

Chapter 28

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[Caden]

I walk away from Vivienne, leaving her shocked and confused. By the time I return to my table, Sasha is still grimacing at the food.

God, this was one bad idea. I should never have agreed to Mom's request to take her out to dinner. This is what I get for trying to be a good son: a bad mood and an extreme urge to storm off.

I reach our table and pick up my stuff. Sasha probably senses something, not that I'm making any effort to hide it.

"Wait. Are we leaving already?"

"Yes, we are," I say curtly, assuring myself that's all she needs to know.

"But why? We haven't even eaten anything yet! Caden? Are you even listening to me?"

I ignore her protests and grab my jacket, slinging it over my shoulder as I start to walk away. Sasha hurries to catch up, her heels clicking loudly against the restaurant's floor.

"Caden, what's going on? You're acting so strange."

I stop and turn to face her, my patience wearing thin.

"This was a bad idea. My dad is in the hospital; it feels wrong to come out and have a nice dinner." Even though there's nothing

wrong with my reasoning, it still feels wrong. The truth is, I just can't stand seeing Vivienne sharing a meal with another man. If I stay here any longer, I might just snap.

Thankfully, Sasha falls quiet for a while, but when I turn back around, she's back to following me.

"But this was supposed to be a nice dinner! Your mother will be furious if she finds out you cut it short."

"I don't care," I snap, my voice sharper than I intended. "I'm not in the mood to play along with anyone's expectations tonight."

We walk out of the restaurant in tense silence, the cool night air hitting my face as I step outside. I take a deep breath, trying to calm the storm of emotions raging inside me. The valet brings my car around, and I open the door, hoping to get out of there as fast as possible.

But as I try to slip inside, my head spins wildly. The world tilts, and for a moment, I feel like I might pass out. I grip the car door, trying to steady myself.

"Caden, are you okay?" Sasha's voice is filled with genuine concern, a rare softness that momentarily cuts through my frustration.

I close my eyes, trying to regain my composure. "I'm fine," I lie, forcing myself to stand up straight. "Let's just go."

I head for the driver's side when I feel a hand on my shoulder.

"Why don't you let me drive? You look like you could use the break."

"No, it's okay, I'm fine."

But Sasha refuses to back down. "Come on, you can't drive in this state. You can barely stand upright."

I know she's right, but it still annoys the hell out of me. Who does she think she is? She might be my mother's pet project, but she has no business sticking her nose where it doesn't belong. But I can't deny that she's right. I can't drive like this. Why the hell did Mom insist on me driving tonight myself? She never does that. She always makes it clear that we should have a driver when going to important events like tonight. I can only blame my own stupidity.

With a deep sigh, I let go of the door handle. Sasha looks pleased with herself as she quickly walks to the other side. Once she slips into the car and settles down, I take the passenger seat.

I must be really out of it because when she leans closer, I see Vivienne's face instead. Her dark hair, her plump lips, her rose-coloured cheeks. She looks so beautiful in that white dress she wore when I met her a while ago.

My hand reaches to brush an invisible lock of hair off her face.

"Do you really mean what you said?" She called me her ex-husband. Ex-husband!? We are not even divorced yet. She's still my wife. My fucking beautiful wife.

"Yes, I do," she says, her perfect lips moving so slowly. Why does she look like she's not even bothered by our fight? I don't understand this. She looks at me like she can barely wait to leave this marriage.

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The marriage that she wanted to happen. The marriage she left her parents for because apparently they were against her marrying someone like me. What a joke!

I never met her parents. Not because she didn't let me, but because I was happy to not be introduced to them. There was already drama in my life, with my parents trying to marry me off to Sasha and Vivienne not really helping with her jealousy issues. The last thing I needed was more people telling me how to live my fucking life.

Vivienne's hands cup my face and while she did lean closer to help me with the seat, the kiss still takes me by surprise. For a moment I forget the situation, the fact that she just pissed me off enough to leave the restaurant, that I'm damn angry with her because she wants a divorce.

When the kiss ends and I see that it is Sasha I'm kissing, I push her away from me, shocked.

Before I say something, she starts crying.

"What are you doing, Caden? Why did you kiss me like this?"



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