

Chapter 31

Leila stares at her reflection in the mirror, her puffy eyes telling her not to cry anymore, her head throbbing with an intense migraine, her face completely ridden with gloom, her heart heavy with sadness. 2

She has remained in her room for the whole day and Tatum doesn't even bother to come up to check on her. She knows he is with his beloved, and she is again, the third wheel in their relationship, just like in the past.

She was the one Tatum used to adore, the one he always spent his spare time with originally. He even resented Carmela and used to call her a spoiled brat.

Back then, Carmela was the third wheel but Carmela got that mark and everything changed, Tatum pushed her aside, showering all his attention on Carmela.

She selfishly thought everything could go back to the way it was these last two years, that Tatum would look upon her with that candid affection in his eyes again but she was wrong, his heart was and is for Carmela and now that Carmela is back, there is no room for her.

Her stomach growls, followed by a strong hunger pang. She hasn't even eaten all day. She sighs and wipes away the tears dropping from her eyes, she didn't even realise that she had started crying again.

Why does it hurt so much?



Coming down from the stairs, she glances at the living room and immediately wishes she didn't

Carmela is doing Tatum's pedicure.

This used to be one of her favourite thing in the world to do for him. She would always tease him about how his feet were too pretty for a strong male Alpha.

Tatum would gloat about how he was perfectly handsome and how she was lucky to be his wife, she felt truly lucky indeed and moments like that filled her with hope, that maybe, it could last forever.

A hope that has been reduced to nothing but she seems to be holding onto, with everything.

She turns her gaze away but she sees Carmela coming towards her from her peripheral vision and she can't help the bile that rises in her throat.

She shouldn't feel like this, so angry at her friend, so hurt and irritated by her presence, especially when she is the intruder, the one standing in the way of the prophecy but she can't help herself.

"Leila, can we talk?" Carmela says in a remorseful tone, walking up to her.

"Yeah, sure," Leila replies. "I should apologise for what I did earlier today, it was inappropriate of me." 1

Even if it wasn't intentional.

Carmela doesn't need to know that and to think there was a world where Carmela would be the first to know she is carrying a baby.....

"No Leila, it is I who needs to apologise. I just barged into your lives and expected everything to be as it used to be. I already spoke to

Tatum, I'll be moving out tomorrow," Carmela says calmly.

Leila stares into Carmela's sullen eyes and she doesn't know what to reply immediately.

A part of her wants to be happy about it but quickly snaps out of it when she catches Tatum's icy grey eyes concentrated on her, watching and waiting for her decision. 1

She suddenly feels like a criminal and Tatum, the judge. Only his judgement will never be fair on her, it will always favour Carmela.

Even if she asks Carmela to leave, Tatum will never agree and what kind of a friend will she be to do that?

"Carmi I-" 1

"Leila please.....let me stay, I can't live without being in his presence," Carmela is almost in tears, glancing at Tatum.

"Sure," Leila nods passively.

What is the need of even asking her?

It doesn't matter whether Carmela is in this house or halfway across the world, as long as Tatum knows where she is, he would cross seven mountains and swim seven seas to be with her.

"Thank you so much Leila.....you see.....when I was locked up and being tortured, only thoughts of him made me feel numb to the pain. I guess I developed a coping mechanism to deal with my trauma then, and now my mind hasn't adjusted to the new reality. Without Tatum, without being close to him, without his touch, I feel like I might die.



I'm not asking for much, and I won't cross the line, I just want to stay close enough, JUST to be able to hold his hand, and live. Will you let me live?"

Leila's skin crawls as the words fly out of Carmela's mouth, a sickening feeling swirling in her gut.

How can Carmela ask such a thing from her?

What woman would take it?

That's right, the woman who is only a placeholder in her husband's life, who lives in the same house with him and his true love.

"Sure Carmi, knock yourself-"

"Where is that bitch?! How dare she bully my future daughter in law?"

Adaline's curt yell lands in Leila's ear as the living room door flies open.



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