

THIRTY TWO – ACCOMPLICES

Luke stood in Kayla Andrew's house fiddling the bracelet, his nerves all but ready to explode with rage.

She finally stepped into her living room, her eyes widening in surprise when she saw him.

"Luke? What are you doing here?"

Luke stared at her for a moment, his face hard and unsmiling.

"Do you have a minute? I'd like us to discuss a few things."

Her eyes narrowed in confusion but she hid it really well.

"Oh, please sit." Her gaze clouded with concern. "Is this about Nina? Is she okay?"

Luke paused for a bit, unsure on how to broach the subject.

"Nina's awake now. The doctor proclaimed her stable yesterday."

She brightened immediately.

"Oh, that's great. So...what did you want to talk about?"

Luke fixed her with a thoughtful stare.

"Kayla, when the police questioned you concerning the night you and Nina were kidnapped, are you sure you told them

everything you knew?"

Kayla shifted uncomfortably in her seat.

"Yes. I'm sure I did. Is there any problem?"

"Think carefully, Kayla. Are you sure you didn't leave anything out?"

Her eyes narrowed on him and she instantly became defensive.

"Yes, I'm sure. Did something happen?"

"Kayla...the night you and Nina were attacked at the club, where did you say the kidnappers let you off?"

She pursed her lips thoughtfully.

"I was drugged that night so I'm not really sure. But I think it was some kinda road or something. I vividly remember that they opened the car door and tossed me out." She glares at him, "why are you asking me all these questions?"

Luke did not reply that.

"So you were not taken to any buildings or anything?"

Her gaze shifted nervously.

"No. No I wasn't." She said hesitantly.

"Are you sure?"

Kayla got to her feet, her eyes blazing.

"What exactly is the meaning of all these, Luke? Are you perhaps accusing me of something?"

Luke just sat back and stared at her calmly.

"Sit down, Kayla."

A few seconds later, she lowered herself to her seat and folded her arms.

Luke reached into the pocket of his slacks and retrieved the bracelet.. He held it up for Kayla to see.

The look of panic that crossed her eyes before she expertly hid it with surprise was all the answer he needed.

"Do you recognize this by any chance?" Luke asked quietly.

"N-no...I mean, yes. That's mine. I've been looking for it. Where did you find it?"

She got to her feet and tried to snatch the bracelet from his grasp, but he held it away from her eager fingers and got to his feet.

"Do you know where this was found?"

Kayla shifted nervously, her eyes darting behind him as if looking for a means of escape.

"I have no idea. I lost it the night we were attacked. I looked for it but never found it so I forgot about it."

After a moment of silence, Luke asked quietly.

"How long have you rehearsed that lie, Kayla?"

Her eyes snapped to his, widening in surprise. Then surprise was gradually replaced with anger.

"How dare you call me a liar? How dare you?" She pointed her index finger in his face. "I've tolerated you enough because you're Nina's friend. Don't you dare come into my house and disrespect me."

Luke smiled.

"You tolerated me. Wow."

Kayla lifted her chin.

"Of course. Everyone knows you're a pauper who just got lucky. I have no idea what Nina sees in you. You're a wretched bastard and that is all you will ever be."

Luke tried to restrain his temper as she continuously hurled insults at him. When she was done, he only said quietly.

"Miss Kayla, I'm afraid you are under arrest for being an accomplice to the kidnap of Miss Nina Washington."