

S2 Chapter 38

Samantha's POV

I was very worried about Catherine. With the news that Anna Johnson was pregnant with Alexander Miller's baby, Cat was devastated, of course. I spent the whole day switching Rick and Cat's offices, as she would now be assisting Patrick.

My mother had invited her boyfriend, Henry and Enzo for dinner with us on Saturday. The apartment was finally organized, and my mother was excited to have visitors, but the girls didn't want to come. Cat said she was too sad and didn't want to ruin my mother's moment.

Joaquin was the first to arrive and was telling me that his oldest son had just broken off his engagement because his fiancée was unsure if she really wanted to get married.

"How is he doing, Joaquin?" I asked, sympathizing with what must be a terrible situation.

Joaquin worked with my mother at the pharmaceutical company. He was a tall Black man, very kind, and treated my mother like a queen. He was a widower with three children, two women and a man. The women were already married, and his son, Vincent, was a doctor who had been engaged but suffered this disappointment.

"Ah, Sam, you know what? I think he's actually doing okay. But he's buried himself in work, taking one shift after another. I'm worried, but I don't want to invade his privacy," Joaquin explained.

"I think you're doing the right thing. Maybe working more is good for him right now," I tried to ease his concern.



The doorbell rang and I went to answer it. It was my boyfriend and our almost-son, as Henry had been saying lately. They arrived in high spirits, Enzo bringing a huge basket of chocolates, and Henry carrying two bottles of wine and flowers.

"Auntie, beautiful! I missed you this week," Enzo said right away.

"Enzo, you sweetie! I missed you too," I replied, giving him a hug. "And this beautiful basket, is it for me?"

"No way, auntie! This basket is for aunt Pearl, who was kind enough to invite me to dinner, which you didn't do," Enzo pretended to be upset, and I started laughing.

"Oh right, I forgot you two are close now." Enzo went in, and I hugged Henry.

"Sorry, my goddess, but these aren't for you either," Henry passed by me and went to give the flowers to my mother.

"Bunch of sweet-talkers!" I said, and they laughed.

We had a wonderful evening. Henry, Enzo, and Joaquin got along very well, and Enzo was very curious about the pharmaceutical industry, asking thousands of questions. We ended up accepting Henry's invitation to spend Sunday at sea on his yacht, and Enzo was more than excited to be able to invite his girlfriend.

After dinner, I gathered my things to spend the rest of the weekend at Henry's house. Joaquin had planned something special for my mother with my help. I was very happy to see that my mother had someone special in her life; she really deserved it, and Joaquin was a very good man.



We had an incredible and fun Sunday. Enzo's girlfriend was a beautiful and somewhat shy girl, but she was charmed by my mother. When we dropped her off at home in the early evening, her parents thanked us and praised Enzo highly.

"Ah, I felt so proud!" I said as we got into the car. "Our almost-son is such a gentleman, Henry!"

"We're doing a good job with this boy." Henry laughed, and we both turned to look at Enzo in the back seat.

"Wait till my mom hears this! She'll give you her twelve-hour labor sermon." Enzo laughed.

"Twelve-hour labor sermon?" I asked, confused.

"Hebe was in labor for twelve hours before this kid was born, so she uses that whenever someone compliments him, but especially when his father gets any praise for his son. She says since she carried him for nine months and felt the labor pains, everything he is or will become is thanks to her, and that he should love her like some kind of deity, more than any other living being on Earth." Henry was laughing as he spoke, making us all laugh until we got home.

On Monday, when I got home from work, I was exhausted. It had been a difficult day, with the Johnson family harassing Cat. I noticed everything was very quiet in the apartment. I took a shower and prepared dinner before my mother arrived, finding it strange that she was late, as she usually wasn't this delayed.

"Mom, finally! You're late today," I called from the kitchen when she came in.

"Oh, honey, sorry, I stopped by our old house to pick up a package that



arrived there that the neighbor received for me. And there was a letter for you too. I'll leave it here on the console table by the door, and I'm going to take a quick shower."

My mother went to her room, and I walked trembling toward the envelope, already imagining what it was, and I froze when I picked it up and saw the handwriting with the same address as the previous letter. Would I ever have peace? I hid the letter in my room and rushed back to the kitchen.

"Honey, who's sending you letters?" my mother asked suspiciously.

"Oh, it's just direct mail from a makeup company." I lied, but my mother was suspicious.

"Are you sure, Samantha?"

"Yes, mom!" I tried to smile. There was no reason to worry her, since whoever was sending the letters couldn't possibly discover our new address.

"Hmm! If there's any problem, you'll tell me?"

"I always do, mom."

"Okay." She sighed. "Honey, I want to talk to you about an offer I received."

"At work?"

"No. Joaquin asked me to move in with him. I asked for some time to think about it. Of course, he included you in the invitation, but we just moved and... I don't know." My mother seemed a bit nervous, and I laughed.



"Mom, I think Joaquin is a wonderful guy! I believe you two found each other and will spend the rest of your lives together."

"Did you talk to him? Because that's exactly what he told me."

"Yeah, he asked for my permission." I smiled at her. "I know he invited me too, but I think you two deserve to have your own place. So, if you don't mind, I can stay here in the apartment, or if you have other plans for it, I could go live with Manu."

"Are you trying to get rid of me, honey?"

"No, Mom! I love you and want you to be happy. I'm an adult now, and you don't have to worry about me. I think you should move in with Joaquin."

"But I don't want to leave you alone."

"I think this experience of living by myself could be good for me."

"Would you be okay?"

"Of course! And I'd visit you often."

"Then I'll think about it." My mother smiled.

"I thought you were already thinking about it?"

"I was thinking about refusing. Now I can think about accepting." She smiled and held my hand.

When I went to bed, I grabbed the letter that was burning under my pillow. After opening it, I started crying as I read what was written.

"Tick Tock. Time is ticking, little Samantha! And you haven't come to



visit me. I won't be in here much longer, and when I get out, you'll regret what you did to me. You'll come back to me and beg for your life every day!

Your love, Romulus''

The content wasn't very different from the first letter that contained a threat for me to visit him. But receiving a second letter made me afraid he might follow through with his threats. I decided that the next day I would talk to the lawyer and ask him not to tell my mother. Maybe he could do something to help me.