

Stay With Me

Bella

I blushed to hear the nickname that he used only for me. I let him guide me to his car. As he ushered me inside the car, he insisted on driving himself, dismissing the driver despite his injuries. He had always been stubborn, a trait I had known him to possess throughout my entire life.

The car came to a halt in front of his apartment building. Vin stepped out of the car and walked to my side, opening the door for me. He reached out and took my hand, leading me toward the elevator. His intense gaze remained xed on me, and I couldn't help but feel a strong desire to squirm under his possessive stare.

He unlocked the door to his apartment and motioned for me to enter. As I stepped inside, I took in the surroundings. His place was interesting, with shades of white and grey adorning every corner, exuding a sense of classiness and coldness that mirrored Vincenzo's nature.

I slowly took a seat while he went to the kitchen and returned with two glasses of cold water.

"Water!" He offered me one, his deep, husky voice lling the room.

Our eyes brieY met, and I quickly averted my gaze, unable to withstand the intensity and re that seemed to burn in his eyes every time I dared to look.

I took a sip from my glass, letting the cool liquid soothe my parched throat. From the corner of my eyes, I observed him as he, too, drank his water, his actions calm and deliberate. I sensed his eyes on me.

Having quenched my thirst, I delicately placed the glass on the smooth tabletop in front of me. Vincenzo's gaze seemed xed on the table, but a certain inexplicable emotion seemed to shimmer in his eyes, just below the surface.

"Vin, what was that? I mean, the truck, the attack, and the gun ring?!" I nally broke the lingering silence, needing some clarity about what just happened.

"Someone attacked you," he said, nally looking at me.

"What?!" I exclaimed in disbelief. I couldn't comprehend why anyone would want to harm me.

He nodded, inhaling sharply.

"You don't have to worry. I will nd out who did this," he assured me. "By the way, why were you standing crazily in the middle of the road?" he asked, his eyes lled with a mix of concern and anger.

"What were you doing here? Aren't you supposed to be in your oce? Wait! Are you stalking me?!" I countered, attempting to divert attention away from my actions.

He didn't inch, his gaze remaining xed on me,

"I saw you there as I was heading to a meeting. I was puzzled when I spotted you standing in the middle of the road, tears streaming down your face. I halted and was just about to approach you when I noticed a truck speeding toward you," he narrated, his expression reecting genuine concern.

"What happened to you, Petal? Why were you crying in the middle of the road like that?" His voice was laced with worry as he questioned.

I sighed as I hesitated to tell him.

"I blacked out," I replied in a monotonous voice.

"What do you mean?" he snapped, his tone demanding an immediate explanation.

"Ever since the accident, I've been dealing with this issue. Flashes appear that block my vision, and my mind blanks out momentarily," I responded, my gaze xed on my lap. Nervously, I ddled with my ngers. "I underwent treatment for three years, and the doctors assured me that I was ne. But recently, those ashes have started to reappear."

I fell into silence, my ngers gripping the fabric of my dress tightly as if drawing comfort from its touch.

"Have you shared this with your family?" he prodded.

"They were under so much stress for three years, and I don't want to burden them again. I can't recall what happened to me. Hell, I don't even remember what transpired during that one year; that memory has eluded me," I choked on my words, tears welling up in my eyes.

I heard him let out a deep exhale, a sound that carried a mixture of frustration and empathy.

"And to make matters worse, no one wants to talk about that one year. How am I supposed to know what they're keeping from me?" My lips trembled, the oodgates of my emotions bursting open as the tears I had been holding back nally streamed down my cheeks.

"Petal!" He sighed, moving closer and sitting beside me. He gently wiped away my tears, taking my spectacles off my face.

"Bella, your family is protecting you," he asserted, his voice both rm and reassuring. "If they haven't told you about something, it's because they believe it's not necessary for you to know."

"But... but I want to know. It was my life, and I feel completely lost," I managed to say through the tears, the weight of my guilt still pressing heavily on my conscience.

"No, Petal. Please don't cry. I can't bear to see you in tears. It... hurts," he whispered, his gaze locked with mine as he wiped away my tears. "Give yourself some time. Maybe one day, you'll remember everything. But for now, you have to trust your family," he insisted, his sincerity and concern evident. His words seemed to penetrate my heart, stirring a willingness to believe him. He had a way of persuading that always managed to work on me.

"But this situation seems more dangerous than I initially thought. Why would someone attack you?" he mused, a frown forming on his brow.

"Maybe it was just an accident?" I shrugged, attempting to downplay the situation.

"No, it wasn't an accident. You were targeted," he stated rmly, causing a chill to run down my spine.

"You shouldn't be alone, especially since those ashes have started again," he emphasized.

"I'll consult my doctor and start taking medication. Don't worry, I'll be ne," I reassured him. However, he gave me a cold, skeptical look that clearly indicated he wasn't convinced by my words.

Just then, the doorbell rang, breaking our conversation. He swiftly got up and headed to the door. After a brief moment, he returned with a few bags in his hands.

"Petal, your things have arrived. Go freshen up. Your clothes were soiled," he instructed, motioning towards the bags.

"What?! Vin, you really didn't have to do this," I protested, surprised by his gesture. "I was actually planning to leave in a while."

"No, you're staying here until I can ensure your safety," he declared with determination, his tone reverting back to the overprotective friend I knew.