

Chapter 40

I fell asleep and didn't even see Lygia arrive with Peter. I only woke up when Mel was sitting beside me on the bed, watching me. I opened my eyes and saw only one lamp lit. I sat up in bed and looked at my friend, feeling a deep sadness.

"What happened, honey? Lygia said you were lying down when she arrived with Peter. She came to see you, but you were sleeping, and she noticed you'd been crying. What's wrong? Had your first fight with Alexander? It'll pass," my friend spoke in such a calm voice that it made me feel peaceful.

"It won't pass, Mel. What happened was horrible!" I told her with tears in my eyes.

"Well, tell me about it, and we'll decide together if it was horrible. And if it was, I'll send Fred over there to kick Miller's ass," she said, trying to lighten the conversation.

"I'll tell you. But where's Peter?" I asked, realizing what time it was - he should have been home ages ago.

"Don't worry, Lygia's staying over tonight, and they're having a great time in the living room. Leave him with her; you're not okay. She'll take care of him, and I'll take care of you," Mel said, stroking my hair.

"Alright, it's better if my boy doesn't see me like this. I'll take a quick shower, and then we can talk, okay?"

"Of course, honey, go ahead."

I went into the bathroom and let the hot water wash that day off my body, but the pain didn't go away - my soul was hurting. When I returned to the

bedroom, Mel was already waiting for me with a tray of dinner and a huge tub of ice cream with two spoons.

"Come here, sweetie. Fill your stomach first, then we'll destroy this ice cream," Mel said, patting the bed.

I sat down and forced myself to eat; I couldn't get sick - I had a son, and he was my priority. I shouldn't have let my guard down, shouldn't have let Alexander into my heart. After dinner, Mel opened the ice cream tub, and I started talking while we took spoonfuls. I told her everything that had happened in detail, feeling tears roll down my face once again.

"What a son of a bitch! Oh, I'm going to destroy that jerk! He had no right to treat you like that!" my friend was outraged. She always took my pain as her own; that's how she was. She said sharing made the burden lighter. 1

"Mel, I'm going to call my parents and tell them I'm coming home. Alexander is powerful, and he won't let me work here anyway. Do you think your uncle would hire me after this?" I asked her, head down.

"Honey, obviously my uncle or even my dad would hire you. They know who you are; they don't doubt your integrity and character. But you're not going back; you're staying here and making a comeback. Alexander may be powerful, but he's not God. We'll find you another job here. And when that clown regrets it, you'll step on him like a cockroach."

"Melissa, he'll never regret it! He's already decided to blame me; he won't investigate to find the real culprit," I said, discouraged.

"Oh, Cat, if there's one thing I learned from my dad, it's that in this world, traitors are always discovered because they sin through overconfidence. Of course he'll find out it wasn't you, especially when this audit comes to an end, the truth will come out too."

"Mel, only Mari supported me. You can't imagine how cold Patrick was to me," I said, feeling tears rolling again.

"They're both idiots, Cat. You know who you are, and your conscience is clear, so screw those clowns," Melissa was furious. "But they'll regret it, I guarantee that."

I gave her a weak smile, feeling exhausted. She handed me a glass of water and a pill.

"It's for your headache. It must be exploding after crying so much," she explained.

And my head really was hurting. I took the pill and lay down. Mel left the room and turned off the light. It was a horrible night, filled with nightmares and tears.

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