

KEY TO HAPPINESS:(My mute devil)

#Chapter 61 - Read KEY TO HAPPINESS:(My mute devil) Chapter 61

Chapter 61: 61

AN: every location and event that is mentioned here is all fiction.

As the late afternoon sun bathed Parc de Saint-Cloud in golden light, the tranquility was suddenly shattered by the distant roar of rotor blades. Heads turned skyward as a sleek helicopter emerged from behind the trees, slicing through the air with powerful precision. Its matte black exterior gleamed against the bright sky, a stark contrast to the peaceful park below.

Students strolling toward Les Jardins de Saint-Cloud paused, shielding their eyes from the low-hanging sun, captivated by the aircraft's unexpected arrival. The steady thrum of the blades grew louder, reverberating through the air as an unknown figure descended gracefully, kicking up a gust of wind that rustled the autumn leaves and sent loose papers swirling.

The helicopter hovered briefly above an open clearing before gently touching down. Onlookers whispered in hushed tones, their faces a mixture of curiosity and excitement. Some clutched their jackets tighter as the wind whipped through the crowd, while others stepped closer, intrigued by the arrival.

As the rotors slowed and the noise subsided, a sudden, heavy silence took its place. All eyes remained fixed on the helicopter, waiting to see who or what would emerge. The air was thick with anticipation. But when they saw the figure step out, they couldn't resist rolling their eyes.

"What is she doing here? I thought she was suspended."

"She's got some nerve showing up after what she did," they whispered, too afraid to speak aloud, though their disdain was evident. Despite their hatred for her, none dared to voice it openly.

"You're here, Carmela?" Professor Henny approached with a smile, but it was met only with an eye roll as Carmela hauled her luggage out.

"Why? You thought I'd want to spend another session with you?" she retorted with a suffocating aura, making the professor wonder who she had offended to deserve such a student. Once sweet and manipulative, Carmela had returned from the holiday as a

devil in human form. Worse still, Professor Henny couldn't do anything about it without risking her job.

Is this what the education system has come to?

"We didn't see you at school, so we.."

"Stop making assumptions with your dead brain and just do your job, okay?" Carmela snapped, her voice dripping with disdain. "The only reason I didn't meet you at school is because I don't waste my time on people who aren't worth it."

She targeted the one person she desperately wanted to be rid of. As if suspension wasn't enough, she had been forced to write an apology letter to this 'ugly doll,' as she privately referred to her. When she was the true victim in this situation.

"Hmm... I must say, I don't appreciate this tone, Carmela. It's not nearly as sweet as the one you used in that apology letter," The root cause of the entire situation remarked, making Carmela scoff.

"Apology letter? You must be dreaming if you think I wrote that. And as for my tone, you're awfully confident for someone with a botched plastic surgery." Her words, though calm and flat, carried a sting of mockery.

Unable to bear the escalating tension, Professor Henny stepped between the girls, acting as a barrier. "Alright, everyone, let's head to the guest house."

"Uh, Professor, there's a problem," the teaching assistant interrupted, earning a raised eyebrow. "About the rooms there aren't enough. When making the booking, you didn't include Carmela, so I.."

"Shit," the professor muttered under her breath.

"You didn't even want me here in the first place. Isn't that just wonderful?" Carmela mocked.

"Calm down, we'll.."

"Stop being a hypocrite, Mrs. Henny. I'll just.. "

"Carmela!" A voice rang out, sending a chill down her spine. She couldn't be sure who it was, but her body recognized the voice. Her face paled, eyes widening as her pupils dilated in shock. Her lips parted, a shallow breath escaping as her pulse quickened. For a brief moment, pure terror flickered in her gaze.

But just as swiftly as it appeared, the fear vanished. Her features hardened into a mask of cold indifference. Her jaw clenched, and her lips pressed into a thin, straight line as if

nothing had fazed her. The only trace of her fear was the faintest shadow in her eyes, quickly concealed behind a steely, unreadable stare.

"Mr. Dean," Professor Henny called out in relief, glad to be spared from another word between the two girls. She still didn't understand why this trip had been planned for her class alone or what feud existed between these families, but all she knew was that keeping her job was essential.

"Aren't there disciplinary measures for students this rude?" Nix's voice was calm but tinged with anger.

"I'm sorry about this. We'll handle it when we return. For now, we need to find a place for Carmela to stay at the guest house is fully booked." The professor's nervous gaze darted between the students, ready to lash out, and Nix, who seemed irritated for reasons she couldn't comprehend.

"Take the rest of the students. I'll book a room for her at the hotel I'm staying in," Nix replied before walking away, leaving Professor Henny to silently thank her luck for providing a solution. All she wanted was to secure the promotion Nix had promised by the end of the trip. After that, she couldn't care less about this class or its high-status students.

"Carmela, don't keep Mr. Dean waiting. He's not known for his patience," she warned before leading the rest of the group toward the guest house.

Carmela glanced at her luggage, then herself, wondering why she always had to deal with one psychopath after another. Her personal maid was nowhere to be found, and she had no intention of searching for her. With a reluctant sigh, she followed behind Nix, her mind blank. She wasn't sure why, but spending even a moment with him felt dangerous.

After all, she had to be a good daughter and obey her father.

She sighed again as she opened the door to his car, carefully placing her luggage in the back seat before settling into the passenger seat. As she had hoped, Nix said nothing as he drove off, but the silence made her uneasy. She stared out the window, watching the scenery pass by, and for a brief moment, a smile crept across her face until an unexpected jolt of electricity made her flinch. At first, it wasn't serious, but the farther they got from Parc de Saint-Cloud, the more intense the pain grew.

"I've implanted a proximity sensor in her. If she's pretending and tries to meet someone, we'll get a signal but only if her heartbeat stops. If she exceeds the distance from the server I've placed in her maid, the electrical stimulus will dry up her blood," she recalled overhearing the scientist say to Damian.

"That damned man!" she cursed, clutching her chest. Without warning, she threw open the door and tumbled out onto the asphalt. Her hair streamed behind her like a banner as she rolled and bounced onto the pavement. Shocked by her sudden action, Nix slammed on the brakes and rushed out to confront her, but his words died in his throat when he saw her writhing on the ground.

"What..." He tried to speak, but his voice faltered when he noticed her growing pale.

"Ella... take me back to Ella," she murmured, though he didn't understand her plea. He could only assume it was the handiwork of the scientist. Without hesitation, he scooped her into his arms, turned the car around, and sped back toward Parc de Saint-Cloud.

...

My eyes couldn't divert from Carmela's recumbent form. I was at a loss for words, unable to comprehend what was going on in her head. Whatever it was, I couldn't allow her to handle it alone.

"Has such a thing happened before?" Zamiel threw his question at Ella, who I doubted was ready to speak up. All she did was shrug her shoulders.

"Well... I can only come to one conclusion. There is a proximity sensor implanted in her, and I think she's aware of it. That's why she jumped out of the car and asked you to bring her back to her." He pointed at Ella, his eyebrows knit together. "And Ella must be the server. In other words, she can't exceed a certain distance from her. If she does, the same incident that happened a few hours ago might happen again, but it could be even more severe." He paced around the room.

If the scientist had implanted a proximity sensor in Carmela, then it only hinted that he didn't trust her despite his experiments. But why implant the sensor in the substitute he created?

"What's next?" I questioned, but he only tilted his head, his gaze shifting between Carmela and Ella.

"Finding the proximity sensor would be difficult since I don't have my equipment, but the sensor could be found and..."

"And implanted in her. That way, there would be less suspicion," I concluded, but his face said otherwise as he pouted towards Ella.

"Would she agree to work with us?" I read his lips. But that wasn't the issue I was ready to make even the devil mend his ways if it meant benefitting me.

Snapping the pen I was twirling. "Excuse us," I said, picking up the knife from the fruit basket and approaching Ella. She subconsciously took a few steps back.

"I'll make this quick, and I hope you do too."

"W-what do you want?" she stuttered.

"Well, it's simple. Tell me everything you know, and I'll spare you." I twirled the knife. "I know you're well-informed about my every activity, so you must know how ruthless I can be when I make someone my enemy.. and I'll ask one more time tell me everything you know, and not only will I spare you, but I'll also shield you..Spill one lie, and I promise not even the devil will be happy to see what I'll do to you." My tone sounded menacing, and I saw her fidget with the hem of her shirt. I forcefully placed her hand on the table beside the bed and stabbed the knife next to her fingers.

"Let's play a game," I began, moving the knife slowly between her fingers. "Will Ella tell me the truth, or will she lose her fingers?" I looked up to find her eyes trembling, but I just smiled, seeing how scared she was at this little threat,when the real danger was her ambition.. becoming the heir. "I'm just kidding.. Here's the real game will I chop you into little pieces.. or.. let the scientist finish you off? Let's find out." I tightened my grip around her wrist, feeling my excitement rise.

She had always been selfish from the start so I really doubt she was going to sacrifice herself.

As I was about to move the knife,"I'll speak!" she screamed,

Just as I had expected. Even though I had no intention of harming her, rumors about me being a psychopathic murderer must have gotten to her.

"I... I don't want to die. If you can guarantee that, then..."

"No harm will come to you if you oblige and work with me," I retorted, taking my seat.

"The server was implanted in my left foot, and I'm not sure what both the scientist and Alpha Four are planning, but I'm sure Carmela is with them..

I overheard them saying something about punishing you for the series of deaths you caused years ago, but I'm not too sure about that,but the one thing I'm certain of is that whatever they're planning, they're going to execute it during this trip," she blurted out.

"Then why was the proximity sensor implanted? If Carmela is on their side, why would they want to harm her?" I raised an eyebrow as she sighed.

"The scientist never fully trusts anyone, not even his partner.. And I doubt he truly wants to monitor Carmela. From what I overheard, he wants to kill her but can't. It... it seems like he's afraid of someone."

Afraid? That was out of the question and who could this someone be? Who could be the fourth party involved in this?

I truly doubt that this someone is Damian, cause though he has a bad record in the dynasty he doesn't have the capacity to shake the core of the scientists. "Tamila, he keeps mentioning this name and I suspect it is the source of his fear." Her words seemed unbelievable, but yet convincing to an extent..

If the scientist didn't fear my father, the former heir to the dynasty, how could he fear a woman who was once his wife?

"So, the scientist is scared of a woman?" I narrowed my eyes trying to piece together the puzzle "Not a woman, but a man..The voice I heard belonged to a man."

'Another man?Who could this fourth or fifth party be, and what do they stand to gain from Carmela?' my thoughts seemed to go haywire as every secret I discovered led to another secret. "That's all I know.." her words pulled me out of my thoughts "Now you have to keep your end of the bargain," she said seriously, but her words made me chuckle as if they were a joke.

"I will.. I will if you answer my last question." My question was obvious, but I still needed someone to tell me otherwise, as it was the only affirmation I needed to carry out my next plan. "Did she truly lose her memories?" A heavy silence followed as she seemed to debate whether to answer. I watched her fidget with the hem of her shirt, heaving sighs as her eyes darted between me and Carmela.

"If you and Carmela were to go up against one another, who would have the upper hand?" This question had never crossed my mind, and I never considered such a scenario. But truly, if it were to happen, who would emerge victorious was hard to determine, as we were evenly matched.

"That's nothing you should worry about," I said, not batting an eye. "She has all her memories intact, but I don't know why she's pretending."

"How sure are you?" I questioned the authenticity of her words. If they were true, Carmela would be the first to contact me, as we had a plan. But...

"I'm not one hundred percent sure. But before she decided to assassinate the presidential candidates, I overheard her telling someone over the phone that André Dubois is the only man she can trust to support you in the dynasty. That's why she's giving him as much power as she can."

Mr. André Dubois had been a loyal friend to my grandfather and to the Deans, but he had never sought power. Placing him in a high position could only benefit me as the heir, which is undeniably true.

If she hadn't lost all her memories, why was she gambling with her life?

Could all this be related to the event back at the sea?

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A small smile crossed my lips as I noticed Cicila's little pout after hearing what I had just said.

"Uncle, aren't you cheating Aunt Carmela by doing that?" She placed both hands on her hips, trying to act grown-up, which made me chuckle again.

"I just don't want to lose to your aunt," I lied.

"But she deserves to win, Uncle..." Well, I might have agreed if Carmela had been in the right, but she wasn't, and I couldn't let her get away with it.

I motioned Cicila over and squatted down to her level. "I'll help you if you promise to let me and my brother live with you. I don't like staying with Daddy." She stretched out her pinky finger, and I linked mine with hers.

"I promise," I whispered with a smile.

"I'm sorry to interrupt, young master, but the little miss is ready to leave," said the head of security. I lifted Cicila into my arms and led her to the car.

"See you soon, Uncle," she waved as I closed the door.

"Make sure my meeting with her stays between us," I instructed firmly, then headed back inside, where a representative of Old Aron was waiting.

After months of silence, he finally decided to reach out this could only mean two things: either he was nagging me about giving him a grandchild, or it was about my uncles.

"Young master!" The representative greeted me with a slight bow as I sat across from him.

"Let's not waste time. Why are you here?" My tone was sharper than intended, so I leaned back, masking my irritation with a smile.

"Your grandfather asked me to deliver these documents." He placed a file on the table. "He also wanted to inform you that T&C Construction Group has agreed to sign the contract on the condition that both you and the young lady attend the signing party."

I leaned back, tapping the armrest. Another game. The T&C Construction Group's assets were meant for Carmela after our marriage, but the management had changed,

making it impossible to access. After several failed attempts to secure a contract, it became clear that something was off as nothing in the will had been modified.

This wasn't just business anymore; it was a chess game, and my grandfather was now a piece on the board.

The problem was Carmela. She wasn't in a place where I could fully trust her.

"Young lady!" the butler stood abruptly, his eyes locking on the doorway.

"Huh?" Carmela raised an eyebrow, her hand cuffed to her bag. She had changed into a white joggers and a matching jacket with a pink inner. The butler's gaze lingered on her hand, but I had to hide the truth of our reality to keep my uncles from gaining leverage.

"If you'll excuse us, my wife has a class to attend," I said, standing up but never breaking eye contact with her. I needed answers, and the only way to get them was to get her out of here. I took her hand, and though it felt like it belonged in mine, she slipped it away the moment we left the room.

"Excuse me?" She stepped back, and I exhaled, choosing my words carefully.

"You have a class soon. Let's go." I walked ahead, but instead of following, she turned in the opposite direction.

"Should we stop her?" My head of security asked through the earpiece, but I waved them off. No matter where she went, I could keep track if I wanted to. If she didn't want me involved, then I'd let her handle things on her own.

...

I kept glancing at my watch. It was almost time, but she was nowhere in sight. "Did she forget?" I muttered, kicking the air in frustration. Just then, our eyes met across the crowd.

"Baby!" she called, arms open wide as she rushed towards me. I shot her a side-eye, unimpressed. "I'm sorry I'm late," she apologized, wrapping her arms around my waist. I pouted, ignoring her, though I could feel the eyes of passersby on us. To avoid drawing attention, I softened and turned, laughing as we locked eyes for a few seconds.

"You'd make a great actress," Amina teased, still laughing.

"Let's get out of here first," I replied, gripping my luggage as Amina waved her car key at me. She never ceased to amaze me.

I had contacted her shortly after escaping captivity. At first, I wanted to inform Nix of my survival, but instead, I got in touch with her. I never remembered having a cousin named Amina Sorrentino, but her charisma was undeniable. When she revealed the possibility that my mother was still alive, I abandoned the idea of contacting Nix. She showed me a letter with my mother's stamp, urging her to protect me. That letter had come from Paris years ago.

I decided to play along with Damian and the scientist while trying to uncover my mother's whereabouts. But instead of finding her, I discovered even darker secrets.

"I can't shake this question." Amina glanced at me as she drove. "How did you escape the scientist's experiment? You should have no memories."

I stared out the window, debating whether to tell her about the third-party involvement or make up a story. My hand absentmindedly touched the metal bracelet Nix's demon had given me after we made a deal. It had caused excruciating pain at first, but once it settled into my skin, the pain vanished. When the scientist tried his experiment, I was just as shocked that it didn't work.

"Someone gave me a gift and it saved me," I said, my eyes still on the passing scenery. Amina nodded, seemingly satisfied. "What's the plan? Where are we headed? What about the tracker and proximity sensor? And your grades?"

"One question at a time," I chuckled. "My grades are fine. I had the professor tell Damian otherwise to create this opportunity to meet Nix. As for the sensor, I'm sure Nix took care of it last night." I smiled, touching the rough spot on my shoulder. "The tracker is handled. As for our destination have you heard of the Betas?"

She raised an eyebrow but made a confused smile. "Just like there are four Alpha families, there are eight Beta families. Without them, the Alphas are powerless. If we want Nix to become the next heir, we need their support at least one of them."

"But isn't having the rest of the Betas' support enough?"

"Absolutely not." I tightened my seatbelt. I thought I could ignore this particular Beta family, but after hearing Damian and the scientist's plans, I realized they were essential. If they wanted to take Nix down, they'd have to go through me first. Making Nix the leader was my final mission. After that, I would leave, as promised but not before I removed myself from Nix's life, either by making him forget me or hate me.

"What's in the suitcase? Why's it cuffed to you?" Amina asked, breaking the silence.

I smiled. "We're meeting someone special, the leader of the most powerful Beta family... Women are the ones who hold the real power, and that's our chance for revolution." I bit my lip, glancing at the suitcase. The look Amina gave me suggested she thought I was

crazy, and she wasn't wrong. I was about to make a deal with the "craziest woman in France."

"Make a U-turn; the casino is just a few minutes away."

After I was transferred to Paris my first week at school wasn't as easy as I had expected and for some strange reason I kept bumping into Ice. From the rumors around I discovered she was in the same department as me and was also leaving while I was being admitted but I unintentionally picked her interest after falsely accusing her of trying to steal my work..

But anyone in my position would have thought the same after seeing a creepy person snooping and taking shots of their unfinished piece.

And just like that I became her 'spectacle of fun' as I love to refer to it as she would always come to school just to pick at me which I found childish.. but thank goodness Tommy came to my rescue, but who would have thought I'd be needing her help?

"I usually picked at you on campus because I thought you were naive and innocent but I never knew you are the killing mechanic everyone talked about in the dynasty" her hands left her pocket, running through her hair and then went back into her pocket and the corner of her lips continuously rose and dropped.

Little trail of white substance were on the skin beneath her nose and she continuously rubbed the bridge of her nose with her other hand that wasn't in her pocket. My eyes caught the trail of white powder on her table which looked like it was hurriedly wiped..drugs. "How about you offer me a seat?" I raised an eyebrow and she nodded pointing the chair before me, was this getting out of hand? Is this my cue to leave?

"I won't beat around the bush, I need your support in making Alpha one the next heir" I broke the silence but got no reaction instead she lit up her stick taking a puff before throwing her head backwards. "I've always wondered who the lady behind the veil was who would have thought it was you" her response was far from what I could imagine nor react to "Don't be confused baby.. you must not be aware of the things going on in the dynasty so I'll fill you in a bit.." she picked up the bottle of whiskey before us and filled her glass before taking a sip "Ever since the dining event in the dynasty, I've always been curious of who the woman that nasty man picked and no matter how much I've tried I've never gotten a picture of her face it's either she's wearing a mask or he's covering her.. it almost like he doesn't want the public to know the truth identity of his wife.."

"So what makes you think I'm the one?"

"What makes him keep close tabs on you?"

"Excuse me?" I retrothed as this was no longer going as planned. "You wore a leg chain all though your stay in school and surprisingly he also wears a similar chair around his wrist,you came to paris to study and surprisingly he comes back to paris where he once ran from,you get kidnapped by his Uncle and boom his uncle his dead in less than 24 hours.."

Chapter 63: 63

A Few Hours earlier.

I stood confidently, my formal suit exuding a sleek yet slightly rebellious vibe. The white, long-sleeved shirt I had on was crisp, and I'd left the top few buttons undone, revealing just a hint of collarbone beneath the sharp fabric. The shirt was tucked neatly into a pair of black trousers, a little baggy, striking a balance between casual and refined. A perfectly fitted waistcoat completed the look, accentuating my frame without being too stiff.

A sleek black bag was slung casually over my shoulder. Through the material, the outline of a double-barrel rifle was barely visible, adding an edge to my polished appearance. The rifle, however, wasn't mine.

Amina was dressed in a similar formal style. She wore tailored black dungarees that hugged her figure, contrasting sharply with the simple white T-shirt beneath. Her braids fell perfectly down her back, her edges laid so neatly they added to her flawless look. Together, we looked like we were ready for anything our strengths and flaws balancing each other out, making us an unstoppable force.

"What's her name?" Amina's voice broke through my thoughts as we approached the casino entrance, causing me to pause.

I hadn't asked, and honestly, I didn't care much to know. "Ice," I muttered, earning another unfiltered look from her. But I wasn't in the mood to argue, so I walked ahead.

The casino was buzzing with life. It didn't matter if it was night or day inside, it felt like another world where time blended. Gamblers filled every corner, lost in their games, and I scanned the room, trying to figure out how to get her attention.

Should I join a game? That idea was risky. I had no idea how to gamble, and losing money or worse, ending up in debt was not on my agenda. There had to be another way.. I wanted to convince myself but there was none.

I strode through the casino, my boots connected with the polished marble floor, the sound swallowed by the vibrant hum of the crowd and the melodic chimes of slot machines. The air was thick with the scent of expensive cologne, smoke, and desperation intoxicating and electric. My eyes swept over the rows of tables, calculating

as I searched for one near the CCTV cameras. If I wanted to gain her attention, I needed to make a scene one with great impact.

Then, a particular table caught my eye, the high rollers. I could sense it from the atmosphere. The players laughed amongst themselves, tossing chips casually like spare change. The man at the head of the table wore a confident smirk, his fingers tapping rhythmically on the green felt, daring the world to challenge him. He thrived on control and dominance, with a pack of arrogant players circling him like vultures. My pulse quickened, but my expression remained cold, unflinching. I didn't belong here, and they knew it, but I was determined to make a place for myself.

"Amina," I signaled. I'd spotted the cameras, and it seemed she had too, already moving into position. I was left to handle my part.

My understated elegance contrasted with the flashy displays of wealth around me exactly the point. I wasn't here to fit in; I was here to disrupt.

As I approached the table, I crossed my sleek black bag over my shoulder. The laughter grew softer as the players sized me up, their eyes sweeping over me, amused by a woman stepping into their territory. The lead player raised an eyebrow, his smirk deepening as if to say, 'What do you think you're doing here?' I returned his look with a smile, sliding into a seat, ignoring the unspoken challenge in the stares around me.

"Mind if I join?" My voice was smooth, but beneath it lay a quiet menace. I didn't wait for an answer. The dealer glanced at the lead player for approval. He chuckled, a low, condescending sound that grated on my nerves.

"By all means," he said with a mocking flourish, "if you think you can keep up." The others snickered, amused.

My lips curved into a smile that never reached my eyes. I reached into my purse and withdrew a stack of chips enough to make even the seasoned players pause. This was more than a bet. It was a statement.

With deliberate motion, I pushed the pile forward, my fingertips brushing the cool surface of the chips before I let them go. The air around the table stilled as the lead player's eyes widened, only for a fraction of a second, before he masked his surprise with another smirk. "You're either brave or foolish," he drawled. "Challenging the house like that?"

"Maybe both," I replied, my gaze locked onto his.

The dealer shuffled the cards with machine-like precision, quick and efficient. Though my heart hammered, I kept my hands still, fingers lightly resting on the table. The players chuckled, clearly amused by my audacity. They didn't expect me to last long, but I wasn't here for that.

As the cards were dealt, I glanced at mine a king and a nine. Nineteen. Strong, but not invincible. The lead player flashed his cards at me with a taunting grin he had twenty.

"You still have time to walk away," he sneered, voice dripping with condescension. But I needed more time for Amina to place me in the limelight.

"I'll stand," I said, unwavering. The game played out in slow motion. The dealer flipped the house card a six, followed by a queen.

I wasn't much of a card player, but with these cards, I'd won.

For a moment, the table was silent. Disbelief hung in the air like smoke. The lead player's smirk faltered, his jaw clenched as he stared at the outcome.

A victorious smile crept onto my face. The same players who had laughed at me were now speechless, their smug expressions wiped clean.

The man across from me finally broke the silence with a strained laugh. "Well, well," he said slowly. "It seems the lady has more bite than we thought."

"Sorry, not sorry. I don't sulk like you do." I pulled the chips toward me, but the lead player suddenly grabbed my hand. I locked eyes with Amina, who gave me the signal.

"One more game," he said, annoyance creeping into his voice. But I wasn't here to play anymore, and I wasn't leaving my winnings behind.

"Let me think about it... Nah, I'm not in the mood." I brushed his hand away, as expected, pissing him off. He pointed a gun at me, and his subordinates followed suit. My calm demeanor only fueled his anger.

"You're a very lucky man," I chuckled, placing the money in my bag. "No one points a gun at me and escapes the pit of hell, but I'll let you off this time." I stood to leave when a bullet whizzed past, grazing my cheek. Warm blood trickled down my face, awakening something dark and primal. My pulse quickened, not from fear, but from something far more dangerous.

The taste of iron on my lips ignited a savage instinct I'd been trying to suppress.

"You asked for it," I scoffed, pulling out the weapon meant for Ice. I opened fire not to kill, but to create chaos, targeting the infrastructure and sending screams throughout the casino.

"Stop!" The one person I was waiting for finally appeared. I ran a hand through my hair, placing it on my waist.

"Holla," I greeted her with a smile. She chuckled, shaking her head with a sigh.

"Everyone, return to your business. You," she pointed at me, "let's go." I beckoned Amina to follow. "Oh, one more thing," I said, turning to the men at the table. "They'll pay for the damages." I smiled at her, and she sighed once more before leading the way.

I followed keenly trying to pick a thing or two from my surroundings with a little smile spread across my lips. If I needed her help then I needed to dance to her tunes and I doubt putting on a long face would help.

"You never seem to stop amazing me" her words cut through the air as we entered her office but her compliments weren't what I was after it was her compliance. I took a second to observe her office and honestly it wasn't that bad though it lacked in several ways. From a single glance one could tell how untidy she is from the books and snacks wraps littering the room and how hot tempered and impatient she can be at solving cases seeing the series of broken glasses across the room

"Is there no cleaner?" I wondered within taking a step close but not too close to her table since it was a litter dump "sorry about this mess..I'll have someone clean it up.." I swiftly hid my expression of disgust replacing it with a smile like it was never there as I waved her off "it's okay" I lied but her response was just a chuckle "I was in the middle of something and suddenly you appeared on all my screens.." she pointed to the other side on the room with four big flash screens "So I doubt it's coincidentally" her eyes lit up a bit with a trace of curious and doubt.

Is this what we call karma?

After I was transferred to paris my first week at school wasn't as easy as I had expected and for some strange reason I kept bumping into Ice. From the rumors around I discovered she was in the same department as me and was also leaving while I was being admitted but I unintentionally picked her interest after falsely accusing her of trying to steal my work..

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Little trail of white substance were on the skin beneath her nose and she continuously rubbed the bridge of her nose with her other hand that wasn't in her pocket. My eyes

caught the trail of white powder on her table which looked like it was hurriedly wiped.. drugs. "How about you offer me a seat?" I raised an eyebrow and she nodded pointing the chair before me, was this getting out of hand? Is this my cue to leave?

"I won't beat around the bush,I need your support in making Alpha one the next heir" I broke the silence but got no reaction instead she lit up her stick taking a puff before throwing her head backwards. "I've always wondered who the lady behind the veil was who would have thought it was you" her response was far from what I could imagine nor react to "Don't be confused baby.. you must not be aware of the things going on in the dynasty so I'll fill you in a bit.." she picked up the bottle of whiskey before us and filled her glass before taking a sip "Ever since the dining event in the dynasty, I've always been curious of who the woman that nasty man picked and no matter how much I've tried I've never gotten a picture of her face,it's either she's wearing a mask or he's hovering over her.. it almost like he doesn't want the public to know the truth identity of his wife.."

"So what makes you think I'm the one?"

"What makes him keep close tabs on you?"

"Excuse me?" I retorted as this was no longer going as planned. "You wore a leg chain all though your stay in school and surprisingly he also wears a similar chain around his wrist,you came to paris to study and surprisingly he comes back to paris where he once ran from,you get kidnapped by his Uncle and boom his uncle is dead in less than 24 hours.."

"Are you monitoring me?" I questioned since she was sounding more like a creep with every line she spat

"Wrong question baby.. your question should be what do I want from you" her eyes were filled with mischief as she set them on me. This was no longer an ordinary discussion it has turned into a game of chess and I had to pick my pawns calculatively if I need to win.

I suddenly had the feeling I was playing with fire,not just any fire one ready to consume me as well if I don't turn it off

"What do you want?" I said not breaking eye contact with her and the side of her lips drew up into a smirk

"obviously.. you".

Chapter 64: 64

Our eyes came to a standstill as if time had taken a break,it was neither a staring contest nor an argument,we were both bent on breaking down the wall we both built and

dispelling what the other was thinking but neither of us gave up nor in "With you I can surpass the other Alpha family and become the ruler so why would I give up on you" she suddenly broke the silence circling her finger on the tip of her glass "I can see you seek death" I threatened standing to my feet. Arguing with her felt nonsensical, if she wasn't going to cooperate then I better find other ways to align support "If you were to choose between Alpha one and four who would it be?" Her question made me halt in my tracks, although she had a laissez faire attitude she seemed to be more well informed than others in the dynasty. My situation with Damian hasn't been made public and so only a few people from the four alpha families are aware of it but she.. she's a different case entirely "Don't stare at me like that.. I mean one is a serial killer who kills innocent people and the other a psychopath.."

"You shouldn't forget your place even if I came to seek help" my tone and mood changed drastically the moment her words left her mouth shocking even myself.

For some reason it pained me hearing people describe Nix with such words although he was far from them "seems my coming here is pointless.."

"Hold on,you can't claim a goods without making the proper deposition needed for it" she winked pouting at the bag I was carrying "if you want my support then atleast give me my welcoming gift" her suspicious look suddenly turned friendly as her smile gleaned from side to side

"What's going on?" i asked myself before dropping the bag I was carrying before her

"i finally see why the boss takes a liking in you.." she snatched the bag away and quickly unzipped it and the smile on her face suddenly grew wilder "please pardon my irresponsible behavior and have a seat" I was suddenly pulled towards the chair she was seated on and made to seat

"What's going on?"

"It's just me trying to get to know you.."she pouted "..I just hope I didn't get on your nerves" She looked up at me, capturing half of her lower lip between her teeth. "I'll continue supporting alpha one as I've always been doing so you don't have to worry about me becoming an enemy or going against him.

But how are you going to solve the problem knocking at your door?" I raised an eyebrow trying to figure out what she was talking about but then a waiter walked into the office holding a tray which he placed the contents in it before me "drink up,..that's the only way to prove we're on the same slate" she spoke the moment the waiter took his leave. I took a look at her and then back to the glass of whiskey placed before me.. suspicious enough was the situation before me but I had no other option than to carry out her instruction,and so I glued down the glass in one go which earned me a smile from her.

"good girl.. a little bird told me alpha four is here.."I didn't need to hear any more word from her to know the situation on ground. Damian was here to execute his plan and I had to stop him one way or the other in order to save Nix.

I looked around the parking lot and ran over to the car Amina had left for me,with a fierce swift I opened the car door and took my seat in it as I hurriedly ignited the engine,but then it hit me.. I had never driven a car before I only knew the basics and didn't even own a drivers license but that wasn't an issue to consider since someone's life was at stake.

...

My eyes swamped across the arranged bulk of documents before me.

How long have I actually stayed away from work to have so many documents to attend to?

I twirled my pen in one hand while going through the document before me but for some reason I felt restless which was unlike me.

I wasn't sure why or if Carmela's behavior towards me was the reason but I had this gut's feeling that things were about to go haywire.

I looked up at the CCTV footage displaying on the screen before me and a weird figure caught my attention which made me pause the video. I rewinded it watching it from the part the suspicious man appeared on the screen but still couldn't see his face because he was wearing a mask.

A knock suddenly called my attention to the door and I looked up to find Tom standing

"The CCTV footage caught a man acting suspiciously at the parking lot" he informed and I nodded turning my screen towards him."I also noticed" I said picking up another document but could see his eyebrows tense up for a while before he spoke up.

"This man is completely different from the one I spotted... I decided to keep an eye on Carmela as you instructed.." he placed the tablet he was holding before me showing me slide pictures "She visited the Beta's casino and after an hour rushed out and drove off in a car..."

"She what?" I question trying to confirm what I just heard as worry grew within me knowing the fact that she has no training or information on how to drive but Tom waved me off with a sadic smile

"That's not the issue at hand. After she drove off this man.." he scrolled to the next picture " was spotted under her car after she drove off which could.."

I didn't need to hear more about what he wanted to say. I swiftly picked up my coat as I headed toward exit "Track down the man and his rooting" I instructed rushing toward the parking lot. And there was only one thing going through my head at the moment

Carmela.

As I reached for my car I felt something hard against my head which took me taking a few seconds to recover myself as I placed my hand on my head to find it drenched in blood,I stood straight to find Damien with a manic smile on him face

Why did It have to be him of all people?

"Hello..missed me?" He waved swinging the rod he was holding at his other hand "Well I wish I did" I scoffed standing up straight "Hmm.let's make this real quick then,I know you must be heartbroken and shattered knowing that Carmela no longer remembers you and she's in love with me now wanting nothing to do with you.." he closed his eyes placing his hand on his chest and nodding as if there were an invisible gaudiene giving him an applude which made him seem like a mad man "..Allow me kill you real quick so I'll go to my bride..wait no.. actually.." I took a step backwards wiping the blood stain off my hand with a handkerchief as I took a moment to wonder if he actually thinks before he speaks,cause if he does then he would realize that he's sounding off point and stupid. I was in no mood to play around so I took advantage of his little speech and knocked him unconscious before driving off.

I could feel my heart beat speed up as I grab hold of the starring wheels

"I want to know what your personal reason for bringing me into your life is" Carmela's words flooded back into my memories

" I...I decided to stay, you can take your leave now I have to go for my checkup" I could see her bowed head as she walked away from me,I could not just hear her words but it was as if she was performing her actions and saying those lines right before me once again

"Scared that I'll go berserk?"

"No, I'm scared you'll fall in love with her and break all hell loose when she's gone. After all, you've been very protective of her since we were young," Zamiels riddles hunted me as well

And then the amazement in her eyes as she starred at the vast expanse of the sea,the excitement of how she kicked off her shoes and ran towards the water's edge,the waved lapping at her feet's and the carefree laughter she had on her as she looked towards my direction.

These memories all flooded in as if making an attempt to mock me, my heart and my head were teaming together to play against me and I could see myself already losing the game

"You can't deceive me Nix Dean, as you never do things that never bring you profit so what's your reason?" Luna's words echoed in my head

"To get more money, she's a painter and I wanted her to make more painting which means more money for me, or better still since she needs to be married to become the sole owner of a construction company, how about I be her husband and take over the company since she knows nothing about business?" My words came like a bullet against me this time around.

"Do you think we're joking? Carmela's life is in danger" Luna said half screaming

"So what?"

"You have to save her"

"And who said I must save her? What's the relationship between the both of us?"

"She's my wife" I answered my own question as tears trailed my cheeks as I made a right turn stepping on the accelerator. I'd been a liar not just to everyone but also to myself for years, I wouldn't be able to bear it if anything happens to her nor would I be able to live with myself. Memories flashed through my eyes as if I were on the road to death, although I wasn't dying physically but emotionally and mentally I knew I was going to die if she died.

Regret is one thing I knew was going to be my acquaintance through out this journey every since the day I promised her mother that I'll take her under my care.

"What do you want?" and here was another memory to mock me, although her words carried a hint of fear I could still feel the strong resolve it carried the night I tried to get close to her

But my answer had always been "You.." from the beginning.

She was my heaven and even my hell, I could no longer deny this responsibility, emotion nor my reason for being over protective over her

I've loved her for ages.

Chapter 65: 65

I stepped on the accelerator, my foot pressing down with increasing desperation. Each second felt like an eternity as I willed myself to reach Nix in the next blink of an eye. But

the faster I pushed, the more the road seemed to stretch a cruel, infinite expanse mocking my efforts. Frustration clawed at my resolve as I slammed on the brake, yearning for a moment of reprieve, to calm the storm in my chest.

Panic clawed at the edges of my mind, a sensation I hadn't felt in months, but it surged now with a vengeance. I could feel my pulse in my throat, heavy and erratic, as my body betrayed me. My breath hitched, a suffocating tightness spreading through my chest. I pressed harder on the brake pedal, but the car didn't respond. It ignored me, defying my will.

For a moment, disbelief froze me in place, and then a bitter smile spread across my lips. Of course. Why would anything work in my favor now? My vision blurred as I caught sight of the truck approaching from the opposite lane. Its headlights pierced through the growing haze, bearing down on me like a predator locked onto its prey.

The world around me became a chaotic swirl a watercolor of light and sound bleeding together in frantic disarray. My knuckles whitened as I gripped the steering wheel, my heartbeat roaring in my ears, drowning out all coherent thought.

"No, no, no..." The words tumbled from my lips, barely audible over the engine's roar and the wind howling through the open window.

I stole a glance in the rearview mirror, the image of the steep mountain road behind me hauntingly clear. It was a cruel reminder of how far I'd come and how little it mattered now. My stomach churned as I spotted the sharp curve ahead a hairpin turn bordered by a fragile guardrail, its thin metal mocking the forces bearing down on it.

The truck grew closer, its blaring horn slicing through the chaos. The sound was guttural, primal, reverberating through my ribcage and silencing the scream caught in my throat.

The dashboard lights cast an eerie, sickly glow on my face, reflecting the pale mask of terror I wore. My thoughts, once focused and clear, are now fragmented into shards of regret and fear: my unfulfilled quest for justice for my mother, the dreams I had abandoned, and Nix... His rare, fleeting smile, a sight I cherished but could never be the cause of.

And then, as if summoned by my desperation, the voice of his demon echoed in my mind, a cruel reminder of the choices I had made.

"Let's make a deal," Nix demon had said, his tone cold and unyielding.

"About what?" I had asked, feigning indifference, though the weight of his gaze felt like a chain tightening around my neck.

"We both know Nix deserves better. He doesn't deserve a flaw like me, and he doesn't need a weakness like you," the demon had sneered, his words as sharp as a blade.

"You're right about one thing," I had snapped, my voice trembling with controlled fury. "He doesn't deserve a flaw like you. But as for me being his weakness, I suggest you rethink that."

The demon had smiled, a slow, calculated curve of his lips that chilled me to my core. "This isn't up for debate. I'll leave Nix forever but only if you do the same. Let him rise as the dynasty ruler, free of us both. Otherwise..."

His unfinished sentence had lingered, a threat heavy with implication. And now, as the truck bore down on me, that decision felt oddly liberating.

The collision was instant, violent, and all-consuming. Metal shrieked and groaned as it crumpled, the force of the impact flinging the car like a child's toy. Shards of glass exploded inward, cutting into my skin with a sharp sting. The acrid stench of burning rubber and gasoline filled my lungs, choking me as my body slammed against the seatbelt.

Pain radiated through me, sharp and all-encompassing. Time seemed to shatter, each second stretching into an eternity. My head snapped forward, the collision sending a nauseating shockwave through my skull. Darkness crept at the edges of my vision, drawing closer with every breath.

The car finally came to a halt, teetering precariously on the edge of the guardrail. A deafening silence followed, the stillness almost surreal. I blinked slowly, my surroundings blurring into an unrecognizable haze. My thoughts drifted, fragmented and fleeting, but one thing remained clear Nix. His face burned in my mind, vivid and beautiful, a fleeting memory of what I couldn't protect.

I smiled faintly as the darkness claimed me.

Nix stood frozen, his breath caught in his throat as chaos unraveled around him. The screech of twisted metal and the faint scent of gasoline filled the air, mingling with panicked voices and the wail of sirens in the distance. His chest heaved, but no air seemed to fill his lungs.

"Carmela..." The name escaped his lips, a broken whisper drowned by the cacophony around him.

His legs buckled beneath him, and he collapsed to his knees on the cold asphalt. Trembling hands stretched out toward her still form, desperate to touch, to feel the warmth that seemed to slip further away with each passing second. Memories of her

laughter, her voice, and the way she had looked at him when she thought he wasn't watching ripped through him like shards of glass.

The paramedics swarmed, their movements swift and purposeful, but they blurred in Nix's vision.

"Nix! Nix, let's go!" Zamiel's voice cut through the fog, a lifeline in the storm.

"She's... she's..." Nix stammered, his voice cracking as tears streamed down his face, carving silent paths of anguish.

"I've arranged everything at the hospital," Zamiel said firmly, pulling Nix to his feet.

Nix allowed himself to be led to the car, his expression vacant yet heavy with guilt. As the ambulance carrying Carmela sped away, Zamiel drove behind it, glancing nervously at Nix's blank face.

He wondered how his friend was going to react if he told him about the secret he'd been hiding and what was going to happen to the Dean family after that.

"Tomline has been able to find the person behind the accident," he said, trying to divert his attention.

"Who?" His tone was filled with coldness.

"Ice, the beta... remember her?" He took a glance at him, but he still had a blank expression on his face, and his hand curled into a fist.

"Take me to the casino."

On hearing that, he quickly did a U-turn, sighing in relief as his plan had successfully diverted Nix.

He had already instructed the people at the hospital on what to do but feared Nix could be an obstacle, his biggest fear was actually him finding out the truth.

Upon arrival at the casino, Nix climbed out of the car, not even waiting for Zamiel to park properly, and headed straight to the Beta's office. On spotting him, everyone avoided contact and simply paid their respects from afar. But Nix was in a bloodthirsty hurry and paid no attention to them. He slammed the door of the office open without knocking, startling Ice, who was busy having a drink.

"Oh my, what a pleasant surprise! The big boss finally came to visit me," she said with a wild smile as she stood to her feet, making her way towards him to welcome him. "And to what do I owe this pleasant visit?" she inquired, taking her seat across from him. And he faked a smile hiding his anger

"Well, I was passing through the area and decided to say hello to you, or is that a..."

"It's no problem, boss; I'm just excited to have you around. Forgive my manners. What do I offer you?" Nix waved his hand still maintaining the smile, as thoughts of what he planned to do to her crossed his mind.

"A quick death would do her good" he heard his demon chip in but ignored

"Never mind, I'm about to take my leave either way... What a nice tattoo you've got there." He suddenly pointed at her, and she smiled, stretching her hand forward to him. "I recently got this and..." Her words were replaced with a scream as he pierced his pen through her palm.

"What the..."

"Shh, little girl... I warned you from the start to stay away from my wife, but still, you went ahead and organized her accident..." he scoffed in a low yet audible tone that sent fear into her. "How do I kill you? Amputation? Electrocuting? Fire? Or maybe I should just render you useless?" He looked into the thin air as he twisted the pen.

"Let's cut her into tiny pieces after all she did she doesn't deserve to live" his demon chipped in again but he ignored him not wanting to establish the conversation

"Ki... kill? Boss... boss... no, you... you can't kill me..."

"Oh really? I didn't even spare my uncle when he kidnapped her, and you think I'll spare you after you tried to kill her?"

"She's not worthy of your love nor support. Don't forget she's the daughter of the man who caused your affliction..."

"That's an issue between husband and wife. I see no reason for you to intervene, girl. But don't worry, I would not kill you..." he growled, his voice dangerously low "...not yet. First, you'll beg at her feet." He rose to his feet. "You know I'm a gentleman, and I don't touch ladies, so I'll let my wife take care of you until then...how about a vacation?" On hearing this, she quickly rushed to his side, kneeling beside him, knowing what he meant by that.

"Please... don't take me there," she begged, holding his leg, but he kicked her away before making his way towards the door.

He was once locked up in a mental hospital and knew the experience was worth more than death itself, and he wasn't so generous as to give her a simple option, especially after what she did.

He stepped back, his eyes glinting with unrelenting fury.

"Enjoy your vacation," he added, malice dripping from every word as he turned and walked away, leaving her trembling in fear.

"Why do you keep ignoring me?" He heard his demon say half screaming as he stepped out of the room but he only remained calm trying to organize his words

"You and I know I've never been a fan of killing people so stop trying to make me have more blood on my hands unless I'll find a way to evaluate you" he threatened leaving his demon speechless for the first time ever.

Chapter 66: 66

Nix arrived at the hospital and rushed towards the Emergency room with Tom and the others staying on guard outside. He watched as Zamiel walked into the emergency room, giving him a small nod while he waited outside, pacing around the room.

Seconds rolled into minutes and minutes into hours, but still, there was no word from the emergency room, and neither did anyone step out of the room. He felt like his soul was wandering around the universe pleading to any or every supreme being that could hear him for Carmela's safety.

He could hear footsteps approaching him but he didn't care about them. All he wanted was news from behind the door...

"How is she doing?" Luna rushed toward the emergency room but found her brother lost in his own world. She took one more look at Nix, who usually strikes fear into others and confidently defends his beliefs totally lost with no air of confidence around him.

"Lord," she said, letting out a sigh as she squatted to his level. "Nix," she called to have him look up to her with teary eyes, which was a first. She had never seen her brother cry, but today was way different; he wasn't just her brother but Carmela's husband. Although she was still unaware of the situation between the couple she knew they still cared for one another.

"Nix, she'll be fine," she said, trying to comfort him, but he only wrapped his hands around her, resting his head on her stomach as tears flowed freely from his eyes. "I believe in the Lord that she'll make it, so don't..."

"Are you sure your god would even listen to my request? I've done a lot and even have a lot of blood on my hand. I'm sure he wouldn't forgive me for my sins but I can't have him take Carmela away from me...I can't continue without her and.."

"Nix.."

".. I'd rather die in her place than let.."

"Nix!" she screamed, calling him out of his own world as tears found their way to the corner of her eyes

Who is this? She wanted to ask as was no longer the brother she knew a few hours ago

"I can't talk to god on your behalf.." She tried maintaining eye contact with him although her eyes were filled with tears. "Yes..you might be my brother but I can't help build your relationship with him. I can only encourage you. So if you have a request then go to him yourself, if you don't want him to take the life of your wife then give him yours and not just your life but everything you're in charge of, you can do this then he would not take her away" without letting her explain what she meant by the words she just said, he rose to his feet making his way towards the exit while she burst into tears.. he suddenly arose to her feet seeing the door of the emergency room flung open and stood to her feet in desperation for a response on the situation at hand

"Madam, Doctor Zamiel and other doctors are doing their best but I'd advise you to prepare yourselves to say goodbye to her" She slumped back to the ground hearing what the nurse said as she shook her head vigorously "No,, " she said as more tears ".. this can't be happening" she cried knowing very well she couldn't question the final decision of the creator but her one wish has been for him to change his thoughts but that would not happen if Carmela dies it would only make him hate everything more.

As Nix approached the exist and Tomlin quickly blinked away the tears in his eyes before rushing toward him but noticed the unusual aura surrounding him making him rethink his words before they came out

"Where are we going to?"

"No one should follow me" he ordered before taking the car key from the driver and driving off.

He could suddenly feel a sensational pain in his head followed by an electrocution which made him stamp his foot on the break bringing the car to a sudden stop

"Do you want to get us killed?" He said half screaming just to hear the sarcastic laugh of his demon

"Killed you say? Why wouldn't I when you are about to get me killed..what was it you said about religion? Oh yes, it's not your cup of business, but all of a sudden, it's your cup of business because you want to save Carmela?" Hearing what he said he knew there was no use arguing with him. He was going to go to the church and do as he was told, even if it meant breaking the promise he made to his demon to never step foot in a church.

His car came to a conscious stop at the front of the church, and he could feel some hesitation in his soul as he approached the church door, but remembering the condition

Carmela was in brought tears to his eyes, which he blinked away and fastened his steps into the church. It was his first time in such an arena, and it felt as if he was taking his very first step for some reason; although it was empty, he felt a sense of welcome with every step that he took, which gave a cold embrace. Unconsciously to him, he broke down into tears as he come face to face with the alter and slumped to his knees. He is a businessman and has never been at a loss for words in his life but today was different..he neither had words nor could he converse what he wanted all he could see was a picture of his Carmela in the pool of her own blood

"Luna said I can make a request to you.." he began, bringing both his hands together. "I can give you all my cars and money. Anything you want, but please spare Carmela's life.." he spoke as if there was an individual present

".. She's been through a lot from a very young time and..and she deserves a life free of pain so why can't you just grant her that?" He questioned his voice breaking but heard a cautioning voice dragging his attention to the other side of the church "Young man you shouldn't question the Lord, he has a reason for everything.." the man said getting closer to Nix "If you're going through a difficult time then don't say that it's the end of the world because it's only the beginning, because even the Lord said when the world says there is a casting down then my children would say there is a lifting up because he'll never leave us"

"But what if he has never been with me?" The priest chuckle upon hearing Nix's question

"Young man it's not possible..You see, even before you were formed, he knew who you were, so how come he doesn't know you? He is always with you but you just don't seem to notice him because you've been occupied by things that aren't supposed to be.

So think about it, young man, what are the things you do that you wouldn't accept your own child do..think about them and ask him for his mercy because I know he's a loving father who would abandon his own child," the priest said leaving Nix to wallow in his thoughts.

He stood between the conflict of his thoughts and the incomppliance of his demon he could suddenly feel the rate of his heartbeat triple making him clutch his chest in pain as he tried his best to take each breath at a time but with every breath he took it felt as if his lungs we're trying to come together. His vision suddenly became blurry, making it difficult for him to make out what was going on around his environment, but all he could hear were footsteps approaching him. He suddenly felt a firm touch his shoulder making him look up from the ground but couldn't make out who it was

"Your faith has made you whole young man" he heard a voice

"Confess and believe, cast your troubles before his feet and you'll become rebranded" he heard the voice saying but felt even more confused

"What do you mean by all these? I'm..I'm confused," he said, trying to catch his breath but the more he took his breath, the more pain he felt in his chest. He placed both his hands on his ears hearing his demon scream.

...

Damian stepped into the house to find the building extremely quiet which left him confused for a second but suddenly remembered he had sent all the servants home on her request. He walked further to find her lying on the couch, her figure fragile as she clutched into the teddy she was holding.

He squatted to her level and smiled seeing how innocent she looked while asleep. Without a word he lifted her in his arms in a bridal style and took her to the bedroom where he helped her lay on the bed before going to freshen up. He returned taking his place beside her and like a baby she snuggled into his warm embrace shocking him. She always preferred her personal space but now all of a sudden she's been acting clingy.

"Whatever you did to her I do appreciate it Nix Dean" she smiled pulling the covers up

As the morning sun ray filtered through curtains a soft smile appeared on Carmela's face, as she opened her eyes she was met with a pair of brown eyes staring back at her

"Good morning babe" Damian greeted

"Good morning, when did you come back?"

"Babe I'm sorry I kept you waiting I.." She suddenly rose up scaring him.. After her return from the excursion she suddenly changed into a totally different person which sometimes scares the life out of him. She compelled him to send all the maids home out of fear that one of them could be Nix's spy and even refused to leave Paris, her new found anger was now one thing that shook his guts, if he could wish for one thing then it would be the first version of her he met, the timid and quiet one but if he were to speak about acceptance then he preferred this version more.

"How's the situation with Nix Dean going?" He sighed not sure of the response to give to her

"He's still under trial.." he could barely complete his statement before she slammed the flower vase on the dressing table

"Do you even love me at all?!" She screamed as she turned to face him "I told you I don't want him to see the day of light, you were able to prove that he caused the death of those girls so what's the delay? Why can't he just be gone"

"Babe.." she smatched another flower vase and he tightened his fist trying to control his anger

"Twenty five days Damain. I spent twenty five days and you can't even imagine the things he did to me. I taught he loved me guess I was just a tool to become the next heir" he watched as she broke down in tears "Are you also like him.." she looked up at him with tears filled eyes "..is your aim also to use me and get rid of me?" she fell to her feet and he hastenly rushed to her side wanting to console her

"I'm not like him and would never be like him.. how can I prove that to you?" He wiped her tears as he raised her face to meet his

"Let's get married"

Chapter 67: 67

The Paris global governance summit was the biggest event of the year. Which was usually held at the famous Palais de l'Élysée. World leaders, diplomats, and big business names gathered there to talk about important issues facing the world. People called it 'The Midnight Accord' since talks often went late into the night.

The night was full of glamour and influence. Guests arrived in sleek cars, with security all around. Camera's clicked nonstop. Inside the grand ballroom, chandeliers lit up the room. Golden details reflected onto shiny marble floors. Glasses of champagne clinked, people were chatting quietly, and a classical quartet played softly in the background.

Leaders, business people, and celebrities mixed together, all under the eyes of the press. André Dubois the expected next president was in the spotlight, talking softly with a visiting American envoy. Nearby, the British Prime Minister shared smiles and sharp comments with a rich oil magnate from the Middle East, both hiding their true feelings.

As the night went on, journalists buzzed about a secret meeting happening behind closed doors. A sudden discussion had sent aides rushing down the hall. Then, just as a senior EU official raised a glass for a toast, a loud sound broke the chatter.

Click. Click. Click.

The sound of heels on marble cut through the room. It was slow and steady. And everyone noticed. Conversations stopped, hands froze, and the pianist missed a note as the music faded.

All eyes turned to the grand entrance. A woman stood there, framed by the tall doors. She was in a sharp black dress and had an air of mystery. Her face was hard to read, but she made waves in the room.

The President's chief of staff got tense. A journalist from Le Monde fumbled with his recorder. A Russian diplomat held his champagne flute tighter, it was obvious that every one knew who she was, and that made the tension rise.

But no one said a word. Not yet.

She took another slow step, the click of her heels echoing again.

And then, finally, she smiled swiping her gaze across the room

"I never knew I held so much importance" Carmela finally spoke up maintaining the smile on her face while Damian walked closer to her. They crossed their hands and made their way inside the hall while Cameras kept clicking

"Mr prime minister, it's such a pleasure to finally meet with you" she did a slight bow which they both returned

"Miss Dalton the pleasure is all mine. I've always wanted to meet the creators of my favorite painting and today I have the opportunity " he placed a kiss on the back of her hand "I heard you were married to the first grandson of the Dean family.."

"I guess the Prime minister is easily enticed by false rumors I'll never make the mistake of spending the rest of my life with someone as hot tempered like Miss Dalton" Nix interrupted earning him a death glare from Carmela

"And neither would I want to spend the rest of my life with someone who is mentally disabled.." she smiled at him before turning to face the prime minister "I'll also like to use this opportunity to introduce my fiancée Damian,our wedding would be commencing in a few days and I'll be sure to send an invite to the both of you"

"Then I'll be expecting that" Nix let out a chuckle catching the attention of almost everyone in the hall including that of Carmela.

"Congratulations Miss Dalton on your engagement with your fiancée I hope your father is pleased with your choice..no I know he's pleased with a doormat as a son in-law" he scoffed before taking his leave

"Doormat.. he just called him a doormat what could that mean?" Whispers suddenly began infuriating Carmela making her clutch her hand

"We'll excuse ourselves then" Damian withdrew taking her away from the spotlight as he noticed Carmela's knuckles turning white. As much as he loves the way she showed him off in public and detested the way Nix made fun of him,he couldn't admit he loved the tension between the both of them and one thing he would not allow is Carmela's anger ruining everything

"Babe" he called cupping her face in his palm as they got to the corner but she withdrew "You shouldn't mind him, all his words doesn't matter.."

"Doormat? How dare him?" She retorted

"But I'm not a doormat so calm down babe.."

"I'll kill him..I'll surely kill him today" she said storming out on him leaving him with just a sigh. He rubbed his hand on his forehead wondering how he ended up with such a situation on his plate but was suddenly startled. He turned to find who touched him to find a dark skin lady in a black dress standing behind him

"Mr Damian, your miss Dalton's fiancée right?" He took a step backwards eyeing her before giving a small nod. " I'm Sophie Tchiani, director of the Judicial police in Paris if you don't mind I have a few questions for you" hearing this he felt a lump in his throat but his straight face masked his worried appearance

"Alright, I'm all ears" he tried to compose himself

"I'm sorry if my method of approach is wrong but I know this is the only opportunity I'll get to be able to approach you.

From our investigations, about the death of the university students, we found out that Mr Dean was involved in it but every lead that we had towards him suddenly disappeared. I decided to dig in more and got to know that both you and Mr Dean shared most of your childhood times together so I believe you'll have or be a better judge of his character than anyone else. Almost a decade ago, a similar incident happened and more than a hundred lives were claimed and every evidence that pointed to Mr Dean was somehow covered up just like now, how would you explain that?" He smiled looking away as he cooked up his answer before looking back at her

"As you said, I and Nix Dean did spend most of our childhood together and so I'll be a better judge of his character. The reason I and Nix are no longer close friends is because of that day. I'm not sure if you were aware of this but I was also a victim on that day, he almost killed me when I went to visit him but luckily I escaped"

"Then why didn't you speak up? He could be brought to punishment by the law"

"If he was able to clean every trace that led to him do you think he would not get rid of me? Don't forget that my family status and his are on a whole another level..."

"Not anymore Mr Damian, I'm willing to reopen the case if you are willing to walk with me." He looked at the young fierce woman in the eyes and a smile crept on his face before he extended his hand

"The pleasure would be all mine director Sophie Tchiani.." he brings out his business card from his wallet "..be sure to reach out to me whenever, I'd like to catch up with my fiancée" he took his leave as his devilish plans unfolded one after the other, things were about to get spicy and all he has to do is sit back and watch it all from afar.

"You look so happy after that child announced that you're getting married " he turned to find the Scientist leaning against the wall his face covered with a mask.

"I'd rather kill my daughter than have a physcophat like you as a son in law" he scoffed making Damian chuckle

"Too late, you have no other option than to accept me" he teased making the scientist roll his eyes

"You speak so highly of yourself, I wouldn't be surprised if she's following you..like where is she now?" He stepped closer to him

"Whether I am being fooled or not is my issue as of now I have big news Sophie Tchiani the director of the Judicial police in Paris is on Nix's tail" he whispered but the scientist showed no sign of surprise

"I was the one who gave the hint. I'm not sure what that child is up to but before she figures out my cards I'll throw that boy into prison so make sure she doesn't ruin it" he hit him lightly on the chest before walking out.

"You speak so highly of yourself, I wouldn't be surprised if she's following you..like where is she now?" The words of the scientist echoed in his head and he took to his heels to find her. He wasn't sure of the direction she was but he knew from the temperament she displayed before leaving that she was super mad.

"If I was Carmela and wanted to kill somebody without calling for attention then where would I be?" He asked himself as strolled through the corners of the hall before abruptly stopping

"Car park " he said to himself taking a D-turn through the hallways.

On approaching there "Don't you have any shame" he heard Nix's voice and took a step closer to find Nix hand wrapped around Carmela's neck while she struggled to get free from his grasp "You've already announce your fiancée to the world but here you are chasing after me.." she suddenly cuts him off by spitting on his face making his facial expression change "I detest you Nix Dean I sincerely do" she said before kicking his groin. He suddenly let go falling to his knees in reflex to the pain he felt in-between his legs "The next time you call my fiancée a doormat, I wouldn't just stop after kicking you but I'll take away everything you treasure.." she threatened straightening her dress "..be ready to bow to your next ruler Nix dead" she scoffed before walking away

Damian's suddenly started clapping catching the attention of Nix as he took a step closer to him

"Nice shot..dont you think?" he squatted to Nix level "you know I once taught we could be the best of friends after all we were roommates in the mental hospital but no you have to be the upright one" he landed a blow on Nix's face "That's for holding my baby roughly" he said before giving him another blow ".. and that's for even touching her..you better keep your distance if you love yourself " he threatened before standing to take his leave

"Shameless couple" Nix cursed.

Chapter 68: 68

The entire Delton Villa turned in a uproar noticing the presence of Carmela. They all took to their heels wanting to stay far away from the father and daughter duo remembering the kind of scenes she caused when she returned from her school trip. The sound of her boots against the tiles made then quicken their steps as every step she took added even more tension to their heart.

"Dad" Carmela called stepping into a forbidden zone,she was aware she wasn't ment to ever go into his room but today she was going to break all rules and even bend some in other to get her way. She looked up to find the Scientist seated of the king-size couch that faced the balcony his face facing her "Dad I have something to say" she went quite waiting for a response but got none so she continued "I'll be getting married to Damian in the next three days and.."

"Who ever it is Damian or the son of the Dean family it's none of my business just get the hell out of my room and never show yourself to me" he interrupted her making her scof,a slie smile suddenly appeared on her lips as she looked around the room trying to control her emotions

"You know I've always wanted to know if you're truly my biological father or just a physcophat that picked I and my mother from the road side...because .. because no father would turn..bno not father no normal human being would turn their child into a lab rat and still want to kill her after achieving his fucked up results no!" She screamed with tears filled eyes talking one step after another closer to him "let's step aside the issue of the Deans,so what is my offence? Why do you hate me so much even after being your own offspring?..

You know what never mind I don't want to know but make sure you attend I and Damians wedding unless.."

"Unless what? You'll kill me?" He laughed "Girl you'll never succeed so stop laughing I'll.." he was suddenly interrupted by Carmela's laughter

"Oops sorry I didn't mean to be respectful but I heard the scientist is sick and still haven't found the source of his illness.." She laughed more gaining even more of his attention "Don't forget I'm your daughter so forget about dying it's time for you to pass through the same pain you made me pass through.." her words got stuck in her throat as he firecly wrapped his hand around her neck wanting to choke her but that didn't freak her instead she laughed more with wild eyes seeing how disfigured his face was "could this be the reason you hid your face from the public? Several failed surgery attempts that led to this?" She raised an eyebrow and he subconsciously took two step away from her feelings his thoughts run haywire.

This wasn't how he expected everything to turn out,he had dreams and goals he wanted to achieve but..

"I have the antidote of the poison but I'll only hand it over to you after my wedding so be sure to attend unless.." she stopped by the door "Forget about having this dynasty under your control you wouldn't even have control over your own body" she said about to take her leave but halted remember someone

"A little birdy told me that Ella is still alive.."she turned to face him once more "Dear father you should learn to do a clean job weather it is I or my stand in.

I guess you like having people seek for your down fall, what an attention seeker" She left her words hanging in the air as she rhythmically danced to the song in her head as she made her way out of the house with a plastered on her face.

"Madame where are you headed to?"

"Drop me at the mall after which deliver this to the Dean Villa" she instructed before siking into the chair.

She let out a deep sigh trying to relieve her self of the pileing stress on her shoulders. As the car speed through the road she tilted a bit to the window as she lowered the glass allowing the fresh air kiss her face. Her smile follered by a droplet of tears as she felt her chest tighten up. She was tired of acting strong but had no shoulder to cry on at the moment the car coming to a suddenly halt brought her back to the reality she found her self it.

Sudden sound of gunshots took her unaware making her flinch as she subconsciously laid flat in the car. Her mind ran far and wild trying to assimilate the situation but as much as she tried to understand the more confused she was. The gun shuts suddenly died down giving her moment to breath

"You can step out now" she heard a familiar females voice and looked out the window to find Sophie Tchiani hiding her gun behind her before helping her out of the car. "Are you sure that man is your father? Because his taste for your blood is one I don't even

see between enemies" Sophie looked at her before returning her gaze to the bodies lying before them

"I'm not his daughter.." Carmela suddenly shook her head before looked up to her with he's void of emotions "I am his nemesis. The wedding is in three days prepare your team while I prepare mine" she said regaining her composure

"Don't mind me asking, but will your ex husband be there?" Sophie's question earned her a sudden detest look from Carmela

"I hope Director Sophie isn't catching feelings for my ex..don't forget he's a criminal and should be locked up.."

"Off course not Miss Dalton.."

"And except behind a criminal, he's my trash and only I am entitled to taking out my trash.." the both shared a battling gaze before Sophie suddenly broke it off with a sarcastic laugh

"Don't let weird thoughts come up in your head Miss Dalton, I'm only asking because who knows you might also be locked up with him after all you're responsible for the death of the parents of your stand in " she took a few steps away from Carmela to observe her reaction but seeing no reaction from her made her chuckle

"We'll settle all old and new scores in three days time so I hope you're prepared" Sophie waved before climbing onto her motorcycle and zooming off.

Carmela's tensed up for a moment and was interrupted by the vibration of her phone, without taking a look at who the caller is she placed the phone on her ear

"Hello"

"She's awake" the caller said and a scoff escaped her lips

"Speak of the devil".

...

Second's rolled into minutes and minutes hour's which finally turned into days and now three weeks. Patience is one thing I definitely lack but I've learned with the help of my beloved who has refused to wake from her coma.

"Beloved.." I called holding her hand "Guess who's here to meet you?" I pulled forward Cicilia who was hiding behind me "Cicilia" I smiled and I could see the confusion on the little girls face as she returned her glance from Carmela to me "I don't know which spell you casted on her but she's become your fan and has been wanting to meet with you

and I finally fulfilled her wish today" I brought Cicilia closer still trying to maintain my smile

"Uncle" she called looking up at me "Why is aunt wrapped like a mummy? Is she sick?" I looked at her eyes and then looked away as I tried to think of something "Hmm..your aunt hasn't been feeling too well so she decided to have a.. a skin care routine" I lied picking her up in my hand

"But that's weird I've never seen someone do their skin care like that" my little smart princess responded crossing her hand above her chest

"Umm..well that's because it's a newly invented type, and if it works others would start doing it as well" I could see her struggle in accepting my excuse but at the end she still had to accept it

"Alright..once aunt is awake tell her I came to visit and I love her okay?" I nodded helping her have her seat in the car "Bye Uncle I love you too" she threw a flying kiss at me while I stood back watching the car speed away.

"You surely wouldn't lack when you become a father"Zamiel took a step closer to me and I heaved a sigh.

"Is everything prepared?" I asked making my way back into the house and he nodded catching up his pace

"I can say 80% is done,her swelling are now better and even the bruises and thanks to you we've been able to make the situation less suspicious. Also the Vocal fold shortening operation was successful..and she can now go back" he responded placing both his hands in his pocket

Two days after Carmela's accidents,Ella was saved by Zamiel after Damian had tried to kill her. Carmela not responding to the treatment was one thing and being unable to catch the scientist and put an end to all his games was another, and so I approved Zamiel's plan of using her as a substitute to buy time for us.

He arranged for plastic surgery to be performed on her after which she got a voice surgery to sound a bit like Carmela and I had to pretend to kidnap her to buy us time.

"When do we proceed with the plan?"

"Tonight..ask Tom to arrange for me to attend Mr. Dubois party and prepare her..also remind her I can change my mind at anytime and send her to the other world if she ruins my plan " I threatened

"A letter arrived from Tamila..and one more thing,one of the officers asked me to plead for your cooperation for the investigation,from what I heard their senior doesn't take a

liking of you" I collected the letter from him before continuing my walk not commenting on what he said.

I expected Damian to cause havoc after my conversation with Ella from the previous day but I never expected that he was going to go to the extent of killing students and as she said I was framed for it.

"Beloved your mum sent a letter" I waved taking my seat beside her. This time around, I'm going to take every chance that comes my way to put this Chapter to an end once and for all and by the time my beloved is awake it would be a new story.

...

"Madam we are done" one of the ladies applying make-up on her said before stepping aside. Taking a deep breath, Ella opened her eyes to find a different person in the mirror. She traced her hand on her face as she found it hard to believe that such a miracle was possible although it was possible she doubted it could be as perfect as this.

"This was no longer my life but the life of another, Ella is dead and I'm just a substitute for the time being" she said to herself remembering how she almost lost her life but eventually got saved by Zamiel in the nick of time.

"For a moment I thought you were my little bunny" she looked up to find Zamiel standing beside her "Either ways it's time to put the plan into action. Pretending to be Carmela should not be an issue for you after all you were trained to replace her, your fear shouldn't be messing the plan up.." he suddenly turned quite as he created some distance between them. "Always remember that you aren't the original and no matter what a substitute can never take the place of the original. Take this as an advice or threat whichever ever you see it as, but remember; Nix can take away this new found life of yours if you mess up his plans but I wouldn't.." he took a step closer to her as he came to her eye level while maintaining eye contact with her ".. I'll peel your skin off your skeleton and watch you suffer in pain" his words helped her discover a new emotion she had never truly experienced 'fear'

"Alright Mrs Dean shall we?" He offered her his hand which she accepted trying to mask her emotions.

Among the four Alpha's, Alpha three has always been the calmest and easy going one. He showed no trait of madness as she loves to refer to it like the other Alpha's did and wasn't one that got involved in the affairs of the dynasty but who would have thought that he was an even bigger psychopath than the remaining three? She wondered as she took her seat beside Nix in the car.

But if all these were over, where was she to return to? Who was her family and how could she find them? These were questions she had no answers to.

"The first number" Nix interrupts her solemn moment by handing her a phone "is my number, the others number has been saved so be sure to reach out to them if needed." "we'll be approaching Damian's ambush in the next five minutes so be prepared" hearing that she felt a knot in her stomach it was finally time but she felt nervous unlike her. Closing her eyes taking in and letting out her breath over and over again until she sense the car stop, letting out a heavy breath, she open the bag she was carrying and wrapped her scarf on her neck hiding the scar that hadn't recover. With a acknowledging nod, she swang the door open and ran towards Damian

"Carmela!" Nix screamed watching her run into his arms and he could see Damian show off a smirk as they drove off

"Baby are you okay?" He raised her face to face his but was met with a tears filled eyes which he had never see

"Take me away"

Chapter 69: 69

The grand hall shimmered with elegance, the air thick mixed with the scent of roses and lavender. Delicate golden drapes hung from the ceiling, catching the soft afternoon light. A string quartet played a sweet, melodic tune calm, graceful, perfect. Guests, adorned in their finest, sipped champagne and exchanged hushed words of admiration for the seemingly flawless event.

The bride, a vision in white lace, sat before a towering mirror in the bridal suite. Her dress clung to her frame like a second skin, intricate beading glimmering with every small movement. Her veil cascaded over her shoulders, pooling softly around her feet. Makeup artists and hairstylists buzzed around her, adding finishing touches, but she barely noticed them. Her lips, painted a soft crimson, curled into a smile not of joy, nor of nervous anticipation. It was something else entirely.

Her bridesmaids laughed and complimented her, mistaking the smile for happiness. But beneath the surface of her calm expression, a storm brewed. Her chest rose and fell a little too quickly. Her fingers, clutching the bouquet of ivory roses, trembled ever so slightly.

A knock at the door.

"Five minutes, miss," called the wedding coordinator.

The bride's smile widened even more as a flash of teeth against her delicate features appeared. But her eyes was contracting, they held no warmth. Only a cold, simmering satisfaction.

And then, she saw it.

In the mirror, standing just behind her shoulder a figure.

Tall. Stern. Familiar.

The scientist who she referred to as her so-called father.

His reflection seemed untouched by time. Although dressed in a tuxedo for the occasion, she envisioned him in the same worn suit she remembered her own father being buried in. His gaze was as hard as she recalled the same piercing look that cut through her like a blade the first time they met when she was a child.

Her smile deepened into something wild, untamed. Yet she didn't flinch; instead, she welcomed his presence.

"Father," she whispered softly, her voice like a blade sliding across silk.

The room, once alive with laughter and idle chatter, was now as quiet as a graveyard every individual trying their best to remain invisible, afraid of losing their heads. As if waiting for her signal before they took to their heels they began existing the moment she gave a little nod to them.

Realizing that they were alone "Don't call me that. Where is the antidote?" The scientist suddenly spoke but his question only received a cold throaty chuckle from her

"Antidote?" She scoffed. "Don't tell me you came to your daughter's wedding just because you needed some silly antidote? Aren't you a scientist? Why didn't you come up with one yourself then.." she looked at him with wild eyes before laughing sadically "what if you were never actually poisoned by me then?.."

"Carmela..dont..you..dare..test..my...patient" restraintment was visible in his voice and Ella could only let out a devilish laugh

Could having a man like him truly classify as having a father? Well that she doubt but at least both her and the person she was made to substitute were in the same boat to her rely.

"Let's end this..you know what, never mind." She smiled, pulling down her veil. "Walk me down the aisle, and after that, you'll get the antidote."

She took a step closer to him, noticing his hesitation to take her hand. Yet, eventually, he did his grip firm but reluctant as he led the way toward the wedding hall. With every step, a flood of thoughts swirled in his mind.

Although he wore a mask of composure, a gnawing sense of worry spread through him. Insecurity crept into his every nerve, but he pushed it aside, blaming it on his emotions.

"Once I get the antidote, I'll lead this country for good," he reminded himself, the fear of Carmela's growing in power gnawing at him and it sincerely scared the guts out of him

The moment they arrived at the wedding hall, a sudden chill seemed to sweep through the air the temperature dropping with each passing second. Ella looked up, finding Damian grinning from ear to ear. She offered him a small smile, sending a flutter of butterflies through his stomach.

What an idiot she wondered to herself..who was going to tell him that karma had finally caught up to him? That the devil didn't send an agent this time but was here to personally take him to hell with him? And that the bliss he believes to be his heaven has turned out to be his lake of flames?

"There has to be more to all of this... I've surely been here before," she whispered to herself, her gaze drifting over the crowd.

Her eyes landed on Nix, his legs crossed, seated among the guests. Beside him sat a woman whose hat obscured most of her face, dark shades masking whatever emotions hid behind them. She smiled faintly at Ella. Zamiel, also seated in the crowd, had a blank expression as if everything that was about to unfold was less of his problem and he was being bothered which she didn't really care about.

"We're finally going to be one," Damian whispered, gently pulling her hand away from the scientist.

"Your thoughts are like abstract art.." she responded with a face straight, not faking any emotion,her expression blank and cold leaving Damian a bit confused but he smiled tucking the strands of hair that was lying on her face behind her ear as he forced on a smile pushing aside her words

"Priest..." He called with eager eyes but an uneager Ella couldn't resist the urge to roll her eyes "Hold on." She said removing her hand from Damian's, as she forced on a smile giving him that assuring look that everything was finally falling into place before turning to face the guest still maintaining her smile.

"I'd love to appreciate everyone who took the time to attend my wedding, even the press, who showed up despite me calling them only a few hours ago." She pointed to the side of the hall, where a group of media personnel scrambled with their cameras as they tried to take a picture of the latest couple on the net, just a few months ago news about the lost Dalton daughter being finally brought to light to the world and now she's getting married to one of the sons of the top family on the wealth chain

Life of the wealthy some of them thought to themselves.

"Before I take my first step into my new life, I'd love to say a few words to my dearest partner." She flashed a smile at Damian and noticed the subtle way he stumbled back,

biting his lower lip nervously while keeping eye contact with her. Well if only he knew the special gift he had prepared for him..no if only they all knew the special gifts she had prepared for all of them, her eyes swept across the hall then maybe none of them would agree to this plan.

If hell was waiting for her, then she wouldn't go alone.. No.. she'd make room for the one who turned her life into a quiet kind of torment, smiled in her face while twisting the knife. The one she laughed with while bleeding beneath her breath. Yes... Some debts were too deep to leave unpaid. She thought to herself as her eyes trailed from the scientist and then finally landed on the lady seated beside Nix

She clicked her fingers...and suddenly, the hall went pitch black the only light in the hall came from the flashes of the photographers' cameras.

A screen lit up, displaying a slideshow of pre-wedding photos of her and Damian.

"Most of you must be aware of my family background and childhood though some of you may not be..."

The spotlight shifted onto the scientist.

"That's my father, Mr. Delton who had been responsible for everything I've become. But don't worry, we'll talk about him another time. For now, let's focus on my dearest life partner."

The spotlight moved to Damian, who quickly adjusted his suit and stood up straighter.

"The man I'm about to marry... I don't know his surname.. Never asked. Never needed to.. It won't matter when he's just another ghost at my table after all, tombstones rarely hold the full story..." she said with no emotion, just calm finality,the entire room suddenly went quiet that even the dramatic fall of a pin could be heard but this silence was ruined by a chuckle echoing from the dark hall but the owner of the voice could not be traced

"The key to happiness..." she whispered, eyes fixed on the screen. "I spent so long searching for it..chasing shadows, trusting smiles."

The slideshow flicked through more photos, each image more intimate, more unsettling than the last.

"And all this time... it was right in front of me. Hiding in plain sight."

Her voice dropped, barely a breath.

"But no one ever warns you, do they? That some keys open doors... and others?"

She tilted her head slightly, eyes gleaming with something unreadable.

"Others are already broken...Rusted...Sharp enough to bleed you if you hold them too tightly."

Then the slideshow cut. The screen froze a paused video of Damian and the scientist. She smiled. Not with joy. But with knowing.

And there he is," she murmured. "

Chapter 70: 70

"The one who gave me the key... is the same person who built the lock to keep me in."

The screen flickered. The video stuttered, then began to play.. grainy at first, like a memory too damaged to be whole.

Voices echoed faintly through the speakers, one calm and calculated. The other is familiar. Damian's.

She didn't blink.

In the footage, he stood beside the scientist, their conversation laced with precision, not hesitation. There was no sign of guilt, no flicker of regret. Just... plans.

Her chest rose slowly. Once. Then still.

Whatever she thought she knew... dissolved.

This wasn't betrayal.

It was designed.

"Our families could have been the most powerful in the dynasty," Damian's voice echoed from the recording, "and you'd rule while my wife and I toured the world. But no, you had to ruin everything."

Damian visibly tensed, holding his breath as the video played.

"I ruined everything?" the scientist snapped back into the footage. "Don't call yourself righteous, you devil. What did you do when I gave you another chance to amend things?"

"Amend?" Damian laughed bitterly. "Sometimes I wonder if your brain is like a system that needs an update. You sent the person I wanted dead to the same place I was. Did you forget why I was locked up there?"

"You could have used your... talents on him. After all, you love turning human bodies into art pieces."

"And what then? Kill him and lose my right to compete as heir? Don't put all the blame on me. You're at fault too. If only you had injected him with that concoction or whatever you created, then he would have gone insane, and the blame for the hospital deaths would have been pinned on

Another video began.

Ella's blood ran cold.

The footage crackled to life and there he was again. Damian. But this time, holding a gun. Pointed straight at her.

"You little rat... you've been in touch with Nix Dean and dare pretend you don't know where Carmela is?"

His voice thundered from the speakers, venom laced in every word.

"Damian, listen.. I sincerely don't.."

"Shut up!"

Even in the safety of the present, Ella's body trembled. Her breath came shallow. Her fingers curled around the edge of the seat.

"Since you've been working with him," Damian growled, "Then he must know I'm the one who killed those students .. and the people at the hospital ..but pinned it on him. And..." He staggered back in the video, pressing both hands to his head as if caged by panic. "What if he tells Carmela the truth? That I'm the one who killed her adoptive grandmother? She wouldn't think twice before ending me.. No ... I won't let that happen. But first I have to deal with you."

Her voice in the video was barely audible, as she felt her heart about to fall off from her chest

"You... you can't. The scientist wouldn't spare you; he considers me his daughter." the shaky hope she clinged on to cracked in her throat but Damian only laughed low, cold and merciless.

"The scientist?" he spat. "He doesn't even care about his real daughter, let alone you.. A substitute." He leaned in toward the camera.

"You want the truth? He ordered the hit on his wife and daughter. You were just a replacement. And guess what? He approved of your death, too."

"It's not true," she gasped.

"Oh, but it is. Your entire family? Slaughtered by his real daughter. On his command. Then he adopted you. A perfect little puppet. And you still think he'd care?" he scoffed looking at her like she had lost her mind well yeah, she actually had lost her mind hearing those statements from him

"You... you can't do this to me. You can't.."

Bang.

The screen flared white with the gunshot. Her words ended in a choked cry. Then came the second.

The third...

The fourth...

Ella in the footage dropped, blood blooming like petals across her chest as she crumpled.

And then, silence followed

The screen faded to black. The hall, to stillness and then seconds began to stretch into minutes.

Before a slow, deliberate clap echoed across the room. From the woman in the hat.

"Well," she said, lips curved in something that wasn't quite a smile, "I do love a twisted reunion... What a lovely wedding." Her voice dripped with mockery, each syllable a blade. "Bloody vows, shattered veils ..how romantic."

Damian staggered forward, pale, desperate, eyes darting between the woman in white and the face he'd sworn he loved.

"Baby... Carmela... it's all fake. I... I never.."

A sound cracked through the silence of Ella's palm, across his cheek. He reeled, not just from the impact, but from the look in her eyes. Not pain. Not confusion.

But rage.

She tore the veil from her head like it burned her, the lace scattering like ash. Her bouquet hit the ground with a hollow thud.

"Carmela.."

"I'm not Carmela." Her voice was calm. Too calm. "I'm Ella."

A ripple moved through the crowd like the chill before a storm.

Damian blinked. "What do you mean you're.."

"Editor Damian." The words struck like a gavel.

Carmela finally stepped forward slowly, deliberately peeling off her hat and sunglasses. The real Carmela. Her eyes gleamed with ice and fury.

Gasps echoed. As the fingers of the press clicked continuously on their cameras with an intent to capture everything and not leave out any detail.

Two women. Same face. Different fire.

"Two... Two Carmelas?" Damian stammered, his voice cracking. "How..?"

Carmela laughed. But it was hollow, and joyless. "Are you dense, or just willfully blind?" Her heel clicked once against the marble floor. "She's Ella. I'm Carmela. Ever heard of plastic surgery?" Her smile twisted. "We made sure you fell for her and you did. Like a moth to your own damn fire."

Damian's lips trembled. His hands raised in protest, but no words came.

"I never thought it would end like this," Carmela said, voice low, dangerous. "But now... watching you fall apart this is better than justice. This is art."

Damian lunged forward again, fury reigniting, but his arms were seized by Sophie before he could take another step.

"Mr. Damian," she said flatly, snapping the cuffs onto his wrists, "you are hereby under arrest for mass murder... and the attempted murder of Miss Ella."

As the handcuffs locked, he thrashed. "Lies! You're all lying! This isn't real!"

Ella's eyes didn't leave Carmela. The fury had cooled but not faded. There was still unfinished business, still ash to be scattered. And Carmela was part of it.

Carmela still hadn't looked at him. Her hands trembled now, as her eyes darted toward the exits, and the shadows that laid along side it, She whispered something barely audible.

"Where is he...?"

Ella turned, watching her not with sympathy, not with scorn but with chilling stillness. The fire in her hadn't burned out.

It was waiting.

"Damn it... he ran," Carmela muttered, spinning on her heel. Nix and Zamiel followed without question, their footsteps steady but urgent. "Where would he go without the antidote?" Nix asked.

Carmela's head snapped toward him. "Antidote?"

Zamiel's voice cut through like steel. "There was no poison. Just an overdose of sedatives. He'll stay alive long enough to panic."

No emotion flickered in his face, only precision, like a machine already calculating the scientist's next move.

A motorcycle screeched to a halt in front of the gates.

"He's heading for the airport!" Amina shouted, tossing Carmela her keys.

Carmela caught them mid-stride, not slowing. Amina gave a brief nod as Carmela tore the lower half of her gown, the silk ripping like paper, and tossed it aside without a glance.

Revealing what she wore beneath. A black tactical corset hugged her torso, laced tight over a matte leather catsuit that molded to her like second skin. Twin holsters strapped to her thighs gleamed under the streetlight, and her heeled, armored boots hit the pavement with precision. A crimson-lined trench coat fluttered behind her, and as she mounted the bike, her visor helmet clicked into place, hiding the storm in her eyes. She didn't look back.

Zamiel suddenly spoke up flatly, already typing into his phone. "I'll inform Sophie Tchiani. Nix.. stay on her."

Tom tossed Nix the car key he was holding and a beat later, both vehicles roared into the city.

The dust hadn't even settled when Amina and Tom were left standing in silence.

Amina exhaled, slow and uncertain. "What do you think happens now?"

Tom hesitated. "I guess... things return to normal."

Her eyes didn't leave his face. And her next question sliced between them.

"And your feelings for her? Will those go back to normal too?"

Tom couldn't answer. He didn't even try. The silence between them turned thick and almost unbearable.

Then, with a voice like ice over fire, Amina said,

"Where are you going to find the antidote... to your own poison?"