Irresistible Love

S.S.Sahoo

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Introduction

Irresistible Love

Chapter 1

Zachary Udolf Sullivan

I love you

I jerked up from my sleep and sat on the couch rubbing my face using my hands. Beads of sweat formed on my forehead as I shuddered in my place. Her voice still fresh in mind never allows me to sleep. All I ever wanted is to sleep, and that is to once and for all. Three months, eight days and five hours have passed since she has gone. She betrayed me. All those promises were just lies. Just plain lies. She promised me that she would always be there with me, forever but still, she broke her own promise and left me forever and ever. I inhaled deeply, as I got up from my office couch and walked to the glass window.

The clock read half past five in the morning. I looked back at my table to find my table all messy and a stack of important papers gathered in files. A sigh escaped my mouth as I shoved my hands into my pant pockets and stared at the trees which were black against the sky, the time of dawn, the sun was about to rise as I watched the birds already flying searching for their food. Traffic seemed less and only a few people who came out for what looked like jogging were visible down my office building.

I have been working late in the night wanting to finish all of my works which have remained pending for three months.

As I turned around to go back to the table, I felt the world rotating before my eyes as I stumbled on my own feet feeling dizzy. All of a sudden I felt my head hurting as if somebody was hammering on my head. All of this happening to me because of my lack of sleep. How will I sleep? How can I sleep when she betrayed me. Even though she betrayed me, she keeps on lingering in my mind every single time when I close my eyes. She shows up before me when I am sleeping when I am thinking when I wandering here and there when I am eating, just everywhere. She is with me even though she isn't near me.

I still remember when the cops got her body out from the car from underwater. I felt like killing myself. Why did I let her go?

It was all my fault.

She broke my heart and my soul into pieces. My hands trembled when the cops told me to remove the shroud from her face. Her face was ruined from the accident. I couldn't ever find the courage to look at her when the stupid cops declared her dead. Her father was screaming and fighting with the cops yelling at them that his daughter can't leave him. Her mother was on the ground senseless with the medical team assisting her. Her friend Kiara and her brother Jace where crying their eyes out while me, I just stood there with my back facing her body. She was

indeed wearing my shirt and my pants. It was undoubtedly her. But still, my heart screamed to me that she isn't the one that I was crying and breaking. *She can't be...*

Four people died that day. The truck driver whose truck hit my Juliette's car, the taxi driver, a lady in a black car and my *Juli...*

I still can't believe that she left me. I thought finally we were together and we were finally going to start our new life, together but then this had to happen. I refuse to believe that the body they found is of Juliette's. Even though it was wearing my clothes that she wore when she left me, even though her hair, her height everything matched Juliette's physique, still I refused to believe it was Juliette. But the way others behaved seeing that body made me believe it to be her forcibly.

But then I didn't have the courage to face her death for which I shut down myself from the world and when the pain didn't fade away I started drinking alcohol to the limit where I would tumble down and sleep at the same spot but it was only because of Max, Kristian and Willie I am standing here once again before the world. A facade of a mask on my face masking every emotion and feeling away from everyone. Earlier the facade that I had made started to break when she entered my life, but with her, the happiness and all the joys I had felt those days are just gone.

"Why did you leave me?" I mumbled as I crouched down on the floor holding my throbbing head. Earlier, I had taken sleeping pills to let myself sleep for some time but even those meds didn't work as she evaded my dreams in my sleep causing me to forcibly wake up. Now, the pills seem to be getting on to me as I felt dizzy and nauseous all of a sudden. Crawling back to the couch, I got hold of the water jug from the coffee table and splashed the water on my face.

Nothing is working...

Inhaling deeply and exhaling out, I leaned against the couch and closed my eyes for some minutes when didn't even realize when I fell asleep in my sitting position.

Excuse me?

Sir?

A sigh left my mouth when I felt something cold against my cheek.

Sir?..

Is someone calling me?

But who is it?

Chapter 2

Going against my will of falling asleep once again, I tried to open my eyes and when I did, I watched as two black orbs looked down at me worriedly. A woman with raven black hair and with pale complexion looked down at me with her hand on my cheek as she patted softly trying to gain my consciousness.

"Are you alright? Should I call the doc?" she asked and I furrowed my eyebrows when I realized her hand still on my cheek. I got hold of her hand and removed it from my cheek before letting her go. As I shifted on my position and tried to get up, my feets wobbled and I tumbled down but a pair of hands supported me by getting hold of my arm in the process to stop me from landing on the floor. The same woman got hold of my arm protectively trying to help me stand but then anger surfaced me for being touched by another woman other than my Juliette, I jerked her hands away and glared at her.

"I am fine," I gritted out and she smiled surrendering her hands in the air.

"Why were you sleeping there? I mean are you alrig-" I cut her off before she could complete "Who are you and what are you doing here?" I asked as I took in her appearance.

She was wearing a purple blouse with a cream-colored pencil skirt matched with beige colored heels. Her dress was formal and I saw files and a tab on the table which I assumed to be hers.

"Oh, I am Cristina Dimir. I am your personal assistant," she said and I raised an eyebrow at her.

"I mean I was Mr. Kristian's assistant but now when you are joining back I am appointed by Ms. Cosmina as your new PA," she said which made me look down at my feet.

Indeed, Kristian played a big role in my absence. He took care of mine as well as his business when I was lost trying to find myself.

"Then where were you from this past ten days?" I asked as I remembered not seeing her around in the office from the last ten days since I've joined back.

"Oh, I was on a holiday," she said smiling at me showing me her dimples which reminded me of Juliette. My eyes remained fixated on her dimples until she cleared her throat which got me out of my state.

"Get me a cup of black coffee and Mr. Pachia's file," I said as I stood up from my place but the sudden impact of me standing made me feel dizzy once again, and I held my head groaning.

"Sir are you al-" before she could reach out and touch me, I held a finger before her stopping her from coming forward.

"Do what I have asked you to do," I ordered her in a strict commanding tone.

She blinked her eyes several times before she nodded bobbing her head from side to side as she turned around and picking up her files and tab and walked out of the room but not before glancing my way.

I sighed as I picked my suit up from the couch and wore it buttoning it up as I walked to the table and looked at the clock which read a quarter past nine in the morning. Judging from the time, I concluded my employees must have already reached the office and I should also get back into my work before Juliette evades my blank mind. Raking a hand through my hair, I concentrated further on my work but failed miserably because I couldn't just forget Juliette just because I didn't want to remember her.

She was my life, my soul, my everything. I could still feel her presence beside me, she was in my breath.

I took my phone out and opened the gallery where I clicked on her picture. The picture of her that I had taken forcibly in the day when our whole family was out on a picnic. I remember joking with her that I was taking the picture because she told me to cradle up happy memories and be happy with the family but for me being with her was the only happiest thing that ever happened to me. I pulled her to me and clicked a photo of her and me. She was looking at me while I looked at the phone camera. If I had known that the picture I was taking with her would be the only picture which I would have with her then I would've never...

"Your coffee sir," my trains of thoughts were interrupted by none other than Ms. Dimir. She placed the cup of coffee down on my table and kept Mr. Pachia's file before me all the while a smile plastered on her face which irked me.

Why are other people so happy?

Am I the only one whose happiness has been pulled away in this world?

"Any other work sir?" she asked and I nodded my head no. She nodded her head and turned around to leave but stopped when I called for her "Ms. Dimir," she stopped and turned around smiling at me "Yes Sir?" she asked as she pulled the tab close to her chest "Next time when you come in don't forget to knock!" I said nonchalantly and pointed her my finger towards the door asking her to leave.

She looked back at the door and then at me. Her smile faded away as she nodded once again absentmindedly and she walked out of my room.

"Everyone seems so happy, Juliette" I looked back at Juliette's picture on my phone as I talked to her.

"But except me," I completed as I felt my eyes stinging and tears streaked down my cheeks uncontrollably. I kissed her picture and kept the phone aside as I wiped my face using my handkerchief and lifted up the hot cup of coffee to my lips to drink but couldn't. My appetite

was long lost. Nothing seemed to extinguish the fire of my burning soul, nor did anything soothe my pain of being left alone to deal with the world by Juliette.

"My only wish is that please come back to me, my Juliette" tears continued streaming down my face as I thought about her, again and again, cursing myself for letting her go alone that day.

Chapter 3

Zachary Pov

"Where are the weapons?" I asked as calmly as I could.

"I-I don't know," he trembled before on the floor, knelt on his knees he joined his palms and begged me for his life.

"Pitiful," I spat and shoved the back of the gun on his face. He fell down on his side and before I could kick him in his face Willi came in between us stopping me.

"Let me handle this," he asked and I glared at him. Huffing at him I turned around and rubbed my face aggravated by the situation. The illegal arms that were supposed to transfer to my dealer today vanished in the mid road and the only person we got in our hand was the driver. According to him, some thugs stopped the truck and took the arms with them throwing the driver on the road but I am far too concerned about it. I don't really care about the driver but only my arms. I need to transfer it to my dealer anyhow and the dare of those thugs.

"He is just keeping on repeating that some thugs stole it," came Willi's tired voice.

"Finish him," I stated not even looking back at the driver.

"What?" he asked in shock and the driver whimpered and cried as soon as he heard.

"Kill him," I said my eyes void of any emotions.

"We can't do that. He is the only one who can tell us where the weapons are," Willi said and I took my phone out of my pant pockets when it vibrated.

As I read the text message from my informant an irritated and annoyed expression marred my face as I turned around ready to kill the damn bastard of a driver.

"Well, I can tell you where the weapons are," I gave out a sarcastic laugh and the next moment a gunshot was heard in the room. The driver's leg was shot by none other but me as I pointed the gun at his face as I looked at him with an intention to kill him then and there.

"What are you doing?" Willi yelled at him and tried to get on my way to stop me from killing the driver. I showed him the text message and as realization struck him, he looked back at the driver who was yelling and sobbing because of his wounded leg.

"You bastard! You surrendered the truck to the damn cops?" Willi snapped at him and the next moment he was the one who kicked him in his stomach.

"This crazy bastard," I muttered as I looked the driver getting hit and I kept on watching until he was on the verge of death.

"Stop," I said and Willi looked back at me.

"But he-" he stopped midsentence when he noticed my murderous expression.

"On whose order did you do that?" I asked as calmly as I could to the driver who writhed in pain on the ground with hands tied on his back.

"I will never tell you," he laughed and spat blood on the ground.

"We will see that," I said and turned around to Max.

"Bring the taser, use it on him until and unless he tells the truth. Don't let him sleep or die. Make him suffer," I looked back at the driver who was breathing heavily.

"Start now!" I said and walked out of the room.

His plea of agony could be heard even after I walked out the warehouse. They did their work perfectly of making him suffer.

"Call Jeremiah and tell him about the situation,"

Willi nodded and fished his phone out of his pant pockets in order to call our man who worked as a cop. I walked to my car and got in. Igniting the engine and drove off to my office building. Its been three to four days since I went back to my office. I have been busy solving my illegal dark matters lately and because of that, I have not been able to work on my legal works.

"Good afternoon Sir," Cosmina greeted as I walked past her desk.

"Send every important file that you need to sign to my cabin, I intend on finishing every pending work of mine today itself," I said as I stopped in my tracks and looked back at Cosmina. As I was talking I heard a loud gasp and turned to my side to find the woman whose name I remembered as Cristina starring at my hand with wide eyes.

"Sir you have blood on your hand and also on your sleeves. Are you hurt?" the woman tried to touch my hand but I jerked my hand away even before she could touch me and glared at her.

"Mind your own business Ms. Dimir," I said nonchalantly and looked back at Cosmina.

"But Si-,"

"Send me the files Cosmina," I said and turned around to leave.

As soon as I went inside my cabin, the first thing I did was to walk to the small shelve where I took my extra shirt out and went inside the bathroom to wash the blood and change my shirt. Everything is messed up in my life. I watched as the water turned red as it washed away the stains of blood from my hand into the sink. The water running down from my hand had all my attention. I looked at myself in the mirror.

Nothing

There was nothing in my face. I was expressionless. Tired. And most importantly I didn't look a bit like Zachary Udolf Sullivan. But this was the reality the man who was standing right before me inside the mirror was actually me. A loser who has lost everything in his life.

"You don't really deserve happiness," I mumbled looking at reflection before splashing a handful of water on my face.

Life has to go on and I have to live. I just can't break down like this; I bet Juliette wouldn't have liked seeing me like this but I just can't do anything. Every time I try to even think about moving on with my life I just can't. I thought I would live the rest of my life with her. It's not her fault that I am in this position of my life nor do I blame anyone. But every time I look at myself the only thing that I think of is how would my life been if she was here. I knew she didn't hate me anymore like she did when I kidnapped her for the first time. I knew that her hatred soon changed to that of love and she loved me truly then why? Why? Just why do we have to be like this?

Chapter 4

I was the one who has killed people, who had done so many wrong things then why was she the one to lose her life? I should have been the one. Why was she punished because of my sins? We both are punished. Me; by losing the only person I loved so much in my life and her; because she was in love with a sinner. The hell with God forgives repentant sinners, he punishes the one next to the sinner. And in my case, the only person next to me was my Juliette.

"The files you asked for," Ms. Dimir placed the files before me on my table. I looked up at her from reading glasses and narrowed my eyes at her "I thought I had asked for Cosmina to bring me the files,"

"She was actually held back by the Managing Director while she was coming so she asked me to hand you the files," she said and gave me a smile.

"Kristian is in the office today," I mumbled to myself but she heard it and replied with a quiet 'yes'.

"Ask him to meet me. You may leave," I told her without even looking back at her too busy in reading the files but I could still feel her presence.

"What is it?" I asked as I looked back at her. She looked startled all of a sudden but then she stood straight in her place and then her eyes averted to my hand.

"Ho- I mean How is your wound? You had blood all over your sleeves beforehand. Should I bring you the firs-,"

"Ms. Dimir," I intervened her and she looked at me "Mind your own business aye?" I gave her a stern look and pointed towards the door with my eyes. She inhaled deeply and nodded before turning on her heel and walking out but she did turn around to look my way once before walking out of my cabin and closing the door after her.

"How annoying," I muttered and skimmed through the files.

"The more we meet the more older you look," Kristian voiced out his thought as he barged into my cabin without knocking.

"When will you learn to knock?" I asked as I continued typing on my laptop.

"And when will you take care of yourself?" he asked which made me look up at him.

"Look at your knuckles," he said and I ignored him not even bothering to look at my knuckles because I already knew that it had scratches from all those punchings.

"Not a new thing," I muttered in reply.

"Of course it's not a new thing but its also becoming your habit. You no longer seem to take care of yourself. Get a grip on yourself else it will be bad for your business," he said and that made me look up at him. I narrowed my gaze at him and watched as he smirked back at me sitting on top of the corner of my table.

"Get off my table," I had to glare at him to keep my point because he is not from the one who takes me seriously.

"Oh boy! You and your mood," he shrugged before getting off my table. He walked around and sat on the chair before throwing his head backward and exhaling out a breath.

"I heard what has happened. Arms has been seized by the police hu?" he leaned against the chair comfortably and took the paperweight rolling it between his hands he spoke "Now they will look into it and then they will find you in no time," biting down on his lower lip he looked towards the glass window as he kept the paperweight back on the table.

"Want me to take the lead in this matter?" he asked out of nowhere.

"You?" I scoffed at the thought and closed the laptop shut.

"Yes me!" squinting his eyes at my direction he rubbed his eyes with his palm before getting off from the chair.

"I have assigned Willi into this matter. He can take care of thi-"

"Aren't you playing too naive lately hu?" he slammed his hands on my table.

"You have blind trust on that guy. As much as I remember he was the one who killed my cousin and your sister isn't it?" he asked raising an eyebrow and I clasped my hands and kept my elbow on the table "He has won my trust and I am not blind when it comes to him. I do have my eyes set on his movement,"

He looked at me for some seconds before he laughed aloud "Hmm Interesting. Indeed very interesting,"

"Well, then I'll be off now. I have work to do. Give me a call if you need me. I'm off to Melbourne now," a ghost of a smile played on his lips as he adjusted his tie.

"Melbourne? Why Melbourne?" I asked thinking what type of work does he have in Melbourne when all his business is in here in Romania.

"Huh?" he looked up at me with his raised eyebrows before speaking "Oh it's nothing. Just that unlike you I do have a woman whom I cherish and is alive," he air quoted the word alive. In a jerk, I was on my feet seething with anger for his disrespectfulness.

"Kristian you need to hold your tongue before me," I said as calmly as I could not wanting to hurt my brother.

"That..." he bent towards my direction ina mocking state with his hands shoved into his pant pocket "Is purely upon me, my brother" he smirked and taking tentative steps walked out of my room leaving me burning with rage.

"Idiots! All are idiots," I muttered to myself as I raked a hand through my hair.

Chapter 5

"What is it?" I asked enunciating each word and held the gun tightly as I could feel the pulse in my body rising bit by bit as I took in what has happened.

"B-Boss...it's about Willi...," Max said as he gulped down audibly and took few steps back as I passed the gun to my other hand all the while trying hard as much as I could to control the anger that was forcing me to kill everyone then and there.

"I-It looks like Willi has gone missing," his voice trembled in the end and that was it. I threw the gun on the glass window next to me in anger. The glass shattered into pieces as soon as the gun hit it and pieces of glass went past piercing my skin due to the effect. Even though blood oozed out from all over my face and on the skin on my hand I refused to wince.

The anger that I was feeling dominated my pain and at the moment I was anything but calm. My mind went blank all of a sudden forcing me to think in what point I went wrong. Where was the point in my life where I made a wrong decision for which my every plan is getting destroyed bit by bit. Why is this all of a sudden I have to go through severe paths of failure? My hands formed into a fist as I looked out of the broken glass.

"G-General is here to meet you," Max said out before I heard the door of my study room opening.

"What a scene," I heard my grandfather's voice," as he walked in and stood behind me. I could feel his presence all the while but refused to turn around to look at him. It was the last thing ever that I wanted him to see me like this. I was a failure.

"Udolf?" he chuckled when I didn't turn around to face him and that was when I heard Max talking to him before taking his turn to leave us alone in the room.

"I thought you were back on your island..." my voice was neutral as I spoke. As he had always taught me. Never to show emotions. I was trained better to show the saddened and the emotions of a failure to the one who was the mentor.

"Well, Kristian called me back and I can see why all of a sudden he wanted me here," he laughed before clearing his throat.

"Well, this is refreshing." I heard him mutter with a sigh.

Even though I wanted to ask him what he meant but chose to stay quiet already knowing that he would answer my unasked question all by himself.

"Whenever I look at you, I am reminded of my youthful days. You have inherited me well. Even your father...he used to behave just like you do. We all same..." he chuckled.

"Udolf your father believed that no matter what you would be the only one in this family who would always stand strong no matter what. Don't assume that I don't know about the things that you have been going through. Kristian has told me everything. I believe most of your sentiments are connected with Julliette's death..."

"General..." my voice was hoarse as I intervened him from saying anything further.

"You can't go on avoiding this every day. You have to move on now and its the time for you get your head right back at your work. I see... you are not really paying attention to the ones in your surrounding and that is why today you are suffering all this. Remember this Udolf...it was you who chose this line. Nor me or your father ever wished or forced you to be on the same path as we were. You wanted to carry on the business and it was why you fought with Gale to take over the business. Even though your grandmother and your mom and I believe Juliette must have also hated this profession but still you are the one who chose this line. So, what I mean is... if you were the who chose this...then you should be the only one to hold onto this. I do know how it feels when you are away from your loved ones... but as I retired I understood that this was the life I would never ever chose in my next birth. Neither Kristian was ready to work in this line for which he chose to work his own and today he is successful. Even you...You did a tremendous job of working and handling both of your day and night shift work."

"So far you have been successful but now its the point in your life where you have to stop and think. Do you really want to continue this? As you chose this path I took it as my duty as your General and grandfather to teach you well how to handle all this but now I want to take it back. You don't have to do this any longer. I already have enough your grandmother's hatred for this profession and I believe your mother and even Juliette had their fair share of hatred for this profession. You need to understand this well Udolf ... if you are in this profession you can't lose your balance. Think ten times before you take a step and I do have faith in you. I believe you will be back on your feet before no time. So think what I have just said. Either leave this...and live like a normal human being else keep walking on this path but all the while dodging the obstruction cunningly. It is what I expect only from you Udolf..." he said and I heard the screeching of the chair on which I assumed he was sitting.

He was leaving.

"I will use my brain better from now on..." I spoke out "But... Juliette will be living in my memories. I will never except it that she is not with me and I won't ever forget her..." my words were filled with determination. Forgetting Juliette was the most painful thing than enduring physical and mental pain.

"Hmmm. As I had told you..." as he spoke I turned around to look at him. He had a sinister smile plastered on his face as he continued "This is really refreshing," he smiled and turned around and walked out of the room.

"Vă mulțumesc bunicul," Thank you, Grandfather.

"Let's start from the beginning hmm?" I asked in a calm tone as I took a seat before the driver who backstabbed me by surrendering my arms to the cops.

He looked like a trash. His clothes were torn and his face; swollen and bruised all over. My eyes fell on his left hand to find two of his finger including his index and middle finger gone. It was what he got for backstabbing me.

"I have nothing to tell you..." he snarled and it was when Max kicked him on his back and he fell on my knee hitting his nose on the process.

"Now...Now" grabbing his hair I pushed his head back and looked into his eyes.

"Max...bring out that pruner...I think chopping all his finger would work..." as I said that he crawled back until his body hit the wall and he looked frightened.

"Alright Boss..." Max obliged as he went out of the darkroom and bought the pruner.

I passed the pruner from one hand to other putting a mocking show of chopping his finger. For the first time ever after so many days, I felt confidence in me.

Chapter 6

Max dragged him by his hair and made him sit right before me before forcibly pulling his hands up for me to chop his finger.

"No! No!" he screamed thrashing around and tried to pull his hand back but was completely at a loss as he was held firmly by Max.

"Don't worry. It won't hurt.." a smirk appeared on my face watching him suffer and his wailing gave me more joy for torturing him.

"You called it upon yourself..." I said as I grabbed his hand as I glared at him I pressed the pruner on his thumb. The room filled up with his wailings and yellings as I pressed it tighter enough to the point where the blades went past his skin but the pressure was not enough to cut his finger but was enough for him to yelp in pain.

"Stop! Stop! I'll tell you every-thing. Please stop!" he cried out and as he said that I stopped putting pressure on the pruner and watched as blood oozed out of his thumb.

"Hu.." Max huffed at him and left him and stood right behind him.

"I'll tell you everything. But you have to promise me that you would set me free afterward...deal?" the driver huffed out air and exhaled in the air as he talked.

"You scum...you're not in any position to make a deal with us-"

"Deal!" I said cutting Max in the middle.

"What? But Bos-"

"We just want the information. Give it us and we will set you free. I will even forget that you backstabbed me." I said as calmly as I could to the driver and he nodded looking relieved a bit. he withdrew his hand back and inspected the cut before looking back at me.

"I was paid. I was paid to vacate all of your arms before the police station. They couldn't find me because I had contacts with one of the cops who helped me in vacating the weapons and he even helped me flee. It was a plan to destroy you and I was just a pawn in that game.

"Interesting. Now, who was the one who gave you the money?" I asked as I kept the pruner on my left thigh and leaned back against the chair and looked at him sitting on the ground.

"I don't know. A man visited me the same day when the arms were loaded on the truck and asked me to surrender it in return for money. I was selfish and I took the money and did as he told me to do.

"The face of the man?" Max asked him.

"He was just in a yellow jacket with his hoodie on his head and he had his face cover up to his nose... like this," he gestured towards his face and used his trembling bloodied hands to show me how the man covered his face.

"You mean that man came to our warehouse where the truck was being loaded and paid you the money and went away?" Max asked looking astonished.

"The man knew where our works are done. He must be completely aware of it from the beginning. This only indicates one thing...and its that the man is from our group else he couldn't have entered in our land so easily." I muttered to myself.

"Max....go and get me the CCTV photage of the day where our arms were being loaded," I said and he nodded in response as he turned around ready to live.

"But before that..." I got up from the chair all the while both of their eyes trained on me and passed the pruner to him.

"Cut all of his fingers before anything else," as soon as I said that the driver yelled curses on my directions and tried to get up wanting to run away.

"You lied about the deal. You said you'll set me free..." he yelled at me while I smirked at him and shook my head.

"I lied. And I never really told you that I would not punish you for backstabbing me for money. This all happened because of you...You will have to pay for it,"

"Take care of him," I said and Max nodded before walking towards the man as I walked the other way all the while hearing the driver's pleas and wailings.

Skimming the video properly I watched the CCTV photage countless times wanting to get a clue on the identity of the yellow hoodie man. The driver was truthful when he said he was unable to see his face. He was indeed wearing a mask under his eyes covering half of his face.

And the way he walked and looked here and there..it was proved that he knew the place.

"Who are you?" I thought as I watched it again and again.

"Whoever you are...Just make sure I don't catch you..else you would die a painful death..." I smirked when I got a hint looking at a ring that he was wearing.

"Ahh...I see," a sinister smile broke on to my face as I finally recognized the man.

"You have called it upon yourself. This time I will kill you for sure," I muttered as I pulled the drawer in my study table and pulled the revolver gun out.

"Enough of me in forgiving you," I muttered as I inserted the bullets into the chamber.

"Gale..." I spoked his name out with venom and stood up from the chair as I looked at the loaded gun and made up my mind to finish him off this time my eyes fell on Juliette's photo on my table.

"You see this? He called it upon himself. I don't really want to give pain to my mother but this time it is beyond tolerance. I hate him so much, Juliette. What should I do?" I picked up the photo frame in which she was sitting next to her friend Kiara. This was the picture which I took sneakily when we went out for a family picnic.

"This was what I scared the most out of everything. I never really had any intention of breaking my own family but it looks..." I trailed a finger on her face "This is what destiny have for me." my eyes watered up at the corners and before I knew it I slammed the photo frame back on the table and walked out of the room taking long strides wanting to end all this for all.

Chapter 7

The sky seemed to be clear after pouring for continuous two days. Finally, the rays of the sun hit the drenched leaves of the trees and plants as the birds who sat on the birdbath shooks their beaks and looked up towards the sky before flying off to their nests. I watched all of this standing on my balcony.

The view was quite something. It was soothing and calming compared to the one I see back in the city. There was no chaos of traffic, no skyscrapers to block the sky and my view, no people around, and no noise. It was only trees in place of the skyscrapers, birds, and animals in place of traffic and humans and quietness in place of noise. I loved this place. Away from everything...away from every hustle and bustle of the city....away from every single problem but alas like every day gets over and is replaced by the darkness of night...the time to be spent here is soon going to be over and even if I don't want it to get over so soon...still it had to and we have to leave this soothing place to go back to our old forms of living in that concrete jungle that we call a city.

"Master, your luggage has been packed and the car is ready," the butler told me as I turned around to face him.

"Where is she?" like everytime my voice was void of any emotions and I expected a clear answer from him.

The old butler clasped his white-gloved hands on his front and bow down his head before replying "Miss Ungur is on the way. She has desired you to meet her at the front. She said she needs to pack a little more before she is ready to leave," he bowed once before turning around and vanishing inside the woodland mansion.

I looked back when I heard the sound of the car honking and like the butler told me a few seconds ago...the car was ready for us. The driver stopped the car and got out holding a piece of cloth and he began to wipe the windscreen oblivious to the fact that I was watching.

"Oh...you all are already leaving,"

"Grandma..." I turned around as soon as I heard her voice. There she was walking down the stairs as she made her way towards me and engulfed me in a hug.

"I don't want you to go..." she whined and that made me smile softly at her. For... she was the only person who ever showed me affection and made me realise what care truly means.

"We shall be back soon beautiful," I kissed her palms and smiled at her. She tried to return back the smile but failed when her eyes watered and she withdrew her hands and hid her face in her sleeves.

"Grandma..." I engulfed her in my arms.

"Join us. Come with us..." for the umpteenth time I begged her to come and live with us but then once again she nodded her head no and smiled up at me.

"It's alright. I'm fine here. I love this place and I don't want to live your grandfather alone... here..." her voice broke down at the end and automatically my hold tightened around her.

"I know he must be watching us from up there and I believe he wouldn't like seeing you like this everytime Grandma..."

"Still. I can't leave this place. I don't want to. I feel as if your grandfather is right beside me in here. I don't really feel lonely..." she sighed and looked up at me as I took a step back removing my arms from around her.

"It feels as if you two just visited me yesterday but now you both are leaving..." her eyes saddened but before I could reply a voice stopped me and both of us looked towards the source.

There she was..standing on the porch as she looked towards us with a smile on her face. Her jet black hair flew up into her face as the wind blew around her and with a smile, she raked her hand through her hair removing them from her face as she made her way towards us.

If you want I can stay here for more days Granny..." she ran up to us and engulfed Grandma into a hug.

"Oh, Ivona..." Grandma laughed as she patted her arms that were around her neck.

"Is it possible?" she asked blinking her eyes at me. Both of them looked back at me with a pleading look.

"She can't Grandma...you know we need to be present in the con-"

"Please, Alex! I don't want to leave this place yet. At least let me stay here for a week. I promise I shall be with you on time for your conference. Please?" Ivona pleaded.

"Ivona you have never been out without me and y-"

"She is not alone Alex." Grandma huffed at me and that made me instantly close my mouth.

"I am here with her. And be honest here, will you? It's not about her being out alone in nowhere in this island in the middle of a forest but its everything about you not wanting to leave your fiance alone for a second isn't it Alex?" Grandma wiggled her eyebrows at me. Wrinkles formed on the side of her eyes and her green eyes sparkled up with mischief as she mocked me.

"Grandma it's nothing like tha-"

"Alex please?" Ivona pleaded for the second time and I looked back at her. Her blue eyes pleading me to give up on the decision to take her back to the city...back to normal self...back to family...back to work.

My eyes roamed on her face before I turned around and looked at my surrounding. Surely, we were in the middle of nowhere. The woodland mansion was surrounded by trees and there was no other infrastructure visible to my vision. We were on an Island that my Grandma owned. A very small island but it took only twenty-five minutes to reach the nearby port by a speedboat. And it was how she and grandfather used to live. Away from everyone.

"Fine," I muttered as I looked back at them.

"Really?" Ivona's eyes lit up and she walked to me. I nodded and it was when she flung her arms open and pulled me into a hug.

"Oh Thank you so much! Alex!" she beamed with happiness.

"Yes! Thank you, my baby," it was Grandma who was the second person to engulf both of us into a tight hug.

"What are you two doing? L-Leave m-me!"

Chapter 8

"Oh I'm so sorry!" both of them said in unison as they let go of me. I huffed out a breath of air which they managed to choke by hugging me at the same time.

"Fine! You can stay here for a week. I will send Rica to escort you back to the city. I'll be leaving now," I said as I took a step towards Grandma and kissed her temple.

"Take care... I shall come back to visit you soon okay?"

"Hmm..." she smiled fondly at me and patted my cheek.

"If you need anything... Just give me a call" I told Ivona and took a side step when she took a step towards me wanting to hug me.

I was still not comfortable with her being my fiance. This marriage deal was getting on my nerves.

Sadness marred her face as she looked down and hummed at me as a reply. Still, I chose to ignore it as I looked at the wristwatch that read nine in the morning. I had two more hours to reach my office for my meeting. It was when I sped up my pace and walked up to the car where the driver was ready to drive me off to the boat.

The clock read ten in the evening. I plopped down on my couch as I held my forehead and rubbed my temples feeling the exhaustion growing up inside me even though I just returned from a week holidaying at my Grandma's. Leaning against the couch... I looked out of the glass window towards the building when I heard my phone beeping.

A text message.

It was Ivona.

There were three text messages and two missed calls from her. The day was hectic with me attending three meetings and catching up with the works that I left pending before I went on the holiday. I didn't even had the time to check the phone but I surely had the idea that Ms Ivona Ungur my supposed to be fiance would have surely called me to check on me. It was her habit to call me every day and talk to me even though she knew I barely had any interest in her stories and what she did the whole day. According to her, she wanted me to socialise with her to know me better. And even though I hated it, in the beginning, I grew up to accustom with her ways. And finally, I would call her back or text her back letting her know that I got her text messages.

"Alex..Hi.." her voice seemed down compared to other days where she would talk breathlessly in a single go.

"You alright?" I poured the water from the jug into a glass and gulped it down feeling thirsty all of a sudden.

"Yeah! I mean yes I am alright."

"What happened? I do remember you being the one insisting on staying in there. You are tired just in a single day. How Peculiar.." I chuckled at the thought and leaned back as I stared blankly at the roof unbuttoning the first few buttons of my shirt.

"No, I'm not tired. It's just that my head hurts." she groaned a little.

"It must be because of travelling. You have been travelling continuously past these months. It's probably because of lack of sleep."

"Hmm. I think the same," she said and then she coughed.

"You alright?" I asked as I heard her breathing in deeply.

"Yeah! Y-Yeah.."

"Ivona?"

"Oh dammit! I don't know what's wrong with me. Ever since I met that woman in the mall in the morning ...my head has been hurting tremendously. I can't bear it any longer," she groaned and I raised an eyebrow at her before sitting up on the edge and bowing a little wanting to get rid of my shoes.

"Who was that and what did she do?" I asked as I removed the shocks and was just going for the other one when she replied: "I don't know. I don't think I have ever met her before. Grandma and I went to the mall today and it when I met that woman who ran after me yelling at me like a maniac," she exclaimed and I chuckled at it.

"Why? Did you steal something from her shop?" I couldn't help but to joke and she huffed in response.

"No... I didn't! And she wasn't any shopkeeper or sales girl. She looked like a customer. I don't have any idea what she meant when she ran after me all of a sudden calling me Juliette," I froze on my spot.

"What do you mean?" my voice void of any emotions.

"I don't know. I was in the shoe shop when that woman saw me and yelled at me 'Juliette? Wait! Juliette! I'm Kiara! Juliette is that you! Juliette!'... I even told her that I'm Ivona but she didn't seem to understand...I think she misunderstood me for someone else...I don't even know her...and finally the saleswoman and the guards came to my rescue and it was when I ran away and hid myself in the mall's washroom until Grandma called me and we came back home straight after that..." her voice seemed low much to my dislike.

"The woman seemed possessed. I was scared. Hugh!...What a day!" she sighed and it was when I lost my control.

"Ivona..."

"Yes?"

"Pack your bags. I'll be there in an hour to bring you back!"

Chapter 9

Zachary Pov

"Been a while..isn't it?"

The dark room enlights up when Max turned up the lights and the two of the hostage looked up squinting their eyes when the light hit their eyes.

"You son of a bitc-"

"Nicholas!" his father cut his son off and shook his head no warning him not to open his mouth.

"See? Your father is such a polite man and indeed...intelligent..." I chuckled as I took a seat on a chair before them.

"Why have you kept us alive?" Vito talked to me for the first time. He has been tight-lipped from the day they have been captured and that captured my interest.

"Well, someone is in talking mode today," I mocked earning a glare from Nicholas.

"Honestly, I take my words back. You two are the dumbest people I have ever met in my life," I sighed as I folded up my sleeves and crossed my arms across my chest leaning against the chair as I lift my leg up and kept it on the other one as I took in their appearance.

My people totally forgot what the word sanitization actually means because it was how they had kept these two all these while my absence. They were wearing the same clothes in which they were captured. Their shirt dirty and bloodied, hair messy, bruises and blood stains on their skin and they smelled like rotten rats.

"Jeez!" fanning the air before my nose, my nose scrunched up when the scent of raw blood assaulted my nose and it was when my eyes fell on Nicholas' leg.

"Seth!" I called the guy who was supposed to be the caretaker of the two guest.

"Yes, Boss!" within a minute he entered the room and stood in between us exchanging glances towards our guest.

"What is this way of handling our guests Seth? Where are your manners?" I asked and even though he didn't understand what I meant he hung his head low and waited for me to continue.

"Look at his leg. He is bleeding. What do you think you have been doing? From now on, take even more good care of our guest, do you understand?" my voice raised a little at the end and all he did was to nod his head.

"Now what are you waiting for? Go! serve our guests. His leg is bleeding...go and bring a cloth and mop the floor. Do you have any idea how costly the flooring is? His dirty blood is ruining

my floor and moreover, this place has started to stink. I don't want people who come to my house think this place as a butcher shop or something. It's terrible!" I huffed at the end.

Seth nodded and left out of my sight leaving the four of us including Max who was standing in the corner of the room to talk privately.

"You little! Unhand me this instant and I'll show you what I have got!" Nicholas spat enraged all of a sudden.

"Easy there tiger...I believe you don't want me to hurt your father now, do you? hmmm?"

"Nicholas..." Vito whispered yelled at him.

"Why have you kept us alive? What do you want?" Vito spoke up.

"Why? Do you have a desire to die soon?" I asked as I raised an eyebrow at him.

"But..." I moved forward in my chair as I stared straight into his eyes "Even though my desire is to kill you here this instant...I won't. I won't until and unless both of you beg me to kill you. You fucking rats have the guts to look straight into my eyes even after what you did to my sister and you dumbasses of the century thought barging into my territory and abducting Juliette would have been a good ide-"

"Huh! What's the point anymore? The bitch is already dead." Nicholas spat cutting me off in the middle.

The room was instantly marred with silence as I stopped in the middle and stared at him with a blank expression. Even though I didn't move in my spot still I could feel as if pins were continuously stabbing my skin all over my body. My chest tightened up and my jaw locked up as my fingers formed into a tight fist.

"Max..."

"Yes, Boss?"

"Have Rafael Amputate his hand. Torture him to the extent until-"

"What! Wait...No!" interrupted Vito's shaking voice.

"Until he is on the brink of death. But be careful, don't kill him just yet. Let him breathe and suffer little more. He should understand what it feels when a person is on the brink of death. He should feel how my sister was feeling when he killed her mercilessly. Record everything and send it to me," I got up as I adjusted my suit.

"No! No! No!" Vito yelled at me.

"It was all my plan. Not his. Don't kill my son. Kill me in his place. No!" begged Vito.

"Don't worry your turn would come soon after," I said icily as I turned around avoiding Nicholas' curses and Vito's pleas.

"Unlike you. I won't separate a family because I know how it feels when the person you love goes away. The sadness you feel is a lot stronger than any physical pain. Heart aches like hell. I won't let you suffer that heart-ache. Even though I want to be the one to kill him with my own bare hands, I can't. I don't want to be marred by his filthy blood. So, that is why I'm letting you have this honour, Max."

Chapter 10

"It would be my pleasure," smirked Max as he picked up his phone and seemed to call Rafael.

"Make sure that he has the pain visible in his eyes and make sure he begs for his life. Have it all record up and sed it to me. Then kill him," I ordered as he nodded and I walked out of the room where both of the father and son continued yelling at top of their lungs too let them go.

"You asked for it!" I found myself muttering venomously.

"Is this all okay?" I heard Cristina asking me about the pile of files that she arranged previously.

"Hm? Yeah. You may go now. It's too late already. I'm sorry I had you working this late Ms. Dimir" I said as I checked the estimation file rolling the pen in between my fingers and adjusting my reading glass up using my index finger.

"It's perfectly fine for me..." I heard her saying and just hummed in reply "...sir" she finished and somehow her tone seemed to change at the end which made me to look up at her.

"It's already nine in the evening. Get going...it seems as if it would rain outside today. Wait! Let me have my driver drop you home..."

"No! I have my car, sir and I live nearby. Thank you for worrying about me. I shall be leaving now," she smiled and I chose to stay quiet at the part where she thought I was worried about her. I wasn't worried about anyone but just wanted to fulfil my responsibilities as her employer. I kept her working late for helping me and it was my responsibility to make sure she gets home well.

"Good Night, Sir!" she smiled and bowed a little. I looked back at my file and just nodded in response.

I heard the door closing and it was when I looked up from my file and towards the window. Surely, it was a cloudy night and I could even see the lightning far away, striking somewhere clearly indicating it would pour soon. I was anything but interested to go back to the place which was supposed to be called as my house. It is nothing but some blocks of bricks and concrete for me. Juliette was my *real home.*

All of a sudden I found myself wondering how it would have been if she were here today. She would have definitely called me back home because that woman was scared of thundering and even though she never told me about all that I had a perfect idea of the things that frightened her. At the beginning when we were strangers and fought to each other...the time when she loathed me was the time when she slept at the edge of the bed maintaining as much as the distance between us. But in the night when it used to thunder outside she used to jolt up from her sleep frightened, as she would clutch the duvet close to her chest and look up here and there.

Even though I were awake and witnessed her waking up to the sounds, I pretended to sleep when she would wave a hand before my eyes wanting to check if I were awake. And then when it would thunder for the second time...I found her close to me. She would snuggle to my side making sure the duvet played the biggest role of playing as a partition between us. She had zero trusts upon me yet she would stick with me whenever she frightened.

I would hear her trouble breathing and to ease her tension I would have her covered and keep a hand on her body still pretending to sleep. She would gasp and check multiple times if I were awake and when she made sure I was sleeping she would snuggle comfortably and sleep with my arms over her. It was the only time when she wouldn't push me away. Somehow I made her feel comfortable and it was what I was glad of.

Not only thundering but the woman was even scared of little things like snakes, rats... I still can't stop myself from laughing whenever the scene of her yelling at top of her lungs frightened just by a mere dirty rat comes into my mind. She ran all across the room screaming and frightened by the poor thing. If it wasn't because of Hilda shooing the rat away I was sure that she would have fainted that day out of a panic attack. It was like a rat was enough to kill her than a gun's bullet.

Amidst all this, she never told me the things that scared her. Because it wasn't necessary, as I knew it all. If it weren't for me noticing her every move I would have never known about it all. But then I started to take care of it all. I did my best to keep her happy even though it was the time when she didn't love me or neither was I aware of my own feelings for her. *Still,* I would found myself taking care of her.

Still, I failed.

Chapter 11

A notification on my phone had my attention as it broke me out of my thoughts and I closed the file that was in my hand and threw it frustrated on the table before getting up and wearing my suit as I picked up my phone and walked out of my office handing the cabin keys to the guards.

"What is it, mom?" I asked as I kept the phone on loudspeaker and got inside my car ready to drive off back home.

"What is this tone Zac?" she sighed and I drove past my office building and switched the wipers on as it began to pour.

"I'm driving back home mom. Let me have you call back after I reach bac-" I stopped in the middle when my eyes fell on the car parked with its lights on and hood open at the side of the road. But it wasn't the car but the lady who paced around completely soaked in rain before the car looking terrified as she continued to click on her phone.

"I will call you back mom," I said as I hung up without even hearing her reply.

"Ms. Dimir?" I said once I parked my car next to hers and rolled the windows down.

"Mr Sullivan?" she seemed off guard for a moment but then as she got her senses back she ran towards my car and looked in.

"What's wrong?" I found myself asking.

"Thank God! Mr. Sullivan...Oh, it's my car. It gave up upon me," she cried and it was when we looked up towards a group of built up guys coming towards us crossing the road.

Not wanting to create a scene or let Dimir know about my night duty I took a decision and looked back at her to find her staring at them looking frightened.

"Close the hood, lock your car and get in..." I said and her head shot up towards me. She nodded frantically and without even second thoughts she ran to her car and closed the hood and took her purse out before locking the car and ran back as she got in and closed the door in a hurry. I locked the door and looked at her to find her inhaling in deeply and exhaling out. She looked terribly frightened because of the situation.

I pulled up back to the road crossing the group of guys who banged on my window yelling at us seeming drunk.

"Oh god!" I heard her whisper as I sped up and turned the heater on.

"There's a towel in the backseat. Use it to dry yourself before you catch a co-" she interrupted me by sneezing "cold..." I finished up and looked at her as she gave me a sheepish grin.

"Excuse me," she murmured and fetched the towel from my back and used it to wipe herself dry before wrapping it around her body.

As I drove silently...I could feel her gaze on me all the while to the extent which made me uncomfortable and I stared back at her raising an eyebrow to which she shook her head no whispering a low 'nothing'.

"Yes, that building over there..." she pointed at the building and I nodded in response as I drove towards the direction. As my car came to a halt I unlocked the door and waited for her to get out because it was still pouring heavily and in the moment anything but to be back home where I could rest peacefully after working continuously for days.

"Thank you so much for dropping me today," I heard her talking and I nodded in response. Her eyes brightened up even in the dark and she smiled widely as she opened her mouth once again to speak up "Would you like to have some coffee up in my place?"

"No. It's alright. Thanks for inviting me Ms. Dimir," I said and witnessed as looked a little sadder after hearing my reply.

"Then... I guess I will be leaving now," she smiled and I waited patiently for her to exit.

"Good night," she said as she finally opened the door and walked out to the rain.

I thought she would run straight into her the building's wing but she stood there with her purse over her head that had me rolling the window down as I spoke up "Go in Ms. Dimir,"

"No, you go first," she said and I found myself little irritated by the situation.

"Ms. Dimir, Just go in!" I heard my irritated voice to which she seemed little taken aback. But then once again she regained her composure as she smiled and turned around running back into her building.

"What a woman," I muttered to myself as I rolled up the window and drove off towards my home.

As I parked my car and got out avoiding the umbrella that was under my back seat and the still pouring rain...I walked towards the house with the rain drenching me but at that moment it wasn't what that got my attention but the figure that came running towards my direction. As I squinted my eyes and wiped the rain away from my eyes I recognised the person who came running towards me completely drenched...but it looked she wasn't alone.

"Kiara?" I heard myself.

"Zach-Zachary!" came out her croaked voice as she came running towards me and stumbled before me but if it wasn't for me to catch her by her arms then she would have tumbled down.

"What in the world are you-"

"She is alive...She is ALIVE!" she cried as she looked up at me avoiding my question.

"Kiara..." it was Kristian who was running after her. He ran up to us and stopped right next to me completely, drenched.

"What are you-"

"She is ALIVE! I saw her!" Kiara cried as she pulled herself up and got hold of my forearms as she shook them frantically trying to gain my attention.

"What? Whom did you see? Who is ali-"

"JULIETTE!"

A loud thundering was heard followed by flashes of lightning and suddenly the rain stopped with three of us standing motionless on our spot staring wide-eyed at each other.

Chapter 12

Ivona Pov

"Why was I suddenly asked or should I say more likely commanded to get back here?" I threw my bag pack on the couch as I glared at Alex who poured himself a glass of wine from my bar.

"Why? You seemed to be miffed off by the situation," he took a sip from his wine as he walked towards the couch and sat on it with the glass of wine in his hand.

"Of course I'm miffed! Alex! Do you not understand this? I left your grandmom alone! so suddenly even though she told me to stay back a little more. Do you know how bad I was feeling at that moment when I declined it only because of you? For god's sake, you didn't even tell me the reason why you asked me to come back all of a sudden when you yourself had agreed to let me stay in there for a little longer," I exhaled out the breath that I didn't know I was holding.

"I feel like it," was his blunt answer.

"You! You f-feel like it?" I asked flabbergasted.

He seemed to be lost in deep thoughts as he whirled his wine in his glass staring blankly at it.

"Alex!"

"What?"

"I'm asking you a question!"

"And why do you think that I will be answering any of it?" he asked as all of a sudden he glared at me. Those grey eyes of his squinting at me with what seemed like hatred for a moment before he slammed the glass on the coffee table and got up adjusting his suit all the while maintaining the glare at me.

"Why do you do this?" I was surprised that today I found my voice to speak up.

I had just enough...

He narrowed his eyes momentarily before edging his head to a side which indicated he wanted to hear further.

"Why do you do this all the time? What have I done for you to hate me-"

"I don't hate you Ivona!" he cut me off in the middle but that didn't stop me from striking back verbally.

"And you don't even like me either! Let's be honest here..." arching my eyebrows at him I crossed my arms over my chest as I glared back at him.

It was true. There was nothing in between us. Even though we were engaged there was nothing in between us. We weren't lovers...we were not even friends... I don't even know what we were to each other. Our marriage was a part of a business deal which I was aware of from the beginning and from the day I met him...I thought we could at least get to know each other and at least let this work but every time I try to warm up to him...he moves away giving me the cold shoulder. For the world, we were just like some high profile romantic couple soon to be married off but it was far from the truth.

Mr. ALexadru Lascar who was supposed to be my future husband wanted nothing to do with me and I don't know why but even though he had never agreed to this he has always tried to make it obvious to me...indirectly.

"Look! Don't forget the situation in which we were both tie-"

"I remember! You don't need to remind this to me every single time! I do remember! My grandfather made a deal with your father to marry off his granddaughter in order to pay the debt that your father provided to save my late dad's company. I remember..." my voice lower down a little at the end and he seemed a little tense after hearing that.

"But I want you to remember this as well. This deal was made in order to save my company and your father agreed to deal because he wanted the company and now let's be honest over here...aye?" his jaws clenched at my words but then he didn't speak a word because he knew I was telling the truth.

Or was it something else?

I remember the time when I woke up in the hospital bed alone surrounded by IV's and machines. My head was bandaged and I had a broken rib. But then I couldn't recognise anything or anyone...let alone remember my own name. Then after being stuck up for two days finally Alex's father showed up who reminded me of who I was. But then he told me that I was in a car accident with me losing some part of my memories. It didn't affect me that much because I could barely remember anything...but then he told me my only family...my grandfather was also in the accident but unlike me, he lost his life.

The pain I felt was unbearable. It was worse than the broken rib because it troubled me that I couldn't even remember the sole family member who has already passed away. I was sad and scared. I couldn't understand what to do.

Chapter 12

But then his father took care of me and slowly when I started to heal he told me about that he had made with my grandfather and that is how I met Alex. But at first, he seemed different. He used to smile a little and talk nicely but now...he has changed completely. Many a time I had assumed that he was forced into this or perhaps he has someone in his life whom he loves and I even tried to ask him all these wanting to sort things out between us. I don't him to marry me being pressurized by the situation but like always he nodded his head no to everything I asked.

"You know my condition! And even though you deny it...I know that you are being forced into this. You don't love anyone...you don't love me...you don't share anything with me...you don't want things to work out between us nor do you opt out of this deal. I don't understand you! You know that I'm in a position where I'm in debt and bound by the deal...but you! You are free! You can always walk out of this deal! So why are you always like this? I want to know the reason for your hatred towards me! Just tell me what is it already!" I huffed out air as I felt the corner of my eyes stinging.

"Ivona!"

"Please? At least let me aware of my sin so that at least I could try to repent!" my voice broke out in the end and soon I was in a series of sobbing.

As I looked back at him hoping that today he would let it all out but to my extreme astonishment he wasn't annoyed or irritated like the other times. In fact, he seemed a little down to earth as for the first ever time I saw concern and a little sense of remorse in his eyes as he saw me break down.

"You know what?" I asked in between my sobs.

"I am ready to face the consequences!" I said once I repeated the whole sentence in my mind practicing it for a moment.

"What?" he seemed little taken aback.

"I can't just can't do this anymore!" I cried as I looked at the ring that I was wearing "I will be the one who will be walking out of this marriage! You seemed to be under pressure but not being able to walk out of this deal. Hence, I shall face the consequences and I shall deal with money that needs to paid back to your father. I shall pay back my grand father's debt! But for now...I'm calling this..." I placed my fingers over the ring ready to pull it off "wedding of-" but before I could do that he walked up to me and kept his hand over mine stopping me from removing the ring.

"Wait!" he breathed as he stared at the ring.

"You don't need to-"

"No! Wait! Look! Forgive me. You don't need to do this!" he said and looked into my eyes. His grey eyes boring into mine as I stood there paralyzed to my spot traumatized by the fact that he was actually opening up to me.

"Look! I understand I don't involve you in my matters but that has nothing to do this with this deal. And for the last time let me make this clear to you...I am not forced into this nor I have anybody else in my heart! It's just that I don't know what to do!" he said as he withdraws his hands and raked a hand through his hair looking slightly red.

"What?" I muttered.

"You won't understan-"

"Oh then, make me!" I said determined and that made me look straight into my eyes.

"You don't me know me well!"

"Nor do you!" as I said that he nodded and bit down on his lower lips staring at the floor.

"I have no problem with you!" he said and I arched my head to a side.

"Nor do I!"

"Tell me the reason for dragging me back here. Your grandma must have been so upset!" I said once I remembered his grandma's saddened look when I told her I needed to leave urgently.

"There's no reason for that-"

"See? I told you! It won't work between us. We should call this wedd-" he got hold of my hand and stopped me from removing the ring as he looked down to me.

"Fine! I get your problem!" he muttered as he took few steps back and shoved his hands in his pant pockets. I stared at his questionably patiently waiting for him to continue.

"Let's get to know each other well!" he said and that instantly brought a smile up to my face as I smirked inwardly but gave him a small nod and smiled at him feeling happy all of a sudden.

It seemed the day just started.

Chapter 13

Zachary Pov

The room was marred by silence as the three of us including me, Kiara and Kristian stood at different places in the room facing different direction lost in deep thoughts.

"Bro-" Kristian was cut off by Kiara as she spoke up for the first time.

"So? What do you plan on doing now? Believe me or not but the woman I saw there in that mall was Juliette. I can never misunderstand Juliette for someone else. I just can't understand anything. It's really hard for me to-" she held her head as Kristian made his way to her and kept a hand on her shoulder staring down at her with concern.

What is this?

"Please! I know this might sound weird...heck! you must be thinking of me as some insane woman but please believe me...the woman whom I saw was Juliette. I don't know how in the world it's possible but I did saw her. And the worst part was she seemed a little bit different and she even refused to recognize me," she sighed and looked down with sadness filled eyes.

"Kristian please tell him to believe me," she muttered as she leaned against him and he wrapped his arms around her shoulder.

"Yes! Look brother I know you probably won't believe us but not only Kiara but me...I was also present in that scenario. I saw the woman's face and she clearly resembled Juliette. I don't know how it's possible either but she dashed as soon as Kiara tried to talk to her," Kristian said and all the while all I did was stare at them blankly.

All of a sudden I felt my heartbeat raising up and blood rushed throughout my body as I turned around facing the window where the rain still continued to pour. Raking a hand through my hair I stood there silently but all the while I could hear both of them murmuring and talking to each other with Kiara crying out and asking Kristian to make me believe her.

Juliette is alive...

"Mr. Sullivan I know this is hard for you to believe but please...I beg you to believe me for thi-"

"Take me to that mall where you saw her," I said and like before the room was once again filled up with silence.

"Wh-What?" I heard her shocked voice.

Inhaling a deep breath, I turned around holding a look of determination as I repeated myself once again "Take me to that place."

"I want the CCTV footage," I asked one of my men as I took out a cigarette and lit it up using a lighter that Kristian provided me. Kiara sat stiffly on her position as Kristian sat next to her holding her hand murmuring something to her while I waited for the guy to bring me the footage, patiently waiting for him sitting inside the limo.

"Please, God! Please..." I heard Kiara whispering as she kept on chanting the words.

As the guy went out for the work the three of us waited patiently in the limo for the result that was anticipated patiently by all three of us. Hours passed by and I dropped my third piece of cigarette end into the ashtray. My eyes felt on a couple that walked past my window hand in hand enjoying their time oblivious to their surrounding. I couldn't blame them. It was how I felt when I used to be with Juliette. The world did not matter whenever I was with her. It seemed as if my whole interest was only upon her. And it was what I always wished for.

But...

"I want to know," I heard Kiara and I turned up to look at her to find her already looking at my direction.

"Do you believe us?" she asked and I watched as Kristian squeezed her hands.

"I am not here because I believe you," was my stern reply before I turned my head to look out of the window.

"I am here because I want to believe myself," I said as I felt the inside of me tightening with a gut feeling that Juliette is alive. I refused to believe that the woman we found dead was Juliette. I refuse to believe that my Juliette has left me forever. She is here and I know it.

I felt my phone vibrating and took it out from my suit pocket to read the caller ID an incoming call from Ms. Dimir. Not wanting to answer her call I rejected the call and kept the inside the pocket and adjusting my suit waiting for the guy. A few minutes later, he appeared as got in and handed me the pen drive in which the footage was supposed to be loaded.

"I got the footage from two days back as you had asked me," he said and I nodded as I inserted it in my laptop and played the footage.

Kiara clasped her hands and closed her eyes chanting and praying the lord while Kristian sat on the edge of the seat as he tried to peak a look ion the footage. Taking a deep breath I pressed the enter key and watched as the video played of that day.

"Right! Look here! Here we are!" Kristian pointed on the screen in which he and Kiara were walking towards the shoe store with him following Kiara with shopping bags full in his hands.

I looked up at him to find him too engrossed in the scene that he didn't even notice my glance towards him. I chose to ignore him for the moment and looked back at the video to find them entering the store. Both of them seemed too engrossed in their work but then they disappeared from the screen as another couple replaced their place on the screen.

"What the...!" Kristian swore under his breath looking visibly astonished and distressed.

"What happened?" Kiara voiced out.

"We disappeared from the screen!" he muttered and Kiara looked up towards me.

I looked at the time and checked the video thoroughly only to find the footage that we were searching for to be missing. The time changes in a certain scene of the video and looked as if somebody knowingly took it out.

"Wh-What happened? I don't understand!" Kiara said as she sat on the edge of the seat visibly distressed.

"Relax!" Kristian was immediately on her side but I had all my attention fixated on the screen.

"It seems somebody took it out from this video. Someone tampered the clip knowingly..." I answered as I leaned against the seat.

"Wait! Somebody did that? Does this mean someone knew we would come searching for this clip? But why would someone do that? I mean what would they get from all this?" Kiara asked.

"It doesn't make sense either to me. Wait! the clip in which we met that woman who looked like Juliette is missing..." he muttered to himself.

"Then search for the clip in which that woman enters the shop. She was present in there before us. I'm sure we would find something out," Kristian said and Kiara bobbed her head agreeing with him.

"I had already looked for it. It's missing..." I said and watched as Kiara finally broke down.

"What do we do now? We can't find her anymore. What do we do?" she cried and immediately Kristian encircled his arms around her pulling her to him.

"What do we do now? Kristian?" she cried.

I looked out of the window. The small ray of hope that I had a few moments ago seemed missing until I was pulled out of my thoughts when I felt my phone vibrating for the second time. Irritated by the constant calls I brought it out of my pocket and rejected the call without even glancing towards the caller ID thinking it would be Ms. Dimir.

"Do you have the second one?" I asked the man and he nodded as he handed me the second the pen drive.

"Wh-What is this?" Kiara asked looking at the drive.

"Second footage of the parking lot."

This seemed to catch her off guard as she sat back in her position restless.

As I played the video I waited patiently and skimmed through the video even though it took me an hour but still, in the end, all we got was the disappointment. My hands shook as I reached for the pause button and sat on my seat staring blankly at the screen.

"What do we do now? We can never find her..." sadness laced up in Kiara's voice as she held her head.

"There should be any other way to find that woman..." Kristian voiced out but all I did was to stare at the blank screen.

"Zachary?"

"Bro?"

"Frate?"

"Look I can understand how you might be feeling right now but trust us we are not lying. The woman whom we saw was Ju-"

"Juliette..." I spoke as my hands reached out towards the paused screen. There was this woman who was visible in the safety convex mirror of the parking lot and she seemed indeed like Juliette.

The same face, same figure... as she walked towards a car with another old woman.

"My Juliette..." I whispered as I could feel the corners of my eyes stinging as I traced my fingers over her picture.

"See? Oh my god! She is her. She is Juliette..." Kiara cried out happily.

"Greg!" I spoke to the guy beside me.

"Find out this woman. Now." I spoke as I fist clenched in a tight ball determined to find the woman.

Chapter 14

For the umpteenth time, I looked at myself in the mirror to check my look. Nervousness glide up my body as I looked into my reflection. I was wearing a royal blue with thigh slit dress for the evening. Alex had told me that he would be taking me out on a date today. But it wasn't the first time that he made me such a promise. All those previous promises were not fulfilled and that was the only reason why our relationship turned out to be like this.

I found myself pacing around my room as I waited for his car. I looked up towards the wall clock to check the time and it read seven in the evening.

"It's already seven. I guess he is no-" my little conversation was stopped in the middle when I had the doorbell ringing. Immediately a smile broke onto my face as I ran up to the door and quickly made sure to fix my hair and dress before inhaling deeply and slowly I opened the door only to face a person whom I didn't even recognize. The smile faded away from my face as I looked around searching for the person whom I wanted to see but found no one except the guy standing in a tailored black suit before me.

"Yes?" I asked giving him a small smile.

He smiled showing his dimple as he brought his hand forward and handed me a bouquet of roses and a small card in it. Before I could ask him about it he bowed his head and left the place with me standing there with the bouquet in my hand. Inhaling the fragrance of the freshly plucked roses I smiled as I opened that small card placed in the bouquet to read: *Beautiful flowers for a beautiful lady ;)*

"What?" I chuckled reading the cheesy lines.

"What's wrong with him?" I muttered as I looked at the bouquet in my hand with a smile plastered on my face.

"Nothing's wrong with me" a voice spoke up and that made me squeal startled when I saw none other than Alex standing before me as he buttoned his suit and smiled seeing my reaction.

"Sorry, I didn't mean to scare you," he apologized and I shook my head no.

"No. It's okay. I was just caught off guard,"

"You look beautiful today," he said out all of a sudden and like a flash, I looked up at him surprised for the second time of the day.

"Why do you look so surprised?" he raised an eyebrow to which I shrugged my shoulders and smiled back in reply.

"Wait! So you want to tell me that this is the first time, I have ever complimented you?" he asked and I narrowed my eyes at him in reply.

"What? What a liar! I have done it before-"

"When?" I asked and he was cut off in the middle as he held his collar and tried to remember.

"Oh..." was the only thing that came out of his mouth as he recognized his mistake.

"I'll try to pay attention to all these from now on," I heard him mutter but that made me chuckle.

"It's okay. You don't have to," I said as I walked back in and placed the bouquet in a vase.

"So did you like the flowers?" he asked as he followed me inside and I looked back at him and nodded my head yes.

"Relieved" I heard him mutter.

"So shall we?" he asked as he forwarded his hand for me to take and I placed my hand in his feeling his warmness and we walked out of the apartment after I locked the door and towards his car. As we sat in his car I couldn't help but notice what he was wearing. He chose a grey colored suit for the evening and had his hair styled backward. All of a sudden a scene flashed before my eyes when I looked at his styled hair. All of a sudden I felt as if I had seen the same hairstyle but that person wasn't Alex.

"Ivona?" Alex held my hand as he looked towards me while driving seeming worried all of a sudden and I realized that I was holding my head gasping for air.

"What happened?" he asked and I shook my head no.

"Nothing" I whispered and took in deep breaths and rolled the window down wanting to feel the air.

What is this?

Why do I keep having these weird memories flashed before me again and again?

Are those things somehow related to my past?

Chapter 15

"Ivona!" I was shaken out of my trance by Alex and startled I looked towards him to find him already looking at me. I realized the car has already come to a halt and we had reached our destination.

"Are you alright? You don't seem fine to me? Should we go back ho-"

"No! I'm alright. It's just I keep having a headache, again and again, these days," I lied and looked out of the window averting his gaze.

"What? Why did you not tell me about this? Should I take an appointmen-"

"No," I chuckled "It's okay. I am fine," I smiled and got out of the car before he could come out and hold the door for me.

"Hey! I thought I was supposed to hold the door for you," he narrowed his eyes at me as he looked at me from the other side of the car.

"Oh sorry. Should I get back in?" I asked and bit down on my cheeks trying to hold back the smile. He stared at me for a second and rolled his eyes slamming the door shut.

"Forget it!" he replied and I shook my head at him as I made my way to his side and he offered me his arm to hold and I entangled mine smiling up at him.

"Thank you for your kindness," I mocked and that made him a smile.

"Whatever," he said and we walked into the restaurant.

As we walked in I looked around the restaurant. It was crowded and the waiters paced around faster to serve the orders.

"The place is crowded," I voiced out my thoughts and Alex held my hand giving it a squeeze.

"Don't worry this is not the place where we will be enjoying the evening," he said and I followed him to wherever he was going.

"Where are we going?" I asked once we were inside an elevator.

"You will see,"

As the elevator door pinged open I looked out to find us in the terrace. A wow escaped my mouth as I took in the decoration of the place. There in the middle our table was set with candles and fairy lights lit all over the place. A man stood next to table and as soon as he saw us he walked towards us with a professional smile on his face.

"A candle light dinner?" I asked excited all of a sudden.

"You like it?" he asked for the first time smiling brightly.

"Very," I heard myself and he smiled looking back at the man. But all the while I was actually complimenting his toxic smile.

"Good Evening," the host said and took my hand in his and placed a kiss over it making me blush.

"I, Jeremiah will be your host for the evening," he said once I withdrew my hand from his hand.

We followed him to the table and he dragged the chair for me to sit.

"Thank you," I whispered and sat down all the while still gawking at the scenery. I could see the whole city from the floor and what excited me more was the fact that Alex was there with me to enjoy the time. This was like a dream come true. The only wish that I had for a while was to spend sometime with Alex and finally it was the day. I just hoped that nothing goes wrong and the night goes on as we had planned and be a night to remember till end.

"I hope I have made you happy," I heard Alex and nodded my head smiling at him.

We chatted for a while while we waited for the food to be served. Jeremiah played a wonderful host as he joked around, played some magic tricks and had me squealing like a three year old kid and it was the time when the violinist came. I sipped from my red wine and waited patiently for him to play his violin but when he did I had the glass slip off my hand.

"Ivona!" Alex was immediately by my side as he took the tissue from the table and tried to clean the spilt wine from my dress.

"Ivona?" I could hear him but still I felt traumatized to move from my place.

What was that?

As soon as the violinist played the tune I had some memories flashed before my eyes with some woman who seemed like me crying and looking at herself in the mirror and what seemed like a washroom and then I saw as a man barging inside but before I could see his face I was shaken out of my trance.

"Ivona!" I heard Alex's worried voice.

"Yes? Yes!" I said once I got a hold of myself.

"What happened?" he asked and I stood up on my heels holding the side of my head.

"Oh no it's nothing. Am sorry for that. The glass just slipped off my hand. Sorry," I lied once again as I looked down towards my dress. A ll of a sudden I felt my heart rising up. I placed a hand over my chest feeling the sped up heartbeat.

What's going on?

It felt as if my heart was responding to someone. As if it was feeling a presence of a certain somebody. I felt as if someone I knew was around and that made me feel restless.

"Are you sure you are alright?" Alex asked me and I nodded.

"I need to use the washroom. Excuse me, please," I said and took a step forward towards the direction of the elevator but was held back by Alex.

"I will take you there," he said and I shook my head no.

"No, it's alright. I know the way," I said and walked away without even hearing him reply.

The whole way I paced around the elevator holding my head.

"What's going on with me?" I asked as I splashed water multiple times on my face once I was in the washroom.

Why am I feeling like this from this past few days? Am I sick?

I took in a deep breath as I splashed water a few more times before leaning against the sink.

"Or maybe I should tell about all this to Alex," I muttered and turned around to look at myself in the mirror.

"But what if this creates a new problem between us? I mean we just started to give this deal a chance. What if he thinks am ill? I don't want to burden him any longer," a sigh escaped my mouth and I looked up towards the white ceiling and just as I was about to pick up my purse from the counter the door slammed open and a man walked in.

All I did was to stare at the person in complete shock until he walked up to me and before I could shout or yell he held me by my head and pulled me into a kiss while I stood paralyzed in my spot with the purse in my hand as the unknown man kissed me.

"My Juliette," he whispered once he looked back at my shocked state. His brown eyes filled up with happiness as he looked straight into my eyes and looked all over my face before pulling me to another kiss that blew my mind away.

What in the world?

Chapter 16

There are certain things that should be left unsaid. There are certain things that even if you try your level best to know, you can't, you just can't and at the moment it was what I was feeling. There was a certain feeling that I thought I knew but quite couldn't get my finger upon it. A feeling that I knew but still didn't. I was confused to the point where I chose to stand still while a person I didn't even know pulled me and kissed me as if his whole life depended upon me. But then I was pushed to reality. Like a bucket filled with ice water was thrown upon me, I was thrown out of my state as my eyes widened the size of a saucer and finally held my hands up in an attempt to push the man away from me who was busy with his assaults on me.

The man was tall, much taller than me and had jet black hair. It was what I could only see.

"Juliette," he breathed out as he held my face and looked into my eyes once he let go of me. I was shocked to the point where I forgot how to breath and all of a sudden fear glide up inside me as I began pushing him back. His brown orbs boring into mine. The man wasn't speaking just kept on staring at me as if he had lost something precious to his heart but now he has found it. Something valuable.

But what does it has to do with me anyways?

"Let go!" I found myself speaking up.

"L-Let go me this instant,"

"Never. Not again. Ever," he whispered and in a second he pulled me to him wrapping his arms around me trapping me in my place.

"Let go!" I cried as I tried my best to push the bulky man who would budge a bit.

"I knew it!" he spoke up and I stopped my actions as I heard him speaking "I knew it that you were alive. I knew it that you can't abandon me like everyone did. I knew that your love for me was the only truth in my life. Isn't it?" he looked back at me as he held my face and placed a kiss on my forehead.

"Where were you? Why were you away from me? Don't you know how I would have felt when everyone told me that you have left me forever? Don't you know how much I love you? What took you so long to come back to me? Why did you not come back to me-"

"Get off!" using all my strength I pushed his chest hard and was finally able to push him away as he stumbled backward but held the sink to stop himself from falling.

"Julie-"

"What Juliette? What the hell do you think you are doing?" I yelled at him as I looked my forearms which had bruises all over it for the man who held it tightly a few seconds ago.

"Who do you think you are? And how dare you kiss me like that?" before I know it I was pushing him out of the washroom angrily shouting at the top of my lungs on him.

"Juliette," he held my forearms as he looked down shocked for a moment and I breathed in and out heavily before the temper surfaced and I jerked my hands away from his hold.

"What Juliette? Who do you think you are calling Juliette? Oh, I see...so this is a new way for all you guys. You think you are smart? You -"

"What are you talking about? Don't you recognize me? What's wrong with you?" he asked as tried to hold me but in a swift moment, I took a step back swatting his hand off me.

"How dare you barge into women washroom like that? Just who do you think you are? And how dare you..." with a raised pitch in my voice I pointed an accusing finger towards him as I continued with a flaring nostril "kiss me?"

"What's going on?" the voice interrupted us and I looked towards the source to find Alex standing there looking at us or more likely towards the man.

"Oh my god! Thank god! Alex!" I exclaimed as I tried to take a step towards him but the strange man before me got hold of my hand stopping me from moving.

"What the-"

"Where are you going?" he asked as he held my hand firmly.

"Let go of me!" I tried my best to pry my hands away from him but he tightened his hold and pulled me to him. A shocked gasp escaped my mouth as my body collided with him.

"Alex!" I screamed petrified.

"Hey! Hey! Let go of her!" Alex was fast on his feet to reach me but the stranger moved me away from him as he tried to touch me.

"Just who are you? And how do you know Juliette?" the guy asked and I watched as Alex narrowed his eyes at the stranger clenching his jaw.

"Who is Juliette? What are you talking about? Let go of her. NOW," Alex looked dangerous as he seemed to be miffed by the situation. His eyes looked murderous as his hands formed into a fist and with jaws clenched he stood eyeing at the stranger who refused to let go of me.

"This woman over here is Juliette. Juliette Swanson or you can call her Mrs. Sullivan since she is my wife," he declared and with wide eyes, I looked up at him.

Now he takes me as his wife? WOW

Chapter 17

"What are you talking about? She is no Juliette that you know. She is my fiancée and her name is Ivona, not Juliette that you are thinking off. So, let her go," he seemed to control his rage as he talked as calmly as he could.

"What?" the strange man tightened his grip even further blocking the air out of my lungs.

"Fiancée? Ivona? Juliette what is all this?" he asked and I tried my best to push him.

"Look. You're hurting my fiancée so let her go right now before I call the security," Alex threatened to which the strange huffed in response.

"You call my wife your fiancée one more time and I'll rip your throat right over here and bury you right here in my property," the stranger threatened and as I realized the hotel was his property the color seemed to drain off my face.

"Oh! So this is your property. No wonder you have the guts to behave like this with me. You have no idea who I am," Alex took his phone out as he glared towards the stranger.

"And you have no idea with whom you are dealing with," the stranger laughed as he looked down towards me.

"You have a lot of things to explain me. You are coming with me," he said and before I could talk he dragged me towards the other end of the hallway but soon enough I was held back none other than Alex who got hold of my arm and pulled me towards him and like a rope in tug of war they pulled me, either way, hurting me in the process.

"Let go of her!"

"Remove your hands off my wife right now!"

"Enough!" I jerked my hands away from both of them as I yelled at the top of my lungs.

"Ivona"

"Juliette"

"Stop it! Stop it!" I was so irritated all of a sudden that for a moment I clasped my hands on my ears and shut my eyes close giving some time to myself to hold up my breath,"

"Just stop it now," I whispered as I reopened my eyes.

"Look! I am not Juliette. Not your Juliette. Not your wife. You might have some misunderstanding. Perhaps I think I may look like her or something but I'm not Juliette. My name is Ivona. Ivona Cernea. Okay? And this man over her is my fiancé. I don't know you. I

don't know who you are. Nor do I have any idea what you are even talking about? So relax!" I spoke as calmly and slowly I could to make him understand it clearly.

"Are you kidding me?" he faked a laugh as he looked down at me.

"Do you think I'm blind? What's with you behaving like this? Do you have any idea what I have went through since you went missing? I knew you were alive and I searched for you everywhere and now when I have finally got you, you tell me that you are not Juliette but" he air quoted "Ivona whatsoever?"

"Okay, I'm done. I told you what I know and I have had enough now. This is just too much now. You are forgiven for what you did a few minutes ago but I don't want to see your face ever again. So I'm going out of here right now with Alex," I said and got hold of Alex's arm ready to walk away.

"Don't touch her-" the stranger yelled at Alex and pulled his hands away from me and soon landed a punch on his face.

I gasped in horror as I watched Alex knocked down to the ground. He tried to get up but before he could I ran up to him and crunched down to him helping him get up "Oh my god Alex! Are you alright?" but before I could help him the stranger got hold of my hand and pulled me up.

"Stop hel-" he stopped talking as I slapped him right across his face, hard. The *slap* was as loud as a clap and I knew it would have stung his face as much as it stung my palm for hitting him hard. His face turned up to the side due to the effect of the slap but then he touched his face and looked back at me with shock clearly evident on his face.

"Jul-"

"Shut up!" I pointed a finger towards him.

"Just shut up! How dare you punch the man I'm going to get married in a few months before me? Just shut up! I am Ivona. Ivona Cernea. Soon to be Mrs. Lascar and I want you to remember this," his eyes widened as he looked down at me still shocked at what just happened.

I helped Alex back on his feet as I examined his face where he was brutally punched.

"I'm so sorry about all this Alex. Let's get back home," I said with regret-filled eyes and he nodded adjusting his suit.

"Jul-" I glared back at the stranger stopping him from talking any further and entangling my arm with Alex's we turned on our heels to leave.

"Damn that hurts," I heard Alex hissing while we were walking.

"I am so sorry for all this. I will help you once we get back home," I whispered to him. As we walked I could feel the burning gaze of that stranger boring into my back and I saw as Alex looked back towards the direction where we left that idiotic strange man.

"Don't look at him. I think he is some psycho released from a cell or something," I asked Alex and that made him look back at me.

"I think the same too. What a crazy guy," he seemed to laugh off the matter. But I could still feel my hand stinging because of the slap. I wondered if I hurt him badly. For some reason, I felt uneasy in the back of my mind and heart and as we walked away I felt loneliness and as if something important was being left back because of me. The incidents a few moments ago kept playing in my mind and all of a sudden I found myself comparing the strange man's forehead and hairstyle with the guy I keep on seeing in my dreams.

"What is this?" I found myself whispering to myself.

"You alright?" Alex asked as he looked worried for the time being and not wanting to cause him any more distress I nodded yes followed by an assuring smile to keep my point. But before we took the turn from the hallway I made a mistake of looking back and what I saw scared me to death.

The strange man was burning in the fire of rage. His eyes were murderous and his aura was changed to a dark one and as our eyes met he seemed to give me an evil smile before I lost the sight of him when we were out of the hallway. A breath that I didn't know I was holding left my mouth and at the moment all I wished that I never get to encounter that evil, dark smile ever again in my life for it seemed nothing less compared to a dreadful nightmare one could ever have.

Chapter 18

"As if her nagging and annoying me every single time wasn't enough that I have to deal with all these things too," I muttered annoyed by the situation as I checked my face in the mirror where that bastard had punched me. "I swear if it wasn't for Ivona interfering in the middle then I would have seriously killed that son of a bitch there," applying the ice pad on my cheek I noticed the bruise forming up on the left side of my cheek.

"Great! I have to deal with foreign delegates tomorrow and this is what I have to show them," hissing and cursing all the while all of a sudden I remembered that I have been in the washroom for what seemed like an hour and I still haven't contacted Ivona after dropping her at her apartment.

Quickly making my way up to my phone in the master room I called her to check on her.

"Ivona?"

"Yeah?" she hissed at something in the background which got my attention as I kept the ice pad on the chair and concentrated on the phone.

"What is it? Are you alright?" I asked and she cleared her throat.

"Yeah. I'm fine. I was just putting ice on my forearm. It has bruises all over it because of that," she paused for a minute before getting back in the line "stupid man," she sighed and I nodded.

"Is it bad?" I asked referring to her bruises remembering that her arms surely had bruises all over it when I dropped her.

"No. I think it will go away in two to three days," she said and hummed in reply.

"How is your ch- ow!"

"What is it?" I asked when I heard her yelping.

"Damn it! I think today is just not my day. I just hit my foot hard on the kitchen counter," she hissed and at that moment I chuckled at her reaction.

"What? Excuse me? Are you laughing? Do you think this is funny?" she asked sounding pissed and that stopped me chuckling any further as I composed myself clearing my throat "Well, I think you have a sour mood today. Let's go out tomorrow for shopping or something like that," I asked as I got rid of my tie and sat on the bed.

"No. I don't feel like i- Wait! What? You! I mean you want to take me out for shopping?" she asked sounding astonished.

"Of course,"

" Really? I mean are you serious?" she asked and I nodded feeling a smile making its way up on my face hearing her astonished sound.

This woman is weird sometimes. She fights with me claiming that I never give time to her and now when I am giving in to what she had always wished for, she declines. Wow.

"So are you up for it or should I cance-"

"No! No! Actually, I think I do need to buy some new clothes for my closet. I'm in."

"Really? Wow, you were the one who told me a few minutes ago that you don't wan-"

"Listen! Are you trying to pick on a fight with me?" she asked in a low tone and I was quite sure that I had pissed her off.

Well...

Chapter 19

"No! I mean why are you getting so upset about everything today?" I asked and heard her heaving a sigh. "I mean it seems so..." I clarified as I waited for her response. "No, I'm just shaking with what just happened today. It was too much for me. I mean a stranger appears in front of you out of the blue and claims that he is non-existent husband. It's all weird and depressing," her voice was low in the end.

"So? Why are you taking it so seriously? Forget it. I think he wouldn't show up before you anymore. It's over," I said and she hummed in response.

"Are you going to sleep now?" I asked further and in response, I got a chuckle as she spoke teasingly "You are surely talking to me too much all of a sudden. Is there any specific reason for it Mr. Lascar?" she asked and I chuckled in reply "Well, I'm trying. I told you the truth when I said I would try my best," she laughed at it "Yes, you were speaking the truth I can see that. But today, I think I should go to bed with a sore foot to bed," she hissed.

"I completely forgot about your foot. Are you good now?" I asked all of a sudden feeling genuinely worried about her. For a second I found myself amazed and shocked by what I was feeling. *How is it that I'm all of a sudden being worried for her?*

"Yeah, I think I'm fine," she sounded unsure.

"Okay. So will your sore foot keep up with the shopping tomorrow? Or should we cance-"

"No. I told you already. I am good. Don't cancel it" she sounded desperate as she chided and I laughed at her reaction.

"Cool. I will be there to pick you up in the morning eh?" I asked and she replied a yes.

After we hung up I changed my clothes and poured myself a drink as I sat on my balcony looking at the sky.

"Hmm. So finally showed up here," I couldn't help but mutter to myself as a smirk formed upon my face.

"Well Well, this is going to be quite interesting now Mr. Zachary Udolf Sullivan," a chuckle escaped my mouth as I thought about today's incident in that hotel. It wasn't as if he was the who found us but me intentionally showing up in his hotel deliberately on purpose.

"The game is on Sullivan. You can't have what I have right now and I'll make sure you can't get it ever," it was a promise that I had made to myself from the day I made him as my enemy.

"Afterall enemies are enemies," I smirked as I drank the last drop of wine before keeping it on the small table and walking in towards the bedroom to sleep.

"You look amazing," I couldn't help myself but compliment the way she was dressed today. She was wearing a peach colored floral knee-length dress and with hair braided up in the side, she looked absolutely breathtaking. *Simple yet stunning.*

She smiled at me and rolled the few loose strands of hair behind her ear blushing.

Even the way she blushed made me want to compliment even more. What was I doing all of a sudden? It was supposed to be an act to woo her, praise her but here I am feeling different every once in a while whenever I was around her. From the moment I had started to be around her, I couldn't help notice all of her features that has started to attract me towards her.

Attract? No! get a hold of yourself!

"Thank you," she replied and looked out of the window while I drove off towards the mall.

"So? what have you decided to buy today?" I asked as we walked the entrance of the mall.

"Um I don't know but I want to buy some dresses today. There are some charity functions that I'm going to attend this week and I want some suitable attire for it so..." she trailed off shrugging her shoulder and I nodded shoving my hands into my pant pockets.

"Okay..."

"Let go of me," she yelled at the person who was holding her hand and tried to speak to her. I watched the scene from far away making sure that they were unaware of the fact that I was watching them.

"You need to listen to me. I want you to stop all this nonsense right now, Juliette because I have had enough of your drama," he hissed at her and as I watched Ivona struggling against him I found myself clenching my fist at the sight. All of a sudden I had a desire to walk up to them and thrash him away from Ivona. I wanted to kill him for having his hands on Ivona but then I stopped all these weird thoughts as I concentrated on my mission and continued watching them from far.

"Why don't you understand? Please! I beg you. Please stop following me. I'm not your Juliette. I'm Ivona. I don't even know you. Please!" I watched as Ivona struggled against him trying her best to remove her wrist from his hold as he cornered her near the lift away from everyone's sight.

While we were shopping I had noticed the guy walking like a mad bull inside the mall and I knew he had found out where Ivona was. So, I deliberately made an excuse to attend an important phone call as I left her alone and stood nearby until he got her. At first, she was angry and annoyed at him but then when he got off her hand and she couldn't fight him I saw the fear in her eyes and I understood right away she was scared and she wanted nothing to do with him.

"Why are you with him? Who is he?" he snarled at her and I watched as Ivona finally broke down in front of him crying and begging him to free her.

"Juliette," he seemed annoyed.

It was enough for the day. As Ivona broke down, something turned up inside me and finally, I took it the chance to interfere.

"Let go of her!" my voice was dreadful when I walked up to them.

"Alex!" Ivona looked relieved when her eyes fell on me.

You can never have her Mr. Zachary Udolf Sullivan. I had always wanted to destroy and finally, I have the pawn which would be a bait for your destruction. You will have to watch as I destroy your world right before your very own eyes. And Ivona would play a vital role in it and I'm sure when I tell her about your true self she would gladly help me in ruining you.

Just wait and watch...

"Enough! Let go of my fiance right now!"

Chapter 20

"You need to take your hands off my fiance," the guy said as his eyes reflected his emotions of rage.

"I dare you to call my wife as your fiance one more time and you will have it from it," was my reply as I held Juliette by her arm while she kept on struggling.

"Stop it!" she screamed irritated whilst still trying her hard to remove her arm from my hold.

"Let go!" her voice was shaking at the end and at the very moment, my heart ached for the pain that I was knowingly causing her. I knew my hold on her was firm, too tight that would surely leave a new amount of bruises on her arm but I was too selfish and most importantly scared to let her go. *What if she disappeared from my sight once again? No...*

"Look," I spoke up as I turned her towards me and holding her face I tried my best to talk as calmly as I could for I knew if she continued doing this any further I would naturally give up this soft facade to and go back on being the monster myself to bring her back. "I am your husband and you are my wife. I know the conditions in which we married off where nothing to what you had ever wished for but then you said you loved me. You told me that you only loved me and made love you back even more but then one day you disappeared and people around me told me that you are not going to come back. Do you understand how I would have felt when they told me that you," my thumb began to caress her face as I spoke feeling my eyes stinging in the corner "my love will never return to me?"

"I was destroyed. I thought I had lost myself but I never lost hope of finding you. I never believed them. I swear-"

"I swear I never believed them. Even though their words were hurtful and at the moment looked the sole truth, I swear I never believed them. I was keen on the fact that the woman who went to the extent to annoy me and irritate me just to make me confess my love for her would never do this to me. She just can't leave alone after healing from my loneliness. I just knew it that you were alive but you were only lost," as I spoke she stared at me with tears in her eyes.

"I knew you would come back and when you didn't I came searching for you. And now," I laughed as I felt the unshed tear falling off "I have finally found you. I'm never letting go again."

"I'm never letting go again," my voice broke at the end as I put my forehead against her inhaling deeply.

I can never be wrong in identifying Juliette. I could smell her and the fragrance, the scent of the body belonged to Juliette. I knew it.

"Just who ar-"

"Ivona!" a voice interfered Juliette from speaking up and like a bolt of electricity she jumped back avoiding my touch.

"I...I" she stuttered looking down and back at that guy before looking towards me. She stared at me for few seconds before nodding and inhaling deeply "Look! Please! I understand your feelings. I understand that you have lost your wife. But I'm not your Juliette. I don't even know you. My name is Ivona. But I do understand that I might resemble you-"

"Resemble?" I asked and all of a sudden the barrage of my patience began to break as I felt the anger surfacing "Resemble?" I laughed sarcastically "You think I'm stupid?"

"No, it's not what I mean-"

"Resemble? Do you think I'm blind and all these things up?"

"Okay!" I breathed in deeply trying to control my anger "So let me believe for a moment that you are not my Juliette but Ivona."

The guy next to her shifted on his place crossing his arms across his chest as he narrowed his eyes at me. Juliette stared at me in confusion but spoke nothing giving me the chance to speak up further "So how come these two people look exactly the same? Care to make me understand?" I gritted out.

"What do you mean?" she spoke up.

"What I meant is how" I made a circle in the air before her face "do you look exactly the same as my wife? You have same eyes, nose, facial features, height and even the-" my eyes fell on her black hair and for a moment I halted for the reason it didn't match my Juliette's brown one but ignoring that I continued further "So how do you look exactly like my Juliette unless you are her twin. And as far as I know she has only one brother and no twin, so how?" I asked and fished the phone out of my pocket and slid the screen on.

"Care to make me understand how in the world do you resemble so much to her?" as I showed her my phone's wallpaper in which I had the photo of both of us together back from the day when we went to family picnic. The girl who claimed her name as Ivona looked absolutely shocked as she stared at the phone's screen with big wide eyes.

The guy looked at the screen and immediately his arms loosened as he uncrossed his arms and looked at my phone shocked.

"This. Thi- How is this possible?" she spoke up in a whisper and reached out to take the phone from my hand.

As I handed her my phone, I chose to stay quiet for a moment to give her little time as she continued staring at my phone.

"Alex?" she turned to look at the guy and the guy remained rooted to his place as he eyed my phone. The beads of sweat that formed on his forehead didn't go unnoticed by my eyes and for a moment I felt as if the guy knew something.

"This. How is this possible? She looks completely like me," she said eyeing back at the photo.

"No, she doesn't!" for the first time the guy named Alex spoke up as he took my phone from Juliette's hand and handed it back to me.

"It's fine. People do resemble and it is possible that there is some resemblance between your wife and my fiance. But I can assure you that my fiance is certainly not your wife. I have known her from my childhood and as far as I know her she has never married to anyone," Juliette looked up at him when he said the word childhood.

"You have a misunderstanding over here. We can even provide you her legal identification proof to prove that she is Ivona, not Juliette. We feel bad for your loss but this doesn't mean that you can do whatever you want and speak up as you wish. Ivona is my fiance and for the last time, I'm warning you to stay away from her. If you don't then the consequences will be" he took a step further looking straight into my eyes with a determination in his eyes he completed the sentence "bad. Very bad," he whispered the last part only for me to hear and the next thing I saw was him getting hold of Juliette by her hand and he picked her shopping bags in one hand before walking past me taking her with him.

Juliette looked towards me over her shoulder and at the very moment I understood that something was definitely wrong.

I chose to stay rooted in my place as I watched them walk away.

"Ivona" I breathed out speaking the name with utter disgust.

"Fiance"

"Alex" my palms curled up into fists.

"Face resemblance" I scoffed at it and walked to the railing and leaned against it looking down where a huge crowd of people gathered to witness a launch of a new brand in the mall. My eyes fell on the guy named Alex who was dragging Juliette with him. His hand on her shoulder as she scurried off towards the exit of the mall.

"So this is what you want?" I whispered to myself clawing the railing in anger.

"Fine. I had warned you. Don't tell me that I didn't," a smirk appeared on my face as I watched them walk away.

"You didn't do this right with me. You don't understand who I am and to what extent I can go," an evil chuckle escaped my mouth as I looked at my phone's screen once they were out of my sight.

"You called this upon yourself Juliette. You have called this upon yourself, my love," my thumbs trailed upon her face on the screen.

"You are going to pay for all those sufferings and I will make sure I turn your life a living hell...Mr." a smile formed on my face as I shoved my phone back into my pant pockets and looked the way where they were last seen "Alexandru Lascar"

Chapter 21

For a moment I felt as if the ground under me has cracked open and it wanted to swallow me up for a mistake I didn't even do. What exactly has life kept for me? I can't even understand what is all this going on with me. My emotions are mixed up and I could feel my head burdening with the thoughts of what is wrong with my life all of a sudden and I had started to question my own identity.

Who exactly am I?

Who exactly is that person who is claiming me as his wife and who exactly is the guy is claiming me as his fiance?

Whom should I trust?

Who is speaking the truth?

I can't even remember my past. My past has become a riddle for me and I found myself believing in the fact that perhaps I had made a mistake trusting the wrong person. But again I cursed myself for even thinking like that. Alex had never caused any harm to me and I believe on him but I felt as if I couldn't even stop myself from thinking about that guy.

What was his name again?

"Wait! What was his name again?" I thought as I paced around my room thinking about his name.

"Sullivan. Sullivan! Right!" I jumped up in my place when I remembered him saying something Sullivan but couldn't quite remember his first name.

"Oh! What is wrong with me? Here I am thinking about him but I don't even know his name. What should I do?" I thought of the moment when he came barging into that ladies washroom and kissed me senseless. My hands automatically touched my lips when I thought about that kiss. I could feel so much of feelings emerging out in that one kiss. The guy was desperate but was ecstatic and that made the kiss wonde-

"What in the world am I thinking?" I slapped my forehead feeling a blush rising up my face.

"Argh!" I fanned my face feeling hot and took the remote of the AC decreasing its temperature, even more, feeling hot.

"What's wrong with me?" I muttered annoyed at the situation. I could feel a headache growing second by second for the amount of thinking I was preferably doing. Sighing, I sat on my bed and noticed the laptop on my bed. Crawling on my bed I fetched the laptop from the other end of the bed and opened it to surf the net when a thought crossed my mind.

"Why not search for him online?"

"I hope he has an online account" I muttered to myself as I looked for him on the social media sites. All I knew about him was his surname and that didn't help me in searching for him because there were thousands of people with the same damn surname 'Sullivan'.

"Was it James Sullivan? No! or maybe Keith Sullivan? Argh!" I was beyond frustration. For an hour I sat there searching for him but found nothing and finally when I was ready to give up another idea crossed my mind.

"Oh right! Juliette! Let me search for Juliette Sullivan," I typed the name directly on google and screamed in frustration when all of a sudden the screen displayed a connection error.

"Why? What's wrong now?" I began hitting the laptop and finally after trying three to five times when it didn't work I left the laptop screen on and walked to my kitchen wanting to make myself a cup of coffee.

Earlier, Alex was quite the whole time when he drove me back home from the mall and ignored my questions when I asked him about the resemblance me and Juliette had. I wanted to know what he thought about the resemblance and was it possible to have the same face even though we were not even related.

The look he gave me made me shut my mouth because he looked kind of angry and I wanted to ask him the reason for that but couldn't because by that time we had already reached my apartment and he left as soon as I got out of the car.

"He is weird sometimes," I scrunched my nose when the coffee powder fell off the glass.

"Oh shoot!"

"This is my life," I sighed and took the duster to clean my kitchen counter.

As I stirred my coffee and walked back to my bedroom to where I had left my laptop open, I looked at my laptop screen to find the wifi connection connected and that brought a smile to my face as I ran over to it keeping the cup on the nightstand to look at the screen. But then the color drained from my face when I saw the screen.

It was me.

I had a picture of me in a golden dress in an event with that guy who claimed himself as my husband. He had an award in his hand and had his other hand on my waist.

"What? What is this?" tears rolled down my face as I took in the pictures. It was me. Surely, the woman on the screen had the same eyes as me, same height, facial features except for my hair. She had brown while mine was jet black. The woman looked same as me but she looked happy and breathtakingly gorgeous in that pic. I read the headline to read *Mr. Zachary Sullivan awarded the best Businessman of the year.*

Mr. Zachary Udolf Sullivan titled the best Businessman of the year.

There were other pictures of them together and I clicked every single picture of them together to read the headlines.

Mr. Zachary Udolf Sullivan the business tycoon married off his sweetheart in a private manner which included his close family members, friends, and relatives.

Mr. Zachary Udolf Sullivan clicked shopping around with his wife Mrs. Juiette Sullivan.

Mr. Sullivan thanks wife Mrs. Juliette Sullivan for all the success in his life.

Amidst all these headlines, there was a picture which got my attention. In the picture, the guy whose name was Zachary was standing in a balcony seeming lost in deep thoughts as he seemed to stare particular at nothing and the headline read *Mr. Zachary Udolf Sullivan, heartbroken after losing his wife in a car accident.*

"Wait! Car accident?" I spoke up as I read the headlines.

His wife died in an accident?

Chapter 22

"But he told me that she went missing or something like that. Didn't he?" I muttered and looked for my phone around and saw it on my nightstand. As I reached for it, my hands accidentally touched the coffee mug and it slipped off the table and the hot coffee fell all over my hand before spilling on the ground.

"Oh shoot!" I hissed feeling the skin on my hands burning.

Why is everything so difficult for me these days?

I ran to my washroom hoping to wash it off using cold water forgetting everything that I was doing. As soon as the cold water touched the burnt area it stung for a moment but then I felt better and leaning against the basin I let the cold water do its work but then my mind drifted back to that guy.

"So your name is Zachary Udolf Sullivan," I spoke to myself thinking about the guy and looked up at my reflection in the mirror.

"I wonder what exactly has happened with you," my eyes fell on my messy hair and I found myself comparing my looks with the woman named Juliette whose picture I saw on the internet.

"This is really weird. How come I look so much like her? Is this really possible?"

"Except the hair," I sighed as I held a few strands of my hair and twirled it in between my finger.

"Well, I think there's more to it. Not just my face but even my height, body type, and features matches with the woman. So, is it true that seven face alike really exists?" I found it incredulous.

But as weird it was, there was the proof before me and I found myself questioning more to my own existence.

This is so frustrating.

As I was lost thinking about it all over and over again, the doorbell snapped me out of my thinking state and hurriedly I went up to get the door when my phone rang.

"Hello?"

"What are you up to?" it was Alex on the other end and I heard the doorbell once again. Holding the phone next to my ear I walked up to get the door.

"Who is it?" he asked as I got near the door. I assumed he had heard the doorbell through the phone.

"I don't know let me see," I said and used the camera peephole viewer to look out. As I recognized the person from the camera I replied back to Alex, "Oh it's the maid," I said and opened the door allowing the entrance to my apartment.

"Maid? It's already noon. Is she showing up now? At this time of the day? What type of servant is she?" I could imagine the scowl on his face to which I laughed out loud.

"No, she is on time. Actually, she went out to get some grocery," I replied and watched the maid got inside closing the door and walking towards the kitchen room to keep the things that she had brought.

"Oh, I see" he replied.

"So? What are you up to?" he asked and I took a seat on my couch sprawling my legs on the coffee table.

"Nothing much. I have a charity function to attend tomorrow. I'm just thinking of what to wear and about a good speech to deliver," I sighed as I saw the maid cleaning the kitchen counter where I had previously scattered the coffee powder.

"Please clean it properly," I smiled at her when she narrowed her gaze at me and carried on cleaning the counter.

"What are you talking about?" Alex asked and I shook my head no but then remembered I was on the phone and answered: "Oh no, I was talking to my maid."

"Oh," he replied.

"Is she not doing her work properly? Shall I replac-"

"No! No! You don't have to. Actually," I laughed as I saw her scowling while washing the coffee mug "I'm the one who is causing trouble to her."

"I see. Well, good luck to her then," he chuckled and I watched as she made her towards me and stared at my legs that was resting lazily on the coffee table. Raising my eyebrows and giving her an amused look I removed my legs giving her space to walk past but then I found myself in a playful mood as I kept the leg once again back on the table stopping her from going further.

"Is there any problem?" I asked batting my eyelashes innocently at her.

She stared down at me and rolling her eyes turned around and walked into my bedroom to do her work.

"I assume you are giving her a hard time," I heard him chuckling on the other end and I laughed aloud at it in reply.

"Well, I am happy she is keeping you entertained," he replied to which I just hummed in response.

"Not really. This all things are not really keeping me entertained these days," I sighed as I laid back on the couch and looked up at the ceiling.

"I can't understand anything and especially the g-"

"You are just thinking too much. The only guy you need to trust at the moment is me. I'm your fiance after all. We will be sharing our lives together and I hope you trust me enough to not let any outsider get in between us," he spoke up and I could hear the determination in his voice that brought a smile on my face.

"Of course," I replied.

"Now, I want you to get ready. I'm already on my way from my office to your apartment," he said and immediately I was up on my feet, horrified.

"What? Where?" I asked as I was ready to run up to the door but stopped when I heard his voice.

"Relax! I mean I'm halfway through my office work and I'll be out from here in less than thirty minutes and then I shall come to pick you up," he replied and as I realized what he meant I sat down on the couch holding my head.

"Oh," is what that came out of my mouth.

"Wait! Where are we going again?" I asked once I realized I never knew where we were going.

"To my dad's house," he said in a monotone.

"What?" and I was back on my feet "But why? Why all of a sudden?" I asked breathlessly as I thought about meeting his father after so many days.

"Relax! Why do you always get so hyped up whenever you meet my father? He is not a monster you know?" he chuckled at my reaction and I snorted at the end.

"I am not afraid. It's just that you never told me anything about this meeting and you are not even giving me proper timing to get ready," I spoke up as I ran past the maid to my bedroom and hurriedly pulled out my clothes from the closet.

"You don't really need to dress up. You look beautiful in whatever you wear and I'm sure you will pull out any dress you chose to wear pretty well. And my father lacks knowledge on fashion trends. So you don't need to worry much about it."

"Yeah. But still that doesn't mean I will show up ...you know... I want to look my best whenever I'm with you," I replied and as I said that a loud screeching sound was heard across the room and I looked at the source to find my maid scowling looking the ground.

"What is it?" Alex asked to which I replied, "It looks like she broke something."

"So why are we going to meet up your dad all of a sudden?" I asked as we made our way out of the car and towards the house entrance.

"Oh, he just called me today asking both of us to show up as quickly as we could. You know he is selling his company and his client is here. He wants us to meet his client. It's a big day for him cause finally he will be getting rid of that company which has caused nothing but loss to him," Alex said as he laced his hand with mine as we walked inside the house.

"So how did all of a sudden he found a buyer?" I couldn't help but ask.

"I don't know. Let's find out," he shrugged and as we walked towards the lawn where they were. There were three people in the middle of the lawn out of which I recognized his dad immediately and the other two were his clients, I assumed.

"Oh, there they are!" his dad smiled and stood up from the chair looking towards us. I waved at him and smiled at him but as soon as my eyes fell on the people with whom he was sitting my smile faded away as I recognized the person immediately.

"W-What?" I heard myself.

"What the-" Alex stopped in his tracks and I could feel his hands wrapping tightly around my waist as we looked at the man.

Mr. Zachary Sullivan.

"Mr. Sullivan meet my son Alex and his fiancée, Ms. Ivona Cernea," Alex's father introduced us to him even though he knew us and we knew him.

"And kids meet Mr. Zachary Udolf Sullivan. He is my client and he is here with his girlfriend Ms. Cristina Dimir," Alex's father introduced and as he said fiancée my eyes snapped up towards the woman. The woman smiled at us and I watched a smirk plastered up on Sullivan's face as he wrapped an arm around her waist and pulled her closer to him. The woman seemed to be caught off-guard as she looked down at his arm and then back at him, lovingly.

What is going on?

"Nice to meet you," is what Mr. Sullivan spoke up sounding sarcastic as ever as he smirked more at me for my reaction.

Chapter 23

"Meet his girlfriend Ms. Cristina Dimir," Alex's father said as he introduced us to Mr. Zachary Udolf Sullivan, the same person who have been invading my dreams, thoughts since the day he had met me causing nothing but trouble to me and my relationship with Alex. The same person who claimed that I was his wife and my name was Juliette Sullivan but here he was before us like nothing ever happened as he smiled at the woman next to him and had his arm wrapped around her waist.

"What type of game is he playing now?" I heard Alex mutter with annoyance and his grip around my waist tightened and I noticed Sullivan's eyeing Alex's arm from the corner of his eyes.

Whilst all these chaos, the fact that Sullivan was the problem solver for Alex's father's company and their client didn't help. I could notice the tension arising between them as they stood there glaring at each other. Like, two alpha males refusing to get down. Alex seemingly tried his best to keep his anger in check and while on the other hand, Sullivan clenched his jaws and smiled sarcastically before paying his attention to the woman next to him.

"Uh, do you guys know each other?"

Thankfully, Alex's father interfered in, cutting the thick air with his question.

"No!" both Alex and Sullivan said in unison before narrowing their eyes at each other's lies. And the very moment the only thought I had all of a sudden was to have a tub of vanilla ice cream.

The sudden desire for an ice cream had my stomach growl and before I knew it everyone present there heard it making it seemingly an embarrassment for me. Mr. Lascas laughed out loud while the woman next to Sullivan smiled at me. Feeling the blush forming upon my cheek I coughed a little and looked the other way trying my best to hide my embarrassment.

"Come, let's have some snacks first before we talk," Mr. Lascar spoke up and we all followed him to the chair where each of us sat next to our partners. But the awkward position was Mr. Lascar sitting in between them while the lady sat next to me.

"So? how did you two meet?" It was Alex who asked the question all of a sudden and I looked back at Zachary who pissed at the moment but calmed down as soon as the lady kept her hand on his elbow.

Who is she?

"It seems as if my personal life interests you, Mr. Alex," Sullivan gave up a narcissist smirk as Alex narrowed his eyes at him.

The moment was interrupted by the servant who served the high tea and went away.

"How much sugar would you like to have Ivona?" Alex asked as he held the cubes of sugar in his hand ready to put it in my cup.

"Oh, t-"

"Two," Sullivan interrupted and all of us looked at him while he smirked more at me looking straight into my eyes.

That was the amount I preferred for my tea. Seemingly looking confused the lady beside him looked up at him and put her and on his hand which brought him out of his thinking state.

"Oh, I mean I would like to have two cubes for my tea, Cristina," he said as he directed this words towards Cristina which caused her to smile happily as she took the cubes of sugar and served him the tea.

"Ivona?" I heard Alex calling for me when I was busy looking at the couple.

"Oh, it's one. I would like to have one cube, please," I asked and looked back at Sullivan who was sipping from his cup of tea as he kept himself busy answering and talking to Cristina.

"So? How did you two meet?" this time it was me who asked the question. From the corner of my eyes, I could notice both Alex and his father stopped whatever they were doing and looked back at us while Sullivan raised his eyebrows at me and looked at Cristina who nodded up at him.

"She works with me in my office. She is my personal assistant," he said and I could feel Alex shifting his chair closer to me.

"And how long have you been together?" Mr. Lascar asked to which Cristina smiled up and looked lovingly at Zachary "Its only been a month, Sir"

Sullivan smiled at her and then looked directly at me.

"Very interesting," Alex replied and took hold of my hand placing a kiss on the back of my hand.

"That's really nice. Very few people get to find their true love and I am sure who two pairs are just made for each other in heaven," Mr. Lascar laughed but awkwardly neither of us joined his laugh and as if he got it his laughter died down and he cleared his throat before shifting on his chair.

"So, let's get back to our discussion now aye? Now when my son is here I would like you to settle this deal for once and all Mr. Sullivan. What do you say?" Mr. Lascar asked the question to Sullivan and he nodded before taking his phone out.

"Before we do that, I have a condition for you," he said out of the blue.

"Condition?" What is it?" Alex asked and Sullivan turned his phone around showing us a picture of a house.

"You see this house?" he asked as he showed us a picture of a house. It was a two-storeyed house and was only surrounded by bushes and trees in the picture. It looked old yet beautiful and homey where an average person would dream of living.

"This house..." I heard Mr. Lascar trail off as he looked at the house as if he knew the house.

"Yes, this house. If I'm correct then this house belongs to you. Am I correct?" Sullivan asked and Mr. Lascar nodded looking confused.

Chapter 24

"I want this house," Sullivan said it loud and clear for all to hear and in spite of looking confused Mr. Lascar pulled himself and asked back: "This is the house that I had brought years ago in the outskirts of the town. Its old and I believe the building is now home to many wild animals and it would give up any second as you can already see it in the picture, it's in a critical state. I have not been there for years and why would a person like you like to buy this house anyway? You can have a mansion if you want to and where exactly did you get this picture?" Mr. Lascar asked to which he only replied with a shrug.

"This is my only condition, Mr. Lascar. I will buy your company only if you give this house to me. Don't worry I won't take it for free. I will pay for it. We can add this property to our agreement and I shall buy it at once. Do you agree?" Zachary asked.

Alex looked back at his confused father and then back at me.

"Why exactly do you want this particular house only, Mr. Sullivan?" Mr. Lascar asked and I looked back at him waiting for his answer.

"Why are you clenching your fist?" Alex whispered to me and I realised I sat there clenching my palm in a tight fist. Letting it go, I smiled at him and got up from the chair holding everyone's attention at once.

"Excuse me, I need to use the washroom" I excused myself and made my way towards the house but before I could take two steps further I heard Zachary spoke up "I want this house for my wife...I mean my lover," he laughed and that made me stop in my tracks.

His laugh was joined by the lady and Mr. Lascar as well. Closing my eyes for a bit, I found myself inhaling and exhaling deeply before I took my chance to walk up towards the house.

In the washroom, I looked at my own reflection. My hair was a mess as I had continuously raked my hand through it and my navy blue colored sleeveless dress had wrinkles all over it for I was pacing around at the washroom trying to cool down my nerves that had been kicking in since the time of the day I saw Zachary with his...

"Calm down, you don't have to think about them now. Just think about Alex," I spoke to myself and adjusting my dress and patting it using my hands, I found myself inhaling in deeply for the second time of the day as I looked at myself through the mirror and finally took it the chance to go back to them.

As I walked out of the washroom and towards the living room, all of a sudden a hand clamped my mouth and I screamed petrified as I found someone dragging me towards a dark room. The guy had a tight grasp of me as his hand held my waist and the other hand clamped my mouth stopping my screams. The person dragged me towards the room and pushed me inside roughly

as I lost my balance and fell to the floor wincing and hissing in pain when my elbow came in direct contact with the ground.

"Are you alright?" I didn't mean to-" I recognized the voice right away and looked up horrified to find no other person but Zachary himself.

"Don't touch me!" I slapped his hands away and looked back to find he had closed the glass door and we were inside what looked a storeroom with old types of furniture all over the place.

"What do you think you are doing?" I hissed at him and inspected my elbow for any would.

"Look yo-"

"Shut up!" I was up on my feet as I looked back at door to find it locked from inside.

"How dare you, Mr. Zachary Udolf Sullivan?" I raised my hand to slap him right across his face but in a swift motion, he caught my hand and his jaws locked as he pushed me back towards the wall, my back hitting the wall behind me as I looked at him startled.

"You have no idea how daring I could be," he smirked which caused me gulping in fear at the moment.

He got hold of my hand and in a swift motion, his other hand was inside my dress touching the band of my underwear.

"What? W-What do you think you a-are doing? Get off me!" I screamed and horrified by his actions lifted my knee up to hit him but as if he knew it was coming he moved back and placed his leg in between my legs before pulling my underwear down.

"S-Stop! Let me go!" all of a sudden my screams were muffled as he placed his mouth on mine kissing me roughly and taking this as the advantage I had hardly any time to react when all of a sudden he had himself forced inside of me. A gasp of pain escaped my mouth and tears flowed down my eyes as I could feel the pain in between my legs. My struggles were in vain but then I felt him plunging deeper inside of me and he finally let go of my hand and I found him kissing my neck while I stood their helplessly.

If anything that was heard in that room then it was his grunts and my sobs as I raised my hands up and held his shoulder feeling the pain subsiding to pleasure, a smile erupted on my face as I stared at his eyes lifting up my leg giving him more access, I spoke up seductively "Slow down, you idiot!"

He smiled more like smirked at me satisfactorily and holding my leg in his hand proceeded to plunge deeper inside me while I moaned and we kissed like never before, forgetting everything and everyone at the very moment.

Chapter 25

It was like a moment of pleasure, I found myself blown away by the situation and had my legs wrapped around Zachary forgetting everything and everyone at the moment. My senses didn't work as he assaulted me with his kisses and each time he thrust me I felt as if it was my end of sanity.

"Ivona?" a familiar voice had me back to my senses as I had my eyes snapped open and I looked towards the direction of the voice.

"Oh no!" I whispered yelled as I pushed Zachary away and stood back on the ground quickly adjusting my dress and putting the underwear back on.

"What have you done?" I held my temple as I glared at him while he buttoned up his pant and raised his eyebrows at me.

"You! You can't this to me. Zachary, oh my god! What do I do now?" I cried as I looked around.

If I was correct then Alex was outside searching and calling for me. Even though the store room's door was closed from inside I was sure he would find me out eventually and it was why I panicked because I was in a complicated state with the most complicated man in the world having a complicated moment of pleasure.

"What if he finds you here? Oh my god!" I cried as I thought about impossibilities he would do if he found Zachary with me.

"As if I care, and you! You can't do this to me. I am not done with you, yet!" he held my hands and inched forward wanting to kiss me.

"Zachary are you serious? If he finds me here with you then everything is finished. God only knows what he would do! Zachary this is his land," I warned him as I kept my hand on his chest trying to push him away from me.

"And you need to remember you are mine," he said without any emotion in his eyes and that had me stop pushing him.

"Ivona? Are you here?" it was Alex. He was right behind the door softly knocking on the door but that had me alarmed and I jumped on the ground afraid.

"See? He is here now! Oh my god! What do I do? What do I do?" I cried and looked back at Zachary who had anything but worry in his face. I knew he wasn't afraid at all but his lack of emotions at a place and time like this worried me.

"Ivona?"

"Y-Yeah! I'm here!" I yelled back wanting him to know that I was there.

"What are you doing inside? Open the door!" he asked and I looked back at Zachary worriedly.

"Yeah just a minute," I said and was about to take a step away from Zachary when he held my arms and turned me to him. "Don't let him touch you once again. If he does then I will kill him right then and there. I have a low tolerance when its come to you and you know it too!" he whispered more like threatened and before I could answer he turned around and in a swift motion jumped to and held the open beam of the wall and pulled himself up before opening the window door to outside and jumped out but not before giving me a last glance.

"Ivona?"

"Yeah, I'm coming!" I said as I looked back at the open window and took a sigh of relief before walking up to the door to open the door.

"What took you so long?" he said as he looked at me and then without even hearing my answer walked past me inside the room.

"I thought someone was inside with you," he said and I shook my head no.

"What are you talking about? I said laughing nervously before replying "I was just adjusting my uh dress. Yeah! dress," I said and he narrowed his eyes at me.

"But you could have done that in the washroom too. Why did you come here?" he pestered further and even though I wanted to give him a snorty reply I held my tongue and smiled "Oh, there was already someone in the washroom and I wanted to adjust my dress as quickly as I could. So, I saw this room and entered here. I'm so sorry for walking into your house like this bu-"

"What are you talking about? It's your house too. You're my fiance remember?" he smiled and held me by my elbow.

"C'mon let's go now," he said and I nodded.

As we walked out of the room, all of a sudden he stopped on his tracks and looked back. I gulped thinking that he had noticed that open window door and he would definitely doubt but then miraculously he spoke "How many times I have told Dad to mend that stupid window door. It's loose and it opens every single time."

"I will have to do this by myself," he whispered and then closed the storeroom's door and locked it.

"So? What did you decide? Are you going to give him your house?" I asked as we walked back to where we had previously left them.

"It depends upon my dad. It's his property after all," he replied and I hummed in response.

Chapter 26

As we went back, thankfully Zachary was already present their talking to Mr. Lascar as if nothing ever happened a few seconds ago. The woman sat next to them and silently listened to their conversation. All of a sudden Zachary looked at us and at the moment his eyes traveled down to where Alex had linked his arm with mine. I noticed as he clenched his jaws and that was enough for me to be attentive and I removed my arms from around Alex and went back to sit on my chair.

"So shall I start the paperwork? Should I think that this deal is a yes from your side?" Mr. Lascar asked and the moment Zachary's eyes flickered towards me and back to Mr. Lascar as he nodded his head yes.

"I don't have any idea what is he up to now," Alex spoke as he walked me back to my apartment.

"I think he has gotten over me and gave up on me," I said as I fished the keys out from my purse and turned the doorknob but didn't open it.

"No! I don't think so. But at the moment he is helping my father from his depression and I am just glad about it," he said and I nodded "I hope, I don't upset you on this," he said and my eyes widened and I shook my head no "No! What are you saying? Of course not! It's alright!" I said and he smiled "He has caused you so much trouble yet you are fine with us dealing with him. You are really...what do I say?" he trailed off thinking about the correct word and I smiled "Kind?" I laughed and he joined in.

"Okay. I think I should go. Bye," he smiled and I nodded replying the same and waited for him to leave but he stood their and rocked on his heels like a school kid as he spoke up "I am going now. Bye," to which I only nodded and smiled at him.

"Okay. Bye," he said and finally turned on his heels and then finally after ten minutes of Bye...Bye...Bye...he was gone as he took the lift and was out of my sight.

I sighed as I exhaled out and turning the doorknob, I entered the apartment only to be startled by none other than Zachary himself.

"You seem to be enjoying his company a lot lately," he said narrowing his eyes while I held my heart finding its sped up for the moment.

"Oh my god! Zachary! Why do you always do this?" I hissed at him and hurriedly closed the door locking it as I glared at him and walked past him towards my bedroom where I threw my purse on my bed and got rid of my heels.

"What were you thinking? Must I say this you truly are something aye? You had sex with me in your enemies house. What should I do? Should I applaud you for it? or should I reward you something for that stupid stunt of yours?" I yelled at him but all he did was to glare back at me.

"He touched what's mine so I had you in his own house. Simple as fuck!" he replied and then plopped down on my bed.

I gave him an incredulous look before picking up the pillow and throwing it at him.

"Really? Then what were you doing? What's with this girlfriend story? Do you think I'm blind? I saw you touching her and she had her arms around you as if you were her husband," I yelled at him and as I remembered the woman's arm around his I felt my blood boiling.

"She is being paid for it. You don't have to worr- Oh wait! Are you jealous?" he smirked as he narrowed his eyes at me. His eyes had this mischievous glint as I glared back at him.

"Why should I?" I laughed sarcastically.

"Oh well, good. You shouldn't be jealous at all," he said as he wrapped his hands behind his head and looked up at me as I stood next to him near the bed. I nodded feeling angry from the inside but chose not to speak anything in return. *Cause I knew it was useless.*

My phone rung and still glaring at Zachary I went to pick it up to find Alex on the other end.

"What are you doing?" he asked and I narrowed my eyes at Zachary who had his attention on me.

"Nothing! I was just lecturing my maid," I replied in a monotone.

"Ivona?" Zachary poked me on my shoulder as I watched a stupid movie on which I had no attention on the Netflix.

"Hey! Are you listening?" he poked for the second time but again I chose to ignore him.

"Juliette!"

"What?" I snapped back at him as I got up from the bed and looked up at him.

"Why are you ignoring me?" he asked to which I crossed my arms over my chest and stared back at him.

"Okay fine! I am sorry. Are you going to ignore me for eternity or what? I have been walking following you for two hours and you are not even responding,"

"Zachary, are you being serious now?" I asked and he raised an eyebrow.

"I don't remember us talking about you having a paid girlfriend. You didn't even bother to tell me about her and you have the audacity to let her touch you before me. How dare you?" I pushed him and walked past him towards the closet where I unzip my dress and got rid of my dress. He followed me inside while I was still on my lingerie.

"Juliette, I was just kidding. You know I don't love her or anybody else, It's you only you," he came forward wrapping his arms around me from behind stopping me from putting my pajamas on. I sighed as and let him hug me as I turned around to face him.

"I'm sorry too. I don't know why I am acting like this but it's not exactly you. I just didn't like it when she had her arms around you. It didn't even look as if she was acting," I said and wrapped my arms around him feeling a bit of possessiveness for my husband.

"I love you," I whispered and he chuckled wrapping his arms around me as he placed a soft kiss on my shoulder. A small smile laced up my face as I cherished the moment of me being in his arms and him being so close to me but then he had to ruin the moment as I felt my bra unhooked all of a sudden.

"I have unfinished business with you, remember? Darling?" he whispered seductively.

Chapter 27

Two months ago...

It's all over.

Do you hear me?

It wasn't how it was supposed to be! You could've killed her.

I heard a faint voice as I found myself regain my consciousness. A groan escaped my mouth but as soon as I opened my eyes they shut down immediately for the brightness. But then slowly, I opened my eyes and looked around to find myself in what looked like a hospital room. I had IVs attached to my body and a thin oxygen pipe was attached to my nose. I tried to get up but then my body didn't respond to my wishes and that caused me to fall right back on the bed and before I knew it I had lost my consciousness once again.

Her vitals seems to be stable now.

I think the patient would come to senses any moment now.

Is she alright?

We can't really tell that. As soon as she regains her consciousness, we all shall know it.

It's a relief!

I could hear those people speak and could literally feel their stares on my body but I couldn't move. I just couldn't feel my body and it became frustrating for me. Suddenly, I felt something cold on my face and it when I began to feel everything.

I felt the cool air touching my skin and I could literally smell something medicinal and it was when I found myself opening my eyes and then looked frantically.

"Where is thi-s place?" I murmured as I stared only at the ceiling of the room but then recognized the place as a hospital room.

I was admitted.

"W-What? What happened?" I questioned myself and tried to get up but then stopped when I felt the needles inserted into my hand as IV drips.

Nobody was in the room and I expected for someone to be near to offer me some water. I could feel my throat dried up and the moment all I needed was water. But then questions arose on my mind thinking how was I admitted to the hospital and what really happened.

How did I end up here?

I wondered and tried to think of whatever I remembered and then like a spear being thrown, memories of what exactly happened flashed through my mind and it was when I remembered everything.

"Z-Zachary," was the only name that came out of my mouth.

"Zachary. Oh my god! Wh-What really happened? Where is he?" I muttered to myself before looking around but was soon disappointed when I didn't find him around.

"Where in the world is he? He should have been here, next to me bu-" I spoke irritated and remembered I had met with an accident last night and remembered my car being hit by a truck as my car fell off the bridge and into the river. I looked at my hands and body to find faint bruises all over it and touched my face to find it swollen and had a bandage wrapped my forehead.

The last thing I remembered was...when I opened my eyes I found myself in the water and I thought I would lose consciousness any second. The driver's body was right before me and I had no idea if he was dead or alive but still holding his collar I found myself swimming out of the already broken window towards the surface. It was dark and as I swam towards the surface, I could feel my legs giving in and at the moment I knew we were in deep water...still for the sake of Zachary I swam towards the surface hoping that if I reach the surface I would definitely live but then I felt my lungs giving in and it was when I found myself losing consciousness.

"But where is he?" I thought and then tried to get rid of the drips before deciding upon investing about his whereabouts on my own.

"You better have a good reason for being absent while I regained senses Mr. Zachary Udolf Sullivan else you are going to have it from me," a sharp pain crossed my body when my foot touched the cold ground. Still, hissing in pain I held the sides of the bed and gradually yet slowly walked towards the door. My legs seemed to be stable for me to walk on my own but still, I could feel the pain hitting my body with every step I took.

"Where are you, Zachary? Damn it!" I cursed under my breath as I walked out of my room but as I was just about to cross another room, the voice of a news reporter reporting in tv stopped me in my tracks and I looked at it only to gasp in shock.

The headlines were about Zachary. They showed us some videos of him standing on the balcony of our house looking at particularly nothing. He looked terrible but what shocked me was the headline which read.

A month anniversary to the famous businessman Mr. Zachary Udolf Sullivan's wife.

And then they showed the viewers some videos of me with him at all the events we attended together.

"What the hell!" I cursed as I realized what was going on but then it hit me.

"Wait! A month? Was I out for a month? And they think I am dead? Wait! Am I actually dead?" I yelled and looked around before pinching myself only to end up hissing in pain.

"What the fuck?"

"T-This got to be some type of joke. And Zachary that fool.. does he even know I am alive? What exactly is going on over here?" I cried as I held the bridge of my nose in aggravation. The moment was short lived when the main door opened and I watched as two men walked in. I recognized the one wearing the white coat as the doctor and the other one... a stranger.

Still, I found myself walking back towards my room and I as I realized Zachary was not near me, I went back to my bed and slept back on it pretending to be out. I could hear the door of my room opening and the footsteps were clearly audible as whoever they were they walked in and stood right beside me.

Chapter 28

"Why is her drip not attached to her body?"I heard an angry masculine voice.

"I think the nurse might have got rid of it," the other one spoke professionally and I assumed it as the voice of the doctor.

"Is she alright now? Why has she not regained her consciousness yet?" the angry guy asked and the doctor replied: "It's really strange. She should have already regained her senses because her vitals are clearly normal."

"Do whatever you want to doctor but remember this I want this woman back to senses now. If anything happens to her..." he stopped for a second before continuing with a threatening tone "I will shut this hospital down."

Who is he?

I have never heard this voice before.

Did he know me?

Why did he not inform Zachary about me?

Is he one of Zachary's men or enem...

No! Too soon to judge.

I heard a ringing of the phone and then I waited a little longer with the intentions of listening to their conversation much further.

"Yes, she is alright now. But she has still not been able to regain her sense," the angry dude spoke to someone through the phone.

"You don't have to think about her. I shall take care of her. You just carry on destroying the Sullivans. You remember this right? It was our deal. I shall take care of her and in return, you shall eliminate each member of the Sullivan family," he said and at the moment a gasp escaped my mouth out of shock for what I just heard.

So an enemy.

"What was that?" the angry dude asked as he had clearly heard my gasp.

I bit down on my tongue aware of the mistake I just did and the next moment felt as if someone was waving its hand over my face.

"Is she on her senses?" the guy asked and the doctor replied: "She has still not opened her eyes. So I guess not!"

The angry dude hummed in response before going back to his phone call conversation. I could feel my palm forming into a fist thinking about it.

Why would they want to eliminate the whole Sullivan family?

Who are they?

And who is the one at the other end of the phone?

"Remember this very well, destroy the Sullivans. I want them going down to dirt before I could kill them with my own hand," he spoke and it was when I thought of Zachary.

After they were gone, I sneaked out towards the other room where I had last seen the tv. I saw the patient in deep sleep but this time there was a person sleeping on the couch of the room. I assumed it to be a guardian of the patient but then carried on with my mission to get the phone of the sleeping person.

It was right in the front pocket of his shirt and he was in a deep slumber and looked too tired to get up. So, taking it as the chance, I walked out of the room and hurriedly dialed Zachary's number after four to five wrong attempts of numbers it rung but was soon disconnected.

"What the-" I looked at the phone screen to find that the person at the other end had cut my call.

"Arrgh! Just pick up the damn phone you idiot!"

Unfortunately, he kept on disconnecting my calls and as I begun to grow more impatient and frustrated I decided on leaving a text message first.

Pick up the damn phone you monkey.

I wrote a simple one-line message and sent it to him and expected that he would ignore the message but again fortunately for me within two seconds of my text message, he called back and almost immediately I picked it up holding the phone near my ear.

"H-Hello? Is this Juliette? J-Juliette?" I heard his voice. He sounded terrible as if he had been drinking.

But it was enough for me to have a sigh of relief. My eyes teared up hearing his voice and as I realized I was out for a month and all this time people might have made it harder for him because of the lies they thought I had died, completely oblivious to the fact that I was indeed alive.

"Were you drinking?" I asked and then heard him gasp.

"Where are you?" he said almost immediately and not wanting to fight him for ignoring my question I told him my whereabouts and I could hear the background noise of jingling of keys and ignition of the car before the call got disconnected of its own.

"What the fuck?" I said it out loud when I checked the network long gone.

"Shit!" I cursed under my breath but thankfully I had managed to tell him about my location and I was sure he would reach me any second.

"Exactly! Shit!" a voice behind me made me jump up from my place as I turned to look at the person to be the same person whose phone I took out sneakily a few minutes ago. The guy crossed his arms over his chest as he narrowed his eyes at me and then at the phone I was holding.

"If you are done with your conversation then can I get my phone back? I have urgent calls to make!" he snarled at me and almost immediately I handed his phone back to him with a sheepish grin on my face.

"Uh..." I trailed off not knowing what to say.

"You could've asked... it was not like as if I wouldn't have helped a stranger for a phone call and that to a ..." he eyes me up and down before continuing "patient."

"Uh... Thank you for your help. Arigato!" I bowed my head down and dashed towards my room.

Shit! Now I shall be labeled as the thief patient in this hospital. I'm sure he is going to complain about me. Shit!

As I sat back on the bed ashamed and flushed for being caught the door flew open a bewildered I looked at the person to find the person none other than Zachary. He stood there, at the entrance of just staring at me with wide eyes but as I got up from the bed he realized I was alive and was right before him the look on his face changed from shock to relief and the next moment he ran up to me engulfing me into his arms.

"I knew it that you were alive my love. I knew it. Oh my lord. Oh my love," he held me tightly in his arms blocking the air out of my lungs and cried sounding desperate. And at that exact moment I felt all his miseries and even though he told me nothing, his condition and his voice clearly told me that he was in a much more miserable condition than I really was while I was in the hospital.

Chapter 29

Hatred, I have felt it before. I've seen myself being engulfed into the darkness of hatred. I hated everything about me to the extent that I even questioned my own existence. It was as if there was no reason for my existence and there was no reason for me live. At that time, all I wanted was to end my life. Trust, faith...I had believed that this was just mere words until the day when somebody broke it. My trust was broken, my faith in God and love was broken the day when I was cheated in love.

Until the day I found Zachary.

I couldn't even realize, when he became the most important person in my life.

Day by day, I found myself trusting him more than anyone else and when I did that... when I finally started trusting him...it was like I was finally able to find myself, my existence. It felt as if my whole life I've been living a fake world until I found him and everything in my surrounding seemed to be real and wonderful.

Trust grew up to be faith.

I had faith...hopes on him that he would make everything right for me. He would actually save me from my darkness, my hatred and will eventually help me in forgetting the ugly past of loving Emmett and it was how it went. He stood on all my hopes and found his way towards my heart.

And then I started loving him.

It wasn't about his looks or money, it was just him. *Only him.* I was sure he could've handled me and I would've fallen in love with him even if he didn't have his wealth to impress me. The words he used, the way he expressed his love, the way he looked at me was enough for me to fall head over heels for him. And it was when I hated myself even more for not waiting for him to come into my life. I knew he was my soul mate and instead of going over the edge for loving Emmett...it would've been better if I had waited for him. I wanted to be his first love and I wanted him to be my first and last but *I ruined it all.*

I had to choose Emmett.

But life had planned something else for me and it was when Emmett's ugly truth was unveiled and it was how Zachary entered my life. I was glad he came for me.

I was stupid enough not to believe that Emmett was my only love. I was wrong. Zachary proved me wrong and he poured all his emotions out on me and I loved him back. Sometimes, I found myself questioning the silliest question to myself if I were the one who loved Zachary the most or the love that Zachary had for me was much more than what I did.

He proved me wrong every time.

Every single time.

And I was glad I was the one who was wrong. Like every single time, he came forward to help me without any selfishness and hesitation and it was why I could feel all his agony when he engulfed me in his arms. I could feel his heavy breath as his chest pressed into mine and he buried his head in the crook of my neck, I could feel all his sufferings.

A month. It had been a month since I was pulled out of his life and I imagined what he had to go through in my absence.

"Did you miss me?" I asked as I felt him silent for a while with me still in his arms.

"Zachary?" I spoke up and ran my hands all over his back.

When he didn't reply, I made it my cue to move back but when I did take a step back, he lunged forward not wanting to leave me but ended up putting his weight all over and due to sudden bending of my back pain laced up my body causing me to hiss in pain. Zachary heard it and immediately pulled back from me and looked at me worriedly.

"What happened? Juliette?" he asked as he held my face in his cold hands.

I smiled and shook my head no at him. "It's nothing... it's just my back," I said as I touched my back and closed my eyes feeling the pain.

"Y-You need to sit down. I can see you are not really in a good condition. I'm sorry... I should've been more careful about it," he helped me back on my bed as I sat on the bed and he arranged the pillows for me to sit comfortably before sitting next to me on a chair and looked at me lovingly as he held my hand in his.

"Is this a dream?" he asked which made me chuckle and I pinched him on his hand expecting a hiss from him but he didn't even move. All he did was stare at me.

"I want to know everything. What happened and how did you end up here? Why are you in the hospital?" he asked everything in one go and I found myself inhaling deeply before telling him everything that happened to me. From hiring a taxi to the accident and waking up on the hospital bed to hearing all those conversations of unknown people.

"So this is what I can remember," I said once I told him everything in detail.

"But even if I try to remember it, I still can't figure it out who was that guy and who he was talking to," I said recalling the guy who was talking against Zachary while I pretended to sleep. As I closed my eyes to remember the day a sharp pain in my head caused me to hiss in pain and I held the temple of my head rubbing it trying to ease the pain.

"What happened?" he asked almost immediately by my side as he held my face in his hand.

"N-Nothing, it's just my head," I said and I could feel the corner of my eyes stinging but nevertheless I smiled at him not wanting to worry him.

"It's alright. You don't need to remember, I shall take care of it. Don't hurt yourself. You are still weak," he said and I shook my head no.

Chapter 30

"I can't still when I know that people out there are trying to hurt my husband and family," I said thinking about the man.

"I should be the one telling you this," he said and all of a sudden I was engulfed into a hug as he wrapped his hands around me and pulled me to him. I smiled wrapping my hands around him, his manly fragrance affecting me and I realized how much I had missed him.

"You don't need to worry about anything from now on. I'm going to protect you this time. And they will be paying for what they did to you, I promise. They will have to pay for this," he whispered as his voice showed his determination.

"But for now, let's get you out of here. I don't trust the doctors. As you told me, the doctors are also wit-" he was cut mid-sentence when all of a sudden we heard noises. It was as if somebody was coming towards my room and I panicked thinking what if it was the same man. He would definitely try to hurt Zachary if he saw him here with me.

"Lay down," Zachary whispered and helped me on my bed and covered me using the sheet.

"W-Where are you going?" I asked as I held his hand when he made an attempt to go away.

"Don't worry. I will be here," he gave me a smile and kissed my forehead before walking towards the curtain where he hid behind it and I closed my eyes when people walked inside my room.

"Why is it taking so long for her to regain her consciousness?" I heard the same angry dude and felt the bed near my leg dipped, as if he sat there.

"She should've already gained her consciousness by now," I assumed the person as the doctor.

"What have you decided to do with her when she regains her consciousness? The patient is still weak and she needs proper treatment for the head. She had severe injuries on her head when you brought her here. Although the wounds have healed we still can't say anything about her mental stability. She needs to regain consciousness before we end up on a certain decision," the doctor asked.

"I will be using her against the Sullivans. I don't really care what really happens to her but at this very moment, I want her alive. Do whatever you want but keep her alive," he said in a menacing tone probably trying to frighten the doctor. But then I had all my attention on Zachary. I was sure that he would be seething in anger behind those curtains and I prayed the lords to not to let his anger take over his brain. I knew Zachary was a cautious guy and he would generally think before acting but the very moment it was me who was his weakness.

"What if she tries to fight us if she gets up?" the doctor asked and I felt the room falling into a pitch of silence before the guy spoke up icily: "Kill her."

"What?" the doctor gasped and I had my palm formed into a fist inside the bedsheet when I heard that.

"She is already dead before the world and it wouldn't matter if we kill her now. It depends on her. If she co-operates with us, it will good for her if not then she is not needed," he said and I felt my heartbeat rising thinking about Zachary.

What if she gets out and tries to kill the guy?

No! Zachary, please stay calm.

Juliette, you need to stay calm too.

Don't react.

They can't hurt Zachary.

I felt as the bed shook a little when the guy who was sitting near my foot got up from the bed and I had imagined in my mind that he would definitely go towards the room's window and what if he pulls the curtains aside? Zachary!

Oh my god! Zachary.

So, it was what I did. I did what was right at the moment to gain their attention and stop the guy from getting to Zachary who was still behind the curtain. I went against Zachary's wishes and slowly opened my eyes.

"P-Patient? The patient has opened her eyes," the doctor said as he began to check my nerves and the other guy ran towards me and looked at me. I could clearly see his face but I averted my gaze away from their direction pretending to adjust my gaze and blinked my eyes a few times.

"Can you hear me?" the doctor asked as he checked my eyes and held my hand in his checking the nerves.

I'm sorry Zachary.

I hope you forgive me for this but I'm doing this for you.

I love you and I shall protect you even if I had to die.

I looked at the guy and I could feel the anger inside me when I saw his face. I had never seen him around beforehand but the fact that he wanted to hurt Zac had me on my nerves. The first impression I had of him was hatred. I hated him the moment I saw him cause he was the cause of all the miseries and sufferings Zachary had to go through when he pulled me away from his life and as I looked at his face with an expression void of any emotions, I promised myself that I

would definitely make his life a hell and he would curse the day for even thinking of hurting the Sullivans.

"W-Who are you?" I asked in a hoarse voice. The guy clenched his jaw and moved forward to speak up but stopped when I chose to speak cutting him up "And who am I? Where is this place?" his eyes widened and he looked troubled as he looked at the doctor who looked back at him puzzled by my reaction.

Chapter 31

Back to the present...

The ringing of the phone woke me up from my slumber and groggily I looked up at Zachary who picked it up smiling at me. I closed my eyes and fell back on his chest while he picked his phone up and all of a sudden I heard a familiar voice from the phone.

"I am probably the first person in this world who has started to hate vacations. Just how long do you want me to stay here? I'm tired of this beach and the sun. Just what's so fascinating about all this? I want to get back there....please..." the person cried at the end and that made me grin triumphantly.

"Is it Willie?" I asked and Zachary hummed in response.

"Boss, please? I wanna get back there and kick some asses," he added and that made me open my eyes as I sat back on the bed pulled the duvet to my chest and adjusted a pillow behind my back before I looked at him in the video call.

"I can't express how happy I feel seeing you like this," I grinned and he narrowed his eyes at me which made me laugh.

"I would have been happier if you had sent me to Savannah. I would have spent my time happily with those animals. I am so tired of the beach and I'm growing to feel sick of eating seafood. Just call me back. This vacation needs to end now," he said determinedly.

"Well, you didn't tell me about this wish of yours for Savannah when I had asked Cosmina to book your vacation tickets," Zachary told him and he huffed slamming a hand to his face.

"That's because I had no idea that I would end up spending so many days in here," he complained and Zachary looked back at me.

"It's time we end this," he whispered to me and I thought about it for a second before I nodded agreeing to him.

This path of vengeance has not been easy for both of us. We were not the only people who suffered but the people around us were also affected by all the games that Alex had played. Only Willie apart from my Zachary knew that I was alive. There were some actions around Zachary made him believe that somebody near to him was the pawn of Alex's game and Zachary had concluded that it would be better if we were the only who knew about me.

As I recalled the conversation that I heard while I was in the hospital I was sure the one who showed worriedness for me being in the condition was someone who knew me and Zachary had told me that it was someone from the family that has been stabbing us in our back and has joined hands with him to destroy us.

Zachary had to suffer a month while I was gone but when he found out I was alive he had been more alert and had been working hard trying to find the mole in our family who gave all the information about us to Alex. He had been silently observing everyone's move and silently went through all the problems all by himself in the hopes of getting hold of the mole red-handed. And it was when he decided it should be like that as his enemies wanted to be. He suffered making them believe he was in misery. He knew that they definitely aim Willie and try their best to get him away and it was when Zachary set all this plan by himself and made everyone in the family believe that Willie was a traitor who stabbed him in the back and made him suffer a great loss, when his arms were deposited to the cops.

Zachary made sure his enemies knew this and it was why he had sent Willie away so that his enemies would think that his shield has been removed and he is vulnerable enough to be attacked.

But I must say Zachary is really really good at acting.

So much, that he made everyone in the family and his office believe that... he was actually in pain and his condition was miserable but our plan took a new turn when all of a sudden I had to bump into my best friend Kiara. She saw me in that mall and it was when everything crumbled down.

Zachary had to show himself up before Alex so that the traitor around us doesn't get suspicious of our acts. As much as I hated it, I had to stay away from Kiara all these times because Zachary told me that the traitor could be anyone among us and he or she would definitely try to attack the close ones if we are not cautious.

I remember the day when I pretended to have lost my memories in that hospital.

As soon as the angry dude whose name I know today as Alex left, Zachary came out of the curtain seething in anger. He disliked my decisions and I still remember how he reacted.

"What the fuck do you think you are doing?"

"Look Zachary. I can explain..."

"I don't need any explanation. You have already gone through all this. Can't you see?" he asked pointing at my bruises.

"And I'm not going to let you be pulled into this like this. I'm going to end this for once and for all," he snarled at me as he pulled his gun out and walked towards the door, clearly dead set on killing Alex. I was already on my heels running towards him to stop him, because I had already had an idea that somebody from us was helping him and if Zachary killed him, we could never find that traitor.

"Zachary stop! You can't do that! Look! We can find the real mastermind behind all this with the help of this guy. If you kill him...we can never get him," I begged him to stop and this was the first ever time he

proved me wrong from thinking he used his brain before doing any act. It was as if he was dead set on killing him and nothing in this world could ever stop him.

"Za-"

"I don't fucking care. I will find that traitor out all by myself and" he pointed a finger at me stop from opening my mouth "then you will see how I am gonna end his or her filthy life," his voice venomous and his murderous as he turned around and took long strides with the gun in his hands.

"Zachary please don't," I whispered as tears streamed down my face.

"Y-You are alive?" somebody spoke behind me and I turned around to find the person as none other than Willie. He looked as if he had seen a ghost but at that moment I was glad that he showed up. Wiping the tears off my face I ran to him and held his shoulder.

"Look. You need to stop Zachary. He is out there to kill someone. Please don't let it happen," I said and even though he was still in the state of shock seeing me alive, he nodded and dashed towards the direction where Zachary left a few minutes ago.

Chapter 32

It took us a lot of time to pull Zachary into the game and finally he gave up to me and did as I said and it was why we decided to send Willie away, but for a little while.

"Pack your bags," I saw as Zachary spoke to Willie and as he realised he was coming back he squealed like a little girl and hurriedly hung up the call probably thinking if he continued with the video call then Zachary would change his mind of him getting back.

"Zac," I whispered as I wrapped a hand around his arm and laid my head on his shoulder.

"What is troubling you?" he asked and kept the phone back on the nightstand.

"Who do you think can be the traitor? I mean if he or she is from among us then why is he doing it? What is the reason for him to separate us and cause us all these miseries?" I asked and felt him stroking my head.

"I don't really know but if anything I know then its the fact that this game needs to end. I have had enough of it and this needs to end soon," he said and I could literally feel the anger in his voice that he tried his best to suppress under his smiling facade.

Truth to be told, even I was tired of the game and if anything I ever wanted, then it was to go back to my friends and families and live as we were living, with Zachary. I have had enough of plotting plans, being cautious, meeting Zachary secretly, calling a stranger my fiance when I was already married to Zachary, acting and pretending as if I had lost my memories and I was oblivious to everything that was going on around me, it was just enough for me.

"I want this end as soon as possible so that I could go back to my family and live peacefully with you," I said and he chuckled.

"What?" I narrowed my eyes at him when he found my words funny.

"What's so funny in it?" I asked and he shrugged his shoulders.

"Oh, n-nothing. It's just still hard for me to believe that you are the same woman who told me on my face that you hated me and it was the last thing for you to live with me but today...its totally the opposite. You wish and want to stay with me," he said and that made me close my annoyance.

This guy always has to bring our past before us and knows how to ruin somebody's mood and moment.

"You know what?" I said as I got hold of my robe that was on the floor and put it on.

"What?" he asked sounding nervous all of a sudden.

"I am going for a bath and I'm hungry. So while I take a bath...go and make me some food," I said and narrowed my eyes at him when he tried to open his mouth.

"Afterall you are my maid and I'm paying you for this. So, don't just sleep around, go and prepare my food," I said sarcastically checking my nails.

"What's up with you and your mood change? I mean you were totally happy a few moments ago. What's with your icy tone?" he asked as he looked at me in a state of confusion for my foul mood. And the fact that he didn't even have any idea how he had ruined my mood angered me even more.

"Never mind. I can cook by myself." I said enunciating each word before stomping up towards the bathroom but as I walked towards the bathroom I had no idea why I was even angry all of a sudden without any reason.

Chapter 33

"Oh no! Why do I look so much like her? I don't understand it at all," I said as loudly and clearly as I could.

The device had a red light blinking over it and I knew it was recording whatever I was doing and speaking. Not only one, but Zachary found three devices hidden secretly in my apartment in order to record the things that were happening. At first, I had no idea about this but Zachary was clever enough to search for it and he got because according to him, he believed our enemy was not dumb enough to let me live freely. He would definitely check and would have me under watch and these peculiar voice recording devices are just a mere part of it.

But fortunately, Zachary could edit the records all by himself. It meant even if it recorded our conversations, he could edit it and keep the parts that he wanted Alex to know. It was why I had to go on shouting around behaving as if I was Ivona so that it could record my voice and he listens to it and rests assured that indeed I had no memory of Juliette. I had marked him taking the devices with him whenever I wasn't around so that he could hear it all.

If it wasn't for Zachary we would've long been caught.

I raised my eyebrows at him asking him if it was okay for me to stop now but then he made a few circles in air using his finger and his cation told me that I should carry on the act a little further.

"No! This all are just rubbish things. I must concentrate more on Alex for now and moreover, that guy seems to have a girlfriend now, I wonder if he would disturb me and Alex any further," my eyes trailed off to Zachary who was busy in counting the red lights blinking on that small device under my coffee table. All of a sudden anger boiled up inside me for Zachary wasn't paying attention to me and his less reaction on the word 'girlfriend' irked me.

As if noticing my gaze upon him he looked up at me and raised his eyebrows probably asking me why I had stopped talking but instead I got up from the sofa and wore my coat before striding up towards the door, silently. He seemed to caught off guard by my actions because he sat there silently observing my actions with a confused look but as soon as I was out of the door he was right on his foot following me out.

I looked back at him to find him adjusting his hood to hide his face and I stopped on my tracks when I stood right before the elevator and punched the switch angrily waiting for the elevator door to open.

"What's wrong with you? Where are you going?" he asked and I looked back at him with a sharp gaze. At the moment, I had a sudden desire to kill him.

"What's wrong with you?" I mocked his voice in my mind.

"Juliette? I'm talking to you," he said and that made me look back at him. I knew I was angry for nothing but the reason that there was nothing that should make me angry had me angrier upon him. I knew he loved me and only me but still, I was angry upon him. I knew he was doing the same thing that I was doing. I was with Alex unwillingly while he was with that woman...although she was being paid for it for an act but still thinking about that woman had me miffed.

"Juliette?" he called my name. His eyes had been portraying a lot these days or was it me who was able to read it. It was so clear and it was as if I could see the real Zachary who no one ever did. They seemed happy yet dark for some certain reason. Perhaps, he was sad like me for staying away from each other like this. We have been separated a multiple of times now yet fate doesn't seem to be tired of separating us and here we were acting as if we had nothing to do with each other.

He must be suffering from the inside.

Zachary, why do you still hide your feelings from me?

I am really sorry. It's all my fault. If only I had listened to you and hadn't pulled you into all this then we would've somewhere else probably enjoying our lives.

But you were always involved whenever it was something related to me. You've always protected me and it still is even though you have to stay away from me. I want to hug you and tell you that I love you so much that words can't even describe. At that moment when I thought I was dying back in that water, all I thought was about you.

I thought about you when I was dying.

I was worried for you thinking how would you react if I didn't get back to you.

I'm sick and tired of dragging you into my problems. I'm tired of seeing in pain.

Can't we just end this and live a life away from everyone peacefully like those happy fairytale endings?

I want to live peacefully with you. I want to have kids with you and I want to grow old with you.

Just why did I even plan this game in the beginning?

It would've been a lot easier if I hadn't sent Willie after you to stop you from killing Alex. It would've ended then and there but then we would've never known who was the person behind it all.

What the hell am I even thinking?

I held my temple frustrated by myself.

How could I even think like that?

I can never let Zachary kill someone ever again.

For a moment, I grew selfish and thought all those absurd things and that made me upset.

"Are you even listening to me, Juliette?" I heard his voice and looked back at him to find him staring at me intently.

"What's wrong?" he asked and all I wanted at that moment was to hug him tight and never let him go.

Chapter 34

Too preoccupied with my feelings, I didn't even realize when I moved further wanting to hug him and he knew my intentions because he smiled and opened his hands for me to fall into his arms but then the elevator door pinged open and I looked back the door when Alex stood right before me with a smile on his face.

"Ivona, hey!" he smiled and walked forward and pulled me into his arms, surprising me with his actions. I looked back at Zachary to find him standing with his back facing towards us. Unlike me, he was quick enough to react and as Alex hugged me he walked to the elevator and hurriedly pressed the switch. But as the door of the elevator closed, his eyes met with mine, it was filled with sadness and sorrow.

My eyes teared up as I knew I was again the reason for that emotion that I saw in his eyes. It is really hard to see the person you love in somebody else arm. It was how I felt when I saw Loana Ularu and that woman from the previous day next to him. My palm formed into a fist when I realized how much I hated myself for doing this to him but this was all because of him. The guy who was hugging me.

The root of all these sufferings.

Could I be the one to end this all?

A realization hit me suddenly when I thought about it for the first time ever.

What if I end this all by myself? Can I protect Zachary?

Currently, I am the only one close to Alex. Even if its an act from my side and I know he is into it as well playing his side of the role of being my fiance I still have a chance to get close to him and I can kill him.

Yes, I should kill him and then it will all be over and I wouldn't have to stay away from Zachary.

"Where were you going?" he asked as he looked at me and I looked back at him forcing a smile.

"I wanted to get some ingredients. I wanted to make soup," I said and he nodded.

"Oh alright. I hope you can share your soup with me," he laughed and I nodded but balled my fist inside my coat.

"I will go get and get your ingredients, you can go back to your room. It's cold outside,"

"Alright," I muttered and turned around walking back towards my apartment. But my mind kept on thinking about the idea that I thought a few minutes ago.

"Actually, you know what?" I heard him and turned back to look at him raising an eyebrow questionably.

"Let's get to the nearby restaurant to have dinner," he smiled.

The place was crowded but was comfy. It was a family restaurant were average class people came with their family. Somehow I was grateful that he brought somewhere like this but then a scowl formed on my face thinking why would he who throws his shoes if it has mud on it and loathed poor people would ever bring me to a place like this?

I was tired of those fancy restaurants where you have to whisper to talk, take small amounts and wipe your face after every single bite to maintain decency of your high-class family. In those restaurants, people judge you by the dress you wear. The more the price of your dress, the more is the value of the person. You will get attention only if you have money in your wallet and people go their with their family not to have a stomach full of supper but to show off others that they have the status to come and eat in the restaurant. I was tired of it.

"I know, I know that you don't like this place. You don't like this place, its nothing like the restaurant we usually go but trust me, they have the awesome food served over here. Far much better than those five-star restaurants," he smiled and looked around for a waiter when we sat down in the corner of the restaurant.

You don't really know me, bastard!

"Alright, so how do you know about this place?" I asked seeming curious.

"This place...." he had a pleasant smile plastered on his face from the time we came here and he looked around as if reminiscing something.

"Has a special place in my heart," he said and looked back at me. His finger trailing over the rim of the glass.

"I used to come here with my mom," he said and I responded with an 'oh.'

"We used to come here every time I scored more in my school and every time I won a medal or trophy. We used to come here to celebrate,"

"I see," I said. I was not really interested to hear his melodramatic story when he has turned my life into a melodrama. Still, we chatted and waited for the food that he had ordered for us.

"Truly, the food was awesome," I said as I wiped finger using a tissue.

"I told you," he grinned like the Cheshire cat and went to the counter to pay the bill. I was gulping down the glass of water when my eyes fell on the knife on our table. A lot of questions formed on my mind and I thought about it multiple times when a voice behind me startled me "Shall we?" Alex asked as he looked down at me. I nodded and got up wearing my coat.

We walked out of the restaurant and back towards the isolated parking lot but then I took it my chance to shove my hands back into the coat pocket and fish out the knife that I had managed to

steal at the last moment, sneakily. I held it ready to strike him while he stopped in the middle looking at his phone screen.

My hands trembled and I couldn't really breathe thinking that I was going to kill someone, but my mind was dead set. Counting internally, I closed my eyes and stroke as hard as I could wanting to stab his back but then I felt someone holding my hand stopping me. My eyes snapped open only to find Zachary in the middle. He took or more like snatched the knife away from me and glared at me before running towards the car beside me and seating inside while Alex turned back to face me.

"What? What happened to you? You look as if you have seen a ghost," he joked but I could feel my heart pounding.

Oh no! What was I doing?

Chapter 35

"What do you think you were doing?" he held my shoulder while I tried my best not to meet his eyes because I felt ashamed of what I was about to do a few hours ago.

"Juliette, answer me," he pressed and I closed my eyes shut not wanting to answer him.

"Yo- You out of your mind?" he withdrew his hands off me as he raked a hand through his hair and turned around heaving a sigh. I looked up through my lashes and seeing his tensed back made me feel even more regretful and guilt lashed up me as I knew I was the reason of his bothered state.

Unconsciously, my hand reached forward and before I knew it I was hugging his back wrapping my arms around his chest as I pressed my forehead against his back.

"Juliette?" he asked as it looked he was slightly taken aback my action.

"I'm sorry," suddenly my voice cracked up and I felt him tensing up under m touch.

"I'm really sorry," my chest vibrates as I broke down letting the tears flowing down my face.

"Hey!" he took hold of my hand and turned around. I looked down and cried silently whilst he held my hand and leaned down to kiss my forehead softly "Do you know how dangerous it was? He could've killed you. What were you thinking love? It isn't like you. What made you take that step?" he asked as softly as he could but that made me cry even harder.

"I'm sorry. I am really sorry,"

"Hey look at me. Now don't cry. Juliette," he held my face in his warm hand and wiped the tears away as he smiled gently "It's alright now. I'm here....for you,"

"No! I'm not saying sorry for what I just did," I said with a hoarse voice and he frowned before looking down at me with confusion clear in his face.

"I'm saying sorry for you have to face all this because of me. I'm the one because of whom you have to suffer all-"

"Juliette we have disc-" I cut him off before continuing "No, let me speak today. Do you think I am stupid? Well I may be but I'm not stupid enough to miss the loneliness in your eyes. The worry you have for me, the sufferings, I know its must be hard for you to see me with him, I know everything and yet I can't do anything for you. In fact, I'm the reason why you have to do...we have to do this. I can't stand a single minute with him knowing that he tried to harm my husband. I hate him," I said and looked down at my hand.

"And I'm not at all sorry for what I just did. Nope. Not at all. I wanted to kill him and I think..." I looked back at him to find him with a startled expression "I will kill him," I said and before he knew it I dashed towards the door.

"Juliette!" he was right behind me as I ran towards the elevator. The elevator door pinged open but before I could enter he got me and held my hand firmly pulling me out of the elevator.

"Let go of me Zachary. Leave me. I will kill him," I said all the while struggling against him while he dragged me back towards my apartment.

"Calm down..."

"No! Why did I even stop you in the first place? It would have been over that day. It would have been more easier if we had got him. Yeah! That's right! You could have tortured him enough to speak up about the mole in our family. That would have been more easy and we could have been together but no! I-" I whimpered before taking his face in my hand "I had to act stupid and I dragged you into all this drama. This is all because of me. I can't tolerate this anymore. It hurts me. I can't tolerate this anymore. I will kill him. I will kill him by my very own hands..."

"Juliette..."

"Yes, this would do and then we would be together,"

"Juliette..."

"This needs to end-"

"Juliette listen to-"

"I will kill-"

"ENOUGH!" he snapped all of a sudden and the raise in his voice snapped me out of my state. My eyes were wide and my breathing came out in shorts while I stood their in utter silence and looked at him, horrified.

"Enough now," he said softly and engulfed me in a hug rocking me back and forth in attempt to calm me down. My fingers clutched his shirt tightly as I could feel my heartbeat coming back to its normal speed but I could still feel the anxiety building inside me that caused me wanting to throw up all of a sudden and in a second I was dashing towards the bathroom. Bile rose up in me and I was continuously vomiting holding the sides of the toilet bowl. I could feel my hair being lifted up my face but I was too nauseous to be bothered.

Chapter 36

As I sat back on the bathroom floor, tired and exhausted by the amount of what I literally threw out I could hear faint voice of someone asking me if I was alright. Exhausted I looked up at the person to find him none other than Zachary. His eyes were filled with worry as he crunched down next to me and put the loose strands of my hair away from my face.

My hands automatically reached forward to him and he held me gently helping me stand up on my feet. I flushed the toilet and dragged myself to the sink where Zachary turned the water on and I splashed the cold water on my face multiple times and into my mouth cleaning it in the process. I watched him in the mirror as he walked to the hanger and brought me a towel but the cold water didn't help me to remain conscious as I felt the energy draining out from my body and before I know it everything blacked out and I Iost the control on my body but I did hear a faint voice of someone calling my name.

The moment my I opened my eyes everything came flooding back into my mind as I recalled the incidents and sat back up only to be held down.

"Stay. you need to take some rest now,"

It was Zachary. He was by my side as he held me by shoulder and tried to make me sleep back. But then my eyes fell on the surrounding. It wasn't my apartment. It was some other place. I was on a king sized bed and it was large spacious room. *Where was I?*

"Where are we?" I found myself asking the question to Zachary.My voice was hoarse and I recalled the time where I ended up puking my guts out and then blanking out.

"What happened to me?" I asked and felt someone touching my right arm. I flinched almost immediately when I felt the person's cold finger touching my skin.

It was a lady in her perhaps late forties as she smiled at me and nodded at me holding my arm. The stethoscope around her neck told me that she was a doctor and I looked back at Zachary questionably.

"Don't tell me I got food poisoned by the diner's food that Alex took me to?" I said and Zachary pursed his lips looking back at the doctor.

"You need to rest now. For a while. If you want Mr. Sullivan, I can give you the best nutritionist and dietitian's details for consulting," the lady said and Zachary gave a nod "That would be nice. Thank you," he said and the lady stood up "Don't work hard now. You need to take care of yourself now and your family alright?" she smiled and I nodded even though I frowned.

Do I not take care of Zachary?

Zachary walked her out and I looked at the prescription that she left behind. Everything seemed to bounce over my head.

"How are you feeling?" Zachary asked from beside me startling me and I put my hand on my chest feeling my heartbeat.

"Did I startle you? I'm sorry." he said and almost immediately my head shot to his direction.

"Sorry?" I repeated his tone.

"Where are we in the first place?" I asked remembering the fact that we were not in my apartment.

"Don't worry. This is where I live. Its rented," he said and I nodded looking around "But did you bring me here? I mean-"

"I couldn't phone the doctor to that apartment. Our identities were at risk," he said and I nodded as it drawn into me "But why did you call the doctor? What happened to me?" I asked and he smiled at my question.

"Juliette..." he spoke and sat on the bed pulling me into his arms before covering me with the duvet. My head was on his chest while we lay down on the bed and his chin over my head, as he wrapped his hands around me, and somehow I felt his possessiveness over me.

"It was not you when you tried to kill Alex,"

"I-" he hushed me and I refrained myself from talking "It was not you. Not my Juliette. The Juliette I know can never harm anyone...not even her enemy. But now I understand what made you do that. In fact, I should be the one who should ask for forgiveness not you. I should be the one who should be sorry. I should've protected you but it was the circumstances and I failed." His voice slowed down at the end and that worried me.

What is he talking about?

Why is he bringing all those topics back?

"But somehow I understand why I failed. I had never promised you anything. Perhaps, I'm the one who is at fault. And certainly I am. I made myself miserable and showed myself miserable before you... that I forgot how much it affected you. I forgot that you loved me and you can't see me in miserable condition like the way I can't see you like that. At the end, you kept it all inside yourself and it was for me. You held that knife for me wanting to protect me," he kissed my head and I could feel the tears forming in my eyes. I had to bite my lip from sobbing.

" A man learns from his mistake and now I won't repeat the same mistake. I will protect you and I promise you I will be strong. Strong enough to protect my family and my love and..." he stopped for a while that made me look up at him in confusion.

"And?" I asked urging him to continue further.

"My...our baby." he finished with a smile while I looked up at him with eyes like saucers.

Chapter 37

Zachary Pov

"Congratulations. She is going to be a mother,"

The doctor's words kept on echoing in my mind and I could feel a pit of happiness evolving inside my chest as I thought about it again and again. Juliette made me the most happiest man in the whole world. From the day, she came into my life, she has brought only happiness for me which I really feel grateful off but then this news is just above all the happiness.

I am soon going to be a father. A father.

Whenever I utter the word 'father' it makes me feel something new. Earlier, it was just a word for me but now it's going to be a title for me. *I am a father now.*

I watched as she slept soundly holding her belly and her other hand resting over mine. She was ecstatic when she heard the news but then she was tired and felt nauseous and I thought it would be better for her if she rested for a while before I had to leave her back to that apartment. Thinking of that, makes me feel restless. I can't send her back to him. Not when she is pregnant and seeing the stunt that she pulled yesterday, that makes me feel even more worried.

What if she does that again when I'm not around?

Just the thought of it gave me chills. I couldn't take any risk now. Not when she is in this state. I just can't let anything happen to both of them.

Taking a deep breath I closed my eyes for a minute and then decided it for the betterment of Juliette. This should end. And then called the person who has been working his ass off remaining in the shadows.

"Willi,"

"Yes, before you say something I have a news," he said and that got my attention.

"Found ya' stabber," he laughed venomously and that cracked a smile on my face in triumphant.

"You sure?" I asked wanting to make sure if he actually found the traitor but I knew that he must have found him or her because he never fails in his work.

He chuckled in response and cleared his throat before replying "I'm sure you have had your plans ready to torture the traitor but let me warn you something you wouldn't like who it is," he said and I just scoffed in return.

"I am sure its Ga-"

"Ah! Ah! No! He is not the one .... he said and that had me all confused.

"What?"

"Then who is it that is has become the enemy of Juliette and had tried to kill her and get me? I was thinking Gale is the only one who has always wanted to hurt me but then wh-" I said but stopped mid sentence realising something.

"Don't tell me...."

"I think you have got it..." he chuckled and I had my hand over my head in frustration.

"Just no! Just no!" I groaned balling my fist angrily.

"Unfortunately....Yes. And the person is...."

Sitting next to Juliette I watched her sleep soundly unaware of the world that is after her. I have promised her that I would protect her from every pain and sufferings but here I am, sitting next to her cursing our fate for giving us so much of trouble to endure. The people whom we had doubts has no hand in anything that has been happening to us.

But the question is why and what made that person to fall this cheap?

Now, what am I going to tell Juliette when she asks me about the traitor?

I don't have any intention of lying to her but then I don't want to give her any more stress than she really is.

"Damn it!" a curse escaped my mouth when I kept thinking about it repeatedly.

"Is everything alright?" I heard her soft voice from my side as I kept on glancing outside the window trying as hard as I could to avoid her gaze and helping my own self from getting caught.

"What do you mean?" I asked still not looking at her as I fished the phone out of my jacket and scrolled through the screen acting busy even though I had nothing to do with it at the moment.

It was best if I try to avoid it till the very end and wait for the right time and place. Currently, we were in a situation where we were just surrounded by a vast sea of problems and I had no intention of exploring anything new when I had so much in my pocket. We had to deal with Alex, I have to keep Juliette safe from Alex, I have to find Alex's motives for doing all this, Juliette has to face and act as Ivona, Juliette is pregnant and someone from our family had tried to stab me in my back and attempted to kill Juliette.

Chapter 38

With all these things in my mind, it was beginning to make me fill up with anxiety because not only this but I was also not concentrating any more on my work.

Even though I had managed to export all the arms the last time, but since the day I had met Alex and had started playing this acting game there is no movement in my business and no new deals have been made since then. It's a loss. A huge loss.

Max has been handling my business in my absence but he is not Zachary Udolf Sullivan and I knew he couldn't handle and make new deals during my absence. And talking about the construction company, Kristian has been supporting as well but he has changed. He has grown bitter since the day I had left all the works on him and judging from the fact that he was with Kiara, Juliette's friend last time it is not a doubt that he is interested upon that woman and because of me he is unable to spend time with her which is why he has grown so bitter towards me.

A sigh escaped my mouth as I thought about my life.

"Zac?" I heard her soft voice from beside me and it was when I turned to look at her.

She looked refreshed after having a long nap but had a radiant skin. I noticed, she looked happy and healthy and that made me wonder if it was all the work of pregnancy hormones. It made me smile.

"Are you alright?" she asked as she took a seat before me on the couch and faced me.

"Yes," I smiled at her and pulled her close hugging her as she buried her head in my chest and I looked out of the window towards the road.

"You know I have a detector on my head that tells me that you are lying and you know it as well. So,..." she sat back as she moved away from me and smiled at me "Why do you even bother to lie?" she smiled and that made me huff at her.

"Really? A detector? I would have been impressed if you had said that your heart knows it when I lie or something more corny or cheesy like that," I told her and watched as she squinted her eyes at me and the moved forward towards me.

"Do you think really think that you can divert me from any topic with your witty words?" she challenged and for a moment I was dumbstruck.'

What is this?

What happened to her?

"W-Who are you?" the words escaped my mouth and she raised her eyebrows questionably before speaking "What?"

"Who are you? Where is my Juliette?" I asked and she had a known expression on her face as she rolled her eyes and crossed her arms over her chest pushing her boobs up in the process.

"Whatever you mean Mr. Sullivan!"

"Really! Where is my Juliette? What happened to my Juliette? What did you do to her?" I asked as I poked her playfully and her lips turned up into a smile.

"Come here and give me a kiss," I exclaimed as I pulled her face close to me and pecked her lips multiple times which made her giggle and soon enough the peck turned to a passionate deep kiss with her sitting on my laps as I roamed my hand all over back feeling her body.

"You have just come to us and you have already made your mom so smart," I joked as I roamed my hand over Juliette's belly talking to my unborn child but my action were slapped off by Juliette as she snorted at me and crossed her arms over my neck placing her forehead against mine.

"Even though you try your best to hide away your feelings, I can still sense it. So, stop it now," she whispered which made me chuckle.

"Just give me one reason why should I not go?" she gritted out as she glared at me from the other side of the car.

"One? I can give you thousands! Are you really again at it Juliette? C'mon now! Just how many times did I tell you that now you can not be so free willed and do whatever you wish to do? You have a life inside you now. Do you not understand? How can you just think about yourself?" my nostrils were flaring as I yelled at her but it looked it didn't bother her even once.

"T-Thinking about myself? Oh am I? Why do you think am I doing this?" she retorted back and I had my fist formed into a ball out of anger and also for the fact that I had to continuously remind myself that she was pregnant and I needed to calm down and calm her down as well. But she had something else in her mind.

"No arguments!" putting up a finger towards her direction I made sure that my words were clear enough for her to be heard and wished her to stop arguing.

A few hours ago she received a call from that mutt Alex who told her that he wanted to take her to his father and discuss about the wedding.

Wedding my ass!

I had changed my mind on letting her be with him and have finally decided that I should finally put an end to this but Juliette being Juliette, the stubborn woman she is still adamant on finding the traitor for me and it why she wishes to be Alex even though she knew he was a threat to her

and also to our baby. And even though I knew who the traitor was I couldn't even unveil the traitor out before Juliette worrying about her health.

What if she suffers a Trauma?

I couldn't see her break down and in no means I would let her crumble down. If it means I had to fight with her then so be it. I am ready to suffer her wrath.

"Look Zachary! I-" she began but was cut off abruptly by me as I held a hand out to show her that I wasn't listening. But then what seemed like it triggered her because as soon as I held my hand out her expression changed to a vile one and she marched off to me stomping her feet angrily as she held the collar of my shirt and pulled me to her angrily as she gritted out "Don't you dare behave this way with your wife!"

And before I could speak up, I felt a presence and as if Juliette felt it too she looked towards our side still holding my collar and I watched as her expression changed to a shocked one and she let go of my collar. I looked towards the direction where she was looking and it was where I saw a flustered Kristian and an angry looking upset Kiara looking our way.

Chapter 39

You can't ever predict what life has for you. When you expect something it doesn't goes the way you want and when you least expect something to happen, you get a surprise and it is where you are confused about your life and it makes you think hard whether the things that are happening is for good or bad. Like a deer caught on a spotlight, I watched as Kiara looked at me visibly upset and I could feel the anxiety building up inside me as I thought the more about her.

Earlier, when I was with Alex's grandmother in a mall I was caught none other than Kiara and Kristian and she refused to believe that I was someone else named Ivona. Even though I had dyed my hair, still she refused to believe that it wasn't my real hair colour and I was indeed the same Juliette she knew as her best friend. I was so busy Alex's grandmother trying my best to take all information about Alex's past life out of her that I didn't realise when I was noticed.

Looking at the current state of Kiara, I was sure that she had already heard the conversation between me and Zachary and she had already known the truth.

"So? How longer did you plan on playing the act Ms. Ivona or should I say Mrs. Juliette Sullivan?" she said in a taut voice and I shifted on my position looking back at Zachary who wore his sunglasses and shoved his hands into his pant pockets avoiding Kristian's penetrating gaze.

We were inside in Zachary's house as we stood in three different corners of the house with Zachary sitting casually as if nothing happened in his lounge, Kiara and Kristian stood together near the piano while I stood near the balcony thinking of a way to start a conversation.

"So you knew who I was back in that mall, right?" she asked and I looked up at her to reply but she scoffed at me and held her forehead laughing sarcastically.

"Of course you did!" she answered her own question and it was when Kristian spoke up "And you! You knew all this from the beginning didn't you? Still you made me work in your absence and here you are enjoying with your wife or should I say," he air quoted the word "Late" before eying me up and down and glaring back at Zachary "Wife,"

Zachary chose to keep his mouth shut as he sat there on the lounge and remained mute looking anywhere but at him.

"What great actors," Kristian remarked in a disbelief and huffed "Should we clap for your brilliant performance?" he mocked us and then clapped his hands keeping his words.

"Kiara, I can explain," I said and she narrowed her eyes at me.

"Oh so you know my name? I thought you don't even know me," she said in a toneless voice.

Pursing my lips I looked back at Zachary for some help but all he did was shrug his shoulders in response clearly telling me that I have to deal the situation all by myself because I was the one who planned all this from beginning.

I remember the day when we planned all this in the hospital. Zachary wasn't really the supportive one but he didn't even step back but instead he made one condition before me and it was I had to deal with his family and mine all by myself when the truth of me being alive comes out. Wanting to start the plan immediately, I had said yes almost immediately without thinking of the situation or consequences but now when I face an upset Kiara and a miffed Kristian I get it just how difficult it would be to face the other family members.

"You made me feel like a maniac. I thought maybe I was seeing things and I got the wrong person but I was right. I thought we could help Mr. Sullivan who has been suffering and being miserable all this while because of your death but here we see he knows that you're alive and he has been with you since the beginning but just why? I don't understand just why did you act the way you did back there in Romania even though you knew your wife was alive. What was the reason for acting and for remaining hidden from us all this while?" she asked out of breath.

"Do you know how your father, brother and mother has been suffering all this while? Do you know how your friends Tess, Eve, Marianna have been mourning since your death? Do you even know how I felt after I heard the news of your accident that happened just after a few minutes after I had called you to tell you about your parents arrival and them searching for you? Since then I have been thinking that perhaps it was my fault. If only I had not called you that day then you wouldn't have died," she said in a brittle voice and soon enough Kristian had his arms around her.

"Um Kiara....are you not happy that I am alive?" I said out of the blue but then realised my mistake and bit down on my tongue. Her head whipped up in my direction and her previous sorrowful expression changed to a grimace one as she strides up to me and lifted her hand up wanting to slap me.

If it wasn't for Zachary standing in the middle and holding her hand, I would've hit hard on my face but it made even more frightened than I already was.

"You! You just don't even understand my pain and you think I'm unhappy because I see you alive?" she outraged and I shrunk behind Zachary, horrified.

"I-I am sorry Kiara," I whispered and heard her struggling against Zachary's hold.

"Let go of her," Kristian spoke up.

"Enough now. You need to listen to her part too before jumping to conclusions. We know that you were in pain but we didn't do it on purpose. As much as you were hurting, we went through it too and we didn't really love to deceive you all. We have a reason for doing it and

before you hit her, listen this... she is pregnant," Zachary said and Kiara's eyes widened up in shock.

Chapter 40

"W-What?" she managed to mutter and looked my way.

"Look! Please calm down and let me explain," I said as calmly as I could and all she did was to stare at me blankly while Kristian held her by her shoulders mirroring Kiara's expression.

It took me an hour or more to tell her everything that happened from the point where I had the accident to where I got up in the hospital and got to know everything and letting Zachary know about me and our plan. Even though Zachary didn't really seem to mind it, still I felt an urge to stop myself from telling them about our plan of catching the back stabber that was still roaming freely between us. By the time I finished, Kiara had an equally angry expression as Kristian as he looked back and forth between me and Zachary.

"So, now you're saying that you have to keep on playing the act of being Ivona infront that scoundrel Alex?" Kristian asked and all I did was nod in agreement and heard Zachary sighing.

"No! You can't!" Kiara cried out and before I realised she came forward and engulfed me into a tight hug. I could feel the tension in her body and I knew I made her suffer a lot and it was why she was so worried for me. The fact that I had hurt so many people, made me upset and at that moment I realised how much I hated Alex for doing that to me and also the person who has been helping him.

"Do you not understand? You are no more a single person. You have a life inside your body and you have to protect it!" she said signifying the baby in my womb.

"Exactly Kiara!" I held her by shoulder as I looked into her eyes.

"I have to protect my baby and it is why I'm so keen on ending this once for all. Just think about it Kiara, they tried to kill and almost succeeded on killing me, it was just my luck that saved me and I came back alive. Do you think they will not try to harm my baby?" I said and saw Zachary flinching at the end and his jaws locked yet he chose to keep his mouth shut.

"Still, this so risky. He will kill you!" Kiara cried.

"Don't worry nothing will happen to her," Zachary spoke up and we all looked towards his direction as he went back to sit on his lounge.

"How can you be so sure about that?" Kiara asked and before I could argue Zachary spoke up "Because she is not going back!" he said and I huffed in response.

"Again! We are just back to square one!" I murmured annoyed by Zachary's argument of sending me back to Alex. We have been fighting over it since morning but yet he keeps standing to his decisions.

"Yes, don't send her to him," Kiara said finally smiling and looked back at me "He is right. Don't go back. We are here and we are going to help you. I-" she held my hands and looked at me with determination "I promise we are going to find the one who has done this to you."

"But Kiara. Everything will fail if I don't go back. Do you know what will happen? Alex will know everything and we can never catch-"

"The only thing you need to do now is to rest and take care of yourself. Leave the rest to me. But this is more important and this is decided that you're not going there anymore," he said sternly when Kristian spoke up "Yes, now we are with you as well. I'm sure he has something planned in his head so rest assured and leave everything to us."

I looked back and forth at the three of them and I understood that no matter how much I tried I couldn't manipulate them and finally I gave up and thought about it and sighed.

"Fine! Do whatever you all want," I said and pushing past Kiara I walked towards the bedroom but I could hear them calling for me.

I just don't understand why Zachary doesn't want to proceed with this plan. We were just so close to reach the end. Just what made him change the plan all of a sudden.

Does he not wish to find the person?

But amidst all this things, I was sure of one thing and it was whatever Zachary was doing I was sure that he wasn't backing off because of my pregnancy. Either he wants to hold the matter for some days or my lips quirked up as I realised is behavior " or perhaps he has already caught the one."

Chapter 41

Standing before the mirror my hands roamed all over my belly trying to feel the unborn child. Even though I had a flat belly yet the thought of carrying the child built a pit of happiness in my heart as I thought about my future. If everything seem to be good, then I would wish to have a small and happy family along with Zachary. It was like a dream to have kids and to have a peaceful family. It seems the first part of my dream has been granted but the second part is still yet to happen as we have to go through all the troubles that surrounds us.

Just when I thought that I could live my life as I had always wanted, life has planned something else for me. We had to overcome all our overwhelming feelings of parenthood, only because of that Alex and that traitorous person.

"I swear to god, I would definitely make the traitor pay for all his sins," my hands balled into a tight fist as I thought about it again and again. Suddenly the temperature in the room seem to grow up and beads of sweat formed over my forehead. Even my body temperature raised up and I ended up throwing the cardigan that I was wearing. It was weird as it was cool outside but the temperature inside the room burned up.

"Juliette!" someone shrieked and I looked towards the door to find none other than Kiara herself as she ran to me and held me by my arms. A look of worry marred her face as her eyes skimmed my face before she made me sit on the bed and brought me a glass of water.

"Thank you," I whispered as I gulped down the water in a go feeling thirsty.

"What's wrong with you? You're sweating and your face is so pale. Are you feeling alright?" she asked as she took a seat beside me and I nodded.

"No, I'm alright,"

"Well, you don't seem to. What's bothering you?" she asked and that somehow made me smile as I showed her my belly encircling my arms over it.

"Are you worried about your baby?" she asked and it was when a thought about Kristian crossed my mind.

"What's up with you and Kristian?" I asked all of a sudden catching her off guard. Her eyes widened just for a second before she averted her gaze away from me and pushed the loose strands of her hair behind her ear.

"W-What do you mean? There's nothing between us," she looked nervous all of a sudden and tried her best to lie.

"Really?" I smiled as I shifted on the bed trying to look her face and she kept on facing the other side as I grew more closer to her.

"Then why are you blushing?" I asked teasing her which made her huff at me.

"What? Blushing? Who?" she stuttered and that made me laugh.

"You!" I mimicked her voice and it was when she laughed looking down at her knees.

"So? Are you two dating now?" my abrupt question seemed to affect her as she stood up and looked at me before saying "No, we are not," and then she chose to walk out of the room.

"Okay, now that was strange," I laughed out on my own comment.

The clock ticked as I looked at the umpteenth time trying to figure out where all of a sudden Zachary has vanished to. I stood near the glassdoor to the balcony just gazing at the blazing sky, no time to admire the nature's beauty as my mind was too occupied thinking about Zac. He seemed as if he was in a hurry. I was taking a shower when I heard him speaking from behind the door that he was going to somewhere and that he would be late.

He told me not to go outside and told me that some of his guards are guarding outside the door. But he didn't really tell me where he was going. The only thing that he told me was that he was going out for work and then he left. As soon as Kristian and Kiara left, Zachary went away for his work and being alone in the house I made myself some food and took a good nap for a while but then I got bored and tried calling Zachary but he never picked up.

Sighing, I thought about calling him one more last time and it was when I picked up the phone and clicked the speed dial for his number. The phone rang a few times and it was when I huffed and was about to end the call when the call got connected with someone picking it up and I was sure that it wasn't Zachary.

"Hello?" a feminine voice said from the other end.

"Zachary?" a frown formed on my forehead when I heard a woman's voice from the other end of the phone instead of Zachary. It wasn't Cosmina for sure but it wasn't even someone I know.

"No, he is busy in a meeting with a client. I saw the phone ringing and it is why I picked up the call," the woman said.

"Oh alright!" I said and was about to cut off the call when something crossed my mind. I was sure that Zachary didn't save my name in his phone and nobody ever dared to pick up his phone calls that came for him in his personal cell phone than how did she get the phone?

"May I know who you are?" I asked and heard some ruffling sounds in the background.

"Yes, my name is Ms. Cristina Dimir and I am his P.A," she responded professionally. The name clicked on my mind when I remembered the day when Zachary had brought a woman as his girlfriend to meet Mr. Lascar.

Cristina Dimir.....

"I see..." I said and hung up on her rotating the phone between my fingers lost in deep thoughts.

If it weren't for the continuous vibration of my phone, I wouldn't have snapped out of the thoughts that I was thinking and the name that displayed on the screen had my blood boiling in fit of rage.

"Ivona," he said sweetly and my jaws locked thinking about his face.

"Sorry, I couldn't catch up with after the dinner last night. I had to fly back to Canada this morning and I would return back after two days," he said and gradually I rolled my eyes not even caring where he was and whatever business he was doing. But then the thought of letting Zachary knowing about his whereabouts and information made me act like a detective girlfriend.

"Way to go Mr. Lascar. I can perfectly see our future together. Bright and shiny,"

He gave out a throaty laugh from the other end before replying "Have I miffed my fiancée already?"

"I'm sorry Ivona. Dad told me that it was important and I had to leave almost immediately as soon as I dropped you off in your apartment. To make it up to you, let me meet some good wedding planners and I promise as soon as I come back to the Valley, we shall start discussing about our wedding. Alright?" he asked and that made me choke on my own spit.

"S-Sure," I said and before he hung up he told me where he was staying and for what he had flown all the way to Canada.

"Wedding..." I scoffed at the thought and remembered the only wedding that I was trying so hard to save.

It was quarter past two o'clock in the night when I found myself staring blankly at the ceiling. I heard the front door beeping as it had the code security lock and knowing the only person apart from me knowing the code was Zachary, I made zero efforts to get up and greet him at the door. Pulling the cover upto my neck, I shifted from my position from facing the ceiling to my sides as I stared at the lamp when the door of the bedroom opened.

Closing my eyes shut, I heard him walking to the walk-in-closet and then he went into the bathroom.

It looked as if he was taking a shower because he came out after thirty minutes and I felt the bed dipping from my behind. A cold hand brushed past my face to switch off the lamp and then he pulled the cover on me properly before snaking an arm on my waist and another under my neck as he turned me around to face him. Still not opening my eyes, I pretended to be on deep sleep as I felt him stroking my hair before putting his chin over my head and finally falling to sleep.

Just what exactly are you upto Zachary?

Just when I was about to sleep his phone vibrated and I picked a look from over him as he slept deeply to see the caller Id displaying "Ms. Cristina Dimir."

Chapter 42

Zachary Pov

Something warm touched my arm and as I opened my eyes the phone was shoved right into my face as Juliette spoke in an irritated voice "How many times have I told you to mute your phone in the night? Even the vibration mode disturbs your sleep," she murmured as she kept the phone right next to me and turned over to sleep. As I picked up the continuously vibrating phone, I frowned seeing the name displayed in the caller Id as 'Ms. Cristina Dimir.'

Now, what does she want?

"Ms. Dimir, whatever the matter is...do you even care to check the time before calling?" I spoke through a hoarse sound of sleep.

"Mr. Sullivan! Oh Thank God you picked up!" she cried from the other end that got my attention and suddenly the sleep went away as I grew alarmed hearing her distressed voice.

"Ms. Dimir? Is everything alright?" I asked as I sat up straight on the bed and threw the cover away. Juliette turned around and frowned at the my action before sitting up on the bed and looking at me while I spoke on the phone.

"Mr. Sullivan, I think I'm in trouble. Some people have followed me home from the time we left Mr. Lascar's house after making the house deal that you wanted to buy. It seemed Mr. Lascar didn't really bother about the wrecked house but I guess some people from his home or I don't know just doesn't want him to sell that property to us. They have been knocking on my door and yelling at me to go away and drop the plan on buying the house or the consequences won't be good," she said out of breath sounding frightened to death.

"Are they still there?" I asked but judging from the sound of her squealing and some people yelling in the background it seemed they were still there.

"Did you inform the cops?" I asked and she screamed a yes from the other end.

"Alright! Don't worry. Keep or move something before the door stopping them from barging in and lock yourself in your closet or in your bathroom. But before that make sure to lock every window and door to your balcony. I will be there in a moment," I said as I got up from the bed and threw on a white polo shirt and jeans before running to get the keys when Juliette handed it to me and I sprinted to the door.

"Lock the door. My guards are out here," I said hastily as I opened the door and was just about to close it when she stopped it using her hand.

"Take one of the guards with you," she said and not wanting to waste any time on argument I nodded a yes and close the door before running to the parking calling Seth, one of my guard to prepare the car.

It seemed they were some hired bullies sent to scare Cristina in hopes of indirectly warning me not to buy the house from Alex's father. The cops reached before us and by the time we arrived we saw them handcuffed and being escorted towards the police car. Cristina Dimir was perfectly fine but she continued sobbing and kept on mumbling how scared she was to death. As I talked to the officers about the bullies wanting to know who exactly sent them over they told me that the group of bullies won't open their mouths and then they would inform me as soon as they confess everything for the purpose and who sent them over.

One of them crossed me handcuffed and a cop followed him to the car but then the bald strong built guy stopped in his tracks to look back at me. A smirk remained plastered in his face as he spoke in his deep drunk accent "Oi! Are you already scared by all this?" he asked and I tilted my head to the side squinting my eyes as I heard just what he wanted to say.

"Don't worry. If you want to save your sorry ass then just stop thinking about buying that house and move back from wherever you have come from. You stupid businessman just don't have any idea with whom exactly you are dealing with. So, before you sit there crying for your sorry ass, get your ass safe," he laughed hysterically mocking me and Seth took a step forward intimidatingly wanting to hit him but stopped as soon as I signalled him to stop.

The cop pushed him towards the car and he got in all the while showing his tongue out at me.

"Interesting..." I muttered.

"Is everything alright?" she asked as soon as I entered the house, locking the door from behind.

"Why are you still up? You should be sleeping," I said as I held her by her shoulders and turned her around pushing her towards the bedroom. "Zac. Zac!" she had an irritated look as she turned around to face me. "Can't you simply answer my question?" she complained and that made me heave a sigh before telling her everything that happened.

"So, you are saying that you went to Mr. Lascar this morning to finalise the house agreement?" she asked and I nodded before lounging on the couch.

"But I don't get it. Why are you so keen on buying that wrecked house?" she asked as she sat on the coffee table to look at me. My eyes fell on the scar on her knee and involuntarily my hands reached out to touch it. It was probably from the accident few months ago and that boiled my blood.

"Juliette..." I spoke up for the first time thinking of spilling everything out.

The thing that I have hidden so many things from her had always nagged me to the extent that I felt suffocated. I felt as if I was betraying her and a part of me was responsible for everything

that had happened to her. From the part where I marry her for the sake of saving her from Nicholas to the part where she gets into an accident, I felt responsible. If only I had stopped everything that happened that year, then probably Juliette wouldn't have to go through so much.

If only had I....

"Hmm?" she whispered holding the hand that was touching her scar.

Chapter 43

"I have kept so many secrets from you," I told her and sat back from my lying position as I looked at her straight into her eyes. Finally determined to spill everything out that I have been keeping inside from a long period of time.

A gut feeling in me told me to wait and let her know some other day but then I wanted to feel free from the burden of hiding things from her and it was why I chose to be truthful and let her know.

"I know," she whispered smiling at me as she reached for my face and touched my cheek with her warm ones.

"I knew that you were full of secrets but I believed that you would eventually come out one day and tell me everything."

Her words were filled with sincerity and that made me smile as I leaned more onto her touch and kissed her hand before taking in a deep breath getting ready to tell her about my past.

"I want to tell you everything today. So please be patience with me and hear me out okay?" I asked and she nodded signalling me to continue.

"So, back when I was doing my degree, a girl named Gina used to stalk me everywhere I went. She was really pretty and bubbly but very childish. Even though I was her senior, she continued to follow me everywhere I went and would sent me those you know um-" my voice stuttered thinking about the correct word.

"Love letters?" Juliette finished and awkwardly I found myself nodding at her as I cleared my throat before speaking "So...she would declare her love for me every single time she met me and would always scare away the other girls that followed me."

"I used to decline her advances because I never really felt anything for her but then I felt I should at least date her and see if it works. The day when I told her that we should date, she was extremely happy and like a kid jumped up and down but I made a condition that if it didn't work then she would stop pursuing me and stop following me,"

"She seemed hesitant but when I turned to leave, she agreed almost immediately and it was the beginning of our dating relation," as I finished I looked up to see Juliette's expression but found her neutral and attentive as she signalled me to carry on.

"Then we dated each other, going out on dates, movies that I hated, amusement parks and did everything to have fun but every time as I walked her back to her hostel I knew it wasn't working for me. I never really felt that excitement and spark that I had wished to feel but on the contrary she was ecstatic and happy with whatever we were doing and clutched onto me even more. As we continued, she grew more possessive and acted like my girlfriend boasting around

and being mean to a girl who was my lab partner. She didn't stop on that, she started disturbing me while I was in my class and joined me on lunch every time I was with my friends."

I inhaled deeply as I remembered the day when I last saw her. She was sad and broke and looked as if she would die.

"So finally I told her that it wasn't working and I wanted to end it. She was heart broken and she cried for hours and days following me everywhere even more to the point where I had to take a short leave from the university frustrated by her behavior of barging into boy's hostel. But then I never knew that the day when I last saw her running behind my car to stop me from leaving would be the last day I would ever see her."

"W-What happened?" Juliette asked slowly holding my hand tightly sitting at the edge of the table.

"When I returned back, I heard that she commited suicide by jumping off a cliff near our university."

"What?" Juliette said with widened eyes.

"Everyone blamed me for it and told me that just because I was stupid not able to handle her love, she ended up committing suicide only because of me. The situation was a chaos back then and I was filled with guilty. I couldn't sleep nor eat when everyone kept on looking at me accusingly. So, it was when Gale stepped in wanting to help me and he spread a false story of her being pregnant with some other guy. She felt guilty for cheating on me and it was why she commited suicide." Juliette gasped when she heard that and reluctantly I continued "It didn't even take him too long to even get a fake pregnancy report and he hired some guy who even agreed to whatever he said and took the blame on himself for money. Even though people stopped hating and accusing me for her death but the fact that she cheated on me didn't go well with them and they turned her into the evil one much to my dismay and it made me even more frustrated and angry upon Gale for doing this."

"G-Gale did this all for you?" she asked shocked and I nodded.

"We were always in good terms but after this incident I hated him for the guilt that I was feeling and for turning Gina, who was dead as the evil one."

"Zachary," Juliette whispered as she stood up and pulled me into a hug rubbing her hands all over my arm soothingly and comforting me.

"But the past that I thought I had left behind has came back hunting my present and it is why I chose to tell you everything today," I said and Juliette looked down at me with a questioning look.

"What do you mean?" she questioned.

"Gina- Gina's full name was Gina Lascar and she is Alexandru's younger sister."

Chapter 44

Zachary Pov

The room was marred with silence as I kept on staring at the light lamp next to the couch having no idea of whatever Juliette was thinking because I was too distracted with the thought of having Juliette judge me like everyone did back then and I was okay with it because I knew it was even too much for her to handle. Everything that ever happened to her was only because of me. I was always the root cause of everything that she had to go through and today I would not blame her. Not even for a single bit because whatever she would say was the right thing. For me, she is always right. She went through that accident that Alex planned because of me, she came back from death and then in order to save me, she put her life in risk playing a second identity before Alex not even knowing that everything she went through was actually planned for me.

I was the person who should have been hurt in place of her, but every time, every single time she would divert all those sufferings and would take it on her head. All this while, she had foolishly protected me thinking I was the one who was protecting her, but in reality, I was nothing in compared to her. I could only protect her with the help of a gun, while she obstructed every emotional pain that was led towards me.

Slowly turning towards her, I was ready to face an upset Juliette but instead I found her already looking my way with a saddened face as her eyes teared up and she looked down as soon as my eyes got in contact with her. I knew, I had made her upset. I should've cleared it from the beginning that I knew Alex and he was after me for his sister and he had pulled Juliette into all this because he wanted me to suffer like he had when his sister died. I was an ominous for Juliette and no matter how hard I tried I couldn't clear that dark part of me.

"Then...you're saying that Alex did all this with me, with us, because of Gina?" Juliette's voice broke down at the end and I kept mum knowing she would understand.

"Then...what else?" she asked which made me look up at her.

"What do you mean?" I questioned not understanding what she meant by what she just asked.

"There is more to than meets the eyes right?," she asked and I nodded clasping my hand together.

"I found out about it when you planned everything out. I had to know who he was because when I was dating Gina, I knew that she had a brother but I had never been able to meet or see his face. I was informed that her brother on the time of her death had wanted to sit a committee against me and reopen her case file which was closed because of Gale's influence, but he lost to Gale and we were never been able to meet because soon I graduated. I had always wanted to

clear things out with her family but I was never able to. So, finally I got to meet him and it planned out he was set to destroy me and he wanted to take revenge for his sister and it was why he found a pawn but ended up being used as a pawn in his own game."

"So, who is that person? Have you already found him?" she asked and I nodded to which her eyes grew the size of a saucer.

"W-Who is he then?" she asked and I had an internal feud with my consciousness thinking whether it was the right moment to spill everything out or not. I chose the latter.

"I will tell you," I got up from the couch that made her look up at me.

"But Za-," in a swift moment I picked her up in my arms and she looked at me all startled as I walked towards the bedroom with her in my arms.

Chapter 45

"I promise, I will tell you everything. But not today. It's too late in the night and you need to have some rest. You have been up since the time I went away and it not good for you and our baby," I said as I tucked her in and placed a kiss on her forehead.

"Tomorrow, I will be sending Willi back home to Romania to have everyone come here. We can't hide this anymore. This drama needs to end and I want unveil the real person behind all this. This is for our own betterment, I'm tired of playing this hide and seek games and I want to go back to the way we used to live," a sigh escaped my mouth as I sat next to her and she held my forearm facing my side.

"Zachary," she whispered softly almost faintly and if it wasn't for the night's pin drop silence, I wouldn't have heard it but then I looked at her as she closed her eyes and took in deep breaths before speaking "Does Alex know about you and your other job?"

"Probably not," I answered almost immediately as I had a background check on him by Willi and according to Willi's sources he had no idea about my mafia connection. If he had, then he wouldn't have dared. It was almost my guilt for losing Gina that made me not to kill him but he hurt Juliette and I had no plan on letting him off the hook so easily.

I knew how much it hurts when you lose a near and dear one especially when I had also lost my own sister. I knew the amount of hate I felt for Vito and Nicholas was same as what Alex might have been feeling for me, and perhaps it was why I had to control myself to go right before him and shoot all the bullets into his head. I wanted to know who he had befriended with and then when I finally found the person I decided I should at least clear Alex's part to Juliette.

"And you know what?" she whispered.

I stared down at her as she rubbed her hands on my forearm, before opening her eyes and looking at me "Let if off!"

"What?"

"Let it off now. Gina's death was not your fault," she said as she smiled at me but her eyes held assurance. It was what I had always wanted to see for me. From the time Gina died, everyone actually thought I was to be blamed for it and it was what made me guilty even more than what I was already feeling. Instead of supporting me, Gale tried to curtain and get me off the hooks from Gina's death case, which indirectly meant he believed that Gina committed suicide because of me and I was actually the one to be blamed. Not even my mother or grandfather, gave me the assurance that it wasn't my fault and I kept on drowning into the pit of darkness and grew distant to everyone that were near me.

When I met Juliette, she caught me off guard and made me feel certain things that I had never experienced, not even with Gina. It was hard for me to not let Juliette enter into my heart because she was even more stubborn than I was, and finally she ended up in my life protecting and loving me, pulling me from that pit but contrary getting her hands dirty with that pit of darkness. So, in last she had to face the consequences of being with me.

She held my wrist firmly and that made me snap out of my thinking world as I laid down next to her, switching off the lamp on my side and pulling her close to me as she snuggled to me in a comfortable position breathing in heavily.

"You alright?" I asked as I had my arms around her while I felt her nodding, as she kept her head on my chest.

"Let's go for a check up or should I call a doctor home?" I asked as I thought about our baby. I knew with all the things going around I was unable to look after our baby but knowing Juliette, she played her part perfectly and she took care of her and the baby much to my relief.

"No, it's alright. I want to deal with our family first," she said and I hummed in response.

"Zac? Are you asleep?" I heard her voice almost after fifteen minutes and I tapped her hand that was on my chest replying her that I was indeed awake.

"I wanted to ask you a question," she said nonchalantly and the way she said that I had an understanding what she had been wanting to ask me from the beginning as I had told her about my past life.

"What is it?" I asked nevertheless.

"Did. Did you and Gina had that type of relation? Uh! I mean...did you two did it?" she stuttered a few times in the middle and by the time she finished, I could feel her body turning cold and I scoffed at her in the middle of the night.

"Did you and Nicholas do that?" I snapped and almost immediately she got up from me and glared at me. I could see her face as the moonlight fell on her face through the glass window and she looked as if she was ready to slap me.

"You ask me that? Were you drunk when we had sex for the first time? I was a v-"

"Enough! I'm tired and I want to sleep. So, sleep and let me sleep! Idiot!" I muttered as I rolled around on my stomach and pulled the duvet to me irritated all of a sudden.

"C'mon tell me?" I heard her voice.

"Nonsense, Idiot of a woman" I mumbled but soon regretted as she climbed up on me putting all her weight on me, crushing me in the process, giggling like a mad woman who just won a stupid ass lottery.

As I had concluded earlier, she was the only woman in the world who had the power to make me mad in a minute and also had the power to melt me just in a second.

Chapter 46

Juliette Pov

It was the day.

The day when I was supposed to meet my family back and let them know that I was alive. Zachary told me that he had called his family and they had no idea about me being alive. As I had called it upon myself I had to deal with them my own and make them understand the purpose of me being dead, and this is what Zachary wants me to do. My sweaty palms shivered out of anxiety as I thought of the ways to deal with our family.

It would've been great if I had actually died in that accident because it is just of no use of me being alive for my mother and father would definitely kill me after they find the truth. l sigh escaped my mouth as I walked to the balcony to get some fresh air. Zachary has been out to the airport to receive the family members leaving Kiara with me and guards guarding the front.

Talking about Alex, strangely it's been three days since he contacted me. In our last conversation he told me that he had to fly urgently for a meeting and he would come back after two days, but strangely he didn't contact me ever since.

I wonder what's he up to?

"Hey, eat up your food!" I heard Kiara's voice from the kitchen.

As I walked to the table I found the food's aroma getting into me as I felt hungry all of a sudden. The chicken and tomato pasta that she made looked mouth watering as I took a fork and took a bite savouring its deliciousness almost immediately forgetting about all the problems that surrounded me.

"This is amazing," I said as I moaned and she laughed from the kitchen.

"What a cooking skill!" I remarked as I enjoyed the food while she brought her a plate and started eating it sitting beside to me.

"You know this recipe has some ingredients missing, yet I thought it would still taste good if I made it without them," she told me as she took a mouthful of her food and circled her fork in the air thinking about something.

"That reminds me, where did you get the chicken? I remember we didn't have any in the fridge," I said as I remembered wanting to eat a chicken dish last night but couldn't because we didn't have it and Zachary was away and the guards didn't let me go out to the walmart nearby all by my own.

"I asked one of the guards to bring it for me," she said and I nodded concentrating on my food.

"I want to have some wine as well," I said out my thoughts and Kiara scrunched up her nose giving me a pointed glare.

"Don't even think about having alcohol for the rest eight months. It's not good for your baby and your Romeo would be very upset," she said and the name 'Romeo' that she used to address Zachary made me raise an eyebrow at her.

"Romeo? Seriously?" I questioned to which she just gave a toothy grin and shrugged her shoulders. I huffed at her and was just about to drink water from the glass when all of a sudden my eyelids drooped and the world around me seemed to rotate. A groan escaped my mouth as my vision blurred and I held my head wanting to stop it.

"Juliette?" I could hear Kiara's worried voice.

"Hey! What's wrong?" she asked as I felt her touching my arm but I could no longer she her. I was losing my consciousness and my heartbeat raised up all of a sudden.

"Why is my head spinning?" the next moment I heard her groaning and before I could reach out or speak anything to her, I lost my consciousness and fell back on my chair.

Why did you do this to me?

Why?

How could you?

You betrayed me!

You betrayed everyone.

My eyes snapped open as I gasped for air looking around frantically thinking where I was. That was a bad dream that I saw. A very bad dream in which I was shouting and screaming feeling betrayed who was someone closer to my heart. I couldn't see the person's face in my dream but still I could feel how terrible I felt when I was yelling at the person.

My body was sweaty and I clutched my heart feeling distraught.

My eyes traveled up and I found I was in a dark room with a ventilator and just a grilled door. I was laying on a bench and as my mind registered everything found myself jumping off the bench and making a run towards the grill door to find it locked from outside. Terrified, I held the grill and tried to jerk it a thousand times wanting to open it but to no avail.

"Open the door! Where am I?" I yelled at the top of my voice as I held the grill growing desperate to be out.

When no one responded I looked around the dark room wanting to find something that could help me to break the door but there was nothing. My eyes fell on a plate which had fruits and I ran to it throwing away the fruits and took the plate and banged it on the door. Anybody would

have been annoyed with the amount of noise I made as I continued banging the plate on the door but nobody responded and finally I grew tired as I held the now bent plate and slide down to the floor.

Anxiety crawled up to me as I thought about my baby. Instantly, my hands wrapped up around my stomach as I thought my baby. Even tear pooled my eyes and in no time I found myself sobbing thinking about Zachary.

The last thing that I remembered was eating food with Kiara and all of a sudden I felt sleepy and after that no matter how much I tried I couldn't remember anything.

"Perhaps..." something struck my mind as I wiped my tears and thought about it "Something was in my food,"

"Did Kiara add up something in my food?" I found myself talking as I thought about it again and again.

No! Why would she?

Snapping out of my thoughts, I concentrated more on my situation rather than wasting my time thinking about the things that has already happened. Hastily, I searched for my phone in my pocket and to my extreme shock I found it in my pockets. Feeling little happy, I switched it on and only to find no signal on the phone. And that meant, I couldn't contact Zachary.

Chapter 47

Zachary Pov

Everyone's eyes were set on me as I stood in the middle of the room, hands shoved inside my pant pockets as I thought of a plan to at least give them the idea about what they were going to meet. Juliette...

Even though I made it clear to her that she had to deal with our family all by herself, still I couldn't help but be worried of her and our baby as I brought my our family directly from the airport to the hotel. I knew if they see Juliette all of a sudden then they would go berserk and bombard her or who knows maybe get angry over her and also over me... And keeping on mind that she is pregnant, it would be good if I give them an idea and then let them face her.

My mother sat on the couch next to Gale and both Juliette's mother's and father stood near the window, while Jace sat sat on the Piano's bench facing our direction while my grandfather and grandmother along with Kristian stood near the small bar taking sips occasionally from their wine. Kristian gave me a smirk but his expression turned to a smug one when he saw my jaws clenching.

"Are you going to keep standing there?" Gale was the first to break the silence and as he kept his hand on my mother's lap who held it firmly.

Gale and I had a huge fight the last time because he planned on destroying me by submitting my illegal arms and weapons truck to the cops. But he had no idea that I had known he was the one behind it all and thanks to my man who work as cops for informing me on time or else I would have been destroyed. I was in the verge of shooting all the bullets that I had in my gun into his forehead but if it weren't for mom getting in the middle trying to save him, I would have really killed him. Mom had to apologise in his behalf and she clarified that she was aware what Gale had been doing all these years, starting from Gina's case to the illegal weapon case but still she didn't interfere because she thought he wouldn't do it again.

For the first time in my life, I was I was angry on my own mother for always choosing him over him and putting a veil over his actions and it intensified to the extent that I was on the verge of breaking all my ties with her but then she begged that she loved him but she loved me too and she couldn't live with us. My grandmother had to step in and break all the ice and finally after some chaos it was all sorted. Mom assured me that it was for the last time that Gale played these cheap tricks and she would make sure that he keeps out of my business and Gale admitted that it was his wrong move and truly he wouldn't do that again.

I had to backout that day after giving a last warning.

Since that day, the problems between us has decreased but not to the extent where we would roam together talking about our lives. But as long as he behaved I would keep my sanity for mom's sake.

"Zac?" Mom asked and I looked at her but avertexd my gaze away from her and looked at Juliette's father. My eyes narrowed at him as I looked at his appearance. He wasn't in his usual self. He had grown his facial hair and had dark circles as if he hasn't been sleeping in the nights as if something were disturbing him. He looked remorseful in a type of way where it looked as if he wanted to tell me something but he couldn't.

Only if he knew, I already knew.

Mrs. Swanson had stood their with a stoic look as she looked at the ground and avoided meeting my gaze. Jace, while on the other hand sat quietly looking at me intently and I cleared my throat to get everyone's attention. I was just about to open my mouth to speak when the buzzing of my phone stopped me from going further. Annoyed at the person for calling me at a wrong time, I was just about to cut the call when the name displayed on the caller's ID got my attention.

Willi Simmel.

Chapter 48

He was the type who only called to talk about business and to avoid his call meant making a rod for your own back.

"Excuse me for a moment!"

I hurried out of the room where they had gathered because of me and directly went out of the room to get the call.

"Yes? What do you have for me?"

"You need to get here, immediately!" he said and the way he spoke I knew something was bad.

It took me fifteen minutes to reach back to my house and as soon as I reached I was greeted by my guard's dead bodies. One had his throat slit while the other had his head blown by a gun. Both of them lay dead laid dead near the entrance. That was enough for me to make a run thinking about Juliette and as soon as I entered Willi stood in the middle of the living room with his hands over his waist looking apprehensive.

"They are gone," he said as soon as he saw me standing near the doorway.

"Hey! What's going on? Kiara!" I heard Kristian's voice as she came running and searched for Kiara in desperation.

"Where is he?" he asked and as he saw my and Willi's distraught face he slammed his fist on the table in frustration.

"Bro..." Willi kept a hand over Kristian's shoulder but at that moment everything seemed blank to me as I walked slowly towards them like a robot and stood next to them as I thought about Juliette and our baby. I wanted to break down, crash everything and go all berserk wanting to destroy everything but knowing that wouldn't actually help anything and even though I didn't want to still I controlled my sanity and looked everywhere.

"Did you check the CCTV?" I asked as I walked the window to look outside.

"Its been destroyed," Willie replied and I clutched the curtain tightly in anger.

No, Zachary Udolf Sullivan...You need to control yourself.

At least for the sake of Juliette.

"Go and get me the CCTV footage of the nearby roads and call the police," I said and looked back to find them both looking at me in shock.

"I'm willing to involve police in this. It would be a lot easier to find her," I said and Willi nodded before walking away to get the footage.

"Are you out of your damn mind? You want to fucking involve the police in this? Do you know what this means? Subsequently, your background would be checked and they will dig out your information and your mafia business would be out before everyone," Kristian yelled at me but in contrast I chose to keep quiet as I sat on one of the dining table chair.

"Let me have it in my way for once," I said and his face contoured in anger as he took a menacing step towards me and held my collar aggressively.

"Bastard isn't it always you way? Look where we are today just because it was your fucking w-"

"It wasn't!" I snapped as I held his hand shoved it off from my collar.

"It fucking wasn't. I wasn't the one who planned all this. It was Juliette, if it were my way then I would have already killed him. Things were never the way I had wanted and if it were then nothing all this and the rest that I had to go through including that girl, Gina, had happened. Do you fucking understand?"

"Now, for the first time in my life, let me have it in my way," I was exasperated.

He clenched his jaws and shrieked before pulling his hair in frustration and gradually ended up sitting next to me. I adjusted my shirt and watched as he held his head and muttered about Kiara. But then it struck me. Kiara was also there in the house and then...my eyes fell on the two half filled plates. I reached my hands out to get the plates and saw it had chicken and tomato pasta in it. Juliette was eating this?

As long as I remembered, she loved this dish and why would she leave it unfinished? Even the other plate was half eaten. Taking the fork, I examined the dish and sniffed it a little but everything seemed okay. I was just about to taste it when I stopped.

"Hey! Kristian..." he looked at me annoyed as I handed him the plate.n

"Are you hungry?" I asked as I signalled him the plate.

"You fucking retard? You think I would eat at a time like th-"

"Kiara made it!" I exclaimed and his eyes grew wider before he looked at the dish intently and gradually reached for the fork.

It looks like Kiara never really cooked for you brother.

He looked as if he was going to cry as he stabbed a pieces of chicken and brought it to his mouth to eat. I watched as he chewed his food and gradually finish everything occasionally whispering how great the food was and how delicious it was. At the end, when he finished, I breathed out as I scratched my chin.

The food was alright.

I was just about to reach out for the water jug, as all of a sudden I was feeling thirsty when a thud sound next to caught me off guard.

It was Kristian. He banged his head on the table and I stood up to check on him, alarmed. He had passed out next to me and quickly I checked his nerves worried thinking that he died but to my relief he was only passed out and it got in my mind that the food was already drugged.

"Who could've drugged this food?" I mumbled to myself as I looked back at a sleeping Kristian.

Chapter 49

Zachary Pov

"What happened to him?" Willi asked as he watched Kristian passed out on the table.

"Nothing. He is just sleeping," I replied as I looked back at him and shrugged my shoulder at him.

"Sleeping?" Willi looked bewildered as he repeated the word and gave a pointed glare at Kristian's sleeping form before walking up to me and handing me a tablet which had the CCTV footage. The footage had a white sedan pulling up towards our driveway and it took a turn towards our house, it was what we had in the footage because it disappeared in our lane and the footage to that lane was not found.

"Make sure that the police gets this footage by their own," I said as I handed the tablet back to him and looked back at Kristian.

"What do you plan to do now?" Willi asked to which I put my hand back on the revolver and pulled it out rotating it from its barrel "You will see."

The cops got inside the house as I stood their in the corner letting them investigate as they checked every corner of the house for evidence. The bodies of my guards were seized by the police and they were taken away for autopsy.

"Do you have any any doubts upon anyone who could've done this? Any enemies?" the officer asked as I nodded my head no.

"Then why do have two guards guarding your house?" the other officer asked and it was when being on a foreign land I told them that I was a businessman from Romania and I was here with my wife for business. When I came back home, I met the dead guards outside of the house and my wife including her friend had gone missing.

"Sir, we found no CCTV footage in lane twenty-five, it was taken down or somebody has deleted it. But I had checked the footage of other lanes and there was this one Suv which seemed common in every lane heading towards twenty-five," another officer said intervening and handed over some photocopies to the officer who was interrogating me beforehand.

"Find out about the owner and get a search warrant for Mrs. Sullivan and Ms. Richmond," the officer commanded.

"Meanwhile, you have to come with me to proceed with the formalities to the police station," he informed me and I nodded agreeing to him. The officer sighed as he turned around only to come face to face with Kristian.

"Officer! You have to find Kiara," he said enunciating each words making me heave out a sigh.

"Who is he and what does Ms. Richmond's relation to him?" the officer turned back to me to question me and soon enough I watched as Kristian opened his mouth almost immediately "She is my gir-" I had to interrupt as I said "He is my cousin and Ms. Kiara is my wife's friend," I replied and watched as Kristian threw a glare my way.

"I see, don't worry. We shall find them and also the one who kidnapped them. As you see Mr. Sullivan," the officer pursed his lips before speaking "due to lack of evidence we can't really say if they were kidnapped or they went away of their own. I know you would find this outraging but we suspect they might have been the one to kill your guards and destroy the footages,"

"What nonsense!" Kristian butted in almost immediately.

"I'm talking sense. I don't see any evidence of...you know any kind of scuffle or things out of place,"

"It only means they are the one who did it or the person who did this was of a close acquaintance, who knew everything about them and easily get into the house," the officer made his point and even though I wanted to tell him about the drugged food, I chose to close my mouth as I watched a cop picking of the dish and putting it inside a sealed packed for sending it to the lab for testing as evidence.

They would definitely find out about it by their own and they would reach the Suv owner on time.

Chapter 50

"My wife has nothing to do with it. I can assure you that, and talking about acquaintance, we are here for a short period of time and we have no acquaintance in here who would break into our house," I said and even though the officer nodded it seemed he didn't really believe me and it was what I really wanted. I didn't want him to believe me and dig into it find everything what I wanted him to find.

"Alright then," he rocked on his heel and turned around to leave but stopped when I called for him "Officer Hugh!"

"Yes?"

"I have a request. As you can see the media is already outside covering the crime scene. Sooner, they will find my identity and the news of my wife getting kidnapped will air on Romania's news channel as well and I believe it will worsen the condition even more, because I think the kidnapper will get to know about everything about the situation," I said and he seemed to understand what I meant because he closed his eyes and nodded.

"I understand. We shall keep it in check!" he replied before turning around to leave.

"What now?" Willi asked me as he looked at me from the mirror before me.

"I guess it will be already in the news by now and our family will know it on their own. Let's go and get Juliette," I said to which he narrowed his eyes.

"Do you know where she is?" he asked looking suspicious all of a sudden.

"What! You know where they are?" Kristian interfered.

"I had a tracking chip attached to Juliette body without her knowing," I said and both of them gasped giving me an incredulous look.

"Oh so this explains why you have been so calm from the beginning," Willi smirked but Kristian looked mad.

"Then what the fuck are you waiting for?" Kristian snapped and took his car keys and strode towards the door.

Willi looked back at me and shrugged his shoulder "True love," he whispered more like mocked me and I gave him a look before pulling my phone out and following Kristian.

"Pull your second phone out," I asked Willi and he obliged as he gave me his phone and sat in the car.

"The cops would be tapping my phone by now. I can't risk spilling everything out to them," I whispered and he nodded.

"Where to? You fucker!" Kristian yelled as he rode the car like a maniac.

"You have been swearing a lot lately," Willi didn't seem happy with Kristians' continuous swearing. Kristian in reply just scoffed at him and cursed even more.

Five minutes later we were right before Alexandru Lascar's house as Kristian parked his car right before his gates and honked for the guards to open it. The guards however denied to open it and stood right before the gate denying the entry. Kristian miffed by them sighed in frustration and put his foot on accelerator and warned the guards to open the gate or else he would barge right in breaking the gate. Knowing that he would actually do that Willi and I got out of the car not wanting to get additional trouble and soon as soon we got out, Kristian broke the gate speeding his car right into the gate, breaking the front part of his luxurious imported Lincoln MKZ as well.

"What an idiot!" Willi muttered and we watched as more of security guards ran towards Kristian.

"You take care of them while I go inside," I said and he nodded before pulling up his sleeves and heading towards where Kristian was struggling against four heavy built guards.

"And remember!" I yelled at Willi making him stop in the middle as he looked back at me "No killing!" I warned but he touched the gun that he had in jacket pockets and patted over it giving me a smirk which meant he was going to break bones instead.

As Kristian and Willi minded their business with the guards, I made my way into Alex's house clearly knowing every place as I had been there before for the property deal.

The grandeur of the house was impressive yet dull for me as it made me mad because the owner had been planting and plotting plans to destroy my family all this while and to top of that had the audacity to kidnap my wife.

Kicking the door to the hallway open, I took long strides going around searching for Alex like a maniac. The housekeepers scurried of my way and some even intrude to stop me and ask me who I was. But giving no replies to them I made my way towards the target and as I entered the living room, I saw a person standing in the middle with his back facing me and his hands folded behind his back as he stared up towards the ceiling.

"You sure know how to barge into someone's house and life," he spoke timidly and even though I wanted to kill him, I stopped that urge as I stopped in my tracks with a housekeeper following me.

"I'm sorry sir!" the housekeeper apologized as he was unable to stop me from getting in. Alexandru in return motioned him to leave the room and finally turned to look at me.

"Where is Juliette?" I asked as calmly as I could.

"Mr. Sullivan, you need to take the thought of Ivona being Juliette out of your mind," Alex had this determined look on his face that made me think the worst.

"And you need to stop all this right now. Because your game is over," he crossed his arms across his chest and gave me a smirk and remained unaffected to whatever I just said and even though it infuriated me. I chose not to pull out the gun and shoot him.

"Alexandru Lascar, if you think that I don't have any idea about what is going around me then I must tell you that you don't really know me. You have chosen the wrong person for enmity and must I tell you, I can see your future. Do you know what it is?" I said as I took some steps forward, menacingly.

He stood rooted to his position and just eyed my movement but didn't budge to move as I continued "Your death!" I completed and that made him smirk as he opened his mouth to speak "Oh really?" in a challenging tone.

Chapter 51

Everything was so dark and I could hardly see anything that was around me. After tripping and stumbling a few times, I figured it out that it would be a better idea to sit down or else I knew I would my baby. Exhausted, I sat down on the floor and hugged my knees feeling little cold and scared.

Has Zachary find out that I'm missing?

The question kept on nagging my mind and internally I was growing even more desperate and agitated thinking why Zachary hasn't come to get me and who kidnapped me. My thoughts wandered off to Kiara.

Where is she?

"Kiara...where ar-" I was cut off when I heard someone groaning.

Alert, I stood back up and held the bars of the gate thinking that someone was around who could me out. I heard someone groaning and groggily asking for water and then the voice died down. I was just about to call for help when out of nowhere a blood curdling scream caught me off guard and I stumbled a few steps back, surprised.

"What the *fuck?*" I heard the woman and immediately recognised the voice of Kiara.

It was Kiara.

"Where the fuck am I? I- I" and she screamed again and I heard something falling and the next moment she was banging something on what felt like iron rods and I was back on my place "Kiara?"

"J-Juliette?" I heard her frantic voice for help.

"Kiara? Where are you?" I called her and she sobbed before replying "I don't fucking know, where the fuck am I? What the fuck is going on?" she cried and i heard her banging on the gate using something.

"I don't know...when I opened my eyes, I found myself in here, locked inside this room and nowhere out! Nobody came to meet and I have screaming for help from hours," I said as fast as I could.

"W-What happened? How did we even end up here? I remember making the pasta and we eating and..." she trailed off and kept quiet for some moments before speaking or should I say yelling "Did that fucking guards of yours do something to the chicken?"

"What?"

"When he got me the chicken, I felt little weird. He looked really nervous when he handed me the chicken, but I brushed it off thinking it was nothing and I was just being paranoid or something. Did that fucking man do something that made us pass out?"she exclaimed and I heard her groaning.

"Why the hell did I cook that chicken even if I knew that something was off?" she started blaming herself and I couldn't help it any further and I cried.

"Juliette?" I heard he concerned voice.

"Kiara, my baby. I'm afraid for my baby. What if something happens to my baby. We don't even know what we ate and here we are locked in this dark room. What if Zachary doesn't get here on time? What if he never finds us?" I sobbed and for some moment she was quite and that made me think that probably she was worried about the same thing too but then she yelled.

Chapter 52

"Hold yourself now! You are soon going to be a mother and I see this fucking attitude of yours! Don't fucking scare me or the baby. Did you just forget what and who your husband is? I'm sure he is out there kicking some asses, now calm yourself down. Don't tire yourself. Sit down and let me handle this," she exclaimed and even though I had an idea that she was right beside my lock up, and even though I couldn't see her, I knew that her knees must be wobbling and she was horribly scarred but she was just pretending to be strong in order to protect me and that literally gave me confidence for which I was thankful off.

"What exactly are you going to do?" I asked once I realised that she said to leave everything upon her.

"Oh! You know the obvious thing people do in this type of situation...call for help" and then she yelled at top of her voice "Motherfuckers get us out of here!"

It was probably the longest ever time, I found myself to be quite and all to myself as I slept on the ground exhausted facing the ceiling, even though I couldn't really see anything. I was hungry and thirsty. Kiara on the other end continued to shout like a mad woman and giving me assurance that everything would turn alright. The situation was chaotic as I knew, the constant yelling of Kiara would only tire her and she would end up even more hungry than I was and then she would grow sick.

"Kiara stop it now!" I said once I heard her coughing but being the stubborn woman she didn't stop.

"Get us the fuck out of here. Where in the world are we?" she yelled even more and I heaved a sigh.

To think that I was even doubting Kiara for single moment made me feel sick. How could I even doubt her? She was more of a sister to me than a friend and I had trusted her every moment in my life. Even though, she was scared at the beginning when my life threw me in this dark side of world, but slowly she put her feet in this dark water following me wanting to protect me. In the process, getting hurt and being adequate to the type of surrounding I was in.

Kiara...

Zachary....

Willi..

Kristian...

Max...

I didn't really had any idea that these people would grow so close to me that I would trust my life upon them. Kiara was there with me whenever I needed her but I was never there for her. I was so selfish, lost in my own world when I didn't even notice what was going on with her. Her parents truth was right before her and I knew she was badly hurt, but what could I do for her? I gave her even more of my problems. But she stood up bravely, juggling her own and my problems proving that she was the best of friends that I had in my life.

Zachary...

The man has been protecting me even though I had no idea what was going on around me and I blamed him and alleged him of being the bad one. He had nothing to ask for in return but I knew he didn't really had any plans on falling for me. He was there to avenge for his sister but then fell for me and protected me wholeheartedly. Even though there were times, when I humiliated him, hurt him, embarrassed him, he was still there for me. i remember when I saw him in the news when I got out of my coma, I saw how broke he was and how I broke him and I couldn't forget his face when he saw me alive and it was the first ever day in my life, when I saw him so weak.

The man I knew so strong....became so weak for me.

I was stupid to fall for a guy like Nicholas but then I wonder, if I didn't fell for Nicholas than I would have never came across Zachary.

And everyone else Willi, Max, Kristian...even though I had done nothing for them, still they saved me every single time.

As I thought about it again and again, it made me feel even more guilty. Just what had I done to deserve them? And just what exactly did I offer them in return? *Just nothing.*

I was a loser and complete useless.

Everytime, it was only me who fell in trouble and they would always come for me wanting to save me and asked nothing in return.

Tears pooled my eyes and streamed down my face as I thought about it again and again. I didn't really deserve them. Not even Zachary. The guy had just enough in plate and then I was there to add more of troubles to it. I couldn't give him any happiness. Even though he yelled at me and raised his hands at me when I fought with Loana, somehow down there I knew he was suffering a lot and he just had enough of it. I continued adding problems to his life.

It would have been a lot good if I wasn't there.

It would have been a lot better. if we had never come across each other.

I couldn't even tell him that Gina's death was not his fault. I wish to get back in time and erase the guilt that he had locked up in him for years. If only I had helped him getting over it in place of adding more troubles.

"Juliette?"

"Juliette!"

I heard Kiara snapping at me and I wiped off my tears as I got up from my place responding to her "What?"

"Do you hear that?" she said and that made me crease my eyebrows in confusion.

"Hear what?"

"Its like someone shouting and I don't know. There's something going on out there, i hear some sirens as well," she said and immediately I was alert as I tried to hear it and as she said surely I did hear some sounds and siren.

"I do! I do!" I exclaimed out of happiness.

"Oh my god! Is that the police?" her voice broke at the end and I knew she was crying out of joy.

Chapter 53

It was the moment where you would realise that it was it. It was the moment where you would think that your life depends on it and you just have to do anything in your control to reach your goal. My goal, was Juliette. My destination was Juliette. My aim was to get Juliette back even though I knew where she was. I knew I had to do it clearly so that I could end the matter for once and for all and it was what led me to the situation where blood oozed out of my mouth as I huffed in exhaustion and watched a bloodied face of none other than Alex as he struggled to catch his breath after we had a nasty combat of fist fight.

All of a sudden, he laughed. The jackass laughed hysterically and got up holding his chin and wiped the blood out of his mouth.

"You asshole, do you think I am stupid?" he laughed and looked up towards the ceiling.

I got up from the floor and held myself stable as I huffed out blood and looked at him exhausted. The guy was laughing hysterically like a maniac and even though all I wanted was to just pull the gun out from my back and kill him, I couldn't. I wasn't supposed to kill him or else he would pull me down to end as well and being aware of that and thinking about Juliette, I restrained myself from doing such actions.

"I knew it! I knew there was something fishy going on and hell I tried to shrug it off," he spat out blood and had his hands on his hips as he shook his head but then looked back at me.

"I fucking knew that both of you were together and she had not lost her memory," he said and even though it surprised me, all I did was to stare at him as blank as I could. "Deep down, I knew I was just digging my own grave, but I did it. I did it to get you," he said with rage filled in his voice and immediately he pulled a revolver out from his behind as he held it towards my direction. His bloodshot eyes looked murderous and his face contoured anger but amidst all that his hands trembled as he held the revolver before me.

"You! You are the root cause of everything! My life is miserable only because of you. I should've killed you back then when my sister Gina attempted suicide. It was all your fault.It was bloody all your fault!" he yelled and in a moment he leveled the revolver down, his fingers quaking as he pulled the trigger and shot me on my arm. At first, I didn't really realise what happened but then as I felt the pain my right hand moved up to hold the wound on my left arm as I held it where it was shot.

A grim expression remained planted on my face and I staggered a few steps back but refused to sow weakness as I thought about it again and again on the plan to give up and just pull my revolver out and shoot him directly on his head.

"Look! What you have made me. You have turned me into a filthy monster. It's all because of you!" his voice cracked at the end.

"Do you remember Gina?" he asked almost immediately as he looked at me with a dark expression on his face "Of course you do! How could you not know who Gina is oh! my bad! I must say who Gina was!" he said and that made me stand straight as I tried to forget the pain that I was feeling and stood on my ground.

"She- She was my sister. My younger sister and do know what happened to her? She died! Because of you!" pain etched his face as he said her name.

"She loved you. She had never loved anyone in her life and she loved you so much and it is why because of you bastard! She ended her life. What did she get for loving you? Huh?" he yelled pointing the revolver at me "What did she get? Death! You bastard abandoned her when she needed you and you made her feel worthless, finally my sister chose to end her life. Do you fucking know how much my dad and I suffered because of you? We couldn't get the justice we wanted but I- I promised her that I will find you and make you pay for it and finally its the day!" he laughed as he spoke.

"Look!" I said but he yelled stopping me in the middle "Shut up! Nothing that you will say will make me change my mind."

"I'm going to kill you today, here and right now!" he looked stubbornly determined but I couldn't care less what he wanted. The fact was, I was standing quietly hearing and tolering him only because he was the brother of Gina and only for the sake of Juliette.

"Fine! Don't listen to me. I know you had it tough because of me but the truth is I never abandoned Gina. I had wanted to meet you and sort things out but I could never do that due to certain circumstance," I said and he narrowed his eyes before shouting "What do you mean?"

"What I mean is... you've been mistaken. It was not for me that Gina attempted suicide," I told him and I watched as his eyes grew wider before he grew even more angrier than he already was.

"You liar! Don't you fucking dare lie on my fa-"

"Look at this then!" I said as I pulled a paper out from my pocket and forwarded it towards him," he looked at my hand and then back at me but still not putting the revolver down as in a confused state of mind he came forward and cautiously took the paper out of my hand.

I watched as he unfolded the paper and read it quietly before his eyes grew wider and his hands trembled in shock. I knew that he would definitely had this reaction when he gets to know about Gina. I knew he was never been told about this before and it was why he was so dead set for revenge but then I was also drowning with guilt as I was also somehow responsible for her death. What I did back then was purely stupid.

I remember when I had found about Gina's medical condition when I was dating her and somehow I had skipped the part of the story from Juliette that Gina was a HIV positive patient. And the actual reason why she had attempted suicide was because of this and not me. I had her autopsy report back then and I was so filled with guilt for not being with her at least as a friend and I had wanted to let this report to her family but I couldn't as I was immediately taken away from the case and I couldn't contact them. And not wanting the situation to be known to media and as my name was into it too because I was the last person with Gina, Gale had this situation covered up and it was why her autopsy report was never handed to her family and as I had assumed everyone had blamed me for it.

"Th-This can't be. My sister can't-" Alex's hand trembled as his eyes teared up as he read the old autopsy report again and again.

"What I had always wanted to let you know that I am not the one why Gina took that step," I said and it was when he fell down on his knees.

"Ho-How could this be?" he mumbled as tears streamed down his face.

"Because of the blood transfusion she had three months ago before she started dating me. It was the fault of the hospital," I said and he crumbled the report in his hands.

"You are fucking lying!" his voice broke at the end and he kept on mumbling the sentence again and again as he tried to digest the truth.

"I am really sorry for your loss and I agree am also to be held guilty as I had abandoned her when she had needed me. But I was not the reason why she killed herself. It was probably shock and fear for the disease that made her end her life and for which I am very guilty and ashamed for not being there for her," I spoke with sincerity and all he did was sob on the ground.

"But you! You tried to kill my wife. You tried to take her away from me and you have kidnapped in hopes of getting me," suddenly my voice turned serious as I looked at him dead serious.

"I-I didn't want to do that but she- she made me-" I cut him in the middle "I know" as I said that his head throttled towards my direction.

"Y-You know?" he said and all I did was smirk in response.

"It looks like you are not aware of who I am. Trust me, I could've sorted this all out from the beginning but only for Gina and the sake of Juliette, I didn't."

"I- I was blinded with revenge," he cried out nodding his head no as he dropped the revolver down and punched the ground 'I was so blinded by revenge that I couldn't see anything."

"Zac!" I heard Juliette and I turned around on my spot to find none other than Juliette herself with group of cops as she ran towards me and in a swift moment jumped on me to hug me.

"Mr. Lascar, we have the warrant to arrest you for plotting murder against Mrs. Sullivan, kidnapping, and attempt to kill Mr. Sullivan," one of the cops said as he walked up towards Alex and held the handcuffs before him.

"Oh my god!" I heard Juliette shrieking and looked down to find her holding my arm and she had placed a hand over it tryin to stop the blood oozing out. "Someone please call the ambulance!" she sobbed and I watched as Kiara ran into the room with Kristiana and Willi and they looked horrified as they looked at my bloodied arm.

"Zachary!" Kristian was already in my side and he pulled out his handkerchief and tied it around me.

"What the heck! How could you let this happen to you!" Willi looked angry and he marched up to Alex wanting to punch him only to be held back by some of the cops.

"Let go!" he grimaced and thrashed the cops wanting to punch Alex.

"We have to take you to the hospital," Juliette cried as she held my hand and I reached out for her head as I gave her a kiss on her forehead "Don't worry about me. I am fine. Are you alright?" I asked and she nodded frantically with tears rolling down her face.

"We have also arrested the person who was with Mr. Lascar," one of the officer told us and we watched as he signalled an officer to bring the culprit inside. I held Juliette's hand tightly as I knew it would give a shock to her.

Juliette watched the door intently, waiting patiently wanting to know who the person was that had wanted to kill her and the person responsible for what was going on between us. Her eyes eyes grew wide with shock as the person walked in handcuffed and shamefaced.

"M-Mom?" Juliette seemed to disbelieve what she was seeing. It was none other than her own mother, Mrs. Jessica Swanson. Shock filled Juliette's expression as she looked at her mom and ran to her. "No! This can't be. There is some kind of misunderstanding. Zachary!" she ran back to me and held my hand "My mom can never do anything like this," she cried and before I could say anything she ran back to her mother who looked down seeming ashamed and saddened as she whispered "I am sorry."

Juliette immediately stopped what she was speaking as she eyes her mom in shock.

It turned out, Juliette had signed a contract that only forty percent of her inherited money would transfer to charity and the rest would be used to open a shelter for the homeless, orphaned and old people while only two percent of it would be transferred to her brother Jace Swanson, if she passes away. Not wanting to give the money away, Mrs. Swanson had trickly made Juliette sign a document telling her that it was a divorce paper that she signing which I had sent her but in reality she had signed on a contract in which she was willingly transferring hundred percent of her inheritance money to Jace. But then the money could only be transferred after her death didn't change.

Mrs. Swanson wanting to give Jace a better life, plotted this plan of having her in an accident and proving her dead and transferring the money. And she had joined hands with Alex for this but never really planned of killing Juliette. She wanted Alex to plan an accident and initially they had planned the accident not to be fatal and they would just swap Juliette's body with a dead person's body but then it was a real accident and Juliette was thrown off the bridge and as Juliette acted of memory loss, Mrs. Swanson had further planned and made Alex change her identity and take her away. But it all failed when Willi had his eye set up on her and finally found her and not only that but she planned on kidnapping her own daughter again as she had spiked her food with the help of my man who was the guard and later ordered him to kill the my other loyal one. But then she killed the one who had helped him and it was all recorded in a CCTV camera which I had planted in the peephole and to which the guards were unaware off.

I had submitted that footage and her taking away Juliette in that SUV, anonymously and it was why she was arrested by the cops.

As Mrs. Swanson gave the interpretation of events, Juliette stumbled back in shock and I was immediately right behind her as I held her and Kiara succeeded in holding her hands.

"How could you do this to your daughter mom?" it was Jace who said that. We watched as our family walked in and they eyed Juliette in shockas if not believing she was alive and then looked at her mother.

"Jessica?" Mr. Stephen, Juliette dad asked as he looked at in a pained expression.

"I am sorry," Mrs. Swanson sobbed "I never planned on putting my daughter in an accident but I was forced to do that. You know our condition Stephen! We are soon going to be bankrupt but even though Juliette knew this she was adamant of giving the money to the charity and I was left with no other plan. I thought I would make her understand after I get the money transferred but then she got into that accident and lost her memory," Jessica cried and in a swift moment Stephen slapped her across her face "How could you do this to your own daughter? You call yourself a mother? You knew that she was alive and still made us all believe that she died? How could you?" Stephen ended up breaking down as he kneeled down on the ground and looked at his hand with which he had just slapped Jessica. Jace was already by his side comforting him.

"You are a murderer now, Jessica" Stephen mumbled and that made her cry loudly as she looked back at Juliette "Please, I am sorry. I was scared that my truth would be out and it was why I killed that guard of yours. But please trust me, I never wanted to hurt my baby. I was doing that for our family, for us," she tried to give a reason and all Juliette did was scoff at her "For us? You nearly killed me and even tried to destroy Zachary joining hands with Alex.How could you do to this to me mom? How could you? I can't even believe out of everyone you are the o-" Juliette turned around swiftly as she put her head on my chest and hugged me tightly breaking down in my arms.

"Please take her away, officer" it was my mom who spoke for the first time.

"No! Wait! Juliette! Stephen! Jace my baby Jace! Please don't let them take me away. I am sorry. Juliette my baby, I am so sorry. Mommy is sorry. Please!" the female officer dragged her away and as Alex was being taken he stood near to Juliette's sobbing form and whispered "Forgive me," before being dragged away by the cops. His revolver was seized and I was taken to the hospital. The situation around me was so chaotic as everyone had different expressions in there face and different emotions going on inside them.

Juliette being the one, stayed strong staying by my side until the bullet was taken out and the surgery was done. Our family had to go through so much at once, from Juliette being alive to Jessica's truth. Stephen had just lost his dear wife and he himself filed a lawsuit against her for trying to harm his daughter while Jace continued to fight all his emotions all by himself.

I knew that it would take time for the pain to heal and everyone to move on but life had to go on and it was why after a year of that incident I smiled looking at the our family photo in which all of my family members were only looking at my baby lovingly, who was in Juliette's arm. We had a daughter and we named her Veronica Sullivan. The experience was so much filled with love, anxiety, anticipation, and care and by the time Juliette gave birth to Veronica, Kiara and Kristian were set to get married.

Chapter 54

Alexandru Lascar, was sentenced twelve years in jail while Jessica was charged of murder and she was given a lifetime imprisonment. Juliette goes to meet her in the jail but hardly talks about her with me. She feels guilty that she should've thought about her parent's condition first before making a will. Meanwhile, I had finally chosen my future and decided on leaving the dark world for the sake of my family and my daughter. She made me stronger and her birth made me the happiest in the world. But somehow my roots to the dark world remained attached and I knew I could never get away from it but instead I made sure not to get myself involved in it anymore. Max got married to his girlfriend and had joined my company to work under me whereas Willi... he is nowhere to be found. He would contact me wanting to know how I was but then hang up and vanish away.

It seems he is leading the life that his wife had always wanted him live and I was happy for him.

The beeping of my phone broke me out of my state and I picked it up when I saw the caller ID displaying 'Wife'

"Ju-"

"Zac!"

"What is it? Is everything alright?" I asked as I sensed her tired voice.

"When are you returning back? You have been working for five days non stop away from home. Are you even going to return?" she asked and I chuckled at her reaction. It was true. Kristian finally gave up on me and went away on his honeymoon leaving me loads of work, that I couldn't even finish even though it was over a year now.

"I will end this up and come back tomorrow. I swear my love," I said as I looked at the files and heard a knock on my door. Cristina walked in holding a tray of food and I looked at the watch to find it was already the lunch break.

"Sir, you need to do your lunch. You've not eaten anything from yesterday," she said and I smiled at her nodding at her as I signalled her to put the tray down on my desk. She did it and gave me a small smile before leaving.

"So, I was saying...how is my daug- Hello?" I looked at my phone to find the connection disconnected. Sighing, I kept the phone down and ate my lunch peacefully before jumping back to work again.

Exactly, four in the evening when the door of my office slammed open and I looked up ready to yell thinking it was Cosmina or probably Cristina but shocked to find Juliette, dressed in a black pencil skirt and a black blazer with a white shirt underneath as she slammed the door shut and walked towards me.

"Juliette? What are you doing here?" I asked as I remained seated in my position too shocked to move.

"Come here!" she leaned down on my desk and in a swift moment pulled my tie "What are you doi-" and planted her lips onto mine. I was too shocked even to register what just happened but then felt her kissing me aggressively and no sooner felt her hands moving towards my shirt and yanking it open. Immediately, due to lack of romance since seven to eight months, I found myself turned on and I kissed back trying to open her blazer and her shirt. She was immediately on my desk right before and I couldn't even quite make it out when I had my pants down and I was making love to her on my desk with her moaning and pulling my hair.

The situation was so heated up that both of our eyes were filled with lust and I kissed her face not getting enough of her.

By the time, we were done she leaned over me and had her head on my shoulder as she took deep breaths and I found myself out of breath, shocked and finally grunted not getting enough of her. She climbed down my desk and I gave her some space as she pulled her skirt down and held her purse that she had thrown on the ground previously. Her shirt was still open and before I could reach to button it up she made her way towards the door.

"Hey! Where....Where are you going?" I asked as she looked at me buttoned up a few buttons before turning around and winked at me "Shopping," she said and opened the door. Quickly, putting up my pants and tucking my shirt in, I ran after her as I watched the brunette with brown long hair walking past Cristina but stopping right before her "Is my hair okay?" she asked and Cristina smiled at her before nodding and soon her eyes traveled down to Juliette's unbuttoned shirt.

"Oh just the buttons," Juliette laughed and hurriedly buttoned up her shirt.

"Honey it's alright! I can go back to the car by myself. Don't worry," Juliette turned around to leave but I stopped her as I held her hand and looked back at Cristina "I am off for today," I told her and she nodded watching both of us as we made towards the elevator.

"Seriously Zachary I can go back, on my own," Juliette huffed once we were inside the elevator.

"Sure, you can" I rolled my eyes as I pressed the 'G' button "Where is Veronica?" I asked and she replied "with your mom and Gale."

Even though nothing seemed to settle down with me and Gale, it seemed he was the perfect grandfather for Veronica as he loved her dearly and spent most of his time with her. I didn't seem to mind as long as he stayed away from me and my work. At first, to be honest I was cautious with Gale being around Veronica but then it seemed he saw Rose, my sister in her and it was why I didn't interfere much to Juliette's relief.

"Where are we going?" she asked as we sat down in our seats and put on our seat belts.

"To end the game that you had just begun," I winked at her making he giggle.

Through odds and evens we sailed through all problems together and held hands as we continued to watch over our daughter Veronica who seemed to grow up quickly but at the same time giving us immense happiness and power to overcome the difficulties. It was us, *the Sullivan family.*

Finally the end.

Thank you for your support.

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