

Taming A Billionaire

#Chapter 231 - Two Hundred And Thirty-one: I Do - Read Taming A Billionaire Chapter 231 - Two Hundred And Thirty-one: I Do

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The third point of view

Some say the best day in a woman's life is her wedding day but that wasn't the case for Emily.

"Oh my God!" Her makeup artist squealed in excitement, "You are like the most beautiful client I've ever attended to. Your skin is so fresh and smooth, I don't even think you need much of this cosmetics," she gushed while applying mascara on Emily's eyes, unaware that the girl was miles away from reality.

Today was finally D-Day, her wedding day, roughly a month after they got their marriage certificate.

Emily was officially two months pregnant but she had a slim frame so the slight bump in her stomach wasn't that obvious- only the seamstress could tell.

Today was supposed to be a happy day for her but her mood said the opposite. Emily had not received what she was expecting, not in this marriage with Ahmed.

The man was good, sweetening good, but it finally dawned on Emily, Ahmed saw her as a task he had to shoulder- which had to do with his past.

She was his wife and he took care of her not because he loved her but because she was his to take care of. Perhaps, others might not see that as a problem but Emily needed someone that she could communicate with on an emotional level and not just someone who made sure to provide all her needs.

It made her feel like she had returned to her father's cage but this time with a different person and reason. Adam had pampered her to the core because she took after her mother and this time, Ahmed was pampering her rotten because he didn't want her to make the same decision his mother did.

"Love would come naturally, love would come with time," Emily kept telling herself but inwardly, she had an inkling she was deceiving herself. This ...this...

"Ooh, you must be so happy you're moved to tears," The makeup artist mistook the reason for the abrupt tears.

She was so damn alone! There wasn't Niklaus to support her nor was she getting married to Judy and was pregnant with a baby with a not so bright future!

Emily cried harder.

Right now, the stylist was at a loss for words, this no longer seems like tears of Joy, her client was crying?

"Stop crying, you would ruin your makeup," she pleaded as Emily wiped her face frantically.

"I'm trying but these tears just keep falling," She complained, still wiping her eyes.

"I don't know what's tearing you up, but this is your special day. What would you do if the groom walks in and sees you like this?" The beautician cajoled her.

For some reason, that comment riled her up, "I don't care! You know what? I don't think I can continue with this wedding!"

"What?!" The woman was shocked.

"I don't need this!" With a clean sweep, the makeups on the dresser were moved to the ground scaring the woman.

"I don't need you all! Get out! I don't need any of you..!"

It was at that moment that the door clicked open and Cecil walked into that scene.

"Oh my God, Emily!" She ran to the emotional mother, engulfing her in a hug while gesturing the stylist to give them some space.

"It's okay," She patted Emily on the back as she broke down in tears.

"I want my mother," She wept further.

This was the first time Emily made such an outrageous request. Her mother had died when she was young and she couldn't even remember what she looked like, if not for her picture hung on the mantel plus the constant reminder by her father that she was her replica.

Why had she requested that? Emily had gone to many wedding ceremonies and seen the way mother's supported their children. She needed that kind of support right now.

"I just want to end this," Her shoulders shook with her sob.

"What difference would it make? Emily, you're married legally to him already. You just need to be strong for the sake of your baby," she comforted the poor girl.

"I'm just so scared,"

"It's okay to be scared. It's alright, dear. I've got you," Cecil tightened her hug while Emily rested her head on her shoulder, bawling her eyes out.

They remained that way for quite a while until Emily couldn't cry anymore.

"It's everything alright here?"

Both of them pulled away with a startle when they heard the deep voice resonate in the room.

Emily was short of words when she saw her father standing in the doorway with his lips pressed together displeased.

"Oh right, it's nothing, sir," Cecil answered for Emily who was moping at him.

"It doesn't exactly look like nothing," his face was set in a scowl.

Cecil remembered Emily's pale and haggard features, "She was just having wedding jitters, pretty normal for brides nothing else," She didn't forget to add, "And Which has been handled properly, sir"

"Has it?" This time, the question was to be answered by Emily and not her spokesperson.

However, Emily didn't respond, rather kept her intense gaze on him until Cecil nudged her slightly on the shoulder.

She blinked as if returning from her reverie, "Ah, yes. I'm alright now,"

"That's good to know," He said, giving her a long hard look before departing her room.

Emily knew that particular look, the signature, "Don't disgrace me,"

"He hates me," Cecil was the first to say a word after her father left.

Emily plonked back down on her seat with a tired sigh, "Of course, he would. He thinks you're corrupting me when in reality, you're giving me freedom,"

"Emily," Cecil squeezed her shoulder affectionately.

"I know," She nodded her head with a deep intake of breath, "I'm going ahead with the wedding for his sake," her hand rubbed her belly.

"Good," Cecil smiled, hugging her once more. The disaster was finally averted.

The makeup artist was finally let in after Emily had fully calmed down to redo her makeup. Cecil knew the pregnancy hormone had not helped with the stress, so stayed behind to help the girl relax.

It was funny how fate could mess with people's life. She had only known Emily through Maya but now, they were the best of friends and the maid of honor at her wedding.

The woman was definitely a professional cause by the time she was done with beautifying Emily, there wasn't a trace of her red, puffy eyes as a result of crying - unless someone looked very close.

Everything else passed in a blur and before Emily knew what was going on, her father was walking down the aisle.

"You look so beautiful today, just like your mother," Adam said as they walked slowly to the altar where Ahmed and the priest were already standing.

Emily didn't respond, rolled her eyes to be precise. No matter what she does, she would continue to live in the shadows of her late mother.

She looked elegant and chic in her classy and sophisticated wedding gown. It had a long-sleeved v-neck bodice that showed a moderate amount of cleavage with a flare skirt that falls from her waist to the floor. Her hair was curled and some braided stylishly with tendrils by the sides of her head.

It was an outdoor wedding and one lavishly decorated, evident of the prominent people getting married today. A lot of influential people - mostly her father's friends and associates- and her fake friends were in attendance aside from her brother, Niklaus and his daughter, Isabella - even Amanda was here.

Though it hurt Emily, she understood him, their father was not the most liked person at the moment.

She just couldn't understand him, it dawned on her that Adam married their mother out of love, then why wouldn't he let them do the same?

They- Niklaus and her - didn't have much interaction with their mother's side because their father shunned them from doing so since young - for reasons best known to him.

She hadn't given it much thought due to the fact their mother's relative also kept their distance. But now, her curiosity was piqued and she would look into that.

"Miss Emily?"

"Huh?" She was snapped from her thoughts only to realize it was time to exchange their vows and declare their commitment to each other. Oh boy, the thought made her sick in the stomach.

"Do you accept Ahmed Petrova as your lawful husband, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and cherish until death do you part?"

Everywhere fell silence, awaiting the bride's decision and Emily heightened the tension when she didn't reply after a minute.

She didn't glance up, feeling Ahmed's heated glance on her. Her fists were clenched by her side as she battled internally while murmuring arose from the audience.

"Emily," she heard Ahmed say her name firmly which was a reminder of what she stands to lose if she changes her mind.

"I do,"

Chapter 232 - Two Hundred And Thirty-Two: Reina

*Seven years later

The third point of view

A striking woman is seen exiting the luggage collection area when an entourage of men in suits surrounded her and lowered their head saying in a chorus,

"Welcome, Princess Reina Armani Sakuzi!"

This unexpected stunt drew attention from passersby who couldn't help but get drawn to the scene. Judging from the setting, whosoever was receiving such an enviable reception must be someone of great importance.

Unknown to them all, a reporter who was captivated by the event as well, hid behind a pillar taking pictures of the scene when his camera was snatched from his grasp.

"Hey, who are you?! How dare you! Give me back my camera!" The reporter fired up, trying to snatch back his camera but the man step-sided him with ease.

"You didn't even take her best part, what a pity" The man mumbled, going through the photos with a disappointed look as if the reporter trying to get his attention was nothing but the wind blowing in his ear.

"Who are you to -" The reporter was still saying when the strange man that looked oddly intimidating, took out the memory card.? He went ahead to smash the camera to the ground, stomping on it repeatedly till it was beyond redemption.

"You!" He went red in the face and eyes wide with shock staring at his damaged camera.

"I'll deal with you today," The reporter slipped out his phone from the pocket of his pants, intending to call his friends at the outgoing flight gate - stalking a celebrity- to appear and help him deal with this tall-arrogant- somehow- scary - individual - he - couldn't- defeat - by - himself.

But the man was beyond flabbergasted when the phone was also taken from his grasp and smashed to the ground also.

"You!" Veins protruded from his neck from the extreme rage he was feeling inside. He could have fought the guy but this man looked like he had been cultivating his muscles for years unlike him who was tall and scrawny; looking like something the wind could blow away by mistake.

Moreover, there was just something about him, like he was dealing with a formidable son of a biscuit or something - but his manly pride would not allow him to concede to that voice of reasoning.

"Do you think I'm afraid of you, you big bully!" The reporter raised his voice intentionally to attract a crowd. Since he couldn't defeat him one on one, he could manipulate public opinion against him.

He puffed up his chest - that should make look intimidating a bit- and looked him in the eyes, oh no, don't look - his eyes were chilling.

"I'm going to sue you for" The reporter trailed off when he saw the man open his wallet and brought out tons of notes. Who was this man?

He grabbed the reporter's hand and placed a wad of cash, enclosing his palm around it saying, " This should be enough to cover your camera and cellphone,"

He drew closer and whispered into the man's ear, "Take even a picture of Princess again and you can kiss goodbye to your family,"

Upon hearing that, the reporter stiffened, goosebumps covering his spine. What had he gotten himself into?

"Buy yourself a drink," he added some notes into the pocket on the man's shirt, patted him on the shoulder- squeezing the muscles there as a reminder of their deal- and left to receive the princess.

Filled with fear, the reporter scrutinized his environment and took off before he got himself into more trouble. He would have dropped the money- he didn't want it anymore- but he was scared the man would be angered and hunt me down once he finds out.

"Welcome back, princess," That strange man walked to the lady and bowed his head.

"Andrew," The woman drawled.

"Yes," the man still had his head lowered.

Reina pulled off her aviator glass, a tired look on her face as she asked, "Who sent these fools here?"

He lifted his head this time, "I believe your father did,"

She pinched the bridge of her nose with her eyes closed as if trying to rein in her temper, "And why would he do that when I clearly told him I didn't need them,"

"I believe he didn't want you running off like the last time," Andrew answered.

"I didn't run off, I just wanted some space, is that too much to ask?" She sighed.

"Princess, your father wants you home this time," he declared.

"Fine, let's go," Reina left her baggage behind without second thought, and on cue, one of them took care of that as they left.

Anyone who passed them, turned back the second time - if they weren't shoved to the side. It was obvious that the woman being protected was of high status.

"Make way please," The guards paved a way for the princess to go through, using their body as a shield.

They knew their enemies could be hiding in the shadows and might strike upon discovering a weak spot in their array. Sakuzi would end them all if a single hair on her body gets missing.

Reina was led into the comfort of a Limousine by the chauffeur who closed the door after Andrew went in after her.

She basked in the extravagant and plush leather interior with a massage seat. It had a state of art entertainment system with fiber optic lighting. Also, there was a bar where her favorite wine was already chilled and handed to her as soon as she sat on the comfortable, styled luxurious seat.

"This is good," Reina took a sip, savoring the goodness of the wine. Over the years, her taste in food had changed but not wine; this was meant to be her buddy for eternity.

She glanced sideways, capturing Andrew by her side who stood as rigid and alert as every other of her father's men. How boring.

"You know you should relax sometimes, you look like someone who has been told the world's about to end," she joked but it didn't give the desired effect; she laughed alone.

Andrew gave her a straight look,

"The world would end for me if I don't get you safely home,"

"Just like my father, you all are so pessimistic," she snorted laughter, lowering the back seat a bit and relaxed further, "Just chill dude, relax, nothing's going to happen...."

The car was braked so suddenly that Reina was almost tossed out of her seat and the wine spilled on her.

The partition between the driver compartment and the rear passenger compartment slid open at once.

"We're being attacked!" The chauffeur announced just as the bullets rained down on them.

Andrew pushed Reina down, shielding her with his body even though the car was bulletproof.

"Activate the grenade launcher" Andrew communicated through the earpiece at the back of his ear.

"Wait a minute, this limo is equipped with the grenade launcher?" Reina was shocked to discover that.

"Ask your father, later," he answered in a hurry.

"What do you mean you can't activate? It's not a direct confrontation? Just take them out already," he ordered.

Seems their gang had been penetrated by another enemy gang, hence some members of their men becoming double agents.

Reina was surrounded by their people who would prevent any open armed confrontation and keep her safe but their formation has been destroyed and they couldn't fire a grenade at their own men.

Andrew knew they were here for Reina, everyone in the underworld - who knew about her existence- knew she was the apple of Sakuzi's eyes. Touch her, you touch Sakuzi.

Thankfully, those betrayals were outnumbered and were quickly destroyed without harm coming to Reina - the same couldn't be said for their bullet dented car.

After this, he would have to do a clean sweep and purge out those tiny spies in their gang.

"If you're done, you could get off my body or" He saw that mischievous twinkle in her eyes, "We could have some cozy time together," she said suggestively.

"I'm sorry for that," he got off her body in a haste.

"Tsk ts, you're no fun at all," Reina dusted herself.

Andrew couldn't help but notice the changes in her attitude. Ever since Maya, no, scratch that, Reina lost her memories, she seemed like a different person - the daughter her father wanted.

No one was to mention Maya unless you wanted a death sentence from Sakuzi.

This time around, Reina was bolder, feisty, flirty with an air of arrogance that comes with being wealthy. She was the polar opposite of her former self - Thankfully, she was still a tiny bit kind.

It was late at night, Reina had taken the night flight to escape her father - Sakuzi was smart enough to figure she wouldn't be arriving in the morning as said.

There was little to no human passing by, so there weren't any innocent casualties- aside from their men - they would just have to deal with the authorities later as usual.

They drove into the mansion Sakuzi had made livable for the sake of his daughter and not one hidden in the middle of a wood.

A chorus of "Welcome back princess" was heaped upon Raina as she walked into the foyer of the house. But she was more interested in finding that old man and she knew where he would be.

"How have you been fa...oh"

Welcome back to life with Daddy, Reina.

Chapter 233 - Two Hundred And Thirty-three: Daddy And Daughter

The third point of view

Sakuzi looked up as soon as Emerald walked into his office. He abandoned the report he was going through and asked him,

"Have you sent my men to the airport?"

"Yes, I sent them already to fetch her just as you wanted and as you surmised, she took the night flight," Emerald answered yet asked out of curiosity, "How did you know the morning flight was just a hoax?"

Sakuzi chuckled, closing the file and leaning back into his seat. His eyes glinting with humor was focused on Emerald.

"I have trained Reina for seven years, I know her like the back of my hands. She's intractable yet follows a set of patterns," was his reply.

"Do you think Maya -"

Sakuzi's sharp, murderous glare cut him off at once; that was a slip of the tongue. Calling that name, "Maya" was a taboo here and a past that should never be uncovered.

Sakuzi had made sure no one found out about the existence of the girl-?the world thought she was dead.

At first, It had been hard finding a corpse with her basic body features, and thanks to Niklaus prolonging the search, it bought them enough time.

But there was nothing money couldn't do: Just a word out there and not only did they find a body that matched Reina's but one who also suffered the same incident, however, the woman wasn't lucky enough to survive the fall.

Reina was just too damn fortunate that night. Ever since Sakuzi had an idea she was his biological daughter, he didn't take his eyes off her, even for a second.

So that night when they had seen her leaning against that bridge railing, Emerald somehow had a bad premonition and ordered his men to be on standby- both on land and water.

It just happened too quickly, before the ones on land could shove their way through those crowds of frantic fans, the deed had been done; she had fallen off the bridge.

Luckily, his men underwater had marked the spot she had fallen in effortlessly, successfully pulling, resuscitating, and taking her away under the cover of the night before the coast guard and the rest of their team could arrive; the whole operation was quick and swift.

Amid their rescue, Reina still suffered injuries to the extent that the doctors appraised her survival as a miracle. The girl had a strong will to survive and the heavens answered her prayers.

Initially, Sakuzi had not intended to keep her survival a secret but after seeing the benefit in this unpremeditated incident, he decided to exploit it to the fullest.

Moreover, it was better that way, the girl had an unpleasant past and was currently hated by the whole world, so he would give her another one.

A life where she gets what she never wanted; a life she could do whatever she wants and easily get away with it; a world she would be loved and adored- if not worshiped.

Finally, Sakuzi had the opportunity to mold the girl the way she should have grown- surrounded with love, money, and thugs.

Valentino had grown in a family where they lacked the presence of xx chromosomes. He had seven brothers and no females and all were trained from a young age to be tough warriors- they were the future potential Sakuzi.

The falcon gang had been in existence for five generations and the Sakuzi title had never left the family. Yeah, they were a powerful crime family, wielding influence over federal and state politicians - and of course, holding stakes in the entertainment industry

Compared to other crime families, the Sakuzi Clan were more orderly due to the strong relationship between siblings and their "honor blood," code - which is why that son of a bastard Niklaus has to pay for the death of his son.

"Do you think Reina would succeed with the plan?" Emerald corrected the name at last.

"Why do you think she would fail?" Sakuzi failed.

"She previously loved that man and he's the father of her -"

"Princess lost her memory and has been away from him for seven years. Trust me, such puppy love is easy to forget," Sakuzi insisted.

"Have you?"

That question from Emerald made their eyes meet. The warning was clear to the buffy man, he had crossed the line. Even up to now, matters regarding Angela were touchy.

Suddenly the door to his office was opened, lifting the tense atmosphere as a beautiful woman walked in.

"Valenti honey!" She exclaimed, oblivious to the way Emerald and Sakuzi's eyes connected simultaneously, beginning their secret interaction.

Sakuzi: Who opened the door for her?

Emerald: I have been with you all this while, how would I know?

Sakuzi: Didn't you remember to send her on a trip abroad?

Emerald: Well, look who changed her mind.

"Sugar pie?" Pouted the tall, beautiful brunette who was young enough to be his daughter's best friend, "Aren't you happy to see me?"

"Of course, I'm so happy I'm nearly dying from you," Sakuzi lied through his teeth just as she lowered her head and placed a brief kiss on his lips.

Cherry was one of his favorite mistresses amongst the others. As a lonely man, he needed the comfort of these young beauties - who were also in dire need of his wealth. Thus, theirs was a symbiotic relationship; he needed sexual gratification, they needed his money.

Sakuzi gestured to Emerald to give them some privacy.

"Cherry, what a pleasant surprise," he made room as she sat across his laps, wrapping her arms around his neck.

"Aren't you supposed to be observing your vacation by now?" He broadened his fake smile.

"You mean traveling halfway across the world? No, I'll rather spend time with you, my love" Cherry clasped his cheeks, puckered his lips, and kissed him a little longer this time.

Sakuzi was in a dilemma, Reina, his baby girl was on her way back home and didn't exactly support him dating girls her age.

"This is creepingly awkward," she would say with her signature frown.

But what could a man do? Cherry was his favorite and there were quality reasons for that. With her fair skin, ample bosom, and great backside; she was temptation walking in a dress.

"You're distracted," She pulled away with a frown on her face.

"I'm not distracted, I'm just distancing myself from you," he said, of course, in his head.

"No, I'm not distracted..." Sakuzi was still saying when the door to his office was abruptly opened.

"How have you been fa...oh"

Sakuzi glanced up, startled.

Oh, Reina.

"And you couldn't even observe a holy day for me," Reina stood with her arms folded across her chest and a stance that could only mean trouble.

Sakuzi shoved Cherry to the side, but not with enough force to hurt her.

"My baby girl," he rushed to take her into her arms but Reina pulled up her hand causing him to stop.

"Don't hug me," she declared.

"Why?" His face was distorted.

"You stink of her perfume,"

"What?!" Cherry was offended and strode over to her saying, "How dare?-"

Sakuzi's sharp, cold glance in her direction shut her up. She had no idea that Reina was his daughter and he made it that way. He wasn't the type to bring pleasure into his family.

Even when most of his mistresses stumbled upon her picture on his desk, most of them thought Reina was just one of the favorite mistresses - they all knew his children were male, not female. Nevertheless, none complained, after all, they were here for his money, not his love.

"At the least, let me peck you on the cheeks," he begged, "I've missed you so much that I almost died,"

"Yeah, it's so obvious," Reina said in irony, "And no, you can't peck me on the cheeks, her lipstick is on your lips,"

Sakuzi turned to Cherry who had taken two steps back after the fright earlier, "You applied lipstick?"

"You're just noticing now, I can't believe this," Cherry rolled her eyes in disbelief, jaw clenched. Her eyes sized up Reina who was currently an opponent in her eyes.

The girl had long blonde hair which Cherry surmised wasn't natural, judging from the dark root neither was she model-tall as her - what did Sakuzi even see in her?

Well, she was slim but not to the point of being bony and had these curvaceous hips - that was the only feature in her body that surpassed her's. Her boobs were just normal, not as full as hers neither were her backside. Sakuzi must be blind to choose that girl over her.

Still, Cherry couldn't help but feel intimidated by her presence. The way she carried herself and the way Valentino - who fears no one - revered the girl made her jealous. She must be quite rich and powerful to elicit such a response from him.

Reina didn't take her eyes off the girl who was also sizing her up with her fierce gaze. Aside from the fact this redhead had this blessed feature that wasn't surgically enhanced- she could tell- there wasn't anything special about her. She was just her father's newest collection.

"If you're done glaring at me, perhaps, you should give father and daughter some privacy to catch up on things, would ya?"

Cherry was struck dumb, father and daughter? Not sugar baby and lover? Impossible.

"H-he's your father?" She stuttered, her finger pointed at Sakuzi with mouth agape.

"I believe you heard me the first time. I don't like repeating myself, leave us instantly. " Her voice was low but firm.

"Cherry, leave us. I believe you still have enough time to catch up with that plane " Sakuzi reminded her of her vacation.

"Of course," Cherry grabbed her things and hurried out of the room.

Now, where were they?

Chapter 234 - Two Hundred And Thirty-four: He Would Be Returning Soon

The third point of view

There was no trace of laughter on Reina's face as she took a seat on the couch in her father's spacious cozy office with a touch of modernity.

She looked suave crossing her leg over the other yet the frown was still present with her arms crossed against her chest.

Her father deserved harsh treatment at times, he was just so stubborn. How could he still shamelessly chase after those girls her age? How could she face them? What was she going to call them? Mom? Stepmom? Who should greet who?

"Princess baby, look at daddy" Valentino came to sit beside her in a morose manner. Anyone who saw him at that moment would be shocked for eternity.

The cruel, powerful Sakuzi was begging for his daughter's mere attention; looking like a dog wagging his tail just to attract his master's interest.

"Stop calling me that father, I'm not a child for christ's sake," she complained, throwing her face the other way.

Reina wished there was a way she could remove "Princess" out of her name, it was so damn girlish, cringeful, and annoying. But that man called her father wouldn't let her do so, how frustrating!

When she was abroad, people would always ask if she came from a royal background because of her name? Funny but no, she came from a criminal background.

Sadly for her, it turned out that the "Princess" was indeed a title given to the treasured miss of the Armani family, just like "Sakuzi" was given to her father as leader of the Falcon mob.

"How did you know I would be back by tonight? By chance, did you send someone to spy on me again?" Reina changed the topic, knowing she couldn't stay angry at that sneaky old man forever.

"Do I even need to spy on you, Princess? The last man I sent to keep you safe, you sent his chopped fingers back to me" he reminded her.

"You mean that peeping tom you sent to monitor my activity? He should be lucky I didn't gouge his eyes out instead," she said.

"Tut-tut," Sakuzi made a sound of disapproval, "I trained you to be a proper princess but all you do is follow your brother's footsteps; flirt with men, speak vulgar words, so aggressive and unfitting of a lady," he complained.

"I'm sorry father but I can't be that girl; that wears pink and a bow on her head or that girl; that wears a skirt and awaits her prince in shining armor to come to rescue her in time of distress. I'm just me and I love being me," Reina poured out her feelings, hoping her father would get to see things from her perspective.

"Fine, anything you want princess," he conceded easily. Well, it wasn't all that surprising, he had always pampered her beyond measure.

"By the way, how are my grandchildren and when are they coming over?" Sakuzi asked, envisioning the face of his beautiful grandkids - notwithstanding, that son of a bastard was their father. As far as they had a pint of Sakuzi blood in them, they were already family.

Valentino swore to train them up without him, his grandchildren deserved better than him. Once their revenge was over, he would have Reina choose a man to settle down with.

It wouldn't matter whether the supposed future husband came from a rich background or not - after all, they had all the money they could ever wish for- once his precious daughter made her choice, he was hers to have.

"They're fine, father," she answered, " But they won't be coming over here till I'm done with this mission,"

At the mention of a mission, Sakuzi's countenance changed,

"You came back too early, our enemy is still not yet in the country, "

Reina smirked, " Oh, don't worry, father, he would be returning soon if not tomorrow, "

He was intrigued, "What did you do?"

With her hand, she made a calm down gesture, "Settle your nerves father, I haven't killed anyone," she added, "Yet, "

"Princess, you don't need to soil your hands. If you need any difficult job done, there are many of my men to - "

"All those years I spent away wasn't for nothing, father.?I found a way to make him return to the country- legally, of course," She Informed with a self-pleased smile.

"He's the father of your children, princess. Are you sure you're going to be alright dealing with?him?" Sakuzi tested her on purpose, checking to see if she was in line with his plans.

Her face expressed anger and she shot up to her feet, " He's a bastard, scumbag, womanizer, and an asshole who doesn't deserve to be part of my children's life," her chest heaved with emotion.

"Moreover, time is running out," Reina went on, "It's no longer a matter of being alright or not, I have to get him before he settles down, "

"He's getting married?" Sakuzi was surprised.

"There's no official news regarding that yet but rumors are circulating. There's no smoke without a fire, father. It must be true, I have to act fast," Reina said to him yet couldn't understand why she was so bothered by it.

It doesn't matter to Reina whether he got married to another woman or not, all that matters is that he gets his fair share of punishment.

He manipulated and used her and he would pay for that, alongside killing her older brother. A Sakuzi sees revenge to the end.

"Well," Sakuzi shot up to his feet, "If you say so, then I'll have you know that all my resources are at your disposal," he gave her permission to carry out anything she wanted.

"Really? Oh, thank you so much," Reina hugged her father tightly with joy, "Thanks for being there for me, Father,"

"Of course," he said, finally launching that peck on her cheeks "Anything for you, my princess,"

Reina pulled away with a heart full of joy. Finally, it was time to exact her revenge on that son of a biscuit and she had all the power she wanted.

"Niklaus spencer, I'm coming for you," her lips were tilted to the side in a smile as she sauntered out of her father's office.

Sakuzi watched her daughter leave his office with a heavy heart, what was this prickling sensation in his heart?

Yes, he did lie to her but just in matters concerning Niklaus. Reina had an idea of her past including her name, everything! though she still hasn't recovered her memories.

He just tinkered a bit of her past and lied about Niklaus being a casanova that did nothing but play with her feelings and there was uncountable evidence to support that - Niklaus' past was just so ...

Well, in one word, he pits his daughter against the father of her children. Reina was from the Sakuzi Clan and she would later understand the reasons behind his actions.

Chapter 235 - Two Hundred And Thirty-five: Catch A Big Fish

Reina's point of view

"Get out of the industry!" They all swarmed around her the way bees surround a honeycomb

"No, let me go," she tried to move past them but she was pushed back against the bridge railing.

"You golddigger, we don't need someone like you in the entertainment industry!"

"Ouch!" She cried in pain as someone grabbed her hair from the side. But she couldn't tell who did that since they encompassed her all about, that there wasn't enough air to intake.

"Leave me alone!" She screamed, trying to breathe; they were suffocating her.

"You're a disgrace to this generation! Go away! We don't need you, bitch,"

Then she felt someone push her and somehow lost balance, toppling down the bridge and plunging deep into the water.

"Niklaus, help me!" That was the last word from her mouth as she landed feet first in the water. But even with that landing position, it felt like she had hit a cemented wall, her entire body was in pain.

So she lifted her head, gasping for air, however, swallowed more water till her lungs felt like bursting. Her arm arched but she wanted to live so hard that she flailed wildly. Sadly, the water was impenetrable thanks to the darkness and she lost consciousness.

"No!!" I woke up with a startled scream and rushed to my bathroom, turning on the faucet and washing my face till I was sure I wasn't trapped in that nightmare anymore.

I was hyperventilating, that I was sure of; my breath was coming in gasps and my hand shaking uncontrollably. Of all the memories that I could retain, it happened to be the traumatic one.

For seven years, I had been reliving that nightmare but I loved it anyway, it made me stronger and better.

I wasn't Maya anymore; that weak, pathetic vessel that couldn't stand up for herself. Now, I was Reina and sure wouldn't let anyone step over me that easily- heads would be sure to roll off of bodies.

Returning to my room, I flopped down on my bed and took out my phone, scrolling through the news and stopped on one that featured Niklaus.

"What a waste of a handsome face," I mumbled to myself, drinking in that picture.

Now, I could understand why my father said I fell head over heels in love with him. It wasn't that difficult to comprehend, the man had great looks that could even make the strongest of woman buckle at the knee.

I felt like placing one or two kisses on that sexy pouty lips - Woah, Reina, dangerous territory. He's your enemy, remember? Not snacks to eat. It was quite a pity that he was the most appetizing snack around.

I scrolled further down, my face scrunching up at the sight of the woman who latched on his arm as if he was her property.

"Jennifer?"

My brow raised in interest, so this was her? For some strange reasons, I decided I didn't like her. Moreover, Jennifer, or whatever she called herself, looked too innocent. But don't be mistaken, those seemingly naive ones are always the most dangerous. The Angels are not always who they seem to be.

"Whatever," I threw my phone to the side of the bed and decided to go get something to eat upon hearing my stomach rumble. I had gone straight to bed when I returned earlier and now it was protesting.

Father must have known that I would skip dinner hence the refrigerated meal awaiting me. Sigh, what would I do without that old man?

I warmed the food in the microwave and sat down to enjoy my meal not minding the movement of guards observing their normal patrol. Living with Sakuzi meant a higher ratio of men to women.

The only women you could find around here were the maids and cleaning staff who maintained this mansion. There were women in the gang but you could count them with your fingers.

Though stepmom did come around to visit sometimes, we didn't have much of a relationship. Apparently, she had divorced father because of his infidelity and not because of his line of work.

Her family wasn't all that innocent either with their long chains of casinos spread across several cities and abroad- money laundering was their specialty. Apparently, their marriage had been an arranged one, you know politics and such.

We don't talk much whenever she visits. Neither were we on bad terms, just learned to mind our own business. After all, I was just an illegitimate child like the other two and also the child of that woman.

I had always thought women were the gossips but no, welcome to the Falcon gang. It was through the men's spirited conversation that I got to learn that my so-called mother was his favorite and supposedly the only one my father had genuinely been in love with.

But sadly for my father, Angela didn't want anything to do with a mobster, so their relationship ended abruptly or so he thought.

Years later, Angela came to him married and in dire need of help. Her husband Alfred mistakenly stepped on the toe of a powerful man who was hell-bent on making their life a living hell and started by messing with their budding company. Angela wanted my father to take care of him since he had the capability; she wanted the evil man to lose everything he possessed.

Father had been so delighted to hear she had come to visit him after quite a long time but his heart sank finding out she was married and only came because of favor.

Unfortunately for her, he had no intention to help her. Angela wanted a rich husband who wasn't a mob leader and got what she wanted finally. They should go solve their problems by themselves - he wasn't her private cleaning service notwithstanding their previous relationship.

To chase her off, he made an atrocious proposal she would never honor- with the kind of pride she had.

"Give me your body for a night and I'll fulfill your wish,"

" That's impossible,"

"Nothing is free in this world, it all comes at a price"

You should his men acting that, it had a comic effect- lucky for them, father didn't catch them.

And as I was saying, Angela accepted the deal to his astonishment. And yes, he could have changed his mind but no, my father is an odd bastard - he knew Angela would hate him for that yet went ahead to mate with her.

So the deed was done and I was the result of that night. But there was something else, Alfred almost caught on to what she did but the great planner Angela convinced and covered it up as a rape- thanks to father's help by the way. Both of them would have really made a formidable couple - one with the wiles, the other had the brains

Done stuffing my stomach, I headed back to my room to discover I had several missed calls from my assistant.

"Is it done?" I went straight to the point.

"Yes, as you wanted, "

"Alright, now press charges. The whole of them. It's time to catch a big fish, "

Chapter 236 - Two Hundred And Thirty-six: A Good Wife

Niklaus point of view

"Here he is!" Reporters encompassed me as soon as I came out of the departure gate which made me wonder who leaked my flight info.

"How do you feel returning home after seven years, Niklaus Spencer?"

"There have been rumors circulating that you'd be getting married, is that true?"

I ignored them. I've encountered reporters over the years and learned silence was the best tool to use to deal with them unless making an official statement.

"Are the rumors true? Is that why you're back home?"

"Seriously," I hissed, glaring at the reporters almost shoving their cameras in my face. Just when I thought this city had forgotten me, it turned out that I was wrong.

I was relieved when I lifted my head to see my men hurrying to save me from their distress.

"Make way!" They shoved the persistent reporters aside, creating a path which they walked through and were by my sides in no time.

"Why did you leave in the first place, Niklaus? There have been rumors circulating that the relationship with your father is hanging on a thin line, is that true?" Queried a reporter who was adamant about getting her question answered. She even kept following after me amid the guards keeping her at arm's length.

"Say something, sir, why did you leave? Is it because of Maya? You both had been quite close and you left after her death, right? Is there anything else you know regarding her death that the public has no idea about?"

I stopped in my tracks at once, my once bright face darkening. Of all questions, she had to ask that?

My guards stopped as well, watching as I approached the reporter with a clenched jaw. The other reporters must have sensed my furious mood and remained the way they are - nor moving or proceeding further.

"Mind where you snoop your nose, curiosity killed the cat," was my clear warning to her, and strode away with the other reporters running after me. Hence I spoke to her, they had the view I might respond to their question too.

I didn't need to speak, my guards held them back while I was led to my car where my ever loyal Micheal was awaiting me already.

"Long time, Sir Niklaus," He

welcomed me.

"Thank you, Micheal. How have you been?"

"I'm fine. Where to, sir? Home?" He inquired

"Home?" I mumbled under my breath, was that home? I had not returned to stay but solve this sudden problem that has affected the entirety of my jewelry company and might escalate if not settled.

"Find a good hotel that isn't owned by the Spencers," I ordered him yet found a stressed look of grimace on Michael's face as if he was at war at what to say.

"What is the problem?" I asked him, knowing there was something on his mind.

"Sir, most of the high-end hotels out there currently belong to the Spencers," he reported.

"Is that the case?" I breathed, "Seems Eden has been doing a good job then,"

Though I had been away for years, I had my ears glued to the ground and got to know that Eden had successfully taken the power from that man Adam. But something was strange, the old man had given up the position without a fight which means he had other plans in mind. Just prayed Eden was smart enough not to fall into his traps.

Michael glanced over his shoulder at me "What should I do, sir?"

I rubbed my jaw contemplatively,

"Alright, drive to my place," there was no need to spend sumptuously when I had a house to stay. Moreover, it was seven years already, it was time to face that reality and get over it.

"Good choice sir, Amanda has prepared the house already," that comment from Micheal made the corners of my mouth quirk, why do I feel like I was just tricked?

Sigh, whatever.

I had intended my return to be low-key hence my refusal to stay under any hotel owned by any Spencer - this city was their playground- but the reporters had exposed me.

Well, there was no need hiding anyway, Adam probably has an idea of my return - he had been keeping track of my movements over the years in secret.

How did I know about that? I was his son, he was my father, we knew each other's tactics and behavior pattern. Adam had let go of me easily because he knew he could find me wherever I was?

After giving up on my position as a Spencer, I left with my hard-earned resources garnered over the years to go start my life from the scratch.

And now, I have a successful jewelry company with a network of over two hundred concept stores worldwide alongside its other subsidiaries coupled with my private security company.

My company wouldn't beat the Spencer Group which had diverse networks and had made a name for itself, in a head-on challenge. However, as it's former CEO, I knew how they worked and operated, with careful planning and trickery- of course- I could have a chance of victory.

My phone rang, rousing me from my reverie, it was a video call from Jennifer.

"Hi babe," I smiled at her beautiful face staring back at me from the phone.

"Hi sweetheart," she smiled back, a blush creeping up her face when she looked away. Jennifer had always been a shy one.

Well, it was seven-plus years already since Maya died and it's natural I got a female companion; I couldn't stay single for eternity. I loved Maya and all, but she's dead and this is reality and I'm alive; people who are alive move on, not dwell on the past.

At first, we had just a normal relationship but when my grieving years were over, I realized something changed inside of me. I didn't want to return to my old ways; I didn't want to be that same old player, heck! I had no time to chase after girls who cared nothing but what they gained from you.

That's when my eyes rested on Jennifer, we've been inseparable over the years and had a purely platonic relationship until I realized she's the perfect woman for me.

My play days were over, I was almost thirty-four of age and it was time to settle down. Jennifer seems to be the perfect candidate so far. She's kind, beautiful, intelligent, shy in a cute way but fragile, a little happening could bring her to tears - well, I would live with that.

Though her relationship with my daughter Isabella isn't that great - she still gives her the cold shoulder- however, they see eye to eye on some issues and condone each other at least - that's encouraging.

My relationship with Isabella over the years has been a series of ups and downs. Periodically we fight, and the next we reconcile- she's much harder to handle now she's a teenager.

My daughter changes boyfriends like she changes her tee-shirt - I wonder if she ever sees them as humans with emotions too- not to add the numerous suspensions she has been given over the years from schools because of her pranks. Currently, she attends school number four - Yes, Isabella's an infamous student over there.

Though Isabella and I communicate better than in the past but lately, ever since I made my intention of marrying Jennifer known, she has been giving me the cold shoulder.

I knew she didn't want me to marry Jennifer or any other woman for that matter, but I can't remain single forever and that's what my daughter fails to understand.

"Have you arrived?" Jennifer asked, chewing on her lower lips.

"Yeah, I'm currently in my car as you can see," I showed her around the car's interior happily.

"You must be stressed up," she pointed out my tired features.

"Yeah, it's been crazy over here," I sighed, rubbing my temple. Now she said it I could already feel my head throbbing.

Jennifer turned to the side as if something grabbed her attention and I heard her say to someone, "Say hi to uncle!"

Neon's handsome face popped up in the camera, "Hi uncle," said the mischievous creature - let's just say Isabella has not exactly been a good role model.

"Hi Neon, how have you been?" I gave him a warm smile. The boy has been a source of joy to me over the years, children had a knack for lifting one's mood.

"I'm fine. Uncle, when are you going to return home, Neon misses you already" he inquired with his childish voice.

"Hmm, uncle would return as soon as possible so I can play with you as much as you want, alright?" I promised him.

"You promise? " his face lit up.

"Of course, cross my heart," I swore to him.

"Fine, see you later, uncle. Bye," he ran off, probably went off to continue with his mischief.

"How's Isabella?" That was my next question.

Jennifer replied, "Went to some party with friends. Don't worry, she'd be back. If there's anyone I'm worried about, it should be you. How are you faring so far?"

Of course, I knew what she was referring to. If there was anything I liked about Jennifer, it was her understanding. She would make a good wife and a mother to our future children.

Chapter 237 - Two Hundred And Thirty-seven: That Face

Niklaus' point of view

"How are you managing so far?"

My eyes met her orbs probing into mine and searching for answers. Discovering that question had taken me aback and made me vulnerable, I quickly bottled up my emotions.

"Of course, I'm fine. Why wouldn't I be?" I answered with a fake smile.

She breathed, "I just thought that with all that happened, returning to that place might bring back the painful memories, "

"Don't worry Jennifer, It's been seven years already," I gave her an assuring smile, "I sure can handle anything that comes my way, "

"Well, if you say so," she didn't press further.

If there was another thing I loved about Jennifer, it was that she knew me too well. Being with me over the years: she knew my likes and dislikes, my do's and don't, and when to stop in an argument with me.? Most things might change over the years but not my stubbornness.

"So ..." Jennifer went on to change the topic, "When you get home, don't get too busy that you would skip your meals- well, I'll check up on you anyway. Now, have a nice trip," she waved at me and was about to end the chat when I called her name.

"Jennifer,"

"Huh?" she glanced up at the screen with expectation.

I took a deep breath, "I love you,"

For a while, she didn't move and I couldn't blame her, this was the first time I was confessing my feelings of love for her. Yeah, it took me that long.

A smile tugged her lips to the side, "I love you too, Niklaus,"

I smiled back, "Take care of yourself and the kids, I'll be back soon. Goodbye"

"Alright, goodbye" the call ended.

I threw my head back against the headrest, releasing a long, deep, puff. Let's see how this goes from now on.

"Sir, is that our future Madam?"

Oh right, I had forgotten that Micheal tends to opine in my personal affairs.

"Yes, she is but don't worry, when everything's settled, you'd get to see her," I replied with my eyes closed.

"Alright sir," Micheal agreed, settling his eyes back to the road.

After such a long day at the airport, I had fallen during the ride home and had to be woken up by Micheal when we arrived.

"Here we are, sir," He opened the door for me to step out.

"Oh," I cleared the sleep out of my eye, wincing as the afternoon sun hit my face,"
Thank you,"

"Sir Niklaus!" I heard Amanda's excited scream and turned around to meet her plumpy figure running to welcome me. I blanched from shock, with that momentum, she'd bring us both to the ground.

"Stop," I put my hand up and she came to a sudden halt like the brakes in a car.

"Better. You can hug me now," I opened my arms as wide as I could and she walked right into it, hugging me tight and shedding tears I would like to regard as tears of joy.

Amanda was employed by my grandfather after she lost her husband and had been a mother figure to me over the years and today, I felt like a son returning home after making his mother proud.

"Thank you for coming back home safe, " she said in relief.

I wanted to inform her that I wouldn't be staying here for as long as she thinks but decided against it, let's enjoy this rare moment.

And of course, whatever lingering fear I had was dissipated by her lively chattering.

"As you wanted, everything has been renovated," Amanda went ahead to explain the changes she had made to the house.

The entire rooms in the house had been repainted, the sofas changed with their positions altered. Everything was altered; light bulbs, curtains, rug, furniture, electronic gadgets, and many others. It was done to make me forget and move on with my life, and I couldn't do that with everything in the house looking the same and reminding me of her.

"If you're done with what you're doing sir Niklaus, you should come downstairs to have lunch," She said while following after me as I walked up the stairs leading to my room.

"I don't think I have an appetite for food at the moment," I replied, turning the knob to my room and entered.

Different indeed.

The previous pale green wallpaper had been changed to ivory coupled with cyan professionally while my bed was new and moved to another corner of the room.

"Niklaus, don't tell me you're still starving -"

"Amanda, you worry too much," I said to her, placing a hand on her shoulder, "I just need rest that's all," After Maya's death, it was no secret that I lost all? appetite for food

"Fine then, if you say so" She left after hugging me.

I fell back on my bed with a sigh, this room felt empty, cold yet faintly familiar. I could tell that space, where that book shelf was standing was where my previous bed had once been; the bed Maya and I had been intimate a lot of times.

I must have been tired because I fell asleep faster than I thought and to top it all, a peaceful sleep. I believed that sleeping in this bed would bring back painful memories that would assault me in my sleep but the reverse was the case. Had I finally managed to get over the guilt of so many years?

By the time I was done eating the meal that was forced on me by Amanda, I decided to go and visit Maya. It had been seven years since I last visited, hence had to pay my respect.

So I got to my car and drove to the columbarium where her ashes were stored.

"Hey," I spoke to her picture in the niche of the columbarium walls, "It's been so long since I visited and that's why I'm here today to pay my respect and also to announce something," A lump formed in my throat as I watched her picture; she was smiling.

"I'm getting married,"

I paused as if waiting for some divine power to tell me that she had heard me before I continued.

"I'm not here to ask for your permission but to inform you, just so you know. If you're pissed at me after this, you can keep torturing me in my dreams. I'll take that as your answer,"

I turned to leave, yeah, I didn't come here to reminisce about the past - that made it harder to move on. Yes, Niklaus, stop dwelling on what happened and move on already, Maya's dead.

But I hardly took a step forward, when I retraced my steps and screamed into the picture, "If you're so pissed about me getting married and possibly forgetting about you in the future, then come out and stop me! Stop me from getting married, Maya!"

I knew challenging an ash to become human again and come smack me in the face on my wedding day was ridiculous but the outburst made me feel good.

"This is stupid" I wiped my face with my palms and strode out of the place. By the time I had walked out of the cathedral entirely, a call came in.

"You're an unfaithful fellow," was Pablo's first word to me, "You returned and didn't even bother to tell me?"

Oh right, I forgot to announce that Pablo had been a good encourager to me during those years of pain, and from there on, we became quite close; closer than brothers.

"I'm sorry about that, I would have called but things get a bit busy over here," I apologized.

"Fine. Now get your ass over here" He said with a tone that indicated there would be no refusal.

"Where?"

The next hour I found myself ambling through a club and you should see my face. I was trying to get this live-for-tonight-die-tomorrow lifestyle behind me, not revitalize one.

But this particular club was different from the local ones where sweaty bodies are crammed and cheap perfumes nauseating the stomach.

Aside from the big dance floor, prompt and friendly service, and luxurious interiors, the club had strict filtering of their clientele. However, there was still the presence of barely clad women and the Dj playing the ever-familiar elective dance music blasting through

the speakers. Dim colored lighting placed throughout the club provided a sexual experience.

It wasn't hard to find Pablo who was leaning against the balustrade, watching the music from upstairs with a cocktail in hand. He gestured to me by lifting his drink and I made my way up the banister.

"You don't look bad," Pablo said and we exchanged greetings by giving each other a manly hug.

"You're not left out too," I complimented him just as he took a flute from a passing waiter, presenting it to me.

"You know I'm trying to put this life behind me," I reluctantly accepted the drink with a grimace.

"Just unwind tonight, Niklaus. You're home after a long time," He patted my shoulder as I chugged down the whole drink. Well, it had been quite a long time, it wouldn't hurt to lose myself a bit.

Ahh, Pablo's a bad influence.

I ended up drinking and drinking until I couldn't differentiate my right from my left. In that barely sober state, I stood watching the dance floor from that distance when my eyes fell on a figure dancing wildly in the middle of the dance floor.

Even with the dim light and my intoxicated state, there was no way I could not recognize that face.

"Maya,"

Chapter 238 - Two Hundred And Thirty-eight: The Meeting

Reina's point of view

"Oof," I let out a quick breath when Andrew threw me over his shoulder for the umpteenth time already. Gosh, why was he so damn strong?!

I swear I defeated my father the last time we had a duel, right? A-ha! How was I such a fool! That sly old man intentionally went easy on me! Seriously, was he helping me or bringing me down! He now pampered me in training?

Maybe, I should consider Emerald being my trainer, oh no, not Emerald, I'll rather be thrown over the shoulder by Andrew than challenge that fierce, sturdy giant. Though the good news is that I have defeated him once in a fight - with trickery of course - after five hundred and three trials; I mark all my failures.

"We've been going at this for two hours already, can't we go for a break?" I pleaded, pouting my lips, and fluttered my eyelashes at Andrew.

I prayed this tactic worked- it had been effective on my father so far. I was so damn tired and my muscles were aching - my butt, to be precise. The downside of being a part of the Armani Family or Falcon Gang or Sakuzi clan or whatever else they referred to, was that you get to train like a superhuman.

As a crime family, we often stepped on the toes of other powerful factions which made dirty altercations the norm of the day. Thanks to that, we had to be physically and mentally prepared for any attack and that included proficiency in hand-to-hand combat; incorporating techniques from martial arts, and swift handling of weapons.

Yes, we were served and protected by the gang members but what if they're taken out and we found ourselves to be the last one standing? Of course, fight to the death.

These people had this stupid mental conception that if they had to die, they should die alongside their enemies. So in conclusion, we all had to be able to protect ourselves in times of danger hence the strict training.

"Stand up!" Andrew, my current cold-hearted trainer boomed at me.

"No, you better kill me first " I sprawled out fully on the ground, he should do his worst. Why was he so cold-hearted?

"Please, let's just take a break," I pouted my lips more. Why couldn't he find me irresistible? A lot of men had been won over by my wiles, he wouldn't be any different, right?

"What have you been doing over the past months to have fallen to this level? Playing away your time when you should be stringent with practicing your skills?" he asked, literally shooting fire from his eyes.

"I had just been behind a desk planning the ultimate revenge" I groaned, refusing to be on my feet to his annoyance.

"That's no excuse. Get to your feet this instant, Reina," the heartless man said, walking over to me.

"No, don't come over," I crawled away from him but he didn't stop until he was within physical reach and tried to grasp onto me.

Like an agile cat, I grab his arms and put him in submission hold before he could retaliate.

"Haa!" I laughed, "Who's the winner now?" Andrew went red in the face from the extreme pain.

I applied a kind of grappling technique called the joint lock which involves manipulating Andrew's joint in such a way that they reach their maximal degree of motion and hyperextension.

"Give up now!" I increased the tension. His face was extremely red yet he shook his head stubbornly, indicating that he wouldn't submit.

However, I began to worry when Andrew rose gradually to his feet with a primal grunt amid the pressure, bringing me up with him. He successfully stood and grabbed my arm to inflict the same pain yet I slipped out of his arms or so I thought cause he grasped me by my wrist.

I tried to trip Andrew but miscalculated hence brought his whole weight on me, we fell to the ground with a thud.

Gosh, he was so heavy.

With a pained moan, I lifted my head to see that Andrew's face had been squished in between my chest. I wanted to sock him on the jaw but a memory flashed in my head.

"You?" My mouth fell open after a memory of the both of us playing In the background at night resurfaced.

For the first time since I've known Andrew, he blushed from embarrassment and tried to leave my body but I wrapped my hand around his neck, stopping him from moving.

My gaze searched his face and for the first time, realized he looked strangely familiar; as if we've met before - and did more than just conversation.

"Hey, did we by chance know each other previously ?" I asked him, just to ensure it wasn't a false memory.

Gazing at his flushed expression shift to one of shock, finally followed by anxiety, told me something was wrong. This was the first time Andrew was showing emotions other than his signature stoic face.

The man flung off my arm, "Have a nice day," he said with a harsh yet hurried voice which made me all the more suspicious.

Andrew was my personal trainer my father had assigned to me many years after that incident and reported directly to Sakuzi, unlike other gang members that had hierarchy hence followed the rules set.

I've known him for close to a year and yet we haven't even conversed like normal humans would, just greetings and all. I had thought nothing of it when I found out he avoided me especially, but now? Something was on; there wasn't smoke without a fire. I would find out the truth - but that would be after party time!

Yep, you heard me. I'm for the life of the party, what is life without a great party?

After showering off the stench of sweat on my body, I donned a white faux fur crop top - The club lighting would be reflected off it - coupled with a black leather skirt that reaches midthigh and of course my boots with a bit of heel - I hated heels.

Done with looking good, I grabbed my purse and was out of the door. No-one stopped me - not like years ago where I had to sneak out - Father didn't mind as far as I returned home, not runoff. But then, I was sure the man already had an idea of my movement and must have someone following me.

I didn't have to stay in the queue like the other people at the entrance of that picky club since it was owned by my father's old friend, so I went through the Vip door that brought me inside the venue without much exertion.

The sounds of electric music and the cheering from the crowd made my blood throb, this was what I wanted. So after downing a few shots at my lonely private booth, I went to the dance floor and began to rock my body.

I was the only uncoupled female dancing like a monkey on the dance floor which attracted those sex-starved alpha males.

"Hey," I heard a guy say above the loud music, causing me to glance up at him.

My eyes scanned him from his head to his toes. Facial appearance: Twenty percent - he's a lost cause. However, I would have let him the honor of just the dance floor if he wasn't tall.

I hated guys who were as ridiculously tall as Emerald, each time I tried glancing up at them, it was like staring up at Mount Everest. So, no.

"Find someone your height!" I shouted, still dancing - so the loud music doesn't drown up my voice.

The guy accepted his fate and left without making a face or swearing at me - Good for him. I would have hurt him if he had said any offensive word to me. I don't take bullshit from anybody.

And so, I continued my enthusiastic dance- jumping up and down with my hair whipping about - when I felt some hands on my butt. Christ, this groping idiot!

Before the idiot could vanish into the crowd of dancers after molesting me, I managed to grab onto his hand and twisted his wrist till he crumpled down to his knees in pain.

No one heard his cries due to the loud music nor did they care nor did the man make a complaint. So far this party was wonderful - If it means that I get to break more hands.

So, I continued my dance this time without disturbance or so I thought because, after a while, I felt an intense gaze watching me. I searched around yet couldn't find anybody until I heard a name that made me froze.

I turned around to see a face I wasn't expecting so soon nor here of all places. Niklaus.

I might not have seen him after my accident but this man was the cause of the whole revenge thingy - I could even recognize him in my sleep.

He was a few distances away from me due to the bodies on the dance floor but our eyes met and it sent a strange warmth that tingled my senses.

Gosh, I hated this! This player was trying to seduce me with his good looks - I was a sucker for good looks - and to crown it all, we weren't supposed to meet yet.

But wait a minute, everyone thought me dead, why was I panicking? I just had to get the hell out of here, I thought until I saw it was just a body separating us.

I was greatly alarmed and thinking of what to do when Niklaus was suddenly pushed to the ground and someone grabbed my arm, leading me out before he could stand.

Chapter 239 - Two Hundred And Thirty-nine: I Saw Maya

Niklaus' point of view

I couldn't believe my eyes, no, my eyes must be deceiving me. How was this possible? How could she be alive? I had seen her lifeless form, I had just returned from the columbarium where I stored her ash, so how was she standing in the middle of the club and dancing like she got no problems.

I must be seeing things, that was my first thought. But the more I got closer and closer, shoving past the dancing bodies, she was as real as it gets. No, it wasn't a dream, even with the blonde hair she wore that was reflected blue due to the lightning, I could still recognize her.

There was just one person between us and she would be within touching range. Also, she had turned when I called her name, staring at me wide-eyed shocked. Yes, that was it! That was her! Maya must be surprised to see me too!

But just as I tried to slip past that body forming a barrier between us, someone shoved me hard and I fell, no, fell with someone.

"I'm so sorry," I hastily got off the lady I had unintentionally brought down to the ground - not because I was embarrassed but due to the fact I couldn't find Maya anymore.

"You pervert, how dare you harass my girlfriend! " a punch met me on the face instead when I tried to leave.

The fact that I hadn't seen that coming plus I was not entirely sober made me see stars and stumbled to the ground.

"Maya," I ignored the pain, my gaze darting around the club in search of her.

I was dragged up to my feet by the same bastard who still wasn't satisfied with the first punch on my face. He intended to sock me in the jaw again when I intercepted his hand, landing him one instead.

"I already apologized," I said to his girlfriend who shrieked out of fright. The blow made the son of a biscuit double over in pain and I walked past them, going to look for Maya.

Our fight somehow caused a small commotion because people stopped dancing and stared at us, making it harder to search for Maya with them huddled together pointing fingers and gossiping.

But somehow, I caught someone with the same blonde hair and clothes and rushed over to her.

"Maya," I grabbed her hand.

But the face that turned around to me wasn't even close to the Maya I saw on the dance floor.

"What's your problem?" she glared, flung my grip off her, and left.

I thread my hand through my hair, how was this possible? I was sure I had seen her or was it my imagination? Was I so desperate to see Maya that I let my imagination somehow overlap with reality?

I felt a touch on my shoulder and a warning scream - from the ladies of course - but it was too late, a whack met me on the side of my eye.

Now, this is it!

I charged at that idiot, spearing him to the ground which elicited a scream of fear from the crowd, not that I cared.

For this guy to have the nerve to touch me, he must be some nouveau riche still reeling from the exhilaration of his newly accumulated wealth. Well, he'd bear the brunt of my anger.

I punched the daylight out of him, pouring all my frustration into each blow, and would have ended the guy had Pablo not had his men separate us.

"No, come after me! You idiot!" I roared in an outburst while the bastard was helped to his feet.

It pleased me to know that I was in a better state than him. Apart from a black eye he had given me when I was distracted, I had split lips and a swollen jaw unlike him who had a broken nose added to his other injuries. I was going to be sued for that - I was a hundred percent sure - but who cares, he was the one who came at me first.

"What the hell is wrong with you?!" Pablo was furious and followed after me as I walked to our private booth upstairs.

He went on, "I brought you here so you could breathe and feel alive again, not make someone else's life miserable,"

"Fine, I heard you!" I snapped at him unintentionally, dazing him. I wiped my face with my palm, wincing upon coming in contact with the wound on the side of my eye.

"I'm sorry but I need to meet the owner of this place," I announced.

Pablo narrowed his eyes at me, "Meet him? What do you need to meet him?"

"I saw Maya," I disclosed and heard his groan of disapproval.

"I know you're not going to believe me which is why I need to glance through their security -"

"Niklaus, that's -"

"Impossible, right? I thought the same way too, Pablo but I know what I saw," My heart raced with the possibility of finding her.

This time Pablo didn't say a word, deciding to watch me with a blank expression which made me continue, "I don't know how this is possible but once I find her, I'll-"

"Niklaus, Maya is dead!" Pablo boomed so loud that every head turned to our table.

"She is dead and it's time you get over that. It's been seven fucking years, Niklaus" He spoke the rest with a low voice having brought unwarranted attention.

I shook my head stubbornly, " I know what I saw"

Pedro leaned over the table between us, saying "Listen to yourself Niklaus. Maya's alive? If she's alive, what hasn't she contacted you all this while? Did you even think about that?"

"Maybe she's In some kind of situation or something, where she's isn't supposed to seek people from the past or reveal her identity?"

"Seriously, are you sick in the head or something?" Pablo's chest heaved,

"You were the one who confirmed her body and now, you're telling me she's alive? You've lost it," He stood to his feet with a Frown, straightening the rumbled edges on his clothes.

I sighed, "Come on, Pablo..."

"The first time you thought of getting married to Maya when she was still alive, you developed cold feet and now you're planning to spend the rest of your miserable life with Jennifer, you're bringing up a ghost from the past?" He shook his head in disbelief, "Call me when you're back to your senses," Pablo said and strode out of the club angrily.

Great, you ruined the once great evening Niklaus.

"Here, catch," one of his men passed a cold pack to me which I pressed against my swollen face. It was comforting to know he still cared about me.

At that moment, my phone rang and I glance at the screen to discover it was Jennifer - probably to check up on me.

The reason why I didn't pick up was not that I was annoyed - maybe, I was a tad bit irritated at her keeping tabs on me. The real reason was that I was too tired and not in the mood to start explaining what happened to my face.

What was I going to say to her? That I got into a fight because I pushed down someone in the name of searching for Maya or her look alike. That was I desperately searching for my ex's ghost when we already had talks of getting married.

I let the phone ring on till the call ended two times in a row. Resting against the chair, I threw my head back with a great sigh. When was I ever going to get peace?

After the pain on my face subsided a bit, I left the club and drove straight home. I had done enough damages for the night already.

However, I was surprised to see rows of expensive cars parked at my place when I returned home. This could only mean one thing, my family members were here - so was my father.

With anger, I strode into my house to discover that my living room had been redecorated into some sort of venue for their evening parties.

Though they weren't wearing champagne dresses nor the men in a tuxedo; they dressed formally, and most had champagne flutes in hand.

What were they thinking? They barged into my house and used it to host a party without my permission, wasn't that a huge slap across my consent? Whoever organized this party was purposely mocking me. Amanda wasn't here, she was probably serving those arrogant relatives of mine.

"What the hell is going on here?!" I shouted, finally attracting the much-needed attention.

The small band at the corner of the room stopped playing the number, prompting them all to look in my direction. There were about twenty guests in here and they're about to receive my wrath.

"Who did this! Who's responsible for this!" I roared.

"I did,"

I had expected Eden to claim responsibility. As the new Spencer head, he'd like to throw his weight around considering I was once his rival. But who I saw emerge from the crowd made my blood run cold and my eyes to shoot lasers.

Chapter 240 - Two Hundred And Fourty: Kidnap The Owner

The third point of view

Niklaus stared at the figure who made his way out of the crowd of relatives causing his jaw to clench reflexively.

His father, that man Adam.

It's been so long since he last set his eyes on him and it was obvious that age has taken its effect yet that brilliance in his eyes was still there. His aging process was maintained hence the presence of few wrinkles on his face. Though there were now traces of white in his hair, Adam was obviously better than most of his pals out there.

However, Niklaus wasn't here to admire his physique. His fist clenched and unclenched by his side as he received memories of the past seven years, this man was the reason why he had lost Maya and his child.

If only he had accepted their relationship, then those unfortunate events that preceded wouldn't have happened. That man was his father; someone who was supposed to make sure his happiness mattered, however, the reverse was the case - Adam was after his own happiness at the expense of his children's.

"Long time no see, son" Adam said as if they were even on talking terms. He tried to hug Niklaus who stepped back, regarding him angrily.

"What's the meaning of this? Who gave you the right to barge into my house and plunder it the way you want?" Niklaus was furious. They had not shown him an ounce of respect at all.

"Don't be such a pain in the ass," Adam said to him, "You left home for seven years and no one has set his or her eyes on you since then. So when you returned, we decided to come to visit since you wouldn't do so. What's so wrong with it?" he summarized with a cocky grin unbothered by the lack of warmth on his son's face. His tantrum would end pretty soon.

"I don't need your visitation, return from wherever you all came from" His eyes rove across the crowd coldly.

"Cousin," Niklaus heard Eden's voice from behind.

Contrary to his expectations, Eden didn't look what he expected at all. Yes, facially, his handsomeness didn't diminish but the look in his eyes told Niklaus something else.

Eden looked tired; not the kind of tired one gets after a long time at work but the kind of tired one gets when sucked up with life or situation. Sure, Eden looked mature than in the past - which comes with that kind of responsibility - but the gnawing feeling in Niklaus's heart told him there was more to that.

"So you were a party to this?" He asked Eden, clearly not pleased.

"You decided not to come to the mountain so the mountain decided to come to you," He spoke idiomatically.

"I made it clear to you guys that I want nothing to do with the Spencer family," Niklaus reminded him but those words were directed to his father in particular.

"So you want nothing to do with your sister too?" Emily made her epic appearance.

They came prepared for him.

"Sister," Niklaus tried to smile but winced in the process.

"I would have given you a good punch on the face but whoever gave you that black eye did me a favor," he couldn't believe she was supporting his assaulter.

"Fine, I've always been an asshole anyway," He dragged her into his arms, hugging her tightly.

"I've missed you," Emily said, savoring this brief reunion.

"Yeah, me too. I'm sorry for failing my brotherly responsibilities towards you Emily, "

Niklaus owed Emily a lot; he wasn't there when she got married nor was he there to grace the birth of her first child. He was just engrossed in his problems to help with hers.

"It's alright," She sniffed, "All that matters is that you're back now,"

His mouth twitched, why does everyone think he was here for good? Well, they'd know the truth soon.

"Where is he?" Niklaus asked, pulling away from her.

Emily looked to her right calling, "Akim" and a boy supposedly seven or so hurried over to her side saying, "Mom,"

"Here" she faced the little boy to him, "That's your uncle, Niklaus. Say hello to him,"

The boy glanced up at him with his blue eyes he inherited from his mother, " Hello, uncle Niklaus"

Niklaus lowered himself to the boy's height, ruffling his hair, "Hello Akim. How are you doing?"

"I'm fine," the boy replied right away with a smile. He was a smart one.

Niklaus smiled back at him before his eyes connected with Emily's who bit on her lips nervously, he knew already?

He didn't need to be told, just a glance at Akim and he understood the child wasn't Ahmed. The boy was a copy of Judy no matter how hard they tried to dye his blonde hair black. Ahmed must have known that the child wasn't his and for protecting his sister so far, the man has earned his respect.

"Niklaus, I -" Emily was about to ask him to keep his discovery a secret when he squeezed her shoulder softly.

"You have suffered so far," His comment made tears roll off her cheeks, " Thanks for keeping him alive,"?and hugged her once more.

Judy might have been his shadow guard but he was the closest thing to a brother he ever had. So Emily keeping his lineage alive was a huge joy to him.

Emily wanted to break down in tears but composed herself. Her father and other relatives were watching and though Akim had grown up and wouldn't be taken away from her easily, she still couldn't trust her father. But it was satisfying to know that someone - her brother - understood the hardship she had undergone all through the years.

"And you still say you want nothing to do with the Spencers, would you cut off your relationship with your sister too?" Eden butted in, causing the siblings to move away amid making secret signals with their eyes to continue this conversation later.

Niklaus didn't say anything but his eyes rested on Adam who was making conversation with another member of the family - which Eden didn't fail to capture.

"Don't keep your beloved family members at arm's length because of the sins of one person," Eden advised.

"That should be two persons," He corrected, "If you hadn't kissed Maya, the scandal wouldn't have popped up in the first place,"

Eden gulped, Niklaus still thought it was him who initiated that kiss and it would remain that way, "It's been seven years, Niklaus. Get over it,"

"Says someone who didn't lose the love of his life and his child," Niklaus sneered and moved away. Talking to Eden would continuously put him in a bad mood. All he wanted at the moment was for them to end this stupid party and leave him the hell alone.

Sadly, that prayer wasn't answered. He ended up making conversation with family members who were curious about his business and intended to partner with him. As much as he hated them, business was business - but not one with his father.

But the main battle began at dinner. Niklaus shared a table with Eden, the annoying face; Emily and her son, the only ones he was sympathetic to; and Adam, the last person on earth he wanted to communicate with at the moment.

"It's a good thing you're home for good, son," Adam said.

Niklaus glanced up in his direction, "Don't rejoice much, I'm not staying for long here, he responded with a not- so- friendly- tone

"What?" Emily's face fell, "Then, why did you return in the first place?"

"I have something to deal with over here," Niklaus revealed without going into much detail.

"You mean that problem with your company?" Eden asked.

"He's having problems with his company?" Adam inquired, to Niklaus's annoyance. He didn't need his father's involvement in his private life and dealings.

"What's wrong with his company?" Emily joined in the questioning.

Knowing that Niklaus wouldn't bother to explain, Eden went ahead to say " His company is facing a lawsuit from a rival firm for copyright infringement,"

"Uh-oh, that doesn't look good," Emily remarked.

"How were you so careless to let such a mistake happen?" Adam grumbled, "I never trained you to be dumb and careless!"

Niklaus glared up at him, " I run the business and you don't have the right to butt into this case. It's my company, remember that when criticizing me!"

"Alright, calm down everybody" Emily interfered, she turned to him, "Nobody is here to criticize you, Niklaus. We're just looking out for you like loved ones are supposed,"

He tried to rebut her words but she silenced him with a warning glare his way. Niklaus swallowed his argument instantly, his sister was the only person after Maya, he ever listened to.

"Fine, my company is at a two million dollars loss if we lose this case and so far my legal department thinks our rival has a strong case," I disclosed.

I could afford such an amount but this was affecting the whole company and shareholders were beginning to worry.

"What happened?" Adam calmly asked this time to his surprise.

"A funny case where two designers shared the same room and the other stole the drawings unknowing that the designs had been sold exclusively to the company and the rest is history,"

"Something's strange," Eden rubbed his chin, "Why didn't the rival company claim ownership until you started production and distribution?"

"He fell right straight into a trap," Adam figured out, the disappointment on his face was prominent - Niklaus didn't give a damn.

"Why would they target me, I have nothing to do with them," Niklaus said earning stupid looks from everyone. They all knew the Spencers had numerous enemies, people who they stepped on their foot one time or the other.

"Maybe you should try settling outside the law" Eden suggested.

"I'm planning on meeting up with them and if I'm so lucky, I might be granted permission to use the works through licensing arrangements or buy the works from the copyright holder - I highly doubt that,"

"You are going to beg them?" Adam asked in disbelief, "We, Spencers don't beg, we take what we want,"

Niklaus scoffed, "You're not seriously suggesting I kidnap their owner and torture him to give up the case?"

Adam looked away but the answer was obvious.

"You're unbelievable," He breathed.

"Wait a minute," Emily chimed in, "I think you all are forgetting something important here"

"What are you trying to say?"

"Who's the owner of the company you all are trying to kidnap?"