

Chapter 8

Dean:

I stayed completely quiet as I watched Iris walking out of the office, clenching her fists as she tried controlling whatever she was feeling.

I knew that she was more than just a little angry, and I couldn't blame her for her anger. She was hurt by what I did, and that was something that I knew for fact. It was something that I built myself, and now that I was dealing with the consequences, I hated to admit it, I couldn't help but find myself hating it.

It just upset me that she wouldn't even bother trying to listen or speak, but I knew for fact that I couldn't expect any less from her. This was the first time the two of us have seen one another in years, and that alone was enough to set a major gap between us. Not that a bigger gap needed to be created, I already created one between us years ago when I started dating Mariana, cheating on my wife and marriage. The fact that she knew about it and didn't speak at the time confused me, but I knew that she did it to maintain our marriage, one that I chose to break.

She was in pain, and that was something that I knew very well. The woman that I knew wouldn't be acting on this much anger. If anything, the Iris that I knew was more in control of her emotions regardless of the situation. However, I knew that for her to be acting like this, she was broken and was trying to both hide and control it, and I knew that it would be somewhat worse than that as time went by, I just hoped that things didn't end up backfiring badly on both our businesses, that would be something that I didn't want to deal with.

"Boss?" Matias, one of my men asked, entering the meeting room. The men knew that I often left after the last of the partners left, mostly, it was supposed to be me and Ashton, or in this case, Iris, but this time, I just couldn't find myself moving, and I knew that Iris left because she didn't want to deal with me anymore. She needed her space, and I knew that I needed to respect that if the two of us were to work on proper boundaries with time. It was like my feet were paralyzed to the ground, and I knew for fact that it was due to the fact that the woman that I loved and lost stood in front of me minutes ago when I had been searching for her for years. It just annoyed me that I didn't realize that I

was in love with her until she was gone. It was a sad game of life and fate, and it was a game that I didn't find myself calculating correctly.

I didn't even have the guts to face her with the fact that she was in a new relationship, it was something that sickened me to the bone, and was something that hurt me more than anything that I ever thought would. It shouldn't be concerning me, I knew that, but I couldn't help the pain that I felt at the fact and idea that it could have been the two of us who had the baby. The two of us could have built our family somehow, but I was the one who chose otherwise; therefore, I couldn't blame her if she chose to move on, it was her basic right to do so.

"Call in and check on Mr. Ashton. I want to know what is wrong with him and if there is anything that I would need to do to help. Let him know that I would be more than willing to offer it, all he had to do was let me know." I said, and Matias nodded before walking out of the meeting room. I picked up my phone and wallet before walking out and heading to my office. My heart raced with every step, and I knew that I was in for long days ahead. The man was still like a father to me despite everything that happened, at least, it was how I saw him. I knew that it was the opposite when it came to him looking at me.

Ashton has been avoiding me since he found out about everything that happened between Iris and I. The thing was, I couldn't blame the man. I would have done more than just cut ties between us. If anything, I would have let the man who tried to break my daughter lose everything that he had before I made sure to discriminate against him in ways that he didn't even think possible.

I hated admitting it out loud, and I knew that I wouldn't have the guts to face the man on an occasion that wasn't work related. I had to admit, I couldn't even look at him in the first few weeks when we started working together after the divorce. The way he looked at me was more than enough to make me regret ever deciding to file for the divorce to begin with.

The first words that he told me after that were still drilled in my memory, and I knew that they would be until the end of time. Especially considering the fact that I knew that he was right about them. I had no right to do what I did to the woman. She truly didn't deserve to be treated the way that she was.

"I gave you a bright and beautiful flower, and you not only killed her by

plucking her and throwing her away. You drained her until she was no longer able to fight to survive, and that is something that I am going to make you regret, Dean.* He said, making my chest ache. I had to admit, it was the first time that I felt so out of place, and so disoriented.

I was often the confident man who knew what to and what not to say, when to and when not to say the words that needed to be said. But when it came to that situation, I found myself being blocked to the point where I didn't know how to think of a proper response.

I entered my office and sat on my desk, my heart aching as I felt like I was in complete conflict. However, my conflict didn't last for too long before the confusion that I had was replaced by anger when my phone rang. I glared at the device already knowing the ringtone that I set for her.

It was one that I used to ensure that I knew who was calling me when I didn't want to answer her. And this time, I knew that I didn't want to.

I set my phone aside before my office's door opened, revealing Mariana who raised an eyebrow at me as she looked at the phone. I stood up, glaring at her, not understanding where she thought that she could get the attitude from. I was not one who even allowed her back at the company. It was one of the rules that she knew for fact, especially considering that she was well aware that the two of us ruined my marriage by the scandal that we put up.

The funny part was the fact that almost everyone, including Iris, knew about it. No one really ever spoke until the divorce news. I guess that it was because it was common for a few men to fall for such scandals sometimes, but the fact that she didn't even face me with it made it harder for me to digest. Things would have been a lot easier and I would have felt less guilty if she did.

"What are you doing here?" I asked, standing up from my chair as she closed the door behind her. She glared at me, crossing her arms over her chest as she shook her head in question. I could tell that she was looking around, probably trying to find someone inside the office for her to start a fuss about it.

She knew for fact that I didn't like her being in the office, and she knew that I had my reasons. The number of rumors that spread after our divorce made the office toxic and annoying when it came to working at,

and the fact that she has managed to fire more secretaries than I ever hired in a span of our first two years as a couple said a lot about why I didn't want her coming to the office anymore.

The woman suspected that every other woman would lure in a married man simply for a few thousand dollars. However, she didn't know that her case was common, but not all girls who entered MY companies had those features. The reputation of my work was always important to me no matter what the content.

Therefore, hiring Mariana didn't seem like the best decision that I made. She was good at what she did, I knew that very well, but the fact that I didn't stop to think for a second before hiring her was something that I regretted.

I had to admit, the innocent gaze that she had at the time was what caught my attention. The fact that I could tell that she struggled to get whatever degrees she had was another fact. She was a hard worker, it was something that I knew, but I was wrong in not choosing to let her go when I saw the first sign of her trying to seduce me. It was the mistake that I made.

"I asked a question." I said, glaring at her when I saw that she didn't answer.

"I called and you chose to hang up on me. You have been treating me coldly for months, if not a year already now." She said, and I glared at her. The woman was sick if she thought that I needed permission from her if I didn't want to do anything that concerned me. "So, where is she?"

"She?" I asked, frowning in confusion. The woman couldn't be seriously asking me this question within MY employees and assistants.

"Yes, SHE." She said, and I crossed my arms over my chest, waiting for what she had to say. She pulled out a picture before handing it to me. It was Iris walking into the company. "Where is your slut of an ex, Dean?"



Commented [Ma1]:

Commented [Ma2R1]:

