

Broken 127

Chapter 127 I Want Proof This Time

The night was quiet and soon, morning came. I woke up, dressed up for work and tried to pretend that everything was fine. Office had been unusually quiet that morning. Most of the staff were in meetings, and the only sound in my department was the steady hum of the air conditioning. I was going through the quarterly compliance reports when I saw Mark's name appear on my phone screen. I stared at it for a few seconds, debating whether to answer. Part of me already knew what this was about. After what happened last time, I didn't want another conversation with him. But curiosity won. "Mark," I said flatly. He sounded tired. "Amy, please don't hang up. I just need a few minutes of your time. I'm already in the building." My stomach tightened. "You shouldn't be here." "I just need to talk. One last time." I hesitated. The last thing I wanted was a scene at Carter Enterprise, but I also knew avoiding him would only make him more persistent. So, I agreed. "Five minutes. Conference room 4A." When I walked in, he was already there leaning against the table. He looked thinner, paler than before, but his eyes still carried that restless energy I remembered too well. I had no idea what that was about but I didn't care. He gave a weak smile. "You look good, Amy." "Get to the point," I said, keeping my tone professional. He sighed. "I know you don't trust me anymore, and I deserve that. But things are worse than you think. Clara's not herself. She says things that don't make sense. I'm worried she might hurt herself." I folded my arms. "You should take her to a doctor. That's not my problem anymore." He shook his head. "You don't get it. This is connected to you, everything that's happening to her. The ritual, the attack, Elias—" froze. "What did you just say?"

He stopped mid-sentence, realizing he'd said too much. His expression shifted, guilt flickering across his face. "Mark, what do you know?" I demanded. He looked down, rubbing the back of his neck. "I can't tell you. It's not safe. But you have to believe me, I didn't mean for things to go this far." I took a step closer, anger rising. "You've already gone too far, Mark. You chose your side when you took Elias's money." His head shot up. "You think I wanted that? I was desperate! Clara—she said he could help her. I just wanted things to go back to how they were before." "Before what?" I asked sharply. "Before you replaced me? Before you helped destroy everything that could've been decent between us?" He looked hurt, but I didn't care. "I made mistakes," he said quietly, "but I never stopped caring about you." "That's not love, Mark. That's regret." He took a step forward. "No, it's not. You were the one good thing I ever had." I moved back. "Stop." He ignored me, his voice trembling. "You can pretend all you want, but I know you still feel something. You can't tell me you love that man—" Before I could reply, he reached for my face. I reacted instantly. I slapped him really hard that it echoed through the room. "Don't ever touch me again," I said, my voice cold. He stood there, stunned. His hand went to his face, eyes wide. "Amy—" I cut him off. "Security." Within seconds, two guards appeared at the door. I didn't have to explain. "Escort Mr. Mark away from this floor," I said firmly. "And make sure he doesn't come back without written permission."

They nodded and guided him out, ignoring his protests. When the door shut, I let out a slow exhale, trying to steady my heartbeat. I hated that he still had the power to throw me off balance, even for a moment.

A soft knock came at the door. I turned, half-expecting one of the guards to return, but it was Daniel. He stepped inside, his eyes immediately scanning my face. "What happened?" "Nothing I couldn't handle,"

I said quietly. "Mark came by." His expression hardened. "What did he want?" "To talk. To manipulate. To cross a line." He moved closer, his voice low. "Did he hurt you?" "No," I said, shaking my head. "But he tried to kiss me." Daniel's jaw tightened. "He what?" I placed a hand on his arm before he could storm out. "I already dealt with it. Security escorted him out." For a moment, he didn't say anything. Then he sighed, rubbing a hand across his face. "He's working for Elias. That's the only reason he's here." "I know," I said. "He slipped up and mentioned the ritual. He knows something he's not supposed to." Daniel frowned. "Then he's more dangerous than we thought." I nodded. "We need to watch him, both of them." He studied me for a long moment. "Are you okay?" "I will be," I said honestly. "It's just... tiring. Every time I think the past is gone, it finds a new way to walk through the door." Daniel's voice softened. "You've handled worse." "Maybe," I said. "But I'm getting tired of handling everything." He reached for my hand, his thumb brushing gently across my knuckles. "You don't have to anymore. Not alone." I didn't pull away. "I know," I said quietly. He gave a small nod and looked toward the door. "I'll have Mason look into Mark's accounts again. If he's being paid to spy, I'll find out who's behind it." I Want Proof This time "Elias." I said automatically. "Most likely. But I want proof this time." When we left the conference room, a few staff members glanced curiously, probably having heard the commotion earlier. I didn't care. For once, I wasn't going to let anyone walk over me. As we walked down the corridor, Daniel placed his hand lightly on my waist. For the first time that day, I felt calm. Whatever Elias was planning, he'd already failed at one thing which was breaking I and Daniel apart. And I was done being anyone's weakness.