

Luca's Inferno by Karima Sa'ad Usman Chapter 19

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19 Going Through The Motions

Emma

The sorrow was immense. Luca cried and broke a lot of things. I became scared that he might lose it. It was an enormous trauma. The Alessandros wanted a quiet funeral, and so it was only family members that were invited.

I didn't want to go because I did not qualify as a family member, but Luca had insisted. I did not want to face his mother, so I tried my luck again while putting on my clothes.

"Maybe I should remain, Luca. Your mother would be in pain right now, and you know how much she hates me. This is not the time to ruffle her feathers." I asked gently, and he was silent; then walked up to where I was and turned me around to look at him. His eyes were sad and angry. The incident had touched him in the worst way ever.

"I want you beside me, Emma. I need you there," he said in the words he could manage. Since the incident, he had spoken few words. He hardly slept at night, and most of the time, he would come home covered in blood that did not belong to him. I knew Luca had been doing a lot of killing lately, and I knew it wouldn't stop until he found the culprit responsible for his sorrow. His thirst for blood had grown, and I was now afraid of him. He was a complete stranger now. He yelled at people and did not care for their emotions. Although he did not do that to me, I still felt his coldness. When he touched me, it was rough, as if he was doing it more to relieve stress, making me not look forward to it.

It had been three weeks since his brother Roberto was gunned down in front of a club. Luca was finally ready to bury him. I wondered how difficult it was to live the way they did. Always afraid that someone was trying to get them. It was horrible. 1

Luca had asked his sister, Catalina, to move in with us after the incident, and she hated me. Still, I blamed it on her grief and let her lousy behaviour pass. I also did not tell Luca how she had made life unbearable for me in his house. It was a minor issue, and my days in that house as his wife were numbered, so there was no point creating problems between him and his only remaining sibling.

I turned around, and he helped me zip up my dress. He walked out, and I followed him. Usually, he would loop his arms in mine, but this wasn't the time for that, and I respected it. He was still in pain, and nothing could take it away. "Why is she coming? She isn't family." His sister asked him, puffy-eyed. She had been crying.

"Mind your business, Catalina. Do not disrespect my wife." He warned her, but he did it gently. I guess the loss of his brother had hit him so hard that he did not want to be hard on Catalina.

"I can remain outside the church if my presence would bother you, Catalina," I offered, not wanting to be in the church with the rest of the family. She rolled her eyes.

"Don't bother," she said, and we both followed Luca out.

The three of us sat in the back seat; Catalina sat in the middle so she would be near her

big brother. I leaned towards the window and stared outside, trying to remove myself from the situation. Luca did not say a word to me, nor did I say anything. We finally got to the church, and I was about to sit when his mother began to cry.

"No, No, No, Luca, not today. Not when our family is grieving. How dare you bring your whore here? Dishonouring Roberto," she said in the presence of some family members I did not know. Knowing all that Luca had been going through and that he was on edge, I wanted to spare him the pain of confronting his mother, so I stood up, apologised to all of them and was about to walk away when he held my hand and squeezed.

"I did not ask you to leave," he said with a growl, and everyone could hear it." Sit next to me," he ordered, and I reluctantly sat down. His mother did not say a word anymore.

They finished the service, and we proceeded to bury him. We all went to Luca's family house. It was a large estate. An old stone building on a vast piece of land. We had come there for something sad, so there was no point exploring.

I stood next to Luca all through. I saw his mother walking toward us, and my stomach began to churn. I did not want to deal with any more issues from her side. She approached us and splashed her drink on me. I felt humiliated because the place went silent. Tears were stinging my eyes, but I fought them. Why did she hate me so much?

"If you were not busy fucking her that night, you would have been there for your brother. He called you to come with him, and you refused!" She yelled and hit Luca's chest, tears streaming down her face.

"You let them kill him because you were with her. If you had taken Mathias' offer, he would have been protected. All because of a bloody Omega you picked up from Marcelo's slave collection. I hate you, Luca," she said, and my tears began to fall. I could not hold them anymore. She turned toward me and spat at me, and I could see the fury in her eyes. She really blamed me for this.

"She is bad luck, Luca; you better let her go." She said.

Luca slowly held his mother's hands together; he did not seem remorseful. He was angry.

"Then you would have buried two sons today," He said and growled at her.

"Leave Emma out of this," he said. "My life was already fucked up and unfortunate the moment you conceived me, mother. This is what the mafia life is like, and you know it. Do not point fingers at innocent people simply because you are grieving. I won't allow it. I told Roberto to go home, and he refused. He wanted me there instead. If he had listened to me and gone home, he would still be alive. I would have been dead if I had not stayed home with my wife. What would you have done then? Blame her for not keeping me at home? This madness must stop!" He said and gently pushed her hands at her chest.

Luca took me away from there and led me to a room. He was silent, and I was nervous and shaking from embarrassment and fear. I cleaned up in the bathroom and came out. Luca did not say a word, and I was perturbed. "Emma", he finally said, and I was attentive. "Being around me or related to me is very dangerous right now. I am willing to let you go with no grudge. I can't bear another death on my conscience," he said, and my heart fell. I was hoping to spend the duration stipulated in the contract with him, and the fact that it was easy for him to come to this conclusion hurt me, but I held my pain and braced up. "I am not afraid, Luca. You said one year, and I am willing to hang around for the time stipulated on our contract. Do not worry about how I feel right now. I

just want you to be okay, ” I said, hoping he would let it rest.

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“NO, Emma. I will,” he said, and I got scared. “Please let us not do this here,” I begged him, almost in tears again, but I held it this time. He looked at me and then frowned. Are you falling in love with me? I thought you said no strings,” he said, and I shook my head quickly to throw him off.

“I am not in love with you, but I want to be here for you through this. It is the only way I can help you. After all you did for me, it is the least I can do,” I said, trying to switch it and then he was quiet. I hoped I was successful, and he wouldn’t repeat it. We returned to where people were.

People came to greet him and ignored me completely. I felt weird by his side, but I stood. After the funeral, we all returned to our various homes. When we went up, Luca stopped by his door and looked at me.

“Do you mind sleeping in your old room tonight? I need to be alone,” he said, and I was crushed. Had he finally decided to listen to his mother? I nodded quickly, so he won’t catch my hesitation and went to the room I was in before he moved me to his.

I sat up most of the night and heard him scream, growl and break things. His soul was pained, and it seemed he had no clue who the culprit was. I began to brace myself that the contract was coming to an end. I started conditioning my mind, and in the process, I realised how hard it would be for me, and I began to weep. It wasn’t my fault that his brother died, but everyone took it out on me. I did not sleep until the early hours of the morning. I slept on the floor instead of the bed. I was confused, scared, hurt, and helpless. Was this why Declan was sad in my dream and was this why he asked me not to let him go? How did he expect me to hold on when he was already letting go? I felt someone scoop me up from the floor, and I managed to open my heavy eyes to see who it was.

“It’s okay, Emma, sleep,” Luca said. He took me back into his room, laid me down on the bed, covered me with the covers, and then left the room.

I looked around me, and some of the decorations were gone. I guess those were the things he smashed. I did not want to think of what he was going through, but I knew his soul was bleeding. I put myself in his shoes and had to commend him for functioning. He returned to the room with a tray of food, and I was surprised he was serving the food himself, was everything okay with him?

He set the food on a small round table in the bedroom and came to sit next to me in bed.

“I am sorry about last night, Emma. I was too angry and did not want you to see that side of me.” He said, and I sat up gently and smiled at him.

“It is okay, Luca. I can only imagine what you are going through. I understand. You are in pain, and I wish I could help.” I said sincerely, and he smiled and patted my cheek.

“Do not worry your pretty head about it. I have things under control.” “I am visiting my parents with Catalina. I hope you will be fine at home?” He said, and I nodded. I knew why he did not want to take me along, and I respected it.

We had breakfast together, and he went to prepare for the day. He left, and I was bored. so I called Tevin.

“Hey,” he said to me, and he sounded busy. “What are you doing?” I asked him, and he sighed. “Setting up our restaurant.” He said, and I wondered where he got that kind of

money. "Where did you get the money to set up a restaurant, Tevin?" I asked, afraid he had taken a loan. I knew only the mob gave loans to low-level breeds, and my experience with my father remained fresh in my mind. It had also become a permanent scar. I did not know how damaged my family's image was until I heard Luca's mother talk about it. Understanding my fears, my brother laughed.

"That envelope Luca gave me on the day he came to get you had a one million two hundred thousand Leer check in it." He said, and I exclaimed.

"Why didn't you tell me so I could thank him?" I got short with my brother. "I thought you knew, Emma. I am sorry," he apologised, and I sighed. "It is okay. How is father?" I asked him, and he laughed. "Went into farming. Hasn't crossed a club, bar or casino since we got back. He has really changed, Emma. I guess your husband really scared him," he said, and we laughed and then he paused.

"Do you like Luca?" he asked me, and I did not know whether to lie or tell the truth.

"If you chose to remain with him, no one would be mad, Emma. Forget that he is a mob boss; he is a good man, Emma, and it would be nice to see you two end up together," he said, and I sighed, not knowing how to tell him that might never happen. Besides, his brother's death had set us back terribly. "How is he holding up, by the way?" He asked me, and I sighed. "Going through the motions," I replied honestly. "I would have called him to give my condolence, but I do not want him to think we are taking the marriage thing seriously," he explained, and I understood his point. We talked about trivial stuff, and then I hung up. After hanging up, I called Heather, and we got talking