Intern 82

Chapter 82

Even the surgery, one that typically took months-sometimes years-to get scheduled, had been fast-tracked. Prioritized under the personal request of someone named Mr. Ashcroft.

Maya had nodded politely when she heard the name. But inside, confusion bloomed.

She hadn't met him.

Who was Mr. Ashcroft? And why would he step in for someone like her?

Or maybe… it wasn't about her at all.

"Personally requested," Dr. Anderson had said. "By Mr. Ashcroft and Mr. Blackwood."

The words echoed in her mind long after the doctor left the room.

She sat in the quiet after Dr. Anderson left, her hands resting in her lap, her mind anything but still.

It should've been relief-pure and simple. Jamie was getting the care he needed, the best care money could buy, and somehow, they didn't have to worry about how to pay for it.

But relief wasn't the only thing curling in her chest.

Gratitude warred with unease. Joy tangled with something she didn't quite want to name. Because this-this level of intervention-wasn't normal. It wasn't kindness from a distance. It was personal. Intimate.

And it came from him.

Damien Blackwood. A man who didn't do entanglements. A man who terrified her and drew her in at the same time.

She pressed a hand to her chest, trying to calm the flutter there.

She had questions. Too many. But only one rose to the surface right now, sharp and insistent.

Mr. Ashcroft.

The name had been mentioned twice now-once by James, and again by Dr. Anderson. Spoken with reverence. With weight. And yet, she didn't know his face. Didn't know what kind of man would personally clear her brother for surgery, or why his name was always spoken in the same breath as Damien's.

And she couldn’t carry the confusion anymore.

Later that afternoon, Monroe returned with fresh clothes and a tray of lunch. He moved with his usual quiet efficiency, setting everything down.

Maya waited until he’d finished, then gathered a bit of courage.

“Mr. Monroe…” she began, her voice soft but steady. “Can I ask you something?”

He looked up from the tablet, warm and attentive as always.

“Ms. Thompson, please,” he said, a faint smile tugging at his lips. “Drop the ‘Mr.’ Just Monroe is fine. And of course.”

She hesitated, fingers fidgeting with the edge of the blanket.

“Only if you drop the ‘Ms. Thompson.’ Maya is fine.”

That earned a low chuckle.

“Alright then. Deal.” He nodded, his smile deepening. “Ask away, Maya.”

She took a breath, steadying herself.

“Who is Mr. Ashcroft?”

The question hung in the air-small but loaded. And when Monroe’s expression shifted, just slightly, she knew she wasn’t imagining the gravity behind the name.

He set the tablet aside, then pulled the chair a little closer to her bedside.

Then his expression shifted-calm, composed, almost fond.

“Mr. Ashcroft is Mr. Blackwood’s childhood best friend,” he said. “They’re like brothers. Only not by blood.”

Maya blinked. She hadn’t expected that.

“The Ashcroft family owns this medical pavilion,” Monroe continued, gesturing subtly to the walls around them. “Which I’m guessing you already figured out from the name.”

She gave a small nod, still absorbing.

“He’s the sole heir to the Ashcroft family. A very private person. Reliable. Sharp-minded. And - surprisingly-pretty humorous when he wants to be.”

“He’s not the kind of man who likes being seen,” Monroe added. “But when he moves, things happen. Clean. Quiet. No mess left behind.”

There was a quiet fondness in Monroe’s tone, and Maya felt the tension in her chest ease slightly.

So he wasn’t some cold shadow pulling strings behind the scenes.

Still… that kind of power. That kind of connection. It wasn’t nothing.

“And he helped,” she said quietly.

Monroe nodded, “Because Mr. Blackwood asked him to. It wasn’t a request-it was a favor between family. And when it comes to Mr. Blackwood, Mr. Ashcroft never hesitates.”

He paused for a moment, then added, “It goes both ways, by the way. That kind of loyalty… it’s rare. But between those two, it’s unshakable.”

Maya didn’t speak right away.

She just sat there, her fingers curling around the edge of the blanket, her thoughts spinning in quiet, widening circles.

Unshakable loyalty. Power that didn’t need to be seen to be felt. A favor between men who moved entire systems with a single word.

And somewhere in the middle of all that… was her.

She hadn’t asked for any of this. But now, she was part of it-pulled into the gravity of something bigger than she could name.

And she didn’t know what scared her more- The danger that came with it.

Or how much she already wanted to stay.