

Four or Dead by GOA

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Emma

The last hour is a blur. I think at some point I passed out or fell asleep, I'm not sure. When I open my eyes though I'm in a different room than the one at Zane's cabin

I take a few breaths before I push myself to sit up. A few blinks to clear my eyes better reveals a cozy-looking room with a fireplace on the opposite wall of the bed

"You're awake. I was starting to get worried." The voice has my head snapping to the side of my bed to find my rescuer slumped against a chair a few feet away

My eyes look him over and I can tell he hasn't left my side the whole time I was out. His clothes are still covered and blood and the few sprays of blood on his face are smeared but still visible. The sight of him should freak me out but somehow all I can think about is the fact that he saved me from Zane

My eyes catch a section of his arm that seems to be bleeding and I jump from the bed and rush toward him. I drop down to my knees next to his chair and grab his arm to examine it

"You're bleeding." I say

"It's just a graze." He says resting his hand over mine and pulling it

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away from his injury

I look at him and I can see how tired he looks. Why am I not scared of this guy?

"I'll be fine." He promises with a weary smile

My heart breaks for him. "I should clean it and get you patched up."

My voice is soft and laced with worry. I can't explain why I'm acting this way but there is a pit of worry in me that is yelling at me to help him

Maybe it's some sort of need to repay him for helping me...I don't know

He nods. "There's a first aid kit in the bathroom under the sink." He

says pointing at one of the doors along the wall next to the fireplace

I jump to my feet and search frantically for the kit. When I find it I make quick work of cleaning his wound well and see that's he's right

The wound isn't too bad and some of my worries fall away to relief

When I finish patching him up I let out a sigh and look up at his face to check on how he's feeling. His eyes are on me too and he gives me a soft smile

"Thanks." He says and I can't help but smile back

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"You're welcome." Now that the adrenaline of helping him and the worry has calmed I stand and take a good look around. "Where are we?"

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"A place me and a few of the guys share." I can hear him shifting in his seat and his words hit me like a bullet

More of Zane's men are here? He must notice me tense up because he reaches for me but I step back

"Why would you bring me here? I-I thought you were helping me." I feel my throat tighten up with an urge to cry and call for help

"Of course I'm trying to help you. The guys who stay here are not loyal to Zane. They're here for you." He says. \

What? I mean I know I have been trying to figure out which of Zane's men I could eventually get to help me but I didn't have a chance to figure out much

"What do you mean?" I ask him

He sighs and walks over to the bed I woke up and pats it to ask me to join him. I hesitate at first but my curiosity wins and I sit beside him

"A few of us have watched how Zane is with you and we hate the way he was hurting you. We couldn't take it anymore, so we had plans to sneak you get out but we couldn't seem to find the right time. Zane was being too erratic and it made it hard to find the right moment to sneak you out of where he was holding you." He stops and runs a hand down his face and I watch the movement. \

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He seems pretty upset about what he's saying but I can't be sure why. I mean I'm glad someone had been planning to help me but why would they be bothered by what was happening to me if they work for the guy who was hurting me?

"You might be surprised by this but a lot of us have a code against hurting women and children. Zane has never really taken an interest in a woman enough to let things go past a quick hook-up. So we never saw how badly he is willing to treat a woman until you. He was obsessed with you. He asked his guys to install cameras in your room and he would watch the feed most of the day. I-I'm so sorry Emma." His voice cracks at his apology and I can see real regret in his eyes

"Why are you apologizing?" I ask him

I have never even seen him before he came to my room so I don't blame him for anything

"You being here is my fault." He says softly but I just give him a confused look

How could it be his fault?

"I know you don't recognize me but we went to school together." He starts but stops to check my reaction. \

"We did? I'm sorry. I don't remember you." Now I am the one wanting to apologize

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He shakes his head and sets his hand over mine in my lap. "We never spoke but...I saw you. At first, I was curious about you because you walked around the school like a shadow. You always kept your head down and moved like you were afraid to be seen. I wanted to talk to you but I didn't want to scare you. Then I noticed Asher and his crew messing with you. I so badly wanted to help you but I was a weak kid back then. I couldn't think of how to stop them from hurting you by getting into a fight with them." He sighs and drops his head with shame I'm guessing

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"There's nothing you could have done. They could have hurt you." Honestly, I don't know what I'm even doing right now

To some, it might seem like this guy is a stalker or now a kidnapper but I don't see that. I see someone who saw me when I was invisible and someone who has just saved my life. Maybe it's because I've had so few people on my side that I'm desperate to grab onto anyone who shows a small bit of concern for me. It's pathetic. \

"T should have stood up for you. I'm so sorry. Anyway, a man came up to me one day after school and started asking about you. I told him I saw you around but I didn't really know you. He said you were a family friend and he was worried about you. He said he was hoping I could keep an eye on you and let him know if anyone bothered you. I figured this was my chance to help you, but when I told him you were being bullied he didn't do anything. I confronted him and told him off. I didn't know who he really was and he was more than happy to show me what he was capable of. After he tortured me he said I had the choice to continue helping him or he could kill me then and there." He sighs and

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avoids looking at me

"I turn my hand over underneath his and twine our fingers together. He stiffens for a second before looking at me. "I didn't have a choice, Emma.".

"T know," I say

He chose to live and I can't blame him for that

"T was sent back to school and told to keep watch over you and told that when the time was right we would take you away. I waited for three years for that call but nothing ever happened. Zane threatened me not to even go near you but I was there Emma. I was watching. I wanted to help you so badly but I didn't trust anyone else to watch you. So I went along with it just so that I could be the one watching over you. I did get a few blows in though when I could. I would mess with the guys' cars and the girls I would share stuff about them to get rumors started

Nothing that lasted but enough to get a little revenge for you." He smirks at me and I can't help but laugh a little. \

I think back and even though I didn't really pay much attention to what happened around the school I do recall some rumors floating around about the mean girls of the school

"When Zane came for you that day I thought I would finally get to talk to you but Zane assigned me to the cabin. He wouldn't let me anywhere near you. I think he knew how...how I felt about you." He looks at me

shyly

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How did he feel about me? "How do you feel about me?" I ask nervously

"T liked you from the moment I saw you, but I was invisible like you. I wanted to be worthy of you so I bulked up and trained hard hoping that eventually, I would have a chance with you but Zane made sure that never happened. I didn't even know what he wanted with you until I saw on the news that you were his fiancé. Some of the other guys knew though and they would let me know how you were doing. Then they started telling me that Zane was going off the rails and they were worried when they noticed marks on you. I was furious and wanted to break in and get you out of there but they convinced me not to. So we came up with a plan to get you out, but like I said it wasn't easy." \

I blow out a breath and try to work through everything he just told me

"So what now?" I ask first.

"Now you rest a little more." He says squeezing my hand

I nod but then a flash of a memory jumps out at me. I must have been too scared last night to take everything that happened in. A image of the guys on a roof hits me clear as day

I gasp and stand. "Logan and the guys. They were there on the roof?"

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"Yeah they came but we were already in the air and I wasn't convinced it was safe to take you back. A lot has been happening while Zane had

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you locked up. Devaro has been grabbing guys and torturing them to get information before sending their broken bodies back to us. I know you are with Asher and the others now but I'm not sure how safe it is for you to go back to them yet." He says and I feel a tug of fear at his words

Is he going to lock me up here now? He stands and shakes his head like he knows exactly what I'm thinking

"You are not a prisoner here Emma. We want to help you but I don't know who we should trust now. Word is that Zane is alive but was taken away by Devaro's men. The crew is searching the city to find him and killing anyone in their way. The few of us here are staying out of the city right now. We want to protect you from the mess that's going on but if you want to leave we won't stop you. As I said, we want to help you. We're with you." I watch him but I can't seem to wrap my mind around his words

Maybe I do need more rest because it sounds like...these men want to be my...what? Army?

Did I really have a crew of my own? How in the hell did that happen? "How many of you are there?" I ask

He smiles. "Come meet everyone."

I take his hand and he leads me out of the room through one of the.

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doors and we end up in an outdoor hallway. I glance around and realize we are at some kind of motel. He leads me down the hallway and past several doors. We walk down the stairs and head toward the main build

He pulls open a door and I gasp at the sight in front of me

We step into a large room that I'm guessing is a room they rent out for small events. Well, they would I guess if this was a normal motel. Right now the room is filled with men from Zane's crew. Some faces I

recognize and others I don't

"Emma. Meet the guys." He steps back and the men all lower their heads to me like I'm some kind of royalty. I

There have to be a hundred guys in the room

I stand there in total shock

The guys. Men who have abandoned Zane's crew to help me

My men

My crew

Two words I never thought I would be able to say