Intern 69

Chapter 69

The Blackwood Enterprises executive floor thrummed with quiet efficiency-the usual rhythm of ambition, precision, and silent fear.

Inside his office, Damien sat behind his glass desk, sleeves rolled up, the lean muscles in his forearms flexing as he signed another contract. The thick stack of documents bore his signature in clean, practiced strokes, each one a seal of power, each decision sharpened by decades of control.

His pen barely paused as James knocked and entered.

“Well?” Damien asked without looking up.

James stepped forward, tablet in hand.

“The check up went well. Jamie’s vitals were stable. Transfer is proceeding as planned. All records are officially in the new system.”

Damien nodded once. Expected.

“Dr. Anderson has been briefed on the case and will personally oversee the pre-op planning. He’ll likely drop in tonight or tomorrow to meet them both.”

Damien gave a small nod, jaw tight, but his focus was absolute. “Good.”

But James didn’t leave. Instead, he cleared his throat-softly, but enough to draw Damien’s

attention.

“There’s… something else,” he said. “Something… personal. About Ms. Thompson.”

That made Damien’s pen stop.

His eyes lifted-sharp, unreadable. “What about her?”

“I had a brief conversation with her. After Monroe took Jamie for snacks.”

Damien leaned back, waiting. His gaze narrowed, unreadable. But inside, the tension coiled fast-tight, immediate.

James continued, measured but not indifferent.

“She thanked me. Genuinely. Told me she meant it. I replied the way you’d expect me to, but I might’ve… teased her a little.”

A pause. Damien’s jaw clenched slightly. “Teased.”

James smirked faintly. “Lightly. Nothing out of line. I just told her she shouldn’t thank me since I’m only following orders-but that I wouldn’t mind being the one to keep your mood satisfied.”

Damien’s eyes darkened like a stormcloud rolling over glass. But James went on, calm.

“She turned red. Flushed all the way to her ears.”

That gave Damien pause.

A slow, hot pulse beat behind his ribs. His fingers twitched against the pen in his hand.

He didn’t move. Didn’t blink.

But inside, something unspooled-fast.

James shifted, just enough to glance down at the tablet, like it was nothing.

“Ms. Thompson, by the way…” he added, tone maddeningly casual. “She actually looks prettier when she blushes.”

Snap.

The pen in Damien’s hand cracked clean in half.

A beat of silence.

Then –

“I think you’ll enjoy a new overseas assignment, James,” Damien said smoothly, voice like silk laced with steel.

James blinked. “I-apologies, sir. Slipped out. Anyway…” He cleared his throat again, tactfully shifting back to business. He stepped forward slowly, his voice lowering a fraction. “She also said that everything is too fast and asked me why you were helping her.”

Damien didn’t move, but the shift was immediate. Something stilled in the air around him.

“I told her,” James continued, measured, “that only you could answer that. But I also told her you don’t do anything without reason. That if you chose to help her, it’s because you already decided she was worth it.”

A flicker of something passed through Damien’s eyes.

“And then she said she was terrified,” James added quietly. “Terrified of being seen. Of what your attention might cost her.”

Damien’s fingers twitched once-subtle, but not lost on James.

“She said… she’s afraid that if she lets you in, she’ll end up broken.”

Silence.

Damien’s jaw flexed, but he didn’t respond.

James gave him a moment before finishing.

“I told her she was stronger than she thinks. That she didn’t have to do this alone. That maybe… you’re a risk worth taking. And if she walks away broken, she’ll heal. But if she never tries, she’ll never know what she’s capable of.”

Damien’s fingers drummed the desk once. A warning rhythm. “Did she believe you?”

“She didn’t say. But I saw it hit her. The weight of it.”