

Chapter 156: One step at a time.

Ethan's POV:

My days were kind of boring during that damn rest. I was having a few hidden meetings online, but just while Patricia was distracted with Michael, otherwise she would rat me to Hannah, and I would be reprimanded. But I didn't think that having online meetings was what could be called an effort. Outside that, I was taking it slowly, I swear.

I was a little disappointed though because I asked Hannah to make the pasta that I loved and she was held by something else at the café, but she promised to come the next night and comply with my request. And on the next night, she was here as promised.

I wasn't at rest anymore, thank God, so I was allowed to come and go in my place as I wished. Michael had already had his dinner, since now he was allowed to eat a few different foods, and Patricia was putting him to sleep, but they wouldn't stay for dinner. Patricia wanted to go home to call her sister and check on her, and she told us that she would take Michael so he could sleep in his own crib, so it would be just Hannah and me.

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About half an hour later, they went home, and I was sitting on one of the kitchen stools talking to Hannah while she was cooking.

"So, how was your day?" she asked me.

"You know... boring," I told her. "Well, at least this was the last resting day. I'm a free man from midnight on, thank you for asking."

Hannah tried to hide her laugh. She was always telling me all the time that I was exaggerating about this resting thing. But she didn't know how complicated it was for me to stay put. I was a man of action. Getting stuck at home wasn't fun at all. "Don't be a baby, Ethan," she told me. "It's over now, you overcome your rest!" She exclaimed.

"Yeah, yeah, I know," I mumbled to her.

"Even though I know that you weren't resting all the time, right? But I think it's okay," she told me.

"But how did you know about that?" I asked her feeling guilty.

"Let's say that Patricia knows how to babysit more than Michael," she told me while chuckling.

"Damn it! I thought that she didn't realize what I was doing," I complained to her.

She shook her head while she was laughing at me, and then she turned back to the stove to start to prepare everything to cook the pasta that I asked

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her.

It happened instinctively. I raised from the stool and went toward her. My intent was to hug her from behind. I knew that I almost didn't do anything like this during our marriage, because I didn't display affection toward Hannah, but right at the moment, all that I wanted was to hug her and thank her for doing all that for me. But I knew that now that we were not married anymore, this would be stupid and inappropriate, so I stopped myself from doing that at the right time, unfortunately, I was already too close to her for her not noticing that I was there. So I saw her stirring and turning back to me, and we were like nose to nose.

Hanna's POV:

Ethan was, of course, exaggerating. It wasn't as if he was a prisoner in his own house, and the doctor's request was just for a few days. Still, it was really funny the fact that he thought that he was able to have meetings secretly while he pretended to be resting. Who he thought he was fooling? He looked like a toddler who hides their eyes and believes is hidden from their parents. Michael was the one who was sleeping while he was making these meetings, not Patricia.

I was still distracted by these thoughts when I felt it. He was moving toward me and suddenly stopped right behind me. I would lie if I didn't

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know what he was about to do. He was doing one of the rarest affection demonstrations that he did when we were married. Whenever he wanted to, he would just come from behind me and hug me. And I have always been naïve enough to melt down in his arms and cherish each of these moments like I was about to do right now.

If on one side I was willing for his hug in a way that I was still not willing to admit to myself, on the other side, it was wrong. We weren't married anymore, so it wasn't something that we should be doing anymore. So, I decided to turn back to him and stop him from doing something that we would both regret.

When I turned back to him, though, I got distracted. Ethan was too close to me. We were nose to nose as if we were going to kiss each other, so my question about what he was doing was swallowed by my distraction.

We stood there looking at each other for a little while. I didn't know how long we stood like that because seconds felt like hours. But then, we bounced back and got a little distance between each other. Both breathing heavily as if the effort of being apart was herculean.

Ethan gulped a few times and mumbled: "I... I..."

I nodded at him and said: "I know. You don't need to tell anything."

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Honestly, I was confused as hell, and although I told him that I got it, I didn't. I wasn't certain if I wanted him to hold me tight in his arms or if I wanted him to get back and forget me once and for all.

Ethan nodded and slowly went back to the stool

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where he was originally sitting, while I finished preparing dinner for us both. We remain in an uncomfortable silence for a few minutes, with me not knowing what to talk to him about.

After that, he tried to clear the air by asking me: "So, how was your day today?"

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I sighed in relief. It was good to end the awkwardness between us. "Well, today was pretty normal, but yesterday was atypical," I told him.

"You mean the reason why you didn't come here yesterday?" He asked me.

"Yep," I told him.

"What happened yesterday?" He asked more directly this time.

"Yesterday one of our clients came to the café to talk to me about a job proposal," I told him.

"A job? But doing what?" He asked me.

"As a decorator," I told him.

"So, he saw what you did to the café!" Ethan exclaimed. "It was a great job, Hannah," he added.

"But you didn't even see that personally!" I exclaimed to him.

"I didn't, but I trust in your taste, Hannah, and did you forget that I was working alongside you guys to make your vision become real?" he asked me. "I obviously trust in you," he shrugged and said.

"Well, and what is your opinion of it?" I asked him. I didn't know if this was because of what happened earlier or anything else, but hearing his opinion was important for me at the moment.

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"I think that you are perfectly capable of doing a decorator job if you decide to do so, Hannah," he said to me.

"You think?" I asked him uncertainly.

"Yeah, you do," he told me. "And I think that if this is what you want to do, you should go for it," he said.

"But I wasn't chosen for the position yet," I told him insecure.

"Yeah, but I think that you shouldn't count yourself out of it, Hannah. If you really want it, you should go for it," Ethan told me.

"But this job might take me longer hours than my job at the café," I told him.

"Well, if you get to do extra hours, we will give it away. If you decide to decline a job offer, it's up to you too," Ethan told me. "I just don't think you should give up on an offer before you even try it," he told me.

I nodded at him but didn't say a thing. So, he asked me: "Well? What do you think? You think you are going to give it a try?"

"I think... I think I will. Thank you for the conversation, Ethan," I told him.

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When I was driving home, I used my time alone to think things through. It was important talking to Lucy about the possibility of leaving the café, and I couldn't explain why, but Ethan's opinion still matters a lot to me. I guess that the fact that he believed that I was capable of doing this job made me more confident.

I also wondered about what happened in the kitchen today, but I didn't have an opinion on it yet. I think that sometimes you need to give it time to process everything and take one step at a time.



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