

PROLOGUE



Ang sakit. Ang sakit maiwan. Hindi ko inaasahan na mangyayari sa akin ang bagay na ito ngayon. Sa pelikula ko lang naman napapanood ito, eh—yung namamatay yung lalaking mahal ng bida sa istorya o di kaya sa libro ko lang nababasa. Pero hindi ko akalain na nangyayari pala sa totoong buhay.

Aware naman ako. Aware ako sa realidad na lahat tayo ay mamamatay pero bakit naman ang aga niyang kinuha sa akin? Gusto ko pa siyang makausap, mayakap, mahalikan at higit sa lahat, maramdaman ang init ng katawan niya.

Scott...

Scott, why did you leave so easily?

I smiled bitterly remembering the date today. July 20, 2013, the day we were supposed to say our vows in front of the altar, but unfortunately, he died. Yes, he died.

I swallowed the lump that was already forming in my throat.

Two weeks ago, I was the happiest woman alive because everything was set for our wedding and I couldn't wait to marry the man of my dreams. Siya ang prinsipe ng buhay ko. I was like a queen and he was my knight in shining armor.

Again I smiled bitterly, fairy tales only happen in books and movies but not in real life. Life is cruel. Life is unfair. And life is not perfect.

He died in a car accident on the way to our wedding rehearsal. Ang tindi, 'no? Andoon kami sa simbahan, hinihintay siya at

excited ako kasi magsisimula na kaming mag-ensayo sa entourage walk namin at walang kaalam-alam na yung fiancé ko, eh, nag-aagaw-buhay na pala sa loob ng kotse nito.

He was dead on arrival. At first, I was in denial, but I saw his body lying coldly on the stretcher and waiting to be pushed to the morgue.

Ang sakit.

Sa tuwing naiisip ko ang eksenang iyon sa buhay ko, parang wala nang mas sasakit pa sa naramdaman ko.

I grabbed the glass of the hardest drink I thought I could tolerate. Inisang lagok ko iyon. I could taste the bitterness of it that burned my throat, pero hindi naman ako nabigo dahil ilang sandali lang ay nawala na ang kirot sa puso ko. Nawala lang ako sandali sa pag-iisip nang may tumabi sa akin sa bar counter, at base sa naaamoy ko, it was a guy. His scent was so masculine yet anyone could smell something citrusy. I didn't smell a charcoal barbeque on him, meaning he does not smoke. Just like Scott.

Damn it. Andito ako sa bar para maglasing at makalimutan man lang pansamantala si Scott.

“One glass of—what’s the name of this drink again?” I heard a sharp intake of breath from beside me before the bartender could answer my question. Siguro dahil na rin sa tama ng alak ay madaling nag-init ang ulo ko.

Ano ang gusto niyang palabasin na ang lakas kong mag-iinom dito pero ni hindi ko man lang alam ang pangalan nang nilalagok ko?

I gave him a glare, bago ibinalik ang tingin sa bartender. Tinaasan ko siya ng kilay. Ano? Hindi ba niya narinig yung sinabi ko kanina?

“What?”

“T-Tequila Sunrise coming right up, Ma’am.” Mabilis siyang kumilos at inasikaso ang order ko. That’s more like it.

I was not really like this, I mean too bitchy and stuff. Maybe, a big part of it was because of the alcohol. May tama na kasi ako and maybe a couple of more glasses and I would really doze off to sleep already.

I heard a “Tsk” sound beside me that’s why I immediately looked up and glanced at the man beside me.

Arrgh! My vision was starting to blur. Hindi ko na masyadong maaninag ang mukha niya. Pero pansin ko pa din yung paglingon-lingon niya.

“Here’s your drink, Ma’am. Enjoy.”

I grabbed it immediately and was ready to drink it again, but big and strong hand captured my wrist and the glass was held up in the air. My blood easily boiled. The nerve of this guy to touch me, much more get involved in my business.

“You’re drunk,” he stated in this husky bedroom voice.

“And I’m well aware of that. You don’t have to stress the obvious.” I told him in a ‘DUH’ tone if that’s even possible.

“Eherm.” I was about to scratch this guy with my venomous nails kung hindi lang sumingit sa eksena ang bartender.

“May I take your order, Sir?” Base sa tono nito, parang nag-aalangan ang lalaki o di kaya ay intimidated. Seriously, hindi naman siya kakainin ng lalaking katabi ko. Well, the latter looked somewhat scary based on his body, his well-built body, pero... ay ewan bahala sila sa buhay nila.

Marahas kong binawi ang palapulsuhan ko na hawak-hawak pa rin pala ng lalaki. Good thing, his attention was diverted to the

bartender kaya walang kahirap-hirap akong nakawala sa kanya.

“The usual, Joey.”

“Okay, Sir.”

Regular customer, I thought. Kaya pala ganoon kung umasta, ang angas. I rolled my eyes. People these days. Sobrang pakialamero.

Napangiwi ako nang sa wakas ay nainom ko na yung laman ng baso ko. That bitter taste again. Totally awful yet manageable. And the effects had started. My head started to throb and my vision was really blurry already. I was also feeling dizzy. Parang umiikot na ang lahat sa palibot ko at sobrang bilis pa.

“That’s what I’m telling you about.”

Ghad! I’m really drunk. I couldn’t even concentrate on the things that were happening around me. *Damn it, Xonia. You’re in big trouble right now. Papaano ka makakauwi niyan ngayon?*

I might not be able to drive in this.

“Sir, mukhang lasing na po ata.”

I could hear some buzzing. Weird voices and noises. Oh, ghad! My head really hurt.

“It’s okay. She’s with me.”

I gave up. Ipinikit ko na lang ang mga mata ko and surrendered to sleep.



Nagising ako sa kakaibang sensasyon na nararamdaman ko. I was still a bit disoriented but my consciousness was starting to work. I could tell I was lying on a soft mattress. Tapos, may mabigat na bagay na nakapatong sa tiyan at mga binti ko. Sinubukan ko iyong alisin dahil hindi ako makahinga nang maayos but my hands stopped in mid-air when I touched warm soft skin.

I immediately got alarmed. I tried to stand up pero ang higpit-higpit ng kapit sa akin ng kung sinumang yumayakap sa akin. Then, all of a sudden, I felt kisses on my bare shoulder. I shivered.

Nervousness was already eating me up. Where was I? And who was this person next to me?

“Relax, it’s just me.”

Napalingon agad ako sa katabi ko.

THE EFF! Who’s this guy? I trembled upon realizing that a stranger was hugging and kissing me. Nire-rape ako nang kung sinumang lalaki!

“Let me go.” I wanted to sound authoritative pero naging bulong lang iyon.

I saw him smirk.

“You smell so good.” And then I felt his warm breath on my neck. Ang lapit-lapit na niya sa akin. He’s sniffing me like he was some kind of a dog. At yung kamay niya na nasa tiyan ko kanina ay unti-unti nang umaangat.

“H-hey,” awat ko sa kanya nang mukhang mahahawakan na ang maseselang parte ng katawan ko.

“Don’t,” he said. And before I knew it, he had already claimed my lips with his.

His lips moved slowly as if savoring the moment. He kept lingering on my lips; tempting and encouraging me to respond. At hindi ko maintindihan ang sarili ko. This was wrong, why was I letting this guy to kiss me? Hindi ito magugustuhan ni Scott.

Scott...

And as if on cue, I responded to the stranger’s kisses.

Scott hurt me and I needed a distraction. Iniwang niya ako nang ganito lang. I was in deep hurt and this guy beside me made

me feel alive.

He was kissing me possessively and hungrily. He kept on nibbling and sucking my tongue. Napapaungol ako sa ginagawa niya sa akin. I felt hot. And I didn't know but my body felt like it yearned to be touched like this. Na parang hinihintay talaga ng katawan ko na mahawakan nang ganito.

“F@ck! I love your moan. It's turning me on.”

Napasinghap ako nang maramdaman ko ang dalawang kamay niya sa loob ng suot-suot kong blouse.

I was feeling too much intensity and anticipation then. Hindi ko makapa sa sarili ko na patigilin ang lalaki o kahit magpumiglas man lang dahil aminin ko man o hindi, gusto ko din ang ginagawa niya.

Napaungol ulit ako nang bumaba ang mga halik niya sa leeg ko papunta sa pinakasensitibong parte ng katawan ko—sa tenga.

“Just like that, Babe. Don't hesitate to scream.” With the words he said, I felt my core getting wetter.

Damn it! I felt so hot right then it was so painful already.

“P-please,” I heard myself begging him. Pero ano nga ba ang pinapakiusap ko sa lalaking ito?

“A little patience, Babe, I need to savor you first.”

Aapila pa sana ako nang inangkin na naman niya ang labi ko kaya naputol ang gusto ko sanang sabihin. His tongue delved inside my mouth, battling for dominance with mine. Nakikipag-away ako sa dila niya nang bigla na lang niya itong kinagat na nagpaungol sa akin nang malakas. He won.

He ripped my blouse in one swift move and shoved my brassiere upward para mahawakan ang malulusog kong dibdib. With the way he caressed and sometimes squeezed them, alam

kong nagustuhan niya ang mga iyon.

“F@CK IT! Your boobs are so big!”

Napaliyad ako pataas nang isinubo niya ang isang nipple ko. Damn. Tanging sa buhok niya na lang ako kumukuha ng lakas dahil hinang-hina na ako. Hindi ko kaya ang sensasyong nararamdaman ko.

“Oohh,” I moaned again when he started playing with my other nipple; pinching and tugging it with his fingers, bago buong lalamukusin ang dibdib ko.

Talagang pinagsawa niya ang sarili niya sa bahaging iyon. Hindi ko na nga mabilang kung ilang beses akong nagmakaawa sa kanya na tigilan na niya ang pagpapahirap sa akin pero parang wala siyang narinig at patuloy lang sa paglamas ng dalawang dibdib ko.

“This is heaven. Definitely a treasure to behold,” narinig kong sabi niya, at nang subukan ko siyang tingnan, nakita ko na lang na tinitingnan niya na pala ang ibabang parte ng katawan ko—ang aking pagkababae.

I blushed really hard; I tried to cover myself.

Kailan niya nahubad ang jeans and underwear ko? Ganoon ba ako kalango kanina para hindi mapansin na kinakalikot niya na pala ang butones ng pantalon ko?

“F@CK. I’d better taste it first.” At yumuko na lang siya bigla para pumantay ang ulo niya sa parteng kanina niya pa tinititigan.

“GAAHD! Oh, my—NO!” Napaatras ako pero mabilis niyang nahawakan ang dalawa kong binti para hindi ako makakilos.

Napadaing ulit ako, sobra-sobra na ang nararamdaman ko.

Hindi ko na din maibukas nang maayos ang talukap ng mga

mata ko habang yung katawan ko ay nagsisimula nang manginig dahil sa ginagawa niyang pagsinghot, pagsipsip at paghalik sa pagkababae ko.

“Oooh. YES!” ungol at sigaw ko nang maramdaman ko ang basa at mainit niyang dila sa loob ko.

Nababaliw na talaga ako sa sensasyong ibinibigay ng lalaking ito. Napakapit ako nang mahigpit sa bedsheets nang ipinasok niya ang isang daliri sa loob ko.

He started to pull and slam it back inside me. Napahawak ako sa kamay niya na iginagalaw at humahawak sa akin sa parteng iyon.

“No, Babe, let me. I know what to do.” Inalis niya ang kamay ko at ipinagpatuloy ang ginagawa.

Oh, please! I started to feel that something was building up inside me.

“Yes, that’s it, Babe. Give it to me.”

Sunud-sunod na ang mga ungol na inilalabas ng bibig ko.

And before I knew it I exploded on his mouth and hand.

I heard some slurping sounds; sinisipsip niya ang mga katas na kakalabas lang sa akin.

Just plain damn it! I just got turned on again. Heck, I’m tired but my body and mind said otherwise. s

I saw him lick the corner of his lips as if savoring my juices there. And then, he smirked devilishly.

“From this moment on, YOU. ARE. MINE.”

1



xonia

Hindi pa man ako nakakabawi sa nakakabaliw na kaunahang orgasm ko ay pumatong na agad itong lalaking ito sa akin.

Mabigat siya pero hindi naman niya ibinibigay lahat ng timbang niya sa akin. He started to look at me as if reading my mind.

Wait, this guy was the one from the bar.

“Good that you remember me,” he said in a husky and bedroom voice.

May pagkapaos iyon na parang inaakit ka at mapapaisip ka kung bakit ganito ka-raspy ang tinig niya. Na parang galing lang niya sa isang karumal-dumal na gawain.

Dahil nasa malapit siya, noon ko pa lang napansin ang kulay ng mga mata niya. He had chocolate brown eyes that could drown anyone if one would keep at staring it. Gaya na lang ng nangyayari sa akin nang sandaling iyon.

Hindi siya singkit pero yung hugis ng mga mata niya ay sobrang nakakaakit na kapag tiningnan mo yung mukha niya ay sa mata dideretso ang focus mo.

A pointed nose and kissable lips that were on my privates a while ago, napaka-manly ng features ng mukha niya. Tapos, mas nakakapagpapalakas pa ng appeal ang kilay na hindi naman makapal pero sobrang itim.

“I guess you’ve rested enough already.”

Napakurap ako. Then, I felt a huge and hard bulge poking my inner thigh. Seriously, bakit ngayon ko lang ito napansin? I shifted para maiiwas sana ang binti ko pero mahigpit niya akong hinawakan.

“What? Don’t you want to feel me? Know how you turned me on?”

Namula ako. How could he be so blunt?

“NO!” I shouted and got alarmed when he started to hold my right hand and started to bring it downwards.

Pero malakas siya eh, so I could not do anything about it and suddenly, I just felt it. His hardness in my hand; the good thing was, I think he’s still wearing his boxer shorts.

“There. You should get acquainted with it.” He guided my hand to move it up and down his length.

What we were doing was so hot, him guiding me to pleasure him. Kitang-kita kong nasasarapan siya sa init ng palad ko. Nakaawang na nga ang bibig niya na parang nahihirapan nang huminga.

Tumigil ako sa paghaplos sa kanya nang binitiwang niya ang kamay ko. Ilang sandali lang ay nasagi ko na ang pagkalalaki niya, na bahagyang kumislot dahil sa skin contact. He had removed his boxer shorts.

“F@CK! We can do that in another time, I badly want you right now.”

Ipinuwesto niya ang sarili sa entrada ko. Then, realization hit me. Nangyayari ba talaga ito o nananaginip lang ako dahil sa kalasingan? Pero bakit nakakaramdam ako ng sarap?

“Don’t look at me like that. I will have you TONIGHT.”

And then, I felt a sharp pain. Parang may binutas siya sa

loob ko. It's my virginity. The one I was supposed to give to my husband on our honeymoon. Pathetic, this night was supposed to be my first night with Scott kung hindi lang siya nang-iwan nang ganoon-ganoon na lang.

"Just the way I like it." Nakakapit na ako sa likod niya, more like, kinakalmot ko na iyon dahil sa sakit. "I got you first, Babe."

Hindi ko na pinansin kung ano ang sinabi ng lalaki. The pain was eating me.

Walanghiya 'tong lalaking ito. Virgin na nga ako, binigla pa. And based on the feeling of being too stretched, alam kong sobrang laki niya.

Sinubukan kong yumuko at nakita kong hindi pa niya lubusang naipapasok ang kanya sa loob ko. *Oh, my!* He's that long and big.

"Relax, just breathe. It doesn't have to go all the way in." Nabasa niya siguro yung pag-alala sa mukha ko. "But, I do love to be fully inside you and feel your tightness and your hot walls around me." Napaungol ako. "And I also would love to hit the farthest tissue that I can reach."

"Oh, please." He's distracting me from the pain I'm feeling, and he succeeded.

"A few seconds from now, I will find your G spot and hit it repeatedly until you cum."

This man would definitely kill me from so much anticipation.

"Ooh, please, just move! I can take it." That was all that he was waiting for and he started to move slowly. Pull and push, rhythmically.

I was able to adjust in time. It was just so wonderful. Ramdam na ramdam ko ang paglandas niya sa akin, ang paglabas-pasok at

ang paghihirap niya na bilisan ang paggalaw sa kabila ng kasikipan ko.

“F@CK! You’re so tight, Babe.”

“Oohh.”

His pace was getting faster. Nakakapit ako sa mga balikat niya habang siya ay nakahawak sa dalawang dibdib ko na inanggigilan niya na aaminin kong masakit pero mas importante sa akin ang sensasyong unti-unti nang nabubuo sa puso ko.

“Yes, Babe, that’s it. We’re getting there.” Humahangos na rin siya. Pabilis na nang pabilis ang kanyang pagkilos. And when he hit something inside me, bigla na lang akong nangingig. When I looked at him, he had this big grin plastered on his face.

“Found it.”

At hindi ko na napigilan ang sarili ko sa pag-ungol nang mas malakas dahil ang parte na iyon ang pinuntirya niya. It’s so sensitive.

“Oooh, my—yes... oooh!” Sunod-sunod ang naging pang-ungol ko.

“F@CK.” And with a hard and deep push, he made me cum longer than usual. I convulsed. Literal na nangingig ang katawan ko. Hinang-hina na ako at nakahiga na lang sa kamang iyon habang patuloy pa din siya sa paggalaw. He was biting his lip really hard. His breath had shorten.

And with another plunge, hot liquids flow from inside of me. Habang tumatagal, parami iyon nang parami. I couldn’t help moaning. He looked at me and kissed me really hard and rough. Gumagalaw pa rin siya sa loob ko pero hindi na gaanong mabilis, parang inilalabas niya na lang lahat.

Naramdaman ko ang mainit na likidong tumakas mula sa loob

ko at dumaloy hanggang sa mga hita ko. Ang dami niyang inilabas.

Matapos niya akong halikan, tumingin siya sa ibaba namin.

“This is just so hot.” Kahit na nanghihina, sinubukan ko talagang tingnan din ang pinagmamasdan niya. Right there, blood and white juices were flowing along my thighs to the bedsheet.

Ibinagsak ko ulit ang ulo ko sa kama. I felt exhausted. All I wanted to do was to sleep and get some rest.

Last thing I remembered was closing my eyes to sleep with him still lodged inside me. Pagod na ako para magsalita man lang, and the pain was starting to emerge again. Siguro naman, bubunutin niya rin iyon kapag nakatulog na siya pagkatapos.



Bright sunlight rays woke me up. Arrggh! A lot of my body parts ache—my head, my boobs and my—

And the realization of things that took place last night really woke me up. Napaupo ako nang wala sa oras. Iisipin ko pa sanang panaginip lang lahat ng iyon nang mapansin kong wala akong saplot sa katawan, and that only a blanket was covering my naked body.

I tried to move again but the hell, I felt sore. So sore.

SH*T. It really did happen.

Ibinigay ko ang aking puri sa isang lalaking hindi ko man lang alam kung sino. I was such a moron. Naturingan pa naman akong matalino. Pero nasaan ang talino ko kagabi, at papaano ko nagawa ito kay Scott?

Remembering his name made my eyes water. Dalawang linggo pa lang simula nang mamatay si Scott pero lumandi agad ako. I was the worst person ever. He might have seen that scene yesterday, and oh, my. I had hurt Scott ten times greater than how

much he'd hurt me.

“You're awake.”

My whole body tensed upon seeing the guy who claimed my virginity. This couldn't be happening to me.

“Good morning, Babe.”

“Who are you?”

Mahigpit kong hinawakan ang kumot na tanging nagtatakip sa kahubaran ko. When he noticed how confused I was and maybe a little scared, napangiti siya habang napapailing. Unti-unti siyang lumapit sa akin. I moved backwards until my back hit the headboard.

Moron! Wala ka nang maaatrasan.

Tumungo ako nang makalapit siya sa akin. What was he planning to do? Kahit na gwapo at nag-uumapaw sa hotness itong lalaking ito, hinding-hindi na ulit ako mag-aalinlangang sumigaw kapag nagtangka siyang gawin yung ginawa namin kagabi.

I couldn't help blushing when I remembered the things that happened last night.

“Are you alright?”

Nag-angat ako ng tingin. Concern was evident in his eyes before his expression turned to blank. He masked it. I shivered when he touched my cheek lightly.

“I... I want to go home. Where are my clothes?” I secretly reprimanded myself for stammering.

Sige lang, Xonia, ipakita mo diyang sa lalaking iyan na natatakot ka at nang pagsamantalahan niya ang kabinaan mo.

Tumigil siya sa paghaplos sa pisngi ko, at tumayo nang tuwid. Blangko pa rin ang mukha niyang nakatingin sa akin.

“I threw it away,” simpleng sagot niya na parang tinanong lang

siya kung kumain na ba.

I was terrified. Papaano ako makakauwi nito nang walang damit? “But I need to go home, ano’ng susuutin ko?” I glared at him.

Tinaasan lang ba naman ako ng kilay ng hinayupak. “Then, don’t go home.”

“Are you insane?”

“Yes, I am.”

Arrgh! The nerve of this guy to treat me like this.

Walang mangyayari sa akin dito kung hindi ako kikilos.

Tumayo ako at nagtapang-tapangan na pumunta sa isang pintong nakita ko sa loob ng kwarto. Hindi ako sumulyap man lang sa gawi niya.

Nang buksan ko ito ay tumambad sa akin ang napakalaking banyo, and his scent was so strong there.

Kainis! Bakit ba nababanguhan ako? Hindi dapat ganito eh, si Scott lang ang mabango. Yung si Scott na palaging amoy-baby.

May nahagip ang mga mata ko. This would do. I grabbed it and simply wore it around my body.

Nang lumabas ako sa comfort room, nakita kong nag-aabang sa harap mismo ng pintuan ang lalaking hindi pa din nagpapakilala sa akin.

“You don’t plan on going outside wearing only that bathrobe?” he asked dangerously.

“I do, and you can’t do anything about it!”

2

xonia

The nerve of that guy to tell me what to do! Naikama niya lang ako, akala mo kung sino na. The thing that happened between the two of us was plain sex, a one-night stand to be exact.

Nagmamadali akong umalis sa bahay niya. He was living in a very huge house with a few servants; located in one of the most exclusive subdivisions in the country. Hindi na talaga ako nagtaka sa estado ng buhay niya nung makita ko siya sa bar. He walked like he owned the world.

Ipinilig ko ang aking ulo para burahin ang lahat ng pangit na kaisipan. What happened that night was the product of my stupidity, and I learned my lesson. Gustuhin ko mang ngumawa at maglupasay sa unit ko, hindi naman niyon maibabalik ang virginity ko. So what's the point?

I sighed. With all that stress and the drama that happened last night, gusto ko na lang matulog nang buong araw. My Dad owned the company so I could easily do what I want. And besides, I was one of the bosses there, why would they give a fuss kung um-absent man ako ng isang araw?

I lazily went to bed and plunked myself on it. Grabe, kakahiga ko pa lang pero parang dinuduyan na agad ako ng kama ko sa antok. I groaned when my phone started to ring all of a sudden. Noong una, hinayaan ko lang iyon, but the caller was persistent, at nang sandaling iyon, pangatlong beses na itong tumatawag. I muttered a deadly curse before I slowly answered it.

"Hello," bored na bati ko sa nasa kabilang linya. Ni wala nga

akong ganang tingnan kung sino ba iyong istorbo sa buhay ko.

“Where are you?”

I tried so hard not to curse out loud. Sa dinami-dami ng oras, ngayon pa talaga naisipan ni Dad na tumawag sa akin at gamitan ako ng ganoong tono?

“Condo.” Nagsisimula na akong mainis. Isa lang naman ang ibig sabihin ng pagtawag niya sa akin. He wanted to see me. Wala siyang pakialam kung um-absent man ako sa trabaho ko, basta kapag ipinatawag niya ako, kailangan ko iyong sundin nang walang pagdadalawang-isip. Yun ang batas niya.

“Pumunta ka dito sa office, I need to talk to you.”

“I’ll be there.”

Tinapos ko na agad ang tawag dahil baka humaba pa.



When I arrived at my dad’s office, napansin ko na nandoon din si Mommy. I studied both their faces and it immediately made me worry. Nakakahawa ang mukha nilang dalawa. Both of them were tensed and looked a little problematic, I guess.

I greeted them and rested myself in one of the comfortable seats in the office.

“So what is this all about, Dad?”

I heard a loud intake of breath kaya napatingin agad ako kay Mommy. Seriously, people, something was off. And I just couldn’t tell you what it was. I looked at my father waiting for him to say something.

“We should not be telling you this but—”

“So, something is wrong, am I right? And ngayon n’yo lang sasabihin sa akin?” Nagsisimula na akong mainis, dahil na din siguro sa pagod, antok, and all the drama that happened a few hours ago.

“It’s not that, Hija. We tried our best, kami ng Mommy mo, na solusyunan ang problemang ito but it got worse.”

I took a deep breath, trying to calm my nerves.

“Okay, so what’s our problem?”

“The company is sliding toward bankruptcy.”

I was at a loss for words. I didn’t expect this to happen. Sa pagkakaalam ko, Dad’s business was doing fine, until that mystery bachelor appeared and stole most of our investors. But I thought we could still survive without those sour losers pero nagkamali ako.

I swallowed the lump in my throat. “We can do something about it, right? Hindi pa naman huli ang lahat.”

“Our properties are being sold already and our house is about to be foreclosed,” my mom said.

Could it get worse than this? Gusto kong tumayo para yakapin sana si Mommy na nagsisimula nang umiyak pero natatakot ako na baka sa pagtayo ko, eh, bumigay na lang bigla ang mga tuhod ko at mapaupo ako nang wala sa oras.

My world started to fall apart. First, my fiancé died. I lost my virginity last night and now, we’re doomed!

“Maybe we can ask our loyal inventors for help.” Hindi pa din ako nawawalan ng pag-asa.

“They did try to help me,” amin ni Dad. “But Xonia, pati yung investments nila this last quarter, naipalugi ko. Thankfully, they understood the situation, but business is business. It’s either I step down as CEO of this company or they will file a case against me.”

“No, no, that can’t be, they are your friends!” sigaw ko.

Hindi. Hindi pwede ito. I couldn’t just let go of the company that my dad built, dugo’t pawis ang inilaan niya para sa kompanya, pagkatapos mawawala lang basta sa amin? No, I won’t let that happen.

“I’m going to help, Dad, don’t worry.” I wanted to say it with conviction kaso nabigo ako. Kahit sa sarili ko, hindi ko alam kung saan ako makakahanap ng pera para ipambayad sa lahat ng utang nila. I couldn’t just say, ‘Hey, Mister, Can you lend me some money?’ Wala nang libre sa mundong ito.



Papalubog na ang araw nang makarating ako sa condo ko. Well, I tried my luck pero lahat ng mga kaibigan ko wala ding maitutulong. It was not because they don’t want to help me, pero ako lang kasi yung pinakanakakaluwag-luwag sa buhay sa aming apat. Kadalasan, ako pa nga yung tinatakbuhan nila kapag may problema sila sa pera. This was is my first time to ask them for help pero nabigo ako. I didn’t want to hate them, pero nakaka-frustrate lang kasi.

I knew it was mean and rude pero matulungin naman akong tao. Hindi ako nagdadalawang-isip na tumulong hanggat may maitutulong ako. Pero bakit naman yata ang unfair?

Yeah, right. Para namang hindi ko alam na talaga namang life is not fair.

Padabog kong binuksan ang condo unit ko. This day was a very tiring one. Ang dami kong pinuntahan para lang kausapin but it didn’t went well. I also tried to file a loan in a bank pero mukhang mas nauna pa nga yatang nakaalam ang mga taga-bangko sa tunay na estado ng kompanya namin kaysa sa akin.

I lazily opened my bedroom door only to be shocked by what I saw. “WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING HERE?”

“Surprise.” Sarcasm could be noted from his tone. Damn it! He suddenly strode toward my direction as if he was ramp modeling. The eff with this guy! Akala mo kung sinong hari. “Why did you leave?” Seryoso siya sa pagtatanong sa akin, even though

his facial expression was blank.

Our gap right then was about a foot only. Kahit na medyo nai-intimidate ako sa kanya and I was a bit nervous, I didn't back down nor show my weakness. I never retreated, bahala na kung magkalapit kami basta hindi ko aatrasan itong lalaking ito.

“And why would I stay at your place?” May sayad ata sa utak ito, eh. Sayang, ang hot at gwapo pa naman.

“You didn't get it, did you?” His jaw clenched, kaya wala sa oras na napahakbang ako paatras. Damn it again! “I told you last night that YOU. ARE. MINE.”

I could really conclude that he was insane. Napangiwi ako sa ideyang iyon. I lost my virginity to a person with a mental problem.

“As far as I am concerned, NO. ONE. OWNS. ME,” matapang kong bwelta. I tried to look stern and I just hoped it would really show on my face.

“Oh yeah, you want me to prove my claim?” Humakbang na naman siya papalapit sa akin.

On instinct, I stepped back but he caught my waist and stopped me. Napatingin ako sa kulay-tsokolate niyang mga mata. He had that effect on me. Para akong dinuduyan na nilulunod sa klase ng tinging ibinibigay niya. And his smell was so intoxicating, a mixture of the ocean breeze and something citrusy. But what made my knees weak was his warm breath fanning against my cheek.

Get a grip, Xonia, will you! my brain reprimanded me, and on impulse, I tried to get lose from his grip. “Arse, let me go. Ano ba—hhhhmmpp—Stop!”

Pinaghahampas ko ang dibdib niya. But it's no use; he was strong and my body started to betray me. I started to melt in his

arms. I wanted to be closer to him right now.

His kisses were so tender and then, they became more possessive and before I knew it, they suddenly turned wild. Our tongues battled for dominance which he easily won.

“I know you need me, as much as I need you,” bulong niya.

Buong pwera ko siyang tinulak at humakbang papalayo. Hindi ko pala kayang kalabanin ang taong ito. Dahil kapag naglalapit kami, unti-unting nawawala ang tamang huwisyo ko. And it’s really a dangerous thing.

“Get out.” Hindi ko alam kung paano siya nakapasok dito but I would need to report this immediately to the management. Napaka-unreliable naman ng security nila kung walang kahirap-hirap na nakapasok ang estrangherong ito sa unit ko. “Hindi mo ba ako, narinig? I said get out! O baka naman gusto mong tumawag pa ako ng security?”

“Go ahead; call whoever you want to call,” he said casually before walking to my bed and sat comfortably.

Napataas ang kilay ko. At home lang?

“Pwede ba, hindi kita kilala so will you please get the hell out and don’t ever, as in *ever*, show your face again here.” Pero ang mas nakakainis, he just shrugged his shoulders at pabagsak na humiga sa kama ko.

“It’s okay, I know your name already so that’s fair enough.”

What? He knows my name? Was he some kind of stalker who’s obsessed with me? Just thinking about that gave me goosebumps.

“And, Babe, from now on, you will see this face often, more like every time.”

Come again? Tama ba yung rinig ko?

He looked at me intently, like studying my face or something.

Nakahiga pa din siya sa kama at tahimik na pinagmamasdan ako. I was not able to stop myself from blushing. There was always something about the way he looked at me. I saw him smirk but didn't say anything. Ano, magtititigan na lang kami dito?

“Okay, so who are you? I mean, ano ba'ng pangalan mo?” I gave up. He's so stubborn.

“Damien,” he said in a whisper that was why I barely heard it.

“Ha?” Dahan-dahang bumangon siya at tumitig sa akin nang sobrang seryoso. Wala na ang nakalakong ngiti niya kanina.

“It's Damien Fernandez.”

Ohh, geez! He's the great Damien Fernandez, but why didn't I notice him right away? Siya lang naman ang kaisa-isang batang businessman sa Pilipinas na napabilang sa listahan ng Richest People in the Philippines ng *Forbes Magazine*. Sadly, my dad was not able to be on the list for almost three years now at dahil iyon sa lalaking ito. He was the one who stole most of our investors kaya nalugi ang kompanya namin.

“I guess, you recognized me.” Kulang pa ang salitang ‘recognize’ dahil kilalang-kilala ko ang taong ito. Ito ang nagpahirap sa mga magulang ko sa loob nang tatlong taon. I did some research back then pero hindi ko sineryoso, knowing na kaya naman ni Dad ang pamamahala ng company kahit na kulang kami sa investors.

I sighed. “What do you want?” *Ibibigay ko, tantanan mo lang ako.*

“You... you as my wife.”