

## Taking you home

### Marabella's POV

I jumped, slightly startled by his presence. He was as stiff as stone, but his eyes were soft. His eyes raked my body, ooding me with heat. In his hand he held a rst-aid kit.

He stood and gestured to the bed. "Sit", he said, his voice deep with emotion. I nodded as I walked over to the bed and took a seat. My tears still silently fell down my cheeks, as Luca applied ointment to my knees. "Are your tears because of me?", he asked softly. "Because if they are, I promise to take very good care of you", he added, looking up at me. I shook my head 'no'.

Luca stood and wiped the tears from my face. "Why are you crying then, precious?", he whispered. I broke into sobs and Luca wrapped his arms around me. He held my head to his chest as I gripped his shirt. "She's never loved me. Why? What did I do wrong?", I sobbed. "Shh", Luca cooed, as he stroked my hair. "It's not you sweetheart. It's the drugs. It changes people", he explained softly.

He held me for a few moments, until my sobs became hiccups. Luca pulled back and wiped my tear stained face. "Don't let them see you cry. You will be their Queen. You will only show your weakness to me. Understood?", his voice was gentle, but demanding. "Yes", I whispered. "Good girl", he uttered, placing a soft kiss to my forehead.

He tended to the wounds on my elbows and arm, being careful not to be too rough. I hissed from the burn of alcohol. "I'm sorry, princess.", he said, pained. I gave him a reassuringly soft smile. He moved to the wound on my lip. "I wish I would've tortured those fuckers", venom laced his deep voice.

I grabbed his hand, that applied ointment to my lip. His movement froze and his eyes met mine. "They are dead. That's what matters", my voice was just above a whisper. His stroked my cheek with his thumb. "You are right. Get dressed now. We will leave soon", he said. I nodded and walked to my dresser.

I grabbed a pair of jeans, long sleeve shirt and underwear set. I went back to my bathroom to get dressed. After getting dressed, I grabbed the personal items from my bathroom that I wanted to take with me. When I stepped out of my bathroom, Luca stood at my bed, packing one of my suitcases.

"I will buy you more clothes", he mentioned, as he picked up one of my college books. "You are in college?", he asked with an arched eyebrow. I put my personal items inside my suitcase. "Yes. Will I be able to continue?", I asked, looking up at him. Luca was staring at me with a complex expression. "Yes, under certain circumstances. Ones that we will discuss tomorrow after you have got some rest.", he agreed, tossing my book on the bed and walking up to me.

He reached his hand up and tucked a strand of hair behind my ear. "You look exhausted", he whispered. I smiled sadly. "Do you live far?", I asked softly. A wistful grin appeared on Luca's lips. "No. Only twenty ve minutes or so", he answered in an utter. I nodded slightly and swallowed the lump in my throat. "You promise I can stay in school?", I asked skeptically, my voice small. Luca cupped my cheeks in his hands. "I promise you can stay in school. However, from now on out, when I make you a promise, know I will keep it. My word is everything to me. And I don't want you to doubt me.", he vowed.

"I'm sorry", I stuttered, shaking my head. "No. You don't have to be sorry. I understand why you need that reassurance. Which is why I'm giving it to you now.", he whispered. His eyes scanned my face, taking in all of my features. "Let's go, princess", he said softly, taking my hand in his.

Luca took my bag in his other hand and led me down stairs. Where four of the original eight men still stood and my mother, who sat on the couch still sobbing. As we walked toward the couch, my mother looked up at me with hate and disdain swimming in her irises. "This is your fault, Mara. I f\*\*\*\*\*g hate you!", she screamed at me.

A sharp pain slashed through my chest and caught in my throat. Tears threatened to fall but I stopped them as I remembered what Luca had said. I took a deep breath to steady myself. "Well, I love you. That is why I made the decision I did. Hopefully, one day you will get your s\*\*t together and forgive me", I said. I walked straight passed her and out the front door towards a black SUV.

I staggered as I reached the vehicle door. I felt a warm arm wrap around me as Luca opened the back door. He hoisted me into the vehicle seat and climbed in behind me. His broad arms engulfed me, "It's safe now, precious. You did good", he uttered into my hair. And, like he had the tool to break my dam, my tears fell freely. I clutched onto him, as I mued my cry's with his broad chest.

### Luca's POV

I held onto Mara as her body racked with sobs. I ran my ngers through her hair then up and down her back. I'm well aware that my right hand man, Cal, can hear her cries. But, Cal is also aware that if he speaks of the events happening in this back seat, I will kill him myself.

Which is why I informed her it was safe. I'm immensely proud of her for holding off until we made it to the car. I thought for sure she would break the second her mother uttered the words 'I hate you', because even I felt a pain at her mother's confession. "Shh, I've got you, sweetheart. It's okay", I whispered into her ear, trying to calm her down.

I knew she was strong the moment she busted through the living room. When I had said to kill those men earlier, I did not expect her to pull the trigger. The order was for my men, not her. Yet, she pulled that trigger, without thinking twice about it.

I knew then that I needed her as my wife. I had made mention long ago, that I was in search of a wife. However, I did not expect Sherry to so willingly volunteer her daughter's virtue. I was also surprised that Mara agreed to it. I'm not sure why she did. Whether it was to save her mother's life or to just escape the life her mother was forcing her live.

Either way, I will treat her like a Queen. I will make sure my men show her the upmost respect. I will demonstrate to her the love and loyalty that she so desperately deserves. She has an affect on me like no other woman has before. Her beauty and touch make my heart rate accelerate and skin tingle.

Her terms for marrying me, surprised me. But, what surprised me the most was how ready I was to kill Carl at her request. Like it controlled me. I wanted to be the one to do it. To prove to her, I would.

Which is different for me, usually my men pull the trigger, unless necessary, or special terms, like someone who has hurt my family. The feeling I had when she requested Carl's death, was similar to the to the feeling I get when someone has hurt my family. Except it was more.. intense. Like, I didn't need a reason or to second guess the decision.

Marabella's cries had calmed down and her breathing evened out. I felt her head lull in my hand. I looked down to nd her asleep. My heart sank as I realized she had just cried herself to sleep her rst night with me. Even if it wasn't because of me it still hurt me to see her this way.

I gently brushed the hair from her face, so that I could run my thumb over the bruise that had started to form on her cheek. Her eyes were puffy and red from crying. And her lip. f\*\*k. It's swollen up, making the split on it protrude. I know she had fought for her life. One of the man's nose was crooked and bleeding, while the other also sported a broken nose and a limp from a busted knee cap. I could see it when she yanked the door open and confronted the bastards. I didn't need to be told what they were attempting to do to her. I knew because I wanted her the second I seen her and that never happens. With anyone.

"Boss, we are here.", Cal's voice broke through my thoughts. Cal got out of the driver's seat and walked around the back to my side. He opened the door for me as I scooped Mara's precious body up to secure her in my arms.

I stepped out of the vehicle and looked around the villa. It's late so everyone is asleep and silence lls the cool night air. The only movement comes from the men I brought with me and the men on guard duty.

Cal outstretched his arms towards Mara. "I'll take her for you, Boss", he said. I turned my body away from his, not allowing his hands to even skim her. "You won't f\*\*\*\*\*g touch her, ever", I demanded. Cal put his hands up in surrender as he took a step back. "Yes, Boss", he resigned. "Bring her back to my room.", I ordered, tossing my head in the direction of the back of the SUV. "Yes, Boss", he said, nodding and heading to the back of the vehicle.

Marabella stirred in my arms. Her arms wrapped around my shoulders and she buried her face further into my neck, then hummed. A crooked smile broke out across my face. That was f\*\*\*\*\*g adorable.

I walked to the front door, where I was greeted by my younger brother and second in command, Sergio. "Brother, you're back", he greeted with open arms. He looked down at Mara and furrowed his eyebrows, "Who's this?", he asked confused. "You're future sister-in-law. Be quiet, she's asleep", I hissed. Damn these men. His face contorted in shock as his lips made an 'O' shape.

"All I know is her name is, Marabella, she goes to the university here in town and her mother is Sherry Marcio. Find out everything you can for me.", I instructed, as I walked to the stairs. "Oh, and draw up a marriage certicate. I want us married by the end of tomorrow.", I said. I turned and walked up the stairs before he had a chance to speak back.

"Hmm. What's going on?", Mara mumbled sleepily. "Shh, go back to sleep. We are home now.", I whispered. A small hum thrummed in her chest before I felt her body relax against me, once again. God, she's so f\*\*\*\*\*g precious.

I walked into my room and gently laid her on the bed. Her suitcase already sat right inside the bedroom door. However, I didn't want to go through it, so I just sat it inside the closet and grabbed one of my shirts for her.

I walked back to the bed and removed Marabella's shoes and socks. Then pulled her jeans off. I groaned out loud when I saw her black cheeky panties. Her tan lines sat low on her thighs, telling me she wears shorts when she swims. I pulled her shirt off her head next, revealing a tattoo on her hip. It portrayed the phases of the moon. f\*\*k, that's sexy.

It was hard refraining from running my hands over her smooth bare skin, as she laid only in her underwear on my bedspread. I slid my shirt onto her body carefully. Worried if I get to much of a feel, I'll no longer be a gentleman. I noticed some stretch marks on her thighs, making me bite my lip. f\*\*k. I gently tucked the covers around her and placed a soft kiss to her forehead. "Goodnight, bambina (baby).", uttered.

I quietly headed to the in-suite bathroom to take a cold shower to calm my raging hormones. f\*\*k, I feel like a teenager. My c\*\*k is rock hard right now. I rub my hand over it groaning as Mara's body pops into my mind. f\*\*k it. I stroked from the base to the tip and back down, a guttural moan reverberating in the back of my throat.

Marabella's face popped into my mind, her brown hair, blue eyes, her plump lips. "Ahh", I groaned quietly, as the image of her lips wrapped around my c\*\*k came to mind. f\*\*\*\*\*g hell. Within a few strokes, I was cumming hard. My hand gripped the shower wall, as my body jolted with pleasure. "f\*\*k", I mumbled.

After washing down real fast, I threw on a pair of sweatpants and curled up in bed with Mara. I wrapped my arm around her waist and pulled her back ush to my bare chest. She hummed as she snuggled further into me.

A smile graced my lips. I've never felt so content in my life, as I do right now, in this calmness. Her fragrance of vanilla and strawwens drives me mad, but also ironically calms me at the same time.

When I woke up the sun was peeking in the curtains, allowing the rays to shine into the room. Marabella was still sound asleep in my arms. I pulled her closer to my chest and buried my face in her hair, breathing her scent in deep.

She stirred in her sleep, before I felt her ngers skim down my arm, until her hand rested over mine. "Good morning, bella (beautiful).", my voice rumbled with sleep. I felt her shiver against me, making me smirk. She hummed gently as she turned her body enough to face me. A gorgeous smile crossed her lips, "Good morning", she spoke softly.

I couldn't stop the smile that formed on my lips. "You are so beautiful", I whispered. A deep blush formed on her cheeks and she turned her head into the pillow, trying to hide her face from me. I chuckled as I tightened my hold on her, snuggling up to her back.

"We have a big day ahead of us, precious. When do you have class again?", I asked softly. "Tomorrow. I have class on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday.", she answered. "What time?", I inquired as I took another deep breath of her scent. "From 9am-12pm", her voice was as smooth as silk when she spoke.

Mara sat up and looked around the room. "Where's the bathroom?", she asked in a small voice. I grinned and pointed at the door closer to her side of the bed. As she stood, she realized she was only wearing my shirt. She gasped and quickly turned to face me. Her hands gripped the hem of the shirt and pulled it farther down her thighs.

"Uh, Did you change me?", her voice was a notch higher than normal. I smirked and arched an eyebrow, as I sat up and lazily leaned on my hand. The blanket slid down my body, exposing my bare chest to her.

Mara gulped and took a small step back as her eyes raked over my chest. "I did", I answered simply. Her eyes snapped up to mine, making my smirk deepen. "We should set some boundaries until we are actually married", she choked out.

I smiled as I climbed out of bed and took a step towards her. "And what might those be?", I asked, taking another step toward her. Mara took another step back, "Ugh, well not seeing me naked would be one", she stuttered lightly.

"You weren't naked", I said. As I took another step towards her and her a step back. "You were still in your undergarments", I clarified, taking a larger step towards her. "Close enough", she snapped, taking another step back.

"Is it?", I asked with a smirk and head tilt, as I closed the distance between us. Marabella's back hit the wall. "Yes", she whispered. I braced my hands on either side of her head, against the wall, caging her in my arms. "I don't know if it is", I uttered, as I brought my face closer to hers.

Mara's hand reached out and touched my chest to stop me from coming any closer. When our skin made contact, a shiver passed through us both. She closed her eyes and let out a shaky breath. I wanted to know what she would do if I got closer, so I did. I stepped closer, bringing my hips ush to hers. She didn't do anything other than open her eyes.

The innocence in her blue eyes was clear as day. She likes this, a lot, but it's also scarring the s\*\*t out of her. I brought my hand down and gently cupped her jaw.

"I only put my shirt on you. Nothing else. You have my word. And even after we marry today, I will respect your boundaries until you're comfortable enough around me", I explained softly.

Her lips parted and her breath hitched, immediately drawing my attention to her lips. "I want to kiss you, Marabella. Tell me not to if it's not what you want", I whispered, as I brushed my lips against hers. She didn't object, so I closed the distance, connecting our lips in a slow passionate kiss.

The hand she used to hold the hem of the shirt with came up to rest on my bicep. My other hand left the wall and wrapped around her waist, pulling her chest ush to mine. My tongue swiped across her bottom lip, begging for entry. Just as she opened her mouth and brushed her tongue against mine, a knock on the door interrupted us.

I groaned as Mara pushed me away. "Where's my clothes?", she asked frantically. I chuckled and cupped her cheeks with my hands, "Relax, sweetheart. Your clothes are in the closet, there's a door in the bathroom that connects to the closet. Go get dressed, love", I uttered, placing a soft kiss to her lips.

I walked to the bedroom door and waited until I heard the click of the bathroom door before I opened the bedroom door. Sergio stood on the other side, with a concerned look. "What's wrong? It'd better be good", I said, irritated. Sergio's face contorted into a grin. "We were worried about you. You never sleep this late", he mentioned. "Well, I've never had sleep that good either. We are ne and will be out soon", I said, as I closed the door in his face.

I walked to the closet and noticed her bag had been opened. Good, she's already got her clothes. I quickly slipped into a pair of blue jeans and a black shirt. Mara was sitting on the edge of our bed when I walked out of the closet. She held my shirt in her hand. When her eyes met mine she blushed, "I didn't know what to do with it", she mumbled, as she stood and held my shirt out towards me.

I chuckled as I took it from her and tossed it on the bed. "You honestly could've left it on the bathroom oor. I wouldn't have complained.", I joked. She shook her head frantically, "I can't do that", she whispered. I chuckled once again, "Okay. There's a basket in the closet for future reference, then", I explained, as I took a step towards her.

"Are you ready to meet my family?", I asked, tucking her bangs behind her ear. Her long dark curls were French braided down her back. She was wearing a pair of blue jeans with a simple white tshirt and converse. Her outt was simple yet brought out her natural beauty.

Panic graced her beautiful features. "What if they don't like me? How many people is it? I don't even know your last name. Umm-", I cut her rambling by sealing her lips with mine. I slowly moved my lips against hers until she relaxed and kissed me back.

I reluctantly pulled away and cupped her cheeks. I ran my thumb over her bottom lip as I spoke, "First, they will love you. Second, it's just my mom and three younger brothers. As for her died two years ago. There are some maids, along with my men in the house. As for my last name, it's Barello", I explained softly. "Luca Barello", she whispered, sending a shiver down my spine.

"I know your rst name is Marabella or Luca. What do you mean by your last name either", I said. "Calsut", she answered softly. "Luca. But, I don't know your last name? What do you do?", she asked in a small voice as she looked down at my chest. Her stomach growled, making me chuckle.

"Mara", I uttered, as I lifted her chin to look at me. "I promise, I will tell you everything you want to know, in time. There are things I can't tell you yet for you safety, and things I can. But, it'll all have to wait until after breakfast. Okay?", I asked gently. She nodded meekly, "Okay", she whispered. "Okay", I repeated. I placed a gentle kiss on her lips before taking her hand in mine. "Time to meet my family, bambina (baby)", I smiled, leading her out of the room