Intern 86

Chapter 86

The room was dim-lit only by the city bleeding through floor-to-ceiling glass. Cold Detached. Watching. Beneath the brass lamp's harsh glow lay scattered traces of a darker world – floor plans, tablet displays, satellite images, surveillance prints. Some stamped in red: ACTIVE. DECEASED.

Ashcroft stood with a glass of whiskey in hand, sleeves pushed up, a hint of ink curling beneath the edge of his watch. The digital file glowed in front of him, but his eyes had drifted -no longer reading, just calculating

"Beckett's just a loose thread. Random. Disposable. An arrogant nobody who tangled with the wrong man," he muttered, voice low

Damien didn't look up. He studied the floor plan, its corners curling with age, a jagged line of ink slicing through the middle

"He's nobody. Twelve days, then we let him crawl free-broken, marked. Let him spend every miserable breath remembering what happens when he crosses me"

Ashcroft let out a low chuckle, slow and dark

"Well" he said, swirling the amber in his glass, "the bastard's already halfway to hell I guess I'll tell the boys to take it easy Let the pain settle Let the wounds fester-just enough so when the sun hits his face again, he remembers us with every breath that still rattles in his chest"

Damien’s eyes stayed fixed on the floor plan. He murmured coldly,

“Hmm Your doctor might thank you someday-stop cutting him up. I want him alive Conscious To feel the pain every single day”

Ashcroft shrugged swirling his whiskey with a smirk.

“Yeah, that’s true. The old man’s pretty pissed-spends hours stitching him up, and the boys just tear it open in less than five minutes. Kinda funny, really. But don’t worry, I’ll tell them to take it easy. Just enough to keep him breathing, but not enough for him to forget. A slow burn’s the best kind of torture”

Ashcroft drained the last of his whiskey and set the glass down with a deliberate clink

“Alright, enough about Beckett. What’s the move, D? This unfinished business won’t handle itself. But if we move too fast, we risk waking the wrong ghosts before we’re ready”

Damien’s jaw tightened. His finger tapped once against the printout, then stilled

“We move fast-but careful And we move clean.”

James entered silently, tablet in hand.

“Preliminary reports are in,” he said, setting the device between them. “We’ve tracked three targets overseas. Two are dormant-off the grid and desperate to stay that way. Intel confirms internal fractures: three years of infighting, shifting power plays, and growing instability. The younger faction’s trying to dethrone the seniors-lots of side-switching, especially in the last year.”

He paused. “These two are older. Not high-value Peripheral players. The main circle doesn’t see them as a threat-just keeps them on a leash, quiet and out of sight. For now.”

He paused before adding. “The third is still active Dangerous because his loyalty is uncertain. But he’s useful enough to the inner circle that they keep him close-tight leash, constant watch”

Ashcroft leaned forward, eyes narrowing “That’s Marco Greco They call him the Shark- because he goes where the blood is. Bastard son of the old man’s affair. Two years older than the current Capo. He thinks the crown should’ve been his, but his bloodline makes that impossible”

He took a slow sip of his drink before continuing

“He can be bought. But the price is steep-and unstable. Everyone who’s tried ends up burned He’ll flip sides make it look like a betrayal, then run back to the family just in time to play the loyal dog. That’s his game. He sells the illusion of loyalty. just enough to keep the Capo from gutting hum *

Ashcroft’s voice dropped, cold and certain

“But he’s too hungry Too patient He’s not playing sides. He’s playing for the throne”

“From what I know, though he’s got no bad blood with you. During that time, he stayed clear -let it all play out Said it wasn’t his war to fight”