

Midnight 32

Just A Few Words

Everyone gasped and were enthralled by what was happening on stage.

It seemed obvious to Savannah and, she suspected, to everyone else, that the speaker had no clue what was going on between the two men either. He sank uneasily into the background, glanced around, bemused, and then slunk off stage. Savannah wanted to laugh if it wasn't all oh so sad.

She hoped Kevin wouldn't lose his temper. That would practically force Dylan, with his large ego, to come down hard on him.

Finally, Kevin unclenched his fists and shook hands with Dylan and, gracefully but with some irony in his tone, said, "Mr. Sterling, you are taking your joke a little too far. Why not tell me in advance? Are you afraid of a disagreement?"

"No jokes, no surprises," Dylan said, diplomatically, dismissing Kevin's hidden barbs out of hand. Disappointed journalists started snapping pictures again, and they began to interview the two men for the details about their future relationship. After all, both of them were obviously very experienced and equal to the occasion.

When the guests and journalists drifted away at the end of the interview, Kevin's face fell and clouded over. He was about to have to go backstage when a figure stepped out from the periphery of his vision, emerging like a phantom from the shadows.

"Stay away from my girl, and JK will be fine." Said Dylan, blankly, as if he were talking about business. Kevin forced a smile, lifted the curtain and went backstage, and saw a familiar slender figure standing at the end of the corridor.

"Kevin -" Savannah had come searching for him, but now that he was here, she was lost for words.

She stared at him in shame and fear, ashamed that he knew about her shady agreement with Dylan, and afraid of being hated by him for it.

Kevin had not seen Savannah since their previous short meeting. He went straight to her, caught at her wrist, and pulled towards the door. "Savannah, come with me." He commanded, "We have to leave here."

Savannah staggered back. She smiled ruefully, "I can't..." She wouldn't cross Dylan again. That much she was sure of. He had absolute control over her, not just her words, but her very existence.

Kevin rolled his eyes, "Can he really destroy JK with the equity he holds?"

Savannah shrugged. She didn't know, could he?

"Of course not!" Cried Kevin, throwing his hands into the air. "I can stage a comeback even if the company is gone, but I can't let him destroy you like this. Savannah, don't be stubborn, just leave with me!"

Her heart tugged at her chest, but fear, a great metal rack of it, slammed down hard, like a bear trap. And although she had not run a company before, she knew that it had been hard for Kevin to create his own company and make it a success. She doubted if he'd be able to summon the energy to do it again. And lose it all for what, her? How silly. Kevin was an outstanding individual, but after all, he was just alone, without a family to support him. The Sterling group would grind him under the well-trodden heel. Savannah forced a smile, "Kevin, I'm not stubborn, really, I'm simply doing what is best. For both of us." She continued after a deep breath, "One day, maybe one day soon, he will let me go, and neither of us would've had to lose anything." She hoped Dylan would tire of her. She still didn't understand why he was so fixated when he could fuck any girl he wanted.

Kevin's face was livid with anger, and his knuckles were white.

Savannah looked at him and suddenly asked, "Kevin, why didn't you tell me you were JK's boss?"

She had sensed his unusualness when they met that day at the orphanage.

Before, when they were children, Kevin was so eager to find his parents, but now seemed to detest them. What had he found, buried in the past? What skeletons had he dug up?

Kevin was taken aback by her question, silent for a moment. He hadn't told her because he didn't know what to say. After all, how could he tell Savannah that his biological father was Robert Smith, the governor of LA, and he, his shameful bastard of a son? And how could he let her know that his success – all of it – was due to the help of the Smiths, even if he hated to admit it?

"Brother Kevin," Savannah continued, "I remember when I was unhappy in the orphanage, you told me not to keep it inside and to share it with you. How about you follow some of your own advice, hmm?" She ventured in a soft voice.

Kevin's lips moved and were about to say something when there came the sound of footsteps down the corridor. Dylan was coming to them, his chiseled face glinting under the theatre lighting.

Savannah gasped and, subconsciously, stepped back away from Kevin. Her action pleased Dylan, but his face was still strained and grim. Dylan put an arm around her, claiming ownership of her. Caught off guard, Savannah fell into his arms. And although she had been here so many times before, it was different doing it here, in front of Kevin. She was so embarrassed that she wanted to struggle to free herself, but she knew she couldn't. Not from his iron-like arms. She was pressed hard against his chest in a helpless position like a small animal gripped by a wolf.

Dylan had his arms around her tightly, his face in her hair, and his voice was low and husky, "You ran off again to meet your childhood sweetheart."

Savannah shuddered and remembered his punishment that night, and she murmured, "Just a few words."

He pressed his strong body closer to her, the top of her head rubbing on her chin, and covered her face with some kisses. Dylan breathed in her ear, ignoring Kevin's present, "Why not tell me? Am I that unreasonable?"

Of course! You're the personification of unreasonable!

Resisting the impulse to say it aloud, she instead dipped her head in obedience. "Next time... I will."

He patted her on the rump with a sharp slap, as if praising a small pet that had done well.

The slight slap was intimate and ambiguous in the quietness.

Savannah was flushed with anger that she did not expect he should go that far.

Kevin's eyes clouded with irritation. If he treated her like this in public, he thought, he must do everything to her in private.