

Taming A Billionaire

#Chapter 271 - Two Hundred And Seventy-one: Grown Up - Read Taming A Billionaire Chapter 271 - Two Hundred And Seventy-one: Grown Up

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The third point of view

"Where is Anabelle?" Isabella's brow raised when she discovered she had not logged in. They promised to video chat by this time.

"Ooh, Izzy, don't tell me you're concerned about Anabelle. You've grown soft," Pedro teased her on purpose.

"I have not gone soft, I just don't need her disturbing me later for details," there was a crease on her face.

"Well, Anabelle is asleep so you don't have to worry," He answered.

Isabella's brow raised at that answer, she folded her arms with her signature interrogative look, "How do you know she's asleep?"

Pedro was taken aback by the promptness of the question, he had forgotten how sharp the girl could be.

He and Anabelle had an intense argument concerning the lies she told Isabella.

Flashback:

"What was that lie about?" he was pissed

"I'm so sorry, I didn't mean to say that but I had to,"

"You had to lie to Isabella of all people about what? Us dating?"

"You don't get it," Anabelle defended, "I don't want Isabella to feel left out. We are a team here and once the two of us get together, Isabella would be the castoff,"

"Isabella doesn't give a damn if the both of our dates, she said it herself, so why are you doing this?" Pedro was vexed.

"Isabella doesn't always say the truth, she keeps her emotions bottled up - you of all people should know that," she gestured at all.

"So what you're trying to say is that if Isabella is not cool with our relationship, you're willing to break up with me, is that it?"

"No, that's not it" Anabelle ran her hand through her hair. She inhaled sharply, "Fine, I'm sorry. I shouldn't have lied,"

"Tell that to Isabella not me," He said and left.

End of Flashback.

"I know Anabelle like the back of my hand, she can't miss such an important meeting - especially with you involved - unless she takes her meds. They make her sleepy."

Or she's avoiding me, Isabella thought, unknown to Pedro. There was something the two were keeping from her and she would find it out.

"Do you know me like the back of your hand too?" Isabella threw that sudden question at him.

Pedro was stunned by the directness of her question, he shifted uneasily on his seat. For some weird reason, that question made his heart race. What was wrong with him?

"A-hem," Pedro cleared his throat awkwardly, "No," he blurted.

Isabella's expression shifted, where has his damn royalty gone to? He had always been on her side when they were young.

"I can't read yours because I don't know if you're the back or front of my hand," Pedro laughed - all by himself.

Isabella wasn't amused at all which made Pedro shut up. He had hoped that somehow this comment would elicit laughter that would clear the awkward tension between them.

"How did the plan go?" Prado changed the topic tactically.

Isabella gave him a long stare before responding, "Jennifer interrupted and things went downhill from there. But the good news, she's finally out of here,"

"You mean like, left?" Pedro didn't know what to make of her statement.

"Yes, Niklaus finally man up and told her to leave but there's something strange,"

"What is strange?"

"Something seems to be wrong with Jennifer?"

"How so?"

"She hit Neon"

"So?"

"Jennifer doesn't hit Neon, but she did yesterday. Pedro, I saw the looks in her eyes, she was raving insane," Isabella told him.

"What were you expecting Isabella? She was frustrated, your father chased her out," Pedro pointed out.

"You don't understand, Peddy. Her eyes were murderous, bloodthirsty,"

"Isabella, you're currently stressed out. You just need to chill a little, have fun, and take your mind off your father, Reina, and Jennifer's problem for a while." He opined.

"There's nothing fun to do..." her eyes suddenly lit up.

Pedro didn't like this one bit.

"Pedro, get your ass over here," She smiled.

Pedro groaned. This was not going to end well.

Isabella got off her bed, hurried into the bathroom, and observed her bathing ritual. By the time she was through, Pedro was already downstairs waiting for her.

"What's that?" his brow raised questioningly at the duffel bag in her grasp.

"Secret," Isabella smiled at him.

For a moment there, Pedro was struck shocked at the sight. So Isabella could smile this wide, not to talk of how beautiful she looked.

"Pedro," Isabella snapped her fingers at his face.

"What," He was awoken from his reverie.

Isabella leaned closer to him and took a sniff, "Did you apply perfume?" She asked, surprised.

Pedro was uncomfortable with her closeness, "Maybe? A little?"

She leaned more closer, straining her head to meet his neck, "What's the name of the perfume?"

"Why are you so interested in it?" He went red in the face.

"Because I want to," Isabella insisted.

The more Pedro tried to distance himself from her, the closer Isabella got till he had no choice but to put some distance between them. However, in the process of trying to place his hand on her shoulder, Isabella somehow moved and his hands ended on her breasts.

For a minute, no one moved.

Isabella was stunned, her gaze slowly traveled from his face to his hands still rested on her....

"You son of a biscuit!" She hit him on the head.

"Ouch! That hurts!" Pedro cried out in pain, taking his hands off her chest "I'm so sorry, it was a mistake. Who knew my hands were going to find their way there?" he protested with a pout.

"The nerve!" Isabella fumed, "Just because you smell good and we're friends, you think you can get a good feel for free, is that it?"

Pedro knew his life was in danger, he took to his heels. However, Isabella had always been a strong and athletic person, she jumped over the sofa between them and pushed him to the ground.

Isabella straddled him, she tried to grab his hair but Pedro was quick to grab both hands, they began a power tussle. Each tried to overcome the other but their powers were evenly matched.

"Give up! " Isabella smiled at successfully pinning his hand to the ground.

"No way," Pedro rolled her to her back, overthrowing her, "Always respect a man's ego," he grinned victoriously.

"Ego, my ass," She flipped him over.

Pedro released a sharp gasp when his back hit the bare floor. Gosh, why was she so strong? But there was another problem, a certain part of his body was reacting to her sitting on him.

Isabella must have felt it too because she stilled; She didn't dare to move, knowing what would happen next. They were speechless, staring at each other unsure of what to do.

Isabella blushed, did she just give him a boner? She was a bold one but Pedro was her friend... wait, was he? Why shouldn't she date him? He was hot for God's sake and that was her type of guy.

Pedro's heart was slamming against his chest, he felt blood rush to his brain yet guilt overwhelmed him. He was dating Anabelle, so he shouldn't be in this compromising position with Isabella.

He was just about to pull her away from him with all the control he had when Isabella moved against him. Pedro gasped while his eyes grew wide, what did she just do.

"Isabella," He hissed, aroused beyond measure, but he had to stop this madness.

"Don't fight it," Isabella whispered, lowered her head, and kissed him before he could comprehend what was going on.

He overestimated his control.

Yes, Pedro wanted to stop this but he was a man and his body was designed to such responses and so, found himself kissing her back.

They were no longer kids, Isabella discovered that by slipping her hand inside his shirt, caressing his stomach. Those baby fat had been replaced by a perfectly toned stomach; she traced his six-packs.

Pedro's primal side was activated and he showed that by flipping her over, conquering, and taking the lead. He swore, he has never felt this way with anybody - not even Anabelle.

He and Anabelle started going out two months ago and all they shared was sweet, brief kisses- nothing beyond that. He had to consider her health plus the fact, Anabelle believed in the fairy tale type of romance.

But this was intense and passionate, seeping right his veins and making his blood boil. He felt alive, like that demon in him had awoken.

Isabella never thought it would be good - Better than her other kisses. Not that she kissed much, none of the so-called boyfriends lasted more than a day - she beat her father's record. Moreover, none of them interested her, she just kept them around for the attention and to whirl away time - those unfaithful douches.

Pedro was not what she expected, he was so innocent and sweet that she wanted to taint his soul - but it seems, the angel was a hybrid.

And so both of them were so engrossed in their passionate moment that they didn't hear Niklaus come in until the glass in his grasp fell and broke.

Chapter 272 - Two Hundred And Seventy-two: Coming For You

Niklaus' point of view

It had to stop now. I had taken enough of Jennifer's nagging and manipulation, it was to end instantly. Moreover, we had a deal and now I've confirmed it's Maya, she should keep to her end of the deal.

I was truly sorry for giving her false hope which was why I made sure that the card contained enough money that would give her and Neon a comfortable life without even lifting a finger in the name of working.

Things just didn't go the way we planned. People date for years, engage and yet call off the wedding on D-day. So this was just a slight version of it, I told my guilty heart.

Moreover, If Maya had to return to me, Jennifer had to go. If there was anything I learned from Tina, it was the fact that women were extremely jealous creatures and would never coexist in a room when put together.

I was on my laptop going through the weekly statistics from my company, forcing my mind not to think about the ridiculous conversation I had with my father days ago.

Flashback:

"Who is this Reina I hear about?" His voice rang from the other end.

My jaw ticked, for Adam to call by himself meant he was uncomfortable with this news and wanted something to be done.

"And why do you ask me that? I'm not your private investigator," I backtalked. Gone were the days when I was under his control.

"Niklaus.." He released a burst of mocking laughter that made my fist clench. He was treating me like I was some sort of inexperienced kid.

"We already know where Maya left you and I. Steer clear of this one whether she looks like Maya or not, " I sensed the threat beneath his words.

It was a relief he didn't know Reina and Maya were the same person else who knows what this crazy man would have done already.

He continued, "You're welcome to return home anytime soon. Eden is nothing but a puppet I allowed in your place - temporary. Just a word and you'd be restored to your former glory. This position belongs to you, son."

That comment made goosebumps climb my arms, I realized, "You're the one responsible for Anabelle's illness, aren't you?"

"Desperate time calls for desperate measures," was his reply.

Of course, what was I expecting? That this demon would suddenly develop a human heart. Eden must have foolishly thought he could beat him.

"You know what father?" My voice was icy cold, "You can go to hell,"

I was so angry that I wanted to hang up on him, instead, I added, "And if you dare to lay a hand on Reina, I'll really put a bullet in your head this time," I reminded him when I pointed a gun at his head after Maya's death.

He laughed again, that annoying sound making my blood boil, "Really? Come at me then,"

End of Flashback.

The thought made me hot and I reached out for my glass of water only to realize it was empty and so was the jar. I contemplated calling up Amanda for a refill through the intercom but decided against it and so, I made my way downstairs to quench my taste only to receive the greatest shock of my life.

Pedro and Isabella

My eyes weren't deceiving me.

It wasn't Anabelle, but Isabella, my daughter with Pedro on top of her, doing stuff I did to Reina hours ago.

The glass slipped from my hand and smashed to the ground. I was not expecting this, nor with Pedro. Sure, they had been pretty close as kids but they're adults now - and it had never crossed my mind till now.

They both rushed up to their feet, guilt, and embarrassment showing on their faces.

I pointed at Izzy and Pedro, what was I even going to say to them. More like where was I going to begin?

"Sir, I can explain," Pedro stepped forward.

"Yeah, explain the fact that I just caught you on my rug, swapping saliva with my daughter in the sitting room while I'm upstairs. Respectful, right?" there was no smile on my face.

A childhood friend or not, Pedro was a boy; a horny hormonal teenager, and as a father, it's my responsibility to keep Isabella from these dickbags - not that I wasn't one in high school. But thanks to that experience, I know what boys his age think about - notwithstanding his innocent facade.

"Dad, chill, it was just a kiss - we weren't even having sex," Isabella rolled her eyes, bored.

"How kind of you to help your father," I said ironically.

I took a step towards Pedro, menacingly. The boy was tall but I still towered over him - Sure, he'd grow up more in the future but let me enjoy intimidating him as of the moment.

"Let me make it clear...", My voice was low and dangerous, "If I get your nasty prick inside her hole, I'll cut them off and feed them to the dogs. Are we clear, here?"

Pedro gulped and nodded his head. It was good to know that my threat was understood. Seems my reputation comes in handy now.

"Seriously, dad, "You're beginning to scare him," Isabella complained and picked up a strange bag.

"What's in there?" my brow raised in suspicion.

"None of your business," she replied, took hold of his hand, and began to lead him out.

"I need you home before eleven!" I yelled after them.

"Hopefully," Isabella gave me an unsure answer.

"Don't get pregnant!" I added before she made it out of the door.

That comment must have touched Isabella because she retraced her steps, stretching out her neck to peer at me, saying, "You'd make a good grandpa,"

"Seriously, Isabella. Don't you dare -"

She was out of the door already. I sighed, girls were too hard to train.

I took a drink from the water dispenser, filled up the glass I had taken from the kitchen, and made it back to the room, only to discover I had a message from an unknown stranger.

Rubbing my chin, I didn't put much thought into it as I clicked open on the message and stilled.

"Nice to meet you, father,"

"T-This... how's this...?"

No, I composed myself. There was no way a supposedly seven-year-old son I once thought dead would chat me up. This could be some sort of prank, right? But who would do such a thing?

Another message was sent in, "Are you going to talk or what?" he was getting impatient.

With faith, I typed and sent, "Is that you, son?"

"Took you long enough to figure that out. You don't seem as smart as Ailee claims,"

I could sense discontent in his voice.

"Who's Ailee?"

"My twin sister, I'm Allen,"

I forgot how to breathe, my chest was stuffed with emotion. Maya had twins for me? It wasn't just one child but twins? I didn't know how to feel? I wanted to jump up in jubilation, hug my laptop, or just.... I don't know.

"Where are you two, I'll come to get you," I had already grabbed my keys, ready to bolt out of my room when a message came in.

"You can't,"

My blood boiled, why were they refusing to meet me? Did Reina threaten them not to speak to me or what?

"Why can't you speak with me?" I sent a message back to them.

"It's not yet time, we promised mom,"

Right, I should have known, Reina.

"Let's video chat then," I proposed.

Thankfully, they readily agreed.

This was the second time in my entire life I was this nervous. The first had been when Maya fell off that bridge; I had been so anxious I couldn't differentiate my left from right.

And now, I was so nervous to meet my children that it wouldn't surprise me if I peed on my pants.

Not long after, my screen lit up with their faces. Both seem to be dragging the position of the camera or something, without realizing the call has connected already.

"Hi," I made my presence known.

They froze.

"Holy shit!" the young girl exclaimed, delight on her face "Allen, he's so handsome up close - no wonder mom fell for him," she gushed over me.

I knew such language was highly inappropriate for a seven-year-old, but I was too emotional to care. Tears fell from my eyes while I cupped my mouth, stifling the pained moan.

I had completely missed out on seven years of their life: I didn't get to hear them make their first baby speech, get their milk teeth nor see them go to preschool. It was just a lot to take in.

"Ooh, daddy don't cry, it makes you ugly," she comforted me but it made me cry harder.

"I'm so sorry," I cried out, the sobs rocking my body hard. I had done practically nothing for them and now they're all grown up. It's not like Ailee is going to appreciate me getting her a teddy bear or Allen, a toy car- they've developed past those.

I knew Maya didn't mean to keep them away plus my fault anyway, but I felt cheated. I had not been a part of their life for god damn seven years- not seven days, note the difference. I bet they didn't even know they had a rebellious big sister Isabella who would be so excited to see them- evidenced by her attachment to Neon.

I clenched my fist with a resolution, relaying a message to them,

"Tell your mother that I'm coming for you both,"

Chapter 273 - Two Hundred And Seventy-three: Sweet Little Villain

Isabella's point of view

"You do know this is called vandalism?" Pedro said for the nth time already, pointing at the graffiti on the wall.

I rolled my eyes while daubing badass motivational speeches graffiti across the wall, "Pedro, I called you here to accompany me, not criticize me - relentlessly,"

"We could get arrested for this," He complained.

"Going to jail is the fun part," I winked at him.

"Joking," He was so silly, "We are not going to go to jail, besides -" I was still saying when I heard the sound of an incoming siren, "And yeah, you had to jinx our luck,"

I stopped spraying at once, putting back the canisters in the bag, saying hurriedly to him "What are you still waiting for, get your ass moving!"

Swinging the bag over my shoulder, I took hold of Pedro's hand and ran off just as the police van pulled up beside us. They gave us a hot chase, but I had studied this area before coming to attempt this vandalism - in Peddy's view.

Art is meant to be expressed and I just did those on those walls. I gave it life, my graffiti was better on it than the plain faded white paint that was peeling off already.

"Quick, here," I drew Pedro into a narrow, dimmed alley. The police car sped past us with no idea where we just sneaked into.

"That was close," Pedro threw his head back against the wall in relief.

"Yeah," I agreed, "I'm totally liking this closeness,"

His brow raised at my comment, his eyes traveling down to discover how pressed together our bodies were.

A smirk pulled my lips to the side, I loved this; my vein was throbbing with anticipation, and my heart slamming against my chest; I simply felt alive.

I had never felt this way with someone and had never planned on it but then, there could always be room for adjustments.

It was obvious that Pedro was affected too. I heard him draw a sharp breath, he shivered when I placed my hand on his chest and the other wrapped around his neck, pulling him closer till our heads were touching.

He shifted uncomfortably, "Isabella, there's something I need to -"

"Shh, don't destroy this moment," I hushed him, pressing my finger against his lips. Gosh, he was so hot.

We stared into each other's eyes, I swear I could see stars in there. Pedro had the palest of blue eyes I had ever seen and I wouldn't mind staring in them all day. Was this what my father felt for Maya because if this isn't love, I don't think it's anything else.

"Isabella, I really need to -"

And Of course, he dared me.

I used that opportunity to kiss him, sliding my tongue into his mouth and drinking from him, till he was sucked numb. This soul was mine to devour.

Pedro groaned into the kiss, his hand moving to snake around my waist and pulling me so close to him that we might as well have been naked; I could feel every part of him, including the reactive little brother.

Sure, it had been awkward after that moment in the living room but none of us had talked about it till now - we weren't doing much talking either.

Pedro's hands were really talented, they moved down to cup my butt, I moaned, threading my hand into his hair and pulling him closer; we were practically eating each other's faces.

The kiss stole my breath away, getting more intense when his hand slipped into my shirt. But then, he pulled away.

I was dissatisfied, I wanted more and stepped forward, trying to pull him in for another passionate kiss when he pushed me away.

"I'm sorry, Isabella, but I can't do this anymore," He said, chest heaving from the effect of what we shared.

"What are you talking about?" I laughed it off. What could make him this serious? He was probably shy or stunned about how fast this was going.

Well, I couldn't blame him. I've always had a direct and prompt personality and approach to life. I don't believe in wasting the little time we had to spend here on earth, which means some people couldn't keep up with my speed. But Pedro shouldn't have to worry, I could slow down for him.

"I don't know how to say this but you should know I'm very sorry," He licked his lips nervously which made me begin to worry. Why was he so nervous?

"Pedro, come on, talk to me. I'm going to listen," I beckoned him to open up to me with a warm smile - and you should know I never smile. Warmly.

He scratched the back of his head, hesitant to say a word.

"Seriously, talk to me, Pedro," I urged him, taking his hand and intertwined our fingers together.

He pulled his hand away.

Alright, I'm getting the bad vibe now.

"Anabelle didn't tell you the truth, she lied," He said, awaiting my judgment.

My faces creased, confusion setting in, "What are you talking about? What do you mean Anabelle lied -" it clicked in my head.

My face darkened, looking like a tornado was brewing in there. My hands fisted by my sides as anger enraged me, how dare they!

My hand moved of its own accord, I whacked Pedro on the face. Did he dare to play me?

"How dare you?" I fumed, my eyes staring into his with blazing intensity.

"Isabella, I can explain -" Pedro tried to reach for me but I halted him with a piercing glare.

"Don't you dare!" I hissed, hot seething anger boiling through my veins. I just wanted to rip somebody apart. The first time I decided to give my heart to somebody and this is how they treat me; play me like I'm some sort of yoyo.

I should have known: the way they looked at each other; how he knew her whereabouts; their secret communication. The signs were clear but I just waved it aside as nothing. After all, I've been gone for seven years, they must have been close. Who knew they'd upgraded?

"You and Anabelle must have enjoyed this; laughed and sneered behind my back for being stupid; for trusting this once," I laughed mirthlessly, running my hand through my hair.

"No, Isabella, listen to...Ouch!"

I punched that irritating handsome face, saying with spite, "Oh, Anabelle is going to get it from me,"

Before he could stop me, I had walked out of the alleyway, to the road and stopped a taxi that took me to their mansion at once.

Though it was quite late, the security didn't stop me nor question my intention of coming there by that time - they must have thought I was coming for a sleepover. Moreover, I was on my best behavior and even flashed them the killer smile I had copied from Niklaus.

When I came into the living room, lo and behold, there was Anabelle watching TV - so much for taking meds. My instincts were right, she must have been so guilty she decided to avoid me.

"Isabella?! " It seems no one informed her of my coming because she looked shocked at my arrival.

"How was it?" I asked, a cold smile on my face.

She gulped, "How is what?"

"It must have been fun watching me make a fool of myself, right? I mean, you've been dating him all this while, and then tough, stupid Isabella decides to let her guard down for once and this is what she gets in return?" I threw my head back and laughed at my stupidity, yet that laughter carried an air of ominosity.

"Isabella, I know how you feel right now but you shouldn't -"

"No!" I roared, my chest heaving, "If you know how I feel right now then you would know that I'm freaking mad!" I boomed, picked the short little wooden stool I could find, and hurled at the large screen television, damaging it.

"If you truly know how I feel, you'd know how volatile I can be when betrayed by no one but my own relative," I spat, intimidating her by approaching her with slow, calculated steps.

"I'm s-sorry, okay?" she choked, " I chickened out; I just so scared of telling you that Pedro and I were a thing, I thought you'd.. you'd.. be what you are right now,"

A cruel smile parted my lips, "Well, thanks for your selfish cowardice, it ruined my life!" I rammmed my fist into the vase on the mantel.

Anabelle screamed, shielding her ears with her palm. None of the broken fragments injured her but the same couldn't be said for me. However, the pain in my heart was far greater than this physical one so I didn't care.

"I hope I never see you again, cousin, " I spat and left.

On my way out, I saw the guards rushing past me into the living room, it seems the butler heard the commotion and called them. I snorted, yeah, they must think I've murdered Anabelle.

I ran into Pedro on my way out and I was really expecting him to say something, anything! Which was evidenced by him opening his mouth, but then, his eyes fell on my bleeding fist.

Oh yeah.

His eyes widened, disbelief with fear crept into his orbs, "Anabelle!" he shouted, rushing into the house.

And yeah, Pedro assumed the worst. What was I even expecting? Of course, evil Isabella would hurt her cousin - that was how heartless they saw me.

Tears streamed down my face, it wouldn't hurt to be that sweet, unfeeling villain once more. I don't need stupid feelings in my life.

Chapter 274 - Two Hundred And Seventy-four: Where Are My Kids.

Reina's point of view

"What do you plan to do to Niklaus?" I questioned father as soon as I strode into his office. Anger was boiling through my veins like never before. Though I didn't remember most things about Niklaus, the thoughts of knowing that we had something great together made me just so angry. Even if he did hurt me, I deserve the right to know the truth. I felt cheated and hurt.

Sakuzi looked up from the desk where he and Emerald were having some sort of meeting. He must have seen the fury in my eyes hence instantly dismissing Emerald.

"Why are you here? Shouldn't you be at the office or doing anything else than glaring at me," He said lightly, but I was not in the mood for jokes.

"Niklaus loved me, why did you lie to me?" I finally asked what was on my mind.

"People never treasure what they truly have until they lose it," Father glanced up without even an apologetic smile, "Just apply that in your case,"

I was numbed with disbelief, I couldn't believe my father had this side to him all along. But he loved me, he favored and treated me well at this time.

Tears stung my eyes but I hardened my heart to see the end of this before my emotional meltdown, "What are you planning to do to Niklaus?" I asked again, this time firmer.

"I'm already doing it already," Was his answer.

"What," My brows furrowed together in confusion, "What are you talking about?"

"As I said earlier, people never realize what they have until they lose it. I'm just preying on his guilty conscience and by the time you're done with that, I'll take everything he's ever worked for and watch as he crumbles in defeat," he revealed.

"Oh my God," A gasp left my mouth as I came to a startling realization that I've been torturing Niklaus all this while.

Today, I just had a realization of how much Maya meant to Niklaus, her death truly devastated him. Then suddenly, out of nowhere, I, Maya's alleged doppelganger appeared, not only was I bringing up that ugly past for him, I was killing him with despair amid feeding him with hope.

Not to talk of the fact I took away seven years of father-twins bonding from him. The guilt was forming an ache in my heart, I was killing Niklaus a second time and my father knew that.

This was his plan all this while: when Niklaus finally gets an idea of who I am and his kids, Father would cut him down; take away everything he ever treasured, and probably send us away to where Niklaus would never find us - that is, if he keeps him alive. There was no doubt that would break him; Niklaus already lost me once, he can't lose me a second time.

I banged my hand on his desk, "You can't do that to him, Niklaus is the father of my kids,"

"Just because I accepted Allen and Ailee whole-heartedly, doesn't mean I would accept him. The kids have Armani blood running in them, Niklaus doesn't," he replied, sitting back on his desk.

"I'm going to tell him the truth," I decided.

Father scoffed, "Then what happens next? Might I remind you that his father is the reason why you went through that hell in the first place?"

I stiffened, the ugly memory of me falling off that bridge resurfacing in my mind. I think I'm going to need a therapist, again.

My fist clenched, "I'm not going to let Adam get scot-free for everything's he's ever done if that's what you're worried about,"

"Just the same way I'm not going to let Niklaus go scot-free for what he did to your brother," said Father.

"Seriously, stop it! Okay?!" I snapped at him.

"What?"

"Don't compare your vengeance to mine!" I felt like tearing something apart. I grabbed my scalp, "You talk about Niklaus taking something from you when for christ's sake, you took something away from him first!"

"What?" there was a crease on his forehead.

"I studied that incident years ago, turns out his wife died after you ordered your men to open fire on them -"

"Because he betrayed me!" Father stood up in a rage, sweeping stuff off his desk to the ground. But I stood unfazed even though I have never seen that look on him - he had always shown me his soft side.

"If he hadn't disclosed our location to the authorities nor stop his wife from tagging along, such thing wouldn't have happened,"

"And out of spite, he shot at your son," I concluded, "I would have done the same if I were him. You killed his wife right in front of him, Father"

"Correction," He spat, "She was caught in the crossfire,"

"And so was Maxwell - he died in the shootout you ordered," I said pointedly, holding his fierce gaze. The moment I stepped into this study, I already knew this confrontation was going to end on a bad note, hence no need to hold back my mouth.

"All this wouldn't have happened if he hasn't gotten the federal police force involved. I lost not only your brother but a lot of good men that day -"

"Which is why I'm begging you to end this craziness already. This bad blood has gone on for a long time now, we need peace, don't you see it, father?" I pleaded desperately, already on the verge of tears.

Yes, I wanted to hate Sakuzi for using me against Niklaus but if it wasn't because of him, I wouldn't be alive by now. Moreover, he's my father, a parental figure I had wished in my life for years, so I can't lose him - especially now the whole world has no idea of me. I don't want to be lonely, I need my father by my side.

Also, I keep getting vague recollection of my past with Niklaus, and my subconscious somehow wills me to trust him, like I'm on the right track or something. But I don't want a war between Niklaus and my father. I don't want to be in a situation where I have to choose a side or die.

I don't remember how or if I loved Niklaus - I still had to be cautious here- but he's the father of my kids, he shouldn't be harmed. But I love my father too, so they have to stop this madness.

"Reina dear," Father walked over to me, caressing my face with his thumb and wiping the tears that fell from my eyes, "What I need is honoring the code for Maxwell. Niklaus must pay for his crime," he made up his mind.

"You're too weak for this mission. I should have known that a person's personality is hard to alter," his tone softened, "Even as Reina, you are still soft and selfless as Maya,"

My tears fell harder.

"I'm sorry for lying and using you princess. But my mind can't be changed," He concluded and left the room for me.

I couldn't remember how I found my way back to my apartment that day. But at night, after video calling my kids, I cried myself to sleep. The worst part was that I couldn't even tell why or who I was crying for? And I don't want to talk about it.

I found myself waking up the next day with quite a migraine. "Wonderful," I groaned, lifting my ass off the bed. My body hurt entirely, it was almost as if a car ran me over - which was impossible considering that I'm still alive.

Taking a shower, I ordered some food and took painkillers that made me feel better. I sat on my swivel chair in my study, thinking about my next plan when I heard my doorbell rang.

I wasn't expecting anyone, I thought. Still yet, I went over to see who was disturbing my peace by this time of the morning.

"Oww, I'm going to need a drink," I groaned, staring at the person in the live feed on the camera's screen.

After Allen and Ailee played a prank on me the last time, I installed a peephole camera that lets me see who is outside my door before I open it. And right now, I was seeing Niklaus - which I didn't appreciate at the moment.

I didn't know his objective for coming over to my place but God knows I wasn't ready for another argument nor drama, so I did what I knew what to do best - ignore him. When he's done ringing and I don't open up, he'd eventually leave, I thought.

With that belief in mind, I went over to the bar and picked out one of my best wines; it would help with the stress. So I went back to the living room to go drown my senses with the drink only to receive the greatest shock of my life.

The wine slipped from my hand. Thankfully, it landed on one of the throw pillows I had messed around with during my breakdown yesterday.

There was Niklaus, sitting on my couch with his leg crossed over the other and a straight face tilted in a sneer. He was patiently waiting for me to drag my ass over to him.

My heart began to pound in my chest, how did he come into my apartment? My place had one of the best security - my father made sure of it. Even if he had it hacked, it would take time for him to do so.

"Reina dear, can you tell me where my kids are?" Niklaus drawled, there was no smile on his face. A storm was brewing.

My pulse quickened as it dawned on me, my kids were the ones who gave him the password to my place. They secretly communicated with their father and I didn't know.

Chapter 275 - Two Hundred And Seventy-five: Who's Your Father

Reina's point of view

I swore I could hear my heart pounding in my ear. For some strange reasons, that dubious smirk on Niklaus' lips scared me. But then, I was Reina, daughter of Sakuji, and nothing on earth is supposed to scare me.

"What are you doing here?" I composed myself, making my voice deeper and displeased by his unwelcome appearance, "You have no right to barge into my place,"

Niklaus snorted, he shot up to his feet, adjusting his collar saying, "Fine, you want to play, let's play,"

"I don't know what you're talking about but you have to leave my place or else.."

"Or else what?" he challenged my threat, using that opportunity to draw nigh to me.

Great, I'll probably have to fight my way out of here.

He was approaching me the way a predator would to a prey. He wanted to tie me down to a corner where he could trap me easily but I saw through his plan. This is why we're moving away from each other with tactically calculated steps.

"I might look simple Niklaus, but you don't want to mess with me," I said to him, eyeing his movements.

"So tell me then, Maya, who's your backer?" he smiled sexily.

Oh, was he trying to charm me into spilling the truth? Nice try. Just because I was extremely attracted to him - I finally admit that- doesn't mean I'm going to spill the whole can of beans to him. Moreover, you heard; he's ready to play the game.

"You must be so curious to know," I bit my lips seductively, watched the way his eyes flickered to it, he swallowed greedily.

"Yes, I want to know," He added, "Neither are you denying you're Maya," He noticed that.

I'm tired of pretending.

"Catch me," was the only word I said to him and jumped over the sofa intending to reach the entrance door when someone pushed me to the ground with all his weight.

"Oof!" The breath was knocked out of my lungs as I landed on my stomach. Discovering he was crushing me with his weight, Niklaus got up to his feet, pulling me up with him.

"Ouch, that hurts," I yelped when he grabbed my hand together from behind, my back turned to him.

"If you think you can beat me at this game again, Reina? Then, you're in for a loss," He hissed into my ear, the heat sent shivers down my spine.

I laughed, throwing my head back on his shoulder, and watched as his eyes rested on the swell of my breast. He gulped, turns out I wasn't the only one turned on.

"Where are my kids, Reina?! " He growled, trying to fight against the attraction between us which I'm hundred percent sure he can feel.

"Your kids are fine, Niklaus," I answered.

I don't know how he confirmed I was Maya but he was still slightly stunned when I admitted to being her.

"Can you unhand me, now?" I asked of him, head still resting on the crook of his shoulder - And men, the view from my position was sexy.

"No, I don't trust you," He answered without hesitation.

"Ouch, that hurts. So you don't trust Maya?" I purred, deciding to do some emotional and physical manipulation, intentionally rubbing my backside against him.

His breath hitched but Niklaus showed no other reaction to what I was doing to him. Fine, Let's see how much he's going to last.

"I trust Maya but I don't trust Reina and right now you're Reina. So where are my kids, Reina?" he demanded.

I chuckled, " If you want to know where Allen and Ailee are, you would have to torture the truth out of my mouth - which I know you can't do- So make this easier on yourself by letting me go," I gave him a way out.

I knew Niklaus loved Maya- technically me- too much to hurt her. But this was for his good, the moment he walks into my father's place to get the twins, he becomes a lamb to the slaughter. I don't even dare to think what my father would do to him. I don't want to find out at all.

"Guess what Reina?" Niklaus looked down into my eyes, holding it, "I fully intend to torture you,"

"What?" There was confusion on my face, what was he going to do?

Then I felt it, sensed his hands slip inside my shirt. Oh no, it dawned on me, I knew what he was planning.

"Niklaus, don't," I tried to struggle out of his grasp but he single handedly held my hands too tight.

"You don't understand that I'm protecting you here," I said.

"Well, I gave you too many chances but you leave me with only this choice. Though I don't know what you're protecting me from, you should know I don't need it. What I need is my kids," He declared and moved his hand to my breast.

My breath quickened as his hand started cupping, rubbing my breast through the bra.

"Where are my kids Reina? " he breathed into my ears, making me shudder.

"You're getting nothing out of my mouth," I answered, breathlessly. Gosh, he was good at this. No wonder, father was worried about me hanging around with him when he first gave me the mission.

"You can't fight this, Reina. We both are insanely attracted to each other and by the time I'm done torturing you with pleasure, you'd vomit the truth," He confessed his plan which I had pretty much figured out.

"You can try, but I'm stronger than I look," I said firmly even though my body was throbbing with need.

"Fine, Let's see how far you can keep up your guard," Niklaus issued the challenge and without warning, slipped his hand into my shorts.

"Don't do -"

"Do this?"

He tugged my panties to the side, rubbing his fingertip up and down my labia. I gasped, throwing my head back as the pleasure flowed through me.

"Would you answer me, now?"

"N-no,"

Niklaus wasn't kidding when he talked about torturing me. Each time he touches me, every logical thought flies out of my head while trying to stay rational, else I fall into his trap. It was a real challenge.

Niklaus was prepared for me: his fingers began to move faster against me, my moans reverberating across the room. My hips began to buckle up as I felt my insides clench, I knew I would reach my orgasm soon. But just when the blissful feeling was about to explode within me, Niklaus withdrew his hands.

I had never felt frustrated in my entire life than now, I needed more. There was this fire burning in my veins and I needed him to quench it.

"Niklaus, you're dead meat once I'm free!" I roared in anger mixed with irritation.

"You can free yourself by answering my question and as a bonus, have me as well," He offered a tantalizing proposal.

God knew how much I wanted to give in but I couldn't.

"You don't have an idea of what I'm protecting you from," Was my reply.

"Then I'm guessing that's a no,"

Niklaus suddenly let me go or so I thought because when I turned around, his lips covered mine, I was unable to resist. It was a soft, demanding kiss that I returned passionately.

We were on fire, engulfed by this insane need for skin to skin contact. Perhaps, due to the fervor between us, I forgot his plan to rip the location of the kids out of my mouth.

Niklaus kissed my neck, I moaned. He moved to nibble on my ear without trying to coerce me and I lowered my defenses - maybe he was lost in the moment.

Hungry with need, we peel each other's clothes off hungrily until I was in nothing but my birthday suit while Niklaus' zipped down pants barely hung his waist. He lifted me off the ground and I wrapped my legs around his waist.

He pushed me up against the wall, kissing me as I wrapped my arms around his head, digging my hand into his scalp and pulling him closer. I had this flash of memory that was so intense that it overlapped with reality- It wasn't helpful at all since it made me hungrier for him. But then, I established a fact: we've done this before.

Niklaus knew it was time when my hips began to grind against him. While his hand held my waist, anchoring me to him, the other set free his arousal and entered me without warning.

"My God!" I screamed, my eyes rolling to the back of my head. He was so damn huge yet filling. I began to moan lasciviously as he thrust into me.

Niklaus picked up speed, pounding into me with careless abandon just the way I liked it. It was as if he knew me, knew what my body wanted.

I bit into his neck, nails digging into his back as I felt my organism around the corner when he stopped abruptly. Like stilled completely.

My eyes opened, "What are you doing? Why did you stop?" I pulled out a ragged breath. I was just on the verge of experiencing that bliss when he stopped and my body was tingling for it.

"Where are the kids, Reina?" He asked, refusing to move.

It dawned on me, this was the climax of his plan all along. I began to wriggle and move, trying to find some relief but he stopped every form of movement.

"Niklaus, you can't do this to me," I was on the verge of crying. This was too much.

"The kids,"

He made it worse by kissing down my neck, my body shuddered, I can't take this anymore.

"They are with my father," I confessed, seriously hoping the interrogation was over. I guess I was just deceiving myself because the Niklaus I knew always wants it all and that was confirmed when he asked,

"Who's your father?"

Chapter 276 - Two Hundred And Seventy-six: Meet Her Father

Reina's point of view

I was sure Niklaus would hate me once he finds out the truth. He hated Sakuzi as much as Sakuzi hated him; I can't let both meet.

"I'm sorry but I can't answer that," I replied to him.

"Really?" his brow raised and I could find a trace of annoyance mixed with determination in his eyes.

"Yes, so it's either you continue or just let me down and stop giving me a damn blue vulva," I grabbed his hair tight, hoping he felt this pain I was feeling.

There was an aching, heavy feeling in my genitals since I have been sexually aroused for an extended period without reaching the holy O - sorry, but guys weren't the only one who gets 'blue balls', we're all in the same boat. I needed to climax to release this pressure and Niklaus knows that, which is why he's not giving me what I want.

He was intentionally torturing me.

"Reina, you know what I want and I'll get it because you have no choice but to surrender, " He whispered into my ears, tremors rocked my body, and my grip on my scalp tightened.

Maybe he was right, I can't fight him. Niklaus held me at a tight spot, I was the one at a disadvantage here and the one bearing the brunt of the pain. I thought guys were always the needy ones in this act but Niklaus had so much control over himself that he showed no sign of discomfort at all.

"Fine, I'll take you to them," I gave in at last.

"How do I trust you? You're not exactly reliable at the moment, " he murmured, nipping me at the ear, wriggling his waist a bit, which gave me some sort of relief from this build-up.

"I give you my word," I struggled to breathe, "Besides, how can I escape from you? You're the boss now"

That sentence made his eyes darken with lust and the next I knew, he was slamming into me with a force that continuously ripped whimpers and screams from my mouth.

My nails dug into his back as he came increasingly closer to the right spot with his teeth gritted and then I felt it;

that heavenly bliss, the light blinding my eyes as I felt weightless.

Niklaus followed after me, the orgasm shaking through my body and echoed in his, causing me to rest my chin on his shoulder. We stayed that way for a while trying to catch our breath with a satisfied smile on our faces.

Niklaus pulled out of me but didn't let go of my waist, instead, he kept staring into my eyes that made my heart beat a mile per minute.

"I'm grateful that you're alive," He suddenly said, tucking my hair away from my face.

A surprised gasp left my parted lips, I didn't expect him to drop that kind of comment. My heart pounded harder, it wouldn't surprise me if he could hear that.

His hand began to caress my face, "And I'm so sorry I broke my promise of protecting you and the baby. I failed you and..."

He stopped speaking when he watched a tear slid down my face. I didn't even know why I was crying but my heart just felt so heavy and sad.

"The past seven-years was real hell for me too, Maya" Tears began to fall off Niklaus' eyes?"I blamed myself every day I woke. There wasn't a day I wasn't tortured in my dream,"

The more Niklaus spoke, the more my heart ached and the tears fell. There has been this hollow feeling in my heart over the years and now, someone was unloading the heaviness in there.

"You should know that I love and would always love you, Maya," Niklaus confessed, breaking the dam that bottled all my emotions all these years.

We cried on each other's shoulder, though I was the one who did much of the loud sobbing. Strange enough, I felt better afterward when I stopped crying. It was almost like my soul found peace or something.

I saw Niklaus in a different light, he was the one I needed and I wanted to spend the rest of my life with him amid his flaws and scars; I was in love with him, again.

I initiated a kiss, he responded passionately, pouring all his emotions and unspoken words into it. Unlike before, this kiss was slow, deep, and sweet, we wanted to savor everything.

Burning with desire, we blindly found my bedroom with our lips still attached, unaware of the world and its problems. He placed me on the bed and there we explored the rest of our bodies, touching each other in places that pleased us till we were joined as one.

Niklaus made love to me in ways unimaginable till we were both satisfied and exhausted.

"I survived that fall but I lost my memories," I confessed to him as we lay together, tucked under the sheet after the lovemaking.

My head was on his chest with my hand drawing circles while his hand treads through my hair. That gesture felt familiar, no wonder, I felt like I've been missing a whole lot of things in my life.

"I thought so too," He said.

I turned my head, resting on my chin on his chest asking in surprise, "You did?"

He nodded, "You were so attracted to me - everyone could sense the sexual tension between us - but then your eyes were clear. Though it held affection, you were staring at me like I was a stranger," He explained patiently.

Oh, so that was it.

"I get snippets of my past with you, I haven't recovered my memory fully yet," I informed him.

"Don't worry, you'd recover it with time while I'll be by your side always to support you," Niklaus kissed my forehead.

That gesture warmed my heart. I must have loved Niklaus so much in the past that I couldn't wait to regain the rest of my memories.

"We should start going if you want to see my dad, he gets extremely busy at night," I intentionally dropped hints for Niklaus. He should figure out the kind of job that makes one active at night.

"Alright," Niklaus didn't say anything about the clue I dropped.

I didn't press either but got off the bed with the sheet wrapped around my body while Niklaus stood shamelessly naked. I blushed.

"What are you hiding?" he teased me, "I've already seen and touched everything, just let me enjoy the sight,"

The blush on my face deepened, how could he be so bold to say that. Didn't he have a sense of decency?

"No way," I refused him as he put on his briefs while I searched for my pant. Oh crap, it was in the living room.

"Take it off," Niklaus demanded, " You can't watch mine and deprive me the privilege of seeing your body, "

" No freaking way, Nik - "

He tugged on the sheet and pulled it off without effort, baring me to him. I was so embarrassed that I looked away, my breath shaky as he ravished me with his eyes alone.

"They've improved, " He murmured.

"What?"

"Your breasts," He mentioned without shame.

My jaw dropped, how could someone be this wantonness?.

"Seven years ago, they were so small I had to feed you coconut milk to increase them, " He grinned, "I guess motherhood has done me a huge favor,"

"Y-you," I raised my hand to hit some sense into him but Niklaus captured my hand midway.

"Don't tempt me, get dressed,"

To my horror, Niklaus put the missing panty in my hand, pecked me on the lips, and left the room with a pleased smile at the corner of his lips.

"Pervert," the word was released from my mouth.

Worried he might return to watch some more, I dressed up in a flash, choosing to pick another cloth from the wardrobe when I couldn't find the ones I had previously worn - having known they were in the living room with the one and only Niklaus.

Thankfully, Niklaus respected himself when I came to meet him in the living room. We left, deciding to take his car instead - after playing rock, paper, scissors on whose car to use.

"Honey, you look good in blonde hair but you're not hiding from me anymore, you should revert to your old look," Niklaus attempted a conversation after five minutes of silence in our journey.

"Alright," I replied blandly.

I was nervous; the nerves were playing acrobatics in my stomach. Niklaus would hate me after he sees my father - Sakuzi killed his wife, Kay- they were enemies.

"Any chance I might change your mind about going to see my father?" I tried my luck.

"Not at all, my mind is set," Niklaus replied, eyes fixed on the road.

"Is your father a good person?" Niklaus asked me that strange question. Has he figured it out?

"He's good to me and the twins but the same can't be said for others, especially you. If I could give you an advice Niklaus, I would rather you turn around and let me handle this, please?" I grabbed his free hand, rubbing it tenderly.

He turned and smiled at me, saying,

"What kind of man would I be if I can't protect the woman I love and our kids?"

Chapter 277 - Two Hundred And Seventy-seven: Betrayed Him With A Kiss

Niklaus' point of view

Reina was uncomfortable, I could tell that, which made me anticipate meeting this man called her father. I knew how much she had longed to meet him during her time as Maya so I didn't discourage nor show an ounce of fear.

It was clear, only the bad guys were active at night since it provided the best cover for their illegal activity. I was tempted to call my men but decided against it, I wasn't going there to declare war against her mysterious father. However, if things got bad, I trusted Reina would do the right thing.

It was quite funny, she didn't even know she had the power to control all of my men. Call me stupid or something but even after Maya died or thought she died, I had not withdrawn the authority I gave her. Reina just needs to make a call to Micheal and the rest is settled.

But as I said, I didn't come here to make war, even bad guys are fathers and husbands, I'll just have to inquire about what her father wants and if things go well, take away Maya and my kids immediately.

Allen and Ailee shouldn't live in that kind of negative environment. As someone who lived in one, I can tell you that with time, you're inevitable to take a life - intentionally or unintentionally - I don't want such a future for them.

"What are the twins like?" I asked out of curiosity.

Reina gave me a strange look, "Didn't you three form a father-child bond behind my back, so you should know everything already,"

I sensed sarcasm in her voice.

A smile tilted my lips to the side, Reina was jealous, "I mean personality-wise, I didn't have enough time to study them during our chat," I pretend not to notice the grudge in her tone.

"Well, guess, what?" the corners of her mouth quirked mockingly, " They inherited your stubbornness -"

"A-ah," I gestured no with my finger, "That gene is obviously from you,"

"No way, they took my intelligence," She argued.

"Yeah, intelligent indeed. You're as intelligent as a goose," I sassed.

Suddenly, her eyes turned red. Uh oh, Maya mode activated. I was in trouble.

"Did you just call me a goose?" she pointed to her chest with all seriousness.

"No," I gulped, refusing to meet her burning orbs.

"Why don't the both of us die today," She said and before I could react, grabbed my hair tight.

"Ouch! Reina, I'm driving," I struggled to keep the pain at bay and drive at the same time.

"I don't care! I'm a goose? You slept with a goose then, huh? Do you know how many suitors are fighting each other to have this goose as a wife," she effused.

I had no choice, I packed the car by the side of the road and spent the next fifteen minutes placating her. Seriously, why were women so hard to please? It was just a joke - a joke that hit close to home. Fine, no more calling her a goose.

After appeasing the tigress, we drove to our destination in silence. The first thing I noticed about the mansion was the huge intimidating gate and men standing patrols.

There were no other houses around for quite a distance as if they had purposely bought the lands off. No wonder the twins didn't want me to come - without Reina's direction, I might lose my way here.

Reina was the first to get down and I stepped out after taking in our environment only for her to press me against the car, kissing me.

I was surprised, this was unexpected. Not to add that this kiss was questionable, it was as if Reina was saying goodbye or something.

"Is this a good luck kiss?" I asked, breathless.

"Sort of, you're going to need it" she replied and kissed me once more.

"Your father hates me, doesn't he?" I inquired knowing that was the only reason the man would keep me away from my kids for seven years.

"Trust me Niklaus, when you see him, the feeling would be mutual," she answered.

I caught the wistful look on Reina's face. Who was her father? I began to go through my memory, thinking hard about people I must have offended or offended me. None of them fit being Reina's father but there was a nagging feeling in my belly as I thought of one person. No, I refused to believe that.

"It's time," Reina grabbed my hand and began to lead me to the gate.

"Open up," She said through the intercom and the next, the huge gate slid to the side electronically and we went in.

I could sense their intense glance at me and it didn't seem friendly at all. They surely knew who I was else that one by my right wouldn't be glaring at me.

"What's he doing here? How could you bring him here?" a man came out of nowhere to confront Maya.

"Get out of my way, Andrew" she growled at him.

Andrew? My brow raised at the mention of that name which made me look at him closely.

"You?" I was shocked, pointing at him, "Wasn't he your ex-boyfriend?" I asked Reina, "What's he doing here?"

"It's a long story," was all she said.

"I'm not letting him in," Andrew insisted, disregarding my presence; he treated me as if I was air.

"Niklaus would come in and there's nothing you can do about it," Reina demanded, not caring about his opinion.

"Watch me," Andrew challenged.

Suddenly he brought out a gun and pointed it at me, but what happened next left me baffled.

Reina brought out her gun from underneath her shirt, instead of pointing it at Andrew, pointed it at herself. In synchrony, all the guards around us fixed their guns on Andrew instantly.

Wow, It seems Reina's words here weigh a lot - her father must love her a lot to give her this much authority. But what surprised me the most was how she had a gun and I didn't know it. Maybe my private investigator was right, I should be wary of Reina. She might be Maya but we spent seven years apart and people change, coupled with the fact she lost her memories. What if all this was a pretense and she was leading me to my slaughter?

Seeing he was outnumbered, Andrew had no choice but to lower his weapon but he hit me in the face.

"Get away from him now!"

I had never seen Reina this furious, she looked like she would murder him that moment. It relieved me to know she cared this strongly for me,?I could trust her now.

"Let's go," She grabbed my hand, leading me through the entrance door.

We went through a long hallway with lots of rooms coming off of it. Some of the doors were opened, showing me bald men with tattoos scattered around their bodies and playing cards; rooms storing weapon crates with men checking them out and so many others.

That assured me that her father was involved with a gang that I now know. That tattoo could only belong to the falcon gang and as much as I tried to deny it, evidence was everywhere.

"We're here," Reina said to me as soon as we walked into the spacious lavish-looking living room.?She must have sensed my withdrawal because she let go of my hands, going to meet a man that had his back turned to us as he instructed another.

A name lingered on my tongue but I refused to say it out, no, I didn't want to call it out. There was no way this was happening.

"Father,"

"Reina dear," He turned and our eyes met and held.

Sakuzi.

I didn't know how to feel at that moment. I had a premonition that it was him but I refused to admit it until I saw it with my eyes and now I did,?I want it to be a dream.

"Sakuzi is your father?" I asked in disbelief.

She nodded.

"Nice to meet you again, Niklaus," He smirked at me, "Though it has been seven years, it still feels like yesterday,"

"And you don't look any younger," I countered, struggling to keep my emotions under check. Now, I saw him, the memories of Kay I had buried years ago come flooding back.

"Alright," Sakuzi clapped his hand, "Thank you Reina dear for bringing him straight to me, you'd be rewarded greatly for this job well done," he said.

Between me and Reina, I couldn't tell who was more shocked, or maybe she was faking it. If I listen carefully to his speech, she just betrayed me.

"That is not true!" She hollered.

Reina approached her father, turning to look back at me with anxious looks and back to him, whispering something I couldn't hear.

"Don't worry, I won't kill him as I promised you but he won't leave here in one piece," Sakuzi declared.

"Father!" She cried out, deterred.

"Take our guest out, he'd be having a pleasant time here," My arch-nemesis, Sakuzi, instructed four men who came out of nowhere and grabbed me. I couldn't fight back, they manhandled me. It dawned on me, this was a trap and I fell right into it.

"Niklaus!" I heard Reina call my name but I didn't turn to look at her. I needed time away from her. No wonder she kissed me earlier having known this would happen. Just like Judas, Reina betrayed me with a kiss.

Chapter 278 - Two Hundred And Seventy-eight: Rescue Mission

Reina's point of view

"What was the meaning of that?! " I yelled, following him into his office. He has to give me an examination for that charade earlier.

"You've already done your part, there's no need to bother me," Father replied, plopping down on his swivel chair with a tired sigh.

"That's the point, father! We never discussed bringing Niklaus over and imprisoning him. He came here to see his children and possibly talk with you but you just made it seem like I betrayed him!" I was slowly running crazy. That look Niklaus gave me earlier pierced my heart, I was no more than a stranger in his eyes. All I wanted was for him to meet his kids, not this.

"That's why I'm thanking you for making the job easy and rest assured I won't kill him as promised," He said casually, opening the laptop on his desk.

I grabbed my hair, pacing to and fro the room. Father was doing this on purpose, he just doesn't understand me at all.

"Niklaus is the father of my kids, you can't do this to him. Have you ever wondered how the twins would feel if they know you're keeping their father hostage? "

He glanced up, saying seriously,

"They'll feel bad at first but with time, they'd understand the reason for this and get over it. I should be the one advising you not to think of accepting Niklaus as your husband - not even in your wildest imagination because that is not going to happen, "

"What?"

I was so shocked by that statement that I took a step back. There was no way on earth that my father meant that, right?

"You heard me right, Reina. There's no way on earth you're marrying into Spencer's family, that's over my dead body," He declared.

It dawned on me, my father was joking with my happiness. He wasn't the one who would end miserably as a wife to a man I don't love, it's me. I'll be the one living in such loveless marriage. I had to speak up now or forever hold my peace.

"Why do I even have to obey you?" I blurted out.

"What?" Sakuzy was taken aback.

"I like Niklaus, no, I love Niklaus, I should fight for that, not listen to you tell me who to love,"?It was as if my eyes were suddenly open and I could see what I've been missing out on all this time.

"Reina?" he growled. That was a warning - that I wouldn't listen to.

"I'm sorry father," I apologized, already making it out of his room at full speed.

"Reina!"

I heard him continuously yell my name but I didn't listen rather sprinted down the fleet of stairs and headed for the holding room.

And there I found him.

Niklaus was standing with his hands chained to the wall while someone was hitting him.

I came closer to discover it was? Andrew again! What the hell was his problem?

Searing hot anger blinded me and the next I knew, I grabbed the metal chair that must have been used to restrain Niklaus earlier and brought it down on the asshole's head.

You should see the surprise on Niklaus' face when Andrew got knocked out only for I to appear in his line of view.

"Reina," his eyes widened, "I thought you were -"

"Think no more," I grabbed his hair, pulled him closer, and kissed him as passionately as I could. The thought of losing him scared me so much that I'll rather die with him. I tasted blood from his lips, Andrew must have hurt him there.

When we separated for air, Niklaus looked me straight in the eyes, searching for something.

"Did you recover your memories?" He asked, awe still plastered on his face.

"No," I replied, "But I think I'm hopelessly in love with you,"

"Huh?"

"I love you, Niklaus," I confessed, a weight being lifted off my chest.

"Tell me you didn't fall for me a second time," He smiled, his sexy bruised lips kinked to the side.

"I think I did," I smiled back at him.

"I guess you can't resist my charm," He flirted with me.

"Don't get too cocky, Niklaus," I told him, my eyes moving to the binds on his wrist, "I need to get you out of these,"

"You can't sweetheart,"

"I don't need that kind of negativity, Niklaus, especially from someone who always knows a way out of every problem," I said, checking how to hack them

"You give me too much credit," Niklaus chuckled, "But this is the truth this time: This place is a fortress, even if you get me out of these binds, we won't make it out of here..." There was a sudden commotion, "And speaking of which,"

That comment made me turn around to see that my father has arrived here with his men. Oh no.

"Reina," Niklaus called me as I hastily searched for a way to release him.

"Reina," He called again.

"No, just give me a bit of time. I can just -"

"Reina dear, come here," I heard my father's taut voice, he was on the verge of exploding.

I shook my head stubbornly, pulling on the chains all to no avail. This was frustrating! And Niklaus added to that by saying, "Go with your father,"

"Shut up, you're talking bullshit. I'm busting you out of here," I said, but inwardly knew it was impossible. Even if I got him out of those restraints, there was no hell on earth father would let us leave without a fight - which he would win of course.

Fresh tears fell from my eyes, I've never felt as helpless as I felt now except that time I felt off the bridge - that was the only memory I never lost for once.

"Go with your father, I'll be fine," Niklaus told me as I cried on his chest. We just reunited with each other, why can't everyone just let us be.

The anger and the frustration added, made me kiss him again, this time with heated intensity.

I rested my forehead against his when Niklaus abruptly mumbled, "Call Eden,"

My eyes twitched, what did he just say?

"Call Eden," He whispered once more, "He'll know what to do. Now, go,"

I pretended not to have heard what he said so as not to arouse suspicion from my father who had his eyes trained on us.

I went back to him, saying sarcastically "Hallelujah, you won,"

Sakuzi simply gestured to the man by his side, who came up to me and grabbed me roughly

"What the hell are you doing?!" I was flustered as he began to search me.

"Take every electronic gadget she has on her and make sure she doesn't get her hands on one. Then lock her up in her room, ensure she doesn't leave till we're done with this bastard," My father instructed.

And just like that, I was stripped of my phone that could get me the help I wanted.

"Niklaus!" I called him but he wasn't in the position to help me.

They dragged me into my room and locked me up. I banged and banged against my door but they didn't open up. I was worked up for about an hour before I decided to calm down and think. Getting angry would not solve my problem and I refuse to let my father maltreat Niklaus.

Suddenly, it clinked in my head: Ailee and Allen.

"Hey!" I banged hard on the door.

"What is it?" I heard the gruff voice of whoever was stationed outside my door.

"I need to see my kids," I said to him.

"I'm sorry but they gave us no instructions regarding them hence I can't grant that, "

"You have me locked up, the least you can do is let me see my children and make sure they're okay! Their father is standing helpless in that holding cell and I'm running out of my mind with anxiety, I need to see my children before I go crazy. I'm so tired and scared," I intentionally let my voice crack at the end, sniffing and making it so emotional - thanks to whoever invented acting.

I didn't hear any reply from the guard for about a minute until he said, "Fine, you'd see them but for just ten minutes,"

"Alright, thank you so much, I'll forever remember this," My voice sounded like I was crying when in reality, I had a smirk on. I just hope the kids don't fail my expectations.

*****!

"Did you know that our father's here?" Ailee barged into Allen's room, closing the door hard.

"Yes, so?" Said Allen blandly, eyes fixed on the book he was reading.

"Weren't you the one who was so anxious to meet him and now he's just a few rooms away from you, your excitement dies down?" she gestured and all.

"Grandfather has him hostage and mom started the whole mess, she should clean it up," He said without a care.

With anger, Ailee strode over to him, picked the book, and flung it halfway across the room without a care.

"Have you lost it!" Allen shot up to his feet, fuming.

"I'm sorry but I have not waited seven years plus to meet my father for nothing. So unlike you my bastard twin brother - pun intended by the way - who hides his emotions and thinks everything is okay, I'm going to go release my father!" Ailee spat in his face.

"Do you think I don't want to save him too?" Allen retorted, "Grandfather has him and mom failed to rescue him, what makes you think we'd be able to succeed where the adults fail? "

"Because we're kids and kids think out of the box, unlike adults!" Ailee said to him with hands akimbo.

"Fine, so what's the plan, Mrs know it all?" was his sarcastic reply, throwing his hands up.

"I don't know but I guess, you know... " She shrugged, "Go with the flow of the situation,"

"Such as....?" Allen inquired, hopefully.

A knock came on the door.

"Your mother wants to see you both,"

Ailee tilted her head in the direction of the door, "Such as that," a sly smile pulled her lips to the side.

They opened the door and left with the guard who brought them to the entrance of the room.

"Hand over all electronic gadgets you have on you," the man commanded, reaching out his hands to collect them.

The twins handed their phones. However, the man still watched them expectantly.

"I've watched spy kids. Hand. Them. All," He enunciated.

With a sigh, Ailee handed her hairpin and bracelets while her brother removed the studs in his ear, releasing them all to him.

Still doubtful, the man searched them from their head to the sole of their feet to which the kids complied.

"You have just ten minutes," He informed them, opening the door to let them in.

"Oh my God," Reina came over to hug them all, the door closing behind them. She pulled back, anxiety written all over her face. "I love you kids but tell me you have something for me,"

Allen and Ailee looked at each other briefly before the girl pulled out something from behind.

"I guess someone didn't watch the whole series of spy kids," She smirked, handing the phone to her mother.

Ailee and Allen might have done a bit of collaboration to keep that phone from being discovered: while Ailee was being searched, the phone was tactically moved to Allen and vice versa.

Reina was relieved, she had never been so proud of her children till now.

Chapter 279 - Two Hundred And Seventy-nine: Oh, Thank God

The third point of view

Eden was troubled in his office. Ever since Isabella terrorized his daughter at his place, Anabelle has refused to leave her room not to talk of seeing him.

It was true Isabella was not a model child but she had never been this destructive, they had worked out just fine since their childhood amid their personality differences. What could have caused the rift this time?

Eden was still wondering what he could do to brighten his daughter's mood when his phone rang. Glancing down, it was a strange number, and would have ignored the call if he hadn't felt the urge to answer.

This was a restricted number, hence the only people that could get to it were his family members, a close circle of friends, and few business associates. So whoever was calling him with this unknown line, must mean something to him.

"Hello," He picked up with a bored tone.

"Oh, thank the universe you picked," He heard a somewhat familiar feminine voice.

Wait a minute, Eden's eyes widened.

"Reina...?"

"Yes, you guessed correctly,"

He was delighted, she finally called him. Though her company was active but finding this woman without help from questionable sources was like finding a needle in a haystack.

"I'm so happy to hear your voice. Ever Since you left me at the hospital, I've been searching -"

"Eden, I would have chit-chatted with you on normal days, but right now, I need your help,"

Eden's brows furrowed, why does she sound like she was in trouble.

"You're in trouble, aren't you?" it dawned on him.

"Yes and no: yes, there's trouble but no, I'm not the one in trouble but your cousin Niklaus and you're the only person who can save him," She revealed in one breath.

Eden had mixed feelings about this. Why was Niklaus in trouble and how did Reina get to know about that? Were Reina and Niklaus together?

"What the hell is happening?" He questioned, pushing aside his personal feelings.

"You were right, I'm Maya, "

It felt like a bomb went off in his head. From the start, Eden had an inkling that the girl was Maya come back to life somehow. But since her adamant rejection of that claim, he believed her and finally began to treat her like the Reina she allegedly claims to be.

Moreover, if she was Reina, that means dating and falling for her wouldn't be wrong since she wasn't Maya, his cousin's woman. But now, all his hopes came crashing down.

Amid that, Eden was relieved that she was alive - after all, he had contributed to her death. If he had protected his artist perfectly well, she wouldn't have been assaulted by angry anti-fans and pushed down a bridge.

"M-Maya?" his throat was clogged with emotion, " How did you -"

"I would have loved this emotional reunion and possibly reminisce the past with you but like I said, I don't have enough time and the life of Niklaus is in your hands," she told him with all manner of seriousness.

"Fine, what's going on?" Eden decided to leave this reunion for later. What mattered was finding that annoying cousin of his.

"Well, as you all know I'm Reina princess Armani but what you don't know is that I'm a Sakuzi. Sadly, it turns out that my father and Niklaus have quite a long history. He betrayed my father during a shady business deal which resulted in a shootout that claimed the life of the brother I don't know but called Maxwell and Kay, Niklaus's wife as well.."

Eden froze when that information was passed into his ears. It has been so long already, why was that case reopened again. If only they knew that he was the one who had leaked their location to the police force that night.

"Turns out that Sakuzi's are big on revenge and now, my father is insistent on hurting Niklaus. I've done my best but I'm helpless here neither is my father changing his mind anytime soon. Niklaus told me that I should seek you out, that you'd know what to do, "

Eden rubbed his jaw, thoughtfully. Was Niklaus telling him to confess? But if he does that, Sakuzi's anger would be shifted to him and probably multiplied since he had hidden that secret for years.

"I'm sorry but I can't do that, " Eden relayed.

"What?!" He sensed the disappointment in her tone, "You can't be serious,"

"I'm sorry but unlike Niklaus who has a daughter, father, aunt, and you, Anabelle has only me; nothing should happen to me," He told her.

"I never knew you were this selfish and here I was, about to tell you that I have the permanent cure for Anabelle's poison. So then, are you going to bust Niklaus in exchange for that?" She proposed a deal to him.

Eden thought hard over it and responded, "I'm sorry Reina but I still can't do it,"

"Even with the deal? "

"If you can find the cure, that means my team would make a breakthrough soon,"

"Niklaus must have been a fool for trusting you," She spat and hung up on him.

Eden sighed, rubbing his face with his palm as soon as the line disconnected. He wished he could help Niklaus out but Anabelle was more important; his daughter was too fragile to lose him now.

The moment Sakuzi finds out he hated the wrong person all those years, he'd feel played, added with the frustration and anger, who knows what he would do to him? End his life presumably?

But then, how long was he going to live like this? Eden was no going to lie, he has taken a life before - which was inevitable in this line of business - and though it stayed with him, none had tormented him so much than the secret of knowing he caused the death of

the woman he previously loved.

Eden felt a heaviness in his heart, no day passed by without him being reminded of what he had done to Kay. Perhaps, it was time to pay for his sins, time to make retribution for his crimes.

Eden picked up his phone and called his shadow guard at once, "I need you to track down a number and make arrangements, we are going to war,"

Niklaus was surprised when Sakuzi didn't bother him after separating him from Reina. That asshole Andrew was attaining revenge for what he did to him - framing him for public indecency and sending him to jail- he hurt him pretty badly.

He purposely didn't show an ounce of pain earlier, knowing that Reina would worry about him. Sadly, his joy was short-lived.

As expected of gangsters, the man rained punches on him till he was exhausted.

"Satisfied now?" Niklaus spat out blood from his mouth. That hurts.

"Do you know how long I've waited for this moment?" he said, ramming his fist into Niklaus' face.

His head whipped to the side from the impact, a groan drawn from his lips.

"You took away a son that should have ruled after me!" he yelled, tugging Niklaus' head backward by grabbing his hair painfully.

"And you took the mother of my child. Isabella was made motherless because of you," He retorted.

"That one's on you Niklaus, if you hadn't called the police plus put your wife in her place, she wouldn't have died. So try again for your mind games," Sakuzi growled, then grabbed his chin, turning it side to side as he scrutinized his features.

"I'm such a fool by forgetting that Reina loves beautiful things, no wonder she fell for you a second time," He said, thinking hard, "I wonder if she would still like you if your face is ugly and disfigured-that should settle the score between us," Sakuzi's eyes glinted malevolently.

"Seriously man, don't do this," Niklaus started to struggle to be free. That look in Sakuzi's eyes was enough of a warning sign that he wouldn't like his next plan. Plus, he loved his face, not that he was narcissistic or something - maybe a tad bit narcissistic - but the point is, this face has been with him for thirty-two years of his life, he wouldn't want to lose it.

Sure, he had the money to get plastic surgery done if he became hideous to the eyes. But the pain of whatever plan Sakuzi had installed would be borne by him. To summarize it all, Niklaus loved his face.

Sakuzi turned around, ordering his men, "Get the acid ready,"

Niklaus' eyes widened from shock and disbelief, this man wasn't about to give him an acid bath, right?

"Maxwell has been dead for twelve years, do you think he'd be happy for this blind revenge?" Niklaus tried to reach out to him before his face would be deformed permanently.

"Why wouldn't he want this? You're the one who put him in an early grave,"

"Fine, let's be truthful here," Niklaus had enough of this nonsense, "All these years you've blamed me for being responsible for the whole catastrophe

when in reality, you caused it all,"

"What?" Sakuzi's expression shifted.

"I wasn't even the one who fired the gun that killed your son, he was caught in the crossfire just like my wife, Kay. A crossfire which you started! So if you want to take revenge, start with yourself, "

"Liar!" Sakuzi roared, angered by that false accusation.

He glared at Niklaus just as his men came in with his request. Niklaus groaned - he would have facepalmed if his hands were free - he just made things worse, didn't he?

"No, no, no," Niklaus shrank away just as two men came to unlock the cuffs. He fought hard but he was no match for them, and they subdued him in no time.

Niklaus was forced to his knee, his hand restrained by the men with two others coming to hold steady his legs so he doesn't shake and get acid on anyone else.

"You don't have to do this Sakuzi, we can figure another way out," He pleaded as the stoic looking man got increasingly close with the glass bowl containing the acid.

Niklaus watched his life flash before his eyes as Sakuzi grabbed his hair, planning to dip his face into the bowl when they were suddenly interrupted.

Oh, thank God.

Chapter 280 - Two Hundred And Eighty: A Glimmer Of Hope

The third point of view:

The pressure in the air was so obvious that even the dead could feel it. Both parties stared at each other with a cold-blooded stare.

Just like a video game, Sakuzi's side was determined not to let the enemy penetrate their fortress while Eden's men were determined to invade this fortress by all means possible.

Each side had their guns loaded and aimed at one another. Quite a pity there wasn't a producer around to capture this stunning scene, it was like a clip taken out from an action movie - the film would have been a blockbuster.

"Put your guns down," Eden ordered his men as soon as he came down from the car, "We're not here to start a war but to end an impending one,"

His men created a path which he followed to reach the front, standing in front of the giant who looked like he would snap him into two.

"I need to meet Sakuzi, I believe he has my cousin for reasons best known to him. I think there might be room for negotiations," he said to Emerald who didn't respond.

He went on anyway, "We're not here to start a war so you should order your men down too - for a start,"

Emerald lifted his hand, eyes still trained on Eden and his men as his own men lowered their weapon.

Eden gave him a warm smile as soon as he saw that, they were in for negotiations then.

"Open the gate! "Emerald commanded.

Immediately, the gate was opened allowing Eden and his entourage to drive into the courtyard.

"Where is he?" Eden questioned.

"If you want to see Sakuzi, you have to come in alone,"

"Like hell," Eden refused, "I'm not going into the lion's den unprepared. Look around pal, you guys have the advantage here-what could we possibly do?" he pointed out at the fact that their men were numerous plus the advantage of playing host - they knew here like the back of their hands unlike them.

Emerald wrinkled his nose, "Just one person," he added, "Without a weapon,"

"That is bullshit -"

His shadow guard was about to protest on the partiality however Eden motioned him to quiet down.

"You can go ahead," Eden submitted his weapon and out of the corners of his eyes, signaled his shadow guard to do the same.

Though fuming, the guard had no choice but to bury the grievance in his heart as his weapon was confiscated and they searched him thoroughly.

"You can go in," Emerald made a sign for one of his men to lead them to Sakuzi.

Eden and his shadow guard were then led into the house. Along the way, he observed their surroundings and possible escape routes. To be frank, Eden had no idea what he was doing, all he knew was that he had to make retribution for his sins.

"Here," They led them into the living room where Sakuzi was awaiting him.

"What a pleasurable visit, what brings you to my humble home?" Sakuzi acted the role of a humble host.

Eden had a smile on his lips as he shook hands with Sakuzi, the man was a pretty good pretender.

"You should already know why I'm here," Eden went straight to the point, "Release Niklaus,"

Sakuzi threw his head back and laughed, then he gave a sign with his hand for Niklaus to be brought over.

"How did you know to come so quickly?" Sakuzi asked him.

"Niklaus might not be the family head anymore but that doesn't mean he could be easily kidnapped without notice,"

"Kidnapped?" Sakuzi laughed then murmured beneath his breath, "Reina, that ignorant girl," He already figured out it was her doing.

The men sent out to get Niklaus returned. Niklaus' hands were bound from behind and had a black eye plus other wounds and bruises - he was quite a sight.

"Niklaus," Eden shot up to his feet, heart arching at the sight of his cousin. Though both hated each other, blood was thicker than water. He would rather beat Niklaus up than let an outsider do so.

Eden moved to receive Niklaus but Sakuzi's men blocked him, that action angered him.

"Let him go this instant!" he fumed, glaring at Sakuzi.

"You see that's not possible," Sakuzi told him smugly, "Niklaus is not leaving here without losing a part of his body,"

"You can try but that would happen over my dead body," sneered Eden, "Aren't you afraid of going to war with the Sakuzi Clan? You know we're evenly matched,"

"I wouldn't have started this if I was afraid of that. I'm all prepared and ready to go to war if that means he pays for the death of Maxwell," Sakuzi was determined.

"Niklaus is not responsible for that," Eden told him but the man misunderstood him.

"Of course, you're going to support him as a family - "

"I'm the one responsible for Maxwell's death," He finally confessed.

"What?" Sakuzi was so shocked that he stepped back. His eyes were bulging with veins around his forehead, "What did you just say?"

"You heard me right, Sakuzi. I was the one who leaked your location that day to the police. I'm the one who caused your son's death, you should hold me responsible,"

It was at that tension-filled time that Reina made her appearance known, pushing past the guards to hug Niklaus.

"Thank God," she was relieved, hugging him tightly only to receive a wince from him. That sound made her look up only to find the damages her father did to him. His appearance made her blood boil and was about to give her father a piece of her mind when she stumbled upon the revelation.

"You're trying to say that Niklaus didn't betray me?" Sakuzi was dumbfounded.

"Yes, I was the one who sabotaged that deal,"

Reina gasped, her hands cupping her mouth from the shock. Niklaus was innocent?

"Is what he said right?! " Sakuzi now turned to Niklaus, eyes red from emotions.

"You already heard him, what more do you want to hear? Didn't I tell you all those years that I wasn't the one who leaked the location, yet you never believed me? Why would I sabotage a deal that cost me, my ex-wife?" Was?Niklaus' slightly sarcastic reply.

"I know my apology would not mean anything to you neither would it bring Maxwell back but I'm truly sorry. I didn't call the police intentionally though. I was just childish and blinded by jealousy because he won over the woman I loved too; Niklaus had everything he ever wanted - "

"Adam is the worst, you think I want him as a father? " Niklaus glared at him.

"You have a supportive father who isn't afraid to give you the world, unlike me who has none - thanks to your father, " Eden argued.

"My father is a heartless, manipulative psychopath that I would willingly give to you without even blinking twice," Niklaus retorted, ignoring the stabbing pain at the corner of his jaw.

Then, they began to argue back and front.

"Now stop it! The both of you! " Sakuzi boomed, eliciting a silenced hall instantly. He looked between the both of them, then at Niklaus, "You knew about this all this while, didn't you? You knew your cousin was the perpetrator yet you kept silent?"

"You never asked neither were we on speaking terms, remember?" Niklaus reminded him with his brows raised.

Sakuzi nodded his head, "It must have been funny, wasn't it?"

"What?" Everyone was confused.

"Making fun of me," The seething Sakuzi said and before anyone could stop him, aimed his gun and fired at Niklaus.

But then, something happened.

Just when Sakuzi was about to fire, a tiny scared voice was heard, "Grandfather, no!"

The child got in the way and took the bullet.

"Ailee!" Reina shrieked when she saw her daughter, Ailee, fall to the ground.

There was a horrid look on everyone's face.

The gun dropped from Sakuzi's hands, disbelief mixed with shock written all over his face. His hand which held the gun earlier trembled. What has he done?

Eden and Niklaus went after Reina who was on the floor, cradling her daughter's upper body and wailing like a banshee.

"Ailee," Allen who had been attracted by the sound of the gunshot hurried over to his twin sister.

"Call 911!"

"Get help!"

Eden and Niklaus boomed orders when Reina wouldn't let them get close to the girl.

"Ailee! Stay awake! Stay awake with mommy," Reina burst into tears, burying her face into the girl's stomach.

"I'm sorry mom but I can't hold on," her croaked voice was heard.

"You can't die yet, Ailee," She continuously wept. Her heart was breaking, her daughter always wanted to see her father and now he was finally here, she was dying. No, that was so sorrowful.

"Urm, isn't this the point where she dies already?" Allen said.

Reina looked up, offended by her son's casual insensitive statement, and was about to lash out at him when he pointed to Ailee's chest.

"There's no blood, see?"

Indeed, there wasn't.

A glimmer of hope rose in Reina, that she quickly took off the girl's clothes to see that the bullet was perfectly hedged in the center of the rose gold full circle pendant necklace she was wearing.

Reina couldn't believe her eyes, the necklace she had bought the girl for her seventh birthday saved her life.

This could only be a miracle.