

Chapter 735 Dread And Loathing

Elliana understood Paulina's concerns at once. She reached for Paulina's hand, her touch gentle but firm—a silent plea. "This is all we can do for now. Just promise me one thing. No matter what happens, make sure my babies reach Cole safely."

Paulina's eyes shimmered with tears, her voice trembling as she replied, "You have my word. I'll guard them with my life."

A faint, grateful smile curved Elliana's lips. But before she could say another word, a sharp pain tore through her belly, leaving her breathless. The contractions were coming harder and faster. The time had come.

The medical team sprang into motion instantly.

Meanwhile, outside the operating room, chaos ruled.

Jason proved to be a far tougher opponent than Matthew. Miguel soon realized this fight wouldn't end easily.

Jason and Miguel clashed again and again, their blows echoing through the hall like thunder. Each strike was fierce, each movement calculated. Neither man was willing to back down.

But the tide was shifting. Jason was beginning to falter.

Miguel, though older by decades, moved with the speed and precision of a man half his age. His years of training had sharpened him into a living weapon. His body was honed, his instincts razor-sharp.

Jason's rhythm broke. His punches slowed. And then, in one split second, his guard dropped. Miguel seized the opening and slammed a powerful kick into Jason's chest.

The impact was brutal. Jason was lifted off his feet and thrown backward, crashing hard onto the floor. Blood burst from his lips. Though

tougher than Matthew, the blow had crushed his ribs and left him barely breathing.

"Mr. Evans, are you okay?" his men shouted, rushing to his side.

Jason didn't answer. He gritted his teeth, forced himself up, and wiped the blood from his mouth. His cold eyes locked onto Miguel. The message was clear—he wasn't done yet.

Miguel's brow furrowed. "You still want to fight? Another hit like that, and you're a dead man."

Jason let out a bitter laugh. "I told you already—if you want that door, you'll have to go through me."

Miguel stared at Jason, almost in disbelief. The man was out of his mind. He glanced at the operating room door and then back at Jason. "Elliana belongs to Cole, not you. Is she really worth dying for?"

"Cut the crap," Jason snapped.

Miguel tilted his head and let out a low chuckle. "Don't tell me you've fallen for her."

The words hit Jason like a slap. His heart clenched. His feelings for Elliana were his burden alone—something he'd buried deep and would never admit, especially not to this man.

Fueled by rage, Jason lunged forward, ignoring the pain tearing through his body. But his strength had abandoned him. His speed was gone. His charge was desperate, reckless.

Miguel didn't even move. He waited calmly, and when Jason came within reach, he struck again—another merciless kick, right where he'd hit before.

Jason's body lifted and then crashed to the floor once more. Blood spilled from his mouth, staining the floor beneath him. He tried to rise, but his body gave out. After a few failed attempts, he collapsed, motionless.

Miguel dusted off his coat as if nothing had happened and walked toward the operating room. His hand had barely touched the cold metal doorknob when a voice cut through the corridor. "Miguel. Long time no see."

The sound froze him in place. Slowly, he let go of the knob and turned.

The entire hallway fell silent.

Even Jason, broken and bleeding, lifted his head.

A woman was walking toward them with calm, graceful steps. Her long black gown swept the floor, and a dark veil hid her face, concealing her age and features. Her voice was soft, melodic—too young for what Miguel knew to be true. Because this woman was no stranger. She was nearly eighty years old. It was Maxine. She had arrived.

Miguel had done everything possible to avoid Maxine, but fate had other plans. His heart was a storm of dread and loathing. Fear had been carved into his bones by her hand, and hatred had burned there ever since Rita's fleeing.

He had lived under Maxine's shadow—her cruelty, her power. Fear had once been his master, but time had turned it into venom. For years, he had dreamed of killing her, of taking the Griffiths family for himself. Now, seeing her again, the hatred surged like fire, but the old fear still whispered in his veins.

Flanked by her entourage, Maxine glided forward, her veil swaying lightly. Her voice carried a trace of amusement. "After all these years, you've finally shown your face."

Miguel stood frozen, his jaw tight, his body coiled with tension.

She studied him calmly, a faint sigh escaping her lips. "You've done well, Miguel. Still as talented as ever. What a pity you were born a man. If you were a woman, I'd have made you my successor."

Her words sliced deep, reopening old wounds. The Griffiths family's twisted matriarchal rule had haunted Miguel since childhood. Hearing her mock him with it now shattered his restraint. His fury exploded, raw and blinding, swallowing every trace of control he had left.