

## Chapter 275 Fifteen Years Ago

Now, only Janessa's undergarments were left.

She was practically naked in front of so many men.

"What the hell are you doing?" she shrieked as the men surrounded her again. They held her fast against the table, putting an end to her struggle.

"Do you still remember how my sister died, Rayan?" Noble's eyes flashed with murderous intent as his fingers flitted over Janessa's thighs.

If one didn't know better, one would think he was admiring an exquisite sculpture.

"Noble, how many times do I have to tell you? I have nothing to do with your sister's death. Haven't you been investigating this matter all these years?" Visibly angry, Rayan turned away from his car and strode toward the table where Janessa lay.

Briefly, the scene of Ally's death appeared in his mind.

Just a while ago, he had been thinking that he could save Janessa as long as he pretended not to care about her.

With the way things had turned out, however, it seemed like he might only be pushing her into a fate worse than death. Knowing her, he doubted she cared much about her life, provided she died honorably. With that said, she couldn't possibly be willing to risk her chastity.

For Janessa, there were few things in life that were more important than one's honor.

Rayan snapped then. He couldn't bear leaving her with the wolves any longer. If he did, who knew what would happen to her?

"Oh, you're finally coming over here?" Noble mocked, smirking with satisfaction as Rayan drew closer.

"What the hell do you want? I never did anything to Ally." Rayan had said these exact same words countless times in the past, but not once had Noble believed him.

"Don't say Ally's name in front of me! You bastard!" Without warning, Noble lunged at Rayan and punched him in the face.

Rayan stumbled back and even fell, but he didn't fight back. He just got back on his feet and straightened his suit jacket.

"I have nothing to do with Ally's death," he repeated.

Bang!

"I have nothing to do with Ally's death!"

Bang!

The men were locked in a cycle—Rayan denying his involvement again and again, and Noble landing a blow on him each time that he spoke. Pretty soon, Rayan's mouth was bleeding, and bruises blotched his cheeks.

"How many times have we gone over this?" Rayan asked wearily at some point.

"I know you didn't do it yourself, but my sister died because of you!" Noble yelled out in fury before grabbing a baseball bat from one of his subordinates. He toyed with it for a moment, tossing it back and forth between his hands.

"Because of me?" Rayan echoed, confused by Noble's words.

"Do you really not know what I'm talking about? Fine! Today, I shall make it clear to you." Noble began to slowly circle Rayan as he recounted the past.

He took them back to fifteen years ago, when they were still teenagers. Although Rayan was a top student in their school, he was also been the leader of the delinquents. He often skipped classes at whim.

But because of his excellent academic performance, most of the teachers decided to turn a blind eye to his other, less than ideal activities. As a result, Rayan possessed free rein in school. He could do whatever he wanted.

Once, as he was passing by the bathroom on one of the floors, he witnessed a group of girls bullying another girl. Their poor target was a small and timid girl, who shivered in the corner while her bullies huddled over her.

"What are you doing over there?" Rayan shouted, causing the head of the bullies to stop what she was doing and gape at him.

"Rayan! Why are you here?" she had asked in a singsong. She counted herself lucky for running into the school heartthrob so unexpectedly. She was even glad she and her friends had chosen that time and place to bully their frequent target. Otherwise, she might have not met Rayan.

The head girl shot Rayan a suggestive look, which he returned with a sneer.

"Fuck off!" he snapped, which mortified the girl. Even so, she didn't dare say anything. In the end, she had no choice but to collect her little gang and flee.

"Are you okay?" Rayan asked the trembling little girl when the others had gone.

There were shoe prints all over her uniform, which was also torn here and there.

"I'm fine. Thank you!" The little girl raised her head to find piercing eyes on a gorgeous face. He had been cold to the other girls just now, but he was looking upon her kindly. For a moment, she forgot about her injuries.

"That's good then." Rayan took off his jacket and draped it over her shoulders. "There. You should go back to your classroom."

"What's your name?" she asked hurriedly. "I'll wash your jacket and return it to you."

"There's no need for that."

But the girl was very persistent. She wasn't letting him go until he gave her his name. She held on to his hand, and the small physical contact seemed to make all the pain in her body disappear.

"Please tell me. It's only proper that I give you back your jacket."

Rayan sighed. He had only helped her by accident. This shouldn't have been a big deal.

But this girl was so eager, he didn't have the heart to disappoint her.

"It's Rayan."

"Rayan. Okay. My name is Ally. It's nice to meet you."

Rayan instantly recognized her name. Ally was supposedly one of the poorest students enrolled in their school.

"Ah, you really don't have to return it to me."

He pulled back his hand and walked away, thinking that they would never cross paths again.

He was mistaken, of course. They met again half a month later.

This time, Rayan was exiting the school when he spotted a group of people beating up someone.

As he came closer, he saw that the assailants were using baseball bats to beat up a boy, who was already crouched on the ground.

"What are you doing?" he called out. Rayan had never been one to meddle in other people's business, but he couldn't just pretend not to see someone being bullied.

He frowned as he realized how uncharacteristically compassionate he had been recently.

"Oh, it's you, Rayan. We're just settling the score over a trivial matter. We'll be done soon." The person who spoke was one of Rayan's subordinates. He was a couple of grades older, but he followed Rayan's orders to a tee.

Rayan pushed them aside and looked at the boy lying on the ground. He looked familiar somehow.

"What's going on here?" he demanded, his eyes still fixed on the boy. "I already told you to stop picking fights like this. How come you're beating someone up again?"

"This boy was acting all arrogant around," his subordinate answered. "He just wanders around, asking about you wherever he went. We must teach him a lesson so that he never takes your name lightly again." As a loyal follower of Rayan's, he took insult when someone spoke of his leader lightly.

"Well, just leave. All of you!" Rayan couldn't believe his ears. It was a trivial matter, indeed. It didn't warrant such drastic measures.

He turned and was about to leave when the beaten boy grabbed the cuff of his trousers.

"Are you Rayan?" the boy asked, even as he looked Rayan up and down.

"How dare you talk to our boss without respect?" The subordinate landed another kick on the boy's stomach.

Rayan pushed him away and glared at him, then he bent over the boy and helped him up. "Ignore these people and just leave."

"My sister has been looking for you for a long time," the boy said, undaunted. "Meet me here at five o'clock tomorrow afternoon." With that, the boy sprinted away, leaving Rayan as baffled and speechless.

Back to the present, Noble was just halfway through his story, but Rayan was already beaten black and blue. His entire back was covered in bruise. His skin had split under Noble's multiple blows, and now he was bleeding from various places in his body.

"Noble, that's enough! Stop hitting him!" Janessa blurted out. She was so overcome with emotion that she unwittingly revealed her true feelings. Noble looked back at her in surprise, his eyes glinting with newfound insight.

"Well, well, well. Apparently, you two make a perfect match. You're quite the shrewd couple, aren't you?"