

The Diamond Atelier

Zane:

I know Kiara is sad about me leaving tomorrow, but there is almost nothing I can do. All I owe her at this point is sorting out things with my father and finding a way to expand the business to other parts of the world, especially Efla. It is not surprising Kiara likes the town; it is serene, except that it has Mindy, but I do not care about that. If I knew she would come back to this town, then I might not have considered it, but I am here already, and Kiara loves the town. When I properly expand, Mindy cannot get into any of my properties, and she will not bother Kiara or me.

I pull up to the spot where I am to meet with Theo, a real estate agent. Then I take out my phone to call him.

"I am here, and..."

"Up ahead, Mr. Malibu," he says, then I raise my head, looking forward to see someone on a bike pedaling toward me. I shut off the call, then I wait for him to get to me.

He gets down from his bike and parks it, then he walks up to me. I roll my window down, and he puts out his hand for a shake. I take his hand.

"Nice to meet you, Mr. Malibu. The property is ready for viewing," he says, and I nod at his words.

"How do we get there?" I ask, glancing at his bicycle, which is by the side. "You do not expect me to wait for you to pedal that?" He lets out a brief laugh when I say this.

"Do not worry about that. The estate is not far, and I will be as fast as

possible," he says, and I say nothing more to him.

He gets onto his bicycle, then I turn on my car. He rides off, and I follow him closely. Unlike what I thought earlier, he is fast, pedaling down the streets while I try to match my car to his rhythm to avoid hitting him and those on the road.

Shortly, we arrive in front of the mansion, which stands tall and clean with its white walls gleaming under the sunlight. Trees line the edges of the property, offering shade and privacy, while a wide driveway curves up to the entrance. We drive up to the entrance and stop in front of the gate. Theo gets down from his bicycle, then he walks up to a recognition panel by the pillars of the gate. The gate slides open at once, and he hops on his bicycle, driving into the large compound while I follow him behind.

We come to a halt in the center where a large stone fountain gushes in layered streams. I turn off my car and get down, then I pause for a moment, taking in the surroundings. This is perfect, and I can already imagine the look on Kiara's face when she finds out about this property.

"What do you think?" Theo asks.

"Outside is calm, and I love the environment, but I will have to see the entire house to make a decision," I say, and he nods.

"Right this way, sir," he says, then he makes his way to the front door where he places his thumb on a panel before the door unlocks.

We make our way into the house. The living area is so large that the ceiling is as tall as the building. It has an enormous chandelier dangling at the center, and the fireplace is luxurious and cozy.

"Good enough," I say to Theo, then he leads me to the kitchen, which is

wide enough.

Although Kiara doesn't cook, I know how women love aesthetic kitchens. She met my house the way it was, but now I am trying to build with her, so I am putting everything into consideration.

"Perfect for a wife, don't you think?" Theo says as though he can read my mind as I walk around the beautiful kitchen, running my hands on the surface.

I do not answer him as my mind drifts off, and I imagine living like a normal family with Kiara making a meal while I help her in the kitchen. Then our kids run around the house, playing and passing time until dinner is ready.

"Mr. Malibu," Theo's voice draws me back to reality, and I stare at him.

"It is perfect," I say to him, then I follow him at once as he makes his way out of the kitchen.

Theo and I walk through the fifty rooms in the house, then we finally make a stop in the living area.

"So what do you think?" he asks, and I look around the house as though I hadn't already made a choice.

"I like it very much, and I would like to get it," I say to him, then he clasps his hands together.

"Very well then. You are aware the property is going up for twenty million dollars," he says, and I nod my head.

"The documents will be ready this evening," he says, then he puts out his hand to shake me. "It is nice doing business, Mr. Malibu, and I hope

you enjoy your stay here," he says.

When he lets go, we make our way out of the house, and I keep looking back at the property with the thoughts I had in there swirling through my mind. I want Kiara badly, but I never thought about kids. They scare me so much, and I wonder if I will raise them properly or if they will end up like me, but this time I will not be dead like my parents—just a shitty parent that cannot raise their kids.

"I'll be on my way now, Mr. Malibu," Theo says, getting on his bicycle.

He is about to leave when I call out to him.

"I need to get to the best jeweler in town. It's been long since I was here, and I have never been to a jeweler," I say to him, then a smile spreads across his lips.

"I enjoy seeing a young man in love. It reminds me of my younger days."

When he says this, my face contorts as I stare at him. What did he mean by young? This man doesn't look anything above thirty.

"I am an old man with the Efla blood. I turned forty this year, and I have five kids. My oldest is fifteen."

His answer is unwarranted, but it keeps my jaw on the floor. This town is really an antidote for ageing, and it makes me eager to be here. There is fresh food, fresh air, and the warmest people; even though hearing people compliment Kiara makes me jealous, I am happy that she gets the praises she deserves.

"I'll take you to the finest jeweler I know," he says, then he gets on his bicycle while I get into my car, trailing behind him like before.

Soon we stop in front of the store, and he parks his bicycle, then I stop my car, and we walk into the store with a signboard that says THE DIAMOND ATELIER. There we find an old man in a suit and glasses behind the counter.

“Give us your finest ring, Jerome,” he says to the man, and he adjusts his glasses, looking at me, then he chuckles.

“Young people in love — something I love to see.” I know they do not mean any harm, but hearing people point out the way I love Kiara makes me feel weird...

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