

Chapter 15

Chapter 15

[Vivienne]

I'm not surprised that the woman who just slapped me turned out to be a Lawrence.

They all are such idiots.

This time it's Caden's sister.

"You fucking bitch!" Avery growls, lifting her hand to slap me again but I stop her before she can.

"Do that again and I swear you won't be able to lift your arm for a week."

Her eyes shine with hatred. "How dare you insult my mom like that? She is ten times the woman you will ever be. I mean, just look at you. Nothing but trash! I bet Caden only married you because he pitied you. You have absolutely nothing to offer to this family. You poor, pathetic thing. Always playing the victim. You really are disgusting."

I have so much to say to her, but I stop myself and walk past her instead.

She screams after me. "Don't you dare walk away from me, you bitch. I'm not done with you yet!"

"Well, I am."

Marcus opens the door once he parks it in the driveway.

However, just when I'm about to slip in, Avery comes stomping her high heels and tries to yank me back.

To my surprise, Marcus acts before I can think of anything. He grips her wrist and twists it around her back.

Avery starts crying and yelling. "Oh my god, oh my god, oh my god! Let go of me right now or I swear I will sue you for everything you own. Do you hear me? Everything!"

But Marcus doesn't let go. Instead, he turns her around so she's facing me.

"Apologize!" He demands.

"Never!" She yells back.

Marcus twists her arm further back, making her yelp in pain. "Apologize." He repeats himself.

Avery shoots daggers at me with her eyes. She's biting down hard on her lips as she tries to contain her tears. But soon enough she breaks down and cries out.

"I'm sorry!"

"Say it like you mean it."

She glares up at me again. Marcus gives her arm another twist. She grits through her teeth.

"I'm sorry!"

"For?" Marcus pushes.

Avery lets out a sob. "I'm sorry for calling you trash!"

"And?"

Her tear-streaked face turns red. "And for calling you pathetic, for slapping you too."

It's only then that he releases her and she ends up falling to her knees, and also at my feet. She looks up, her eyes teary, her face red, her jaw clenched. But I guess she has no more insults to hurl at me anymore. She just rubs her wrist while glaring daggers at me.

I scoff and shake my head. "I guess you learned something new today."

She scrambles back up to her feet. Her hands curl into fists but she doesn't dare to make any move towards me.

"You may have won this round, bitch, but don't think for one second that you're ever going to fit in this family. You'll always be nothing but a lowlife in our eyes." She spits out before running back inside.

Marcus growls and almost breaks into a run to chase her down. But I stop him.

"It's okay, Marcus," I tell him and he listens. "Enough drama for one day."

"If you say so, Ms Richardson."



Then, I get into the car and he takes me home.

By the time I reach home, Mom is waiting for me in the living room.

"Why haven't you slept yet?" I walk over to where she sits on the couch and drop myself next to her. She happily lets me put my head on her shoulder, and just like that, all the exhaustion of the day starts to crumble away from my bones.

"I tried but couldn't. I suppose I'm just too excited that you have finally come home. I wanted to see you one more time before I go to bed."

I hug her tighter, trying to hold back the tears that threaten to fall.

I don't know why I turned my back on this—on my family. I must have been crazy to leave all of this for a man who never even cared for me, never even loved me. But maybe it's not entirely his fault. It was me who always held the hope that one day he would change his mind, that he would finally see how good we were for each other, and that my love for him was pure and unconditional.

But of course, I was a fool to expect so much from him. I should have never pursued him in the first place. Because now, not only is my heart broken, but I'm broken as a person too.

"I missed you, Mom," I say and kiss her on the cheek, pulling away. "But you should sleep now. You look tired."

After Mom leaves, I head into the kitchen and find one of the maids still finishing up the cleaning.

She turns to face me, her bright blue eyes surprised to see me. "Ms. Richardson! I...I mean...do you need something? I am almost done."

"It's fine. I just wanted a cup of coffee. But that's okay, I can make it myself."

I start to walk towards the coffee machine when she literally jumps in front of me.

I frown.

"Oh, no no no no. I'll make it for you. Coffee is actually my speciality. Let me do it for you. You'll love it, I promise."

I hesitate for a moment, but her eagerness is so genuine that I can't help but smile. "Alright, thank you."

She beams and quickly gets to work, expertly preparing the coffee.

I lean against the counter, watching her with a mixture of amusement and gratitude.

"Here you go, Ms. Richardson," she says, handing me a steaming cup of coffee. "I hope you like it."

I take a sip and my eyes widen in surprise. "Wow, this is really good. Thank you...?"

"Anna," she supplies with a shy smile.

"Thank you, Anna. This is exactly what I needed."

"I'm glad you like it. If you need anything else, just let me know."



"Will do." I bring the cup with me and head straight to my bedroom.

Three years and nothing has changed here. My room looks exactly the way it did three years ago. The bedsheets and curtains are changed, but the rest of the decorations, the paint, and even the books on the shelves are exactly where and how I left them.

I pull out one of the books with the thickest spine. It's an old favorite, a collection of classic literature that always brought me comfort. The cover is slightly worn, a testament to how often I used to read it.

I put the book back on the shelf and move to the bed.

There, I find my purse and take out all the cards Caden gave me but I never really used them.

I always bought everything for myself with my own money, the money I earned from working part-time as a jewellery designer. It was one thing my brother and I had in common while growing up. We both were fascinated by precious gems and stones.

Caden knew that I tinkered around designing small charms and pendants in my free time but he never paid enough attention to realize that I made them professionally.

That gives me an idea.