

Hospital

Grace

" Maybe I should...take it to the court after all. " I mumble under my breath, my brows pinched in concentration.

My lack of horror towards stabbing Ethan and hurting Lily surprises me. But I still can't bring myself to regret it.

Instead, I regret not doing it sooner.

" Or I should— "

A warm hand around my wrist makes me pause. I look down, to find my hand still holding onto to Tristin's wrist.

My lips purse, my eyes narrowing on my trembling fingers. It's so stupid that I haven't stopped trembling.

It's like something inside me is screaming at me to wake up, but I am still lost in an abyss, unable to think about anything else but the damn divorce.

The sooner Ethan divorces me, the sooner I can leave this awful world. 1

I can be at peace. I—

Tristin pries my fingers off his wrist and turns my hand around to look at my palm. I blink at the deep gash on my hand that is bleeding profusely. The scissors must have hurt me too.

After all, it's not possible to hurt someone else and not get hurt in the

way. That's why they say that...when you are out for revenge, you should dig two graves. One for your enemy and one for yourself.

"What are you doing?" Tristin murmurs, his voice cold and hard.

I look up at his face, focus on his darkening eyes and shudder. He looks ready to murder someone.

"I am doing what you wanted me to do." I tell him honestly. "You want me to distract Ethan, right? Make him so angry with me that he forgets about Lily and focuses on getting back at me?"

His gaze snaps to mine. The air around me freezes, sending another shudder down my body.

"Isn't that why you let him get to me...every time?" I whisper, wondering why I really thought that he would protect me.

Tristin has no reason to help me. But he has every reason to use me because I am both, a Calder and a Whitlock. It makes me so special for everyone who hates both cocky families.

"To the hospital, Luca." Tristin's voice breaks me out of the trance.

I pull my hand out of his grip softly and turn to the window. I have already accepted that Tristin is only using me, but it still feels weird every time that I admit this to myself. Why must he act like a friend if he is more like a puppet master to me?

I sense his warm palm over my hand again. He pulls it back towards him.

Startled, I glance at our hands to find him wrapping his tie around it. My eyes lift to his perfect suit, now bare of the tie.

" You are really good at this. " I smile, watching him stop the bleeding, his eyes fixed on my hand with a strange look in them.

His silence irks me so I continue. " You push people into the fire and then pretend to be the savior. Does it stroke your savior complex? "

A moment passes, but he doesn't reply. The warmth of his hand seeps into my skin, making me want to draw my hand back but he holds it still, refusing to let it go.

So, I turn away from him again and watch the bright world instead.

An hour ago, I was going to the hospital with Ethan to see Lily. Now, I am with Tristin, on my way to another hospital.

But this ride is not as uncomfortable as the one with Ethan.

When we reach there, Tristin pulls me out of the car and leads me inside. This time, I focus less on the people eyeing us and more on his hand around my wrist.

He should have said something by now instead of dragging me around silently. My frown deepens as he sits me down on the bed of a private room.

Doctors and nurses rush inside, instantly treating my hand and assessing me for other injuries as if I have been in a terrible accident. Their stances are rigid and their movements nervous as they steal occasional glances at the man beside the door.

Maintaining his silence, Tristin steps out of the room and the doctors finally breathe a sigh of relief.

" Ms. we need to put you on anesthetic to stitch the wound, is that— "

" No, proceed without it. " I reply without taking my eyes off the door.

I can sense that the people around me have doubts but they don't repeat the same question again.

After a while, my hand is stitched and bandaged. I get down from the bed and sway lightly. I feel drowsy.

Shaking my head, I walk out of the room, only to pause in the doorway when I see Tristin standing in the distance, beside a glass wall. He is on the phone, his jaw clenched and his eyes showing the darkness that resides inside him.

" Reveal everything. By tomorrow, he must face the consequences. " Tristin says to the person on the other side of the call.

I rest my side against the wall and watch him closely. Under the sunlight that filters through the glass wall on his side, the tips of his hair look golden and his blue eyes lighten to a greenish shade.

He appears like an ice figurine, cut to perfection but he is special. The heat doesn't melt him. Nothing can, it seems.

" I hold 51% shares. The shareholders can not do anything against me. " He says, his jaw gritting harder. " I will not hold back anymore. Destroy everything Calder holds close, and hit him until he relents. By the end of his week, he must divorce Grace or he goes down. "

My brows lift at his icy tone. I clench my aching palm, my head filling with confusion.

His expressions harden as he hears something on the other side. A scary smirk pulls at his lips.

I swallow, unease growing inside my chest.

"If he won't give in, he has reached his end. Strip him off the power and kill him." His voice echoes in the silent corridor.

After he is done, the silence resonates again. I become a frozen figure on my spot, watching him turn into a man from someone's worst nightmares.

Tristin said someone can't grasp the extent of power Ethan has now without showing a certain cruelty towards the world. But he never mentioned...

To maintain such power—a power that the Calders and Robertos hold in their palm—they all must turn into demons.

Once they get the power, they can not go back to the way they were. They can not stop being cruel.

The door behind me slides open again and the team of doctors and nurses steps out of the hospital room. The noise prompts Tristin to hang up and turn to me.

I expect him to be surprised to find me there, but his expressions don't change. The realization that he knew I was here all along makes my heart skip a beat.

The doctors rush away when his cold eyes rest on them. After we are alone in the corridor again, I approach him on small, wobbly steps and look into his eyes.

" You are the same as Ethan, if not worse, right? " I whisper, my heart growing heavy.

The man who saved me on that road, came for me in the rain, waited for me around the corners every time...

It's a facade, isn't it?

Tristin's tense muscles loosen under my stare. His hand reaches for mine, turning my bandaged palms so he can inspect it.

" If someone had hurt my woman, I would have made life hell for them if I couldn't kill them. I wouldn't choose anyone or anything over her. " His thumb runs down the middle of my palm, over the bandage, as our eyes meet and he smiles. " Do I still look like Ethan to you? "

My quivering lips press together as I find myself at a loss of words.

" But you are cruel...just like him. " I whisper, my hand trembling in his palm.

" You got it wrong, Little Butterfly. I am far worse than him. He only got to know power like what...for three years? " He leans in, staring into my eyes. " I have known it my whole life. I was born with it. But... "

He leans away and releases my hand gently.

" My cruelty doesn't extend to you. " He says, before marching away from me.