

S2 Chapter 46

Melissa's POV

Something had been bothering me that day. Things had been complicated since Alexander and Catherine had broke up. We were all walking on eggshells, trying to help our friends sort out this mess and move forward. Finally, things between Alexander and Cat were getting resolved. She spent two awful days at home but decided to get back with Alexander and face things head-on, which I thought was great. So I should be feeling at ease, but I was not. Something felt off.

Henry had been impossible for many days by then. He was nervous, careless, and barely stayed in the office. I had been giving him space because I thought it was about his father, but I was starting to suspect there was more to it.

Samantha was different too. She swore she was fine and seemed really excited about her mom moving out and leaving her the apartment. She had been a rock for Cat, taking care of her all day at the office, but something was off. Maybe she was just tired. But I was not sure. That surprise she was planning for Henry - I didn't even know if she went through with it, she hadn't mentioned it again.

"You know what? I'm not going to sit here wondering!" I got up and went to Henry's office. "Henry, got a minute?"

"Sure, Mel, come in." Henry replied, staring at his phone like it was some alien object.

"What's wrong?" I asked.

"What's wrong with what?" He responded, somewhat distant.

"That look on your face." I pointed at him and sat down.

"Oh, nothing really, just thought it was weird getting a call from the Social Club manager asking me to come in."

"Uh-oh, Henry, been misbehaving?" I smiled, knowing the Social Club only called members when they had broken some rules. 1

"Always thinking the worst of me, aren't you, Melissa?!"

"Of course, your past condemns you!" I smiled at him.

"Hmm." He smiled, but it didn't reach his eyes. "Tell me, what do you need?"

"I need to know what's going on." I said, and watched Henry turn pale.

"Wh... what... um... what are you talking about?" There it was. Something was definitely up!

"Exactly that!" I pointed at him. "What mess did you get yourself into?"

"Melissa, I..." He was pale as a sheet and couldn't find the words.

"Come on, Henry, spit it out." I said harshly, and he trembled.

But he was saved by the bell. Julia burst into the office all flustered.

"Henry, I'm sorry, but your father is causing a scene at the reception," Julia said, and Henry ran his hand over his face in exasperation.

"What a load of crap! When will this useless man leave me alone?" Henry was furious. He picked up the phone and dialed an extension. "Send two security guards up with Mr. Reynold Martin to my office. Nowhere else, straight to my office."

Henry hung up the phone and looked into my eyes, irritated. He took a deep breath and spoke again,

"Isn't it enough, Melissa? This man is hateful!" He tried to control his breathing and calm down. "If you and Julia want to leave to avoid meeting him, feel free."

"No, Henry, I'm going to help you kick his butt," I said and held his hand.

It didn't take long for the security guards to arrive with Reynold Martin, who was ranting. Henry met him at the reception and asked the security guards to stay close.

"What do you want now, Reynold?" Henry asked, and I could tell he needed to gather a lot of patience for this.

"You know what I want, you brat!" Reynold spat with rage dripping in his voice.

"And I've already told you I won't give it to you," Henry replied simply and directly.

"I'm going to crush you, you insolent kid. Always defying me, always interfering, always thinking you're better than me, but you're not!" Reynold spoke, and I had never seen anyone so petty in my life. "I'm going to take everything from you, and I've already started." He gave a demonic smile.

"What's he talking about, Henry?" I asked.

"Nothing important," Henry responded simply. "Do everyone a favor and leave, you creep!"

"No, I won't. I'm staying, and I'm going to take this company from you! What do you think, that you can match my strength? You can't. I'm going

to get into your sister's head, and she'll put all her shares in my name, and you know she does everything for me, that idiot, so needy for daddy's attention. With that, I'll have a lovely seat on the company board, and I'll manipulate everyone to turn against you, and when you least expect it, I'll drive you out of here."

Right at that moment, the elevator had opened, and Hebe stepped out, in time to hear the horror her father had spoken. Thick tears were falling from her eyes, and I felt an enormous hatred for this imbecile. I looked at Henry, and it was clear he was measuring what to say, his eyes fixed on his sister, who was standing behind their father, so I decided to take control of the situation.

"What a despicable little man you are!" I said coldly. "If you can even be called a man. You're nothing but a disgusting, opportunistic worm. Thank goodness Henry and Hebe have an extraordinary mother who raised them well, and they're nothing like you."

"And who do you think you are, you little tramp?" Reynold focused his insults on me. "Just because you're from an important family, you think you're somebody? Well, you're not - you're nothing but a spoiled little slut!"

"Keep barking! Your insults don't affect me because your opinion means nothing to me!" I said, stepping closer to him. "Now listen very carefully to what I'm about to tell you. Security will throw you out on the street, and don't you dare even pass by this building ever again. Don't you dare harass your children or grandchildren ever again, because one more dirty trick from you and that fat monthly allowance you receive will stop hitting your account, and you'll end up begging for pennies outside some church. And before you try anything, rest assured I have the power to make that happen! GOT IT?" I shouted the last word in his face as he looked at me, terrified.

"Who do you think you are?" He glared at me with rage.

"Melissa Larson! I'm sure my reputation precedes me." I said with complete confidence. "And I can even make you disappear. Want to test me?"

"You're crazy!" Reynold said, shrinking back.

"Completely! Just got out of the mental hospital last week. Another reason why you shouldn't try to mess with me. You know the Larsons can crush you like a cockroach." I knew very well the power and connections my family had and would use if necessary.

Hebe walked over and stood beside me, her face streaked with tears, looking at her own father with horror, evident disappointment, and hurt.

"I never thought you were like this. This despicable person everyone talks about. I always refused to see it because you're my father..." Hebe sniffled. "But what I just witnessed here was more than enough for me to believe you're much worse than what everyone says. Don't ever set foot in my house again and don't try to contact me or my family. My father is dead - you're just a man I despise now."

Hebe turned her back and walked toward Henry's office. But the wretch didn't know when to shut up and started to speak,

"As if..."

I knew he was about to say something terrible to her, so I grabbed him by the collar and slammed him against the wall, squeezing his neck.

"Don't you dare!" I said through gritted teeth. "Henry, can I have this idiot thrown out?"

"You should, Melissa. Thank you!" Henry turned his back and walked

toward his sister.

"Throw this guy in the gutter," I told the security guards. "And if he insists on making a scene, you can call the police to take him away. Spread the word – if he shows up again causing trouble, remove him from the building and call the police."

The security guards grabbed Reynold, one on each arm, and removed him. Julia came from the pantry with a bottle of cognac and four glasses.

"Tea won't be enough to calm everyone's nerves here," Julia said to me as we walked together to Henry's office.

"May we come in?" I asked, poking just my head inside. The two siblings were sitting on the couch embracing each other and motioned for us to enter.

"Come on, folks, a shot of this for everyone and calm will be restored," Julia said while pouring four shots of cognac.

Each of us took a glass, made a toast, and downed the drink at once. Julia poured another round for everyone and sat down. Hebe started laughing, clearly from nervousness, but it was impossible not to join in her laughter. And laughing did us good at that moment, along with the drink, it helped dissipate some of the tension.

"Thank you, Melissa! You were wonderful." Hebe said, reaching out to hold my hand.

"I'm so sorry you both had to go through this, Hebe," I said sincerely.

"Thank you. But it's better this way, I finally see what kind of person he is. I could have ended up doing what he wanted," Hebe lamented. "I'm sorry, Henry, you can cut off his allowance if you want."

"Don't apologize, Hebe." Henry held her hand. "But I won't cut off his allowance, not yet. We're not like him, as Melissa rightly said."

It broke my heart to see their sadness. But they would recover; they were good people surrounded by love and kindness.

"Hebe, what did you come here for?" Henry asked.

"To talk to you, but let's leave that for later. I can't handle it right now," Hebe requested.

"Alright. Hebe, I was called to the Social Club, do you know anything about that?" Henry asked, and Hebe shook her head. "Well, I need to go. Would you like me to call Edward to pick you up?"

"Oh, no need, my driver is downstairs," Hebe said, finishing the last sip of her cognac. "I'll go down with you."

We said our goodbyes and they left. When they entered the elevator, I looked at Julia, who seemed tired.

"This stuff is crazy, Julia!" I said, and she started laughing.