Hathaway, did you manage to find my wife?"

"A moment, please, Mr. Sawyer. Let me ask my daughter." While speaking, Hathaway shifted her gaze back onto Kathleen, asking, "Did you see Tessa?"

"I didn't," lied Kathleen with an evasive gaze, beyond panicked deep down.

Though she concealed it well, Nicholas still noticed her abnormality, and he narrowed his eyes at the woman, his gaze enigmatic.

At that, he pulled his phone out and called Tessa, giving up on searching.

"Nicholas..." Tessa's groan came from the other end of the line, causing Nicholas to panic. "What's wrong?"

Tessa didn't hide the fact that she had slipped and fallen in the washroom. "I can't come out at the moment. Can you ask Miss Hathaway to come and help me out?"

"Got it. I'll be right over." Nicholas ended the call at that, looking beyond grim.

Sensing something was amiss, Hathaway immediately went up to Nicholas and asked, "Is Tessa alright?"

"She fell in the washroom." After saying so, Nicholas strode to the washroom.

Horrified by the news, Hathaway and Scott hurriedly followed after Nicholas.

Once they arrived, Hathaway hurriedly went in and came out with Tessa leaning against her for support in no time.

"How did this happen?" Nicholas hurriedly went up to his beloved as soon as he saw her ghastly countenance.

"I accidentally slipped and fell, and my elbow hurts a little," Tessa answered briefly, striking fear in Nicholas. "I'll take you to the hospital now."

While speaking, he picked her up and strode away.

Meanwhile, Hathaway locked her brows into a deep furrow as she watched the couple leave.

Kathleen seemed to have come out from the washroom earlier, and she didn't look right when we asked her Tessa's whereabouts.

Instantly, an unpleasant assumption came to her.

Does Tessa's accident have something to do with Kathleen?

Hathaway thought it was very likely the more she thought about it. After all, her daughter had a history.

At that, her countenance turned beyond awful.

Likewise, Scott was super apprehensive about Tessa's condition, but he couldn't leave the party now. Just like that, the two returned to the banquet hall preoccupied.

Hathaway went straight to Kathleen and questioned her after taking her to a secluded corner. "Is Tessa's accident your doing?"

Kathleen instantly turned forbidding when she realized her mother had brought her here because of the b*tch. "So what if I did?" Kathleen snapped in spite.

Lo and behold, she got a slap from Hathaway as soon as she finished her words.

"Why do I have a wicked daughter like you?! Don't you know that Tessa's pregnant?!" Hathaway berated Kathleen. "You best pray that Tessa and the child in her belly are fine, or I won't harbor you this time no matter what!"

Kathleen was so stupefied by her mother's slap that she didn't even hear a word Hathaway said, only having the slap on loop in her mind.

She looked at her mother with incredulity as she held her swollen cheek, raging, "I can't believe you slapped me again because of that b*tch! Am I your daughter, or is she?!"

"It's exactly because you're my daughter that I slapped you!" Hathaway looked disappointedly at her daughter. "I don't understand what I have done wrong for you to become like this. Tessa's already married and is even expecting. Why do you still want to give her a hard time?"

"It's because I have a problem with her, that's why!" Kathleen wasn't holding back anymore when things had already come to this, blowing off steam however it pleased her. "I've said it before—I won't leave her alone as long as she remains in the orchestra!"

Chapter 760 Seeing Tessa

Hathaway was so exasperated with Kathleen's answer that she thought she would have a heart attack. She even believed that her daughter's behavior was becoming increasingly unconscionable.

Meanwhile, on the road to the hospital, Nicholas held Tessa in his arms while asking repeatedly, "Did you really slip by yourself?"

Tessa reiterated as she looked at the doubtful man, "I did slip by myself, but it was because of Kathleen."

With that, she recounted the incident briefly, causing Nicholas to turn grimmer by the second. "Thank goodness you're okay, or I won't spare that woman if something really happens to you."

Nicholas was frothing at the mouth, especially when he remembered that Kathleen had repeatedly bullied Tessa. "Does Kathleen think I can't do anything about her because she has her mother shielding her? Well, I won't be merciful anymore if she dares lay a finger on you again!"

The man's rage touched Tessa.

"Kathleen has indeed gone too far." She nodded in agreement, then comforted his raging mind by saying, "We won't forgive her anymore if she dares to make another move, and you shouldn't get angry either. It's not worth getting all upset over people like her."

Nicholas looked down at the young woman in his arms and thought she was right.

He shouldn't be mad over people like Kathleen. However, if that woman still dared to mess with Tessa, he would not let her get away with it again.

As he thought about it, he tucked away his hostility and asked worriedly, "Do you feel uncomfortable anywhere else?"

"No, not at the moment. Just my elbow." While speaking, Tessa raised her arm, but the pain got her grimacing.

Nicholas urged Edward to drive faster upon seeing this, to which the latter obliged with a nod.

They soon arrived at the hospital, and Nicholas carried Tessa out of the car.

If anything, Tessa wanted to walk on her own, but Nicholas objected to it no matter what.

In the end, she could only yield and let him carry her everywhere.

After a series of checkups, the doctor concluded that she was fine and the baby wasn't affected. "She just got bruised on the elbow, and it'll be gone after a couple of days. She's all good. You can relax."

After getting the good news, Nicholas took Tessa home.

Meanwhile, Gregory had learned of Tessa's injury, and his heart ached for her.

"Mommy, does your arm still hurt?" he asked with concern by her bedside.

"It doesn't hurt anymore. Don't worry, sweetheart." Tessa ruffled the little guy's head with her good hand, touched that she had such a sweet little boy caring for her. "Go on, go to bed. It's getting late."

Gregory nodded and said, "You should rest early too, Mommy."

Tessa nodded in reply.

. . .

The following morning, Nicholas personally sent Tessa to the orchestra after their homely breakfast.

Nicholas wanted Tessa to take sick leave and rest at home, but she gave up on the thought since the concert was just around the corner.

After learning that Tessa had arrived at the orchestra, Hathaway rushed over from her office to check up on her. "What are you doing here? You should be resting at home when you're injured. You must take good care of your hands; you need them to play the violin."

"Don't worry, Miss Hathaway. I know what I'm doing." Tessa smiled at Hathaway. "Besides, the concert is just around the corner. As the principal violinist, I shouldn't delay the rehearsal."

Hathaway couldn't say anything else when Tessa put it like that, so she only exhorted, "In that case, please pay more attention to your hand. If it gets too much for you, go home and rest."

With that, Tessa nodded and entered the practice room.

"What did Miss Hathaway want to see you about?" Mona asked when she saw Tessa coming in, curious.

"Nothing much. Let's get rehearsing." Tessa decided not to talk about it and took her violin out to practice.

Scott had come later in the day to see how Tessa was doing, for he thought he held responsibility for letting her get injured during his after-party.

"How's your hand?" He looked concerningly at Tessa, who shook her head with a smile. "It's all good."