

Arabella 2025

Chapter 2025

"You're family, too." Martin said, wrapping his arms around her tightly, "There's no need for you to move

away. I'll set a date for our engagement party, and I'll invite all our friends and family to show them

you're the one I've chosen to be by my side, the love of my life."

"But..."

"No buts. A day without you is torture enough. You think I could stand you moving to another town?

What if work chains me down and I can't drive over every day? I can't even picture life without you

anymore. I'm used to having you right here with me."

Holding her close, he continued, "You're mine, and you should be standing by my side, basking in the

spotlight, not hiding in the shadows, nameless. I don't want to hear such thoughts from you ever again."

That was exactly what Serena had been longing to hear!

"But," she protested, feigning guilt, "it's all my fault. If only I were in better health, I could visit your folks

more often, take care of them properly."

"Focus on healing up first. Your body's still recovering. I'll talk with my parents." Martin reassured her,

then opened the first aid kit and began to tend to a cut on her ear, "Did they hit you here?"

Serena quickly replied to cover it up, "I don't know how it happened."

He knew she was protecting them, "This wasn't here when I left for work. It only showed up after their visit. You think I can't put two and two together?"

"Martin, don't be upset with them. It doesn't hurt, really!" But as she spoke, she winced and hastily added, "Compared to everything the Collins family put me through, they have been saints."

His mind flashed back to the day he had rescued her from the Collins family's basement, battered and barely clinging to life and his heart clenched with renewed tenderness.

At that moment, Dora knocked and said softly, "Sir, there's a police officer at the door for you."

Martin paused mid-application of the antiseptic, and then resumed, "Got it. You may go."

"Martin, what's going on?" Serena's voice was laced with worry, "Why are the police here?"

"Just a small matter. Stay still; I need to finish dressing this wound."

"Have you gotten into trouble?" Serena was unaware of the latest trending news, oblivious to their relationship being outed, to the deaths of Martin's men being pinned on him, and to the rumors that he had sabotaged the Collins' prize car for her sake.

She was anxious that Martin was facing serious trouble, that her lifeline might be cut down after so many efforts she made to cling to him.

Had she just endured all that pain for nothing?

"Don't fret. It's a minor issue, really. Just a formality the police have to go through because of public voice." Martin's tone was light, "Are you worried about me?"

"You're my boyfriend. Who else would I worry about?" She thought to herself, wondering if she had missed some explosive news that afternoon.

Martin wouldn't have done something that would land him behind bars, would he? Surely not, she mused. The Cooper family was too influential for him to end up suffering for a crime.