

AMARIS RICCI

A Life Lived

Amaris Ricci

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Tylan was born to one of the most exotic creatures in Italy. Anella Vincenzo took your breath away and kept it until she was out of eye sight. Men fell at her feet, bought her expensive gifts, hoping to sample just a kiss. Fernando Marcello was no different, from the moment he saw her, and something in his heart shoved him into action. He never thought he would fall in love, never thought he would be the first and only man to touch her and he surely never thought he would be the only man to break her heart and leave his son.

Tylan was a mirror image of his father, the kind of man women would sell their soul just for him to say hi. He could walk up to any woman and she would do what he wanted after just a smile. He loved his parents, he longed to share the bond they had with that one special woman but she came into his life too soon and left even sooner. Tylan V followed in his father's footsteps but his life took a wrong turn and it was something he could never recover from.

Chapter ONE

"Good morning Anella would you like to have breakfast with me?"

"Mr. Marcello?" She was looking into her mirror and he was at the door way behind her.

Fernando looked around.

"Do you see anyone else here?"

Anella laughed softly. She had seen Fernando around the photoshoots often and it never occurred to her that he would find her the least bit interesting.

She was sitting in her private cubicle when she heard his voice.

"Is breakfast all you are asking for? You reputation precedes you."

"I always ask for what I want caro, it is up to the female to give it willingly. Now... breakfast?"

"Okay, give me a few minutes, I have to change."

She saw him turn and leave without a sound. She sighed and quickly changed into a yellow sun dress.

Fernando was captivated by the young model, she had this innocence about her not ever associated with that profession. He listened to the photographers, designers, the crew and everyone said the same thingshe was the sweetest thing to hit the runway. She never pretended to be who she wasn't and when she said no, it was no.

She was tall and slim, her hair looked like silky black rope and her skin was as dark as the darkest chocolate.

Anella appeared at the front desk of M-Studios and as she was about to ask if anyone had seen a sexy young gentleman wearing a white shirt, a voice whispering in her ear made her spin around.

"I want more than breakfast."

"No. You get what you asked for. Let's go."

Fernando smiled and followed Anella out of the studio.

"Is this your car?" She pointed to the blue Maserati convertible, Parked neatly in a reserved spot outside the studio.

"Yes it is."

"I'm driving, keys please."

Fernando fished out his keys and handed them to her. She unlocked and opened his door. He got in, she closed it and made her way to the driver seat.

"I wonder Anella, how is it that people fall all over you and yet you don't have a boyfriend or husband?"

"I am in love with a man who does not exist. I am not ready for relationship. I want to build my career and nothing will side track me from that. I don't want to be a notch on anyone's belt. I want the man I marry to be someone who loves me and not my money or my fame. He will understand that I have value and if he treats me with respect I will do the same for him."

"I see. You ask the impossible sweetheart, no man is able to live up to that."

"Then I guess I shall remain single for all eternity. Here we are."

"You brought me to a sandwich bar?"

"Don't knock it, get out, I have to park."

Fernando did as he was told and he watched as Anella parked his car like she was born inside it.

When she got out every single man within eyesight turned his head.

"Morning Nella!"

"Hi sweetie, have a great day!"

"Nella baby!"

"Nella Caro!"

"Darling!"

This went on for about fifteen minutes as Anella hugged and cheek kissed the people who greeted her and Fernando marveled at the way she handled the greetings. He also realised that no one was lewd or disrespectful and they also spoke to her in pure English. The women blew kisses at her, children ran to hug her. Fernando was blown away.

They walked into the bar and before they got to the counter a man in a chef hat shouted out to them.

"Nella Caro, you bring boyfriend to eat yes?"

"Adriano! Cattivo!! This is my boss Fernando Marcello, he owns M-Studios so be nice or I will get fired!"

"Ah you wound me Anella, am I not boyfriend material?" Fernando put his hand over his heart.

"I don't know you Fernando and I am not looking for a boyfriend so cut it out!"

Anella left Fernando standing with his mouth open as she went to make her order. She looked back at him.

"What would you like?"

"Surprise me."

Anella ordered Colazione breakfast, she paid for it and looked around to find Fernando talking to a nice man dressed in a pair of shorts, polo shirt and Crocs. She made her way over and when the man saw her his face lit up. Fernando stuck his hand out to her and pulled her to him.

"Anatolio this is Anella, the best model I have at M-Studios."

"Oh I know who she is, my son has all her posters in his room, my wife buys everything she wears and the endless perfumes. It is nice to meet you, the others will hate me when I tell them."

"Nice to meet you as well, would you like to join us for breakfast? There's more than enough."

"Just a few minutes, I have to go pick up my wife, she is pregnant with our third child, just at the doctor's for a checkup."

"Congratulations." Anella replied with a huge smile on her face.

The conversation went from modelling, to construction, to real estate, to golf then swimming. Half way through the food, Anatolio thanked them for the company and the food and said he would stay in touch.

"He is nice, thank you for introducing me."

"I'm sorry Anella but all I can think about is you in my bed."

"If I said yes what does it mean to you?"

"Everything. I have never been with a woman like you, you don't have any of the qualities I am usually bombarded with by most models. What gives?"

"Modelling is what I do Fernando, it is no way near who I am. I love life in its entirety, I want to be happy in whatever capacity I choose. If I gave up my work tomorrow, it would have to be a very good reason and I would know that I made my choice of my own volition."

"How old are you?"

"Twenty-Five in three months."

"I shall make a deal with you. I have stated what I want, you have three months to decide. If you say yes I will have you on your birthday, your terms not mine. I promise to give you everything you need all you have to do is ask."

"I won't be a fling Fernando, that's not what I want for my life. If you know you will cast me aside after you have gotten what you want, don't touch me."

"You drive a hard bargain woman for someone so young. Come, finish breakfast, I have something to show you."

They finished breakfast and while chatting for a bit another model walked up to the table and threw a glass of juice on Fernando.

"Thanks for nothing!"

"What in the hell is wrong with you Calandra?"

"You said I would get the Barbados contract and you gave it to someone else!"

"This is NOT the time or place to discuss business but if you insist, you were found with drugs in your car while driving drunk. How do you expect to win a contract for a Family product with that kind of behaviour?

"You promised!"

"I promised that if you were qualified I would insist that you be the spokesperson but you aren't so get over it. Now if there isn't anything else, I have to leave."

It was only when Calandra glanced down at Anella she realised who she was.

"He will get what he wants and then forget you exist." With that she stormed off.

Anella looked at Fernando and let out a laugh.

"What's so funny?"

"You've got juice all over you."

"So I do." Then he started laughing as well.

"Come on, I live nearby, I can wash that out for you."

"Honey, if I go to your apartment, we will make love, so I think I will just go home and change or go buy something new."

Anella paused. She loved his honesty and forwardness but was she willing to risk her heart for this man? Maybe but he will have to work for it.

"Okay let's go shopping for new clothes."

Five hours later Anella made her decision. They had spent the day in and out of stores buying all sort of things. Anella felt comfortable, she didn't have to worry about Fernando forcing himself on her because he said what he wanted and he was willing to wait until she was ready. All her senses were on alert. She felt every touch, no matter how soft or simple. When he complimented her she didn't feel as if he was saying it just to get her into bed.

"The contract Calandra spoke about, is it up for grabs or do you have someone already?"

"Do you want it Anella?"

"Yes, I have never been there before."

"It is yours and if you ever get it in your head that it is pre-payment, don't, I would feel disrespected of our new friendship.

"Thank you Fernando, I will do my best."

Chapter TWO

Fernando was happy with the way things were going between him and Anella. Strange enough the press did not hound them much, and he figured that Anella was the cause of this. When she saw a camera man or woman, she would wave to them and ask if they would like a photo. They always took her up on the opportunity. It didn't matter where she was people just loved her.

Her birthday was two days away and she had not said yes. Fernando decided birthday or not he would wait.

He planned a party for her at the office and then he would take her on a romantic cruise on his private yacht.

"HAPPY BIRTHDAY ANELLA"

Fernando had taken Anella touring Italy all day. He bought her gifts from everywhere and had them delivered to her apartment building. Around 5:30pm he told her he had a surprise for her and then proceeded to blind fold her in the car. He lead her upstairs and when he took the blind fold off, she was floored. Everyone was there, her parents, friends, other family members, workmates and a whole host of news crew.

They partied, cut cake, made toasts and then she said she wanted to go home and change.

Fernando sat inside her apartment on the couch waiting patiently as she got dressed. He was sorely tempted to go into her bedroom and wait until she came out of the shower but he decided he would grin and bare it. He knew he had fallen in love with her but he needed to be free of commitment. He loved not having to stay with one woman all the time as he didn't want to get bored and contrary to what he thought, with Anella....he could never get bored.

Anella came out of the bedroom wearing a white tube top knee length dress with multicoloured roses at the right side and bottom. She had her hair down around her shoulders and a small bag clutched under her arm. She slipped her feet into her shoes and held out her hand for Fernando.

"Thank you for not coming into my bedroom."

"Ah caro you read my mind, come before I change it. This is getting to be the hardest thing I have ever done."

They drove out to the Aci Castello Marina and Anella had figured she would eventually give in to Fernando. He told her he wanted to take her cruising but when they pulled up, there was a table setup for two next to a boat that said 'Happy Birthday Anella' on the side.

"We aren't going cruising anymore?"

"No, I have decided that since you did not say yes, I will push the subject no more but my offer will stay open. I want you, never doubt that but I am comfortable with the way things are. Yes I want more, I will always want more with you but somehow my yearning for you is a result of what we have now. I hope I haven't confused you."

"Oh Fernando, thank you for saying that and it really is funny because I always knew I would let you make love to me, it was just a matter of when. I am so scared of taking that step, I know you will break my heart but just to be totally loved all the way will always be cherished by me."

Fernando wanted to forget dinner after that statement but he could see she trembled as she spoke.

"Come dinner first then we will decide what we will do next."

They sat alongside the boat and talked about the Contract to Barbados and what would be expected of her in the long term.

Around 8 Fernando stood up and held out his hand to Anella. She took it and he led her to the boat.

She had heard about it from others but to see it was breathtaking.

"You like it?"

"I love it, it suits you."

Fernando let go of her hand and picked up a remote control from a table, when he pressed a button a cabinet opened and a stereo began playing some soft music.

"Dance with me my love."

Fernando and Anella danced for almost an hour. They just held each other close and swayed to the music. Then all of a sudden, they realised the music was no longer playing. Fernando pulled away to stare into Anella's eyes.

"Please don't look at me like that, I won't be able to control myself."

"I'm in love with you Fernando. Make love to me please."

Fernando lifted her into his arms and made his way to the bedroom. He put her down and slowly stripped her of all her clothing. Anella was so nervous she couldn't keep from shaking.

"Ah my love, don't be afraid, I won't hurt you, I promise." Fernando's mind was in turmoil. After this there would be no turning back and as much as he was so turned on for her, he decided he would not take her this time.

He kissed her forehead and brought her into his arms and just held her. She was so soft against him as she nestled her head on his chest. When the trembling stopped he pulled away.

"On the bed for me love." Anella walked over to the bed and lay down on it. Some of her shyness returned but being in her profession she was comfortable in her skin.

When she looked up at Fernando he was sitting on the edge of the bed still in his clothes.

"Fernando?" She whispered.

"Yes my love, just give me a minute."

Anella realised that Fernando was giving her the chance to change her mind but she was so hot, she needed to do this or she would regret it.

She moved across the bed and pressed herself against his back while running her hands down over his chest.

Fernando was fine until she touched him, he turned quickly and pulled her onto his lap and for the first time since they started dating he kissed her.

"Oh God Fernando."

"Yes Anella I feel it as well." He kissed her again and how he managed it she didn't know but he maneuvered them both onto the bed without separating from each other.

Fernando spread her legs and placed himself between them. He rubbed himself against her through his pants. The friction was enough to drive her wild.

"Oh please Fernando I need you, please."

Fernando groaned.

"Not tonight my love, I fear I am making a mistake and the last person in this world I want to hurt is you. Tonight is just for you, just let me love you."

Anella turned her face away but Fernando pulled it back.

He kissed her hard and she wrapped her legs around his back. He continued to grind himself against her slowly. He reached between them and touched her intimately. She dropped back on the bed as his fingers slowly entered her.

"Oh."

"Tell me how it feels love."

"It's torture, make it stop!"

Fernando kissed his way down her body to inhale her scent. She smelt fresh and when he tasted her she lifted her hips to meet his tongue.

Anella grabbed Fernando's head and pulled it into her. She reached her orgasm quickly and she screamed his name. She full expected him to take her even though he said he wouldn't but much to her surprise and disappointment, Fernando got up and lay down next to her.

"Fernando?" She whispered, totally out of breath.

"Go to sleep my love." He pulled her to face him and rested his arm on her hip.

Chapter THREE

Anella woke up naked to the smell of breakfast. She put her clothes on and made her way to the galley.

"Good morning my love, you slept well?"

"Yes and no."

"I understand."

"I don't Fernando, you have been telling me for months you want to make love to me and I offered myself to you and you rejected me. Why?"

"Didn't I make you feel good?"

"Is that all you wanted?"

"Anella, I told you never doubt me and yet here you are! I know you are confused but be patient, I know what I am doing. Breakfast, eat."

"God you are insufferable, you spend money on me like it's nothing, you parade me around your friends like I am some priceless piece of art and the one time I lay my heart on the table you reject me. I don't want breakfast Fernando, I want YOU! I'm leaving." She stood up quickly.

"You can't." He said softly in amusement

"Why the hell not?" Anella began to shout.

"We are 2 miles from the shore, unless you plan to swim."

"When did we move?"

"In the middle of the night, while you slept."

"You are so unfair to me Fernando, why did you bring me here?"

"I don't know Anella, I'm in love with you and I want to keep you here safe from the outside world but I can't and I am afraid if I make love to you, everything will go wrong and you will get away from me."

"Please take me back, I can't handle the hot and cold from you. Either you want me or you don't. Maybe it's time I find a boyfriend who won't refuse me. I can't sit around and wait for you to change your mind and make me feel stupid again."

Fernando got up from his seat, walked over to Anella and stood infront of her. He took her hand and placed it on his erection.

"Does this feel like I don't want you?"

"Then make me yours Fernando, please or I will never let you touch me again."

"You need to be sure."

"I am, I don't want anyone else."

"As you wish but you need to eat and take a shower, I don't want any interruptions."

"Okay."

They ate in silence, Fernando checked his cell phone for any emails pertaining to business and when Anella got up to go take her shower, he grabbed her hand while she walked past him.

"No turning back caro."

"I know."

Fifteen minutes later Anella came out of the bedroom wearing a red satin robe that came to her knees. Fernando was on the phone, speaking harshly to someone.

"Buy the damn magazine if you have to and collect every single print. I will NOT have her name tarnished by me you understand? Now do as I say, NOW!" Fernando clicked off his cell phone and threw it across the room. It shattered into pieces.

Anella scrambled back to the bedroom door.

Fernando sat down and rested his head on his arms.

"I am not angry at you love, come over here."

Anella stood where she was. Fernando looked up and saw her face. Fear was all he saw and it was directed at him.

"Anella you cannot possible believe I would ever hurt you! Come to me."

Anella shook her head and stayed where she was. Fernando let out a grunt, got up and went to her. He took her by the hand and led her to the table.

"Sit."

Anella sat down without taking her eyes from his.

"Someone saw us caro and I have to fix it before your name is all over the news."

"Saw us? Where?"

"Here, in bed. Someone sneaked up to the porthole and took photos of us. They sold them to a sleezy magazine and the prints are already in circulation. I am acquiring the magazine as we speak and recovering the copies before people hit the streets."

"Actually I don't care Fernando, I am not involved with anyone and neither are you. Wait are you?"

Fernando looked guilty.

"Oh god, this is why you wouldn't go all the way. I hate you! Take me back NOW!"

"Caro please don't, I didn't mean for things to happen this way. I am not actually seeing anyone, she was just someone I would call when I needed release and yes it sounds bad but that's the way it was."

Anelle let out a sob.

"Don't."

"Leave me alone, I trusted you, I know you would break my heart and you did and now people have photos of us. How could you?" She got up and tried to go back to the bedroom but Fernando stopped her. He held her in his arms and tried to kiss her.

"Stop it, let me go, you don't love me."

"Shhh, you know that's not true. Quit struggling!"

Anella cried her heart out for about five minutes and when she thought he would let her go, he lifted her onto the kitchen counter and just stared into her watery eyes.

"My heart is breaking, I need you so bad, please let me."

"I can't Fernando, you need what I have, not what I am."

"No, you make me happy, I have never had that with anyone, please......" He began kissing her neck, her ears, cheeks and when his lips touched hers, all the doubts, fears and issues evaporated.

Fernando quickly disrobed Anella, and stepped back to look at her. He had pulled the curtains over all the portholes before she got up.

He held her hands onto his chest and kissed her again ashe took off his shirt and dropped his pants. His body wasn't hard like an athlete's but his muscles were soft and well defined. Anella ran her hands all over him, she had seen naked models before but this was for her and only her.

Fernando began to pull his boxers off and Anella watched and his manhood came into view. He was magnificent. She reached out and touched him and he groaned.

"You like that?" She whispered.

"Yes, honey but right now I need to be inside you badly."

Anella shook her head quickly.

Fernando stepped between her legs and hooked one arm under her left knee and he lifted her right leg onto his shoulder. She rocked backwards and rested on the palms or her hands and waited.

He rubbed himself up and down on her and when she raised her eyes to meet his, he took her quickly.

"Fernando!"

He could not speak. He was breathing heavily.

"Oh, Fernando please please."

"Ah my caro, you are finally mine, I love you."

Fernando had managed to retrieve all the magazine copies and as soon as he purchased the magazine he changed the name.

She and Fernando spent the night on the boat and he took her home the following morning.

He stopped seeing Taraisa. She was pissed but she had no choice other than to accept. He spent every moment he could with Anella, he would accompany her to all her events and she would go to his but after the first two months, everything crashed.

Anella was in heaven. She knew she was pregnant and her biggest fear was how Fernando would take it. He made love to her every single night since her birthday, he taught her everything and she loved every minute of it. She visited her doctor and when he confirmed it, she felt as if she would burst with happiness.

"Fernando, can I see you later for dinner?"

"Sure honey, I will pick you up around 7."

"No, I want to stay home and cook for you."

"Okay we can do that."

Fernando arrived just as Anella was setting the table. She let him in, kissed him warmly on the lips and went back to the table.

"Let me do that for you, here put that in the fridge." He handed her a bottle and took over setting the table.

"Are you finished? I'm ready to eat."

"Sure honey."

They sat and ate and Anella served him some wine.

"Okay tell me what's up, you seem different tonight."

"I love you Fernando, I have something to tell you and all I ask is that you not get angry."

"I could never be angry with you, you mean everything to me."

"I'm pregnant."

Chapter FOUR

Anella held a press release about her pregnancy, she had given up the Barbados contract before people found out.

She stepped up to the podium and smiled sweetly. She was now about 6 months and she looked fantastic.

"Good evening everyone, now I have some rules. I will say what I have to say and there will be no questions are we clear?"

People nodded.

"I am six months pregnant, I am no longer be working for M-Studios as their head model. I made a conscious decision to keep my baby because he or she was created out of love between two consenting adults and I have no regrets at all. The father of my baby knows who he is andthat will not be public knowledge until he decides otherwise. I know you will want photos and I have no problem with that but please refrain from bombarding me. When our baby is born I will arrange to have a photo session. That's all." She turned away from the microphone

"Anella! Is it true that Fernando Marcello the father of your baby?"

Anella stopped and turned to the person who asked the question.

"Would my answer win you anything?"

"No but....."

"Exactly. I just asked you all nicely not to ask any questions, I've shown my belly, told you about my decision and yet you feel the need to dig further into my personal life. What kind of person are you?" She felt the tears sting her eyes.

Her best friend Satina took her by the arm and lead her away. When she reached her apartment she burst into tears.

"Aw come on sweetie, you made it this far don't give up now."

"He told me he loved me but yet he left me when I needed him the most. How could he. The night I told him, he made love to me for hours, when I woke up he was gone. He sends money every month, he bought this building so I wouldn't

have to pay rent. He gave me the magazine and all the baby items I need arrived last week."

"I can afford to get these things myself, I want him to love me like I love him and be a part of our child's life, why doesn't he understand that? No amount of money can make up for him abandoning me and our baby."

Every month a suspicious amount of \$25,000 would appear in her bank account with no trace as to where it came from but she knew it was Fernando. She was hurt that he would rather give her money that give her his love but she was happy she had his child and she looked forward to every day she was pregnant.

Anella decided she would not give up hope that Fernando would come to his senses. She prepared for the birth of her baby and she was as happy as ever. She took belly pictures and when the day came she paid a videographer who specialized in deliveries to record it for her.

Tylan Samir Vincenzo was born on a warm Monday morning, Anella had rented an apartment closer to the hospital in the last few weeks of her pregnancy. The birth was relatively problem free and she felt an aching in her heart because Fernando was not there to share it with her but when she heard the cry of her baby, nothing else in this world mattered but him.

She got her friend to pack the few things she had at the apartment and took her son home.

"Oh my gosh Nella he is so sweet, he is going to break quite a few hearts when he gets older."

"Walking in his father's shoes I guess. Well I can only teach him what I know and hope that I do not fail him. I think I want to do a photoshoot with him in a few weeks but I want him all to myself for now."

"Are you going to tell Fernando he has a son?"

"I left a message on his cell phone when I went into labour but he hasn't called and I don't expect him to. He will see him after the photoshoot because I intend to invite every single TV station, newspaper and magazine to see my son. Thanks for being there for me Satina."

Anella hugged her best friend and said goodbye.

When Tylan was about three weeks old, Anella invited everyone to the lobby in her building for the photoshoot. This way she wouldn't have to be dodging people and fearing for the safety of herself and her son.

Everyone showed up and asked questions about her career and the health of her baby. They all took photographs in several different outfits and after two hours she had enough. Tylan however, slept through it all.

On the other side of a television in his apartment was Fernando. The TV stations had released the photos of Tylan and his mother and the public could not get enough and just as he thought, they were spectacular. His heart burst when the camera zoomed in on his son and he broke down in tears. He couldn't face Anella because he was a failure, he was not ready to be a father. He was one of the richest men in Italy but he totally abandoned a woman who gave him nothing but love. He was 35 when he met her and he felt like he had aged 35 more years since she told him she was pregnant.

He went to a product launch and got blind drunk, and old friend of his took him to her place and decided she would get what she always wanted.

"Oh Fernando my love all these years I have yearned for your touch and the only time I can get it is when you are drunk, well I guess it's better than nothing."

When Fernando woke up, he was in a strange bed still in his clothes and sporting a headache from hell. He made his way out of the bedroom and followed the voices he was hearing.

Marianna and her fiancée turned towards the sound of the angry voice.

[&]quot;Fernando slept here, he was drunk and......"

[&]quot;You always wanted him and I am sure you took advantage, well that's it, no more of this. I will not be your second option. Goodbye Marianna."

[&]quot;What the hell is going on?"

"Good morning Fernando. I'm sorry, you got really drunk last night and I couldn't let you drive home so a few of your friends I brought you here. We couldn't even find your keys. Torio is angry."

"My keys are in my pocket and my staff are always at my house, you could have taken me home. What did we do?"

"Nothing! I put you in my bed and I slept on the couch."

"Somehow I don't believe you and Torio has every right to be angry. Why didn't you call him?"

"I cannot believe you two. I tried to help out a friend and this is the thanks I get, well both of you can go to hell and stay there!" Marianna walked away from the two men and slammed her bedroom door. She had to make a hasty exit before she betrayed herself. She knew it was wrong but she had to have Fernando at least once even if he didn't remember.

Chapter FIVE

When Tylan was two years old Anella was sitting at the breakfast table feeding him and the doorbell rang.

She strapped her son into his feeding chair and went to the door. If she knew he heart would free fall into her stomach and lodge itself there, she would have never opened the door.

Standing there was Fernando. He looked tired and not his usual sexy self.

Anella stepped back from the door and waited for him to pass. Fernando stepped in and turned to face her. When he opened his mouth to speak she stopped him.

"Follow me."

When Fernando cane face to face with his son, he felt a rush of emotions. Guilt, desperation, love, happiness, fear. What made him sit down was when his son looked up at him, cocked his head to one side and said,

"Papa!"

"What did he just call me?"

"Oh Fernando, did you think I would not tell our son who his father was? I have been showing him your photos the first time he opened his eyes. How you must have hated me."

"Hate you Anella? I am the one who failed you. I ran because I didn't want to let you down but I did anyway and I was scared I would not make a good father because of the life I lived. I have every video, every message and every photograph you sent via email and post. I didn't know what I did to deserve you but the efforts you put into lettingme know I had responsibilities told me you never gave up.

"You gave me my son Fernando, a child that I love with all my heart. I have loved you from the morning we had breakfast. I didn't have the heart to give up. I knew someday you would come back to me so we could be a proper family. Please tell me you want to be a part of our son's life, I can handle you not wanting me but don't stay away from him. I don't want that for him or you."

"Before I answer that I need to tell you something before you find out from someone else. I have another son, he is just a twomonths old. I got drunk one night and a friend took me home. She told me I said your name over and over but she took advantage of the situation as I never talked about her like I did you. When she told me she was pregnant and what she did, I was so angry. She doesn't want anything to do with the baby so I brought him home and I knew what I had to do. I had to try to make up for all the wrong things I did to you and try to beg for your forgiveness.

"I don't want anyone else Fernando, only you but you can't up and leave when you feel the pressure is too much, I won't have the boys' lives disrupted."

"Boys?"

"Do you think I would let you abandon your son to be raised by a nanny? How he got here doesn't matter and Tylan will have a brother to grow with. No, we will buy a house, get married and raise our two children together."

"I promise on my life Anella, I will never hurt you again and I will love you until the day I die."

"I will hold you to that. Now let's go house hunting."

Fernando decided he had to make up for abandoning the only woman he loved. He held a press conference because people were beginning to talk again when they saw them together with two children. Anella wanted to stay out of the spotlight but Fernando insisted.

"Anella, I know I have not given you much reason to trust me but let us do this as a family. I promise you it will turn out okay."

On the day of the press conference, every single reporter was seated in the grand foyer of M-Studios. When Fernando, Anella and the children appeared the cameras started flashing. Anella shielded Cenzino but Tylan giggled and waved to the crowd. He was a natural.

Fernando had Tylan in his arms and when he stepped up to the microphone Tylan grabbed it and said "Buongiorno!" The cameras flashed and people laughed.

"Well I guess he said it all.Now before you start to ask questions I will squash many of the rumours surrounding me. I would first like to introduce you to Anella Vincenzo, the love of my life and mother of my two boys. Tylan here is two years old as you already know and Cenzino is just a few months old but Anella is not his biological mother. He is the result of my carelessness and this beautiful woman has taken it upon herself to make sure he is raised in a good family home. I have never loved a woman more than I love her and in time I hope all the hurt I have caused her will fade and I will do my best to make her happy every single day that we are together. Anella will you marry me?"

Fernando nudged Tylan and he fidgeted in his pocket for something. When Tylan pulled it out......... Anella squealed.

"Yes!"They all hugged as the cameras flashed incesssantly.

"We will answer a few questions then we have a wedding to plan."

"Anella, why didn't you tell people who Tylan's father was?"

"Honestly I wanted to but I realised that if he wasn't ready to be a father, shaming him would only make it worse. Being rich and famous is one thing but being a

father is something a man needs to feel deep down in his bones and I knew that someday he would come home and share the joy that I have found in our son."

"Does it bother you that he abandoned you and had a child with another woman who you now have to raise as yours?"

"It bothers me that you asked that question but I will say this. None of us are perfect, we are all prone to make mistakes and Fernando was honest with me from the day he came back. I do not have to raise Cenzino, I choose to. If I want to be a good mother and set an example for Tylan, I could not leave his brother out in the cold while the rest of us lived our lives, he is Fernando's so he is also mine and if his mother decided she wants to see him that is up to her."

"Now that you are getting married, how will that affect your reputation as a sex God?"

"It won't because now I have my sex Goddess, I mean look at her, why would I want anyone else?"

"Will Tylan be modelling any baby lines anytime soon?"

"I thought about it but his father and I will decide how that goes, I want our boys to be have a childhood before they become famous."

"Okay enough questions for now, I will take my family home."

They all made their way to the car, strapped the boys in and left.

Anella and Fernando got married on Tylan's 3rd birthday. Between the two of them they didnt have many relatives but they invited all their close friends, and the staff of M-Studios.

On the night of their honey moon, they had hired a personal nanny to travel with them and they were staying at the Belmond Villa Sant'Andrea. Anella put the children to bed as she always did and made her way to her husband.

"Honey, are you happy? I know we aren't the typical family and we are spending our honeymoon with our children, I will understand if you have doubts."

"Nothing about us is typical my love and no matter what we went through, we have each other and two wonderful children, I cannot ask for anything better but more children of yours to love."

"Oh that I can do, thank you for not giving up on us, you have no idea how much that means to me."

A year and six months after they got married, Anabella Marcello was born. Unfortunately Anella had complications and she could no longer have children. She feared her husband would want more and find someone else.

"I feel so miserable Fernando, I feel ike I have failed you as a wife." Fernando got up and made his way over to her. When he hugged her she burst into tears.

"Ah caro come on now, there is no need for this. What can I do to make you understand that I am never leaving you unless I die. You make me happier each day I get to look into the eyes of my family and know that we did good. Please please, don't let your fears destroy us now."

"I'm sorry I just..... oh Fernando make love to me please."

Pain and doubts forgotten Fernando made love to his wife and when they were finished she cried again and again. He didnt know what to do other than hold on to her as tight as he could.

[&]quot;Anella honey, what's wrong?"

[&]quot;The doctor says I can't have any more children."

[&]quot;I know my love I was there when he said it."

[&]quot;He said I, he didn't say you."

[&]quot;What are you telling me Anella?"

[&]quot;What's going to happen when you decide you want another baby?"

[&]quot;I see and you think that I will just go and have one?"

[&]quot;I don't know!"

[&]quot;This coming from the woman who waited for me to come back to her, is raising a son who she didn't give birth to and gave me another beautiful baby. Have you lost faith in us?"

Chapter SIX

Tylan was becoming quite the popular child. Anella stayed at home to raise the children while Fernando continued to build up their empire. She insited they attend public school and she did not spend lavishly on them. They had to learn respect for themselves and others. She prepared all their meals and snacks were only allowed on Saturdays and in small amounts. While the children were at school one day, she decided she wanted to go back to work. She picked up the house phone and called her husband.

Fernando was no stranger to women throwing themselves at him and his lovely understanding wife, took it in stride, she was confident that her husband would never hurt her intentionally and these women could never replace her but even the most self-assured woman will have feelings of doubt at some point and this day showed her how vulnerable she really was at times.

Anella wanted to see M-Studios and discuss the changes she would like to make with her husband. She bought lunch from his favourite Bistro and entered the foyer of the building. She knew there was a photoshoot that day and she knew how busy he would be but he took the time out to see her for lunch.

She said hello to a few familiar faces as they rushed around getting things for the models and photographers and assistants.

[&]quot;Hello my love, are you missing me?"

[&]quot;I am always missing you but this is a business call."

[&]quot;Ah my lovely wife wants to work again. Tell me how can I help."

[&]quot;That's it, I don't know. I'm too old to get back into modelling and I need something that will allow me to be here when the children come in from school."

[&]quot;Your son is one of the most sought after child models, use him."

[&]quot;A children's magazine?"

[&]quot;Yes, that way you control all the rights to his photos and you control the content of each issue without fear. You have M-Studios at your disposal. Actually, I think I will hand that over to you and get into something else. Probably the restaurant business."

[&]quot;Oh that is a lovely idea. I will get started right away. Are you free for lunch?"

[&]quot;For you my love anything. See you around 1?"

[&]quot;Definitely."

She knew what this was like having been their top model once. She felt a tug at her memories but knew she made the right choice to raise her family with Fernando.

She spotted him talking to a beautiful woman dressed in an expensive looking suit and she took a seat and waited. A few minutes later Fernando took the elbow of the model who was dressed in a robe and they left the set together.

Anella realised he had not seen her. She had to decide whether she would follow him or wait in case it was just business.

Ten minutes later her curiosity got the best of her. She got up and made her way over to his office, figuring that's the most private room in the entire building. When she got there, she heard voices and stood by the door.

"Fernando why won't you leave her? You know we had something wonderful, she is a washed up model with three children, how could you possibly choose her over me?"

"I am sorry you feel we had something special but that was not my intention to mislead you."

Anella cringed that he didn't defend her to the insults.

"Please Fernando, we were good in bed, tell me you don't long for the nights you spent in my arms." Anella stepped forward a bit when things went silent and much to her dismay, the woman had taken it upon herself to rub her hand on the front of Fernando's pants. She saw him take the woman's hand and remove it.

Anella placed the food on the table outside and started to walk away. Then she stopped and decided that she was a mother of three and she should never assume her husband would be faithful just because she wanted him to be. She also never assumed that he would always be strong enough to resist every woman.

When she pushed the door, Fernando let go of the woman and stepped back. His face registered no guilt or any emotion of any kind. He looked Anella straight in her eyes.

"I think you better leave Taraisa, my wife is here for our lunch date and from the look on her face, she isn't pleased."

"Tell me you don't want me Fernando and I will leave you alone for good."

"I don't want you." His eyes still fixed on his wife.

"I hate you!" Taraisa stormed past Anella and slammed the door.

Anella turned to leave.

"Are you mad at me?" Fernando whispered but it was loud enough for her to hear. Anella continued walking. She opened the door, went to the table and took up their lunch. When Fernando saw her come back, He walked up to her, took the lunch, put it on his desk, locked the office door and bent her over a chair.

As he ran his hands up the full length of her legs, Anella moaned softly.

"Women don't understand me, only you Anella only you, never forget that."

"You let her touch you." She whispered breathlessly.

"I'm sorry my love, I should have never let it go that far. Forgive me?"He softly caress the hotness between her legs.

"No." She whispered and she pushed herself against his hand.

"Yes." He pushed away the fabric of her panties and slid his fingers into her.

"Yes, take me now please."

"As you desire."

Fernando already had his pants undone and around his feet but she would never have known. When he slid into her, she almost crumbled to the floor.

"I do not want any other woman but you." He said as they lay on the couch in his private sitting room. As Taraisatouched him he felt nothing but as soon as his wife walked into the room, he knew he had to get rid of her instantly. Somewhere inbetween taking their clothes off, lunch and round two, Fernando buzzed his PA and told her he did not want to be interrupted.

"I know, Fernando. I guess I doubt myself sometimes. I believe in my heart you won't hurt me but as I grow older, I have to compete with these women."

"That's the thing, there is no competing against you. Now, let me love you again so we can go get our children from school."

In the privacy of their home, Anella does several photoshoots with Tylan. She sent invitations to the top designers of children's clothing and they all agreed to contract him until he turned 18. Tylan was only 4 when he began modelling and he loved it. Anella kept a tight reign on the amount of work he did. One shoot per week and only on a Saturday. She had to approve any photos before they were

published. She spent every day with her husband and her children because nothing in the world meant more to her than her family.

After Fernando signed over M-Studios to Anella, her attitude towards life changed somewhat. She now hadanother business to run and the only person she had to answer to was well, herself. She knew Fernando must have had complete confidence in her because M-Studios and M-Mag were worth millions. Not only did Fernando make some lucrative investments but he hired only the best, the staff were his greatest assets and they were now hers.

She used to sit on board meetings often and Fernando would always treat her as a board member first then his wife, she used to feel awkward and embarassed by it but after a while she understood. Now she would be running the meetings and he sat in her place. Ever so often he would wink at her or send her a sexy message, just as she used to do and it gave her the courage she needed.

Chapter SEVEN

Tylan wanted to sit on the board, he already has 15% shares and he wanted to make a difference. He was astute like his father and when he set his mind on something, nothing could stop him.

His first chance to sit in on a meeting was when he was 17. M-Studios was presenting a proposal to contract for an entire line of clothing for a young photographer who had just won the state Lottery in the US and had \$280 million dollars at his disposal. The contract was worth 3.5 million and it would span over 2 years. He had over a thousand designs and he wanted them all produced.

"Good morning ladies and gentleman, as you know we are presenting this morning to Brad Delacey. You have copies of all his designs and we will begin in about fifteen minutes. Mr. Delacey is there anything you want to tell the board before we begin?"

"Hurry up I don't have all day."

"Sir, I would appreciate it if you do not speak to Mrs. Marcello like that, she has been accommodating you for two weeks now."

"What? How dare you? If this is how you allow people who are paying you to do a job to be treated, well then my money is too good for you." Brad pushed back his chair and stood up to leave.

"I wonder Mr. Delacey, how do you expect to make money with other people's designs and get away with it?"

"These designs are MINE!"

"Try again, I have been going over these designs for a week and I couldn't figure it out. Now I know.I suggest you say nothing else and leave before I call the authorities."

The rest of the board was in shock but Anella just sat in her chair and watched her son work. She knew he would never accuse Delacey if he didn't have proof. Much to their dismay, Delacey puffed up his chest and walked out the door.

The rest of the board started to argue and one or two of them glared at Tylan asking how he could be so preposterous. Then they turned on Anella who said nothing but continued to look at her son in awe.

"Be quiet all of you."

All this time Fernando was as quiet as a mouse. He wanted to see how his wife and son would handle this situation and he was not disappointed.

"Remember a few years back we hired a photographer from the US to do a shoot when we went on vacation? Well the contact he signed was valid only in Paris, that was our mistake. He took the photographs and had someone re-draw them. Those are our designs, it took me a while because he changed a few things but those are ours.

Anella smiled and punched a button on the telephone next to her.

"Kaisia send Brad in here please."

"Why is he still here mama, he is bad news!"

"Be quiet."

Brad came into the room smiling.

"Thank you Brad."

"Anella my sweet, I am so glad I could be of service, we will talk soon and yes I totally agree with you. My plane leaves in the morning, we should have dinner tonight to celebrate." He blew a kiss at her, nodded to everyone else and left. Fernando burst out into laughter.

"Mama?"

"I know who Brad is and the designs are definitely ours, I drew them myself. I just wondered how long it would take you to figure it out and you did just in time."

"You were testing me?"

"Very much so, how can I expect you to take over from me if you are incapable of recognising your own designs. Now, meeting is over, I am going home to be with my family and thanks everyone for going along with this."

The other members said their your welcomes and exited the room.

"Do you have any idea how much I love the both of you? I am so proud to have you in my life. Tylan my boy I can see great things in your future. Come, your mother has promised to pay for dinner."

"Brad is taking us to dinner, he really did win the state lottery and he really does want to contract us to produce his designs but not for 3.5, 10 and 5 years not 2. He is giving us the full go ahead and he has requested that Tylan be the model for all his designs since the line is for males only and he is not much older than him."

"Mama that is wonderful, thank you for trusting me." He hugged his mother tightly.

They went home to get changed and meet Brad for dinner. Anabella was always ther quiet one but when she saw Brad, her father remembered why he kept a gun in the house, car and office.

They met with Brad for dinner and discussed what their plans were for the line and within six months they were up and running.

The line was an immediate hit. They held shows all across the country and sales crept up into the millions within months. The thing is that Tylan was the perfect male model. His manerisms, his walk, the way he addressed public conferences.

Annabella wanted to get into the family business so she started Finesse Couture with her father and she and Tylan worked well together.

Every aspect of their lives had fallen into place, the children were happy in their chosen careers and their parents lead by good example. There were few mishaps here and there but nothing major.

This situation would not last.

Chapter EIGHT

Anella felt sick right after Fernando's birthday celebration party. They had decided to keep it private but turning 50 was a huge point in his life and they felt it would be best if they shared it with everyone.

Fernando rented Castello Odescalchi for the evening and invited all their friends and a few media houses for exclusives.

Throughout the evening, she and Fernando drank wine, ate good food and enjoyed their night with the ones who mattered most to them.

When they were returning home Anella felt a sharp pain in her stomach.

"Fernando!"

"Sweetheart, what is it?"

"My stomach it hurts, oh it hurts."

Fernando punched a button and spoke to his driver.

"Frederique, to the hospital quickly!"

"Mr. and Mrs. Marcello, I have been studying your notes for ten minutes and it is my belief that against so many odds, you are pregnant."

"WHAT?" Both of them exclaimed.

"The doctor told me I shouldn't get pregnant again so he burned my tube ends. How is this possible?"

"The body is a mysterious machine but you are definitely pregnant, about 3 months to be exact."

"Fernando?"

"Ah my love, this is a good thing, let's not worry about why and how. I am happy, are you?"

"I will always be happy to have your baby you know this but I'm almost 45."

"Well you seem to be in good health but we will consider you to be high risk and treat the pregnancy as such so, no stress, no drugs, alcohol, and no travelling either. Come back to see me in a week if you feel any pain or notice any spotting."

"Thank you doctor."

"What are we going to tell the children?"

"That they will have another brother or sister, Anabella my love, don't worry, this will affect the baby. Come let me take you home and pamper you."

The children were surprised but happy for their parents, they told everyone they were going to have another addition to the family.

In the months following, Anella gave complete control of M-Studios to Tylan. She was confident he could run it with his eyes closed. She spent her days in the garden, going to lunch with her husband and chatting with her daughter over the phone about small issues.

As she neared 9 months Anella started to feel sick every day. She had enjoyed little morning sickness, she had a healthy appetitecarried the baby full term but during the delivery, both she and the baby developed complications and Fernando had to choose.

"Doctor, I know you cannot garauntee me the life of either one of them but I choose my wife, I know she will hate me for this but I cannot live without her."

Fernando signed the papers and prepared for the worst. Fernando had paid for a private ward and he was glad that he did.

The operation lasted 3 hours. Fernando named the baby girl after her. There was no funeral, fernando had his daughter cremated and her ashes were placed on the mantel intheir living room.

When she woke up and didn't see the baby, she screamed. She knew her baby was gone.

"Fernando what did you do?"

"I couldn't let you go." He whispered softly.

"You have had me for years why couldn't you let her live. I HATE YOU! Go away!"

The doctor had to sedate her quickly and within minutes she was sleeping soundly.

The day Anella was ready to leave the hospital was a dreary and dismal one. Fernando had locked the new nursery and when his wife came home that's the first place she went.

"Open this door now."
Her husband did as she wanted.

He tried talking to her but she refused to acknowledge him.

Anella went into depression, Fernando stopped working and the children were not coping. Tylan had already moved out but in wanting to be there for his family he would come over every day, Anabella was overseas and she flew home a few days after her father called. Cenzino was becoming more and more distant and eventually he left to start his own business away from the family. He loved Anella for taking him in but he always felt like an outsider and he was glad that she understood this.

As the weeks passed Anella started to come around, she was sleeping in the nursery away from her husband. She would come down to breakfast, lunch and dinner and go back to the nursery each time. Her husband continued to talk to her, show his love and be as understanding as he could be.

One morning he was sitting at the brrakfast table and she came down. Everyone had gone back to their busy lives and it was just the two of them. What Anella saw broke her heart all over again. The man she fell in love with, had three children for was crying his eyes out.

Anella stood in the doorway beind him not knowing what to do. Then she heard him.

"I don't know if there is a God but if there is, I beg of you this one thing, heal my wife, there is nothing more in this world that I need more than this.I love her with everything that I am and if I could take the place of my baby girl just to make her happy I would. I hope that someday she will forgive me."

It was then Anella realised how selfish she had been, she was so wrapped up in her depression and loss that she ignored how Fernando must have felt knowing he was the one who made the choice..... he chose her. He chose to risk her anger and rejection knowing what the baby meant to both of them..... he chose her.

"Fernando."

He spun in his chair to face her.

"I...."

"Let me, please. I love you and I'm sorry for saying those nasty words to you at the hospital, I'm sorry for ignoring you and making you suffer all these weeks. I do not need to forgive you for chosing me. I understand why you did it and she was your baby too. I want us to get on with our lives, I don't want to be sad anymore, I want to see my children and be thankful that I still have them.I want to make love to you like we used to and truth be told if I got pregnant again, I would do it all over again because the love you have shown me has reinforced what I knew all along....... I always have you no matter what life throws my way."

Fernando got up and then he hesitated. She opened her arms and he rushed over to her.

Fernando decided to take Anella on vacation and during that time, they met two wonderful children, adopted them and brought them home.

Chapter NINE

When Tylan turned 18 he decided he wanted to branch out on his own but his mother decided after speaking with Fernando that M-studios would belong solely to Tylan. He was quite capable of running it but they made him a CEO and Anella maintained the controlling shares.

He was already meeting the agencies throughout Italy and they just loved to work with him. He moved out of his parents' home when he turned 21 and bought his first home.

Tylan was sexy, intelligent as hell and a natural hit with the ladies. He was very picky about the women he took to bed and at 21 he wasn't ready to settle down. He wanted to fully take over M-Studios so he called a meeting with his parents.

"Thank you for coming, I will get straight to the point. I want to fully take over M-Studios. I won't change the name but I will buy out both you and father."

"Okay you could have told us this over the phone son." His father said.

"I have always respected both of you I just thought that this was business and we should treat it as such."

"You are our son, you could never be business. The company is yours,let your sister and brother keep their shares, that way no one can take the company from you without theirs. Give the twin shares as well."

"Yes mama I know, I have already spoken to my siblings and they are behind me in this, I just needed your full approval."

"You have it. Now come buy your old folks some lunch."

In the next few months Tylan took M-Studios to a new level. He changed up a few things to suit his preferences but he realised his parents made sound business decisions and he did not want to divert too far from them.

He created several lines and of course his own personal line... The V. When he got bored he would seek out new designers and that is when he heard about Genai Watson.

He was looking over some of the previous designs at M-Studios and he called his head designer and asked about her.

"Demarco, who is this new designer?"

"She isn't really new by any chance but she is talented. Started when she was 18. She seems to grab you with new ideas while keeping with trends. She worked for your father at M-Studios, then she worked for him and your sister at Finesse Couture and now she owns G-Designs. You wish to hire her?"

"Yes, where is she located?"

Demarco handed him a business card.

"Great, I shall go there now."

"Let me warn you, she is beautiful, her book smarts are exceptional but her street smarts will knock you on your ass if you cross her. I don't know of any man who has not fallen for her natural charms and come out on top. She is engrossed in her work and her staff love her."

"I see, well she hasn't met me yet."

"You poor thing, don't say I didn't warn you."

Genai was working on her next set of designs when the girls in the outer room seemed not to be working.

She got up to see what the fuss was about. There he was in the flesh. Tylan Vincenzo, Italy's heart throb. She had always loved his work and the way he ran his business. His staff respected him to the maximum and anyone he worked with was treated as such.

He nodded to the staff as he walked towards her and when he got close enough her heart stopped. It was one thing to see him as he came out on a runway after a show, or at a press conference but to be less than 3 feet away, Genai was floored.

He called her by name and said it was finally nice to meet her. She did her best to sound professional and told him she would be free in about ten minutes and he could wait in her office.

She went back to the production room with her heart pounding in her ears. She finished up with the staff and told them what needed to be done. Taking a deep breath she pushed the door of her office.

He was standing at the window, hands in pockets, jeans molding to his ass cheeks perfectly.

"So, what does the great Tylan V want with a small time designer like me?"

"Time for a change, these older designers bore me to tears, I need something new, tasty, something I can put in my mouth and swallow with delight."

Genai knew he was flirting with her. This would not do.

"How many designs would you like, when would you like to launch, what look are you going for and what's your budget?" She tried to calm her breathing down and she felt her panties get wet.

"Fifty, in three months on my birthday, casual but stylish and whatever you ask I am willing to pay."

Tylan gave her the details on what he wanted and expected and she quoted her fees.

"Now with business complete, I want to make love to you."

"Why?"

"Why not, we are two young people full of life, why not share each other bodies just for the sake of sharing."

"Nice answer, I will think about it."

"Don't think, people think too much, live a little. This way we have no expectations from each other and we know what we are doing with no lies or empty promises in between."

"I'm still a virgin."

"At your age?"

"I wanted to wait for a husband."

"I understand and I applaud you for staying so pure especially in this business. I shall not bother you again on that subject. I will bring the contract in a few days. Get it back to me soon."

"You are still giving me the work?"

"Yes, one has nothing to do with the other. You are great at what you do. Now I have to go seduce some young pliable girl who won't say no to me."

"I didn't say no."

"Yes you did, you just didn't realise it." He kissed her on her forehead and left.

Tylan met his father for lunch and he could not stop talking about Genai.

"Papa, she is such a beautiful girl, she isn't like the other stuffy goats I have to put up with. She let's me be myself and she is herself as well. Her designs are futuristic but anyone can wear them. I love the way she laughs, she buys me dinner or lunch or sometimes she would show up at 6 in the morning with breakfast."

Fernando looked at his son and wondered if he should spill the beans. He had always hoped Tylan would find a woman like his wife and for him to find Genai made him happy. He also knew that Tylan was not ready to settle down and he prayed that Genai would not be hurt.

"Son, I understand your excitement but if she is so precious to you, you must not hurt her like I did your mother. Many days I wished I would go back and start again but everything has its place in our lives."

"I understand papa, I understand."

Over the next few months, Genai and Tylan worked closely, she told Fernando about him and his expression changed for a bit and he tried to hide it but she saw.

"Something wrong Fernando?"

"I just want you to be careful Genai, you have come this far, don't let some pretty face change your life."

"Thank you Fernando, I already told him no but it's hard to work with someone like that and not have feelings, I had to do it with you."

"I know sweetheart, just mind what I said."

Genai knew she wanted Tylan, she knew of his reputation but it didn't matter. She called him on his office phone and his voice alone cemented her decision.

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"Hello bella, is everything okay?"
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The line went dead. She put her things in her bag and waited.

About fifteen minutes later Tylan burst through the door and just stood there.

"Let's go bella."

She got up and left the building.

Tylan could see Genai was nervous and frankly he was too but he could never let her see that. As they sat in her car he told her where he stood relationship wise and she accept that he was not ready to settle down. She loved his honesty and that propelled her into saying yes.

She nodded in the affirmative and he took her inside. What Tylan was not telling her was that he was already in love with her but the thought of committing himself was beyond his thinking. He saw the kind of love his parents had and he never thought he would never find that connection with anyone and here she was, taking over his heart with little effort.

She cried in his arms and he stayed the entire night and just held her. He taught her everything he knew and she in turn gave him the love he did not ask for.

Over the next few months, they did everything together, they were seen at the launch of his line, at dinner, even the movies. Tylan was going places he never took another woman and she allowed him to be himself at all times. Never having to live up to the image Italy had painted of him. They would be having lunch at M-Studios or G-Designs and he would throw food at her or spill drink on her clothes so she would have to change and while she was changing he would lock the door and take her on her or his desk.

He loved her too, he knew that but still, to be with one woman he thought he could never be happy. He knew someday he would break her heart but he didn't know how soon his thoughts would come to life.

[&]quot;I want you to make love to me."

[&]quot;Where are you?"

[&]quot;At the office...."

Chapter TEN

Genai was so caught up in the fun she was having she didn't realise she missed two periods. Two. She was at work one morning before anyone got in and as she took a sip of coffee, she had to run to the bathroom.

She mentally calculated the time she and Tylan had been intimate and she knew.

When the doctor told her she was about eight weeks she almost passed out. So many thoughts came to her, what would she do? She knew she would never terminate but her fear was that Tylan would hate her.

Pregnant. She cried for hours after she got home. The next morning while sitting at her desk, she knew what she had to do. Then as if everything seemed clear, she picked up her cell phone and dialed Tylan's number.

"Tylan I need to see you."

"I am in your building, be there in a few."

When Tylan saw her he felt something deep inside him needing to wash all her worries away.

"What's wrong? Tell me and Tylan will fix it."

"I'm pregnant." She closed her eyes and waited for the anger.

"How far?"

"Eight weeks."

"We have been making love unprotected for three months, it's no surprise. What will you do?"

"I want to keep the baby. I don't need anything from you, I just wanted you to know. I will be closing up shop after I find work for my staff. I need my parents to help me through this."

"I wish I was a better man for you Genai, you would make a wonderful wife and you will be a great mother too."

"You aren't angry at me?"

- "This might sound selfish but I have never loved a woman like I love you. I have also never been with a woman unprotected before. You are the only one I have been seeing since we started. How ironic is that?"
- "I see, but the thought of a baby scares you."
- "I would not make a good father bella we both know this but you will be strong for both of us."
- "At least you are honest as you have always been."
- "I know you said you didn't need anything from me but I can't let you leave without giving you a little something."
- "Alright."

Chapter ELEVEN

Tylan felt his heart turn to stone. He knew what Genai was giving up to have his baby but he could not see himself as a father. He hated himself for what he did to her. Funny, his father did the same thing to his mother, hence the reason his last name was not Marcello. His fear of being a parent was bigger than his fear of committing himself with the one woman he knew he would ever love. He decided he would never allow this to happen again.

- "You broke her heart didn't you." Fernando mused as his son sat at their breakfast table with his head in his hands.
- "Whose heart did he break?" Anella asked as she made breakfast for her family.
- "Yes Ty, who did you leave in tears this time?" Anabella asked as if this were a normal occurrence and it was. Once a month Anella insisted everyone be there for breakfast. Cenzino always refused and always sent his love but for some reason he showed up and his family welcomed him with open arms..
- "Ooooh big brother, you just have them falling at your feet don't you?" Marianna said. She and her twin brother were the newest additions to the Marcello household.

"Again? Yes big brother tell us whose heart you broke this time, I have a bet on you so make me some more money!"

Tylan looked at his father with sad eyes and shook his head.

"Wow this must be serious, usually you brush it off and go on to the next conquest. She must be special."

"Yes big brother, so I can know what never to do." Cenzino grinned. Anella playfully slapped him on his arm.

"Genai." Tylan said as if he couldn't believe it himself.

"WHAT?" Anabella, Anella, Marianna, Marco and Cenzino all shouted at once. Fernando just shook his head.

"Genai is the best thing to happen to you and you broke her heart, that woman defies all the laws of what society thinks a woman should be and you just" Anella left and went back to the stove, spouting French, Italian and German.

"Honey, there is something he isn't telling us, he's way too quiet." Fernando said knowing his son.

"Please tell me you didn't get her pregnant and just drop her." Marianna said.

Tylan was silent.

"Oh God, how could you?" Anabella screamed at her big brother.

"I didn't mean to, I'm not ready to be a father. She said she will keep the baby and move back home with her parents in Barbados."

"Man, you are some role model, I hope I grow up not to be like you." Marco chipped in.

"Wow, Ty, I have seen all the photos of you too together, I have never seen you so peaceful and happy with any one woman. She is the envy of women all over the world and you just messed up her life. Wow, just....." Cenzino took a bit out of a burger Anella placed in front of him.

"She must be in a state, I have to call her." Fernando said.

"Call her? How do you know her?" Tylan asked his father.

"Genai is the other half of Fernai's, she does not know you are my son. I warned you not to hurt her, not to be like me and yet here you are telling me that the one

woman who loved you for YOU, is giving up her life's work, to have your child. Do you know what that did to your mother? I have never forgiven myself for putting her through that."

"I am NOT ready to be a father!" Tylan shouted as he got up and left the house.

"Oh Fernando how scared she must be." Anella stood next to her husband and rested her hand on his shoulder.

"Genai is G-Designs?" asked Marianna.

"Yes Mari, that's her."

"Oh gosh she is so pretty and smart, I met her once at one of Ty's shows, she told me she would love to design something for me."

"I can't call her yet, she will know Ty told me. I have to wait on her."

Just then Fernando's cell phone rang. Anella answered it.

"Oh hi Genai, yes he is here hold on." She handed her husband the phone.

"Yes my sweet, what is wrong, tell me let me fix it for you." Genai burst into tears, it's the samething Tylan said to her the day she told him she was pregnant. It never occurred to her that he got it from Fernando.

Genai told him everything and that she was going back home to stay with her parents.

"You know we will be here for you sweetie, are you sure you want to go home?"

Fernando met with Genai the next day at her office. He closed the door and she immediately went into his arms.

"Oh Fernando, I am such a fool."

"Why do you say that?"

"I have loved two men and neither of them were mine."

"I believe we both love you in our own way but look at the bright side, you are going to have a child, the greatest and most precious gift in the world. Be happy."

When he handed her his gift of half a million dollars she cried even harder. As the next few weeks went on Genai looked forward to being back home in Barbados with her parents.

Tylan on the other hand was in turmoil. He wanted to go back to Genai and ask her to marry him but he knew he had damaged her in the worst way and she would take a whole lot of convincing especially after he already rejected her and the baby.

"If you love her so much why don't you tell her?"

"Papa, I am so afraid that if I try to be a father I will fail. Look at the life I live, I am always travelling, I am out all hours, I have not slept in my own bed in over six months. What kind of life would that be? Genai would be alone most of the time funny enough, when I travel, other women have no appeal and I can't wait to get back home to her."

"I find it extremely ironic that I had those same exact thoughts when your mother told me she was pregnant with *you*. I know that I loved her more than life but my fear of being the man she needed was beyond my level of thinking and I was right at the time. I knew I would have just hurt her by staying and not being there for her so I left. When I found myself with Cenzino, it put what I did to her into perspective. I knew how she felt and I decided that I had to forget what I thought I knew and be the man all of you needed. This is what you need to find out for yourself. She is leaving in a week."

On the day Genai was ready to leave, she heard a knock on her door. When she opened it she knew what was coming next.

Tylan said nothing, he stepped forward and while forming his hands around Genai's face, he kissed her.

As she stood naked before him, Tylan knew he would never love another woman as he did her. He got down on his knees and rested his cheek on her tummy. She ran her hands through his hair and as the tears fell, her heart broke all over again.

"Do you love me Ty?"

"With all my heart."

"Then why don't you want a baby with me? Am I not good enough?"

"Never! I have never been in love before, I also know that I cannot imagine myself being a father. I don't want the kind of life where you wait on me every night to come home and I don't because I am off travelling or working, for months on end. You will be a good mother Genai, I have no doubt but please don't ask

that of me. I am not the type of man you want for a husband nor a father to your baby."

"Our baby." She whispered.

"Yes, I'm sorry our baby. A baby created from our love, I will never regret that." Genai sighed softly and made her final decision.

"I have to leave in a few hours, make love to me."

"As you wish."

His intensity is frightening, Genai allowed no words to leave her lips, she relished in the ecstasy washing over her as the man she was about to leave, gave her all that he could ever give her.

Tylan fell asleep wrapped around Genai but when he opened his eyes, the room was dark. When he groaned and rolled over, he felt something under him. A letter from Genai.

'My dearest Tylan,

My heart is so torn at the moment and yet I am so happy to be carrying your baby, knowing that he or she is the most precious thing I will ever have of yours. I know you believe that you could never be a good father to our child but I think you are wrong. I believe you have so much love inside and I guess I was not woman enough to bring it out. I understand your decision and I will never speak negatively about you. If at any time you want to see your child, just let me know when you are coming. I love you Tylan. Thank you.'

G.

Tylan gets dress and locks the door on his way out. He drives and drives until he finds a bar and gets totally drunk.

In his effort to drown his sorrows in a glass, he fails to see the women gawking at him. This one particular woman gets the courage to walk up to him and introduce herself.

"How much more are you doing to drink? My name is Torina."

"Leave me alone, I am not interested."

"You are too drunk to be anything. Where's your car? Let me take you home."

"Fine whatever." Tylan stumbles off the chair and wobbles his way outside. Not knowing where he parked his car or even what it looked like, he shrugs and starts to walk.

Torina manages to fish into his pocket for the key fob. She presses it and much to her delight the head lights on an expensive looking car. She had no idea what is was but it looked expensive. She managed to help Tylan into the car and get it started. He slumped into the seat and fell asleep.

"I guess you can't tell me where you live huh." Torina sighed loudly and pulled out of the car park.

Tylan groaned something but she couldn't understand what he was saying. He turned in his seat and then she understood.

"Genai."

"Ah that explains it. He is suffering from a broken heart. Well I have just the cure for that."

Torina drove to her rented seaside Villa in Tuscany, pulled the Pagani into the parking lot and got out. The fresh breeze whipped through the car, blowing her hair across her face.

"Now how am I going to get him inside?"

Tylan groaned loudly. She left him to go open the door.

Torina opened his door and tried unsuccessfully to drag him out. She thought of something and decided to try it.

"Genai is here you have to come see her."

"Genai, my love where are you?" He miraculously got out but only took two steps before he stumbled onto the grass.

"I cannot believe that actually worked. Let's try that again."

This time when Tylan heard the name Genai, as he got up Torina positioned herself under his arm and guided him inside. She managed to get him onto her sofa and he went back to sleep.

She took off her shoes and went out onto her balcony. She never closed the door because the only way to get to her house from the Livorno beach was up a steep Cliffside.

She feels the ocean breeze whip through the house and behind her she hears a moan and then the sound of someone throwing up.

"Great! What have you gotten yourself into Tor?"

When she got back to Tylan he was half off the sofa but he didn't actually throw up, it just sounded like he did.

"Genai." Tylan mumbled.

Torina wondered who this Genai was. She searched his pockets for any photos, his phone was locked so she went through his wallet. She found nothing. The as she turned him over the letter Genai wrote was peeking out of his pocket.

As Torina read it, she looked down at the most handsome man she had ever see and decided she would weasel her way into his life and get whatever she could. When she realised who he was, the dollar signs literally floated above her head.

She wanted to have sex with him but she would rather he was fully aware of her.

"Let the games begin."

Chapter TWELVE

Once again Tylan wakes up and it's dark, the only difference this time is that there is no love note from Genai and the room clearly isn't his living room. He sits up and tries to get his bearings.

"Where the hell am I?"

"I brought you home drunk, this is my house."

Tylan slowly turned to acknowledge the voice.

"Thanks and I will repay you for this in any way I can. What is your name? I hope I was not a complete oaf."

"Torina. I don't need repayment, I had a goal and I will achieve it eventually. Now, let's get some food into you and some coffee."

Torina made her way to the kitchen.

Tylan shrugged and stood up slowly to follow her. He glanced at the clock on the wall and it said 11 p.m.

He sat down at the breakfast table and watched as Torina prepared him something to eat. It was quick and simple. The percolator was bubbling and then it clicked. She poured him a cup and set it down with the sandwich.

"Thank you Torina. Now tell me, what is your goal? To get me into bed and then sue me for sexual harassment?"

"Actually no, that's too much work and speaking of work, I would like a job."

"Doing what?" Tylan took a sip of his coffee.

"PR and Marketing. Your product has become boring again, for about six months, I saw your lines everywhere and now, nothing."

"So you think you can create a buzz once again?"

"Yes I can, just give me the chance."

"While I eat my sandwich, make your pitch." Tylan took up his sandwich and began to eat.

"You need a new designer, someone who is young, with old ideas. Styles are repeated, they would be able to take some of the old styles and create fantastic pieces. Men's clothes are becoming too feminine. I like my men looking rugged, Construction boots and plaid shirts, dark colours. No capris, no skin tight jeans, no man bags. I hate that stuff. The women's line should be soft pastel colours, full length dresses with bold flowers."

Tylan swallowed the last of his sandwich, took a napkin and wiped his mouth. He flopped back into the chair and stared at the strange woman.

"Take me back to my car, I will speak to my team and if they agree, I will hire you for one month on a trial basis, if it works out, I will keep you on as one of my employees."

"Fair enough, are you sure you won't use my idea and get rich and never even acknowledge my input?"

"My parents taught me however I treat people will reflect on me, if they ill-treat me that is on them and my conscience would be clear. I appreciate you taking care of me but I have to go."

"Can I ask you a personal question?"

"No, you already know the answer since the letter I carried in my pocket is no longer there, hand it over."

"I'm sorry but you mumbled her name so much in the last few hours and I had to search your pockets to find out who you were." She walked over to the counter, picked up the letter and handed it to him."

Tylan took it and closed his hand around it.

"She refused me the first time I asked and I have never told her this but no one refuses me and I fell in love with her and my respect for her will always be one hundred percent. She is the only woman I will ever love, she is carrying my child and I am not man enough to own up to my responsibilities. She does not hate me, and no matter what, there will never be anyone like her. Don't get any ideas, I am not interested in a relationship. She ruined it for everyone. Now, take me back to my car please. I will let you know of my decision by midday tomorrow."

"You promise?"

"Your lack of confidence is evident. I promise I will take your idea into consideration and make the best decision."

"Thank you, come on."

Torina drove back to Tylan's car and he got out. He dug into his pocket for the key and unlocked the car.

"I will follow you home."

He did just that. He waited until she pulled into her driveway, got out and went inside. She waved to him from the window.

"Interesting girl." He muttered to himself.

The next day he put Torina's idea to his team and they loved it. He called her to give her the news.

"Torina speaking, how may I help?"

"Torina Mendoza, this is Tylan Vincenzo."

"How did you get my number?"

"If that is your biggest concern, this conversation ends here."

"Fine. What did your team decide?"

"Your contract will be ready in an hour, my team and I will meet with you at 2pm for lunch."

"Thank you."

"See you in a bit."

Tylan hung up and smiled. Torina was average and she dressed nice but his loins didn't fire up when he was near her. The first day he set eyes on Genai, he stood at

the window talking to her because he was so turned on by her wit. He knew he affected her when she turned him down and he understood why.

At 1:30pm sharp, Torina entered the foyer of M-Studios. She went to the receptionist and waited her turn.

"Hello madam can I assist you?"

"Yes, I have a 2oclock appointment with Mr. Vincenzo."

"Torina Mendoza?"

"Yes please."

"Go through that door on your right and when you reach the elevators push the 3rd floor and someone will be there to greet you."

"Thank you have a good day."

Torina stepped into the elevator and a container full of butterflies shoved her back onto the partition.

She took deep breaths to calm herself and when the elevator dinged, the doors opened and her stomach took two nose dives.

The third floor of M-Studios was epic. It actually looked like a movie set. There were cloth samples, photographers, models, flat screen televisions, projectors, the works. Each section was separated by a floor to ceiling wall and there were no doors. As she stood waiting, a nicely dressed lady came up to her.

"Good morning Torina, this way please."

Torina followed without a sound, her head turning this way and that trying to take in everything. She was so caught up that she walked right into Tylan's arms with a smack.

"Pay attention Torina, you don't want to get hurt your first day on the job. Come, lunch is ready and my team is waiting for you."

Tylan lead her to a conference room and already seated and eating were 15 people all dressed in jeans and polos shirts with M-Studios on the breast pocket.

She was shown to her seat and a lady asked her what would she like to eat.

"Everything."

"Oh gosh I love her already." One man responded.

"Down Aldo, she just got here." Another man said.

Torina blushed.

"Ooh she blushes, how cute."

"Alright guys, don't scare the new girl. One lady laughed.

"As you can see my team is not on their best behavior, try not to let them get to you." Tylan said softly but with a hint of mischief in his eyes.

A plate with everything from the table was put in front of her and after she said thank you, she began to eat.

"While you eat, I will make introductions from left to right we have Aldo, Lia, Gianni, Gianna, Francesca, Omero, Chiara, Cosimo, Durante, Alisso, Laila, Agostino, Calvino, Amata and Leora. They are all skilled in graphic design, marketing, advertising, promotion, fashion design, accounting and human resources. All of them are under 40 years old and have been with the company from as early as 18, around the time I started. They know me, I know them and that's the way we like it. The secretary assigned to this team is Marianna, she greeted you at the elevator. Cari, is serving the food at the moment but she is our fitness instructor and health consultant."

The others grinned, giggled and made small talk. When Torina was finished, Cari took her plate and placed with the others. Then both she and Marianna sat at the table.

"Now Torina the floor is yours."

Torina, began talking about her idea in full detail from the actual designs to the colours, fabrics and the method if reaching the public and keeping their attention, When she was finished she took a chance and told the truth.

"I have a confession, I know nothing about the fashion industry, I can't draw to save my life and I would not know how to prepare a marketing plan. What I do know is that I have been a consumer all my life, from electronics to food and I know what appeals to me as a woman. I listen to people on buses, trains, at dinner or lunch, I see what they wear, use and recommend. I don't consider myself an expert and I hope that I can learn from the best."

Aldo spoke up.

"Right so when do we start, I can't handle all this talking, I can have the designs by the time we are ready for dinner, how many we talking, fifty?"

"Get going Aldo." Tylan said with a lopsided smile.

Aldo got up, stuck out his hand to Torina, shook it and left the area but went to his section.

"I will have the contract ready for you to sing in fifteen minutes Torina, wait here." Marianna got up and went to her section.

Chiara and Cosimo, stood up.

"We will be back with the fabric samples."

All the others got up said what they were going to do and left to go to their sections.

Torina sat in silence, she could not believe her good luck. Tylan reached out and touched her hand.

"Nervous?"

"Can you tell?"

"I totally understand and I applaud your honesty. Now, I have some expectations from you. You are to conduct yourself in an appropriate manner at all times and this sounds hypocritical coming from me but I have already made my mark, I can sit down at home and I will make millions every week. Do not tarnish your reputation. If there is anything you need just ask and I will do my best to help. Do not steal from me, I have great lawyers. If you do not agree with something while working with my team, say so when asked. Now there is one thing I must insist on."

"What is that?"

"Your health."

"I don't understand."

"You are overweight and if you feel insulted you should leave now."

Torina's mouth opened wide and the tears filled her eyes.

"I do not have time to soft soap anyone who works for me. This industry is cruel and if you want to make it you have to stay on top of your game. I am not asking you to lose weight because of some issue I have with fat people, I am telling you to speak with Cari and get a health plan and physical training. I won't have you keeling over from poor eating habits or heart attack. Your life is about to get extremely busy. Stop crying Torina, the others will tear me to shreds. They love your ideas, they don't care how you look but they will agree with me on this."

Just as if on cue, Aldo and Chiara came back.

"Oh gosh boss, did you give her the health talk?"

Torina nodded slowly.

"Wanna hear a joke Torina? I was twice your size. I was pissed when he told me what he expected me to do. I thought he was just another son of a bitch who was too handsome for his own good."

"I am too handsome." Tylan laughed.

Chiara groaned.

"Look Torina, most of us have health issues and we don't need to compound them by carrying around extra weight. We all went through the health talk and none of us regret it. It will be very hard at first but Cari is great at what she does, she hollers when you lapse and she praises when you achieve your target goals which by the way is not to lose weight, you goal is to be healthy and the weight will come off so fast you won't realise it until someone tells you how much sexier you look."

"You think I'm sexy?"

"Girl sexiness is a mind thing, you wear clothes to suit your size and you aren't sloppy, of course I think you are sexy, you need to think so too." He winked at her and left.

Marianna came back with the documents to sign. Torina asked questions, Tylan answered and when she signed the papers, she cried.

"Come now, Time to celebrate. We are schedule to have dinner at my father's restaurant. I will take you home to change."

Chapter THIRTEEN

Tylan and his entire team sat at Fernai's chatting, eating and drinking and over the next few days, they all started work on the line and they called it – 'Rina'.

After about a week, the news of Torina being hired by Tylan gained some interest when people started seeing her there regularly. The only person who know what she was doing was Tealia. Tylan told her Torina was to be let in the building at any time night or day.

Tylan and the team was going out to do some scouting for fabric samples and much to the demise of Torina, some photographers pushed their way through security to get a glimpse at the newest addition.

Tylan guessed what would come next and he was right. The headlines in several newspapers were awfully insulting and they were all aimed at Torina.

'M-Studios hires Torina the tow truck.'

'M-Studios gone over to the wide side.'

'Tylan V hires Fat Farm.'

The next morning as Torina was walking into the building, she realised people were pointing at her and whispering. As she got inside everyone in the foyer looked up. Some snickered, some nodded in approval but this one particular girl, made it her business to actually say something out loud.

"Look it's Tow-rina." A few of them laughed.

Torina kept walking. When she got to the receptionist, the lady looked up and smiled.

"Ignore them. The others are already here, go on up."

"What's this all about?"

"You don't know?"

"No. What is it?"

"Oh dear. Look." She handed her all the magazines and newspapers. Torina slowly looked at each one of them.

When she was finished, she closed her eyes and let out the breath she was holding.

"Can you please make an excuse to the others, I think I am going home."

With that she turned and walked out of the building. She got into her car and left.

Tealia the receptionist punched Tylan's number.

"Sir, we have a problem, Torina came and she left go back home, sir she was so hurt, can you go after her just to make sure she is okay or if you can get someone to fill in for me I will get her address from you and go see her."

"Why are you concerned for her Tealia? You only met her yesterday."

"Sir, she has been here a week and every morning she brings me a fruit, or a muffin or juice. She is so sweet and she never looks down on me like the models or photographers do."

"Understood. I think we need a break anyway, I will tell the others. Call Jona and tell him bring around the bus. Be down in ten minutes."

"Thanks sir."

"Tealia?"

"Yes sir?"

"As of now, you no longer need to call me sir, Tylan will do just fine."

"Okay sir." She giggled.

"Stop everything we have to rescue Torina."

"Headlines got to her?"

"I am afraid so. Let's go."

"All of us?"

"All of us."

The fully loaded M-Studios branded tour bus pulled up to Torina's drive way. Her car was there.

Everyone got out and rushed up to the door.

"TORINA!"

Torina saw the bus from her balcony and slowly made her way down to the ruckus at her front door. She unlocked it and stepped back.

Cari walked past her and attempted to locate the kitchen.

Tylan watched as the others filed in and made themselves comfortable.

Cari came out of the kitchen with every single piece of junk food she could find and rested them on the coffee table.

"Today just happens to be cheat day. Dig in."

The others pounced on the snacks and within minutes they were all gone.

"Did you leave anything in the fridge?" Asked Tylan.

"Nope."

"Good. Torina, you start training tomorrow."

"I can't. I don't want to work there anymore. Do you have any idea how I am hurting right now?"

Aldo stood up and pulled out his wallet, he fished out a newspaper clipping of him and Tylan. It read 'Buffalo Spotted In Italy."

"Oh gosh, I'm so sorry."

"I'm not. It made me work harder. Remember I told you not to think about the weight! I used to get so depressed but these guys here stuck right by me and we will do the same for you."

"I can't, I don't have the energy for this."

"What I do not understand is why back down now. You have given us ideas for something great and now that it starts to get tough, you want to back out? Fine. The line is cancelled. Let's go." Tylan got up and strolled through the door.

The others never uttered one word. They cleaned up the snack wrappers and bags and started going out to the bus. Torina broke down in tears. Chiara paused at the door but the look she got from Tylan made her continue.

When the door of the bus closed the driver reversed and slowly moved out of the driveway.

All of a sudden a banging was heard on the side of the bus.

"WAIT!" More banging.

"STOP!"

The driver spotted her in the rear view mirror and slowed down. He opened the door and Aldo peeked his head out.

"What's wrong?"

"If I am to I start training tomorrow, I need to go shopping for clothes."

"That's more like it." A voice from behind her spoke.

She spun around and saw Tylan.

"You cheeky devil, you knew I wouldn't give up."

"You want this project more than any of us, this is your baby and we are just here to see it through."

"Thank you, all of you. Come on, I will take the bus back to work and go shopping later for clothes."

The program Cari designed for Torina was gruesome and extreme, the first thing they did was remove all the mirrors in the house. Then she assigned an assistant to

her. If she needed food, clothes, to get to work, he made the arrangements and he never left her alone, he slept at her house and followed her everywhere. She was blindfolded to and from work. She was taken to the office and never went to lunch or dinner outside of what Cari allowed, she was given a personal chef, and a maid. In the 10th week of the program, Torina was allowed her first look in a mirror. They made a huge deal out of it.

Cari decided she would go all out. She brought everything to Torina's house. Hair dresser, massage, manicure pedicure the works. What Torina didn't know was that the maid had been secretly replacing her big clothes with ones that suited her size. Cari told her Torina would be so busy with work she would not notice and she was right. Torina's assistant picked out all of her clothes so she never knew what was coming next.

The final reveal came where she had first met the team. Tylan arrange a private party. He even invited Tealia.

They blindfolded Torina and took her to M-Studios.

"Torina honey, before we take the blindfold off, I just want you to know that I am so proud of you." Aldo said softly.

"Yes Torina, we all are, come Cari she is about to burst with anticipation."

When Cari took it off Torina's eyes were closed.

"Open them honey, we got you." Cosimo said.

She opened her eyes.

She began to tremble. Cari took her hand.

"Yes honey, that is all you. Congrats!"

"Uh oh, she's gonna cry, tissue box!!!"

Torina burst into tears. They all hugged and kissed her but Tylan stood and just watch, silently. When the tears finally stopped she looked at her boss.

"Boss, you haven't said anything."

"No need. Back to work, we have a line to launch this weekend."

With that Tylan left the others staring with their mouths open.

"What did I do wrong?"

"You don't know?" Aldo said.

"Know what? Cari asked.

"The boss has a thing for Torina, he has been hiding it. He doesn't want to get hurt again so he has said nothing. These changes in her have nothing to do with it, he loves her enthusiasm, her honesty and she doesn't pretend to like him for his money."

Torina looked at Aldo.

"No it's more than that and I don't see him that way, he is special to me yes but.....oh dear, I need to fix this."

Torina, left the floor and made her way to Tylan's office. He was standing at the window looking out into the town.

"Boss? You got a minute?"

"Sure. What's up?" He responded without turning around.

"Did I do something wrong?"

"No. Why would you think that?"

"Everyone has complimented me except the one that matters most."

"I thought I knew you Torina, the one thing I valued in you was your honesty."

"I have not lied to you about anything."

"Who is Amondo?"

Torina gasped.

"He is my husband."

"Why didn't you tell me you were married?"

"Why did that matter, you said from the first night we met you were not interested in a relationship because of Genai, I have never lead you on or given you any impression that I wanted to be with you, so don't put your anger on me."

"He called me here and told me to stay away from you or he would end my life somehow. He said he always knew where to find you and any attempt to get you into bed would end in disaster. The cops are on their way to search his house."

"Why didn't you tell me? He and I have been separated for almost three years. I ran from him with nothing, I hitch hiked all the way here. When I met you I was just beginning to recover my finances. I was deep in debt and I needed a better job. I have stayed away from men because I know how Amondo is. He used to beat me, he cheated on me with my mother of all people, then my boss, then my sister and best friend. He is a good looking man and the women can't resist his advances. I ate myself to the size I was. I felt like a total failure and useless. When you left that night I really wanted to seduce you but I knew you would never even think about making love to someone like me. So it was work work and more work. I am sorry I didn't tell you and I will deal with Amondo."

"I am not angry because you are married and I am jealous, I have grown to care about you, if Amondo came after you, those people in there would turn his ass inside out. Four of them carry guns, three are black belts and one was in the army. This is why I ask for complete honesty. You need to divorce him, I will send you to the company attorney. Now for the *us* issue. I do love you but as one of my team, nothing more. That ship has sailed for me and I would never use the friendship we have to make it into more."

"What if I wanted more Tylan?"

"I can't offer you anything Torina, I have no love left in me for anyone that way and you deserve much better. Aldo is quite taken with you."

"He was the one who told me you had a thing for you!"

Tylan laughed.

"That dog. He just wanted to see how you felt about me."

"Have I made a mess of things? I do love you Ty but as a really good friend."

"No, all the cards are on the table and we both know where we stand. Now, Amondo will be arrested and I will make sure he never bothers you again. You need to find love Torina, you are a wonderful woman and yes the changes were worth the stress. You have a new line on the way and I hope we can create more."

Torina walked up to Tylan and hugged him, he closed her arms around her and held her tight.

Aldo walked in.

"Boss, I'm gonna have to punch you if you don't let go of my woman!"

Tylan laughed, kissed Torina on the cheek and let her go.

"She is all yours, treat her well or I just might let Chiara shoot your knee caps out."

Tylan patted Aldo on the shoulder as he passed and left the two of them in his office.

"Please tell me you are serious."

"Torina I was in love with you from when you said 'everything'."

"That was the first day we met!"

"Yes and?"

"I'm married."

"We all know, we just needed you to trust us enough to tell us. Do you know who your assistant is?"

"Honey K?"

"A trained assassin, do you know what his real name is?"

Torina looked confused.

"Think honey, have you ever heard anyone call him by anything other than Honey K?"

"Jesus, no."

"Tylan hired him when he did a check on you and yes he does it to all his employees, so don't go making a fuss. He protects everyone around him. Now, I am sure he told you to divorce Amondo. So tomorrow we go see Marlon and get started. Can't have you being married to two men."

"What?" Torina whispered.

Aldo got down on one knee and presented her with a gold ring with an emerald set in the center of four diamonds.

"Yes, Yes!"

Aldo got up and kissed the woman he dreamt about every single night since he met her.

They got married a year later and during the time they were courting, Torina noticed a drastic change in Tylan. He was becoming depressed and he was drinking more and more and she thought he was on drugs. On her wedding day, Tylan was supposed to give her away since she had no family and he never showed up.

Tylan was 27 when he met Genai, he was now 35 and lonely as ever. His father made it a point to show him every single movie and photograph Genai sent him of Sofea.

"Papa! Why do you make me suffer through this?"

"You did this to yourself son. That child is YOUR flesh and blood and you will be lost to her."

"You are one to talk!"

"YES, I AM. I woke up and realise that your mama gave herself to me and only me. She gave me all she had and I betrayed that but at least I was man enough to admit I was wrong and she has forgiven me and brought me even more happiness. You will not have this chance!"

"What do you mean by that? Sofea will always be mine!"

"Genai is getting married in a few days. Your mother, your sister and the twin are going. You are not."

Tylan sat down in the chair with his head in his hands.

"I cannot make up for eight years Papa."

"Ask Genai to see your daughter, take an interest before it's too late."

"I cannot papa, Genai is lost to me and soon will Sofea. I cannot bare to see either of them only to break my own heart all over again."

Tylan's father died and he saw Genai and meets his daughter for the first time. The problem was that she brought her entire family including her husband. He could see the love between them and he wanted Genai more than ever. In his foolish attempt she denies him. He starts using drugs to hide his depression and he began drinking again.

Tylan finds out he has aids and he makes a promise to leave everything he has for Sofea but he need to play the game perfectly or he will lose the only chance he has to be with his daughter.

"Daddy don't leave me please!"

Tylan hears her voice.

"Ah I did not wish for you to see this. Go, wait for your mama, remember me with a smile and never doubt that I love you or your mother. Stick to Pierce he is a better man than I."

Sofea rests her head on her father's chest and a few seconds later he stops moving. Tylan V was gone.

Tylan handed the responsibility of his entire estate to Genai because he knew that she would understand in the end and that this is the only way he knew to show his love for both her and their daughter.

Sofea knew her father loved her in his own way and she was glad she got the opportunity to meet him. Everytime she looked into the mirror she saw his eyes looking back at her and with her family the universe was hers.

The End

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