

Beyond the Divorce

Chapter 26

Chapter 26 The Voice on the Phone

I paused before snapping back to reality and realized she was right. I couldn't lose everything without a fight or reclaiming what was rightfully mine. Even if I fought and lost, I wouldn't regret it. At that point, my phone had stopped ringing.

I stared into Ivanna's calm eyes and gradually regained my composure. My thoughts began to clear, and I wiped my face, saying, "I get it now! I'm grateful to have a clear-headed person like you by my side. You constantly remind me of my priorities."

When the phone rang again, I had already sorted my emotions. Ivanna passed me the phone and nodded. "You've got this

I took a deep breath and swiped the screen to answer the call, "Hey, honey. It's about time you called. I need to ask you, where's the money in our account? Ava had pneumonia, and I had to rush her to the hospital in the middle of the night.

"Nothing was left when I tried to withdraw money from the card. What's going on?"

Ivanna smacked her forehead when she heard my words. However, I knew Matthew well and phrased it to fit my personality, especially since he would be on guard if I didn't bring it up.

"Hi, honey. I used the money, but don't worry. I'll explain when I get home," sure enough, Matthew

comforted me, "How's Ava now?"

"She's still on the IV, and her fever was 39.5 degrees. It's quite serious. When are you coming back? Can't

you hurry?" I pretended to sound anxious, "I'm scared and had to wake your parents in the middle of the

night.

“Can’t you tell me when you’re using the money? Don’t you know we might have emergencies like these

when you’re not around?”

Such conversations were mundane last time, but maintaining this calm tone took so much effort n

couldn’t help but laugh at myself, I realized I also had a knack for acting.

“I know. I’ll be back as soon as possible. I’ll try to finish my work in the morning and come home,”

Matthew tried to reassure me, “Take care of our daughter and make sure you rest too. You’ve been

through a lot, honey.”

I forced a bittersweet smile at his comfort and advice.

“Okay, then, I’m heading out for work!”

now. I

As I was about to hang up, I heard a coquettish voice in the background. I felt all my strength draining the

+15 BONUS

carried my sick daughter to the hospital?

I dared not continue those thoughts as I plopped on the hospital bed with the phone falling to the ground.

Ivanna was alarmed at my reaction and squatted before me. She held my hand and asked with concern,”

Chlo, what’s wrong? Hm?”

I looked at Ivanna in a daze as that coquettish voice echoed in my ears. Ivanna shook my arm. “Can you

speak? What did he say?"

I said sobbingly, "Ivanna, find me a lawyer."

She stood up, hugged me, and patted my back, "Okay! Don't cry!"

I met Mr. Brown two days later. He was the lawyer Ivanna had found for me. I explained the situation in detail, and he told me that my description had no value yet. He said they were speculations without

substantial evidence, sliming my chances of winning. 1

"So, what can I do to maximize my chances? After all, I still have a four-year-old child," I asked urgently,

Besides, I was the one who started that company. I must defend my rights."

After some thought, Mr. Brown advised, "For now, the best you can do is collect solid evidence. Based on your described situation, your husband isn't explicitly aware that you've caught on to his affair.

"So, maintaining this state makes it easier to gather information. However, it's also challenging to gather

evidence."

I chuckled and said bitterly, "So I must continue enduring this?" 1

He nodded, giving me a clear answer, "Yes."

When I left Mr. Brown's office, I felt drained, as I had just discovered I didn't have the upper hand. Although Matthew cheated, moved assets, and enjoyed my company's success, I was disadvantaged.

I wondered why the world was so unfair as I sat by a river. I gazed at the flowing water, genuinely not knowing what to do next. I only regained my senses when Ava asked, "Mom, where'd you go? Did you get

lost?

I grinned when I heard those words. My daughter was right that I was indeed lost. I called Ivanna on the way back, but she excitedly told me she had good news to share before I could speak.

Chapter 27

Chapter 27 The Bruises on the Child's Body

I chuckled as I wondered what the good news could be. Ivanna didn't specify the news due to time constraints, and I didn't pry. Instead, we agreed to meet tomorrow.

Meanwhile, everyone waited at my in-laws' place for me to return for dinner. Surprisingly, Melanie was there.

When Grace saw me, she quickly laid out the dishes, saying, "Dinner's ready! Chlo, it's been a while since you last joined us for a meal."

I smiled while washing my hands and helped with the dishes. The atmosphere was heartwarming with the whole family together. Henry asked Matthew about the project in Operose during the meal, but Matthew brushed it off.

Without much thought, Grace asked Melanie, "What were you doing with your brother?"

Immediately after, I noticed Melanie pausing and glancing at Matthew. He questioned, "You went to Operose too?"

Melanie froze, seemingly off guard, as she hesitated before saying. "Uh...I went there with my friends!"

However, Grace persisted, "Then why did you tell me you were with your brother?"

Melanie became irritated and retorted, "If I told you I was going there with my friends, would you have let

me go? You're always scrutinizing me."

I felt a bizarre sensation when I heard their exchange, but I couldn't pinpoint it. Suddenly, I realized

Melanie might be more important than me to Matthew. After all, I was the outsider in this household.

Whenever I had a meal with my in-laws, they always focused on urging Melanie to get a boyfriend. I typically cared for Ava on the sidelines and did not interfere with their conversations.

After dinner, Melanie tidied up and prepared to leave when Matthew asked, “Where are you going this late?”

“Why do you care? You’re allowed to have your wife and child, but I can’t go out for some fresh air? I’m off to find a boyfriend, all right?” She grumpily replied, putting on her shoes and heading out.

As she left, Matthew called out after her, “Come home early!”

I glanced at Matthew, inwardly criticizing him. As Melanie’s brother, he made too much of a fuss.

When we went home that night, I noticed two bruises on Ava’s thigh as I bathed her. Since her skin was

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these bruises, I asked, “How’d you get these bruises, Ava?”

Ava shrank back, avoiding my touch. Her big, teary eyes stared at me, but she didn’t speak.

“Can you tell Mommy?” I prompted, and she burst into tears.

“Aunt Melanie said you got lost and wouldn’t come back. I called her a bad woman, but she pinched me!

Daddy told me not to tell you, Mommy!”

I was outraged and yelled, “Mathew Murphy!”

Matthew rushed into the bathroom, and I picked up my sobbing daughter to show him her bruises. “Don’t

tell me you don’t know about these! Does your sister even have a heart?! Forget your lies. How can you

teach your child to lie as well?!”

Matthew glanced at Ava’s bruises guiltily. He took Ava from me and said, “I’ve already scolded Mel. Don’t

be angry. I didn’t want to tell you because I knew it’d upset you.”

I roared, is it something I shouldn’t be upset about?! Is your sister more important than your daughter?

Why do you care so much about Melanie? Have I wronged your sister in any way? How could she treat

Ava like that?!”

I wanted to tear Melanie apart for stepping out of line.

“All right, you’re scaring Ava. I talked to Melanie about it, but you can’t expect me to pinch her back,

right?” Matthew looked displeased.

His words choked me, and I couldn’t continue for a long time. After a stiff silence, I finally said a few

words. “Matthew, you disappoint me.”

With that, I wrapped Ava in a towel and carried her out. I no longer wanted to argue with him and had

nothing to say. It was apparent his heart wasn’t with us.

After punching in at the company the following day, I left to find Ivanna, but she was with someone else.

That person was the good news she referred to the other day. He was a professional and reliable private

Investigator who could gather evidence faster and more efficiently.

However, I knew I would potentially lose my family the closer I got to the truth. Still, was there even a way

back for me?

Chapter 28

Chapter 28 The Walls Are Listening

I laughed at myself for thinking I had a way back while Matthew and the other woman were already

transferring assets. I wondered when I became such an idiot. Ivanna was right to call me a fool.

Matthew was practically selling me off, yet I stood beside him to count his money. I had no idea who that

woman was and how cunning Matthew could be. Still, the woman's identity was not my priority, I was just

curious.

Most people in my situation would obsess over finding out who they lost their love to, but the results

were always the same, no matter who the other person was. I had already lost.

After some thought, I told Ivanna, "My priority is finding where that money went."

"I already have someone looking into it, don't worry!" Ivanna reassured me confidently.

I returned to work after our chat to figure out how to reclaim my company and bring Matthew down from

his pedestal. That was my only wish. No one noticed when I had left and returned. After all, everyone

knew I was the boss's wife.

Moreover, it was nearing lunchtime when I returned, and everyone was preparing to leave. Since it was a

time when people gathered to chat, I wanted to ask Matthew what he wanted for lunch.

When I arrived at his office, his secretary wasn't there, and the door was half-open. I heard voices inside

the office, which meant Matthew was still there. I was about to open the door when I heard Johnson's

voice.

"Don't worry. I've prepared all the information you requested. You're a genius, Mr. Murphy, Still, I don't

think Madam is interested since she's rarely at the office. From what I see, she works here just to keep an

eye on you."

Johnson's tone was full of mockery as he continued, "As for the money, I've taken care of it according to

your instructions."

My heart raced, and I quickly backed away to ensure they wouldn't spot me. It was evident they were discussing me.

"Remind the finance department about that. I don't want any discrepancies or complications," Matthew instructed Johnson, "She's been on edge lately and always getting ticked off."

"Don't worry about that, Mr. Murphy. I've already informed them about it and sorted things out with the suppliers. You can rest assured. If anything, we can say the project went wrong. After all, losing money In business is a regular thing.

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"At that time, just cooperate and act as if you're perturbed. What else can Madam do? She hasn't worked for so long. It'd be hard for her to figure anything out," Johnson sounded confident.

I was outraged as I clenched my fists, I never expected Johnson to be so devious.

“Play it safe. I...haven’t decided on the next step yet...” Matthew’s words trailed off, but I knew what he wanted to say.

“Oh, Mr. Murphy, are you still tying loose ends there?” Johnson inquired.

“I can’t show up there. Just keep an eye on it. Damn, none of them are simple folks. Not a single reasonable one!” Matthew muttered in frustration, then sighed heavily. “All right, you can go now!”

I quickly left, making sure to stay out of their sight. My heart pounded as I sat in my office. I calmed

myself before calling Matthew to ask, “Hey, honey, what do you want for lunch?” T

“Are you in the office?” His voice was warm. “What do you feel like having? Maybe we can go out

together?”

“Sure!” I agreed without hesitation. “I’ll come to find you!”

As I headed out, I bumped into Johnson, who seemed shocked. He must’ve thought I wasn’t in the office.

“M–Madam!”

I smirked and teased, “What’s wrong? You look like I just caught you red–handed. Why do you look so

anxious?”

“Huh? Not at all!” He quickly defended himself. “I thought you weren’t around!”

“I just got back,” I retorted playfully, then toned it down, “I’m going to lunch with Matthew. Care to join us?”

“I–It’s okay. I don’t want to be a third–wheeler. You two lovebirds should enjoy yourselves,” Johnson replied with a humble smile, like an obedient lackey.

Once I met with Matthew, we visited one of my favorite Italian restaurants across the building. While waiting for the food, Matthew asked, "What were you up to this morning?"

"I went to check out some properties," I replied straightly, then asked, "By the way, when will we get the money back?"

Chapter 29

Chapter 29 HD Photos

Matthew seemed shocked at my question.

I said innocently, "That was our house savings, so we need that money back soon. I want to buy a place

once I find a suitable one. We can't afford to delay our move any longer, especially after Ava's fall. I need

to find her a decent kindergarten, preferably Sunnydale Institute."

Matthew remained silent as I spoke. I feigned naivety and continued, "Why are you so quiet? I've noticed

you're so indifferent lately."

Matthew chuckled awkwardly, saying, "How's that? Honey, I've got everything under control. I told your

what happened to the money, right? We invested in a project many people have their eyes on.

"We had to make an executive decision then, so I used our house savings as payment first. Do you think

we'll have trouble finding a good house once the company grows stronger? It's all part of my plan, so

don't worry."

He smiled and gently pinched my nose. However, I knew his smile wasn't genuine.

We were preoccupied with our thoughts throughout lunch, and I lamented that money. Ideally, I must quickly trace it before Matthew tells me the project has gone south.

After returning to my office, I called Ivanna and updated her on what had happened. I also sent her a photo of Johnson, knowing Matthew wouldn't show his face for the next few days.

I remained in my office that afternoon and focused on the "special" materials Matthew had prepared for me. I had to admit that the woman who took Matthew from me was impressive.

Meanwhile, Matthew stuck to his routined schedule the next few days while Johnson was frequently

absent from the office. 1

Since Matthew was so cautious with me, I figured the other woman would be even more careful not to expose herself. It seemed I had greatly underestimated her.

Matthew and I went to the company together on Monday morning after dropping Ava off. I had just returned to my office when my phone notified me of a message.

I absentmindedly removed my coat and picked up the phone to see the text message containing a photo. I calmly opened it, but my hand shook when the image loaded. I saw two high-definition pictures on the screen.

The first picture was a close-up of Matthew sleeping on a hotel bed. His profile was prominent, but what caught my attention was the woman's midsection nestled against him. The photo was detailed enough to

The second photo was from a different angle but was slightly farther away. It showed Matthew's hand resting between the woman's thighs. The sheets were a mess, indicating the passionate encounter that had occurred the night before.

The pictures were detailed enough to resemble selfies, cropped to focus on the main action. My vision blurred after seeing those pictures. I plopped into my office chair and pressed against my chest while taking deep breaths.

I felt like I had gotten stabbed in the heart, and my veins were about to pop. Although I had mentally prepared myself for what may come, these explicit photos still shocked me.

The scenarios I had imagined seemed like child's play compared to these pictures. They were impactful and sparked my wild imagination.

Soon after, I checked the phone number and realized I didn't recognize it. Before I could gather my

thoughts, I received another message from that number. The message was even more provoking than the last.

Chapter 30

Chapter 30 The Mistress's Provocation

The message read, "I just wanted to show you how amazing he is."

Those few words sparked my wild imagination. I knew what the other party meant by saying Matthew was amazing. I was outraged and threw my phone aside, heavily panting to contain my impending scream.

I knew the person was taunting me. I clenched my teeth so hard they made a grinding sound. Then I closed my eyes and took a few deep breaths. After a while, I picked up my phone, grabbed my bag, and stormed off.

I could no longer hold back my grievances when I saw Ivanna. I threw myself into her arms and wailed. I couldn't understand why I felt so shaken even after enduring torment.

When I showed Ivanna the photos, she roared, kicked, and smashed things around. I guessed it was her

way of helping me relieve my frustrations. "That bastard's shameless! Disgraceful degenerate! How dare he?"

Once we finally calmed down, I looked at Ivanna and said, "I won't fall for her provocations. She's the

wrong one, and I need to show her that her tactics are futile. If that woman's got the guts, she should

face me. Hiding and pretending like that won't impress me

"You're right, damn it! Are mistresses these days so daring? How can they use their shamelessness as an asset?" Ivanna ranted.

"It seems she's someone we know or at least an acquaintance. She must know I've started working at the company again. She's been inseparable from Matthew lately and can't sit still!" I stated, my intuition

overflowing.

Ivanna sat beside me, saying, "Chlo, it would be great if you could always stay this composed. You're right. I don't believe we can't handle her with our combined intelligence. This chick doesn't play by the rules, either.

"It seems she's not satisfied being in the background anymore, so how do we deal with what's coming?"

I agreed with Ivanna. After calming down, I pondered how to respond to that woman's blatant challenge.

"She's openly provoking me. I'd let her off too easily if I didn't do anything. Since I know she can't stand seeing me with Matthew, I'll do her one better and taunt her. I'll rile her up!"

"But what if that raises Matthew's guard?" Ivanna looked at me with concern.

"What if he teams up with

her to target you?"

"Hahaha! You know, he's already being careful. He even went through the trouble of making fake has attacked me. Otherwise, why would he be so cautious?" I reasoned.

Ivanna snapped her fingers. "You're right! What's your plan?"

"I'll continue showcasing our love and putting on a show with Matthew. First, it might force her out. Second, I need to buy myself some time. We haven't planned everything yet, so we must seize every opportunity and maximize our time."

Ivanna nodded continuously.

I continued, "On the other hand, you should see what Johnson's up to. I know there's a secret between Matthew and him. Matthew has entrusted Johnson with a few things recently, which could be our breakthrough. I'll give Johnson a taste of his own medicine if I must."

"What do you mean?" Ivanna looked at me curiously.

"He's got something I can use against him!" I contemplated how to use Johnson as a pawn.

Before leaving work that evening. I returned to the company and went to Matthew's office. Luckily, Erica

Turner, the head of the finance department, and a client were in the office with him.

I seized the opportunity and boldly asked Matthew for fifteen thousand dollars, claiming I saw a few

clothes and bags I liked while shopping

Matthew had always cared about his image, especially in front of others. Without a second thought, he

transferred twenty thousand dollars to me. Sure enough, the client praised Matthew while Erica couldn't

contain her amused expression.

If this were in the past, I wouldn't have dared to ask him for money in front of others. I even refused.

whenever he offered, citing various expenses the company had. However, things had changed, and I

could no longer uphold that facade.

Moreover, I knew Matthew would use my rightful company shares to pamper his little vixen if I didn't take it first.

After bidding the client goodbye, we went to the preschool, and I affectionately linked arms with

Matthew, thinking a pair of spiteful eyes must be watching us from a dark corner. Sure enough, the

woman hadn't finished messing with me.

This was just the beginning, I thought.