

Through Rising Fog We Walk Paths Unknown Yet Comforting

Chapter 201

BELLA'S POV

I froze when Jasmine said that.

6 min left

For a moment, even the noise in the canteen seemed to go dull. Jasmine had watched me knit those gloves from start to finish. When I got stuck, I had even asked her to help me count stitches. Of course, she remembered.

But the moment the words left her mouth, laughter broke out around us.

"Jasmine, don't be ridiculous," someone scoffed.

"Bella may know how to knit, but do you think anything she makes can end up on Kane Stonewood's hands?"

Another person laughed. "Exactly. Kane only wears things made by master designers. A sanitation worker's handmade gloves? That's a joke."

Someone else said mockingly, "Jasmine, you're really funny today."

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Another scoffed and said "In what universe would the

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two of them even know each other?"

6 min left

I almost laughed bitterly. What if I told them that Kane and I not only knew each other but we were technically married? I could imagine the horror on their faces if only they knew.

Jasmine's face flushed. She stopped talking and lowered her head slightly. Then she leaned closer to me and whispered. Her face was red with embarrassment. Still, I could see the stubbornness in her eyes.

"Bella, I'm serious" Jasmine said "Those gloves he wore last night really look like the ones you knitted. Everyone says they're custom-made by a luxury brand, but

honestly? What the brands make isn't much different from yours."

I did not know how to respond. Because they were the same. Jasmine had no idea how right she was.

I kept my head down and continued eating, pretending not to hear the discussions around us. Inside, my thoughts were in chaos. If anyone found out the truth, it would only cause trouble. Kane's world and mine were

so far apart. The gloves were just wool and thread to

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them, but to me, they carried a meaning I couldn't explain.

They wouldn't get it. Nobody would.

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Even I didn't know why Kane wore them. Did they really mean much to him? Did I....mean much to him?

When work ended in the afternoon, my phone rang again.

It was Kane's driver.

"Miss Bella, Master Kane asked me to pick you up." He said.

My heart jumped. "Please wait five hundred meters away," I said quickly. "I'll walk over."

After hanging up, I avoided my colleagues and made my way there alone. Even as I walked, I kept looking back to make sure nobody was following me or watching me.

When I got into the car, I let out a long breath. Going home like this every day would be exhausting, mentally more than physically. I couldn't let anyone see me, especially not my coworkers.

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I mean, how would I explain to them why I was being picked up in a car far more expensive than they had all ever seen in their lives?

Back at Stonewood Residence, Kane hadn't returned yet. For some reason, his absence made my heart ache. I thought of all the first nights that he would come late to the cabin. I had thought he abandoned me then. He always reassured me he wouldn't.

Uncle Wes greeted me and said respectfully, "Alpha Kane has a meeting at the company. He'll be back later. Please have dinner first."

Dinner.

I sat alone at the long dining table, surrounded by dishes that could have fed many people. The food was delicious, but the space felt too large, too quiet. The clinking of my cutlery sounded small and lonely.

Without meaning to, I thought of Kane. I thought of the memories we had in the cabin – how we would eat together, and sometimes, joke around. Kane was always quiet but he could be funny and amusing when he 4/7

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wanted to.

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Thinking about it, I smiled a little. I missed "that Kane". The Kane I thought I knew.

I also thought of Kane's grandfather.

The media said Old Master Stonewood was hospitalized. That meant Kane had probably eaten meals like this alone for a long time. The thought made my chest feel heavy. I didn't know why, but the silence at the table suddenly felt unbearable.

KATHY'S POV

At the Jameson house, I barely tasted my food.

"You've been eating at home these past two days," Yolanda, my mom, said while feeding my younger sister. "Aren't you supposed to be accompanying Eric?"

Accompany him?

I almost laughed at myself.

mom had no idea what was going on. Eric hadn't 20:37

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6 min left

called me once in the past two days. I had even gone to his company, only to be turned away with the excuse that he was busy. His sudden coldness made my heart sink.

It had to be because of Bella.

He saw how I treated her on set. Was he angry with me because of her? The thought made my fingers tighten around my chopsticks.

How did Bella even know Eric? Why had neither of them ever mentioned it?

"You have to hold on to Eric," Yolanda said seriously.

"That's right," my dad added coldly. "Don't repeat your sister's mistake. One wrong step, and everything you worked for will be gone."

His words stung. He was still furious that Bella had ruined her future with that poisoning incident. He could have been the father-in-law of the Silverwood Group's president. He had no idea I had caused the poisoning.

But now, things were better.

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Eric Simpson was far more powerful than the Silverwoods in the entertainment world. He was a real prince .

"I know," I said, forcing myself to sound calm.

But inside, I felt insecure. Was something going on between two of them? How did Bella always get the attention of powerful men anyway? She was a nobody. The thought of it made my blood boil.

I felt a bit scared that something was going on between Eric and Bella. Still, I had no proof. There was only one way to be sure.

I had to ask Bella.

I had to find out exactly what her relationship with Eric was.

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BELLA'S POV

When I finished washing up and stepped out of the bathroom that night, I noticed a thin line of light through the narrow gap between the connecting doors.

Kane was back.

I paused. I felt heart tightening for reasons I did not want to think about. I had planned to talk to him about the driver. The arrangement made me uneasy, and I definitely didn't want to draw attention at work.

I raised my hand and knocked.

The door wasn't fully shut. My knuckles barely touched it before it opened.

The first thing I saw was the glow of a massive projection screen. A video conference filled the wall. On the screen, there were faces arranged in neat grids. Most of them were foreigners. These people looked serious. They wore suits and designer dresses. They looked like the kind of 1/11

people who were used to being listened to.

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Every one of those eyes turned toward me. They all whispered in surprise.

“There’s a woman there.”

“Oh? Alpha Kane, who is she?”

“It’s late. Why is there a woman in your room?”

“Is that your lover?”

“Introduce her.”

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The voices overlapped. They were all curious until the room fell silent in an instant.

Kane had muted them.

Even without sound, I could still feel their stares on my skin. I stood frozen at the door, wishing I could disappear

into the floor.

Kane turned from the screen and looked at me. His

expression was calm, unreadable, as if nothing out of the ordinary had happened.

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“Yes?” he asked simply.

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“I- I’m sorry,” I said quickly. “I didn’t know you were in a meeting.”

“It doesn’t matter,” he replied. “What do you need?”

His calmness surprised me. I had to compose myself.

“I wanted to ask about the driver,” I said, forcing myself to focus. “You don’t have to arrange for him to pick me up tomorrow. I can take the bus.”

“Why?” he asked. “You take a bus with four wheels. The driver brings a vehicle with four wheels. Where’s the problem?”

He lifted an eyebrow slightly, as if the answer should be obvious.

Was he being serious right now? Of course, it was different.

I hesitated, choosing my words carefully. "It's... too noticeable. The car is really expensive. It'll make people 3/11

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talk when they find out"

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He looked at me for a moment, then asked, "Which car did he use today?"

"The silver Maybach," I said.

He nodded "I'll talk to him. I'll switch it to something less obvious."

I stared at him, feeling speechless. That was not what I meant at all.

"What I was trying to say is-"

"Or," he cut in calmly as he stood up, "Do you want me to take you myself?"

He stood up and walked towards me, closing the distance between us. He bent slightly. His face was suddenly very close to mine. His smile was small and dangerous in a quiet way.

The space between us was small....too small.

4that's what you want," he said, "I can arrange it." 20:38

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My face burned instantly.

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From the corner of my eye, I saw movement on the screen. Even without sound, those people were clearly watching us, exchanging looks, whispering to each other. I felt like an animal under glass.

“Hmm?” Kane’s voice dropped lower. “Do you want that?”

“No,” I said quickly. My voice was too fast, too soft. “No, that’s not what I meant.”

I didn’t wait for his response. I turned
and almost fled back into my room, shutting the connecting door behind

1. me.

Only then did I lean against the door and let out the breath I had been holding.

My heart was racing.

I pressed my palm to my chest, trying to calm myself. Kane was dangerous, not because of force or threats, but because he saw too much and held too much power

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without ever raising his voice.

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He was dangerous because he had an effect on me that I couldn’t explain.

I had gone to talk about a driver.

I left feeling like my thoughts had been stripped bare.

KATHY’S POV

I went to Bella’s cabin that night to look for her but the place was dark and empty.

There were no lights. No sound. No answer when I

knocked.

I assumed Bella was out and decided to wait. The air was cold but I told myself she should be here soon.

The cold crept into my bones as the hours dragged on. By the time it passed one in the morning, I was shivering, furious, and humiliated.

Bella still had not returned. I left in a rage.

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The next morning, I found Bella at the hospital.

“I need to see you,” I said.

I wore sunglasses, a mask, and a baseball cap, as if I were afraid of being recognized. I forgot that outside the set, few people paid me any attention. To most, I was just another unfamiliar face. I was still a C-list actress, if I’m being honest.

Bella looked at me once. Her eyes were cold, like I was nothing to her.

“What is there to talk about?” she asked flatly.

She lifted her cleaning tools, placed them neatly on her bicycle, and added, “Excuse me. I still have work to do.”

I stepped back, looking at the dirty bicycle with clear disgust.

Bella got on without another word and rode away.

Trihuling my teeth, I hurried to get a car and ordered

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driver to follow. I needed to talk to her. I couldn’t just let her go. This was important. My whole relationship depended on this.

When we reached the road Bella was assigned to clean, I finally caught up to her.

“Sis,” I called out, forcing my tone to soften. “Why are you treating me like this? I only came to ask you something. We’re sisters, aren’t we?”

Bella didn’t answer. She picked up her broom and continued sweeping. She acted like I wasn’t there.

I frowned and followed her. “I came to apologize,” I said.

Bella stopped.

“Oh?” she said calmly. “You still haven’t paid the medical bill from last time. Settle that first.”

I froze. I forced a smile, opened my purse, and asked, “How much?”

“One hundred and six dollars,” Bella replied.

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I pulled out two hundred dollars and handed it over.

“Keep the rest,” I said sweetly. “Take it as a gift.”

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Bella took the money without hesitation. “It’s not a gift,” she said coolly. “I’m being kind by charging only this much. If I sued you for intentional harm, how much do you think you’d owe then?”

My face flushed beneath the mask.

“How could I hurt you on purpose?” I said awkwardly. “It was an accident.”

Bella looked at me. “Is it really necessary to put on a show for me? There’s no one else here. Calling me ‘sis’ and pretending you were careless only makes you look ridiculous.”

My expression darkened.

“Fine,” I snapped. “Then tell me. What’s your relationship with Eric?”

Bella looked into my eyes calmly. “That’s why you’re

Bere?”

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“Eric is my boyfriend,” I said sharply. “You’d better not get any ideas. If you ruin this, your reputation will be destroyed, and you’ll get nothing.”

Bella looked like she was stopping herself from laughing.

“My reputation?” she said softly. “It was destroyed three years ago. What exactly do you think I’m protecting now?”

I lifted my chin. “If you behave, I can give you some money in the future. Help you open a small business. That’s better than sweeping streets, isn’t it?”

Bella laughed outright this time.

“Do you think I care about your money?” she said. “And how long do you think you’ll remain Eric’s girlfriend?”

My eyes burned with fury.

“Eric is mine!” I shouted.

“Then say that to Eric,” Bella replied coldly. “Not to me.”

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I choked on my words, then turned and stormed away.

As I walked off, my hands clenched into fists.

I would be Eric’s last girlfriend.

I’d make sure of that.

Coin Package: get more free bonus

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BELLA’S POV

Later that night, just as I was folding my clothes and preparing to sleep, my phone vibrated softly on the bedside table.

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It was a message from the film crew's organizer. I read it carefully. They wanted me on set again.

I stared at the screen for a long moment. If I refused, Jasmine would be the one caught in the middle. She was the one who recommended me. If I disappointed, they would take it out on her and it could affect her getting other jobs.

She had already helped me once, and I didn't want to cause her trouble over something like this. Extras were replaceable, but favors were not easily repaid.

Before I could reply, a calm voice spoke behind me.

"Who sent that message?"

turned abruptly. Kane was standing by the door. He had

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entered through the main entrance, not the connecting door between our rooms. His presence was quiet but impossible to ignore.

"I agreed to be an extra again this week," I said honestly.

He frowned. I could tell he wasn't happy about this. Again?"

"Yes."

"Didn't you learn enough from last time?" His voice was low, restrained, but there was an edge to it.

I pressed my lips together. "If you want to earn money, you can't avoid hardship."

That was the truth. I had learned it long ago, even before prison, even before everything fell apart. Life never gave without taking something in return. Nothing was ever

easy.

"So," he said slowly, stepping closer. He braced his hands on the edge of the bed, leaning down to meet my eyes "as long as someone pays you, you don't care how much you suffer?"

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My back pressed against the mattress. I didn't want to retreat, but my body reacted faster than my thoughts.

The closer I leaned back, the closer he came.

His eyes were beautiful – too beautiful – but there was something unreadable in them, like smoke hiding a flame.

"Is that right, Sis?" he murmured.

I could feel his breath across my face. My thoughts scattered. I felt my strength draining in an instant. Before I could react, my back touched the bed fully, and his body followed, bracing above me.

"So if I give you money," he continued calmly, "you'll accept the suffering that comes with it?"

My face burned. I could feel the heat radiating from his body and I'd be lying if I said it didn't affect me.

"I... I only earn what I deserve," I said.

He chuckled. He raised his hands up and his fingertip

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brushed against my lips, lingering just enough to make my pulse race.

"And don't you deserve the money I give you?" he asked.

My face grew hotter. I turned my head, trying to avoid his touch, but his finger followed. I shivered.

"Don't tease me, Kane," I said, breathless.

He studied

my eyes. He looked at me deep and focused. Slowly, his fingers pressed against my lips, gently parting them. I could feel the coolness of his skin. My heart raced even louder.

“What if I’m not teasing?” he asked quietly. “What if I tell you I can give you as much money as you want? Would you suffer for me then?”

My heart pounded violently.

“I only take what I earn through labor,” I said, forcing the words out.

Was he joking? And if not... what would he want in Aturn?

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I looked straight at him, refusing to lower my eyes.

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For a moment, Kane did not move. After a few seconds, he withdrew his hand. He straightened up. His expression returned to its usual calm, as if nothing intimate had just passed between us.

“Then,” he said softly, “I’ll see how you trade labor for money.”

He turned and walked out.

I lay there, stunned. My heart was still racing.

What did that mean?

The next two days passed quietly.

Kathy didn’t come to look for me again. Kane did not mention the film crew or that night. Everything seemed normal on the surface.

Yet the driver still picked me up every morning.

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4 min left

The Maybach was gone, replaced by a BMW. It was the most “low-key” option in his eyes, but it was still worth more than I could imagine earning in years. It cost about two to three million dollars. It was the cheapest car he owned.

I continued getting off about five hundred meters from the hospital, walking the rest of the way like nothing had changed.

At work, Jasmine and I swept our assigned roads together as usual.

After a while, she glanced at me, hesitating. “Bella,” she said, “can I ask you something?”

“Of course.”

She lowered her voice. “The scarf Kane wore that night... it looks a lot like the one you’ve been knitting.”

I paused, tightening my grip on the broom. “A lot of people knit similar patterns.”

Jasmine frowned. “Maybe. But the stitches, the edges... it 6/8

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revally looks like yours.”

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“I probably just followed a popular design,” I said lightly.

She did not look convinced. “And the gloves?”

“They’re simple.” I replied. “Anyone could make them.”

Jasmine sighed. “You always dodge questions like this.”

“Do 1?” I teased

She frowned “I know what I’m saying, Bella. I don’t know what it is but I have a feeling you’re hiding something”

As soon as she said that, my heart jumped in my chest. It felt like someone had dumped a cold water over my head.

I knew she was watching my reaction so, I kept my cool.

"It's not that serious, Jas" I said with a smile
"You're probably just overthinking it. I get that
they look similar but think about it. How on earth can Kane Stonewood
wear my designs?"

She still didn't look convinced but she shrugged If y3fl:40

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say so"

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I smiled and changed the subject, but inside, I felt uneasy

Some truths were harder to hide than I thought.

And I had a feeling this calm would not last much longer.

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Through Rising Fog We Walk Paths Unknown Yet Comforting by Arlo Mason Jett 203A

THIRD PERSON'S POV

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It was the day of filming, and the entire set was already in chaos before noon. Assistant
s hurried back and forth with walkie—
talkies pressed to their ears, makeup artists adjusted costumes at the last minute, and
the director's loud voice rang through the air as she barked out instructions.

The atmosphere was tense. Everyone was busy and impatient—
no one had time to waste.

Bella arrived quietly.

The Stonewood family's driver dropped her off at the entrance where the extras were ga
thered. The BMW stopped smoothly, and when
Bella stepped out, the surrounding noise seemed to pause for a brief second. Several e
xtras turned their heads almost at the same

time. They looked at the car in shock before looking at

her face.

When the BMW drove away, the whispers began. 1/8

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A woman approached Bella.

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“Hey,” she said. “Who are you? Are you from some rich family?”

“Yeah” someone else added “A BMW just dropped you off”

“Why are you here as an extra then? You’re so rich”

Bella looked at them nervously. She didn’t know what to say. Before she could say anything, someone beat her to

1. it.

“Yeah right” a voice said.

A young woman stepped forward. She was tall, slim, dressed in fashionable clothes, with makeup and carefully styled hair. Her name was Tracy Brown.

“If she’s a rich daughter, then why was she kneeling again and again last time?” Tracy asked.

“That’s right,” another person nodded “If she had a background, would she be treated like that?”

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The first woman shrugged “I’m just stating facts. She clearly got out of a BMW.”

“Maybe she’s backed by some big boss,” someone else said quietly. “Some people don’t need skills. They just know how to please the right people.”

Tracy's tone turned sharper. "Exactly. Opportunities don't just fall from the sky."

As the comments piled up, more eyes landed on Bella. Some were curious, some envious, some were....confused.

Bella heard every word.

She stood still, holding her bag. She kept her expression calm. She didn't respond. She didn't defend herself, and didn't explain. She had learned long ago that words rarely cleared misunderstandings. Often, they only made things uglier.

During the last shoot, she had been humiliated by being forced to kneel repeatedly. Tracy had thought Bella was simply unlucky, someone meant to be crushed by the second female lead. No one had expected Eric to suddenly edry Bella away in front of everyone. That scene had

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burned itself into Tracy's memory.

4 min left

If she had known that kneeling would get her noticed by the crown prince of the entertainment industry, Tracy

would have knelt herself.

In her mind, the BMW that dropped Bella off could only belong to Eric.

That thought made her stomach twist with jealousy.

Bella looked at the ground a little took a step aside, distancing herself from the group. Their opinions did not matter. She was only here to finish the job and leave.

Soon, the organizer, Diana, arrived and gathered the extras. She led them toward the set, reminding them of their positions and warning them to follow instructions strictly.

Bella changed into her costume, put on light makeup, and waited quietly.

Then she saw Gina.

this time, Gina was not using a stand-in. She stood

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4 min left

beside
the male lead herself, dressed elegantly. Her posture was confident. The staff around her treated her with careful respect.

Bella felt her chest go tight a little.

When she looked at Gina, Gina was already watching her.

There was no contempt in Gina's eyes this time. Instead, she looked thoughtful, like she was trying to figure something out.

The look unsettled Bella.

She remembered
clearly how Gina had once hated her, especially after the poisoning incident. After prison, Bella had expected Gina to retaliate or even confront her.

But apart from the incident with the garbage ring, Gina had done very little.

Was it because Bella was already miserable enough to be beneath her notice?

Or... was it because of Kane?

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If the Silverwood family knew about Kane's involvement

with her, then Gina would know about it too. The thought made Bella even more confused.

Before she could think further, she felt cold eyes on her.

Kathy.

Kathy stood beside the male lead, dressed beautifully. Her makeup was flawless. She glared at Bella. She had deliberately asked for the same group of extras as last time, specifically to bring Bella back.

The filming had been delayed for days because Kathy had refused to show up after the previous incident. As Eric's girlfriend, no one dared to question her.

Today, she was determined not to let Bella escape. She wanted everyone to remember who held power on this

set.

The director soon called everyone to position. The extras lined up carefully. Bella stood where she was instructed. She kept her expression neutral.

She knew what was coming.

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Just as they were about to begin filming the kneeling scene, a production assistant suddenly ran toward the director, whispering urgently into his ear.

The director's face changed instantly.

He stood up and hurried away. His expression looked like he was panicking..

The filming paused.

The extras glanced at one another, puzzled. What kind of person could make the director leave the set so abruptly? What was going on?

They followed the director's gaze and saw him approach a tall man wearing a beige trench coat. The director bent slightly, bowing his head. His posture was respectful, too respectful.

That alone was enough to spark speculation.

The director was not a small figure in the industry. For him to act this way toward someone clearly meant the man was no ordinary outsider.

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Then, the director gestured and led the man back toward

the set.

As the man drew closer, murmurs spread rapidly through the crowd.

Someone gasped softly. Someone else stiffened. People started whispering. Some of the women even arranged their hair at the sight of him.

Bella lifted her head to see who it was. Her breath caught when she recognized him.

It was Kane.

Kane Stonewood.

Coin Package: get more free bonus

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THIRD PERSON'S POV

A wave of shock moved through the set.

Everyone gasped as they realized who it was. Screenshots from the previous live stream had circulated widely online, and nearly everyone present worked in or around the entertainment industry. They were used to gossip, but this was different. This was Kane Stonewood.

Alpha Kane Stonewood.

The air subtly changed.

People straightened unconsciously. Conversations dropped to whispers. Even the noise of the set seemed to fade, like they were giving way to his presence.

Kathy froze. Gina froze. Almost at the same time, both of them turned to look at Bella.

A terrible thought crossed their minds. Maybe... Kane was here for her.

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Kathy's face drained of color. It had taken effort to get Bella back onto this set today. She had carefully arranged everything, confident she could control the situation this time. She wanted to get her revenge on Bella and to

show her who was in charge. But if Kane was involved, everything would fall apart before it even began.

Kane's relationship with Bella had always been unclear. Kathy knew about the arranged marriage, but she did not know how far things had gone now. That uncertainty made her worried.

Gina's expression darkened as well. She stared at Bella with confusion in her eyes. "These two are still together?" she thought to herself.

Kane stood calmly beside the director. His posture was relaxed. He had one hand tucked casually into his coat pocket.

"I came by today because a friend of mine is filming here," Kane said lightly. "I thought I'd take a look. I won't disturb your work, will I?"

His tone was polite, almost friendly. Someone who didn't know him might have thought he was simply a charming

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gentleman with good manners.

3 min left

But those who truly knew Kane understood better. His smiles were measured. His gentleness was a blade disguised in velvet.

"Of course not," the director replied immediately. He bowed his head again. "We're honored. May I ask... who your friend is, Alpha Stonewood?"

Kane's eyes shifted. "She's over there."

He lifted his chin slightly, pointing in Bella's direction. The director blinked, then followed his gaze.

"...Over there?" the director asked again.

The direction Kane pointed was where the extras were. He stared at the group of extras, confusion clearly written on his face. There were no lead actresses there. No

supporting roles. Just a group of people waiting quietly for instructions.

For a brief moment, the director wondered if he had misunderstood. He scanned behind the extras, searching for someone hidden from view. There was no one.

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Before he could speak again, Kane asked calmly, "You haven't started filming yet, have you?"

"No, not yet," the director replied quickly.

"Good," Kane said. "I'll say a few words to her. She ran into some trouble last time. I came today to check on her."

With that, Kane stepped away from the director and walked toward the extras. The crowd around them waited

in silence. They all wanted to see who Kane came for. They whispered in hushed tones.

"He's coming this way."

"Who is he looking for?"

"Is he lost?"

Several female extras felt their hearts jump into their throats. They adjusted their hair, straightened their backs, and tried to appear composed and alluring all at once. They all wanted his attention. Who wouldn't? He was the most powerful Alpha in the region. Even though 4/9

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he hid his face, women still wanted him.

And now, everyone knew how gorgeous he was. The women wanted him even more.

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Tracy Brown's breath caught when she looked at him. Her mind spun wildly.

Kane Stonewood. He was the man who ruled the city. The rumours said he was cold, distant, untouchable. He was a man who had never been seen close to a woman since his fiancée's death more than three years ago.

If he noticed her – if even his eyes lingered for a second – her life could change.

Tracy's heart pounded.

She subtly shifted her stance, angling her body just right. Her mind raced through possibilities. What exactly could she do to get his

attention?

Should she stumble? Should she faint? Should she

pretend to be startled and fall into his arms?

That was how it happened in dramas, wasn't it? She took a small step forward, timing it carefully as Kane drew

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nearer.

3 min left

Then...Kane stopped.

Tracy's body leaned forward, only to freeze mid-motion. Her eyes widened as she watched Kane turn, not toward her, but toward Bella.

A gentle smile appeared on his face, one that seemed reserved only for her.

"I happened to have some free time today," Kane said calmly. "So I came to see you. When you're done filming, shall we head back together?"

The words landed like a bomb. Tracy's face went blank.

The extras around Bella stared openly now. They all looked at her in disbelief. Some of them did not recognize Kane, but even they could tell from his demeanor, his clothes, and the way the director had treated him that he was no ordinary man.

What was he doing with someone like...her?

Béla stood stiffly. She was surprised to see Kane. That

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3 min left

wasn't the problem now. Right now, too many eyes were staring at her. She hated this feeling. It made her nervous.

"Are you okay?" he asked her.

"I..." she hesitated, biting her lip slightly. "You being here is... a little too eye-catching."

Kane raised an eyebrow "Can't you handle a little attention?"

Then, almost casually, he added, "I don't know how you ever worked in the hospital. We weren't there always people staring at you?"

Her eyes dimmed.

Before prison, she had stood confidently before crowds. She was never afraid of scrutiny or judgment. But those days were gone. Now, it felt uncomfortable when people watched her. She knew they were either assessing her or judging her because she was an ex-convict.

If not for her grandmother's medical bills, she would never have stepped onto a film set. Kane noticed how

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uncomfortable she was. He didn't press her further.

3 min left

Instead, he lifted his hand and gently patted her head.

The movement was natural. It looked intimate.

The set fell into stunned silence. Tracy Brown felt like her heart had been torn out.

He was touching Bella. Not casually. Not dismissively. He did it tenderly.

Who was Bella to him?

What kind of relationship could make Kane Stonewood treat her like this?

Tracy's jealousy burned fiercely. She would have given anything to stand where Bella was standing now, to receive even a fraction of that attention.

Bella went stiff a little at the touch, then slowly relaxed. She didn't pull away.

Kane's hand stayed there for a few more seconds before he withdrew it.

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3 min left

Around them, countless eyes watched. Everyone's expressions were filled with shock, envy, confusion, and fear.

And standing in the midst of it all, Bella Kane's presence firmly beside her.

Through Rising Fog We Walk Paths Unknown

Chapter 206

THIRD PERSON'S POV

3 min left

The moment Kane bent down, the world around Bella seemed to disappear.

He leaned close to her ear. His tall figure shielded her from the crowd. His voice was low "Didn't you suffer enough last time you filmed here?" he asked quietly. "How about I help you remind them who decides the

rules?"

Bella froze.

For a second, she forgot where she was. Her

almond-

shaped eyes lifted to him in shock and doubt. She didn't answer, but her fingers curled slightly at her side. She never expected him to say something like that – so direct and so clearly meant to protect her.

Around them, the extras were hit by wave after wave of disbelief.

Anyone with eyes could see it now. Kane Stonewood was close to Bella. Too close. They were intimate in a way that

20:41

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could not be explained away as coincidence.

Whispers spread instantly.

"Who is she really?"

"Is she some rich family's daughter?"

3 min left

“Why would someone like Alpha Kane know an extra?”

Those who didn't know Kane's true identity were already stunned. Those who did know felt their scalps go numb. If what they were seeing today got out, the city's gossip circles would explode. The most powerful man in the city openly protecting a nameless extra? It was unheard of.

Gina pressed her lips together hard. Her red lipstick almost lost its shape under the pressure.. She stared at Bella with a complicated expression. Her thoughts were impossible to read.

Kathy, on the other hand, felt hatred rise like fire in her chest.

Her nails dug into her palms as she realized her plan for Today was collapsing before it even began. Kane

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3 min left

presence alone made everything she had prepared meaningless. She knew he would protect Bella at all costs.

Kathy suddenly remembered the way Eric had introduced her to Kane before. She remembered Kane's eyes then. They were cold and unreadable. Now those same eyes were focused on Bella.

Fear crept up her spine.

She was terrified of Kane in a way she could not explain. Who wasn't? His aura was enough to make even a dominant wolf submit. Not to mention the fact that he ruled the country.

Nearby, the director leaned closer to the assistant director “Master Stonewood's friend ... that girl... she's an extra?”

“I... think so,” the assistant director replied, though his face looked just as confused.

“How can that be?” the director muttered. “Who exactly is she?”

The assistant director swallowed. He had no answer. His 3/10

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face turned pale. "I can... ask someone to look into it later?"

2 min left

Before the conversation could continue, Kane had already turned around. He walked back toward the director. They bowed their heads at him again.

"All right," Kane said calmly. "You can start filming. I'll just watch."

"Of course," the director replied quickly, forcing a polite smile.

Inside, he was drenched in cold sweat.

He still remembered clearly how Kane's "friend" had been forced to kneel and grovel last time. If Kane decided to hold someone accountable today, the director knew exactly who would be blamed. Kathy might have Eric backing her, but he had no such protection. Eric Simpson could not be compared to Kane Stonewood.

So the filming began again, and the director's nerves were stretched tight. He was scared. He prayed silently that nothing would go wrong on his set.

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2 min left

Kane stood to the side, hands relaxed. His expression was neutral. He looked like a man who was simply passing time. Kathy, who usually acted arrogant and commanding on set, suddenly sat quietly with her head lowered. Her posture was stiff and obedient.

The filming was going on smoothly. The staff slowly relaxed. Maybe nothing would happen after all.

But when the scene reached the kneeling part, Kane's voice cut through the air.

"Stop." He ordered.

The director's heart nearly stopped with it.

He turned toward Kane, forcing himself to remain calm. "Alpha Stonewood... is there something wrong?"

Kane tilted his head slightly. "I remember someone saying last time that the kneeling wasn't done properly. That it needed to be demonstrated several times, right?"

The director went blank.

Feldidn't answer immediately, and that silence was 20:41

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2 min left

enough. Kane's voice had not been loud, but it carried. People nearby heard every word.

All eyes turned toward Kathy. Her face drained of colour in that moment.

Before she could react, Kane continued, still sounding relaxed. "If she found it so unsatisfactory, then maybe she should demonstrate it herself. That way, everyone can learn properly."

The words hit Kathy like a slap.

Her mind went white. Demonstrate? Kneel and grovel?

In public?

She was the second female lead. She was Eric's girlfriend. How could she kneel like an extra?

Kane was clearly targeting her.

The director glanced at Kane, then at Kathy. After a brief hesitation, he walked over to Kathy and lowered his voice, forcing a smile. "Kathy, since you raised the issue last time, why don't you show everyone what you meant?20:41

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Think of it as helping the extras."

2 min left

Kathy's chest burned with anger. "That's not my role. Why should I do it?"

The director leaned closer. He dropped his voice even lower. "I'm not trying to embarrass you. This is Alpha Stonewood's suggestion. If you don't agree... you can talk to him directly."

Kathy's face changed instantly.

Talk to Kane? Just the thought made her hands shake.

She clenched her teeth and forced the words out. "Fine.

I'll do it."

Relief flashed across the director's face.

The set grew quiet as Kathy stepped forward. Her expression was stiff. Her movements were awkward. She could feel the eyes on her. Some people looked at her with sympathy. Some looked at her with mocking expressions. Many people had envied her rise, and now they were secretly enjoying this moment.

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2 min left

She knelt.

She bowed.

But her movements were clumsy and rushed. She had never practiced this properly. Her mind was in chaos. Her only thought was to get it over with as quickly as possible.

When she finally stood up, she thought it was done.

Then Kane spoke again.

"She looked like she was kneeling to empty air," he said coolly. "There was no focus. It ruined the performance."

Kathy's heart sank.

Kane walked over and stopped beside Bella. Without asking, he reached out and gently pulled her forward into the open.

"Let's try again," he said lazily, his eyes on Kathy. "This time, kneel properly."

Kathy
stared at Bella. She had disbelief written all over her face. "... You want me to kneel in front of her. 20:41

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Kane raised his eyebrow. "Is that a problem?"

2 min left

Kathy's face burned red, but no sound came out. Bella stood there, stunned. Was Kane doing this for her?

Or was he simply showing Kathy that no matter who stood behind her, he could still force her to kneel if he

wished?

Before the moment could break, there was a small sound coming from the entrance of the set.

The director turned. He didn't know how to feel. He was unsure whether to panic or feel relieved.

Another tall figure was walking in. It was Eric.

The air tightened instantly.

No one could have imagined that both powerful men would appear on set on the same day.

And just like that, the tension rose to a breaking point

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9 Cain Package: get more free bonus

get it0:41

Chapter 207

BELLA'S POV

2 min left

Eric walked in. He wore a dark gray overcoat. It fit him perfectly. He walked in with confident steps. The aura around him was dominant and cold, just like the expression on his face.

I was shocked to see him. I truly didn't expect him to appear here today.

What were the odds that two powerful men

Eric would show up on set today?

—

—

Kane and

For a brief moment, the entire set seemed to quiet down. Kane raised his brows when he saw Eric, as if he hadn't expected him either, but there was no real surprise in his eyes. Just calm interest. When Eric's eyes moved over Kane and then landed on me, his expression remained steady. He looked almost indifferent, as though this scene had already been played in his mind.

The moment Kathy saw Eric, her whole posture changed. It was like watching a drowning person suddenly find a floating plank. She rushed toward him, clinging to his

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arm. She started playing the victim card. Typical.

Her voice went soft.

2 min left

"Eric," she said, "can you talk to Alpha Stonewood for

me? He's asking me to kneel and grovel for the extras. I already did it once, but he's still not satisfied. I'm not an extra. I really can't keep doing this."

I almost laughed. Not because it was funny, but because it was familiar. I had seen this kind of performance too many times – back when I was still wearing a white coat, and later, when I was stripped of everything. Kathy was far better at acting off-camera than on it.

Eric didn't comfort her. He did not even look at her

properly. He slowly walked past her and stopped in front of Kane instead. His dark eyes were deep and unreadable, carrying the kind of calm that came from always being in control. The tension between the two of them was thick.

It felt like everyone on set was holding their breath.

I stood there quietly, my heart beating a little faster. I didn't know why I felt tense. Maybe because I was suddenly standing between two men who both carried

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power in very different ways.

Eric spoke first. "What are you doing here?"

2 min left

Kane smiled a bit. It wasn't warm, not cold either. Just intense.

"I came to visit someone," he said calmly. "Bella is working as an extra today. I heard your girlfriend complained that the extras weren't doing a kneeling scene properly last time. She even asked Bella to demonstrate. So, I was curious. I wanted to see what kind of standard she expects."

His words were light, almost casual, but every sentence landed like a blade.

Kathy's fingers tightened around Eric's arm. She lowered her head slightly. Her voice shook as she spoke.

"Eric, I really tried. I did what Alpha Stonewood asked. But he keeps saying it's not good enough. Isn't he just deliberately making things hard for me? If he hates me that much, then maybe I shouldn't even be in this film."

She said it as if she was sacrificing herself. As if she was

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the victim forced into a corner.

2 min left

I

watched Kane from the corner of my eye. His expression didn't change. Then he said, simply, "Alright. Then quit."

The words fell flat and clean.

Kathy froze. Her head snapped up. Her eyes went wide with disbelief. She clearly hadn't expected that answer. She turned to Eric immediately. I saw the panic flashing through her eyes. She had only meant to threaten. She never truly wanted to leave.

I could almost hear her thoughts. This film was her ladder. Without it, everything she had planned would collapse.

I knew Kathy well enough to know that she didn't want to be a minor actress. She wanted fame. She wanted the top.

Eric looked at her calmly. Then his eyes shifted past her... and landed on me.

I froze. I didn't know what he saw on my face, but it made my chest tighten. Before I could lower my eyes, Kane stepped half a pace forward, blocking Eric's line of sight⁴²

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2 min left

Eric turned back to Kane. "Has Kathy been causing trouble?"

"She's been annoying," Kane replied lightly.

He didn't lower his voice. Everyone around us heard it clearly.

A wave of quiet shock spread across the set. Some people looked at Kathy with sympathy. Others looked amused. After all, very few people in this city could make Kane Stonewood openly admit annoyance.

"In that case, quit," Eric said calmly, like he was discussing the weather.

Kathy's face went completely pale. "Eric... are you telling me to quit the show?"

"You said it yourself," he replied. "If Kane dislikes you, you'll quit. Now he does. What's the problem?"

Her lips trembled. She couldn't speak. The stares around her burned hotter than fire. Finally, she forced out a strained smile.

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2 min left

"Then... I'll leave before Alpha Stonewood dislikes me even more." She said.

She turned as if to escape. Before she could take a step, Kane's voice stopped her.

"You haven't knelt yet. Why are you leaving so quickly?"

Kathy froze again. "What?"

I wanted to say something, to tell Kane that it was enough. But he didn't look at me. His tone remained calm, almost lazy.

"How many times did you make her kneel last time?" he asked. "Let's repeat it today. Same number. I want to see how standard your movements really are."

He paused, then added lightly, "You're an actress. You should be better than an extra. If you can't even do this, there's no need for you to stay in this industry."

My heart tightened. I understood. This wasn't just about kneeling. This was a verdict.

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2 min late

Kathy's lips were bitten until they bled. She looked at Eric desperately. "Eric-"

Eric's eyes shifted again. They fell on **me**.

For a brief second, it **felt** like the air froze. Then Kane stepped fully in front of **me**.

Eric looked away. "Then kneel," he said coldly. "Same **number** as last **time**."

Kane nodded "And don't forget – kneel in front of her."

Write your comment

Yet Comforting by Arlo Mason Jett 205

Chapter 208

KATHY'S POV

At that moment, all my hatred focused on Bella.

If she hadn't appeared, I would never have been humiliated like this. I would never have been forced onto

my knees in front of so many people. Everything that happened today was her fault. I repeated it again and again in my heart. The more I thought of it, the more annoyed I was.

One day, I would make her pay. One day, I would take back everything she had taken from me.

But hatred didn't change reality.

Reality was cold and heavy. It kept my knees pressed into the ground.

I couldn't afford to offend Kane. I didn't even dare look him in the eye for too long. And I could not fight Eric either. He was my backer, my protection, the man I had carefully chosen. I wanted to be his last girlfriend, not a disposable one. So no matter how much my pride

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screamed, my body still bent.

I knelt.

1 min left

The moment my knees touched the ground, the whispers around me stabbed into my ears. I kept my head down. I felt my nails digging into my palms. I told myself to endure it. Just endure it.

Then I heard movement.

Bella frowned as she stepped back. She was clearly uncomfortable with me kneeling in front of her. She tried to avoid the scene, but her foot slipped on a loose stone. I saw her body tilt backward.

Everything happened too fast.

Kane

reached her first. His hand was firm at her waist. At the same time, Eric grabbed her wrist to steady her. For a split second, both men were touching her.

Then Bella let out a small, painful sound. Eric's hand had pressed against her injury.

Before I could even process it, the air around us changed?

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It was suffocating and heavy. Like an invisible force crushing down on everyone present. Kane's eyes darkened instantly. They turned dangerous.

"Let go," he snarled.

The sound was low, cold, and terrifying.

1 min left

Eric released Bella at once. He looked confused before his usual calm mask returned. The pressure vanished as suddenly as it had appeared, but the crew stood frozen. Everyone looked pale.

Only a few people seemed to realize what had just happened. I saw fear in their eyes too.

Bella pushed Kane's hand away, forcing herself to stand straight. She turned to the director, who looked like he might collapse.

"I'm sorry, Director," she said calmly. "I can't continue filming today. You don't need to pay me. I'm leaving."

The director nodded quickly. "A—alright."

Bella walked toward the dressing room without another word.

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#3

glance back. Kane followed her without hesitation.

1 min left

I wanted to stand up. I wanted to scream that this was enough. But before I could move, Eric's voice stopped me.

"Continue," he said lightly. "I didn't tell you to stop."

I looked up at him in shock. His expression was serious, cold, leaving no room for argument. He wanted me to keep kneeling. To keep groveling.

My heart dropped.

If Kane had done this to stand up for Bella, then what was Eric doing now?

That thought filled me with panic far worse than the fear Kane inspired. Kane was obvious. Eric was not. I looked around. Countless eyes were fixed on me. Some pitied me. Some mocked me. None helped.

I looked at Eric again. He didn't change his expression. So I lowered my head and continued.

At least Bella was gone. At least I no longer had to kneel

in front of her.

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But Eric didn't even look at me.

1 min left

He took out a bracelet and played with it. His head was lowered as he looked at it. His focus was completely absorbed. It was as if I didn't exist. As if I was nothing more than empty air beneath him.

That realization hurt more than the kneeling itself.

BELLA'S POV

When I reached the dressing room, my steps felt heavy. My chest still hurt where Eric had grabbed me, but it was not the pain that unsettled me the most.

Kane stopped me before I could go inside.

"Why did you leave?" he asked calmly. "You didn't like seeing her kneel in front of you?"

"I have no interest in that," I replied flatly.

Just because Kathy enjoyed watching others suffer did 5/10

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1 min left

not mean I did. I had been on my knees before. I knew exactly how it felt.

He studied me for a moment. "If that wasn't enough," he said lightly, "I can do more for you. Tell me. What do you want her to do?"

I looked at him. "Why are you standing up for me?"

He smiled, as if the answer was obvious. "Because you're my sis. You were bullied. Of course I step in."

That word made something twist in my chest.

"There's no need," I said, turning away. "I don't need anyone to stand up for me."

I walked into the dressing room and closed the door behind me.

Even if he helped me today, what about tomorrow?

I had learned this lesson before. Depending on others was a dangerous habit. Once you got used to it, losing that

support could destroy you.

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1 min left

Damien had once stood up for me the same way. Every time trouble came, he was there. I thought I could rely on him forever. I was wrong. Our relationship had been built on lies. His protection could be taken away anytime.

When that happened, the despair nearly crushed me.

Was Kane doing the same thing now? Showing me his power, tempting me with safety, slowly making me forget how to stand on my own?

In prison, the torture had pushed me to the edge more times than I could count. I had thought about ending my life more than once. If Tara hadn't visited me, had not kept reminding me that I still mattered, I would not have survived.

Kane was different. He was....too complicated. I couldn't see what he wanted. Love? He had never said it. And love was no longer something I blindly believed in.

I sighed and began unbuttoning my costume.

Then I heard footsteps.

I turned to see who it was. Kane had followed me inside.

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1 min left

"This is the women's dressing room," I said. "You need to leave."

Instead, he stepped closer.

"What are you afraid of?" he asked.

"I'm not afraid," I said, stepping back.

But the more I retreated, the closer he came. We both kept moving until my back hit the closet door. There was nowhere else to go. He placed his hands on either side of me, trapping me between him and the wood.

My breath hitched. My heart raced painfully in my chest.

"Why are you afraid of me standing up for you?" he asked again.

I raised my hands to his chest, trying to create distance. Even though my body clearly wanted him.

"You should go. Someone might come in." I whispered.

"No one will," he replied calmly.

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“How are you so sure?”

1 min left

“Because no one can,” he said. “My bodyguard is outside.”

I froze.

He lifted a hand and brushed my hair away from my cheek. His touch was light. It made my body shiver.

“Tell me the truth,” he said quietly. “Why are you afraid?”

“I’m not,” I insisted, lowering my eyes.

He caught my chin gently and lifted my face. “I didn’t ask if you were. I asked why.”

My heart trembled.

His eyes were deep and unreadable, as if they could see straight through the walls I had built around myself. The air between us felt tight, heavy with something I did not

want to name.

And yet, I could not look away.

Chapter 209

BELLA’S POV

“For fear of it becoming a habit,” I said quietly. My voice was lower than before.

There was no anger in it, only restraint. “Some things become habits after enough repetition. When you suddenly lose them, what’s left *is* despair.”

He looked at me. His expression was calm, almost casual.

“So,” he asked, “were you desperate before?”

I took a deep breath. My chest rose and fell slowly. I had avoided this kind of honesty for a long time, but under his intense eyes, hiding felt pointless. I met his eyes directly.

“Yes,” I said. “I was desperate.”

For the first time since he had stepped close, his pupils got a bit darker. The small smile at the corner of his lips faded, leaving behind something darker and more serious. The air in the dressing room felt heavier.

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1 min left

“Can you go out now?” I said after a moment. “I need to change.”

He didn’t move.

His eyes stayed on my face. He raised his hand slowly and his fingers brushed lightly against my cheek, slow and thoughtful, as if he was tracing something only he could see. My heart beat faster, loud enough that I wondered if he could hear it.

Once again, my whole body shivered. I felt goosebumps spreading through my arms.

He spoke in a low voice. “What if I told you it’s already habit. And that it won’t change.”

I froze.

His face was very close now. Too close. I could feel his breath on my lips. Our bodies were almost pressing. I could see every line of his features. My heart felt like it was pounding out of control. For a moment, I didn’t know how to respond.

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1 min left

Then he stepped back. He turned and left the dressing room, closing the door behind him without another word.

I stood there, stunned, before finally letting out a deep breath.

As I changed my clothes, my face burned. Even though he was gone, I could still feel the warmth of his fingers against my skin, as if the touch had not faded with distance. I didn’t answer his question, not out loud and not in my heart.

If something became a habit, it meant dependence. And dependence was dangerous.

Did he mean he would stand up for me forever?

A man like him would not say such words lightly, and he was not the type to lie. If he said it, he believed it. That thought unsettled me more than comforted me.

But what about later?

No one could see that far ahead.

He wasn't someone I could predict or fully understand 18

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1 min left

was better, I told myself again, not to form habits at all.

KANE'S POV

I stood outside the dressing room, lost in thought. Two bodyguards stood a short distance behind me, silent and alert. One of them suddenly stiffened and glanced to the side. Someone was approaching.

It was Eric.

Eric stopped in front of me and spoke first. "Did you come today just to stand up for her?"

I lifted my head slowly. A lazy smirk curved my lips.

"So what if I did?" I said. "Funny seeing you here."

"Funny?" Eric smiled a bit "Knowing you were here, I guessed she wouldn't be far away. I came to see for myself."

I kept my expression calm.

4/9

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1 min left

"Coincidence or not," I said flatly, "you can't touch her.

She's mine."

My tone was indifferent, almost casual, but

the seriousness in my eyes left no room for misunderstanding. My wolf growled at the thought of another man taking interest in Bella.

She was mine, even if she didn't realize it first. End of discussion.

Eric studied me for a moment. "You care that much about her?"

"Yes," I replied without hesitation.

Eric's eyes were filled with surprise. He knew better than anyone how rare such a confession was from me.

"Then I won't touch her," Eric said calmly. "She's not the one I'm looking for."

I knew Eric had been looking for a girl from his past. Was that why he was getting close to Bella? Did he think Bella was the woman he was searching for?

5/9

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"She's not her," Eric added quietly.

I raised an eyebrow. "And if she were?"

1 min left

Eric's expression remained unchanged, but something stirred deep in his phoenix eyes.

"Then I wouldn't let go," he said. "Even if it meant competing with you."

I narrowed my eyes slightly. "Good thing she's not, then."

"Yes," Eric agreed. "Fortunately, she's not."

With that, he turned and walked away.

Shortly after Eric left, Bella out of the dressing room.

“Done?” I asked, looking at her.

She nodded. She had changed back into her usual clothes, her hair tied into a simple ponytail. Her makeup

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1 min left

was gone. Her face was bare. She looked lighter without the costume.

“Let’s go,” I said, reaching for her hand naturally.

She pulled back a bit. My eyebrows lifted slightly as I looked at her.

“You don’t want to?” I asked her.

“I can walk on my own,” she said.

“I prefer holding your hand,” I replied, reaching for it again. “If I hold you like this, you can’t run away.”

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1 min left

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She barely had time to move before my fingers closed around hers.

“Oh,” she gasped softly, like she was in pain. I stopped at once. “Did I hurt you?”

My grip loosened immediately. I brushed my fingers over the bruised skin carefully. She bit her lip.

“It’s fine,” she said. “You can let go now.”

I ignored that.

Instead, I lifted her hand closer. My eyes were focused on the faint bruise that had not fully healed. Then I bent my 8/9

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head and gently blew on it.

"It won't hurt as much if I blow on it," I muttered.

She stared at me in disbelief.

1 min left

I continued, blowing softly and rubbing the bruise with my fingertips.

Chapter 210

BELLA'S POV

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1 min left

I felt as if my heart was about to burst out of my chest. It beat so hard that my ears rang, and my throat felt tight, as if words were stuck there and refused to come out. His fingers were still around my wrist and no matter how many times I told myself to pull away, my body reacted slower than my thoughts.

My body seemed to react to him faster than my mind would catch up. It felt like my body had a mind of its own

when it came to him.

"Feeling any better?" Kane asked quietly.

His voice was low and calm, as if nothing in the world could shake him.

"It's... better," I said. I tried to pull my hand back for the third time, careful not to touch the bruise on the back of it. Still, his grip did not loosen. His fingers adjusted slightly, avoiding the injured spot.

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Be good," he said. "If you know it hurts. If I'm carele39;43

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might hurt you again.”

1 min left

My face flushed at once. His words sounded casual, yet there was something in them that made my pulse jump. I didn't dare look at him for long. There was just something intense about him that made my nerves spiral out of control.

I swallowed hard, trying to steady my nerves. In the end, I let him lead me outside.

The Bentley was parked by the curb. The driver opened the door respectfully. Kane guided me in. His hand never left mine. The door closed, shutting out the noise of the street. The car moved smoothly, and for a moment, neither of us spoke.

“There's still time today,” Kane said after a while.

“We don't need to go back so early. Is there anywhere you want to go?”

I shook my head without thinking. There was nowhere I wanted to be, not with him sitting so close beside me. The thought of us being in an enclosed space together made my nerves flutter.

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1 min left

“Then let's just find a place nearby,” he said lightly. “I remember when you used to take me to night markets

and malls.”

I looked out of the window and laughed bitterly inside. Back then, I had counted every coin. I had saved money bit by bit just to buy him clothes, just to replace his old phone. I thought I was helping him live better. Now, thinking about it, it felt foolish. He had never lacked anything. I was the one who had been poor, careful, and afraid of the future.

The car stopped in front of a shopping mall I recognized immediately. We had been here before. He had told me he had just gotten his paycheck. We chose the cheapest restaurant and shared one meal. I remembered how I kept telling him not to order too much.

Now, he brought me here again, as if time had looped back on itself.

“You want to eat here?” he asked.

I hesitated, then nodded. “Alright.”

Bmean, what could go wrong? Right?

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Don't **miss** out on::: **A** video from. You commen...

1 min left

He walked in first. The smell of food hit me the moment we entered the restaurant. We sat down, and the waiter handed us the menu. I took it and did something reckless. I ordered dish after dish, expensive ones, without stopping. The waiter's pen paused several times. As I kept ordering, his expression grew more uncertain.

I did it...i don't know even know why. To get revenge on Kane? The last time we came here, I thought Kane was a poor exiled Alpha. Now, things were different.

I ordered even though I knew I couldn't finish it all.

When I finally looked up, I saw Kane watching me. He was smiling a bit. His eyes were calm, as if nothing I did could truly bother him.

“That's all,” I said and handed the menu back.

“That's all?” he repeated softly.

“Yes,” I said again.

The waiter forced a polite smile. “This is enough for seven or eight people. Are you sure?”

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“That's fine,” Kane said simply.

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After the waiter left, I finally realized how childish I had been. Even if I ordered the entire menu, it would mean nothing to him. I was angry, but I did not even know what I was angry about. I pushed the menu aside, feeling embarrassed.

Even if we spent thousands of dollars here, it was nothing to him. What was wrong with me?

"I was just fooling around," I said. "I should cancel some dishes."

I stood up, but Kane reached out and caught my hand.

"There's no need," he said. "Why remove what you like?"

"I don't want to waste food," I replied quietly.

He looked slightly surprised.

"Maybe money doesn't matter to you," I continued, "but wasting food does matter to me."

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I remembered prison too clearly. I remembered scraping rice off dirty floors. I remembered going hungry when meals were ruined on purpose. People would throw my food away just to be mean. Sometimes, I could go two days or even more without food.

Hunger was not a memory I could laugh about. It was something that stayed in the bones. It was one of the reasons I hated wasting food.

Kane watched me for a long moment. Then he nodded. "Alright."

He called the waiter over and canceled most of the dishes, leaving only three and a soup. When the food arrived, he helped arrange the tableware without a word.

I stared at the table. I never imagined I would sit here with him again like this. My stomach growled softly, embarrassing me. I lowered my head and started eating.

Kane didn't touch his food. He only looked at me with those intense eyes of his, like he was studying me.

"What?" I asked without lifting my head.

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"Nothing," he said. "Eat."

Lucky Draw

I ate slowly, feeling his eyes on me the entire time. For reasons I couldn't explain, my chest felt tight again.

The past and the present overlapped in my mind, and I suddenly realized how dangerous it was to sit here with him, sharing something as simple as a meal.

I kept eating anyway.

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