

154 It wasn't them.

Arwen sat on the hospital bed while Jason checked her legs. His expression was calm, but Aiden's presence made the air tense. He stood beside her, arms folded across his chest. 1

Arwen couldn't bring herself to look at him, but she could evenly feel the intensity of his gaze. She could tell he wore the same dangerous expression as before, as if he were on the verge of massacring the whole city at any second.

"You are fortunate, Arwen," Jason said, looking up at her. "You haven't sprained your ankle. It seems you just twisted in the wrong way," he added, pressing a soft smile to cheer her up.

Arwen nodded, trying to reciprocate his smile, but hers barely reached her eyes. "Thank you, Dr. Clark."

Jason sensed something deeper was troubling her. His gaze shifted to Aiden, and when he noticed his hardened expression and furrowed brows, he decided to take the hint. "Although her legs seem fine, I will double-check the X-ray reports to be sure."

With that, he gave a reassuring pat on Aiden's shoulders before leaving. He had just reached the door when Emyr walked in.

Giving a small nod of politeness, Emyr walked past Jason and entered the room. "Sir!" he greeted, then gave a small bow to Arwen, who reciprocated with a small nod.

"Did you handle them?" Aiden asked. His menacing tone sent shivers down Arwen's spine.

Emyr, looking all accustomed to such tension, held a calm demeanour and nodded. "We have taken care of them, sir."

Arwen's brows furrowed, and, confused, she couldn't hold herself back from asking, "Did you do something to them? Didn't you say you would spare them if they allowed us to leave?"

Spare them? Emyr coughed abruptly, struggling to hide his reaction to her words. *Since when did his boss start sparing anyone who dared to lay a hand on something —or someone —he held precious?*

Arwen narrowed her gaze at Emyr. "What's wrong?" she asked.

Emyr's gaze darted to look at Aiden, not daring to spill a word. Clearing his throat, he simply dodged the question. "Madam, I would take my leave now. There are still a few matters that require attention. Please allow me." Then, giving a bow slight bow, he quickly exited the room.



As he disappeared, the knit between Arwen's brows deepened, and she turned to Aiden. "What did you do to them, Aiden?" Her tone wasn't accusatory, but curious. While she didn't hold any sympathy for the thugs, she wasn't sure she wanted to know the full extent of Aiden's actions. 3

Aiden didn't answer her. And Arwen noted the stiff muscles of his broad back. Her gaze looked down at his hands that he had balled into fists, as if trying to hold back the wrath that was on the verge of exploding.

Sighing, she reached out to touch his fisted hand. "Aiden!" she called softly and was about to add more words to it when Aiden moved.

With a swift, unexpected force, he leaned down and pushed her gently but firmly back onto the bed, caging her beneath him.

Arwen's breath hitched, her heart racing as she stared up at his smoldering eyes.

"What do you think?" he asked, his voice was low, almost close to a growl. "If you think I would spare him after what they dared to do with you today, you are truly carrying a big misconception about me, Moon."

Arwen blinked, momentarily startled by the raw intensity in his tone. "Aiden, I —"



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"Do you know what could have happened to you tonight if I hadn't reached there on time?" Aiden seemed to have lost his control.

Arwen could see his fury unfurling in the depth of his gaze. But she didn't know how to ease him. His fury was right. If he hadn't reached her one time, she might have been truly in unrecoverable trouble.

"Don't ask me what I have done to them after seeing you struggling in their hands" Aiden spoke, each of his words laced with a dark promise. "Believe me, Moon, you wouldn't be ready to hear it. You wouldn't want to hear how every fibre of their being was tortured to avenge the pain they had merely dared to think about inflicting on you."

Arwen felt her soul shudder. His words were chilling, yet, deep within they comforted something that was deeply hurt. Maybe it was the deficiency of someone's genuine care that she hadn't realized she was missing until today. 1

"They grabbed you," Aiden continued, his voice quieter but no less intense. His hands gently brushed over hers, lingering on the faint marks of her struggle. "Even after you told them not to. They dared to touch you, leave their marks on you, making you fight against their vile intentions. For that alone, they deserved to have their very existence ripped apart"

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His touch was tender, a stark contrast to the wrath burning in his words. Arwen could only stare at him, her heart caught between fear and an odd sense of safety.

"And I won't give them anything less than what they deserve," he promised as his hand slowly moved to her cheeks, caressing her there gently. "How dare they?" his concern spilled through the grit of his teeth, and it was then Arwen realized something.

The slap ... it must have left an imprint on her cheeks. She turned her head to the other side, trying to hide the mark of her mother's cruelty, but Aiden had noticed it long ago.

"Don't hide it from me," he said, his voice carrying an edge. "I will make them suffer for every mark they have left on you. They will pay for it," he said, his thumb slowly brushing over her cheek as if to soothe the burn she might have felt back then.

Arwen closed her eyes, allowing the weight of his words and the tenderness of his touch to wash over her, leaving her both comforted and vulnerable. Hesitant, she finally spoke, her voice barely above a whisper. "It wasn't them."

