

Don't Leave Me

Grace

"You just never change. How many times has it been already?" I murmur, attempting to get up but he hovers above me, pressing me down with his weight.

"I will never let you go." Ethan seethes, leaning in to press his lips to mine.

I turn my head away and glance at the lamp placed on the side table.

Ethan grips my chin harshly and makes me face him again. I hold my breath, staring into his half-lidded eyes.

"Your lover boy knows you are here with me. Josh caught his men spying on your whereabouts." His lips curl into a sinister smirk. "What do you think about that?"

I blink, my hands going still by my side. My blank face makes Ethan frown.

"He doesn't give a fuck if you sleep with me or what I do to you here." He hisses, grabbing my left wrist to pin it above my head.

"Why do you think I care about it?" I sigh, finding it hard to panic.

He is on top of me, drunk and furious, yet I find it hard to react. His Tristin talk doesn't bother me either. Tristin probably realized that this was his chance to go after Lily and dropped the idea of coming for me.

Good for him.

" He can keep you away from me if he tries, Grace. " Ethan cups my cheek and strokes it gently with his rough fingers. " but he doesn't. He doesn't care about you. "

My body jolts in repulsion. I release a breath and grab his hand to push it away.

" I don't want him to. " I shake my head.

Confusion appears in his eyes. Ethan's hand hangs in the air awkwardly.

" He— "

" Stop whining like a child. He did this or did that. Stop it. I don't really care, Ethan. " I place my hand over his chest to push him away.

" Are you trying to fool me again by making me believe there is nothing between you two? " He snarls, his expression shifting to one of fury.

I swallow as his hand cups my cheek again. He squeezes my face harshly, making my lips pucker out.

" I won't fall for it! " His voice rises in volume. " Listen to me carefully now. I am going to fuck you, Grace. Tonight and for the rest of your life, and no other man will ever lay his hands on you. You are mine and will ever be— "

His words cut off with a groan. I blink, noticing the trail of blood that sneaks down his forehead and falls over my neck.

" That's what you call rape. " I mumble, slamming the lamp over his head again.

He was so busy with his threat that he didn't notice me grabbing the lamp, he didn't hear the glass dropping on the floor, and he didn't anticipate the blow.

Ethan draws his head back momentarily, his hand moving up to touch his forehead. He shakes his head, focusing on the blood on his fingers.

Instead of taking any chances, I push him away and slam the lamp on the back of his head again. Ethan gasps, his hands moving up to hold me, but they never reach me.

With the fourth blow of the lamp, he drops on the bed, his hands still reaching out to me.

" You know... " I let the lamp fall on the floor as I slip away from him. " seeing you like this reminds me of how I reached out to you that day. You pushed me, you almost killed me, and I was still...reaching out to you. But you took Lily and left. "

His groans don't make me feel anything. The coldness has seeped into my bones. I wish he dies.

I get to my wobbly feet and take a deep breath. " After that...if you still believe I will let you rape me, you are wrong Ethan. How many times has it been anyway? I slapped you, stabbed you, insulted you...why don't you get lost? "

I walk around the bed and stop by his side. Ethan's hand is holding the side of his head, as blood trickles down and taints the sheet

under him.

Unconsciously, I reach for his cheek, wiping the line of blood that is rolling down to his neck. The warm liquid coats my finger, making my heart turn colder.

"The sight of your blood..." A lump forms in my throat. "I would have wounded my heart before. But now...I don't even feel pity, Ethan. Is this not enough for you? What more...do you want to turn me into?"

He blinks, pushing himself up. Instinctively, I try to step away but he catches my arms and draws me in. My hands rest on his chest, as our faces near and his ragged breaths hit my lips.

Now that he has stopped pressing on the wound, his blood starts flowing faster. Feeling his hands around my arms pulls me out of the trance.

Suddenly, this is too real, and I am watching him bleed from so close. I am reminded of how we first met, the days I spent with him, the moments we have shared...and how it all ended.

My vision blurs and tears start to flow without control. 1

"You—" Ethan's voice breaks. He draws me closer and rests his forehead against mine. "You...can make me bleed all you want. But...don't leave me."

I shake my head and hit his chest, struggling to break free. "I don't want to be with you. I don't want you anymore. You—You broke my heart, Ethan. You killed our child. You—You stood by when Lily accused me of being a cheater. You...You believed her over me. You still do! God, you still do! Why? Why? Why could you not believe me? Why

her and not me? "

" You...betrayed me. " Ethan croaks, his grip loosening over my arms as his eyes droop.

" No. " I sniffle, my struggles becoming weaker. " I never betrayed you. I never did anything to hurt you, Ethan. I loved you. All along, I just loved you...but Lily never did. She never loved you. She didn't abandon you on the altar for me. "

" Grace. " Ethan whispers, fighting to keep his eyes open.

" She disappeared because you were less powerful than Sebastian Roberto. She left because she found someone better. It's her! She never loved you, but I did. Then why—why did you do this to me?! "

My rants fall on deaf ears. My breath hitches as Ethan slumps back, his eyes closing and the blood wetting the pillow under his head.

I wipe my tears before my attention diverts to the blood on my hands. My fingers tremble under my gaze.

" Ethan. " I call out to him. My spine stiffens as I stand there, waiting for him to answer but he doesn't.

Even the sound of his breathing has ceased and everything has gone completely silent.

Is dying so easy? So silent? So cold?

" Ethan. " I whisper, and my voice drowns behind the silence in the room.



Miserable

Grace

I sit on the floor silently and stare at the blood that still stains my hands. After the rush of emotions, everything has gone numb inside me again.

"They have asked us to make life difficult for you." Detective Marlo stands on the other side of the bars and reveals.

"Did Ethan's family return from abroad?" I wonder.

"They want you to suffer for hurting Mr. Calder. Eventually, they will bring some people inside and get them to torture you." He discloses, without answering my question.

I nod. I expect nothing less from the Calder family. Ethan usually kept them out of the country because they were problematic but now that they are back, and Ethan is not conscious, they will do everything to make life hell for me.

"I didn't expect you to be such a woman. Why did you do that Mr. Calder?" He sighs.

I don't know why he came or why he is being so nosy.

"You could have run away instead of calling the police and ambulance for him. Mr. Calder's people would have dealt with the rest." Detective Marlo continues.

I take a deep breath and close my hands. I don't want to stare at the blood any longer.



" He could have died. " I murmur.

When I came to my senses and realized he could have really died, my courage disappeared and mechanically, I searched for his cell phone to call for help.

Today I have finally come to terms with the fact that I do want Ethan to suffer, but I don't want to kill him. I don't have it in me.

" The Calder family will— "

" Why are you here, Detective? " I question, closing my burning eyes.

" My hard work went down the drain. I am frustrated. " He slams his hand on the bar and hisses. " That's why I refused to get involved in the first place. You can't really bring powerful people to justice. Lily Whitlock was taken out and her record was wiped clean. Just like her, your husband is also considered a saint in the police records but here you are... "

" In for attempted murder. " I finish for him as a sad smile pulls at my lips.

" He kidnapped you, didn't he? You did everything in your self-defense! But they are saying you went there to kill your husband, that it was all a preplanned, cold-blooded murder attempt. This label will get you the highest verdict. " He sighs.

I nod, my eyes burning even if I have closed them. Ethan's bloodied face flashes across my mind, and I swallow the lump that forms in my throat.

" How is he? " I whisper.



" In a critical condition. If Mr. Calder doesn't survive, you will be charged with murder. Your life is over. And even if he survives, he will keep you behind bars for the rest of your life. That's just as shitty as this system. " Detective Marlo huffs before I hear him retreat.

Turns out he came to vent his frustration about the little power that he holds. The influential people twist the facts and make Detectives like him dance to their tune even if everyone knows the real truth. This must make these people feel helpless.

I hum to myself and open my eyes. My gaze is drawn to the dried blood once more.

You can make me bleed but don't leave me. Ethan's words echo in my head, and I find myself unable to forget about him.

Suddenly, I am forced to think about a harsh fact. Why does Ethan really believe Lily, cheats on me, yet still holds onto me as if his life depends on it?

Why is the situation not adding up?

What am I missing?

My thoughts are pushed to a stop, as Detective Marlo appears on the other side of the bars again.

" Your sister Lily Whitlock... " He trails off, his voice breathless.

" What about her? " My lips form a small smile.

I have a hunch.

" She went missing. " He discloses. " do you know anything about it? "

Of course, I do. Tristin has made his move. Ethan is unconscious, barely hanging onto life, and can not protect her.

Tristin has swept in to get her away at the crucial moment. This way, he will avoid having Ethan searching for Lily immediately and ruining Tristin's plans.

" They might pin this on you. " Detective Marlo says.

" Let them pin the end of the world on me. I don't care, Detective. " I shrug nonchalantly.

I hope Tristin makes Lily suffer.

" At this rate, there is no way you will ever get out of here. " He sighs and retreats again.

I release a soft breath and rest my head against the wall behind me. It's dark in the cell I am kept inside and it smells horrible.

Once in a while, I even hear hissing voices coming from the floor, but it doesn't faze me.

I have been in here for longer than a day, since the time, the cops showed up at Ethan's hidden villa and took me away.

Yet, Tristin didn't come.

This means we are done. Tristin has achieved what he wanted through me and slipped out of my life as easily as he barged in.

Now, alone once more, I feel oddly agitated but at peace. I just wish

Ethan doesn't die on me.

The door to the cell is pushed open and three women stroll inside. I crane my neck, directing my gaze towards the officer locking the door before looking at the group of women.

Instead of sitting down, they shoot me piercing glares and close in on me from all sides.

"I wonder...were you sent by Calders or Whitlocks?" I whisper, pulling my knees to my chest.

"Does it matter? They paid us handsomely to disfigure your face. Once this beauty is gone, you will not dare to seduce men again." The one on the right side crouches and takes out a blade.

"They paid you to ruin my face?" I blink.

"You can sit still and let me carve you up or you can fight and make yourself more miserable." The bulky woman on my right smirks, showing her dirty teeth.

"Who knows maybe she will end up stabbing you a few times if you move too much." The other two laugh.

I glance at the officer still standing beside the locked door, his back towards us. He can hear them, but he doesn't move an inch.

My chest tightens as I look back at the group, and smile. "I think I want to be miserable."