



Chapter 16

Laura

"I ruined everything, right?" Richard asked as he drove the car, and I just sighed silently as I wiped my tears and touched up my makeup. I was meeting my daughter in a little while, and I didn't want him to see me with my face swollen and my eyes red from crying. I didn't want my daughter to find out I was crying. 1

"To be honest, you messed up, Richard," I said bitterly. It was still difficult to remember the shameful way he introduced me to Jason at that lunch.

"Look, I just want you to understand that I was trying to help you. Holy shit, Laura. He's fucking Jason Davies, the billionaire who almost owns New York. He can make you stand out in this city just with a recommendation. I would even sell my soul to him if I had to be able to help you. How would I know he was your damn ex-husband?" He explained himself, and I couldn't deny that he was right, he was just looking out for me. 1

"It's okay, Richard. I'm just sorry for meeting him again after so long, he and I didn't have a friendly breakup..." I said fearfully that I didn't want to remember the past.

"I know so, after all, why would you want to disappear from Jason's sight for so long?" he said, being smart enough to steal the points. "Anne is his daughter, isn't she?" He asked, and I remained silent. Richard had been very close to Anne since he met us all those years ago.

It was a rainy night, and I was going through the worst drama of my life. Annie was still a baby in my arms, and I had just been evicted from the house I was living in with my daughter because I couldn't pay the rent for



five consecutive months. The landlord had no mercy on me that cold and rainy night, so I was walking on the road while my baby cried from hunger and cold because we were both soaked. I hadn't eaten anything, and consequently, my breasts didn't produce milk for Anne to be able to breastfeed food too. 2

I was crying desperately that night, with nowhere to go and no one to call. I was embarrassed to ask Ava for more money since I was having so much trouble that I was practically living off of her, and so I had paid dearly for that. It was when I was crossing the road and a car almost ran over me and my daughter, and we fell to the ground because of the fright because the car had stopped centimeters away from me. 2

"Good heavens, are you okay?" It was Richard who had almost run me over, he got out of the car to come and give me some assistance. I nodded fearfully and protected my baby, who was only crying more and more. 1

"I'm fine, sorry..."

"My Goodness," Richard stammered, seeing the situation I was in. "What about that bruise on your face? Did my car touch you? That baby is cold, you shouldn't be out here in the rain with such a small baby. Where are you going, lady? Can I give you a ride?" He said this, helping me up. I shook my head and covered my daughter even more. 1

"I'm fine, you can go," I said, already starting to move away from the strange man, but Richard didn't give up on me, even though he didn't even know me, he continued offering me help. 1

He took me to his house and gave me dry and clean clothes so that my baby and I could stay warm. He also gave me hot food, which I couldn't deny because I was starving and also because Anne needed breast milk. When my breasts were given milk, my daughter was able to feed and then fell into a deep sleep. Richard offered to take care of my injuries, which

had not actually been caused by his car but by the landlord of the house I was living in, who beat me up as a way of paying off the debt and then evicted me. ⑧

So it was from that day on that Richard didn't stop looking after me, he believed in me and gave me the job that started to slowly change my life. I owed my life to Richard, and Anne and I owed our lives to Richard, not to my ex-husband's son of a bitch. ⑨

"Damn, I want to turn this car around and punch that asshole," Richard said now as we both stared at the road in silence. He was angry. I could tell by the way his fingers were gripping the steering wheel of the car that he was angry knowing that my ex-husband had returned, because once Jason had returned, I doubted he would leave so easily.

I took my hand to his wrist and touched it to calm him down. "Calm down, Richard. I know this is all a shock, but relax, I don't blame you for anything. Now please, take me to Anne's place, I need to be with my daughter," I asked, and he nodded, doing the same to my request. ⑩

That afternoon, I took my daughter to the park and played with her, marveling at her giggles, which made me smile too. My daughter was so simple and innocent that I would have done anything to protect her from danger.

Two days later, we received an email from Nemesis saying that our project had been approved. I couldn't even be happy with that achievement because I knew my ex had a bad hand in it. Richard came into my office looking dismayed. "What's wrong with you, Richard? You should be happy because our project was approved by Nemesis, we won this project," I said, smiling sincerely at him. Despite having my ex-husband's rotten finger in that story, it didn't take away our merit



because we had worked hard to create that project.

"Did you see the conditions your ex-husband is asking for?" Richard said it angrily. "He wants you to go live in Manhattan, he's going to pay for housing and lodging for you for the duration of the project. He wants you around, but I'm not going to let it happen. I won't let him hurt you again!" 4