

Divorced Heiress

Chapter 19 Complete strangers.

Chapter 31 - Divorced Heiress

I finished climbing the stairs determined to reach Sarah's table, my hands started to sweat and when I was about to go for her. A uniformed man crossed my path, stopping me in my tracks.

"I'm sorry, the VIP area is for authorized customers only. You can continue enjoying our service on the ground floor. " I looked at him with a raised eyebrow, while suppressing the curse words that were going through my head.

"I need to talk to Ms. Sarah Petit. I won't take much of her time. I don't think there will be a problem with that." I said, looking a few meters ahead, where Sarah was sitting, talking animatedly with the others. She still hadn't noticed my presence in the place, but it wouldn't be long before she found out.

"You can't go any further. It's restaurant policy." I let out a tired sigh as I turned my back on the man and took out my wallet. That was what I should have done from the beginning.

"Ten thousand dollars to let me through." I said, holding the bills in my hand and his eyes widened.

It would be very foolish of him not to accept it. I was giving him twice as much as I gave Richard.

I smiled slightly, which disappeared immediately when the man refused to accept the money.
was it not enough?

I added five thousand more dollars and he shook his head again, after swallowing hard.

"Sir, I can't break the restaurant rules. I apologize, but I can't accept it. Please go back to the ground floor."

My face contorted in disbelief at his rejection and I wanted to push him out of my way, but I held back and I didn't know how much longer I could hold back.

"I'll transfer one hundred thousand dollars to you right now if you let me go to Ms. Sarah's table."

The man's surprise was more than evident and as he was about to give me an answer, another uniformed man appeared. He was the manager, I read it on his vest.

"Any problem with this gentleman?" He asked next to the young man who was as pale as a sheet.

"I am Alexander Lancaster, pleased to meet you. I was asking the young man to let me in. My wife is at that table over there and I need to talk to her urgently."

I know I was doing wrong by insinuating that she was still my wife, but it was the first thing that came to mind to get the manager to grant my request after all.

"Oh, Ms. Sarah. I understand that you two got divorced." He said mockingly and I let out the breath I had been holding in my lungs.

So the news had circulated around the world, hadn't it?

"Yes, we got divorced, but there is an unresolved matter that I need to discuss with her. Can you let me go? It'll only take a few minutes." I was honest because lying wouldn't achieve anything other than getting kicked out of the restaurant completely.

"I'm sorry, we can't help you. Please go back to the ground floor and enjoy our services." I clenched my jaw as I nodded, not very much in agreement with my own head. I wasn't going to argue with the men who were just doing their job and following orders.

I turned around to go down the stairs, but before that, I had to resort to a contingency plan. I needed to talk to Sarah no matter what, tell her the real reason I was with Rachel and tell her that secret from beginning to end that wouldn't stop tormenting me one way or another.

"Sarah!" I called her from the stairs, attracting the attention of all the diners on both floors. The pair of men didn't take long to grab me by the arms and guide me downstairs, but I resisted and the three of us struggled while the manager called security. Sarah's surprised look sought the origin of the commotion and she finally looked at me with confusion.

"Sarah, I need to talk to you, please!" I begged her when I broke free from one of the men's grip.

She stood up from her seat realizing that I was being wrestled by two men who couldn't move me an inch, but she sat back down when the woman's hand next to her shoulder touched her, then the man next to her stood up and kissed Sarah's head, which made me feel angry. I used all my strength to free myself from the pair of men who held me by the arms and grabbed me again when I took three steps forward.

"Security, over here." I heard a voice next to me, but I didn't pay attention, I could only angrily look at the man who walked casually towards me.

No! I didn't want to talk to the idiot Vincent. Couldn't they understand that I needed to talk to Sarah?

What was I supposed to do to get her to listen to me?

Should I beg for forgiveness on my knees?

I would do it.

Should I apologize to her through all forms of communication?

I would do it.

Just tell me what I had to do for her to listen to me for five minutes and I would do it without hesitation.

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The grip of the two men was replaced by strong arms that applied a lock on me, leaving me immobile and without the strength to keep fighting.

"Let me go! I need to talk to my wife!" I shouted angrily at the man who forced me to go down the stairs, treating me like a damn criminal.

"I'm going to sue you! Is this how you treat your customers?"

I exerted all my strength in an attempt to free myself from that man I didn't see coming when he caught me, but it was useless. He seemed to have three times more strength than me.

He only let go of me when we were outside the restaurant. He threw me out like a thief just for calling Sarah, these sons of...

"Mr. Lancaster, I think your words don't match your actions. Have you actually stopped caring about Ms. Sarah? Because it doesn't seem so."

I snorted in annoyance when Vincent appeared in my way.

The desire to punch him in the face kept growing, but I couldn't afford to lose control, especially when Sarah was so close.

"Ms. Sarah has never stopped interesting me." I admitted out loud, while looking around thinking about what the hell I was going to do now that I had been thrown out of the restaurant.

The man, to whom I gave the five thousand dollars, looked at me with a mix of surprise and embarrassment.

Embarrassed, I should be for the show I made inside, putting his job at risk.

"That is completely contradictory, considering that you cheated on her with her supposed best friend. What else do you want from Sarah? She left everything behind to marry you. That woman is too good for you, leave her alone, let her regain her life, let her find the happiness that you didn't give her, enough of being so selfish Mr. Lancaster. Sarah doesn't deserve this."

Every word Vincent uttered hurt more than the previous one, reminding me of how miserable I was and how little or nothing I did for her when she was still my wife, and it hurt even more that Vincent was damn right.

After losing her, I opened my eyes and dared to fix the mess I caused, when I should have prevented it from the beginning by stopping Rachel and defending her from my own family.

"Mr. Lefevbre, that's why I've come here. I need to talk to her, give her my reasons and..." I lowered my guard for a moment, but Vincent interrupted me.

"Don't you think it's too late for your explanations? The damage is done, you have already divorced. She went back to where she never should have left, and you have nothing to do here. Stop disturbing her peace. She's better off since she left the Lancaster family."

I remained silent for a few seconds, feeling a pressure in my chest that didn't let me breathe properly.

Suddenly, a doubt completely invaded me, and the man in front of me could clarify it.

"You've become very intimate with my ex-wife. What is your relationship with her?" I spat the question angrily because I couldn't overlook their closeness, how he looked at her, his attentions towards her, and I remembered his arm around her shoulders.

Vincent let out an ironic laugh that made me frown and I felt the blood boiling in my veins.

"I don't have to answer your question, but if my answer brings you peace, my relationship with her is evidently better than yours."

My heart tightened in my chest upon hearing his answer, and I clenched my jaw in an attempt to contain the anger that his mocking words unleashed. I opened my mouth to speak but closed it when I saw her coming out of the restaurant with a cold expression. She seemed upset and no wonder after the scene I made trying to approach her table.

Her green eyes were gloomy, nevertheless, she looked more beautiful and elegant than I remembered. She looked so sensual in her tight dress that showcased her long legs, her hair was pulled back revealing her long neck and highlighting the delicate features of her face.

I remained immobile and unable to say a word. My mind went blank as I wondered if this was the Sarah I was married to. How could she change so drastically in a few days?

"Mr. Lancaster, I didn't know that side of you. Causing such a scene over a simple note? Don't worry, I have already ordered them to delete the security footage. You can rest assured and go back where you came from." Her cold and indifferent voice sent shivers down my spine, and I could only react when she linked her arm with Vincent's, who gazed at her.

"Relax, my musketeer, I can handle it."

I raised my eyebrow upon hearing the way she referred to Vincent, confirming that they had a better relationship than the one I had with her.

In the two years of marriage and the six years of knowing each other, we never called each other by any nicknames. Why was I feeling so upset about this?

I cleared my throat, coming back to my senses so I could speak before she turned around and I missed the chance to talk to her.

"Sarah, the least of my concerns is that note, I won't go anywhere without talking to you first, and alone." I emphasized the last thing I said, while giving Vincent an unfriendly look. He was being a thorn in my side.

"I haven't given you permission to act like we're close. I ask for a little more respect, if you even know the meaning of the word. And I'm afraid I won't be able to grant your request unless it concerns the rumors we were involved in, there is no subject to discuss. Please, avoid causing another scandal in public, your image will be seriously tarnished. Excuse me."

Sarah turned around without releasing Vincent's arm after saying that to me without the slightest emotion. She wasn't the same sweet Sarah, now she was a cold woman and it bothered me that her change had been because of me.

"Sarah." I hurried to grab her arm before she disappeared into the restaurant and I missed this golden opportunity.

She stopped her pace and looked at my hand on her arm as if it were the most unpleasant thing. She looked at me with daggers in her eyes and I let go of her immediately.

"Mr. Lancaster, hasn't it been clear to you that Sarah doesn't want to talk to you?" Vincent intervened to defend Sarah and I took a step towards him, ready to punch him in the face for getting involved in a matter that was only between Sarah and me, he had pushed me to my limit. But Sarah stood in front of his body when she realized my intentions.

"Don't waste any more time, Mr. Lancaster. Go back where you came from. Surely your new companion must be waiting for you. I'm not interested in hearing from you today, tomorrow, or ever. You and I have nothing to do with each other, from today on we are complete strangers. If you have any pending matters, you can discuss them with my lawyer."

I stood petrified in my place by her icy words and she resumed her walk back to the restaurant, leaving me with my word in my mouth, without giving me a chance to explain what happened.

I didn't care if she didn't want to see me again after that, at least she would know my deepest secret and why I did what I did.

Feeling defeated, I walked to the car, stomping and with warmth in my cheeks.

There was no way to convince her to talk to me, even if I bribed half the world, even if I caused the biggest scandal, even if I followed her to the ends of the earth, she was reluctant to listen to me and I knew I deserved it, I knew I deserve her contempt and rejection.

I hurt her in the worst way, I cheated on her with Rachel and even though I had my reasons, I couldn't justify myself.

She wouldn't agree to listen to me and it was understandable after what I did to her, after breaking her heart.

Well, Ms. Petit. Did you want us to be complete strangers from now on? So, your wishes were commands.

She would not hear from Alexander Lancaster again.

I would not look for her again.

I would not call her again.

Chapter 20 Alexis.

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THREE YEARS LATER

I took the last sip from my whisky glass, New York Fashion Week was getting closer and I was stressed that the collection we were going to present wasn't ready yet. The first costume trial should have been ready by now.

A few knocks on the door diverted my attention from my work. When Cristina appeared with my mother and Gina, I gave an indifferent look to the two women who entered without asking.

"I'm busy, I can't attend to you right now." I said, turning my attention back to the papers I had to review before signing, ignoring the women who sat in front of my desk as if I hadn't said a word.

"Alexis woke up." My mother said, and I put aside the papers, furrowing my brow, unable to believe what I was hearing.

"Woke up? When?" I asked incredulously, although I could tell by her serious expression that she wasn't joking.

"This morning, the hospital called me. He woke up from the coma. We didn't want to go without letting you know." Gina said, looking at me disdainfully.

This morning? They waited all this time to tell me? I stood up abruptly, leaving the papers that were supposed to be signed by the end of the day and gathered my things to leave the company.

"You couldn't have let me know this morning? Damn it." I couldn't help but be angry with my mother and Gina. It wouldn't have cost them anything to call me on my phone to inform me of the news.

"Brother, you have no right to be mad. It's because of you that he's like this. In any case, we can't see him until visiting hours, so we preferred to wait. I knew you would rush to the clinic and it would be a waste of time." Gina said, daring to speak to me in her arrogant tone, reminding me of what I did years ago as if I didn't live with that burden on my back for thirteen years.

I approached her in two strides and she shrank in her seat as her face turned red.

"Speak to me like that again, and I'll cut off your allowance for the rest of the year. Don't forget who you're talking to, rude girl." I spat the words angrily in her face and she opened her mouth in surprise.

I walked away from Gina and resumed my path to the door of my office, not caring that I left them sitting there. However, before leaving, I stopped for a few seconds when I heard what my mother was saying to Gina.

"Leave it, Gina. Since he divorced that woman, his mood has worsened." My fists clenched tightly at my sides, feeling the anger bubbling in my system as she referred to my ex-wife that way. But I ignored it because I had more important matters to attend to and continued on my way.

I admitted that since I returned to New York without achieving my goals with Sarah, I had become more irritable than ever. I couldn't even stand myself. But that didn't give her the right to speak about my ex-wife however she pleased, let alone remind me of it after three years in which I focused one hundred percent on my company to avoid thinking about my misfortunes.

"Cristina, cancel all my appointments for today. I'll arrive at the end of the afternoon or perhaps at night." I informed my assistant as I passed by her, and she stopped me three steps ahead.

"Ms. Rachel called again. I told her you were on a business trip, but I don't think she believed me." I rolled my eyes upon hearing that name that gave me a headache.

As much as I rejected her and avoided any encounter with her, she kept insisting on resuming "us" or taking action. What a stupidity, there never was an "us" and there never would be, especially now that I could finally rid myself of her damn threats.

"If she calls again, tell her I'm giving her a VIP pass straight to hell." I said with a relieved smile on my face. Cristina looked at me surprised by the message I was leaving for Rachel the harpy, and nodded her head.

If only I had put a stop to her from the beginning, if I had said that years ago, I wouldn't be feeling so miserable right now, and burdened with the guilt of losing my wife. But there was nothing I could do anymore, I couldn't turn back time, and all I could do was accept my punishment for failing her, for hurting her.

I drove to the private clinic on edge, still unable to believe that Alexis woke up from the coma after the doctors said he would never wake up and would be in a vegetative state for life, that only a miracle would wake him up, so they suggested countless times that it was best to pull the plug, but I never allowed it because I was waiting for that miracle the doctors spoke of. Was this a miracle? I felt a great relief and a spark of hope ignited in my chest, while I remembered the moment I saw Alexis almost dead by my side.

I wiped away the rebellious tear that escaped from my eye and parked the car when I arrived at the private clinic. I didn't need to ask for Alexis. The nurse confirmed that he woke up in the morning and asked me to wait a few minutes while they did the final tests.

My heart raced with excitement and I couldn't help but wonder if he remembered what happened. What if he didn't want to see me because he remembered it perfectly?

Chapter 20 Alexis part 2

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I shook my head and sat in the waiting room, while I looked at the latest fashion news on my phone.

I found countless articles mentioning Fashion Week and the brands that would be presenting this year. Lancaster Collection was one of the most mentioned brands by all media, however, one name caught my attention and I felt my heart sinking.

"The prestigious Doinel fashion house is present at New York Fashion Week."

"Doinel Special Guest at New York Fashion Week, after more than three years of absence."

A chill ran down my spine and I closed my eyes tightly, thinking that this must be fake news. Doinel hadn't appeared as special guests at New York Fashion Week for years. This had to be false.

I kept looking for more information about Doinel and my heart raced when I saw the next news.

"The representatives of the French brand Doinel are back at New York Fashion Week as special guests."

The note was accompanied by an image where I recognized the faces of each of them. The great Leonardo Doinel, Paul Dubois, Vincent Lefebvre, and of course, Sarah Petit.

I accidentally turned off my phone screen without wanting to see more, since the last time I saw her, I had been avoiding reading any news where her name would be in the headlines. I didn't want to see her face or read her name. I was doing exactly what she asked of me three years ago, being complete strangers, and I didn't read news about strangers. She wouldn't be an exception.

I never called her again, nor did I look for her. I suppressed the desire I had to tell her what no one else besides my family and Rachel knew about my past. I didn't want to keep tormenting her when she didn't want to see me at all, and I couldn't deny that I missed her, but I got used to her absence, I didn't need her anymore.

Or at least that was what I wanted to believe.

"Mr. Lancaster, you can go in." The nurse brought me out of my thoughts and I got up immediately to follow her, even though I already knew the way by heart.

The nurse handed me what I needed to wear before entering and I didn't waste a minute putting on the disposable clinical gown, a cap, and the face mask.

Dr. Spencer was waiting outside the room, he had been handling Alexis' case since he was admitted to the clinic.

"Good afternoon, Mr. Lancaster. Before you enter the room, I must inform you that Alexis does not remember much of his life. It is advisable that you be cautious with the information you provide him. He has difficulty formulating words, at the moment he is like a child. He must learn to speak and walk. According to the studies I have conducted, he believes he is still eighteen."

I swallowed hard with that news. I didn't expect something like that to happen. In fact, I didn't expect him to wake up. Anyway, I should be glad because he was still with us. With therapy, he could be the same as before.

"Doesn't he remember anything about the accident?" I asked with fear, afraid that it was the only thing he remembered and that he would end up hating me forever.

"For now, no. You may go in, Mr. Lancaster." I sighed in relief and nodded before entering the room with nerves bubbling in my system.

My heart shrank when I saw him lying with his eyes closed as always, although he no longer had the tube in his throat. I approached with trembling hands and stopped halfway when he opened his eyes and his honey gaze landed on me, leaving me speechless and with a blank mind.

Despite the time he spent in a coma, the great change in his physical appearance was noticeable. His honey eyes, black hair, pale skin, and the shadow of his beard made him look nothing like a thirty-one-year-old.

"Hello, Alexis." I greeted him unsure of what to say, tears welling up in my eyes. But I forced myself not to shed a single tear so as not to alarm the man in front of me.

"Do you remember me?" I asked, finally reaching his side under his attentive gaze.

It seemed like a crazy person talking to himself, but that was what I had been doing for thirteen years. Talking to him, telling him about my life, about the family, without receiving any response from him.

"A...Al...exander." He said, and I looked at him in surprise, unable to believe that he could pronounce my name. I thought he couldn't say a word. That was what I had understood from Dr. Spencer.

I approached him, unable to contain my tears any longer, and hugged him. This time, I received a response from him. His hand barely touched my back, and I couldn't help but continue shedding tears on his shoulder.

"You said my name, you remember me." I separated from him, afraid to hurt him with my overly enthusiastic embrace. I looked into his crystallized honey eyes and nervously smiled when he nodded his head.

"Mom...and Gi...na." He asked with difficulty about the two women he had left in the office who should be arriving at any moment.

"Don't strain yourself; they'll be here in a moment. Do you remember what happened? Don't say anything, just answer with your head." I asked, fearful of his response because maybe upon seeing me, he had remembered what happened that night. However, he shook his head after looking at me for a few seconds.

"Sa...Sarah." He said, furrowing my brow, totally confused when that name barely came out of his mouth.

Did I hear correctly?

Why was he mentioning my ex-wife?

Before the accident, I didn't yet know Sarah. There was no way he could know who she was. However, many times I spoke to him about her while he was deep asleep. Was it possible that he heard me, and that was why he was asking about her?

"Sarah?" I asked, confused, and before he could answer, my mother entered along with Gina, both shedding tears as if he had died.

"Son, son. I almost lost you because of your brother."

I looked at her with daggers in my eyes, hoping she wouldn't mention anything about that. Didn't Dr. Spencer warn her about Alexis's condition?

"Brother, thank heaven you woke up. If I had been your twin, I wouldn't have left you in a coma." Gina hugged Alexis, not caring that he was weak. I quickly separated them and moved both women away from my brother.

"Can you be more discreet? He just woke up; he barely remembers anything. Is it necessary to tell him that I was the one responsible for everything? If you want to make me feel miserable, you can do it outside the room. Right now, the priority is Alexis's tranquility and recovery. If you're going to start with your scandals, it's better that you leave."

Both of them looked at me dumbfounded, and I let them go back to Alexis. Thankfully, they didn't mention anything more related to the only person guilty for him being in that condition.

In other words, me.

My phone started ringing, and I looked at the name on the screen with annoyance--Rachel.

I left Alexis's room without hesitation and answered, I was going to put an end to this once and for all. I didn't want to hear anything about that woman again.

"Hello?" I spoke indifferently when answering Rachel's call.

"Don't think you're going to get away with it. I'll see you tonight at my apartment, or you'll find out what I'm capable of. Everyone will know who's responsible for the state your twin brother is in, the one that almost no one knew about." She threatened.

I let out a laugh amused to hear her threat again. Now I was completely disregarding her blackmail. My laughter stopped, and I hurried to speak and put her in her place. I didn't even want to hear the name of that despicable woman.

"Do whatever you feel like, my brother has already woken up and I won't be long in publicly giving my testimony about Alexis Lancaster. I don't want to have anything to do with you or you will deal with my lawyers."

Chapter 21 We will travel to New York.

Chapter 35 - Divorced Heiress

SARAH

I had no idea what time it was when I felt hands on my cheeks, waking me up from my comforting sleep. I opened my eyes and met the honey gaze of my little dark-haired boy, who brightened up all my days.

"Mommy." Tristan's sweet and cheerful voice made me smile from ear to ear, and I enveloped his little body in my arms, showering him with kisses that made him burst into contagious laughter.

"What is the most spoiled child doing awake so early?" I left a few more kisses on his cheek when I realized he shouldn't be here, and I didn't even hear the monitor connecting my room to his. "How did you get here, you naughty boy?"

"Oh, how adorable! They make me want to have a child, but then I see Tristan's mischief and it passes, I prefer to remain an aunt. I can return him whenever I want." I exclaimed in bed upon hearing Abby's voice, and I saw her sitting on the couch with a sandwich on her lap.

Tristan got scared when I sat up abruptly with him in my arms to look at my friend, and I hugged him when I saw that he wanted to cry from the scare.

"What are you doing here at this hour of the morning?" I asked annoyed with my friend for coming to disrupt my son's sleep and mine, to which she burst into laughter that almost made her choke on the piece of sandwich in her mouth.

"Have you seen what time it is?" She asked after swallowing the bite of her sandwich, and until that moment, I bothered to look at the time, finding out that there were less than ten minutes to ten in the morning and the alarm hadn't gone off.

"Even Tristan woke up before you, he's already had breakfast, gotten dressed, and ready to start the day, and you're still like a lazy bear."

But of course, I was going to fall asleep after a long day of work and taking care of my son until he fell asleep. The night before, I fell to sleep exhausted, feeling completely drained.

But why didn't anyone wake me up?

"I can't believe it! I overslept!" I jumped out of bed, not before leaving Tristan in bed with a kiss on his forehead, and went into the bathroom to get ready as quickly as possible.

"Unbelievable, Sarah. You overslept on the day you have such an important meeting and your parents are coming back from their vacation."

I heard Abby from the bedroom, but I ignored her because I knew very well everything I had planned for today and I had fallen behind by oversleeping.

"Come here, Tristan, it's not your fault you have the mother you have."

I rolled my eyes at what she said to my son, as if I were the worst mother in the world.

And it was far from the truth. Since I held Tristan in my arms hearing his cry, everything bad disappeared in an instant. I forgot about that man I loved madly, his family, and their humiliations. I forgot about that woman who claimed to be my friend.

I forgot that I had failed in my marriage. When I saw him, with his rosy and tender skin, his small hands, his little face, I realized that not everything was lost, and I was left with something wonderful from all the suffering I had once endured.

I have given everything of myself to be the best mother and father to Tristan Doinel, without neglecting my responsibilities in the company. I didn't consider myself a perfect mother, but I was doing a great job in my attempt to be one, and it showed every day when I saw my son happy.

I quickly dressed in an executive dress I found in the closet, not having time for makeup or hairstyle. I left my hair loose and went out just in time to stop Abby, who was catching Tristan in the air after tossing him, and he wouldn't stop shouting and laughing.

"Abby, you're going to scare me to death if you keep playing those games." I said as I picked Tristan up in my arms and left the room, grabbing my things before leaving.

"So grumpy. Tristan likes that game, don't you, honey eyes?" Abby followed me while playing with Tristan's hands. I looked at my son's smiling face, who nodded eagerly. "Yes!" Tristan moved happily and restlessly, and I put him on the ground to take his hand once I descended the stairs.

"You see, I am the best aunt, you have to admit it. Although it's a pity that he looks so much like the unnamed one, it truly is unfair. Nine months in your belly for him to come out identical to that wretched man."

I looked at her with a displeased expression. There was no need to remind me when I realized it every day with the great resemblance to Alexander. At least he got my nose and lips, and I was more than happy with that.

"Aunt Abby, thanks for reminding me, I hadn't noticed." I said in an ironic tone and Abby burst into laughter, while taking Tristan's free hand and he joined in the laughter with my friend.

God, if my son knew what Abby was laughing about.

"Ms. Doinel, Tristan's backpack." one of the employees handed me Tristan's belongings for the afternoon, interrupting what Abby was about to say.

"Are you not going to have breakfast?"

"Thank you, Lucy. I don't have time, but thanks. Prepare the house, my parents are coming back today." After giving the order to the employee, I left with Abby where the chauffeur was waiting for me with the Mercedes running.

"I don't feel like driving, I'll go with you. Besides, I have to continue teaching my nephew to pronounce my name correctly." Abby entered the back seat next to Tristan's car seat, and I went to the other side. The car started moving, and Abby quickly asked me a question that made me uncomfortable.

"Speaking of the unnamed one, did you know that his company will launch the new collection during fashion week in New York?"

"No, I didn't know, but it was to be expected, and I don't want to know anything related to him. I don't even remember that man." I responded indifferently and sharp, with no intention of continuing the conversation, while I ran my hands through my son's black hair.

"Come on, Sarah! Are you going to tell me that you haven't seen the news about him and his company? The youngest successful CEO in the fashion industry. How old is he? In his thirties?" I didn't even look at Abby when she spoke as if trying to find out something, when she already knew everything.

I haven't heard from Alexander since that day he made a scene in the city's most exclusive restaurant. I couldn't believe his high level of cynicism, coming here to have me remove the note, and then saying that it was what he cared about the least. For God's sake! No one believed that.

For starters, we had nothing to talk about or pending matters. The only thing that connected us was Tristan, but he never knew about his existence, and he never will. Thank goodness he gave

up and returned to New York after I gave Damien the order to make any news with the name Alexander, Paul, Rachel, and mine disappear.

I didn't even watch Lancaster Collection's news. Why bother? I was happy with my life as a single mother and vice president of my father's company. I wasn't masochistic enough to search for or watch news related to that man. I didn't need it.

Chapter 21 We will travel to New York part 2

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"Thirty-one years old." I answered simply without looking at her, all my attention was focused on my son playing with his toy dinosaur.

"And then you say you don't remember him."

I shot daggers at her with my eyes for whatever she was trying to say with that. It wasn't hard to remember his age; he was one year older than me.

"But well, I won't talk about Alexander Lancaster anymore, just mentioning his name disgusts me."

"It shows." I said sarcastically, and she ignored me to turn her attention back to Tristan.

"Tristan, what's your favorite aunt's name?" She asked with an extremely high pitched voice, and I didn't want to miss the show.

"Aunt By."

I laughed seeing my friend's defeated expression upon hearing Tristan's mispronunciation, but she wouldn't give up so easily.

"My name is not that difficult, for heaven's sake. A-bby. Repeat after me, Tristan."

My son looked at her attentively, observing the movements of her mouth. I couldn't remember how long Abby had been teaching him to pronounce her name, and he always ended up saying it wrong. However, I was sure that at any moment, he would say it clearly like the first time he said "mama."

"A." She elongated it for Tristan to repeat.

"A."

"Bby."

"Bby."

"Abby."

"Baby. "

I chuckled at how he had called my friend.

"Hey, I like it, we're making progress, at least he doesn't call me By anymore. Say it again. " Abby was excited about Tristan's progress, it showed in her ear-to-ear smile.

"Auntie By."

And her smile vanished when he called her as he always had, I couldn't help but laugh even harder.

"It had to be Lancaster."

...

Today's meeting was so important that we had to wait for my parents to arrive before starting, however, I didn't just sit around. While Tristan played with his toys in the space I set up in my office for him, I focused on getting ahead with the next collection Doinel was going to launch.

I had Patrick's designs and the fabric order I would need for each design, but I couldn't do much as a knock on the door interrupted me, and seconds later Jack entered with a floral arrangement so big that it covered him completely. I dropped the pen on the desk and let out a tired sigh.

"You don't say, Paul sent it." Jack placed the arrangement on my desk and looked at me apologetically but with a smile.

"Yes, lilies brought from Sweden. That man doesn't give up, he should..."

I interrupted him before he gave me another speech about accepting the man who never gave up, even when he was in another country taking care of the Doinel franchise.

"No, he shouldn't. Thanks, Jack." I said with a smile that didn't reach my eyes, and Jack left the office, leaving me alone with my son and an arrangement of lilies bigger than my head.

I didn't even bother reading the note he left. The door to the office opened again and a smiling Abby entered with a strawberry yogurt in hand.

"That's my brother! They're beautiful! Just say yes already, he would be a great father to Tristan, you know he adores him."

I looked at her with a raised eyebrow, showing my disagreement. From the beginning, I warned him that nothing would happen between us.

I couldn't think of anything other than my son, I didn't have time to think about starting a relationship, nor was I looking for a father for my son. I knew Paul adored him, but I didn't want to risk hurting him, getting hurt myself, or even getting my son's hopes up.

"I won't say yes, you know I appreciate him a lot, but I don't want anyone to get hurt or burden him with a responsibility that doesn't belong to him. He has decided to keep insisting even though I told him no from the beginning." I replied without any expression, while I focused again on the papers I had in my hand.

"You've become so cold, really. Not all men are like your ex-husband. Paul is not to blame for Alexander cheating on you, and he doesn't have to pay for it when all he has done is show his interest and how much he wants to be with you and Tristan. Anyway, do what you want, as always."

I looked at her with a raised eyebrow as she made her complaint, and when she was about to leave the office, she stopped dead in her tracks upon hearing my son.

"Aunt Abby." Tristan raised his arms towards her, asking for her help to get out of his playpen-style enclosure, and she looked at him incredulously, overflowing with tenderness in her eyes.

"Oh, I can't believe it. He said it, he said it right."

She came running to Tristan and took him out of his space by carrying him in her arms.

"Let's go, Tristan, it's too cold in this office." She said referring to me, and left my office without even telling me where she was going with my son.

Well, she would get over it. I was not obligated to be with Paul or anyone else. She should respect my decision. I took a deep breath, and just as I was finally getting back to my work, the door opened again and I hit my desk with my hand, feeling frustrated by the constant interruptions.

"And now what?" I asked reluctantly and swallowed the bad words that were about to come out of my mouth when I saw my parents entering the office.

"Mom, dad!"

I stood up from my comfortable chair and rushed towards them to hug them. I hadn't seen them in two months, since my father organized a vacation with my mother for their wedding anniversary, and today they were finally back.

"Is that the way to welcome your parents?" My mother asked, pretending to be offended by how I spoke to them before knowing it was them, and I kissed her cheek.

"I'm sorry, I didn't know... I missed you so much." I said as I breathed in their scent. I had missed them so much, the house felt empty without them. Although with Brandy's playfulness and my little Tristan, there was more noise than usual.

"My Sari, we missed you and Tristan too. Where is my grandson?" My father asked as he peeked into the area where my son was, and he looked at me when he saw it was empty.

"Abby took him, didn't you see her in the hallway? Anyway, she shouldn't take long to come back." I said, avoiding talking about the little argument we just had before she took Tristan, who finally said his name right.

"Dear, I think we should take advantage of Tristan not being here to give the news in the meeting." My mother said, embracing my father by the waist, and my brow furrowed immediately.

News? Why didn't I know about the news? The last time they gave a surprise news, I ended up being the vice president of Doinel.

"Sari, tell Jack that we want the board meeting in five minutes in the conference room. We'll wait for you there." My father said before leaving the office with my mother, and I obeyed immediately.

The conference room filled up in less than five minutes, except for Paul who was on a business trip. Vincent, who had been busy in the production plant, took a seat beside me and shook my hand.

My father started the meeting, greeting everyone after being absent for so long, as Vincent continued to occupy his place. He thanked them for doing a great job in the last three years and for cooperating with the vice president.

"Before moving on to the next topics of the company, I am pleased to inform you that Doinel has once again been invited to New York Fashion Week, which will take place in a few days, and this year we will attend as special guests. I have always gone representing Doinel, but this year things will change. Not only will I go representing, but Paul Dubois, Vincent Lefevbre, and Sarah Petit as well. We will travel to New York!"

WHAT?!

Go back to New York?!

Chapter 22 I don't want to go back.

Chapter 37 - Divorced Heiress

I couldn't help but look at my father as if he had lost his mind. I wanted to think that maybe the tiredness of the trip had affected him, but his serious yet excited expression made that idea vanish. He seemed more sane than ever, and apparently my mother agreed with my father's crazy decision.

How was it possible that they were doing this to me?

He more than anyone knew what returning to New York meant, and to Fashion Week! It was a sure encounter with Alexander Lancaster, and I didn't want to see him even if my life depended on it.

"Mr. Doinel, I'm afraid this is a hasty decision that hasn't been previously discussed. The company can't be left without anyone in charge, as you can understand. The launch of a new collection is approaching, and someone needs to take responsibility. So, I prefer to stay and take charge of Doinel." I spoke with all the seriousness the case required, not taking my eyes off his.

I was conveying my dissatisfaction with his sudden announcement, and there was no need to mention out loud the reasons why I preferred to stay.

My father didn't change his expression, despite seeing the displeasure on my face.

Why was he doing this to me?

"Ms. Sarah, I have everything under control. My partners and best friends, Mr. and Mrs. Dubois, will take the reins of the company, so it will continue to function in our absence." I bit my lower lip, containing the urge to express my dissatisfaction, but this time as a father and daughter. However, I couldn't expose my identity and my relationship with the president of Doinel in front of the executives present at the meeting.

"President Doinel, may I speak with you and Mrs. Doinel alone?" I asked, standing up, feeling everyone's gaze on me. I didn't care what they were thinking of me and my reluctant behavior. I needed to talk to my father and make him see reason.

I couldn't go back to New York!

I didn't want to go back!

"Of course, Vice President Petit. We'll take five minutes of recess." My father informed, getting up from his chair. I quickly left the boardroom and reached my office, where I released the breath I had been holding since my father dropped that bombshell.

My parents entered the office, and I closed the door behind them, making sure no one curious was nearby to hear us.

"Do you realize what you're doing to me? Do you know what it means to attend Fashion Week in New York? Why are you doing this to me? Mom! Dad!" I began my rant, pacing back and forth. When I turned to face them, I felt my cheeks burning with anger at how unfair my parents were being.

"Sari, dear, we know that if you go back, you might encounter your ex-husband. But sweetheart, you can't hide from the Lancasters forever. Don't you realize that despite divorcing that family over three years ago, they still influence your life and your decisions? It's not right for you to reject such an important opportunity out of fear of coming across Mr. Lancaster at the event." My father said, making me stop in front of them. His words made me see things from a different perspective.

My father was right, even though it was hard for me to admit it. I was letting an opportunity pass by that not everyone gets and that anyone would want because of the Lancasters. I was letting that family I divorced keep affecting me despite all these years of not hearing from them.

I didn't consider myself hiding from the Lancasters; I was avoiding them. But should I miss such an important event just to keep avoiding them?

I was supposed to not care anymore, so why should I be bothered or fearful of a possible encounter with a man who was like a stranger to me?

"Your father is right, my Sari. Besides, we have declined many invitations to Fashion Week in New York for your sake, to avoid making you uncomfortable because we know you don't want to show up again in the place where you were hurt. But your father and I think it's time for you to attend on behalf of your company because you are Doinel's heir. This is the moment to show what you're made of and prove to those Lancasters that you're not the nobody they thought you were. It's time to shut mouths, don't you think?"

My mother approached me, placing her hands on my shoulders, waiting for my response. Her encouraging words erased the slightest doubts that were clouding my thinking.

Of course, I was going to take advantage of this opportunity and any other to silence anyone who dared to humiliate me and trample on my dignity in the past. The submissive Sarah was left behind, making way for a strong and capable woman.

"So, are you going to miss this opportunity to attend an important event in your career because of the person you left everything for? Or are you going to go to New York and make the name of Doinel proud?" My father asked behind my mother. Although they already knew the answer I was going to give, I looked at them with a smile on my face.

"Of course I will go, count me in." I said determined. But my smile disappeared from my face when I remembered a small detail from almost three years ago.

"Wait, with Tristan, it will be impossible."

"Tristan will travel with us. We will bring Maga to help you take care of him." My mother said as if it were no big deal. And although my first thought was to take him with me, just the thought that Alexander might find out about his son gave me a headache.

No, I couldn't allow that. I'd rather my son not know about his father until he's older. I didn't want him to meet the Lancasters as such a vulnerable child. No, I wouldn't let my son have any contact with that family that knew no respect and believed that because they had money and power, they should be worshiped.

"Don't worry, daughter. We won't let the Lancasters find out about Tristan, and in case they do, which I highly doubt, we won't allow that family to lay a finger on him." My father immediately understood what was really bothering me and reassured me with his words.

"Tristan will stay with Maga while you interact with the media. No one will realize that Tristan is your son."

If my father said so, I could feel relieved. The last thing I want was for my son to be harmed because of his father's family.

"Now that everything is clear, shall we go back to the meeting? The five minutes have passed and I still have some topics to discuss." My father said. I nodded, returning to my smile, and hugged both of them, feeling grateful for the unconditional support they provided.

Back in the boardroom, my father confirmed my attendance at the event in New York, as well as Vincent's, Paul's, and of course, both of their attendance. Our flight was scheduled for five days from now, so we needed to get the company in order and leave it in the hands of the Dubois for a few days.

He mentioned a possible collaboration project and invited Ms. Boyer, who was going to be solely in charge of the contracts with the brand that would collaborate with Doinel.

Although Ms. Boyer took my position in the company in the worst way, she kept her distance from me during the time I had been occupying my place. However, I heard on more than one occasion that she talked about the mysterious father of my child and started false rumors about my divorce and the reason I was expelled from the Lancaster family, claiming that I had an affair with another man that left me pregnant.

It wasn't until my father caught her talking to the receptionist about me that he gave her a memorandum for disrespecting the vice president. Since then, he made all the staff sign a confidentiality agreement in which no one would talk about Tristan or Sarah.

He did this mainly to hide the identity of my son, just as he did with me when they tried to kidnap me as a child. And also to prevent the Lancasters and their associates from knowing about the son of Alexander Lancaster's ex-wife.

Going back to the topic, I didn't like my father's decision to include Ms. Boyer, but I respected it. After all, she was one of the executives with the most time and experience in the company and would be very useful in closing deals.

After the meeting, I found Abby in my office with Tristan sleeping in her arms. I looked at her silently for a few seconds, and her brown eyes met mine. I knew that pleading look; she couldn't stand being "estranged" from me for too long, and honestly, neither could I, especially now that I had to tell her about my trip to New York. She was going to go crazy, I knew it.

Chapter 22 I don't want to go back part 2

Chapter 38 - Divorced Heiress

"Sari, forgive me for how I spoke to you earlier, I have no right to interfere in your life or pressure you to make a decision you don't consider appropriate, will you forgive me?" She got up from the couch with Tristan in her arms and smiled at me from ear to ear, as she always did when she wanted to apologize.

I looked at her with a raised eyebrow and took Tristan carefully, making sure not to wake him up, earning her confused and sad gaze. I was sure she thought I was so upset that I couldn't forgive her, but I would never be mad enough at her to not do so.

"It's fine, I forgive you, but with one condition," I said, gathering Tristan's and my things to leave with my parents for lunch, after finishing talking with Abby.

"You tell me, should I kneel? Oh, I can't, I'm wearing a skirt. Do you want me to be your slave? Well, not that, it would ruin my manicure. It doesn't matter, tell me, I'll do whatever."

I suppressed a laugh as I saw her acting like the refined girl she had always been.

"You're going to travel with me," I said without a hint of humor on my face, although inside, I was dying of laughter at Abby's expression when I told her that.

"Really? Wow, that's much better than kneeling and being your slave. A girls' trip! You don't know how much I've been waiting for this invitation. How long has it been since we last traveled together? Oh yes, since we were seventeen, remember? When we visited New York for the last time and I made you go to an illegal car race and your bodyguard kicked us out after half an hour." Abby laughed, recalling our trip thirteen years ago, and I couldn't hold back the laughter, just remembering that night and the furious face of my bodyguard for us having escaped from him.

Thank goodness we managed to convince him with our best innocent face not to tell our parents about our little mischief, although it was Abby's idea. That was where I saw Alexander for the first time... Forget about memories.

"Those were the days, too bad we couldn't even see the race that was about to start."

I rocked Tristan, who squirmed in my arms because of our laughter, and he settled down again, falling back asleep.

"Well, what do you think about going back to the last place we traveled together?" I asked in a low voice, and Abby looked at me with a puzzled expression. Her face told me she didn't understand a word of what I was saying or what I meant.

"You mean, go back? How? Go to the illegal car races in New York?" She responded with another question and I raised an eyebrow, waiting for her to figure out the answer herself. She spoke quietly to herself as if she were trying to find some logic in attending a place like that at this stage of our lives, then her eyes widened and she looked at me in disbelief.

"No... no... Don't tell me, tell me you're joking me." She whispered, not wanting to wake up Tristan, and I knew she had found the answer.

"I'm joking you." I whispered to her amused, obeying her request.

"Sarah, I'm not in the mood for games, don't tell me... Damn. Don't tell me you're going to New York Fashion Week, because I swear I'll faint." She shouted again in a low voice and fanned her face with her hand in the most dramatic way.

"Well, no. I'm not going. We are going to New York Fashion Week because you're going with me, even if I have to drag you. " I corrected her words, and she ran to the couch to grab a cushion, put it on her face, and let out a muffled scream.

I laughed silently at Abby's exaggerated reaction and looked at Tristan's relaxed face while he slept, holding back the laughter that was about to escape.

"You're going with me too, my love." I whispered to my son as if he could hear me and placed a kiss on his forehead.

"Wait, wait, stop. Hold your cowboy horse." I looked at her when she calmed down, although her cheeks were still flushed.

"We're going to New York, right?" She asked, and I nodded in response.

"To Fashion Week, right?"

I nodded again in answer, and her calm gaze changed to one of concern.

"Okay, everything's fine until there. But have you lost your mind?! Going back to New York, and specifically to such a fashion event, is a sure encounter with the unspeakable, are you aware of that?" She asked exasperated, and I understood her concern perfectly well because it was mine too.

In the same way, I reacted when my father gave me the news, but after speaking alone, where he expressed his point of view and how much they trusted me and what he was willing to do for his family, the security and courage that I lost for a few seconds came back when I panicked just hearing him say:

-We will travel to New York.

It wasn't the best idea in the world to go back to New York, but it was a great opportunity to make myself known, not just as Leonardo's daughter, but for my potential.

"I am very aware of that, and believe me when I tell you that I care very little about Alexander. I am going for business reasons and on behalf of Doinel, the Lancasters are irrelevant, they are strangers to me, and if they dare approach me or my son, they will meet the Sarah they never had a chance to know." I said, determined and feeling stronger and stronger to confront this situation.

I was going to prove to myself that I am immune to the Lancasters.

"I'll go to the end of the world with you if you promise me that you will give a taste of their own medicine to Mrs. Lancaster, that snake. I hate her, she's like a punch in the stomach." Abby said with evident disdain towards Amelia, and I let out a silent giggle.

Although I would love to get back at Amelia and her daughter for everything they had done to me, I preferred to avoid their presence at all costs. They were the last people I wanted to see in my life. However, if they happened to cross my path, they would be in for a big surprise if they continued to think that I was still the passive and submissive Sarah.

"If they come across me, they will regret it. I will have no mercy for anyone."

Chapter 23 Back to New York.

Chapter 39 - Divorced Heiress

A shiver ran down my spine all the way to the back of my neck, when the private jet landed at the private airport in New York, my stomach churned and I had to drink a whole bottle of water to avoid throwing up right there.

Back in New York.

"Are you okay?" Vincent asked by my side, he had been by my side throughout the entire trip with Tristan playing on his lap and now my little baby was sound asleep in my cousin's comfortable arms.

"Yes, of course I'm fine." I blatantly lied, smiling.

I didn't feel completely well, it was inevitable to remember part of my life as Mrs. Lancaster, especially remembering as if it had been yesterday, the day I returned from my little vacation in Orlando with the pregnancy test in my hand and nervous to tell Alexander the news that he would be a father. Now I was landing in this place again, but with my son in my arms.

It was alright, no one would know about Tristan's existence.

"Your pale face says otherwise." Vincent caught me lying and I chuckled as I got up from my seat after Vincent did.

"Don't worry, princess, nothing will happen to you as long as I'm by your side, you can use me publicly as you please, as your best friend, the father of your child, your new husband, or as your bodyguard, don't forget that."

I laughed again at his remarks, and we exited the jet where the others were waiting for us, we were the only ones left to exit due to my sudden discomfort.

"Vin, there's no need for me to pretend that you're my husband or the father of my child, it would lead to news about us and I don't want to harm your image, all your fans will be disappointed and hate me." I said. Vin laughed without humor and adjusted Tristan, resting his little dark-haired head on his shoulder.

"Besides, nobody needs to know about my private life, I won't show Tristan publicly."

"Fans? What's that? I've been alone for years and you know that very well, nobody will hate you. I leave the offer open for you, the last time the one who shall not be named saw us, he left thinking that you and I had something, so we can keep making him believe that there's something between us. Oh, look, the fruit of our love is waking up."

I laughed when my cousin spoke playfully upon seeing Tristan shift uncomfortably on his shoulder and then go back to sleep as if there was no tomorrow.

"False alarm."

"The fruit of our love? The trip affected you, didn't it? What will the media say when everyone finds out that I'm Leonardo's daughter? Everyone will know that I'm your cousin, and that will be frowned upon."

We walked slowly towards where my father was with the others, giving each one instructions on what to do and which car to take. Abby could barely stand, as she had attended a party last night and ended up very drunk.

Jack left with Ms. Boyer and Vincent's assistant in one of the three parked cars.

"Nonsense, your father and my mother are only siblings by name, everyone knows that, so..."

"Vincent, you're coming with us, Abby, Sarah, Tristan, and Maga, you'll go in the other car." My father interrupted Vincent, which I appreciated. I didn't know where he was going with this conversation, but I already had an answer, and it was a resounding no. I wasn't going to involve anyone in future destructive gossip.

No one would know about my private life, the only thing they would know was that I was a divorced woman, and that was it.

"I'll go with Sarah, uncle, Tristan is asleep. Let Abby go with you." Vincent said, pointing to my son who was still peacefully sleeping. I looked at my father and subtly signaled him with my eyes, which he immediately understood.

"I need to talk about a few things with you, let's go, Vincent." My father insisted, and Vincent had no choice but to obey.

My cousin looked at me disappointed and skillfully left Tristan in the car seat, my son barely moved.

"Just keep it in mind, princess, I say this because I don't want you to get hurt again, you can always count on me." He said with a slight half-smile, and I nodded, not very sure, before he left with my parents. I let out a tired sigh and got into the car where Abby was waiting with her eyes closed and Maga in the passenger seat.

"I hate hangovers. I won't have a single drop of alcohol ever again in my life." Abby said with her eyes still shut as the car started moving.

Alcohol.

That was what I needed to alleviate my discomfort from returning to this place where I experienced the best and worst days of my life, but I wouldn't do it even if I needed to. I was a responsible mother now.

"Only you would get drunk the day before traveling, you're crazy." I told her as I made sure Tristan was securely in his seat, pulled out my phone, and glanced at my packed schedule for the week. I would barely have time to breathe.

"Tell me something I don't know." She said, settling into her seat with the intention of sleeping. I chuckled, at least she's aware of her craziness.

"Speaking of crazy..." I exclaimed when she raised her head as if she remembered something and took off her sunglasses, revealing her tired eyes.

"My brother is arriving tonight and we're all going out to have fun before starting the busiest week of our lives."

I turned my gaze away from my phone screen and looked at her with narrowed eyes. Another one affected by the trip.

"Abby, you just said you won't have a drop of alcohol ever again in your life and now you're planning to get drunk again, we haven't even finished arriving." I said in a low voice so as not to wake up Tristan as I frowned at her.

"Besides, I can't leave my son alone so soon, I don't know how long I'll be without him all week."

"Miss Sarah, don't worry about Tristan, I'll take care of him, go have fun, it's been a while since you did, take advantage of this trip to relax." Maga said, surprising me as she joined the conversation from the front seat.

"See! Maga, you're an angel fallen from heaven, you've become my heroine." Abby spoke excitedly, unable to contain her joy at Nana's offer, causing Tristan to stir as if he wanted to wake up, earning a stern look from me.

"Oh, sorry."

Chapter 23 Back to New York part 2

Chapter 40 - Divorced Heiress

We soon arrived at the mansion my father bought a few months ago. Now I understood why he was so interested in a property in New York even though I disagreed. Of course! He had already planned everything in advance, he would accept the invitation to Fashion Week that he had rejected for years and bring us all to be part of such an important event.

I carried Tristan in my arms to enter the ostentatious mansion, and he soon woke up, looking around curiously and fixing his gaze on me as if asking where we were.

"We've arrived, my love." I said, and he sleepily looked at the house that was completely unfamiliar to him, and to me too.

"Do you want some water?" He nodded, and I reached for his special water cup to give him a drink.

"Look who woke up, Sleeping Beauty." Abby approached me as she got out of the car and caressed Tristan's hair.

"Don't you give your mom permission to go out tonight and have fun? Don't you?" Tristan's honey-colored eyes turned to Abby and then to me, obviously not understanding what Abby was saying but still nodding his head while drinking his water, in response to my friend's last question.

"That's my nephew! Even Tristan agrees! High five!"

Tristan high-fived Abby and I playfully shook my head.

"I imagine I'm invited too." Vincent's voice made me turn to look at him, and I couldn't help but remember the strange conversation at the airport.

"But of course, I won't be the only one playing the violin for Sarah and Paul." Abby said, amused, and I discreetly nudged her with my elbow.

"Ouch, no aggression, please."

"When is Paul arriving?" Vincent asked, ignoring the nonsense coming out of Abby's mouth as he ruffled Tristan's hair.

"Tonight, just in time for us to go have fun. I've already planned everything. We'll go to the most exclusive bar, and guess what? Thursdays are tango nights, and guess what day it is today? Thursday! Tonight, we'll show off our forbidden dance moves."

Abby began dancing with her best tango steps, and Tristan let out a laugh that infected all of us. I admitted that I was enthusiastic about the idea, we both were passionate about tango, in the past we used to dance like professionals, but now I didn't know if I could dance like I did years ago.

"Before Abby leads them down the path of alcohol, let's settle in and review the activities we will have during our stay." My father interrupted our conversation. However, Abby continued dancing to imaginary music, at least I know she still danced as well or even better than before.

After bathing and feeding Tristan, I left him asleep in the bed my father prepared specially for him. I gave Maga instructions in case he wakes up, although she already knew everything, after all, she helped my mother take care of me since I was born and now she was helping me with my son.

I dressed in a tight black dress with spaghetti straps that reached to my knees with a slight opening on the left leg, it was the most comfortable outfit I found in case I feel like dancing

tango tonight. Although if Paul was present, we would most likely remember old times with our best tango steps.

In the living room, an impatient Abby was typing quickly on her cellphone, and Vincent had his eyes closed in boredom.

"Did it take me long with Tristan?" I asked.

"We leaving?" I asked as I made sure I had everything I needed in my purse.

"Finally." Abby said, jumping up from the sofa to take my arm and pull me towards the exit.
"Let's go quickly."

"Abby, can you calm down? We'll get there anyway." I heard Vincent, who was following us, say. Abby suddenly stopped, causing her body to collide with my cousin's.

"Crazy girl."

"Can you stop being so serious for a second? Thanks. And crazy my foot." My cousin retorted.

I watched their small argument and covered my mouth to suppress my laughter. Vincent looked at her with narrowed eyes, and for a moment I thought he would refuse to go anywhere with my friend.

"And you, stop making fun of me." Abby added.

My laughter subsided as Abby's seriousness returned, and she continued walking towards the car where the driver was waiting for us.

"What time does Paul arrive?" I asked when the car started moving, earning me a meaningful look from Abby and causing me to roll my eyes.

"How interested, Ms. Doinel. I'm sorry to inform you that I don't have that information. In any case, he will arrive at the bar at any time, so don't worry, you'll see your man soon." She said with a smirk. Vincent released a amused laugh next to Abby.

"Vincent! You should defend me, not laugh at me." I said as my cousin raised his hands in the air as if he were innocent.

"Now one can't even ask a simple question."

Abby gave the driver directions to the bar, and after half an hour of talking about the impressive tango performance Abby was going to give with her best tango steps, the car stopped outside the bar that my friend had been talking about so much.

I soon realized that it was Mr. Rehman's bar, Alexander's best friend, and a bad taste filled my mouth.

No matter, no one was going to disturb my night, nor my stay in New York.

Abby exchanged a few words with the guard, and despite the number of people waiting outside to get in, they let us in. We followed my friend into the place, and I smiled when I heard a tango piece that made me want to go straight to the dance floor, but I held back. Abby guided us to the second floor in the VIP area.

As soon as I set foot in the area where there was a sign with my friend's last name, I felt arms wrap around my waist, taking me by surprise.

"Ms. Sarah, long time no see." I heard the familiar masculine voice in my ear, and I quickly turned around in astonishment to see Paul's smiling face.

"Paul!" I hugged him excited and at the same time surprised.

I didn't expect him to be waiting for us, now I understood why Abby was in such a hurry. I couldn't deny that I missed him a lot, almost a year without seeing him and he looked so different, very attractive with his new haircut and his stubble, despite the tiredness on his face.

"I thought you wouldn't make it in time." I said playfully in his ear. He greeted his sister with a kiss and Vincent with a handshake, after breaking our hug, and turned his brown gaze towards me, without erasing the genuine smile from his face.

"Oh, just in time for what?" He asked playfully and knowingly, as he took my hand to play with my fingers.

He knew what I was referring to, we made the best dance couple when it came to tango.

"To propose to you, of course, now it's women who take the initiative, didn't you know? Women in power!" Abby spoke before I could say anything, and I looked at her with a sour face for interrupting our conversation with her jokes, at the same time that Paul let out a laugh.

"Well, anyways, I'm leaving, I'll go with your boring cousin."

I opened my mouth to speak and remind him of the great couple we made in the past when dancing tango, but I closed it when a familiar and unpleasant female voice interrupted the moment.

"It can't be! The gold digger has returned."