

# Love Like You Never Loved Before Chapter 21 - 25

"Christopher, I'm a patient who just had a miscarriage!" I gnashed my teeth and bellowed. This man is despicable!

"I'm not going to devour you. Why are you so nervous? You look pale and disheveled. Besides, there are still some eye boogers in your eyes. It appears that I'll be the one on the losing end for sleeping with you," Christopher argued cunningly as he squinted.

Eye boogers? Immediately, I rubbed my eyes to realize that there were no eye boogers. Knowing that he played a prank on me, I blushed and dared not gaze at him. Although I only intended to use him for my revenge, I couldn't help but care about his feelings toward me.

As such, I began to think that something was wrong with me. Christopher, who was a handsome playboy, had many women fighting for his attention, some of whom were more beautiful than me. There were even celebrities who wished to get close to him.

Suddenly, I felt like a fool for liking him merely because he was nice to me. Unknowingly, I became irritated and said coldly, "You're right. There are many women lining up to sleep with a handsome man like you, so a married woman like me is certainly out of your league."

"But I prefer my little calf." Shrugging, he tapped on my forehead and hugged me tighter.

I blurted out in frustration, "Who needs your love, Christopher? Do all men behave just like this? When courting a woman, a man will whisper sweet nothings to her non-stop. But once he is bored of her, he will abandon her like some rubbish and trample on her as he pleases. Do you guys think men are emperors who can choose among concubines? What gives you the right to do so? Get out. I said, get out!"

Nevertheless, I began to sob when I was talking. Admittedly, I was venting out my frustration on Christopher, for I dared not say such things to Lyle. I knew that Christopher would only make fun of me with some lewd jokes but wouldn't actually break my heart.

On the other hand, Lyle had hurt me deeply. I still hadn't moved on ever since I found out about his affair. After all, only those I cared about could ever hurt me. However, I had to

admit that I deserved it for loving him. Although our relationship was in a precarious state, I couldn't let go of what we used to have.

Meanwhile, Christopher didn't move an inch but merely gazed at me. I mustered up my energy to push him away and kick him. Unexpectedly, I ended up hurting my wound instead of him. Instantly, I covered my stomach and wailed in pain.

My kick sent him falling from the bed onto the floor. Assuming that he would feel insulted, I expected him to slam the door and leave me like what Lyle did.

As I continued sobbing, my vision became blurry. Deep down, I blamed myself for chasing away someone who cared about me. I couldn't help but think that Lyle was irritated by me due to the same reason. All of a sudden, I was pulled into a warm embrace.

"Cry all you want. I'll lend you my chest." Although Christopher was teasing me, I was deeply touched by his words nonetheless. I leaned against his chest and cried my heart out.

"If he doesn't love me, why did he marry me? Why did he have to hurt me like this? Is it wrong for me to love him wholeheartedly?"

When I recalled the past, I realized that there were already some signs back then. When Lyle confessed his love to me, he didn't bring any flowers nor prepare a romantic setting. Instead, he merely held my hand in the company's corridor, said perfunctorily that he loved me, and asked if I agreed to be with him.

But I was so immersed in his superficial affection that I overlooked the fact that he had just broken up with Crystal at that time. On top of that, I had also forgotten the way he gazed at me in disdain once he knew I had a crush on him.

"Of course you didn't do anything wrong. Lyle is the one who's missing out. How about changing your husband to someone who loves you entirely like me? Get a divorce tomorrow, and we can apply for a marriage certificate right away."

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Needless to say, I didn't believe Christopher's sweet-nothings. Although we overstepped the boundary of friends, I was well aware that I was only using him to take revenge on Lyle. Besides, I had only done it because he was drunk and didn't give me a chance to say no that night.

Moreover, I dared not think about the prospect of getting a divorce and marrying Christopher. After giving all my love and affection to Lyle, I was now left with nothing. Although I had feelings for Christopher, I knew it was merely due to the overwhelming loneliness and sorrow.

Given that I didn't respond, Christopher didn't dwell on it and continued to hug me on the bed. He took off my clothes against my will, saying that sleeping naked was good for my health. Knowing that he wouldn't harm me, I let him have his way. As I was exhausted after crying for a long time, I eventually fell asleep in his arms.

I had never imagined that I would sleep naked alongside a man who wasn't my husband. It felt surreal because we didn't actually do anything else other than sleeping.

I had a sound sleep without any dreams. The moment I woke up, I heard a doctor and a nurse talking. Startled, I opened my eyes to realize that Christopher had already left. When I looked down and saw that I was fully dressed, I heaved a sigh of relief.

Deep down, my impression of Christopher improved a lot. Not only was he thoughtful enough to consider things from all aspects, but he was also aware of my reservations about certain things.

The doctor and nurse looked at me sympathetically when they noticed the bruises on my neck. I was unsure what they discussed, but I knew that I had become the talk of the hospital.

I had stayed in the ward for almost a day, but Lyle was nowhere to be seen, and there wasn't even a single call from him. By then, I had given up on Lyle completely. When he finally visited me at night, I pulled a long face.

"Eve, I'm so sorry for overreacting yesterday. Can you forgive me? By the way, I've brought your favorite cake here." Lyle put the cake on the table and wore a warm smile as usual.

I almost burst into laughter. You hit your wife and caused her to suffer severe blood loss, yet you have the cheek to say that you merely overreacted? Whenever he said such words in the past, I would feel moved. But now, all I felt was disgust.

Since when did Lyle become so hypocritical? Well, perhaps I was blinded by love back then.

“Come and try this strawberry cake. I remembered that you liked it.” Lyle took a chunk of the cake with a fork and put it near my mouth. Much to his surprise, I turned away and ignored him.

Every word he said yesterday was imprinted in my mind, and I couldn’t pretend as though nothing happened. As expected, Lyle was irritated. He threw the fork away and asked impatiently, “I’ve apologized to you. What else do you want?”

He always apologized a few days after he mistreated me. Back then, I would be touched by his sweet words and forgive him very quickly. But now that I refused to compromise, he couldn’t take it.

I met his eyes calmly. Then, I tilted my head as I stared at the lipstick mark on his collar. “When you apologize next time, remember to wipe away the lipstick marks left by other women. Then perhaps I’ll pretend that nothing happened and forgive you.”

Lyle’s expression turned grim as he took off his coat and saw the lipstick mark on his collar. As though he wanted to conceal his awkwardness, he coughed and explained, “Nothing happened between Bianca and me. Please don’t misunderstand us.”

How could he still have the cheek to claim that nothing happened when they have already slept together? I watched silently as he put on a show. Since we had a fallout yesterday, it didn’t make sense for Lyle to give in and apologize to me. As such, I believed that there was an ulterior motive behind what he was doing now.

“She’s a staff in my company. As my secretary, it’s only normal that she tags along with me to meet clients and have dinner together.”

“Does that mean your secretary is supposed to entertain you too?” I interrupted Lyle and raised my eyebrows.

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Given that I usually behaved in a deferential manner, Lyle was stunned by my words. He had never thought that I was capable of being so confrontational.

To my surprise, he didn't get angry but attempted to argue with reasons. After that, he got straight to the point. "Eve, Mr. Ziegler from Ziegler Corporation invited us to discuss our contract renewal. He specifically asked you to meet him. Since you were the one who closed the deal for our company in the first place, can you represent us in the meeting?"

I knew it. He only treats me nicely when he needs me. I closed my eyes, feeling even more dejected. After a while, I pointed at my face and said, "I just had a miscarriage, so it's important that I take a good rest in the hospital. How could you ask me to drink with your client tomorrow?"

"Well, it isn't necessary to drink. Since Mr. Ziegler is close to you, you can tell him that you aren't feeling well. I'm sure he won't make things difficult for you," Lyle persuaded. When I seemed unconvinced, he added, "It's okay if you're reluctant to go. After all, your health is more important. I'll ask Grandma to meet Mr. Ziegler instead."

"It's okay. I'll go. Just give me the address and bring me the attire that I need," I interrupted Lyle. He knew my weak spot well and was despicable enough to leverage it. Since he wanted to involve Sharon in the matter, I couldn't refuse his request.

In fact, she was the reason why I hadn't taken any substantive actions to get a divorce ever since I found out that Lyle was having an affair. After I was married into the Smith family, Lyle and Sally weren't nice to me. On the other hand, Sharon loved me like her own granddaughter and took good care of me. Hence, I was reluctant to trouble her with my problems.

Satisfied with the answer, he talked to me for a while before he left. This time, he didn't even bother to put up an act as he did so. At that moment, I finally believed the words he said back then—he had never loved me.

I couldn't help but feel pathetic. Back then, I thought that my life was the perfect fairy tale because I got to marry my first love. Who would have known that love was so vulnerable? In the blink of an eye, everything that I had turned into dust. Later that night, I tossed and turned in bed, yet Christopher didn't come over as I had hoped. I let out a self-mocking laugh as I thought about my predicament and only fell asleep in the middle of the night.

I must have been lonely for too long. Hence, when someone was nice to me, I would hope for more. Nevertheless, I understood that no one would treat another person that well for no reason. Judging from the BMW Christopher drove, he was definitely someone out of my league.

Even though Lyle never told me about Christopher's identity, I could guess that he wasn't merely a scion, judging from the way Sally always flattered him whenever he came over.

I had to admit that Lyle was very efficient. His assistant had delivered my attire and documents to the hospital early in the morning. Given that I had been a housewife for two years, I was a little dazed when I put on my business attire.

Looking at myself in the mirror, I felt as though I had transformed into the career woman I used to be. I recalled that I was competent at my job before I became a housewife who stayed at home all the time, idly waiting for my husband's return.

Ziegler Corporation's contract was the last business deal that I closed for the Smith family. Back then, the Smith family faced financial woes and needed the deal very much. Hence, I spent a lot of time and effort striving for it. Initially, they didn't have high hopes of me succeeding and even began to look for other alternative solutions. Surprisingly, a rare opportunity emerged, and I successfully closed the deal.

As I was deep in thought, my phone vibrated. I unlocked it and saw Christopher's message: I went home yesterday to deal with an urgent matter and only managed to settle it just now. I'm sure you were lonely and unable to sleep yesterday. Do you want me to come now? I have a surprise for you.

Admittedly, I was delighted to read the message. After all, I was terribly lonely, and his message reminded me that I still had a place in someone's heart. However, I didn't want our scandalous relationship to drag on. Moreover, I couldn't afford to love again.

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I quickly replied, saying I was fine, and I had been discharged from the hospital.

However, my fingers lingered on the keyboard as I hesitated to end this once and for all. In the end, I decided not to as I could not bring myself to hit the "send" button. That's just who I am. Because I've lost so much, I don't want to lose anything else anymore. I yearn for warmth and love, even if I myself find it hard to give love.

When I arrived at the clubhouse, I received a call from Sabrina. She was my only best friend who wouldn't hesitate to speak of her feelings. "Hey, I know you're married and living a happy life. But, it doesn't mean you should be cooped up in your lovey-dovey nest all day. You should really meet up with us sometime. It's not like your love would disappear the moment you step out of the house, right?" she teased.

I let out a bitter laugh and thought to myself. It's been two years since we got married, and I realized I had lost a huge part of me. No wonder Sabrina always complains. I used to think that those were really sweet moments, but all that's left was sadness. I can't believe my life has become like this – a world that's filled with Lyle and only him!

"I'm sorry. I got caught up with something. But I'll be available later. What's up?"

"It's just a small gathering with our friends at 301 clubhouse. You must attend, or I won't be friends with you anymore," Sabrina said in a childish manner.

I agreed to come as I was at the same place. The meeting went well, and Mary noticed that I lost weight. Hence, she asked if I was doing okay. I smiled lightly and told her I was discharged from the hospital a while ago.

She complained that I wasn't taking good care of myself and that she would have brought the contract to the hospital if she knew I was unwell. Furthermore, she also asked about Lyle. However, I merely smiled at her. How am I supposed to tell my business partner that my husband cheated on me and was the cause of my miscarriage? Besides, my husband was not the father to my baby.

Once the meeting was over, I walked toward the private room according to Sabrina's description and knocked. I immediately regretted it as soon as I entered the room. Because, in that room, were Sabrina and a bunch of familiar faces as well as Benjamin. He was Lyle's best friend who always looked down on me. In fact, that b\*stard would take every chance to find fault with me.

The reason behind his attitude towards me was because I rejected him in public when he confessed to me in the past. I guess he felt pretty humiliated, and everything changed after that. Sure enough, he made me drink three glasses of whiskey the moment I stepped into the room. He even said I would be deemed rude if I rejected it. At that, the crowd began to cheer, and I glanced at him lightly. He glanced back in return, his eyes filled with disdain and provocation. It was obvious that he had bad intentions toward me, and he did not even bother to hide it.

It wouldn't make sense if Benjamin didn't know that I was hospitalized. Though Christopher and Lyle were best friends, Lyle and Benjamin were like brothers.

"Eve, what are you still waiting for? Drink up! We all know you drink like a fish, so three glasses of whiskey would be a piece of cake, right?" Sabrina urged.

It used to be true. However, I wouldn't risk my health like that right now. "I was just discharged from the hospital due to a miscarriage. Are you seriously going to force me to drink all these? Do you still have any conscience left in you?"

"What? A miscarriage? What happened, Eve? Why were you so careless?" Sabrina looked at me, dumbfounded.

"What a shame. Well, who knows who the father is. Perhaps she messed around with someone else, and something bad happened." Benjamin snorted.

I could feel countless eyes staring at me as I replied, "I met a madman who wasn't looking at where he was going and fell. Don't worry. Although I can't drink, we can still do something else."

The door of the private room was pushed open as I said those words. It was Lyle who walked in. I frowned at the sight of him as a bad feeling crept into my heart. Lyle did not notice us as he said excitedly, "Everyone, look who's here today!"

The crowd saw the mysterious person and began whispering among themselves. Who was this mysterious person that got Lyle so excited? I thought as I took a sip of my water. Then, I heard the sound of high heels clicking against the tiles.

I initially thought it was Bianca. Yet, I was proven wrong when I looked closely at the woman who was wearing a white dress and a sweet smile. It was none other than Crystal. I was taken back as the cup in my hand slipped and fell onto the ground with a loud clang.

She's back, and at this time too? Why?

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The loud noise of the cup dropping onto the floor and caught everyone's attention in the room, including Lyle's. "Sorry about that, my hand slipped. Carry on." I waved emotionlessly.

"Eve, what a coincidence! I didn't know you'd be here!" Crystal flashed a sweet and innocent smile. Yet, I was nowhere near pleased to see my kin. That smile had made



me suffer so much. I was not loved by anyone in the Tanner family. Heck, even the housekeepers would bully me, and it was all because of her.

The crowd looked at one another as the atmosphere turned awkward. Lyle's expression dropped into a disgusted grimace as he stared at me like an uninvited guest. "Why're you here?" he asked coldly.

I ran my fingers through my hair and answered casually, "I had a business meeting somewhere around here, so I decided to stop by."

"Oh, really? I thought you were on a manhunt, judging from your outfit. Bet you were probably out seeking for a companion." Benjamin sneered.

"For the love of God, Benjamin! Watch what you're saying!" Sabrina snapped. She slammed her cup on the table and was ready to argue with him. Seeing that, I quickly held her back and shook my head, signaling her to stop. I then glanced sideways to observe Lyle's reaction.

He had always been like this. That man, whom I called "husband," would never defend me whenever Benjamin ridiculed or said harsh things to me. I lowered my gaze and stared at the cup before raising my head and replied, "Just so you know, my husband prepared this outfit and the contract in my purse. So perhaps the 'companion' that you mentioned earlier was also prepared by him."

"How would I know that?"

"Benjamin!" Lyle interrupted while looking at me, wide-eyed as if he was shocked by my insult. He had never seen this side of me as I'd never shown him my true self. After all, I'd always been very careful around him as I always behave like a lowly ant.

"Cut it out, you guys. We don't always have the chance to get together like this. Besides, I believe Eve isn't like that," Crystal chimed in.

However, she made things worse by saying that. My expression hardened at her words as everyone looked at each other awkwardly.

Moments later, the awkward feeling quickly went away as everyone shifted their attention to Crystal. She shared her studying days abroad as an art student, and some even encouraged her to open an art gallery.

Everything seemed fine until Lyle sat down by the couch, and Crystal quickly filled up the seat beside him. It seemed like she was claiming herself as Lyle's girlfriend.

They were indeed a loving couple in the past. However, Crystal decided to give up everything in Avenport and headed to Anglandur for the sake of her future. Or else, she would be Lyle's bride, not me.

"Hey, Lyle! Don't you think you should be sitting with your wife who had just gone through a miscarriage instead of her cousin," Sabrina said.

"Hey, don't say that. It's been a while since I last met Lyle, and I miss him. Besides, we're good friends," Crystal bit her lip stared at Sabrina innocently.

"Oh really? I highly doubt that!" Sabrina scoffed.

Lyle shot her a cold look and said, "I would advise you to stay out of other people's business, Sabrina."

I wasn't planning to start an argument with Lyle in public. After all, I was still processing the news of Crystal returning from abroad. Hence, I shook my head at Sabrina, signaling her to let it go. She shot me a dissatisfied look and finally sat down unwillingly as she gulped down a glass of whiskey angrily.

After a short while, everyone decided to play a game of truth or dare to ease the tension. I was selected and had no choice but to pick a dare as I could not drink. "Go stand by the door and have a steamy make-out session with the first guy who passes the hallway," Sabrina suggested.

Great, why did you have to propose this idea? I sighed, trying to make an excuse to reject it. However, I noticed Lyle's mocking gaze upon me, so I decided to accept the dare. With that, I pushed my chair aside and walked to the door. So this is what you want to play, huh? So be it!

Thus, as soon as I saw Christopher walking over, I head toward him and kissed the crap out of him.