

## time away

Vanessa's p.o.v

I called Verlene once we arrived. She was upset that I didn't tell her before, but I told her it was something I decided on so unexpectedly. I also called the school and let them know the kids will be out for some days and I also let Eric know that he could visit the kids once we returned. He seems to be calming down. He didn't try to ght me on anything. Im glad. I turned off my phone after that. I need uninterrupted time with my kids and no phone means no missed calls or text messages from Alex. I think not speaking to him for some time will give me a clear head on what I want to do moving forward.

My kids loved our mini-vacation and wished we had brought Vanna with us. We got on the road on Sunday afternoon and the kids sang songs with dad and I. We stopped at a cool gas station and everyone got to pick a snack they have never had before. We arrived home and I decided to park the van in the garage. I don't want anyone coming around yet. The kids played in the backyard and eventually Anthony made his way over. Valeria told him all about the trip and he asked if he can go with us next time. He was so upset that he hasn't seen Val for days now. We eventually did night routine and I got everything ready for the kids for the following day. I also got my clothes ready to go work with dad. They got a location and he said although it is early stages of being prepared, I can go help him. Perfect. I do not want to be stuck in this house all day long. Finally, in bed, I turn on my phone and there's some messages from Alex and some from Eric. I ignore Eric's for now and read Alex's. It is mostly asking me to call him back and telling me that we need to talk and asking where we are at. The last one reads. "Fine, reach out when you are ready. I will be waiting."

Alex (Monster's p.o.v)

We sit in our weekly meeting. I am losing my mind. I have not spoken to Vanessa, yet. She will not return my calls, texts and Verlene isn't talking to me and Buck says he is getting the silent treatment from her as well. He is even pissed off at me now. I didn't even do anything. This has gotten way too out of hand. Law comes in a little late, he sits next to me and whispers that Vanessa's case has been transferred to another lawyer. This is straight bulls!t. I don't even know what to do, how to get in contact with her. She is avoiding me. I know the sheriff knows where she is at, a\$\$hole won't tell me. I have been sending her multiple text messages, but I decide to just send one last one and tell her to contact me when she is ready. We clearly need to talk. During the meeting, I bring up club girls or any females at all feeling like they can go into member's rooms uninvited and I am surprised how big of a problem it is. The majority of the men do not want club girls in their rooms. It is decided that if it happens, the person gets kicked out on the spot. People need to learn to respect boundaries. We go through other things. Members bring up things we need to vote on and once we are done, I get ready. I have to go make my weekly run and check on one of my clubs. Hopefully, this helps me get my mind off the woman who seems to have me by my balls.

When I returned from my trip, I returned to the restaurant to check on things and secretly hoping that Vanessa came back, but no such luck. Foxy was here though and with Brea. "Can I talk to you?" I ask her and she nods and follows me to the oce. "What is she still doing here? Her club left already and she isn't staying here. She isn't a member." I tell her. "I know. I tried to get her to leave, but she won't. I am not sure what else to do. All she wants to do is get drunk and party. She is so hungover right now. Last night she had s3x with a bunch of our members. I heard her say that she didn't have anywhere to go and that she wouldn't mind downgrading from member to club girl." she tells me and I am shocked. "Not for this club. I don't want her here." I tell Foxy and grab some paperwork and head out. She better deal with it because if I do, no-one will like it. I go do some mechanic work at the shop because I am on the verge of snapping. Buck comes in and informs me that they are back. Why Vanessa hasn't contacted me, I have no clue. Maybe she gured out what a piece of sh!t I am and that she can do better. Maybe she decided to give the sheriff a chance instead. Jealousy bubbles inside of me. I want to rip him and everything apart. If she would just hear me out, she would know that I did nothing wrong, but I can't even do that until she contacts me. I stay working on cars til real late. I then head home, shower and try to sleep.

Vanessa's p.o.v

The following day goes by smoothly at work. Dad taught me a lot of things. He says he will give me the position that Eric had, if I want it. I am not too sure what I want to do, so right now we started with small, easy things. At 2:30, I leave to pick up the kids and he stayed to continue working. I took them to this pizza and ice cream place, then to the park where Anthony and Franco are at. We all hang out together for a couple of hours, then we all head home. Valeria asked to ride with Franco and Anthony and since they are our next door neighbors, I allowed it. I help the kids with homework and we play a board game, then they ate dinner and we did night routine. This goes on for a couple of days. Same routine day after day. Today Verlene came over and is upset with me, but she got over it when I poured her a big glass of wine. She tells me how Alex has been looking for me and upset at everyone. Buck told her that he cussed everyone out at the clubhouse and they had a meeting and set a rule that club girls or any visitors can't go into a member's room uninvited. Apparently, a lot has gone on while we were gone. God, I miss him, but I don't even know where we stand anymore. Who knows what will happen. We do need to talk, eventually. This time away made me realize a lot of things and I know that everyone deserves a chance to explain and everyone needs closure on situations too. "Not to be rude, Verlene, but I do not want to talk about him right now." I tell her. "Alright, apologies, tell me all about the trip." she says. I go on and on about how our trip went.

That night there's a knock on my door. The kids are already in bed. Who can it be this late? Hope and happiness bubbles up in my stomach, thinking that it is going to be Alex asking me for forgiveness. I realize how much I miss him and want to see him. I open the door and I am surprised to nd Eric standing here. What the h3ll does he want? I realize that no-one else is here. I am alone and if he tries something, no-one can defend me.