Intern 60

Chapter 60

“Your internship will be completed. You’ll receive full credit for it. But going forward-you’ll transition to a full-time employee of Blackwood Enterprises. Effective next week.”

She stared at him.

“Your salary and benefits will reflect your permanent status. Your schedule will be adjusted to accommodate your remaining classes. I’ll have James take care of all the paperwork.”

He said it like a business proposal.

But it wasn’t.

It was something else entirely.

Maya’s pulse thundered as she searched his face.

There was no arrogance there. No smugness. Only quiet authority and the sharp edge of need-not just for control, but for her safety. Her comfort. Her place in his world.

Maya didn’t speak right away.

She couldn’t.

His words-his offer-hung in the air like something too heavy to hold, too beautiful to

believe.

Full-time employee.

Jamie’s hospital bills covered.

Her internship, her future, her classes-all accounted for. Secured. Protected.

By him.

It should’ve been a relief. And it was.

But it also terrified her.

Because every part of this-the job, the hospital, the sudden shift from barely scraping by to having her life rearranged in a single breath-was because of him. Because he wanted her

safe. Because he cared.

Her fingers twisted tighter into the blanket.

What if I get used to this?

The security. The way he looks at me like I matter. The way he says my name.

What happens when he changes his mind?

Because men like Damien Blackwood didn't keep people like her. They didn't build bridges to girls with half-worn shoes and crumpled bus passes.

They didn't rewrite schedules or erase debts unless they expected something in return.

Even if he hadn't asked for anything… yet.

And that scared her more than anything.

She swallowed, trying to gather words that wouldn't betray her confusion, her hope, her fear of falling too fast into a world that didn't belong to her.

"Why are you doing this?" she asked softly.

Damien's gaze didn't falter.

"Because I can."

She exhaled slowly, unsure what to do with that answer. Her heart pounded, a mix of awe and fear swirling inside her. Unsure what to do with him.

A part of her wanted to thank him. A part of her wanted to push him away, just to see if he'd stay. Just to prove this wasn't another beautiful dream waiting to shatter.

But she said nothing.

"The doctor said you can be discharged in two days."

A pause.

“Rest well, Maya. I’ll see you in the office Monday morning.”

He turned slightly-then looked back over his shoulder.

“And Maya…”

His voice dropped-low, final, utterly certain.

“If I let someone in… they’re mine. And the world doesn’t get to touch what’s mine.”

A beat. His gaze held hers, unblinking.

“Get used to it.”

Then he opened the door and left, the quiet click behind him somehow louder than thunder.