

## Love Me in the Dark - Chapter 9. Quit

RIVER

“Yet you told me there was no evidence. When I asked you if he ever hurt you, your answer was no.

Why

the fuck did you have to lie to me?” His voice was harsh and thick with anger, but something flashed

in his

eyes that somehow surprised me—quilt. Why would he feel guilty about something I lied about?

Appalled, I wrapped my arms all over me with a sick feeling in the pit of my stomach. He’d already

seen

the bruises, but it felt like I was protecting myself from deep scrutiny. “No one would ever believe

me.”

‘I would if only you were straight and honest from the very beginning.’ With eyes like razor blades,

he

glared at me.

“No one saw he did this to me.” I gulped as I broke my gaze. I knew he wanted to help, and that was

th

reason why I was here, yet I was the one who made this difficult for both of us. I felt ashamed,

helpless,

and weak that I had not felt like this in a long time.

He let out a deep sigh. “I will do anything in my power to put this to an end, River. You just have to

trust

me and help me to stop him. What he did to you is not something you should take for granted. He

hurt you

for fuck sake. What's with you and that lunatic that you're still protecting him? He might also need help.

Don't wait until it becomes his hobby; stalking and hurting women because you choose to keep your mouth shut." Like always, he had a point. "How would I even going to help you if you, the victim would not cooperate with me?"

"You have no idea how much I wanted to end this. I am haunted in my sleep. I lost my job, Krew. I left my friends, my life back there because I was terrified for Journey and myself. I am here with you, barging into your life when the last thing you wanted was our paths to cross again after what I did to you. I just..."

I sighed exasperatingly. "I don't know why the first person—"

'It doesn't matter now. I'm here to help, and you're here with me. I mean, you're safe here in my house, but you can't hide from him for the rest of your life. You have to face him one way or another."

'I know. I couldn't be any grateful for doing this." I smiled timidly as I looked at him.

'I haven't done anything yet."

"Anyway, why are you looking for me?"

He blinked away the emotion in his eyes. "I'm going to see my brother."

"And how I don't know anything about this?"

'Now you know. Just get dressed before you get colds. Meet me in the office.' He dashed out of the  
room.

I felt a rush of warmth in my chest. I didn't know why. If I had not known he disliked me, I would have thought he cared about me, but on the other hand, he didn't want to add to his full plate if I got sick.

It's  
time to put my girl's pants on.

I went to his office after I put on a shirt and shorts. I was about to say something when I noticed him  
in a  
white crisp shirt and dark pants. His hand was in his pocket as he talked to someone over the  
phone, and

I got a chance to see his back, especially his pants-clad thighs and his round ass.

I shook that image away. "You could hang a painting or two on your wall, you know." Then I noticed  
his  
duffel on the couch.

He was ready to leave. How about me?

"You're here."

"And you're leaving?" I slumped my ass to the couch. Crap! Now I sounded like a clingy wife.

'I told you I have to see my brother.'

'Is he okay?'

"Yeah. He said he needs to see me."

'Is it about me being here?'

He shook his head. "No. It's personal."

'I see." I pursed my lips.

"What's that supposed to mean?" His dark brow arched as he glanced at me.

'I mean, you hired me to be your assistant, yet I don't know your schedule. I didn't even arrange a

flight

for you. And when you leave, what should I do here at your house since my boss is too reticent to

share

his business meetings with me?"

'I said, it's personal. I'll be back as soon as I'm finished dealing with my brother." That's it? How long

exactly?

I rose from my seat. "I know you would come back, but—"

'I will leave cash and my card with you. You can purchase anything online or order food. Use my

name or

fake name. Whatever."

I closed my eyes for a moment. Was I overthinking this or what? "I don't need to purchase anything

or

order food, Krew. I'm capable of feeding myself. I just feel like you don't really need me." Crap. "I

mean,

you don't really need my assistance. I've never felt more useless than today."

"Your job is to stay put. But on the other thought, you're right. I don't need you."

Too stunned to think straight, I stared at him, perplexed, until everything clicked together.

“Call me if you need anything,” he added.

I ignored the ache in my chest. “Then why did you hire me?”

‘Because you needed a job,” he answered without faltering.

I crossed my arms over my chest. “Then I quit.”

“Okay.” What the hell? I was expecting a little dismay, but I was the one who was disappointed.

Clearly, he

didn’t need my service. “I have to go. Call me if you need anything,” he repeated as he took his bag.

He

was going to leave me alone in this freaking massive house.

My stomach did a nosedive. “You can’t leave me here. I’m coming with you.” As difficult as I already

was, I

stomped my feet and followed him towards the door. “Krew!”

“What?” He stopped, his eyes blazing with displeasure. “I would be late, River. There’s only one

flight

leaving for New York today, and I couldn’t afford to miss it.”

“What about me?”

“You’d be safe here, and you won’t be alone. Garcia is gonna be here twenty-four seven until I come

back.”

Who the hell is Garcia? “Just let me come with you, please? I’ll stay in the hotel while you’re with  
your  
brother.”

He groaned, squeezing his eyes shut. He breathed deeply before he looked at me. “Look, woman.

Don’t  
test my patience. I did what my sister has asked me to do. I’m doing my best to help you, but I can’t  
babysit you for days. You’re a grown-up, at least behave like one. Do whatever you want as long as  
you  
stay at home. Watch Netflix, do shopping, but no partying in my house, got it? You can paint your  
toenails,  
dye your hair, for all I care. When this is over, you can go back to your old life, but right now,  
anything you  
do is on my terms. While I am helping you, I still have works that need to be done. I have businesses  
and  
a company to run, I have meetings to attend. I have a family I need to see. If you can’t stay here  
alone,  
then I can ask someone to help you with catching your ex. There are counselors and advocates to  
help  
you cope with this until I put your stalker in jail.”

With wide eyes, I gulped. I started to get it now. He was struggling with my presence in this little  
sanctuary.

I was the one who was invading his life, his privacy, and I was pushing him to his limit. I had not  
thought of  
how much I was a burden to him since I arrived until this moment. I was so dumb not to realize this  
sooner

because I was the stupidest person who had ever lived. I had to bite my bottom lip to not burst in

front of

him when my chin started to tremble.

'This is the safest place for you, River. I can't take you with me. I would be with Kai at the office all

the

time. It would just ruin my plan of ending this stalking very soon if he sees us together."

I nodded even if it was hard. I wanted this to be over too.

"Good."

I followed him to the hallway until we reached the massive living room.

"Garcia, this is River Rouge. We discussed it over the phone earlier about the details. If anything

occurs

while I'm away, call me immediately." He then faced me. "River, Jonas Garcia. He will stay with you

while

I'm in the city. Don't worry he's very much capable of keeping you safe. Just don't be a pain in the

ass."

'Hi, I won't give you a hard time. I promise." I regarded Garcia with a tight smile.

'Miss Rouge." He was in his forties, shorter a few inches than Krew, but he looked more dangerous

in his

dark suit and goatee, and he only gave me a small nod.

After two hours with Aaren, I learned a few tricks. He also gave me pepper spray and a taser. I'd like

to

think that was Krew's idea to give those to me. My body was sore, but everything he taught to me

was

worth the pain and sweat.

Defeated and more pathetic than ever, I went back to my room and rethought what I did for the past  
four  
days. I hadn't done anything right. I knew that sometimes I had trouble making decisions, but for the  
last  
few days, I was worst. I just hoped this would be over soon so that I would be gone and out of his life  
for  
good.

Is that really what I want? I had not thought that far.

I must have slept longer than a nap. Someone was calling my name outside the room, which I  
recognized  
was Garcia.

I got out of bed, still half asleep.

'Ms. Rouge, I just want to check up on you if you're okay,' he said followed by another knock.

I opened the door, rubbing my eyes. "Hi. I must have fallen asleep."

'Dinner is ready. I reheat the meal Mr. Selik kept in the fridge.'

"Would you mind joining me?"

'I had dinner, Ms. Rouge. It's nine in the evening.'

My eyes grew big. "What? Are you sure your time is correct?"

I picked up my phone on the nightstand. Garcia was right. "Did I sleep that long?"

"See you down, Ms. Rouge."



A few minutes later, I was eating alone at the long dining table. Honestly, I missed my rude and  
asshole  
boss. I was still hurt about what he said this morning, but he was right all this time. He had a life  
before I  
came, intruding into his life. He was just so upfront and rude sometimes. Okay, most of the time, but  
it hurt  
a lot like someone just slapped the truth right to your face.

“Garcia, I’m heading back to my room. You could use some rest, too. Good night.”

“Good night, Ms. Rouge.”

I replied to Krys’ message as soon as I got back to bed.

River: Sorry for the late reply. I slept all day.

Krys: I was with Krew earlier. He must have given you a hard time.

Her words put a little smile on my lips.

River: He’s nothing but kind.

If his rudeness was not counted.

Krys: Glad that you two get along alright. But I know you would not tell me if he’s driving you crazy. I  
know

my brother. He’s just been through a lot. Just give him some time. He’ll come around.

River: What do you mean?

Krys: Not my story to tell. He’ll open up when he’s ready.

River: Sorry. NOMB.

Krys: Just checking up on you. BIF no news on that creepy guy.

River: Sure Krew is working on something.

I wanted to ask her when Krew was coming back, but I held that urge when I remembered what he  
said to  
me earlier today.

Krys: I'm just a call away if you need anything. TTYL

River: GIC. TFFT. Xoxo

It became my pass time to double-check the doors and windows. I checked my pepper spray and  
taser  
under my pillow once again before I closed my eyes.

My muscles were burning. I stirred. I was half-conscious when I felt as if someone was watching me.

I  
froze. The hair on my nape rose as an icy sensation chilled my bones.

Goosebumps crawled up all over my skin. My heart raced. My breathing quickened. I was too scared  
to  
open my eyes to see who would possibly be right in front of me, but my body betrayed me as I  
started to  
shiver uncontrollably. Whoever was watching me right now, he must have noticed that I was aware  
of his  
presence—that I was awake.