

Chapter 145: Several voice mails.

Ethan's POV:

After Hannah and I left that damn appointment with the therapist, we both stood on the sidewalk outside embarrassed. We both looked at each other, but we didn't know what to say. Hannah had given me a lot of things to think about, and none of them were easy. I had messed up a lot with her, but at least right now I understood that I hadn't prove to her so far that my love for her was real and not because of our own son.

So, I looked at her and mumbled: "Well, I think that I'll see you later, right?" I asked.

"Uhum," was all that she managed to say to me.

She was already turning her back to me and was walking to her car when I told her "You have a good day!"

She didn't even look back when she said: "You too," and soon she was gone.

Since Hannah found out about her post-partum depression, I have discovered a new version of her. She was more edgy than she used to be. Well, I knew that I had to work on my relationship with her, but I knew that I couldn't press her to do anything, otherwise she would tell me to get lost,

Chapter 145: Several voice mails.

and I would not go back to her good graces so soon, so I thought a good idea to give her some space.

So, I decided to do what I apparently do best, which is work. A few days ago I had fixed myself a little office on the shores and everything was ready there, so I went straight to the office, turned on my computer, and started a videoconference with Eric, my secretary.

"Good morning, Sir," Eric told me. "I hope you're doing fine."

I nodded at him and said: "It's all right, and you?" I asked.

"Never better," he told me.

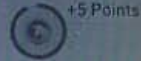
"So, shall we begin our meeting?" I told him hurriedly.

"Sure, sir," Eric told me.

"So, what are the most critical points?" I asked him.

"I'll start with them, sir," Eric told me and continued: "You have two meetings in the morning. The first one is with the Paris project crew, and the second one is about a potential new business across the Americas," he said.

"So, the conglomerate wants to have a meeting now?" I asked him.



Chapter 145: Several voice mails.

"Yes, they do, Sir. They want this meeting since they learned that you are back full-time," Eric explained to me.

"Ok. Are the meetings in this sequence?" I asked him.

"Yes, sir. And for Paris' team meeting, I sent you a bunch of memorandums so you can get prepared for whatever they bring you since this project is already delayed, and they want to solve this matter with you in this meeting," Eric told me.

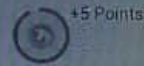
"Right. I get it. Let's get to work," I told him, and then I completed: "Eric, I'll be in a lot of meetings today, and I'm going to turn off my cell phone. I won't be available for anyone until the middle of the afternoon, so I ask you to not transfer any calls. After that, I have a personal appointment, so I can't talk to anyone today," I told Eric.

"Sure, sir. Good luck," Eric told me and killed the call.

After that, I switched off my phone and started to work.

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Today, was one of these days that I can say that I worked like a dog. Both meetings went smoothly. I managed to save Paris' project, and the outcome for the Americas prospect looked good too. In summary, my professional life was back on track,



Chapter 145: Several voice mails.

and that was great. I might be unlucky in love, but I was very lucky in my game.

But during the day, I had this feeling back in my head that I was ruining everything with my wife. I thought about Hannah all day long, and it didn't look good. I have done so many wrong things to her. Nobody is perfect, but I had the feeling that my defects were more pronounced right now.

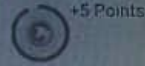
But I was determined to change for her. So, at the end of the day, I went to my own appointment with the therapist to talk about what I should do.

"Hello, Mr. Brown, how are you feeling right now? I must confess that when you scheduled this appointment I got a little surprise. You know, right? I'm treating your wife already. I can't treat you as well. This would be a conflict of interest," Hannah's therapist told me.

I arched my eyebrows ironically, and told him: "Well, that's kind of fun coming from someone who made a couples therapy session with us in the morning."

The therapist shrugged and said sheepishly: "I'm sorry, sir, but it is what it is. I can't be her therapist, the couple's therapist, and your therapist at the same time."

"Then you should refuse my appointment, shouldn't you?" I asked him.



Chapter 145: Several voice mails.

Hannah's therapist looked at me with a funny face and said: "Yes, I should, but I made an oath saying that I can't deny assistance for someone in need, and if you reach to me, it means that you need help, so I could hear you today and give you a few

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suggestions so you can reflect in your life. And then, I can indicate a few other therapists who can proceed working with you and you can see if you feel comfortable with one of them to continue your treatment."

Damn it. All this works for almost nothing. But after all, what were my options for today? "Ok, let's do it then."

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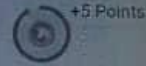
I stood at the therapist's office for a whole hour, and then, I considered everything done for the day. I came back quickly to the office to grab my computer so I could analyze a few agreements first thing in the next morning. I was still a little behind schedule, so I needed to walk an extra mile in the following days.

I left the office past 5 p.m. with a sense of realization for the day. I hadn't allowed myself any distractions during the whole day and there were no other problems to solve for now. I had left a few points for tomorrow, but that was okay. And then, I finally shut the computer down and went home.

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It was kind of strange the fact that nobody tried to reach me through the cellphone the whole day, but then I remembered that I had switched off my phone in the morning and never switched that on again. When I finally turned the phone on again, I saw that there were a couple of unidentified calls from a local number and several calls from Lucy.

My stomach sank in that moment. I tried to call Lucy back, but she never answered her phone. So, I decided to return the unknown number and then try Lucy after that.



Chapter 145: Several voice mails.

I found out that the unknown number was from the city's police station unit responsible for Tess and Hannah's case.

"Good evening, this is District 11 station, How can I help you?" a monotonous voice answered the phone.

"Good evening, I would like to talk to Detective Pratt, please," I answered the question.

"And who can I announce?" the bored voice asked again.

"This is Ethan Brown," I answered to her.

"Right. Just a moment, please," the voice said.

A few moments later, Detective Pratt answered the phone: "Mr. Brown, this is Detective Pratt. I'm glad I finally got you."

"Good evening detective. I'm returning your call," I told him.

"Oh, yes. I'm afraid I have bad news, sir. Something happened recently..." he told me.

"And what is it?" I cut him and asked. I hated it when people continued to stall things.

"Miss Astor broke out of jail about 72 hours ago," he told me.

"Wait a minute, 72 hours ago and you just let me

Chapter 145: Several voice mails.

know now?" I asked him.

Detective Pratt cleared his throat embarrassedly and then said to me, "I'm sorry, sir. We've been wanting to capture her, and we thought delaying this news would give us time to do so, but now we thought it best to notify you and your family," Detective Pratt told me.

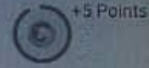
"Thanks for the warning, Detective," I muttered wryly and hung up.

Then my stomach sank. Every call I received from Lucy was indeed an emergency. So I desperately called her again, and she didn't answer. I didn't want to call Hannah for fear of finding out something had happened to her.

So, I started looking for Hannah everywhere. I started at the cottage, but only Patricia was there. She was still very nervous from her most recent scare: Tess had been able to kidnap Michael.

So I quickly went to the cafe, but everything was already closed, and in the surroundings, there was something very unusual: there were police tapes that said "no trespassing" everywhere. When I saw that scene, my heart sank as this was definitely not a common thing to see in that small town.

So, I went to the city's hospital looking for Hannah and Michael, but they weren't there too. I've checked with the nurses, and they never went



Chapter 145: Several voice mails.

there. There was just the police station left, so I went there. My heart was racing and I was getting more nervous by the minute. I opened the doors looking astonished everywhere. And that was the moment that I saw them: Timothy and Hannah were hugging each other and Lucy holding Michael in her arms. I didn't know about their conditions, but they looked pretty well to me, so I felt relieved.

I went close to where they were and asked: "Hannah? Are you okay?"

That was when I heard Lucy's answer: "Oh, I'm glad you finally decided to show up, isn't it, Ethan?"



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