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#### **Chapter 155**

Natalie had just stepped out of the autopsy room.

Next to her, Effie put a palm over her mouth and nose even though she was wearing a mask. Still, she looked like she was about to throw up anytime soon.

"I can't stand this..." Effie muttered, waving her hand. "Heaven knows how long this body had been soaking in the sewer before they dug it up."

"Well, that's the reality of being a coroner. It's no easy job," said Natalie, patting Effie's shoulder gently. "Besides conducting autopsies, we also need to provide evidence for criminal investigation."

"Lunderstand."

When Effie could not stand the stench any longer, she dragged Natalie along and headed to the restroom to freshen up.

Just then, Natalie's phone rang.

When she realized it was Sophia calling, her mood lightened in an instant, and she picked it up with a smile.

Immediately, the sound of Sophia crying came from the other side of the phone.

"Save Franklin..."

Upon hearing Sophia's words, Natalie froze.

"What happened to Franklin?" Natalie felt a pang of heartache as her throat tightened. "Take your time and tell me what happened. I'm here. Everything's going to be fine."

For some reason, Sophia felt soothed and relieved by Natalie's voice.

"Great-grandpa... H-He is punishing Franklin... Franklin didn't do anything wrong..." Sophia mumbled hurriedly between sobs.

At that moment, she hated the way she stuttered when she spoke.

Nevertheless, Natalie understood what she wanted to tell her because she could vaguely hear the sound of Franklin being punished.

Although there were some noises in the background, she could somehow hear the sound of the cane clearly

The sound of one stroke after another was enough to infuriate Natalie to the point where her body trembled with anger.

At that moment, all she could think about was that no one could ever touch Franklin without her permission.

"I'm coming right now, Sophia."

With that, Natalie hung up the phone.

Effie was taken aback when she noticed the fury in Natalie's eyes. "Boss, what's wrong? You look SO scary!"

"Effie, I'll leave the data to you guys. I'll emall you the diagnosis report later," said Natalie, turning off the tap. "Right now, I have something more important to handle."

"Oh... All right."

After that, Natalie turned around to leave.

Staring at Natalie's retreating figure, Effie had a feeling that she looked more like she was going to fight someone.

As Natalie headed downstairs, she saw a police officer who was about to pull out the key to his motorcycle.

Stepping forward, she took the keys and the helmet from the police and said, "I'm Natalie Nichols, a senior coroner. I need to borrow this motorcycle for now. I'll return it afterward."

"Huh?" The police officer was puzzled.

However, she had put on the helmet, started the engine, and sped away.

Along the way, she traversed the roads while the wind blew through her long hair, the noise of the motorcycle's exhaust pipe roaring.

This was her first time riding a motorcycle in Dellmoor.

Although it had been a long time since she rode a motorcycle, she could overtake the other cars swiftly.

In the Bowers residence's living room, Kenneth was still punishing Franklin. Although he didn't exert much force, it hurt whenever the cane landed on Franklin.

Franklin's once delicate and adorable face was contorted in a grimace of pain.

Yet, he was adamant about suffering in silence. Till then, he had not let a single tear fall and would only let out a low grunt when he could not bear it.

Meanwhile, Yara merely watched on without saying a word.

I've disliked Franklin since a long time ago. He looks too much like that woman! Besides his features, his stubborn attitude is exactly like her! Heaven knows how much I have to put up with him over the years!

Now that she witnessed Franklin punished by Kenneth, she felt as if her pent-up frustration had been vented.

Soon, Kenneth could not bring himself to punish Franklin anymore. Therefore, he intentionally paused and asked, "Franklin, I've already punished you for your mistake. As long as you admit it and apologize, I won't continue anymore!"

"Apologize?" Franklin breathed as his face paled. In the next second, he directed a glare toward Yara and said, "Never!"

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Chapter 156 Protecting Franklin

Yara clenched her teeth in hatred.

Franklin has been punished so much already. Why is he still choosing to remain silent?

Yara forced herself to speak. "Grandpa... Forget it. Since Franklin is this unwilling to admit it, don't force him anymore. I don't want him to hate me even more..."

"No! I am a man of my word." Kenneth turned red with anger as he felt Yara had been bullied. "I'll continue punishing him until he confesses."

"No..." Yara feigned her objection while posing elegantly on the couch. She used a tissue to dab at the tears she had forced out from the corners of her eyes.

"Great-grandpa, you're being foolish! This evil woman has got you by the balls!" Franklin shouted agitatedly.

"You... You..."

This provoked Kenneth even more. Just as he wanted to punish Franklin, a figure dashed out and stopped in front of him.

She hugged Franklin tightly from behind, shielding his small and frail body in her arms.

Her act caught Kenneth off guard, and the cane struck Natalie squarely on her back.

A low thud sounded where the cane hit flesh. It echoed louder than before.

Franklin opened his eyes and raised his head, surprised that he felt a warm hug instead of pain.

All he saw was Natalie's face.

"Natalie, w-why are you here?"

Even though Franklin was scared and in pain, he resisted the tears.

At this very moment, however, his heart ached when he saw that Natalie had protected him by suffering the brunt of the cane instead.

"You don't want me here? Are you hurt?" Natalie asked Franklin gently.

Her actions had made him feel very vulnerable as if something had struck the most tender spot in his heart.

Franklin was on the verge of crying, and his throat had seized up, but he forced out, "Why would I be hurt? I don't need your protection! This is none of your business. What happens if you get hurt?"

"You're so young, yet you already say things you don't mean... I'm here to protect you!" Natalie let out a small sound of displeasure.

Kenneth and Yara did not expect Natalie to barge into the Bowers residence.

Furthermore, they never thought that she would use her own body to protect Franklin from the cane.

"N-Natalie? How did you come in? I'm disciplining my great-grandchild. Who are you to interfere?" Kenneth gripped the cane tightly and stared at her.

Natalie slowly got to her feet. She could not stand it any longer and rebutted, "Look at the difference in your age! The cane is not something that should be used to educate children!"

Seeing his own authority challenged, Kenneth replied angrily, "Who do you think you are? I used to be the head of this family. How dare you talk to me like this! Do you even want to live and work in Chanaea anymore?"

"Don't use that to threaten me. Even if Samuel were here, I would have still said the same thing."

The Bowers were deeply rooted in Chanaea, and she had no power against them.

However, after she entered and saw Franklin's condition, her heart broke for him.

In such a situation, she could not say anything that would show weakness.

If there's no place here for me in Chanaea anymore, so be it! Even if I die for it, I will still protect them.

"If Franklin and Sophia don't listen to your reasoning, then you should reflect on that, Old Mr. Bowers. Maybe there is something wrong with your logic."

Natalie raised her chin defiantly, the light in her almond-shaped eyes arrogant and untamed.

"Natalie Nichols, how dare you? You've taken my cheque for ten million yet have not done what you've promised me. Have you come running to the Bowers again because you've run out of money? What kind of scheme are you planning this time to get our money?"