

The Almighty Dominance - kidnapped 221[1,057 words]

Chapter 221

Charles hadn't expected Bella to launch such a bold accusation in front of all these people.

Moments earlier, the opulent ballroom had been alive with murmured praises for Sophia-her grace, her elegance, her success.

Now it pulsed with scandal and suspicion.

Sophia's expression darkening. "How dare you do this, Miss Kane? You invited me here as your guest, and now you're publicly accusing me of theft? If you really have evidence, show it. Otherwise, you owe me an apology."

Bella's lips curved into a contemptuous grin.

"For your information, I never invited you. You barged in like the desperate parasite you are. And evidence? Oh, sweetheart, I've got more than enough to bury you," she purred, nodding toward the bodyguards.

"All they have to do is look inside that tacky little purse you're flaunting. Or would you prefer to drop the charade and confess right here, right now?"

"After all, you had countless chances to sneak my bracelet back-ten million dollars' worth, mind you-but here we are. You're nothing but a greedy little thief."

A hush fell over the crowd, all eyes zeroing in on Sophia.

Somewhere behind the cluster of onlookers, Clara hovered, nervously avoiding Sophia's gaze.

A flash of realization tore through Sophia.

There was only one explanation for why Bella Kane was so certain she had the bracelet-and for the way Clara avoided her gaze after touching her bag.

There was only one possible answer: the bracelet was in her bag!

Sophia tightened her grip around her handbag, a chill racing through her veins.

This was a setup.

She was certain of it.

Charles moved closer, placing a hesitant hand on Sophia's shoulder. "Bella, this is-this is going too far. Accusing her without proof is-"

"Proof?" Bella let out an icy laugh. "We'll see how 'proof' looks when we empty out that cheap purse."

The bodyguards lunged forward, seizing Sophia's bag before she could react.

They tore it open and spilled the contents out on a nearby table.

Keys, phone, lipstick-everything scattered for the world to see.

Then came the final item: a glittering gold bracelet crusted with diamonds.

Bella's bracelet.

A collective gasp washed over the crowd. The bodyguard snatched it up, holding it high as if he were displaying a trophy.

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"Miss Kane, we've found it!" he declared, fueling the mob growing disbelief and excitement.

Sophia's chest constricted. "This is a trap! I have no idea how that got in there!"

Charles stood frozen, his eyes darting between the damning evidence and Sophia's horrified face.

"Do you think a thief would actually admit they're a thief especially one this slimy? Do you think we're all stupid?"

Bella marched over, righteous fury lighting her eyes, and slapped Sophia hard across the cheek.

The sound echoed in the stunned silence.

"Everyone, look!" Bella held the sparkling bracelet aloft, reveling in the collective shock.

"What more proof do we need?"

"Is this not the beloved CEO of the Lancaster Group, exposed as a cheap, desperate thief?"

Voices rose in a clamor: "I can't believe it—she looked so elegant."

"Who knew she was just another gold digger?"

"Did you hear about her messing around with Bella's fiance, too?"

Sophia's cheeks flamed. She swallowed the burning humiliation in her throat.

"I didn't steal anything! Someone planted it on me-"

"Shut up!" Bella screeched, hand flying out to slap Sophia again.

Sophia staggered, tears pooling in her eyes as pain exploded across her cheek.

"You think you can deny it now? There's your name, dragged right through the dirt. It's what you deserve for coming after what's mine-my fiancé." Charles stepped forward. "Bella-"

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"Shut up, Charles, or I'll have my father ruin you. Let's see how brave you feel when you're begging for scraps,"

she sneered.

Charles flinched and stepped back, and the betrayal hit Sophia like a punch to the gut.

He couldn't even look her in the eye.

"Sophia, I-I can't afford to cross them," he muttered, his voice soaked in cowardice.

Bella's face contorted into a cruel leer.

"Restrain that thief," she commanded, and the bodyguards complied, yanking Sophia's arms behind her back and forcing her onto her knees.

"You want to claw at things that aren't yours? Let's see how filthy you really are!"

Sophia twisted to free herself, but Bella grabbed a fistful of her hair, yanking her head back.

"Did you truly believe you could worm your way into his bed and escape untouched?" Bella hissed, her tone like

venom on silk.

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"You filthy little parasite- did you think your cheap tricks would be enough to outshine me?" Sophia froze, breath catching in her throat. "It... it was your You framed me?"

Bella's eyes gleamed with wicked satisfaction as she tilted her head.

"Oh, darling... You really are as pathetic as you look. I didn't frame you. I exposed you. I merely set the stage. You played your part like the desperate little whore you are."

Sophia's heart thudded painfully in her chest-she was prey, hunted from the start.

Bella leaned in close, her whisper colder than winter steel.

"But now that the curtain's lifted, tell me, Sophia... what exactly do you think is going to happen? Do you think anyone will lift a finger to save a defiled servant girl who forgot her place?"

Then came the tear-sharp and sudden.

Her dress was ripped at the shoulder, exposing bare skin to the biting air and cruel, leering eyes.

Gasps and stifled laughter rippled through the room.

"You masquerade as a lady, but you're nothing more than a back-alley slut in borrowed silk," Bella spat.

"Now let's strip away the illusion for everyone to see."

Sophia trembled, arms wrapping around herself instinctively.

But Bella wasn't finished. She was just beginning.

"Still playing modest?" she sneered. "That's rich. I've seen dogs with more dignity.

Fine. You want shame? Then, drown in it."

She seized a bottle of dark amber liquor-aged, expensive, and potent-and forced it to Sophia's lips, jamming the neck of the glass between clenched teeth.

"Drink," she commanded.

The burning liquid poured down Sophia's throat.

She gagged and choked, sputtering as fire spread through her chest and her vision swam.

"Drink!" Bella howled, her voice cracking with manic glee. "Drink every drop! You're going to dance naked at this banquet-let everyone see exactly what kind of filth you are!"

Sophia's body convulsed as the whiskey seared her throat, the liquid fire clawing its way down her chest.

She gasped for air, coughing, choking-yet Bella didn't loosen her grip for a

second.

"This is just the beginning," Bella whispered into her ear, voice low and venomous.

"By the time tonight ends," Bella sneered, pulling out a sleek, jewel-encrusted phone and aiming it at Sophia, you'll be live-naked, broken, exposed for the world to see. A crawling little thief."

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Charles flicked his gaze over Sophia sprawled on the marble floor.

He clicked his tongue in quiet disdain.

All that time and cash he'd funneled her way-her and that vulture of a mother- could go up in smoke if he didn't salvage the situation.

And he'd been so close to getting her into his bed, to boasting he'd seduced one of the top five most beautiful women in Vancouver.

A real waste if it all ended here.

He ran a hand through his hair, shot an irritated glance at the raging Bella, and stepped toward her.

"Bella, come on," he said in a low voice. "Don't you think you've gone a little too far?"

Bella's eyes flashed with contempt.

She didn't reply. She just raised her hand and smacked Charles right across the face-loud enough to make the entire ballroom freeze.

Gasps hissed through the air.

Charles Kingston, the so-called Prince of Vancouver, getting slapped around in front of half the city's elite?

That was a headline all on its own.

Bella didn't give a damn.

She jabbed a finger at him. "You still dare to side with this bitch?"

"I'll destroy her until even ashes feel like a mercy. Get out of my banquet!"

A storm of murmurs whipped around them.

Charles's cheeks burned hot.

Everyone stared, some smirking, some in shock.

He clenched his fists, itching to slap Bella back. But Jericho Kane, looming behind her, was too big a problem.

Charles could practically taste the humiliation.

"Fine," he muttered, swallowing his pride. If he had to wait ten years to get his revenge, so be it.

With a final glare, he stormed toward the exit.

His face was on fire, and so was his anger.

As he reached the entrances, an idea ignited in his head. He whipped out his phone, typed a quick text:

"Sophia Lancaster is getting destroyed by Bella Kane at her own banquet. She's gonna get her drunk, make her dance naked, live stream the whole thing. She's done for-unless you hurry."

He sent it off-to Alex-then laughed under his breath.

He believe Alex will call Jessica for help.

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"Let's see how Bella versus Jessica? When they tear each other apart..." He smirked, "I'll pick up the pieces."

He was still chuckling when hurried footsteps sounded behind him.

"Charles, wait!" Clara's soft voice called.

She jogged up, eyes darting nervously between him and the banquet hall.

"Are... are you leaving now? Can I come with you?" She glanced over her shoulder as though someone might pounce.

"I never thought Sophia really stole that bracelet. I'm... I'm scared."

Charles arched a brow. He'd almost forgotten about Clara.

Cute, and apparently eager. He gave her a slow once-over.

She blushed but pressed in closer, hugging his arm, her body trembling just enough to awaken his lust.

"Charles," she whispered, leaning in. "I... I'll do anything if you can keep me safe. Promise."

Her perfume was sweet and tempting. Charles curled his arm around her waist, savoring the feel.

"Relax," he purred, tilting his head. "I know just the right place to spend the night.' And with that, they were gone.

Meanwhile, Bella rammed the neck of the whiskey bottle against Sophia's lips, grinning like a hyena in heels, hell-bent on turning humiliation into sport.

"Drink it, you bitch," she hissed, loud enough for the entire room to hear.

"Isn't this what gutter girls like you live for?"

She was forcing-a show for the vultures gathered around, laughing, watching, filming.

She was rough. She was ruthless.

But Sophia wasn't stupid.

Her instincts screamed-if she drank, they'd play with her, strip her dignity, and ruin her.

After that, her name would be in the dirt, and the entire Lancaster Group would crash with her.

Offending Bella Kane wasn't a big deal on its own-Lancaster's business was based in Vancouver.

But a ruined name? That would destroy everything.

She refused the whiskey.

She resisted with all her strength. She would not be made drunk.

"You really think you can say no to me?" Bella spat, grabbing a fistful of Sophia's

hair and wrenching her head back. "You stupid, stuck-up bitch."

Then came the slaps. Brutal. Unrelenting. Each one a crack of rage echoing through the banquet hall!

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"You think you're better than me?!" Bella shrieked.

You think you can touch my fiance and walk away clean? When I say drink-you fucking drown!"

Sophia's cheek split. Blood smeared across her lips, mixing with mascara and the shimmer of humiliation.

Bella stepped back, panting with fury.

"You," she snapped to one of the guards, "get me another Bottle. I'm not done with this plastic-faced tramp."

As the guard let go of her left arm, Sophia moved fast.

Too fast.

Her hand darted for the shattered bottle on the floor.

She gripped it, still on her knees, and without hesitation, swung up hard.

The glass exploded against Bella's cheek.

She screamed, staggered, crumpled to the ground holding her face.

Silence.

Gasps.

Shock.

People froze like statues. No one dared breathe.

Sophia-she-had struck first blood.

At Bella Kane's party.

A tiny, savage smile flickered across Sophia's battered lips.

But she didn't get to enjoy it.

Bella roared, wild and red-eyed. She lunged. Her fingers found Sophia's hair again, yanking her forward-and

then-

CRACK.

Sophia's head slammed against the marble floor.

Blood spilled immediately, dark and thick, trailing into the spilled wine.

Bella towered over her, rabid. "You fucking nobody! You dare scar me?!"

She raised a leg and stomped-heel-first-into Sophia's side.

Iron stiletto. Straight into soft flesh.

Sophia screamed. The sound was raw, involuntary.

Bella wasn't done.

She stomped again-this time, right onto Sophia's feet.

The crunch was sickening. Bone and nail and flesh gave way under the spike of the heel.

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"Let this be a lesson," Bella hissed. "You crawl into my world, you don't leave walking."

Again.

And again.

Each stomp was a message: You don't belong here.

By the time Bella stepped back, Sophia was barely conscious.

Her dress ruined, her hands mangled, her face a mess of blood and pain.

She looked less like a woman and more like a rag doll left out in the rain.

The crowd? They watched. Cowards and social climbers. No one stopped it. No one helped.

Even monsters need an audience.

"She's out," one of the bodyguards muttered.

Bella scoffed. "Took her long enough. Weak little fraud."

Then she glanced down at the girl at her feet-bleeding, broken.

Her voice dropped, cold and flat.

"Lock her up," Bella said, her voice ice-cold and dripping with venom. "Call those filthy street rats man. Let them take turns ruining her-film everything."

She leaned in closer, staring down at Sophia's bloodied body like it was trash.

"I want every second caught on camera. Make it brutal. Make it unforgettable. When they're done, dump what's

left of her into the street naked. Let people feast on her like the bottom-feeding slut she is." (1

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Bella arched her perfectly manicured eyebrow and, with slow deliberation, lifted her stiletto-clad foot.

She wiped the streak of blood from its heel against Sophia's mouth

Then she spat, full of contempt, right onto the woman's fainted body.

"Get her out of my sight," Bella snapped, coolly flicking her gaze the two bodyguards.

"She's not fit to breathe the same air as the rest of us. Make sure you two enjoy it."

Without hesitation, the guards each grabbed one of Sophia's arms and began dragging her across the polished marble floor.

Her battered, lifeless body smeared a faint streak of blood in its wake.

A small knot of onlookers gathered-some wrinkling their noses, others letting out cruel, amused chuckles.

"That's what you get for trying to swipe something from Jericho Kane's family," one of them sneered.

A middle-aged man, wine glass in hand, watched Sophia with open scorn.

"If she was that desperate for money," he drawled, a smirk tugging at his lips, "I would've written her a check. Pathetic little thief. She could've sold her body-God knows someone would pay

The guards unceremoniously shoved Sophia into the lobby just as a tall figure stepped through the main doors.

The moment his eyes landed on the bloody woman, his face twisted with rage.

"Out of the way!" one guard barked, dismissively waving at him. "Can't you see this is a private event?"

Before the words fully tumbled out of the guard's mouth, he was sprawled on the floor, unconscious.

His partner joined him, knocked out cold in seconds.

Alex dropped to one knee beside Sophia. 1

His expression was livid-yet beneath the fury lay a desperate concern.

Without a word, he fished out a small, glimmering pill, gently pried open Sophia's lips, and placed it on her tongue.

"You'll be all right," he muttered under his breath, watching her swallow. "Just hold on."

Two men in sharp suits appeared at Alex's flank-his allies, known by the solemn crest embroidered on their lapels.

"Get her to a hospital," Alex commanded, his gaze never leaving Sophia's bruised face. "And lock this place down. No one leaves until I say so." 1

"Yes, sir," they responded in unison, quickly lifting Sophia's limp body and carrying her out.

Inside, the banquet continued almost untouched by the violence at the entrance. Bella was still the gravitational center of the room-everyone wanted a taste of her attention.

The band played smooth jazz, servers circulated with trays of champagne, and well-heeled guests buzzed around the birthday girl as though nothing horrific had happened just minutes ago.

Only the truly important visitors commanded any real interest from Bella.

Everyone else was beneath her notice.

Just then, one of her assistants rushed up.

"Miss Bella," she said, in a breathless whisper, "Mr. Dupont from Chicago has arrived."

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Bella's eyes glowed with a sudden warmth.

In strolled Henry Dupont-renowned, wealthy, carrying himself with understated confidence.

Four female bodyguards flanked him, each an Imposing figure in her own right.

"Mr. Dupont," Bella said, her sultry voice dropping a notch, "what a pleasure. Happy you could make it."

"Of course I'm coming-it's your banquet," Henry said, offering ornate gift box with a small smile.

Bella offered a coy smile. "That's too generous, really. Your presence is gift enough."

They exchanged a few pleasantries while bystanders whispered in excited confusion:

"Who the hell is he?"

"Chicago big-shot, maybe?"

"He must be loaded to get that kind of welcome."

Amid this sea of sophisticated chaos, two guards posted at the entrance squared their shoulders, blocking a lone figure who marched forward with unsettling resolve.

"Invitation?" one guard demanded, crossing his arms.

"Move," Alex growled, pushing past before they could blink.

"You piece of trash!" the other guard snarled, lunging for him-only to collapse in a heap when Alex's hand snapped out, a punishing blow dropping him instantly.

His partner followed in a similarly humiliating defeat, hitting the floor so fast that a few onlookers gasped.

In the hush that followed, Alex strode into the ballroom, scanning the crowd until his gaze locked on Bella.

His voice, quiet but unyielding, carried easily over the buzz of music and conversation:

"Which one of you bastards is Bella Kane?"

A hush descended. Confusion and disapproval rippled across the guests.

Mouths opened in shock-nobody dared to address Jericho Kane's daughter like that.

Bella stood, her perfectly tinted lips twisting in annoyance.

"Who the hell are you?"

People parted to let Alex pass. He moved through them like a storm, eyes blazing.

Nearby, a few nobodies with big mouths began to murmur:

"Isn't that Sophia's ex-husband? I thought his only talent was keeping Jessica Hilton's bed warm."

"What the hell is he doing here?"

"Trying to sell himself to Bella, maybe. Gotta admit, he is easy on the eyes..."

"Ugh, disgusting. His ex-wife just got torn apart, and now he's wagging his tail for the one who did it?"

"Pathetic doesn't even begin to cover it. What a twisted, spineless freak."

Bella cocked her head, a mocking laugh escaping her lips.

"Sophia... was it you who made her bleed?"

"Oh, that's why you're here? Still crying over that useless whore?"

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*25 BONUS

She flicked an imaginary speck of dust off her designer dress

She's lucky she only got roughed up. I should've taught her a bigger lessons. But if you're entering to grose in fiet para " ella's grin sharpened.

"Then maybe I'll let her keep breathing."

"Was that level of cruelty truly necessary?" Alex asked, his voice m enough to kill.

Bella curled her lip. "She brought it on herself. A backstabbing little tramp has no right to roam free around here. And guess what? That was just the beginning." Alex gave a mirthless laugh.

'He who fights with monsters should look to it that he himself does not become a monster!

"So, you tortured her-right in front of everyone-and none of these spineless cowards lifted a finger to stop you?"

Bella shrugged off his accusation. "No one cares, especially not about a nobody who tried to steal from the Kanes. This is my doma. People do what I want, when I

want."

The final syllable barely left her lips when an explosive slap echoed through the cavernous room

Bella's body spun in midair, and she crashed to the floor with a bone-rattling thud.

Blood trickled from her nose, and broken teeth clattered to the tiles.

Stunned silence followed-guests stood frozen, their horrified gazes darting from Bella's sprawled body to Alex's unwavering

stance.

He had struck Jericho Kane's beloved daughter. In front of everyone.

And in that breathless moment, not a soul dared speak.

They had never seen anyone-anyone-so bold, so unshakably defiant, so willing

to set fire to the Kane family's untouchable empire... all for a woman.

Romantic? Maybe.

Stupid? Definitely. 1

But undeniable? Absolutely. Today's Bonus Offer

The Almighty Dominance - kidnapped 224[1,253 words]

Chapter 224

Everyone in the ballroom knew one unspoken rule:

Never cross the Kanes.

So when this random nobody smacked Bella Kane across the face, felt like time itself froze.

Every head turned, jaws hanging open. The gasp was almost a collective choke.

"Is he out of his damn mind?" someone muttered.

"He actually hit Bella Kane... He must have a death wish."

A hush fell, thick with fear and disbelief. For as long as anyone remembered, Bella was the one who dished out the torment-

never the other way around.

In that moment, the unthinkable had happened.

Bella swayed on her heels, hand pressed to her flaming cheek.

Her eyes were wide with equal parts shock and wrath.

No one, no one, had ever dared lay a finger on her.

"You-" she spat, voice cracking, "you dare... you dare hit me?"

Alex felt adrenaline rattle his veins. He'd lashed out before thinking; a part of him hated that he'd struck a woman.

He flexed his hand, trying to ignore the sick churn in his gut.

"Kill him!" Bella shrieked, voice echoing off the marble walls. "Now!"

Her security detail snapped to attention, batons raised like they were itching to break bones-some even pointing their guns.

The onlookers scattered, some scrambling behind tables, others pressing themselves flat against the wall.

Everyone watched, hearts pounding, expecting Alex to be torn to pieces.

But he stood there, posture calm, expression unreadable.

In an instant-thud, thud, thud-the guards crashed down as though their legs had been yanked out from under them.

A few face-planted; others buckled at the knees.

Their eyes were wide with terror, as if caught under the gaze of some demon cloaked in human skin.

"Hey! I need more backup out here-now!" one of Bella's bodyguards growled into his earpiece, voice cracking with an edge of

fear.

Alex kept advancing, calm and unhurried.

Step. By. Step.

Each footfall resonated against the polished marble, a steady metronome of menace.

Bella stumbled backward as if her designer heels suddenly weighed a ton.

Her face twisted in both shock and fear. "Stop him! Why aren't you idiots stopping him?"

A couple of wannabe heroes among the guests sprang forward, spurred by self- righteous adrenaline.

A towering fellow with a reddening face bellowed, "I'll kill you for laying a finger on Bella, you hear me?!"

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Chapter 224

Alex didn't even blink-just slid aside in a smooth, practiced motion, effortlessly avoiding the man's fist.

In that same heartbeat, he scooped up a fallen guard's gun.

Before anyone could breathe, a deafening crack tore through the air.

Bang!

A single shot fired skyward.

Crystal shards of the chandelier above rattled ominously as the echo reverberated around the hall.

Everyone ducked in terror, covering their heads. Screams tore through the crowd, raw with panic.

"Don't move," Alex warned, voice as cold as the steel in his hands

"I'm not after you, unless you decide to be stupid. My problem is that vile woman right there."

His glare pinned Bella like a spotlight, and her face blanched whiter than the marble beneath her feet.

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He exhaled, a bitter laugh slipping through.

"You spineless lot watched Sophia get brutalized, and not a single one of you lifted a finger. Yet the minute Bella's in danger, you all leap to play hero? Disgusting."

The big man glared up at Alex with hate-filled eyes.

In a flash, Alex was on him-pressing the warm barrel of the pistol against the man's temple.

"You want to be a hero?" Alex snarled.

"Then show me. Here's your chance to redeem that pathetic excuse of a soul. Slap Bella across the face, right now. Or I'll paint these floors with your brains."

The man's pupils shrank to pinpoints. "You... you're out of your mind! You wouldn't-"

Bang!

This time, the shot clipped the side of the man's ear.

Blood splattered onto the pristine marble. He howled, folding into himself as agony wracked his body.

"Try me again," Alex hissed, his voice low. "The next bullet rips straight through your skull."

Alex's lip curled. "Everyone in this room-listen up. You all turned a blind eye to Sophia's suffering. Now you'll make it right. Each and every one of you will slap Bella."

He cocked his gun and gestured impatiently. "Anyone who refuses gets the same treatment-or worse."

"You're insane!" someone yelled from the rear of the crowd. In answer, Alex fired again,

The bullet grazed the speaker's thigh. He collapsed, wailing, grabbing at his leg.

"That's to make it crystal clear how serious I am," Alex snapped. "Next shot will take a limb-or a life."

Over near the grand double doors, a few guests tried inching toward freedom. But they froze when they spotted four masked men armed with assault rifles blocking the exit.

"You heard him," one of the masked men growled, the barrel of his weapon tracing a lazy path across the escaping group.

"Back inside, or I'll turn you all into corpses."

A young, arrogant socialite stepped forward, lips curled in outrage. "You have no idea who you're messing with! My father will

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Chapter 224

Bang!

The masked man didn't hesitate. The bullet ripped through the socialite's chest, dropping him instantly.

He never even finished his sentence.

Horrificed shrieks ripped through the hall again.

A few people fainted outright, while others stared at the body in stunned silence.

Shaking his head, Alex regarded them all with cold contempt. "See? When you allow evil to flourish-when you stand by and do nothing-you are just as guilty. Now pay your debts."

His attention snapped back to the big man he'd already wounded. You. Get up." Blood trickled down both sides of the man's face, staining his collar. "I—I can't—"

"I'll count to three," Alex said. "And if your hand hasn't moved by then... you die."

"One."

The word hit harder than a gunshot.

Trembling, the man cast a desperate look at Bella.

"Please, Andreas!" Bella shrieked, voice cracking. "My father is your company's main investor! If you even think about—"

"Two..."

Andreas let out a guttural curse, raised his good arm, and swung a shaky hand across Bella's cheek.

The slap barely connected. Bella stumbled, shock etched into every line of her face.

Alex scowled, his tone dripping with disgust. "That was pathetic."

Bang!

Another shot-Andreas screamed as the bullet tore through his other ear.

He collapsed to his knees, clutching his bleeding head. "Stand up," Alex barked at Andreas, ignoring Bella's outburst. "Slap her again. This time, make it real. If you disappoint me, you'll be six feet under by sunrise." "I'm sorry, Miss Bella," Andreas managed, tears mixing with the blood on his face. Then he summoned every ounce of desperation in his body and delivered a brutal strike.

The slap echoed like a gunshot itself, sending Bella sprawling to the floor. A thin line of blood trickled from her busted lip; a white tooth clattered onto the marble. Bella moaned, disoriented, eyes brimming with stunned humiliation and pain. "Better," Alex approved. "Now get out of here before I change my mind." Clutching his bleeding ears, Andreas staggered away.

The masked guards parted to let him pass, then resumed their post, rifles still aimed at the terrified crowd.

Alex swung the gun toward the next terrified guest, his voice cold and unwavering.

"Form a line. All of you. You want to leave? You do your part. Slap her, then you walk free. That's the rule."

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Chapter 224

Gasps rippled through the crowd.

Bella's face drained of color as she realized what was happening.

There were nearly a hundred guests.

A hundred hands.

A hundred slaps.

If this went on-she wouldn't survive.

Bella staggered to her feet, mascara streaming down her cheeks in streaks of rage and terror.

She spat the words through trembling lips.

"You sick, lowlife bastard! You think this ends with me? You're dead. You hear me? Dead!" Alex let out a dry, humorless laugh, the sound echoing like a final verdict.

"Oh, Bella... After what you did to Sophia?"

"After you stood there smiling while she bled? You don't get to talk about justice."

"Believe me-karma's a bitch."

Today's Bonus Offer

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Chapter 225

Alex leaned back in his chair, casually stretching his arms as though bored by the whole ordeal.

"Next," he drawled, voice flat. He shot a cold glance across the room.

"You, brown hair in the black suit. Get over here."

The man in the black suit stepped forward, trembling so hard it looked like his legs might give out.

He risked a quick, apologetic glance at Bella.

"I'm... I'm sorry," he muttered. Then, in a jittery burst of courage or desperation,

he raised his arm and slapped her.

The crack of flesh echoed in the silence.

Bella flinched, blood trickling at the corner of her mouth.

Alex gave a dismissive yawn.

"Move it along, people. Don't make me do it for you." He cocked his pistol and spun the barrel for emphasis.

"From here on out, if anyone's slow to follow orders-" he tilted his head to the side, eyes flashing menace.

-I won't waste my time with warnings. I'll just shoot."

A hush fell over the crowd.

One by one, people inched forward, some grimacing with regret, others almost too eager, as though seizing the chance to vent their personal grudges to Bella. Bella took every hit with a ragged gasp, her cheek swelling into a purple mess. She had already lost three teeth, and the blood ran freely down her chin.

It was difficult to tell which blow hurt worse-physical or psychological.

At last, Bella snarled through split lips, clinging to the last shreds of her pride.

"You miserable bastards! Do you have any idea who I am?" she screamed, her voice trembling with fury and pain.

"My father is Jericho Kane! If you don't want to end up buried in a ditch-"

Her words broke into a sob, tears of rage streaking down her face.

"You should be on your knees begging!" she shrieked. "I'm the one who's supposed to be slapping all of you! Know your damn place! Maggots!"

Alex leveled his gun at a nearby man who seemed hesitant.

He fired off a shot, deliberately missing by only a hair.

"Scared of her daddy?" Alex sneered.

"How about I send you straight to the King of Hell instead?"

"Or... you can slap her, walk out of here alive, and pretend this nightmare never happened. Your choice. But I won't say it again."

The man, panicked, reared back his hand and struck Bella hard across the jaw.

She coughed up blood, head spinning so violently she nearly collapsed.

Alex watched her with a cold, amused smirk.

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"Spare us the name-dropping," he said, voice sharp as a blade.

"If your father were here, he'd be on his knees right next to you, taking the same damn slaps. Man can't even control his own spawn-what a pathetic excuse for a father. Total failure. Just like his daughter,"

A loud, furious voice boomed from behind the crowd.

"That's enough!" Heads turned to see Henry storm forward. The moment Henry laid eyes on Bella, battered beyond recognition, his face twisted with fury.

Bella's eyes flared with desperate hope. "Henry! Thank God! Help me!" she begged, stumbling toward him.

Henry gave a curt nod.

"Don't worry, Ms. Kane. With me around, this punk won't lay another finger on you."

He turned and realized who stood in front of him.

"You," he spat. "I've been looking for you all over the city."

Bella's battered features flicked from fear to confusion. "Henry, you know this guy?"

Henry didn't break eye contact with Alex, rage rolling off him in waves. "This is the piece of trash who punched me a few days back. I swore I'd teach him a lesson."

"Hitting someone from Chicago Lord... Sure you have a death wish" she hissed at Alex.

"You're dead! Not just you your whole pathetic bloodline! I'll hunt down every last one of them and make them beg for death before I'm done! You think you're tough?"

"These people are elite fighters from the Chicago Lord! You're nothing but street trash to them! They'll snap your bones one by one-and when they're done, I'll finish the job myself!"

She forced herself to stand, wobbling on weak legs, her face a grotesque mask of rage and blood.

"Chicago Lord?" someone whispered, eyes wide.

The room tensed. The name hit like a bolt of lightning. Everyone knew it.

The Chicago Lord weren't just gangsters-they owned the city. They were a shadow empire.

One of their enforcers could wipe out a room alone.

"Holy shit... they're really here?"

"Looks like that guy's screwed."

"Please," one man muttered, trembling, "help us get out of here alive..."

The room buzzed with whispers.

Most of the guests just wanted to get out.

"Jerk," Henry drawled, his voice dripping with disdain, "if I were you, I'd drop to my knees right now and beg. Maybe-just maybe I'll let you leave here breathing."

But Alex just raised an eyebrow.

"So what if you're with Chicago Lord? No one stops me from doing what I want." Henry's face twisted in fury.

"You punk!" he snapped, nearly spitting the words.

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Chapter 225

"If I hadn't gone easy on you before, you'd be lying in a hospital bed right now.

You really think you can disrespect me and walk away?"

With a grandiose wave of his hand, Henry turned to his chief guard a muscle- bound woman named Barbie-her broad

shoulders and height made her look more like a trained soldier.

"Barbie, take him down. Show him what happens when you disrespect the Chicago Lord."

Barbie's stare was ice-cold as she squared her stance, but before she could make a move, Henry jerked his chin at three additional guards standing behind

her.

"All of you, help Barbie snuff this brat out. Do not hold back."

"Yes, sir!" they barked in unison, drawing their swords with a deadly, metallic hiss.

Just a few days ago, they'd been caught off guard by Alex-he'd managed to handle them easily back then. This time, though, they were united, focused, and burning with vengeance.

The second Henry nodded, the four of them burst into motion.

Two came at Alex from the left, the others from the right, swords raised high, glinting under the harsh banquet lights.

The crowd collectively sucked in a breath. Even Alex's critics figured he was toast.

Then it happened-a single, swift motion. Steel met steel with a thunderous clang.

Before anyone could blink, the swords were shattered into shards, scattering across the marble floor.

The shockwave of the impact sent Barbie and her fellow guards hurtling backward as if rammed by a speeding truck.

Time seemed to slow as they soared through the air, coughing up arcs of crimson before crashing to the ground in a jumbled

heap.

They lay there, sprawled, unconscious.

A stunned silence smothered the crowd. Jaws hung open. The top enforcers of

the Chicago Lord were down, their expensive swords reduced to scrap.

No one had any words left-they were all swallowed by the gravity of what they'd

just witnessed.

Henry's composure crumbled.

His eye twitched in disbelief, sweat gathering at his temples.

All his boasts about power and dominance had just blown up in his face.

Alex took a single step and drove a brutal punch into Henry's stomach, knocking the wind out of him.

The man collapsed to his knees with a tortured wheeze.

"Get over there," Alex snarled, hauling Henry by his collar and dumping him at Bella's side-a spectator who had been frozen with wide eyes.

"Slap them both, everyone," Alex said smoothly, as if he were asking for a top-up

of wine.

"It's not every day you get to smack a Kane heir and a Chicago Lord's son, right?"

A heavy silence fell over the room.

Unease rippled through the guests like a cold wind, each of them quietly questioning their own judgment-Why the hell did I come to this banquet? 2

The Almighty Dominance - kidnapped 226[1,041 words]

Chapter 226

Chapter 226

One by one, each guest stepped forward with a look of grim determination.

Every time someone approached, two sharp slaps resounded-one across Bella's cheek, the other across Henry's-before the guest left without so much as a backward glance.

It was a relentless parade of humiliation, everyone too afraid to disobey the man who commanded them.

While this sick assembly line of slaps continued, a subordinate from Kingwell handed Alex a thick folder.

The moment he read its contents, his expression darkened.

Still, the slapping went on, as if the guests were workers on a factory line.

Bella's face swelled to twice its size, and Henry's lips were puffed and raw. Tears streaked Bella's cheeks as she whimpered, "I'm sorry."

Alex folded his arms, looking unimpressed.

"Oh, really? Tell me, Bella, have you ever forgiven anyone who begged you for mercy?"

Bella sniffled, her voice trembling, "Yes... I mean, if someone apologized—"

Alex snorted. "Don't lie to me. I've dug up all your dirty secrets in Vermont."

"If you happened to despise someone just because she was prettier than you, you destroyed her face without hesitation."

"No matter how much they cried or pleaded, you never stopped. Worse, I have proof your father tried to sweep it all under the rug-thirty-five cases in total, and eleven of them ended in murder."

He tossed the documents on the floor, letting photos of countless victims spill out.

The guests gasped at the gruesome evidence: battered faces, lifeless bodies, horror frozen in every image.

"For decades, you've unleashed terror without anyone daring to give justice to your victims. Well, your overdue karma has finally arrived."

He glared at Bella, then turned on her closest allies.

"Marie, Cathy, Julie. You're her best friends in this bullying spree. Each of you is just as twisted as she is. Now you'll have one chance to make it right."

The three looked like cornered animals.

Their father owned major companies in Vermont, yet here they were, trembling before Alex.

"Pick up those clamping pliers. Each of you is going to rip out three of Bella's nails. Do it, and I'll consider wiping your slate

clean."

"But if you refuse-after all the hell you helped her unleash-you'll kneel next to those two, and every single person here will line up to slap your faces raw. So, what's it gonna be?"

The trio exchanged horrified glances.

Marie swallowed, Cathy trembled, Julie looked ready to faint.

Finally, they agreed, voices shaky. "We'll... we'll take the nails."

Bella's eyes widened in terror.

"No, please don't do this!" she shrieked, voice ragged and desperate.

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Julie winced. "Bella, we're sorry. But your nails will grow back. Our lives won't if we refuse."

She looked away as Bella sobbed and thrashed.

Henry tried to speak through his own pain. "You-you have no idea what you're doing," he spat.

"Jericho Kane rules Vermont. He won't let this go. You'd better stop now or risk making an enemy of the entire Kane family." Without warning, Alex raised his gun and shot.

The bullet tore through Henry's thigh, dropping him with a scream, blood soaking his pants-not fatal, but agonizing,

"When Jericho Kane protects monsters like Bella-monsters who prey on the innocent-it's only a matter of time before someone stronger brings him to his knees."

Alex's eyes locked onto Henry's, cold and unflinching, burning straight through him..

"Don't forget-Kane might oversee Vermont, but the people still have their king. And that king has warriors who aren't afraid to do what must be done."

He stepped in close, his voice a low, deadly whisper. "Jericho Kane won't outrun justice. Not this time. Not ever."

Henry let out a harsh, mocking laugh.

"You? You're nothing but a grunt-some washed-up ex-military mutt playing boy toy to Jessica Kingston. I've seen your file, Alex. My intel misses nothing. Don't think you can scare me with your tough guy act." (2

He sneered. "You think you're the king's warrior? You're just a discarded soldier clinging to a fantasy. You'll die at Jericho Kane's hands. That's a promise."

"Be smart-get on your knees, and maybe I'll consider begging Kane to spare your pitiful life."

Alex sighed, finally grasping the futility of speaking to a man who mistook his own shadow for the center of the world.

"You bastard!" Barbie, one of Henry's four female bodyguards-though built like a seasoned fighter-yelled and stepped forward, finally recovered from the initial knockout.

She glared at Alex. "You caught me off guard before, but now I'm taking you seriously. You won't get away with this."

Alex sighed. "I don't like hitting women unless absolutely necessary. It'd be best if you pretended to be unconscious like the

others."

Barbie's face twisted with rage. "Unlike them, I'm Barbie the Tiger Claw, champion

of Muay Thai. I don't lose. You should be terrified!"

Henry tried to egg her on despite his injury, believing in her abilities.

"Yeah, punk! Kneel down before you get destroyed! Barbie's the Tiger Claw-he's never lost a fight in his life!"

The crowd erupted like a thunderclap.

"What?! That's Barbie Somchai-the Tiger Claw?! The legendary transgender fighter who slaughtered forty men in the arena?"

"No way! The Tiger Claw's actually here? This just went from brutal to historic!"

"Tiger Claw? You serious? That name alone makes seasoned fighters piss themselves!"

"There's barely a handful in the world who can stand toe-to-toe with that beast. This man's finished!"

Gasps turned to cheers.

Whispers turned to roars.

The moment Barbie's identity was revealed, the room transformed his name igniting awe, fear, and bloodthirsty anticipation.

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Chapter 226

People whispered about Barbie's reputation, fueling his pride.

"What's wrong, punk?" Henry taunted. "You were cocky a minute ago. Did the name 'Tiger Claw' scare you speechless?"

Alex shrugged with an air of indifference. "Never heard of him."

The crowd gasped and began hurling insults.

"He's an idiot, doesn't even know Tiger Claw!"

"He's dead meat!"

Barbie's face turned deadly. "You'll pay for that insult," he sneered

"I don't care who you are," Alex said, turning his stony gaze on Bella.

"Leave now, or I won't hold back. I never liked harming women or transgender folks with a woman's heart."

Henry's voice shook with terror. "Barbie! Just kill him already!"

Barbie snarled and charged. "You want death, you got it!"

He sprang into the air, arms outstretched like a hawk ready to shred its prey.

The crowd roared in anticipation.

But Alex simply lifted his gun and pulled the trigger.

A single bullet lodged itself square between Barbie's eyes.

The fighter's body jerked, then crashed to the floor, lifeless.

Alex exhaled, a trace of weariness in his voice.

"I'm done wasting my breath on idiots."

Today's Bonus Offer

GET IT NOW

The Almighty Dominance - kidnapped 227[1,112 words]

Chapter 227.

Chapter 227

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Everyone froze, eyes wide, as they watched Barbie fall to the ground, blood spilling across the floor.

If they hadn't seen it themselves, they wouldn't have believed it.

A legendary warrior-undefeated in the arena-now dead by a single bullet.

Jaws dropped. No one could've seen this coming.

They thought Barbie's arrival would settle things. Instead, everything flipped upside down.

"You!" Henry barked. "Don't you have any honor? How could you use a gun in a fight?"

"Good question," Alex nodded, cool and sharp.

"Why would anyone try to fight someone with a gun using their bare hands? Is she stupid? Most people run from a gun, not charge at it-unless she really thought she could win."

"She can't!" Henry screamed.

"She rushed me. I figured she could take it. So, I shot!" Alex snapped back.

"Alright, Barbie, I'm sorry," he added, his voice flat.

You bastard! What's the use of your sorry? She's dead now!" Henry shouted.

Alex's answer was another shot-this time grazing Henry's thigh

Henry screamed, clutching his leg as he collapsed.

Alex leveled the gun at him. "You wanna keep talking, or should I send you to see Barbie in the afterlife so you can deliver my apology? I could even say 'sorry' to you once I'm done. How's that sound?"

Everyone felt sick. What was the point of saying sorry to the dead?

"All of you start doing your job," he sneered, "feel free to keep pushing my buttons. I've got plenty of bullets and an endless supply of apologies."

"Damn," they all thought. Bella made no sense. This guy made even less.

Might as well slap them both and head home.

They started moving, this time with more urgency.

But Bella Kane-Jericho Kane's notoriously spoiled daughter-was still there.

She had always been untouchable, always had the upper hand.

"All of you! You can't treat me like this!" Bella shrieked with bleeding and bruise face, her voice cracking under the weight of genuine fear.

"I'm Jericho Kane's daughter-if you harm me, my father will crush you, your family, even your distant relatives! You'll all pay for this!"

Alex rolled his eyes as though profoundly bored.

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"Good grief. Heard that one before. Everyone, please give it your best shot. Maybe she'll learn something you all take turns. Do it and call it charity-maybe you'll help break her nasty habits.

One after another, they slapped Bella's face, struck her ribs, kicked her when she fell screaming to the floor.

The room was soon filled with her blood-curdling shrieks.

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She sow the wind and reap the whirlwind.

People who'd once cowered before Bella Kane were now unleashing every ounce of resentment and fear they had bottled up. By the time the last guest filed out, she was unrecognizable, her body battered, her spirit even more so.

Outside, in the hotel's lobby, the departing guests were confronted by a group of photographers carrying long-lensed cameras. One of them waved at a woman who had just stepped out.

"Hey there, good customer. Had fun inside? got some great pictures of you. Want to buy one?"

The cameraman had snapped the exact moment she hit Bella.

Every slap, every expression-captured perfectly.

This guy knew his job.

The woman's face turned pale. "What do you want?"

"Nothing much," the man said casually.

"Just a little warning. When you get home, tell your parents and family to cut all business ties with Jericho Kane. Then report to the Kingstons. Whatever the Kanes gave you, the Kingstons can give even more."

He raised his camera. "If you keep your connection with Kane, we'll send this straight to him. What do you think he'll say after seeing you hit his daughter? Still think he'll protect you?"

The woman's face went ghostly white.

She turned and rushed away from the hotel, shoes clacking in panic.

Moments later, phones all across the city lit up between these former associates. "What do you think we're going to do?" her friend asked, nervous

"I think," the woman answered calmly, "we're going to cancel all contracts with Kane. If we all agree, Kane will lose his support and be left standing alone." "While we side with the Kingstons.

They'll rise, and easily overpower Kane." "But that means we'll betray the Kane family," said another voice, hesitant. "Then go ahead and support Kane. But once they find out you hit Bella, do you really think she'll smile at you? You know that woman's psycho."

"She's never going to forgive us. She'll drag us to hell if we stay on her family's side."

"Honestly, I can't say I didn't feel a little joy slapping that bitch."

"Fine!" the other snapped. "That bitch deserved every hit. She's been the queen of evil for too damn long."

"Have you heard who's taking over all our contracts once we cut off from Kane?"

The man suddenly said, "Kelly Kingston. Word is, she'll be running Vermont when Kane's done."

"So we join the Kingston camp."

"That's our best chance now."

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Meanwhile, back at the emptied banquet hall, Bella lay in a broken heap.

Her body was bruised and torn, her mind shattered by the night's events.

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Chapter 227

Alex loomed over her trembling form.

He took out a small, dark pill.

"Bella, I'm not killing you tonight," he announced coldly, pressing the pill to her lips.

"But don't mistake my mercy for forgiveness. In two days, you'll kneel before Sophia and beg her pardon—if you want to keep breathing, that is. Otherwise, you'll meet a fate worse than death."

Bella tried to spit out the pill, but Alex forced it down her throat with a callous shove.

"That poison will take effect soon enough if you don't do what I say. Maybe this experience will teach you some humility. Or maybe not. Either way, it'll be entertaining for me."

With that, Alex walked out into the darkness of the night.

At Kane Villa, miles away, Jericho Kane was deep in discussion with his associate, Vetala.

"Mr. Kane, the first batch of Skin Dew Essence is completely sold out!" Vetala was practically dancing with excitement.

"We've gotten nothing but rave reviews, and lots of people want to partner with us long-term. If we keep producing at this rate, Kingston's going to bleed money and lose their grip.

They'll never see it coming!"

A smug smile tugged at Jericho's lips.

"It's all thanks to the Kingstons' years research-so poetic that their own work is going to bury them. Jasmine's a fool if she thinks she can challenge me. This is my checkmate." Vetala clapped like an excited child.

"Let me be the first to congratulate you in advance on crushing the Kingston family, Sir!"

Jericho chuckled, standing up to straighten his jacket.

"Well, I should get going. Bella's hosting a banquet tonight, and if I'm late, she'll

Suddenly, the assistant burst in, face as pale as the moon. 2

"Sir!" he gasped. "Terrible news... Miss Bella has been attacked. Badly."

Jericho's pleased grin vanished in an instant.

His eyes darkened, fury roiling just below the surface. "What do you mean, attacked? Explain this-now."

The Almighty Dominance - kidnapped 228[1,232 words]

Chapter 228 Chapter 228

The hospital reeked of antiseptic and despair. Jericho Kane shoved the double doors open with the rage of a god uninvited

He froze.

There she was-Bella, his daughter.

His golden girl.

Mangled beyond recognition.

Her once-radiant face was now a ruin of blood and shattered bone Her arms?

Torn like wings from a fallen angel.

Her legs? Bent in ways only nightmares could dream.

He staggered a step back, his lips trembling. Then-

"Who did this?!"

The roar cracked through the ward like a gunshot.

Nurses flinched. A bodyguard limped forward, face pale, one eye swollen shut.

"Sir... it was Alex," he rasped.

"Jasmine Kingston's... boy toy."

Jericho's knuckles cracked as he clenched his fists, fury dancing in his eyes.

"Alex? That son of a bitch again. He has the audacity to lay a finger on my daughter?"

He glared at his guards, eyes blazing. "Why didn't you protect my daughter?!"

The guard swallowed hard, bracing himself.

"He's... stronger than we expected, Sir Kane."

Jericho seized the guard by the throat so violently the man's feet left the floor.

"Stronger than you expected? How about you protect my daughter or die trying? Instead, you come crawling back here with excuses? How dare you look me in the eye?"

"S-Sir, please-"

The sound of bones snapping cut off the guard's plea.

Jericho tossed the limp body aside like garbage.

Around them, doctors and nurses gasped in horror, but none of them dared move.

He turned, slowly, deliberately. His jaw clenched so tight it might've turned to stone.

He stepped closer to Bella, the scent of violence suddenly thick in the air.

"I should've drowned that stray dog when I first heard his name. But no... I let him breathe. And now he's my daughter apart like she's nothing?"

"That son of a bitch Alex," Jericho hissed. "I want him brought to me alive so I can tear him apart personally."

He whirled on the rest of his men, who were half-hiding behind medical equipment.

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"Everyone in Vermont is now on my payroll for this. Spread the word. And if the Kingston family tries to shield him, we'll rain hell on them too. Understand?"

Yes, Sir!" they answered, scuttling away in haste to carry out his orders. Jericho's rage only intensified.

"And the Lancasters-kill them all. I don't care if it's man, woman or child."

"I want that bloodline wiped off the face of the earth. Bella gets hurt because she roughs up Sophia Lancaster? Fine. The Lancasters can pay for that in full!"

Vetala edged closer, his own face pale.

He spoke carefully, trying not to provoke Jericho's wrath.

"Sir, that Alex is no average fighter. He's... extremely skilled. You might consider the Vermont Elite."

Jericho's jaw tightened, eyes narrowing. "You're suggesting I unleash my father's old nightmares on these Kingston fools?"

Vetala nodded, "Yes, Sir. We can't underestimate this guy. Word is, the Kingston family might rally behind him. We need every advantage, especially if you plan on taking them all down in one swoop."

Jericho glanced once more at Bella, fury and sorrow colliding in his chest.

All right. Send for the Vermont Elite. All of them. Tell them it's time."

He paused to brush a hand across Bella's hair, face contorting in anguish for a heartbeat before locking back into unbridled rage.

"No one touches my daughter without paying the ultimate price. The Kingstons want to stand in my way? We'll tear their throne apart."

"And by tomorrow morning, I'll hand Vancouver to my daughter."

Meanwhile, across town at the Kingston mansion, Jasmine Kingston paced the ornate living room, chewing on her lip.

"So let me get this straight," Jasmine said, a disbelieving laugh escaping her. "Alex destroyed Bella Kane in public? Just... went absolutely ballistic on her?" Kelly replied, her voice flat and emotionless.

"He ordered every one of Bella's guests to slap that woman. They obeyed without question. He's absolutely ruthless."

Jasmine's brow furrowed. "Honestly, I'm surprised. Alex doesn't come off as the reckless type. There must be a reason."

"Apparently, Bella Kane had publicly humiliated Sophia Lancaster his ex-wife. Guess he lost it."

Jasmine shrugged like it was the most natural thing in the world.

"I'd have done the same. Bella Kane thinks she's untouchable, Good for Alex."

Kelly baffled. "That doesn't bother you? Come on, Jasmine, you like him, right? He's out there risking everything for some

other woman."

"Kelly, chill. They only just got divorced. Of course there are lingering feelings-it's normal."

Jasmine gave her a cool stare. "Besides, if Alex had stood by and done nothing, I would've lost all respect

im."

Kelly shook her head. "I still think it's weird. If my guy was going berserk over his ex, I'd flip out."

She paused for a moment, an unspoken envy flickering in her eyes. In truth, part

of her wondered if Alex might someday fight that fiercely for her.

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Far from the chaos, in a luxurious hotel suite perched above downtown Vancouver, Charles Kingston exhaled contentedly, leaning back against satin pillows.

Clara, her hair tousled, sprawled across his chest, both of them flush from recent indulgences.

Their moment was shattered by Charles's ringing phone.

He snatched it off the nightstand, scowling. As he listened, his scowl twisted into a sly grin.

"So the rumors were true, he muttered under his breath. "Alex challenged Bella Kane at her own party, and she got mauled.

Now Jericho wants war. Perfect."

Clara, half-sitting up, gazed at him with a languid smile. "Something good?"

"Oh, very," Charles purred, stroking a hand across her cheek.

"Turns out this ruckus might be my golden opportunity. Kane is pissed, and soon enough he'll be taking on the entire Kingston family. Tensions are high-ripe for me to step in and seize control."

Charles swinging his legs off the bed.

"Get dressed. We need to get to Vancouver's underbelly and start pulling the strings. This might be bigger than we dreamed."

At Vancouver Hospital, Alex walked into Sophia Lancaster's room.

He found Florence, Jack, and the rest of the family gathered around the bed. The moment Alex stepped into the room, the air turned sharp with tension.

"You!" Jack snarled, fists clenched at his sides. "Who the hell invited you here?"

"I came to see how Sophia is doing," Alex said.

Florence's eyes burned with fury.

"Get out! We don't want you anywhere near her! It's always you every time you appear, something terrible happens. You caused this to Sophia, didn't you? You're

a walking disaster. Why can't you just disappear from our lives?"

Alex swallowed a retort, forcing himself to remain composed.

"I suggest you ask Clara what happened at that banquet. It's not something you want me explaining."

Florence's brow furrowed. "Clara? She went to the party with Sophia-why isn't she here? Is she hurt too?"

Alex exhaled. "I doubt it."

"Stop dodging," Jack demanded. "Just tell us: who did this to my sister? If I find out, I swear-

"You'll do nothing," Alex cut him off. "Not if you value your lives. Because the person who hurt Sophia is Bella Kane."

Silence descended, thick as a funeral shroud.

"Bella Kane," Florence repeated numbly. "Jericho Kane's daughter..."

"Why would she hurt Sophia?" Jack stammered, stepping away from the bed as if the air had suddenly

"There's no rivalry between us and the Kanes! We are just an ant to them."

Alex let out a hollow chuckle.

1 toxic.

"Bella doesn't need a reason. She's Jericho Kane's brat-thinks she's unstoppable. She was humiliating Sophia in front of

3/4

Chapter 228

everyone, and from what I saw, she went way too far.'

The Lancasters fell silent, dread etched across their faces.

Blindsiding an average family was child's play for Jericho Kane-everyone in Vancouver knew that.

If the Kanes strike, there's nothing left to do but kneel... and pray they don't break you with the first blow.

The strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must.

Today's Bonus Offer

The Almighty Dominance

kidnapped 229[850 words]

Chapter 229

Chapter 229

They exchanged wary glances, each person unsure how to react.

Minutes before Alex arrived, Jack had yelled loudly enough for half the hospital to hear him:

"I don't care if it was demons or damn gods who hurt Sophia-I'll kill them all. I'll burn the whole world down if I have to!"

The others chimed in, bravado swelling like a rising tide. "Damn straight! I'll give up my life if that's what it takes."

But the moment they learned Jericho Kane's daughter was behind the attack, every ounce of their fury vanished like smoke in

the wind.

Gods and demons? Sure, they were easy to hate-unseen, distant, nothing more than ideas.

But Jericho Kane was flesh and blood, a man who could wipe out families on a whim.

Suddenly, no one even dared to whisper a word of protest.

Florence and the others grew restless, every one of them understanding: messing with the Kane family was suicide.

Even if they were spit on, kicked around like stray dogs, they had no power to fight back.

"You won't have to worry," Alex said calmly. "In two days, Bella Kane will walk in here and apologize to Sophia in person."

Jack laughed with a harsh bark.

"Right. You know who she is? Bella Kane isn't some random nobody. You'll have her apologize? You can't even handle a slap from her, you pathetic loser."

Florence snorted, rolling her eyes.

"You're so full of it. If you're that tough, go track Bella Kane down yourself. Go punch her in the face if you think you're so big and bad!"

The mocking stung the air. In their minds, Alex was nothing but a fool with a death wish.

Suddenly, Clara burst into the ward, breathless. "Sister Florence I've got huge news. Alex-he... he attacked Bella Kane-"

She stopped in mid-sentence, eyes going wide at the sight of Alex. You... what are you doing here?"

Alex took a step forward. "Perfect timing. I've got a question for you."

Fear flashed in Clara's eyes. She stumbled backward.

"Stay back! Don't even think about it!"

Her pulse pounded.

Word had spread that Bella was beaten to a pulp.

If Alex found out she was the one who'd planted that bracelet in Sophia's purse...

She swallowed hard, imagining what a maniac like him might do.

"What's making you so jumpy?" Alex asked, his tone quiet but edged with steel.

"Got something to hide? Did you do something to Sophia?"

"I'm not hiding a thing!" Clara insisted, her voice unsteady. "Why would I do anything to Sophia? She's r

ace!"

Alex's

's gaze turned cold. "Who slipped Bella Kane's bracelet into Sophia's handbag?"

"I... I have no idea! Maybe Sophia took it. I... I don't keep tabs on her!"

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Alex's voice dropped, low and dangerous. "This is the last time I'll ask nicely."

Clara stiffened, her face turning pale. "So what if I don't answer? You think I'm scared of you?"

"I will give you three seconds to answer," Alex warned.

He lifted a finger as if counting down silently.

"One!"

"Fuck off, Alex!"

"Two," Alex stepped forward to Clara.

"I did nothing! You can't accuse me without any proof!" Clara yelled.

"Three!"

She opened her mouth to speak when heavy footsteps sounded in the hallway. The door slammed open.

Abroad-shouldered man in black elite uniform stepped in, scanning the room like a predator.

"Which one of you is Sophia Lancaster?" he demanded.

Alex pointed at Clara without a flicker of remorse.

Before Clara could utter a single protest, the assassin lunged forward, thrusting a knife into her stomach.

The blade sank deep.

Clara's eyes went huge, her scream frozen on her lips as her blood stained the hospital floor.

"I... I'm not Lancaster..." she rasped, knees buckling as she crumpled onto the tiles.

Her dress soaked up the pooling blood.

The soldier's expression hardened, and he drove a brutal kick into her face.

"Doesn't matter. Everyone in here's gotta die anyway."

He let his gaze drift over the rest of them, lips curling into a smirk.

Florance was too shocked to understand what was happening.

Clara, her little sister, had just been stabbed, and another attacker was waving the bloody weapon at them, threatening to kill them all. It felt like a very bad joke.

"Perfect. So this is the whole Lancaster clan? Saves us time. Kill them all."

Florence, Jack and all family pressed themselves against the walls, too terrified to make a sound.

As if on cue, five more killers burst in, murder in their eyes.

No questions asked.

They moved in-fists clenched; knives ready.

But before they could take a single step, their bodies jerked oddly.

In less time than it took to blink, they all collapsed on the floor, dead.

Not a single hint of how it happened; just a flash and a silent end.

The room felt colder than any winter storm.

2/3

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Clara shrieked on the floor while a frazzled doctor scrambled to stanch the blood flow.

Alex stepped over the corpses and out into the corridor, finding another assassin standing there, paralyzed by what he'd just witnessed.

"Listen carefully." Alex's voice echoed in the sterile hallway.

"Tell everyone in your group-tell Jericho Kane, in particular-that if he wants the antidote for his daughter, he'll have to come here himself."

He paused, letting the words hang in the air like a threat.

"I'll be waiting for him on the hospital helipad. Tell him not to make me wait any longer."

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Who the hell is this freak," one of the assassins hissed, voice trembling as he watched the bodies of his fellow Vermont Elite sprawled across the cold pavement.

Fear gnawed at his gut, and the moment Alex gave him permission to scam, he took off running.

They'd trained for decades to be unstoppable, to rule Vermont by Jericho Kane's side-but all of that meant nothing in the face of this unstoppable force.

He sprinted through the night, lungs burning, and jabbed the call button on his smartwatch.

"Sire," he panted, voice trembling. "We're facing a monster... and he's demanding a meeting with Master Kane."

Moments later, Jericho slammed his fist onto a heavy oak table.

The table burst into splinters under his blow.

"Who does that arrogant bastard think he is? Some boytoy of Hilton wants to summon me? Me? The Governor of Vermont!"

"I'll damn well show him who he's dealing with!"

Vetala hovered nearby like a ghostly shadow.

"Sir, I've watched his moves. I'm convinced he's not just some random man off the street. He killed Vermont Elite's men too easily. Maybe he's hiding his true power."

Jericho's teeth ground together.

He spoke through clenched jaws.

"So what if he's strong? Nobody hits my daughter and calls me out without consequences. He thinks I'm a joke? I'll show him pain like he's never felt."

His voice rumbled with pent-up rage that made the walls tremble.

"What about the Lancaster family? Did our people wipe them out yet?"

Vermont Elites leader' head dipped low. "No, Sir. So far, we haven't even managed to lay a finger on them."

Jericho Kane stared him down, fist clenched.

"So then, what about the reinforcements we requested from the other Vermont families? You told me they'd help bulk up our forces against the Kingstons."

The assistant's face went chalk-white. His voice wavered.

"I'm sorry, Sir Kane. Nearly every family refused."

Jericho's fist slammed on the arm of his chair, destroying it.

"They refused? You've got to be joking. The Kanes have ruled Vermont for generations-I snap my fingers, and they're supposed to come running."

The assistant's hands curled into nervous fists. "They say they've aligned themselves with Kingston."

Kane felt a hot surge of anger light up his veins.

"What? Kingston only controls Vancouver, while Vermont belongs to the Kane
bloodline. Are those traitorous bastards insane?"

Vetala exhaled slowly, choosing his words with care.

"Master Kane, I think. They're not picking sides just yet. They're watching how we handle this."

1/3

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"Ever since that boytoy of Hilion laid out Bella Kane, the other families are... well, they're waiting to see if you'll crush him. If you do, it'll send a nice, clear message that nobody crosses the Kanes."

Jericho's eyes narrowed, thunder in his voice.

"Refuse me? Fine. If they're testing my patience, I'll crush them. No one humiliates Jericho Kane without paying it."

"Gather every man you can find. We're going to that boytoy-right now and I'll show the whole damn world how the Kane family deals with disrespect. After that, we'll hunt down every single family that dared to refuse me. I'll teach them the kind of regret that gets carved into bloodlines."

A single moon hung high over Vancouver's largest hospital.

Soft lights flickered on the rooftop helipad, a lonely stage for an impending showdown.

Alex stood there, waiting in the gloom, wind whipping at his hair, face cold and calm.

Soon, a powerful helicopter roared overhead and landed with a gust of wind that nearly tore the metal safety rails loose.

Burly then spilled out, each wearing the dark uniforms of Vermont's Elite.

Then came Jericho Kane himself-looming tall, cut like a statue, fury etched into every line of his face-and Vetala at his side.

A senior Vermont Elite member hurried close to Jericho. "Sire, he's here."

Jericho's voice was low and lethal. "I sent you Vermont Elites to handle one man. Now I have to soil my own hands?"

"Pathetic."

Ignoring them all, Alex rolled his shoulders and took a step forward.

"Let's cut the crap. I have better things to do than babysit trigger-happy goons."

A flicker of outrage twisted Kane's features.

He gave a short nod, and twenty Vermont Elite raised their rifles in unison, each one aimed dead at Alex's chest.

Kane let out a low growl. "This is your final warning, kid. You've caused me enough trouble. Kill him-now."

A harsh command rang out from the Elite leader. "Open fire!"

Multiple triggers clicked.

Nothing.

The men tried again, confusion turning into panic.

The rifles were jammed.

A few desperate attempts later, the weapons suddenly detonated in their hands with a series of brutal blasts. 1

Shrapnel tore through flesh and bone.

Several Elite toppled instantly, screaming and clutching at mangled limbs or shredded faces.

Others collapsed in silent shock, blood pooling around them.

Vetala staggered back, eyes wide with horror.

Kane stared in disbelief, thunderstruck by the violence that had erupted in a blink.

The remaining Elite soldier-wild-eyed and terrified-yanked a military knife from his belt and lunged straight at Alex, swinging with all his might.

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He never got close.

Mid stride, he jerked to a stop and crumpled, eyes vacant.

Death claimed him before he hit the ground.

The breeze tore through the rooftop, carrying the smell of blood.

Flickering lights cast jittery shadows on the carnage. Alex stood with an eerie calm, turning his attention to Jericho Kane.

"You've let your daughter run wild," Alex said softly.

"You let your daughter trample Vermont's citizens without a second thought, and now you'll pay the price."

"The King's had enough-effective immediately, you're finished. Kelly Kingston steps in as Governor tonight."

He locked eyes with Kane, who was nearly shaking with rage and shock.

"Either you accept it, or you don't. Makes no difference to me."

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