

## Chapter 208

Bonfim called to inform me that he had scheduled my meeting with Claude for the following afternoon. He explained that he would do it at the police station to take Claude's statement at the same time, plus it would be a safer environment for me.

The next day, at the appointed time, I was there, accompanied by my husband and some security guards. Bonfim took us to his office and asked us to wait there. Shortly after, he returned with two other officers bringing Claude in.

Claude had an unshaven beard and a shaved head. He was wearing a prison uniform and looked small among those officers, but even in the worst possible situation, he still had that cynical smirk on his face.

"Handcuff him there," Bonfim ordered, and the officers sat Claude in a chair in the corner, passing the handcuffs through a tube on the wall that looked like a handrail.

"So, Mr. Claude, you wanted to speak with Mrs. Miller, she's here," Bonfim said.

"Mrs. Miller, how important you've become, huh, Catherine." Claude smiled, and I felt uncomfortable. "I want to speak with her in private." Claude looked at the detective and smiled at Alexander.

"That won't be possible," Bonfim replied.

"Well, sorry for you all then, keep running in circles looking for Joseph," Claude said calmly.

"I'll talk to him," I said impulsively, and his smile grew even wider.



"Catherine, no!" Alexander intervened.

I stood up and looked at my husband, mouthing "trust me." Alexander ran both hands over his face and nodded.

"Detective, is he properly handcuffed?" I asked.

"Yes, Catherine, he can't touch you, and we'll be right outside the door. Just call, and we'll come in," Bonfim assured me.

"Oh, bunny, how am I supposed to caress you then? Run my hands over that sexy bod—" Before he could finish, Alexander was already on top of him, landing two punches.

"Don't you dare get smart with my wife!" Alexander shouted in his face.

"Detective, I've been assaulted, the judge will know about this," Claude said with complete cynicism, and Bonfim pulled Alexander off him.

"Yes, the judge will know you're a liar when I present the medical report I already have, stating that you returned to prison perfectly fine without a scratch," Bonfim said as Claude's smile began to fade. "Catherine, just don't get close to him."

When I was alone in the room with Claude, I felt revulsion, felt disgusted that I had ever let a creep like him touch me in my life. I sat down calmly and looked at him.

"You wanted to talk to me, I'm here. What do you want?" I asked.

"Catherine, you're still beautiful, even after having four children recently," Claude looked at me lustfully, which disgusted me even more.

"How do you know that?" I wanted to know.



"That worthless cousin of yours. She visits me and tells me everything."  
He said. "You know she hates you, right? She's always hated you and has always been jealous of you."

"Yeah, I discovered that when I caught you two in my bed."

"Oh, are you still hurt about that, bunny?" Claude once again referenced the pet name he used to call me when we were dating.

"Don't call me that! I'm not hurt. Actually, Kelly, in trying to hurt me, did me a huge favor!" I flashed a big smile. "Breaking up with you was liberating, and I got to meet the love of my life. A real man!" Claude's face darkened.

"Yeah, you did well for yourself, didn't you, Catherine? Married a rich guy, have a bunch of his kids. Yeah, you're doing great. But you need to help family. Look, I have to put up with that trashy cousin of yours, I'm in jail, you have to help me."

"I don't have to do anything, Claude. You chose this."

"You know, I only slept with your cousin because she's a whore. You know how it is, I'm a man, if a woman shakes it in front of me, I go for it. Just like that slut Celeste. I never turn it down."

"Disgusting! You're such a creep! You're not a man, you're a clueless, sexist, stupid jerk."

"Wow, so many loving nicknames!"

"Just tell me, Claude, what do you want from me?"

"I want you and your rich hubby to pay for a good lawyer for me. That's for starters. I want money every week, and I want you to visit me while



"I'm locked up."

I burst out laughing. This was the joke of the century.

"You know there's not the slightest chance I'll do that, right?!"

"Well then, you'll have to figure out how to find Joseph on your own."

"You know, Claude, I really regret ever dating you. You're a despicable person."

"Catherine, we were happy together. If I hadn't fallen for your cousin's tricks that day, we would be married now."

"No, we wouldn't be, Claude. I would have realized what a disgusting person you are. But listen, Claude, let me give you some advice – confess to your crimes. You know if you confess, you'll get a lighter sentence."

"And why would I do that?"

"Because, as you know, my husband has money and power, and he can ruin your life and throw you in jail forever. He already didn't like you, but now, knowing you did the dirty work that killed his parents, he simply despises you. He'll move heaven and earth to see you get a very long sentence."

"And what can he do? He has no proof of anything! The day that helicopter crashed, I was at my wedding with your cousin." Claude gave a sarcastic smile. "You know, I chose to get married on that exact day because I knew it would be, as they say, the perfect alibi!"

How cynical he was! I needed to think fast, think of something to convince him to talk. But what could it be? I had to think of something that would affect him directly. There was no point in appealing to the fact



that his son would grow up without a father because Claude didn't care about anyone but himself, or well, almost anyone. There was one person he still respected.

"You know, Claude, I heard your mother is very upset about everything that's happening. Has she been visiting you?"

"No, Catherine, my mother hasn't come to visit me." He wiped the cynical smile off his face when he answered me. "You know her health isn't good, and she can't handle the stress of prison visits. The doctor said it's not good for her. Why are you bringing my mother into this conversation?"

"I imagine she must be worried. I always liked your mother, she's a good woman. Raised five children alone, and now the youngest has caused her this heartache."

"Leave my mother out of this, Catherine."

"Wouldn't you like to talk to your mother, Claude? Through video call? To calm her down and know how she's doing? Because I know she hates Kelly and they don't speak to each other. So your mother probably doesn't know anything, must be very worried."

Claude was serious now, the cynical smile gone from his face. He looked into my eyes and leaning forward as much as he could, said:

"You don't think you're going to convince me to talk just because of a video call with my mother, do you? You're smarter than that."

"Claude, I'm going to propose something to you, if you agree, I'll see how to work it out."

"I'm listening, Catherine."





"Anyway, you must already know that you'll be locked up for a long time for kidnapping my son."

"Yes. I know that."

"I know your mother has lupus and is showing severe symptoms. I can ask Alexander to pay for her treatment at the best hospital in the country, with comfort, convenience, and good doctors, no waiting lists, no worrying about whether public pharmacies will have the medications, and so on. And I can ask the detective to let you video call her. In exchange, you confess everything and tell us all you know about Joseph. It's a good deal, Claude."

Claude thought about it, lowered his head, looked from side to side, took a deep breath, and looked at me again. Something in his eyes had changed, softened. Then he spoke again.

"I'll accept if you can get me a video call with my mother every week."

"That's very difficult, Claude. Maybe once a month."

"Alright." Claude agreed with a sigh. "Get that, and I'll tell you everything."

"I'll call the detective and Alexander." I stood up and went to the door asking them to come in. "I'm making a deal with Claude for him to talk, but I need both of you."

"Let's see what it'll be." Detective Bonfim spoke very calmly.

"Alexander, Claude's mother is a wonderful person. She has lupus with terrible symptoms. I thought you could pay for her treatment at the country's leading lupus treatment hospital. Claude worries about her." I said, looking into my husband's eyes.



"Isn't it ironic that I'll be taking care of the health of the mother of the man who killed my parents?" Alexander looked at Claude with pain in his eyes. "But if you, my angel, guarantee she's a good person, I can do that. Besides, she's not responsible for the mess her son made. I'll pay for the treatment and cover all her expenses with a companion since the hospital isn't in Bellwood. I'll sort this out today."

"Thank you, my love! You're so generous!" I said, placing my hand on my husband's chest as he gave me a half-smile. "On your part, detective, I need you to authorize Claude to make a video call to his mother now and arrange for him to talk to her by video once a month."

"The call now, Catherine, is no problem at all. But monthly calls will depend on the judge's authorization." Detective Bonfim informed. "I can't guarantee it, but I can try."

"Then no deal." Claude said harshly. 

"Are you really willing to give up the best healthcare for your mother over a video call? Out of pure selfishness? You're worse than I thought!" Alexander spoke in disgust, making Claude look away and think for a minute.

"Fine, I accept. But the detective has to try with the judge." Claude finally agreed. "And I want to talk to my mother before I tell you everything."

"I'll call my office and have everything arranged about the treatment." Alexander confirmed.