



20 Chapter TWENTY

Theme: A wish she was never born 1

(FLASHBACK TO TEN YEARS AGO)

WINSLOW, ARIZONA.

(RIVERA'S HOME)

Mr Rivera and his wife argued about the incident at the hotel. He scolded his wife for being harsh on Ivy when it was so clear that she was at force.

"Whose side are you on? Ivy? Or me?!" She hissed out.

"I am not taking side. I am just trying to correct you about-"

She interrupted him sharply with a mocked laughter. "Correct me? Come on, stop acting like you are innocent in this issue. What? Are you pity your poor daughter now?"

Mr Rivera raised up his eyebrows. "My daughter? Isn't she your daughter too?" He questioned.

"Is she my daughter? Oh please I can't just stand that girl anymore! She irritates me each time I see her! Look at it now, she is not even back home yet. And I am sure she is somewhere



making out with a man since that has become her specialty!" Mrs Rivera grimaced with annoyance clear in her tone.

"Sometime you sound like Ivy isn't your daughter whereas she is your first fruit. I think it is high time we stop punishing the girl for what happened to you." Mr Rivera said with a calm tone.

"Stop trying to make it look like I am the only one who treats her badly, we are both in this together. And you are asking me to stop punishing her when I didn't even do anything wrong? It's her fault that she didn't to come into this world without my consent! And if only I had the bad heart when she took in, I would have taken an abortion pill."

"Stop these nonsense!" Mr Rivera cautioned her.

"Don't blame me, I was nice enough to birth her but what did she do to us? She almost destroyed our lives. And I wish she wasn't born anyways." Mrs Rivera countered her husband with hatred towards Ivy in her eyes.

Mr Rivera shook his head slowly. "I don't have anything else to say to you." He closed the newspaper he was trying to read and then lay back in bed.

"And I have so many things to say to you but I will save them up for another day." Mrs Rivera stormed out of the room.

She motioned towards the girls bedroom and opened it without even knocking on the door. Her eyes drifted towards Ivy's bed and it was still empty.

"Your sister isn't home yet?" Mrs Rivera asked.

Emily sat up on the bed as she looked at Ivy's bed. "As you can see her bed is empty. I don't think I would be home too if you had treated me that way." She glared at her mom.

Mrs Rivera had to sneer at her words. "I am sure she is somewhere with a guy." She hissed, looking up at the wall clock.

The time was 10:30 p.m.

"Mom, can you stop having this impression that Ivy sleeps around?" Emily queried.

Mrs Rivera crossed her arms over her chest. "Oh! Am I wrong?" She laughed.

Emily shook her head in pity. "You know what mom? What you did to Ivy at the hotel today was terrible. You really embarrassed her when she didn't even do anything wrong. Seriously, If I were Ivy, I won't hesitate to leave



town just to get away from this hell hole and you will never be able find me again!" Emily replied.

"It would be better if she left town." Mrs Rivera replied.

Emily looked at her mom with an angry look on her face. "Please just leave our room," she said, pulling the blanket back to her head.

(INSIDE THE BEACH HOUSE)

She just stood up and went to sit next to him. And he gave the bag of chips to her before standing up to switch on the television. She watched as he moved swiftly around the room trying to find the remote and she couldn't help but drool over his features. Every of his movement displayed his thick muscles and well built body through his clothes. She was drooling over him that she didn't notice he was looking at her.

"Bethany, are you okay?" He asked, snapping her out of reverie.

"Oh! Yes..Yes..I am fine..I was just thinking of -" her voice trailed off when he sat next to her.

Ace grabbed the can of Pringles.

"I thought you wanted the chips too." She completed her unintended statement.

"You can have it all to yourself." Ace



answered with his gaze focused on the television.

"Are you sure you don't want the chips anymore?" She asked.

Ace hummed a positive response as he munch on Pringles.

"Okay, thank you." She stood up to leave for the other couch but Ace pulled her back down to his side and in a swift movement her head automatically rested on his chest.

Bethany was surprised but she was very much comfortable and she didn't know why she felt safe staying close to him.

"I don't want you to eat alone so just stick to my side." Ace smiles, at least she didn't try to leave again which means that she loved it.

Ivy continued to munch of the chips while Ace watched his favorite sport program being aired at that time. And soon the dark sky was lit up by a strong lightning. Ace saw the lighting through the window.

"I think it is about to rain." Ace mumbled.

Ivy sat up abruptly, gazing out at the window and the lightning came again. "I should getting going." She stood up from the couch ready to leave.



"Alright." Ace stood up from the couch too.

But suddenly the clouds spat out their beads of water on the earth. Puddles began plinking as the rainfall became heavier and the downpour dropped pitter-pattered on the roof tops.

Ivy could hear the murmuring of the rain through the window, it sounded like the buzzing of angry bees.

"It has started.. do you have an umbrella or something." Ivy asked.

"It seems the storm is high..and a umbrella might not work in it. You will definitely get drenched before you get home." He said.

"You are right. But it doesn't matter since I am a bit wet already." Ivy replied.

She has to go home because of her parents, not because she thinks they would be worried about her but because they would nag her for keeping late night. Ivy's greatest fear was her parents finding out that she was with a guy.

"I don't mind going out in the rain." She repeated.

"Alright..let me see if I can get -" Then the light went off and everywhere was dark.

Bethany became frightened because she was always scared of dark places.



"The..the..light..went..out.." she stuttered.

Two years ago someone had tried to take advantage of her in a dark ally. Her mom was terribly sick and she had refused to go and see a doctor so her dad had asked her to get drugs at the pharmaceutical store around 11:00 p.m in the night. She was terribly scared when two men had appeared in front of her one with a pen knife in their hands. They were aware of who she was. "The Rivera Girl." So with that they had told her she was used to men sleeping with her.

She had heard stories of teenage girls being raped and murdered in dark ally and that's why she was always scared of staying out late. Ivy was terrified that night and scared of what they would do to her. And they would have had their way if not for the police siren that the men heard. So that night they had no choice but to let her go before running off but with a promise to get back to her. Ever since then, she had tried not to walk late nights ever again or even pass through dark corners.

"I think..it's from the extension box." Ace whispered.

Bethany moved closer trying to get to Ace but he was too close that she stepped on him and her face collided with his solid chest.

"Oh..sorry..I am..sorry. I didn't mean to -"



"Are you okay?" Ace asked.

Her hand went down to hold on the tip of his T-shirt. "Yes..I..am alright..but the light went out....I think..." She replied shakily and held on to him more.

She didn't know how to express that she was scared of darkness.

"I am sorry." She apologized.

"Why are you apologizing because the light went out?" Ace chuckled.

She didn't respond.

One thing he noticed about her was that she was so quick to say sorry. It was as if she was born with that word. For Ivy she got used to saying the word because of her parents. She was always apologizing whenever they scold her even when she wasn't wrong.

"Alright let me just get my phone to check things out. Just stay right here I will be back." Ace mumbled after some seconds of silence.

"No..No...please let me come with you. I really don't..like staying in the dark." She was trembling now.

She still held on to him. Ace hands dropped down to cup her face. "Listen, nothing is going to hurt you when I am right here with you. Just



stay calm.. Okay?" Ace said in a soft tone.

And all she did was nod her head slowly while her hands dropped down to her side letting go of Ace t-shirt.

Ace found his phone on the table and then he put on the flash light. When he looked at Bethany her eyes were closed as she fidgeted and fiddled with her fingers.

As he watched her, his hands reached for her face and she inhaled at his comfort and safety his touch brought to her. "Bethany open your eyes..my flashlight is on." Ace whispered with his knuckles grazing her cheek slowly.

She opened her eyes slowly and saw that Ace face was really close to hers than she expected.

"Are you okay now?" He asked, caressing her cheeks continuously.

"I am sorry..for causing you trouble." She apologized.

Ace stepped closer covering the inches left for their bodies to meet. "Don't apologize." He muttered with his eyes boring into her eyes.

Ivy swallowed hard while Ace's gaze travelled down to her lips. "Bethany.." he called her name in the lowest tone he could muster.



She stared at him while he eased his fingers beneath her hair and clasped the back of her neck looking at her seductively.

"Don't worry, I am here with you," he said, urging her face forward and he lowered his mouth on hers.

"Was he trying to get along just to have her in his bed like he use to do with other girls? Or was he indeed happy to spend time with Bethany without expecting anything in return?" The questions came back to Ace.

And then Ace knew he was back to being his old self but he was sure that his life would never be the same again for kissing the innocent girl.
