

Her CEO Stalker and Her Second Chance Mate

Chapter 7

Adelaide

Beck took a roundabout trek through the city. He dodged down an alley near my apartment and I looked up at my bedroom window. An exquisite vase of lily of the valley sat in the window. It hadn't been there when I left. No doubt they had left a calling card when they found the apartment abandoned. It took us two hours to go around the back roads to get out of the city. 450 miles to go. Suburbia lent way to the countryside and I watched the scenery pass as we cruised down the road.

An hour later, he pulled over for gas. I hopped off, setting my bag on the seat to go use the ladies' room, but instead, I found myself paralyzed in fear. It was a rinky-dink place, but the parking lot was full of strange cars. I remembered how small and insignificant I was. I had forced myself into survival to move earlier today, but now that I was no longer in fight or flight mode, I was in unfamiliar territory with anxiety gripping me.

Beck's presence came to loom behind me, his tall frame bending down to whisper in my ear. "Don't worry, Honey, I'll have an ear out for you. Trust me, my old ears are keener than most." He pressed something cold and metallic in my hand. I gripped the knife. It wasn't a puny little thing, either, but something meant to do damage. "You know how to handle one of these?" I nodded. He grunted in approval. "Grab us some water and some snacks," he added, as he stuffed a worn leather wallet in my other hand. I glanced over my shoulder at him before he nodded to the building, and shoved his card into the gas pump reader. I took a deep breath and forced myself to walk, head held high.

I found the bathroom with no problem, my hand still gripping the knife. I felt vulnerable staring at the locked door as I relieved myself. Everything down there hurt, and it burned, too. If the fucking prick gave me a disease, I'd go back and cut off his balls. I flicked the knife out easily a few times before I finished, and tucked it in my boot to wash my hands. It made me feel better somehow, the cold metal like a protective ward against everything weighing in on me. I shook my hands dry before exiting the bathroom and wandered the shelves, looking for snacks. I grabbed sour gummies, jerky, a couple bags of chips, and a box of HoHos. I found the water in the cooler case and unloaded it all at the register.

I looked behind the register, pointed to a pack of red and black cigarettes, and tossed a purple lighter amongst the pile. The cashier eyed me placing them on the counter. I pulled out the change from my flash drives and added a ten from Beck's wallet. She glanced at the bike pulling up and back at the ID visible in the open wallet, which I immediately snapped closed before she punched in the total. I put the few dollars in change back into Beck's wallet, and snatched the bags of snacks off the counter. Walking out I deposited the

bags in the compartment he opened for me under the seat. I then hopped back on behind Beck and he took off.

Twenty minutes later, he pulled into a dingy motel with a Denny's out front. I looked at him questioningly, but he just held out his hand, and I returned his wallet in understanding. The lawyer wouldn't be in the office until morning anyway, so getting some sleep made sense. When Beck slipped into the office, I looked around paranoid, and found myself shifting my hand into my boot to cup the knife, holding it to ease my mind, giving me some semblance of safety. Why did a sharp bit of metal make me feel so much safer? I could only attribute it to the lessons Uncle Jake had taught me. I knew my way around a blade. I'd be buying my own at the first chance I got. Beck came out and hopped back in front of me. He eased us around the back side of the motel and parked.

I got off and he pulled a key out of his pocket, before lifting the seat, producing a small bag, and throwing the satchel with my money over his shoulder, I grabbed the snacks. Following the beast of a man to the door, where he glanced behind us eyeing the flat land full of elderberry shrubs. He grunted again before unlocking the door and pushing inside. He flipped on the fluorescent light, illuminating an 80's-vibe motel room, with two full beds. I set the bags on the table and let my shoulders sag as I deposited my backpack into a chair. My body felt heavy. I pushed back the hood of my sweatshirt and he eyed me, the corner of his mouth ticking up. "What?" I asked.

He shook his head. "I didn't take you for a natural blond." I snorted, and rolled my eyes.

"Most men don't know the difference," I replied dryly. He shrugged, grabbing the plastic bag-lined ice bucket amidst the plastic cups on the vanity. "I'm gonna get some ice. I'll be right back. Don't open the door. Four knocks and you will know it's me," he said, before he handed me the key card.

Beck seemed like a good guy, a hard man, but I felt safe with him. As I sat there, feeling all the aches and pains of my broken and violated body, I dug out the pack of cigarettes and lit one, pulling the ashtray close to me. I needed to think it all through. I'd see what Uncle Jake had left me and go from there, but one thing for sure, I needed to get as far away from the east side of the country and into hiding as quickly as possible. I could use my middle name. I didn't know how I'd get a license or a vehicle without any documentation, let alone a job; something under the table perhaps? I needed to get a hold of Misty. I didn't want her doing a welfare check on me.

I needed a car and a computer. I could make money on the internet, too, doing odd jobs for small businesses. I could do this. I'd gone through several cigarettes and lost track of time. I was bone tired but there was no way I was going to sleep until Beck got back. He must have gotten lost finding the ice machine. That's when a shadow crossed outside the room's window. I tensed, reaching for the knife. I put my cigarette in the ashtray and flicked the knife out. I remained stock still, my ears trained on the scuff of footsteps on the pavement.