

2. "What's the catch?"

"You have to live through the **worst parts** of life, so you never take the **best parts** for granted."

Chapter Two

Elena's POV

Too many times when I was young, I dreamed of this day to happen - to meet my grandpa. I imagined that he would swing me in his arms and hug me tightly. Then he would take care of me and my mom, relieving us from our hardship of living poorly. But they were all illusions, a figment of a child's imagination.

My nose wrinkled in disgust.

I stared at grandpa. He looked well-built and fit in his seventy plus years, and I could not help but compare to mom's deteriorating health.

Life can be unfair sometimes, but that's no reason to just give up.

Grandpa settled on a padded armchair across from me. His head held high, still so proud and aristocratic. He looked at me like I was a piece of dirt on this very expensive looking Victorian couch.

I was holding my temper. I could not help but recall the time he humiliated me during high school, denying me to everyone. That was something that I could never forget. A mark like a tattoo, imprinted inside my brain.

"So your mother is sick," he spat right away, skipping any pleasantries, "misfortune always follows to disobedient children. She's very foolish running away with that airhead Englishman. She would have a better future if she agreed to marry the man I wanted for her."

An arranged marriage.

Typical rich person's perception in preserving their wealth. I heard silently, thinking of mom. She would have a lifetime of torture instead, if she married a stranger. It would be like nailing her own cocoon in everyday. I knew she would rather choose her life now.

My hands trembled with anger. Grandpa's insults and harsh words kept on coming, degrading my dead father, Gareth Danes, though I haven't even seen in person, I knew from my mom and his family that he was a very wonderful guy.

"What about you? What's going on with your life? My sources said that you haven't gone to a university," he scooped, looking at me oddly like I came from another planet. His eyes studied my appearance from head to foot, "you're twenty two and jobless! That's what you get when you neglect schooling, you can't find a decent job when you lose one."

So he did a regular check with my life. He knows my name and age. He knows my education and work status. I wonder what else he knows?

"I didn't go to university because Mom could not afford it."

"Of course! That retard is so weak and stupid! I don't know where she got that kind of attitude, my wife and I both have strong personalities. The maids probably influenced her," he shook his head, looking very disappointed, "she's an ungrateful daughter, disrespectful... and a moron!"

I stood up abruptly, I could not contain his unpleasant words anymore. Two minutes more, I would forget that he was my grandfather and attack him.

"If you let me see you today, just to tell me insulting words about my mother, then I'd better leave," I glared at him angrily, "she's a wonderful woman, a very loving mother. Yeah, she made the mistake of running away at a young age, for following her heart, and every single day, she regretted that. She could have done a better way, without you hating her... and cursing her to death."

"HA! A better way? She still fell in love with that idiotic Englishman!"

"Spare my dad with your wrath, he's at peace in his grave," I said firmly, uncaring who he was anymore, "it seems like you have nothing nice to say. You're still a proud, vindictive and unforgiving man. You refused to acknowledge that you have your own faults too, by being so strict and controlling Mom's life."

"How dare you say that to me!" He stood up abruptly, his eyes widened as he looked at me with monstrosity, "I'm your grandfather!"

"You're sure about that now?" I bursted, matching his anger, "remember? You denied me before, in front of everyone in school. You said you didn't know me. You said you didn't have a granddaughter. You humiliated me!"

His lips tightened, then chuckled nastily, "so look who's holding a grudge? You think I would announce to the whole world that I have a granddaughter studying in public school? What would that make me, a laughing stock to everyone!"

"Your reputation is more important to you than your family. You care too much about what people say, rather than your daughter's feelings. You're heartless and savage, and I'm not proud of you as my grandfather," I hissed, then took my worn-out tote bag lying out of place on the expensive sofa.

"I'm not done with you!" he barked when I stormed out of the living room.

I stopped mid-stride, turned to him slowly and said, "well, I'm done with you. Don't worry, I won't bother you again. I can ask help for my mom's medical treatment somewhere else. Pretty sure there are plenty of people who have beautiful souls. You can continue cutting your connection with us. Goodbye Mr. Constantine Pallis. I hope you have a happy old life ahead of you."

"I'll pay for your mother's medical treatment," he said and that stopped me from leaving. I stared at him tongue-tied, "everything. I'll get the best medical doctors and institutions in the world to cure her illness. After that, she'll live a very comfortable life. She'll get her trust fund of three billion dollars, and three mansions. In Los Angeles, Maryland and New York."

I was lost for words. I stood there frozen staring at him. Suddenly I was suspicious. There was no way that he would just agree to help Mom and give everything he mentioned. He had a black heart as Satan.

"What's the catch?"

He smirked, then said, "you have to marry Adonis Stavrakos."

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Three hours later, I was on board a private plane with Mom and a group of medical team heading to Rochester, Minnesota.

Her medical treatment started right away. It was intensive at first that she suffered from too much pain and discomfort. But I was there all the time, making things easier for her and giving her encouragement to hang on.

After a month, Mom started to feel better. She got rid of her cancer, but the treatment was still ongoing to make sure that it would not come back. She was transferred to a rehabilitation facility in New York where she would be monitored continually.

I was back in our little apartment in New York. For two days I kept on wondering what my life would be in the coming months.

Yes, I agreed to marry Adonis Stavrakos without giving it a thought. I did not care about who the guy was, or what my life would be. My only concern was for Mom to get well. I would trade my life to the devil, for her.

I did not mention the arranged marriage to Mom, it would only aggravate her condition because she would get so worried. I was saving the bad news till she got really well.

I heard of Stavrakos surname. There were too many establishments in New York bearing the Stavrakos names. A hotel, a restaurant, a business district, a shopping mall, and others. But I did not know anyone who was a Stavrakos or even met any of them.

I stopped wondering who the guy I would marry, and focused on my designs. I was passionate about fashion designing. It started when I worked at the fashion design and manufacturing company after I graduated high school. Being an all-around assistant taught me many things, not just making illustrations of the clothing designs, but also things like matching colors, textures, prints and others. Even running the whole business.

When the company went bankrupt, together with my best friend, Camella, we put up our own online shopping business. We were pretty ambitious, with the goal of having our own fashion design and manufacturing company. I knew we could do it, if we would just persevere.

I was ready to go to bed when my phone rang. My heart hammered instantly when I saw the caller.

"Yes, grandpa?"

"Get ready tomorrow. You're going to meet the Stavrakos family."

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AN: Hello Dreamers! How's everyone? Hope you enjoyed reading Elena's POV.

If you noticed, I've been sharing love/life quotes, all kinds of positivity, in my Instagram account: [sweetdreamer33_xoxo](#). If you like to be motivated, kindly follow me. I'll be sharing some tips in writing and other things also.

Take care everyone. Always keep yourselves hydrated. Bye for now, and see you on Saturday!

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