

Stars and Moon For You

By Crescent de Luna

Chapter 13

Taken aback, Estelle asked, "You...blocked on your caller list?" "I thought I've made myself clear that I want nothing to do with you anymore since there won't be stars for the next few days. After seven days, we'll proceed with the divorce and we'll go our separate ways." She let out a laugh. "Oh Skyler, am I a monster to you? Why are you that terrified of me?" Skyler hissed, "You're worse than a monster." Feeling drowsy, Estelle sniffled and asked, "Skyler, do you think that my heart's made out of steel and that I won't be hurt?" Hence, he could speak to her carelessly and recklessly, stabbing her heart with his words. He replied, "Your heart's colder and harder than stone. How could you possibly feel pain?" "Skyler, you'll regret this." "Yes, I do regret meeting you." Estelle hung up the phone right away. Why should she have bothered to argue with him? She knew better how he would respond. She should not have expected anything from him. After all, she would only be making a fool out of herself. Aunt Frances knocked on the door carefully while peeking into the room. "Stellie, how's the talk with Skyler? He used to adore you so much and if you just explain things, I'm sure he'd..." Without waiting for her to finish her sentence, Estelle called out, "Aunt Frances." "Yes?" Wiping off the tears from her face with the back of her hands,

Estelle put on a big smile. "I miss having the dumplings you used to make." Seeing Estelle with a relaxed expression, she thought that Estelle and Skyler finally cleared up the air between the both of them. Aunt Frances sighed in relief and replied, "Of course! I'll make it for you now. Get some rest and you'll be able to eat by the time you wake up." "Thanks, Aunt Frances." "What's there to thank me for. Skyler used to like the dumplings too. I'll prepare more of them so he can have some later when he arrives." Estelle only smiled and did not say anything further. There was no chance that Skyler would come for her. It was as if she suddenly thought of something, Aunt Frances clapped her hands and said, "Oh right Stellie, I just recalled something that could help with the investigation for the incident. The morning of the incident, an employee from a 4S center visited and said that he was asked to carry out maintenance for Mr. Flynn's car. The employee was acting suspiciously and I feel that she had something to do with the accident. Later when Skyler comes, I'll tell him what I just told you and have him carry out a thorough investigation on the 4S center. My gut feeling tells me that something fishy is going on with that center!" Estelle responded right away, "Aunt Frances, did you manage to see the employee's face?" "I did see her but I don't remember clearly. I could only recall that it was a fairly young lady and I thought that it's strange for a lady to carry out maintenance of a car instead of a man..." Estelle then asked hurriedly, "Aunt Frances, do you perhaps know what Camilla does for a living?" "Oh, I've heard that she met Skyler at a 4S center..."

Before finishing her sentence, Aunt Frances's expression changed. "Stellie, could it be possible that..." Nodding her head, Estelle answered, "The day before yesterday, Camilla came up to me and admitted what she did. She was the one who manipulated the brakes of the car which caused the tragedy." "Oh, my lord! We must let Skyler know of this!" Aunt Frances voiced out in shock. Estelle could feel her heart beating fast again. Though Skyler would not believe her words, she was confident that he would at least listen to what Aunt Frances had to say. As long as he was willing to investigate the incident, she was sure that the truth would have prevailed in the end. Estelle was excited but also felt that she was wronged. Reaching for her phone, she turned on the video recorder. "Little one, I think I've found a way to get your father back to us. You must take good care of your health and listen well to Uncle Howard and the nurses. Let's wait till the day your dad understands what happened back then. I'll bring him to see you and I'll try my best to give you a younger brother or sister and then heal you. Aren't you glad to hear this?" "Mommy's happy. Before this, I only had seven days to persuade your dad. But if he knows of the truth, then mommy will be able to have more than just mere seven days. I could also increase the chances of getting pregnant. Little one, mommy loves you and your daddy..." Before she could continue, a gush of blood rushed up to her throat and she vomited a mouthful of blood again. Luckily she managed to avoid staining the bedsheet. If not she would have worried Aunt Frances again. Reaching out for a few tissues, Estelle wiped the

floor clean and flushed the tissues away. It was as if nothing had taken place at all.

The emotional turbulence that she experienced today finally worn her out. Estelle laid down on her bed, wrapping herself tightly under the blanket as if she was trying to warm her body. She was not sure if it was because of the fever that she was shuddering yet she was drenched in a cold sweat. She finally dozed off drowsily. She had a dream. In the dream, Skyler held her gently in his arms and he apologized to her. He told Estelle that he was wrong to have believed Camilla and that he had wrongfully accused her. He wanted to start over with her and wanted to go overseas to visit their child. The dream was too pleasant and surreal. It was too surreal to a point that though she was sleeping, she knew that it was just a dream.

Thud— A loud crashing sound woke her up from her sleep. Estelle struggled to get off the bed. She called out to Aunt Frances, “Aunt Frances, are you there?” No one responded. Did something happen?

Chapter 14

Estelle’s mind went blank. How could Aunt Frances fall off the roof? How did she...

Panicking, she rushed downstairs and even forgot to put on her shoes. Someone else was at the yard now. Crouching down next to Aunt Frances’ body, Camilla reached out to check if she was still breathing. Wearing a grin, she said to Estelle, “You’re too late, she’s dead.” “It’s you, Camilla...” Camilla got up slowly and looked toward her.

“I nearly forgot that this old lady’s been with you since you were a child. I’m sure she’d take your side.” “She couldn’t have gotten in your way with this grand scheme

of yours, why would you kill her?! She had nothing to do with you!”
“Simply because
she knows too much and she saw what she shouldn’t have in the first
place. Those
who know too much should die!” said Camilla while letting out a light
chuckle.
Estelle shook her head in disbelief and cried out, “You’re nuts!” Camilla
did not seem
to care and started to laugh uncontrollably. “I was even willing to
sacrifice the child
that I was carrying, more so she was just an old gardener.” Estelle felt
chills ran down
her spine. “Skyler, you have to come right now! Aunt Frances’s dead
because Estelle
pushed her off the roof!” She watched on coldly as Camilla called Skyler
up to tell on
her. It was as if she almost heard Skyler’s anger fuming through the
phone. After his
parents passed away, Aunt Frances took care of Skyler. No one could
have replaced
Aunt Frances in his life, but she was dead now. Aunt Frances died at her
mansion and
what was worst was that she fell off the rooftop. “Camilla, I think it was
a waste of
talent for you to work at the 4S center. You could’ve been an amazing
actress and the
Oscars probably owe you an award.” Shaking the phone in her hands,
Camilla teased,
“Whatever you say. Now that this old lady’s dead, there won’t be
witnesses to the car
accident five years ago. I’ll remain as Skyler’s favorite person.” Skyler
reached the
mansion rather quickly. The car came to an abrupt stop and Skyler
dashed off the car.
He looked devastated the moment he saw Aunt Frances’s body. Walking
toward him,
Camilla held his hands and comforted him gently. “Don’t look, Skyler.
Aunt Frances
adored you so much, she wouldn’t have wanted you to see her in this
state...” “Estelle

Sanders!” Skyler bellowed at her. He grabbed Estelle by her collar, and he almost lifted her off the floor with his monstrous strength. “Tell me why you’d do such a thing!” Shutting her eyes tight, she lifted her body that was faltering. “If I told you that it wasn’t my doing, will you believe me?” “What do you think?” “If I were you, I wouldn’t have believed it too. I’m the only person in this mansion, and it’s me who’d be on the rooftop to watch the stars. There’s no one else here who could’ve pushed Aunt Frances off the roof...right?” mocked Estelle. Gritting his teeth with his eyes burning with rage, Skyler stared at her as if he wanted to put bullet holes through her. “Give me a reason Estelle Sanders! First, my parents! Now, Aunt Frances! I want you to take out your heart to see if it’s black!” “Skyler, calm down. There must be some unspeakable reason as to why Miss Sanders did what she did...” Camilla feigned innocence and pretended to be worried while she pulled his hands away from Estelle. Camilla added, “Could it be that you haven’t been accompanying Miss Sanders to see the stars that she got angry and couldn’t control herself. Hence...she did this impulsively. I’ve reminded you that we should be more forgiving of her since Miss Sanders has been in a mentally unstable state recently.” Staring into Estelle’s eyes, Skyler asked, “Is it true Estelle Sanders? Just because I didn’t watch the stars with you, you’re taking revenge on me?” Estelle could not help but smile bitterly. She was deeply impressed by Camilla’s acting. Camilla even thought of the killing motive for her. “It’s not true. It doesn’t matter if you believe it or not. I didn’t kill her.” Estelle

replied. "You do know that I don't trust you at all right." "What do you want to do then?" "I want you to die!" He spat out those words like they were squeezed out from his gritted teeth. "Estelle Sanders, you think that I wouldn't be able to kill you?"

Hurriedly, Camilla pulled his hands away from Estelle. "Skyler, don't be rash. I can understand how Miss Sanders's feeling. She must love you a lot, she wants to see you and watch the stars with you. But you didn't want to see her. Hence, she got you here with this...would you first let go of her?" "Camilla, you should leave first. You just lost your child! You should go home and rest. I'll come home after I settle things with her." "I won't leave, Skyler. I'll follow you wherever you go." "Be good and listen to me..." He spoke in such a gentle tone and used such loving words. Men always had two faces. The way they treat those they love and those they hate are poles apart. "Do you want to kill me, Skyler?" Estelle asked helplessly. "I've called the cops. I don't want to dirty my hands by killing you," replied Skyler. "The cops should be here by now then? Let me go now, I'm hungry." Estelle shook off his hands. Frowning his brows tightly, Skyler stared intently at her.

Chapter 15

In the end, she did not manage to taste the dumplings that Aunt Frances prepared for her. Seated in an interrogation room of the police station, the blinding white lights were shined directly at her. Estelle felt a wave of remorse as she mulled over the fact that she would not have been able to taste Aunt Frances's dumpling anymore. Now that Aunt Frances was dead and she was also dying, she felt as if life was a joke. God

had to take away her one last hope. “Miss Sanders, now that we have both the witness and physical evidence against you, is there anything that you’d like to clarify?”

Lifting her head, Estelle asked, “Is Camilla the witness?” The cop nodded his head.

“Camilla claims that she was there to witness it when you pushed Aunt Frances off the roof.” Estelle nodded her head. It was exactly what she expected, “What about the physical evidence?” “The shoe prints left on the rooftop. We only managed to collect the shoe prints of Aunt Frances, Miss Camila, and your shoe prints on the rooftop.

Besides, both Miss and Aunt Frances don’t know each other. There’s no reason to speculate that they had any conflicts between them. Hence, leaving only you with the motive to kill.” Hanging her head low, Estelle queried, “Sir, if I admit to all the charges, what would I be sentenced with?” “You will be charged with intentional homicide and you be sentenced to the death penalty.” “Will I be executed through a shooting?” “You’ll be executed by lethal injection.” “Will it be painful?” “It won’t hurt. The execution these days are more humane now. You’ll be executed in your sleep and you won’t experience pain.” As if she was satisfied with the answer, Estelle nodded her head and expressed, “As long as it’s not painful. Perhaps this will be better.” “With that being said, are you admitting to all the charges? If so, sign here.”

Estelle queried, “Can we wait three more days?” The cop was confused. “Why three days?” “Because I could be...pregnant. And I’ll find out if I’m pregnant in the next three days.” The cop was right about how the law is treating the suspects more

humanely. She spent three days in the police station. On the third day, with the supervision of two female officers, she visited the hospital for a final checkup. When the doctor saw that Estelle accompanied by two female officers, he was puzzled.

“Miss Sanders, are you...in any sort of trouble?” Putting on a smile, Estelle replied, “I’m fine. There’s nothing more important than me getting pregnant.”

The doctor was perplexed by the situation but he still handed her the checkup list. Her hands were trembling as she waited for the results of the checkup. The female officer seemed to take pity on her and handed her a glass of warm water. “Drink some, you haven’t been eating for the past three days.” Estelle smiled and thanked her. “I can’t drink.”

“Why?” “...It’ll hurt.” Estelle pointed to her chest. “It hurts a lot here. Every time that I drink, it hurts to the extent that I want to end my life right there and then. But I

can’t.” The female officer furrowed her brows and asked, “You have stomach problems?” “She’s in the last stage of lung cancer,” the doctor replied while handing

over the checklist to Estelle. “Miss Sanders, I don’t know if this is something to congratulate you with, but you’re pregnant.” Feeling surprised yet in disbelief, Estelle

lifted her head and asked, “Am I...pregnant?” “Yes, you’re indeed pregnant. But this also means that if you’re determined to keep this child, you’ll need to start to count

down the days that you’ll have left. Also, you won’t be able to go through with the chemotherapy anymore.” She took the checkup list from the doctor and went through

the document carefully. There was a slight glow on her face. She softened when she

saw the word pregnant on the result document for her checkup. She smiled in joy and said to the female officers beside her, "Look here, I'll die anyway after I give birth to this child. You guys could even save on the lethal injection." Feeling complicated, the female officers explained, "Miss Sanders, according to the law, pregnant ladies are granted with medical parole. If you have any new evidence that can prove your innocence, you should collect those evidence in the meantime as it'll help with reducing your sentence..." "It's all right. Nothing else is more important than having this child now." She kept the document carefully, treating it like a precious thing. Being able to have this child was all that she could ever ask for. "Madam, are you sick again?" Estelle saw the little boy that she met the other day at the hospital, and he looked happy. "Madam, my mommy said that I should thank you after accepting your money. I've been waiting for you at the entrance of the hospital for a few days but have not seen you around." Crouching down to meet his eyes, Estelle stroked his head gently and said softly, "This is my last time here to see the doctors. After today, I won't be coming here anymore." "Oh, are you getting better now madam?" Kids are always optimistic. She did not bear to dim his optimism hence she hesitated and said, "...You can say that I'm getting better. " The little boy hummed happily while holding her hands tightly. "Madam, let me sing you a song to congratulate you on getting better." "Sure!" The little boy was delighted. He held his chest up high and sang his heart out, "...Twinkle twinkle little stars, How I wonder what you are..." The little

boy looked disappointed when he finished the song. "Madam, why are you crying? Was my singing bad?" Wiping away the tears from her face, Estelle flashed him a big smile. "You sang amazingly. It's just that I feel sad that I won't be able to see you anymore." "I'll always remember you. You're a good person. A very, very kind person." Before he could finish his sentence, Estelle's phone rang. It was a string of unfamiliar numbers. She picked up the call. "Hello?" "Good day to you Miss Sanders. I'm Zayne, the lawyer that Mr. Skyler had entrusted to be responsible for the divorce matters. Mr. Skyler received the divorce papers that you mailed him. Please come to the Civil Administration Office so that we can proceed with the divorce procedure."

Chapter 16

Estelle felt a lump in her throat when she heard what he said. "Miss Sanders, are you there?" "I am," she took a deep breath and continued asking, "Will Skyler be there...for the divorce procedure?" "Director Flynn won't be there. He's asked me to take charge of this matter." "Have him attend the meeting. I have something to tell him." Zayne chuckled awkwardly, "Miss Sanders, you're putting me in a tight spot. I'm sure you already know that Director Flynn doesn't want to see you." Of course, she knew. It was just that... "Well, then could you please let him know that...I'm pregnant with his child." "Sorry?!" "I said, I'm pregnant and I want to meet him." Zayne hesitated and let out a weak sigh. His tone carried a hint of empathy as he explained, "Miss Sanders, Director Flynn won't be able to come for the meeting. Miss

Camilla just had a miscarriage and she's traumatized by Aunt Frances' death. Hence, he planned for a holiday overseas for Miss Camilla to get some fresh air. They might already be on the plane now." "...How long will they be gone? When will they be back?" "Miss Camilla wants to travel the world. If it's a short trip, they should be gone for at least half a year. If it's a longer trip, it'll probably take more than a year." "... Before he left for the trip, he gave me the power of attorney document which he appointed me to be his proxy in dealing with the divorce procedure. He also entrusted someone to take care of the company matters. He wants to focus on Miss Camilla as she's the most important person in his life." "... "Miss Sanders, are you okay?" Closing her eyes, Estelle felt like a walking corpse. She was numb to the heartache she felt. Skyler always found a way to rip her heart into pieces. Taking a deep breath, she replied, "I heard you." "Okay. I'll be waiting for you at the entrance of the Civil Administration building." "I won't be going." "Miss Sanders, please don't put me in a tight spot. I'm just doing what Director Flynn asked of me." "Fret not. You'll be able to fulfill what you've been asked of." Touching her face, Estelle chuckled. She then added, "In the end, it doesn't matter if he's divorced or widowed, he'll still be able to marry Camilla. I promised him that I'll give him anything that he wants." The phone signal was bad and Zayne did not hear her. "Miss Sanders, you were saying?" "It's nothing. I'm feeling a little tired. I'll hang up now." The female officer who overheard their conversation looked troubled. "Miss Sanders, since you're not feeling well, we

can arrange for the medical parole another time. Let's send you home first. Where's your home?" Estelle looked happy. She looked calm and peaceful as she stroked her belly with her hands. "My home? I've already lost my home." A year later. After flying for more than ten hours, the plane from Provence finally landed at the airport of H City. After a year of rest and recuperation, Camilla felt much better. She looked toward the man seated beside her and leaned on him. "What's the matter? You've been quiet throughout the flight and you look distracted." Shaking his head, Skyler replied, "It's nothing. For some reason, I feel anxious today." "Maybe because we're back in our hometown. Skyler, you made a promise that we'll get married when we're back in H city." "...Right." Reaching out for his phone, he dialed a number. He then said to her, "I'll go get you a bottle of water and call Zayne in the meantime. I'll have him bring over the divorce papers." Camilla planted a kiss on his cheeks. "Okay." Skyler's call did not reach Zayne but he got another incoming call. "Hello?" answered Skyler. "Good day to you. May I know if this is Mr. Skyler?" "Yes." "We finally reached you. Could you please hurry to the hospital? Your child needs to go into surgery right now and we need your approval." A child? Since when did he have a child? "I'm sorry, you must be mistaken. I don't have a child." "It's not a mistake. Your wife made arrangements for stem cell transplant surgery for both of your children. However, we can't get hold of her. We could only reach out to you but your phone was turned off. Could you please rush to the hospital?" "Two of my kids? And

what was that about a stem transplant surgery?’ Skyler thought to himself as he was puzzled. Another call came through and it was Zayne. He answered the call quickly. “Zayne, what have you been up to? Didn’t I ask you to settle the divorce matters? Why is the hospital calling me about children...” “Director Flynn...you should probably come to the hospital,” Zayne said with a deep and muffled voice. “...What in the world is happening?” “Things are a little complicated, I can’t explain it through the phone, and...” Zayne continued. “Miss Sanders just...”

Chapter 17

“Just what...?” When he said those words, he felt a gush of sharp pain in his chest. He tightened his brows while he clutched onto his chest. He continued, “What’s wrong with her?” “Miss Sanders, she...” “Argh—” His thoughts got interrupted by a call of help. “Skyler, help me...” Not far to where he was, Camilla was awkwardly on the floor as she held on to her ankle in pain. A little boy stood next to her while she looked on helplessly. He had an old football in his hands. “Director Flynn...?” Zayne called out impatiently as he did not get a reply from Skyler. Skyler did not hear a word Zayne said just now. He regained his composure and replied, “I’m here but Camilla’s hurt. I need to check on her. Please help me settle the matter in the hospital first.” “But Director Flynn, Miss Sanders, she...” “She still insists on dragging out the divorce procedure right?” “No, it’s not that. Listen, Director Flynn, Miss Sanders doesn’t have much time to live. She’s in the ER!” “Skyler, I’m in pain...” Camilla wailed louder. “I’ll go check on Camilla. Estelle must be up to one of her tricks again.

She tricked me so many times and I'm not falling for it anymore. Bye.”
Skyler hung
up the call right away. After he hung up, he took big strides toward
Camilla. He
crouched down by her and checked on her injury. Her ankle was bruised
and slightly
scratched. He asked gently, “Are you okay? What happened?” Feeling
sorry, Camilla
bit her lips and asked, “...I'm all right. Skyler, did I interrupt your work?
What did
Zayne say?” “It's nothing. You don't have to worry. I'll take you to the
hospital.”
Skyler lifted her and noticed the little boy still standing in place. His eyes
were teary
and he reached out to tug on Skyler's shirt. “I'm sorry, sir.” Skyler's face
turned
slightly dark as he could not bring himself to scold the little kid. “Don't
kick the ball
around at places with many people, you might hurt someone.” “I
understand, sir. I'm
sorry.” “It's alright now” “Are you planning on bringing ma'am to see the
doctor? It's
costly to see the doctor. Here, I have some money, you can take it...” As
he said that,
the little boy reached into his pockets and pulled out several banknotes.
It was five
and one-dollar bills but it was arranged neatly in a stack. He showed the
bills to
Skyler and continued, “Sir, this is all that I can give you.” Skyler noticed a
wound
dressing on the back of the kid's hand. He thought that he must have
just gotten an
injection. The injection wound seemed extremely large on his small
hands. “Where's
your mommy?” Skyler asked. “My mommy works as a cleaner in the
hospital. She
spent all her savings for me to see the doctor. There was a kind-hearted
lady who gave
me a lot of money, but it still wasn't enough to cover the hospital bills. I
only have all

this much left...Sir, I didn't do it on purpose. I was holding my ball firmly but it was ma'am who knocked into me. I did not..." Tugging gently on his collar, Camilla said softly, "Skyler, I feel sorry for the little boy. I'm all right, let's just let this slide." Skyler chuckled lightly and said, "Okay. Let's go to the hospital." After half an hour, Camilla was checked thoroughly by a doctor. The doctor informed Skyler, "There's nothing to worry about. The skin's scraped and there's slight damage to the soft tissue. She'll get better after a few days of rest." "Okay. Thank you, doctor."