

## The Devil's Love For The Heiress by LiLhyz Chapter 16

### Chapter 16: The Compartment Pendant

"Oh, my god, Kate? What are you doing up so early?" Samantha called, alarming Kate in her seat. She had come from the kitchen to get a pitcher of water, and upon her return, she heard noises from their second floor family area.

Kate turned to Samantha with a pout on her lips. She responded, "Hi, mom." She pointed to the television screen and revealed, "I'm watching Carlos' interview. The French open had its second press conference, and I wanted to see him."

Briefly gazing at the television, Samantha sighed. She placed the water pitcher on one table and sat next to Kate. She embraced her from one side, saying, "You really love him."

With one heavy gasp, Kate admitted, "Yes, mom." She brought her knees up to her chest and wrapped them in her arms, saying, "I can't help it, especially since I know he is back." "Well, I hope that this is it for both of you. I hope there is still a chance, but wait, did you already clarify with him about Hailey McKenzie?" Samantha asked, her head snapping at Kate.

Kate simply shrugged and responded, "Carlos said they aren't in a relationship –"

"Did you ask him about the incident in New York when you saw them kiss?" Samantha inquired.

Kate shook her head and replied, "Each time we talk, there seemed to be insufficient time. And no, I failed to ask him about that because that would be admitting I was even there! And that's not going to happen."

"But he said they are not in a relationship, and I believe him, mom." Kate frowned and said, "Come to think of it, before the kiss happened, Carlos seemed confused on stage with what Hailey was talking about, and after the kiss, I did not get to see his reaction anymore; I just... left."

**Kate told her mother about how** she bumped into Hailey and how the same woman suggested she had a complicated relationship with Carlos. She defended, "If what she said was true, she **was giving me rather too** much info, don't you think?" "Or trying to make you believe that was the case," Samantha supplied. She shook her head and said, "Well, in cases of competition, you simply need to eliminate the rival. Simple!" "And how do you suppose I do that?" Kate asked, amused at her mother's suggestion. "By winning Carlos' heart all over again," Samantha suggested. She winked at Kate and said, " **Don't worry, mommy** is going to help you."

**“Mister Ronaldo, we see you often holding your pendant and kissing it before your matches. We’ve always wondered, is that for good luck?” Before they could tackle Samantha’s suggestion, the mother and daughter’s heads turned in the television’s direction. A news reporter asked Carlos a question.**

On the screen, they saw Carlos looking down at his golden chain necklace. He gripped a visible pendant and said, “Yes, this pendant pushes me to do my best. It is... my inspiration.” “Yeah, I noticed him often holding on to that pendant before his every match, too. **Sometimes he would just hold it, and sometimes, he would kiss it. Probably for good luck,” Samantha remarked, her eyes remaining glued to the screen.**

“Yes, I noticed it too.” Kate frowned and speculated, “But I wonder what it is?”

“Is that pendant from someone special? Perhaps a woman in your life?” Another reporter asked.

The camera focused on Carlos’ smile. He said, “This is for a special woman.” He paused and soon added, “My mother.”

Looking down at the pendant, he described, “As you can see, it’s a compartment pendant, a little bulkier than a locket, but smaller in dimension. Inside is my mother’s favorite ring. I always keep it with me to remember our family and my father’s aspirations. For this ring was a gift from my father during her fortieth birthday.”

“The ruby ring?” Samantha sought, her brow raising as she tried to dig through her brain. “I remember how Carlos cherished that ring.” Leaning back, Samantha added, “Though, did you catch how he said it is for a special woman?” “Mom? It isn’t the ruby ring, though,” Kate suggested.

“What do you mean, Kate?” Samantha asked.

Pointing to the TV, Kate explained, “That could not possibly be the ruby ring that belonged to aunt Agnes because... Carlos pawned it.”

Samantha’s face **turned into** a full frown. She responded, “What do you mean, Kate? Why would he pawn it? He loved that ring so much. It was the only valuable reminder he had of his mother?”

“He... um. He pawned it in high school, mom,” Kate repeated. “And he... he probably forgot about it because I found the receipt in his room. He placed it in one of his old bags, which he left behind.”

“Oh, my god.” Samantha could not hide her dismay. She said, “I used to remember how he cried for many days after Agnes’ death. He kept holding on to that ring. Why would he pawn it, Kate? Why didn’t you stop him?”

“He did not tell me right away, mom. When I found out, he already pawned it. He promised me he would get the ring back,” Kate revealed. “That was why he started getting a part-time job at the tennis club.”

“I tried convincing him that I repurchase it, but he never gave me the receipt,” Kate added. “And over time, I forgot about it. Then ... he left.”

“But you found the receipt? Let’s buy it back. Your father can trace it.” “Mom, calm down.” Kate held Samantha’s hand and said, “I bought it back. It’s just that it had been such a long time, and it slipped my mind. The ring is in my gift box for Carlos. I had always hoped he would come back, and I would give it back to him.” Pointing back to the TV, Kate said, “So whatever is dangling in Carlos’ necklace is not aunt Agnes’ ruby ring.”

“Then, what could it be?” Samantha asked. “I don’t know, mom. When Carlos returns, I will be sure to ask him... among my long list of questions,” Kate belatedly replied.

For seconds, they were silent, merely contemplating. They watched as Carlos answered more questions about the tennis matches, and only after the press conference ended did Samantha return her regard to Kate.

“Kate, you still did not answer my question. What in the world was Carlos thinking, pawning such a valuable ring, one that had sentimental value? We provided him with everything?” Samantha thought, still unable to accept how Carlos had made such a decision in the past.

“Mom, he always felt he owed us so much, especially you and dad.” Kate looked down, recalling how she found out about the ring. “Do you remember losing that Gucci scarf you love so much?”

“Ah, yes? And then Carlos bought me the exact same design!” Samantha exclaimed, smiling from ear to ear. “God, I love that scarf. Which reminds me, I’m going to use it next week. It was a limited edition design, and I bet, today, it’s already worth two or three thousand dollars

Samantha choked on her words. She turned to Kate with an awakening. Stuttering, she asked, “Did he – did he?”

“Yes, mom. He pawned the ring so he could buy you the same scarf on your birthday,” Kate revealed with a sad expression. “The school sponsored him to join a tournament that time in Monroe, and the Gucci store there had the last piece of the same design. Carlos bought it for a thousand dollars. He also pawned the ring in Monroe. That was why he probably never got it back, because he didn’t have time to return to the same city.”

Right then and there, Samantha howled in tears. She said, “Why would he do that, Kate? Why would he trade the ring for my scarf?” “Mom.” Kate embraced her mother. She soothed her by caressing her back. Tears stung her eyes, feeling her mother’s sentiments. She replied,

“Because your happiness was also his. He was always very grateful to you and dad for giving him a home.” Sniffing her tears away, Kate answered, “To him, it was the least that he could do. And you always talked about that scarf.”

Samantha kept sobbing, just broken-hearted at having learned of the truth. Kate maintained to hold her mother, and after successfully soothing her, she assured her, “Mom, enough. I repurchased the ring. Kyle helped me trace the new owner; thank goodness, she was a mere jewelry collector. At the right price, we got the ring back.” “Oh, my goodness. Carlos is just such a good boy,” Samantha remarked. She was carelessly wiping the tears with her fingers when she demanded of Kate, “You better make him my son-in-law, Kate... or else!”

Kate leaned back. Her eyes grew wide as she asked, “Or else, what, mom?” Samantha thought about it, but after finding no alternative, she declared, “There is no or else! It is a must!”

Kate wound up laughing at her mother’s demands. She was at it so hard that she snorted as she clutched her stomach. “Gosh, mom. I really love you. You are the most supportive mother in the world... Though, I wish it were that easy.”

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In the morning, Kate arrived at the dining area relatively late. She still had dark circles around her eyes, plus the added eye bags. It was all thanks to the crying she and her mother did in the wee hours.

As soon as she took her seat, she immediately noticed how her mother wore the scarf Carlos bought her. Kate leaned back and laughed. She observed, “Mom? It’s not cold in here.” “Oh, I know. I just want to wear the scarf. I should cherish it more often since my son-in-law gave it,” Samantha claimed.

Ethan, who was sitting next to Samantha, frowned. He asked, “Andrew?”

Andrew was Kate's brother-in-law in London. He was the only son-in-law in the family. Thus, when Samantha declared another one, Ethan fell confused. Laughter filled the air, following Ethan's reaction. Soon, however, Kate clarified, "The scarf came from Carlos. Remember dad?" "Ah, yes," Ethan acknowledged. "And when will Carlos be my son-in-law? Is there a deadline?"

Yet again, the ladies giggled. It was Samantha who offered, "Don't worry, Kate. Let me help. I'm going to be mommy cupid and your dad?" Samantha turned to Ethan, her finger waving at him, "Your dad will not intervene."

"It's not my field of expertise. So, by all means," Ethan gave in. "Besides, I know a cupid's **arrow is very effective.**"

Kate laughed. She acknowledged, "And you **are a testament** to that, dad." "Oh, no." Ethan corrected. "I did not need a cupid's arrow to fall in love with your mother." "Aww, you guys," Kate grumbled. Seeing her parents peck on the lips, she added, "Get a **room!**"