Intern 89

Chapter 89

Not them.

He wanted to be the reason she felt safe enough to laugh again.

But safety had a price. And right now, he could only afford to watch.

Not when she stepped into the SUV.

Not when the door clicked shut.

Not when the car began to pull away.

His hands stayed clasped in his lap, but tension twisted through his muscles-held at bay only by sheer will.

Every nerve screamed to move.

To cross the street.

To tear down every barrier between them.

To claim what was his.

But he didn’t.

He stayed rooted-silent, unseen-because now wasn’t the time.

Because wanting her and protecting her weren’t always the same.

She was safe.

And for now, that had to be enough.

But as the SUV disappeared into the flow of traffic, something in him tightened.

His gaze never left the place where she’d stood.

Not from her.

Never from her.

In the silence that followed, Finn remained still, watching.

He'd known Damien since he was a boy-watched him grow, harden, build his empire brick by bloodstained brick. But beneath the power, beneath the cold precision… he still saw the boy

who once laughed freely. The boy who used to believe in something more.

And right now, that boy looked like he was fighting a war with himself.

Finn cleared his throat, his voice low, gruff with something more than age.

"I've known you a long time, son. Long enough to see when you're hurting, even if you won't say it."

Finn looked ahead, eyes soft but steady.

"I don't know what's holding you back… but whatever it is, I hope you figure it out soon. Before it's too late."

A pause, heavy with quiet truth.

“So you can finally be happy.”

Damien didn’t answer right away.

His eyes remained fixed on the empty street, haunted by the ghost of the SUV that had just carried her away. His jaw tightened. His hands clenched once, then loosened slowly-like a man forcing the storm inside him to stay chained.

A breath. A decision.

Something dangerously close to longing.

“There’s unfinished business I need to take care of first,” he said, voice low.

Finn nodded slowly, eyes softening. Clearing his throat with a low rumble, he offered a rare half-smile.

“I know you will… and you’ll handle it, like you always do.”

He held Damien’s gaze, his voice steady but tender.

“But you know this-sooner or later, she’ll have to know everything. If she’s willing to stand by you, to fight with you… that’s the kind of love worth everything. Only then will you truly know if she’s worth it all.”

After a beat, he leaned back slightly, gaze drifting out toward the city through the windshield -though his eyes seemed to be reaching somewhere far older than the skyline, somewhere wrapped in memory.

“I remember your twenty-fifth birthday,” he said quietly, a faint smile tugging at the corner of his lips. “Your father had half the estate lit up like it was Christmas in July. Champagne,

fireworks, the works.”

He chuckled under his breath. “But all he could talk about-between toasts-was how it was time for you to settle down. How proud he was… and how badly he wanted grandkids running through those halls again.”

Finn glanced at Damien, his voice gentler now, lower.

“He said the manor was too quiet without the sound of little feet… said it hadn’t laughed properly since you were a boy.”

A pause. Not heavy-just true.

“I think your grandfather agreed, even if he wouldn’t say it out loud.”

Damien blinked once, caught off guard.

He wasn’t a man easily shaken-but something in those words struck deeper than he expected.

Grandchildren. Children. A family.

The thought landed like a whisper in a quiet room-soft, but impossible to ignore.

Would she even want that kind of life with him?

Could she accept not just the man, but the shadows that clung to his name?

The blood on his hands, the secrets buried too deep to speak aloud?

Would she ever look at him and see a future… instead of a threat?

He hadn’t even held her hand, hadn’t kissed her, hadn’t touched her the way he dreamed- reverently, hungrily, aching to give more than desire alone.

He hadn’t dared.

Not yet.

Because a part of him still questioned if he ever truly could.

If Maya-bright, brave, already hurt more than once-could ever want to build a life with a man like him.

Let alone carry his children.

Let alone call him home.

But if the time came-if she ever gave him even the smallest part of her heart-

He would hold her like she was made of breath and light.

He would make a future she didn’t have to be afraid of.

Not because he deserved her.

But because he’d spend the rest of his life trying to.

His chest ached with the weight of it all.

A dream he hadn’t dared to voice, now blooming in silence.

A family.

With her.

The corner of his mouth lifted-barely there. Hopeful. Unsteady.

He cleared his throat, like brushing the emotion away before it could claim him whole.

Then, quietly, almost tenderly:

“Let’s go.”