

Chased by my Ex Husband

Chapter 2 Birthday Party

Grace

When I arrive at the venue, dressed in a green cocktail dress, the birthday party is already in full swing. People are mingling and the soft piano tune is playing in the background.

After I step inside the Hall of the Whitlock's Mansion that is my home, several eyes turn to me. Most of them are family members who are aware of Lily's side of the story. They hate me for trying to ruin their reputation three years ago by forcing Lily to make a run.

They won't believe me either because my elder sister is the beloved child. She is excellent at everything she does, and her beauty can charm a stone heart.

That's what she is doing even now. She is standing in the middle of the Hall with a group of people around her.

Her dark locks cascade down her back in waves, complimenting her fair skin and small face. Her grey eyes are enchanting, unlike my black eyes and simple features.

Confidence reeks off her. She commands attention wherever she goes.

In comparison, I don't feel comfortable among people. I like staying in and doing things with the people I love instead of socializing. It just shows and people think I hate them.

"Gracie!" Her sweet voice rings in my ears all of a sudden.

I blink, shifting my attention to her. All eyes are on me.

My parents who are beside her share a look of anger and disappointment. While the other family members look me up and down in a humiliating way.

I told myself that I am used to this treatment but every time, they look at me like I should have died a long time ago, something breaks inside me. Yet, I endure everything in hopes that soon, Ethan will come to his senses and return to me. The world doesn't matter as long as he is there.

"Come here!" Lily smiles widely, her red lips looking alluring.

With a heavy heart, I saunter over and stand beside her. Instantly, Lily embraces me tightly.

"What took you so long, Baby sis? Do you hate me so much that you didn't want to attend my birthday party?" She whispers sadly.

"What kind of sister are you? After doing all those evil deeds, you are still arrogant." Mom snaps angrily

"Mom, please don't be angry with Gracie. You know she just loved Ethan too much. I left because she wanted him but it's not her fault. It was my choice." Lily pulls apart and turns to our mother who is glaring me down.

She is good at blaming me and acting innocent at the same time. It's nothing new. All our lives, Mom and Dad cherished her like their treasure.

Whenever she wanted something, they got it for her. Even if that thing belonged to me, even if it was something I loved and would cry days over, my parents would snatch it away and give it to her.

In the end, they would tell me that my sister needed it more than I did, that I was strong and would get over it but Lily wouldn't.

Lily is innocent. Lily is sensitive. Lily's heart is weak. You should give up everything for your elder sister. Don't compete with her.

"Such a shameless sister! Wanting your sister's man and yet acting innocent!" Aunt Maria scoffs from the side.

A self-deprecating smile plays on my lips. How does my husband belong to her? I don't understand that.

These people were grateful when I married Ethan in place of Lily who abandoned him without a thought but now, they hate me for it because she is back.

"She was always like this. It's my fault for not correcting her before." Mom sighs, placing a hand on her chest.

"Salma. It's fine. It's not your fault. The children are responsible for their mistakes."

Dad embraces Mom and shoots me a glare.

His eyes tell me that he hates me. Everyone does.

"What are you waiting for? Apologize to your Mom and sister!" Dad adds.

"Dad, please don't be too harsh. Gracie didn't mean to upset us." Lily rushes to their side and hugs Dad's arm.

Like this, they look like a perfect family—the three of them. I don't exist anywhere.

What have I done?

Why must I endure this?

Silently, I stare at him as my heart aches inside my chest. Why can't they love me too?

"Grace!" Dad yells, attracting the attention of others around us.

My heart leaps to my throat. I blink, pushing the tears back.

"Dad, Mom..." I whisper, doing my best to speak without a break in my voice. "I won't apologize because I did nothing wrong. I married Ethan because you wanted me to marry him. I left everything to save your reputation. How am I to blame now?"

"How dare you! You ungrateful child!" Mom shrieks, lifting her hand to strike me.

Slap!

The harsh sound echoes in my ears. My head turns to the side.

My parents have never liked me but they didn't hit me either. I touch my cheek, disbelief making me numb for a few moments.

"She is shameless!"

"Her mother is teaching her manners now."

"She deserves it for wanting her sister's man."

People gossip, not caring to keep their voices down. I suck in a struggling breath and turn to look at my parents. Mom's eyes betray a hint of shock. But I am sure I look worse.

"Mom, please don't hit Gracie. It's all my fault." Lily snuffles and clings to Mom.

Instantly, the shock from Mom's eyes disappears and anger fills her again. She points a trembling finger in my face.

"You better stop causing trouble, Grace or we will disown a terrible child like you! We don't want someone who stabs her sister in the back."

I utter, my hands shaking by my side. "I stabbed her in the back?..."

"Stop denying it! The least you can do is to apologize like a decent person." Dad scoffs, his old face frowning

I stare at him, as my mind races with several thoughts. There is no one for me here. It was better to get disowned instead of suffering this humiliation.

I turn around to leave but Lily rushes to my side and grabs my arm. “ please don’t leave, Gracie. Mom was angry just now but she loves you. You know that! She has always loved you more than me. ”

I sigh. “ Lily— ”

“ You need to watch the gift I prepared for you. ” She leans in and whispers into my ear wickedly.

Others are unaware of what she said. Before I can ask her anything, she goes back to crying and begging me to stay.

I find my body frozen on the spot, my heart aching inside my chest. Why can’t they ever see through her?

Slowly, my eyes lift to the man standing in the corner, sipping his wine leisurely. My heart misses a beat as his green eyes stare into mine.

Ethan looks unfazed by the slap, by the humiliation and the treatment I get. Instead, he looks like he wants to approach and take part in this.

So this is what has become of us?

A part of my heart turns cold. My eyes harden as I jerk my arm free from Lily. I walk ahead briskly, unable to stand this anymore.

“ What’s that? ” A woman gasps.

“ Is that Grace Whitlock? ” Other voices join in.

I come to a slow halt. I don’t know why but I feel like something horrible awaits me. If I turn around, I might never be able to stand straight again.