

Chapter 21: An Advice

Nora woke up the next morning with a grimace. She was tempted to simply shoot a text to Antonio that she was sick and then lie in bed all day. She reminded herself that she was done wallowing after discovering his infidelity, but her mind did not seem to grasp the situation yet.

And then there was the additional discovery of Sara also joining the University. How was that possible? Sara was a year younger and had not even appeared for her exams... unless...

Nora shook her head. Just how clueless and foolish had she been? Her mother had insisted that Nora leave at least a couple of hours early for her high school exams so that she would not be 'late' under any circumstance. Even though she'd hated sitting in the sun to study, she had tried to console herself that this was probably her mother showing her some concern.

Now she knew the truth. Her mother had not wanted her to get suspicious of Sara. So, she had been pushed out of the house early so that Sara could relax and go.

Sighing, she made her way to breakfast and with a passing 'Good morning' at the man at the table, grabbed some cereal and milk for herself before sitting opposite him. This had been their routine since the last time he had given her 'the lesson'. Thankfully, there had been no other lessons from him.

She heard his baritone voice as she stabbed at her milk bowl, trying to gather her thoughts about questioning Antonio. Blinking at the unexpected sound, she looked up at the Snowman in confusion.

Since she refused to think of him as Demon due to the kindness he had shown her, she had taken to referring to him as Snowman or Snow in her thoughts. After all, the man always gave off a cold aura and was as silent as a Snowman.

"Did you say something?"

Demetri looked at her with a raised brow and she realized that no one must have ever asked the man to repeat what he said. However, the man was not petty and repeated, "You have marks on your wrist. Again."

She looked down at the marks in irritation. Of course, they were there. It wasn't enough that Sara and her mother were usually digging their fingers into her; even Antonio had quickly picked up that habit.

"Yes, I know I have them again! I am easily bruised!" She snapped at him before stuffing her mouth with cereal. It wasn't as if she wanted to get those bruises or had control over it!

"You should be more careful. If this gets out of hand..."

Putting down her bowl spoon forcefully, so that milk splashed from the sides, she burst out, "I can handle it! Do you think I am going around telling people to grab me? Of course, I am careful! However, I do not have the superpower of controlling others! And I do not need a lecture about the bad effects of violence and things getting out of hand! I. Can. Handle. My. Own. Business!"

The silence after her outburst was so charged that it could probably electrocute any innocent bystanders. Embarrassed and already realizing that she had overstepped her bounds, Nora was about to apologize when Demetri stood up and left the table.

He must be angry. As he should be. He did not deserve all that she had told him. Biting her lip, she wondered if she should follow him back to his room. But the direction to his room was one she had treated as the Line of Control, never stepping over it.

Just then she heard his door open and quickly grabbed a napkin to clean the spilt milk, trying to avoid looking at him. He stopped next to her chair and placed a card next to the bowl, "Please take self-defence classes in case things get out of hand. That is what I had been about to say before you cut me off."

And with that statement, Nora found herself buried under a mountain of guilt. She looked at the visiting card he had placed in front of her and sighed in her heart. A self-defence academy?

Catching his sleeve as he walked away from her, Nora stared at the gold cuff on it and apologized quickly, "I am sorry for my outburst. I did not mean to snap at you."

When he continued to stand there, making no move to go forward or say anything to accept her apology, she spoke hurriedly, "I met Antonio yesterday. That is my ex-fiancé. I don't know why I agreed to meet him again today. Maybe to get closure. But then I discovered another one of his and Sara's treachery. And my own foolishness, of course. I just... I am so sorry about all this.

Demetri's stern expression softened as he looked at Nora's down-turned head, his earlier irritation dissipating. "Apology accepted," he finally replied before moving away from her.

"Thank you," she whispered, her voice sincere. "I appreciate your understanding. And I'll consider those self-defence classes."

Demetri nodded and continued, "You can use this card. It is for our company's employees so you will get a discount."

2

With those words, Demetri turned and walked away. However, as he reached the door, he could not help but hesitate and look back. Seeing her slump like this as he left did not feel right. But...

Sighing, he cleared his throat and called out, "Nora, feeling foolish is okay. We have all been there sometime in our lives. Just remember, you are stronger than you think."

With those words of encouragement, Demetri made his exit. Nora stared in astonishment at the closed door, suddenly feeling grateful. She did not know if she was stronger or not but the assurance in his voice made her want to believe his words. Quickly, she finished her breakfast with renewed confidence and got ready to face her new challenge. As she prepared to leave, she could not help but wonder, what foolishness had he done in his life?