

Love Me in the Dark - Chapter 35. Photographs

RIVER

It hurts. Finally, I felt excruciating pain. I didn't feel numb anymore.

I was hurt, and it was clear that Krew didn't care about me, in contrast to how he said those sweet

words

when we were together.

I thought I was terrible with men. I gave up.

Thankfully, my girls were the best. For the past three days, I managed to divert my attention from my stupid broken heart to what I loved doing. I managed to adjust my time. I did my gigs at Staple Bar at night, then in the afternoon, I did covers and posted them on my growing subs YouTube channel.

Right now, it was my recording for Whiskey Tennessee cover with Adam with his vast ten million subscribers. I hit fifty thousand subs yesterday and just posted my last endorsement picture a few

minutes

ago to my twenty-five thousand Ig followers.

Sadly, I hadn't heard anything from Krew since that day.

I let myself focus on the blessings I had. After six hours, we wrapped up the recording.

'This only needs editing. Then tomorrow, it would be live on YouTube. Are you excited?' Adam

asked me

as he offered me a cocktail.

'Thrilled. Can't wait. Thank you for believing in me.' I smiled, even though my heart was bleeding

deep

inside. But life must go on, and if I had to live my life without Krew, then I had to learn to live it that way.

“You’re an amazing singer with an amazing voice, River. Why haven’t you done this before?”

‘Lum, I stopped when my mother passed away. When my dad became a recluse. I stopped listening

to

music, stopped playing. It was the darkest day of my life. I felt like everything fell apart. My world

became

black and white. Then I had an issue with a powerful man. It ruined me in the end. Two months ago,

I met

this man again. He taught me a lot of things and pulled me out of that dark life I’d been in for years.

He

made me play songs. That’s how it started.”

“You have an amazing talent that you should not keep to yourself. Share it with everyone who loves

to

hear it. Music changes people’s lives, River. You inspired a lot of people, even if you have no idea. I

didn’t

just do covers and posted them to earn money. I do this because I feel like I’m making people

happy.”

“You’re amazing, Adam. Thank you.”

“Thanks for the trust. Have you tried writing your own?”

I paused for a while, staring at him. He did believe in me. “Yeah. It’s just like a personal diary. The

lyrics

need a lot of polishing.”

'Every songwriter starts with a crappy love story or life story, River. Play it for me. I wanna hear it.'

I shook my head, laughing. "No way. It's terrible."

'I still believe in you. We could work it out together. I don't need credit. I just want to help you. The

first

time I heard you sang, I knew at that moment that you have a future in this industry. Your parents

would

be proud of you, River. Never take for granted the opportunity handed to you. Whatever you're

dealing

with right now, note that the storm will pass. You have to be strong to face trials on your own."

"How did you become a man full of wisdom?"

"So can I buy you a drink? We need to celebrate our awesome cover."

I looked down. "I-I can't."

'I'm not asking you out. Just a celebration between a good partnership and a good friendship. I know

about you and Krew Selik."

"What?" I tried my best not to look hurt and shock.

'It's all over the social media.'

"Oh? Yeah. But we're kinda in need of some space right now." Why couldn't I say that we broke up?

I

guessed because I was stupid and still hoping there was still a chance for us.

He offered me a guitar. "Play a few lines of your song."

I scrunched my nose. "It's terrible. I'm ashamed to even play for you."

'Just do it. I won't judge because it's still raw. Maybe I could help. Come on, pretty girl.'

I might need his help. "I'm stuck with the second paragraph. I don't know if it's the lyrics or the melody." I

strummed and sang nervously.

When he stared at me, my cheeks burned. "That bad, huh? I think I stick to covers." I put down the guitar.

'Try changing D to C minor. For some people, the piano made it easier. Do you play?'

"Not that good. But I'll try to change it. Thank you. Raincheck for the drink? You can always buy me at the

Staple." I hugged him.

Even if there was no chance for Krew and me, I still met Krys. I warned her not to talk about her brother if

she didn't want me to walk out. She respected my decisions. She knew I was hurting, and she apologized

a couple of times even though she had nothing to do with it. Kai also called me three days ago and told

me that he had a huge fight with Krew. Other than that, I didn't know what happened to him.

I had a feeling that Krew wouldn't be here in his penthouse, or else I shouldn't come over to take the things I left before we broke up. He must be back to his sanctuary. I searched for his comments on my

post, on his siblings, but it came out nothing as if he just blocked everything out of his life.

He made me worry, but I knew he was tough and could take care of himself just right even before I came

into his life.

I left my notebook where I wrote my lyrics in his office. I tiptoed inside his massive living room, only

to skid

to a halt.

“Who are you?” I asked a woman as old as my mother.

“You must be Ms. River.”

“Yeah, and you are?”

“Cynthia. I just did groceries for Mr. Selik.”

“Where is he?”

“You’re dating him. Should you not know where he is?” I wanted to punch her in her nose right now.

“How did you get in?”

‘His bodyguard Lake sent me.’

“Okay. I just want to get my notebook. I’ll be outta here in a jiffy.”

“You can leave the key on the table on your way out.”

I glared at her. My anger was brewing. “Excuse me?”

“Mr. Selik has never been scarier since I worked for him. You must have upset him so much. Did you

cheat on him? It’s not that any of my business, but he is nothing but a good employer. He’s a nice

man

and not to mention generous, too.”

'I think you should know your place, old woman. You don't have the right to tell me what to do. Just
do

your job, okay? When you're done, you know your way out."

She flinched. "Okay. No wonder Mr. Selik looked like could snap someone's neck in a heartbeat."

"What's that supposed to mean?"

"You're scarier."

I glared, and I might have growled in anger. I walked away before I could wring her little neck. I

entered

the office and searched for my note where I remembered I left it, but the sitting area was clean. I

checked

the fireplace. Maybe Krew burned it, or the cleaning crew threw it already.

Oh, my god. I hope not.

I checked it in the bin. It wasn't there. There were a few papers, but that was not my notes. I opened

some

unlocked drawers, searched under the desk, table, and chairs, I found no luck finding it.

"Where the hell are you?" I was berating myself whether to check on the drawer chest. I might be

invading

his privacy. There could be important documents that I didn't want to touch.

I went back to the door and looked around to make sure that no one was watching me. I sure as hell

there

was no hidden camera in his office, or I would be damned for what I did to him on his chair. I cringed

and

blushed at the same time.

I looked at the door and counted my steps toward his drawer. I pulled the first drawer. I was right.

Valuable

documents were labeled with company names. I tried not to read them as I pushed the drawer close.

Then I moved to the second one, they were in the same arrangements, folders of files, then the third,

and

I still did not find my notes.

The last drawer was the heaviest one. Thanked, God. I found my notes, but something caught my

eye—

manila envelopes labeled in dates. I grabbed a few out. A few dated four months ago. My curiosity

took it

to the next level as I grabbed another stack of envelopes that dated last year.

Every envelope was specified by month. It wasn't bulky, but I was sure something was inside. I knew

I

wasn't supposed to be sneaking around other people's business, but there was something in this

that got

me itching to check this out. I carefully peeled off the seal and poured out the contents. My brows

furrowed in confusion. They were images taken from a distance.

"What the hell is this?" I asked myself. My heart started racing for some unknown reasons.

Goosebumps

erupted all over my skin, and I felt like someone just threw a bucket of cold water over my head. As I

looked at the pictures one by one, I noticed the place was familiar to me.

'T-this can't be. No way. He didn't do this." It just confirmed my suspicions when I saw a familiar

physique

in one of the photographs.

I gasped as I stared in horror. "He'd been watching me?" I grabbed all the envelopes, spilled the contents out, and spread them all over the floor. I was already crying, but it didn't stop me from spreading these images.

It all came to my sense. These pictures were in me there, taken from a distance in all the places I went, including my apartment. He'd been there all this time, all these months and years. Four years. He'd been stalking me.

Krew has been stalking me. He's also my stalker?

I found myself kneeling, surrounded by these photographs, and I looked at them as horrified with thousands of images of me.

"You're not supposed to see that."