

My Stepbrother's Dirty Little Secret

Chapter 5

Raphael

I leaned against the cold brick wall of the mansion, my arms crossed, watching the show. Our soldiers were busy dragging in the trash, fifty men, all bound at the wrists, their faces covered in bruises and tears. They were lined up like cattle ready for the slaughter.

This was the Hunt for the night, and the air already smelled like sweat and fear.

Adriano walked in behind them, looking entirely too casual. He had his hands shoved deep in his pockets, his expensive coat fluttering as he moved.

“The cells downstairs were getting a bit crowded,” he said, his voice light, almost bored. “So I brought you fifty of the worst. Traitors, rats, and the kind of scum that touches people who can’t fight back. They’re all yours. Do whatever you want with them.”

I didn’t say a word. I just watched, my mind already calculating the thrill of the hunt.

Luca walked over and crouched down in front of one man who was shaking so hard his teeth were chattering. The second the man's eyes met Luca's, a dark, wet stain spread across his trousers. He literally pissed himself just from a look.

That made Luca smile. It wasn't a normal smile, it was the kind of jagged, hateful expression that made your skin crawl. He looked more alive in this basement than he ever did at a family dinner.

"Is that the one?" I asked, my voice flat.

Luca didn't look back at me. He just kept staring at the man, his eyes dark and empty. "Yeah," he whispered, "This is the piece of trash who... did those things to his own son."

Just then, the heavy metal door groaned open. Dante walked in, looking annoyed as he tried to peel some girl off his arm. She was clinging to his sleeve like her life depended on it, but he just shoved her back toward the hall telling her something sweet to hold her off. He straightened his collar and strolled over to us, looking at the row of trembling men.

"What did I miss?" Dante asked, checking his watch. "The party started without me?"

I looked at the fifty men, then at my brothers. The night was young, and I had fifty different ways to make sure these men regretted ever being born.

“Just getting ready to play,” I said.

I reached for the weapon resting on the table. It wasn't something you could just buy, I had spent months in my lab building it, piece by piece. It was an electronic bow, sleek and matte black, looking more like a piece of high-tech surgical equipment than a weapon. It was light as a feather but strong enough to put a hole through a brick wall.

I picked up one of the arrows. I had designed these myself, too. They weren't just sharp sticks, they were smart.

The tips were made of a special metal that didn't just pierce skin, the moment they hit a target, they sent a massive electrical surge straight to the heart.

I'd programmed them to track heat, so once I locked on, there was no running away. If I fired, the arrow did the thinking for me. It didn't matter how fast these men ran or where they tried to hide in the dark. My arrows would find them, and the last thing they'd feel was a thousand volts of my own personal brand of justice.

“Take them to the back,” I ordered.

I gestured toward the massive floor-to-ceiling glass walls that looked out into the blackness. Behind the mansion lay the heart of our estate, acres and acres of thick forest.

It was our own private playground, a kingdom of pain where the rules of the world didn't exist.

The soldiers started grabbing the men by their collars, dragging them toward the heavy steel doors.

“Make sure they understand the map,” I added, a small, dark smirk playing on my lips, “There is no exit. The entire forest is wrapped in ten feet of electrified barbed wire. The only way out of those woods is back through this house. And to get through this house, they have to get past us.”

I watched the realization hit the prisoners. Their eyes went wide as they looked at the dark treeline. It wasn’t just a forest, it was a cage. A massive, beautiful, green cage. They could run until their lungs burned and their feet bled, but they would always be trapped inside our world.

“Give them a five-minute head start,” I told Adriano, “I want them to feel like they have a chance. I want their hearts to be pumping fast. It makes the sensors on my arrows lock on much better.”

The thrill of the hunt, the power of the tech, and the absolute control over fifty lives. To most people, this was a nightmare. To me, it was the only time I truly felt like a god.

The heavy stone back terrace was crowded with the kind of men who ruled the world from glass skyscrapers.

These weren't just random guys, they were the heirs, the CEOs, the sons of senators, they were the guys I'd gone to Ivy League schools with, the ones I traded stocks with, and the ones who sat across from me in high-stakes boardrooms.

"Raphael," a voice called out. It was Julian, the son of a tech mogul I'd helped take over a competitor last year. He adjusted the night-vision goggles on his head, a glass of expensive bourbon in his other hand, "I heard you updated the software on the perimeter sensors. Please tell me the 'no-kill zone' near the wire is gone. I want to see them hit the electricity this time."

I didn't even look up from my bow. "I fixed it, Julian. If they touch the fence, they'll light up like a Christmas tree. Try not to miss this time."

A few of the guys laughed, these men weren't here for a gala or a charity auction. They were here for the high that only the Capones could provide. We had grown up together, gone to the same elite schools, and now we shared the same dark secrets.

"The entry f*e is paid?" I asked, not looking at them as I calibrated the touch-screen on my bow.

"Every cent, Raphael," one of them, a billionaire's son with a cruel glint in his eyes replied, "And the side bets are already at ten million for the first kill."

I looked out at the fifty shadows running into the treeline. My screen flickered to life, showing fifty small, pulsing heat signatures.

“The rules are simple,” I said, my voice cutting through the excited deep voices of the men, “The forest is a closed loop. If they reach the wire, they die. If they stay still, they die. The only way they ‘win’ is if they make it back to the mansion basement before the sun comes up.”

I paused, a cold, sharp smile stretching across my face.

“But I’ve never had a winner.”

The men around me laughed, they gripped their weapons, high-end rifles and crossbows, waiting for my signal.

I’m the one who provided the playground for their darkest desires, the one who turned a boring Friday night into a hunt that would be whispered about in boardrooms for months.

“Five minutes are up,” I whispered, flicking the safety off my bow, “The Void is open. Happy fucking hunting, gentlemen.”

Ruby Walker