

Chapter 629 Madness

Taylor typed. "So what if I was drawn to Lilah the instant I laid eyes on her? Is it such a crime that my feelings curdled into resentment and I lashed out at her? Had I done something so terrible that it could never be forgiven? Do I really deserve to be struck down for it?"

Nobody in the family chat had expected Taylor to explode like that. Most assumed he'd be hiding his face in shame, doing everything he could to avoid Cole's fury. His reaction was bold, almost reckless, but it suited a man of his celebrity stature. Whatever else could be said about him, he didn't lack courage.

A silent round of approval followed. Taylor might be a fool for stirring the hornet's nest, but at least he wasn't spineless. Admiration, however, didn't erase the fact that as family, they couldn't just watch him throw himself headlong into disaster.

The tone of the chat flipped instantly into warnings and advice.

"Taylor, don't gamble with your future like this."

"Sure, unrequited love sucks, and flipping from love to hate is a bad look. But at least you only made a fool of yourself in front of family. Outside, your image as a glamorous star is untouched."

"We'll try not to needle you too much about this later. And even if we do, just tune us out."

"We're all family here, and Cole isn't that vindictive. When he returns, offer him an honest apology. He'll let it slide."

"But let's be real—Cole's already under Lilah's spell. Your best bet is to win her over first. If she forgives you, getting Cole to back down will be a piece of cake."

Their words painted a vivid picture in Taylor's mind. He saw himself kneeling before Lilah, begging for her pardon. The thought alone made him frown deeply.

All night long, Taylor had ripped Lilah apart with words in the forum. Even though he hadn't meant half of it, the constant repetition had hammered the curses into his own mind until they sounded like an undeniable truth. By now, he had convinced himself Lilah was nothing but a pretty shell with nothing of value beneath. To drop to his knees for a woman he had spent hours tearing down? To beg her for forgiveness? The very thought shredded what little pride he had left. No, that was impossible.

Yet, if he couldn't get Lilah to forgive him, how was he supposed to face Cole? Cole might not go so far as to kill him, but Cole had a thousand ways to break him apart without shedding a drop of blood. Within the family, Cole could freeze him out. In the industry, Cole could blacklist him so thoroughly that he'd tumble from A-list star to a man begging for scraps. Fans would abandon him, the media would drag him, and strangers on the street might spit at his feet. Just imagining it sent a violent shiver racing down his spine.

Suddenly, Taylor felt suffocated, wedged between two nightmares. He could either swallow his pride before Lilah or suffer Cole's relentless vengeance. After turning it over in his mind again and again, one terrifying thought rose to the surface—if he wanted to survive with dignity, maybe the only option was to remove Cole entirely.

Wait a minute. Remove Cole? The thought rattled him so hard that he flinched, horrified by his own madness. Cole wasn't just anyone—he was a global powerhouse, the Evans family's unshakable leader. Thinking about taking Cole down was nothing short of delusional. He must have lost his mind to even entertain such a notion.

In a frantic attempt to break the thought, Taylor slapped himself across the face, once, twice, but the haze of desperation refused to lift. The blows to his face did nothing to clear his thoughts. Instead, they left his skin raw and his skull pounding.

Pain only fueled the chaos inside him. Unhinged and restless, he lunged for his phone and hammered at the keyboard, words spilling faster than his brain could process. By the time his thumb hit send, he barely thought it through about what he'd written.

Taylor's messages appeared in the group chat like a live grenade.

"I'm an A-list star, damn it! Do you really think I'm so weak that I'd crawl on my knees? I'd sooner die standing tall than bow to anyone! Beg Lilah

for forgiveness? Over my dead body! In this life or the next, I'll never stoop to her. If anything, I'll dedicate every breath I have to crushing her!"

"And don't think my words against her stayed in this chat. I spent the whole night dragging her name across the Ublento Medical University forum! That's right—'Ice Lilah'? That was me! I called her out, and I dare her to face me! If Cole values me as his cousin, he'll cut that woman loose right now. If he won't... Then fine, I'll be the one to cut him off!"

"If Cole dares to bring Lilah into this family, then I'll dare to face him head-on. Jason backed out of the duel? Then I'll step in. I'll fight Cole myself! And when I do, the world won't be able to look away. That battle will decide everything. The Evans family will have a new family head, and it won't be him—it'll be me! So think carefully about where you stand. When I take the head seat, anyone who isn't with me will be wiped out. No mercy. I'll cleanse this family in blood, and those who sided against me won't live to regret it!"

Taylor ended his outburst by sending a photo. The photo was an old still from one of his blockbuster films—him in black battle armor, a gleaming long sword in his grip, eyes alight with murderous intent.

Beneath the picture, a bold caption read, "I would rather betray the world than let the world betray me. Kill whoever stands in my way!"