

## Chapter 61 - Divorced Heiress

I opened my eyes excitedly, when two honey-colored gazes appeared in my dreams.

What I was missing, dreaming about the Lancaster twins.

There was still an hour left before the breakfast my father invited me to, to talk about unfinished matters and give me his sermon upon realizing the treatment I received from Amelia.

I didn't want to waste any more time and got up to get ready and prepare breakfast for Tristan. This time Paul wasn't around anywhere to surprise me with breakfast ready. However, Maga was wandering around the kitchen preparing breakfast for everyone, except for my father and me.

My heart sank as I remembered the rejection from last night, it wasn't fair to him, I knew that, but the last-minute unexpected event was more important and, after talking to Alexis and making sure he would keep the secret, my father preferred that we all go back home, and I fully agreed, as I couldn't bear another second with those insufferable family members in the same place. Finally, Paul rescheduled our date for tonight.

"Good morning, Sari. You've woken up early, that smells really good." My father entered the kitchen and kissed my head when he realized I was preparing a sandwich and chopped fruits for Tristan.

"Good morning, Dad. I'm trying to be a good mother." I said as I served breakfast to wake up my son.

"You've always been. We're leaving in twenty minutes with Jack, we have a lot to talk about." He nodded and hurried to wake up Tristan, leaving me with Maga in the kitchen.

To my surprise, Tristan was already awake, playing on the bed with the toy dinosaur Paul gave him. I gave him his respective hygiene routine before taking him downstairs to the dining room where his breakfast was ready.

I barely had a cup of tea, while making sure my son finished everything, he only had his fruits left when my father appeared, pointing at his Rolex. It was time to go.

I asked Maga to take care of Tristan while I went back inside to say goodbye, then I walked to the van where my father and Jack were waiting for me.

On the way, I checked the news from the previous night. The first fashion week runway was a success. Articles with the best designs of the night were everywhere, and it didn't surprise me that they were from the Lancaster Collection.

My eyes widened when I read the articles and saw the images in the digital magazines of the show.

"Sarah Petit back to the Lancaster family?"

"The vice-president of Doinel has set her sights on her ex-brother-in-law, Alexis Lancaster, who was in a coma for thirteen years due to unknown causes. Without a chance of reuniting with her ex-husband, Sarah Petit seems determined to go for his identical twin. What will Alexander Lancaster think about this situation? Will he agree to his brother being interested in his ex-wife?"

But what the hell!

I wanted to throw my phone out the window when I saw the picture of me and Alexis at the banquet. Once again they took everything out of context and I wouldn't be surprised if it was Amelia.

If she didn't care about Alexander's reputation three years ago, she wouldn't care about her son's reputation now that he'd just come back to life; that woman had no scruples. They captured the best angle of me, leaning to reach his height and his eyes fixed on my lips. Anyone would think I was seducing him, but it wasn't like that, it was far from reality.

How could I be interested in another Lancaster?

That was completely ridiculous.

I turned off my phone screen and pinched the bridge of my nose, keeping calm. It was a dirty game from the Lancaster's part, and yet, they still expected to be chosen for the collaboration with Doinel.

"Is everything okay?" My father asked, sitting beside me.

"Nothing can be okay when I'm near the Lancasters." I closed my eyes and rubbed my forehead, feeling a headache coming.

"Relax, Sari. When you hear what I have planned, that family will have to eat their words, at least that Alexis agreed to keep quiet."

I let out a tired sigh and nodded without asking more.

I already knew that coming back to New York wasn't a good idea, but business was business.

The van parked at the cafeteria's entrance and a black car that I had seen since we left home stopped on the other side of the street, I chuckled when I realized that the owner of the car started taking pictures through the polarized glass, what he didn't know was that I could see his silhouette through the sunlight. That man doesn't seem very smart.

Chapter 37 Dirty game part 2

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When we arrived at the cafeteria, Jack immediately turned on the tablet before placing our order. Quickly, he gave me all the information I had asked him for the night before.

"Alexis Lancaster, thirty-one years old, indeed, thirteen years in a coma. I did my respective investigations and although it wasn't easy, I managed to find the facts."

I settled into my seat ready to listen, but he stopped when the waitress arrived with our coffees and hot cakes.

"That can wait, Jack. Let's have breakfast first." My father ordered, and I looked at him incredulously for making Jack leave the information unfinished, leaving me curious, but I could do nothing but obey.

I could hardly eat a bite, there were so many things on my mind, starting with the issue of Alexis, the new gossip, the new plans my father had for me, and the not discrete at all journalist who was photographing me from outside the cafeteria and thought I hadn't noticed.

The waitress cleared the table when we finished breakfast, and before asking Jack to continue with the information, my father spoke.

"First of all, I want to talk about something important with you, daughter. Do you mind if we go to the balcony? The view is incredible." My father elegantly wiped the corners of his lips and stood up from his seat to offer me his hand.

I took it, although I would have preferred to listen to Jack first.

"I'll go with you. We'll be back in a few minutes, Jack."

My assistant nodded his head, and I followed my father as he led me to the balcony, which had a beautiful view of the city, and the wind gently brushed against my body.

"I'm listening."

I made sure there was no one around who could hear our conversation, I didn't need to be a mind reader to know that he was going to talk to me as father to daughter.

"First of all, I congratulate you on the good job you're doing. For your first assistance in the New York Fashion Week, you're doing very well. You have your sights set on the best companies, which will make the decision in the board meeting easier."

I smiled gratefully at his words, although I felt that not everything was going well. First, the interest of Lancaster Collection in collaboration thanks to the meddling of Michelle, and second, my identity being revealed.

"On the other hand, I want to speak to you as a father. You know perfectly well that I don't agree with you hiding from Alexander that he is a father. I understand that many unpleasant things have happened between you, but he has the right to know. If he doesn't want to, that's another matter, but I put myself in his shoes and I wouldn't like it if the existence of a child was kept from me. Who suffers the most later on are the children. Think about Tristan, he's getting smarter every day, he'll soon be asking about his father. What are you going to say to him?"

Of all the topics I imagined discussing with my father, this was the one I least wanted to touch. And yes, my father was completely right, Alexander had the right to know that he had a child, but I was afraid that he would mix with such an unhealthy family at such a young age. I wouldn't forgive myself if my son got affected by the Lancasters. Besides, how would he react?

"Now that you mention it, I think I should tell him, but my biggest fear is his family. They are vipers and wouldn't hesitate to unleash their venom, regardless of the fact that he's just a child." I admitted with mixed feelings in my chest.

As much as I hated Alexander, I couldn't continue hiding his son from him. He hurt me, not Tristan, and even though I preferred the peace that my son had always had without his father, I would like him to know what the love of a father was like, just as my father had always given me.

"That's another issue that really bothers me, Sarah Doinel. Is that how you've been treated during your marriage to Lancaster? Is that the treatment you deserve? For God's sake, daughter. You've grown up with the best treatment, with all the love your family and friends have been able to give you. How is it possible that you have allowed yourself to be treated that way? Tell me, are you a gold digger? Did you marry Alexander for money?"

I lowered my gaze to my feet, feeling scolded by my father. I deserved it for allowing it from the beginning.

"I gave up my family to be with him, it's obvious that they would think I married for money. And, I can't lie to you, I was humiliated by the Lancasters many times. I should have done something about it, but..."

"It's okay, my dear, I'm not scolding you. It's just frustrating for me to know that you haven't been treated as you deserve, and that Alexander hasn't done anything to defend his wife, it's infuriating." My father interrupted me and put his hand on my shoulders to give me a paternal hug.

"He never knew, but I don't want to talk about it, I'm taking care of putting them in their place whenever I have the opportunity. Don't think I'm getting revenge, I'm just defending myself." I said, hugging his waist.

"I noticed it last night, I wanted to intervene, but I stopped when I saw how you handled the situation. Very well, with your class and education, you humiliate those rude women."

I laughed because that was exactly what I did, without needing to utter an insult, I left them red with anger and humiliation.

"Before getting back with Jack, I want you to tell Alexander about Tristan on the day I introduce you as my heiress."

"When have you planned the introduction?" I asked, thinking it would still be at the launch of the first collection with the collaboration brand.

"The last day of fashion week."

I looked at my father in amazement.

"Will you do it?"

In five days!

I took a deep breath and although I didn't feel completely prepared for presentations, it was for the best. Why continue hiding information that would become a ticking time bomb?

"I'll do it." I said determined, with a smile.

I wouldn't do it for myself, I would do it for Tristan, because I wanted the best for him, even if it was not the best for me. All I knew was that I didn't want my son near that pair of vipers.

We returned to the table with Jack, after ending the conversation. I knew there were more pending matters, but now we needed to work, take a look at the proposal for the Lancaster Collection, and have Jack finish giving us information about Alexis.

"I'm sorry, Jack, we needed to clarify a couple of things. Let's continue with the information about Alexis Lancaster. Is he a threat to our plans?" My father asked, adjusting my chair before sitting next to me.

I looked at Jack and curiosity flooded my body in an instant.

"What happened to him?" I asked, fingers intertwined on the table.

Jack slid his finger on the tablet and when he found the information, he resumed reading.

"He had a car accident in an underground race when he was eighteen years old. He was in the passenger seat and wasn't wearing a seatbelt, so he went through the windshield and his body ended up on the race car's hood. There is no information about the driver, even though there were many spectators at the race, no one knew anything or didn't want to give information."

My brain almost collapsed upon hearing that information.

Suddenly, my heart skipped a beat as I remembered the day I bumped into Alexander at the underground race thirteen years ago.

It couldn't be.

Chapter 38 Giving something to talk about.

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The seat that had been empty since my father and Jack left the cafeteria was occupied by Vincent, who arrived minutes after I asked him to come via text message.

I needed to let go of what was swirling in my head since Jack gave me the information about Alexis. I felt restless ever since, so much so that I barely paid attention to the small meeting where we analyzed LC's excellent proposal, which far exceeded the other proposals, not to mention my father's instructions for the day of the presentation of his heiress.

I immersed myself so much in my thoughts that I had even forgotten that the "undercover" journalist was still outside, photographing my every move. I discreetly looked towards the car that hadn't moved on the other side of the street. It was obvious they were looking for images that would become trending.

"I'm sorry I took so long." Vincent said, taking off his sunglasses.

"Are you okay?"

"Yes, well, not entirely. Have you had breakfast? Would you like something to drink?" I asked, trying to forget about the journalist.

"I've already had breakfast, but a coffee wouldn't hurt." He replied. I called the waitress over and Vincent placed his order while I just asked for a glass of water.

"Tell me, princess, what is it that has you so anxious?"

I took a deep breath, searching for the right words to tell my cousin about the suspicions I had. There was no one I could trust with this other than him, even though Abby was my best friend and confidante, it wasn't a good idea to tell her. She was so indiscreet, she might not be able to keep the secret or would be very unreasonable.

"It's about the Lancasters." I said, and Vincent looked at me incredulously, I noticed how much mentioning that last name irritated him.

"Listen to me before you rant. I imagine you've heard that Alexander has a twin." I said, and he nodded his head confusedly. Before I could continue speaking, the waitress arrived with our drinks.

After thanking the woman for her service, I took a sip of my glass of water to clear my mind, no matter how absurd my thoughts were.

"What does that man have to do with this? I've seen the article associating you with him, I'm sure they have distorted everything just like the news three years ago." Vincent said before taking a sip of his coffee.

Of course, even Vincent, who didn't care about celebrity news, knew it. By now, my family must be aware of that article.

"Yes, they have. But that's not what has me worried. I'll make them choke on all their defamatory news soon. What I wanted to share with you is something that happened years ago and now it makes sense to me, even though it might sound crazy to anyone else." I paused under his curious gaze and continued.

"Thirteen years ago, I came to New York on vacation with Abby."

"If it has anything to do with Abby, I consider it complete madness. That woman is not just missing a screw, she's missing all of them." Vincent interrupted, and I remembered Abby's confession, but this was not the time to talk about it. I gave him an expressionless look.

"Okay, continue."

"The thing is, yes, because of one of her crazy ideas, we managed to escape from my security detail and ended up at an underground race." I said, and his eyes widened significantly, almost spitting out his coffee.

"See! It's very unreasonable, it's reckless, it's troublesome, it's..." Vincent started.

"Vincent, I know Abby, I know perfectly well who she is." I interrupted him before he continued describing her. He fell silent and motioned for me to continue.

"Anyway, at that place, by pure chance, I bumped into Alexander, well, I bumped into his body without realizing it, he introduced himself as Alex, and out of nervousness because my security detail was close by, I blurted out my name and my real last name. I'm not saying it was love at first sight with this. In fact, it wasn't until I entered college that I saw him and immediately recognized him, but he didn't recognize me."

Now that I said it out loud, it didn't seem so absurd after all. For some strange reason, Alexis knew my last name, and according to him, I had told him. That was why he had been looking at me during the show, all signs pointed to...

"Let me see if I understand. You're telling me that you met Alexis, the Lancaster who was in a coma for thirteen years, and you mistook him for Alexander." He said. It didn't sound as crazy coming from his mouth, on the contrary, if he deduced it just from hearing a small part of the story, it meant we came to the same conclusion.

"How are you so sure?"

"I wouldn't have thought about this before, if it weren't for the fact that Alexis knows my real last name and when I asked him, he told me that I had told him."

Vincent remained motionless in his seat, looking at me with surprise in his eyes.

I let out a sigh, feeling discomfort in my chest, I didn't know what to think, this was drilling into my head.

Chapter 38 Giving something to talk about part 2

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"It can't be, he was thirteen years in a coma, it's impossible, there must be another reason. Alexander could have talked to him about you."

I shook my head while letting out a bitter laugh.

"Of course not, I'm telling you that Alexander didn't recognize me at the university, he never knew my last name, why do I know it? He has always admired Leonardo Doinel, if he knew I was his daughter, he would have asked me to take him with him or introduce him to him. But no, they always thought I had no family, the only one who knows is Alexis."

What puzzled me the most was that everything was fitting together like a puzzle.

"So, if you hadn't run into Alexis, you wouldn't have married into the Lancaster family?"

That was a question I didn't have an answer to.

When I saw him at the university, I was excited to see him again, but it didn't mean I fell in love at first sight, although it influenced me to approach Alexander at the university. If I had ignored him like a complete stranger, maybe, just maybe, I wouldn't have fallen in love with him, we wouldn't have started a relationship, and we wouldn't have planned to get married after graduation.

"I don't know. Anyway, that doesn't matter, I've already divorced him. But I needed to tell someone this, I wanted to make sure that what I thought wasn't complete madness, and I see that it isn't. Do you know how he ended up in a coma? An accident in the illegal car race, he was on the passenger side, and, God, it gives me chills just thinking that maybe I met him the night of the accident, before it ended that way, and I wonder, could I have done something to prevent it? Stayed longer talking to him, if it weren't for my escort. There are so many things, Vincent, for example, who was driving the car? No one knows."

I finished my glass of water after pouring my heart out, Vincent listened attentively to every word coming out of my mouth, and after a few seconds of silence, he gave me a smile while holding my hand on the table.

"Princess, none of this is your fault, you had no idea what was going to happen, you didn't know he had a twin, or that you would meet at the university, you shouldn't burden yourself, it's all in the past now, and what should concern you is preventing Alexis from revealing your identity before the planned time." He said quietly, trying to make me feel better.

Although he might be right, I couldn't help but think that I could have done something to prevent him from getting in that car, but the truth was that what was done was done, and now many things were becoming clear.

"That won't be a problem, he won't tell anyone, I took care of it last night, why do you think they're talking about me again? Besides, my father will introduce me in five days, after signing the collaboration deal." I said, remembering the drastic change of plans.

"That's great, I want to see the faces of those vipers when they find out." He said with a smirk, and I laughed, imagining the Lancasters boiling with anger.

"Speaking of vipers, can you believe she sent a paparazzi to follow me? I have no doubt it was Amelia." Vincent discreetly looked around.

"The car parked on the other side of the street." I helped him with the search, and his gaze paused for a few seconds before turning back to me.

"Indeed, it's the same paparazzi who follows me in search of a photo he can distort as he pleases, and believe me, if he set his eyes on you, he will do the same with you."

I raised an eyebrow at the information he just gave me and smiled.

"Then, I'll give them something to talk about, will you help me?" Vincent looked at me with a furrowed brow, as if trying to guess what was going through my mind.

"Impossible to say no to you, what do you have in mind?"

A few minutes later, I couldn't stop laughing in the van, and Vincent, although he thought it was a risky idea, agreed without hesitation.

The van stopped at the entrance of a luxury hotel where Vincent usually stayed when visiting New York. I had to stop laughing and focus on my role when my cousin got out of the van and helped me out. Arm in arm, we entered the hotel, not before noticing that the paparazzi parked a few meters behind.

"The driver is waiting for us by the other exit." Vincent said close to my ear, pretending to be a seducer.

I laughed complicitly and we continued our way as if we were a couple in love, and a feminine figure appeared in my field of vision, almost completely erasing my smile.

Her hazel eyes looked at me with surprise and a triumphantly half-smile formed on her face, that face that I despised, that I abhorred from the moment I found her in Alexander's office.

I looked at her disdainfully and apathetically from head to toe, before returning my gaze to my path as if she didn't exist.

"Sarah, what have you come back for? Don't think that just because you have an important position, you are worthy of a man like Alexander, he forgot about you." Rachel said as I went past her.

Vincent's hand that was resting on my shoulder turned into a fist upon hearing that, and I intertwined my fingers with his to calm him down.

I barely gave her a amused look and continued on without responding to the stupidity she was saying, she made a fool of herself in front of the people present by leaving her talking alone.

She wanted attention and I wouldn't waste my time with a shameless person.

We exited through the back door, where the van was waiting as Vincent had indicated to the driver, it wasn't until we got into the car that my cousin broke the silence.

"Little princess, I hope you don't feel uncomfortable with what I'm about to say, but if Alexander was unfaithful to you with that woman, let me tell you he is truly blind, she can't even compare to you. Your beauty is incomparable. It's not that I let myself be carried away by appearances, but with her mere expression of arrogance and the way she spoke to you, she is a horrible person." Vincent showed his contempt for Rachel and far from bothering me, it made me laugh.

After all, Rachel and Alexander were made for each other.

My phone rang in my purse before I could say anything. It was an unknown number, but I still answered.

"Hello?"

Chapter 39 Uncomfortable moment.

## Chapter 65 - Divorced Heiress

I remained silent for a few seconds and my brow furrowed almost automatically. I looked at Vincent, who was already looking at me curiously.

The conversation with Vincent came to my mind and a chill ran through my body.

"How did he get my number?" I asked after a long silence where only my breathing could be heard.

"It doesn't matter. I'm calling to invite you to lunch, I would like to talk to you." He said. I could tell that he still had difficulty speaking clearly, but I could understand him perfectly.

I pondered for a moment if it was a good idea to accept his invitation, and although I had many doubts that I would like to clarify, we had nothing to talk about except my identity, but he gave me his word that he wouldn't say anything to anyone.

After suspecting that I made a mistake with Alex thirteen years ago, I preferred to keep even more distance.

"I don't think it's possible, I have many things to do. Maybe I'll accept your invitation another time, Mr. Lancaster." I said. When I mentioned his last name, Vincent gestured for me to retract my statement.

"Wait a moment."

I moved the phone away from my ear and covered it with my hand to hear what Vincent wanted to tell me, without Alexis being able to hear.

"Is it Alexis?" He asked in a whisper, and I nodded my head in response.

"Don't you want to find out? You should talk to him." He said, looking at me confused and incredulous.

He was one of those who preferred to keep my distance from the Lancasters and he was suggesting that I should talk to one of them.

"I don't want to know anything about it, what should we talk about? If it really was him, there's nothing I can do, it was just a chance encounter." I said. Vincent raised one of his thick eyebrows, as if he knew that I had questions inside that only Alexis or Alexander could answer.

"Aren't you curious about how he remembers you after being on the brink of death for so long?" That question stirred all the questions that were swirling in my head.

I turned my gaze away from Vincent and returned to the call with Alexis.

"Sorry for the wait, what time and where would it be?" I asked.

...

I felt a pressure in my chest and a bad taste in my mouth as I stepped back into the house where I lived for two years with Alexander. The memory of the last time I was in this place overwhelmed me completely and I had to take deep breaths to dissipate the uncomfortable feeling.

Why did I have to listen to Vincent?

Alexis couldn't leave the house due to his recovery, so he invited me to Alexander's house where he was being taken care of and evaluated by a medical team. Although I refused to even set foot in the house, I repeated to myself over and over again that it shouldn't affect me and even less when Alexis emphasized that Alexander wouldn't be home all afternoon, maybe he noticed my discomfort.

And now that I was here, it was inevitable to remember the time when I was the wife of the Lancaster family.

I took a deep breath one last time and entered the living room when Anna, the housekeeper, greeted me. She was surprised to see me, but I didn't pay attention.

"Mr. Alexis will be here in a moment, with permission." Anna said before going into the kitchen.

The house had some changes, the furniture was new, as well as the paintings and decorations, yet it looked the same as before, with no photos of our marriage, which relieved me.

"Hello, Sarah. Thank you for accepting to come here." Alexis appeared in his wheelchair and although he controlled it with a remote, a couple of nurses accompanied him.

Although he didn't have his elegant suit from last night, he still looked refined in his sportswear, his eyes met mine and then, I remembered the gaze of that boy I bumped into, who looked at me with caution and tenderness.

I dismissed any thoughts and stood up from the couch to extend my hand to him.

"Good afternoon, Mr. Lancaster." I said. His eyes landed on my hand and I thought he wouldn't shake it with his, but when I was about to lower it, his hand took mine and gave it a slight squeeze.

"And don't worry, I found some free time, after all, I owe you a favor."

With that, I was referring to the secret I was keeping, although if he didn't charge me the favor, it would be much better for me. I let go of his hand after a few seconds.

"You must be the woman who helped with Alexis' recovery. Nice to meet you, I'm Viviana, and this is Ofelia."

The voice of one of the nurses caught my attention and I couldn't help but look at them, confused and surprised.

Help with the recovery? That's totally false. I only saw him once, there's no way I helped him.

"Nice to meet you, I'm Sarah Petit. I think there's a misunderstanding, I did not help Mr. Lancaster." I clarified the situation before I got involved with Alexis once again.

"Viviana, Ofelia, please leave us alone. I'll call you if I need you, thank you." Alexis intervened before the nurses could say another word, and they immediately obeyed, leaving me alone with Alexis.

"You can have a seat, Ms. Petit."

"Thank you." I sat back down and he pulled his chair to the side of the individual couch, facing me with the coffee table in between us.

"Mr. Lancaster, I don't know why you need to talk to me, but if it's about my last name, I want you to know that..."

"Your secret is safe with me, Sarah. It's not about that that I want to talk to you. I've heard some things that happened while I was in a coma and I don't know where to begin. Actually, I do know. I want to apologize for my family's behavior. I'm not apologizing on their behalf, everyone is responsible for their actions and they will do as they please, but I feel, in some way, ashamed of how you've been treated by a family that prides itself on good manners, class, and power. If I hadn't had this accident that left me like this, believe me, Gina's education would have been different and I would have somehow taken care of my mother. I found out that you were married to Alexander for two years and I know what she did to make you get divorced. This is not the way you should have met my family."

He didn't stop speaking, despite how difficult it was for him. He said everything he thought about his own family.

I looked at Alexis as if he were from another world. He didn't seem like just another Lancaster. He had been absent for years, but that didn't stop him from now appearing more serious and mature than all the Lancaster members combined. I had no doubt that if things had happened differently, he would have been the head of the family after Mr. Lancaster's death.

Although he looked fragile, he also looked imposing and respectable. If he set his mind to it, he could make anyone tremble, as evidenced last night when he scolded Gina when she attacked me.

"Mr. Lancaster, I appreciate your intention, but you haven't done anything to me, I have nothing to apologize for. And it's no secret that I was married to Alexander for two years. Maybe it wasn't the best way to meet your family, but things have already happened and I want to turn the page. I don't want anything to do with them. I'm here for work, but I'll soon go back to Paris, and everything will go on as it has been since my divorce." I said, knowing that it wouldn't be as simple as I made it sound. Nothing would be the same once everyone met Sarah Doinel, especially when they found out that I had Alexander's child.

Alexis' gaze dimmed for a moment, and he fell into complete silence as if he were analyzing something. I couldn't guess what.

Chapter 39 Uncomfortable moment part 2

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"I want to ask you a question." He finally said, after a few seconds of uncomfortable silence.

"How did you end up married to Alexander?"

His question caught me off guard, and I shifted uncomfortably on the couch. I didn't want to talk about the past, especially if it had to do with Alexander.

"That's an irrelevant topic." I evaded, tapping my knee with my fingertips.

"I also want to ask you a question. How do you know who I am?" I asked, hoping he would reveal what I had been suspecting so far.

His lips curved into a faint smile that I couldn't decipher, but it made me feel nervous and anxious to know what was going through his mind.

"Don't you remember me?"

That question confirmed my suspicions. He didn't need to say more for me to know what he was talking about. I raised an eyebrow, waiting for him to tell me everything.

"Are you still running away from your bodyguard?" He asked, amused, and a shiver ran down my spine. Was it possible that I still had doubts after that?

I let out a graceless laugh under his amused and nostalgic gaze.

"Then, if it was you I bumped into that night." I replied without beating around the bush, feeling like a complete idiot for mistaking him for his twin.

"Whom else could it be?" He asked as he approached in his wheelchair, increasing my nerves.

"You thought it was Alexander, am I right?" He asked with a certain tone of disappointment, and I nodded my head, still feeling like a fool.

"How did you remember me?" I asked curiously, seeing his face up close. An authentic smile appeared on his face.

"From the moment you bumped into me, I couldn't get you out of my mind. Your name echoed in my head; I knew you were Leonardo Doinel's daughter, the one everyone talked about but no one knew where she was. I knew because I searched for you on social media, trying to find you, but I was made to get into that car, and when I woke up, it felt like only one night had passed. The memory of your face, your name, the memory of you came to my mind right away; I didn't remember anything else. That's why I remember you as if thirteen years hadn't passed, Sarah Doinel."

I remained paralyzed after hearing his words, which came out almost as a whisper, and I understood that he didn't want anyone in the house to hear him revealing something only he and I knew for the moment.

My heart sank at knowing that I saw him before it ended that way, and now I was thinking again about what I could have done to prevent him from getting into that car. If I had stayed a little longer to talk with him, everything would have been different. Maybe I wouldn't have fallen in love with his brother, or married him. I could have avoided so much that night.

"I... I don't know what to say." I admitted, feeling confused by the situation and feeling tears pricking at my eyes.

Alexis took one of my hands, and his warmth completely enveloped it. I didn't have the strength to pull away from his touch; I felt lost.

"It's in the past now; I'm still alive, which is the good thing. Why did you let my family treat you so badly? You don't deserve that." He said, clearly frustrated that every member of his family, without exception, had hurt me in some way.

"That doesn't matter, and it shouldn't matter to you either. That's in the past. I'm not the same Sarah who was married to Alexander. Now I don't mind taking revenge on anyone who dares to mess with me." I said, letting go of his grip that was starting to make me uncomfortable.

"And that's how it should have been from the beginning. I don't know how things turned out the way they did, but I imagine that your love for Alexander made you endure anything, and it's okay that it was your way of showing how much you loved him. But self-love must come above all else. You can't love someone without loving yourself first. Think about it, and maybe later on, you can set the course of history right, as it should have been from the start."

I stood up from the couch, feeling suddenly stifled by his sudden insinuation.

What did he mean?

Could he start a romantic relationship with his brother's ex-wife?

Had he gone crazy?

That was completely ridiculous and frowned upon. First of all, I would never be interested in my ex-husband's brother, let alone being identical twins, and second, I wouldn't allow my son to call his uncle "dad".

That was absurd.

Never again with a Lancaster, no matter how good they might seem.

Furthermore, I wasn't here for life lessons. I learned that by making more than one mistake from the moment I laid my eyes on Alexander. I didn't need a stranger to tell me what I already knew and what I was doing right now.

Loving myself and the most important person in my life, Tristan.

His nephew.

"Mr. Lancaster, I think you're confusing things. I don't intend to be part of your family again; that encounter was just that, an encounter. There's no way to even imagine being with you, maybe that's what destiny wanted. I'm sorry, but I have to go. I won't be able to have lunch with you. Goodbye."

I took my purse and walked towards the exit, but his question stopped me.

"Do you still feel something for him? Is that why?"

I let out a bitter laugh before turning towards him.

"The only thing I can feel for him is pity. His whole life has been nothing but a puppet of his mother and sister, not to mention the woman he threw two years of marriage away for." I paused to take a breath.

"I have solid reasons that everyone will soon know."

"What reasons? What will everyone know?"

I heard his voice behind me and immediately tensed up.

I couldn't believe I had such bad luck in life. Alexander had to come at this moment.

I barely glanced at him before looking back at Alexis, I wasn't going to stay to answer him, I wasn't even talking to him.

"Excuse me, Mr. Alexis, have a nice day."

Chapter 40 Us.

## Chapter 67 - Divorced Heiress

I couldn't stand Alexander's presence for even a second, especially not in what once was our home.

I didn't expect any response from Alexis and continued on my way towards the exit where Vincent was waiting for me in the van, who offered to stay in case any irregularities arose, and this was one.

I walked past Alexander, ignoring him as if he wasn't just a few meters away, and hurriedly descended the stairs. Just as I reached the last step, I heard footsteps behind me and stopped before colliding with Alexander, who stood in my way.

"Sarah, let's talk, please." He said. I looked at him with a frown, my face devoid of any humor.

It was unbelievable how identical he was to his twin; I would think I was talking to Alexis if it weren't for the different color of his eyes.

"Mr. Lancaster, I don't have much time. My assistant has already received your proposal, and we will discuss it in a board meeting. Tomorrow we will announce the chosen brand for collaboration. If there's nothing else to discuss, I'm leaving."

I passed by his side again, but before I could go any further, he grabbed my arm, stopping me completely. I looked at his hand holding me firmly; the contact of his skin against mine burned like hell and I couldn't stand that sensation.

"That's not the way to treat a lady, you're hurting me."

I forcefully pulled myself out of his grip, and his honey-colored eyes inspected my entire face.

"I don't want to talk about the collaboration or work matters. I want to talk about you and me." He said. My eyebrows raised and I couldn't help but let out a laugh filled with amusement.

Was he kidding me?

"What? There's nothing to talk about. Remember that we're divorced? What wasn't discussed during the marriage doesn't matter to me now." I said calmly, still with a hint of amusement on my face.

He really made me laugh this time.

"So, after the divorce, you can tell me that my family humiliated you all the time, and I can't say anything. That doesn't seem fair to me." He said with a cold and harsh voice, as if he was bothered by the fact that I didn't want to engage in a conversation with him.

What did he want?

To talk about something he himself ruined?

It was a waste of time.

"Mr. Lancaster, you asked me that on your own account. I didn't even give you a direct answer; I just let you figure it out for yourself. If you have nothing else to say, I'd prefer to leave." I responded calmly, adjusting my purse on my forearm before walking towards the exit, leaving Alexander with his words hanging.

I walked, feeling heat spreading throughout my body. Encounters with Alexander put me in a bad mood almost immediately; I couldn't help but feel disgusted just by looking at his shameless face.

I screamed when I felt his hands lifting me and carrying me over his shoulder like a sack of potatoes. He walked towards the backyard without the need to enter the house.

"Alexander! Put me down this instant! I'm going to call the police! Damn it! This is a kidnapping!" I screamed at the top of my lungs, hoping that Vincent could hear me and come to my rescue, but we were too far away. I only held onto the hope that Alexis could intervene for me.

"You entered my house of your own accord, so it doesn't count as a kidnapping." He said. I let out a frustrated scream, thinking he would take me to his tennis court or throw me into the pool, but he didn't.

He set me down on the floor of the outdoor lounge on the other side of the pool, and without waiting, I slapped him, turning his head to the side.

"Who do you think you are? Have you gone crazy?"

He turned his face towards me, touching his cheek with his long fingers. He menacingly approached me, and I immediately pushed him by the shoulders.

This imbecile was bringing out my aggressive side, and I wouldn't take responsibility for anything.

"So you knew my brother for years." He said, approaching again as if I hadn't pushed him with all my might.

"What does it matter to you? It's not your damn problem."

I pushed him again and took advantage of the space I had to walk back, but Alexander surprised me by pushing me against the wall. I groaned when my back hit the cold wall and looked at him with daggers in my eyes because of the proximity of his body. He had me cornered with his arms, stirring up my desire to rip his head off his stupid body.

"What's your problem? You want to talk? Okay, let's talk, but stay away from me." I pushed him again and escaped from his repulsive closeness.

"You have five minutes."

"Why didn't you tell me that you knew my brother?" He asked from his place, while I kept myself as far away from him as possible.

I let out a humorless laugh. "How was I supposed to know he was your brother if you never mentioned him?" I replied sharply, thinking about how absurd this "conversation" was becoming.

"What does that have to do with anything? It was just a chance encounter."

"It is very important because, in some way, you are the reason why his recovery has evolved in an impressive way." He said with annoyance in his voice. Then I remembered the pair of nurses who hinted that I was helping Alexis recover.

"I have nothing to do with Alexis or the Lancaster family. In any case, what happened for it to end up like that?"

I took the opportunity to ask what intrigued me and could see Alexander's body tense up. He swallowed hard, causing his Adam's apple to move up and down.

He was nervous, I knew him well during the years we were together. Did he have something to do with his accident? I looked at him with narrowed eyes, and he avoided my gaze for a few seconds.

"That's what I wanted to talk to you about when I went to Paris." He suddenly said, and then I knew that, indeed, Alexander had something to do with the accident.

I averted my gaze to the pool before speaking.

"And you waited twelve years to tell me? You didn't trust your wife enough to even mention that you have a brother?" I asked disgusted, with a bad taste in my mouth at the mention of his wife.

"It's not that simple, Sarah. I admit that I should have told you from the beginning, but I did something wrong, and I have lived with guilt for many years. Maybe I wouldn't have made so many mistakes if I had confessed it to you, maybe we..."

"Enough. It's enough. I don't want to know anything related to the great Lancaster family." I interrupted before he veered off into a topic that I had no intention of touching.

"Us? There's no 'us' anymore. That died the moment you failed our marriage. There is no 'us' and there never will be."

"Sarah, I just wanted to clarify about Rachel. Things were not as you imagine."

I raised my hand to make him stop talking as soon as I heard that woman's name. Talking about that was unpleasant, I didn't want to remember the scene that destroyed me.

"Alexander, I know what I saw. There's nothing to clarify. Regardless, you were unfaithful to me, and there's no justification or excuse. I think there's something you haven't understood. We're divorced, and I don't care to know anything related to you. You don't owe me explanations, and I don't want to hear them. Why keep looking at the past?" I asked indifferently, letting out a tired sigh before walking back towards the exit of the room.

"The five minutes are up."

This time he didn't stop me as abruptly as he did before, but he did stop me with a question that left me motionless.

"What is it that everyone will soon know?"

I shivered at the sound of his icy voice and closed my eyes, thinking of Tristan. It was best for him to meet his father. My dad was right, I couldn't deny Alexander the right to know his son,

and if he didn't want to, that would be a separate issue. I turned just a little to look at him disdainfully.

"You'll find out on the day we present the brand that will collaborate with Doinel. It'll be a big surprise." I said, feeling my muscles tense. His mouth opened to say something else, but I kept walking, leaving him alone with his troubled gaze.

Chapter 41 Bad man

## Chapter 68 - Divorced Heiress

My father gathered us to make a decision about the best proposal for collaboration.

Before the meeting, I had spent the afternoon with Tristan, thinking about the moment I would introduce him to his father. It was impossible not to feel nervous, but there was no turning back anymore. Alexander needed to know about his existence.

Maga took him for a walk with the chauffeur, while the meeting was taking place, so I tried to focus solely on work.

Before starting the video conference with the rest of the board, my father wanted to say a few words about the first day of Fashion Week.

"As you have noticed, there is a lot of potential in terms of designs, many brands have innovated. However, some stand out on the list of proposals. Before we begin, I would like to address Ms. Boyer." My father said from his seat, and my gaze traveled to Michelle, who was sitting in front of me. If it weren't for the attention my dad was about to give her, she wouldn't even be here.

"Sir, if it's about last night, I..."

"Ms. Boyer, let me speak." My father interrupted her, and Michelle tensed in her seat, with her eyes fixed on the boss.

"I want to remind you that you are here to take care of the contracts. What you did last night is a job that only Vice President Sarah is responsible for. We set a deadline to receive proposals from brands, and at no time did the LC company show interest in the project until you intervened. Not only does it make us look desperate, but you are also taking away the opportunity from another brand with potential and little recognition in the fashion world, who wants to grow. That was our main goal. Tell me, isn't Lancaster Collection well-known enough?"

My father's cold aura could intimidate anyone, and Michelle was no exception. Her face turned as white as paper. With my father's words, it seemed like she didn't know where to hide in embarrassment.

"Mr. Doinel, my intention was to find better options. LC is a solid company. I thought a collaboration with them would be very beneficial for Doinel. The innovation and quality of their designs far surpass any other brand. Please don't misunderstand my intentions. I thought about what would be more viable and had a small margin of risk for the company." Michelle said, although she was right about the advantages that a collaboration with Lancaster Collection would bring us, I knew very well that it wasn't the real reason she insisted on that company to present their proposal.

"I will accept whatever decision you make. I suppose you have decided to fire me."

Her wavering gaze stopped at me. She was blaming me with her eyes, as if I were really capable of doing something like that. And even though I had the desire, I wouldn't let myself be swayed by her bad intentions. I wasn't like her.

She just wanted to contradict me. She had always been resentful for taking away the position she considered hers. She couldn't stand that a "newcomer" occupied the seat she had dreamt of.

In some way, she wanted to make me feel uncomfortable in the company, maybe so I would give up my position. She tried years ago, spreading rumors about my failed marriage and an alleged infidelity on my part, with Tristan being the result of that affair.

"I am well aware of that, Ms. Boyer. I believe you haven't understood my point. Our intention was always to collaborate with a new brand and help them become known. And you assume wrong. I won't take action in this matter because Ms. Petit asked me not to. I hope this serves as a warning to you. Simply focus on doing your job. You won't achieve anything by doing Sarah's job." My father said.

Michelle seemed overwhelmed with anger. It was evident how tense her jaw was.

For a moment, I felt a small satisfaction from her scolding, but I quickly dismissed it. I didn't want them to think I was getting my way, because I wasn't. She just needed a wake-up call to stop meddling where she wasn't welcome. There wouldn't be a third chance.

"I apologize, Mr. Doinel. It won't happen again." She apologized, although it didn't seem very sincere. Either way, it was already her second warning, and there wouldn't be a third opportunity.

The video conference began, and soon I started presenting the proposals with the help of Jack and Abby. We all agreed on two brands with great potential, and most of them were interested in the LC.

I couldn't help but feel annoyed, but I didn't oppose it at any moment because the last thing I wanted was to mix my work with personal matters. With a bit of luck, they would discard the idea of working with a well-known company that left the other brands behind.

Although the main idea of the collaboration was to work with a new brand, opinions were divided fifty-fifty, we couldn't decide between Innova and Lancaster Collection, on one hand it was just what my father wanted and on the other hand it was almost a perfect proposal.

Then, Paul and Abby's father proposed an idea that was supported by the majority, even my father thought it was a good proposal.

"Since we've made a decision, tomorrow we'll announce it and execute the contract signing." I stayed silent, while thinking about the bad luck I've had lately.

Of course, I was the first to disagree, but Mr. Dubois' proposal was approved by majority vote.

At the end of the meeting, everyone left my father's office, but as I was about to leave, my father called me.

"Sarah, stay for a moment." My father said, leaving some documents on his desk. I sat back down and looked at him without enthusiasm.

"I know this decision is not the most comfortable for you, but you know that this will be a very important project."

"That's fine, Dad, I understand and accept it even if I don't agree, I'm separating personal from professional, otherwise it wouldn't be very professional on my part. I'll do my best to keep the peace." I resignedly said, and my father nodded with a smile.

"I wouldn't expect anything less from you, you can relax. The project will be in Paris, so his presence is not necessary. A representative from his company is enough. "

I nodded my head.

"Of course, the CEO couldn't neglect his work in his own company. A representative was more than sufficient. On the other hand, I wanted to talk about something that has been bothering me a little, the rumors on social media about Sarah Petit and her love affairs."

I sighed with frustration, remembering the new slanders, I was sure Amelia was behind this.

"I know, Mrs. Lancaster could have a lot to do with this. I didn't want to tell you, but a journalist has been following me since this morning, with Vincent's help I managed to lose him." I informed him calmly.

"Why didn't you tell me earlier? Now I understand where they got such an absurd article." He said, while searching something on his computer and showed it to me, I was greatly surprised to see the amount of slander, but I could only burst into laughter.

"Leonardo Doinel, Sarah Petit's sugar daddy."

Next to the headline was the image of both of us hugging in the café this morning after our father-daughter talk.

"Sarah Petit and Vincent Lefevbre, caught red-Handed. The new conquest of the eligible bachelor?"

And as I suspected, they photographed me at the entrance of the hotel hugging Vincent.

"I must admit they've outdone themselves." I said amusedly while taking a look at the rest of the news where I was involved with my father and my cousin, I had achieved my goal.

In less than a day, my name became a trending topic and the internet users' comments were not pleasant at all.

"First with Paul, now with Mr. Doinel and his nephew Vincent, how shameless!"

"Now I understand her sudden entrance into Doinel."

"X: A divorce can't change you that much. 'Sarah after the divorce'."

"She dodged a bullet with Alexander."

"It wasn't enough with one, now there are three! And not to mention her ex-brother-in-law, who knows how many more."

I stopped reading the countless comments from the naive ones who believed everything they saw on social media. If they were told that cows can fly, they'd believe it immediately.

"Sarah, I'll use my contacts to find the person responsible for this and give them a lesson, I'll do the impossible to have all these absurdities about you removed." He said, closing the tab of the gossip page, and I shook my head.

"Dad, let them keep talking, they'll regret spreading false rumors about me on the day of my presentation." I said unconcerned, and my father didn't seem very convinced.

"Don't worry, father, I know what I'm doing, I have an ace up my sleeve."

Although I couldn't convince him completely, he nodded his head and let me go.

I wasn't too worried because I hired a journalist to find information about the person who paid the paparazzi to follow me, and even though I already knew who it was, I wanted evidence for the day of my presentation, that woman didn't know what awaited her.

Chapter 42 Nobody is going to ruin our night.

## Chapter 69 - Divorced Heiress

Maga arrived home with Tristan an hour before I went to the runway tonight, my heart sank when I saw my son with red cheeks and teary eyes, a clear sign that he had been crying.

"What happened? Maga, what happened to Tristan?" I asked worriedly, while running to hug my son, as his lower lip curved into a sad pout.

I checked him from head to toe looking for anything, but I found nothing.

"Nothing happened to him, little Sarah, it's just that I bought him an ice cream and a man bumped into him. He didn't get to taste it. The man was completely rude. He didn't apologize. He just gave Tristan an angry look because he dirtied his pants, and Tristan got scared."

I looked at my son, who had a sad and frightened look, I pursed my lips repressing the anger that was bubbling in my system.

"Who does that man think he is? Maga, do you know who it was?" I hugged Tristan again, who was still affected.

He wasn't used to that kind of treatment, he grew up in an environment full of love where smiles were never lacking, of course he would be scared by a bad look.

"The man is mean, mom." My son whimpered and I left many kisses on his head.

"I have no idea, but he must be someone important, he was well dressed and had a couple of bodyguards."

Although I wanted to find that man to confront him and teach him a lesson, it was almost impossible.

I couldn't find the person responsible for my son's tears, just knowing that he was well dressed and had a couple of bodyguards.

"Don't worry, okay? Forget about that mean man, tomorrow we will get another ice cream."

His hair waved as he nodded his head and I lifted him in my arms to give him maternal warmth.

"Yes, mom."

My phone rang just as Maga was about to speak and I apologized before answering, it was an unknown number.

"Hello?" I spoke with Tristan still in my arms.

"Sarah, I just want to ask you a question and answer me truthfully."

I recognized Alexander's voice immediately, he sounded upset and I started to imagine him walking back and forth while he talked. I furrowed my brow in confusion, not knowing what the hell he was talking about, or why he was so agitated. How did the Lancasters get my personal number? I rolled my eyes and patiently waited for him to speak.

"Do you have a child?"

My hand trembled for a moment and I almost dropped the cellphone to the ground. I felt the cold running through my body and goosebumps forming on my skin as it passed by, the turmoil in my stomach almost made me throw up everything I ate that day.

I looked at Tristan, still in my arm, his head resting on my shoulder and it seemed like he was about to fall asleep.

I opened my mouth to respond, but the words stayed in my throat, I found it almost impossible to utter a single word.

"Sarah, I know you're there, I can hear your breathing. Answer, do you have a son?"

Hearing his voice turn icy and desperate, I snapped out of my reverie and approached Maga so she could hold Tristan for a moment.

How did he know?

This was not the way he was supposed to find out, not from someone else other than me, it was a subject that only concerned me.

"Where did you get that from, Mr. Lancaster?" I asked without answering his question, because first, I wanted to know how the hell he found out.

Very few people knew about it, my friends, my family, and the company's staff, but the latter had signed a confidentiality agreement, so they were not allowed to mention anything related to Tristan.

I walked to the balcony, moving away from Maga and my son. The wind hit my body, but I couldn't even feel a bit of cold. My pulse increased greatly and my breathing was heavy.

"Should I take that as a yes?" He asked impatiently and I closed my eyes frustrated because this was going to turn into a question war without answers.

I bit my lower lip hard and tried to calm down or I would end up saying any craziness.

"Mr. Lancaster, I won't give you an answer unless you tell me where you got such information from." I was surprised to hear my calm and serene voice when inside I was dying of nerves and anger at the same time.

I heard a loud noise on the other end of the line, as if he had thrown something to the floor and he let out a long sigh that made my hair stand on end.

"I promised not to disclose the name of the person who told me this, but I will tell you only because I want to hear your answer, in your own voice."

I swallowed hard, while my hands continued to tremble as if I was freezing to death, but my cheeks were burning like hell.

"Michelle Boyer."

My eyes widened significantly and the rage in me increased.

That woman!

That stupid woman dared to keep sticking her nose in my affairs!

She just signed her death warrant, not only did she end with the little patience and tolerance I had left, but she also violated the confidentiality agreement, this would bring her problems with my father and most likely she would be fired directly.

"Yes, Boyer. Is it true or not? Tell me, do you have a son?"

I looked at the dark sky, wondering why nothing could go as planned.

"Sarah..."

"Yes, I have a son." I responded calmly upon hearing his warning tone.

Silence fell and I could hear the beating of my heart almost shooting out of my chest, my legs shook with nerves and panic that ran through me. It was almost impossible for me to breathe normally because of the stab I felt in my chest.

I rubbed my fingers on my forehead, a headache threatening to appear, that would be the icing on the cake.

"Incredible." He murmured before letting out a humorless laugh, as if he found it hard to believe.

"Is it Paul's or Vincent's? Because you have so many affairs that it's impossible to know whose it is."

I raised my eyebrows surprised by what he just insinuated.

Who did he think I was?

I wanted to hang up the phone and keep hiding that he was his son, but I took a deep breath calming my impulses and thinking that it was time for him to know.

A few more days, a few less, he was going to find out anyway.

"Alexander." I said his name, feeling really annoyed, took a breath and repeated to myself a thousand times that I should continue to be civil with him.

"Do you think that if any of them were the father, I would be answering your sudden questions or still maintaining this unexpected call? I shouldn't be telling you about my private life after the divorce, nevertheless, here I am answering you." I said, completely serious, thinking about how difficult it was for me to directly tell him that he was the father of my son.

In fact, saying it over the phone wasn't the most appropriate.

"What do you mean by that? Sarah, be more direct, I'm not in the mood for your roundabout ways." He said, a slow realization that the anger was not allowing him to analyze my words, his bad mood was still noticeable on the other side of the line, with his tone of voice and heavy breathing, I could tell he was angry, as if it affected him too much that I had a child with another man.

That shouldn't matter to him at all. After all, he exchanged me for another woman, didn't he want to be free? On what grounds did he claim me? Was he forgetting that we were happily divorced?

"I don't think it's appropriate to discuss this issue over the phone. How about..." I was about to invite him to my house tomorrow so he could meet Tristan, today wouldn't be possible because we were in a hurry for the fashion show. However, he interrupted what I was about to say, blinded by anger.

"Is it so hard for you to say who the father is? Don't you know?"

I remained silent for a few seconds, about to lose the little patience I had left because of how annoyed and irrational Alexander was becoming.

"Does it matter so much to him what I do or don't do, who I go with or who I don't? If you're so interested in knowing, just wait until I introduce him on the last day of Fashion Week. Goodbye." I ended the call, feeling my heart pounding.

I took a deep breath, regaining composure.

Okay, Alexander now knew about the existence of my son, now the issue was to tell him that he was the father and he probably wouldn't believe me. But if he still had doubts after seeing the strong resemblance with him, I could make any test, and I would accept it.

Chapter 42 Nobody is going to ruin our night part 2

## Chapter 70 - Divorced Heiress

My phone rang again, it was him again. I ignored the call and went back to the room where Maga was undressing Tristan to give him a bath.

Once again, the phone rang and I had no choice but to turn it off. I didn't want to talk about my son anymore when he indirectly accused me of being an easy woman.

He didn't want to listen to me when I was about to propose that he come, earlier than planned, now I was going to resume my plans and he had to wait.

At tonight's fashion show, Abby couldn't stop mocking the latest rumors involving me and my own family. Paul didn't seem very pleased with the new wave of attacks, but I reassured him by telling him what I had planned and how much I was going to enjoy seeing the humiliation on Amelia's face.

"Will the vice president have the rest of the night available?" Paul asked next to me, when Abby got distracted with Vincent.

I looked at him, embarrassed for ruining the first date, but tonight there was nothing that would prevent our date.

"Tonight is completely available for our first date, don't think I forgot." I replied, giving him a complicit look, and he smiled immediately.

"I won't let you escape tonight." He whispered in my ear and held my hand, intertwining our fingers on his thigh, far from making me uncomfortable. I liked his warm touch.

The show started and I put an end to the subject.

I glanced at Michelle, who was sitting at a considerable distance. I couldn't help but smile with satisfaction.

Before coming, I had told my father absolutely everything and he allowed her to attend the fashion show tonight since it would be her last night in New York because tomorrow, after signing the collaboration contract, I was going to ask for her immediate resignation.

That wouldn't have happened if she had stayed out and away from matters that were not her business. I fixed my gaze on the designs of tonight that looked better than others, thus confirming the decision of the board of directors. Nothing and no one distracted me until the catwalk came to an end.

Tonight I was going to skip any other event to spend it with Paul, who had been so patient with me.

Before leaving, I greeted some representatives from the brands of tonight and said goodbye to my parents and friends, leaving Jack in charge of any unforeseen events.

I walked arm in arm with Paul towards the exit, while asking him about the place he was going to take me to, but he insisted it was a surprise and that telling me would ruin it.

A body stood in our way and the smile vanished from my face when I realized it was Alexander.

Just what I needed.

"Ms. Petit, it seems we have a pending conversation." His cold aura sent shivers down my spine, his cold and indifferent gaze traveled from Paul to me and it was impossible for my hands not to tremble as I remembered our conversation on the phone.

"Good evening, Mr. Lancaster, I think you have forgotten your manners." Paul spoke before I could say a word. I clung to his arm as if it were the only thing that could keep me stable in the presence of Alexander.

"Excuse me, Mr. Dubois, but I am not talking to you, can you leave? I need to talk to the lady."

I slightly tightened my grip on Paul's arm and threw him a look as I slowly shook my head.

"Sorry, but I'm not going to separate from Sarah, whatever you have to say to her, you can say in front of me." Paul stood rigidly by my side, ready to defend me from that idiot who thought he was in charge, but I didn't want him to get too involved.

"Paul is not going anywhere, I think everything is clear, I have nothing to talk to you about." I calmly responded, undisturbed by his presence.

He raised an eyebrow, glaring at Paul as if his presence was the most annoying thing to him.

"Oh, I see. So it's him." He said without taking his eyes off the brunette. Paul looked at me confused and I could decipher his gaze.

He realized that Alexander knew about the existence of my child, but that was all the information they gave him.

"What are you talking about?" Paul asked me, just for me to hear.

I was tired of Alexander, he was acting as if I owed him something, as if it was very important for him to know about my life, or as if he was still my husband when that ended years ago. What I did or who I did it with was my problem.

Besides, this was not the right place to discuss something as important as my child.

"Mr. Lancaster, do I owe you explanations about my life? Let me remind you that we are divorced, I can do whatever I want with my life." I said firmly and noticed how his muscles tensed, I smiled before saying.

"After all, I have so many lovers that no one knows who it could be."

He looked at me with narrowed eyes and his face turned red with anger.

I didn't want to waste another precious minute and resumed my path with Paul, who seemed upset by the situation and for good reason.

"What's going on, Sari?" Paul asked once we were inside the car and away from anyone who could hear us.

I felt bad for the uncomfortable moment he had to go through because of me.

"I'll tell you later, Paul, you have nothing to worry about. Nobody is going to ruin our night."

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I didn't remember the last time I had a date, it happened so few times that those moments no longer existed in my memory.

Definitely, Paul outdid himself tonight.

He had booked a dinner cruise in New York, with a view of the Statue of Liberty. The view was incredible, the atmosphere luxurious, and the attention worthy of a first date. I couldn't expect anything less from Paul.

After dinner, we toasted with champagne for the first time that I finally went out with him after so many years of insisting. He pretended to be hurt by the countless times he was rejected by me

since I returned home, but quickly changed his dramatic expression to a genuine smile that told me in a thousand languages how happy he was in my company.

I couldn't help but laugh at his antics before taking the first sip of champagne.

Silence reigned for a few seconds, but it wasn't an uncomfortable one, rather a moment in which we disconnected from the outside world to fully enjoy the view, the champagne, and the pleasant company.

The truth was, I finally felt relaxed and without any worries, being accompanied by him. I didn't think about anything else but how well I was having and how much I needed an escape from everything and everyone.

I hadn't realized how much I needed it.

But as not everything in life was perfect...