

## Chapter 21

"Hey, dad!" Keith picked up the call of his father.

"Hey, son! How're you doing?" He asked.

"Just usual stuff! Eat. Sleep. Work. Repeat!" Keith answered in a tired voice.

"I see, and how's Natalie?" His father asked, and Keith's expression quickly changed.

"We broke up!" He sighed. "I caught her cheating on me."

"I am sorry to hear that," His father said.

"It's alright!" Keith answered and there was a long pause when his father spoke again.

"Hmm.. so are you seeing someone these days?"

His father asked, and Keith left out a chuckle.

"Natalie has taught me a good lesson! Do you think I'd do such stunts again?" He said.

"I understand, son! Anyway, why don't we have dinner together this Saturday? Are you free?" His father asked. "It's been a long time!"

"Sure! Let's have a family dinner." Keith said, and they ended the call. He turned to walk inside when he saw Cara walking in his direction.

"Are you done?" He asked and Cara nodded her head when his eyes drifted to her old worn-out white sneakers.

"Let's get you new shoes!" He said, walking to the driver's seat of his car and Cara was a little surprised but slid into the passenger seat, a smile stretched on her lips.

\*\*\*

Ascent Group,

"I don't think he is in a relationship with anyone, let alone any waitress!" Keith's father, Mr James Wilson, turned to Alfred Doyle.

"I guess your son is hiding things from you! I've seen him entertaining a waitress these days."

Alfred said, and James turned serious.

"Maybe she is just one of those one-night stands! I trust my son, he won't do anything that could tarnish our reputation." He took his seat behind the desk and wore his glasses.

Alfred Doyle rubbed his stubble. "I think you're right! Ascent Group is the third leading company. Keith will never do something to bring the reputation down." He said and James nodded in agreement, typing something on his laptop.

"But woman these days! You can't trust them.

They're sly and bloody gold diggers! Always out to hunt down a rich man. Keith is a charming boy. I fear he doesn't fall for the wrong woman." Alfred further added and James looked at the laptop screen wordlessly.

\*\*\*

"Try these!" Keith put a pair of white sneakers on the floor, but Cara shook her head.

"These are expensive! I can't take this." She said and Keith rolled his eyes. "I don't have a job. How will pay for these?" She looked uncertain. "I'm fine in my old shoes. Let's go home. Milo must be hungry!"

"When is your birthday?" Keith asked.

"The twelfth of March!" Cara blurted, but quickly chewed the inside of her cheeks and opened her mouth to correct, but Keith interrupted her.

"It's just around the corner. Consider this a birthday gift from me!" He said, sitting on his knees and slipping the sneakers into her bare feet.

"I think it's perfect!" He smiled and glanced up at her, only to find her staring at him. "What's wrong?"

"Why are you doing this?" Cara asked.

"I'm doing what?" He asked, staring into her eyes.

"Look, I'm just trying to help you!" He said and their moment was interrupted when he got a call from his senior and he explained everything to Keith, who glanced back at Cara, his nostril flared in anger, but he composed himself.

He quickly paid for the sneakers and they exited the mall, heading to home.

\*\*\*

"They came to sign cooperation with the one who is the sole reason for their destruction for four years. Bravo, man!" Simon exclaimed loudly, and a smirk stretched on Aries's face.

“Soon Glaziers Group will be on knees, and they would beg me to take over their company,” Aries said in his deep voice. “And that’s how Aries Grayson will kill the leading competition in the market.”

“Great! But do you think they’d agree?” Simon asked.

“If they dare to disagree, Glazier Group will face major loss in the stock market next years!” Aries smirked, pouring whiskey into his glass. “The strings are in my hands now!” He took a sip.

“I hope things turn out the way you want!” Simon said. “So, when is the opening?”



"Next week," Aries answered.

"And when are you coming back? Grandma misses you!" Simon said.

"A week later after the opening ceremony. I've to take sure everything functions here right because I won't be coming back here anytime soon." Aries answered when he saw his assistant walking into his suite in the mirror. "I'll call you later, Simon." He ended the call, finished his drink and turned to hear the good news.

\*\*\*

"Give him whatever he wants!" Cynthia, who didn't

know anything about the business, agreed to Aries's demand and Isla smiled, looking at her uncle.

"Cynthia, are you crazy?" Alfred raised his voice.

"He is demanding fifty-one per cent stake holding of your company and the decision-making rights! Do you understand the meaning?" He berated her.

"Alfred, we need Aries Grayson on our side!"

Cynthia argued.

"But at this cost!" Alfred retorted, shaking his head in disapproval. "We'll be ruined!" He said and faced Mr Johnson. "What do you think, Mr Johnson? You're the head of the financial department! Don't

you think it's a risky collaboration?"

Mr Johnson cleared his throat. "Aries Grayson is the leading name in the business world right now! Intelligent and extremely unpredictable. It is a risky collaboration, Mrs Glaziers!" He glanced at Cynthia, whose smile dropped. "But at the same time, this collaboration can be remarkable in history. Mr Grayson is investing a whopping seventy million which is three times more than our investment, and he is offering his expertise and years of experience. If we see, all in all, it is not a bad deal, considering our position in the market. I'm not sure if we're going to make any profit next year!"

"And that's exactly why he is interested in doing business with us!" Alfred sneered. "He knows our weakness."

"Well, that's what we call business rivalry!" Mr Johnson said. "We'd have done the same if we were in his shoes. But I believe the Glazier Group will retain to its original position if we join hands with Aries Grayson. If there is anyone after Shane Glazier who can save Glazier Group, it's Aries Grayson!"

Cynthia, who was listening to both gentlemen, finally made a decision. "I've decided. We are going ahead with the collaboration. Inform him

and prepare the contract!"

Isla smiled widely. She even started daydreaming about meeting Aries, and it was no less than a fairytale. But little did she know that fairytales were for the angels caught in the cuff.

\*\*\*

Cara was cutting vegetables in the kitchen to prepare dinner while glancing at her new sneaker from time to time. Lost in her thought, she was humming a song when Keith walked into the kitchen with just a towel wrapped around his waist right after the shower.

Blood rushed to Cara's cheeks as she stood in her place watching him. The woody masculine fragrance engulfed her, and she failed to think straight until Keith reached for her, looking for something. "Have you seen my phone?" He asked, and Cara quickly composed herself.

"No!" She answered and Keith groaned.

"Where is your phone? Call on my number!" He said.

"Phone is in my room!" She stuttered and Keith walked out of the kitchen, sauntering to her room while she watched his retreating back. She shook her head, biting her lips, and turned to the

microwave when Keith appeared again.

"Cara, I'm heading out for a party!" He said and Cara nodded without turning in his direction. Keith turned to get ready for the party, but stopped and faced Cara. "Why don't you join me?" He asked.

"No, I'm fine!" She turned to him. "I'm good at home. What will I do there?"

Keith rolled his eyes. "What people do at the party! Come on, join me. Janet will be there to accompany you." He said, and she slowly nodded, pressing her lips in a straight line. Keith's eyes travelled to her new shoes, which she was wearing and roaming around in the house since they came

back, and he chuckled. "You just need to change clothes, I see!"

His remark embarrassed Cara, and she watched him turning to his room. Cara kissed Milo's head and walked to her room to change her clothes in the opposite direction while Milo sat in the hall watching both the closed doors sticking his tongue out.

\*\*\*

"What's the news?" Aries sat comfortably in his recliner and lit a cigarette.

"Congratulations, sir! Glaziers agreed to your



demand!" His assistant said and Aries took a long drag from his cigarette and blew the smoke upward in the series of Os. "They said they would like to discuss everything once you're back in New York,"

"Great, I can't wait to sign this collaboration!" Aries smirked. "What's the status of the Mexico project? I want to go back to New York as soon as possible!"

"I'll see how early things can be done!" His assistant said and walked out, closing the door on his way out.

Aries was in deep thought when his phone buzzed

on the table and he picked it up, only to find a picture of a beautiful girl! He rolled his eyes, scrolling to the other picture when a message from his grandmother flashed on the screen.

“This is Isla Glaziers! I think you both will look great together. What do you say?”

Aries opened the picture of the brunette again, and indeed she was beautiful.

\*\*\*

Keith and Cara reached his friend’s place for the party after an hour of drive and Cara was hesitantly following him inside, but the vibe of the place

totally changed her mood. The party was organised at the poolside, and a smile tucked on her lips watching the happy and cheerful people.

Keith introduced her to his friends and Janet was by her side to let her feel comfortable.

“Let’s dance!” Someone shouted in the crowd and everyone grooved to the beat of the music. Cara was having fun up till her eyes landed on the entrance and she was left momentarily stunned to find Isla Glazier. Her face turned white.

