

## Benefits 151

### Chapter 151: The Enemy

"We need to rescue Sara as soon as possible." Lara paced the length of the dark room as she spoke angrily.

"I just don't understand how she was caught. How did they get suspicious of her? I'd been so careful with helping her establish the cover. Then how did that Demon Frost know to catch her?"

"I need answers, Tom. Have you found out where Sara is right now? She's too fragile. She won't last long under torture. And if something happens to our baby..."

The man narrowed his eyes as he glanced at the woman he loved and shook his head. "I've already found out how they discovered that. The boy that Sara used to stalk Nora and scare her, his roommate was some kind of live streamer. He usually used backgrounds so no one bothered about it, but Demon used experts who cleared the backgrounds to check who frequented the boy and what they spoke about."

"That man was like a dog who had a bone in his teeth, refusing to let go. Even the mastiff incident, on the surface he let rumors spread that he had stopped looking into it but he did not."

Lara's eyes narrowed in hatred as she heard the words. So, they'd never fooled those people. That girl Nora really had made things difficult for her this time. For the first time, Lara felt at a loss. She had gambled everything for this and lost. This was not how it was supposed to be! Nora should have died like that Nellie! Instead, that girl was parading through the high society, showing off while her Sara was...

Tom sighed as he looked at the crazed Lara and shook his head, "It would have been better if you had abandoned that girl and taken Sara to come and live with me abroad. I have the money, Lara. You know that. Sara is being held in a mental institution. Why don't you go ahead to country N? I will rescue our daughter and bring her there."

Lara shook her head at the suggestion. "No. I still have one ace up my sleeve. That girl Arabelle. I'm still in touch with her. I've already probed. Even though she is engaged to Gabe Frost, she is only interested in getting rid of Nora. She will help me. The only problem is that fiancé of hers. He seems to be keeping a close eye on her."

"There is something else you need to know Lara." Tom spoke gravely.

"What is it?"

"That Demetri Frost is already sniffing around Nellie's case. It won't be long before he will be able to pin that in you."

Lara stilled. "Why would he do something so futile? Nellie has nothing to do with that man... It must be Nora who told him to investigate because of that skeleton. We need to get rid of Demetri Frost along with that Nora..."

"Its not that. Demetri Frost was the one who arranged for Nellie to be buried..."

This caused Lara to actually freeze as she understood the implications... and she laughed loudly, "No wonder that Nora's luck has been so good. So she ended up with that Nellie's ex. What a small world. Don't worry, Tom. First, we'll rescue Sara and then the both of you can leave the country. I will get rid of those two and follow you."

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Inside the mental institution, Sara Anderson continue to stare at the blank wall in front of her with red eyes. She had been so happy when Antonio had agreed to marry her. Why did this happen to her every time? Why was she so unlucky?

The previous time he married her, the priest turned out to be a fake. She did so many things to make him love her and give in to her and yet things turned out like this. All Nora had to do was die so that Antonio would never look at her again and doubt himself of his love for her. But instead now he hated her.

Just as she sat there, a nurse entered the room and she glared at the woman, "Why are you here? I don't want any more medicine. You people are horrible. I am perfectly normal but you keep trying to make me insane."

The nurse nodded calmly and agreed, "I know, Sara. Come here, I'll help you comb your hair."

Sara glared at the nurse. This nurse was too kind. The previous ones were not like this. They would simply pull her by the hair and threaten to cut off her hair if she did not listen to them. "Are you going to cut off my hair? Are you hiding the scissor behind you?"

Sara lunged at the woman, trying to check her body for scissors, but the woman caught the girl in her arms and whispered to her, "Sara, be calm. Your mother has sent me to bring you out."

Sara stilled at the words. Her mother had promised her that she would always take care of her. Her mother had not forgotten her and abandoned her?

"Are you telling the truth?"

The nurse nodded and gently turned Sara to sit down on the mattress as she whispered, "This place is full of cameras so I can't tell you much. But your mother has said that she won't let her baby be here longer. You just need to be calm, Sara and then you can get out of here."

"I want to go to Antonio." Sara spoke like a small child now.

The nurse nodded and assured her, "Yes, I know. We will leave this place and then go out of this country. Your mother and Antonio will follow. He does not hate you, you know. He is still in love with you. Your mother has also spoken to him about how much you love him...Tonight, be ready to leave..."

As Sara nodded, the woman gently let her rest before she exited the cell and continued with her other duties. It was only after she left in the evening that she took out her cell phone and made the call, "I have already arranged everything and informed Sara. She should be able to leave tonight."

#### Chapter 152: Almost Like Love

The soft glow of the table lamp illuminated the cozy living room where Nora was engrossed in a book, surrounded by piles of notes and textbooks. To any onlooker, it would look as if she was studying diligently but only Nora knew that she was actually binge-reading a series of novels and was already on her second one.

The books had always provided her with a means to escape reality, giving her the freedom to not be cynical anymore and believe in love, even though she did not believe in it in real life.

She'd actually planned to not start the series until after her upcoming exams but the discussions from the morning had left her a bit unbalanced, sending her mind into an information overload. First there was all about Nellie then with Demetri and then eventually everything that Gabe had told her.

However, despite the urgency of the two other situations, it was Demetri that she was having trouble with. The man who had seemed to be the most straightforward to understand, almost like an open book seemed to be the most complicated. And she did not understand her own reaction to him. He seemed to possess some kind of power over her. And that realization made her uncomfortable.

She shook her head and carefully tried to read the words as the hero tried to confess his feelings to the heroine," Serena... I have always loved you even if I never been able to speak the words. A man... he wants to do everything he can for the woman he loves. Look at everything and ask yourself if my every action has not been to make you happy."

Nora blinked at the words. Weren't they too cheesy? Her concentration was broken when a sudden click of the door sounded. Realizing that her husband had returned, she quickly hid the novel under the textbooks and grabbed a pile of notes.

Demetri Frost was a tough taskmaster and if he knew that she was reading a novel before her exams, he would really stare at her in a way that would make her want to drown herself for being careless towards herself.

She looked up as Demetri closed the door behind him and gave him a huge grin. "Hi."

Demetri paused in the act of taking off his suit jacket as he stared at her intently.

Instead of greeting her, he cocked his head and stared at her. He looked around at the piles of books around her and quirked his lips," Johnny Johnny..."

Nora blinked at the words, trying to grasp the meaning of his words while keeping a wary eye on the man as he walked towards her. Something seemed to be wrong with the way he was looking at her...

"What?"

"Uh huh... Not what... The poem goes, "Yes Papa"... It seems you have too much time on your hands if you are reading novels before your exam."

"Ahh... I don't know what you are talking about. I am studying..."

Her words failed however as the man quickly pulled her novel from under the textbook, making her wince. "Fine fine. I have been slacking...I'm almost finished with this... Just give it to me and then I will start prepping for the exams."

Demetri raised an eyebrow as he held the novel aloft, a playful glint in his eyes. "Why don't I read it?"

Nora blushed, her cheeks taking on a rosy hue as she pouted. "You know how much I love these stories, Demetri." She stood up and tried to take the book back but the man simply kept it out of her reach as he teased, "What are you worried about. I am simply going to read it..."

Nora poked him in the arm and groaned, "Ha! Do you want to steal my novel? Have I converted you into a secret romance reader, Demetri Frost. But if you want to read romance novels then you have to get your own and not steal mine!"

"You think I want to steal your novel?" The air around her suddenly seemed to change and Nora realized that something was seriously wrong with her. She was actually accusing Demetri of reading romance novels. Pigs would fly before something like that happened. But she seemed to have already pulled the tiger's tail. Quickly, she stepped away from him, backtracking figuratively and literally, "No no, of course you won't want to read such novels..."

Demetri lunged toward her, and Nora squealed, making a run for it. She dashed around the coffee table, and he chased her. "Stop! I give up!"

Even as they continued to run around, Nora could feel the excitement inside her rise as all the thinking that she had been doing was of no use. She tried to come up with a way to get rid of the demon she had unleashed and halted, raising her hands in surrender.

Nora, still giggling, raised her hands in mock surrender. "Okay, okay, you got me!"

Demetri skidded to a halt just a hair's breadth away, his eyes locked onto hers, an impish smile curling his lips. He reached out to touch her chin, tilting her head upward. "Surrendering, are we?"

"Yes yes! You win..."

Demetri closed the distance between them staring into her eyes as he said, "I'll always win when it comes to you, Nora. You can't escape me."

Before she could make sense of that dramatic declaration, Demetri leaned in and caught her lips in a searing kiss.

His hands came around her, holding her close to him. The man felt like a conqueror as he devoured her with a kiss, not even giving her a moment to catch her breath.

As he continued to plunder her mouth, she could feel something within her change. Slowly, Demetri broke the kiss, even as he continued to hold her face, rubbing his thumb along her lower lip. In low words, he swore under his breath, whispering something that sounded dangerously like, "I don't think I'll ever be able to let you go..."

Nora lost in the feel of him heard herself reply instinctively, "Then don't...."

#### Chapter 153: The Escape Plan

Demetri lay on the couch watching Nora as she studied with concentration. Even as his eyes scanned her from head to toe, his brain kept on wondering what it was about this girl that he simply could not stop thinking of her. Thousands of questions and as many answers went through his mind. He'd never thought that he'd fall first for a woman and fall this hard. The stark difference between the period before her and after her was almost like moving from black and white to high-definition-colored pictures.

He liked the way her eyes narrowed unconsciously as her gaze lingered on something she found difficult to grasp or the way her lips lifted up from the corner when she understood the answer. Like a little fool, he found himself committing every micro-expression of hers to his memory.

His concentration and good mood were however broken by the sound of a notification popping up on his phone. As he read the notification and opened the app, showing the surveillance video, his eyes hardened and the traces of any softness or tenderness disappeared.

His eyes were now glued to the flickering cameras that displayed the winding corridors of the forbidding mental institution. The images on the screen were grainy, however, it was not difficult for him to know who it was that had triggered the silent alarm.

He felt a shadow cast over him and adjusted the position so that Nora could slip into his arms and lie next to him as they watched Sara and a woman in nurse clothing, running hand in hand through the labyrinth of the corridors.

Even though the two people were walking hurriedly, they could see the calm way in which the nurse handled the checkpoints, avoiding the guards who were patrolling silently. She pushed Sara against a wall when needed and pulled her along to facilitate their escape.

Nora's heart clenched as she watched the scene and she turned her head to look at Demetri carefully before turning back to the escape. If he had not already raised an alarm, he must have had some plan to stop Sara from escaping.

She bit her lip to stop herself from screaming at the screen as they barely missed a few passing guards. Were these people blind to the tension that hung in the air? Could they not be more vigilant? A single turn of the head and they could have spotted Sara and that nurse easily.

Nora could feel herself palpitating as Sara and the nurse edged closer to the part of the building that led to their exit. "Are you not going to call the people there? They are going to escape, Demetri. Once Sara escapes, everything will be ruined."

Demetri patted her arm as he shook his head once, "No need. Let her escape."

"You knew she was going to escape?" Nora asked in shock as she realized that Demetri was not even the least bit shocked about this attempt.

"Hmm. In fact, I planned it. It is why none of the guards have stumbled upon them."

"You are planning Sara's escape? Why?", Nora asked in confusion.

"That nurse is an undercover agent. The moment you told me about the man's threat to keep away from Lara and his daughter, I knew that he would definitely try to rescue Sara. And since he has always remained hidden, this would be the perfect opportunity to reveal him. This is the best chance we might have. All of the staff at the place have already been under our control and the moment someone contacted the nurse to blackmail her to help get Sara, we've had a lead."

"How did you know that it would be the nurse?" Nora questioned, unable to imagine how he could have been so sure... "Because of her past. She has been questioned in the past about harming some of the patients because she has a gambling problem. What the man does not know is that her entire past has been fabricated."

"So, the nurse is going to take Sara to that man? And then you are going to catch him?"

Demetri continued to stare at the screen, as the nurse looked at the camera one last time before making a run down towards the gate between the building and the small courtyard, "I don't think so. The man has been really careful in the entire process. I doubt he will reveal himself easily. For now, Sara will probably be handed over to some decoy and then passed to a few people before she is handed over to him"

"Then...how will you get her? If she slips through our fingers then..."

"We need to wait, kitten."

As they watched Sara and the nurse slip through the exit gate, disappearing into the night, Nora couldn't help but be filled with a sense of unease. It felt like all she did was wait for the next move. She wanted this to end at the soonest but with her mother's disappearance, it seemed that she had been sentenced to wait endlessly.



And now that Sara was being allowed to escape, she felt herself grow even more tense. It was a good plan of course to force their hand and make them show themselves but she did not like the risks.

However, she knew she had to trust Demetri's instincts in such a case.

Just as she continued to stare at the now empty corridors on the screen, Demetri received a call which he moved to answer on the speaker phone. A man's voice then sounded on the phone as he spoke, "The seasoning has been added to the pot, we can now wait for the dish to simmer and the flavours to release."

Demetri disconnected the call and turned his head to meet Nora's worried eyes. Gently he kissed her forehead and reassured her, "Trust me. She will be within our grasp soon along with her dear parents."

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Sara watched as the nurse handed her over to a strange man who took her to a hotel room, quickly ordering her to change. As she did, she was scanned for any signs of trackers that could lead someone to her. Once the GPS tracker on her wrist had been disabled, a few men soon escorted her away from the hotel...

Chapter 154: A Double Date

"To happiness."

Gabe, Demetri, Nora and Arabelle raised their glasses in a toast as they two couples sat in a small, rather cosy restaurant ready to share a meal. As Nora took a sip of her drink, her eyes met Gabe's who looked at her gratefully for having convinced Demetri for this date.

Nora tipped her head in his direction before turning her gaze to Arabelle who seemed to have watched the entire exchange and understood that it was orchestrated by Nora.

Placing her flute in front of her, Arabelle took a deep breath and spoke, "Nora, I think I owe you an apology for my reprehensible behavior towards you the last time we met."

Nora raised an eyebrow at that. This was not what she had expected. But of course, she knew that this was classic green tea behavior, pretending to be nice and apologizing. She'd have rather expected Arabelle to be a bit original.

Knowing the apology was as sincere as a snake apologizing for being poisonous, she shrugged it off and answered, "As long as you don't repeat it..."

Arabelle's fingers clenched in her lap, and she gave a smile with gritted teeth as she said, "Of course. But I hope you will understand that I always believed that Demetri would be my husband and so I loved him. Seeing him suddenly appear with another woman, that too someone who is so much younger than him, was a shock to me."

Nora nodded agreeably while Demetri did not even look at her while the entire drama was being played out, instead looking at Gabe who sat there motionlessly, as if he had not just heard his fiancé announcing that she had always loved his brother.

However, before Arabelle or Nora could add anything to the conversation, Gabe spoke up, "We should not linger over the past which is gone. Let bygones be bygones. We've already toasted to happiness, let's toast to a new future."

As the toasts were done and the dishes were brought to their private room one after the other, Nora realised that Arabelle was not as simple as she had deemed. Even though Sara had been an excellent actor, almost convincing her that she had changed, Arabelle was unlike that.

She seemed to have only changed her behaviour towards her, remaining as arrogant and aloof to the wait staff as she usually was. She also noticed the glances that were passed between Gabe and Arabelle as well as the light touches.

From there she turned to see Demetri who also seemed to be noticing these things. There were times when Arabelle would look at Gabe, when she thought no one was looking and sent him adoring gazes. It was quite a shocker to her.

As Arabelle excused herself to use the washroom, Gabe looked at Demon and raised an eyebrow, "What do you think? Isn't the doctor's hypnosis working?"

Nora widened her eyes as she realized what was happening. Gabe had somehow hypnotized Arabelle into liking him?

Gabe shook his head as he saw her expression and sighed as he explained, "She hasn't been hypnotized in the right sense of the word, Nora."

Nora knew she was looking totally unconvinced, so Gabe quickly looked around to make sure that Arabelle wasn't returning and explained, "Do you remember that you mentioned Arabelle reminded you of your half-sister Sara when we danced together? Sara is mentally unstable because she has always been obsessed with you like her mother. It seems her life's only aim was to destroy you."

"Recently, Arabelle showed me a few reports from her own psychological evaluations in the past, giving me a better understanding about how she became obsessed with Demetri when she was a young teenager. Instead of helping her get over the obsession and getting her psychological help, her mother fed into the obsession to keep her compliant. I knew the only way I could help Arabelle was to get help. So I contacted an expert. She has been using psychological cues and subconscious hypnosis to help Arabelle."

"It is a reckless game you are playing Gabe. This might make Arabelle more unstable and dangerous, and you might end up being even more hurt." Demon commented while Nora nodded her head. She couldn't even imagine what the repercussions would be if something triggered Arabelle.

"I know that, Demon. But this is the only viable plan that I can think of now."

"You can let me handle her." Demon offered.

Gabe's eyes hardened and for the first time, Nora witnessed hostility against Demetri in his eyes, shocking her.

"I won't abandon her to die, Demon. I love her and if that means saving her from you and herself, I will do it."

Demetri did not deny that his method would indeed result in Arabelle's death and Nora suddenly wanted to intercede. Softly, she called out, " Gabe... aren't you as obsessed with Arabelle as she is with Demetri?"

Gabe paused in the act of eating but before he could have said anything, Arabelle returned, causing everyone to quieten up.

As she sat back in her seat, she smiled at the other, before raising an eyebrow, " Why are you quite all of a sudden? Were you all talking about me?"

Demetri quietly returned to eating his food while Gabe quickly shook his head, " We just finished the discussion about this dish. It's sweet here while at other places it is a bit savoury. Why don't you try it and tell me which is better? Sweet or savoury?"

Gently Gabe placed a small offering of the dish on Arabelle's place while Nora and Demetri could only watch in silence. However, to Nora, it felt as if she was seeing Gabe slowly destroy himself. It felt like a movie scene where you could see that the hero was running towards his death but you could only watch in silence, unable to stop it...

She only hoped that Gabe's race towards his own destruction, did not end up ruining everything.

#### Chapter 155: The Threat

"CEO Frost, I am really sorry but we are going to have to ask you to not visit for the time being."

Demetri Frost sat in the doctor's office at the rehabilitation center and stared at the junior Doctor who dared to stop him from visiting his brother.

The doctor fidgeted under his gaze, not daring to meet his eyes but he had to follow instructions of his superiors and still stop the man. He looked at the man from under his lashes and grimaced. The man was reclining there as if he owned this place and had all the time in the world.

No wonder everyone had been excited when he had offered to take on this task. He was new here. How could he have expected that CEO Frost would be a personification of fear? How was he supposed to get rid of this man? He tried to think on his feet but every explanation that came to him, could not leave his mouth out of sheer fear.

There was no way he was going to be able to convince this man to not visit here. He needed to call the senior doctor.

Demetri leaned back in the chair, patiently waiting for the doctors to come up with excuses to stop him from visiting Erasmi. This was the second time he had come visiting and he had not been allowed in instead being told to wait for permission. The doctors really seemed to think that they had the power to stop him.

A few minutes later, the older harried doctor walked in with a fake smile on his face," CEO Frost. We are so sorry to keep you waiting. We..."

"Are you?" Demetri cut in smoothly before the doctor could come up with any other platitudes and directly cut to the chase," Where is my brother, Doctor?"

The doctor stopped short at the question before taking his seat. To gain some time, he picked up the glass of water, slowly sipping it before he explained," CEO Frost, Erasmi Frost is in his room at the moment. I understand that you have always visited your brother on this day of the week for the last many years but we are finally seeing some improvement in the patient. We would like to isolate him for the time being to avoid agitating him. The situation is very precarious at the moment now, CEO Frost. I hope you understand. Erasmi Frost's life hangs in the balance and any mistake on our end could make things worse instead of better..."

Demetri listened to the doctor ramble on, before he smiled sardonically. "It is perfectly alright doctor, if you cannot allow me to meet him. I understand."

The doctor breathed a sigh of relief as he heard the man agree and nodded quickly, trying to usher him out at the earliest," Please rest assured. We will contact you as soon as there is visible improvement."

The doctor stood up and walked around the table waiting for Demetri to get up so that he could escort him out but Demetri Frost remained seated.

"CEO Frost, you have any other questions?"

Demon shook his head once at the doctor before repeating himself, " I don't like liars, Doctor. I'll repeat a question I asked, and you can see if you want to change the answer. Where is my brother?"

The doctor felt the floor disappear before him. This man knew that Erasmi Frost was not in the facility anymore. There was no doubt in his mind that Demetri Frost was aware of the missing patient.

The doctor gulped and fell to his knees, " Please forgive me, CEO Frost. We did not mean to lie to you."

"That is not the right answer, Doctor."

The doctor inhaled sharply and quickly explained, " Erasmi Frost regained movements in the limbs a few weeks ago. We wanted to contact you, but his first request was that you or anyone from the Frost family not be informed of his recovery. Once he started with the physical therapy, he was able to adapt quite quickly. We were studying his progress and hoping to convince him to inform you of the same but before that, he suddenly disappeared one morning."

"And then you decided to not inform me even after that, despite knowing the man might be in danger?"

"We... we wanted to. But Mr Frost left a note. He said he would return today and explain everything to you himself..."

"But he hasn't returned yet?" Demetri drawled, still at ease.

"No sir. We will inform you as soon as he returns."

The man smiled at the doctor as he warned, " You will do no such thing, Doctor."

The doctor blinked and looked at the man, wondering if he had misheard. And then as his mind connected the dots, he realized that he was probably being thrown out of the facility and begged, " CEO Frost. Please forgive me. I am already nearing retirement."

Demetri Frost sent a sharp smile his way and spoke again, " Stop grovelling doctor. You are not being thrown out. Don't you find it strange that I know Erasmi Frost is not in his room?"

The doctor frowned as he tried to understand the meaning of the words. He'd barely registered relief that he was not being thrown out but as he looked at Demetri Frost carefully, trying to understand what the man could mean when he was suddenly struck.

Demetri Frost seemed to have lost some weight. Even though he looked in healthy, there was some feeling of sickness around him...

"You are..."

The man's eyes glittered with sharpness as he looked at the doctor with a dangerous smile, " You are indeed a smart man doctor. You've finally recognized me. Don't worry. I won't let you come to harm. After all, you've cared for me for a decade... You can send Demetri to my room when he comes... but remember to not let him know about my recovery."

The doctor stood up and bowed, showing his gratitude as he agreed fearfully, " Of course, Mr. Erasmi Frost...Thank you, Mr. Frost."

Chapter 156: Need To Kill

"I need to kill her. That is the only way he will be mine. Do you know he looked at me tonight. And he sat down to have a complete meal. He has never done that. He always finds an excuse to leave me halfway through the meal. But tonight we had a date so that is progress."

Gabe sighed and looked through the large glass wall at Arabelle who was still muttering about wanting to kill Nora. They'd been carefully trying to stop her obsession with Demetri but if had gone on too long. However, he knew that Demon's patience was coming to an end.

Until now, he had not touched Arabelle because he had not wanted to hurt him. But now, he needed to protect Nora and if Arabelle continued to remain a threat, she would soon meet her end. He needed to get her away from here before she could do something about these thoughts of hers.

The doctor left her on the patient's chair and walked out of the therapy room.

With a sigh, she said, " Mr. Frost. I understand your need to continue the treatment as quietly as possible but Miss Arabelle is long past the stage to be able to let go of her delusion so easily. Don't forget that instead of teaching her to not stalk and obsess, this disease of hers has been fed more by her mother and regrettably your own grandfather. She is already a threat to everyone around her."

"Getting her into a mental institution would be equivalent to abandoning her, Doctor Jay and leaving her open to the same things that happened in the past. Her parents will not let her get the treatment she needs. I cannot do that. I just need you to do this much so that I can take her out of this country. Once she is out of here, I have already arranged for a place to live in isolation with her. We can continue her treatment there without her having access to people who would do more harm than good."

"I understand what you are saying, Mr Frost. But even if you were to spend a lifetime in isolation with Miss Arabelle, there is no guarantee that she will ever be able to live normally. This would be equivalent to giving yourself a lifetime of punishment. Why would you do something like that? You have no obligation to her..."

"The obligation is love, doctor. I want to take care of her. If she had fallen sick, wouldn't I then have stood by her. That is what the marriage vows are about- in sickness and in health."

"But she can harm you, Mr Frost. Miss Arabelle is quite capable of it."

"I know. Hence, I need to protect her from even herself. Don't worry, I will be taking every medical precaution. She will be confined in that place as well. The only difference will be that she does not have to be cooped up in a cell, waiting for death to arrive."

Dr Jay nodded at the man respectfully. When Gabe Frost had approached her with his ridiculous idea, she had not held much hope. In fact, she had almost been tempted to tell him that he needed to get checked for delusions as well. But seeing him like this, it made her realize that there was still empathy in the world. This man was going to do everything to take care of the woman he loved, even to the extent of paying his own life as the price.

With a sigh, she decided to pitch the one idea that she had been toying with, " There is one thing that we can consider, Mr Frost. It is a dangerous idea but if Arabelle falls for this ploy, then taking her out of this country, with her consent would be really easy for you."



"What is the plan, Doctor?"

As Doctor Jay outlined her plan, she could already see Gabe Frost rejecting the plan without giving it much consideration. She wanted to insist that he at least give it a thought but then he said, "I've already discussed and considered this. It is just too dangerous."

Before Dr. Jay could say more to convince him, Arabelle spoke something that made Gabe's blood run cold, "Of course I've made the arrangements for you, Lara. You need not worry. Demon will never be able to find you both. And once she is dead, you can run away..."

Dr Jay and Gabe looked at each other before the doctor quickly made a move to return to the room to question Arabelle. Who was Lara?

Before the doctor could go inside to question her, Gabe ordered sharply, "Ask her to re-confirm the plan."

Dr Jay looked troubled at the sudden change in the man's demeanour and tried to speak softly, "Mr Frost. Miss Arabelle has been talking about killing this person for a long while. The things she is saying now could very well be some manifested dialogue created by her subconscious mind."

"No. You need to find out the plan doctor. It is quite possible that Arabelle has really been in touch with someone and is already plotting to kill Nora."

"Mr. Frost, if I push her to reveal any plan, it could be dangerous to the patient... Please remember her mind still holds the power to protect herself. If she breaks the hypnosis, getting her under will be even more difficult."

Gabe pushed a hand through his hair and swore under his breath, "Doctor, if we don't discover the plan, it won't matter if she breaks the hypnosis or not. She will be a target. I can protect her to the best of my ability, even overlook her past mistakes, but if she had already jeopardized Nora's safety, I wouldn't be able to save her even if I hid in hell."

Dr Jay nodded and returned to the room, carefully sitting down on the chair. She gently held Arabelle's hand and tried to continue soothingly, "Arabelle, it is me, Lara. I am worried that our plan will not work. Can you..."

## Chapter 157: Plotting

While everyone was busy plotting against her, Nora was busy plotting against her husband. As the man left the house at his usual ungodly hour for his exercise, she slowly slid out of the bed, racing out.

Should she go in or not? As she paced outside the door of "The Forbidden Room", she wondered if this would mean crossing a line. Earlier in the relationship, she had never dared to step into his room, not wanting to invade his privacy. With the new development in their relationship, there seemed to be some tacit understanding that they would be spending the night in her room.

But why not his room? As she crossed her hands behind her back and walked around, she grinned as she imagined what his room would be like. Would it be all dark and sparse furnishings, clean lines that she always read about in novels? Or would it be something different?

As she stared at the door, she could not help but imagine. Maybe she should ask him to invite her to his room. That way she would not have to think so much. No wonder all those people thought so much before having a live-in relationship. She was already married to the man and she was overthinking things.

Well, that was enough. She was not going to tarry anymore. She was going to satisfy her curiosity and visit the wolf's lair while the wolf was away.

Nodding to herself, Nora made her way towards the closed door. However, before she could reach the door, a voice sounded curiously, "Why are you lurking like a thief?"

Almost jumping out of her skin, Nora turned around swiftly, coming face to face with Demetri who was staring at her with amusement.

"I...uh.."

"You want some time to think of an excuse for your peculiar behavior?" Demetri asked her while he strolled towards her with leisure. He'd already guessed what she was up to but of course, he needed to tease her.

"You are back early! Why did you return early?" Nora questioned him with a frown.

Demetri nodded approvingly, "That is a really good answer. Attack is the best form of defence."

"I am not attacking. I am just asking." Nora protested.

"I just received a call. We need to see Gabe and the others in an hour. So, I came early."

"Oh...Then I'll go and get ready..."

"You're not coming in?" Demetri questioned her as he gestured towards his closed door.

"Uhh... no. There is no need. Why would I go to your room?"

With a grin, Demetri placed a hand around her waist and pulled her close to his body, relishing in the softness of her as he leaned in close, "Come on in. You have never been inside, have you?"

"It's just a room..." Nora began before giving in to her curiosity and placing her hands on his shoulders, "Why do you always keep it closed? Is it because you are hiding something?"

Demetri smiled and quickly stole a kiss as he let her go and said, "Of course. But it's just a few bones. I can show them to you."

"Ha! A few bones. If it was that, you'd be showing off. I think your room might be too homely which would ruin your image. It is why you keep it closed."

Sending a faint smile her way, Demetri opened the door to his room and said, "See for yourself."

With an eager yet cautious step, she followed Demetri as he pushed the door open and then almost screamed in surprise as a snake landed on her.

"What in the world?" Nora exclaimed, her hand clutching her chest as her heartbeat raced. She hadn't anticipated this. But it seemed he had been planning this for a while!

The man had turned his room into a haunted wonderland. Dim, blood-red lighting bathed the room in a macabre glow. Cobwebs clung to the corners and bats hung upside down from the ceiling. Fake but eerily life-like spiders scurried across the walls, adding to the spine-chilling atmosphere.

She turned to him, her expression a mix of disbelief and humor. "No wonder you've been hogging my bed!"

Demetri chuckled as he watched her reaction, thoroughly pleased with the surprise he had concocted. "I thought you could use a bit of excitement. With the way you'd been eyeing my door curiously all these days, you would have been thoroughly disappointed that it looked like any other room... This is better, isn't it?"

Nora took a cautious step further into the room, her eyes darting around at the spooky tableau. She couldn't help but giggle nervously as a few of the fake spiders came her way, their fake hairy bodies brushing against her legs.

Demetri walked closer to her; his eyes locked onto hers. "Are you scared, my kitten?" he whispered, his breath warm against her ear.

Nora shook her head and instead smiled, "This was the last thing I expected from you. I should have known you've made a habit of surprising me. Mr. Husband, I think I like this side of you. It's a side no one can guess exists under that tough exterior of yours. I don't know how you even pulled this off right under my nose."

Demetri smiled and tapped her nose, following it with a brief peck, "There is much more for you to discover. Now, do you want to explore this room? Or I have something even better to show you..."

Nora cocked her head at this but before she could question him, he'd already picked her up as he said, "Let me teach you, my dear kitten, the art of saving water and saving time."

With a grin, Nora threw her arms around his neck and placed her head on his shoulder, letting herself enjoy these little stolen moments. As she gazed up at him, she realized that there were things that she had never imagined she would be able to enjoy and yet, Demetri had a way of making them happen for her, surprising her with noticing the tiniest of details. This husband of hers had seemed to understand her all too well.

#### Chapter 158: A Genius Plan

The dimly lit room was filled with tension as Nora and Demetri sat across from Gabe, Ian, Seb, and Lucien. The only source of illumination came from a lone desk lamp that cast elongated shadows on the worn wooden table. Outside, the rain fell steadily, a sombre backdrop to the impending confrontation. The air was thick with tension as Demetri and Gabe continued to stare at each other.

Finally, it was Gabe who looked away, pushing a small pen drive and a file towards the others. "This is all I've found."

As he said this, Gabe stood up, ready to leave the room. It was Ian who stopped his brother, questioning him, "Aren't you going to discuss the countermeasures and strategies?"

Gabe shot a look at Demetri who had yet to say anything before shaking his head, "I don't think so. It is not safe, Ian. I... If push comes to shove, I cannot assure you that I won't do everything I can to save Arabelle."

"You're being foolish, Gabe. You would never do anything to compromise our safety and you know that."

"No, you don't, Ian! You don't know how difficult it was for me to pass this information to Demetri and not just take Arabelle from here and run! So don't expect me to sit here and do nothing while we discuss ways to get rid of the threat that is Arabelle!"

Gabe almost walked out of the room when Demetri's voice stopped him, "Sit down Gabe."

"But..."

"I already have a solution to Arabelle." Gabe paused and looked at his brother with hopeful eyes.

Demetri sighed and continued, "But if we go forward with this plan, you will never be able to see anyone from the Frost family ever again."

Gabe gulped as he heard this but found himself at a loss of words. He loved his brothers as much as he loved Arabelle. It was why he'd chosen to reveal Arabelle's plan to Demetri without taking her out of the equation. But...

"Sit and discuss your role. Whatever you choose, we will know your answer eventually." Demetri ordered sharply this time.

Seeing that at least the situation was settled, for now, it was Lucien who broke the silence, "I don't understand how Lara Anderson made contact with Arabelle and when?"

"It's been a while. It seems Lara Anderson was even present on the day of my engagement with Arabelle. Though Arabelle believes that meeting her was a coincidence, I don't think that this is as simple as that."

As everyone tacitly agreed, Demetri picked up the transcript notes of Arabelle's interview under hypnosis with the Doctor, noticing the dates. It was as he had expected. Lara was first going to facilitate the escape of her daughter and the man who was supposedly her lover. But to think that they would actually dare to use the Frost family's personal plane as a means to escape was simply preposterous even though it was just as genius.

Elijah Frost and Arabelle were scheduled to fly out of the country two days from today on the Frost Industries' private jet. In addition to the two passengers, Arabelle had arranged for two people to join as her guests. Once the plane had left the country, Sara and her father would then hijack the plane and kidnap Arabelle and Elijah Frost forcing Demetri and the other Frost brothers to leave the country to negotiate with them.

And Lara Anderson would probably use this time to attack and kill Nora. According to their plans, once Nora was confirmed dead, Arabelle would help Sara and the man escape while other hired mercenaries would take their place as the kidnappers and surrender to the law enforcement officers.

The plan was indeed genius because while Demetri's people had been keeping an eye on all ways of escaping the country but they would not have suspected that Sara would use their own plane to slide under from their noses.

"No wonder this woman has caused multiple deaths and still been able to fool people into believing that people died of an accident. She's too sinister." Lucien commented, shaking his head.

"We need to stop marvelling at her intelligence and find a way to stop them from getting on the plane." Seb commented, his eyes hard and unforgiving at the thought that Arabelle would dare to use their grandfather for her own means. Did the girl really have no limits. Out of all of them, their grandfather had been her biggest support. To use him this mercilessly, he could only wonder what she would do to Gabe.

Other than killing that woman Lara and Arabelle, Seb was tempted to grab Gabe by the shoulders and shake some sense into him!

"There is no need to stop their plan. They've already set the table, we just need to position our own pieces to counter their moves and trap them in their own net." Demon spoke softly.

"You have a plan already?" Ian questioned.

Soon, Demon had already started to explain the plan in his mind and since the brothers were all used to combat strategies from training together, it did not take them long to connect the dots.

It was only Nora who needed time to understand the plan. And when she did, she shook her head vehemently disagreeing to the plan. " You cannot do that!"

All the brothers looked up from discussing their moves, having forgotten that there was someone in their midst who was not used to this, they looked at her in confusion.

It was then that they realized that Nora was almost having a panic attack. Her face was covered in cold sweat while her eyes were wider than a deer fleeing its attacker.

Demetri quickly reached out and held her ice cold hands in his. Holding his hands in a tight grip, Nora shook her head and repeated her words, "You cannot carry out this plan. It is too dangerous. As long as it was just me, it was alright. But all of you cannot put your lives at risk for me. I... I am not worth it."

#### Chapter 159: Not Worthy?

"I am not worth it..." As the words echoed in the room, the brothers all exchanged a glance. They'd naturally investigated Nora's past when they realized that she was going to be their sister-in-law, so everyone understood her pain. But her perpetual honest and cheerful demeanor made them sometimes forget of what she had suffered. What she continued to suffer.

Even though they'd all lost their parents when young, they'd always known how loved they were. Old man Frost had been a distant and stern man but he had never once tried to actively harm them. And they'd always had each other to rely on. Meanwhile, Nora had not just had no family but she even had a crazy half-sister and an even crazier mother. Their gaze held various degrees of sympathy and pity for the girl. Those people were really outrageous. And somehow, they even blamed the old attorney William Doughby. That man had known that she was suffering and that she would suffer and yet, he had done nothing

Gabe cleared his throat and spoke up, "You are wrong, Nora. You are definitely worth fighting for."

Nora looked up at him and even though her voice had been miserable before, she'd quickly composed herself. She cast a glance at them all, before looking down, back at her clenching fingers. "You have to say that because I am your sister-in-law and your brother loves me. Being his wife does not make me worthy of the risk. Especially when you don't know..."

She'd been about to say that they did not know that their's was not a real love match. That there was no love between her and Demetri. They'd already shown how much they loved and supported their brother and even extended the same to her but it was not right. She could not take their help under such a fake situation.

But before she could have explained everything, Lucien cut in, "I knew you before you were introduced as Demon's wife. I've respected you since the moment I saw you in that cafe, standing up for yourself. And then, I later observed you when you thought no one knew the small things you did for people who came into the cafe you worked at and could not afford much, even using your own tips and money to help give them free stuff."



Nora shook her head, "It is easy to be kind when you do not have to worry about starving. Demetri has always been generous so it was simply paying forward the kindness.

This time, it was Seb who spoke up, "It is just as easy to be ignorant and not be kind to it. Nora, us brothers, we may not have known you long, but you are already one of us. And it is not just because of Demetri. All of us have seen enough fake people in the world to know a genuine gem when we see one. You are straightforward and do not try to gain sympathy."

Gabe nodded in agreement adding, "And you've shown kindness many people are not even possible of imagining. In your place, any woman would have been scrambling to get rid of Arabelle, but you've been patient and empathetic..."

Ian looked at Demetri, who had been quiet all this while before summarizing quickly, "Nora..." He waited a beat until she looked at him and then spoke emphatically, "All in all, we are doing all this because you are worthy. And you are that because of yourself not because of Demetri. You are Nora, our sister."

With that declaration, the brothers all stood up, ready to get back to the tasks they had agreed upon. This time they had to do things according to the enemy's timeline, so they needed to prepare similarly. They could not afford a mistake.

As the room was emptied, all of them did not fail to send a meaningful look at their older brother. He should have been the first to jump in and tell her that she was worth everything.

However, as the door closed behind them and they witnessed their brother kneeling in front of Nora, they also understood that she might not have believed the words that he might have said. Even though they'd all been sincere, it took time for someone who had suffered so much to maybe trust someone.

Kneeling in front of her, Demetri held Nora's hands and waited for her to look at him. Before she could speak a word, he spoke up, "You were about to tell them that we are not a love match?"

Nora nodded guiltily. Even though she'd heard what they'd said, she naturally took it as nothing more than polite words, spoken out of pity to console her.

"Nora, when we entered into the agreement, was there any clause about caring for each other? No. So, whatever is happening just now is not because of some agreement but because you are truly a part of our family to each of us. Tell me, if it was Lucy in your place and you needed to risk yourself to save him, would you hesitate?"

Nora shook her head without hesitation while Demetri continued, "And don't think I am not aware of what you have been doing with Gabe, talking to him so that he would know he isn't alone. Then if you can do these things for them, going out of your way, why can't they show their care for you? Hmm? So, I need you to simply remember that you are worthy and don't ever say something like this for yourself."

Nora felt her eyes welling up with tears as Demetri's words sank in. She had never expected this level of support and understanding from anyone. To receive it so freely, she found herself at a loss.

Demetri gently wiped away her tears and continued, "Come on. It is not the time to cry now. It is time to get rid of those people who would threaten your safety and happiness only to satisfy their own selfish desires."

#### Chapter 160: An Unanticipated Problem

Nora's anxiety gnawed at her from the safety of her secluded spot, hidden away from the prying eyes on the tarmac. She paced back and forth, her steps uneven, like the erratic beat of her heart. The plan, fraught with risk, weighed heavily on her mind.

In the dimly lit waiting room, she nervously adjusted the collar of her coat, her fingers fumbling with the fabric. She glanced at her watch, its hands seemingly frozen in time. Where was Demetri. The last two days, his presence had been her anchor, the one steady element in the chaos of this entire operation.

He was supposed to have arrived here to get her the moment Sara and that man had boarded the plane. From the update she had received, Arabelle and Grandfather Frost had already boarded the plane. Could there be a problem with the plan. Had Arabelle lied about the plan. Maybe the entire thing had been Lara Anderson's set-up.

Nora's thoughts swirled with doubt. Was this plan too dangerous? What if it all went wrong? Her breaths came quick and shallow, and she clenched and unclenched her fists to steady herself. She knew that this was probably the last chance she would have to confront that woman. This time, either she would die, or Lara Anderson would.

She just hoped that Lara Anderson would not flee. As per their plan, they would turn the tables once the airplane was closed and kidnap and subdue Sara so that Lara Anderson would be forced to contact them to save her daughter. According to Demetri's understanding, he was sure that she Lara would not give up on Sara so they were relying on that.

As she waited in the dimly lit room, her mind played out various scenarios, each one more ominous than the last, making her nerves stand on end. She shook her head. She needed to calm down. Just then the door opened, and Demetri walked in.

Hurriedly, he walked to her and held her hand, "Have they boarded the plane?"

Demetri caught her wrist tightly as he stared at her intently, not saying a word. Nora hesitated for a moment wondering if something had gone wrong. Something was off about his expression. She felt a strange revulsion in her heart, wanting to pull her hand away from his side grip. Finally, she winced and tried to extract her hand from his grasp. Maybe he did not realize that he was holding her tightly.

Hesitating, she called out his name, "Demetri? Have they boarded the aeroplane?"

Demetri shook his head and instead caught her hand again, a little gently this time and spoke, "There is a small change in the plan. Come with me."

Before she could say more, Demetri opened the door, looking out carefully. Instead of leading her towards the tarmac, he led her in the opposite direction.

She wanted to question him about the change but simply followed him hurriedly, his urgency rubbing off on her. However, her gut seemed to be screaming that something was awfully wrong.

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Gabe watched from the control tower as Arabelle boarded the plane with Sebastian who looked exactly like their grandfather. An older woman and man followed them on the airplane. They had been introduced as her benefactors by Arabelle.

Gabe snorted. Even if it really had been their real grandfather, no matter how blind the old man was with regard to Arabelle, he would have been able to tell that this woman was no old person. All he had to do was look at the woman's hands which were without any wrinkles. They were too confident of their plan.

In comparison, Seb had been meticulous with his own get-up. Even his hands were covered in such a way that they would look arthritic.

Soon, he received a transmission from Lucien and Ian who had taken the controls of the aeroplane, letting him know that everyone had taken their places and the doors were ready to close.

Seeing this, he gave the go-ahead signal to Demetri who would then go to fetch Nora so that they could board the plane.

As Demetri hurried towards the small waiting room, he could only sigh in disappointment. He had hoped that Lara Anderson would touch base with Sara at least before her daughter boarded the plane. It was why they had kept such a close eye on her, even going so far as to place a small tracking device inside her ear so that they would not lose her. However, Lara had never once contacted her or Arabelle directly.

And even now that Sara was ready to leave the country, their people continued to scour around the airport, eager to catch her in case she decided to come here. But the woman was too elusive.

If this time, they failed to handle Lara, he knew he would have no choice to send Nora away from here to an unknown location until Lara Anderson was caught and dealt with.

Demetri's footsteps slowed when he reached the waiting room, shocked to see it open. He'd left it closed and Nora would have no reason to open it. Quickly, he grabbed the gun in his holster and moved cautiously towards the door.

However, even as he stealthily walked to the room, he hoped that Lara was inside and had not taken Nora away. In this place, they were surrounded by his people on all sides and Lara would have no way of escaping.

But when he barged into the room, his alarms knew no bounds. The room was empty. There were no signs of struggle or anything to indicate whether Nora had been taken away or had gone somewhere on her own.

And then Gabe's voice sounded in his ears, "Demon, why are you taking her away from the tarmac?"

"F\*ck! Gabe! That is not me. Stop them from leaving and alert everyone that Nora is not with me. They need to restrain them but also be careful to not hurt the man with her!"