

Her CEO Stalker and Her Second Chance Mate

Chapter 6

Adelaide

“First, you need to eat the damn muffin, so you don’t collapse.”—I closed my eyes a moment, admitting to myself that he was right— “Second, you’re not paying me; and third, by the time I get back, you need a plan on where to go, because I’m not leaving you in this city with whoever the piece of shit is that did that to you.”

“I don’t know where to go,” I admitted.

“You don’t have any family?”

I shook my head no. “My Uncle died a few months back and my Mama passed away a few months before then. There's no one else. I only have one friend in this city and I have to keep her out of this,” I explained.

He growled under his breath. “Then you have till I get back to figure it out, Honey, cuz I’m not leaving you here, and I ain’t taking you across the country with me.”

“That’s fair,” I let him know.

“What’s your name, girl?”

I glanced around to be sure those closest to us were occupied. “Adelaide,” I croaked.

He nodded, sliding his hand across the table open, in offering. “Beck,” the introduction was curt and short. I met his hand across the table and we shook. He held my hand firm. “Before we part ways, you're gonna tell me who this motherfucker is,” I swallowed and nodded. He returned the gesture and I pulled the wrapper off my muffin once he released me. I broke the bottom from the top before breaking it into bite-sized pieces. I was so incredibly hungry, but my emotions and my headspace were fighting against the act of eating. It felt wrong to try to fulfill my most basic needs.

Beck watched me carefully, and I put a morsel to my mouth, popping it in. I swallowed, my sore throat tightening, as tears threatened to spill over. “Thank you, Beck. You are my guardian angel today.” He nodded quietly, letting me sit in my feelings before I pulled out a pen, and wrote the dollar amount I wished him to withdraw, and PIN. I reached into my shirt to pull my debit card out of my bra. I know, very ladylike, but I never claimed to be a lady. That's what I wanted, I had played the part for a while but not anymore. Beck just

rolled his eyes, as I slipped it under the napkin with my details scrawled out on it. When he reviewed what I wrote, his eyes widened, and I folded my arms under my breasts.

“Is there a problem?”

“No, Ma’am, where is the closest ATM?” he asked.

“Three blocks south, next to a little diner called Jan’s Spot, It’s a red building,” I informed him.

I listened to the sound of his engine taking off before pulling out my laptop. In this traffic, it would be a while before he got back. I clicked into my personal email. Skipping over the junk and the many things I didn't care about at that moment, I paused when I came to the email I had left unread for three months. Its title, ‘Sorry for your loss’; its sender, the same lawyer that had sent me an identical email about my mother a few months before, which I had also ignored.

She hadn’t had much to leave me, monetary-wise. I didn’t want her money; just her memory to hold onto. For some reason, Uncle Jake's passing had hit me much differently; his had been sudden and unexpected, whereas, my mom had struggled for the last two years fighting cancer. Uncle Jake had come over every two months for a week at a time, from the moment she fell ill. He gave me a break from taking care of Mom, so I could study or sleep, treating her as if she were the dearest person in his life. I was devastated when I got the call from a Sheriff in his hometown. There had been an accident, and he lost his life. The somber man on the other end of the line sounded truly torn up to inform me of my loss, as if it was also his.

I let my eyes adjust, focusing on the words. A list of assets and property was to be signed over to my name. I just had to sign on a dotted line. I suppose this was one of those calling cards from fate, I sighed. I took a napkin from the dispenser and jotted down the address before responding.

‘I will be there in the next 24 hours to sign.’ Five minutes after I hit send, I got a response. I was taking the last sip of my coffee after popping the last piece of muffin into my mouth. I’m sure it tasted like heaven but anything I ate seemed to taste like ash. How had eating become so hard? ‘I look forward to seeing you soon,’ was the reply.

So, now it was settled. My next stop was 500 miles west of here. He’d been gone fifteen minutes, so I signed into my bank account waiting for the funds to be withdrawn. Five more minutes passed by. I refreshed the page. The amount dwindled down to six dollars and sixty-six cents. Perfect. A few more clicks and my bank account was closed.

Packing up my laptop, I made my way to the bathroom where I changed into a pair of distressed oil-stained jeans. As I came out, I heard the rumble of that beautiful motor. It was nostalgic really, all the birthdays when Uncle Jack used to wind down that country road to come see me. He never missed one birthday. Mama finally caved when I was 16

and let him take me on a ride. I loved it, it was so liberating, cruising down the country roads, and when we hit the interstate, that was a whole other level of exhilaration. I stepped out of the coffee shop as Beck parked. He nodded to me.

“Pass me some twenties. I need to buy something real quick.”

He reached into the satchel on his bike, pulled out five 20s, and passed them to me. I handed him the napkin with the address to the lawyer scribbled on it, before I pocketed the money, turning on my heels. I felt his eyes on me as I walked into the store full of random off-brand phones and tech accessories. My eyes skimmed the racks until I came upon the USB flash drives. I grabbed a couple of 512GB flash drives, which should be enough storage to copy everything, paid for them, and set myself up on the far side of the counter away from the cashier. I pulled out and opened up my laptop before inserting them and downloading everything necessary, including all the work I had done on my personal computer. He wasn't gaining another cent off my existence. If I was right, Lords and Sons would back out of the deal, since I, the procurer of said deal, was no longer part of the equation. They were very picky and practical about their business partners.

I was aware of Beck leaning against the window, the satchel containing the money over his shoulder. My fingers drummed on the counter. I had no patience for this. I wanted to be out of town ASAP. When the files finally downloaded, I pulled the drives—I'd have 2 copies now—I secured them in my backpack, and clicked a few more times to start the deletion of the hard drives and a forced factory reset. I left the laptop on the counter. It hurt my heart to leave it there, but Uncle Jack would have told me being sentimental over physical things was trivial.

Walking out the door, Beck followed like a shadow in my wake. When we got to his bike, he threw the satchel over the tank and secured it in place, before he mounted it.

“You ever ridden before, Sweetheart?”

“Yeah,” I answered, climbing on a wince behind him and wrapping my arms around his middle. My face burrowed into his back.

“Beck?”

“Yeah?” he said gruffly as he kicked the kickstand up.

“Thanks again for being my angel today,”

He chuckled before pulling into traffic. “No sweat, Honey,” was all he said before zooming off.