

Through Rising Fog We Walk Paths Unknown Yet Comforting

by Arlo Mason Jett 131

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chapter 131

KANE'S POV

I had seen violence all my life. I had caused it, commanded it, executed it. I had walked through battlefields, wiped blood from my hands without a single emotion and silenced enemies without blinking. But none of it prepared me for the sight that waited for me the moment that door broke open.

My eyes went blood-red the instant I saw her.

Bella was on the floor, half-dressed, half-breathing, cowering in the corner as if the walls were closing in on her. Her clothes were torn, hanging off her trembling body like they were barely holding on. Her knees were pulled to her chest. She had her arms wrapped around herself as she tried to shield her ribs from the blows.

Her cheek was swollen, her lip split, and fresh blood poured down the side of her face. She held a jagged piece of broken mirror in her hand, but her grip was weak, slipping.

My heart slammed against my ribs so hard it felt like something inside me had cracked.

And that bastard. That grinning idiot. That deranged fool- He kept kicking her, laughing while she struggled to stay conscious.

"My dad said if a woman is not obedient, I have to beat her! If I beat her, she will listen. So I'm going to beat you, beat **you**, beat

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you-" he kept saying.

I snapped.

I did not think. I did not breathe. I moved.

+8 Bonus

In the next second, I grabbed him by the back of his collar and pulled him off her so violently he flew across the room. He hit the floor and before he could scramble to his feet, I stepped on his chest and pinned him to the ground.

A deep growl tore itself from my throat as my heel pressed harder and harder into him.

My Bella. He touched my Bella.

Murder spread through my veins so thick it drowned out the room. My wolf clawed at the surface, begging to take over, begging to rip him apart. The fool gasped under me. His eyes widened as he finally understood-

An Alpha stood over him. A powerful one. A lethal one.

Even with his tiny brain, instinct kicked in. He went still. He froze. He looked terrified.

He looked up at me like I was Death itself.

Good.

I wanted him to fear.

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+8 Bonus

My

vision blurred at the edges, turning black and red. My whole body trembled from how much rage was choking me. I could feel the air vibrating around me; I could feel the officers outside the door stop moving. No one dared to step inside.

I would have killed him. I truly would have crushed him until every bone inside him shattered.

But then- A small, broken breath reached my ears.

A shaking inhale. Bella.

Her breathing snapped me out of that murderous fog.

I turned immediately.

She was still in the corner. Her body was curled tightly. Her chest rose and fell unevenly as if every breath burned. Her cheeks were flushed unnaturally red. She looked drugged. Her eyes were open but unfocused, like she couldn't see me clearly, like she was fighting to stay conscious even now.

She looked nothing like the woman who had walked away from me that morning. The woman who had smiled softly and placed a scarf on my table. The woman who had endured years of suffering and still somehow kept her gentleness.

Seeing her like this... It ripped something open inside me.

I kicked the fool across the room. His body hit the wall and slid down, probably unconscious.

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+8 Bonus

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Then I went to her.

The

moment I took a step closer, her whole body jerked in terror. She pulled away from me, shaking violently. Her grip tightened around the broken glass until more blood poured between her fingers.

“No, no. Don’t touch me-” she whispered.

That single whisper hurt more than any blade ever had.

“Bella,” I said softly, kneeling down. I kept a distance so she wouldn’t feel trapped. “It’s me.”

She

didn’t seem to hear. Her eyes kept losing focus. Her breathing was shallow, panicked.

The drug was strong. Too strong.

I slowly extended a hand, palms open, letting her see I had nothing in them.

“Hey,” I murmured “Look at me. I’m here. You’re safe.”

She blinked, confused then flinched again when her own blood dripped onto her thigh.

My chest tightened painfully.

I had never feared blood. I had seen oceans of it spill. I had

spilled them myself.

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But her blood....Her blood terrified me.

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+8 Bonus

A tremor

went through my entire body and I hadn't even realized it until then. My hands shook. My breath stuttered. I had never, never, felt fear like this.

If her wounds were deeper. If she lost more blood. If she-

No. I couldn't think it.

"Bella," I whispered again, leaning slightly closer but still careful not to touch her, "it's me. Kane. No one will hurt you anymore."

Her body shook harder, and I could see it – the moment she recognized my voice. Her lips parted, trembling.

"K-Kane..." she breathed weakly.

My name in her voice nearly broke me.

"Yes," I said immediately. "I'm right here."

But when I reached out, she flinched again and the mirror piece cut deeper into her palm.

More blood.

My heart clenched so painfully I had to exhale to steady myself.

"Drop it," I said softly but firmly. Please, Bella. You're hurting yourself."

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She shook her head helplessly. "I. I can't-"

+6 Bonus

"It's okay," I whispered. "I won't touch you. I won't force you. I just need you to breathe."

Her teeth chattered as she tried to hold herself together. She looked like a wounded creature pushed into a corner, doing everything she could to remain conscious.

I hated it.

I hated that she had suffered alone. I hated that I wasn't there. I hated myself for letting her walk away this morning without insisting on staying beside her.

If I had been here. If I had gone with her. She would not be bleeding on this floor.

I swallowed hard as fear crawled up my spine again.

"Bella," I murmured, "I'm going to help you, but I need you to loosen your hand. Just a little."

She hesitated, shaking. Her eyes were unfocused again.

"Kane..." her voice cracked, "...don't let him come back."

"He won't," I said. "I promise you. He will never touch you again."

Blood poured down her palm. Fear choked me all over again.

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I reached toward her carefully, slowly, as if she were glass.

+8 Bonus

“Stay with me, Bella,” I whispered. “Just... stay awake a little longer.”

My hand hovered inches from her cheek, and even then I didn’t dare touch her.

Because at that moment, I wasn’t the cold Alpha. I wasn’t the man everyone feared. I wasn’t Stonewood.

I was just a man terrified of losing the
only person who had ever made my chest feel warm.

And her blood. Her small, shaking breaths. Her broken whisper

It all made my hands tremble harder.

“Please,” I whispered.

And I watched, helpless, as her consciousness began to slip again.

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BELLA’S POV

*8 Bonus

The world felt
distant, like I was slipping into a dark tunnel. My body no longer obeyed me. Only the pain kept me conscious. Only the pain kept me from collapsing into the darkness calling

1. me.

I can’t sleep. Not here. Not now. I can’t.

I repeated it inside my mind. I had survived prison cells colder than this room, survived men with dead eyes and greedy hands. I had patched up strangers with trembling finger

s and learned how to hide bruises under cheap coats. I thought that after I got out, I would finally be in control of my life. That I wouldn't be anyone's prey again. But life had proven otherwise. The moment danger came, there was no one behind me – only myself, only my pain, only my stubborn breath refusing to stop.

“Hey... Bella...” a voice murmured somewhere close.

I didn't know if I imagined it. My mind was blurry, drifting, but the tone...it felt real.

Who...? Who is calling me?

I fought to open my eyes, even though my eyelids felt like heavy stone. Everything was spinning,. A shadow moved toward me, and when he spoke again, the voice calmed me .

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“Bella, don't be afraid. I'll take you away from here.”

+8 Bonus

My vision cleared in fragments. First the shape of his shoulders, then the line of his jaw, then his eyes.

“Kane...” I whispered, or maybe I just breathed it.

My voice felt like broken glass scraping out of my throat.

“It's me,” he said. “No one will hurt you once I'm here.”

I stared at him, dazed. Something about him was different. He seemed stronger, colder, more dangerous—but it was still him, still the man whose presence made me feel safe. I realized then that I had been holding **on** only because I had been waiting for him. And now that he was here, everything inside me collapsed.

My grip weakened. The piece of broken mirror slipped from my fingers and hit the floor. Then I fell sideways, my body giving

out.

Kane caught me before I hit the ground.

He pulled off his coat in then wrapped it around me carefully.

“Bella, you can sleep now,” he murmured “I’m taking you back.”

I leaned into his chest. For the first time that night, I wasn’t alone. My heart slowed, not from weakness but from relief.

“Kane... you’re finally here...” I muttered.

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“Yes,” he said. “I’m here.”

He gathered me in his arms and carried me out.

KANE’S POV

+8 Bonus

The hallway fell silent when I stepped out, holding Bella against my chest. She was wrapped tightly in my coat. Her face was buried against me. I felt every trembling inhale she took.

My men went stiff instantly. They weren’t used to seeing me carry anyone like this. They weren’t used to seeing me look... careful.

“Find out everyone involved in this,” I said to one of them “No one leaves.”

“Yes, sir,” my subordinate responded instantly, stepping away to execute the order.

Bella shifted slightly in my arms. That familiar scent of hers filled my senses. It made something inside my chest twist. She didn’t deserve this.

If I had gotten here a moment later...

My jaw clenched so hard my teeth ached.

“Alpha Stonewood,” Jayden said as he walked beside “We’ve already traced the drug. It’s a type of pill sold in a small underground bar. I’ve sent people to analyze the ingredients.”

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+8 Bonus

I tightened my grip on Bella as she moved again. Her skin felt too hot. Her breathing was too quick.

"Who gave her the drug?" I asked

"Her relatives," Jayden answered. "They're blaming each other. No clear confession yet."

My vision darkened. Family betrayal. That wound would cut her deeper than the bruises on her skin. I knew the pain of betrayal. It lived in my blood.

Bella's body suddenly jolted. She twisted in my arms as if something inside her was burning. Her fingers clutched weakly at my shirt.

"Kane..." she whispered. The sound was soft, broken, terrified. It ripped something open inside me

"I'm here." My voice softened and I bent my head closer. "Bella, I'm right here. Hold on. It'll be over soon."

But she didn't seem to hear me. She kept moving, kept grasping at me blindly. Her breath hitched. Her chest rose and fell too fast. She was losing control.

I lifted my hand to brush her hair back from her damp forehead. Before my fingers reached her skin, she snapped forward and bit down on my finger. Hard.

Jayden shouted, "Alpha. Stonewood!"

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+8 Bonus

"It's nothing," I said without flinching. I had taken bullets without blinking; her bite was nothing. Pain didn't matter. Only she did. "How long until we reach the hospital?"

"Fifteen minutes," Jayden said quickly, watching her with wide eyes. "She can't go to a small clinic in this condition. We need a major facility."

"I know," I said.

Her body shook in my arms again. Her fingers clawed at my chest, not to hurt me but to hold on to something, anything. To stay conscious. To stay alive.

I looked down at her flushed, battered face, at the dried blood on her lips. The fresh blood soaked into my coat, and for the first time in years, fear shook me.

Not fear for myself. Fear that I might lose her.

And as the car sped toward the hospital, I held her even tighter, refusing to let her slip away.

Not her. Not Bella. Not the one woman I could not afford to lose.

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KANE'S POV

The car stopped at the hospital entrance, I stepped out first, still holding Bella tightly against my chest. Her skin felt too hot. Her breathing was uneven against my neck, and every second that passed made the anger inside me burn hotter.

Jayden rushed forward to open the doors for the team of doctors already waiting. They were some of the most respected specialists in the entire region – men and women who usually required weeks of notice and layers of bureaucracy before they agreed to consult. People saw them only during political emergencies, royal summons, or massive catastrophes.

Tonight, they were gathered for one woman.

A woman wearing torn, cheap clothes soaked in sweat and fear.

If the world saw this scene, they would never believe the truth: that an exiled “nobody Alpha” could gather such power with a single phone call. But I didn’t care who saw or who understood. I only cared about Bella.

The moment my men handed the prescription list over, the doctors began debating in rapid clinical terms.

“It isn’t a long-term dependency drug,” one of the elder physicians said. “Not unless consumed repeatedly. Give her a sedative. Let her sweat until her body pushes the toxins out.”

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4+8 Bonus

"Yes," another agreed, adjusting his glasses. "The symptoms are intense, but temporary. She'll need metabolism boosters for the next three days, liver support as well."

They spoke like scholars examining an interesting case. I felt my jaw tighten.

"She needs the sedative now," I said.

One of the doctors nodded respectfully. "At once, sir."

I

laid Bella gently on the prepared hospital bed. Her fingers twitched as if she were reaching for something in a nightmare. The nurse inserted the needle into her arm, and the sedative slid into her bloodstream.

Within seconds, her body relaxed. Her breaths slowed. The restless movements stopped. I felt so relieved suddenly it almost

hurt.

But the doctor spoke again. "We don't have clinical data on this drug. We can't be certain we administered the ideal dosage. If her symptoms return, she may need another injection."

"I understand," I replied.

After they finished monitoring her vitals, the doctors bowed politely and stepped out of the room.

The moment the door shut, I spoke. "Jayden."

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He straightened instantly. "Yes, Alpha?"

"Guard the entrance. No one comes in unless I allow it."

"What about you? If you stay, the Old Master might-

+8 Bonus

"I know." I cut him off. "He'll investigate on his own anyway. There's no hiding Bella from him forever. Let him find out. It doesn't matter."

Jayden hesitated only for a second before nodding.

"Understood."

He left, closing the door behind him.

Silence fell. It was a heavy, suffocating silence that filled the enormous VIP room.

It was just her and me.

I moved toward the bed slowly. She lay there motionless. Her face was pale under the fluorescent lights. Her lips were slightly parted as she breathed. There were bruises on her wrists where she had struggled earlier. The sight made my blood boil even hotter.

"Bella..." I whispered.

I reached out, brushing my fingers along her cheek. Her skin burned under my touch.

"I'll get vengeance for today," I murmured. "Anyone who hurt 3/7

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you will pay ten times. A hundred times. I swear it."

+8 Bonus

But she didn't hear me. She simply slept, breathing softly, lost somewhere far away.

I sat down in the chair beside her and watched her quietly. It was only when I watched her breathe that the rage inside me settled enough for me to think clearly. Anyone else guarding her would have made me restless. I needed to be here. I needed to see that she stayed alive.

Minutes passed, maybe hours. I didn't know.

Then her body shifted.

Her eyebrows pinched together, and a small sound escaped her lips. I stood immediately, leaning over to check her temperature again. Beads of sweat had gathered on her forehead. I reached for a cloth to wipe her skin gently

Her eyes snapped open.

Before I could react, she pushed herself up slightly and wrapped her arms around my neck. Her face was flushed. Her lips were tinted red. Her eyes were hazy like she was still caught between dream and delirium.

"Kane..." she breathed.

I froze.

Her voice... her warmth... the desperation in her grip. My senses 4/7

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locked on her as if the world had dropped away entirely.

+6 Bonus

Then she smiled faintly. She looked dazed, drugged yet beautiful beyond reason. Then, she lifted her face toward mine.

Before I could say her name, her lips touched mine.

It was a slow kiss. A soft kiss. But powerful enough to unravel every last thread of control I possessed.

I knew I could pull away. I should have pulled away. She wasn't fully conscious. She wasn't herself. But the moment her lips brushed mine, my hands moved on their own. I placed one at her back, the other cradling her head.

She deepened the kiss, sighing into my mouth. Her fingers slid into my hair, tugging lightly, and my whole body tightened. When her tongue brushed my lower lip, I froze for a second.

Then I let her in.

I let her do whatever she wanted. I let her kiss me like I was her only anchor. She was probably the only person in this world who could have broken through my restraint.

Her breath mixed with mine; her chest rose against me; her heartbeat raced with heat and desperation. The blood in my veins burned like fire.

No one had ever affected me like this. No one had ever made me lose control.

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+8 Bonus

And then she whispered against my lips. Her voice cracked with need, "Kane... it's so uncomfortable... so uncomfortable..."

Those words shattered the trance

I

pulled back abruptly, breathing hard. Her eyes were glassy and unfocused. I felt a dangerous heat spread through me, and I pressed my forehead against hers, forcing my breathing to steady. I wanted her. Goddess, I wanted her but not like this. Not when she couldn't even tell reality from fever.

If I stayed one second longer, I would break every line I had drawn.

I reached out blindly and hit the nurse call button.

The medical team rushed in. They saw nothing unusual, just a patient relapsing into symptoms. They gave her a second sedative, monitoring her vitals as her body slowly relaxed again.

Only after the staff left did Jayden step halfway inside the doorway. His eyes moved from me to Bella and back. He didn't speak, but I could see the understanding forming in his mind.

He had been with me for years. He knew when I was

suppressing something. And right now, he could probably feel it burning off me.

Without saying anything, he left and closed the door quietly, leaving us alone once more.

I returned to Bella's side and sat down again. My pulse was

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+8 Bonus

racing. *My* body was still tense. But I forced myself to be still.

For her. For the woman who had nearly dragged me into madness without even knowing it

I watched her breathe. And for *the* first time in a long time, I felt fear. Fear of how much she had already come to mean to me.

Coin Package: get more free bonus

DAMIEN'S POV

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+8 Bonus

The evening felt heavier than it should have. The Silverwood and Monroe families sat around the long dining table.

We had out plates full and our glasses raised. Our conversations drifted from business to old memories. On the surface,

everything looked warm and celebratory – two powerful families joining together, sealing an alliance through my engagement with Gina. But deep down, I felt uneasy.

Tiffany sat near the end of the table, looking pale and exhausted. Her foot was still wrapped in a bandage. Her movements were stiff. Normally, she'd be taking photos and talking everyone's ears off but right now? She was silent. She didn't say a single word. She kept staring into space. I could tell she was in pain.

Every few minutes she pressed a hand to her forehead or winced when she shifted her weight, but she refused help from anyone. She hated appearing weak, even in front of family.

I forced myself to respond when spoken to, to smile politely when Gina's mother talked about wedding colors, but my chest stayed tight. I couldn't stop replaying Kane's warning in my head, the hard edge in his voice at the engagement party, how easily he could destroy everything if he chose to. I knew he had taken action, I just didn't know how far it had gone. And the more I thought about it, the more guilt twisted inside me.

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+8 Bonus

Gina sat beside me. Her hand would hold mine now and then in a show of affection, but even that didn't make me feel better.

When dinner finally ended, everyone split into small groups. Some went to the lounge, some to the backyard for wine and fresh air, and others returned inside to talk business. Gina tugged my hand lightly.

"Walk with me," she said.

We stepped out to the back garden. The moonlight came in through the tall trees, highlighting the stone path. For a moment, it felt peaceful... until Gina suddenly stopped walking and turned to me.

"Damien," she said quietly, "is there anything between you and Alpha Kane?"

My heart slammed against my ribs. I froze. I could feel the blood draining from my face.

Why did she ask this? Did she know something?

"What are you talking about?" I forced out. "What could there possibly be between us?"

She watched me closely, too closely. Gina wasn't a fool. She had been raised in a powerful pack, trained to read lies from expression and tone.

"If there isn't," she said, "then why did your expression look so bad after speaking to him at our engagement party? And why 2/6

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+8 Bonus

did you avoid him the entire evening after that?" She stepped closer, lowering her voice. "And one more thing. Tiffany gets injured, and suddenly the Silverwood family's loan application is rejected by every bank? Damien, don't tell me those two things aren't connected."

My mouth went dry. Every question she asked felt like she already knew the truth and was just waiting for me to admit it.

"That's enough," I said, trying to sound firm. "These things don't have anything to do with each other. You're overthinking. Just... stop asking."

She narrowed her eyes slightly. Not in anger, more in disappointment.

"Damien, we're engaged," she said softly. "We're going to get married. Are there really things we can't talk about?"

I swallowed hard. Of course, I wanted to tell her. The truth had been sitting like a stone in my stomach for days. But I couldn't expose Kane. I couldn't expose Bella. And I certainly couldn't the connection between them. Kane would kill me if I

told anyone.

expose

"Gina," I said "there are some things I can't say."

She folded her arms slowly, staring at me. "Does Tiffany's injury have something to do with Bella?"

My breath caught. I stared at her, stunned, unable to answer and that was enough. My silence told her everything she needed

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to **know**.

Her eyes widened.

+8 Bonus

"So it is connected." She shook her head, frustrated. "Damien, what did she do? Don't tell me Bella got involved with people who have... criminal backgrounds from prison."

"No, that's not-" I began, but another voice interrupted me.

"Well, isn't that just great," Tiffany snapped.

We both turned. She limped toward us. Her expression was twisted with anger. She had her phone clutched tightly in her hand. She must have come outside looking for us.

Instead, she stumbled right into the truth she had been desperate for.

“So it turns out I got injured because of Bella.” She said.

She glared at me with eyes full of betrayal.

“Damien,” she said, her voice shaking, “if you keep defending Bella, I swear I won’t recognize you as my brother anymore. I don’t even know when my foot will heal or if it ever will. And she did this to me!” Her voice cracked. “Bella sent people to hurt me. I should cripple her leg in return. I should-”

“Tiffany,” I warned “stop. I already told you, if you want peace, don’t go after Bella.”

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“Why?” she demanded. “Who does she think she is? Do you think I’m scared of her? She thinks knowing a few criminals from prison makes her untouchable?”

+8 Bonus

young

“That’s right,” Gina added, stepping in. “Tiffany is the lady of the Silverwood Pack. If she doesn’t fight back, people will think they can walk all over us.”

My pulse spiked. These women had no idea what they were walking into. They knew no thing. Our lives were at risk here, every single one of us.

“You two don’t understand anything,” I shot back.

Tiffany lifted her phone. “I’m calling someone right now. Since Bella wants to play dirty, I ’ll-”

“Stop it!” I snapped.

She glared at me. “Give me one reason, one real reason, why I shouldn’t.”

The words ripped out of me before I could hold them back.

“It’s Alpha Stonewood who’s behind Bella!” I screamed.

Gina's lips parted in shock. Tiffany froze, looking at me in disbelief.

And I felt my stomach drop.

Because that truth... once spoken... couldn't be taken back. 5/6

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DAMIEN'S POV

The moment the words left my mouth, it felt like the world stopped.

My lungs froze, my throat tightened, and heat rushed up my spine before draining away completely. I stared at Tiffany and Gina. Both of them were shocked into silence, and I realized – I had said it out loud. I had actually said it.

Alpha Stonewood. Kane. Behind Bella. Protecting her. Acting for her. The secret he warned me never to reveal.

Fuck!

Why did I say that? What the hell was wrong with me?

My vision dimmed for a second. I felt sick. If Kane ever found out... No. No, I couldn't even imagine what he would do. To me. To my family. To the entire Silverwood territory. I had heard enough about Kane's methods; I had seen him act before. The man didn't punish – he erased. And I had just spoken his name alongside Bella's in a context he explicitly told me to keep quiet. My blood ran cold. I felt myself break into a cold sweat.

Gina and Tiffany were just staring at me, both of them pale, as if everything they thought they knew about the situation had suddenly been rewritten. Tiffany recovered her voice first. She laughed softly, like she couldn't believe it.

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+8 Bonus

"It was Kane?" she whispered. "How is that even possible? How could Kane have helped Bella? Back then, she – she caused Sophia's death!"

Her voice cracked on her sister's name, and her anger felt almost childish next to the panic twisting deep inside me.

I forced myself to speak, even though my mouth felt like sand. The truth was out already. I might as well explain more things to them. I couldn't take it back.

"Believe it or don't," I said quietly, "but it's the truth. Kane may have... taken an interest in Bella. Whatever the reason, Tiffany's injury this time... it was the work of Alpha Stonewood."

Tiffany's knees nearly buckled. She grabbed the nearest stone chair to steady herself. Her breathing quickened. Her eyes went wide with shock.

"And the engagement party?" I continued. "Kane was the one who said you shouldn't attend. He didn't want you anywhere near Bella that night."

Her whole world seemed to tilt. She stared at me as if I had personally betrayed her.

"So I got hurt like that," she whispered shakily, "because Kane – Alpha Kane Stonewood – wanted to vent Bella's anger for her?"

Hearing it aloud, even I felt how unreal it sounded. Bella – the ex-convict, the woman who swept streets, the woman whose

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+8 Bonus

reputation was dragged through mud for three years – being protected by Kane? Protected so fiercely that he crushed anyone who offended her?

Tiffany's face twisted. "Why her? Why Bella of all people? In the past, Sophia was the most beautiful woman in the pack! Bella was ... well, even if she was pretty, three years in prison ruined her. She's a street sweeper now. Does Kane think she's worth – worth all this?"

I stepped closer. "That's exactly why you need to stop. Don't provoke Bella again. Ever. And what I told you tonight, you bury it....deep. You don't repeat it. Not to anyone. Not e

ven our parents. Kane doesn't want this out. The fact that I said it to you already puts me in trouble."

Tiffany swallowed hard. She wasn't stupid. She might be reckless, arrogant, spoiled but not stupid. Everyone in this region knew the stories about Alpha Kane Stonewood. His name was whispered with equal parts fear and awe. He was a man who had destroyed families for far less. A man who never forgave disrespect. Tiffany's anger slowly drained, replaced by dread as she remembered the rumors.

She licked her lips nervously. "They said he once threw a woman out of a hotel wrapped in bedsheets..."

I nodded "That wasn't a rumor."

"And her family lost everything," Tiffany whispered. "She had to work in a nightclub to survive. And the hotel manager she bribed... no one ever saw him again."

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+8 Bonus

The stories had always seemed exaggerated. They seemed like real-life campfire tales to scare wolves. But those of us who knew the truth... knew Kane didn't bluff. Kane didn't warn twice. Kane didn't leave loose ends. Tiffany fell silent, shaking slightly as she processed the fact that she had been one step away from provoking a man like that.

Finally, she whispered, "I heard you, Damien. I... won't mess with Bella again."

She still sounded resentful, but fear outweighed her pride. She turned awkwardly, limping away from the garden.

I took a deep breath. When I turned to Gina, her expression looked even worse.

"What's wrong?" I asked quietly. "You can't accept that Kane might have fallen for Bella?"

She swallowed hard and looked at me. "Do you think Kane might reopen the case for her?"

I stiffened. "Reopen... the case?"

“Yes.” Her voice shook. “With Kane’s power, clearing Bella’s name wouldn’t be impossible. And if he does, if he goes that far, then my sister... Sophia...” Her voice broke, and she clenched her fists so tightly her knuckles turned white. “Damien, if Bella really didn’t kill her-”

“Gina,” I said firmly “don’t think too much. It’s not that easy to

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+8 Bonus

overturn a murder case. All the evidence pointed to her. Even Kane would struggle to undo that”

She looked at me, searching for reassurance, for something solid to hold on to. I kept talking.

“Kane isn’t planning to marry her. He’s acting on impulse. Bella is... Bella. A convict. An outcast. No pack wants her. And the Stonewood patriarch would be the first to reject her.” I exhaled. “This isn’t love. Kane’s protecting her for the moment. That’s all.”

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I didn’t say what I needed to hide – the truth that Bella and Kane were already in an arranged marriage. It was something neither Gina nor Tiffany should ever learn.

Gina slowly relaxed.

“Good,” she whispered. “Because if Sophia died for nothing... If the case reopened... I don’t think I could bear it, Damien.”

I nodded. “It’s over,” I told her softly. “Bella has already paid. You didn’t go easy on her.”

Her eyes got darker. “She deserved worse.”

My jaw clenched. The image flashed through my mind before I could stop it – Bella kneeling in the prison courtyard, her fingers crushed one by one, blood dripping down her wrists while she refused to scream. I had watched. I had done nothing. I saw her pain, her humiliation, her broken bones. The memory burned like acid.

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\$

+8 Bonus

Let her off too easily. Gina had said those words so casually. As if Bella hadn't been torn apart piece by piece.

If Bella ever wanted revenge, real revenge, and if Kane stood behind her... The Silverwood family, the Monroe family, all of them would be wiped out before dawn. Kane would do it without hesitation. And Bella... Bella had every reason.

A cold shiver ran down my spine.

I looked at Gina beside me.

"Even if Kane is interested in Bella," I murmured, "he wouldn't act against both our families for her... right?"

But even as the question left my lips, I was scared.....because I wasn't sure of that anymore.

Coin Package: get more free bonus

chapter 136

BELLA'S POV

I felt like I had been dreaming, for a very long time, way too long, like I had been trapped somewhere cold **with** no door and **no**

escape,

The dream felt so real. I found myself back **in** prison again, standing barefoot on a wet concrete floor. **Filthy**, ice—cold water splashed against **my** shins as if someone kept throwing bucket after bucket just to watch me **flinch**. Punches and kicks landed on me from every side. Every hit made **my** bones **ring**

They circled me, laughing, spitting, mocking

"Look at her," one woman sneered. "A great doctor, remember that? She was actually an intellectual. You thought you were better than us, didn't you?"

Another woman kicked me so hard that I tasted blood. “Now you’re just like the rest of us. Actually... no. You’re worse. At least we can fight back.”

Their laughter echoed until it scraped my ears raw. I tried to cover my head with my arms, but even that small act felt useless. I was drowning in humiliation, pain, and the fact that no one cared. The water was so cold that I could feel it in my bones.

“How long are you planning to hold on, Bella?” another voice hissed. “When will you finally accept your fate?”

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My knees buckled. Everything inside me felt bruised and swollen. I couldn’t tell which pain belonged to my body and which belonged to **my** heart.

+8 Bonus

Why was I suffering like this? Why did everything keep breaking around me when I hadn’t done anything wrong? Why did life insist on teaching me the same cruel lesson over and over?

“Bella,” someone whispered near my ear,, “do you know what your biggest mistake was?”

Hands grabbed my hair, pulling my head up. Hot breath touched my cheek.

“Your mistake was offending the lord of this city.”

My stomach twisted. I knew the name before they said it.

“Bella, anyone who offends Kane never ends well.”

“And Alpha Stonewood? He was merciful, you know. That’s why you’re still alive. Otherwise, you’d have died in prison.”

Merciful.

The word struck me harder than any punch.

Three years of prison. Three years of wounds that never healed properly. Three years of losing everything, including the possibility that I might ever have a child.

2/8

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Merciful?

+8 Bonus

I laughed bitterly but even in the dream it sounded broken. The pain swelled until it felt like my ribcage would burst. The fear was so suffocating that I couldn't breathe.

I didn't know who I was begging anymore – the moon goddess, fate, myself. "Don't... Don't..." I choked.

I felt hands dragging me deeper into that cold. I fought to pull free, but I didn't know what I was fighting for – escape? justice? breath?

Who would save me from this? Who could protect me?

Then suddenly, through all that noise, I heard a familiar voice.

"Bella, it's okay. I'm here. I'm right here. No one can hurt you."

My mind froze. That voice...

"Whose... voice is this...?" I gasped into the dark.

And when I blinked hard enough, the dream broke apart.

I opened my eyes slowly, painfully, as if lifting heavy stones. Warm light filled my vision. It wasn't the harsh prison light. It was softer. I blinked until a face came into focus – a face too beautiful, too composed to belong to my nightmares.

Kane. But also... not the Kane I knew. He looked different.

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"Kane?" My voice was hoarse, dry.

+8 Bonus

He leaned over me. His features were breathtaking. My eyes took in his strong jaw, dark eyes, calm expression. He looked handsome...but in a different way

"Bella, you're finally awake," he said. "Do you feel sick?"

I shook my head out of instinct, even though I felt like my soul had been dragged through thorns. He placed a hand behind my back and helped me sit up.

Then I really looked at him and froze.

His thick bangs were gone. His hair was combed back, revealing his full forehead. His jaw seemed sharper. His expression looked more refined. And he was wearing a black sleek, designer suit, a dark tie, and a watch I recognized instantly.

That watch cost more than everything I had ever owned combined.

He looked amazing. He looked....expensive.

"Is this... Kane?" I whispered, because my brain refused to accept it.

Maybe my eyes were playing tricks on me. Maybe I was still dreaming.

He frowned slightly. "What's wrong?"

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+8 Bonus

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"Are... are you really Kane?" I asked quietly.

"Yes," he replied without hesitation.

"But... you're wearing-"

He followed my gaze toward the suit, the watch, the polished, elegant appearance that didn't match the shabby exiled Alpha everyone believed him to be.

"It's the same suit I wore yesterday," he muttered, as if he was talking to himself

I looked at him in shock. He had on a designer suit, gold cufflinks, a pair of expensive looking shoes and a million-dollar watch.

Everything crashed into place.

“Kane,” I breathed. “You’re not an... exiled pack outcast?”

He looked at me with those cold eyes of his.

“I’m not.”

The world tilted. Something inside me cracked open. I felt confused, disbelief and most of all.....I felt betrayed.

What?

What the hell was going on?

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+8 Bonus

“Then why did you pretend to be” My voice trembled. I hated that it trembled.

“Because it was necessary.”

“That’s your explanation?” I snapped.

Anger rose inside me “You lied to me about everything.”

He didn’t flinch. “I never lied about who I am with you. I just didn’t tell you who I am to others.”

“That’s the same thing,” I snapped. “You knew exactly what were doing.”

you

I gripped the bedding so tightly my fingers shook. I felt like the ground under me had opened up, and I didn’t know where to step without falling.

Everything I thought I knew about him – every moment, every conversation was a lie?

He watched me with a calmness I found infuriating.

“Bella,” he said quietly, “I didn’t deceive you to hurt you.”

“But you did hurt me.”

“I didn’t mean to“~

“You hid the truth”

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“Not really”

+8 Bonus

“I deserve honesty. Despite how we met, I have been honest with you from day one”

“Bella. I-”

“Save it”

I didn’t want to hear more. I pushed the covers aside and tried to stand, but the moment my feet touched the floor my legs buckled. My entire body went weak.

I collapsed forward, but strong arms caught me immediately.

“Careful.” Kane’s voice deepened. “The drugs in your body haven’t fully cleared. You suffered the whole night. You won’t have your strength back yet.”

His words snapped a door open in my memory.

Last night. My blood turned cold.

“I... I was drugged by my uncles,” I whispered. Tears stung my eyes as I remembered what happened “They took me to the Gomez house...”

My vision blurred. I shook uncontrollably.

“I was... carried into Gomez the Fool’s room. They shut the door. And he – he lunged at me...”

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My voice cracked. My hands started shaking violently.

“Last night... I...” I couldn’t finish.

I couldn’t breathe.

Tears rolled down my cheeks as I remembered everything.

8/8

Write your comment

chapter 137

BELLA’S POV

“It’s okay. The thing you feared would happen didn’t happen last night. When I rushed over, it was just in time.” Kane said “I didn’t let anything happen to you

I froze.

So it really was him... who saved me.

But how? How was that possible? Kane was in a whole different city.

My heartbeat stuttered, and I raised my head slowly, dazed, staring at the face only inches away from mine. His features looked even more beautiful this close—high cheekbones, strong jaw, eyes like polished obsidian.

He didn’t look like the wandering exiled Alpha I thought I knew. He looked like power shaped into a man.

“But... why did you go there to save me?” My voice came out thin. I was confused “How is that possible? You... you didn’t come with me to town yesterday.

In my mind, I thought about many things. How did he even know where I was?

He smiled a bit “Bella... you called me. And I rescued you.”

1/5

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+8 Bonus

I blinked hard. "L... called you?"

I couldn't remember that. Everything was a bit hazy from last night.

"Yes." He adjusted his grip on me, as if I weighed nothing. "Luckily, I got there in time."

A hundred kilometers. A single call. And he still reached me before the worst happened.

I couldn't remember calling him yet in my moment of weakness, I did. He was the only person who came to my mind, even though I knew it would be impossible for him to rescue me. yet he did.

A wave rolled through my chest. I felt so many emotions inside me – shock, gratitude, fear and.....and something far more complicated mixing together inside me.

Kane shifted me easily into his arms and carried me back to the bed. His movements were careful and gentle. He lowered me onto the mattress and tucked the covers around me gently

"Your hand was cut by a mirror shard," he said quietly. "It'll take a few days to heal. If it leaves a scar, I'll find the best doctors to remove it."

That was when I looked down at my hands. I noticed the thick layer of gauze wrapped around my right hand. I felt an ache there—one I had been too distracted to feel earlier.

2/5

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A scar. As if that mattered.

+5 Bonus

I was full of scars layer on layer, year on year. Prison left more than bruises; it left marks on the soul. The streets carved the rest. My enemies burned their hatred into my skin whenever they got the chance.

A small scar on my hand was nothing.

But the fact that he cared... the fact that he noticed... that was something I didn't know how to process.

I swallowed. "My hand is fine. I've had worse."

His eyes got a bit darker as soon as I said that.

"I know," he said. "But that doesn't mean you should keep getting hurt."

I looked away before tears rolled down my eyes.

Anna... where are you? I missed her so much.

If I still had my wolf, if Anna hadn't been ripped from me, I could defend myself. I could fight back. I wouldn't have been dragged, drugged, thrown in the path of danger like prey.

Without my wolf, I felt half-formed. I felt half-alive.

"How much of yesterday do you remember,?" Kane's voice pulled me back.

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He stood beside the bed, looking at me with a serious expression.

I bit my lip and forced myself to speak.

+8 Bonus

"I remember the dinner... the way my uncles kept pouring my drinks. The taste was off and bitter." My hands tightened under the blanket as I continued, "Then everything blurred. I remember the car. Being dragged. The door slamming. And Gomez-"

I stopped, feeling my breath catching in my throat. The memories made my chest tight. My breathing got heavier as I remembered.

What would have happened to me if Kane hadn't come?

Oh goddess...I didn't even want to think about it.

Kane's jaw clenched so tightly I heard the faint crack of his teeth.

"Her relatives," he said. His voice dropped to a cold, lethal tone I had never heard from him before, "were bold enough to sell you to a fool."

“They really thought they could get away with it.” His eyes narrowed, and the air in the room shifted “If anyone dares to scheme against you again, Bella, I will make sure they regret it.”

Hearing him say my name that way in a calm but dangerous

4/5

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sent a strange warmth and fear twisting together inside me.

These weren't empty words. He meant every syllable.

Just then, his phone rang.

+8 Bonus

Kane looked at the screen and frowned. His eyes hardened a little, as if the call forced him back into the role he had been hiding from me.

He turned back to me. “About everything I hid from you... I did lie. I won't pretend otherwise.”

My chest tightened.

“You can have me apologize in any way you want,” he continued. “But right now, you're hospitalized. You need to rest and recover.”

He slipped the phone into his pocket.

“I'll go and get the doctor.” He said.

With that, he left the room.

Coin Package: get more free bonus

“Who the hell is Kane?!” I asked nobody in particular.

I reached for my bag again. I remembered leaving it at my grandmother's house before everything went to hell.

And now it was here. Just like my phone. Just like my safety.

All delivered because of him.

I stared at the bag as if it could explain everything.

But it didn't.

c 139

When I opened my bag, every item inside was exactly where I had left it. Nothing had been touched.

My phone lay on top. The screen was black and cracked. They must have found it at the Gomez residence before taking it from me. When I powered it back on, I saw a flood of missed calls and texts on the screen. A long list from Grandma. A shorter but insistent one from Tara. And several unknown numbers.

"I can guess the reason Grandma called," I muttered under my breath. "But Tara..."

I clicked into her call log and my eyes widened. She had called nearly twenty times. Twenty. That wasn't worry anymore. That was fear.

I didn't wait another second. I dialed her number.

She picked up immediately. "Bella? Bella, is that you?"

"Yes. My phone was... turned off yesterday. I only turned it on now. I just saw your calls," I said.

My voice still sounded hoarse. I hated how weak it made me feel.

Tara let out a long breath "Oh my Goddess, I nearly lost my

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*8 Bonus

mind. I called you last night, this morning, again and again. You told me you were going to your grandmother's house. I kept imagining the w

orst when I didn't hear from you. Those relatives of yours... Bella, you know how they are. They attack when you're down. They always have."

She didn't stop. She never did when she was worried. I imagined her pacing around her tiny apartment, a hand on her forehead, her hair a mess from running her fingers through it.

"I swear," she continued, "I was going to go straight to your grandmother's house if you didn't answer by noon. I already found the address on that paper you gave me months ago."

I felt something warm in my chest at her frantic rambling. It had been a long time since anyone had worried for me like this. But I felt a bit guilty too. She shouldn't have had to.

"I'm sorry," I said softly. "I didn't have my phone. Things... happened."

"Bella... they didn't do anything to you, did they? They didn't hurt you?"

It would've been easier to lie, but Tara wasn't someone I lied to.

"They wanted to sell me," I said plainly. I refused to sugarcoat what had happened. "To someone they called a fool. They planned to use the money to buy a house."

Tara screamed "What?! Those useless...Bella, what is wrong with them? Tell me you weren't touched. Tell me they didn't—" 2/7

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+B Bonus

"I'm fine," I cut in gently. "Kane saved me. Nothing happened."

"Are you with him now? Are you safe? Should I come over?"

"Yes," I answered firmly. "I'm safe. But don't come looking for me. I'm not back home yet. I'm with Kane... temporarily. I'll reach out when I return."

Tara groaned in frustration but didn't push. "Bella, just... be careful. Please. Your family needs to be punished. If you let this slide, they'll only try to sell you again. You know they will."

"I know," I said quietly. "I won't let them off easily. Not this time."

After we hung up, I stared at my grandmother's missed call. My thumb hovered over her number as conflicting emotions twisted inside me. I didn't know what she wanted from me.

Would she ask me to forgive them again?

"What should

I even tell her?" I whispered to myself. "Should I pretend last night never happened? Should I tell her her own children are being punished?"

I let out a deep breath and pressed her number.

She picked up almost instantly. Her voice shook "Bella? Bella, is that you?"

"Yes, Grandma," I said. My throat tightened so suddenly it was

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hard to swallow. "I'm here."

+8 Bonus

"Bella... did

something happen to you yesterday?" she asked, her voice full of fear. "I heard... I heard you were carried away and later saved by an important person. Did Gomez the fool take advantage of you? Did they hurt you? Did they-"

"No," I interrupted softly. "Nothing happened. I'm fine."

I could hear how relieved she was. "Thank the goddess... thank the goddess. If anything had happened to you, how would I face your mother when I meet her in heaven?"

The ache in my chest grew deeper. My eyes burned.

Before I could answer, another voice cut through the phone – my grandfather's voice. It was loud, impatient, and always bitter.

"Why aren't you asking Bella to rush to the police station to withdraw the case? Our children are still locked up!"

I closed my eyes. Of course.

Grandma snapped right back at him. "Withdraw? Why should she withdraw? They committed evil. They should be locked up!"

"They're your own children!" Grandpa barked. "How can you do this for someone who is n't even a Turner?"

"What are you saying?" Grandma shot back. "Bella is my daughter's daughter! Her mother's blood runs in her! If I don't support her, who will?"

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Grandpa scoffed. "So you want to offend the whole family? When you're old, who will take care of you? That ex-convict granddaughter of yours? Will she bury you?"

I felt the sting deep in my chest, even though I had heard worse in my life. But Grandma ... my fierce, stubborn, tiny grandmother... she didn't hesitate.

+8 Bonus

"If she doesn't bury me, then I'll bury myself! And even if she's been in prison, she still has more conscience than all of you combined!" she screamed at him.

I pressed a shaking hand to my mouth.

They kept arguing, forgetting I was still on the line. Those two old people had been married for half a lifetime and still fought like children.

Finally Grandma paused. "Bella? Are you still there?"

"I'm here," I whispered.

"I'm relieved you're safe," she said firmly. "Your uncles, aunt, and cousins were blinded by money. They made their choices. Now they'll pay the price. Don't withdraw the case. Lock them up for as long as the law allows."

Before I could reply, she hung up

For a moment I just stared at the phone, frozen. Then the tears came. They slid down my cheeks, splashed onto my hands, and

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+8 Bonus

soaked into the sheets. I curled forward, pressing the phone to my chest as sobs shook through me.

I had thought, really thought, that Grandma was calling to beg me to forgive them. I had braced myself for it, even practiced what I would say. But she hadn't. She had chosen me. She had defended me. She had risked everything for me, just like she used to.

Memories broke

open inside me. I remembered my grandmother pulling me behind her when older kids tried to bully me after school; her tiny hand gripping mine as she marched toward them, shouting, Bella, don't cry. Grandma is here. We don't bully others, but we never let ourselves be bullied."

She had always protected me. Even when my father remarried and I became the unwanted child in a patched-together family. Even when I grew up, became a doctor, and then lost everything overnight. Even when I went to prison and her heart nearly failed from the shock.

She had

every reason to step away from me. To choose the easier path. To protect her place in the family house. To avoid being alone.

But she still stood with me.

Even now.

I cried harder, gripping the sheets, letting years of pain, guilt, and love pour out of me. My tears dripped onto my hand, 6/7

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+8 Bonus

I felt

overwhelmed by love I believed I no longer deserved, and a grandmother who still fought for me even when I couldn't fight for myself.

chapter 140

KANE'S POV

When I entered the room, the first thing I saw was Bella hugging her phone as if it were the only thing keeping her upright. Her shoulders shook, her breath came out in short, breaking waves, and tears streamed down her face.

The sight made my chest tighten. I dropped to the side of her bed and cupped her face in both hands. Her skin felt damp and hot from crying.

“Bella,” I asked, “what’s wrong? Do you feel ill?”

She looked up at me with eyes full of tears. She shook her head, but that only made me more worried.

Then, what was wrong?

I gently wiped her cheeks with my thumbs. Her tears were hot - scorching even. Every time I touched them, something in me felt helpless, like I was fighting a battle I could not win unless I made her stop hurting.

“What happened to make you cry like this?” I asked. “Tell me. Whatever it is, I’ll solve it for you!”

She didn’t answer. She just broke

She sobbed loudly and suddenly threw herself into my arms,

burying her face in **my** chest as if she couldn’t hold herself together anymore. Her fingers clutched my shirt, twisting it tightly. For a moment, I froze, not because I didn’t want her close, but because something about her desperation hit me too hard.

Bella wasn’t someone who cried easily; she carried her pain quietly like someone who had been forced to endure too much already. For her to break down like this... it made something deep in my chest pull tight.

I wrapped my arms around her, holding her as she trembled. I lowered my chin to the top of her head and listened to the sound of her crying. I didn’t rush her. I didn’t tell her to stop. I just held her. If letting me hold her like this helped even a little, then I would stay that way for as long as she needed.

She cried for a long time. When she finally stilled, her breathing was tired and shallow. I reached for a tissue and gently wiped her cheeks, her lashes, even under her jaw where tears had slid down unnoticed.

“Hey,” I said softly, “tell me what happened.”

She sniffled. “It’s Grandma.”

“Has she come to you to beg for mercy?”

Bella shook her head. “No. Grandma just asked if I was okay. She told me to ignore my relatives... she said they deserve to be locked up.”

I felt a bit surprised. “Your grandmother is a good woman.”

+8 Bonus

Bella sniffled. “She’s always been good to me... but I didn’t expect her to stand against the whole family for my sake. She said she’d rather be at odds with them than see me wronged again.”

I studied her carefully. The emotions she carried wasn’t simple anger – it was grief, confusion, a lifetime of being told she didn’t deserve fairness.

I asked, “And you? Do you want to let your relatives go?”

She looked up at me with tears in her eyes. I leaned closer, making sure she heard every word.

“If you want to let them go, I’ll call the police station right now. If you want to punish them, I’ll find a lawyer who’ll make sure they rot in prison for the rest of their lives.”

I said it casually, because for me, it wasn’t complicated. Power never felt complicated.

She stared at me, stunned. “Kane... this kind of case is hard to win. Only top lawyers can push charges like this through. Ordinary lawyers won’t be able to do anything.”

She hesitated. “Who are you?”

Her heart sped up. I could hear it. She didn’t look frightened of me, but she looked scared of the answer she thought she might

get.

I didn’t answer immediately, because I wasn’t sure what version of the truth she was ready for. But I did notice her right hand. Even wrapped in bandages, it was clenched tightly into a fist.

I frowned and reached for it gently.

“Bella,” I murmured, peeling her fingers open one by one, “don’t clench your hand like this. The wound won’t heal.”

Blood was already pouring through the gauze.

Last night, she had been willing to carve her own hand open just to stay conscious. That image hadn't left my mind for a single second.

I pressed the nurse call button.

When the nurse arrived, she bowed and immediately went to work. She removed the bandages quickly. The wound had reopened completely. Bella watched it all with a calmness that didn't match the injury. She didn't flinch. She didn't make a sound. Only when the nurse pulled the gauze tight did her brows knit slightly.

That small wince made something sharp twist inside me.

"Let me do it," I said coldly. "Get out."

The nurse bowed again and left the room.

I took the fresh roll of gauze from the tray. My hands moved on

their own, looping the gauze around her palm gently. I hadn't done this for anyone in years. The last person I had bandaged was my mother when she was bloody, bruised after my dad would beat her.

But now, with Bella, my movements felt natural. I tied the final knot neatly, pulled the edges to make sure it wouldn't slip.

"Don't use your right hand for a few days," I said. "And don't clench your fist again. You've already lost enough blood."

Bella examined the bandage. "You're very practiced."

I looked away for a moment. "I learned when I was young."

Memories

appeared in my mind I saw images of my mom bleeding, me as a boy crouched beside her with trembling hands, learning how to wrap wounds because there was no one else to do it.

"I haven't done this for anyone since my mother died," I added. "You're the only one."

She bit her lip. "Kane... if I hadn't held that shard last night,

I would've fainted. And then... he would've done whatever he

wanted.”

My tone dropped. “Does it hurt?”

The image of her last night, her hand covered in blood, her face pale ...it burned behind my eyes. The kind of strength she showed wasn’t something I saw often, not even among warriors. 5/7

“It’s fine,” she said quietly. “Pain like this is nothing to me.”

That sentence made my stomach twist. She said it the way someone who was used to pain would say it.

“Kane,” she whispered, “even if you lied to me... I’m grateful you came yesterday.”

My chest tightened again.

“In jail... no matter how much I begged, no one helped me. I offended someone I shouldn’t have. So every beating, every scar... I told myself I deserved it.”

She paused to breathe “But last night was different. You came for me. And I didn’t feel so alone.”

I had never regretted anything the way I regretted what she suffered in that prison. Back then, I would have laughed at someone else’s misfortune. But with her... the thought of her being hurt made my blood go cold.

“I’m sorry,” I murmured.

She blinked at me. “Why are you apologizing? If you hadn’t come last night, I wouldn’t be here.”

She thought I was apologizing for coming too late. But I wasn’t. I was apologizing for a history she didn’t know yet, a decision I had made years ago that had changed her entire life.

She continued “If you hadn’t come... they would’ve kept me in the Gomez residence until I had a child for their pack.”

She looked down, then forced herself to look at me again.

“The person I offended was Kane Stonewood,” she said. “Back then, the Silverwood family was afraid I’d drag the Silverwood Group down with me. Damien left

me because of it. And now you're helping me so much... what if Alpha Stonewood becomes angry with you?"

She had no idea.

No idea that
the man she feared... the Alpha she had once offended... the power she thought would crush her again...

was the very man sitting inches from her, holding her wounded hand with more care than he had ever shown anyone.