

Broken 138

Chapter 138

CLARA I was sitting on the couch with my legs crossed, my phone in one hand and a half-empty cup of coffee in the other. The afternoon had been dull, and I'd been scrolling through social media just to kill time and think less of my problem. My feed was filled with the usual nonsense of people pretending their lives were perfect, friends showing off new cars, fake smiles, empty captions. I kept scrolling until one particular post stopped me. It was Amy. Her name sat right there at the top of the post, bold and bright. My thumb froze, and my chest tightened before I even looked at the picture. A diamond ring. A new one. My eyes popped wide immediately. I read the caption and my blood boiled immediately. I felt heat rush through me so fast it almost made me dizzy. Without even thinking, I threw my phone across the room. It hit the wall first before bouncing off and smacking into Mark's shoulder. He groaned. "What the hell, Clara?" I didn't answer. My jaw was clenched, and I was breathing hard, trying to keep from screaming. Mark picked up my phone and looked at the cracked screen. "What's your problem this time?" I stood up so fast and the coffee cup tipped over, spilling across the rug. "Her," I said sharply. "Amy." He raised an eyebrow. "Amy? Again?" I walked toward him, pointing at the phone in his hand. "She posted a ring, Mark. A new ring. Daniel gave her a new ring!" He blinked like he didn't understand what I was saying or maybe he just didn't care. "So what?" "So what?" I repeated, my voice rising. "She's rubbing it in my face. She's showing off like she's won something that was never supposed to be hers in the first place." Mark ran a hand through his hair and sighed. "You've really lost it." I glared at him. "Excuse me?" He looked at me like he was tired, like we'd been having this same argument for years. Maybe we had. "You're sitting here getting mad over a woman who doesn't even think about you. Do she took everything from me, Mark!" I snapped. "Everything! My position, my reputation, the respect I had in that pack, she just walked in and replaced me like I was nothing."

He didn't look impressed. "You replaced yourself the moment you started scheming against everyone who tried to help you. Amy does not even give a damn about you." I clenched my fists. "You don't understand. Daniel was supposed to be mine." Mark laughed bitterly. "Supposed to be? He never wanted you, Clara. You forced everything between you two. And now you're mad because it didn't work out? Aren't you the one who refused to marry him and then she was forced to? What exactly is your problem?" I felt my throat tighten. The sound of his voice grated on me. "Everything was going on well until she took my place. That snake." He shook his head. "You're rewriting history again." I crossed my arms. "You're taking her side now?"

"I'm not taking anyone's side," he said flatly. "I'm just tired of watching you spiral over something that's long gone." I turned away from him, pacing back and forth. "You don't get it. That ring wasn't just about her. It was about what she represents. She's the kind of woman everyone sees as perfect—quiet, loyal, gentle. And somehow, that makes her better than me? I worked hard, Mark. I did what I had to do to survive." "Yeah," he said dryly. "By lying. By manipulating people. By trying to control every damn thing." I spun around to face him. "Don't you dare talk to me like that." He leaned back on the couch, unfazed. "Then stop acting like a child who didn't get what she wanted." I stared at him, my chest rising and falling. For a long moment, neither of us said anything. The tension in the room was heavy, and the only sound was the faint hum of the ceiling fan. Finally, I spoke. "You think I'm crazy, don't you?" He met my eyes. "Sometimes, yeah. I wonder why I'm still here." That stung more than I expected. I blinked, trying to keep my expression calm. "Then why are you?" He shrugged. "I ask myself that a lot. Maybe

because I thought you'd change. Maybe because I still remember the woman you used to be before all this bitterness took over." I scoffed. "There was never a 'before,' Mark. You just didn't notice it then." He sighed. "Exactly my point." I looked away, unable to stand the disappointment in his eyes. I hated how calm he was. I hated how easy it seemed for him to say all that like it didn't matter. I sat down again, pulling my knees close to my chest. "You think I like feeling this way? You think I like being angry all the time?" He didn't answer right away. When he finally spoke, his voice was quiet. "Then stop feeding it. Let it go." "Let it go?" I laughed, short and sharp. "That's easy for you to say. You weren't the one humiliated. You didn't have everything you worked for stripped away because of some... some outsider who walked in and took over." He looked at me for a moment, then said, "You lost because you never learned how to win without hurting people." That made me go still. He stood up, running a hand through his hair again. "You keep blaming everyone else, Clara. Daniel, Amy, Elias, even me. But maybe it's time you looked in the mirror and saw who's really to blame." I didn't respond. I couldn't. The words stung, but deep down, I knew there was some truth in them. I just wasn't ready to face it. He turned toward the door, clearly done with the argument. "You need help," he said quietly. "And not the kind I can give you." 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.