

Knows Secrets

Knows Secrets

Tristin

"You did the right thing." Mom says, stepping ahead to fix my shirt's collar.

"Why do you dislike her?" I wonder. "we have common enemies. She shouldn't bother you like she does."

Mom's soft eyes flicker towards my neutral gaze. I sigh, taking a step back and turning towards Luca so he can fix my collar instead.

"I need to meet with the shareholders before they cause a commotion over my absence. Carlos has been plotting for some time. He will get out of hand if I don't put him into his place now." I grit my jaw as the injuries on my back and chest stretch, sending a wave of pain down my whole body.

"He is your cousin. Be kind to him." Mom sighs.

I press my lips in a thin line. I can always count on Mom to judge every person wrong.

Once, she thought Lily was an angel. I told her she was a devil under that sweet smile but no one listened.

Now she thinks Grace is terrible, and she is wrong again.

To think that she is taking the side of my so-called cousin in front of me without knowing how he was cooperating with that sweet Lily to expose my family secret...

Anger flares to the surface but I push it back.

" I don't dislike Grace as a person, my son. You know that. " Mom squeezes my shoulder.

" I am not— "

" The way you look at her, at a woman who recently got divorced, is Lily's sister and Ethan's ex-wife...I can not tolerate it. I will not let you follow Seb's steps. " Her voice drops, becoming moist before she sniffles.

I release a heavy breath, ignore the pain in my body, and turn around to face her. Tears are rolling down Mom's cheeks as she tries to wipe them away and hide them from me.

" Mom. " I grab her shoulders and make her look at me. " I am not dying. I am right here, and I will be for a long time. "

" I... " Mom sobs, pressing her head to my chest. " They...called to tell me that my son got into an accident, and...I thought I would follow my child this time. I can not lose one more son. I can not. "

" Mom. " I sigh, rubbing her back.

She's losing her calm after all this time of composure. This means she has been holding it all inside and pretending to be better the last few days.

" I had to see you like that because of that Lily! She paid that driver to kill you, Tristin. And you love her sister? How could you? The Whitlocks are murderers. Grace proved it when she attacked her ex-

husband and tried to kill him. Don't you get it? They— "

" Mom. " My voice turns harsh as I pull her head away.

She is panicking. I can see it in her eyes, and the way she rants.

" You need to calm down, Mom. " I lower my voice and stare into her wide, terror-filled eyes.

" You are not denying it. " She mumbles, shrugging my hands away. " You are not denying what I said! "

I run my fingers through my hair and glance at Luca from over my shoulder. He nods, before leaving me alone with Mom.

" You asked me to send her away and I did, didn't I, Mom? She came to see me and I asked her to leave. " I assert, staring at her.

" But you...my son... " Her hands rise towards me, then lower and clench into fists. " You didn't deny it when I said you love her. "

My shoulders stiffen. I try to form words, but my head goes blank.

When someone else says those words to me and attaches her name in the end, I find myself unable to even comprehend what's wrong with it. When I see nothing wrong with it, how do I deny it?

" How can you love the sister of the woman who killed your brother and tried to kill you?! Have you gone mad?! " She yells, losing the usual calm that I am used to seeing on her face.

I think so too. I have gone mad.

Out of all the girls in the world, girls less complicated, and more bright ...my heart has decided to like the one woman I shouldn't even think about.

Something twists inside my chest as I remember the call I received from her but didn't take because I was angry the night when I walked away from her. The next moment, when the truck collided with our car, I regretted not hearing her voice for the last time.

It's stupid that I didn't even regret not taking my revenge. I didn't recall my family, my friends, my memories...

I only thought about her.

I thought about what Ethan might do to her, or how my family might hurt her, or how she would live all alone in this fucked up world. It hurt more than having the metal wedged in my chest, in my back.

"Tristin!" Mom hisses in my face and finally, I snap back to reality.

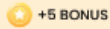
"I did what you wanted. Now tell me where you have kept Lily, Mom." I come straight to the point and ignore the itch in my fingers.

I need to go after Grace, to tell her that I don't want her to not see me ever again. I want her to stay because I don't think I can abandon her.

"She will meet her end—"

"She has that video, Mom." I snap. "come back to your senses! She knows your secret and I do not know who else she has told about it."

Color drains from Mom's face as her mouth opens and closes several



Knows Secrets

times. My chest heaves, with pain, with longing, with exhaustion.

"What..." She swallows. "what secret?"

"She knows what you did, Mom, and if she somehow manages to bring the truth to the world, you can imagine what Ania will go through." I hiss, losing control over my nerves.

Since the time I woke up, Mom has been busy making me lose my mind over the fact that she took Lily to some secret location to get rid of her. No matter how I try to make her understand that she is making a mistake, she just doesn't understand.

But in the end, she made a deal with me. If I send Grace away and don't see her, she will let me know where Lily is.

Now it seems to be a lie so she needs to know the fucking truth.

"How...when..."

"Why else do you think I was not crushing her to death, Mom?! Why else do you think I was patiently watching her move in life instead of wringing her neck and ending her life?" My voice becomes cold. "It's because she has the power to destroy my family more than she has already done. And I need to get that video before I get rid of her, Mom."

"Why didn't you tell me?" Her hands start shaking.

"Because you will do something foolish again." I blink, moving past her to reach the door. "I am telling you...getting rid of Lily before getting her under control will be a mistake. You will destroy your

Commented [Ma1]:

daughter's life while trying to avenge your sons. "

" Tristin, do something and— "

" I will. " I pause in front of the door. " That's why you need to tell Luca where she is. He will bring her to one of my locations. "

I don't wait to hear what else she has to say. The itch in my hands is growing. The surprise and hopelessness in Grace's eyes are killing me.

I shouldn't have thought that I would tell her everything later. I shouldn't have asked her to leave at all or told her all those hurtful words back then.

She was already hurting so much and I just—

But she won't do something rash, right? She is brave and the strongest woman I have met. She will never give up or give in to the harshness of this world.

" Where is she? " I ask Luca as he comes to walk beside me.

" On the rooftop. " His answer has me freezing in my way before I sprint down the corridor, disregarding the pain in my body and the looks I receive from my men.

Your Way

Your Way

Tristin

By the time I step onto the rooftop, it starts raining. Luca is closely behind, asking me to stay in and not get myself wet but I can not stop to listen.

Cold air sways my jacket before I feel the rain drenching me. My eyes scan the dimly lit area, searching for her.

"Where is she?" I mumble.

Maybe, she wanted to get some fresh air and came here. She was not suicidal and all that.

I walk around the front, and onto the back, sighing in relief. She was not here.

"Did someone—"

The words die on my tongue. I have been watching the area, wanting to find her but I was expecting to find her on the tall wall.

Her thin T-shirt moves with the breeze, as she walks along the line, her eyes downcast and her arms wrapped around herself.

The color drains from my face as memories flash across my mind, causing me to freeze after a long time.

"She only wants my money." My brother's voice is carried by the wind, emotionless and determined. "It's my fault that I didn't

Your Way

understand this before. "

" Yes, it was your fucking fault. How could you tell her something like that? It was not your secret to share! " Now, it was my voice, reminding me of the words spoken before, harsh and unforgiving.

" It has always been my fault. Everything. "

Silence had ensued after that, and it had continued for a long time. I turned away from him, not wanting to speak to him anymore.

And then he decided he would respect my wishes. He would never speak again. He would be silenced for the rest of my life.

He had done what I didn't think he ever will. A loud thud and it was over.

How could he run from his problems instead of facing them? I thought for a long time and resented him for making me witness something I couldn't forget.

Then, I remembered. He had been tired since he was born, always wanting to leave and stay hidden.

He was just born with this weight of being the eldest, the one who bore all the horrors and was supposed to protect us—me, my sister, Mom.

But he didn't.

The exhaustion got to him. The betrayal from the one woman he loved became his last stroke.

Your Way

He chose to disappear at last and decided he didn't want to shoulder the weight anymore.

" Ms. Whitlock. What are you doing? Come down from there. " I hear Luca shout over the sound of the rain.

I blink and watch her turn towards us. She looks otherworldly standing there. The lights from the other towers shine over her drenched figure. Her hair clings to her face, as she lifts her finger towards me.

" What are you doing here now? " Her eyes narrow on me.

I can not move. There are only a few moments in my life when I felt like it, like I am not inside my body but floating somewhere in the air, or maybe it's the ground. I can not feel it beneath my feet.

" Ms, Whitlock, get down now! " Luca's voice rises, sounding less muffled but stern.

But I still don't move.

I keep my eyes on her, oddly scared that she will disappear too if I look away.

Finally, it clicks...the reason why I felt drawn to her in the first in place ...

It was never about her beauty, or the talent, or the brave act.

It was all ever about the burden, the weight she seemed to carry everywhere with her. It felt like if I ever took my eyes off her, I would

Your Way

never grasp her again.

It made me anxious.

It made my heart beat in a strange rhythm.

It made me want to be soft, to care for her.

" You said you don't want to see me. " She huffs, staggering a step back on the wide edge.

Suddenly, I am in the present, leaping towards her desperately. My heart jumps to my throat and the energy leaves my body.

I don't want her to disappear.

" Stay there, Tristin! " She lifts her finger in my direction and I stop a few steps away.

I open my mouth to say something but no words come out. How do you tell someone that you are scared without crumbling?

If I had known, I could have saved my brother.

I am so scared, brother.

I am scared our family will be in ruins again, brother.

I am just scared that the past will someday claim me and I won't ever rise, brother.

If I had said all those words instead of blaming him for loving a woman, for wanting to have a family with her, for wanting to leave the past in the past so he could move on...

He would still be alive.

He wouldn't pay for something he didn't do.

It was not Lily who killed him. It was me.

"Don't die." I whisper. "don't die because of me."

"Die?" Grace's voice sounds soft under the rain which makes everything appear blurry. "I thought about it but—"

"Don't think about it." I shake my head, desperation leaking from every pore of my body.

I want to jump ahead and grab ahold of her before she vanishes from my sight but I am still so scared.

Her arms wrap around herself, and she glares at me. "You are so confusing! What the hell do you want now?!"

I don't know what I want.

"Get down, Grace. I will tell you. Get down first." I blurt, lifting my hand towards her.

She cocks her head to the side. "why should I listen to you? We have no deal anymore. You can go your way and I can go mine."

"No!" I snap. "this is not your way! You can not stand there and fucking spew nonsense. Get down from there!"

A frown etches between her brows. "I will get down when I want to."

 +5 BONUS

Your Way

The rain feels harsher against my skin. My chest heaves up and down as I fixate her with a look.

I know I need to go now. If I watch her standing there, on the verge of disappearing, I might lose my mind.

So, I push ahead blindly and grasp her forearm before she can gasp. I tug her towards me, and she falls down, into my arms before knees hit the ground.

"Tristin!" She screams in my ear, but I can not care anymore.

I hold her down and pull her closer. "If this is what you choose as your way, then I am going to keep you like this for the rest of our lives, Grace. I will not let you disappear."

She picks her head to protest and looks at me with those angry eyes. The fear becomes a noose around my neck before I lean in and capture her lips.

She no longer belongs to that stupid Calder. Now, I will make her mine.



Comments



Support