

## Chapter 119

DAMIAN

I knew Anton was watching me. I turned a little in my seat to see him actually doing that. I sighed. I supposed I was being very obvious. Something was bothering me and try as I might, I couldn't shake it off.

"Ah. I knew you would finally get to it," Anton said lightly the moment I opened my mouth.

In no mood for any form of levity, I waved off his words.

"Something is wrong with Amelia," I said. "But I can't just figure out what it is. It's not for lack of trying."

"Ah." Anton said again as he took one leg off the top of the table in my office. "This... problem of yours must have a root, does it not?"

"Yeah. Well..." I thought back to the dinner we had with Anton and Queenie days ago. That day had changed everything. "The other day she threw up and the first thing that came to mind was pregnancy. I thought she was pregnant."

"And is she?" Anton asked quickly.

"No. She isn't. She told me that herself. I then I apologized for my mouth running away with me." Anton's next words were going to be somewhere along the lines of "What exactly did you say to her?" so I saved him the trouble of asking by adding, "I may have told her something about her being angry at me saying I suspected she was pregnant because she was disappointed she wouldn't get child support. We settled things eventually but there's been this reserve on her path towards me since then. Apart from that, What really irks me is the fact that I don't know how I'm supposed to feel about the fact that she isn't pregnant. Am I supposed to be happy or not?"

"That, my friend, is a question only you can answer, but if you ask me--"

"I am asking you."

"-Then I will say you should be happy to have your own child. I can't say I'm talking from experience but I intimately know people who have kids. I must say it's a rather rewarding experience. No feeling in the world compares to it."

"I know. Of course I know all that, but you don't understand. You don't..."

I paused, feeling my throat close up. Having kids or even a kid wasn't simple, at least for me. Especially for me. How could I even begin to communicate the way I felt?

"Then make me understand," Anton urged quietly.

"I'm going to mess it up. I know I am... Fatherhood, I mean. I feel I don't have what it takes to be a father. I have absolutely no idea how to raise a kid. There's this fear I've always that I'm not going to be a good father, that I'll be a terrible father like my own father. I didn't have anyone teaching me different growing up. And Amelia... She's too good for me. After all she's been through, the woman needs a man whole who will give her the kind of love she deserves."

Anton raised a brow at this. "You're quick to write yourself off. What makes you think you can't be that kind of man for her?"

"I don't think it. I know it. I know what she wants in a man. She wants a traditional man, a man who will garden, be a perfect father to her children, do cute, romantic stuff and all that. I don't see myself being that kind of man. It just isn't me."

"Well, I'll tell you what I know, the few things I know, Damian." He held up a finger. "The first is that you are not going to be a bad father because even the very idea of being one troubles you. Instead of ruining what you have going on with Amelia because of your doubts, why don't you just share them with her? I'm sure she'll understand and then you both can work all this out together."

Even in the state I was in, I couldn't help but notice the change in Anton. When had my party hard, happy-go-lucky friend become this deep? And his expression was solemn too. The look was so out of place on Anton's face that it was like looking at a stranger. I chuckled.

The corners of Anton's lips twitched in amusement. "I'm glad to see something I said amused you."

"I was just wondering when you had become a therapist. Also you seem to have forgotten that you never wanted Amelia and I to end up together in the first place. In fact, you were all for not getting too emotionally attached to her before the contract was over."

"Ah. Yes. But then I changed my mind when I saw firsthand what you and Amelia share. What you both share..." He paused to search for the right words. "It's deep. It's strong and you, my friend, will be stupid to let something like that go."

"And may I ask what brought about this... enlightenment?"

"Queenie."

"Queenie?"

"Yes. The bond I feel growing for her. It's strong. It has changed my perspective about relationships. I've never met any girl quite like her. She is unimpressed by me, by what I've achieved. She doesn't fawn over me like other women do."

"I thought she was rather taken with you the other day at my house," I observed.

"She was interested, maybe a little bit, but she's not forcing anything between us. She's a woman that knows what she wants. My usual tactics with women won't work on her. It drives me crazy, man, even though I have only known her for just a few days. I'm trying to get through to her as soon as possible because the thought of another man being with her... it just drives me wild."

Anton relieved some of his feelings by shoving his hands through his hair.

I realized then that Anton was right. I couldn't stand the thought of loosing Amelia to another man.

"What do I do?" I asked desperately. "I don't know where to start. With all I've told Amelia I think I may have pushed her away already. She must have given me up as a lost cause. I don't want to lose her, Anton. I don't."

"Therapy."

"What?"

"You need a little help to get past this. I'm suggesting therapy to deal with the issues you have. It--"

"No way!" I said, slamming my fist on the table. "I'm not going to see a therapist to talk about my childhood."

"But that's not all--"

"Nothing will ever make me do that. Nothing!"

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"I must say, I'm really happy you have decided to choose therapy, Mr Donovan," the therapist said.

I rolled my eyes at the ceiling as I took a seat.

"It wasn't my idea to come," I pointed out. "My best friend insisted that this was for the best. I decided to give it a shot. I hope to see positive results immediately."

She let out a quiet laugh. "I'm Myra by the way, and first I must tell you that is not how therapy works. The results are not instant. It requires work for therapy to work." She chuckled at her own joke which I thought was rather lame. She grew serious again as she adjusted the glasses perched on her nose. "Mr Donovan, may I ask why you decided to try therapy? Please explain your answer in as detailed a way as possible."

"It's simple actually. I'm trying to stop myself from hurting someone I love." The word 'love' got stuck in my throat on it's way out. But it was the truth. I did love Amelia. I loved her almost to the point of distraction.

"I see." Myra tapped the notebook she was writing in before saying. "And why do you think you are going to hurt her?"

"Because I am hurt her already. She wants kids, love... everything I can't possibly give her."

"I see," she said again and I was left wondering what she really did see. "Let's talk about love for a moment. Why do you think you are incapable of loving her?"

"It's complicated," I bit off.

She nodded, made a note. "Please, tell me about your childhood."

So much for Anton telling me this was the best thing to do!

What the hell was with shrinks and people's childhoods anyway? They seemed to have a fixation about it from all I had heard and watched on TV. This one was proving me damn right.

"What's that got to do with anything?" I snapped. "I'm not here to talk about what happened to me years ago."

I got to my feet immediately to leave.

"Mr. Donovan, please have a seat."

"I think I'm in the wrong place," I told her. "Scratch that. I know I am in the wrong place. Excuse me."

"I just have one question for you. Are you truly hurting the person you love or yourself?"