

Chapter 38

[Vivienne]

I head back to my room to grab a few essentials before heading out.

On my way, Marcus approaches me with a new phone.

He gives me a grin. "Just arrived. I already set it up for you. All you have to do now is add your email address and other details and you're good to go."

"Thanks, Marcus. You're a lifesaver." I take the phone from him and do the needful. It takes more than five minutes but the moment I'm done, I feel like the weight of the world has lifted off my shoulder.

"Done!" I say with so much relief that Marcus chuckles.

Then he notices me head to toe and frowns. "Are you leaving for somewhere, Ms. Richardson?"

"Yes. I have to meet a friend," I check the time and wince. "And I'm going to be late. Shit!"

He chuckles again, and I have to say, he has a cute smile. "Would you like me to be your driver again? Mr. Richardson already asked me to be at your beck and call."

Of course, Dad would do that. Sure, he wants to make sure I'm doing fine, but that's not the only reason. He cares too much and has a very stubborn habit of knowing everyone's whereabouts. He's just a cautious man, I guess.

But after what happened last night, maybe having Marcus around won't be so bad. The way he handled Avery last time...I still find myself amused by his instant reaction.

"That would be lovely. Why don't you bring out the car? I'll just quickly grab something to eat."

"Sounds great, Ms. Richardson. Be out in five."

I rush to the kitchen and almost bump into Anna.

"Whoa whoa whoa!" She chuckles, her dimples showing. "Forgot something, madam?"

"Yes," I say. "Dinner and breakfast both."

The moment those words come out of my mouth, her smile disappears, and she scowls.

"What? Why didn't you start with that?"

Before I can say anything, she starts grabbing everything she can find on the kitchen counter. She takes some bread, an apple, and even an egg, which she cracks into a pan and starts whisking with a spoon.

In a couple of minutes, I have a hot meal ready for me. She also hands me an espresso.

I give her a huge grin. "You are a sweetheart. I think I'm gonna steal you from Mom."

She looks at me curiously, tilting her head to the side. "Forgive me, madam, but I have no idea what you mean by that."

I take a long sip of the coffee, swallow, and then smile up at her.

"It means that once I move out, I would love to bring you with me. If you want, of course. It won't be a huge home like this one, probably a two-bedroom apartment or something, but I would love to have you around. It would make me really happy if you consider this offer."

At first, I thought it wouldn't hurt to ask. But Anna's reaction makes my heart happy. Her eyes light up as she beams with happiness.

"Really? Oh, that would be... That would be absolutely wonderful! But are you sure about it, madam?"

"One hundred percent. So, is that a yes? Are you on board with it?"

She gives me a very enthusiastic nod. "Absolutely. It will be a pleasure to work for you, madam."

"Great," I give her a thumbs-up. "But now, I have to run. Marcus is waiting for me in the car, and I can't keep him waiting. See you soon!"

I take a big bite of the bread, drink the rest of the coffee, and rush toward the exit. 1

Marcus opens the door and helps me get in.

"So, where to?" he asks when he gets behind the steering wheel.

"We're meeting my friend at her store. Have you heard of Roe

Fashions?"

I see his face light up through the rearview mirror. "Whoa! Seriously?"

I'm taken aback by his excitement. "Of course, I know. Mrs. Richardson, I mean, your mom, she's been going there every other month. She told me a couple of days ago she ordered something from them for the fundraiser next week."

It comes as a shock to me that Mom has been buying Rosita's collection and never once mentioned it to me, and neither did Rosita. She must remember my mom, won't she? But maybe it's no one's fault. I've just gotten back, and there's so much we all still need to catch up on.

Marcus pulls me back from my thoughts. "So, is this your friend who owns this place?"

I nod and give him the address. "Yeah. My best friend, actually. We went to school together."

He smiles, looking more excited than he was a moment ago.

"Alright. I'll be right on it. We'll be there in no time, Ms. Richardson."

And he wasn't wrong. The drive to Roe Fashions didn't take more than twenty minutes.

We are just around the corner when a car blocks our way, forcing Marcus to hit the brakes.

He tries to manoeuvre through, but just as he gets an opening, another car comes out of nowhere. This time, Marcus has to step on

the brakes hard.

My heart jumps in my chest when my seat belt tightens and a rush of air escapes my lips.

I turn around to see Marcus already getting out of his seat. He looks pretty angry.

I'm about to open the door and help him reason with these guys when two men appear out of nowhere, holding up their guns and yelling at me through the window.

"Get out! Right now!"



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