

Indebted to the man who sits on the couch

Marabella's POV

It's 11pm, closing time for Nick's sports bar. The last of the drunks are leaving as I walk around cleaning off the cocktail tables. I head towards the back and set the dishes down in the dish pit. I take the time to pull down the hem of my shorts, that keep riding up my thighs. Stupid uniform.

"Hurry up, Mara. I have somewhere to be tonight", my manager, Sean, says. "I'm almost done.", I say, as I wipe down the counter and bar tops. After nishing up my side work, I clocked out and met Sean at the front door. "About time!", he sneered. I rolled my eyes and started my journey home.

I don't like walking home at night, but I don't really have a choice. My mom and her boyfriend don't have a vehicle, nor jobs. I tend to have to pay the bills and buy groceries with what I make at Nick's, while also trying to attend college. I only have a year and a half left before I graduate with a bachelor's degree. Then I can leave my s**t job and start a better one.

My walk is interrupted by two men, who are staggering down the sidewalk. "Well, hello gorgeous", one of the men slur. "What's a pretty little thing like you doing out here all alone at this hour?", the other guy taunted.

They tried to circle me, so I took a few steps back, eliminating their possibility. "I'm minding my business ", I countered, getting in a defensive stance, so that I can defend myself. "Spicy isn't she?", one of them asked the other. "Let's have a little fun with her. Teach her a lesson, huh?", the other said, as he took a step toward me and reached for my arm. I took a step back and struck the man in the nose with my st. "Ow, you b***h", he snarled.

The other man lunged at me, knocking me to the ground. I felt my knee and elbow scrap against the concrete at impact. I used my elbow to jab the man on top of me, in the ribs. This made his hold on me loosen, though when I stood up, he grabbed the hem of my shirt and pulled, ripping the bottom half of it off. I elbowed him in the nose, a sickening crack lled the night air, as the man fell backward.

As I turned around to run, the other man open-hand smack me across the face. A sharp burn resonated through my face, as I tasted copper in my mouth. I kicked the man in the knee-cap, breaking it outward before punching him as hard as I could in the Adam's apple. The man fell to his knees and grasped his throat.

I took this opportunity to make a run for it. My adrenaline pumped hard in my veins, refraining me from feeling any pain, though I could feel the blood running down my arm, leg and neck. The cool night air, turning my warm blood to ice as I ran.

I could see my small house come into view, so I picked up pace, pushing myself harder. I could hear the two men's heavy footsteps following behind me as they yelled profanities into the night air.

I cleared the steps in one leap, busting straight through my front door. I quickly shut and dead bolted the door. I rested my head on the door as I panted heavily to catch my breath.

"Mara?", my mother's voice was shaky. I turned around to face her, but was met with a scene I was not expecting. Before me, stood 8 men, dressed in nice black suits. One with a gun pointed at my mother's head and another with a gun pointed at her boyfriend's head. The rest of the men had their hands on their guns as they stared at me, ready to draw their weapon and shoot on command.

My eyes roamed the faces in the room until they landed on a man, whom sat on the couch in front of my mom. He had one leg rested lazily over the other, as his piercing gray eyes pinned me in my spot. His stare was intense, making a shiver pass through my body. He was gorgeous, with a sharp jaw line, olive skin and black hair that only accented his beautiful gray eyes. I was captivated by his gaze.

His eyes slowly raked my body before darkening a shade. "Mara, what happened to you? What's going on?", my mother asked frantically. I broke eye contact with the man on the couch to look at my mom, Sherry and her boyfriend, Carl, then down at my torn, dirty clothes and scraped body. I looked back to my mom and frowned, "Nothing. What's going on here?", I asked, the anger I felt evident in my voice. Sadly, my anger was not directed at the men with the guns, like it should probably be. But, at my mother and Carl for getting in deep s**t once again.

"Oh, well,", my mother's explanation was interrupted by loud bangs on the door. I immediately turned around to face the door and took a step back. f**k. f**k. "You stupid b***h. Open this door, we will teach you a f****g lesson!", one of the men yelled, as they continued to rap on the front door.

I heard Carl's sinister laugh, "I guess we aren't the only ones in trouble. See I knew you weren't an angel", he sneered. My head snapped towards Carl. "f**k you. My trouble isn't because I'm a f****g i***t like you", I hissed before facing the door once again.

I noticed one of the men stood by the door causally, watching my every move. I looked at his gun, then extended my hand out towards him. "May I?", I asked. The man's eyebrows shot up in surprise, as he looked behind me at the man sitting on the couch. I assume the man on the couch gave his approval, because the guard pulled his gun from his holster and handed it to me butt rst.

"Thank you", I said politely, as I dropped the magazine to make sure it was loaded. I slid the magazine back into place and pulled the slide back, conrming one was in the chamber. I put my hand on the deadbolt and let out an uneasy breath. The men were still pounding on the door, screaming that they were going to teach me a lesson.

I ipped the deadbolt and yanked the door open, while simultaneously drawing my weapon, aiming right at the rst man's face. "And what lesson would that be?", I asked, a smirk etched on my lips.

In my peripheral vision, I saw another gun drawn and pointed at the men, as well. Giving me the assumption that the man on the couch ordered me some back up.

"Oh, wait. We don't want any trouble", one of the men said, as they both put their hands up in surrender and took a step back. "I beg to differ. You didn't get the hint in the streets and followed me home. In my opinion, you were begging for my bullet.", I said through gritted teeth. "And since I have the gun, only my opinion matters", I know my smile was sadistic, however these men tried to take something of value to me, something irreplaceable.

I heard a deep alluring voice speak from behind me. "Are they the reason you look like this?", he asked. "Yes", I answered with out taking my eyes off the men in front of me. "Kill them", his profound voice commanded. And without blinking or thinking, I pulled the trigger. The guard pulled his trigger at the same time as me. Both men collapsed onto the porch as blood splattered all over my face and the gun.

I released a heavy breath. My mind racing at an incomparable speed. "Clean this mess up", the gentleman on the couch said. Four men immediately began to remove the bodies and clean the blood from the porch. I tore a piece of fabric from my already torn shirt and wiped the blood from the gun. I handed it, butt rst, to the man I borrowed it from.

He cautiously took the from me, obviously shocked by my actions. I can't blame him though, I, too, am rattled by what I had just done. I killed someone. Without thinking twice about it. It was that voice. It had a power over me, it was dangerous and alluring.

I face the man who sat on the couch, like a king. He had a beautiful grin stretched across his lips, a glint of admiration reected in his eyes and one of his eyebrows was arched.

I reluctantly broke from his gaze to bring my attention back to my mother. "You were saying?", I asked with contempt. My mother and Carl, both looked at me with horror written on their faces. "What have you done?", my mother asked in trepidation. I walked over to one of the chairs in the living room and sunk into it with a hiss. "We aren't talking about me, mother. What kind of mess did you fall into this time?", I asked annoyed with her antics.

I looked down at my wounds that still had dirt embedded in them. My mother did not answer me, so, the man on the couch did, drawing my eyes up to his. "They owe me money", he informed me. I shook my head disapprovingly. "That doesn't surprise me", I uttered, pulling out my checkbook. I knew there was at least \$1,500 in my account. Hopefully it was not more than that.

"How much?", I asked. "\$500,000", he answered. I froze as my heart plummeted to the pit of my stomach. My head snapped up towards my mother. Fury coursed through my veins giving me newfound strength to stand from the couch.

"What the f**k?", I bellowed, the anger evident in my voice. My mother's faced paled as Carl's morphed into one of rage. "Don't raise your voice at me, you little ungrateful b***h", Carl snapped. "You shut the f**k up. No one asked for an opinion from the peanut gallery", I snapped at him. I heard a few of the men snicker at my comment.

"What the hell did you spend \$500,000 on?", I asked angrily. I could feel my blood pressure skyrocketing. "That's none of your f****g business, little girl.", Carl sneered with hate. A growl involuntarily left my throat.

I looked to the man sitting on the couch. He slowly brought his cold, dark eyes up from Carl. They softened as they met mine. We stared at each other for a long moment, calculating the other.

I smirked and looked back at Carl, "You're right. And since it's not my business, it's also not my debt to pay. He can just take it out of your ass. If you'll excuse me, I'm going to go shower and mind my business", I retorted , as I walked through the living room, passing the gentleman on the couch.

"Marabella, please wait. We need your help. Please, I will tell you", my mother begged. I stopped in front of the couch, subsequently in front of the handsome dark haired man. I looked at my mother expectantly. "We gambled a lot of it, but the rest we spent on drugs. I'm so sorry, Mara. But there is still a way to x this", she mentioned optimistically. I do not like where this is going.

"How, exactly? I don't have \$500,000, mother", I snapped, irritated with always being caught in the middle. Sherry smiled softly, her fake smile that always makes my insides churn. "Mr. Luca here needs a virgin bride", she said suggestively. My stomach twisted at her suggestion. That's just great.

I turned and looked down at him. "You're Mr. Luca?", I asked skeptically. He gave me a sharp nod. All the while studying me with his gray orbs, entrancing me with his gaze.

I broke the stare and furrowed my eyebrows as I looked back at my mother with contempt. "You want to bargain me? Sell me like a piece of merchandise that you can pawn?", I asked credulously, hurt swirling in my words.

"Please? I'll turn it around this time. It won't be in vain. Please don't let me die. I'm your mother", she pleaded, shamelessly. I knew deep down that she was lying to me. She always is. She never turns her life around. She has been an addict for as long as I can remember. But I also don't want her to die.

"Are you?", I asked, crossing my arms over my chest and tilting my head to the side. "Of course I am. I love you, Mara. But, this is the only option left", she said, feigning sadness. She doesn't actually care. I know that too. "Just f****g do it, you stupid b***h", Carl snapped impatiently.

I looked back at Mr. Luca, who's eyes didn't seem to stray from me unless Carl spoke harshly. I knew he was a dangerous man, but I didn't see any hostility in his eyes towards me. He wasn't bad, just dangerous. A plethora of emotions swirled in his irises, emotions hidden from me right now. I felt an undeniable urge to discover those emotions.

"How do you know I'm a virgin? I am 21-years-old", I asked, as I looked back at my mom. I was curious because I've never discussed anything of the sort with her. My mother chuckled nervously, "Well, you've never brought a boy home, so", she trailed off, suggestively. I tilted my head to the side. "That doesn't prove anything", I countered.

"Oh, for god's sake, we contacted your doctor. Did you think we weren't already aware that Mr. Luca would come for us? We also directly knew he was looking for a bride. This was planned sweetheart.", Carl chuckled darkly, revealing his and my mother's big plan all along. "What? That's confidential information. You can't just do that. How did you do that?", I snapped, feeling both violated and betrayed. Carl laughed manically, "Well, we did", he taunted. I stared at him, projecting the hate and rage I feel for this despicable man.

I looked back at Mr. Luca, who waited patiently for an answer. He tilted his head to the side and looked in ever so slightly, signaling me to speak. I drew in a deep breath, "Okay. I'll do it, but on one condition", I said with a serious tone. Mr. Luca arched an eyebrow and smirked, "And what might that be?", he asked, his tone heavy.

I leaned down, placing both of my hands on the back of the couch, on either side of his broad shoulders. I brought my lips to his ear, "I want Carl dead. He's poison for my mother", I whispered softly, so only he could hear me. Mr. Luca turned his head slightly, brushing his lips across my ear. "Deal", he uttered.

He swiftly reached out and wrapped an arm around my waist. By the time that he had me seated in his lap, he had his weapon drawn and already released a bullet between Carl's eyes. The sound of the gunshot echoed in the small home, making my ears ring loudly. I watched as Carl's body fell lifelessly to the ground.

A blood curdling scream pierced through the ringing. "No! Mara, what have you done?", my mother screamed, as she actually cried over the death of that scum bag. "I freed you", I answered simply.

"Go pack a bag. You are coming home with me, now", Luca whispered in my ear. "But, nothing like this", he frowned, looking over my out and tugging on the hem of my shorts. "Where are you coming from dressed like this anyway?", he asked, pinning me with his eyes. I looked down at his chest, the two top bottoms were undone on his shirt, revealing a glimpse of his toned chest. "Work", I whispered softly. What the hell is this guy doing to me?

"Well, you won't be going back there, so leave your uniforms behind", he said sternly, as he gently wiped blood from my bottom lip. I nodded slightly, "Can I shower rst?", I asked timidly. Luca grinned and nodded, "Of course. Call for me when you're done and we will take care of your wounds", he said softly, his eyes matching his tone.

His instructions threw me for a loop. I've never had anyone actually worry about my wounds. Is he being sincere with me? I nodded as I stood from his lap, his hand following my movements as it stayed on my hip until I was fully on my feet.

"How could you, Mara? I loved him", my mother screeched at me, crying hysterically. I knelt down in front of her and stared into her eyes. "No, you loved the drugs he gave you, the high you felt. But you didn't love him, and you don't love me, or you would've got sober along time ago", I uttered coldly, before standing back up.

Even if I didn't want them too, tears owed down my cheeks as I made my way to my in-suite bathroom. They owed tears my shower and even as I stepped out and dried off. They still periodically fell, as I wrapped the towel around my body and walked into my room, where Luca sat on my bed waiting for me.