

## Chapter 344

### Chapter 344 A Cold War

"Listen to me. I understand that this conversation is difficult for you, but can you please try to calm down and hear me out like a grown-up?"

Kristy's tone was so calm that I felt as if the blood coursing through my veins had frozen. I was astounded and incredulous. Could a mother really talk like that? "Are you insinuating that only by being coldblooded like you can I be called cool?" I retorted, my fury simmering dangerously beneath the surface, but I made a conscious effort to keep the volcanic emotions in check.

My silent duel with Kristy was unfolding right before my eyes, subtly and insidiously. I was barely aware of it, yet I knew one thing.

I was as much a mother as she was, but I refused to be a carbon copy of her.

"Kristy, don't you think you're being a bit presumptuous? Do you regard yourself as doing me a favor by suggesting that an unexpected child should not become my life's purpose? Look at where we are now. Do you find that even slightly convincing?"

My voice was a seething cauldron of emotions. My chest heaved with each ragged breath I took, and my eyes were like twin infernos, ready to spew forth the flames of my indignation.

"A mother, devoid of warmth, compassion, and responsibility, who, even after bringing a child into this world, opts for her selfish desires over her child's well-being. Isn't that what you are?"

"Yes!" The word slipped from Kristy's lips, her face hardening like ice. "And that is precisely why I'm trying to dissuade you from following the

same path I did."

The affirmation left me dumbstruck. For a moment, I didn't know what to say.

As I grappled with her audacity, her change of demeanor took me by surprise. Gone was the softspoken woman, replaced by an assertive, forceful adversary.

"I confess that I am not a model mother. In the grand scheme of my life, my career and my thirst for exploration outweighed my maternal instincts. I can even tell you honestly that I don't regret my decision to abandon you and return to Antarctica."

She voiced her true thoughts. Even after witnessing the ordeal I had been through and the life I had nearly lost while trying to untangle the knots in their hearts, they remained unmoved.

The pain was unbearable, as if my heart had been pierced by arrows. Even my viscera started to twist in agony.

Undeterred by my visible distress, Kristy was determined to pour out her grievances.

She rolled up her sleeves, crossed her arms, and paced back and forth in front of my bed. "In this situation, I'd rather make everything clear to you. Your father and I have never regretted our choices.

We were naive and young, believing that love would conquer all. We thought we could return to New York and provide you with a good life. But you know well enough what transpired afterward."

"So, in your eyes, I am nothing but a mis-take?" I asked provocatively.

Kristy met my gaze, and her lips parted slightly. "If you have to see it that way, yes."

A buzzing filled my ears. My parents' truth had finally been revealed.

To them, my existence was a mistake! And now they wanted me to abort my child because they believed I was repeating their mistake.

"When Aaron approached us, he shared your struggles and your pain. Your father and I were initially moved. We thought having an independent, accomplished child wasn't a bad thing. We could be your friends; you wouldn't need us to return to New York and take care of you." Kristy moved closer, her voice softer.

"We wanted to heal your scars with words of regret and apology. But considering your situation, we decided to share our true thoughts. It's the best we can do as parents."

With her eyes locked on mine, she settled on the edge of my bed and enunciated, "Don't underestimate the impact a baby can have!"

She continued, "You may choose to keep the baby now, whether out of defiance or to prove that you're not like us. But have you considered the aftermath? How are you going to take care of him?"

At the very least, my father and I love each other. What about you? Don't tell me that there is no barrier between Aaron and you."

An incandescent fury seared through me, aiming squarely at Kristy's audacious and antagonistic demeanor.

I craved the satisfaction of a biting retort, but my tongue felt as though it had been cemented in place, held down by a potent adhesive that sealed every possible retort within.

The oppressive sensation was like an over-inflated balloon strained to its limit, teetering on the precipice of an explosive pop.

"I maintain my stance," I said, fixing her with a resolute and unwavering gaze. "I am not like you. Given a choice between my career and my children, I would unhesitatingly choose the latter. Your support, or lack thereof, is irrelevant. My decision is immutable." A pang of frustration coursed through me as I realized my physical limitations. If only I were not so weak, I would have flung aside the covers and strode away with a modicum of dignity.

"Let's not waste each other's time any more. We are fundamentally at odds," I said, wrenching my gaze away from her. "Once I recover, I will leave this place and never return."

I reached for the call bell, and the metallic sound was my eviction notice for Kristy.

"Olive, when you become a mother, you'll understand that my words were meant for your benefit,"

Kristy said sadly, her eyes welling up with tears.

"I don't need it," I interjected, my tone icy. "Since you regretted giving birth to me and abandoned me, don't play the parental advisor now. My future, whether filled with joy or regret, is my concern. It has nothing to do with you."

The door to the ward swung open, and Aaron stumbled in, his eyes bleary with sleep. "What's wrong, babe?"

I barely registered his presence, my mind still embroiled in my tumult.

"Mother, this is the last time I'll address you that way." The anger and sadness

within me had crystallized into a strange calm. I looked into her eyes peacefully and continued, "If you still harbor regrets about my birth, let's just pretend I was never born."

With that, I turned away and closed my eyes. A teardrop slid from the corner of my eye, disappearing into my hairline.

My viscera felt like rusted machinery, spasming and convulsing inside me. My heart pounded ruthlessly, each beat tearing through my breath. I detached myself from the external world, sinking into the depths of my private grief.

The overwhelming nightmares would stop haunting me, but I knew that my life would never know true happiness again. My ties to my family were severed, leaving me adrift in the world.

The room started buzzing with activity as the nurses on duty rushed in, alarmed by my fluctuating vitals. After Kristy left the room, my tears wet the stark white pillow, my sobs echoing through the silent night.