

Love Me in the Dark - Chapter 31. Under the Rain

RIVER

Krystyn and Journey had been very supportive of my bar gig. Last week, I started my YouTube channel—
it was their idea. Since Krystyn had hundred of thousands of followers on her Instagram, it was a huge help. I uploaded another cover yesterday, and I started to get a couple of thousands of views and hundreds of comments.

“You’re getting famous around here, young lady,” the bar owner Ben said in the dressing room. “I wouldn’t be surprised if you’re leaving the stage so soon.” He was in his seventies. His children were all successful because of Staple Bar, and it had been here for four decades.

‘I’m not going anywhere. I just started two weeks ago. You’re very optimistic, Ben, but thanks.’ I sippe:
my ginger ale. In five minutes, I would be on the stage for my last performance for this week.

‘I don’t know you know the Selik.’ I guessed the Selik siblings had quite a reputation other than the fact that they were running a billion-dollar enterprise.

‘I met one of the Selik back then. Then I got in touched with them a few weeks ago. They’re decent people.’

'I met their old man before he became a billionaire. Koby Selik never changed despite that he was
one of

the most notable people in this city." He nodded. "If you get a record deal, I would be proud of you,
River.

Break a leg tonight."

I smiled. Ben was one of those people who could inspire someone with his words. "Thanks."

Tonight I would have a few songs line up. Some were requested from my last performance, and I
had a

duet with the band vocalist.

My eyes grew wide when I walked on the stage. The place was crowded. It tripled from the usual
customers we had in the last few days.

"What's going on?" I asked the vocalist, Emil.

"Surprise too. Are you ready?"

"Yeah. Let's do it." Tonight, I ditched the guitar.

We started with trending songs. So far, the audience was liking it. They sang along with us. Then
after a

short break, I did a solo with blues by a well-known classic singer.

"Our last song for tonight. Tennessee Whiskey by Chris Stapleton." The crowd went crazy. "Take
this

home with you. I hope you'll like it." When the melody started, that was it. I gave all my heart. It was
my

dad's favorite.

Emil sang the first line. I did the second. We made a few arrangements during our practice, and it

went

perfectly well. The crowd roared up when I did my own runs. They joined us, hands in the air, and

the best

crowd so far. I felt all emotional that I had to close my eyes to enjoy these feelings.

“Thank you.”

The waiter gave me a note. It was written on the order slip ‘Meet me’. My heart raced when the initial

was

K. Selik, even though I knew it was impossible to be him. But the cursive penmanship was from a

guy. It

must be Kai.

It was absolutely Casanova. I found Kai on the table with his two goons. “What brought you to a bar

like

this, Kai?”

He did his signature smile before he hugged me. “I missed you too, the infamous River Rouge.”

‘Really, why are you here? Krys wouldn’t make it, and so as Journey. Seems pretty convenient,

right? But

glad to see a familiar face around here.” Whatever happened in the past, I had to learn to forget and

forget. I learned to like Kai despite our differences. And honestly, he was not that bad.

“And I’m glad that you turned down my offer. I just wanna say that I’m happy that you did not give up

your

passion. The stage suits you, River. You blow me away.”

I tipped my ear to him. “Did I just hear compliments? Did Kai Selik, the playboy CEO of Selik

Enterprise

compliment me?”

He laughed out loud and took something from his suit pocket. It was his phone. “Come here, River.”

He

wrapped his arm around my shoulder. “Smile to the camera.”

“Wait. I’m not ready.”

He raised his phone, angling at us. “Guess what, guys? I just watched this gorgeous woman

performed on

the stage tonight. And let me tell you, she’s amazing. Don’t worry, guys, she’s not mine. Though I

wish she

is because she’s not only beautiful, she’s also smart and talented, but she’s taken.” He shrugged as

if

disappointed, which made me smile. “This is River Rouge. Catch her performance at the Staple Bar

three

times a week.” He ended the video. ‘I will post this on my Instagram.’”

“Oh, my god. Did you just say those—?” I covered my mouth. My eyes widened.

“So what? That’s the truth.” He busied himself with his phone.

“Anyway, thanks.”

“River?” someone called me from behind. When I turned around, I met a guy around my age with

shoulder

dark blonde hair smiling at me. “Adam Stance.” He held out his hand.

“He’s taken, man. Sorry.” It was Kai.

I wanted to roll my eyes. I shook Adam’s hand. “River Rouge.”

‘I know. I’d been watching you perform for two days. You’re talented, and I like your voice. I watched
your
covers on YouTube, too.”

“Thank you. That means a lot.” I genuinely smiled at him.

‘I’m also a YouTuber. I do covers and invite a few guests over.” He gave me his card. “Check me
out, and
I’d love to cover Whiskey Tennessee with you for my next video.”

I took the card shakily. “Really?”

“Yeah. I think—no, I’m sure five million views would be easy in a week.”

My eyes widened. Wow. Who was this guy?

“Call me if you’re interested. Nice to meet you up close. Mr. Selik,” he regarded. I wasn’t aware Kai
was.
still standing beside me.

“What do you think?” I asked Kai.

“You wanna grow viewership? I think that’s a pretty idea. Just check some legalities before you jump
into
opportunities. I’ll let one of my lawyers help you out with that.”

‘I haven’t gotten anything, Kai.”

“You’re gonna need it very soon, River. Trust me.” His confidence boosted my self-esteem.

“Thanks.”

“Anything for our girl.”

My smile broke out. Our girl. I felt special even though his brother left me for good. I hadn’t heard

anything

from him anymore. I still met Conner once in a while, checking up on me. The rest was just history.

I wasn’t aware the rain was pouring heavily outside, which reminded me of him. I didn’t even bring

an

umbrella with me. I took off my coat and used it over my head as I ran towards my car in the parking

area.

I shivered as the wind breeze gushed through me almost knocked me off. My coat flew like a kite.

Thankfully, I had it in my grip.

Once I reached my car, I unlocked it. I shivered again, goosebumps erupted on my skin, but it wasn’t

from

the cold and rain. The hair stood up on my nape as I felt like someone was watching me. I quickly

entered

and locked my car. I was soaking wet, but I managed to enter the key to the keyhole in one take.

“God!” I jumped inside before I could start the ignition. My heart jackhammered to the knock on my

window. I squeezed my eyes shut and mentally prayed. No. Not him again.

Another knock.

I opened my eyes and looked out of the window. My jaw dropped. I tried not to widen my eyes, but I

failed.

I gulped. I wasn't aware I was already rolling my window down until the gush of wind hit my face.

"My god," it was my shaking voice. At least I thought it came from me. "Krew?"

He was soaking wet. Water dripping from his head down to his neck. I ventured my gaze down to his

white

shirt was sticking to his ripped biceps and chest. He looked like in a photoshoot for a shirt brand commercial. I blinked fast as I raised my gaze to meet those gorgeous eyes that I terribly missed.

He leaned over the window, and he was smiling, but there was something in his smile that made my

heart

race wild, my inner muscles clench, and there were excitement, longing, and admiration brewing in

those

eyes.

"What are you doing here?" It required a great deal of thought to say something. He completely

surprised

me and caught me off guard by showing up with that smile.

'I was around the neighborhood.'" He swallowed. Oh, he'd been here. For how long? But he never

came to

visit me. He scratched his head. "Fine. I came to see you perform. I-I just—" The thunder roared.

The

lightning strike.

"Oh, my god! It's raining." I rushed to unlock my car and pushed the door opened. Crap. It should be

the

passenger seat, but I was cramming and clumsy. "Get in."

'It's alright. I'm wet. I can't soak your car seat.' He seemed calm, still smiling down at me.

"No. It's okay. I couldn't care less about my freaking old car. It's raining, Krew. Please? Before you—

" I

stopped and stared at him. I found myself pushing the car door, climbing outside. He was not scared anymore.

My gaze was still meeting his. "Krew?"

"You're gonna be wet."

"Screw the wet. I mean the—Oh, my god." I launched myself into him, wrapping my arms around him

as I

squeezed him into the tightest hug I'd ever given to someone. I pressed my face against his chest, listening to his heartbeat. I closed my eyes when he wrapped his arm around me, kissing my hair.

"You're

okay. You're not scared anymore."

"You made me."

I pulled away before I got too carried away. I looked at him again, because honestly, this was the

most

unrealistic way to meet him. It might sound so cliché and romantic, but we were both started to shiver.

'If you don't wanna get inside the car. You should stay out of the rain before you get sick.'

"Um, River."

"Yeah." The anticipation was killing me.

"Would you like to have dinner with me?"

My heart stopped beating. "What?" I was so stupid.

"Do you have any plan tomorrow night?"

"Yes."

"Oh. I see." His face fell, swallowing uncomfortably.

I smiled. "I mean, I heard you the first time. And yes, I'd love to have dinner with you. And no, I don't

have

any plan tomorrow night, but now I guess I already have a plan." I laughed out loud at my babbling

and

stupidity. "I should stop talking, really."