

Chapter 20 Did She Meet Her Match

At the other end of the line, Emmett paused a little to think. "Mrs. Hilton, where are you?" He asked instead of answering her question. "Has she really gone to New York?" he thought to himself, a crease on his forehead.

Trapped in his own musings he heard Debbie say, "I'm in New York. I just got off the plane."

Her voice trembled correspondingly, and then she added, "It's freezing cold out here." What she said was no exaggeration, and Emmett was more than aware.

Back home, the climate was welcoming with the soft breeze of Autumn. In New York, however, the temperature had dropped to several degrees below zero. The young lady did not sound like she had any idea until she was there.

Emmett's mouth was agape in shock for a bit. He had not expected her to push through with going to New York by herself. "Mrs. Hilton, please find someplace where you can have a cup of coffee first. In the meantime, I'll arrange a car for you right away." Despite the grave possibility of a divorce, as long as it was not finalized yet, Debbie still had every right to enjoy all the respect and proper treatment as Carlos' wife. That was clear to Emmett, and so he insisted on being of assistance to the young lady.

Although she wanted to refuse, it was snowing heavily outside and she did not exactly have a better plan in mind. After giving it some careful thought, she turned to the side and entered the nearest coffee bar that caught her eyes.

Just as Emmett kept true to his word, a car picked Debbie up to drive her to the hospital where the old man she was supposed to see was currently confined.

Upon entering the ICU ward, Debbie eyed the old man lying in bed, with all



kinds of tubes and apparatuses inserted into his skinny and frail body.

The mere sight of the man's condition nearly broke her heart. "What happened?" Debbie asked in a soft whisper, turning to the driver who had brought her to the hospital from the airport.

"Carlos' grandfather has been in poor health for years," the driver began, his chauffeur cap in his hand. "He has been in a coma for over three years now. Ever since he got seriously ill, the man has not awakened from it."

Looking at the motionless old man once again, Debbie could not help but feel every kind of sadness. "Poor man," she thought to herself.

At his age, instead of suffering alone in an ICU ward, he was supposed to be surrounded by his children and their respective families.

Although he appeared to be receiving every possible means of comfort, it was still different than to be resting in his own home. She then sent a text message to Carlos. "Why did you not tell me about your grandfather's condition?" If she had known about it, she might not have come to New York. The primary reason for her flying over had been to ask for an answer, but to her surprise, the old man could not even speak.

Nevertheless, since Carlos and she were still married, strictly speaking the old man was also her grandfather by law. Perhaps, it was a good thing that she had come to see him after all. Otherwise, she would never have guessed about his current situation. Turning to the driver, she asked, "Who's taking care of Carlos' grandfather?"

"Professionals, I hear. He's provided with around-the-clock care," the driver explained, squinting as though he were trying to recall. "Carlos and his parents often come to check on him as well."

After asking a few more questions, Debbie left the hospital. While waiting outside for the car, she stretched out her right hand to catch some snowflakes until her hand went numb with the cold.

Thanks to Emmett making arrangements while she was at the hospital, Debbie could stay at a place which Carlos owned in New York. At least, just until she returned back home. It was not until she walked into the room that she learned the villa was where Carlos lived whenever he came to New York. A few personal items could be found neatly propped in their respective places, some suits in the closet being one of the things



which she noticed.

Although Emmett was thoughtful in his actions, it was a pity that Carlos and Debbie were not meant to be together.

Having flown for more than ten hours, after which she had headed directly to the hospital, it was no wonder that she felt the exhaustion overcoming her. By the time she sat on the bed, she did not want to move a single muscle anymore.

However, when it dawned on her that this was not her own bedroom, but Carlos', and that she would be sleeping in his bed, she mustered what was left of her energy and dragged herself into the bathroom. As soon as she finished taking a shower and changing into clean clothes, she plopped onto the bed and fell asleep the moment her head touched the pillow.

On the other side of the world, Carlos was still at work in the Hilton Group.

He was putting aside some finished files, when he saw the text message from Debbie. "You didn't ask," he replied.

When he had received her message about letting Gail off easily the day before, he had been at a loss for words. Despite the lady being the one who was asking for a divorce, her message felt as though he was the one who wanted to get out of their marriage. More importantly, where had she gotten the nerve to propose terms and conditions?

After sending the message, Carlos turned to Emmett and asked in a flat tone, "How's everything with her in New York?"

"Her? New York?" For a moment, Emmett was confused as his thoughts were preoccupied with his work responsibilities. "Oh, right," he thought suddenly. It finally occurred to him whom Carlos was asking about. "After her visit to the hospital, Mrs. Hilton went to the villa on Mountain Avenue. Right now, she is likely resting in the villa."

Without lifting his eyes from the files before him, Carlos asked again, "When is she coming back?"

"I didn't ask. She hasn't booked a return ticket yet," Emmett answered.

The man intertwined his fingers on the desk, and looked at him once more. "Postpone everything tomorrow on my schedule," Carlos said. "Book a ticket to New York for me." There were a few things he had to do anyway. One, he wanted to pay his grandfather a visit. And two, he preferred to talk with his wife about their divorce in person. 'It was better not to delay either of those matters,' he thought to himself.

"Yes, Carlos."

Initially, Debbie had planned to have some fun in New York before flying back home. But later on, she had received a message from Gail out of the blue. It was regarding Lucinda; she had gotten into an accident.

As soon as she read it, she called Sebastian to check on her aunt's situation. Her uncle did not sound too distressed. "It's not that bad," he said in a comforting voice. But despite Sebastian's reassurance, she was still worried. After the phone call, she quickly packed her things and went to the airport.

The moment she got on the homeward bound plane, Carlos' plane just landed in New York. But due to a curious twist of fate, they missed their chances of having their first meeting as a married couple, ironically to discuss their divorce.

Six days later, Carlos came back from New York as well, but he did not have any time to rest. A meeting with an important client had been scheduled at Orchid Private Club. As soon as he got off the plane, he had to head straight to the venue if he wanted to arrive on time.

The night fell. A Bentley sped past along the road.

Due to the evening rush hour, they were stuck in a traffic jam that extended all the way to the intersection. The car wasn't going anywhere anytime soon. Carlos rolled down the car window and lit a cigarette. Tired, he took a drag on the cigarette to elevate his spirits.

While his car was not moving, Carlos saw a bunch of people fighting in a lane. Seven men had cornered a woman against a wall. Something about the scenario felt oddly familiar.

When he saw who the woman was, Carlos coughed out a mouthful of smoke which hid the look in his eyes.

The conflict amongst the eight people did not last long. When one of the seven men raised a hand, the young lady deftly kicked him who was going to strike her.

Emmett, who was becoming uneasy in the car, worried that his boss might get impatient and lash out on him. He fidgeted in his spot and his eyes wandered around in the streets as well. His eyes widened when he saw the commotion.

In a surprised voice, he exclaimed, "Carlos! Isn't that..." The shock made him stutter. "Isn't that Mrs. -- I mean, Debbie?" Once Emmett was certain that it was indeed Debbie, he could not believe his eyes. The woman was fighting alone against one, two, three... seven men. Debbie was in a fight against seven men!

While stubbing out the cigarette, Carlos exhaled the last mouthful of smoke and demanded, "Shut up!" No one needed to tell him who the lady was. Even from afar, he had quickly recognized that it was Debbie in another brawl. 'Does she have nothing else better to do?' he thought, scowling.

Emmett opened the door and was about to get out of the car when he heard his boss' cold voice. "If you get out of this car," Carlos began, "don't bother getting in again."

Frozen, Emmett stopped himself just in time. His mind was reeling. Under the firm gaze of his boss, the conflicted man could only utter, "But..." Even though his hesitance was clear, Carlos did not respond. He was not worried about the woman's well-being. If he remembered correctly, she had kicked the asses of nine well-trained security guards during the Loftus family's party before.

Lighting a second cigarette, Carlos turned to Emmett. "Start walking to the club. I'm going to park the car somewhere first," he said indifferently. "Tell the client I'm on the way."

The club was not too far from where they were. If they continued the rest of the trip by car, they would need to make a detour. On foot, however, the distance would be shorter.

While gripping the door tightly, Emmett was confused by his boss' sudden change of heart. Whatever Carlos was up to, Emmett did not have the courage to disobey his orders. Bouncing out of the car, he closed the

door and briskly made his way towards the Orchid Private Club.

In the lane, Debbie was panting with her hands on her knees. The hooligans whom she was fighting with had run away.

The only reason she went there was to use the bathroom. How unfortunate of her that she ended up running into those losers! This neighborhood belonged to Orchid Private Club. Generally, it was quite safe over here. That was why Kristina had chosen to sing in this neck of the woods.

Hence, Debbie presumed those hooligans must have taken someone's money and were working for someone. Alas, she had let them get away. Now she had no leads as to who had hired them.

Then, as Debbie stood up straight in a calm manner, steady yet heavy footsteps could be heard from behind her. Even after a fierce fight and somewhat exhausted, her entire body was on full alert again. When she felt that the person was within close range, she slashed her hands swiftly towards him.

But before she could touch the person, he moved behind her at the same moment she had turned around.

Struck with surprise, Debbie narrowed her eyes in suspicion. She had studied martial arts for ten years. Through a single move, she could tell that the person behind her -- whomever he might be, was a professional.

Whether it was the security guards on the cruiser or the hooligans she had just dealt with, this man could easily handle them with one hand.

On the other hand, she had exerted most of her strength with both hands. Even worse, she had not even seen his face yet. Was he a friend or a foe? And if he was the latter, did she just meet her match?