

Chapter 77

There was a pause before Kane's voice came through again. "This isn't something I can do without clearance. You know the kind of heat we'll get if Lord Ryder finds out."

Ryan stepped forward with his fists clenched and trembling slightly. He leaned toward the phone and said in a low voice. "Kane, this is Ryan Walker. I'm offering you five hundred thousand dollars. That's how much I'll pay you if you help me save my mother. I swear on my life, you'll get the money, she's all I've got."

The room fell silent.

"You're offering half a million? Are you serious?" Kane finally asked in disbelief. He couldn't believe what he just heard. It sounded unreal.

"I'd offer more if I had to," Ryan said. "But that's what I'm putting on the table. You'll get it, both of you, I promise I'll make it happen."

When Kane spoke again, his voice had dropped to a whisper. "It's tempting, but we're talking about betraying Lord Ryder. That woman doesn't forgive, ever. If she finds out—"

"You could leave," Ryan cut in quickly while his chest rose and fell. His heart was slamming against his ribs now. "With that kind of money, both of you could leave the country tonight. Change your names and start over, you wouldn't need to stay here and work under her rule."

Anton stepped closer to the phone with his brow furrowed and his voice low. "Kane, listen to me. You've got two kids and your wife's always talking about moving to Florida and getting out of this mess. This is your chance. Don't throw it away out of fear, you don't owe Ryder your life."

Another silence. Ryan could hear Kane's breathing now and it sounded shaky.

"Kane?" Anton called.

"I'm thinking," Kane replied. "I just—"

"You don't have time," Ryan snapped in a sharp voice, and his eyes burned with unshed tears. "My mother is steps away from being paraded in front of a crowd of twisted people who will treat her like she's nothing. Like cattle. I cannot allow that to happen and for me to be able to stop that I need your help."

"I don't want to get killed," Kane murmured, almost as if he were trying to convince himself it wasn't already too late.

"You won't," Anton said quickly. "You follow me, and we move smart. We disappear okay? We take the money and we run."

There was a few minutes of silence before Kane responded. "Alright, alright I'm turning back now."

Ryan's knees nearly buckled as the tension released all at once. He let out a shaky breath as his chest rose and fell like he'd just surfaced from underwater.

He felt deeply relieved. He hadn't been sure if this would work, and the thought of his plan failing, and watching his mother get sold to the McCarthys, had made him shudder with fear.

"We need to act fast," Anton muttered to Ryan. "There's only a short time before someone notices the woman is missing."

"Thank you," Ryan said quietly, his eyes locking onto Anton's.



Anton met his gaze. "Don't thank me yet, we're not out of this hellhole. We're not even close."

The flickering screen still displayed the auction room. Lord Ryder stood near the back, glancing at her watch impatiently.

"She's waiting," Ryan muttered as he stepped closer to the screen. His jaw clenched so tight it ached. "We've only got seconds before Kane has to vanish. If she sees him turn around..."

"I know," Anton said. He reached for a weapon from the nearby table, it was a compact pistol and tucked it into the back of his belt. "Let's get your mother out of here."

Ryan stared at the image on the screen for a few seconds.

"Let's go," Ryan said.

Anton nodded briefly before moving towards the and leading the way.