

## Chapter 10

[Caden]

I walk into the house and stare at the couch where Vivienne always used to wait for me in the past. Whenever I was late from a meeting, or my flight got delayed, or I couldn't make it for any other reason, she was always there, waiting.

But not today.

I frown and walk past the dining room, annoyed by the events of the day. Three years. Three years of marriage, and she wants to break it off. Did she forget that she was the one who proposed marriage out of the two of us? That I always made it clear I was never going to fall for anyone again? That I couldn't put anyone else first?

Astrid... she is special to me, and nothing anyone does could change that. Then why is my so-called wife being so stubborn now? Why is she painting me in a bad light? Why is she blaming me for everything?

Frustrated, I yank at the tie and pull it over my head, tossing it away, not caring where it falls. I'm pacing aimlessly in the home office when Tony, my childhood friend, strides in.

"So, it's true, huh?" he says, but I don't even lift my gaze to acknowledge him. I glare outside the window instead. "Depends on what you heard."

"Well," his footsteps echo, and I can tell he's coming closer. "The whole office is talking about it. That Caden Lawrence has been hiding a wife all along. What do you have to say about that?"

I sigh, rubbing my temples. "Since when did my personal life become such a huge sensation?"

"Are you seriously asking me that?" Even though I can't see him, I know he's shaking his head. He chuckles. "I think you've been famous ever since you were born. Remember when a media reporter snapped you without your parents' permission? Damn, I think that media house still has your face labeled with danger."

His laughter grates on my nerves, and I feel like choking him with my bare hands.

"Are you done?" I turn to glare over my shoulder, and the room falls silent once again. But then he quips, "Oh, this is serious. Sorry, I forgot to read the sign outside."

I shake my head, not in the mood for his nonsense. "Vivienne wants a divorce."

My words manage to shut him up for a whole minute—almost. When he finds his voice again, he suddenly appears in front of me. "What?"

I turn away from him, running a hand down my face. I thought she was mad last night because I couldn't make it on time for our anniversary. I thought she would do what she always did whenever I couldn't make it for one reason or another—move on, that is. But she didn't. She wants a divorce instead.

Why does it make me feel so strange?

I sigh. "Yeah. She came by the office to serve me the notice."

"Oh," he says. "So this is what it was all about. All those gossips in

the office."

I roll my eyes. Does he really think I'm worried about office gossip? I don't give a damn. I have a company to run, shareholders to appease, several projects to oversee. I'm too busy to be bothered by such trivial things.

I walk back to my desk and sit down in my chair, unable to forget the smug face of that advocate Vivienne hired for herself.

Elijah Walter.

I've heard of him. He runs one of the biggest law firms in the United States with his partner... whose name I'm forgetting. Not that it matters. Not when Vivienne wants to cut all ties with me. The ties that she was once so desperate to establish.

"Call my family lawyer," I say, watching Tony's jaw drop open.

"Are you agreeing to divorce her?"

"No!" Of course not. I meant it when I told her she couldn't walk into my life and leave on her own terms. She might have started this—whatever we have between us—but I'm the one who holds the power to end it, and it's time she learned that.

"Just give him a call and tell him to meet with me ASAP. Also, what happened to the task I gave you?"

Tony once again returns to his lively self and retrieves a small velvet box from the inside pocket of his suit jacket. "I came to see you as soon as it arrived."

He places the box in front of me, opening it gently and revealing a

bracelet made of diamonds with a tiny butterfly-shaped pendant hanging from it. It's beautiful.

"Ron asked me to tell you that he's really sorry for not finishing it on time."

A small smile crawls across my lips. Ron is a jewellery designer I've known for a while now. I remember Vivienne admiring this piece the last time I took her to his workshop, so I decided to buy it for her.

I pick up the bracelet and hold it in my palm, studying it under the light. It's perfect.

"Tell Ron it's okay. This will do."

"But are you sure you want to give this to her now?"

I shrug, closing the lid of the box. "I planned to give this to her last night for our anniversary."

"And then you ruined everything by missing dinner."

I glower at him. "I had work to finish."

"And that's exactly why she wants a divorce." He shakes his head, walking towards the door. "You better fix it before you lose her for good."

I stare at the closed door even after he leaves, wondering how I'm supposed to fix this when I don't even know what Vivienne wants.

All my thoughts come to a halt when my phone goes off.

I answer it without checking the screen.




"What?"

"Caden! Your dad—" It's my mom and the way she sounds so panicked makes my stomach clench.

I'm already reaching for the door, grabbing my coat on the way. "What happened?"

"He is...he is having a heart attack. We're on the way to the hospital. Please, come soon."



Diti Koshy  Author

*"Thank you for reading this chapter :) What do you think of Caden so far? :P"*

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