

Chapter 143: My way.

Hanna's POV:

Honestly, seeing Tess holding my little baby in one arm and a pistol in the other hand right in front of me in that alley made my legs shake, and I think if

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it weren't for Michael, I honestly would have passed out. My brain couldn't formulate questions like "How did she manage to kidnap my baby?" or "What does she plan to do now that she has me where she wants me?" The only thought I could

formulate at that moment was one of terror about the certainty that she had come to take revenge on me.

Then, a new thought came to me: I needed to be strong for my son. I needed to free him from whatever macabre fate Tess had for him.

"Tess, I definitely didn't expect to find you here. What are you doing in this little town?" I smiled weakly at her and asked the question while I was trying to ignore the fact that my voice was shaking and trying to make it sound as normal as possible. With the look she was making, it was best to remain calm not to make any sudden movements.

"Oh, hi Hannah! It's always good to see you too," she told me in the most ironic tone possible. Her face was strange. She was still the same Tess, but in her eyes, there was more evil than just the mischievous behavior she had. Her eyes were glassy with hatred. She looked like a shark that had smelled blood in the water, and I was her completely defenseless victim.

"So, you didn't answer me, Tess... What did you come here for?" I insisted on the question.

"Well, I thought that the answer to your question is pretty obvious, isn't it?" She told me while playing

with the gun. Every time she twirled the pistol around her finger my knees shook with terror as the gun was pointed at Michael, who slept soundly snuggled into her left arm, oblivious to any external disturbance.

I figured the best strategy in this case was distraction, so I thought I'd get her to keep talking: "I'm sorry, but not really. At least, not for me," I told her and took a discreet step toward her.

However, unfortunately, this was a false move. She wasn't distracted by my questions, and the moment I finished taking the step, Tess took a step back. Eyebrows raised and in a defiant tone, she said to me: "No, no, no, Hannah. Don't even think about it. I see what you're doing. We don't want any tragedy to happen, do we?" she asked me. As soon as she finished the question, she went back to playing with the pistol.

"No, of course not, I promise to behave," I told her as I shook my head and raised my arms in surrender. Above all, I needed to stay calm. "But the reason for your visit isn't that obvious to me. Can you please explain it to me please?" I asked her again.

Tess rolled her eyes as if she had had enough of this conversation. "I didn't think you were that

dense, Hannah. But if you insist, I'll explain," she told me. "Look, first of all, I came to get revenge on you because after all, YOU are a big part of the reason I ended up in jail. And the worst part of that is that if only you had died that day, at least all this mess would be worth it. So, I came here to finish the crime I was arrested for," she said.

"Okay, I understand where that came from," I told her. I thought that would be it, after all, she always wanted to take her revenge on me. I wasn't as stupid as she thought. I was just trying to buy time. I was trying to reach my phone in my jacket pocket and make some speed-dial call. So, I discreetly put my hand inside my pocket to feel for the phone. I couldn't really see what I was doing. I just hoped it would work out.

Then, I looked at Michael in her arms and asked her, "So why don't we leave the baby in a safe place while we sort this matter out between us? Michael has nothing to do with this," I told her.

"Michael...?" she asked and gave a wry smile. "What an... interesting name," she said to me. "You decided to honor the man who made Ethan forcefully marry you? Well, I imagine you have a lot to honor old Michael, don't you? You owe him everything! Without him you would remain a

nobody!" she exclaimed. "You know, I always wanted to know where the hell Michael found you, the poor girl with no mother and sick grandmother. And why did he want Ethan to marry you so much..." she wondered.

"I'll gladly tell you this story, but how about we first get Michael to safety where he can sleep more peacefully?" I suggested to her.

Tess made a face as if she told me I was going crazy. "Of course not, Hannah. I'm going to take little Michael here with me after killing his sweet mamma. Since you took away my chance of being a mother, I'm going to raise this baby as my own and he won't even know you existed. And on top of that, this baby is Ethan's too. That means when the time is right, he will inherit the entire Browns fortune, you see, two birds, one stone..." she explained to me.

I confess that I felt a small relief knowing that she had no plans to kill my baby, but then I panicked when I remembered the plans she had for me and where she would take the baby.

Then Tess apparently remembered what she came to do and turned to me and said, "You insist on living, don't you, Hannah? Despite all my attempts to bring you down, you're still here. Old

Michael wasn't insistent like you. If you liked him so much, you could follow the same path as him, right?" she asked.

"Wait... the same path...? What do you mean by that, Tess?" I asked her in fear.

"I mean exactly what I said, Hannah. Michael stood in our way and suffered the consequences. His cancer wouldn't have killed him, but what we did to him certainly did the job," Tess explained to me.

My face must have been in pure shock. We all thought Grandpa Michael had died from illness. I would never have imagined there was more to that story than that. And now that admission would probably die with me in this dirty alley at the hands of this crazy woman.

"It would have been so much easier if you had followed your path in your mediocre life without meeting Michael or Ethan... It would have been so much easier if you had refused the marriage proposal that Michael made Ethan make to you!" she told me.

"But Tess, if this is about Ethan, we can work it out," I told her. "I can leave him alone one more time, I promise! I've already disappeared once, I

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can disappear again. I even gave him the divorce papers," I suggested to her.

Tess looked bored as she said to me, "Yeah, I know that. Ethan already showed me your divorce papers," she told me.

What? I thought to myself. Ethan really divorced

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me and didn't even have the decency to tell me and on top of that he kept saying he wanted to insist on us? But then, I put that matter aside due to the urgency of the situation at hand. So I turned to Tess and said, "If you want a clear path, I'll leave a clear path for you, Tess. I promise. Just let

me go and take the baby with me," I pleaded with her.

Tess shook her head and said to me, "Well, Hannah, unfortunately, that offer has been off the table for some time now, don't you know? That would have interested me a year ago, maybe a little less. But right now, I have no use for your empty promise, if you know what I mean," she said.

"What do you mean, Tess?" I asked her.

"Newsflash: Ethan doesn't interest me anymore, Hannah," Tess told me. "The Brown inheritance is Alex's business now. I don't care about it anymore. I have nothing left to lose," she told me and I felt my stomach sink and my legs shake again. Tess who had a lot to lose was already a very dangerous person. Imagine one who was here for a Hail Mary trying to kill me.

So I turned to her and asked, "But we don't need to go to that extreme, do we?" I knew it was pathetic to beg for my life and that she was probably having a lot of fun watching me do it, but at that moment I didn't give a damn about my humiliation.

Tess shook her head and said, "That's where you're

wrong, little Hannah. We do need to go to that extreme," she said and pointed the gun in my direction.

"Tess, please wait. Let's talk. There must be something you want more than to kill me, right? I can get it for you," I begged her while she was about to pull the trigger.

Then Tess said to me, "I'm sorry, Hannah, but what we had to talk about no longer interests me, and you insisted on continuing to do things your way. Now all that's left for me is to do things MY way," she said.

I swallowed hard, knowing there was nothing else that I could say to stop her. She was about to shoot me. Then I closed my eyes. I didn't want to face my executioner head-on. I took a deep breath and waited for the final blow. Then, I heard the sound of the gunshot, and I waited for a pain...

That never came.

I could hear my baby crying in fear, and I waited a few more seconds, internally evaluating where she had shot me. But then, I realized that her shot didn't actually hit me. Was she really that bad at aiming?

A few seconds later, I opened my eyes and saw

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that Tess was leaning against the wall with my baby in her arms. She slowly slid to the floor, and a lot of blood was coming out of her torso. How could this have happened?

I looked around and realized we weren't alone in that alley. There was someone else there who had shot Tess to save my life.



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