



Chapter 18 Saved

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"Very well," Ember whispered, biting her lip as she turned around, her emotions still aflame. Her steps carried her forward, her hand lingering in the air, almost as if still feeling the residual heat on her flushed face.

Within her heart, she cursed her own incompetence, questioning why she felt so inadequate in that moment. Yet, as she pivoted to steal a glance behind her, she discovered a sight that captured her attention under the glow of the streetlights. Standing there, amidst a backdrop of picturesque scenery, was the enigmatic figure whose eyes had silently observed her. Unable to resist, Ember offered him a friendly smile, a silent acknowledgement passing between them.

"Go on ahead. I'll catch up shortly," he said, reciprocating her smile.

Her voice soft, Ember replied, "If you venture further, I'll be gone."

"Goodbye then."

With their farewell exchanged, Ember's ears caught the familiar ring of her phone. Hastily retrieving it, she answered the call, only to be interrupted by the whizzing sound of a motorcycle passing by. Startled, her gaze instinctively lifted, locking onto the impending danger hurtling towards her. Time froze as the motorcycle drew dangerously close, threatening to collide with her. Paralyzed, she clutched her phone tightly, listening to her brother's voice buzzing in her ear. Her body remained motionless, oblivious to the imminent peril.

With a thunderous roar, the motorcycle barreled towards her, a

split-second away from disaster. In that desperate moment, when life hung precariously in the balance, a powerful force yanked Ember to safety. Shocked and bewildered, she found herself ensconced in an embrace-strong and protective, exuding a masculine scent that enveloped her.

"Are you alright?" a voice inquired, concern lacing every word.

Raising her head, her pallid face a canvas of terror, she beheld the man who had gallantly saved her life, the very same individual who had watched her from afar earlier.

"I'm fine," she managed to utter, unaware that she had narrowly escaped a calamitous accident, leaving him terrified.

Relief washed over Alexander as he observed her response. Amidst the return to normalcy, Ember remembered her ongoing conversation with her brother. As she lifted her phone to resume speaking, Alexander swiftly snatched it from her grasp, pulling her aside, terminating the call, and sliding the device into her bag.

"No more answering calls while walking," he asserted firmly. "Keep your phone in your bag and focus on your surroundings."

Ember glanced down at the path beneath her feet. She had merely been strolling along the sidewalk-what harm could it cause? Was his assertiveness not somewhat excessive? Ready to retort, her objections were intercepted as if he had read her mind.

"It's not safe even on the sidewalk. When you receive a call, find an empty spot to stop and answer it. Prioritize your well-being."

"Very well," she reluctantly concurred, surprised by his

overbearing nature yet recognizing his genuine concern.

"Go on back. Your family is waiting," he gently urged, a warm smile gracing his lips. Unable to resist his request, Ember reluctantly turned, reminded of the medicine her mother awaited.

As she prepared to depart, another bicycle zipped past, prompting Alexander to swiftly pull her into his embrace once more. Ember had never anticipated such perils along this seemingly innocuous path. Twice in a matter of minutes, her life had hung precariously in the balance. Thankfully, he was there—her guardian angel.

Observing the bicycle fade into the distance, a frown etched upon his face, Alexander couldn't help but express his concern, "This road is far too dangerous. Please try to avoid it in the future."

Ember nodded in agreement, her gaze meeting his. "Thank you for the warning. I'll be more cautious from now on. I should be on my way."

As she made her intention to leave known, a trace of reluctance flickered across his features. In that moment, he realized he was about to take a step back, but instead, he tightened his hold on her, pulling her closer. He pressed her gently against his chest, inhaling deeply, his satisfaction evident. "Allow me this embrace, just for a moment."

Ember felt a surge of mixed emotions. Throughout her life, besides David Smith, she had never experienced such proximity to another man. Her face nestled against his chest, she found herself enveloped by his essence, his every breath reverberating in her ears. It was as if a spell had been cast

upon her, rendering her speechless, forgetting any inclination to refuse his request. She remained in his embrace, caught in a timeless interlude.

A gust of cool wind swept through, as if breaking the enchantment that held Ember captive. It stirred her senses, dispelling the spell that had bound her momentarily.

With a newfound clarity, she remembered her purpose and sought to disengage herself gently. Alexander, however, held her firmly, as if unwilling to release her. He brushed his fingers tenderly through her hair, a gesture that both comforted and perplexed her

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