

Chapter 57: Mist

Damon's POV

I was still drying the dishes when Mom and Layla were in the lounge still going through the recipes for the feast they were planning to cook for the Christmas lunch next week and I felt a presence behind me and I already knew it was my father.

"Even after all these years, you still resent me", he said, and I turned to look at him, leaning with my back on the sink

"I don't resent you", I folded my arms, and he pocketed his hands

"Then why are you acting like this?", he questioned. "We can't even have a decent conversation like two adults because you're acting like a child"

"We'll start having a decent conversation like adults when you start acting like one, and you stop treating me like a child", I said, and he chuckled a little before shaking his head "What's this about Damon?"

"Of course you're going to act like you don't know"

"That's because I don't"

"I know about your affairs", I said and his face dropped, like he thought I didn't know. "So I also remind you with whom, or you recall?"

"How did...you-", he stuttered nervously, and it seemed he was experiencing an electric shock, his features starting to twitch

"How did I know?", I interrupted, and he stared at me blankly. "It was easy to figure out; the late night meetings, the out of the blue business trips and the hotel invoices you hid in your bottom drawer. I hired a private investigator, only to find out that my suspicions were true", I added, and he covered his face with his hand. "How could you, Dad?"

"It was years ago"

"Justifying your actions isn't going to solve anything. My mother did everything for you, was there when you were at your weakest and did everything for you. She did all that she could to make you happy, she sacrificed everything for you; her life, her career, her family just to make you happy and be the wife you made her think you deserve. But, nothing will ever be good enough for you, right?. Not even us, your sons are good enough for you, nothing is".

"Don't talk nonsense!", he shouted a little before looking over his shoulder in case someone walked in on us. "I love your mother, and she knows it", he sneered at me and I rolled my eyes. "As if you're a saint. You impregnated another woman and Layla is raising another woman's child as if her own because you also couldn't keep it on your pants, don't act like you're better than me. We're the same".

I grabbed a fistful of his shirt near the collar and nearly punched him, his eyes widened in response when I stopped mid-action, with my fist in the air, then I realized what I was about to do and withdrew my hand

"Never compare your disgusting actions with mine", I pushed his backwards. "At least I took responsibility for my actions and I don't depend on you to raise my son for me"

He scoffed mockingly. "What are you trying to say? That your grandfather raised you more than I did?"

"You were never there", I towered above him in anger and his eyes widened. "You were never there when I needed you"

I unleashed a burden of anger I've been carrying all these years, weighing on my conscience

"Grandad was more of a father than you were, he raised us while you were out there chasing skirts and forgetting that you had a family that needed you", I said with my voice a lot calmer than the first time and his eyes softened with regret written all over your face

"What's going on in here?", my mother walked in the kitchen closely followed by Layla as they looked at us, Layla already questioning me with her eyes and I pushed past my father and them to walk outside to the garden for some fresh air

"Damon, wait", Layla called after me as she jogged to keep up with my hastened pace

"I just need to be alone now Layla, I'm not going to be great company", I turned to her thinking she'll stop and turn back, but instead she kept on following me until she was close enough to grab me to stop me from walking and turned me to face her

"I'm not leaving here until you tell me what's this tension between you and your father, everyone can sense it, especially your mother", she breathed heavily, trying to catch her breath

"I really don't want to talk about it", I said, and she folded her arms

"Damon, what's the point of trying to work things out if you're not going to even talk to me and allow me to be there for you?", she said, and I stopped in my tracks to turn to look at her. I walked back to her and wrapped my arms around her, and she tried to push me from her, but I held onto her tighter.

"I'm sorry, I know you mean well, but this is something I can't share with you just as yet. I'll tell you when the time is right", I released her and held her at arms length, she shrugged and mouthed whatever before turning to leave, but I blocked her way.

"Don't tell me you're mad", I said, and she shook her head

"I'm not mad. Why would I be mad?", she said trying to walk forward, but I kept standing in her way.

"Layla."

"Like you said, you'll tell me when you're ready", she moved to the left to walk past me, but I blocked her way, she moved to the right, but I still blocked her way. This was getting to her, but she tried by all means to keep her cool.

"Move out of the way, please", she stood firmly as she wasn't looking at me, I laughed at her silliness, but she rose her eyes to meet mine, she was now pissed, and I moved out of her way and she started walking

"My father had multiple affairs, ever since I was still a child", I said, and she stopped in her tracks. "That's what the confrontation was about"

She turned to look at me with her eyes softening than a couple of minutes ago

"That's what the tension has been about all these years?", she asked, and I nodded my head

"He's not the man I thought he was. I always thought highly of him, even when I knew something was wrong, I made myself believe that maybe it's just my imagination running wild. All the signs were there, but I chose to ignore them because I'll rather stay in denial that believe he's being unfaithful to my mother", her hand brushed against mine as she was now standing next to me, looking up at me before resting her head on my shoulder.

"I'm sorry", she breathed out, and I quickly wiped of the tears that were about to stream down my face

"Please take a walk with me, I really need to blow off some steam ", I let out a short laugh, and she nodded her head before entwined our fingers together, and we walked towards the rose maze in the garden

Layla's POV

"Layla?", mother knocked on the door and I turned to see her through the narrow opening of the door.

"Come in", I motioned, and she checked the coast before she walked inside our bedroom, I was in the middle of getting ready for bed

"I bought you two a fresh set of towels", she handed them to me and I thanked her, then she started looking around, probably looking for Damon since she hasn't found the time to talk to him after the confrontation he had with dad

"He just got into the shower. You can wait for him if you don't mind, I'm sure he won't be long.", I stated, but she gave a short laugh before taking my hand in hers, giving me a gentle pat and shook her head.

"I actually wanted to talk to you", she motioned that we sat on the bed. "Damon probably told you about the affairs", she said after a long pause and I really didn't know what to say or do in that moment. I just dropped my eyes to the ground.

"It's okay. I know he told you", she gave me another gentle pat on my hand as I bought my eyes up to look at her again and nodded my head slowly.

"You knew?", I asked, and I could see tears build up in her eyes and she bit her lip to stop them from falling

"I'm a woman Layla, all the signs were there", she replaced the almost smile with a smile and then looked at me. "But there was nothing I could do because I loved him and saw a future for us", she said as she gave me a gentle pat again. "You see Layla, as a married woman and a mother, there are things that you can't change or run away from, you just need to stay firm and tackle each and every challenge head on. Even though I knew about his affairs, I couldn't walk away because I had already sacrificed a lot for this family and walking away wasn't an option".

"How did you handle all of this?", I asked, and she smiled before biting her lip again, but she had already lost the battle as tears were already streaming down her face"

"At the end of it all, he still came home to me", she laughed as if she didn't believe she just said those words. "It wasn't easy, but I had to be strong enough to not being weakened by the situation, I had to be strong for both Damon and I"

"How old was Damon at the time?"

"He just turned 3, and I was pregnant by the time I found out"

"With Quinton?", I asked, and I could see her holding a breath before shaking her head

"With a baby girl, I named her Rosemary", she couldn't help to look back the tears. "One day, I came back early from visiting my parents and...", her voice broke. "I walked in on him with another woman, in my bed, our personal space", she wiped of her tears. "I couldn't bear the pain of seeing him in that compromising position, so I made a run for it, but I slipped and fell down the stairs", she was now crying as she recalled the unfortunate day. "I miscarried", she turned to look at me. "Damon was still so young to even know what was going and his father promised he would never have an affair again. But it seems he lied, he continued with them but this time he was careful to make sure I didn't find out, but..."

"Damon put all the puzzle pieces together", I added, and she slowly nodded her head

"I know the pain of losing a child Layla and I wouldn't even wish it on my worst enemy", she brushed my hair with her fingers before cupping my face in her hands. "I'm sorry about what happened to you"

Hearing her tell me this caused old wounds to be ruptured open and tears stung my eyes

"Damon need you", she took both my hands in hers and I nodded my head. "I know things aren't always pleasant between the both of you, but he learned his lesson. I want the two of you to be genuinely happy, not because you feel like it's what you have to do, but because the two of you love each other enough to make it work and build each other".

"I don't blame you for walking away that day, but I am happy the two of you found your way back to each other again", she smiled as she stood up and kissed my cheek. "I couldn't have asked for a better wife for my Damon".

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