

Chapter 101 - Divorced Heiress

Alexander didn't say anything else, but he looked at me as if I had told him the best joke of his life and he started to rub the wound on his lip that had already stopped bleeding, exposing the mark of a bite and his red and swollen lip.

As soon as he parked the car at the entrance of the house and I opened the door to finally get out, Alexander's hand closed the door again without giving me a chance to step outside. I looked at him feeling irritated, and he spoke.

-No matter what you say, I will continue to insist on earning your forgiveness. All I long for in this moment is to be with Tristan and you as a family. It's okay for you to distrust me, but things have changed and I have learned from my mistakes. I haven't stopped loving you, I even love you more now for being the mother of my child. If you give me a chance to prove it to you, I...-

-You said it yourself, things have changed.- I interrupted him before he continued daydreaming, and I paused as I remembered that I had thought of a way to get back at him. That way, I could feel satisfied and more at peace. I cleared my throat, shifted in my seat, tucked a strand of hair behind my ear, and opened my mouth to speak. -I will give you one chance, but don't think that means I'm going back to you.-

I spoke as seriously as possible, and Alexander's face immediately lit up. It seemed as if he had forgotten the pain in his lip, and a smile from ear to ear appeared on his face as if he had received the best news of his life. I glanced at his smile for a few seconds, and before he could say anything, I opened the car door again to get out immediately. My heels resonated as I walked carelessly towards the entrance of the house, leaving behind the man who was left speechless. However, before I could reach the door, I felt a hand on my arm that made me stop in my tracks.

-After we settle into the Doinel company and start the project, we will have a date and talk about our situation.- He said, close to my face, causing an unpleasant chill down my spine. I forced a half-hearted smile before breaking free from his grip and continuing my walk as far away from him as possible.

-Mr. Lancaster, they are waiting for us.- I said as I resumed my path to the house. I heard Alexander's steps behind me, and I kept a serious expression when I reached the living room where everyone was waiting to toast. Only Alexander and I were missing.

Silence filled the room when they saw us arrive, and all eyes were on us. I went to my parents to embrace them with a smile on my face. When my mother let go of me, she looked at Alexander kindly, and her eyes widened without any disguise before looking at me with questioning eyes.

When I looked at him, I knew he was looking at the wound on his lip, the one he obviously didn't have the last time she saw him at the press conference.

-Welcome to Villa Doinel, Mr. Lancaster and Mr. Ferrer.- My father greeted him, overlooking the detail that my mother discovered and probably already suspected the reason behind it. All I could do was ignore her accusing gaze and take the glass that the staff offered us.

-Let's toast to the project, because we are off to a good start, and because the press conference was a success. The three of you handled the situation like the professionals you are, and I couldn't be prouder. There is no doubt that we made a good choice with our collaborators. Cheers.-

I smiled as I clinked my glass and took just a small sip of the exquisite and high-quality drink. It wouldn't be a bad idea to have up to three glasses of it, I needed it. But I had to see Tristan after the toast, it wouldn't be very responsible of me otherwise. Vincent arrived by my side with his drink in hand and leaned his head close enough to my ear to whisper, without anyone hearing.

-I hadn't seen the wound on Alexander's lip before, I find it a bit suspicious.- Vincent murmured. I almost choked on my drink and discreetly looked at Alexander, noticing that his injury was even more noticeable than I thought. -I could think he got a good punch, but it's obvious he has teeth marks.-

I looked at Vincent with narrowed eyes and let out a tired sigh. If my mother and Vincent had noticed, it meant that others had too.

-Don't be silly, the car stopped suddenly and he hurt himself with his own teeth.- I quickly improvised, but Vincent didn't believe me, especially considering what happened next.

Cristina, Alexander's assistant, noticed his injured lip and covered her mouth in surprise before speaking.

-Mr. Lancaster, what happened to your lip? Are you hurt? Are you okay?- Cristina asked with concern. After Cristina spoke, anyone who hadn't noticed that detail before now knew, all eyes were on Alexander's face and he glanced at me for a few seconds before responding seriously.

-It's nothing, Cristina. I hurt myself while eating an apple.- He replied with such confidence that if I didn't know the truth, I would have believed him. He deserves the award for the liar of the year.

My lips tightened as I thought about what he was referring to. I was that apple he was eating.

After he finished giving his explanation, Vincent whispered in my ear again.

-A sudden stop, an apple. Poor thing, you bit him really hard.- Vincent said sarcastically, and I glared at him. There was no point in lying to him anymore, he already knew.

-He deserved it.- I replied, shrugging and downplaying it.

-You enjoyed it, and I'm not talking about the bite.- He said teasingly, and I furrowed my brow in annoyance.

-No.- I quickly changed the subject. It wasn't a topic I was proud of. In fact, just remembering it made me angrier with that idiot with honey-colored eyes. He had no idea what awaited him. -Did what you were waiting for arrive?- I asked in a low voice, referring to the investigator. I couldn't say it clearly because the Dubois family was present, acting like innocent doves, toasting and talking with everyone with feigned joy. Except Abby, who looked at me listlessly and sighed before looking away.

-Oh no.- Vincent replied in the same tone as me. -He's waiting in your father's office. I had him come in through the back door, I wanted you to come before attending to him. It seems he has very useful information.- Vincent understood everything and interrupted the conversation that was taking place.

-I apologize, Sarah and I have a matter to resolve, you all continue without us. We'll be right back.- Vincent announced to everyone. I smiled apologetically and left with Vincent as he put his hand on my waist to guide me along the way. Just as we were about to disappear down the hallway, I heard a loud snort. Without needing to turn around, I knew it was Abby.

Chapter 67 Playing with fire.

Chapter 102 - Divorced Heiress

A tall man in a black suit was waiting seated in my father's office. Vincent let me sit in the comfortable chair while he stood by my side. Quickly, they exchanged a few words about the investigation and Vincent handed him an envelope with the information he had gathered so far.

I rested my elbows on the desk, and my eyes automatically went to Vincent's busy hands, resisting the curiosity to look inside.

-In the envelope I just handed over, you will find the evidence of what I will explain next.- Said the investigator, settling into his seat. Vincent opened the envelope and placed the sheets with the evidence on the desk for both of us to take a look.

-Paul has been working abroad for years and returned to Paris on his mother's orders over three years ago. Since then, he has taken on the responsibility of the family in the Doinel company. However, I have found payment receipts in Rachel Duncan's name from four years ago until now. If you add up all the receipts, it amounts to a substantial sum, more than enough to live a life of luxury. You will also find call records relating to Mrs. Duncan. She has a certain

relationship with the Richman lawyers, who have been the Dubois family's lawyers since Paul returned and are the lawyers handling the case of the lady in question. Of course, Paul is paying for their services. I have uncovered some information that could be useful. The Richman couple's law firm was established thanks to Mrs. Dubois. At the moment, the investigation into Mrs. Dubois is ongoing, and it seems she is colluding with Paul. Based on my experience as a private investigator, I would dare say she has been giving him instructions, but I can't confirm anything until I have the next report in my hands.-

I examined each piece of evidence more closely, absorbing the investigator's explanation. Suddenly, my head started to ache, and my breath became irregular.

I still held on to the slightest hope that Paul wasn't involved in any way with Rachel, the lawyers, or me. But these documents were clear; I had the evidence in my hands, and they shattered what little hope I had left.

So, it was possible that his mother is the mastermind and the main responsible for all this mess.

I swallowed hard, trying to get rid of the bad taste in my mouth that all of this was leaving me, and dared to ask, -What do you know about Mr. Dubois and his daughter, Abby Dubois? Have you discovered anything? Do they know what the lady and her son are doing? Are they also involved?-

My voice trembled, as my heart told me Abby couldn't be so cruel as to do something against me. I wanted to believe that was the case; she was like a sister to me.

I looked expectantly at the man, feeling like my heart was about to burst out of my chest.

-As for Mr. Dubois, all I can say for now is that there have been unusual movements in his bank accounts in recent days. The income is higher than usual, but most of these funds have been transferred to foreign accounts in Mrs. Dubois' name.- I was astonished to hear that information, and a bad feeling settled in my chest. I looked at Vincent, and from the concern on his face, I knew he was thinking the same thing as me. Even though it had nothing to do with Paul, it was very suspicious.

-As for Abby Dubois, there isn't much to say. I haven't found anything related to the main issue or anything that could affect you or the company. It's likely that there is nothing about her that you should be worried about, although she is a bit... unconventional?-

A sigh of relief escaped my lips, and I could breathe normally again. That was my friend; I felt like a weight had been lifted off my shoulders, even though this whole affair worried me.

Was it possible that Mr. Dubois was embezzling from us? Did he leave us in charge for a while, while the executives were away, only to steal from the company he was a partner of?

We thanked the investigator for his service and efficiency. After concluding the conversation, we accompanied him through the back exit where no one could see him, much less the Dubois

family. Vincent and I stayed in the kitchen feeling bewildered by the information we had just received. He poured me a glass of water, which I didn't know I needed until now.

I had no intention of saying a single word, in fact, I didn't even know what to say. This was more than I had imagined. What did we do to the Dubois to deserve this?

-Princess, don't overthink it.- Vincent approached me and wrapped his arms around me, giving me a comforting hug. -We knew we would find out something like this, don't worry, I'll take care of you like the little princess you are. I'll handle the irregularities in the company, you know you can count on me for anything, right? You're not alone in this.- I laughed against his chest, feeling more encouraged than a moment ago.

-Thank you, really.- I broke our embrace and gave him a genuine smile. -I'm going to rest with Tristan, excuse me from all the guests, I don't feel like sharing the same space with that family. It's been a long day. The last thing I'm going to ask you is to perform an audit on the company without anyone knowing, I want to see how many irregularities Mr. Dubois left us with.- Vincent nodded and kissed my forehead before letting go of me completely and letting me go.

-I also thought about the audit. Now go rest, tomorrow I want to see you with a smile and a fully charged battery. You're Sarah Doinel, you don't have superpowers because you don't want to.- He encouraged me even more, and I rolled my eyes playfully, exaggerating everything.

This day ended up being a complete disaster. Being alone, I would think better about what I would do from now on. I wouldn't let Paul and his mother get away with it, and now that I think about it, I could kill two birds with one stone.

I'd get close to Alexander and pretend that his proximity was stirring something in me. That way, I would make them tremble, and Alexander would get what he deserves. After all, what they did with Rachel's help was intended to ruin my marriage. I wanted to see their faces when they realize their methods were a total failure.

They were playing with fire, and they were get burned.

Chapter 68 Good memory.

Chapter 103 - Divorced Heiress

I arrived at the company in my Rolls Royce, everything looked just as I remembered it and I felt so good to be back at work, the only place where I could keep my mind clear. As I entered my office, I found a arrangement of red roses on my desk. I picked them up in my fist and walked back to Jack's desk.

-Who left this here?- I asked him, showing him the roses that I had taken from my office as he stood up from his seat and looked at me dubiously.

-Mr. Paul left them, he came very early with his parents.- He said. I looked at the roses and took the note that peeped out between them, I quickly opened it and read it.

-These roses can't compare to your beauty. Welcome to Paris.-

I let out a bitter laugh and put the note back in its place, before placing the arrangement on Jack's desk.

Definitely, this man wouldn't give up until he got what he wanted, but he was very wrong about me. In New York, I had allowed him to get close to me, because I thought it would be worth giving someone who really deserved it a chance and rebuilding my life, however, now I realized that all his efforts were to achieve whatever his mother had planned.

-Throw them away.- I ordered Jack, who looked astonished before looking at the beautiful arrangement.

-Throw them away? Are you sure?- He asked incredulously and I nodded my head in response.

-Of course I'm sure.- I said, looking at the note resting on the roses with indifference. -Has anyone else arrived?- I quickly changed the subject.

-Yes, his parents are with Mr. Lancaster and Mr. Ferrer, they're touring the facilities and he's going to show them their new offices before the professional team of each brand representative arrives. Mr. Vincent is in the president's office.- He said. I couldn't hide my surprise to know that my father was already with the pair of men, personally showing them around the company.

-Has everyone agreed to arrive early? Or am I the one who's late?-

-Thank you, Jack, I'll be in Vincent's office.- I gave him a smile and started to go to Vincent's office, but halfway there, I remembered something important. I quickly went back to Jack's desk, getting close enough to speak without anyone passing by overhearing.

-Have the lawyers given you an answer?-

-They're currently working on it, I'll let you know as soon as they respond.-

I nodded with a smile and before resuming my walk to Vincent's office, I took a rose from the arrangement Jack held in his hand.

-Thank you very much.-

Vincent was on the phone when I entered his office, he smiled from ear to ear when he saw me and pointed to the chair in front of his desk for me to sit.

-I need it as soon as possible. No, this case can't wait until tomorrow. No, it's impossible by the end of the afternoon.- I looked at him amused as I listened to his cold and authoritative tone, it was rare to hear him like that, but I knew that when it came to business, Vincent was a completely different person than the Vincent I saw every day. -I'll give you a maximum of two hours.-

After saying that, he ended the call without waiting for a response from the other side.

-Good morning, musketeer, did you wake up on the wrong side of the bed?- I asked playfully and magically, his cold voice changed immediately.

-No, of course not, I was just complaining about the audit, they intend to do it tomorrow, we can't wait that long.-

All trace of amusement disappeared from my face as he said that and I looked at him with a serious expression.

-What have they told you? Everyone is in the company, they will realize.- I said worried, as the Dubois had been in the company early in the morning. If they found out we were doing an audit, they'd know that we were more aware of their affairs than they thought.

-Don't worry about that, it will be so discreet that you won't even notice.- I calmed down a little, although I was still uneasy just imagining someone noticing.

-In any case, I will make everyone leave the company before the audit starts, I will be more at ease.- Vincent nodded in agreement and his gaze fell on the rose he had in his hand. Immediately, I stretched out my arm to hand it to him. -For you.-

-Sarah, please, I had never been given a rose in my life, where did you get this?- He said, hiding his amused face, although he didn't make much effort, as he let out a laugh when he took the rose in his hands. -Thank you.-

-Well, I'll be the first, what's wrong with that?- I looked disdainfully at my nails, before giving a response that maybe he wouldn't take so well. -Paul left me a bouquet in the office.- As soon as I said that, the rose slipped from his hand, falling onto his desk.

-Sarah, if you're joking... God, have you given me a rose that traitor gave you? Why did you accept it?- I sat calmly in my seat, not giving too much importance to the matter.

-I have had it thrown away.- I clarified before he got upset over something unimportant.

He picked up the rose again and before he could respond, the door of his office opened, grabbing both of our attention. My father's head appeared and a smile came across his face.

-Oh, here you are. Come in, please.- My father said, stepping aside to clear the way, then Alexander and Julian appeared, both in impeccable suits.

I stood up from my seat when I saw them enter and secretly smiled at Alexander's injured lip, his wound taking a while to heal.

-Welcome.- Vincent and I said in unison.

I shook hands with both of them as a greeting and Vincent did the same.

-This is the presidency office. As you already know, Vincent is currently taking my place. Sarah and Vincent will be in charge of everything, don't hesitate to go to them in case of any unforeseen events or concerns.- My father explained briefly and I moved uneasily in my place because Alexander kept his gaze fixed on me, as if I were the one speaking.

-The company has exceeded my expectations, all the spaces are well distributed, the machinery is of the best quality as well as the materials, have we seen everything? The only thing left is Ms. Sarah's office, am I wrong? I mean, if this time Mr. Vincent is not occupying her seat, Ms. Doinel.- Alexander spoke casually about the company until he touched on the topic of my office.

I knew he said it because the last time he was in this company, with his mother, Vincent took my seat in my office and stood up for me.

Bad memories.

I smiled without showing my teeth before speaking.

-You have a good memory, Mr. Lancaster.- I said indifferently, while looking at him with a slightly arched eyebrow.

-Sarah, would you join us in your office? - My father intervened as if he suspected that we would start a discussion like the one we had on the Jet at any moment.

-Of course.- I replied calmly and looked at Vincent. -Don't let it wither.- I told him, referring to the rose still in his hand.

Without further ado, and without looking at anyone, I left the office before everyone else to guide them to my office. Upon entering, my father gave Alexander and Julian a quick talk, and I remained silent, remembering as a real masochist the day Alexander traveled to Paris to talk to me and the first thing that came to mind was hiding in the bathroom. It wasn't very mature of me, but in that moment, the last thing I wanted was to see him or exchange a single word with him.

How ironic, now I would have him lurking in the company for a year.

When my father finished his tour, he invited Alexander and Julian to settle into their respective offices and left, because he had left my mother with Patrick and the Dubois.

I said goodbye to everyone and Julian was the first to leave. Alexander walked to the door and just when I thought he was finally going to leave my office, he stopped at the door and closed it

behind him before walking towards me slowly. I stood in my place unable to hide my surprise and confusion, I was astonished looking at him with a furrowed brow.

-What are you doing? You must go to your office.- I said angrily at his audacity, who does he think he is?

-What is there between Vincent and you?- He asked, ignoring what I had just said. I looked at him confused, not understanding at all what he was referring to.

Vincent and me?

Soon I understood what was happening and couldn't help but laugh in his face, as if he had just told me a good joke.

-Mr. Lancaster, are you having a jealous scene?- I asked amused, and I didn't need him to speak to get an answer, his dark gaze said it all.

-I saw you hugged and I heard you last night. 'Princess, don't overthink.' 'Don't worry, I'll take care of you like the little princess you are.' You gave him a rose!- I laughed again at his poor imitation of Vincent and how funny he looked making such a silly jealous scene.

-Sarah...-

-Mr. Lancaster, first of all, I don't have to give you any explanations. However, since you made me laugh, I will remind you that Vincent is my cousin, almost like a brother to me and a very overprotective one. It's normal for you to see such a display of affection between us. And second, have you been spying on me?- The idea that Alexander had heard our conversation left me frozen, although if he had heard more, he wouldn't have misinterpreted last night's situation.

-I'm not spying on you, I got lost looking for the bathroom... For God's sake, how many times do I have to tell you not to treat me like a stranger?- I looked at him with a raised eyebrow, not believing the first thing he said.

When I was about to refute, the office door opened and I realized that Paul stood still at the sight of Alexander's back.

I didn't think twice and approached Alexander, close enough to hug him by the neck. Judging by the tension in his body, I knew I caught him by surprise. However, it didn't take long for his arms to wrap around my waist, embracing me in a warm hug that almost made me shudder.

I swallowed, closing my eyes, ignoring the nerves that magically appeared in my system, and until now I didn't know why, or maybe I did, but I was bothered to think about it.

Damn, I also have a good memory.

I opened my eyes, coming back to reality, focusing on the objective I wanted to achieve with this hug, and cleared my throat before speaking.

-Don't say it again, I won't do it again, Alex.-

Chapter 69 My love.

Chapter 104 - Divorced Heiress

My nostrils were flooded by Alexander's exquisite and expensive perfume, his breath brushing against my hair, while his hands lightly caressed my back. For a moment, I felt tranquility as my legs lost strength.

I couldn't bear a second longer the warm contact of his body against mine, and I pulled away as if suddenly burned. Despite my attempts to free myself from his arms, his hands clung to my waist. I looked up to him, hoping to discover what was going through his mind at that moment, but his gentle gaze was unreadable. I couldn't guess what he was thinking.

I opened my mouth to speak, but the words stayed in the air when he spoke first.

-Why this sudden change?- He asked in a low voice. His eyes looked at me with a gleam that made them even clearer.

-If you didn't like it, you can let me go.- I said, hoping it would be a good enough excuse for him to release me. I didn't want to have to push him away forcefully and reveal to Paul that everything was just an act.

-Why do you think I haven't let go of you yet? You have no idea how much I needed a hug from you. Your arms have become my favorite place.- He said. When those words left his mouth, I was speechless. Though inside, I congratulated him on his cynicism. Just then, a clearing of the throat was heard in the office, providing the perfect excuse to step away from his arms and pretend blatantly that nothing had happened.

-Good morning, Sarah, I was looking for you.- Paul said, entering through the door and looking at Alexander with hatred reflected on his face. The latter returned the gaze with annoyance, as if he couldn't stand his presence or perhaps because he had interrupted what was -his favorite place.-

-Good day, Paul. Well, you've found me. Is there something wrong?- I casually asked as I reached my chair behind the desk. I didn't know where I found the ability to remain calm and unruffled after what I had just done. Maybe it was the desire for Paul to realize that his plan wasn't going as smoothly as he thought.

Alexander also approached my desk, reaching the guest's chair, but he didn't sit down. He just leaned his hands on the backrest to give Paul an intimidating look, but the latter didn't flinch.

-I didn't think you had company.- Paul said, completely ignoring my question, and went past to confidently sit in the free chair as if Alexander wasn't standing by his side.

-Yes, and very well accompanied, until you decided to interrupt. Haven't you been taught to knock before entering?- Alexander responded, clearly annoyed. He didn't give me a chance to say a word, showing his irritation and anger at Paul's presence.

I looked at Alexander in surprise, as I didn't imagine he would dare to question Paul's manners. The last thing I wanted was for the situation to spiral out of control.

-Alex...- I mentioned his name warningly, in an attempt to calm his anger. He looked at me uneasily and didn't say anything more.

-This morning, I left you some roses. I selected them especially for you.- Paul said, completely ignoring Alexander's unfriendly words.

-Did you get them? Oh, I know, you had them put in water.- Paul insisted on the matter, as if he wanted to bother Alexander. It was only then that I dared to raise my gaze, while playing with the pen in my hand, and I met Paul's proud face and Alexander's expression of tragedy that almost made me burst out laughing, not to mention the injured lip that made him look so miserable.

-Thank you, I received them and had them thrown away.- I said. The smile on Paul's face disappeared immediately, and he looked at me with confusion and frustration. His cheeks gradually flushed, just as they did when he was angry. It was rare to see him like this, but I never enjoyed it as much as I did at that moment.

Alexander let out a slight laugh, completely eliminating that expression of despair and sat down casually in the chair he had been holding tightly all this time.

-What? But why? You had never thrown away my gifts before, what's going on? Sari.- He began to complain with a furrowed brow and soon fell silent, before giving the man next to him a look of anger. His expression relaxed as if he had realized something.

-Don't tell me...- Before any speculation could come out of his mouth, I put the pen down on the table and looked at him expressionless.

-Paul, don't bother dwelling on it, we have returned to Paris and things are still the same as before, isn't that right?- I said referring to the fact that his opportunity had ended and now more than ever, I had to reject him, his persistence had a reason, and a very unpleasant one.

-Is there something else?-

-Could we talk alone?- He asked after a few seconds of silence, in which he digested what I had just told him. It was clear that he didn't want to talk about it with Alexander present, but I had nothing else to say. Before, I didn't agree to his constant proposals to start a relationship and now, I was relieved that I hadn't made a mistake getting involved with him, I would regret it right now.

-I think I have been clear. Is there something we need to discuss?- I looked at him fixedly after my question. He didn't know it, but with that, I was referring to his secrets, to what he was planning against the Doinel family, but obviously, I wasn't going to talk about it, nor did it cross his mind that I knew about his plans.

-Let's talk alone and...-

-Mr. Dubois, I think Sarah has been very patient and sincere with you, maybe you didn't understand her, but let me explain it to you. She told you no, don't you accept no as an answer?- Alexander intervened, interrupting what Paul had to say. I looked at him again with a warning. Being in the middle of our conversation didn't give him the right to speak for me, I didn't need anyone to advocate for me.

-What is your problem, Mr. Lancaster? Are you Sarah's defender? If I remember correctly, you hurt Sarah in the past and you dare to intercede for her. I remind you that thanks to your infidelity, we got divorced. You being here means nothing, you have no right over Sarah. If you're in this company right now, it's nothing more than a stroke of luck.- Paul confronted Alexander, bringing up the past and making me extremely uncomfortable, especially because right now I knew that Paul was the main cause that led Alexander to make that wrong decision.

Alexander stood up from his seat, his gaze fixed on Paul's face, almost immediately, Paul also stood up, facing Alexander. They were having a war just by looking at each other and I feared that at any moment they would come to blows, in which case I would have no choice but to call security.

-My problem? You are my problem right now. I know that Sarah doesn't need anyone to defend her, she is very capable. I think you don't know her like I do, and I couldn't care less if we are divorced or not. As long as I'm here, I will defend her from jerks like you, even if she doesn't ask me to. I think you know the way out.- Alexander said that with so much hatred in his voice that for a moment I feared he would be the one to throw the first punch.

Immediately, I calmed down when I realized an important detail.

If Alexander reacted that way with Paul, telling him those things without even knowing him, it meant only one thing. And no, I didn't mean jealousy, because it was clear that he was rejecting Paul directly without giving him the slightest possibility.

-I see that you are very sure of yourself, Mr. Lancaster, I won't waste time with a small man like you. We have a pending conversation, Sari.- Paul said, leaving the office forcefully without waiting for any response, leaving me alone once again with Alexander.

-You didn't have to bother.- I said when Alexander let out a loud sigh, his gaze turning back to me. He raised an eyebrow and his fingers lightly tapped the desk.

—Sarah, I want to ask you a question and I need you to answer me honestly.— He said seriously and in his eyes I could see that he thought the same of me as I thought of him. I interlaced my fingers and rested my chin on them, just waiting for him to ask me the question, because I also had a question for him.

—Do you know? Is it true? Do you know what's behind that -I wouldn't harm a fly- face?— He finally asked and I confirmed that he knew more than I thought.

I let my back fall against the backrest of the chair, while I looked at Alexander as seriously as possible.

—I know many things about him, but why don't you tell me what you know?— I answered, avoiding giving out more information than necessary.

—Do you know everything he has done to make our marriage fail? Do you know that he is trying to marry you and take over your father's company? Do you know that his mother is the one planning to destroy your family? Do you know that Mrs. Dubois wants revenge on your mother because your father fell in love with Mrs. Joelle and not her? Do you know that they have clauses prepared in case Paul marries you? And do you know the worst part? Those clauses leave Paul as the universal heir to all your assets and can only pass into your hands if you... die.—

My heart froze and I felt the warmth leaving my body. My legs trembled uncontrollably and for a moment I thought I was going to faint, as the tension dropped so much that I had to hold onto the desk because everything was spinning. I glanced at Alexander with a furrowed brow, not knowing when he had come to my side to hold me from behind, looking at me with concern while fanning his hand across my face.

—Sarah, my love, don't faint, have some water. Sarah, look at me.—

I raised my eyes to look at his worried face and immediately became aware of three things.

The first was that Alexander knew more than anyone else knew.

The second was that the Dubois family issue was bigger than I had imagined, they had even planned to kill me to take what belonged to the Doinel family for a simple affair.

And third, after almost four years, I heard Alexander call me “my love”.

Chapter 70 You deserve to be happy.

Chapter 105 - Divorced Heiress

The water that Alexander offered me, I drank it so quickly that I could have choked, but it was the only solution to dissipate the nerves that were bubbling in my system.

It didn't take long for my pulse to return to normal, I regained my breath, and I stabilized almost completely.

My eyes stopped on Alexander's face, at the moment when an important detail crossed my mind, putting aside any other thoughts. Unconsciously, I firmly grabbed Alexander's arm, as if I could fall at any moment, but the worry that lodged in my chest and reflected on my face barely let me breathe.

- Alexander, if what you're saying is true, then our son is in danger, have you thought about that? Why didn't you tell me before? - I barely said, with a choked voice, feeling the knot in my throat not allowing me to breathe.

If that wretch dared to even touch a single hair of my son, he would know what I was capable of, he could mess with whoever he wants, but never with my son, I was going to protect him fiercely.

Alexander also seemed worried, but he was able to hide it easily. My fingers were still clutched to his arm, and although I knew I was causing him pain, he never complained or pushed me away. Instead, he stroked my back in an attempt to calm me.

- Sarah, even though I didn't tell you before, the reason I'm here, apart from assuming my role as a father with all the love in the world, is to protect you and Tristan. Nothing bad will happen to either of you, I won't allow it. -

His hand slowly approached my hair, pushing aside a strand that was in my face. Just the thought that my son could be the perfect target for Paul made me feel sick.

-I made bad decisions in the past that I now regret, for being a coward and thinking that's how I would protect you. And from my mistakes, I've learned that the best way is to do it on my own. I learned it late, but the past cannot be changed. There are more things that you might not know, what do you think if tonight I go to Villa Doinel to talk about this with your father? I would also like to spend time with my son.-

I didn't even know what to say with everything he said, my mind wasn't functioning at one hundred percent, the only thing I could think about was my son and his well-being.

Although it left a bad taste in my mouth, I had to come to an agreement with Alexander to keep our son safe. Right now, he was our priority, despite any differences between him and me.

I stood up abruptly, causing Alexander to get startled. Far from removing his hands from me, he held me tightly around the waist, as if he was afraid I would fall.

- I'm going for Tristan. - I said in an attempt to free myself from his grip, but it was useless. Alexander had no intention of letting me go, I could see it in his worried eyes.

- No, no, Sarah, don't worry about Tristan. I've left him under protection wherever he is, nothing will happen to him. First, you need to calm down and when you do, I'll accompany you myself if that makes you feel safer. -

His hands left my back and the next second, they settled on my cheeks, cradling them so I could look into his eyes without interruption. I didn't fully understand what he was telling me, but after feeling his long fingers on my face, I realized that Alexander not only knew more than I imagined, but he has also acted swiftly for the sake of his son.

- Sarah, I'm not lying when I say I'll protect you, even if it's the last thing I do. You mean everything to me, I don't care if you still have a poor opinion of me.-

- Alexander... - I interrupted him before he continued speaking. Our gazes met once again, and what was going through my head and about to come out of my mouth seemed ridiculous. - I'm scared.

Alexander gave me a half-smile, and this time, he surprised me by embracing me for a long while, during which I dedicated myself to curse the Dubois.

- It's okay, Sarah, it's okay to be afraid, we're only human and it's allowed, but I don't allow you to lose strength. Now more than ever, you must appear strong and capable.-

He let go of the hug while uttering those words of encouragement, which, to my surprise, achieved their purpose. -In your house, I'll tell you everything I know and give you the information that I'm sharing with your father to put an end to this.-

I nodded in response and almost immediately looked at him confused.

-My father you say?- I asked with curiosity, and it wasn't necessary for him to say a single word for me to understand why they were so close now. Of course, that was it.

-In any case, I will also go with Vincent, he has been helping me since the moment my suspicions started. Why investigate on our own when we can do it together? After all, we're pursuing the same goal, aren't we?- I proposed, putting my pride aside, but it was true, we could work together for better results.

-Vincent...- He repeated the name as if it annoyed him, and I looked at him with an displeased expression.

-It will be with Vincent.- He changed his mind upon seeing my expression, and I raised an eyebrow before finally getting rid of him and going straight to the door.

-Sarah.- Alexander called me before I opened the door, and I turned enough to look at him in silence, waiting for him to speak.

-Yes?- I asked.

-Thank you.- He looked at me confused, not understanding why he was thanking me, and immediately continued. -Thank you for having my son and loving him so much. You deserve to be happy, no matter who it is with. I will be happy when I see you smile like you used to with me.-

Chapter 71 All for an obsession.

Chapter 106 - Divorced Heiress

Tristan played carefree with the new toys my father gave him, so oblivious to all the problems that surrounded him, it seemed unfair to me that he was constantly in danger at such a young age. I, more than anyone, knew what it was like to be in danger at such a young age, that was why my parents did everything they could to keep me away from my family name, but I didn't want that for my son.

Vincent remained silent since I finished telling him what happened with Alexander, I gave him all the details and invited him to be present in the conversation I would have with Alexander and my father in a few minutes. I just hoped that my father would finish his conversation with the collaborators so we could meet in his office.

-You know, you did well to think first about the well-being of your son and put aside all that resentment towards Alexander, even if only for a moment. After all, they have something that unites them and that is that wonderful child. Paul and his mother are ambition personified and that is very dangerous. Still, you know that you have my support and my time. I am at your disposal twenty-four hours a day.- Vincent said, trying to hide it with his serious expression, but I knew very well that he was as worried as I was, because the information that the private investigator gave us was just a taste.

I didn't know what we were supposed to do to end this before the situation worsened. We didn't have enough evidence to file a report. I couldn't wait for my father to finish his "brief" conversation with Alexander and Julian, I was getting desperate from overthinking. Although I had taken the time to inform Vincent, and obviously he was surprised to learn that my father knew everything and even more than us.

-Mama, look.- Tristan called my attention, showing me how he played with his little toys while sitting on my lap, and I smiled as I looked into his honey-colored eyes adorned with his beautiful long eyelashes.

I could barely see his toys and immediately hugged him as if he was going to be taken away from me at any moment. That unpleasant feeling in my chest did not dissipate in any way, only by seeing the Dubois behind bars or far away from my family. How could I imagine that they would be so cruel and wicked?

-It's beautiful, my baby.- I said as I let him go since he began to squirm uncomfortably in my arms. He looked at me with his offended little eyes.

-I'm not a baby, mom. I'm three years old.- He showed me three of his little fingers, indicating his age. I couldn't help but laugh because Alexander taught him that and Tristan caught on right away.

-You don't know what you're saying. I wish I could be three years old again.- Vincent said, looking amused at Tristan. I laughed even harder at his remarks.

I got up from my bed as my laughter ceased, leaving Tristan standing on the floor.

-Well, does the three-year-old adult want to see Alex?- I asked as I combed his disheveled hair, and his face lit up immediately upon hearing the mention of that name.

-Yes! Daddy Ales!- He suddenly dropped his toys on the bed and would have almost run out of the room if I hadn't taken his hand, preventing him from taking another step. At this point, he would already be in his father's arms.

-What is this feeling I'm having? Could it be jealousy? Is there a cure for this disease?- Vincent joked as he got up from the couch where he had been sitting since he arrived, and I looked at him with a raised eyebrow.

-He has quickly earned his love, even though at first I was afraid of him. What can you do? He is his father after all.- I shrugged and walked hand in hand with Tristan, who was happily jumping by my side.

In the next second, Alexander's words came to mind, and it was inevitable that I would remember the past when my smiles and sighs had a first and last name. He knew it very well, and mentioning it made me feel inexplicably annoyed with him. Upon entering the living room, I saw the three men sitting on the couch, chatting as if they had known each other all their lives, but they were only talking about their first day at the company and how the entire work team from both Innova and LC would finally arrive this week.

When my father noticed our presence, he looked at me with an almost nonexistent smile, that was his expression of guilt. From his gaze, I could tell that he felt responsible for what was happening, but it wasn't his fault, no one was to blame for Mrs. Dubois' unrequited love.

Unfortunately, no one decided who to fall in love with.

Julian and Alexander stood up when we entered the room, and my father quickly spoke, ending the conversation.

-Mr. Ferrer, Mr. Lancaster, I welcome you again and thank you for giving so much importance to the project. Soon we will see the fruits of our hard work and sacrifices.- My father shook hands with each of them as he stood up.

Tristan was aware that he couldn't interrupt a conversation, so he refrained from letting go of my hand and running into Alexander's arms, he just fidgeted impatiently.

-Thank you very much for trusting us, it will be a good year for everyone. Goodbye, Mr. Doinel, Mr. Lancaster.- Julian spoke with a slight smile, saying goodbye to both of them, and his gaze settled on my direction.

-Mr. Lefebvre, Sarah, thank you for everything. See you tomorrow, little one.- He bid farewell from his place, while his smile widened, revealing a pair of dimples.

-See you tomorrow, Julian, have a good night.- I said politely and Vincent approached to shake his hand.

-I'll walk you out, Mr. Ferrer. You can go ahead to the office, I'll be there in a second.- Vincent offered and disappeared with Julian, guiding him outside the house.

Only then, Tristan jumped at my side and released my hand to run to Alexander and hug him as if he hadn't seen him in years.

-Ales, did you see my house? It's very beautiful, isn't it?- Tristan started chattering uncontrollably with excitement and Alexander looked at him amazed. Seeing my son so happy, my heart swelled with emotion. There was nothing I adored more than seeing him like that, so happy, no matter the reason.

-Your house is beautiful and very cozy, even if it's so big.- Alexander responded as he lifted Tristan in his arms and planted a kiss on his head.

-Yes, it has many rooms, you can stay here whenever you want, right, Mom?- Tristan looked at me with surprise for what he was offering to Alexander, but I couldn't reprimand him for his innocence. He still ignored so many things, but I preferred it that way.

My father chuckled quietly at his grandson's antics and Alexander looked at me, waiting for my answer. Was I even considering it?

-Tristan... Ales already has a place to stay, I'm sure it will be much better for him than here. Besides, it's a very big place for him, I don't think he will like it.- I responded, denying firmly that it would happen, even if it was just one night under the same roof. It wasn't going to happen.

-Well, in that case, I apologize. You don't know me well.- Alexander replied indifferently and he let out a chuckle while looking at Tristan.

My eyes shifted to my father and I felt embarrassed that he had to witness another scene between Alexander and me, although this one was more peaceful than the previous ones.

-Of course, you know me very well.- I was left speechless by his double entendre response. I felt my cheeks blush and I had to end this useless conversation before I died of embarrassment in front of my father and my son, who were watching us with curiosity and amusement.

-Let's go to the office, we have a very important conversation.- I said before turning around and walking quickly, containing the annoyance and irritation that the simple conversation left me with, but managed to make me angry.

I sat on the couch upon entering the office, seconds later, Alexander entered with Tristan in his arms and sat next to me as if he didn't notice how upset I was. I just remained silent, watching every movement of Tristan.

I didn't think it was appropriate for my son to be present in the conversation we were about to have, but Alexander seemed unwilling to separate from him. In any case, we would have to choose our words carefully.

With everyone in the office, Vincent was the first to speak, expressing his discontent with the situation and informing my father and Alexander about what we discovered. He said everything with words that only we would understand. Nonetheless, Tristan was very distracted with Alexander's cellphone, which he handed to him without complaining.

After Vincent finished speaking, my father let out a tired sigh and leaned his back against the chair, giving Alexander a look before speaking.

-Alexander informed me when he dug deeper into the threat and discovered that there was someone else behind all this. Of course, I didn't want to believe that Paul, the son of my best friends and Sarah's childhood friend, had the cold-blood to do such a thing. But everything made sense when a third person appeared, we could say, the mastermind. That woman planned it all, even... God. I feel so responsible for everything that is happening. Alexander and I have discovered so many things that I still can't believe. The problems didn't start recently, they go back further. Sarah, we don't have evidence yet, but we have discovered that she was responsible for what happened to you when you were a child. It was her way of getting revenge on Joelle and me, but she failed because of the protection we gave you. She wants to get revenge by causing you the greatest possible harm. She wants to take what, according to her, belongs to her. This is all my fault.-

I was stunned by my father's words, I couldn't believe what he was telling me. This was getting worse and worse, that woman knew no limits, and if she was capable of doing that to me as a child who was not at fault for her problems, I didn't even want to imagine what she was capable of doing to my son, to my family.

All because of an obsession.

Chapter 72 Forget about me.

Chapter 107 - Divorced Heiress

I found it hard to believe what my father was saying, and that wasn't all. Alexander was aware of everything before me, his own daughter, the one who was in danger and still was, the one who was most affected by a woman who pretended to be the best friend of the family for so many years. And now, the danger continued, but not just for me, but for my own son.

My father finished telling me about his past with that woman, if she could be called that. Mrs. Dubois confessed to my father that she was in love with him the day before my parents' wedding, thinking that my father reciprocated her feelings and that with that confession he would leave everything behind to run away with her. But she was wrong because he rejected her and went through with the wedding as if that woman hadn't said a word to him the day before.

Upon returning from the honeymoon, Mrs. Dubois introduced Mr. Dubois as her partner, and everything was forgotten. Well, forgotten for everyone except her, as her resentment for the rejection still accompanies her to this day, and she was taking it out on the whole family, trying to claim something that was never hers.

The investigator that Alexander hired has been very helpful. At this moment, he was searching for the necessary evidence that would expose Mrs. Dubois as the mastermind behind my kidnapping attempt when I was a child and the death threats that Alexander received, and which he never knew how to handle.

The garden of Villa Doinel was so peaceful and cool at this late hour of the night. The cold breeze hit my face as I pondered the complexity of the situation. I didn't even mind the company of Alexander and Tristan, who invited me to take a walk to pass the time together. It was the perfect excuse to escape from my father's office, which was starting to feel suffocating.

-I've proposed an idea to your father to ruin their plans.- Alexander said after a long time of walking aimlessly. He was only playing with Tristan, and my son could do nothing but laugh.

I looked at him silently when he snapped me out of my thoughts, still walking through the extensive garden. Soon, I realized we were approaching the forest that I could see from my room, the forest I had never dared to venture into out of fear.

-Ah, really? Why didn't you mention it before?- I averted my gaze as his eyes intersected with mine with such intensity that even the temperature seemed to rise. Alexander stopped, and I did the same after taking a few extra steps.

-What is it about?- I asked curiously, turning my body towards him but not giving him a single glance. I could only see Tristan's smiling and sleepy face.

Alexander bent down to scoop up the little one in his arms, and the small dark-haired head almost immediately rested on his father's shoulder.

Upon seeing that tender father-son scene, my eyes came to a halt without thinking in the honey-colored eyes that still gleamed in the darkness of the night, under the faint light of the lanterns that illuminated the path. Alexander took a step towards me, and I didn't dare to step back.

-What I think might be more effective and faster, while we gather what we need to make them pay, is...- He left the word hanging, planting curiosity inside me. I raised an eyebrow, urging him to finish saying what, for him, was a great solution but seemed so difficult for him to let go. Then, he continued.

-For you to marry me.- My brow furrowed when I heard those words from his mouth, and I had to repeat them in my head more than once to understand what he was talking about.

I couldn't believe it. Did I hear correctly? Did he say we should get married again to put an end to this?

I let out a slight laugh that gradually increased until I couldn't control my laughter. I laughed heartily at the absurdity I had just heard, causing Tristan to raise his head and look at me with curious and tired eyes.

-Sweetheart, I'm sorry, I woke you up.- I said to Tristan when my laughter subsided. I approached him and stroked his disheveled hair in an attempt to relax him again and lay his head back on Alexander's shoulder. After accomplishing it, I looked at Alexander with amusement and mockery reflected in my eyes. This time, I didn't let myself be carried away by my impulses to laugh without measuring the force with which I did. But I did let out a playful giggle.

-What do you find so funny?- Alexander asked in a low voice, his face serious, without the slightest hint of amusement in his eyes, as if he was bothered by me mocking his wonderful idea.

But he had gone crazy, the change of environment had affected him so much that he lost his mind.

-What nonsense did you just say, Alexander? Are you even listening to yourself? Have you said this to my father? Please. You have to be very naive to believe that he can agree to something as stupid as marrying you and your family again. Do you want my answer? You don't have to look too far, it's a NO. I would never marry you again.- I responded indifferently and amused. He was completely crazy if he thought I would accept something like that.

-Do you hate me that much? Sarah...- He interrupted me, raising my index finger and looking at him intently. I didn't care that he was closer than he should be. I wanted to make it clear what I was going to say.

-Don't mistake it. I feel absolutely nothing for you.- I said, looking into his eyes without blinking. Alexander let out a dry laugh and took my finger with his free hand, but I immediately moved away from his touch. I didn't want him to touch me or say any nonsense that came to his mind. I definitely didn't want him to take advantage of any circumstance to try to get close to me in that way.

-Don't lie to me, or lie to yourself. Be honest and tell me what you feel. Look me in the eyes and tell me that you still feel something for me because I'm feeling a thousand things for you.- He said calmly and confidently. I furrowed my brow and felt the blood boiling inside me because Alexander didn't seem willing to stop saying things that made no sense and were unrelated to the current situation. I didn't want to touch that subject, but this was a good opportunity to end the problem at its root.

Chapter 72 Forget about me part 2

Chapter 108 - Divorced Heiress

-Are you done going crazy? Please, get off that cloud. I feel nothing for you, don't be so delusional. The last breath I exhaled for you froze years ago. It didn't rise like it always did, you know why? Because in that moment, I knew that my feelings for who I believed was 'the love of my life' had exhausted its last breath, because you yourself took it upon yourself to kill everything. What could you possibly be feeling for me? Did you ever feel anything for me?- I believed that by telling him all that, I would feel freer and relieved for letting it out in his face, for unburdening what I had carried inside for so many years. But it was the opposite, I felt a pressure in my chest that barely let me breathe.

Alexander looked at me with hidden pain in his incredulous and amused gaze. I no longer knew what else to say for him to understand that he was wrong, that everything died the moment I signed the divorce.

-Is that so? Because your eyes tell me the opposite.- He said calmly and with such certainty in his words that I wanted to slap him to see if he would understand. But I wasn't going to do that in front of Tristan.

-Despite everything that has happened between us, I still feel a thousand things for you since the day I met you and asked you to marry me, when I saw you in white, wearing the most beautiful smile as you walked towards me, when I saw you again after years, dancing with your father, looking so radiant, when I found out you had my child, when I kissed you and still feel it in this moment seeing your teary eyes, refusing to accept that you still feel something for me. When I am close to you and can't touch you, can't kiss or caress you, every time you look at me like now, with a furrowed brow, making your biggest effort to seem annoyed and angry with me, but deep down you know it's an attempt to bury everything you feel for me.- I swallowed hard as I wiped

my eyes, which indeed were teary without me realizing it, but it was nothing more than anger and frustration.

I turned around to laugh without amusement. Every time he spoke, he went even further, drawing conclusions that he wasn't anywhere near. I turned towards him and let out a tired sigh while shaking my head.

- And what do you want to hear from me? What should I tell him that I feel? Do you want me to tell you that I feel something nice and good for you after everything that has happened? After seeing you half-naked about to touch that woman's body who seemed to be enjoying what you were doing to her, after six months in which you slept with her countless times and came home indifferent, without any desire to touch me, as if you despised me. What do you want me to feel after seeing my husband in his office about to...-

- Sarah, Sarah, my love. No, I wasn't with her for six months. I admit that I changed with you, but not because I was sleeping with Rachel. Sarah, all that time I was mentally debating the situation, receiving her threats, her blackmail, along with my responsibility in the company, my family, my brother, I couldn't tell you, I didn't know what to do, I didn't want them to hurt you and I also didn't want what happened with Alexis to be exposed to everyone. And everyone is right, I handled it in the worst way, I ended up causing the damage and I regret it every day of my life, I am sorry for everything, that's why I apologize to you and will continue to do so until one day you forgive me from the bottom of your heart. -

I stood motionless in front of him with my arms crossed over my chest, a humorless smile appeared on my face, and I took one step closer to him to spit the following in his face.

- First, I am not your love. Second, I don't want to talk about the past anymore, it's just that, and nothing is going to change. You know what the difference between you and me is? That I don't settle for the first and easiest option to solve problems. I will get through this, but it won't be by marrying you. - I said softly, very close to his face, so much so that our breaths momentarily merged, his wounded eyes continued to observe my face as if he wanted to capture every detail in his memory. I looked away when his gaze stopped at my lips for a moment and his Adam's apple moved as he swallowed.

- I will take my son to his room and you should leave, it's late.-

Alexander let out a tired sigh and looked at the dark sky for a few seconds as if it were going to help him at any moment.

Tristan ended up on my shoulder, unfazed, and I walked past Alexander to make my way back home, and his words stopped me after just three steps.

- All of this, all this Dubois affair, our son, does all of this make you realize that this hatred you feel for me is not worth it, that resentment? I am not your enemy, I am the father of your child, your first man, your first husband, I hurt you, but only I can fix it. I don't regret anything I said, you know why? Because I'm in love with you, because I'm going crazy to be with you again and

with Tristan as a family, the family we deserve. And I know you do too, but all of this scares you, but let me tell you something, if at any moment in your life you decide to give me a second chance, everything will be different, starting with keeping my family away from our marriage, because I will give you the place you deserve as my wife, my woman, Mrs. Lancaster.- Just when I thought Alexander couldn't say anything more absurd, he came up with all this.

I closed my eyes tightly when I felt a chill run through my legs and settle in my neck, my hands began to tremble with helplessness and anger, and I had to contain myself from turning back, this conversation was not going to go anywhere because I was not going to accept something that wasn't happening to me. I didn't know what Alexander expected by saying all that, that I would jump for joy and tell him that I want to marry him?

Please! There were other ways to end all this.

Before continuing on my way with Tristan in my arms, I barely turned my head over my shoulder to glance at him.

- Forget about me as a woman.

Chapter 73 Whoever doesn't know it, should buy it.

Chapter 109 - Divorced Heiress

The project started off on the right foot despite the problems surrounding my family and the lack of viable solutions other than marrying Alexander again. The Innova and LC staff who would work on the collections were already well settled in the company, which put my mind at ease in that regard.

The door of my office opened after a couple of knocks, and my father's face appeared in my field of vision with Tristan in his arms. I smiled at him before inviting him in.

-Are you busy?- He asked as he sat in the chair across from my desk. I stopped typing on my computer and looked away from the documents in my hand to pay attention to him.

-I'm never too busy for you. Have you finished your outing with my baby?- I asked, looking at Tristan playing with the toy dinosaur Alexander had given him.

-Of course not, we're just taking a break. Later, I'll take him to Patrick's workshop with Alexander. He wants to see the designers in action.- My father said. Tristan enthusiastically nodded in agreement, and I looked at them with surprise, but mostly at my father, who seemed to be getting closer to my ex-husband.

-Someone there is going to follow in the family's footsteps.- I said, putting the name of that man on the backburner.

-Yes, Mom, Patick is going to teach me. Do you want to come with us?- Tristan's invitation left me frozen, not knowing what to answer. Honestly, these days I'd been avoiding Alexander because he was always insisting on talking about an "us" that no longer existed.

-I would like to, but I have a lot of work to do.- I pointed to the papers on my desk, and his eyebrows furrowed just like his little hands did every time he wanted to convince me.

-Please, Mommy, come with us, it'll only be for a little while.- His pleading voice moved me a bit. I looked at my father, who raised his hands as if he were washing his hands of any guilt.

-Don't look at me like that, I have nothing to do with it. But I do think you should go, you know, spend a moment with Tristan. The work can wait a few minutes. Come on, dear, join us.- My father said. Tristan fidgeted, agreeing with my father, and after a few long seconds, I nodded.

-Alright, you've convinced me, but it'll only be for a few minutes.- My son shouted excitedly and high-fived my father, who looked at him amused.

-I didn't teach him that.- My father said with a laugh, and there was no need to ask who had taught him that. -Before we go, I came to tell you that I'm organizing a gathering at the villa for your birthday.- I looked at him confused, but soon realized that I had completely forgotten about my birthday, and of course my father wouldn't let such an important date for him go unnoticed. He was definitely going to celebrate it.

-Dad, there is so much to do, I don't have the head to celebrate my birthday. You know we have the Dubois issue breathing down our necks, the project that has started off wonderfully, there is a lot of work at the company.- I excused myself, hoping he would give up on the idea, but in his eyes, I could see that he wouldn't change his mind.

-How can I not celebrate your birthday? You would do the same for Tristan. We're both parents, and as parents, we want to celebrate such an important moment. It's not every day you turn thirty, and besides, I have a gift for you that can't wait.- He said. I let out a long sigh seeing his excited face at the idea. I couldn't snub my father like that. After all, it would only be a gathering at home.

-Alright.- I finally responded and stood up, touching my neck that had been hurting since this morning. -Let's take that walk to the workshop, and then I need to talk to Vincent.-

-He'll surely be with us. The test models are about to arrive, and he needs to be present.- My father said. I nodded, feeling less uncomfortable if he was with us. Tristan jumped off my father's lap and ran towards me to take my hand and walk as fast as his legs allowed. My father followed our steps until we reached Patrick's workshop, where he was sitting talking to Alexander, Julian, and the two designers representing each company.

-Hey, Ales!- Tristan let go of my hand as soon as he saw his father sitting, who immediately turned to hear his sweet voice and embraced him when the little one ran to him. -Look, I brought my mom.- I stood a considerable distance away, watching my son who looked so happy in Alexander's arms.

Alexander's eyes lingered on me more than they should, and I gave him a forced smile as a greeting. -Finally, your mother came out of hiding, well done.- He said shamelessly to my son, who looked at me with amusement on his face.

-Good morning, Sarah, you arrived just in time.-

I gave Alexander an expressionless look and smiled at Julian, who got up from the seat where he had been sitting this whole time, his gaze fixed on me.

-Sarah, I'm glad you're here. The trial models are about to arrive, you can take my seat to be more comfortable.- Julian spoke without taking his eyes off my face, and the smile on my face widened before I spoke. -Thank you, Julian.-

I walked towards him, under the watchful eyes of everyone present, until I reached the chair he was holding for me. -It's great that there are still gentlemen around.- I took a seat next to Alexander and in front of Patrick, the latter had a look of complicity which I ignored, as I knew what was going through his mind and his great imagination. -You're welcome, Sarah.- Julian responded, staying standing by my side.

The workshop was engulfed in silence for a few seconds, during which I casually glanced at the fabric samples on Patrick's desk, until someone cleared their throat to get attention, and then I heard the cold and deep voice of the man sitting next to me.

-Well, Sarah, my seat is more comfortable, sit here.-

His words amused me, but I maintained a serious expression on the outside. What was this about? I was already seated and I was not going to change seats just because he said so. Without taking my hands off the fine fabrics, I looked at Alexander, finding his cheeks slightly flushed and a frown on his face. I took a deep breath, and my hesitant gaze momentarily rested on our son, who looked away from Alexander and looked at me, waiting for my response.

-Thanks, I'm already comfortable.- I replied simply, briefly returning my eyes to his face and focusing my attention back on the high-quality fabrics.

Silence returned, but it didn't last long, as Vincent's voice echoed throughout the workshop, filling my chest with relief. I could relax more with him here.

Chapter 73 Whoever doesn't know it, should buy it part 2

Chapter 110 - Divorced Heiress

-Good morning, everyone. The models have arrived.- He said in a serious voice, the one he used when he was working. My body turned slightly to have the best possible view of the entrance for the long-awaited models. -You can come in.-

The nine trial models entered one by one, all tall, thin, and very well-groomed. Now all attention was on them, and discreetly, I released the breath I had been holding since the moment Alexander spoke to me.

-Welcome, we were all waiting for you, come in, come in, walk, I want to have a look at you.- Patrick jumped up from his seat and approached the women, inspecting them from head to toe as he used to do.

-You look perfect, the designs will be a success, right?- He asked, turning to everyone, but especially to the two designers who would work with him.

After all, the three of them would carry out each of the designs for the two collections. However, I detailed each woman, while everyone was happy with the models and gave good opinions of each one, but there was a small detail that didn't convince me completely and even though it wasn't in the contract, it couldn't be overlooked, as this was what differentiated us from other companies.

-I'm sorry.- I apologized to Ada and Zafiro, the pair of designers who were delighted with the models they would work with. Immediately, everyone fell silent and watched expectantly for what I was about to say. -What sets Doinel apart from other brands is that we design for all sizes, where are the curvy models? Are they not going to be included this time?-

Vincent opened his mouth to speak when he realized it, but said nothing, while the rest looked at him waiting for a response or a solution, after all, he was still the president until my father decided.

-I didn't want to say anything before, but my daughter is right, who has been in charge of the models?- My father asked Patrick, the poor man turned pale with the problem and spoke quickly.

-Well, Mr. Doinel, we know that Ms. Boyer was in charge of the hiring, but since she is no longer part of the team, Paul has taken the trouble to do that job, I didn't know that he would dismiss the plus-size models, for a moment I thought it would be different because it was a three-way collaboration.-

Patrick informed looking worried and my alarms went off upon hearing that name.

I didn't know if Paul did it on purpose to sabotage the project or if he didn't know that we worked with all types of models, although the most likely option was the first one, since besides being a partner, he had worked for years in the company, impossible that he didn't know.

-Alright, I'll take care of this, you all continue.- I intervened before anyone said a word and got up from my chair, ready to go talk to Paul about the case and incidentally analyzing his behavior with me after having distanced him drastically.

Keep your enemies close.

Before taking a step, Alexander stood up with Tristan in his arms, blocking my way and looked at me with a frown, he looked annoyed or worried, it didn't matter how he was feeling.

-You're not going alone.- He said without moving from my path and I had to take a breath to maintain my patience. I ignored his words and walked away from him, leaving through the other side.

Who did he think he was telling me what to do or who to go with?

-Does anyone smell that? It smells like jealousy.- I heard Patrick's amused voice when I crossed the door, leaving the workshop and that naturally uncomfortable atmosphere. I didn't pay attention to those senseless words and walked down the hallway while greeting the workers I crossed paths with, but I didn't get far when I felt a hand grabbing my arm and stopping the slightest movement. I turned my head in frustration and anger arose in my chest when I saw his honey-colored eyes.

-Could you please remove your hand from me? If it's not too much trouble.- I said without the slightest grace, burning inside as I looked at his hand still gripping my arm, however, Alexander didn't pay attention, he just loosened his grip. -Fine, don't do it. Where have you left Tristan?-

-I left him with Leonardo, I won't let you go alone into the lion's den.- He said and my brow furrowed almost automatically, my eyes couldn't hide the irritation that his mere presence caused me.

-Do you really think he can do something to me in my own company? You don't need to worry, I can handle this without being backed up by anyone.- I took the opportunity to free myself from his grip with a single pull, and as I turned around to continue my way, Alexander spoke. -At this point, Paul is capable of anything. Let me take care of you, can you trust me?- I closed my eyes as I forced a smile, then I turned back to him, met with the gleam in his eyes. Is that possible at this point?-

—Don't ask me for the impossible.— I said, not wiping the smile off my face, but his eyes fixated on my smirk and I immediately erased my smile.

—You don't have to worry about me, you never have, stop this game right now.—I said, unable to hide my anger any longer. He took two steps towards me with the corners of his lips slightly

curved, forming a smile. Despite knowing he was doing it to intimidate me, I didn't back down, I stood firm in my position, challenging him with my gaze.

—Darling, I'm not playing any game, I care about the people who matter to me and you matter more than you can imagine. I have never stopped worrying about you, don't ask me to stop now because that will never happen, my love.—He said so close to my face that I could feel his fresh breath subtly hitting my face. I was so astonished by the nonsense he had just said that I didn't have time to react when his lips left a fleeting kiss on the corner of my mouth. This son of a...

—Come on, we'll go talk to that idiot, I mean Paul.— Without further ado, he started walking towards Paul's office, leaving me astounded with no chance to refuse his self-invitation, and wanting to give him a good punch to make him stop being such an idiot.

I clenched my fists in the air in an attempt to calm my growing anger.

—I have never stopped worrying about you. —I repeated his words in a poor imitation of his voice. —Whoever doesn't know him, let them buy it.

I had no choice but to follow in his footsteps, still feeling in a bad mood. After all, I would only make a small complaint, it wouldn't be the end of the world. My heels echoed behind Alexander, just as he reached the door of Paul's office, he stopped to wait for me.

—Ladies first.—He opened the door without knocking, as if he didn't care that Paul might be busy or simply not there. —I'm being quite the gentleman, they still exist.—

I passed him without looking at him, ignoring what he had just said. And when Paul saw me, he stood up from his seat with a smile on his face, which vanished when he looked behind me.

—Sarah, what a surprise to have you here. Come in, take a seat. —He pointed to the chair in front of him. I barely glanced at it, but I didn't sit down, I stood there watching him. —Did you have to come with this guy? —He asked, referring to Alexander, who stopped by my side as if he wanted to protect me from anything Paul could do.

But, I repeat, Paul was not capable of hurting me in my own company.

I opened my mouth to respond, but the words got stuck in my throat when I heard Alexander speak up.

—Of course, I have to be by my wife's side. We have been apart for a long time and now we can't be separated even for a second, right, honey? —I almost choked on my own saliva with Alexander's big lie. My head turned without any care to look at him with surprise and confusion.

But what was this idiot saying?

I needed a lot, a lot of patience, because Alexander easily destroyed it.

