

This Time, I Will Get My Divorce, Mr Chapter 101

“What else is there? Cynthia has been angling to get acquitted, which is why she’s so insistent on lodging an appeal in the first place. That being said, the appeal wouldn’t make a difference, and the sentences would still run anyway. Her mom probably rushed over here to convince you to drop the charges,” Charles said as he leaned close to Sonia’s ear.

He spoke softly, but Carmen heard it nonetheless, and she winced in embarrassment as she interjected, “Well, Miss Reed, Mr. Lane is right. I am indeed here to convince you to drop the charges.”

“See? Told you so,” Charles mused, shrugging dismissively.

Sonia rolled her eyes at him in mild exasperation before addressing Carmen with a distant smile. “I’m sorry, Mrs. Stone, but I won’t be dropping the charges.”

Carmen stiffened when she heard her words and grew a little uneasy; she had not expected such an outright rejection from the other woman. However, she was quick to regain her composure as she pleaded, “Please, Miss Reed. I know Cynthia has completely crossed the line this time, but she’s been repentant ever since. Could you please—”

“No!” Sonia was expressionless as she cut Carmen off mid-sentence. “Mrs. Stone, you said she’s been repentant ever since, so why is it that she has yet to apologize to me? More to the point, why didn’t you apologize to me on her part? Don’t you think that’s the least you could do as a parent after realizing your daughter’s in the wrong?”

“That’s right,” Charles chimed. He put his hands on the back of his head as he added insouciantly, “It seems rather insincere on your part to show up—without gifts, might I add—and ask my darling for a favor now that the ruling is about to be given and Cynthia is going to be pronounced guilty. It’s almost like a bad joke.”

Carmen tightened her grip on her purse, growing flustered after the two persons in front of her had put her down without much decorum. The humiliation left her speechless. She thought she might be able to persuade Sonia to relent on the charges. I didn’t know how cold-hearted these two could be, she thought grimly.

Not wanting to be pestered by Carmen any longer, Sonia glanced at Charles meaningfully and declared, "Well then, we should make a move."

Just as the both of them turned to leave, Carmen stepped forward and grabbed Sonia by the hand abruptly. "I'm begging you, Miss Reed. Please go easy on my daughter and give her a second chance."

Sonia frowned when she heard this and tried to pull away from the older woman's grasp, but the latter's vise-like grip prevented this from happening. "Won't you please just drop the charges for my sake, Miss Reed? If you do, I'll personally bring Cynthia over and give you a formal apology. Please, Miss Reed."

"Mrs. Stone, I'm sure I've made myself very clear just now that I will not drop the charges, so begging me won't do you any good at all. Could you please let go of me now?" Sonia bit out impatiently.

However, her words fell upon deaf ears as Carmen gazed at her peevishly. "How could you be so heartless, Miss Reed?"

"Did you just say my darling is heartless? Come on, even you have to admit that Cynthia deserves what she got," Charles pointed out in dark amusement as he scoffed, only to be ignored by Carmen.

Instead, Carmen put her attention on Sonia as she went on to say, "Should I get down on my knees before you then, Miss Reed?" With that, she promptly let go of Sonia and dropped to her knees in front of the latter.

Sonia and Charles were shocked by her action, and when they finally registered the situation, they quickly hauled her to her feet.

"Don't do this, Mrs. Stone!" Sonia sighed tiredly, rubbing her temples in frustration.

Charles, too, was displeased by this turn of events. "This is emotional blackmail, Mrs. Stone."

He could hardly believe that Carmen would resort to begging on her knees after Sonia's outright rejection. This was virtually no different from running away from responsibilities. Besides, this was far more than just emotional blackmailing; it was as good as duress.

Evidently, Carmen's outlook on things was just as twisted as Cynthia's. It was no wonder that the latter turned out the way she did.

Carmen ignored Charles. Upon seeing Sonia's expression soften, she gazed at her hopefully and seized the chance to ask, "Does this mean you've agreed to drop the charges, Miss Reed?"

Sonia started to say, "I'm sorry, Mrs. Stone, but I—"

Before she could get her words out, Carmen broke away from Charles and attempted to drop to her knees once more. This time, however, someone stopped her. It was neither Charles nor Sonia who kept her from kneeling, but Tina.

Presently, Tina pointed an accusing finger at Sonia as she snapped in aggravation, "How could you let someone older get down on their knees before you, Miss Reed? You're taking things a little too far, don't you think?"

Sonia's lips twitched; she clearly exasperated by the accusation. Meanwhile, Charles rolled his eyes in the most jaded manner he could. "Oh, for God's sake, are you blind? When did my darling ever ask Mrs. Stone to get down on her knees? The woman did that out of her own volition!"

Tina was skeptical. "Right. As if."

Carmen, on the other hand, merely patted the back of Tina's hand as she explained, "No, Tina, Mr. Lane is right. I got on my knees voluntarily."

"But why, Mrs. Stone?" Tina stared at Carmen in disbelief.

Carmen looked aggrieved. "I'm doing this for Cynthia. She will be freed as soon as Miss Reed drops the charges, so I..."

"So you're begging on your knees for it?"

“Yes.” Carmen nodded once, then after casting a brief glance at Sonia, she dabbed at her tears. “Unfortunately, Miss Reed has yet to agree to this.”

“I understand.” Tina pursed her lips, then glowered at Sonia unhappily. “Miss Reed, it’s rather cruel of you to reject Mrs. Stone after she has gotten down on her knees in front of you, don’t you think?”

“I’m the one that’s cruel?” Sonia raised a hand and lazily tucked a strand of hair behind her ear, looking graceful as she did so. “Cynthia was pretty ruthless when she spread all those vicious rumors about me, but suddenly, I’m the cruel one for holding her accountable.”

“I—” Stumped, Tina grimaced.

Meanwhile, Charles scoffed. “You should figure out where you stand before you point fingers at my darling, Tina.”

A look of shame flashed in Tina’s eyes, but it disappeared just as quickly. She bit down on her lower lip as she argued, “Look, even if Cynthia was in the wrong, it can’t be denied that she’s paying the price for it now. Isn’t it bad enough that she’s facing intense backlash on the internet? Besides, Mrs. Stone has gotten down on her knees to plead her case, so I don’t see why you can’t forgive Cynthia for this one slip-up.”

“No way!” Sonia was fuming as she spat her words out. “Cynthia means nothing to me, after all, so why should I forgive her?”

“Precisely! Why should she be allowed to get away with hurting my darling? Why don’t the both of you force an apology out of that girl instead of wasting your time asking for my darling’s forgiveness? It’s good enough that my darling hasn’t returned that wicked girl’s spite sevenfold,” Charles jested darkly as he wrapped an arm around Sonia’s shoulders in a show of support.

“Right, I nearly forgot about this.” Sonia regarded Tina indifferently as she said, “Miss Gray, lest you forget, Cynthia ended up in her current predicament because of you. I think it’s only appropriate that you play the hero now.”

Having said that, she turned her icy gaze toward Carmen. “You know, Mrs. Stone, it would do you better to plead your case with Miss Gray over here. Surely she would be kind and generous enough to help you out.”

“Bye-bye,” Charles sang, offering a flamboyant wave as he led Sonia into the courthouse.

Tina watched the two retreating figures while averting Carmen’s eyes. “I know Cynthia only did this for me, Mrs. Stone, but I—”

“You don’t have to explain yourself,” Carmen cut her off gently as she wiped her tears away. “I know Cynthia came to you for help, but there isn’t anything you could do for her.”

Tina had only just brightened up at this when she heard Carmen continue, “But I hope that you’d stay away from Cynthia in the future. She really isn’t meant to be your friend.”

“Wait, what are you trying to say, Mrs. Stone?” Tina blanched, and her voice quivered as she urged, “Are you blaming me for this?”

Carmen heaved a sigh. “Yes, I am. If you hadn’t stopped me earlier, perhaps Sonia would have caved in if I just got on my knees a couple more times. It’s precisely because you interfered that everything is ruined, and now there’s no way Cynthia could be acquitted. You would do well to remember what you have done today.”

With that, she brushed past Tina without so much as a second glance and walked away.

As a result, Tina’s gentle features were twisted into a menacing grimace. She could scarcely believe that Carmen blamed her for stopping her desperate attempts to plead for Sonia’s favor. How dare a lowly housewife such as herself blame me for what has happened?