

## Broken 132

### Chapter 132 Making The Past Dissappear DANIEL

Pa The day started really well and I was happy that Amy had a smile on her face before we enter our offices. I sat at my desk that morning with the blinds half-closed as sunlight filtered thru in thin, uneven lines across the stack of files spread in front of me. I'd been at it for hours, checking through the quarterly reports, the employee budgets, and every expense linked to the last gala. The numbers didn't sit right. Too many adjustments ha been made after final approval, and I wanted to see who had signed off on them. Carter Enterprise Holdings had always run like a well-oiled machine, but lately, there were gaps. Minor discrepancies in invoices, irregular fund transfers, things that could easily go unnoticed. I'd already marked several pages with notes for Mason to double-check. The gala itself had drained more from the budget than projected. I was reaching for another folder when the door opened without a knock which made me look up. Selene stood in the doorway, dressed in a light blouse and a calm expression that didn't fool "Daniel," she called out calmly, smiling a little. "You look busy." I closed the folder slowly. "Because I am. What are you doing here, Selene?" Her smile didn't fade. "I came to see you. Is that a problem?" "It depends," I said, leaning back slightly in my chair. "This is my office, not a lounge. People usually come here with a purpose." She stepped closer, "Always so uptight," she said. "You were never this tense before." "Before, you weren't walking into my office unannounced." She tilted her head, pretending to be hurt. "You really don't have to act like I'm a stranger." "I don't have to pretend we're close either," I said. "You and I have a past, but that's all it is now -past." She stopped in front of my desk, her hands resting lightly on the edge. "You say that like it means nothing." "It means exactly what it should," I replied. "I'm married, Selene." I said to her, holding up my right hand to show her my wedding ring.

She chuckled dryly "You think saying that makes the past disappear? I never stopped lovin you." I sighed, trying to keep my focus. "This isn't the place or time for that kind of talk." "Then make time," she said quietly. "You owe me at least that much." I didn't like the way she said it-like I was supposed to feel guilty. I picked up the nearest f and pretended to scan it, but she reached out and closed it with her hand. "Stop hiding behind work," she said. "You used to look at me like I was the only one in the room." "I was younger," I said, meeting her eyes. "And a fool." She smiled again, "Do you really think you've changed that much? I remember the way you used to hold my hand when no one was watching. The way you'd walk me home through th old trail behind the packhouse." Her voice softened. "We were always meant to end up together." "That was before everything happened," I said. "Before you disappeared." Her expression shifted, the smile faltering for the first time. "I had my reasons." "Reasons you never shared," I said. "You left me waiting like an idiot, wondering what went wrong."

"I didn't want to hurt you," she said. "But you did," I replied. "And you don't get to waltz back into my life pretending nothing happened." She reached for my arm, lightly touched my sleeve. "I'm not pretending. I'm here because I st care." I stood up, forcing some distance between us. "Selene, whatever we had ended the day you left You don't get to rewrite it." She looked at me closely, observing my face. "You really mean that?" "Yes," I said. "I have a wife now. I love her so much. I'm not interested in anything else." For a moment, she didn't move. Then she leaned slightly forward, lowering her voice. "Do you really love her, or are you just trying to convince yourself that you do?" That question made me tighten my jaw. "You should leave." Instead of backing off, she stepped around the desk until she was standing close again. I could smell her perfume. It was familiar, confusing and distracting. She smiled

faintly. "You used to say my name like it meant something." "Stop, Selene," I said, keeping my tone as calm as I could. "This isn't going anywhere." "Don't you ever think about what we had?" she asked. "How easy it was? Before your life turned into all this—titles, reports, and council politics?" "I think about what's real," I said. "And what's real is Amy. What's real is this company, my people, and the future I'm building." She didn't seem to hear me. "We used to play behind the training grounds as kids," she said quietly. "Do you remember that? You always said I was too slow, and I'd chase you until you let me catch up. How we had our first kiss with each other, our first sex, our first orgasm." I nodded once. "I remember." "And then we grew up," she continued, her eyes softer now. "We were mated before—" "Before you disappeared, Selene." I finished for her. The words came out before I could stop them. "Before you left me heartbroken." She looked down at the floor for a second. "I wish I could explain why I left. I wanted to tell you everything, but I couldn't. I'm sorry for breaking your heart like that." I didn't respond right away. Part of me wanted to ask what had really happened, but I stopped myself. Whatever her reasons were, they didn't matter anymore. "I don't need to know," I said finally. "I've made peace with it. I'm happy now, Selene. I'm happy with Amy." She lifted her eyes again, and this time there was no smile on her face. All she had was bitterness in her voice. "Are you?"

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