

Unwanted and Hated

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Grace

I sigh, shifting my attention to the roses beside me. "So you do care about them. But if you care so much, why do you keep hurting them?"

Ania glares at me for a moment longer, then turns to leave. I glance at her back.

"Keeping yourself locked up in your room or hating your family won't solve your problems, Ania. The truth will not go away, and you won't stop hurting." I whisper, a lump forming in my throat.

I shouldn't be interfering, but I can't help it. If Ania keeps hiding herself like this, soon, she will find herself unable to break through this wall.

I don't wish for her to find herself in a state where she finds it hard to even get up from the bed.

"How does it stop then? You are talking as if you know a better solution! Are you not as pathetic as me? Your own family hates you, and you—"

"That's right." I interrupt and look down at my hands. "You are right. My family hates me, and I am far worse than you will ever be."

A moment of silence passes between us, but she doesn't leave. My memories play before my eyes like a movie scene.

" They hate me for no apparent reason. Or maybe there is a reason, but I will never find out. " I nod to myself. " but your family doesn't hate you, Ania. Instead, they love you. They love you so much that they feel your suffering as their own, that they can do anything and everything to protect you from the slightest of harm. "

Another moment of silence, and I give up. My words might sound harsh to her, and I might end up making things worse between Ania and her family.

My train of thought comes to a halt when she plops down beside me. I stiffen, my hands curling into fists.

" But they are the people that hurt me the most. " She whispers. " They hid the truth from me, and I proudly called myself a Roberto all this time. I—Now, how do I face my friends...and everyone? They are laughing at me. They make fun of me. I am just an illegitimate child, and what's worse is that...I am the result of Mom's infidelity. This means...I must be unwanted, right? This means...that Mom regretted giving birth to me, and my brothers secretly hated me all this time because I was a threat to their reputation. "

I wrap my arms around myself. " is that what you really believe? "

" What? " Her voice lowers.

" Your Mom did everything to protect you. She loved you and cherished you. Do you think she would have done all that if you were unwanted? " I shrug, refusing to look her way.

If she is still glaring at me, I might lose the courage to keep speaking.

" She must have pitied me. " Ania reasons.

" And your brothers...do you think they pitied you too? You say they hid the truth from you. That's right. But did they ever make you feel like they are hiding something? Did they ever...hurt you or treat you like you were not their little sister, a sister they adored? " A frown settles between my brows. " did they ever hit you, Ania? "

" What? No. Tristin and Seb would never hit me. That's... " She trails off, unable to find her next words.

" Did they say hurtful things then? " My frown deepens.

" No. " Her voice drowns.

" Did they ever look at you with disdain? Did they ever make you feel like you are insignificant? " I wonder.

" No. " She repeats the answer.

I sense her shoulders drooping beside me and release a sigh. " didn't they treat you like their Princess? "

" They did. " She mumbles without hesitation.

" Then why do you think they hated you secretly? " I finally turn to look at her and find her head lowered.

" Because...I am...the only one...who is the result of... " She can't finish that. She just shakes her head, realizing that her words sound stupid to herself.

Unwanted and Hated

" Let me tell you one thing, Ania. " I whisper softly. " You can not hide hate for long. You can not treat a person you hate like they are the moon in your world. "

She doesn't say anything. I look away, focusing on the flowers once again. The sunlight peaks through the glass ceiling of the greenhouse, the golden shine making everything look ethereal.

" My parents hated me like you said. " I whisper. " They didn't forget to show it to me at every turn of my life. Whatever I loved, they would snatch it away from me and give it to my sister. Whatever I wanted, I never got it. Even if we were in the same room, they would forget I ever existed, not until they wanted to say something hurtful to me. I didn't understand why they would do this to me...but the truth is... they must have wanted only Lily as their daughter. They never wanted me. I once heard from my housekeeper that my Mom wanted to abort me, but she couldn't because the news of her pregnancy broke out in the news. In the true sense, I am unwanted by my parents and my sister, and I have never once...felt otherwise in my life. My parents can kill me if it means making their elder daughter happy. And my sister can get me raped if it means she can get what she wants. "

" That's—that's too much. Surely, they wouldn't have tried something like that. " Ania gasps, the surprise reflecting in her voice.

" They did, actually. " I smile. " My sister tried to get me raped by multiple men, and your brother came to save me at the last moment. She even wanted to record it so she could send it to Ethan. "

" Grace. " Ania gasps again. " That's— "

Unwanted and Hated

" And you must know...that I was kidnapped some time ago. That was my parents' doing. They wanted to use me to get their precious daughter back or to avenge her. " I shrug with nonchalance. " they didn't care if I ended up dying. I was taken right in front of their eyes. They saw me, our eyes met, and then they looked away as if they couldn't bother with me. That's what...it feels like to be unwanted by your parents and hated by your siblings, Ania. "

A heavy silence settles between us. I shudder as the cold breeze hits my body. It's surprising that the past doesn't affect me as much as it did before.

I no longer cry when I think about my parents or Lily. I have accepted that they are not a part of my life anymore.

" I didn't know you had to go through something like that. " Ania mumbles under her breath.

" My goal was not to make you pity me or sympathize with me, Ania. You said you are unwanted for your Mom, and your brothers hate you. You needed to know that's not true. Your Mom, even after getting scorned by the world for her decisions, still doesn't think you are a mistake. And your brother, despite facing your wrath...still continues to think about how he can make you feel better. He was...so lost when he realized he couldn't protect you, and the regret is still haunting him to this day. "

" They could have told me the truth. " I hear her snuffle and instantly turn to look at her.

My hand reaches out to her back. I pat her back and swallow the

Unwanted and Hated

unease in my throat.

" They thought you could spend your whole life without facing this pain, Ania. They were wrong to keep the truth from you, but they had a valid reason. They just wanted to protect you. Can you not...focus on that reason? " I whisper, watching her tears fall and roll down her cheeks.

She doesn't say anything, so I continue to pat her back in silence. Maybe it will take her some time, but I am sure she will come around.

" Did I hurt...Tristin too much? " She asks after a while of sobbing quietly. 1

" He will be fine as long as you forgive him. " I smile as our eyes meet.

" I was...rude to you from the start. Why are you being nice to me right now? " She wipes her cheeks and stares at me.

I shrug, taking my hand back. She has pulled herself together, so there is no need to comfort her.

" Because...I really... " I gulp. " I really love your brother, and I can't see him and anyone he loves suffering. "

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