

My Contracted Husband, the Heartless CEO has Amnesia?!

Chapter 3: CHAPTER 3: The Last Night

Kingston Industries' annual Innovation Showcase was unlike any other corporate event in the city.

It was part trade show, part celebration, part intimidation tactic; I learned early that it was Xenois's way of reminding competitors and allies as well of his dominance in both legitimate and illegitimate businesses.

I'd attended ten of these galas now, but this one felt a bit different. After all it was my last one as Mrs. Kingston.

"Mom, look! They have quantum computers!" Soren said as he tugged at my hand, pointing toward a display where engineers demonstrated holographic things.

I smiled, smoothing down my gold gown, the same one that Xenois had specifically selected for tonight.

"Why don't you go check it out? Stay where I can see you."

The boys ran off, happy to have gotten permission to explore. I watched them go, smiling and feeling sad at the same time.

By this time tomorrow I would never see them again.

"They're making quite an impression," Xenois said as he stood beside me, his voice low.

"The Kingston legacy secured."

I glanced at him, my breath taking away each time I saw him.

"They're excited," I said smoothly as I looked back at them asking the engineers some questions. "It's their first time here."

His hand moved to my waist, warm and possessive. I felt goosebumps on my skin as I tried to hide my blush. It was merely an act for him, for the public to see us as a happy couple.

"Victor Romano is watching," Xenois murmured, nodding toward a group of men across the room.

"He's been questioning my commitment to our alliance. We need to look united."

I leaned into him automatically, playing my part. "Is that why you're actually touching me in public?"

He smirked looking down at me as he chuckled softly. "Six years and still so direct."

"You've always said you appreciated that about me."

"Indeed." His eyes scanned me from head to toe as he nodded, a smile of approval on his lips. "You look beautiful tonight, Celeste."

The unexpected compliment made my heart flutter as I looked down, playing with my fingers. "Thank you."

We moved through the crowd together, accepting congratulations on the triplets' intelligence from colleagues, and deflecting questions about when we would be trying for baby number 4. Well technically baby number 2.

"Xenois," a hoarse voice called, and I tensed up immediately.

Victor Romano made his way towards us, followed by two men whose suit jackets barely concealed their weapons.

Unlike Xenois, who managed to make even his criminal enterprises seem normal to the public eye, Romano preferred the stereotypical mafia aesthetic—complete with gold chains and tattoos that were up to his neck.

"Victor," Xenois nodded briefly, as he said. "Enjoying the showcase?"

Romano's eyes moved to me, watching me as he said. "Mrs. Kingston. Always a pleasure."

I smiled at him, fighting the urge to step behind Xenois.

These men frightened me not because of their appearances, but because I knew exactly what they were capable of. What my husband was capable of.

"The boys have grown," Romano observed, watching the triplets as they moved from exhibit to exhibit. "Strong little soldiers."

"They take after their father," I said politely.

Romano chuckled at my words. "Let's hope they have his drive for business too."

He turned back to Xenois. "A word?"

Xenois's hand tightened briefly on my waist.

"Of course. Celeste, why don't you check on the boys?"

I nodded, understanding the dismissal. As I walked away, I felt Romano's eyes on my back.

The triplets had gathered around a robotics display, watching a mechanical arm build something.

"Mom!" Troy exclaimed as soon as he saw me as he pointed. "This robot can build anything! Can we have one?"

"I don't think that would fit in your playroom," I laughed, a little bit grateful for their distraction.

"Mrs. Kingston." A familiar voice spoke behind me.

I turned to find Dmitri, one of Xenois's most trusted men, he looked huge and had a lot of scars that gave him a black boy vibe.

If I wasn't in love with Xenois, I would have gone after him. Despite his intimidating appearance, he'd always been respectful toward me.

"Dmitri," I acknowledged, a genuine smile on my face this time.. "Enjoying the party?"

"Not my scene," he admitted, then surprised me by crouching down to the boys' level.

"Hey little bosses, you like the robots?"

The triplets immediately surrounded him, asking him a lot of questions that he answered with a lot of patience. I watched, amused, as this hardened killer explained hydraulic systems to my five-year-olds.

"They're smart," Dmitri said approvingly as he straightened up and looked at me.

"Got their father's brains."

"And his stubbornness," I added.

His face changed a bit from happiness to sympathy as he looked at me. "Changes coming, huh?"

My smile froze on my face as I narrowed my eyes at him. "Excuse me?"

"The boss doesn't tell me everything," he shrugged his shoulders, "but I hear things. Claudia's coming back tomorrow, right? After all these years."

I flinched when I heard that name Claudia Hale. That was the woman Xenois had been seeing before our arrangement.

His true love, according to rumors. The reason he'd specified a contract marriage with an expiration date.

"I wouldn't know," I lied smoothly.

Dmitri looked skeptical but didn't press the matter. Rather he nodded his head allowing it to pass.

"Well, whatever happens... you've been good for him. For what it's worth."

Before I could respond, he was called away by another associate, leaving me feeling empty.

Across the room, I saw Xenois who was in a deep conversation with Romano. Their expressions looked serious, their voices too low to be over heard. As if sensing my eyes on him, Xenois looked up, his dark eyes finding mine instantly.

Then Romano clapped him on the shoulder, saying loudly enough for nearby guests to hear: "So, Claudia returns tomorrow. Everything in place for the reunion?"

Xenois's expression didn't change, but I saw the stiffening of his shoulders.

"Everything is arranged," he confirmed, his eyes still on me.

I turned away, focusing on my sons, determined not to let him see how much those words had hurt me.