

Angels are real

"Mariya"

He always wanted this, right?! So, I was actually reducing his troubles.

"Look, I am actually making your life problems free. You don't like me and... my lifestyle. So it would be better for you if you resign and lead a happy, peaceful life," I suggested, shrugging carelessly.

His dark, intense gaze was xed on me, lingering a little longer.

"It is not like that," Domenic uttered in a at tone.

"Yeah?! Then, what is it?!" I snapped, frustrated by this never-ending argument.

Now, when he was about to get rid of this job, he was arguing with me that I should keep him on the job, while a few days back, he wasn't happy to be my bodyguard. What was his actual problem?

He didn't reply instantly but stared at me with his cold eyes. His mouth was set in a thin straight line as if weighing his words in his mind.

"Listen! I know the things that happened in the past shouldn't have happened like that. And... I am sorry for everything," he hesitated before he apologized, and my jaws dropped as my mouth hung open.

Sorry?!

I thought my ears were ringing.

He had never accepted his mistakes. This was again for the rst time. I kept my face straight as I glanced back.

"Some damages are irreversible," I declared, my nger tracing the brim of the coffee mug.

He nodded, sipping his coffee. He again fell silent, and his expression turned unreadable.

"We will go shopping and buy some dresses for you," he suggested, suddenly changing the topic.

"No need. I have talked to Daniel. He will get some of my dresses," I informed him.

I used to have some of my dresses in Daniel's oce. Most of them were sponsored and used for ad shoots. Daniels's work in Paris was nished, so he had returned to New York.

"By the way, I have called him here. I hope you don't mind it," I sneered and took a sip from my coffee mug to hide my scowl.

"Of course not. Your guests are welcome here, Miss Leonardi," he agreed.

When I went back into the room, Nic had woken up. I took him to the breakfast table, and Domenic cooked some pancakes. Nic was fussy and cranky this morning. Domenic struggled to make him eat. I watched them ghting over food for a while before my patience wore out. So I picked up Nic and put him on my lap while I fed him some pancakes. Initially, he was unwilling to eat anything, but then I made some stories and some promises that I would do whatever he wanted. Finally, he ate after a bit of drama. He was just like me. I also liked some drama in everything.

Domenic became busy as his phone started ringing and it kept him occupied, answering a call every minute. After a while, he went to his home oce. Now Nic and I were left alone.

"How about taking a shower, sweetheart?" I asked Nic when he was watching TV in his dad's room.

He had a doctor's appointment in the afternoon. Domenic was busy, so I thought of running a bath for Nic.

"Who? You?" He asked back while his eyes were still on the TV.

"No! You will shower. I will prepare your bath," I offered, grinning.

"Riya, you can't see me without clothes. I am a big boy now," he whined.

"Okay, I will close my eyes," I giggled.

"Then it's ne," he replied as he blushed.

"So, now get out of bed quickly!" I sang, and he smiled, instantly obeying, sliding out of bed and strolling toward the bathroom.

"Let's go, hero. Time to get into the shower," I cheered.

Nic laughed. He was improving.

I prepared a bubble bath for him, and he got into the tub. Of course, I had to turn on my back and close my eyes before he removed his clothes and got in the tub. He was a big boy, after all. Five-years-old big.

Nic opened up to me more as I talked to him about his friends and school. However, I was very careful not to remind him of anything regarding the kidnapping.

"You know Alex asked Ella if she would be his girlfriend?!" My eyes widened as I gulped when Nic told me his ve-year-old friend asked a girl to be his girlfriend. I was sitting on the edge of the tub, scrubbing Nic's back.

"Yeah! Then, did she say yes?!" I asked amusingly. I was enjoying our chitchat.

"No, she said she would think, and she didn't even give him her phone number," Nic pouted, and I couldn't stop myself now.

"Smart girl," I burst out laughing.

"That's mean, Riya. Alex was sad," Nic complained sullenly.

"Oops, I am sorry, little man," I held up my hand. "By the way, do you have a girlfriend?" I asked, smirking.

"No! I can't handle those girls' tantrums," Nic rolled his eyes. The boy had his dad's attitude.

"But I am also a girl," I whimpered.

"You are different, Riya. You are so pretty," Nic smiled brightly as his eyes shone with joy.

"You are like your father, munchkin. He also likes to make everything bend to his will," I smiled at Nic, ruing his hair.

"Dad!" Nic exclaimed.

"Yeah?!" I mused.

"No, Dad is there," he announced, pointing at the bathroom door.

I turned my head and saw Domenic leaning against the door frame with his hands tucked into his pants pockets. My gaze met his. His eyes were smiling as he had that amused look on his face. He walked lazily to us and knelt beside me. I adjusted my clothes, still wearing his shirt.

"Daniel is here," he informed me before turning to his son.

"Having a good time?!" He asked Nic.

"Yes, Dad. Riya and I are talking about my friends and Alex," Nic told his dad.

"Yeah?! That's... sweet," Dominic murmured, looking at me.

I narrowed my eyes at him.

"Okay, Nic. Now your dad is here. He will help you to clean. I am waiting outside and don't stay in the tub too long. You're already in it long enough," I instructed as I left two of them there to have a good time.

I changed into a black knee-length dress and went to see Daniel. I found him sitting on the couch and having coffee in the living room.

"Riya, what happened? You suddenly left Paris without informing me. You did not even check out the hotel," Daniel began complaining as soon as I joined him on the couch. The typical Daniel. But he was one of the best PR managers.

"Yeah, actually, something happened, and I have to leave," I explained, but I couldn't tell him the actual reason.

"What happened?" Daniel asked, frowning.

"Umm... It's very personal. I cannot tell you right now. But please, clear all the payments and send the bills to my account," I said softly.

"It's okay, dear. I have already tried to clear your payments but was informed that the bill was settled already by someone called Mr. Mancini," he stated as he shrugged.

Domenic?! He paid. When and how?

"Okay?!" I cleared my throat. "And thanks for bringing all the stuff on short notice," I smiled as I checked the bag he gave me. It had my dresses, footwear, makeup kit, toiletries, and jewelry.

"Riya, you should start working on your new project while you are in New York," he suggested.

"New project?!" I was confused.

"Yeah, you remember?! I told you about the brand ambassador hunt for the top beauty brand?! The one I was trying to get you in?!" He informed as he grinned.

I knew that smile. My eyes widened with excitement as I jumped in my place.

"Yes, I remember. Did we get it?!" I breathed out, crossing my ngers.

"I have been trying to get that for you for so long, and nally, after your mindblowing performance in Paris, they wanted to take you as a new face of their beauty products," he declared. I lunged forward and hugged him tightly.

"Oh, my God, Daniel. I can't believe it. I mean... wow! Daniel, you are amazing. I mean.. Wow!" I blabbered, giggling and shaking with excitement. "God, I wanted this offer so desperately."

"I know, Riya. And this is just the beginning, sweetheart. You still have to go far ahead and touch the heights," he pronounced, holding my hand and squeezing it slightly as assurance.

"Thank you, Daniel. It's all because of your efforts and hard work. I have reached there," I whispered, looking at him with gratitude as my voice was low with emotion.

He was very passionate about his work, and so he helped me a lot in my career.

"And so they want you to start the ad shoot tomorrow," he announced, and the bubble of my happiness didn't last long. It blasted the minute after I got the good news.

"What? But how? I mean... it's... it's so soon!" I blurted out instantly.

"Yes, sweetheart. But they have mentioned this condition strictly. I have brought the papers with me. You just have to sign it. I will look after the rest of the formalities, and we will start the ad shoot tomorrow. It will take a few days to start the actual shooting of the ad because the rehearsals and preparations will take a lot of time. That's why we have to start it tomorrow. Riya, it is a very big brand and only wants perfection. Everything has to be perfect, and you have to make sure," he briefed, but my mind was thinking about something else.

"I understand, Daniel, but I can't start work tomorrow," I uttered promptly without a second thought.

I knew I had foolishly refused the best opportunity of my life. But something was more important than that, and I could not leave Nic for an ad shoot.

However, I could get more offers in my life, and this was not the last opportunity.

Domenic

It was actually very nice to see Mariya and Nic laughing together. She had brought a smile back to my son's face. Nic and I used to live in this house, but it had become lively after Mariya came here. I couldn't believe it was only a day, and her voice, her laughter, and her whole vibrant existence made this house feel like home.

I washed Nic and wiped him dry with a uffy white towel.

Dressing him in his favorite pair of jeans and a polo shirt, I nally combed his hair, and we were ready to go down the hall, joining Mariya.

The maid and cook had arrived, and I instructed them to make Nic's favorite chocolate shake and told Nic to sit at the dining table while I went to see Mariya's manager.

But I stopped when I heard them arguing over something.

"Are you serious, Riya? You always wanted this opportunity, right?! I have worked so hard to get you this offer. You can't let me down," Daniel bawled. He looked very angry.

"I am not letting you down, Daniel. I am just saying I can't do this right now or tomorrow. I need some time. Now please try to talk to them and postpone it for 15 days or a month," Riya was calm as she tried to convince him.

"You can't be serious, Riya?! If you don't sign the contract and start the ad shoot tomorrow, this project will go to some other model because they won't wait. And we will lose this project because of you. You can't do this to me. Think rationally. Many models could kill to get this opportunity, and you are letting it go just like that?!" Daniel slumped down on the couch, looking exhausted and sad.

Why was she refusing to take the project when it was her dream? She couldn't be so stupid?! I sighed and thought of leaving them alone. Poor Daniel! He had to lose the deal because of this proud and pampered supermodel. She was stubborn. I felt bad for him.

"I know, Daniel, but I can't do this right now. Nic needs me, and I cannot leave him alone," Mariya whispered slowly, but I heard her. I heard her loud and clear.

She couldn't be leaving this for Nic?!
No!
Fuck!

I was shocked. I didn't know how to react. I never knew that girls like her actually existed. She did not even know Nic properly. She had met him only once before yesterday and was ready to leave the most significant opportunity of her life.

That was crazy.

Stupid and insane.

But my selsh heart was happy.

"Riya, I am done with you." Daniel fumed angrily as he suddenly got up. "You and your tantrums. No one will bear this. You will be left alone, and no one will be at your side if you don't stop being selsh and arrogant," he scolded.

She is not selsh, you i***t. I wanted to scream in his face, but I stopped myself.

I did not want to add more trouble for Mariya.

"I am sorry, Daniel," Mariya mumbled, lowering her head.

Daniel sighed, dropping his hands to his sides in disappointment.

"I am leaving, Riya. Now don't expect me that I will get you new offers and ad projects until you change your attitude," he warned, glaring at her.

Mariya nodded quietly. Daniel darted out without even saying bye to her.

So, Nic was right when he said angels were real and they lived among us.