

## Chapter 199: That would be me.

Ethan's POV:

Leaving Hannah at her place on Sunday night was bittersweet. I was still in ecstasy from the weekend. It was perfect. The only thing that I would change would be bringing our baby boy to live with us in that refuge. The place had no trace of our struggles, no drama. It would be the perfect place to restart, if it weren't for the fact that we need to work for a living. Hannah had to work on-site, and I... Well, I had to find out what the hell was going on with my company.

I had dinner with the whole gang that night. Everybody was there: Hannah and I, Michael and Patricia... even Lucy and Timothy were there, and to my ultimate surprise, they were nice to me. Nobody told me a thing, but I bet that Lucy and Timothy had something going on between them by the way they were looking at each other.

I took my time saying my goodbyes to Hannah and Michael. I didn't want to start all over again tomorrow morning. But when I had no excuse to stay anymore, I went back home and packed for a few days in the city. My private jet was already

waiting for me at the small airport. I would leave first thing in the morning.

Vincent didn't give me a lot of clues about what the hell he was talking about. A movement? Would that be political or something like this? The only thing that he was assertive about was that I must go back to my company as soon as I could. I didn't sleep well that night. I was worried, and my heart was heavy. I trusted my gut, and I knew that something bad was coming. I tried to comfort myself with the fact that I was going to the city to find out what was going on, so I could come up with a solution sooner rather than later. The worst part, in my opinion, was this damn anxiety even though I promised myself that I would deal with whatever was heading at us when the time comes. Quickly and definitively.

I used the time flying to the city to solve small problems. I tackled everything that Eric pointed out in my agenda, and I asked him to tell nobody that I was heading to the company today. If something shady was happening, I would arrive unexpectedly, so nobody would have the time to prepare ahead of my arrival. There was a car waiting for me at the airport, and I went straight to Brown Enterprises.

I could see shocked faces here and there on my



way to my office. A lot of people, though, were smiling sadly at me. The whole atmosphere had changed. It was heavy and filled with fake gestures. Everybody that nodded at me in the corridors seemed to know something that I didn't, and I hated that feeling.

When I arrived at my office, Eric stood up and followed me to my office.

"Hey, Eric, how is it going? What do you have for me?" I asked him. I would normally ask him something like that, but today, a little part of me was afraid of his answer. "I believe that nobody knew that I was coming. I saw a few surprised faces on my way to my office," I added.

"Hey, sir, it's good to have you back today," Eric started. "I have your schedule in your agenda, as always, but I was instructed to let Mr. Callaham know if and when you come to your office, no matter when," Eric told me.

"And who gave you these instructions? I thought that I was your boss..." I told him.

"I'm sorry about that, sir, but Mr. Callaham is on the board, and the board has been demanding your presence for a little while now. I told you that a few times..." Eric told me that a little embarrassed. Yes, he was right. I've been

postponing this trip for too long, and I realize that now.

I nodded at him. He was right after all. "Fine. Let him know that I'm back," I told him.

"And what should I inform them if they ask how long you will stay here, sir?" Eric asked me.

"Tell them that I will stay here as long as they need me," I simply answered him and went to my office.

Five minutes later, I heard a knock on my door, and after that, Vincent's face appeared through a c\*\*\*k on it. "May I come in?" he asked me.

"Sure," I murmured to him and made a gesture for him to come forward.

Vincent entered my office and closed the door. As soon as he sat down on a chair across the table, I asked directly at him: "Now that we met personally, could you please tell me what the hell is going on?"

Vincent shook his head, took a piece of paper and a pen from my desk, and wrote: "*Not here. This place is not safe.*"

I sighed frustrated once again. "*If not here, then where?*" I asked him through the same paper.



*"Let's grab a cup of coffee at the cafeteria across the street,"* he suggested and stood up.

I followed him silently. Neither of us dared to open our mouths until we reached the cafeteria Vincent mentioned. We chose a desk at the corner of the room, maybe the most secluded place in the shop, and ordered our drinks. As soon as the waitress went to the kitchen with our orders, I turned to him and asked: "So...?"

I knew that he would understand me. I would not need to repeat my questions. "Oh, thank God you are here, Ethan!" Vincent exclaimed. "Although I think that you should come sooner, maybe things could still be reverted..." he added.

"Why should I come sooner? What is going on here, Vincent? And why couldn't we have this conversation in my office?" I asked him.

Vincent shook his head and said, "I'm afraid the whole place has been bugged, my friend. What I tried to explain to you, but I had no proof, is that recently, a lot of the board members started to behave awkwardly. Something is up with them, and someone is behind that," he told me.

"Behave awkwardly? What do you mean?" I pressed.

"I mean that some of the decisions that you left to the council to make are taking a different direction. Many of them are casting their votes for key decisions differently from what they would normally do. I think that someone is blackmailing them to make the decisions accordingly. I found a few bugs in my office and presumed that yours should have them too. That is why I asked you to come here with me," Vincent explained.

"I see..." I mumbled to him. "Do you think they are being blackmailed?" I asked him.

"I do, Ethan! There have been a few awkward votes. Minor stuff, that makes me believe that someone else is behind their decisions," Vincent told me and slipped to me a paper sheet with a quick report.

I took a quick look at the report. He was right. They were minor decisions, but I knew most of the board for my whole life. There was no way that they would vote the way they did unless someone had something against them.

I am aware that some people use corporate espionage. I've seen that happen to a lot of my colleagues in the market. I was always very careful about that myself, but this whole melee with Hannah running away, me going after her,



Tess, our divorce, and reconciliation changed my focus from my company and my former lover to my legitimate family. Maybe I've been in this bubble for too long, and it was time to take care of my company again.

"Damn it! I need to talk to them and find out who is behind this and what they have against the board members," I told Vincent.

"And be prepared, Ethan. They might have multiple things against the members of the board, and you might have to fight against a lot of narratives. Besides, I think that by this time, they might be aware of your arrival, so they will be on high alert for any movements."

I nodded at him and asked, "Will you help me with that, Vince?"

"Sure! Just tell me what you need me to do!"  
Vincent exclaimed.

\*

After finishing our cups of coffee, we went back to the office. I was just going to tell Eric that I would be visiting Callahan in his office when Eric told me, "Sir, Mr. Callahan called and requested your presence as soon as possible in the great meeting room."

I arched my eyebrows and asked, "Did he say what was that for?"

Eric shook his head and murmured, "No, sir."

I nodded at him and murmured, "Thank you, Eric. I will see what Callaham wants."

I went to the great meeting room, wondering what the hell was happening in my own company and was kind of distracted when I opened the room door. All the board was there to see me.

I arched my eyebrows and said, "Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I didn't expect to see all of you at once, but that makes my work a little easier," I nodded at them.

They all were making strange faces, as if something was seriously wrong. "What is it?" I asked them. I was tired of these riddles.

Callaham looked at me and said, "Well, thank you for coming, Ethan. Unfortunately, we have some bad news for you."

I sat down on my chair at the head of the table and told him with a knot in my stomach, "Well, go on, then."

Callaham cleared his throat and started to stutter, "We... well, we made a decision last week about



your position at the company, and we decided to grant you a leave of absence from your CEO activities."

It was as if the ground had fallen beneath my feet. "But I didn't ask for this absence!" I protested.

"I'm so sorry, Ethan, but with Mrs. Brown's involvement in the attempt to murder Miss Astor and later her demise, Brown's Enterprise's reputation is too low. We needed to do something. You understand that don't you?" Callaham insisted.

"But Hannah was cleared from all the accusations!" I exclaimed.

Callaham sighed. The rest of the council wasn't even looking at me in the eye. "That is not all, Ethan. We are afraid that you've been spending too much time at the shores with your family. We needed a present CEO, and we believe that you should be released from this position for now," he told me.

"That is absurd! Someone is calling the shots here, and I want to know who this is!" I demanded from them.

"Well, well, well, that would be me," said a voice that I never thought that I would hear in this room

< Chapter 199: That would be me

+5 Points >

again.

I turned around and my stomach sank. I saw Alexander with a contemptuous smile, greedy for power once again.



1

Comments



Vote



Get Bonus (Ad) >