

Chapter 76

"For a prisoner," Anton muttered, "you sure talk too much."

Ryan let out a dry and humorless chuckle. "And for a man with a dying daughter, you sure keep quiet a lot."

Anton's shoulders stiffened at that and Ryan noticed.

"I'm just saying," Ryan pressed gently, "if you were really serious about saving her, you'd be talking to anyone who offered a way out. You'd be clawing at every door until one opened."

There was no reply but Ryan knew the man was listening, even if pride kept his lips sealed.

Minutes passed and the overhead light buzzed faintly. Ryan leaned back into the chair.

Finally, Anton cleared his throat. It sounded forced, as if speaking was the last thing he wanted to do.

"This job," he said slowly, "is a special one, that's why I'm earning twenty thousand dollars. Normally, I earn five thousand a month working directly under Lord Ryder. That's what I get for following orders, carrying out special deliveries, guarding high-risk captives like you."

Ryan raised an eyebrow. "Twenty grand is a drop in the ocean compared to what you need."

Anton's eyes narrowed slightly.

"And your daughter, how long does she have?" Ryan asked in a quiet voice.



Anton's jaw tightened while he struggled to stay in control. "The doctors say two days. Three at most."

Ryan inhaled slowly. "Two days..." He tilted his head, murmuring the math out loud. "Five thousand a month. That's one hundred and twenty thousand in two years, if you're lucky. But she doesn't have two years, does she? She doesn't even have two days. By the time you finish this job, she might already be gone."

"Enough," Anton barked as he stepped forward and his fists clenched at his sides. "Stop talking."

But Ryan didn't stop. "What if I told you I could help you? Right now. What if I could clear her hospital bills today and give you enough to disappear? For good."

Anton blinked. He didn't scoff this time. His shoulders dipped slightly, and for the first time, he looked uncertain.

"What, what are you trying to say?" he asked with his voice barely above a whisper.

Ryan met his gaze head-on. "How does one million dollars sound to you?"

Anton froze. His mouth parted slightly as if the words had struck him physically. He took a step back and inhaled sharply. "You're joking," He said in disbelief.

"I'm not," Ryan said calmly. "One million dollars. Just help me save my mother, that's all I'm asking."

Anton looked at him a little too long, his tough look was starting to fade, Ryan could see it. Then he stepped forward quickly. "What exactly do you



want me to do?"

Ryan leaned forward, and said in a raspy voice. "Unstrap me and then contact the man escorting my mother to the auction stage. You know who I'm talking about? He's right there."

He nodded toward the monitor on the wall, where the security feed displayed a tall man in uniform guiding a pale woman down a corridor. Her steps were slow as her form sagged from exhaustion and fear.

Anton turned toward the screen and his jaw clenched.

"That man is my subordinate," he muttered. "He listens to me."

Ryan's eyes sharpened. "Then do it," he said. "Tell him now."

Without hesitation, Anton grabbed his phone and dialed a number then pressed the speaker button and held the phone between them.

The line rang once, then connected.

"Yo, Kane," Anton said quickly. "Stop, Don't take the woman to the auction hall. Turn around and use the back door."

It took some time before Kane's voice came through. "What? Why?" he asked.

"There's been a change in plan," Anton replied in a clipped tone. 

"Whose orders?" Kane replied in a skeptical tone as he was not convinced.

"Mine," Anton answered firmly as he shot a look at Ryan, who gave a tight nod. "I'll explain later, Just follow through and divert the woman now."