

### THIRTY THREE – SHOCKING DISCOVERIES

Kayla's face twisted in shock as she stared at Luke.

"What exactly are you talking about? Do you even realise the depth of what you're saying?" She screeched.

Luke was not perturbed.

"You are certain that the kidnappers did not drop you off at any building. However, investigations reveal that your fingerprints were all over the attic where Nina was being held hostage at the British Museum. Can you explain that?"

Her eyes darted nervously around the room as she tried to come up with a reasonable excuse.

"There has to be a suitable explanation for that. Perhaps the kidnappers..."

"The kidnappers cut off your hands and stamped your prints all over the walls?" Luke asked sarcastically.

Kayla stepped back.

"Look, I am innocent in all of this. I was not taken to any museum. Someone is obviously trying to set me up. Can't you see?"

Luke curled his fingers into fists, trying to contain his anger.

"Save your lies for the court, Kayla."

"I'm not lying!" She yelled desperately. "I promise, I'm not lying. I didn't do anything."

Just looking at her, anyone would believe she was telling the truth, and that angered Luke even more.

He narrowed his eyes on her.

"What I'm really wondering is, how could you, Kayla? Nina is your friend. What exactly did you have against her?"

Kayla's face twisted in rage.

"She's not my friend!" She blurted. "Don't you dare call that bitch my friend."

Suddenly realising what she just said, her eyes widened and she clamped a palm over her mouth.

Luke however, was not surprised.

"Is this about the annual Bridgeville ball?"

After the deputy had hinted at Kayla's involvement in the kidnapping, Luke had done his homework.

From investigations, he found out that Nina had been crowned queen of the annual Bridgeville University ball held just last year. Kayla was the first runner up.

It was after that ball that Kayla approached Nina and asked that they became friends.

It appears that Kayla had never truly gotten over the fact

that Nina had beat her to the crown.

"You had your own friend kidnapped and almost tortured to death because of some petty ball. You should be ashamed of yourself."

Kayla was no longer interested in keeping calm. Rage shot through her like an erupting volcano.

"That crown was supposed to be mine. Mine! That bitch did not put in half the work I'd put in for the pageant. The judges only gave her the crown because her parents are London aristocrats. I was cheated."

The truth was slowly revealing itself.

"So you decided to have her kidnapped."

Kayla turned away, her fingers clenched into fists at her sides.

"I-I didn't want to. Someone reached out to me..."

"Who is this someone?" Luke asked, his eyes narrowed with curiosity.

"I don't know. It was a scrambled number. They promised me five million dollars if I helped get Nina to a position where they could easily pick her up."

Luke's blood was boiling now.

"What did you do?" He asked through gritted teeth.

"I...I..."

"Speak, Kayla!" He thundered, startling her.

"I invited her to the party and encouraged her to drink, okay? She drank too much and she almost puked..."

"So you led her to a dark alley and let dangerous criminals get their hands on her." Luke growled.

Kayla whipped her head in his direction, her eyes glassy with unshed tears.

"They told me nothing was going to happen to her. They assured me that they'll just get the money and then let her go. I did not expect her to get hurt."

"That does not justify your actions, Kayla. You will be punished for this."

Tears fell over her cheeks in torrents.

"Luke, you of all people should understand how painful it is for us 'low born' to work hard for something, then those elites end up taking all the glory. It's not fair! I just wanted them to teach her a lesson, perhaps scare her a bit. I did not expect her to get hurt. Please..."

Luke knew she was trying to manipulate him with her logic and tears, so he locked his jaw and stepped back.

"I'm sorry, Kayla. But you went overboard when you decided to kidnap my friend."

Just then, her doors flew open and three police officers led by the deputy marched in, going straight for Kayla.

Her jaw dropped when she saw them. She immediately ran to Luke and wrapped a hand around his arm.

"Luke please. Please don't let them take me. I didn't mean for her to get hurt. Please..."

Luke wrestled her hands off him as the deputy read her her Miranda rights.

"Handcuff her, officers." The deputy ordered his men.

They closed in and reached for her. Despite her screaming and fighting, she was bundled into the cop car and driven to the station within minutes.

"Deputy, make sure she is thoroughly questioned. We need to find the person responsible for the kidnapping as soon as possible. Time is not on our side."

"Yes, sir."

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Nothing viable came out of Kayla.

The text messages she'd received from the kidnappers were investigated, but the hackers could not make progress because the number was protected by extremely heavy firewalls.

It appeared they were at a dead end.

However, this morning, Luke had received some news.

It appeared that the SWAT team had discovered something new in Mexico. He stepped into the county police station and the deputy commissioner immediately came forward to receive him.

"Good morning, your Lordship, please, follow me."

Luke walked dutifully behind him until they arrived at the investigation room. Upon stepping in, he accessed the room, impressed with the large, complicated looking devices that blinked and winked in all directions.

"As you already know, our trackers were traced to an old building in New Mexico. However, they were moved again today. To a more upscale part of the country."

Luke nodded thoughtfully.

"And?"

"Our SWAT team this morning identified that building as belonging to Don Escobar Scuderi, a notorious drug dealer and mafia cartel leader."

Luke stared at him in shock.

"The Italian mafia are involved in this?"

"I was just as surprised as you are when I got the news."

Luke's heart dropped. If they were dealing with the mafia, things were about to get a lot messier than he thought.

"Is there more?" He asked.

The deputy nodded.

"I'm afraid there is. I think you're gonna have to sit down for this one."

From the deputy's serious expression, something had happened. Something bad.

Luke's heart thudded painfully against his ribcage as he took his seat.

"What's happened?"

The deputy retrieved a photo from his pocket printed in black and white. It showed a young man speaking to a group of masked, armed men.

"Sir, do you know this man?"

Luke squinted at the photo. The man looked vaguely familiar, but the photo was too blurry to make anything out.

"No. I don't think so. Who is he?"

"We ran a match test and according to our machine, the young man in this photo has a ninety five percent match with David Humsworth, first son of the Humsworth family."

For a moment, the world went completely still.

Luke stared at the deputy in horror, then, driven by a strange force, he tore the photo from his hands and looked at it closely.

Sure enough, the entire photo began to make more sense.

That perfectly slicked hair was clearly an attribute of David. The nose and eyes, too. Why hadn't he noticed it before?

Luke got to his feet as his shock gradually cleared, replaced by a violent, venomous rage.

His clenched fingers trembled at his sides as he gritted his teeth.

"I'm going to kill him."

"Now, calm down, sir. The Humsworth family is more dangerous than you think."

"What do you mean?"

"Further investigations revealed that the Humsworths have a long standing connection with the Italian mafia. I'm talking drugs, women trafficking, guns, you name it."

"What are you saying, deputy?"

"I'm saying that we have to bid our time and pounce when the time is right. We need to be careful with this."

"Tell me, deputy, when do you think is the right time, because I am ready to tear that family apart right now." Luke



growled.

The deputy smiled and held up a white, fancy envelope.

"We're in luck. The Humsworths just announced the date for the wedding of their golden son to Fiona Carmichael.

I don't know about you, but I've always wanted to crash a wedding."