

## 104 Be a man.

"Mrs. Foster, he seems better now" Daniel informed Beca as he glanced at Ryan who was finally sleeping comfortably there. "Don't worry he is at my place. I will take care of him," he assured her before hanging up. 1

It was hard to tell how Daniel felt in the midst of all this. Ryan was his best friend, and he had always shared in his sadness and troubles as if they were his own. But today Ryan's suffering seemed so justified that no matter how hard Daniel tried, he couldn't bring himself to feel his pain.

Not because he didn't know what Ryan had lost, but because he knew Ryan had brought it upon himself. 1

Watching Ryan sleep, Daniel couldn't help but sigh. "Ryan, brother, even realizing your mistake now won't help you change anything. Arwen has moved on. She has someone else who treats her the way you should have treated her —or even better. There is no way you are getting her back. I truly hope you accept this sooner, pr else you



will just keep hurting yourself." 1

He muttered softly, and though Ryan was asleep, his brows creased faintly as though he could hear him in his dreams.

Daniel noticed it and shook his head before getting up to leave the room, leaving a small light on in the corner.

The next day, late in the morning, Ryan's brows furrowed in irritation as his phone blared, disturbing the peace he desperately wanted to hold onto. He ignored it the first time, but when the ringing didn't cease and continued relentlessly, he finally reached out to check who it was.

His eyes barely opened, but as he squinted at the screen, he saw Delyt's name flashing. The furrow deepened between his brows. If he had still been drunk like last night, he might have ignored it again, but now sober and rational, he remembered everything he had left behind in a moment of weakness. Pinching the space between his brows, he accepted the call and answered it. "Hello!" He rasped, his voice came hoarse and dry.





"Ryan," Delyth's voice came through, full of relief. "Finally! Finally ... you have answered the call. Thank goodness. You don't know how scared. I simply didn't know how to —" she trailed off purposefully, leaving an ambiguity in her words, her emotions lingering in the air.

"I am sorry, Del. I had got something on my plate yesterday. I couldn't come to you," Ryan coughed a little to clear his throat and voice before asking, "How are you now?"

"Ryan, you don't have to lie to me. I know you were upset yesterday and that's why you didn't come. You were ... Were you upset because of me? Was it because of what I did?" Delyth's voice broke into sobs, and before Ryan could respond, she started crying. "I—I know, Ryan, I shouldn't have done it. I shouldn't have tried to take my life. But I had no choice, I was so weak. I just feel like a burden to everyone —to you. And it's all so frustrating. I thought it would better to end it all, once and for all."

"Del, you are not a burden," Ryan said, massaging his forehead. "I have told you that before. Why are you thinking such nonsense?"



"How can I not think it, Ryan? If I weren't a burden, you wouldn't have been like that yesterday. I just ... just feel so guilty. Can you forgive me, Ryan? Please, forgive me." Delyth plea was desperate, and Ryan shook his head, feeling trapped.

"It wasn't because of you, Delyth. I had something else in my mind and I —"

Before Ryan could finish, Delyth interrupted. "Something else? Did something happen between you and Arwen? Is it because of me?" she asked, her voice quivering. When Ryan didn't respond she added, "I called her yesterday, but she didn't pick up. I thought I would ask her to come and get you since you were calling her name, but she never answered any of my calls. I even texted her, but —"

"Del, wait for me. I will come to you soon," Ryan cut her off, feeling his patience wearing thin. For some reason, her words were just making him feel worse. Not because he felt that it lacked sincerity or concern, but because it only confirmed Arwen's indifference towards him further.





There was a pause before Delyth responded.

"Alright, I will wait for you then. Come soon, and we can talk about it, okay?"

"I will be there. Just rest for now and don't think too much." Ryan said before hanging up the call.

Once done, he heard Daniel's voice from the door. "So, you already have plans for the day?"

Ryan looked up to realize that Daniel had been standing there for some time. He might have heard his conversation. "I can't stay here like this forever," Ryan muttered, more to himself than to Daniel, as he sat up on the bed.

Nodding, Daniel stepped into the room before handing him the medicines he got for him. "Of course, you can't," he agreed, adding, "Though you could always head back to the bar and drink yourself into insanity, pretending the world has wronged you in the worst possible way."

Ryan shot him a dry look, clearly not in the mood to discuss all that. Taking the medicine, he said, "I am not pretending."

"Oh really?" Daniel asked as if surprised. "You are not pretending, then do you mean you are



actually been wrong?"

"Dan —"

"Ryan, be a man and face the consequences of your actions. You can't escape it just because you think it's not your fault. Think back and reflect on your actions, you will see how you deserve everything that's happening to you. Crying and drinking in oblivion are for kids, not for a grown man like you." 1

"You mean this all is my fault?" Ryan asked as if he couldn't believe it. 2

Daniel was even more surprised. "Is it not? Brother, don't tell me you are blaming this on Arwen again."

