

## Broken 131

### Chapter 131 Go Back To Her CLARA

The smell of antiseptic was the first thing that hit me, the same smell every hospital carries and it was becoming a norm for me. Another hospital bed. Another day pretending that what's killing me has a name the doctors can treat. My skin burned as though something beneath it wanted out, and every bone in my body throbbed like it was being pried apart. They called it an infection. They ran tests, whispered to each other, and wrote notes like they were solving a puzzle that made sense on paper. But I knew better. It wasn't an infection but I'd managed to convince Mark that I needed to be here so he would stop asking questions about what really happened. He wouldn't understand anyway. He never did. He was sitting beside me again, as if keeping vigil could undo anything. He looked tired. I kept my eyes closed, pretending to be asleep. It was easier that way. Pretending meant I didn't have to deal with his voice, his pity, or his desperate attempts to make things right. After a while, I heard him sigh. "You look worse," he said quietly. I opened my eyes then, turning my head just enough to look at him. "Thanks," I muttered. My voice sounded rough, unfamiliar. "You can go." He didn't move. Just sat there, hands clasped, staring at me like I was some tragic painting he couldn't stop analyzing. "I miss you," he said finally. A laugh escaped before I could stop it. Bitter and tired. "No, you don't. You miss Amy. You always did." "That's not true." "Then why do you keep looking at me like I'm her?" I asked. "You think I don't notice! Ev time you talk to me, it's like you're talking to a ghost," He looked down, guilt flickering across his face. "Clara, I'm here because I care. Because matter what happened, you're—"

"Don't say it," I cut in, voice rising. "Don't tell me I'm still part of your life. You threw me out moment she turned her back on you." "That's not fair." "Neither was what we did," I snapped. "You want to pretend it was love? It wasn't. It was two broken people using each other to fill a hole." He reached for my hand and I let him, only for a moment. His touch was warm, too warm. It reminded me of everything I'd lost everything I'd ruined. — When he started to pull away, I grabbed his wrist and yanked him closer. I kissed him before could say anything else. For a second, he didn't resist. Maybe guilt. But then he pulled back, breath uneven. "Clara, don't," he said softly. "This isn't what I want. I just want to be here for you that." "Get out," I yelled. like "Get out!" I shouted again, voice cracking. "Go back to Amy if that's what you want!" He stood there for a second, like he might try to argue, then turned and walked out without another word. The door shut with a dull click.

The silence that followed was deafening. I stared at the door until my vision blurred, then dragged myself out of bed and onto the cold tile floor. My hospital gown clung to my skin, damp with sweat. My body felt like it was breaking apart, but I didn't care. Pain had become background noise by now. I pressed my palms against the floor, breathing hard, trying not to scream. Everything hurt — my body, my mind, the memories. I wanted to claw them out of me. After what felt like forever, I reached for my phone on the bedside table. My hands shook so badly that I almost dropped it. I scrolled through the contacts until I found the number Selene had given me months ago. No name, just digits. She'd told me to call if things ever got "too much." They were past too much now. When she answered, her voice was smooth, and calm. "Clara?" There was silence on the other end, a brief pause like she was deciding whether to believe me. softly, "I'll tell him." I hung up before she could say anything else. : 196 +5 Pearl My hand trembled as I lowered the phone, and I let out a shaky laugh. It sounded wrong, like it didn't belong to me. I leaned against the wall and looked around the white walls, white sheets, white light. It all felt sterile and fake, like the world had been stripped of color. Maybe it was fitting. I'd bled the color

out of everything I touched anyway. — My reflection in the window glass was almost unrecognizable — pale skin, dark eyes, hair tangled. I looked like the ghost of someone who'd already died and just hadn't realized it yet. The pain in my chest deepened, spreading like fire, but this time I didn't fight it. I let it burn. If my body was giving up, then fine. But my anger beneath the sickness, sharper than ever. — 'that part of me was still alive. It pulsed Amy thought she was winning. She thought she could build her life, her marriage, her perfect little world on the ashes of everything I lost. But if I was dying, she wasn't walking away untouched. I smiled faintly, a twisted, tired smile that felt more like a wound than an expression. "Let's finish it," I whispered to no one, my voice barely audible. "Let's end this properly." The monitor beside me beeped steadily, mocking me with its rhythm. I closed my eyes, leaned my head back, and let the sound fade. Maybe death was already waiting just beyond that door. Maybe Elias and Selene would use me like a pawn. I didn't care anymore. the weight of what she'd done, of what we'd all All I wanted was to make sure Amy felt it done. The ritual, the lies, the betrayal. Everything. If I couldn't live clean, then I'd die dirty. And when I did, I wanted her to feel every inch of it.

Cedella is a passionate storyteller known for her bold romantic and spicy novels that keep readers hooked from the very first chapter. With a flair for crafting emotionally intense plots and unforgettable characters, she blends love, desire, and drama into every story she writes. Cedella's storytelling style is immersive and addictive—perfect for fans of heated romances and heart-pounding twists.