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*Perhaps the weight of his past could one day be lifted, each scar a story, each tear a silent prayer. Maybe the shattered pieces of his heart could realign, not as they were, but as something stronger, more true. Could he rewrite his mistakes, not in words but in deeds? Could the echoes of his regrets fade into whispers of hope? The path to redemption was steep, but his resolve was steady. And just maybe, in the quiet of his soul, peace would bloom. If forgiveness was a distant star, he'd chase it tirelessly, to finally free himself from the shadows of yesterday.*

The room was dark and aesthetically fitting for a therapy session, but it felt like hell for Hunter. He hated being here, slumped in his chair as he waited for his therapist to interrogate him with the usual questions that did nothing but uproot his pain and thrust it in his face every time. Well, they called it healing - it worked for some - but not for Hunter. For him, it was more like torture because he had to endure sitting across from Amelia, his therapist, with her kind eyes and calm demeanor, while he felt like a caged animal being poked and prodded.

"Hunter, are you ready?" his therapist, Dr. Amelia, asked, her voice kind but firm. She sat across him, clipboard in hand, waiting for his response but Hunter only nodded stiffly, gripping the arms of his chair as he prepared himself for the waiting torture of questions. Most of the time, he wished he didn't have to endure this process, but it was inescapable: A gruelling torture of the mind that he could never escape. His mother must have thought it would help him, and perhaps the doctors thought so too, but it didn't. He preferred physical therapy to this mental torment.

Months after his accident, he had woken up broken. Not just his body but his mind which was a battlefield of regret, guilt, and anger. He was reluctant to heal, which was why he had been admitted to physical therapy first, undergoing painful exercises so he could walk again. That had been painful, with every muscle in his abdomen screaming in protest, but he had preferred the gruesome physical pain to this therapy of words, where they asked him the same repeated questions.

The physical pain was easier to bear than the mental torment which always left Hunter's mind with a constant chain of memories and flashbacks ranging from Estelle's youthful laughter, which was

always replaced by her tears, especially the last time she cried in front of him before he was wheeled into surgery.

And then there was Dave. The memory of that fateful night played in his mind like a cruel loop: the flash of the gun, the searing pain that followed, and the look of pure rage in Dave's eyes.

Hunter had heard about Dave's arrest. The man had stabbed Paul at his business launch, leaving his father paralysed from the waist down. The news had sent shockwaves through their already shattered family. Hunter didn't know how to feel - relief that Dave did what he did or that he got caught or guilt that it had come to this.

"You seem distracted today," Dr. Amelia said, leaning forward slightly, her green eyes piercing into Hunter's soul, forcing him to look away.

"I'm always distracted," Hunter muttered, staring at the floor.

"Let's talk about that. What's on your mind?"

Hunter's jaw tightened. That had been the question for the past few weeks now, and although he had never given the poor doctor a response, she never ceased asking. "Everything, as usual," he said curtly, choosing to respond and

hoping that finally talking would put an end to the question, giving him some rest. "Estelle, Dave, my father... myself. Take your pick."

Dr. Amelia nodded, unfazed by Hunter's defensive tone. "Let's start with Estelle. What's the first memory that comes to mind?"

Her face appeared instantly in his mind, but instead of her bright eyes or her calm smile, it was always her teary, sad face that came to him. "Tears," he said softly, surprising himself. "She was always sad." He finally met the doctor's eyes, and if she was judging him, she didn't show it in her expression.

"And how does that memory make you feel?"

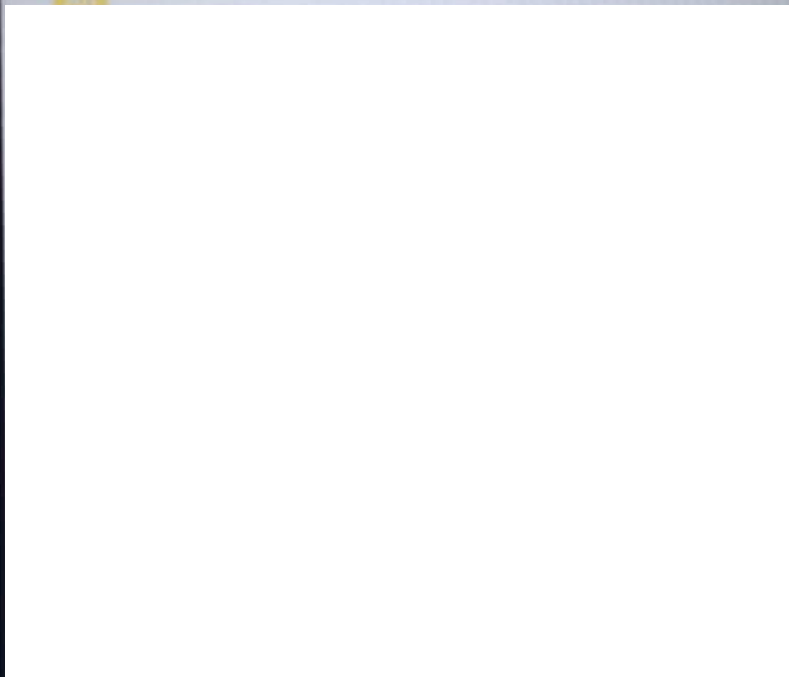
Hunter's grip on his knees tightened. "Like I ruined her," he admitted. "She was always full of life and smiles, and I ruined it. I ruined everything."

Although he was disheartened to hear that Estelle had left while he was unconscious, he was relieved to know she was okay. He didn't think he would have been able to forgive himself or fight for his survival if something had happened to her. He was somewhat at peace until the news of his father's attack reached him, leaving him in dismay, followed by the news of Sarah filing for divorce

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almost immediately - a decision Hunter had seen coming but still found jarring. His mother's departure felt like the final nail in the coffin of their family, separating every one of them, though she was always by his side.



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Paul, now confined to a wheelchair, had grown even colder - if that was possible. Hunter had visited him once since his release from the hospital, and the encounter had been as unpleasant as he'd expected. Despite being unable to talk or move without assistance, his father had thrown a tantrum so huge that the

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nurses had to push Hunter out of the room, which had turned into a mini hospital.

That encounter left his heart hollow with regret. He had ruined everything. His stubbornness and relentless greed to defy his father had led to all this. He had ruined Estelle's smile, turned Dave into a convict, driven his mother to file for divorce, and now his father... He couldn't help but think it was all his fault.

And then there was the media. They relentlessly fed on every news like vultures circling a carcass. Hunter's family scandals had become most talked about - Paul's disability, Sarah's divorce, Hunter's injury, and even whispers about Estelle's departure and the reason for Dave's attack.

The pressure was suffocating. Even as Hunter tried to focus on his recovery, the constant scrutiny made it impossible to escape his mistakes. He saw his name in headlines almost daily. Each headline felt like a punch to the gut, a reminder of how he had ruined everything. It was so overwhelming that he had to stop watching the news or going out. His mother was always by his side though, her presence the only blessing left in his ruined life.

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Months passed, and while Hunter's body grew stronger, his spirit remained fragile. Although he had been able to walk without the support of the crutches, the scars on his torso were a daily reminder of the choices that had brought him here, leaving him in his sea of regret. But he refused to give up. For all his regrets, he clung to the hope that he could still find some semblance of peace. It might take years - or a lifetime - but he was willing to try. His determination kept him moving, for he knew he couldn't undo his past, but he could try to be better.

And so, he began to find a rhythm in his therapy sessions. He started to open up more, even if it was just a mere c\*\*\*k of his emotions. Dr. Amelia encouraged him to write down his thoughts, more like letters to the people he felt he needed to reconcile with or talk to, even if he never sent them. Writing letters was said to be a healing method for the heart, and Hunter couldn't deny that it worked. He felt the weight in his heart lighten every night he picked up a pen to pour out his emotions.

And maybe, just maybe, he'd find a way to make amends and finally let go of his regrets.

**O** Luna

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I'm truly sorry for the delays in updating you all, and it makes me sad to see that some of my readers are frustrated with me. To be honest, when I first signed to write this book, I never anticipated receiving a contract or experiencing such high levels of engagement as a new author. As a perfectionist, I tend to take my time with my creativity, which results in slower updates because I want to craft the best possible scenes. Initially, I planned to end the book in just two chapters. However, I realized that it lacked romance, and I felt that ending it abruptly would be unfair to all of you. That's why I decided to take some extra time to create a fresh start for Estelle and allow her to experience love again. I understand that this isn't a valid excuse for the delays, especially since you are supporting my work, but I kindly ask for your patience and understanding. Thank you all for your support, and I apologize once again.  
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Comments



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Vote



