

Chapter 14: A Package

Rosalind shook her head and scooted along the couch to create a distance from Gabriel. "I can't make an important decision as quickly as that. Give me at least a week."

Gabriel didn't close the distance between them. He only stared at Rosalind for a while. "Fine, a week, but not more."

"Thank you." As he stayed on the couch and didn't show any intention of leaving soon, she finally stood. "Do you want orange juice? Maybe milk? Wine, perhaps? Though it's still too early for that."

"Do you have coffee?"

She nodded. "Sure. How do you want your coffee?"

"Black and thick."

Rosalind lifted her eyebrow. "Straightforward and no-nonsense, huh?"

As he leaning his back on the couch, Gabriel grinned. "Yes, it's me. See how you learn to know me just from my coffee? I'm sure we'll get along great together."

She laughed a little and shook her head. Gabriel and his determination were unbelievable. He might be the one who could sell the sand to people in the desert. "Gabriel, I know why you can be so successful. It's your determination." She smiled while sighing. "I'll be right back."

In the little kitchen, Rosalind prepared the coffee. She even toasted

some bread too. That's when the bell rang. She rushed to the door. After peeking through the peephole, she saw a young adult wear a cap and held a little box. Rosalind opened the door as she thought the young man was a courier.

"Miss Miller?"

"Yes."

"It's a delivery for you. Can you sign here, please?" The courier handed over a ballpoint to Rosalind and pointed at a paper on the package.

"Sure!" Rosalind returned the pen after signing on the small paper.

The courier tore the paper from the package, then he gave the package to her. Rosalind gave the man a small tip when it was not obligatory for her to do that.

The courier accepted it and smiled. "Thank you."

"Don't mention it."

Rosalind brought the small package inside and closed the door. Later, she tore the package. She found a silver necklace inside, a flash drive, and a note. The necklace wasn't new. She could tell that because some scratches marred the chain and the locket. She took the necklace and creased her forehead because she didn't order any silver necklace.

Then she checked the name and address. It was directed at her. There was no mistake about it. Suddenly, she gasped and glanced at

Gabriel. It could be he who sent the necklace to her. So she approached him.

Gabriel looked at her, saying nothing. When he saw the necklace in her hand, he frowned. "Does Jeremy still try to ask your forgiveness?"

Rosalind opened her mouth but said nothing. Jeremy! Yes, it could be from him. Judging from Gabriel's reaction, no way he was the one who sent the necklace.

Immediately, she opened the folded note. 'We have Richard Miller, your brother. He took some of our items and had paid nothing. If you want him alive, send one million dollars before ten p.m. today. For identity verification, we sent you your brother's necklace and his video. If you are late or don't send the money, next we will send your brother's corpse to your place.' Then there was a bank account number too that she had to send money.

Her hands that held the box, the necklace, and the flash drive trembled. She couldn't think straight because it was too shocking for her. It was a blackmail and a ransom note. No doubt about it for now. But then, reading that his brother was still alive was something beyond her mind.

Rosalind clutched the necklace, the flash drive, and most importantly, the note. She was drained from everything happened today until she sank herself on the couch. She put the empty box on the table, then the rest of the items too, yet she still held the note. After taking a deep breath, Rosalind closed her eyes, trying to calm herself.

Being fired twice on the same day had been a nightmare for her, but now ... this? She gulped and took a deep breath, then opened her

eyes and wished it was another nightmare, and she would wake up to find it was just a bad dream. Yet, the note in her hand was still there. Her eyes stared at the empty box, the necklace, and the flash drive too.

"What's wrong?" Gabriel finally asked.

"I ..." Rosalind licked her lips and couldn't finish her words. Her mind was blank. To say a sentence was a hard task.

"Rose?" he asked again. This time, he moved his body forward. His eyes fully focused on her.

"It's a ... threat," she finally could say it.

"Let me see it."

Rosalind handed over the note to Gabriel. He read the note and then frowned. "Richard Miller is your brother?"

She clenched her hands together. After taking several deep breaths to calm herself, Rosalind nodded. "Yes." 1

"Check the necklace and the flash drive, then."

She followed what Gabriel said and took the necklace, but she didn't recognize it. Nothing rang the bell in her mind. However, when she touched the locket, somehow there was a cleft. After paying attention to it for a while, her fingers finally opened the locket. What she saw next made her instantly touch her chest.

"Rose?"

She ignored Gabriel and unclasped her necklace. Then she opened the locket too and found the same picture in the old locket with what was inside her locket. It was a baby girl and a boy. The boy held the baby girl's hand and smiled. The baby girl pouted as the picture was taken after she just awoke from her nap. Rosalind turned both pictures to see the same information on the back of the photos: Richard Miller (eight), brother, and Rosalind Miller (four), sister.

Her eyes were blurry because of tears. She grew up in an orphanage without knowing her parents. Later, they also separated her from her brother, because the orphanage was full. She still had some nightmares as she recalled someone called her name, "Rosa, Rosa," when they separated his brother and her. Now, she knew it was Richard who called her in her dreams.

"Richard ..." she whispered and sobbed.

Then Rosalind returned the photos back to her and Richard's lockets. There was no doubt anymore that the necklace belonged to Richard. As her eyes saw the flash drive on the table, she took and connected it to her phone using an adapter converter.

In no time, her thumb pressed a few buttons, and she saw a video of a man tied on a bedpost. He wore only a boxer. His face was covered in blood, and so was his body. Then there was a voice that said, "If you are late or don't send the money, tomorrow you will receive his corpse."

She covered her mouth with both hands and shook her head. "No! Richard!"