


Chapter 94

The next morning, we woke up early. The aroma of coffee my mom was brewing in the kitchen filled every room in the house. Peter was euphoric, and my dad took him to the small barn to milk the cow. When they returned, my son had a tiny milk mustache and a blue enamel mug in his hand.

We sat down and had breakfast while listening to the birds singing. The house was very spacious and comfortable. It had huge windows, and the fresh morning air flowed through them along with the sunlight.

We went out for a walk, and the property was a good size. It was enough for a diverse orchard, a vegetable garden with all kinds of produce and greens, a barn with one cow, a pigpen with two pigs, and a chicken coop with many hens. Peter had fun collecting eggs with my mom. 

In front of the house, there was a garden full of colorful flowers and a small pond where a family of ducks was playing in the water. The house was flanked by a colonial-style porch, with hammocks hanging in each corner and wooden benches under the windows.

Behind the house, there was a barbecue area with a kitchen and a swimming pool, which made Peter even happier. Further back, there was a water spring and a small stream that ran through the entire property. Peter looked at me with those bright violet eyes and said:

"Mommy, can you call Alexander to come swim with me, please?"

"Sweetie, Alexander is very far away, in another city. It won't be possible this time," I explained to my son and caught my mom's understanding smile.

My parents were really living well in that place, and I was very happy about that. Melissa arrived after lunch, and my parents proudly showed her everything.

"Wow, Anthony, this place is paradise! Now I want to retire and live somewhere like this," Melissa said sincerely. She and my parents got along very well, and there was a lot of affection between them.

"This is your home, Mel. Come whenever you want," my father said with his arm around my friend's shoulder.

Later in the day, Melissa invited me to go into town with Peter. My mom took the opportunity to ask us to buy some things from the market. We got ready and went.

Melissa parked in the square, and we got out of the car. We went to the popcorn vendor and bought some popcorn. We sat there contemplating the afternoon and remembering all the times we used to sit there talking.

We walked around a bit; nothing had changed here, not even the usual malicious gossip from people who kept badmouthing me and calling me lost and my son a bastard. But that didn't bother me anymore. The prejudice of people here no longer affected me.

We entered the supermarket and started picking up items from the list my mom had made. When I walked down the cookie aisle, I ran into my ex-boyfriend Claude. He looked too skinny, with messy hair, unshaven face, and a wrinkled shirt. He was a weird sight, and for a moment, I thanked God for getting rid of him.

"So you're back, Catherine. Took longer than I thought." Claude said mockingly.

"I'm just visiting my parents, Claude, and it's none of your business," I replied, trying to walk past him.

"I can imagine the kind of life you're living in Paradise Port. Big city, no one around to keep an eye on you, you must be sleeping with anyone who comes along."

"Shut your mouth, Claude! You're nobody to talk to me like that," I snapped back.

"But I used to be somebody. Or did you forget I was your first?" He said, making me feel sick.

"You know what, Claude? I don't regret getting pregnant by a stranger. He was a real man who made me feel more in one night than you did in all those years. What I do regret is wasting so much time with you, a failed excuse for a man who never gave me a single orgasm and cheated on me with my cousin in my own bed," I said, feeling anger consume me. He was such an idiot.

"You're a slut, Catherine! Good thing I ended up with Kelly," he said with hatred in his eyes.

"Oh right, because Kelly slept with the whole town, but she's not a slut since they weren't strangers, right?" I said sarcastically.

"You..." Claude lunged at me and grabbed my arm forcefully.

"Let her go right now, you jerk!" Melissa said behind me, holding Peter. "If you don't let go and get lost, I'll make a scene, and when we go to the police station, you know my father's lawyer will be there to make sure you get arrested for assault and harassment."

Claude released my arm and gave Melissa an unpleasant smile, but his

eyes were pure hatred. He never liked her and was always trying to make us fight.

"Well, if it isn't the devil herself with the little bastard," Claude insulted my friend and my son, and I couldn't take it.

"What's going on here?" I heard Mr. Agenor, the store manager, ask. "You're not going to cause trouble here, Claude. You should be ashamed to even speak to Catherine, she's a decent young woman, and you're worthless."

I took a deep breath, positioned myself between them, and pointed my finger in that jerk's face, giving him a warning:

"Don't mess with my son! Or my friend. Now get out of my sight. And if you see us again, pretend you don't know us."

Claude left the aisle, and I felt my body shake with anger. Melissa put her arm around my shoulders and said:

"Friend, this isn't part of our lives anymore. We're only in this town because of your parents."

I looked at her, grateful that she always supported me and protected my son, who was in her arms sucking on a lollipop.

"Mel, this boy is going to lose all his teeth if you keep giving him so much junk food," I said, and we started laughing.