

Midnight III 171

Chapter 1653 - 171: You're Afraid I'll Catch Fire?

Serenity was so surprised by Crystal's news that she didn't know what to say. It all sounded very traumatic, and she doubted that anyone else could have handled it as well as Crystal had. She thought if another girl had been faced with such obstacles, she might have had to hide in some corner.

Serenity was worried about Crystal, but she didn't want to stress her friend out any more than she probably already was, so she decided to change the subject. "By the way," she said. "How are your preparations for the written exam going?"

Crystal frowned and groaned slightly. "I forgot about it," she admitted. "There has just been so much going on lately..."

Serenity: "Don't worry. There is still some time to go before the exam, and we can work together."

Crystal nodded and thanked her friend. Then, as they walked towards their class, they gossiped about some of their classmates, and they giggled when they entered the room.

Meanwhile, in the back of her mind, Serenity couldn't stop worrying about Crystal's relationship. Now that there was another woman, and she was pregnant with his child, she doubted that Nathan would stay with Crystal.

The class had been in session for just over thirty minutes when Vic barged into the room.

He stormed down the aisle to the back of the class, grabbed Crystal by the arm, and dragged her out of the room.

Crystal cried out, "Hey! What's going on? Where are we going?" She was mortified.

"Something has happened," Vic replied. "That's all that you need to know right now." And once he had her back in the car, he sped off in the direction of the military villa.

Crystal suspected that Leslie had gotten into trouble again and that it had something to do with her. So, when she was shoved into the villa, she wasn't surprised to see her friend there, along with Nathan and Arnold. Nathan had an angry expression on his dark face, and the similarity between how he looked and the way she imagined the devil looking was unnerving.

Crystal did not know what was going on, but it didn't take long for her to figure it out. Leslie gave her a sheepish look, and then she looked at the coffee table to the box of Morning After Pills. I guess it is time to face the music - thought Crystal absently.

Arnold looked at Crystal and said, "Miss Smith, I found this in Leslie's bag, Leslie said it was for you. Is that true?"

Crystal's heart is sand. More than anything, she was sad that her trusted friend had sold her out. "I did ask Leslie to buy that for me," she admitted.

"I told you," Leslie cried. "I told you it was for Crystal..."

Arnold slapped her across the face and said, "Did I tell you that you could speak?"

Leslie's eyes went wide, and her hand went to the place where Arnold had hit her. She opened her mouth to defend herself, but he stopped her words with a look. Then he turned his attention back to Crystal.

"Let me give you some advice," he said. "Don't take this medicine. It is bad for your health."

Leslie knew better than to interrupt Arnold, but she couldn't help herself. "But she didn't take it!" she argued. "Why are you making such a fuss over it?!?"

"Is that true?" asked Nathan.

"Yes!" Leslie exclaimed. "There is no need to get mad. I didn't let her take it yet, and now Crystal knows not to do this ever again, so there is no need to ever talk about it again!"

Nathan thought long and hard about what Leslie had said, and then he smiled. He had a lighter in his hand that he'd been playing with, and he tossed it to her. "I know you've been thinking about this lighter for a long time," he said. "Now it belongs to you."

Leslie grinned as she ran her fingers over the image on the side of the lighter. A Prime Minister had used the antique, and it was priceless. There were tears in her eyes as she smiled and said, "Thank you, Nathan."

Leslie was so enamored by the lighter that she didn't see the warning look in Crystal's eyes.

Nathan stood up and said, "You're welcome, and thank you - both of you - for being so forthcoming about this. Crystal and I will go now, and we won't bother you anymore."

Nathan left first, and Crystal followed him out the door. Then, once they were alone, he turned around abruptly.

Crystal's mind began to race. Instead of confronting her, though, as she had thought he would, Nathan summoned Vic.

Within seconds, the bodyguard appeared.

"How can I be of service?" he asked.

Crystal was shocked when Nathan pulled the box of Morning After Pills from his pocket. When did he take those? - she wondered. As far as she'd known, they were still on the coffee table inside the villa.

"Eat these," Nathan replied. "All of them." Crystal gave Nathan a dirty look and said, "Leave him out of this. He had nothing to do with what I did."

Nathan: "If he had been paying better attention to you, this wouldn't have happened. These pills will teach him a lesson!"

Vic knew that he had no choice but to do as he had been told, so he began to dry swallow the pills.

Nathan: "When I catch you taking medicine, I won't punish you, but I will punish anyone who helps you. One of the reasons I keep you around is so that you can be a baby making machine for me, and now that you're mine, you can't go around doing as you please."

Crystal's eyes welled up with tears. She felt like she was on the brink of losing her mind, and she didn't know what to do. "Would you punish someone for feeding me?" she asked.

Nathan: "You little goblin! Haven't I made myself clear? Whoever gives you medicine will come to a bad end."

'What if it was Helen?" Crystal asked. She put her arm around his neck, leaned her head on his shoulder, and smelled his hair. Nathan didn't reply, so she cautiously continued: "What if, instead of the Morning After Pill, I bought condoms or went on The Birth Control Pill? Would that be alright?"

"It would not be alright," Nathan replied. He hugged her hard and said, "I'm worried about you. I don't know where all this nonsense is coming from..."

Crystal gave Nathan a crooked smile and said, "I'm only looking out for your best interests. After all, you will have a "Harem Fire" if you focus all of your attention on me."

Nathan pinched Crystal's waist. "So..." he said. "You're afraid I'll catch fire?"

Crystal's eyes narrowed, and she tried to speak, but Nathan touched her lips with his index finger and shushed her. "It doesn't matter," he replied. "If you need to, you can put out my fire with your water." Then he touched the fabric that covered her pubic mound, pressed down hard, and added: "In case there is any misunderstanding... I'm talking about the water down here."

Crystal couldn't help but twitch when his hand moved up, then down, and back up again. It felt nice, but she knew better than to let him get away with what he'd said. So, she scolded him. "Professor Davis!" she growled.. "Watch your tongue."

Chapter 1654 - 172: Buy Them For Me

Every time Nathan made a dirty joke, Crystal was rendered speechless. When he said such ambiguous, lustful words, though they did not bother her because of his noble temperament, instead, they made her weak in the knees, and she thought - This man is like the proverbial wolf in sheep's clothing.

Back at the Beverly villa- As soon as Nanny Elma heard the sound of Nathan's car in the driveway, she ran out to greet him, without even taking the time to wash her hands. She hoped that her pious loyalty would win her the Best Employee Award.

Nathan barely noticed her, though. He kicked off his shoes, threw his coat on the couch, and walked into his study without a word.

When Crystal heard him come in, she went to look for the medicine box. She had heard from Vic that Nathan had a headache, so she wanted to find painkillers for him.

The medicine box was stuffed with all kinds of medicine. Crystal looked over the instructions and read each bottle's label.

At this time, Elma was preparing a glass of milk for Helen, and when she passed the hallway, she happened to see Crystal. Her brow furrowed, and she wondered - What is that girl up to now?

When Crystal saw Elma, she hurriedly shoved the medicine bottles back into the box.

Then she smiled and said, "Elma, do you have any painkillers?"

Elma raised her head arrogantly and continued on her way without saying a single word to Crystal. She gave Helen the milk, and when she returned, she was surprised to find Crystal waiting for her.

Crystal: "Your young master has a headache. If we don't have painkillers, you will have to go out and buy them. If you do not, and he gets angry, who do you think he will blame? Me or you? Of course, he will blame you!"

Elma stared at Crystal fiercely. "Come with me," she said. She and Helen hadn't lived in the villa for very long, so their luggage wasn't unpacked yet, but she knew where she kept her painkillers, and she quickly found them.

Crystal was leaning on the door. After taking the painkillers, she casually asked if Elma had any Morning After Pills. The Nanny looked at her suspiciously and said, "No."

Crystal: "Buy them for me."

Elma: "Why should I listen to you?"

Crystal: "Because we have common goals. You don't want me to have a baby, and neither do I. Of course, you do not have to cooperate with me, but if I really am pregnant, I will have no choice but to give birth to the child. Then, after its birth, Nathan will favor my child over Helen's. Is that what you want?"

Elma: "Why don't you buy it yourself?"

Crystal: "If I could, I would. Do you think I enjoy wasting my time talking bullshit with you?"

Elma took another look at Crystal, clenched her teeth, and finally agreed. "I'll buy them for you," she said.

Crystal: "Let's keep this between you and me."

Elma sighed and said, "Fine. But you have to take medicine in front of me."

Crystal nodded but said nothing.

Elma took off her apron, changed her clothes, and went out of the door. Meanwhile, Crystal took the painkillers into the study, knocked on the door, and pushed it open.

Nathan looked away from the computer screen on his desk and met Crystal's eyes. He was massaging his temples, and Crystal could tell that he was in pain. "I heard Vic say you have a headache," she said. She sniffed the room and smiled. "Is aromatherapy helping?" she wondered.

Nathan: "Hmm. Come here."

Crystal walked over, and as soon as she was within arm's length, he grabbed her, pulled her to him, and cuddled her. A minute passed, and then he sat her on his knee. Finally, he brought up an image on the computer and said, "Look here."

"What is this?" Crystal asked. She was dazzled by what she saw.

Nathan: "These are the people who own the same cufflink as the one you received from your Mother."

While Nathan was talking, Crystal took the opportunity to stuff a painkiller into his mouth. He frowned and refused to swallow. "What are you trying to feed me?" he growled.

"Relax," she said. "It is for your headache." She picked up the bottle of water that was sitting on the desk and passed it to him.

Nathan smiled as he lifted her chin. Then he fed her a mouthful of water, and before Crystal could swallow, he pressed his lips to hers and plundered the water from her mouth. As the water passed between them, some of it dribbled down their chins in a way that was erotic and enticing.

Before long, Crystal's shirt was soaked, and the material became translucent, giving Nathan a clear view of her cleavage and the outline on her nipples. "Hmm..." he said. He cupped her left breast in his right hand and gave it a playful squeeze.

Crystal couldn't help but clench her fists. She gently beat her fists against his chest in silent protest, but Nathan didn't let her go until their lips were numb.

Crystal: "So, have you found out who my biological father is?"

Nathan: "All of the people in the photo have been investigated, including the fencing master, Warren Kim. That's normal, though. There are very few people who own that cufflink, but it may still be hard to figure out your Father's identity."

Crystal: "Hmm. That makes sense. After all, he is a rapist."

Nathan propped his chin against her head, "Maybe he didn't mean to be a rapist..."

Before Crystal could reply, there was a knock at the door. Then, without waiting for a word of welcome, Elma came in. She had a dessert dish in her hands, and when Nathan wasn't looking, she winked at Crystal. Then she placed the tray on the desk and silently slipped back into the hall.

Crystal, of course, knew what Elma had meant by the wink. So, once the nanny was gone, she sighed and said, "I need to go to the restroom." After saying this, she jumped out of his arms.

Nathan watched her go, and before she made it to the door, he said, "I wanted you to say that you will have my baby!"

Crystal paused, half-turned, smiled, and said, "Of course." And she would, too, but not now. It wasn't because she didn't love him, either. She just didn't want things to be more complicated than they already were.

For the moment, what she wanted was very simple: One home and one person to love and be loved by. "I'll be right back," she said, and she hurried out of the bedroom. Then she closed the door behind her, and instead of going to the bathroom, she went down the stairs.

Elma was waiting for her in the kitchen with the medicine.. "You had better not change your mind!" she hissed.

Chapter 1655 - 173: It Was My Mistakes

Crystal laughed as she scooped the bottle of Morning After Pills out of Elma's hand. She snorted and said, "Obviously, I'm not going to change my mind!" Then she grabbed the bottle, took out a pill, and dry swallowed it. Once the drug was down her throat, she tried to slip the bottle into her picket, but Elma stopped her by snatching it out of her hands.

"I'll keep the remaining pills!" Elma hissed.

"Who knows what kind of trouble you might get up to with them...."

Crystal sighed and said, "If I really wanted to play tricks, do you think I would need these pills?"

Elma frowned and said, "Fine. I don't take these anymore, anyway. They are not good for my body." She chuckled. "After the baby comes, I am looking forward to seeing who your young master will choose to be with."

"You are a real bitch!" Crystal growled. Her finger longed to slap the nanny.

Elma: "Whatever, slut!"

Crystal clenched and unclenched her fists at her side, and she was about to say something nasty, but then she realized that Nathan was watching them. Her face went white, and she wondered - How long has he been there? He was standing on the stairs with one hand on the wooden handrails. "Vic!" he shouted. "Bring the pills to me."

Vic had been in the living room, and he grabbed the pill bottle out of Elma's hand and tossed it to Nathan.

"What are you going to do?" Crystal asked. Nathan glared at Crystal but said nothing. Instead, he emptied the bottle into his left hand. Then he crushed them in his fingers one by one and dumped the debris on the ground. He could not believe that his love had gone behind his back in the hopes of murdering their potential child.

Had Elma's furtive behavior not been seen by Vic, and had Vic not followed her to the drugstore, Nathan would have probably never known how much Crystal did not want to have his baby. He looked at Crystal and said, "I've told you what the punishment would be for anyone who gave you pills, didn't I?"

At that moment, Nathan looked like a devil, and Crystal had a hard time believing that he was the same person she lived with and made love to. It's just a pill - she thought desperately - And I only took it because I'm not ready to have a baby yet....

Elma was so frightened by Nathan's hostility and wrath that she was trembling with fear, and she hurriedly knelt and began to beg him for mercy. "Young Master," she cried. "This is none of my business. Miss Smith ordered me to buy them. She said that she didn't want to have a baby..."

Nathan: "She ordered you to buy them! So what? Would you follow any order she gave you? If she ordered you to kill a person, would you do as you were told?"

"It was wrong of me," Elma wailed. "Young master, please give me another chance..."

Helen had been sleeping while this had been going on, but the noise Elma was making finally roused her. She got up quickly and rushed out to see what was going on. Then, when she saw Elma on the floor, wailing, her heart nearly broke. She staggered over to Elma, and when she saw the bottle of Birth Control Pills, she understood everything. She looked up to Nathan and said, "Tribute!"

Nathan's eyebrows were raised. "What are you talking about?" he asked.

"It's from Hunger Games," Helen explained.

"It means that I will take her place. Whatever punishment you had intended for her will be mine."

Elma held Helen and said, "Miss, don't. You are pregnant. I did the deed. I should bear the punishment."

Nathan turned to Elma and said, "Fine. So be it. Go, kneel at the door, and stay there until this time tomorrow. I think that will teach you a lesson you'll remember."

Helen: "No, Nathan. Elma has bad knees.

Kneeling for so long will kill her... I beg you, please, please spare her..."

Nathan shrugged and said, "No way!" Then he turned to Crystal. "You're next. How do you think I should punish you?"

Crystal could not help but tremble with fear. She knew that she had crossed a line with him and that he was really angry with her. She shook her head and seized her hemline. "It's me that asked her to buy the pills for me..." she said.

Nathan: "You've never taken what I said to heart, have you? No matter who buys the pills for you, even if that person is me, they will have to be punished."

Crystal closed her eyes and said, "I see."

Nathan was so furious that he felt like his head was going to explode. He rubbed his temples with his fingers and looked straight at Crystal. "Go," he whispered. "To our bedroom. Climb into bed and wait for me. You should know what to do once you get there."

Crystal frowned. She was seldom obedient, but she did not dare to disobey him or provoke him at this time. If she did, she knew that it could only make things worse than they already were.

Crystal bowed her head, and as she went up the stairs, she wasn't surprised that Nathan was following her. Once they were in the room, he pressed her up against the wall with one hand and gripped her wet core with the other.

Crystal squealed, and Nathan grinned. "The Morning After Pill works for 24 hours," he said. "So, you don't need to worry about getting pregnant. I'm sure that will make you happy! And now, we can do this all night! Again!"

"Why are you doing this?" Crystal wailed.

"I don't know," Nathan growled. "Why are you such a liar? One minute you told me that you wanted to have my baby, and the next, you're trying to kill it!" He slapped her face and asked her if it hurt.

"I didn't mean it," Crystal cried. "It was a mistake!"

"Almost every murderer says that he didn't kill people on purpose once they've been caught. That's pretty convenient, don't you think?" Nathan pinched her chin and said, "I hate cheaters the most. You know that!"

"When did I ever cheat on you?" asked Crystal. "Are you asking me that because you are afraid...?"

When Nathan heard her question, his face turned white.

Chapter 1656 - 174: Severe Punishment

Nathan released his hold on Crystal's wet core and took a half-step away from her. She was right. He was afraid - afraid that when Helen's baby came, external forces would push him and Crystal apart.

Crystal blinked in surprise and said, "I like your strong, powerful side."

Nathan grinned, and then he thrust his hips towards her. "Is it this strong, powerful side that you're talking about?" he asked playfully.

Crystal sighed and said, "Let's be serious for a minute, okay. You don't need to be afraid, and it's not that I don't want to have your baby; it's just that I don't want to have a baby now. I don't want to make our relationship too confusing. And I'm still very young!"

"You have no right to an opinion of your own," Nathan argued. "You are my wife, and you are of breeding age, so I don't even know why we're having this conversation..."

Crystal shook her head in dismay. She hadn't expected him to say that, and now she felt betrayed. "Does Elma really need to kneel all day and night?" she asked, letting the previous topic go.

Nathan: "Did it look like I was joking?"

"I want to intercede on her behalf," Crystal said.

Nathan: "In what way?"

"Let me see what I can do." Crystal quickly undid his belt and the buckle of his jeans. Then she slid her hand beneath his underwear and brought his General to attention. "I can be awfully convincing," she purred.

Nathan gasped and threw her onto the bed.

Downstairs, Elma knelt in front of the house, near the door. The sun that shone through the window was so hot that she was beginning to feel nauseous, and sweat dripped from her forehead. Helen stood nearby, and she felt terrible about what her nanny was going through.

Helen had told Elma to refuse the punishment, but her nanny had refused. "I can't get fired," she'd said. "If I do, then who will look out for you?!?"

Helen knew she was right, so she'd decided to sit with her.

Elma was not happy about this arrangement, though. "Miss," she said. "Get in the house. You're pregnant. You can't stay outside for such a long time, especially not in the sun. For the sake of the baby, I beg you. Please get inside..." Elma did her best to convince Helen, but she didn't listen.

Helen: "I won't leave you here. I know what to do, though. I will call Grandpa. He'll save you."

"No!" Elma cried. "If the young master knows that you called the old Davis to tattletale on him or Crystal, he will blame you for any of the consequences! Men hate snitches, rats, and moles. Don't you know that?"

Her anxiety went through the roof when Helen heard that, and her eyes welled up with tears.

Elma: "Miss, I'm fine. You'd better go into the house... please... for the sake of the baby."

Helen opened her mouth, but before she could say anything, she began to feel dizzy, and she fainted. Several servants rushed outside. They quickly carried her into the house, and then they called the doctor.

Nathan and Crystal froze when someone began knocking on the door. "What is it?" he roared.

Helen fainted," one of the servants replied.

"The doctor is on his way, but you'd better come down quickly!"

Nathan groaned as he pulled his prick out of Crystal's wet core. He rolled over, sat up, and grabbed a tube sock off the floor to clean himself off. "I'll be right out," he called back after passing the sock to Crystal so that she could wipe between her legs.

Crystal was furious. She thought - That girl, Helen, is such an attention whore! And she hated the lack of respect she was getting from Nathan.

By the time Nathan got downstairs, the doctor had arrived. Helen was conscious, but she was delirious.

When the doctor saw Nathan, he stood up and said, "Mr. Davis, I am sure that you are anxious to know how the patient is doing, and I am happy to tell you that she will be fine. She had a little too much sun. That's all. Luckily, the fetus is well developed, and it was never in any real danger."

When Nathan heard that, he glared at Elma and said, "You need to be taking better care of her!"

Does that mean that I don't have to kneel anymore? - Elma wondered. Assuming it did, she nearly wept tears of joy.

The doctor prescribed some anti-miscarriage medicine for Helen. Then he told Elma to keep Helen's mood stable and play music for the fetus. Lastly - at Vic's request - he examined Nathan, who had been suffering from headaches recently.

They went into the study, and the doctor measured Nathan's blood pressure. He found no abnormality, though, so he prescribed some painkillers and drew some blood. Then, as he packed up his bag, he smiled and said, "Master Davis, you are under a great deal of pressure. You need to get more rest."

Nathan rolled his eyes. The doctor's diagnosis was routine, and Nathan didn't want to hear any more. "Are we done yet?" he asked.

Before the doctor could answer, one of the servants ran into the office. She looked distraught, and Nathan could tell that something was wrong immediately. "What is it?" he asked.

"The old Mr. Davis is in the living room!" the servant exclaimed. "Are you coming?"

"I'll be right there," Nathan replied.

The old Davis had situated himself in a place of power between the two couches, and he was standing akimbo. He'd brought with him more than a dozen outstanding special forces. They were all carrying big guns, and they were invading the villa.

The old Davis was wearing a plain navy blue suit, and he had a leash in one hand. At the end of the leash, there was a wolfhound. Its tongue was hanging out, and it was drooling. The image of the two of them together was daunting.

The old Davis handed the leash to a subordinate and ordered him to tie the beast up outside. Crystal was closest to him, and he could feel her curious eyes on him, but he was more concerned with Helen's condition than he was with anything else.. He gave Crystal a brief glance as if to let her know that she was worthless in his eyes, and then he approached the couch where Helen was resting.

Chapter 175: Get Out

Helen's vision gradually came into focus, and she forced herself into a sitting position. It took her a second to realize who was standing in front of her. When she did, though, a grin broke out on her face. It was the old Mr. Davis. "Grandpa, why are you here?" she asked.

The old Davis: "I won't let you be bullied. Tell me what happened. Did Nathan bully you?"

Helen hurriedly shook his head and said, "No. I was being careless. As usual."

The old Davis' eyebrows were slightly furrowed. He was old, but he was not a fool, and he certainly knew that Helen was not telling the truth. He pointed at Elma and said, "I want you to tell me what happened!"

Elma froze for a second, and then she told him the whole thing.

In anger, the old Davis waved his arm. Then, with a clang, the cup of coffee the servant had just made for him was swept to the ground. The coffee splashed all over the place, and the cup was smashed to pieces. "How dare he?!?!" he roared. He got up and walked towards the study to look for Nathan.

Helen called out to the old Davis: "Grandpa, don't be angry. Nathan didn't mean it..." Then she turned to Elma and said, "Nanny, go and stop Grandpa. Quick!"

Elma shook her head and refused. She didn't dare get between the old Davis and the focus of his anger.

The old Davis got to the top of the stairs just as Nathan came out of his bedroom. The old man gave Nathan a dirty look and said, "We'll talk here." Then he went into the office, and Nathan followed after him.

From the bedroom, Crystal could hear the old man's command and the sound of the office door slamming. The loud bang echoed through the villa, and then there was nothing but quiet for a long time. Eventually, Crystal could not stand the silence any longer, so she laid down and closed her eyes.

Crystal was just about asleep when Vic barged in. She hugged her blanket up over her cleavage. "What do you want?" she asked.

Vic: "Miss Smith, the old Mr. Davis asked to see you in the study."

"I have to get changed first," Crystal said.

She was wearing a white bubble-sleeved nightgown, so she needed to get changed before meeting an elder.

Vic said, "Be quick," and then he disappeared back into the hallway.

Once Crystal was dressed, she went to the study, knocked, and opened the door. Inside, she saw that the study was like a battlefield, and words could not express what she saw. There were broken antiques scattered everywhere, and Nathan was on the ground. He was holding his head, and he was bleeding. The blood was flowing down along his forehead. Strangely, though, he did not look embarrassed. Instead, he seemed surprisingly mysterious and beautiful, as if he was a charming bloodthirsty vampire- and he was looking at her in a way that suggested that he would protect her, no matter what.

The old Mr. Davis glared at Crystal and said, "So, you're Crystal Smith?"

Crystal looked into his eyes without fear, smirked, and said, "So, you're the old Mr. Davis."

The old Davis was surprised. No one had ever dared to talk to him like this. "How dare you?" He roared. He turned to Nathan. "Is this the woman you like? She's ungracious! She's a nobody! This relationship between you is ridiculous!"

Crystal kept smiling. She was determined not to get angry or emotional, no matter what he said.

"Don't even think about letting this woman step into my house!" the old Davis continued.

"Even if she has your baby, the villa's gates will be barred to her! And her little bastard!"

Nathan didn't answer. Instead, he thrust his hands into his pockets and looked lazily at Crystal. He thought - This woman... She isn't afraid of anyone.

He admired her indifferent attitude.

The old Davis: "Why are you pestering Nathan?"

Crystal smirked and said, "I pester him? I'm sorry, but you're mistaken. On the contrary, he is the one that keeps haunting me."

"How dare you talk back to me?" the old Davis roared.

Crystal crossed her arms beneath her breasts defiantly but said nothing. Of course, her indifference only infuriated the old man further. "Answer me!" he roared. Then, when she still didn't respond, he turned to Nathan and said, "Do you see? She has nothing to say for herself. That proves that she is only interested in you for your money!"

Nathan's face turned red from anger, but before he could say anything, Crystal finally spoke up: "Old Mr. Davis, would you mind if I asked you one question?"

"Humph!" The old Davis hummed with disdain.

Crystal: "Is it you who judged the marriage between Nathan and me invalid?"

The old Davis: "Yes. When you got the marriage license, you were not of legal age. Thus, your marriage is invalid."

Crystal: "Well, then that means that I have nothing to gain from Nathan, right?"

The old Davis: "Humph! Of course! And it had better stay that way!"

Crystal: "Never mind that for now. It is inconsequential. You see, since I have nothing to gain from the Davis family, you've gone to all this trouble for nothing - and now that you've broken at least a hundred million dollars worth of antiques in his study, how are you going to make amends?"

Nathan winked at Crystal. This was a trick that he had taught her, and he couldn't help but smile as she executed her part perfectly. She meant the world to him, and if he could not spend his life with her, he thought that the rest of his days would be gloomy and meaningless.

When the old gates saw the look of smug satisfaction on Nathan's face, he pointed at the door. "You!" he shouted. "Get the fuck out of this office!"

"Get out?" Nathan laughed and said, "I won't. This is my house. If someone should get 'the fuck' out of here, it should be you. Please, feel free to show yourself out."

The old Davis flushed with anger.. Then he pulled a gun from a hidden holster and pointed it at Crystal's head.

Chapter 176: How Could I Ever Leave You?

Nathan eyed the old Davis carefully as he slowly stepped between him and Crystal. Then he touched the tip of the old man's pistol and said, "If you want to shoot Crystal, you'll have to shoot through me to get to her."

The old Davis: "You bastard."

Anger burned in Nathan's eyes as he glared into the old man's eyes, and in a voice as cold as ice, he said, "There's something you need to understand about me: The more you want to destroy something that belongs to me, the more I want to protect it, and I would even risk my life to oppose you."

Nathan's statement shocked the old Davis. He was so angry that he threw the only thing he could throw: the beads on his wrist. The beads were extremely light, though, and Nathan hardly felt a thing. But when they hit the ground, he was suddenly reminded of the promise he'd made at the birthday dinner. He'd said that if Helen gave birth to a child and the child was indeed his, he would marry her. His face turned white, and when he looked into the old man's eyes, he could tell that they were both thinking about the same thing.

The old Davis gave Nathan a look of acknowledgment. Then he said, "You are a man of honor. I am sure you will do the right thing when the time comes." Then he left without saying another word.

Once they were alone, Crystal let go a sigh of relief. Then she turned to Nathan and asked, "Is that it?"

"What else do you want?" Nathan asked. "He is going bat shit crazy bananas because of you. Isn't that enough?"

"I guess so," Crystal replied. "Whatever I do... Whatever I say... It all makes him angry. So, why bother trying. Right?"

Before Nathan could reply, Vic appeared in the doorway. A shocked look appeared on his face when he saw the blood streaming down his master's face and all of the damage that the old Davis had caused, and he froze in place.

Nathan chuckled and said, "Cat got your tongue, Vic? Out with it, man!"

Vic blinked twice, and then he said, "Young Master, I'm sorry, but I've looked into what you asked me to, and I failed to find any clues as to the identity of the informer."

Nathan stood up and rubbed his temples for a second. It was hard to think straight with his headache, and it had only gotten worse with the old Davis' visit. "The person that notified the old man is among us," he finally said. "It is only a matter of rooting him or her out..."

Vic stood still as he waited for Nathan's order.

Finally, Nathan straightened his back. He stood in akimbo and said, "Vic, I want you to call a House Meeting immediately. Gather everyone into the living room."

Vic hesitated for a moment. "Should I include Miss Bush?" he asked.

"I said 'everyone,'" Nathan snapped. "What do you think?"

Vic's face turned white, and he ran back into the hallway.

The room seemed incredibly quiet after Vic was gone, and with all of the smashed antiques, the air had an oppressive quality to it that Crystal found unnerving. She knew how much Nathan loved these old artifacts, and it broke her heart to see them in pieces. The vases alone were worth hundreds of millions of dollars, but it wasn't about the money, not entirely, at least. Instead, they were a link to the past, and now that the connection had been broken, it could never be repaired.

When Nathan saw the tears welling up in her eyes, he lifted her chin so that he could look into her eyes. He could see the grief there, but it confused him. Why does she care so much about the antiques? - he wondered - And so little about my injuries? He did not understand that her grief over the antiques was an expression of her love for him.

Nathan: "You saw that, right?"

Crystal: "Saw what?"

Nathan: "The old Davis' decisiveness and my persistence."

"I saw your wounds," Crystal replied. Then she forced him to sit down on the sofa. "Is he really your Grandpa? He is ruthless."

Nathan ignored her question. He held her hand and said, "Promise me that no matter what kind of threat you're under, you won't give up on me!"

Crystal frowned and said, "You're really overbearing. You know that, right? You can do anything you want, and I am not even allowed to dump you? How is that fair?" She said this in a joking way, but he could tell that she was at least partially serious.

"I won't give up on you either!" Nathan exclaimed. "I promise!"

Crystal: "Be careful about what you say. No one knows what the future has in store. All you can do is live in the moment and enjoy the present."

Nathan was very displeased with her casual attitude. Suddenly, he grabbed her wrists and held her in his arms. "What can I do to get you to give yourself to me one hundred percent?" he asked.

Crystal: "All you need to do is give yourself to me one hundred percent. Can you do that? I don't think so... Not with Helen around!"

Nathan: "I am only taking care of Helen until the birth of her child. Then we'll know if the child is mine or not."

Crystal: "I think we're good now. We are in a relationship, but we are not bound to each other. I like you now, and I am willing to stay with you. But, if one day I don't like you anymore, I can leave. Doesn't that sound good to you?"

"Shut up!" Nathan clenched and unclenched his fists. "You need to get that thought out of your head!" he shouted. "You're my woman. Even if you died, I would expect you to wait for me in Heaven. I won't give you a chance to leave me. Do you hear me?" He trembled with anger, and he struggled to restrain himself. He was so upset that it was hard not to give in to his rage, wrap his hands around her throat, and throttle the life out of her.

Crystal rubbed her ears. She was worried that his roar had perforated her eardrums. Then she pressed her fingers against Nathan's thin lips to appease him. "How could I ever leave you," she sighed.. "I'm too afraid of you to dare...."

Chapter 1659 - 177: Didn't I Have You Beside Me?

Nathan's brow furrowed. He looked at Crystal and said, "How is it that you're afraid of me, but you weren't afraid of the old Davis? He had a gun pointed at your head, but you didn't even blink! I don't even know if that was bravery or stupidity!"

Crystal gave him an innocent look, smiled, and said, "Didn't I have you beside me?" Naturally, Nathan didn't know why Crystal was smiling or what she was talking about. He knitted his eyebrows and complained: "Be serious!"

"I am being serious," Crystal said. "If you weren't there with me, I would have ignored him and said nothing."

Nathan's face lit up when he heard that. "You see!" he exclaimed. "You need me. Life would be impossible for you if I weren't by your side, so you had better stick by my side!"

To some extent, Crystal thought that Nathan was talking out of his ass, but he wasn't. She was in danger. He had seen the old Davis cut more than one human's heads off and dig their heart out. Now things are worse than ever. The old man had sunk to a new low when he'd used Helen to play a dirty trick on him. Of course, Nathan had to show him a certain amount of respect, but, in his heart, he thought he was vile, dirty, and mean.

Naturally, the old Davis had done something to protect his informer, but Nathan was confident that he could find the truth.

By the time Nathan and Crystal arrived in the living room, Vic had gathered everyone who lived in the villa, as well as everyone that worked there. There were two rows of people, and everyone was standing, except for Helen. She was sitting on the sofa, and she was nervously rubbing the hem of her sleeve.

Nathan stood with arms akimbo in a position of power in front of them with a grave expression on his face. "I'll give you one chance," he said. "If you are the informer, admit it now, and I'll give you a lenient punishment."

Helen sat quietly, and her grip tightened on her shirt. Her nose was oozing sweat.

"No?" Nathan put his hands behind his back. He smiled and said, "All right! Since no one is willing to fess up, from today on, no one will eat. This forced fast will be enforced until someone freely admits to being the old man's rat."

Everyone gulped, and they all wondered - Does this punishment include Helen? However, no one dared to ask. They were afraid to offend the demon further and be punished more seriously.

Once he was finished speaking, Nathan hugged Crystal and said, "Let's have dinner."

Nathan, Crystal, and Helen sat at the table, and all of the others stood at the side to watch. When a servant laid three plates down, Nathan gave her a dirty look. "Who said Helen could eat?" he growled.

The servant gasped and hurriedly took back Helen's plate. In her haste, though, the plate slipped from her hands, and it shattered when it hit the ground.

"I'm sorry," the servant said, and she knelt to pick up the pieces.

Crystal looked at Helen sympathetically and then at Nathan. "You can't starve her," she whispered. "She's pregnant..."

Nathan frowned and said, "I am not starving her. The rat is starving her, and Helen will be allowed to eat the minute that foul creature comes forward. Now don't worry about it, okay. Just eat."

Helen bowed her head and bit her lower lip. Her stomach growled, and her face turned pale as she watched the couple eat. She couldn't believe how much everything had changed over the last three years. It wasn't that long ago that Nathan had been her man.... Watching him with Crystal made her almost wish that her suicide had been a success. Nathan no longer seemed like the cold, distant man she'd once known, and she felt lonelier than ever. She wondered if Crystal was the reason for the change in Nathan - Is it because he loves her...? It seemed like he would give his life for her. When she thought about this, she couldn't contain her tears.

The tears ran down her face, smearing her mascara. When Elma saw this, her heart broke. She wanted to rush over, but she was held back by the servant next to her.

Elma had been with Helen since she was born, and she looked at her as a daughter. Thus, she could not handle watching her suffer.

Meanwhile, Nathan had a spoonful of soup in his hand, and he was trying to feed Crystal.

"I can eat it myself." Crystal turned her head away and said, "I'm not a child."

"Open your mouth!" Nathan ordered. His aura was strong and horrible, and Crystal respected him. Thus, she could not let him lose face in front of the servants, so she opened her mouth and let him feed her.

Elma saw what they were doing, and the more intimately they behaved, the more heartsick she felt. I can't let this continue - she realized. After a moment of hesitation, she turned to Nathan and said, "Master Davis, it's me... I'm the informer."

Nathan looked up at her, but he did not stop feeding Crystal. "Do you know what the punishment will be?" he asked.

Elma knelt and said, "I'm willing to accept the consequences for my actions."

Nathan opened his mouth to tell her what the punishment would be, but Helen stood up before he could. "No!" she cried. "It was not Elma. It was me! I secretly called Grandpa. Elma knew nothing about my actions."

Nathan frowned as he looked from Helen to Elma and then back to Helen. "Who did it?" he asked. "No more bullshit. Bear in mind that I could punish you both, so you may as well tell me the truth!"

Helen bit her lips and did not speak, while Elma insisted that she was the guilty party. "It's me," she cried. "So, punish me. Please..."

Nathan nodded. "If you say so," he said. Then he called to Vic: "Vic! Bring out the whip and give this rat a hundred strikes on her bareback, ass, and thighs."

"But I confessed!" cried Elma. "I thought you said you'd be lenient if the person confessed..."

Nathan chuckled and said, "That was before. That ship sailed the minute I began to enforce the fast!"

When everyone heard that, they all gasped.

Chapter 1660 - 178: He Got What He Deserve

Elma's eyes bulged. She was horrified by Nathan's words. "No!" she shrieked. She hadn't expected him to be so cruel. She was an experienced, loyal servant of the Bush family, so she had thought that her punishment would be light. But, apparently, she had been wrong.

Helen was as shocked as her nanny was, and not knowing what else to do, she dropped to her knees and began to beg for mercy for her nanny. "Nathan," she cried. "Please show mercy. I promise that this will not happen again!"

"Get up!" Nathan ordered. He hated to see a woman crying. "And from now on, you might want to watch what you say. The baby protects you for now, but you won't be pregnant forever. So keep it up, and you will get the same. Eventually." As he spoke, he nodded to Vic, and the guard dragged Elma to a standing position.

Elma was so scared that her whole body was trembling.

"Do you think this is over?" Nathan shouted. He looked at his servants and continued: "By making this false confession, Elma has made things worse for everyone. Now, until the true informer comes forward, no one will eat, and you will all remain to stand. And Elma will still be flogged."

Crystal stared at Nathan in amazement. What a devil - she thought.

The servants and bodyguards looked at each other in fear. No one dared to say anything, let alone come forward, and they watched in dismay as Vic stripped Elma and bent her over the table. The whip cracked against her bare buttocks, and she shrieked. Helen's face was covered in tears, and she was crying out in desperation for Nathan to put an end to this atrocity.

The second lash struck Elma's calf, and she stood up straight. The third lash struck her thigh, and the fourth, her lower back. He attacked her lower back twice more, and the skin split- and by the time he'd struck her sixty times, he had opened a wound that began at her neck and stretched down to her ankles. There was blood everywhere, and flesh hung off her in gory, meaty threads.

By the seventieth lash, even with the table for support, Elma could no longer stand. Her hands slipped, she fell to the ground, and then she lost consciousness. This didn't stop Vic, though. He continued to lash her nearly lifeless body, and every time the whip licked her skin, she twitched.

Helen knelt beside her nanny. "Elma!" she wailed. Her face was red and puffy, but she had stopped crying somewhere around the fortieth lash. "Elma!" she cried again. "Answer me!"

Helen held Elma's hand as she received the last of her punishment, and then the servants carried her to her room.

Except for Crystal and Nathan, no one had ever eaten anything, and the atmosphere in the villa was tense. The staff was close to panic, and they were all afraid of what would happen if the true informer didn't come forward.

None of this affected Crystal or Nathan, though. After punishing Elma, they'd showered together to get the blood that had splattered on them off of them, and then they went about their day. Nathan had a video conference in the study, and Crystal went to the kitchen to see what was available to eat.

The fridge was empty, but Crystal remembered that she had a box of cookies and a carton of milk in her bag in Helen's room. She quickly retrieved her snack, but when she saw Helen's puffy eyes, she thought - How pathetic. She sighed and said, "Would you like some?"

Helen frowned and said, "Save your insincerity."

"What crawled up your ass?" Crystal asked.

"You did it!" Helen exclaimed. "Miss Smith, I didn't expect you to be so mean. I know that Grandpa wronged you, and I know that this new living situation is hard for you, but Nathan's punishments are over the top - and they don't even seem to faze you. It makes me wonder if they were all your idea..."

Crystal frowned. She leaned against the door and looked at Helen doubtfully. "So," she said. "You think I'm using Nathan to get even with you. Is that it?"

"It is," Helen replied. "And it is unforgivable. Nanny Elma is in her forties. She has never been beaten before, and now she can't even get out of bed. I beg you, Miss Smith. If you are unhappy because I suddenly moved in, then you can deal with me. Alone. Nanny Elma and the servants are innocent."

When Crystal heard this, she shook her head and said, "Believe it or not, I had nothing to do with the punishments."

Helen: "If that is true, can you please go and beg Nathan to show mercy on us? He is so into you that he'll listen to anything you say."

Crystal: "Okay, I'll talk to him. Can you eat something first, though?"

"Okay," Helen replied. "I'll eat. I'll eat." Then she grabbed a cookie and shoved the whole thing into her mouth. As she chewed, she reached for another, but as her hand stretched out, they heard the sound of a gun being fired, and she froze. Her face turned white, and she cried out.

Crystal touched her arm and said, "Don't panic. Wait here while I go and have a look."

Crystal rushed out of the room, down the hallway, and into the study. Inside, she found Nathan sitting in his chair with his back to the door, looking out of the French window. "Did you hear the gunshot?" she asked.

Nathan turned around, and when she looked into his eyes, she flinched. He is a demon-she realized - A monster. And she was afraid.

Nathan smiled and said, "The rat came out and confessed. Vic has dealt with him." His tone was so light that Crystal thought for a second that it was a joke. The look in his eyes would not let her believe it, though.

Crystal choked and took two steps backward.

"To be kind to your enemy is to be cruel to yourself," Nathan continued. He fiddled with the lighter in his hand and said, "I can't let anyone hurt you. Who knows what a person like this is capable of?"

"I didn't ask you to do this!" Crystal shouted.

Nathan: "Then tell me what I should have done."

After thinking carefully, Crystal said, "You should have let the person go."

Nathan raised his eyelids lazily and said, "That would never happen, especially since I offered leniency in the beginning, but it was rejected. It is too late now, anyway. What's done is done."

Crystal shook her head in disbelief, and she rushed downstairs and into the yard. Outside, Vic was putting away his gun. At his feet, a man was lying in a pool of his own blood.

Crystal could not believe her eyes, and she covered her mouth in shock and fear. "L-look at wh-what you d-did," she stammered..

Vic looked over his shoulder. "He got what he deserved," he said. "Do you recognize him?"

Crystal nodded. "He was one of Helen's bodyguards," she replied sadly. "He meant well, and he didn't deserve to die."

"Die?" Vic chuckled and said. "He's not dead. Nathan just wanted me to scare him, and I scared him so badly that he fainted. He cracked his head on a rock when he fell, but he'll live."

When Crystal heard that, she nearly fainted. She couldn't believe that she'd thought that Nathan was capable of casual murder. She thought - I feel like such a fool... She watched as Vic ordered the

wounded man to be carried into the house, and she let go a sigh of relief as he called the doctor to treat his wounds.. She couldn't believe that all of this hullabaloo had resulted from her request for the Morning After Pill.

Chapter 1661 - 179: Wrongly Accused

Once the doctor was done treating Helen's bodyguard, he took out a paper from his briefcase. Then he turned to Nathan, gave him the report, and said, "I have the results from your blood tests. Everything is normal."

Nathan took the paper, gave it a cursory glance, crumpled it up, and threw it away without even saying thank you.

Crystal wanted to say something about that, but she thought better of it and changed the subject instead. She said, "Since you know who the snitch is, would you like to check on Helen and Elma?"

Nathan shook his head and said, "No."

Crystal: "But the child is innocent, and Elma wasn't the rat!"

Nathan frowned. Even though he owed Helen something, he was bound to visit her. He didn't need Crystal nagging him, and her persistence made him wonder - Why is she being so pushy? "You think too much," he said.

"Do I?" Crystal scoffed. "Helen is pregnant, and the constant stimulation is not good for the baby. The only person who can stabilize her mood is you."

"Fine!" Nathan growled, and he stormed off in the direction of Helen's room - and when she saw him, her face began to glow. She felt a bit awkward, though, and she didn't know whether to stand or remain sitting. Thankfully, Nathan made a choice for her when he sat down beside her. "Will you blame me for what happened to Nanny Elma?" he asked.

Helen shook her head. "I don't blame you," she replied. "I know you always do what is proper. Miss Smith and I heard a gunshot, though. Did something happen?"

Nathan: "It was nothing."

Helen: "Okay. That's good. I was worried. Anyway, have you found the snitch yet?"

Nathan: "Yes. In fact, it was one of your men. I do not blame you, though. I know that he was acting on his own initiative."

Helen's shoulders relaxed when she heard this answer.

Nathan stood up again and said, "It's getting late. Go to bed early and have a good rest." Then he walked out and closed the door behind him.

That night, there was a knock on Crystal and Nathan's door. He sat up unhappily and growled at the intruder: "What?!?!!"

"It's an emergency," one of the servants replied nervously. "Helen is bleeding. It might be a miscarriage!"

Nathan cringed as he stood up. "I'll be right there," he said. Then he turned to Crystal and told her to call 9-1-1.

The paramedics arrived quickly, and the emergency turned out to not be an emergency. Not only was the fetus fine, but there was very little blood to be seen. This was puzzling, and it made everyone think - Why did Helen act like she was having a miscarriage? And once things had settled down, Nathan demanded to know what was going on.

"I don't know," Helen replied. She frowned and said, "I felt a bit sick after dinner, but I didn't think much of it..."

Nathan: "What did you have for dinner?"

Helen: "Just some cookies and milk." Nathan was not happy when he heard that. The doctor was still in the living room, so he went out to see him. "What happened?" he asked. "Why does she feel sick?"

"It seems to be something she ate," the doctor replied. "Miss Bush said that she had cookies and milk for dinner. I suggest you take them to the lab to be tested. Don't forget that she is pregnant. That means that she has to be careful about her diet."

Nathan nodded and instructed Vic to follow the doctor's instructions. Then he went back to Helen's room and told her what the doctor had said. Then he asked her if she was hungry. She said she was, so he told one of the servants to prepare some porridge. "Since you haven't eaten much," he said, "you'll have some porridge to warm your stomach."

Helen smiled and said, "Thank you, Nathan." She was moved when she saw that he cared about her.

In the morning, the atmosphere in Helen's room was tense. Nathan had been in and out of the room throughout the night, and he was in a bad mood. Along with his test results, the doctor had given him Helen's test results. Up until now, though, he had kept them to himself.

"What's bothering you?" Vic asked.

Nathan nodded his head in Helen's direction and said, "Her blood showed excessive amounts of Vitamin C, Cinnamon, Dong Quai, and Parsley."

Helen's face turned white when she heard Nathan's words.

Vic: "I don't get it..."

Nathan: "These are among the top methods that women use to trigger a miscarriage."

Helen: "Somebody must have poisoned the cookies in my room..."

Nathan: "Where did you get them?"

Helen: "They came from Crystal. She saw how hungry I was, and she snuck me the snack..."

Nathan turned to Vic. "Get Crystal in here!" he growled. "Now!"

Crystal knew something was wrong when Vic hauled her out of bed and dragged her into Helen's room. "What is this about?" she asked Nathan.

Nathan pointed to the table. "Did you give these cookies to Helen?" he asked.

Crystal: "Yes, I did. I know that you said she had to fast, but I couldn't stand to see a pregnant woman going hungry... Was that so bad? She wasn't the rat!"

Nathan: "The cookies contained Vitamin C, Cinnamon, Dong Quai, and Parsley. These are among the top methods that women use to trigger a miscarriage."

Crystal: "How can that be? The package was sealed when I bought it!"

Nathan: "Are you saying that you didn't try to kill the baby? If you say you didn't, then I will believe you. If you did, though, I want you to tell me."

Crystal: "I don't know anything about this. There could be another explanation. These could be naturally occurring ingredients, or it couldn't have been something she ate earlier in the day."

"I tested the cookies," Vic interrupted.

"They were all tainted, and they are not naturally occurring ingredients."

Nathan frowned at Crystal. "How do you explain that?" he asked.

"I can't..." Crystal shook her head and said, "So, you think I did it?"

Before Nathan could reply, another bodyguard walked in. He had a bag from Safeway in his hand. He handed it to his boss.

"What is this?" Nathan wondered.

"Sir," the bodyguard replied. "This was found in the cistern of the bathroom that Miss Smith uses. If you look inside, you'll find Vitamin C, Cinnamon, Dong Quai, and Parsley." Crystal gasped, and her hand went to her mouth. "It's not mine..."

"We'll see about that," Nathan growled. He turned to Vic and said, "Go and get the security footage."

Within minutes, Vic had a burnt DVD of the footage. He inserted it into the video player in Helen's room, and the room went quiet as events played out on the screen. Unfortunately, the footage was of no help. It showed Crystal giving Helen the cookies, but it did not offer clues about how they'd been tainted. Nevertheless, the more she denied poisoning Helen, the more guilty she looked.

Helen glared at Crystal and said, "You are the only person who could have poisoned the cookies unless you think I poisoned myself! Is that what you're trying to say?!?!"

Nathan walked towards Crystal. She looked nervous and afraid, and his heart was breaking for her. He believed her. Because all the evidence was pointing at her, though, he could not declare her innocence. Not knowing what else to do, he turned to Crystal and said, "Go and apologize to Helen for trying to kill her baby."

When Helen heard this, she glared at Nathan and said, "Nathan, I won't accept her apology. Even though the baby lived, you could have killed it by refusing to let me eat. So, what's the point of going through with this pregnancy? I don't see any point, not if this is the way that you're going to 'care' for us?"

"I promise it won't happen again," Nathan replied. Then he turned back to Crystal and said, "Apologies!"

"I didn't do it!" Crystal cried.. She clenched and unclenched her fists angrily at her sides. "And I won't admit to doing something I didn't do!"

Chapter 1662 - 180: His Certain Illness

Nathan grabbed Crystal by the shoulders and shook her. "If you didn't poison Helen," he shouted, "then prove it!"

"Okay!" Crystal cried. "And if I cannot, then I will apologize. There. Are you happy?"

Nathan: "I am. But how will you prove it?"

Crystal: "By reviewing all of the security footage."

Nathan nodded to Vic and said, "Make it so."

Vic wasn't gone long, and when he returned, he had an unhappy expression on his face. He looked at Nathan and said, "I'm sorry, sir, but for various reasons, certain rooms - such as the servants' quarters - cannot be displayed..."

"What a coincidence!" Crystal sneered. "Don't you think it's strange that these monitors cannot be displayed at the moment when we most need them?"

Nathan: "No surveillance equals no evidence. So, why don't you just apologize? Sooner begun, sooner done - right?"

Crystal sighed as she nodded. Then she walked over to Helen's bed, looked her in the eyes, and said, "Helen, I am sorry for trying to kill your baby... even though I didn't."

Helen: "How can you expect me to believe you without proof? We all know that you don't like me, that you're afraid of the baby, and that you resent having me in your house."

Crystal: "I said it wasn't me. Believe me or don't, I don't care. It's a free world."

Helen turned to Nathan. "Is this matter concluded?" she asked. "Or will Crystal be held accountable for trying to kill my baby?"

Nathan: "What do you want me to do?"

Helen blinked her eyes innocently, and after thinking for a moment, she lowered her head and said, "Don't worry about punishing her, but let me move into the manor early."

"So be it," Nathan growled. "Now, I don't want to hear another word about this!"

Crystal's face turned white when she heard Nathan's proclamation. Suddenly all of the pieces fell into place. Helen had poisoned the cookies, then blamed her, and all to ensure a place for her in the manor.

She opened her mouth to argue with Nathan, but he shut her up with a look, and then he led her to the living room.

Crystal thought her situation was hopeless. Thus, she was surprised when Nathan said, "You said you didn't do it, and I believe you. I'll send someone to spy on Helen. Give it some time. The truth will come out, you'll see. I love you, and I will not allow you to be wronged!"

Nathan sat down on the sofa and folded his legs, and it seemed to Crystal that he had more to say, but then his phone rang. He pulled it from his pocket, looked at the screen, hesitated for a moment, and finally accepted the call. He said hello, and after a second, he covered the microphone and whispered to Crystal: "Can you give me some privacy?"

Crystal nodded and went into the kitchen to get something to eat. Then, once she was gone, Nathan pulled his hand away and said, "Barret, what is it?"

Barret: "I heard from Vic that you have been suffering from frequent headaches lately?"

Nathan: "Yes... And...?"

Barret: "Have you been taking your medication? Is it still working, or is HE emerging again?"

Nathan smiled bitterly and said, "I've been taking my meds, but I'm afraid..." He couldn't figure out why, but HE would insert himself into the equation every time the Old Davis wanted something from him.

It first happened when he was nine years old. While hunting, the old Davis had forced him to shoot a boar several times his size. He had been so frightened, and he'd wanted to pretend to be dead. He hadn't wanted to kill the animal. Instead, he had wanted to get away from it. The old Davis had forced him to stand his ground, though, and he had refused to take the shot for him. But Nathan had been so scared that he'd peed his trousers and completely forgotten why he was there.

When the boar smelled the acrid scent of Nathan's urine, he opened his mouth and charged toward them. As it approached, the old Davis began to curse him for his cowardice until he finally lifted the rifle and fired.

The boar dropped dead, but Nathan was not pleased. He glared at the old Davis and stuck out his tongue, but this amused the old man, and Nathan never forgave him.

In the future, the old Davis tried countless times to train Nathan into the best soldier, but his cowardice hindered the young man's progress. He showed great potential and was skilled, but his natural instinct was to run from danger.

The old Davis worried that Nathan suffered from PTSD - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, so he asked the doctor to examine him. The doctor could not explain what the problem was, but he discovered that if there were no way to evade conflict, the side of Nathan that had killed the bear would take over, and it would've done whatever needed doing. "It is like two people are living inside of him," the doctor had suggested. "The coward and the warrior."

Nathan was the coward, but HE was a warrior.

The second time that HE had emerged was just after Helen's suicide. The old Davis had taken him to a boxing ring and pitted him against ten men, all of whom had been specially trained. In the beginning, he

was beaten badly, but then one of the blows hit him in the forehead. Suddenly, the pain went away. His body went numb, and the pained expression on his face was replaced by utter calm, and within minutes, he had beaten all ten men to within an inch of their lives. Almost immediately after that, he passed out, and when he came to, he had no recollection of what had happened.

That was when Nathan had first begun to suspect that there was something seriously wrong with him. Later, when the doctor explained about PTSD, he thought that there was more to it. He thought he had an MPD -a Multiple Personality Disorder. Thankfully, with medication, he was able to suppress the warrior, HE.

There was a lot of stress in Nathan's life now, though, and he knew that the headaches were a sure sign that HE was trying to emerge once more, and he felt like Bruce Banner was trying to contain the Incredible Hulk.

Barrett: "Are you still there?"

Nathan blinked twice and took a deep breath before answering. For a second, he had been so lost in thought that he'd forgotten where he was. "I'm here," he replied.

"It sounds like something's wrong," Barret said. "Have you considered increasing the dosage of your medication?" He was one of the few people qualified to make such an assessment.

Nathan hadn't thought about increasing his dosage, and he said so. Then: "Barret, where are you now? When will you be back?" "I'm on Vancouver Island," Barret replied.

"I have a beautiful woman in my arms, so I don't plan on returning any time soon."

Nathan: "Forget that. My health is more important than your sex life!"