

Beyond the Divorce

Chapter 46

Chapter 46 The Assistant Seems Arrogant

My heart skipped a beat when I saw Atlas' cold eyes again. Our last encounter was still fresh in my mind.

My hysterical behavior that night probably left a big impression on him. Now, I was pretending to be affectionate with Matthew, and it felt embarrassing.

I instinctively removed my hand from Matthew's arm and smiled at Atlas. Nick approached, and a crowd gathered around him to chat and get his attention. Matthew was among them.

I observed them coldly. Indeed, they were "sincere." Atlas briefly glanced at Matthew. I was sure there was a hint of disdain in his gaze.

Nick didn't introduce Atlas, and Atlas didn't seem interested in meeting anyone. Instead, he stood beside me and said, "Ms. Hartz. Oh, maybe I should address you as Mrs. Murphy?"

"Ms. Hartz, please," I replied noncommittally. "I didn't expect to see you here today."

"Hmm." He sipped his drink and asked, "Seems like you're in a good mood?"

"Life must go on. As you said, everything depends on the individual. My response was diplomatic, "Oh, Mr. Pierce, I don't have your contact information. I still have your coat, so can I invite you to a meal sometime to give it back to you?"

He sipped his drink again, and did not give me his number. He didn't seem willing to share it, so I didn't press.

After seeing me talking to Atlas, Matthew approached. He smiled as he wrapped an arm around me."

Chlo, who's this?"

"Oh, this is Mr. Atlas Pierce from ATL Empire," I said as I turned to face Atlas.

"Mr. Pierce, this is my

husband, Matthew, the CEO of Tanum Corporation."

Matthew extended his hand. "Nice to meet you, Mr. Pierce!"

Atlas smiled lightly. "Likewise."

He turned to me without continuing the conversation with Matthew, "Excuse me."

Then he walked away without saying goodbye to Matthew. Despite being an assistant, he seemed uninterested.

Matthew was annoyed and asked, "What does he do at ATL Empire? He seems arrogant."

"He represented Mr. Wright in the previous bidding meeting." I said. I didn't know Atlas's role at ATL

Matthew scoffed. "Pfft! He seems high and mighty, even harder to approach than Mr. Wright!"

was a man who cared about his reputation. His desire for respect stemmed from his past experiences and insecurities. He was always afraid of being looked down on.

He appeared to have found a support system since we started the company. He liked being widely respected.

I knew these things but chose to ignore them. Perhaps love blinded me, and I would hide his flaws in such situations.

After his betrayal, I had to rethink how I could love a deceitful person who had an affair with his sister.

All that remained was disgust. That foolish state where love clouded my judgment seemed to have passed. As a result, his flaws became glaringly evident in my eyes.

I glanced at him. Matthew was still looking at Atlas with a sour face as he walked away. He's such a scoundrel.

As the banquet neared its end, I saw Atlas again. He was bidding Nick and the others farewell, indicating

they were leaving.

There were a lot of people exchanging pleasantries. Naturally, Matthew could not pass up this chance. He

went up to shake hands and make his presence known.

Atlas, however, came over to me. As he passed by, he slipped a note into my hand.

Chapter 47

Chapter 47 Enduring Humiliation I was startled.

My grip tightened on the note as I watched him walk away.

My heart raced, and I stashed the note in my small clutch.

When it was time to leave, I sat in the car while Matthew talked with several other executives from development firms.

I retrieved the note, but my hands were trembling.

His name and phone number were handwritten on it.

He had given me his contact information.

I smiled and tucked the note into a compartment through my belongings without my knowledge.

1 within my clutch, I was wary that Matthew would snoop Matthew discussed and criticized the people at the event all the way home.

I silently cursed the despicable man beside me.

His words did not interest me.

Instead, I thought about meeting Atlas again and learning more about ATL Empire.

Since Matthew diverted the assets, why shouldn't I redirect my business? Tanum Corporation was my creation, but I was gone too long.

Matthew had left his mark on the company and its culture.

Like its leader, the company was not transparent enough.

This strong desire struck me after the banquet.

I had done it before, and I could do it again.

I needed to lay the foundation for my future.

Upon arriving home, I kicked off my high heels and went to take a shower.

Matthew suddenly walked into the bathroom completely naked, and my face paled.

*Hey! Matt, what are you doing? Get out, I'm not done!" I covered my private parts, trying to shoo him away.

He pounced on me playfully, drunk.

"Honey, how long has it been since we did it? Why are you being shy?" He ignored my protests and embraced me.

His actions were greedy and impulsive.

I desperately tried to push him away.

He became angry at my resistance, despite usually being gentle.

He overpowered me by lifting my soapy, slippery body.

1 I was no match for him.

My nerves and unpreparedness made me feel intense disgust for him.

He showed no concern for my feelings.

+15 BONUS I felt nauseous as tears streamed down my face.

My eyes were wide open as I stared at the ceiling, and I vowed not to let this brute get away with it.

I didn't know how much time had passed.

Matthew alternated between romantic words and vulgarities.

Eventually, he drifted off to sleep like a log.

I didn't know who he was thinking of.

One thing was clear—this was nothing like how he used to treat me.

If it weren't for our daughter, I might have killed him.

Standing up, I ran to the bathroom and looked in the mirror.

My body was covered in marks.

I puked, washing myself inside and out.

I needed to speed up my plans to escape this brute.

I had to endure this humiliation for Ava's sake and my future.

I cleaned myself in the bathroom for an hour before calming down.

That night, I slept in Ava's room.

I woke up to find Matthew next to me.

His intense gaze revealed unspoken emotions.

He grinned wickedly.

“Honey, I'm sorry! Was I too harsh on you last night? I just missed you so much, my love!” He advanced toward me again, forcefully pinning me down.

“Honey... I want more of you!” I felt like my limbs were falling apart under his weight.

I didn't resist and weakly said, "Whatever How about we have another child?" you want.

Even though I was the one saying them, I felt unprecedented disgust.

But I knew this was the last thing he wanted to hear.

Indeed, he froze as he hovered above me.

His expression was complicated, and after a while, he asked, " Are you serious?" "Yeah! I've been thinking about it for a while!" I reluctantly nodded.

"And now seems to be the right time." That no idea what he was thinking.

He rolled off me, hugging me tightly and burying his head in my neck He said nothing and just held me close.

I could feel the warmth and wetness on my neck...

Chapter 48

Chapter 48 Finding the Right Time I remained still.

His behavior puzzled me, but I knew they were crocodile tears.

Eventually, he stood and said.

"Wait here, I'll make you something to eat." He would not show me his face.

I didn't care about his thoughts.

Even if he showed such emotions occasionally, my image of him would not change.

I couldn't lower myself to the level of a brute.

I knew quick action was my best defense.

I couldn't let him succeed.

He returned to normal at breakfast, warm and smiling.

"Honey, come here.

Eat while it's hot! Start with the milk!" He was attentive to me during breakfast, and everything seemed to have returned to normal.

His actions left me feeling a little dazed.

"How about a day off today? You've lost a lot of weight recently.

I could tell when I held you last night," he said tenderly.

A vision of him and Melanie brought me back to reality.

To calm my nausea, I patted my chest.

"I don't know why I keep feeling nauseous.

Maybe I'm too worried about my parents." "I know.

Don't worry too much.

Good things will come to good people.

You call your mom every day, right? Once the pandemic passes, we'll go visit together." Matthew's care was meticulous.

He even helped me with a fried egg.

"Skip the yolk, okay?" Ever since I developed gallstones, I rarely ate egg yolks as they could trigger pain.

"Let's send some money to them today.

I'm afraid they might not have enough," I suggested.

I His hand froze for a second, and then he smiled.

"Sure, I'll handle it!" At the office, I called my mom and told her to accept any money Matthew might send her without hesitation As expected, my mom said, "There's no need for that.

Your dad and I have enough.

The company has many expenses, so you guys don't need to spend too much on us.

“Mom, think of it from my perspective, okay? Can’t you just accept our money and keep it for yourselves? Our duty is to support you, and you shouldn’t refuse.

If he offers, accept it” I was a bit frustrated.

If only they could be as money–conscious as the Murphy family, then maybe I wouldn’t worry so much.

The Murphy family was all about money, never turning it down.

My mom’s tone showed concern, “Chlo, are you...” “Don’t overthink it.

I’m just anxious.

Giving you guys money is always a struggle.

Isn’t it natural for a daughter to provide for her parents? The company is doing well now.

You should just accept our support for my peace of mind!” I emphasized it again.

My mother agreed reluctantly.

However, I didn’t see Matthew transfer any money all day.

I knew he was trying to deceive me.

Over dinner, I asked him, and he said he forgot due to his busy schedule.

The following day at work, I reminded him again.

He nodded repeatedly, promising to handle it soon.

My mother called me at noon to say Matthew wired her ten thousand dollars.

It left me speechless.

He only sent ten grand? I went to Matthew’s office.

His secretary said he was with a client.

After hearing about the client, I went to the finance department.

I filled out an application for a hundred thousand dollars.

Disregarding his meeting, I went straight to his office.

I explained the situation and asked him to sign the form.

He hesitated when he saw the amount stated.

With a smile, I said, "The ten grand you sent is not enough.

They need to prepare for unexpected expenses since my dad suffers from something serious.

Let's make sure they enjoy their retirement in peace." He didn't expect me to reveal the amount he sent in front of the client.

He was slightly embarrassed and quickly agreed.

"You're right.

Your parents need peace of mind." He signed the application form and tried to play it off by saying, "Ask your mom if there's anything else we can do for them." I nodded and went to the finance department to arrange the transfer.

After confirming my mother received the money, I returned to my office relieved.

I gave him a chance to boost his image since he valued it so much.

A satisfied smile spread across my face picked up the phone to check the time.

Then, hesitantly, I dialed Atlas's number.

Chapter 49

Chapter 49 An Unexpected Discovery The call went through.

I introduced myself, and Atlas responded, "I know." His reply surprised me.

"Um... I was wondering if you could join me for lunch.

I'd like to return your coat." "No," he replied, leaving me feeling quite embarrassed.

He sure didn't beat around the bush.

As I struggled to respond, he continued, "2 p.m.

at the cafe in the Glenmarie Plaza lobby." Atlas wasn't refusing me, but there was a scheduling conflict.

"Okay! See you then!" After ending the call, I silently repeated the name ATL Empire.

I noticed that neither Matthew nor Johnson were around during my lunch break.

They must have gone out.

to lunch with clients.

I turned and headed to the bathroom.

As soon as I entered a stall, I could hear two people coming in while murmuring.

"Can you believe how unlucky Erica was? She got yelled at!" "Wasn't it Mr.

Murphy who approved the payment? Why would he be angry?" "With his signature and his wife requesting the money, Erica wouldn't dare reject the application, right?" I suddenly understood they were discussing the money I requested earlier that day.

They continued, "It's clear that he wasn't happy with it.

Looks like Chloe doesn't mean that much to him." "Isn't she the founder of our company? Why is it so hard for her to get such little money?" "That was centuries ago! I heard Mr.

Murphy has a mistress now.

One of them lowered their voice and continued, "I overheard him tell Erica a few days ago not to deposit payments into the company's account.

“He must have subsidiary companies.” Isn’t that a little cold of him? “He’s trying to protect himself from Chloe.

She’s truly pitiful, and one day she’ll have nothing.

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She's truly pitiful, and one day she'll have nothing.

Look at her She only requested a hundred thousand dollars, and Mr.

Murphy scolded Erica Brice annoyed over +15 BONUS “Goodness! Isn’t she on Mr.

Murphy’s team? She probably didn’t expect that treatment.” One of them bitterly remarked, “Back when Chloe was still around the company, Erica stuck to her.

“But as soon as Chloe left, she turned to Mr.

Murphy.

Maybe she has a crush on him, but too bad he doesn’t feel the same way.” “She’s just enjoying the benefits.

Do you think she’s in that position for nothing? She’s living her life, and I’d endure scoldings daily if I could get those perks.” ” The two continued their hushed conversation and left.

It seems that Matthew yelled at Erica over my money transfer today.

His pious appearance and remarks about my parents’ peace of mind had blinded me.

I had chosen such a despicable person to be my husband.

I called Ivanna to investigate the company’s cash flow.

It appeared Johnson still had reservations about me.

“What do you mean?” “I think Matthew—might have shell companies.

Investigate Melanie Murphy.

Henry Murphy, and Grace Murphy.

Check what assets are under these names.” “This guy has been planning for a long time,” Ivanna snarled.

“I can’t believe it! He’s such a scumbag!” “He’s still pretending because he hasn’t settled everything yet.

So, I need to act quickly.

I think there are big discrepancies between the accounts.

Dig deeper for me.” “Got it.” *Also, check Erica Turner’s phone records.

I’ll send you her phone number shortly.

The more detailed, the better.

See if there are other accounts under her name.

Do you need her ID?” “No, her phone number is enough.

Who is she?” “A Finance Director at Tanum Corporation.” “Understood.” i need conclusive evidence that proves my point.” I directed Ivanna in the exact direction I wanted her to Investigate I felt some relief and went to have some pasta for lunch.

Then I took Atlas’ coat and went to the cafe, only to find him already there.

+15 BONUS I smiled and walked over.

“I’m sorry, am I late?” He gave a mischievous half-smile, “I was having lunch nearby with a client.

I got here early.” I handed him the coat.

“I’ve had it dry-cleaned.

Thank you!” He took it and placed it on the seat next to him.

“What would you like to drink?” Just fruit juice.” Before I could even order my drink, Atlas pointed outside the window and looked at me.

I followed his gesture and looked over.

Today’s Bonus Offer

Chapter 50

Chapter 50 He is Shrewd There was an Italian restaurant across the street.

Two people were stepping out, the woman leaning on the man's arm.

They probably just finished lunch, but it seemed like it took a while.

They stood in front of the restaurant.

After some exchange of words, the woman kissed the man on the cheek.

He ruffled her hair affectionately, giving her a tender smile.

After hailing a cab for her, he turned and hurried across the square.

They were none other than Matthew and Melanie.

My cheeks became flushed.

I forced an awkward smile, and I could sense the twitching at the corners of my mouth.

I looked at Atlas and said, "I'm sorry you had to see that." He stared at me before speaking.

"Don't be." I struggled to manage the awkwardness I felt.

I thought Matthew and Johnson had gone out to dine with clients, but I was wrong.

Only Johnson was doing that.

The atmosphere turned heavy.

Fortunately, the server arrived with our drinks.

Atlas pushed my drink toward me as he stared.

After a while, he asked softly, "Does it bother you?" I chuckled.

Atlas's question left me unsure how to answer.

To say I wasn't was a lie.

I saw my husband doing it with another woman.

How could I not be bothered? However, it wouldn't change reality.

I felt like a failure, so I ignored his question.

He always seemed to witness my most embarrassing moments.

I couldn't decide if he was my nemesis.

or my guardian angel.

Sipping my juice, I felt a slight ache under my right rib.

"I want to explain something to you," I said, facing him His eyes had a puzzled look as he waited for me to continue.

"That night when you saw me by the river, I wasn't trying to commit suicide." I didn't know why I was explaining this to him.

After all, Atlas was a stranger to me.

Maybe my pride was acting up.

"I felt dirty after what I saw at home that night.

I just wanted the river to wash away my shame and anger.

He looked at me seriously.

I chuckled and continued, "The woman you saw with him earlier is his sister, Hearing that did not change his gaze.

I was surprised.

I suddenly felt like a sad movie character.

Atlas had no connection to my life, and Tanum Corporation hoped to get a project from his compa My actions were incredibly unwise.

I was so foolish.

+15 BONUS The ache under my ribs worsened.

I pressed my hand against it, realizing I hadn't felt like this in a long I time.

My palm was slightly sweaty.

“Are you feeling unwell?” He noticed my subtle movement and stared at my hand pressed against my side.

“Oh no, it happens all the time! I’m fine!” I withdrew my hand and changed the subject.

“Why were you by the riverside that night?” I couldn’t ask how he saw me “jump into the river.

Was it a coincidence? I couldn’t believe that he would be by the riverside so late at night.

“You left your luggage in the car,” he replied casually, I filled in the rest of the story.

Atlas must’ve seen me rush out.

He could not stop me or return my luggage.

That was why he had followed me to the river and rescued me.

1 He was wise.

I grinned at him, but the intensified pain under my ribs made it difficult to remain composed.

My forehead felt cool, and I persisted, “Thank... you! I’m not feeling too well.

I’ll... excuse myself.

My My vision blurred from the sudden pain.

I wanted to get up and leave quickly, but I lost control when I groaned.

In a daze, I felt a powerful arm stabilize my body.

His large hand held mine.

The pain made my ears buzz, and I couldn’t hear his voice.

“Ahh, it hurts... “I clung to that large hand like a lifeline.

The intense pain darkened my vision, and I lost consciousness.