Chapter 51: Obstacles

Damon's POV

"I need you to come home with me", I said, and it looked like Layla froze in her spot for a little while, before her eyebrows knitted in confusion

"Can I ask why?", she placed her notebook on the coffee table. "If this is about Dylan's party, I can plan it here and make it in time to celebrate it. I don't need to move back".

"It's not about Dylan's party", I said, and I could see her pinching herself on the arm. "Why are you pinching yourself?"

"Oh, it's nothing", she laughed it off a little, like she didn't even realize that she was pinching herself. "Then what is it about then?"

I drew a sharp breath. "I need your help"

"My help with what?"

"There's this new client at the company. The account is worth billions, and it can save the company from bankruptcy".

"That's great news, isn't it?"

"It was, until Mr Brown let her daughter, Ella to handle all the interactions between Brown enterprises and the company"

"So", her eyes lurked around in confusion for a bit. "What seems to be the problem then?"

"She's coming onto me, inappropriately", I breathed out, and I don't know why, but a part of me hoped she would freak out, demand to immediately see her and tell her to keep her claws to herself. But as usual, not Layla. She blinked for a second, pressing her lips in a tight line, suppressing a laugh.

"Coming onto you how?", she snickered a little. "Like a bad rash?"

Mental facepalm

"She's hitting on me Layla because she thinks you're no longer in the picture"

Layla blew her cheeks out, a laugh threatening to erupt from her, and it's like she couldn't even hide the fact that she wanted to laugh at me

"Oh my God", she shook her head in fake pity. "Poor you"

"Layla, I'm serious"

"So am I", she swallowed a laugh, starting to get a little serious. "But okay, tell me what happened, from the beginning"

"Okay", I sat up straight, and she leaned in closer to hear the whole story, "What happened was..."

《Flashback》

"Sir, Mr Brown and his daughter are waiting for you in the boardroom"

"I'll be there in a minute Carla, thank you", I stood up to put my suit jacket on, and she nodded as she closed the door. I then took the files Thomas set aside for the pitch and headed to the boardroom.

"Damon, I won't lie to you. I'm really impressed with the pitch, it's beyond excellent, and it's exactly what my company needs right now", Mr Brown announced pleased and the presentation team clapped their hands in excitement.

"I'm glad to hear that Mr Brown, but I can't take the credit for the hard work and the job well done. It's all thanks to these young minds in this room, it's all them", I said pointing at Jonas and his team, and they were all nodding their heads in agreement.

"Well done", Mr Brown addressed to him. "I'm really impressed. I'm giving you the account ", he said and the team jumped from their seats, clapping and whistling, to my surprise. But I didn't blame them, they deserved it.

"Thank you, Mr Brown, you won't regret this ", Jonas shook Mr Brown's hands

"I'll hold you to that", he playfully wiggled his finger at him, and Jonas and his team exited the room

"Damon...", Mr Brown said as I stood up to shake his hand." I look forward to working with you. Ella here will draw up the contract, then we're good to go", Mr Brown said and as I turned to look at Ella, she was already looking at me with a wide smile on her face.

"My lawyer, Tom Breyburg will be in touch", I put out my hand to Ella for a handshake. She took my hand in hers, for a very slow, deep in the eye looking handshake.

"I look forward to that", she said as I politely pulled my hand from her and accompanied them to the door

The rain was pouring heavily one evening. I had just put Dylan to bed, after having to read four different bedtime stories before he could even rub his eyes sleepily.

I went downstairs to pour myself a very strong drink. I needed it, after a very long and hectic day. I had given Mary a week off. She deserved some time to herself without having to worry about me and Dylan for a change.

The doorbell went off, followed by desperate knocks. The person was really banging on the door. As I opened, it was Ella, standing in the rain with her jacket over her head to shield herself from the merciless rain drops.

"Ella", I said in astonishment. "What are you doing here?", I asked, and she chuckled before saying.

"Aren't you going to invite me in first? I'll answer your questions afterwards.

"I'm sorry, come in", I said, and she walked in

"Let me take that for you", I said as I took her jacket to put it somewhere to dry

I bought her a warm fleece blanket to cover herself with as she adjusted comfortably in front of the fireplace

"Thank you", she said as I covered her shoulders with the blanket

"Can I make you something warm to drink? Maybe tea or hot chocolate?", I asked as I stood over her.

"Hot chocolate sounds lovely, thanks", she said as I nodded as I walked to the kitchen

"You have a beautiful house", she said as I handed her a cup of hot coco, and she thanked me as she smiled politely

"So, why are you here?", I took a sip as I sat behind her

"I bought you the copy of the contract", she turned to hand it to me, neatly covered in a plastic cover

"You shouldn't have, Tom could've bought it to me", I said as I took it from her hands

"I wanted to, this deal means a lot to my father, and I don't want anything to go wrong"

"It won't, I have the best team working on this deal", I said smiling widely, and she smiled back and stood up to sit next to me on the couch

"You know Damon,", she stirred the marshmallows in her cup, played around with them. "I've never been up front with anything in my life. I was always too afraid to stand up for anything, or fight for what I believed was destiny", she said as she turned to look at me.

"We all go through that once in a lifetime ", I tried lighting up the atmosphere, and she smiled weakly

"That's why I can no longer ignore what's going on here", she said, and I rose an eyebrow, completely lost on what she was talking about

"What's going on here?", I asked, and she nodded as she arched her back forward, causing the blanket I covered her with to slip off her shoulders, revealing her dress that exposed her bare shoulders

"Between us", she said, and I laughed out loud, but then my laughter died mid-action as I noticed her, staring at me, saying nothing else with an unreadable expression on her face

"You're not joking, are you?", I asked, and she shook her head no

"Why would I? You can't bluntly deny the attraction going on between us", she tried reaching for my hand, but I quickly stood to my feet.

"I'm not attracted to you", I said, and she smirked before standing up to walk up to me

"I see how you look at me, the stolen glances and acting like you never looked in my direction", she said as she walked slowly towards me and trailed her hand seductively on my arm and I removed it

"Surely you feel it too, the chemistry,", she said as she held on my waist and leaned to my height

"The fuck?", I ripped myself from her hold that she nearly lost her balance. "Are you out of your mind?", I yelled, but then I remembered that Dylan was asleep upstairs. The last thing I would want is him walking into me with Ella, and I'll have to explain what the heck was going on." I'm a married man", I said, my voice a little lower than the last time.

She laughed, "That's what makes you even more irresistible"

"You're sick", I pushed past her to fetch her jacket then opened the door for her

"Resist all you want Damon, you'll come crawling to me when you realize that Layla isn't coming back to you anymore", she took her jacket from my hand and looked at me dead in the eye. "You need a steady partner, and Dylan needs a real mother", she said and within a blink of an eye, I had grabbed her by the arm.

"You keep my son's name out of your mouth, and you never talk about Layla like that", I said, towering in anger above her and she smiled

"So sexy", she purred and I pushed her outside, slamming the door in her face

"Damon", Mr Brown called up to me as I was trying by all means to avoid him, they had a follow-up meeting with the team

"Yes, Mr Brown?", I spread my lips in a smile as I reached out for a handshake, which he gladly accepted

"I'm hosting a black tie ball, for charity, and I was wondering if you and your beautiful wife could grace us with your presence", he said as we kept on walking

"Thanks for the invite Mr Brown but-", I was interrupted by Ella's voice

"I doubt Layla will be able to make it Dad", Ella interrupted as she stood next to her father, grinning widely at me before leaning to whisper in his ear. "They're going through what we call, **a rough patch"**

She whispered the last part, loud enough so that I even heard her

"Oh, I wasn't aware", Mr Brown frowned. "I'm sorry Damon"

"There's no need to apologize Mr Brown, I was just about to say that Layla and I would be honored, and we accept the invitation, we'll definitely be there", I said looking at Ella, smirking widely

"Excellent, look forward to seeing both of you there", Mr Brown reached for another handshake again and then turned to his feet

"If it happened that Layla can't make it, you know where to find me", she whispered as she followed her father

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Layla burst into laughter when I finished telling her the situation, laughing so hard she had to even wipe the tears from her eyes while catching a breath. I could see she's been waiting to do this ever since I started talking.

"Really Damon, what happened to you?", her laughter slowly died down. "Why didn't you put her into her place once and for all?"

"I'm glad you find this amusing", I said sarcastically, throwing her a glare and she laughed again, clearing her throat when she was done

"I'm sorry"

"So, will you help me?", I titled my head to the side a little, and she paused to think for a second

"What good will my presence make?", she also tilted her head. "It doesn't mean she'll stop throwing herself at you"

"Layla...", I got off my seat to kneel in front of her, clutching my hands together. "Please, I'm begging you"

She stared at me for a while, contemplating on whether to say yes or no

"I can cry if you want", I offered jokingly, and she laughed

"That won't be necessary", she paused to think for a second before rolling her eyes a little. "Fine. I'll go with you to the ball, but that's it".

A smile crept to my lips when she agreed, and I sat beside her. "That's all I'm asking for"

"Okay, so what now?"

"You need to start packing", I put out my hand for her, and she smiled before placing her hand in mine as I helped her to her feet

"Can't believe I actually agreed to this", she laughed a little, with me following her to her bedroom to help her pack

Layla's POV

"Layla!", Mary engulfed me in a bone-crushing, breathtaking hug the second her eyes landed on me when I walked through the front door and I didn't mind because I actually enjoyed these kinds of hugs anyway, the kind that were so tight you could actually feel the other persons' heart beat across your own

We broke away from the hug, and she held me at arms length, examining me and when she was done, quite impressed she smiled, cupped my face in her hands, kissed my forehead and said, "You still look beautiful as the last day I saw you"

"Thank you, Mary", I covered her hands with mine. "I missed you so much"

"I missed you too", she pulled me in for another hug before Damon appeared behind me with my bag slung over his shoulder

"Damn, what did you pack in this bag?", he exclaimed when he stopped to catch his breath. "Bricks?"

"Well, those bricks are hard enough to knock-", I paused to think because I legit forgot the woman's name."What's her name again?"

Damon heaved a sigh. "Ella"

"Yeah, to knock Ella's teeth out the second I see her. I mean how dare she", I joked and only Mary chuckled and my eyes widened at her before I leaned to whisper near her ear. "You know?"

She nodded her head

"I told Mary what is going on, she literally threatened to put spices in my food if I don't", Damon folded his arms and we both looked at Mary

"Really Mary?", I sounded disappointed in her, before my lips curved into a smile. "I'm impressed"

I high-fived her, and we started laughing as Damon's jaw dropped a little before a breath and ascended up the stairs

I looked around for my favorite person but there was no sigh of him. "Where's Dylan?"

"He's watering the plants outside with Wesley", Mary said and Damon came back, walking outside to call them

"You'll never guess whose back", I heard Damon say when they approached the door

"Who?", both Dylan and Wesley asked, but before he could tell them, he opened the door so that they could see for themselves

Not even ear plugs could have saved my ears from Dylan's scream when he saw me, and he ran up to me as fast as he could, and I laughed, picking him up and started planting multiple kisses on his cheeks and forehead. Funny enough, he wasn't complaining this time.

"Does this mean you're back for good Momma?", he asked, and I didn't want to disappoint him, so I didn't answer him and told him I missed him instead, he giggled and told me he missed me too and then wrapped his little arms around me for a tight hug, melting my heart melted

"It's lovely to see you again Mrs Kingsley", Wesley put out his hand up for a handshake and I gladly took his hand in mine

"It's lovely to see you too Wesley", I smiled before Damon gave him the car keys and asked him to wash it

"I made you something", Dylan's eyes lit up when I placed him down

"What is it?"

"I'll go get it", he ran upstairs as I laughed as I watched him disappear in the hallway and Damon excused himself to go reply a few emails in his study

"Dylan's never this happy when you're not around. Damon is really trying, but it's just not the same without you", Mary covered my hands with hers.

"It feels good to be back Mary", I smiled, and she gave me a side hug

"How about a cup of tea?", her eyebrows rose, this was her way of telling me we have a lot to gossip about

"Tea? Don't you think it's a bit hot for tea, I'll literally die from this heat if I-", I stated dramatically, and she had that look in her eyes before wiggling her eyebrows.

"There's chocolate ice cream in the freezer"

"Where did you say we're sitting again?", I grinned, and she laughed as we walked to the kitchen. She scooped up more than enough spoons of ice cream in the dessert bowls, and we went to the patio.

"So this Ella woman, have you met her?", I asked as she finished updating me with the latest news

"Unfortunately", she licked her spoon. "She rocked up here one day and started asking personal questions, claiming she was here to pick up a signed contract from Damon"

"What kind of personal questions?"

"How's your relationship with Damon and Dylan, how long have you been gone, are you going to come back etc"

"What did you tell her?"

"I told her it simply none of her business"

I laughed. "Wow Mary"

"No Layla, I know girls of her caliber
"Her caliber?"

"Gold digging home wreckers", she stated as a matter-of-factly and I couldn't help but laugh

"She's won't be wrecking anything now, will she?", I shrugged a little. "This relationship is already wrecked on its own"

"No Layla, you and Damon belong together and him getting you back here, simply means something"

"I'm just here to help him fight this battle and claim my territory. It doesn't go any deeper than that".

"You're wrong, if it didn't go deeper than that, he wouldn't even tell you or ask you to accompany him to the ball, you know how he is", she said and well, she did have a point

At the back of mind, I thought maybe this was his way of showing me that women are lining up for him and wanted to make me jealous, but he was desperate to get this Ella woman of his back

Dylan came back with a picture he drew in his hands. It was a picture of me, him and Damon together, as a family and Mary, Harry, Stacy, James, Lelo, Quinton and Wesley in the background. Our own self found family. Of course, I couldn't make out who was who, thankfully he wrote names underneath each drawing.

"It's beautiful my darling", I stopped tears from falling from my eyes

"I made it for you", he grinned sheepishly, and I engulfed him in a hug

"I love it", I kissed his forehead and he ran back into the house to get more drawings to show me

"Layla, we're going to be late", Damon cried for the 7th time as he sprawled himself dramatically on the bed

"Two more minutes", I put my earrings on and put some finishing touches of make-up on my face, not to heavy though. I wasn't a fan of make up really, but I had to at least make sure I look presentable.

I was dressed in a black evening dress. I fell in love with it the first time I laid my eyes on it in the boutique, I already saw myself in it. It was a V-line neckline off shoulder dress, with a slit that ran from my mid-thigh all the way to my heel. Can never go wrong with a black heel, black & silver clutch bag and silver earnings.

I had styled my hair into an elegant high bun with a few strands of my curly hair loose on both sides of my face. I wasn't a lipstick kind of girl, but I went with a dark maroon lipstick to top the look up.

"I'm ready", I announced, walking out of the walk in closet, and he pushed his upper body up to look at me. The moment he saw me, he slowly got up from the bed and walked to me while looking at me, from head to toe and then smiled, shaking his head in disbelief.

"Wow Layla", he took a moment to himself before breathing out, "You're beautiful"

"Thank you", a blush crept onto my cheeks. "You don't look too bad yourself"

Who was I kidding?

He looked drop dead handsome in his back and white tuxedo. He looked like a dream, really, really hot. He was also neatly groomed and smelt heavenly.

"Thank you"

"Oh, your bow tie is a bit skewed", I laughed a little, handing him my clutch bag and proceeded to fix his bow tie for him. When I looked up, I noticed he had his eyes fixed on me the entire time, and he didn't even try to look away when we locked eyes.

"You really are beautiful", he took my hand in his and bought it to his lips and placed a tender kiss on my knuckles

Please stop it..I was turning red as a tomato.

"Shall we?", he put out his arm and I entwined our arms together

Let's see what the night has in store for us...

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