

## Chapter 2 Betrayal.

Fifteen minutes had passed since I parked outside Lancaster Collection. Every time I gathered the courage to nally go in, negative thoughts returned.

What if he didn't want it?

What if he got mad at me?

To hell with it all, there was no reason to be afraid. If he didn't want it, I would give my baby double the love. And if he got angry, let him be angry. We were both responsible for this unexpected pregnancy. We were a "happily" married couple. We were mature and aware adults.

I took a deep breath and got out of my car with the small gift box in my hand. Nerves were running high. I could feel my heart pounding in my ears. How could something so simple be so complicated?

No, the real question was, why was I making this so complicated?

It was as simple as going to his oce, greeting him, giving him the gift box, and waiting for his reaction.

I hoped it was as simple as that.

I slipped among the desperate and stressed workers rushing back and forth. The company always became a real stress when they were about to launch a new collection.

I didn't dare announce my arrival because I wanted everything to be a surprise. I entered the elevator just as it was about to close and positioned myself in a corner, pretending to look at my phone with my hair covering my face so that the people beside me wouldn't recognize me.

It might seem silly, but I felt like if someone noticed that I was in the company, they would inform Alex and ruin the surprise.

Small details that were important to me.

The only test I had left to pass was that of his secretary, but luckily she wasn't at her desk when I arrived on the executive oor.

Well, I was here now and there was no turning back.

As soon as I put my hand on the doorknob, I froze upon hearing the noise on the other side. My heart skipped a beat as I prayed for this to be a misunderstanding, for those moans to be a product of my imagination and the nerves that wouldn't leave me even for a second.

I was on the verge of turning around and leaving, trying to convince myself that it wasn't what I had in my head, but then I saw Alex's secretary coming out of the elevator and panic set in.

I opened Alexander's oce door without hesitation, only to be met with the worst scene of my life.

I swallowed hard, trying to get rid of the knot in my throat, but it was impossible. I couldn't believe what I was seeing. How did it even occur to me that it could be a misunderstanding? How stupid.

My husband was with my best friend.

The people I trusted the most, after my parents, whom I met years ago in a shared class at university. That pair of people who didn't deserve to be called husband and best friend.

Both of them looked at me in surprise and immediately covered up, as if I hadn't just seen them half-naked.

"What are you doing here?" Alexander asked me, his voice icy and clearly angry.

What was I doing here? That was a good question, and I had the most beautiful answer, at least for me. But after nding them almost having s\*x in Alexander's oce while I was supposed to be "away," I asked myself the same question.

What was I doing here?

What was I doing with a man who had become so cold towards me, someone who had stopped caring?

What was I doing begging for his attention or a caress from the man I left everything for?

What was I doing, enduring all of this, his indifference, his family's humiliation, his infidelity, his betrayal?

"Now it all makes sense." I said, thinking about his lack of interest in me in recent months. Tears blurred my vision, but I didn't let a single one fall.

"I didn't expect this from you, Rachel."

I took a deep breath. I wasn't going to make a scene on the executive oor. Even though that was the least they deserved, my principles wouldn't allow it. The best thing I could do was leave it at that. I wouldn't demand anything from either of them, and I didn't want to hear any explanations, if they even wanted to excuse themselves. But judging by Alex's angry expression and my "friend's" almost non-existent mocking smile, I knew I wouldn't even receive an apology.

"Sir, I apologize. I didn't realize Mrs. Lancaster had arrived."

I looked over my shoulder at the secretary who had apparently arrived at some point and was now covering her face to avoid seeing the exhibitionists on the couch.

But of course, there had to be an accomplice to these two, and of course, she was apologizing because she had just screwed up. And probably, the mistake of letting me continue to the boss's oce would cost her the job or maybe a good portion of her salary.

"Unbelievable, everyone thought they could fool me." I let out a hollow laugh and instinctively hid the gift box behind my back.This was not a good time to give the news of my pregnancy, neither did I think tomorrow would be, nor in a week, nor in a month or a year.

The secretary lowered her head, obviously sorry for me, and turned around to leave the oce.

"Sarah, go home, we'll talk there." He said as he zipped up his pants. Rachel, on the other hand, turned her back to adjust her dress.

They should be ashamed.

"No, Alexander, we won't talk at home, or anywhere else, we are going to spare ourselves all of this, it is more than evident that you stopped loving me, if you ever did, this marriage makes no sense, you prefer the caresses of another over your own wife. You swore to love and respect me, but that oath was too much for you. I set myself free for you to do as you please."

I took off my wedding ring, taking advantage that neither of them saw me, so that they wouldn't notice the gift box I had in my hand, and I left the ring on the desk.

"I will send you the divorce papers."

I turned around and left the oce furiously, with my heart shattered into a thousand pieces and my wings broken. The only thing that kept me strong, with my head held high, was my child growing in my womb, the only person deserving of all my love.

A rebellious tear escaped my eye, and just as I was about to reach the elevator, I heard the female voice of that woman who I once called my best friend, the one I conded my deepest secrets to, who ended up being more false than the "until death do us part" between Alexander and I.

"Sarah, I..."

I raised my hand in a stop gesture, so she wouldn't keep talking. I didn't want to hear what she had to say. At this moment, she was a stranger to me.

"I don't want to hear you, Rachel, I don't intend to cause a scene in Alexander's company, just stay away from me, you're not who I thought you were." I said, remembering her expression when I found them in the oce, her satished face would never fade from my memory.

"That's why you're nobody, believe me, you're doing me a favor with this, don't be surprised when you see Alexander Lancaster and Rachel Duncan's grand wedding in the magazines, as it should have been from the beginning, thanks for clearing the path for me."

I looked at her with a bitter smile on my face, and it was inevitable to release a sigh of relief? Grief?

Yes, grief for her, for how low she had fallen by believing that she was gaining so much from this, for thinking that this was a competition to see who Alexander would end up with.

I gifted it to her wrapped in gift paper, and I didn't accept returns.

"I pity your mediocre thoughts, you think you've gained so much, but I've gained even more by getting rid of a couple of vipers like you, because losing also means winning. Congratulations, friend, enjoy it." I gave her a fake half-smile, and her raised eyebrow with annoyance made me realize that she expected a different reaction from me, for me to go crazy and end up yelling in her face, or even hitting her.

But no.

That wasn't Sarah Doinel, there was something more painful than punches, something that deafened more than screams, words, and indifference, and it was noticeable that everything I said destabilized her, she wanted to mess with me, but she was the one who was going to end up worse off.

"Well, I've made millions of dollars, which you're losing." she said as if that had been my nai blow, as if I had been with Alexander for his money, when in reality, I didn't even touch a penny.

"Let's talk when your mindset isn't so poor and empty." I gave her one last look from head to toe, and I glanced sideways at Alexander, who was leaving his oce so calmly that no one would notice that just a few minutes ago, he was screwing my former best friend.

I continued my way to the elevator before he could come up to me to say something, I didn't want to see him, he disgusted me so much at this moment, I wanted to vomit and I wasn't sure if it was because of the pregnancy or because of the whirlwind of emotions I'm having right now.

I hadn't noticed the looks from some curious onlookers who enjoyed the little spectacle, and most of them looked at me as if I had come out of a boxing ring without a scratch.

I entered the elevator accompanied by some coworkers I know, however, they didn't dare greet me, in fact, the silence was so overwhelming that it was deafening.

I rushed to my car, ignoring the mess that still remained in reception, my hands tightly held the gift box, afraid that it could slip out of my hands at any moment, the lump in my throat grew bigger and it was strange that I had spoken to Rachel without my voice breaking.

Tears threatened to escape and didn't let me see perfectly. Nevertheless, I reached the car and did what I wanted to do since I heard the rst moan in Alexander's oce.

To cry.