

Chapter 39

Haven Kramer POV:

I stood in the doorway, perfectly playing the part of a conspirator caught in the act. The expression on my face froze, my eyes filled with just the right amount of shock.

"I... I just came back to get something..." I began, my voice a little lower than usual, laced with a subtle nervousness. My gaze darted between Demetri and Mrs. Villarreal.

My "guilty" performance made Mrs. Villarreal even more triumphant.

"Get something? Or came back to administer more poison?" she shrieked like a cat that had caught a mouse. "You wicked woman! You poisoned me, and now you're trying to murder the Alpha! I will expose your true face to him today!"

She turned to Demetri, wailing, "Alpha, you see! I caught her red-handed! She doesn't dare to look you in the eye!"

I cooperatively avoided Demetri's gaze, as if I couldn't face him.

Demetri played his part beautifully. He frowned, his face a mask of confusion and doubt, looking from me to Mrs. Villarreal, as if he couldn't decide.

"Haven Kramer," he said, his tone heavy with pain. "Mrs. Villarreal accuses you of poisoning her and attempting to murder me. Is this true?"

"I didn't! How could I..." I began to argue, but then stopped, as if intimidated by her presence, my voice trailing off weakly.

This display of being unable to defend myself thoroughly delighted Mrs. Villarreal.

She put her hands on her hips and strode toward me, a victorious sneer on her face. "What? Nothing to say? The evidence is conclusive, and you still want to argue?"

She turned back to Demetri. "Alpha, she didn't just poison you, she poisoned me too! I've been in agony for days, on the verge of death, all because of her! She wants to control me, to control this entire estate!"

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Oh? She finally brought up the accusation against herself. Excellent. That was exactly what I wanted.

"You're lying!" I finally looked up, as if cornered and forced to fight back. "I didn't poison you! You must have eaten something bad!"

"I'm lying?" Mrs. Villarreal sneered. "Do you dare let us call a doctor? To examine me, and to examine these so-called 'medicines' you've been

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She had finally said the words I most wanted her to say.

The "panic" on my face froze, replaced by a cold smile she couldn't comprehend. It vanished so quickly she might have thought it was an illusion.

"Fine, an examination it is!" I retorted loudly, as if provoked. "Who's afraid! But Dr. Sullivan, the manor's doctor, has a broken leg. Where are we going to find a doctor?"

I deliberately raised a problem, playing my part to the hilt.

Mrs. Villarreal immediately shot back, "Then we'll send for one from town! We'll summon Dr. Chase Foster from Oak Creek! He is highly respected, never takes sides, and everyone trusts him!"

She had cleverly chosen a doctor she believed was impossible for me to bribe.

Demetri spoke at the perfect moment, his voice weary but firm. "Good. So be it."

He ordered the guard at the door, "Go, fetch Silas."

Silas arrived quickly. Seeing the tense atmosphere, he wisely remained silent.

"Silas," Demetri commanded, "send men to Oak Creek immediately. Spare no expense. Bring Dr. Chase Foster to the manor."

"Yes, Alpha." Silas bowed and quickly left.

Mrs. Villarreal's face was alight with an irrepressible joy. She could already see me convicted and dragged away to be executed.

She looked at me with triumph, as if I were already a dead woman.

I lowered my head again, wringing my hands together, maintaining my posture of "anxious unease."

The climax of the show was about to begin.

I felt nothing inside. A cold, quiet satisfaction settled over me. The trap had sprung perfectly.

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+120 Points at most

I stole a glance at Demetri. He was leaning back, his eyes closed as if resting, but I knew that, like me, he was enjoying this cat-and-mouse game.



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