

Love Hate Relationship

Chapter ten

Six months later, Sasha was in her office when her phone rang, she looked at the screen and discovered it was her mother in law that was calling, she picked it up "hi mom."

"Sasha dear, where are you?" Vanessa's gentle and graceful voice was anxious this time.

Sasha instinctively knew something was wrong and her heart pounded "I'm in the office, is something wrong?"

She heard Vanessa sigh "Come to the hospital, Michael had an accident."

The first reaction she got was too freeze, her brain stopped for a while before picking up, she tried so hard to understand what she just heard "hello, Sasha did you hear me?" She heard Vanessa asking on the other side of the call.

"A...a...accident?"

"Yes, I was shocked when I heard it too" Vanessa sniffed "just come to Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center, I'm here already" she hung up.

Sasha stared at her phone, and just as if finally getting back to her senses, she sprang to her feet immediately, she picked up her car keys and purse before running out of her office. She passed Janet who was on her to her office in a flash and Janet had to turn with a "hey" but Sasha didn't even stop neither did she turn.

She got to the parking lot and got into her car, she ignited the engine and pulled out of the parking lot all the while thinking on what she just heard, Michael had an accident? How in the world did Michael have an accident? What exactly happened? But no matter the kind of question she threw at herself, she can't seem to answer a single one.

In her haste to get to the hospital, Sasha beat a red light and an officer followed her immediately, she heard the siren and looked through her rearview mirror and cursed. She decided to stop so as not to make the matter worse. She parked at a corner and the officer stopped before her, she

watched him through her side mirror as he got out of his car and walked to her car unhurriedly.

Sasha felt like getting out of her car and dragging the man forward but she can't, if she doesn't want to be charged as hitting an officer of the law, she rolled her eyes at that. Finally, someone knocked on her window and she hurriedly wound down and smiled at him "hey there officer."

"You were speeding and you passed the red light" he said directly.

Sasha was nodding "I know, I was at the wrong, but you won't blame me" she looked at him and smiled helplessly "I just received a call that my husband had an accident. I wasn't thinking straight."

"You did not drink and drive?" He asked with a doubt clear on his face.

Sasha shook her head vehemently "in broad daylight? Goodness no, I was just in a haste to meet him at the hospital. You should understand the pain of a wife receiving a call that her husband is in the hospital right? I wasn't thinking straight and I apologize. It won't happen again."

"What's your name?"

"Sasha" she said nodding "Sasha Brown."

Something flickered in the officer's eyes "Mrs Brown, I didn't know Mr Brown is in the hospital."

"It just happened" she smiled weakly.

The officer nodded "okay, I will let it pass this time. Don't speed again if you don't want people to visit you in the hospital."

Sasha smiled cause she knew he had already forgiven her "I won't, you have my word."

"I wish Mr Brown good health."

"Thank you" she said sincerely and the officer nodded before walking back to his car, Sasha waited until he drove off before she stepped on her accelerator.

Sasha arrived at the hospital and asked about Michael, she was told that he was still in the emergency room and she left. She saw Vanessa sitting on the

chair in the lobby, her head was in her hands and she looked so lost. Her father in law was pacing to and fro in front of the huge doors, the red light was still on, showing that the operation was still ongoing "mom" she walked over to Vanessa in quick steps who looked up when she heard her voice.

A smile spread on her face and Sasha could see that she had been crying and both her eyes and nose were red. She raised her hand and beckoned Sasha over who sat beside her and hugged her. Vanessa caressed her hair and patted her, more like soothed her. When Sasha finally released her, there were tears in her eyes "it's been hard on you" Vanessa said in a low soft voice, almost a whisper, her voice showed that she had been crying.

Sasha wiped away her tears and smiled "it's okay. What is happening?"

Vanessa sighed and looked at the door "I don't know, it's been like that since I arrived and it's close to an hour now" she looked at the man who has been pacing to and fro and smiled faintly "why don't you sit down a bit?" She beckoned at the man who finally looked their way.

Sasha smiled at him and he returned her smile before walking over "Sasha dear, it's been a long time."

Sasha nodded, in as much as Joseph was good to her, she still find it difficult to communicate with the man and so hardly ask about him "do you know what happened."

Joseph heaved a sigh "I was in my office when I received the call, by the time I got here, he was already in there" he pointed at the huge doors "I haven't meet Gary anyway, I'm sure he will know something."

Sasha nodded and sighed, the whole place was quiet again "have you told your parents?" Vanessa broke the silence.

Sasha shook her head and immediately reached into her bag for her phone and made a phone call "hi mom. Michael had an accident. Yes, I'm in the hospital. No I don't know what happened. He is still in the emergency room. I don't know how long yet. Yea, mom and dad is here. Okay bye" she hung up the call and look at Vanessa "she is on her way."

Vanessa nodded and heaved a sigh again, she rested her head on the wall and closed her eyes, anybody that see her will know that she was really

worried. Michael is her only child and she really love him "no matter how I think about it, I can't imagine how this happened. He rarely drive."

Sasha took in a deep breathe and let it out, she too is surprise, although Michael often drive to work himself but she knows that he is often picked up and also dropped off but she has never been opportune to see his driver. The day he met her at the boutique, someone was with him but she was not able to make out his face because he was standing at the door. The few times she had been with him in his car, she had observed that he is a very careful driver, so what happened?

Minutes later, a man walked towards them and they all turned at the sound of his footsteps. Sasha froze when she saw the man and shock enveloped her eyes, isn't that Mr. Gary who always send contract to her company these past months? Or is she mistaken? No she is not, that is Gary, she confirmed.

"Gary" Joseph walked to him immediately and the man greeted him which he responded to with a "mm" Gary looked at Vanessa and greeted her too before his eyes settled on Sasha, he smiled weakly at her before greeting her too and Sasha came to her final conclusion, he is Gary but what is he doing here? "What exactly happened?" She heard Joseph asked.

"Sir, boss was at the office earlier in the day, he couldn't get himself to work or so I believe. He just kept staring into his laptop without doing anything and after a while, he got up and decided to go for a drive. I opted to join him but he refused. The next thing I heard is that he is in the hospital. After calling you, I went to the scene and checked the surveillance footage. It seemed that he might have been lost in thought and didn't realize that a school bus was fast approaching, he might have noticed when the bus was already closed and he swerved to avoid it but came in collision with a lorry that was coming from the right, causing his car to somersault."

Joseph, Vanessa and Sasha all let out a deep sigh at the same time, the accident seemed like it was destined to happened. He avoided hitting a school bus but then hit a lorry, just what kind of luck met him today?

"Sasha" someone called and they turned to see Angelica and Nicholas approaching in quick steps "what happened?"

"Mom, dad" Sasha greeted with a faint smile, her eyes was already watering, how is Michael faring in there? Is his injuries serious? His car somersaulted, did he break any bone? As her mind wandered to different places and the

wounds he might have sustained, the tears started dropping from her eyes. She might have hold herself in front of Vanessa but not in front of her mother.

Angelica rushed to her immediately and put her in her arms "baby, baby, is okay. Everything is going to be okay" she soothed her and her eyes met with Vanessa's, she subconsciously reached out and grabbed her hand, a way of showing her comfort.

Vanessa smiled and her hand tightened on Angelica's own, she nodded before sniffing. Nicholas approached Joseph and the two men talked in hushed voices. Joseph explained to him about the accident and he too heaved a sigh, he also felt that the accident was meant to happen but none of them voiced out their thoughts.

The hall remained quiet once again except from Sasha's soft sobbing sounds. Vanessa was already rubbing her back as a way to comfort her too while Angelica was hugging her.

The light finally turned off after an agonizing thirty minutes, the door opened and the doctor came out. Everybody sprang to their feet and surrendered him "how is he?" What the question in everybody's mouth.

"He is out of danger now but he still unconscious. Likely to wake up in eight hours time or more" The doctor answered to their question professionally.

Everybody heaved a sigh of a relief, at least he is going to live, they all felt grateful for that. The doctor walked away and almost immediately, the door opened again and three nurses stepped out, two of them was pushing someone on the stretcher who is obviously Michael. His eyes were closed and there was a bandage round his head, there was also a stiff neck collar on his neck. They pushed him into a room and the family members followed behind.

After making sure Michael was comfortable in his new room, the nurses left. Sasha, Angelica and Vanessa stayed in the room with him while Joseph and Nicholas left to see the doctor and Gary trailed behind them.

"You should go home. You deserve the rest" Vanessa smiled at Sasha "I will stay with him."

"No mom, you are the one that needs to go. You need the rest more" Sasha gently declined.

"But I have been resting at home since morning. I didn't go anywhere today but you just came from the office. Look, you are still dressed in your office clothes, you need a shower and a nice sleep. So don't worry about me, I will be fine, I will stay with him till he wakes up. You can return tomorrow" she urged.

Sasha smiled "don't worry mom I'm not tired, I wasn't that busy at the office and besides, I want to be here when he wakes up" she looked at Angelica "you should also go home. Both of you needs the rest, I will be fine. Look, there is a spare bed, I can sleep there."

Vanessa wanted to refuse but Angelica placed her hand on her shoulder and she looked up at her "she is right, you need to rest. You look worn out."

Vanessa heaved a sigh "alright then I will go. But call me once you need anything. I will get a nurse ready in case he needs anything when he wakes up and I will be back tomorrow morning."

"You don't have to worry mom, I will take care of him."

"I know you would" she smiled. The door opened and Joseph, Nicholas and Gary entered, the women looked at them and they sighed "what happened? What did the doctor say?" Vanessa asked when she noticed the look on her husband's face.

"He...he developed a little injury in his spinal cord" Joseph answered.

"What!" The three women shouted.

Nicholas nodded "according to the doctor, he said the X-ray showed that he had sustained an injury there" he let out a long breath.

Vanessa and Sasha looked at the unconscious man on the bed at the same time "what will happen then?" Vanessa asked.

"He said it will affect his movement for a while" Joseph was saying and Sasha and Vanessa shut him a look and he cleared his throat "that's...he will have difficulty in walking for some time. He said it's temporal till he rehabilitate for the wound to heal and that he would start walking again" he rushed to assured them that everything will be fine only for a matter of time.

Vanessa's dried up tears started flowing again "so my son is crippled?" She asked in a whisper while looking at the handsome face of her son, tears were oozing out of her eyes.

Joseph walked up to her and pulled her into his arms "it's only for a short while, two or three months maybe. You don't have to be like this, he will recover" he consoled her.

Sasha walked closer to the man lying on the bed, her eyes welled up too and she slowly caressed his cheek. His forehead was bandaged, showing a little of his black hair that always looks neat and tidy but was ruff now. Her tears fell on his face as she tried her best to hold it, her eyes unconsciously strayed to his legs and her sob became a little louder, so Michael will not stand tall again? He will not stand in his dignified form anymore in the balcony? He might not know it but she always watch him whenever he stood there, admiring his back.

When she moved out of their room, the guest room was adjacent to theirs, so from the balcony, she can still see him when he stood there smoking. Although she hates smokers, she can't help but admit, he use to look so stoic and handsome when he stands in the balcony, a hand in his pyjamas pocket and the other holding a cigarette to his mouth. But now? Not anymore but thank heavens is temporal.

Vanessa and Angelica noticed her battle and walked closer to her, both holding her on each shoulder and rubbing her back. Sasha sniffed and got a hold of her emotion, she turned to look at the two women and forced a smile but her tears gave her away for it continued falling "everything is going to be okay" Vanessa cooed.

Angelica could feel her daughter's pain. Even if this marriage was arranged, they have been living together for the past eight months now so it's expected for feelings to have developed. She hugged her sideways and kissed her temple "it's alright darling. It's not like it's going to be permanent right? It's only for a short while. He will walk again, you will see" she smiled to her.

Sasha sniffed while nodding, she smiled "I know, I know. I'm fine" she tried to assure them.

Everybody took in a deep breath and let out slowly while looking at the handsome man on the bed. Even though all his forehead was bandaged and

he was unconscious, he still look very handsome and gave off the feeling that he is not a simple man.

The family stayed for some time before finally leaving "don't forget dear, call me if you need anything. I will still arrange for a nurse to help you" Vanessa commented.

"No need ma'am, I will be here to help her" Gary suddenly interjected.

Vanessa looked at him and nodded "that's good. You can call Gary if you need anything. I will come back tomorrow morning" she smiled and waved at her before leaving with Joseph.

"You sure you will be alright?" Angelica asked her worriedly as she cupped her face in her hands.

"I will be fine mom. You go home and rest, it's late already. Don't forget to grab a bite, you didn't eat dinner."

"You too dear, that's reminds me, what are you going to eat?"

"Don't worry ma'am, I can help mistress to get anything she wants. She just have to ask" Gary smiled at them.

"You heard him, make sure you order for something this night."

"Don't worry, I will. Goodnight mom, goodnight dad."

"Goodnight dear."

"I will come over before I leave for work, you take care of yourself till tomorrow okay?" Nicholas kissed her forehead.

"I will" Sasha smiled and saw them to the door, she sighed as she watched them walk down the hall before going back into the room.

Gary stood beside her, he knows she has questions but he is not going to say anything unless she ask. Sasha sat beside the bed and watched the man laying there, her eyes moistened again when she remembered what the doctor said, it's only temporal Sasha, only temporal, she told herself looking at his legs.

She sat watching the man for a good while before remembering that there was someone else in the room with her, she turned to look at Gary, her face revealed that she was studying him and not too sure about her memory. Gary chuckled at that "you can stop now you know, whatever your mind is telling you is the truth" he smiled to her.

Sasha nodded once "then that means you are the one that has been sending contracts to my company, I have seen you twice."

"Yes I am" he admitted to her accusation.

Sasha waited for him to say something else but the man remained silent, so she decided to probe further "so, how did you get to know Michael?"

Gary chuckled lightly again "I have known Michael since he was eighteen, been with him since then. His father hired me to be his assistant and I must admit to you, it took me three long years to enter his good book" he looked at her and smiled gently "to get close to your husband is really difficult. For one year, he lived like I did not exist, the second year, he turned me into his slave, always ordering me around. The third year, he started confiding in him but that was after I saved his life, ever since then it's been the two of us, I guess but I know he has never treated me bad since then again and sometimes he even ask for my opinion before he does some certain things."

Sasha took her time to digest the new information before looking at him again "so, Michael is the one that orders you to send the contracts or you do so on your own accord?"

"I can never take such decisions on my own. Rest assured mistress that whatever I did was a direct order from him" he replied.

Sasha was lost to her thoughts and didn't speak to Gary again, so Michael had him sending all those contacts these past months, but why? He doesn't talk to her at home but he sends her contracts, what does he want exactly? Ever since that night they made love, he has never talked to her again and that was seven months ago but he has been helping her to upgrade her company, now the company's name is making it's way into the lights even without the Jack and Jones contract.

But what is the essence of him helping her in work but was cold to her at home? For seven months her husband have not talked to her and she only gets to hear his voice if she happens to see him taking a call, she looked at

the man on the bed and sighed, if he really loathes her then why help her? Don't he realize that this thing he is doing is making it difficult for her to stop loving him but rather she is falling deeper for him? She sighed and caressed his long and slender fingers, he is cold to her at home but he still had her best interest at heart.

Sasha felt her heart moved at that, he cares for her but why don't he wants to show her? What could she have done that make him hate the very sight of her? She remembered how he use to be back then in high school, even though he doesn't talk to her but he never fails to acknowledge her when she pass by him, when she will say her hello, he usually nod in greeting to her, when she says her hi, he always offer her a warm smile, when she says goodbye, he waves back at her. If she is to think on it, he was kind, gentle and charming to her back then, although they have never sit on the same table for lunch, although they have never shared a desk in class because he was her senior then, but he has never been hostile towards her.

So what could have gone wrong? What could she have done to make him despise her to this extent? The more she think about it, the more she can't help but feel that there is a mystery there, something might have happened, but what? Why does he hate her now?

Sasha let out a deep breath, she really can't think of anything, only Michael can tell her and she wish he will soon, she really want her marriage to work, heaven knows that. Gary noticing that she was lost in thought, slowly left the room and closed the door gently behind him. He knows what might be going on in her mind, even he too don't seem to understand, why is it that his boss treats his wife coldly but never let's her get hurt? Why is it that he appears nonchalant in her presence but once she is gone, he wants to know everything about her?

Others might not understand this but he knows better because he is the one that he always sends on such errands, his boss will not ask his wife if she had eaten when he sees her rather he will stare ahead of her and act aloofly but once he gets to the office or where she was not around, he will ask him if she and eaten and will also ask him what she ate, his attitude dumbfound him atimes and he knows no one else will answer this question but the boss himself.

He has also not forgotten how he planted people to watch her when he was out of the country for his education, he can remember the men reports to him every night about what she did that day and unbelievably what she ate in the

whole day, he had always thought his boss was madly in love with her and might have been shy to tell her which was why he was so happy for him when he was getting married to her, he had thought to himself 'finally boss don't have to be shy about confessing his feelings, he just needs to act well and his marriage will be blessed'.

But who could explain his shock when he saw how he was treating her, he had been perplexed and had thought to himself 'why have people watch her everyday life when you hate her? Or better still why marry her?' That's why he said, although he has stayed by his side for ten years now, the man is still a mystery to him because he finds it hard to decipher his thoughts. Gary sighed and sat on the chair outside the room, he really wonders about the fate of his mistress in this marriage and now his boss will be crippled temporarily, maybe things will work out now, who can tell? He heaved a low sigh.

Sasha stayed in the room for a long time beside Michael, doing nothing but just staring at him. Her tummy rumbled to remind her that she hadn't eaten since afternoon. She sighed and got up and walked out of the room to see Gary sitting on the chair, his head was resting on the wall and his eyes were closed. Sasha suddenly found it difficult to wake him up, she thought about going out to look for what to eat herself, she looked at phone time and it was already 10:30, it's been five hours now since Michael came out of the emergency room.

Three more hours and he would wake up just like the doctor said, she found herself praying silently that it will work like that, that he will wake up. She walked back into the room and got some money from her bag before walking out again, she debated about waking Gary up to tell him she was heading out but decided against it, it's still the same thing, waking him from sleep.

She walked down the hall in low spirit and walked out through the hospital doors. The night was pitch black and the breeze was cool more like cold. She looked around and thankfully there was a fast food just opposite the hospital and it was still open, she crossed the road and pushed opened the door of the shop, a bell jingled to signal the waiter or waitress about her presence. It wasn't up to five seconds and a middle age woman walked out from a room and smiled to her, the shop was almost empty with just a man and a woman sitting on a table at the far end of the room.

"Hello, good evening" the lady greeted and Sasha nodded "what can I get for you?"

"Noodles" Sasha answered directly and went to sit down on one of the empty tables.

"Right way" the woman said after her before dashing back into the room she had emerged from.

Sasha sat on a table near the glass wall, she rested her head on it and closed her eyes, both Michael's accident and what Gary told her has really changed her mood. She had concluded within herself that he hates her only to discover that he was responsible for the sudden growth of her company, at the moment, Sasha was lost, she doesn't know what to think anymore, does he love or hate her? Or does he love and hate her at the same time? Is their marriage a love hate relationship? She really can't tell.

She sat lost in thought there while she wait for her noodles, she tried to think about some happy moments but there was no happy moment she has with Michael except in highschool when he always respond to her formal greetings, she heaved a sigh. She can still remember the day of her birthday, she had received birthday wishes from everybody, she had thought her husband will wish her but he had walked in and went straight to his room as usual, she shook her head and heaved a sigh, that is not a happy moment, she chided herself.

The woman emerged again from the room carrying a tray which she dropped on the table Sasha was sitting on, her action had jolted Sasha out of her thoughts, she looked at the woman who smiled at her "I hope you enjoy it" she uttered and walked away.

Sasha stared at the noodles and her tummy rumbled again, she sighed and picked up her fork and started eating, she can't really tell the taste of the noodles but all she knows is that it was satisfying her hunger. She paid the woman when she was done and left the shop, she walked to the hospital with her head staring on the floor and her hands in her pant pockets.

"Whoa, finally. I have been worried sick" she heard and looked up to see Gary with his hand on his chest and he was breathing heavily as a sign of relief, his boss might be treating her coldly but he will really kill him if anything happens to her.

Sasha smiled faintly at his acting "when did you wake up?"

"Close to twenty minutes ago" he answered and they both started walking back to Michael's room "so where went you?"

"I got hungry, so I left in search of what to eat."

"Did you find?"

"Yea, there is a fast food just opposite the hospital."

"You could have just told me to get something for you" he rolled his eyes.

Sasha chuckled lightly at that, she found it amazing that Michael's assistant can be so easy to talk to "I couldn't bear to wake you up, you looked so tired and like you needed the sleep."

He heaved a sigh "yea, but still, you should have told me. I can always come back and continue sleeping."

Sasha smiled "next time then."

They both remained quiet after that and walked silently to the room, a thought suddenly occurred to Sasha and she looked at Gary "you said you have been with Michael since he was eighteen right?"

"That's right" he nodded.

Sasha bit her lower lip "is there by any chance you know if there is a girl he likes, you know like a past love or something?"

Gary grew quiet and just when she thought he wouldn't answer, he spoke up "I don't think it's in my power to talk about his love life, I hope you understands" he looked at her.

Sasha shrugged before nodding "yea I do, I understand" she was quiet "don't mind me, I just wanted to know and again to keep the conversation going."

"I know" he smiled "but such information has to be told by him."

"Yea, you are right" they have reached the room by then and they both sat on the chair, each lost to their own thoughts. Sasha was actually counting the minutes in her heart, she got tired of sitting and decided to go in to lie down a little.

Immediately she stood, Gary opened his eyes and he was staring at her intently "what?" Sasha asked.

"I just want to know if you will leave without telling me again."

"I'm sorry about the first time but it won't happen again" she smiled.

"I know, but I have already set myself to wake up once you stand up, that's all."

Sasha smiled and let out a deep breath "I will go in now, he still has an hour to wake up, let me know if I can catch a sleep with that."

"Sure" Gary nodded.

"Goodnight Gary."

"Goodnight mistress" he replied and Sasha walked into in the room. Her gaze fell on the peaceful man laying on the bed with his eyes closed, she inhaled and exhaled slowly before walking closer to him, she stared at his facial features and marveled at how handsome he looked, how long his lashes are, whereas she as a woman has to fix artificial at times, just why was he blessed with everything? She can't help but wonder.

She let out a deep breath again and stretched out her hand to caress his cheek when a pair of crystal blue eyes was staring at her suddenly. Sasha froze and her hand hovered in mid air, she gulped as she stared at those deep blue eyes, why did he wake up suddenly? Didn't the doctor said he will wake up in the next hour?

"What are you trying to do?" He asked, his voice was low and almost a whisper but it still sounded cold to those who hear it and she involuntarily shuddered.

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