

He Came for me

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Grace

In life...

I always found myself surprised by little things.

Any truth, any secret, any incident could make me go still or start panicking and shock would take over.

But as the call disconnects and Carlos' laughter filters through the speaker of the other phone...

I struggle to feel surprised.

It's love, he said. He can't forget about me because...

He loves me.

I should have been shocked and in denial at the confession that came so suddenly. But I am not.

Instead, my heart is pounding inside my chest, trying to break out of my ribcages.

It's like I knew he loved me but couldn't believe it before and now I do. Because he says he loves me.

The masked men leave us to our state, and retreat into the corner, sitting on a table, playing poker.

Tristin said he would come soon. And I believe him. That's why...I sit

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still and watch Celine.

The cold, damp air of the warehouse gnaws at my skin, making the sting of the cuts and bruises on my arms even worse.

Tristin's words have acted like a lifeline in this dark place, and I am clinging to it, putting all my trust in him.

Soon, I will find out if I have been fooled or if I am lucky.

After a while, Celine picks up her head, her usually bright eyes now filled with fear and confusion. The men tied her hands behind her back so she can only move on the floor but not free herself.

How long have we been here? I wonder. Every minute has started to feel like an eternity.

The men get tired after several rounds and rest on the chairs, their masks still pulled on their faces.

My head rolls to the side with exhaustion as I find myself whispering to Celine. " don't worry. Everything is going to be alright, Celine. "

She nods, and silently cries on the floor. My heart hurts for her. She landed in this trouble just because she was my friend.

I am lost in my thoughts and fighting to stay conscious when...

Suddenly, the sound of a gunshot shatters the silence. The door to the warehouse bursts open, and chaos erupts. It all happens so fast that I barely get the chance to make sense of it.

Lights fill the area, and I squint my eyes trying to see what's

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happening. Fear has me in a vice, threatening to choke me.

To my surprise, Ethan storms in, followed by several men. The air fills with the sharp sounds of gunshots shortly after.

It's a mess. The men are everywhere, firing at each other while Celine and I sit, tied in a corner.

My heart pounds harder in my chest. I expected anyone but not him.

Ethan is here, but where is Tristin?

I watch in horror as bullets fly, men shout and fall, and the clash of men makes me sick.

Ethan is hiding behind boxes with his men and two of the surviving kidnapers are hiding on the opposite side. Heads poke out, shots are fired and then they take cover again.

It goes on for what feels like a lifetime, and I realize...how easy it is for one of the kidnapers to make us their target and...shoot us.

Is Ethan an idiot?!

I struggle harder against my restraints, my muscles burning with the effort.

"Grace!" Celina whimpers in fear.

"Celine, keep your head down!" I shout, idiotically grabbing other's attention but to my relief, they don't start firing at us.

I pull with all my might, my wrists screaming in protest but the ropes

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don't loosen. I can't let Celine die because of me, something inside my head cries out. I have to save her.

Through my fear-filled eyes, I see Ethan coming out from the other side of the boxes, his expression grim and determined. His men cover him and clear his path so he can get to me.

My breath catches in my throat when my eyes meet his gaze in the darkness. It's been so long since I last saw him and I feel more angry than relieved that he is here.

Behind Ethan's figure, a loud explosion shakes the whole warehouse. My ears ring, as shock renders me unable to move for a few seconds.

Is he fucking serious?

The place where the two kidnappers stood is now nothing but fire and ashes. My guts wrench and I double over, dry heaving, struggling to throw up.

They are dead. I am relieved and horrified all at once.

But I am proved wrong.

Out of the corner of my eye, I see one of the masked men sneaking towards Celine.

He is still wearing a mask and there is a trail of blood in his path. His determined eyes lift to me, and then he changes his way, abandoning Celine to rush in my direction.

Before Ethan closes the distance and gets to me, the masked man is already beside me. A cold metal presses to the side of my head and I

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stop twisting or moving.

My breath hitches, my limbs slacken and my eyes lift to the gun.

" Move and I will fucking blow her brain out! " He yells in a sinister voice.

Fear turns me cold and my heart races as he presses the gun harder into my skin.

I try to calm myself, but the terror is overwhelming. This is it. This is how I die after everything I survived, after how I revived my will to live.

" Drop your guns or she dies! " The masked man growls dangerously.

My eyes meet Ethan's murderous glare. There is a gun in his hand, and I have seen him with it for the first time in my life.

Tristin's words keep ringing inside my head. It takes a certain kind of cruelty to reach where he is today.

" Do it right fucking now! " Another nudge of the gun to my head and I gasp.

" Ethan. "

Instantly, Ethan stops glaring at the man behind me and looks in my direction. His eyes soften, worry clouding his gaze.

" I am here for you. I will not let anyone hurt you. " He says, in a gentle voice. 1

A lump clogs my throat and I swallow it right away. I won't start

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weeping when I am so close to dying.

" I said, drop it! " The masked man yells again.

Ethan gives me a long stare and drops the gun. His men follow the lead and drop their weapons instantly.

The clinging of the metal on the floor sends a shudder through my spine. It feels like I am not even here, but in a movie, watching things that are not supposed to happen in real life.

I want to think that I will wake up in my apartment, just sleeping on my couch and Tristin will come to meet me in a few days, like he whispered he will...that night.

How long ago was it? I don't know anymore.

But I know...

I don't want to die before seeing him.

" Let her go now. " Ethan says, in a calm and hard voice.

" Move your men back. Let me leave and I will release her. " The man nudges my head once more.

" If you hurt her, you are not leaving alive. Stop pushing that gun into her head. " Ethan hisses, glaring at the man behind me.

Ethan's gaze flickers to mine, filled with a mixture of anger and helplessness. I can sense the wheels turning in his head, the struggle to find a way out of this without getting me killed.

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Suddenly, the door to the warehouse bursts open again, and there he is. 1

Tristin.

His eyes met mine, and I see a fire in them that I never saw before. Time seems to stand still as he takes in the scene in front of him and his jaw clenches with fury.

It's love, his voice rings in my head again.

" Tristin. " I whisper.

The masked man holding me tenses when he sees more people rushing in. " Stay back or I will shoot her. "

Ethan glances over his shoulder, sending a glare in Tristin's way but Tristin has his eyes on me. He doesn't look away, not for a single second.

My heart fills with the same emotion again, which makes me restless to slip closer to him.

Tristin has a calm but dangerous look on his face. " Let her go. That's the wisest choice you can make right now. I am going to hunt you down whether you do this or not, so it's better that you cooperate and no harm will come to your family. " 1

" My family. " The gun beside my temple slips lower as the man's grip loosens around it.

" I am Tristin Roberto. Surely, you know that. " Tristin steps closer,

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his eyes blazing but never leaving my gaze. " You know the Roberto family always settles their score. The woman you have there is my woman. And I will make sure that your woman suffers the same way if you don't release her right this moment. "

The tension in the room is thick. I hold my breath, my heart racing as I wait for him to let me go.

" In the next half an hour, I will have your Boss' family suffering the consequences of his actions. I am sure you don't your wife and children to join them. " Tristin takes one more step ahead, and the man doesn't threaten anymore.

The coldness that radiates from Tristin is not something I usually see. It's like he will follow through with every threat.

I should be scared, and run for the hills. But I wait and watch as he approaches me.


He came...for me. That's all I can think about like a love-sick teenager.

Tristin stops so close to me. Just a few more steps, and he can free me from these restraints.


" You have three seconds. " Finally, he tears his gaze from mine and looks at the masked man.


The eye-contact has a powerful effect on the latter. The gun clings to the ground, and my breath catches in my throat again.

With three long strides, Tristin is in front of me, and without warning, his arms close around my body, his hand cradling the back of my

 +5 BONUS

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head. 

" I love you. " Tristin whispers. 

And the gunshots ring again.

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