

Chapter 7 Michael's Funeral

Ethan's POV:

I was beyond angry but didn't have much time to consider who was telling the truth in this case. During the path to the hospital, Tess was crying abundantly and I could barely understand her words, although I understood that she was blaming Hannah. On the other side, Hannah remained silent when I accused her of pushing Tess myself. I believed that if she had something to do with that, she would create an excuse to look innocent.

It was hard to believe that Hannah had pushed Tess, though. Hannah was practically a wallflower and promised me to sign the divorce papers after the funeral, so I didn't think that she was willing to ght for our failed marriage anymore. Still, I didn't have time to consider everything, since we were in a medical emergency. Tess was injured and needed immediate medical care. Hannah would be ne, after all, nothing happened to her.

As I always did in my life, I decided to focus on the present. I knew that I would need to deal with this situation later, but now wasn't the time to do that. We arrived at the hospital in record time and soon they took Tess to those examination rooms. She went to be checked in detail in all that medical paraphernalia, and since nobody assigned a room for her yet. I was left in the corridor. Before Vincent could enter and accompany the exams, I grabbed his arm and murmured to him: "Make sure she will have the best treatment."

"You don't even have to tell me that, brother," Vincent told me simply and went to Tess. I knew that I didn't need to request that, since I was an old benefactor of the hospital, and we have several businesses together. Still, I wouldn't rest assured if I hadn't said that.

After what seemed like an eternity, Vincent got out of the exam aisles and came to me. He took a deep breath, put a hand on my shoulder, and murmured: "I'm sorry, brother. There are no vitals for the baby. Tess, however, is ne and after a few days of care, she will be discharged and will be able to recover at home. We will bring her to room 802. You can wait for her there."

I nodded at him in acknowledgment, although I didn't seem to assimilate what he had told me. I had the chance to be a father, and this was taken from me as fast as it was given. I was feeling numb, and I actually didn't know how I arrived at room 802. I just wanted to be left alone. Maybe this was grief after all. It was curious how I was sorry for someone that I haven't met and would never do but I wasn't feeling like that toward Grandpa Michael. Maybe because he made me do the last thing that I wanted to do: get married to Hannah.

Half an hour later, the medical team brought a sleeping Tess to the room. She was fast asleep, and a nurse had told me that she would be like that for a while due to the sedatives and medication. After a while, Vincent came to the room and asked me: "Hey, brother. How are you holding up?"

"I... really don't know, Vince," I answered him. I was empty and devastated, although I couldn't do anything.

"You know, you can go home and change your clothes, get some rest, or do whatever you need. Tess is going to sleep for a while yet. Besides, you look terrible," Vincent told me. I haven't looked at myself since I left home, but when I looked down at my abs it had blood on it. I will probably scare the hell out of Tess if she wakes up and sees me like that.

I nodded at Vincent and murmured: "Yeah, you are probably right. How long will she be asleep?"

"At least six hours. I think I will see you later then, brother. Don't worry, I will send a nurse to watch her, and I will be here from time to time to check on her too." Vincent answered me.

I nodded and murmured: "Thanks, Vince." And left the room.

I took a cab home and when I arrived there, the house was empty. Hannah had probably left for the funeral, and now I didn't have Tess to distract me. So, I took a shower and changed my clothes. Then I looked at the hour and knew that the ceremony probably was ending. I would probably have time to go to the burial, at least. Grabbing my coat and my car keys, I went to say my goodbyes to Grandpa Michael.

Hannah's POV:

When I was left alone at our home, I decided that I should go to the funeral. There was no use staying there and waiting for news about Tess because I knew that I was the last person in the world to whom Ethan would bother to update on this matter. So, I called one of the maids to clean up Tess's blood from the oor, took my purse, and went to Brown estate, where the ceremony would be held. Since the state was enormous, Grandpa Michael would be buried in one of the gardens, in a small private cemetery that the family had at Brown.

It took me one hour driving to arrive at the estate, but I couldn't say that the time was too long, because I was feeling numb. I was still shocked that Tess was pregnant and now probably had suffered a miscarriage, but above all, I couldn't forget about the look on Ethan's face when he accused me of pushing her downstairs. I believed that his face would haunt me forever now.

During the journey to Brown, all the events of the night before and this morning began to weigh on me. I started to feel nauseous about it all. As soon as the car stopped at the Brown estate, I rushed out of the car and puked on the closest ower bed that they had. I stood there bent and nauseated for a long time until there was nothing in my stomach anymore.

"This is so pitiful and pathetic. I expected Brown's women to be more respectful. Or at least they should be, right, Hannah?" I heard a bitter voice that came from behind. I would recognize that voice anywhere. This was Aunt Elizabeth, Uncle Terry's second wife.

I took a deep breath and turned around. "Hello, auntie. It's good to see you too." She grimaced at my words, but as I said before, the only one in this family who could hurt me with his words was Ethan, and since he wasn't here, nobody else could do it.

She sneered at me, turned her back, and muttered, "Come on. We'll get started soon." Aunt Elizabeth never liked me. Maybe because of my poor origin, or because she never understood why Grandpa Michael was so fond of me. Maybe she was even jealous of me because when she got married to Uncle Terry, she was never cherished by Grandpa Michael as I was. Anyway, she despised me and never hid her preferences.

Michael had two sons. His eldest son was David, who was Ethan's father. David and Ethan's mom died in a car crash when he was still a child and they had just one heir: Ethan. Terry, Grandpa Michael's younger son, was married to Aunt Elizabeth. Uncle Terry never had children, which made Ethan the only heir of the Brown family.

When I got inside, she was by the entrance waiting to greet guests with Uncle Terry. She looked behind me, looking for Ethan, and noticing that I was alone she again threw her venomous words: "Why, where is your husband, Hannah? He couldn't come to his own grandfather's funeral?"

There would be many important people coming to Brown estate today, and all of them would be expecting to see Michael's heirs, so Ethan's absence would be noticed by everyone. Still, I put my best smile on my face and told her: "Ethan was stuck at something urgent, but he might be here later," I tried to explain with a few words.

"Oh, I see," Aunt Elizabeth murmured ironically. "So much for the Brown heir, right?" but that was her last comment on the subject. There were so many auent people here today that I concluded that she didn't want to embarrass me in front of all these people and allow our family to experience such embarrassment on a day like this.

The house's old party hall was decorated soberly, and there were white ower arrangements here and there. Grandpa Michael's body was in a con in the center of the room, and there was a huge picture of him and a podium over to the right for the ceremony. I sat down in one of the family-assigned seats and waited. Soon, the whole room was occupied by friends, families, and allies of the Brown family. Grampa Michael was a famous businessman and a community benefactor.

It was a simple ceremony, but at the same time, I had the feeling that this was exactly what Grampa Michael would choose for himself if he had the chance. When the con was leaving the room, someone called me from a distance. Another known voice, but this time, a kinder one:

"Hey, Hannah, how are you doing?" Patricia Barnes came to speak to me. She was Grandpa Michael's assistant. Even though the Brown family was beyond rich, it was small. Grandpa Michael hired an assistant for himself, and she was the one with him at the end.

"Hey, Patricia. Well, I'm holding up. How about you?" I asked her. I noticed that she was carrying a small wooden box in her hands.

"Well, same here," Patricia smiled sadly at me, and then she continued: "Listen, this is for you. Michael wanted me to give it to you after he passed away. You must keep it safe, ok?" She paused and I nodded, and after a while, she continued: "Michael knew that Ethan would divorce you as soon as he could after his death, so he prepared it. If you don't want to divorce, just give this box to Ethan. He will know what to do with it."

I nodded once again and murmured: "Thank you." And then, I examined the little box and noticed that it was locked. I asked her curiously: "Where are the keys?"

"Oh, don't worry, dear. Michael gave them to Ethan before he passed away. You look downcast, dear. You need to take better care of yourself. Michael always hoped that you and Ethan would have an heir, so the Brown name wouldn't be erased. But now that Michael is gone, don't bother with the family."

I nodded at her. Sure, because no one in the family cares a lot about me.

"Anyway, it was good to see you again. Take care, darling." Patricia murmured.

"Yeah, you too," I murmured back at her.

After that, the procession went towards the small cemetery. I went along with everyone else there, my heart in pieces, getting ready to visit the last home of the only person in the family who really cared about me.