

THE  
RIGHT  
MAN



AMARIS RICCI

# THE RIGHT MAN

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## Prologue

"Happy Birthday Soja, it's nice to finally meet you. I'm Jimmy, I live at the house at the end of the cul-de-sac with my parents."

"Hello, Jimmy. The Jacobs right?"

"That's them. I just came back from England working and studying."

"Oh nice, I've never left Barbados but I hope to someday."

"Maybe we can go together."

"You never know what the future holds."

"Would you like to go out on a date?"

"Sure, you can call and let me know when and where."

"That I shall do. Enjoy the rest of your party."

"Thanks."

## Chapter ONE

After a wonderful party, Soja's parents came into the living room where she was cleaning up a few things.

"So, I see the Jacobs boy has taken a liking to you."

"He is nice, not ready to date yet but I did say I'd go out with him soon."

"We have to tell you something Soja."

"Are you feeling ill papa?"

"Sit sweetie."

Soja rested the broom on the back of a chair and sat down. Her parents remained standing.

"We have taken up too much of your life. We are ready to leave this world and all our pain. We wanted to wait until your 30th birthday but your mum is ready now and I can't live without her. I know this is hard for you to understand but, you need to live your life, we have had glorious years together and having you was the best thing we ever did. When your mum got pregnant at 15, we were so scared for your future but we did the best we could and we know you turned out okay despite the mistakes we made. We will be leaving next week and everyone thinks we are going on vacation but we won't be coming back. Our attorney has instructions to handle the legal aspect of our death. Everything we have is already yours. We do have one request and that is for you to find true happiness. Your mother and I found it twice. We love you with all our hearts, don't grieve for too long."

Soja sat with tears flowing down her face and the strange thing about it, is that she understood everything her father was saying.

"I understand dad, I wish I had you for when I got married and had children but I know you have made up your minds. I will do my best to live up to your memory. I love you both."

"You are the best daughter we could have hoped for never forget that. Now, that you know our plans, we have a week to spend together and when you wake up that morning, we will have already left. Finish cleaning up and get to bed. Happy birthday honey pop."

"Goodnight."

Her parents ruffled her hair as they passed and went to bed. Soja was not sad or angry, she was glad her parents lived a good life, they gave her everything she needed and she couldn't be happier.

A week later Soja woke up and the house was quiet. They had left late the night before and took a cab to the airport, they never told her where they were going but that when they died the attorney would inform her.

That same night was her date with Jimmy. He was taking her to a fancy restaurant for dinner. Soja was what some people may consider a diamond in the rough, she wore long skirts, and t-shirts, a head tie and sandals most of the time. Her best friend took her on a shopping spree and got her hair and nails done. They decided she should knock Jimmy's socks off and they chose a burnt orange satin halter top dress with a peak-a-boo split at the side. She wore a silver anklet and silver accessories with shoes to match. When she looked in the mirror, the woman looking back at her was so unfamiliar, she almost called and canceled her date. When Jimmy knocked on the door, she walked over and opened it and from the look on his face he was pleased.

Jimmy drove a Lexus Rx and he was proud of his success. He opened the door for Soja in full view of the neighbours and when he closed her door he strutted back to the driver side. The conversation on the way to the restaurant was mild and non-electric. Soja didn't really know how to act around men since she never dated because of her parents' illnesses one after the other and before that she was all about books and her education. They talked about what she would do now that her parents had left and Jimmy was surprised to find out Soja was a Graphic Designer. She had wanted to be close to her parents and had set up a home office. Her portfolio was pretty extensive and she never had to advertise.

Jimmy asked about a few of her clients and when she called some of the projects she worked on he was a bit jealous. He knew the companies and they were pretty reputable. He asked her how things were now, trying to sound sincere. She told him she was financially sound due to her parents' guidance. She made investments throughout the last 10 years and they have all aided her in her daily living. She had life and health insurance. She was perfect for him.

When they pulled up to the restaurant, Jimmy made a show of taking her elbow. He wanted everyone to know that this gold mine was his. Soja on the other hand felt uncomfortable with his touch and tried to pull away several times.

They were seated quickly and Jimmy was ready to order a bottle of wine but wanting to show off his knowledge of wine, he asked Soja to choose one and much to his chagrin she ordered a bottle of Duhart-Milon, (Pauillac). Jimmy almost fell off his chair but quickly regained his composure and nodded to the waiter. The

waiter disappeared and a few minutes later, the owner of the restaurant came over to their table.

"Good night Soja, how are you doing?"

"Uncle Vitori, I haven't seen you for ages. How are Annai and the babies?"

"They are all great and your parents?"

Soja faltered for a moment and Vitori caught it.

"Don't worry, I know all about it. Your dad told me a few months back." He winked at her.

"Forgive my manners Uncle Vitori, this is Jimmy Meyers, he lives in my neighbourhood."

Vitori extended his hand but the look on Jimmy's face did not please him at all. He would show up the fraud if given the chance. This however was the time to let the man know Soja had his support to the end.

"It's a pleasure to meet you Vitori."

Vitori did not return the sentiment.

"Now, Soja, have whatever you want on the house. Are you still designing? I need some ad campaigns for this restaurant in a few weeks' time, I won't take no, so come see me tomorrow here for breakfast and we will chat yes?" He bent down and kissed her on the forehead in a fatherly manner. Jimmy was seething inwardly. How dare they flaunt their relationship in his face?

"How do you know him?" Jimmy asked while plastering a fake smile on his face.

"He is my God-father as well as a client. I did some work on his other businesses for a few years. I didn't even know he owned this one."

She took out her Alcatel and keyed in a reminder to see him in the morning. She dropped the cell back in her purse and just then the host brought the wine.

"Soja, I didn't realise that was you until Vitori came over. Maddi said to me just last week she hasn't seen you in too long, you must come over for dinner soon before she has my head."

"Will do Manelli, thanks for the wine."

"He is a client as well?" Jimmy sounded frustrated and jealous.

"Uh no. Manelli wanted to date me in college but he ended up with my best friend Madison. They got married a few years later and they have 4 children, all my god-children. I introduced him to Vitori and he manages all of the Vitori businesses."

"I see." Jimmy took a sip of his wine and made a mental note of the two men who knew the woman he wanted for his wife.

They chit chatted for a while and decided to order dinner. Jimmy wanted to order for Soja but yet again she showed no need for him to play alpha male.

"I will have Breaded Ravioli, Pollo Ripieno and Tortellini Cabonara." Jimmy said to the man who approached the table as this was not the waiter but the head chef.

"What will you have Madame? Oh wait lemme guess..... Bruschetta Basilica, Classic Ceasar and a lasagna platter."

Without looking up Soja responded.

"You know too much about me Seba and since you know so much, you can surprise me." Still not looking up, she took a sip of her wine.

The night was not going as Jimmy planned. He thought Soja was so sheltered that she would be eating out of his hands by the end of the night and in a few months he would propose and be married within a year.

"So Jimmy, how is your business doing. I have a few contacts I could recommend you to, if you don't have a portfolio ready."

"I'm doing great but a little extra can't hurt." They continued to chat and as they enjoyed their meal, Jimmy felt more and more inadequate. Soja was not only intelligent, she was beautiful and she seemed to be well loved by everyone who knew her. Yes she would do well for his image. He put his plan together in his head and for the rest of the night he tried to find out everything he could about the woman sitting across the table from him.

When the date was over, Jimmy took Soja home and when he tried to kiss her on the mouth, she turned her head to a side offering her cheek. This infuriated him but decided it was too early for her and he would be patient.

During the next year, Jimmy courted Soja with all the flash and flare he could afford. The best restaurants, high end social events etc. What he didn't plan for was how well Soja was known in his circles. Furthermore, he was getting more business since he met her than in the 5 years he was in operation.

He decided now was the time to pop the question. He invited her out for dinner and although not as romantic as he planned, she said yes. They would be married in six months.

## Chapter TWO

6 Months later

A wedding day is supposed to be the happiest day of any woman's life but Soja was missing her parents. She sat in the dressing room of the hotel Jimmy had booked, with a letter delivered to her with the instructions to open it on her wedding day. She opened it and began to read.

'Hi Soja, Dad here. First of all, smile for me. I know you must be saddened that we could not be there with you but we are. All the love we have, has grown inside you and allowed you to become the beautiful woman that you are. Whoever your intended is, is the luckiest man in the world. I want you to be happy because we are proud of you.' Love Dad.

"Hello honey pop, Mum here. I love you my sweet, from the day I found out I was pregnant, until I close my eyes next to your father. You have given us the perfect love. You chose to take care of us when you could have been out with your friends or starting a new life and left us behind. Know that our life is within you and you are never alone. Tell that young man, he will have hell to pay if he doesn't treat our baby right. We love you Soja. Now go be happy." Love Mom.

She managed not to cry and spoil her make up. She folded the letter and rested it in her overnight bag. She got up, put on her shoes and made her way to the outer room to meet Vitori, he would give her away and her best friend Andrea, would be her maid of honour.

The wedding went flawlessly and she was looking forward to her honeymoon. Vitori had spoken with her Father and they had set some money aside for her special day. When Vitori told her this she broke into tears.

"Oh come now Bella, you make an old man want to cry with you."

"Oh Uncle V, I miss them so much but I am glad I still have you and auntie with me. Thank you for everything."

Vitori had a funny feeling about Jimmy but he could never put his finger on it. One day Jimmy would show his true colours and if Vitori had to pay someone to out his light, he would do so and not even flinch.

After the reception was over, Jimmy spent a few minutes talking with some prospective clients. Soja was organising the gifts to be taken to their room and she glanced apprehensively at him. He seemed not to notice but wrapped his conversations quickly and made his way over to her.

"Hello Mrs. Meyers."

"Hello Mr. Meyers."

"Are all the gifts in the room now?"

"Yes and I have the envelopes with me. Are you all about finished, I want to go get changed."

"Sure, go on up and I will meet you there in 15 minutes."

Soja smiled and made her way to their honey moon suite. A light complimentary snack of chocolates and exotic fruit was waiting for them with a bottle of Rotwein Masseto 1994 Ornellaia. When Jimmy saw the wine, he was tempted to throw it down the sink but he didn't want to spoil the night. Soja came out in a hotel robe and he was wondering what she had under there. He would find out eventually. They ate and drank some of the wine and put the rest in the ice bucket.

Soja held out her hand to her husband indicating she was ready to go to bed. Jimmy took her hand and decided what the hell, she would take him as he was.

As they lay next to each other on the bed Soja spoke.

"That was a wonderful wedding Jimmy, thank you, I love you." Although Soja was now married, she felt none of the adrenaline rush she thought she would feel and chalked it up to missing her parents.

"Love you too." Not the most endearing response but it would have to do.

Jimmy quickly flicks off the lights and grabs something from his bag next to the bed. She realises the scent of rubber. Jimmy is putting on a condom. Before she could protest, he rolls on top of her feels for her breast and gives it a squeeze. He spreads her legs and puts himself at her entrance. He shoves his hips into hers. "Oh yeh baby."

A grunt, a shake and a thrust later, he was finished. He rolls off of her and lays on his back. Soja is in the same position for 5 minutes and she hears ..... snoring. Not understanding what has happened, she tries to wake her husband.

"Jimmy, wake up."

He gets up pulls off the condom throws it into the garbage bin and goes back to sleep.

"Jimmy are you finished?"

"I'm tired, go to sleep or play with yourself."

Tears fill her eyes and spill onto her cheeks. She turns her back to her husband and stares into the dark bedroom. Is this it? Is this what she was waiting

for? Her body feels numb and rather than try to wake him again. She turns on her side facing away from Jimmy and drifts off to sleep.

When she wakes up. Jimmy is dressed for work and sitting at the breakfast table.

"You are going to work today?"

"Yes what did you expect? I can't lounge around all day for a week, I have a business to run."

"We only got married yesterday and you aren't going to spend at least today with me?"

"Why? You will be home when I get there. Since you decided, you weren't living at my parents, you will have to cook dinner. I have to go, I am meeting with Mr. Jennings to sign a 5 year contract. See you at home."

With that Jimmy was gone. Soja sat at the table for almost an hour, crying her eyes out. She could not believe this was the same Jimmy who courted her for a year. What would she do now? Get the marriage annulled? She couldn't face anyone so she stayed in the hotel suite and put a DND on the door. She rang for room service for two for lunch, hoping Jimmy would come back. She ate alone and eventually ate his as well. Dinner-time came and she rang for a light dinner with dessert for two once again hoping her husband would show his face. No such luck.

She watched TV all day and cried when the need consumed her. There is nothing her parents could have said to warn her about a man switching after he got married. He didn't make love to her, no hugs and kisses. Nothing.

### **Chapter THREE**

She fell into a deep sleep. When she awoke the next morning Jimmy was once again at the breakfast table and he looked furious.

"Why aren't you at home? I went over there and the house was empty."

"In case you didn't remember, Vitori paid for this suite for a week and I am not going to let his money go to waste. You decided you wanted to work, you can eat dinner here until I go home. I am going to take a shower."

Soja got up went to the bedroom and began taking off her clothes. Jimmy stormed into the room and grabbed Soja by the arm.

"Listen to me wife, I won't have any insolence from you, got me? You will be at home when I get there tomorrow or you will suffer the consequences."

"Vitori was right about you. He said you would show your true colours but I didn't listen. I won't stay married to you."

"Oh you will or I will make your life miserable, I will paint your name black with all your friends."

"No one will believe you Jimmy."

"Just try me."

Soja was filled with dread. Could he really tarnish her name? Seeing the pleased look on his face, she knew he would do it.

"This won't last for long Jimmy. Vitori will see to that."

"Vitori does not scare me." With that he left.

Soja decided she would try to be the woman her parents taught her to be. Even though she knew now that Jimmy never loved her or had any good intentions towards her. For the next 6 years, Soja endured a loveless, sexually frustrating marriage. Jimmy would seem all affectionate in public but as soon as he was alone with her, he would tell her how stupid and useless she was.

One night, they were to attend a charity ball at the former Sherbourne Conference Center. This was the ball of the year. Everyone who was anyone in society would be there. From Doctors to politicians, to heads of governments from all over the globe. Vitori sent two tickets for Soja and Jimmy but neither of them knew how the night would end.

Vitori was a man of many means. He could charm the label from a bottle just by speaking it. He could also have someone killed by picking up the phone.

"Vitori, how are you?"

"Great Nicolai, I need a favour. Remember my friend from our days when we were running arms out of Columbia?"

"Yep, he died didn't he?"

"Yes and his daughter is in trouble, she married to a man by the name of Jimmy Meyers and he isn't what she thought he was but she is too afraid to leave. I'm sending you a ticket to the ball, along with a tux and the limo will come get you."

"What do you need me to do?"

"Show her what being a woman is all about, enough to make her leave the son-of-a-bitch and I will take care of the rest."

"How far shall I go?"

"Use your profession, I am positive Jimmy is impotent or violent, so get her to relax and tell you everything. You don't have to tell me everything she says just the important parts."

"Done, what's her name?"

"Soja Meyers. She is beautiful but tries to hide it so as not to attract attention. I sent her a drop dead gorgeous outfit that my wife picked out for her personally. Jimmy is gonna be pissed when he sees her in it and he can't go to the ball with her."

"You arranged an accident for him?"

"No, I will ask a friend to request and impromptu meeting that can only be done tonight."

"You ole dog."

"You go and have fun. Try not to scare her, she is already scared."

"Not a prob my friend. Will let you know how things progress."

The two men hung up and Vitori made another phone call.

"I need you to call Jimmy Meyers and tell him you are interested in seeing his portfolio but it has to be tonight. Send a limo for him at house at 6:30 sharp. Take him to one of my restaurants in the next state and talk his ears off until after midnight. Take him to meet a hooker if you have too but keep him away from his wife until I call you."

The person on the other end never responded, they didn't have to.

## **Chapter FOUR**

Everything was arranged and on the night of the ball, Soja was dressed and standing in front of the mirror. She looked ravishing. She wore her mother's jewelry to compliment the outfit. Jimmy came into the room as she turned to leave.

"You actually look good enough to be seen with me, you should feel honoured." He turned and left.

She heard his cell phone ring and he came back into the bedroom and she was still standing in the same spot.

"You will have to go to the ball alone and don't look so smug, I have eyes all over the place."

Soja never bothered to ask why or did she care anymore. If she could have one night away from his onslaught, she would cherish it.

Vitori's limo picked her up around 6pm and took her to the conference center. The place was abuzz with activity. The Theme for the event was 'A Night to be Royal'. Patrons were encouraged to dress like royalty and dressed they were. The deep blues, purples, golds, greens, reds and blacks amassed inside and outside. The red carpet lead from the atrium to the ball room. Soja was dressed as a queen and as soon as Soja got there Vitori spotted her and sent his wife to nab her from the horde of reporters.

"Soja honey, V sent me to get you. Come! Before the reporters eat you alive."

The ladies laughed as they met up with Vitori and his friends.

One man caught Soja's attention, he was dressed in all white regalia. He looked like a true King and when introduced to Soja, he bowed ceremoniously and kissed her hand. He squeezed it a bit, then as he let go, Soja let go her breath. Never before had she felt such a rush from someone's touch. She brushed it off as part of the excitement of the night.

The evening went smoothly and Soja remembering Jimmy's words, trying never to be alone with any men but the handsome stranger in white kept appearing wherever she was. At one point she saw him leaving through a double door. She decided she would follow him and see where he was going. She pushed the doors and stepped out onto the dimly lit balcony. Her eyes adjusted quickly but the White King was nowhere to be seen. She continued on to the balcony railing.

"What are you doing Soja? He is a stranger to you. Turn back now and stay out of trouble."

"Too late for that my sweet."

She felt powerful arms turn her around and in one smooth movement, he pulled her close to him and kissed her. Not just a, 'hi nice to meet you' kiss but a 'when the world stops spinning we may be able to talk, kiss.

The fire that burst in Soja's belly ignited her entire body. She returned the kiss with passion she never even knew she had. Her hands were in his hair, all over his face and chest, she couldn't get enough of him. Then she realised where she was and abruptly pulled away.

"Oh god, I'm sorry Nicolai, I should not have let you do that. I have to go."

"Wait Soja, I will leave first so as not to arouse suspicion, I know you are married but I can see you need someone to talk to. Come by my office and chat, the first session is free."

He gave her his card and left her alone. Soja stood on that balcony for almost an hour. She had never been kissed like that, actually the only kiss she ever shared with anyone was when she said I do. Her lips were still tingling and she was afraid to go back into the ball room for fear someone would know she had been kissed and tell Jimmy.

Vitori realised she was missing and went looking for her. He found her sitting on a lounge chair.

"Bella, come inside you must be chilly."

"Oh Uncle V, why did it have to turn out this way? I have to leave Jimmy but I don't know how. I am so ashamed of myself, I let a total stranger kiss me and I wanted to leave with him. My parents would be so mad at me."

"Now now Soja, life throws things at us every day, we just have to see the light at the end of the tunnel and know that it is within our reach. Jimmy tricked you into believing he was genuine but he only wanted to use you to spruce up his image and his bank account but he will get what's coming to him soon enough, don't you worry. Now who is this stranger?"

"You said his name was Nicolai. He is so handsome and he knew I needed to talk, the kiss took me by surprise. He gave me his card and told me to come by his office if I needed to talk. I don't think he wants a relationship just a fling, so I won't go."

"Ah Bella, Nicolai has a heart of gold, he knows you are married so he won't push himself on you and as beautiful as you are he could not help himself but kiss you. Not to worry, go see him soon, maybe he can help you sort your feelings about Jimmy out, then tell me what you need me to help with, Okay?"

"Yes Uncle. Dad loved you ya' know. He used to tell me stories of your days together and he said if there was anything you needed I should go to you first. Thank you for being here."

"Anytime, I loved your father too, he was the brother I never had and a thorn in my butt that wouldn't go away." Vitori burst out into a belly laugh as he led Soja back into the ballroom. Most of the people were gone and she could see Jimmy working the balance of who was left. When he spotted her he smiled and excused himself and made his way over.

"Hello Vitori, from the reviews I say you made quite an impression and the donations are flowing in. I wish you all the best." Jimmy tried to sound sincere but he and Vitori never saw eye to eye and Soja could smell trouble brewing.

"I think I am tired Uncle V, thanks for a lovely night. I will do as you say. Jimmy can we go please?"

"You go ahead, I still have some people I need to talk to."

"Bella my limo is outside, just tell him to take you home, he knows where you live." Vitori showed his disgust for Jimmy's abandonment of his wife and walked away without another word. Soja looked at Jimmy and walked away as well. She said good night to a few others hoping to see Nicolai. He was nowhere in sight.

During the limo ride, she asked the driver to take a detour and asked if she could use the telephone."

"Sure Miss, I don't have to be back for a few hours, we can go wherever you wish. Dial straight out. I will give you some privacy."

"Thanks Winston."

Soja pulled the number from her coat pocket and dialed the home number on the card.

"Vitori, is something wrong?"

"It's me Nicolai, Winston is taking me home and I decided to call you if it's not a problem. I really need to talk to someone."

"Tell Winston to bring you here, he can wait for you if you wish."

"I can't, if I do we both know what will happen. Why did you kiss me Nicolai. You have no idea what you are getting into."

"You are a beautiful woman Soja, Vitori speaks very highly of you and I can take care of myself. It's you I am worried about. For a woman so intelligent you don't seem to have that spark I've heard so much about. How are things at home?"

"I..... I am happy Nicolai. I shouldn't have called. Thank you for the kiss, you have no idea what it mean to me."

"Wait, please come and see me tomorrow, I can schedule you as my last patient so you won't have to hurry, would that be okay?"

"Yes that will be fine, how much is it?"

"\$250 per session but write a cheque, I don't want you walking around with cash. I will see you later Soja. Get home safely."

"Good night Nicolai."

She hung up and for the first time since her wedding day 6 years ago, Soja smiled from her heart.

When Jimmy got home around 4am he was drunk. Soja knew what was coming and she dreaded it.

Jimmy called her name as he entered the bedroom door. She pretended to be asleep.

"I know you are not sleeping you bitch. You think I don't know what you and Vitori are up to? You won't have my money you hear me? Now give me what's mine or I'll beat it out of you."

This was new, Jimmy never threatened her with violence before, so instead of her usual protest, she got up and took her nightgown off and lay back on the bed with her legs spread.

Jimmy fumbled off his clothes grabbed a condom from the dresser and spent 5 minutes trying to put it on, swearing like a sailor all the while. He finally succeeded and Soja could smell the alcohol on him when he lay down on top of her. She almost threw up but kept it down for fear it would further infuriate him.

Jimmy did his usual, squeezed one breast, tried to shove himself inside her and a few moments later he grunted and fell on top of her.

Soja pushed him off and took a shower and slept in the spare room. When daylight came, Jimmy was gone and she rolled over and went back to sleep.

She woke again around 10, made breakfast and thought about her day. Vitori was keeping her busy by sending clients from all over the world. The good thing about technology is that she never had to meet most of the clients, they sent their instructions, she did the preliminary designs and sent them for approval. When she was finished she sent the bill, they wrote a check or wired the funds and that was it. She had two projects to complete and she could finish those in a few hours.

She prepped for dinner and mentally made a note to leave early for her first session with Dr. Burke at 6:30 that evening. Just thinking of seeing him again opened a barrel full of butterflies. She smiled again at the kiss and decided Jimmy would not take her happiness from her anymore.

## **Chapter FIVE**

When Jimmy got home that evening, there was a note from Soja that she had gone to see a therapist, she would be home by 8 and his dinner was in the microwave.

"Who the hell does she think she is? A therapist? I will deal with her when she gets back."

Soja sat outside Nicolai's office and the secretary smiled at her whenever she looked up from her laptop. The last patient left and Soja was sent in. His office is not what she expected. The lighting was soft and warm. Everything matched perfectly and Nicolai was sitting on a single seat with a notepad in his hand. He pushed a button on his phone and spoke to his secretary.

"Last patient sweetie, lock up and go home."

Soja's jealousy registered on her face and before she could hide it Nicolai spoke.

"My my, aren't we the green one. She's my niece and no competition for you. Have a seat and tell me what you need help with."

Soja sat down rested her bag next to her and sighed.

"My husband doesn't love me. I am boring in bed and I think he is a violent person but he hasn't shown it. Tell me how I can excite him enough to want me rather than just treat me like a chore. I don't even know what sex without a condom feels like and we've been married six years."

"Do you love your husband?" Nicolai realised she wasn't as shy as he thought, she really needed to talk and she seemed at ease voicing her feelings.

"No I don't actually, I did when we were dating but then everything went to hell on our honeymoon night. It lasted less than 5 minutes. I felt so useless that I couldn't please him and 6 years later I still can't. I need to be touched, hugged, kissed, made love to. My body yearns for release and I don't even know how to....."

"How to what?"

"Pleasure myself."

"I see. I can teach you what you need to know physically but mentally is going to take a while longer. Why do you stay with your husband?"

"He said he would make my life miserable and I don't want Vitori to kill him."

Nicolai's eyes opened wide.

"Oh come on Nicolai, I know my uncle is a Maffia Boss, my dad told me years ago and I don't care, he loves his family and he dotes on me. I know if I asked or even hinted Jimmy would get snuffed out in a hot minute."

Nicolai laughed.

"Soja, you have so much inside you waiting to come out, let me help you."

"That's why I am here."

"Okay first off, have you ever been molested or raped?"

"Other than by Jimmy no."

"You aren't afraid of touch so we will start with that. Lay back and close your eyes."

Soja lay back and when she closed her eyes, she heard a button press and soft meditation music began to play.

"The Heart of Reiki, interesting choice."

"Well, I am impressed." Soja could not see the hard-on Nicolai was sporting. She was wearing a simple peach free size dress but her breasts filled out the upper part perfectly. The dress fell on either side of her leaving the outline of her body quite visible.

She felt her shoes being taken off and her feet being massaged. Then her calves and back down.

He took her hands and massaged them. He almost touched her breasts which were rising and falling with her deep breaths and her nipples were hardening under the bra. This was going to be harder than he thought.

## **Chapter SIX**

"Listen to my voice and do as I say."

"Okay, I trust you."

"I want you to take your right hand and place it on your tummy. Now move it slowly over it, feel the contours as if you were taking a shower. Good, now caress your arms, and chest with both hands. Feel the beat of your heart as you move your hands. As you relax, feel your breathing slow down."

Watching her was killing him, he wanted to strip her naked and plunge himself inside her. He knew she was aroused, he could smell her scent lightly invading his nostrils.

"Take your right hand again and slowly move it down to your inner thighs. Feel the dress move over your skin. Good now, I am going to place my hand over yours, don't be afraid, I won't hurt you."

He covered her hand with his and he heard her inhale sharply. If she only opened her eyes, she would see his arousal was pushing against his zip.

He moved their hands together. He slowly moved them towards her womanhood and she inhaled and held it.

"No honey, breathe, feel."

She exhaled slowly and her tummy began to feel warm and her heart rate was picking up. Just then Nicolai moved their hands between her legs and he stopped.

"I am going to move my hand, you continue and tell me what feels good."

"I can't, I'm so ashamed."

"Don't be honey, you have to learn to please yourself before you try to please others. Now move your hands further down and rest it there, feel yourself pulse against your fingers."

"Oh yes, I feel it, it's strange Nicolai."

He wanted to see if he could get her to orgasm in the first session, this would determine how responsive she was.

"I want you to try something for me, are you ready?"

"No but I will try."

"I want you to pull your dress up and slip your hand into your panties."

She hesitated for a bit then she did as he said.

"Touch yourself and see what feels good."

Soja seemed to open up a little more with his coaching. She began rubbing herself in circles and her scent began to fill the room. Nicolai was in a bad state.

"Oh Nicolai, what's happening to me?"

He couldn't help himself. He reached out and touched her breast. She pushed against his hand. He put his other hand on hers that was inside her panties and coaxed her fingers into further movement. He wanted to taste her but he was afraid she wasn't ready.

"To hell with it. Soja, I need you to trust me a bit more in the next few minutes."

"Yes Nicolai."

"You need to tell me how you are feeling."

He removed his hands from her body and walked over to the bottom of the chair by her feet. He took one leg and rested it on the floor. He knelt down between her legs and when he touched her she froze.

"It's okay honey, I promise I won't hurt you."

"That's not it..... Jimmy never touched me before." She hid her face in her hands.

"Look at me honey."

"Trust me to make you feel good. That's all I ask."

She nodded, it was all she could manage because Nicolai was already massaging her on his own. She closed her eyes again. Nicolai bent forward and kissed her through her lacy panties.

"Oh God, do that again." She whispered.

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, yes please."

Nicolai went out on a limb. He rose up and lifted her dress to pull her panties down. She didn't resist and she lifted her hips. His restraint was weakening. How was he supposed to stop himself from making love to her completely? He was mentally banging his head against a brick wall.

He bent forward again and this time when his lips made contact with her skin. Soja cried out.

"Oh yes, Nicolai, please please....."

"You want more?"

"Yes."

Nicolai proceeded to pleasure her, and pretty soon she was almost screaming his name. She grabbed his head and pulled it into her. Her hips were moving in unison with his tongue and then she felt it. Her body burst into flames radiating from where his tongue met her flesh.

"Nicolai!"

He held onto her trembling body and her breathing returned to normal. Then he hears sniffles.

"Soja honey don't cry, please, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I shouldn't have done that. Forgive me."

"Oh Nicolai, don't be sorry, I have never felt that in my life. Why doesn't Jimmy love me, why? Am I that unappealing?"

"Soja honey look at me." He stood up.

She looked up at him.

"Does this look like I am not pleased with you?" He pointed to his erection.

"That's because of me? But I didn't do anything!"

"You didn't have to honey and that is appealing in itself."

Nicolai was right, she was extremely responsive but Jimmy wasn't man enough to bring it out of her and he would make sure he did. What he feared is that she would use her new found knowledge with her husband and not him and that made him angry.

He stood her up handed her the panties and showed her the bathroom. When she came out she looked different. She was smiling - at him. How could he send her back to that monster? He needed to talk to Vitori as soon as she left.

"I have to go now, here is your cheque, how many sessions do you think I need?"

"We will play it by ear, you still have lots to learn." He took the cheque. He realised that she felt what he did was part of the session not knowing that if she had merely suggested it, he would have made love to her, and husband be damned. As a professional his job is not to touch his patients but to let them experiment with themselves while he coached. In all his years he never touched a patient until her.

"Okay, I will see you in a few days then. Have a good night."

As soon as she left, he picked up the phone.

"Don't tell me, you're hooked my friend."

"You set this up, I should have known. Vitori she is fantastic, I almost made love to her on the damned couch in my office, I tasted her and she thinks it's part of the session. Jesus Christ how am I supposed to let her go now? I'm gonna kill Jimmy if he touches her again."

"Calm down effendi, yes I set it up, I trust that you will make her happy when, not if she leaves him. I have a plan for him and when you think she is ready to let go, just give me the word."

"I will be forever in your debt. Why did you pick me?"

"And I in yours my friend. I know you Nicolai, you are a true gentleman in every sense of the word, which is what she needs, you don't pretend to be someone you are not and she is perfect for you. I know things were rough after Rosa died but you need love in your life. Bye my friend, keep me updated."

They hung up each one seeing the light at the end of the tunnel.

## **Chapter SEVEN**

Over the next 4 months Nicolai taught Soja everything he knew about sex, love making, erotica, bondage, everything and he would always make sure she had an orgasm while holding back his. He wanted her to ask him to make love to her.

Soja has made up her mind she is leaving Jimmy and she is yearning for Nicolai to make love to her but she is afraid he sees her as a patient.

She would put her theory to the test at the next session.

"Hi Soja, sit."

"Hello Nicolai, how are you?"

"Great actually, business is good and I have some other ventures I plan to get into soon to make more money. How is business for you?"

"Great, Vitori is a God send."

"Yes he is. Now what would you like to do today?"

"This is my last session, I've decided to work it out with my husband. I didn't get married to give up on him."

"You are the patient, if you feel that is best. My offices are open to you if you ever feel the need to come back." Nicolai's voice was strained and deathly low.

Soja's face changed. She thought Nicolai would tell her how he felt and beg her not to go back to Jimmy.

"Is that how you see me Nicolai, as a patient? Do you do the same things with all your patients that you did with me?"

"No, I don't ever go that far. Since falling in love with a patient would be unethical and you were never my patient."

He took every single cheque she had given him and handed them back to her.

"Then why haven't you made love to me Nicolai?"

"You haven't asked honey. Is that what you really want?"

"Yes, more than anything."

"Come with me, I won't do it here."

"Okay."

They left the building together and when they got to his car, he gave her one last opportunity to change her mind.

He opened the car door and she got in. He went to the passenger side and he looked around and for some strange reason he got a feeling they were being watched. He shrugged it off and drove away.

"I am taking you somewhere special."

"Anywhere with you is fine with me."

They drove to Maxwell Top Road to a lovely house in a corner overlooking the coast. He pulled into the car port and led her through a door and onto a balcony.

"This is beautiful, thank you for bringing me here."

"No one has been here before you, I told you it was special and so are you. Would you like a drink?"

"Yes thanks, a sprite would be fine, if you have it."

"Coming right up, enjoy the view."

The view was definitely breathtaking. She could see the vehicles on the main road, lights from various apartments and hotels and she could see boats in Oistins.

She looked around the balcony and just then Nicolai came out with a drink in his hand. He handed it to her and turned to a closet just inside the door they had come through. He took out a thick comforter and a piece of soft plastic. Placing the plastic down and the comforter over it. The balcony floor was actually grass. He sat down and motioned to her to sit next to him. She handed him her drink and sat down, he handed it back to her. She drank slowly and kept her eyes on his.

"One last chance to change your mind honey. I won't ask again."

"I need you Nicolai, don't you want to? Is that why you keep asking me?"

"Soja, if you only knew how much I've wanted to you since I kissed you but I needed you to need me. It had to be your choice and not my influence."

"I'm ready to leave my husband and that will only happen if I commit myself to someone else. Make love to me Nicolai, I promise that I am ready."

He took the now empty glass from her hand and rested it on a table nearby. He decided to delay as much as possible in case she had a change of heart and wanted to back out.

He kissed her slowly, drawing out the passion he knew hid under the misery Jimmy was putting her through. He undressed her and lay her back on the comforter. He caress her entire body, still expecting her to change her mind. She sensed his hesitance.

"Nicolai, I'm not going to change my mind." She shivered as a chilly breeze blew across the balcony.

"Come let me heat you up. Let's go inside."

They got up and Nicolai picked her up and pushed a sliding door with his foot. He lay her on the bed and stood back to take in the sight.

"You are just beautiful Soja."

"Come to me please, don't make me wait anymore."

"Undress me honey."

She fumbles with his shirt, throwing it to the floor. She manages to get his pants undone and off without tripping him over. Now left with only boxers, she pauses. 'Please God let him be okay.' She closes her eyes and pulls them slowly all the way down to his feet, she lets go and he steps out of them. When she opens her eyes she feels a rush of excitement.

"Can I touch you?"

"All yours honey."

Not only does she touch him but she takes him in her mouth.

"Shit Soja wait, oh boy." Nicolai let's out a low groan and before he can pull away, he let's go in her mouth.

## Chapter EIGHT

Soja pulls back and some hits her on her chest. Trying not to show her disappointment, she gets up and asks where the bathroom is.

Nicolai barely able to stand points to the master bathroom.

She washes out her mouth and gargles with a bit of Listerine. She wipes herself off with a tissue and dreadfully makes her way to the bedroom where Nicolai is not seated on the bed, still sporting a scrumptious erection.

Soja eyes him suspiciously.

"Did I teach you that?"

"No, I did some research on my own. I wanted to please you as much as you have pleased me, was I wrong?"

"Wrong? No honey, I am pleased and we are just getting started. Lie down for me."

He lay on the bed next to her and when he touched her between the apex of her thighs she arched her back. He slipped in a finger and whispered what he wanted to do to her. He changed position as he couldn't wait anymore. He knelt between her legs and she spread them to make it easy for him. He reached into his drawer and fished out a condom.

"Wait!" He groaned.

"Please don't use that."

"Do you trust me that much?"

"You have always been upfront with me, if you tell me I can trust you I will."

"Trust me then."

Nicolai put the condom back and closed the drawer. He sat back on his heels.

"What?"

"I love you Soja."

"Oh Nicolai I love you too."

He leaned forward and placed himself at her entrance, he rubbed himself up and down her wetness and as he pushed forward, Soja opened tear filled eyes. Nicolai was in a state of shock.

"Soja? Oh God, how? Give me a second honey. I'm so sorry, the pain will pass."

Soja couldn't answer, she was afraid he would not want her anymore.

"Why didn't you tell me, why did you lie to me?"

"Does it matter?"

"Yes it matters dammit. If you think I am letting you go back to that man you are seriously wrong. Wrap your legs around me. Has the pain subsided?"

"Yes, don't stop now."

"Oh believe me I am not stopping I just don't want to hurt you anymore."

He pushed further inside her and waited for her to get comfortable.

"Oh God Nicolai."

"Yes Soja feel me, I am the only man who is ever going to touch you again do you understand me?"

He didn't wait for an answer. He pulled back slightly, surged forward then settled into a rhythm.

Soja was filled with so much love for the man looking back at her she started crying again.

"No tears now honey, I love you too."

Nicolai didn't hold back, his thrusts were powerful and deep. He filled her up in every sense of the word. Nicolai had mixed emotions, a million thoughts ran through his mind but Soja said his name and moaned in her throat. He couldn't think about anything else now except the feeling of such a gem wrapped around him, meeting his thrusts.

"Soja, come with me honey."

"Oh yes Nicolai, I can't take anymore, make me yours."

That was it, he picked up the pace and truly made her his. The tremors that shook both their bodies left them breathless, sweaty and completely incoherent.

Nicolai recovered first. He eased up and rested on one elbow beside her.

"Tell me Soja, I need to understand how you are a 36 year old married virgin?"

"Jimmy doesn't have much. He has never penetrated me and he doesn't seem to notice nor does he care."

"Soja, I can't let you go home to Jimmy alone. I want you to move in with me as soon as possible. You can rent out your house when he leaves and we have to get you your own car."

Soja broke out in fresh tears.

"Am I moving too fast?"

"No, why didn't I meet you first? Jimmy made me put my car in storage, he wanted me to sell my house and live with his parents but I refused."

"I am not Jimmy honey, you are a free spirit, if I try to tie you down, you will disappear from me. I love everything about you Soja, you are everything I need in a woman, never doubt yourself or my love for you. In time you will understand what makes me the way I am."

"Time! Oh my God, it's morning, I have to go and face Jimmy." She scrambled up and into the bathroom, takes a quick shower, dresses and sits on the bed.

"Tell me you aren't playing me for a fool Nicolai, if this was just a one night stand I need to know now. I can't handle anymore lies."

Nicolai, still naked, walks over to her and sits next to her.

"Soja Meyers, I love you more than I have ever loved anyone in my life. I would never lie to you or try to hurt you in anyway. Now, I will take you home and wait for you. Pack the things you need most and I will get my attorney to serve the papers today."

"Okay, let's go."

Soja is filled with renewed energy, she has it in her mind she will go home, tell Jimmy she is leaving and she wants a divorce and he is expected to find somewhere to live. When she gets home, Nicolai stays in the car. She turns the key in the door and Jimmy is waiting in the living room for her.

"You are a whoring slut, you think I don't know about the good Doctor? Did you sleep with him?"

"That is none of your business Jimmy, you never wanted me, you just wanted someone to pad your portfolio and look good on your arm. This marriage was all about YOU! Six years and you never pleased me once, never even tried. How much longer do you think I would put up with such frustration? I need a real man who loves the woman that I am. A real man who wants to touch me, caress me. A real man who can last more than two minutes and can fill me up so much I can't think. That was NEVER you and you knew this. All you had to do is try and we could have been happy. I HATE YOU!"

Jimmy rushed over to her and grabbed her throat. She pushed against his chest.

"Bitch don't push me."

"Let me go Jimmy, I am leaving and you can't stop me."

"Oh I can stop you alright. If you so much as move one thing of yours I will hire someone to kill the good Doctor." Soja stopped struggling.

"You wouldn't, he is not your problem, I am, leave him alone Jimmy."

"That is up to you bitch. If you leave he dies."

He lets her go and go into the kitchen.

Soja wipes the tears from her face and goes back outside to meet Nicolai, who is now standing up against his SUV.

"I can't go with you, can you please leave me alone. I don't love you."

"What? Did he threaten you, you don't need to go back, just come with me."

"No, I'm not going anywhere with you Dr. Burke. Please leave my property or I will call the police."

She couldn't stop the tears when she looked up and saw the expression on Nicolai's face. Her heart splintered. She wanted to warn him but she finally saw Jimmy for the monster he was.

"Have it your way Mrs. Meyers. I hope you are happy with your decision." Before he turned away his eyes filled with tears and Soja felt what was left of her heart get smashed into a billion fragments..

"I love you Nicolai, please forgive me." He never heard her.

When Soja went back into the house, she made her way upstairs to the bedroom and as she stepped inside the door Jimmy came in behind her.

"Just so you know, if you think about seeing him again, I will have him shot."

For the next week, Jimmy avoided her. Then one night he came in drunk and she knew the routine but Jimmy had other ideas.

"This is legally mine and I want it now."

"No Jimmy you can't!"

He dragged her from the bed and turned her on her stomach. He didn't use a condom this time but still never reaching his goal, he just succeeded in ejaculating just outside of her vaginal lips.

## Chapter NINE

Soja waited until he was snoring loudly and took a shower. Her body was craving Nicolai's touch. She locked the bathroom door and sank into the tub. Memories of their love making flooded her thoughts. She was so caught up with her thoughts she didn't realise she was touching herself and rather than stop she continued and shortly reached her peak. She sank lower into the tub and her body shuddered.

"Oh Nicolai what have I done to you?"

Jimmy quieted down for a while and was actually a bit cordial to her. He even stopped drinking so much. Then everything changed. Two months had gone by since Soja and Nicolai had made love. She was sure she missed her period. She got up one morning and after breakfast emptied the contents of her stomach into the toilet.

Jimmy had already left for work so she called her ob/gyn and made an appointment. True enough she was 2 months pregnant. On the bus back home she tried to figure out how she would tell Jimmy. He would figure out the baby wasn't his, then he would let her go.

She was wrong. Jimmy was furious and she made the mistake of trying to walk away from him and when he followed her to the top of the stairs, he pushed her.

When she awoke, she was in the QEH. She looked around and she saw her Doctor.

"Doc' how did I get here? What happened?"

"Your husband said you fell down the stairs at home."

"Oh god."

"Did he know you were pregnant when he pushed you?"

"Pushed me? You think he pushed me? Pregnant? I'm pregnant. The baby!"

"Safe and sound, seems he or she wants to be around. Now young lady, are you going to report your husband to the police?"

"I can't."

"Soja, I have been your doctor since you were born, I know you have a good head on your shoulders, yet you stay with Jimmy. He isn't a nice person and I think you realise that now. Please let me help you."

"I can't Doc' he threatened the life of someone I love, I can't play with his life."

"Yet you play with your own and that of your child. Does Nicolai know he is going to be a father?"

"How do you know about me and Nicolai?"

"I saw him kiss you on the balcony at the ball and his niece is my baby sitter who can't keep pretty women out of her head. She was telling my wife she saw this beautiful women who comes in to Nicolai's office to see him. When she mentioned your name, I just put two and two together. I won't tell anyone." What he didn't tell her was that he already knew about her from Nicolai. He couldn't stop talking about her and how he felt.

"Oh God, then other people probably know as well. I haven't told him. When you told me this morning, I went home to tell Jimmy. I fell in love with Nicolai and we made love once. Jimmy found out and threatened to kill him if I left. If you only saw the pain in Nicolai's face when I told him I didn't love him. It broke my heart but I can't risk losing him. I have the baby, it will have to be enough for now."

"You do know Vitori is on his way. I will let you tell him what you wish. If you need me, I am here, Jimmy isn't as powerful as you think." He winked at her and left. Just then a screw faced Vitori strolled onto the ward with all the charisma in the world. Women almost fainted at this power house.

He walked up to the bed and Soja began crying before he even spoke.

"Aww Bella come one you know your tears rip me to shreds. Doc told me you were here. Now tell me, how many of Jimmy's bones do you want me to break and where do you want his body parts buried?"

"Don't uncle V, let me deal with this on my own."

"Bella he pushed you down the stairs after he found out you were pregnant. He is at this moment in a bar drinking and bragging. I don't want this for you my sweet. Let me take over for you."

"He..... no, I can't."

"The baby is Nicolai's yes?"

"Yes Uncle, please don't be ashamed of me, I love Nicolai with all my heart."

"The free yourself of Jimmy and go to him."

"I can't Uncle, please let it go."

"Okay Bella but Jimmy only gets once chance to hurt you, if he tries again, I will take his ignorant ass out and feed him to the fish."

He kissed her forehead and left.

Jimmy never even came back for her. She had to take a cab home.

Over the next 6 months, Jimmy made a total change. He never forced himself on her or hit her again.

She was shopping for some extra baby items and as she came out of the store she stares Nicolai in the face. He is with a woman.

"Hello Soja, congrats on the baby."

"Hello Dr. Burke, can I talk to you for a minute. I promise it won't take long."

"Excuse me for a minute." He moved away from the tall dark woman and walked to where Soja was standing.

"What do you want Soja? Is this why you left me?"

"I left because I'm married Nicolai."

"You are just like everyone else, I let you into my life, my home and you broke my heart and expect me to believe that it was because you are married? You didn't know you were married when I took your virginity. You didn't know you were married when you had your lips clamped around me or when I was tasting you in my office. You are nothing but a common slut Soja. Now, I have to get back to my companion at least she knows how to please a man without empty promises. Have a good day." Nicolai turned before he could grab her and kiss her senseless and started walking towards the car when she heard Soja scream behind him. He turned to find her slumped on the floor with blood all over her dress. He ran back to her.

"Shit Soja! How far are you?"

"Seven months. It's too soon, he can't come yet!" She hoped he wouldn't question her time frame.

"I'm taking you to the hospital."

He lifted her from the ground and motioned to the woman to open the back door. Gently placing her inside, he ran back for her bags and put them in the front seat.

"Jenna you drive."

"Okay boss."

"Boss?"

"She's is my assistant, she took over from my niece. You have no right to show jealousy while you are pregnant with Jimmy's baby."

Pain hit her again and she screamed.

"Almost there honey, almost there."

They arrived at the A & E and Nicolai got out, lifted her and kicked his way inside. The nurse buzzed them in and called for a doctor. Soja had passed out and Nicolai was still holding her hand when her doctor came in.

"You gotta do something bro."

"Little brother, I am quite qualified, now go drink some coffee or eat a salad or something."

He let go of her hand as the staff went to work. Soja woke up still in pain and the baby was still in her tummy.

"Well hello mummy to be, the baby is ready, we didn't want to take him so you are going to have to do some pushing."

"Okay, where....."

"Wearing holes in the carpet in the living room, your husband on the other hand is in a bar drinking as usual. Onto happier thoughts. What will you name your son?"

"Nicolas. Can you ask Nicolai to come in here please? Drag him if you have too."

"Perfect. I will go get him, I made him scrub in just in case. Be right back."

"She needs you in there little brother. I don't want to hear what she did or didn't do. She needs someone, she shouldn't go through such a tough time alone, now suck it up and get in there."

## **Chapter TEN**

"Now Soja, on the next contraction give me a good push."

He spoke too soon. Soja let out a moan grabbed Nicolai's hand and began to push.

Ten minutes later, baby Nicholas came into the world kicking and screaming but when he was being checked out he coughed up a bit of blood. It was chaos from then.

"Doc what's wrong?"

"He has an infection, we need to give him blood. I will send someone to find Jimmy to donate. Nicolai, roll up your sleeves and give me some of that powerful red stuff you have."

"Why should I help her? She left me and why are you on HER side?"

"Do you know what the baby's name is?"

"No."

"Nicolas."

"She named her husband's baby after me?"

"No idiot, she named him after his father." Dr. Burke walked away shaking his head.

When Jimmy go to the hospital, he was met with security. Too drunk to protest he slumps into a corner and sleeps.

Dr. Burke knows Jimmy's blood won't work but he was hoping Nicolai would pick up on his numerous hints. He didn't. He had given the blood and left the hospital.

Jimmy wakes up and goes in to see Soja and the baby.

"Hello Jimmy. I am telling you now, stay away from my son."

"You can't tell me what to do bitch. By law he is my son."

"He is sick and you are filthy, get out before you make him worse."

"Fine but I will be back."

Soja got up to check on her son and he was sleeping soundly. He was taken off a few of the machines but he still had an IV in his arm. The Doctor said for a preemie he was responding well to treatment.

"It must be the powerful red stuff." She let the tears fall.

"He will come around honey, for someone so bloody smart, he can be a real dummy at times."

"It's okay Doc' I have my baby, I can't ask for more."

## Chapter ELEVEN

Soja fell into a deep sleep, when she awoke, the baby was gone. She screamed, got up and walked as fast as she could to the nurses' station and asked where her baby was. No one took him. They called security and the police. She called Vitori who showed up ten minutes later.

"We will find him Bella. I am sure Jimmy took him, I will deal with him myself."

Vitori put up a \$500,000 reward for any information leading to the capture of the baby and of course Jimmy saw it and figure hell he could do with 500 large ones. Pretty soon after the news cast, a telephone call came in from a whispered voice telling them where to find Jimmy and the baby, they didn't want any money just lock up Jimmy because he had beaten them.

Jimmy was found and arrested. He shouted to anyone who would listen what a slut his wife was and the baby was a bastard. No one paid any attention. Somewhere while being transported to the station, Jimmy managed to get a hold of a gun and a shoot-out occurred and he was shot in the chest.

Baby Nicolas was growing nicely and at a week old he opened his eyes and smiled at his mother. She was sitting on the hospital bed, holding him in her arms. They let her breast feed after they took the IV out. She felt a rush of emotions as he sucked. He held onto her finger and squeezed.

"Yes my love, I am here. Oh I love you so much, I wish your father were here. I miss him so much. He doesn't love me anymore so it's just me and you kid."

"It doesn't have to be Soja."

She was backing the door and didn't hear him come in.

"Who told you?"

"Told me what?"

"I'm confused. Why are you here?"

"I still love you and if you will have me, we can raise the baby together."

"You are the most dense man I have ever known. Get out Dr. Burke."

Now Nicolai was confused. He turned and left and he met his brother coming down the hall.

"What happened now? I swear every time you see that woman she ends up in tears, if she is crying I will have you barred from this facility for life."

"I told her I loved her and was willing to raise Jimmy's baby with her. She told me I was dense and to get out."

"Geeze, Nicolai, I swear I got all the brain in this family. Let me spell it out in words you can understand. The baby Soja carried for 8 months not seven, gave birth to, the one that Jimmy stole is yours you *idiot*. God, do we have the same parents? Man you're adopted. Oh go away, I agree with Soja. Dense as ever. I just don't believe it."

The last few sentences were uttered while the Doc' was walking away.

Nicolai rushed back into the room to find Soja crying.

He got down on one knee in front of her.

"Soja, I love you, I need you in my life as well as my son. I have a son. Why didn't you tell me? Do you know how many nights I spent walking to your house? How many people I asked how you were? You told me you didn't love me, is that still true?"

"It never was. Jimmy threatened to kill you if I left him, he pushed me down the stairs, I found out I was pregnant that day, that's why he pushed me. Doc' knew, Vitori knew, but I was so afraid for your life, I couldn't take the chance."

"You sacrificed your life for me? Woman, Vitori is not the only one who has power, I just don't use mine anymore. I don't mean to frighten you but I worked for Vitori as a henchman before I got my degrees. He paid to send me to school. Everything he knows I know. I could have taken Jimmy out up-close and personal and he would never even know it was me. I'm sorry you didn't trust me to help you but I am here now and we will raise our son together in a happy home. Will you marry me Soja?"

"Yes I will marry you Nicolai."

"Well it's about damned time." Said two voices from the doorway.

Vitori and Dr. Burke stepped into the room.

"Dr. Burke, what did you mean, when you said Jimmy wasn't as powerful as I thought?"

"Who do you think stitched up all of Vitori, your father and Nicolai's wounds? Vitori and I went to school together. Your father was a henchman as well and he never let it affect your upbringing. Why do you think Vitori was always around when you least expect it. You are protected for life girl but you have to trust 100% that we will come through for you."

## **Eight years later**

"Daddy, I know I promised not to fight but that idiot call my mother a whore so I punched him in the face. Then his mother came talking up to mom and she got punched in the face too."

"Geeze are all the Burkes so violent?"

"Not me daddy, I'm not." Said Nicola their daughter.

"Yeah so says the 6 year old who put bleach in the teacher's tea because she called your father an unfit parent."

"Okay, okay let's all agree when people say things not to hit them, just call Uncle Vitori and get them fired.

"Yeah like that'll work." Said all three at once.

"Oh well I tried. The world will have to know we Burkes stand up for ourselves."

"That we do honey, that we do."

THE END.

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