



CAPTURE NARCOS

THE ANGEL OF HOPE I

RAMON GERONIMO

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ANGEL OF HOPE I



Capture Narcos: Angel Of Hope I

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I dedicate this book to those victims of domestic violence who suffer quietly and those who didn't make it out alive. To the children that are caught up in the middle, growing up in fear and a lot of trauma. I hope this book helps raise awareness.

To my parents, who have always supported and encouraged me to keep trying as many times as necessary until I reach my goals.

To my brothers and sister who without understanding my way of thinking always made the effort to hear me out.

Ariel Frías, my big brother, you always go out of your way to help me even when you can't, and I will always be in debt with you brother, you mean the world to me and you have taught me everything I know. I love you.

To all my cousins Junior, Robert, Eddy, Sadiek, Franklin and Alvin for all their love and support always, especially Jorge Adames, who is battling an unfair circumstance in his life and despite that he keeps a positive attitude and faith that everything will be alright. I know who you are and I know you will overcome anything.

*To my parent in laws, brothers and sisters in law, thank you
for loving me and supporting me like one of your own.*

*To Jessie Pichardo, my lovely wife, without you this project
wouldn't exist. Since I met you I've been writing to you and you
have always told me I should write a book and now I did because
you kept pushing me. I did the easy part which was create but
the hardest part was all you, from inspiration to publishing
but most of all, believing in me even before I did. I love you!*

*Thank you God for all the blessings you've given me and
all the hard times you have made me go through every now
and then to help me grow into a better version of me.*

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CHAPTER I

The Mysterious Woman

*I provoke you, and make you keep on going,
Tie me with your rope, make me your brown horse,
I am a wild beast, so ride me without a seat,
You will feel it real deep when I move it with my thing,
Watch out so you don't fall, ride me on the floor,
Hit me with your hair if I misbehave,
I will move it fast, jumping you will land,
I'll promise you'll be saved if you hold on to my neck,
Splashing all your sweat, dripping on my chest,
Licking all your flesh, having just a taste,
Coming just to play, hidden every day,
Getting in the woods, lost under the moon,
Ride me until we arise, lost into my eyes,
Ride me until we come, ride me, I'm your horse.*

Perhaps you think I haven't changed. That I'm nothing more than a playboy, spinning a bed of fantasies for dreamy, vulnerable women to fall into. Sneaking out of their bedroom in the



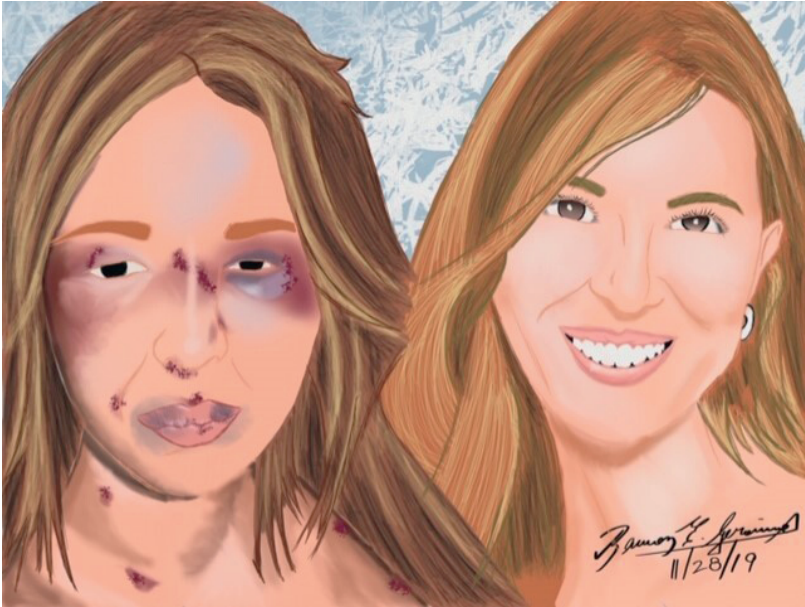
middle of the night. Perhaps you see her gorgeous face and her beautiful hair, but look closer at her body. Not the smooth, round curve of her hips and her small waist, not down to her thighs. Do not look at her wedding ring, and panic that her husband can come in any second, but rather look at her upper arms. Do you see it? Yes, pay attention to the bruises around her arms, the purple marks from a brutish grip on her delicate skin. Can the pillow allow you to see from your angle, her nose job, which is a result of a broken bone?

Perhaps she likes it rough and to talk dirty, too.

*If you were my bitch, I'll be your tick,
I'll attach to your skin, drink when you bleed,
I'll be close to your heart, and your love will end my thirst,
I'll taste from the source, drinking until I explode,
I'll suck and make you tickle, stop or I will tinkle,
I'll feel your paw on me, I love your touch; so sweet,
You'll carry me so deeply, and care enough to feed me,
A cruel and secret love, no one will need to know.*

I know there are no excuses for my actions or hers. But believe it or not, I am just trying to do my job and protect her. Protecting her by seducing her to win her trust. So one day, she'll be free of that animal that treats her like nothing more than an expensive, annoying object. Helping her by putting her at risk, you may think—but I am a ghost and he will never see me until I collect enough evidence and catch him in the act.





*If only he could see your face when you see me,
See all the joy pouring out of your smile,
That look so full of life, it emphasizes
the brightness in your eyes,
If he could only see your cheeks turning pink,
And the grace and excitement of your hands,
If he could just for a moment open his eyes to see your hair,
He would probably understand the beauty he is losing,
Maybe a moment will be enough for him to go back,
To remember how it was ten years ago,
Maybe that would be enough to revive that passion he lost,
There is no getting tired of a sunset, but
there is being too busy to look at it,
The incredible beauty remains,*

*It only needs a second of attention for you to notice it,
How hard is it to pay attention?
You spend more time depriving her of her freedom,
I know you understand her beauty and
want her just for yourself,
Then why is it so difficult to admire and appreciate her?
Abusing her won't make you stronger, but
loving her will give you strength,
Winning her love back would be the drive
that makes you unstoppable,
It is that drive that would make you come
back to her when you are away,
And make you go weeks without eating
to survive and see her again,
Jealousy will make you starve in just one day,
Will spin your head around and make you weak,
It will make you the monster you are
supposed to protect her from.
If he could only see your face when you are with me,
He would probably feel again the fire that
makes people climb a mountain,
Gain the extra speed that makes an athlete win the race,
He'll never feel tired and the pain will be
ignored when you are next to him,
If he could only feel again that strength that your love gives,
Not the effect of his money or power over you,
He would probably understand how weak he is without you.*



But to understand better what I do, you have to go back to where everything started. To where I lost my soul, but not my hope to one day find her; the only woman I truly love—though everything about her was erased and her location remains a mystery.

*What does the face of my sweetest secret look like?
I can't distinguish her hair hidden in the shadow,
No one knows, but she is there in the back burner of my heart,
Where no one knows she exists,
Where no one knows what she means to me,
By what name should I call her to keep her as a mystery,
Under what circumstances would I be able to be with her?
It's only right for my heart to reply with her name to every
heartbeat, since for my lips it's prohibited saying it,
The sun is out and shining but it's raining outside,
Everything is not what it seems without her,
Silences come to be so loud and my secret love shines
so much in the darkest place I call my life,
Wonders turn into confusion when I only dream of seeing her,
Wonders keep my reality a blur when I only think of kissing her,
A magical love that spectacularly disappears
to eventually reappear in the final act,
The perfect prestige for my soul that tries to hold
on to what it feels like to be with her again,
Now that time is fading her away from me,
Our lovely memories are the only thing
that contradict our distances,
For all the right feelings to be together,*



*For all the wrong reasons not to be,
My hidden treasure that I'm not able to spend,
No rubies, gold or diamonds,
But a fortune's worth of pieces of my lonely broken heart,
Full of her sweet memories,
Broken for never being able to confess the one I love.*

But why would you want to know her anyway if she is just a stranger? Why would it be important to you? And what is her connection to you? Perhaps she is you, and you just don't know it yet? Or maybe she is your wife, sister, mother, friend or someone you know but with a different name now? Maybe you are the one who can help me find my only love? Maybe you can spread the message that I never stopped looking for My Angel of Hope?

I am Juan Del Valle from the Dominican Republic. I came to New York when I was just a child. When I was seventeen years old, I joined the Marines. After the military, I finished my education in Business Administration. I was top of my class, but my real talent was seducing women. However, that's how I got the name Don Juan, but this story is not about all the women in my life. In my job after college, I seduced people to buy new products until I developed my own business following my passion for sports. While I had the business idea in the sports industry, I worked a part-time job as a personal trainer in a local mixed martial arts gym.





My roommate was a doctor named Ray; well, he was more than my roommate, he was my big brother Ramon del Valle, and I was more or less crashing in his apartment until my business took off.

June 7, 2012, was the day I decided to spend the summer visiting possible investors. I remember arranging my schedule so that during the day I spent my time finding new leads and visiting investors, then in the evening I worked as a personal trainer at a gym. I had a great start meeting people, and the first month was a learning experience talking to prospective investors.

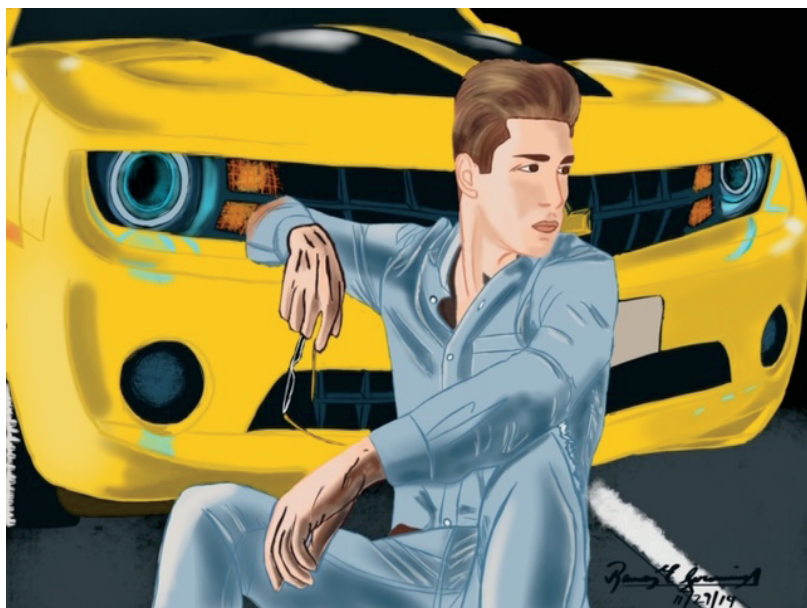
By the end of July, I had one investor willing to risk whatever it took to develop my idea. This was after William Gonzalez, a business consultant, handed my business executive summary to Don Emilio Ramirez.

My pitch was “Simplified Sports Fantasy to Eliminate the Time Spent on Stats.”

Don Emilio was a fifty-nine-year-old businessman and like me, he loved sports. He loved investing in the sports industry and some of his past investments involved sports bars, offshore betting companies, restaurants near stadiums in New York City and New Jersey, a sports agency company with a decent list of professional athletes, and a huge list of young rising stars all around the United States and Latin America. This guy was involved in anything that had to do with sports, from sponsoring cars in NASCAR to the Super Bowl—you name it. Don Emilio was a powerful and well-respected man in society.

Even though I was aiming to do business with Mark Cuban, Scott Boras, or a professional athlete with a great image like Derek Jeter or

Manny Ramirez, I was very excited to meet Don Emilio in person, and for a moment I thought he was the perfect match for my business.



I could picture myself sometime in the future, watching a Dallas Mavericks game against the New York Knicks in the VIP room in New York City with my lawyer and business consultant, Scott Boras, Mark Cuban, and Don Emilio. Mark was trying to convince Don Emilio and I to sell him a small share because he wanted to be part of the business.

What I didn't know then about Don Emilio was that he was under investigation, and because I was speaking to his business consultant William, I was about to become part of that. After I left William's office, I had a tail on me, and by the end of the week the D.E.A. knew everything about me—but I was clean and off the radar for the moment.

My appointment with Don Emilio was not until the end of September. I'd had almost a month and a half to prepare for the meeting. What I didn't know was that my life was about to change completely.

I do remember the day it all began to change, though I woke up under the impression it was just another normal day. It was a Saturday and my brother, Ray, had to work early at the hospital. He left me a note and some cash to get him something nice for a friend he was meeting that night. I decided to take the A train to 175th Street and rode the shuttle bus across the George Washington Bridge to the Garden State Mall in New Jersey. To be honest, I didn't have a tangible reason to go that far for a gift, but that morning I woke up with a feeling of emptiness inside and I wanted to be away. I felt the journey would give me the escape that I needed, so I just kept going, not asking myself any questions or giving myself a chance to rethink my actions.

I went to Macy's looking for something nice for the kitchen. I looked kind of lost because I didn't know exactly what I was getting.

"Did you find what you are looking for?" a voice as smooth and sweet as whipped cream inquired from behind me.

"I don't know what I'm looking for," I responded, and turned around to place a face to the voice.

Due to how exquisite she sounded, I had expected to see a beautiful woman, but the face that met my anxious gaze was even more beautiful than her voice portrayed. I wasn't aware I'd sucked my breath in until she smiled. Her big brown eyes seemed to suck me further in while calling on my eyes to smile right back. Her hair was a breathtaking blonde, bright like the sunlight, and it was coming down from one side, covering half of her face and neck. I could barely see her right

eye, but one eye was more than enough to get me lost for a moment. I had met a lot of women in my life but I had never felt anything quite like the pull I felt towards her.

“Sometimes we look in the wrong direction,” she said. She walked a few steps closer to me and pointed at a baby blue kitchen towel. “She will love the color and the design of waves,” she said referring to my brother’s friend—obviously thinking it was for my own lady friend—and then she began to walk away.

“Do you work here?” I urgently asked her turned back.

“No,” she said, turning around to halt in her tracks as if contemplating the answer and its finality.

It was an oddly powerful moment for me; I felt a strong connection with her as if an energy cord bonded us together, and I was very curious to know if I was the only one feeling this way. I had my senses all over the place and a strange sadness surrounded me, similar to when you lose someone you love. It seemed to be coursing from her aura into me. I didn’t want to sound like a freak so I didn’t mention that to her. However, I did introduce myself.

“My name is Juan Del Valle,” I said, as I extended my right hand for a handshake.

Her palm was soft and warm and the intensity of the connection sizzled even more with the handshake.

“Do I know you from somewhere? You look very familiar,” I said to her with a small smile playing on my lips while a questioning, confused look hovered behind it.

“No, you have never seen me before.”

And she turned and left without saying her name.

I paid for the gift and headed back to New York. On my way home, she was the only thing I could think of. That and the insanely intense attraction I felt for her. I also wondered about the sadness that coursed through her and surrounded me during our conversation and I wrote about it.

She was right about the gift. My brother told me his friend loved the design of waves and thought the shade of it was particularly beautiful. Ray couldn't believe I had such great taste in such a matter, so he questioned and teased me nonstop about it.

Eventually, I had to tell him someone at the store helped me pick it out, but I didn't talk about her. I felt the memory was too precious to share so soon.

That night I had a dream. I was walking on a beach and she appeared to me, full of light. Before I could get closer to her, two men held me down to my knees and another pulled her away from me while she was trying to come closer to me. One of them pulled a gun to my head and boom!

The gunshot explosion woke me up before the bullet reached my head, I was all sweaty and my heart was literally pounding its way out of my chest. I couldn't go back to sleep after that and neither could I stop thinking about her. Would I ever see her again? Who was she? And why did I feel like I knew her so well? I had to find her. On and on these thoughts ran about in my head.





For the first time in my life, I found myself interested in a woman with no intentions to seduce her like all the others before her; well, at least it wasn't my first intention with her. Though she was very beautiful, it was the air of tragedy around her and the quiet strength she exuded that intrigued me the most. It was insane. I could tell she was younger than me, but her body language and the way she moved spoke volumes about class. Somehow, I could also tell her baby face belied her level of maturity. One thing her baby face was spot on about was a clean, pure aura that seemed to be stained with sadness. It just felt like I'd always known her in a past life or something and just needed to know her again. Seducing her was far from my intention because she had already seduced me; got me reeled in, hook, line and sinker. She wasn't even the typical woman I would go for because I always selected who to approach as the lion always selects its prey. A lion will observe

from far away before making a move and if the prey is wounded the lion won't attack, the same way a man makes his decisions to approach or not based on what he sees. This time around, I was the prey and she the hunter leading me to her arms' trap. I couldn't even deign to show any resistance to her even if she brought my death. I just wanted to feel her close again.

*Your silence says more than the things you said,
And the things that you don't see and touch are more real,
There's no lie in a feeling and you will
never hide what's in your heart,
You could look at a person's eyes and tell
them you don't feel anything,
But first, must train your entire body just so,
When your heart tries to come out of your chest,
During the internal battle between your reasoning and feelings,
And your soul knowing you were made for each other,
Let your ego fool you and cover it with the darkest blind.
Don't turn your back to love now,
To live the misery, I am living now without you here,
Admit that more important than fine things and security,
Is us,
You will eat and will never be full,
Dress and always feel naked,
Laugh and never be happy,
And crying will be the only real thing,
Reflecting your emptiness and sadness.*



The very next day, I went to the mall again hoping to find her. I was never in love before, and I needed to know what I was feeling and why I was feeling that way. I knew I couldn't afford to detract from my business project, so I figured I could work on my presentation in a coffee shop or the food court. At least I wanted to try that for a week, hoping I'd lift my eyes off my laptop's screen, and she'd be there, standing right in front of me, saying, "Hello. It's you again."

CHAPTER II

Falling In Love

A few days passed and there was no sign of her. And with each day that passed, my entire being seemed to become engulfed more and more by a strange feeling of anxiety and sadness. I was also making very little progress on my business project because the environment at the mall was rather distracting, especially since every few seconds I had my head up, scanning the area, looking to see if I would see her. I also walked around the mall every two hours. All to no avail. But I was not ready to give up on her.

One day I was seated on a bench having a coffee. Then I had a strange sensation that someone was looking in my direction; I was positive she was behind me, but I didn't turn—though it took all my willpower not to. I looked at the reflection in the mirror in front of me to see if it was really her. The reflection was a match, but I wasn't 100% sure. Or I was scared to conclude too soon; I'd had a few embarrassing encounters like that over the past few stakeout days.

Nervously, I turned my head and quipped with a tinge of humor in my voice, "Are you stalking me?"

“How did you know it was me?” she replied, parrying my question with one of hers.

“Well, I so happen to know exactly what I am looking for.” This time, my voice betrays me and conveys my longing to be reunited with her.

“I am a married woman, Don Juan,” she said with a playful huff referring to me as the womanizer character from the books without knowing that it’s actually my nickname.

“Let me guess, you got married very young—sixteen, maybe seventeen, to an older guy. You also happen to have a child with this man and that is your only attachment to him. Also, your life after marrying him is an illusion of what love is. But you were living a fantasy with your prince charming until you found out he was cheating on you. I can tell he is a very wealthy man because of the clothes you wear and your pieces of jewelry, especially that Rolex. I know that it’s too hot to wear the jacket you are wearing, but my guess is you are hiding bruises on your arms. Then you stopped wearing your wedding ring because you want to divorce him, but that is not an option. You also lost someone very close to you, I’m guessing your mother perhaps.” I couldn’t help myself with my directness, and I hoped I wouldn’t make a fool of myself. But I figured this was going to be my only shot, so I continued, “I wrote you something about it. Would you like to read it?” I said all this in a dead serious voice; the tragedy that was her reality wasn’t a joke to me. She’d remained quiet as a mouse through it and even for several seconds after.

“Sure,” she finally responded, her voice low and hoarse. I slowly handed her my cell phone with the note opened.



*You speak of her and the room fills with sadness
 and sorrow. I can feel the pain in your heart of a
 loss and the emptiness of missing a loved one,
 Death is only sadness for the mind but the soul is full of joy,
 It's like puberty. Afraid of the unknown
 transition: a girl growing into a woman,
 It is only sadness for the mind because it means the end of it,
 It is a joy for the soul because the debt is paid and now it's
 free again. It is full of joy and happy to go back home,
 You haven't lost anything because part of her remains
 with you but the feeling of losing won't let you feel her,
 Her only worry before leaving was your suffering; your gift to
 her now is letting her go in peace and being happy she is free,
 Cry if you must, but for her pain, that is over,
 Cry baby, cry, but remember her pain is gone,
 Let her hear you laugh instead and push her up to heaven
 with the angelical wings in your beautiful smile.*

I heard her trying not to cry. I saw through the mirror how with one hand she covered her mouth and how she shifted it from one eye to the other wiping away tears. She shed very matter-of-fact tears; no loud sniffing or quaking shoulders, just tears flowing down her face. It twisted my insides in the worst way but I didn't move to console her. I stood there and gave her a moment alone.

"It was my daughter... she was premature because I had some complications during my pregnancy when I found out about his infidelities. When I confronted him about it, he slapped me on my face

and I fell on the floor and landed on my belly. The baby survived for almost two weeks, but she didn't make it. I married him when I was sixteen and we now have a four-year-old boy. I tried to divorce him, and I even left him once, but he found me. Since then I have lived with a monster and he treats me like a prisoner. He is a very dangerous and powerful man.”

She somehow managed to say all this calmly, yet there was no hiding the fear and horror in her voice. Her helplessness made my heart twist even worse.



“You have to put your shit together and be strong for your son,” I said, pain from her helplessness causing me to speak in a choked, angry voice.

To this, she laughed. I guess it must have been a while she had anyone show any concern for her, so she found my response unusual and didn't know how to act. So, laughter it was.

I looked up from my feet to see her typing on my cell phone and watched, tense with curiosity as she got up from the bench to hand me the phone.

“Send it to me,” she said, before she turned and left with that effortlessly compelling gait she had.

I watched her the whole time until there was nothing to see. It was only then that I noticed she had left my messenger application open. She'd added herself under the name “AngieHope.”

AngieHope:

In case you were wondering, it is short for Angel of Hope.

I sent her the note and I stood there for a while longer. I thought about walking away because what else could I do? But how possible was it for me to just forget she existed? Or ignore the way I felt? She didn't deserve the tragedy that was her life, but who was I to judge?

I had never and will never hit a woman, but I have made them suffer a lot with my actions. I have slept with them and never called back. What made me think I was a better man for her?

Then one simple question popped up in my mind and made me rethink; what if she is the one?

So, I texted her after a little while.

Don Juan:

The rosebud that was uprooted and put into a jar,
Only remains a dried, withered and battered beauty by
the heat's absence,
Petal after petal falls over time and heralds the plucking
of another rose waiting to be its replacement,
A stalk that has grown longer than usual desperate to
find a ray of light,
Thorns serve as armor that protects their vulnerability
and reflects its fear of being hurt,
But the pain has become survival and adaptation,
Adapting to receive too much water that drowns the root
without suspecting,
That what is missing is solar heat,
I don't even need to touch you to swerve you into my
light,
I don't even feel like water does and yet I calm
your cravings,
Too much water hurts you and too low is the light that
you miss me,
I could swear I know more despite the distance and my
glow burns inside your guts,
What will become of you, my rose, when it's time to plant
another rosebud on your base?
You will be forgotten like the previous roses, dried
from sadness,
Maybe my light will give you that longed-for freedom,
How much I wish I could burn my fire hot enough to finish
your search,
Evaporating your sensibility into the air,
Turning the steam to a dew that gently caresses every
part of your being.



After a minute, I texted her again. I wasn't sure how she would react and for a minute, as she was typing..., I felt I had said too much.

AngieHope:

What do you do for a living?
Besides writing poems to women :)

I was relieved she didn't take what I texted in a bad way.

Don Juan:

I am currently working on a business project. And I only write my feelings when I'm trying to get rid of a stalker lol

AngieHope:

May I hug you next time I see you?

Don Juan:

Sure. Just don't let anyone see you ;)

AngieHope:

I'll find a way.
Muaahz.

Don Juan:

I hope to see you soon.

AngieHope:

I'll be at the mall tomorrow around 4.



I hope you can make it.

Don Juan:

I'll see you around then.

And just like that we started texting and seeing each other. It was a way for her to be free of her awful reality. I couldn't do much so I wrote to her and we made plans like a tactical team, considering all the edge cases and possible scenarios where I didn't put her at risk, but we both knew that plans fail all the time and there's always a risk.



*Fear is the first stage of being courageous,
It is the spark that will start a burnout fire,
Once it's burning, it is almost impossible to put out,*

*Being afraid will not make you a coward,
but running the other way will,
Not having a way to escape or a place to hide
is the push you need to face your fear,
To start the burning of the fire of courage,
It is only then when you let that emotion take over your
actions that you will know what you are capable of,
Where is the valor of a fighter if the
opponent doesn't know how to fight?
Valor is the opponent who is afraid, but will take
a stand and will not allow being abused,
How many times do we feel love and stay shut?
Is it worth seeing that person suffer in another relationship?
When you know deep inside you could've given so much
more but you didn't even dare to face the feeling of love,
You couldn't overcome the fear of being rejected,
and now at the end, you end up alone,
I am afraid of you because only you hurt me in
a way my soul feels like tearing apart,
A lie hurts more when it comes from your lips hidden in a kiss,
I am afraid because I could eat poison from your
hands trusting you when you feed me,
So vulnerable am I to you, the road behind
me shrunk leaving me no other way,
But to say that I love you,
For you to step on, lie on, cheat on, hurt, break or to kiss me in
pure crystal love and let the spark start the fire of our hearts.*

I went to the mall the next day to meet her. I got there early and started working, elated by how things had turned out the day before. By 2 o'clock I had fine-tuned some marketing strategies, so I went for a coffee. On my way there, I stopped at a stand because a beautiful bracelet caught my attention. The bracelet had a dolphin made of Larimar, which is a rare turquoise blue stone found only in the Dominican Republic. The rest of the bracelet had sharks all around the dolphin in white gold. There and then, I decided to get it for Angie because it reminded me of her.

AngieHope:

Hi.

Don Juan:

Hey stranger.

AngieHope:

I am in Macy's talking to customer service.
My refrigerator stopped working so I'm trying to get it fixed ASAP.
Can you wait for me where I saw you yesterday?

Don Juan:

Sure, take your time.

A few minutes later she sent me a message to get a movie ticket at the cinema. She was already inside the theatre. When I walked into the room, I couldn't find her in the crowd.

AngieHope:

Look to your left...
I am the one with the white hoodie.

I approached her, and when I finally got to her, she got up and hugged me so tight, it was a wonder her arms didn't come off. I never forgot that first hug. At that moment I understood that she was feeling the same way I was. I wished I could kiss her there and then but I knew she was too vulnerable and I didn't want her to feel I was taking advantage of her. I didn't want her to suffer, and I was also afraid to rush things and scare her off. It was strange, but around her, I was a totally different man.

*I can hear it in my mind, replaying over and over again,
Time is just providing the space to intensify
and define every thought,
My mind makes it clear it knows what I want,
But I can't please my emotions or even satisfy my
desires long enough to admit that I am truly happy,
And so, I go running around and chasing
my tail into the deepest quicksand,
Moving and moving to listen to every
thought but drowning even deeper,*

*With just a little taste of what being
happy is instead of the full prize,
It seems only right to forge ahead,
And so, I keep on drowning until it's over,
Unless I stop chasing a quick taste of
pleasure and stay still for a moment,
I won't find how to fill with joy my emptiness,
My mind knows what I want, but my soul
disagrees, knowing what I need,
I need nothing because I had it all at this moment,
I forgot to hear the birds singing, the sunset and the stars,
I forgot to feel the raindrops, the sun's
heat and the cool of night,
I forgot the smell of a flower and the taste of a kiss,
I forgot what matters, to focus on material things.
But in this moment, I have become full of attention,
It is time to be here and not be run around,
If I kiss you at this moment would I be lost in you?
Or would I remain wandering around?
I promise if kiss you, I'll taste every second of your mouth,
Forgive me if in that moment all I do is think of you,
Forgive me if by doing so I will make you fall too,
Just don't fall now, don't move,
Hold yourself still and enjoy me as I do,
Don't try to define what's happening,
Just don't try to describe love,*



*Don't spoil this moment of passion with
mundane and simple words.*

We sat down to enjoy the movie and she held my hand while her head rested on my left shoulder. It felt like this was something we always did. Then I remembered I had the bracelet in a small box in my right pocket. I pulled the box out and started opening it with one hand because I didn't want to let go of her hand. She looked at me with a smile as I began wrapping the bracelet around her wrist.

She held it up with her left hand to take a better look at it and stops at the turquoise dolphin.

I then leaned closer to her, not to kiss her but to say to her, "You are the dolphin swimming amidst all the sharks in your social circle. You've been around them so much; you're adapted to their ways and you even had to learn how to swim like one. Don't be afraid—I would never hurt you. With me, you are swimming with your kind."

*Try to find everything in nothing like you
found nothing in everything,
I make my home anywhere you are; so far, you're next to me,
A mansion will not be enough without you,
A box will do the trick if there is another
box next to me with you in it,
I can see you laughing in my mind after that example
and that's exactly my offer; a life full of joy,
When I'm gone you will find me everywhere,
in every memory and every picture.*

*You won't miss my touch because the breeze will feel like my
hands gently touching your face and playing with your hair,
The sun will keep you warm like when I hug you,
But what would be the role of the water?
Use your naked imagination to think of
every dewdrop playing on your body,
Reaching places that only water can reach,
Try to find everything in nothing and you won't
miss me because I am there with you,
Because you are everything to me and I am yours.*

During the course of the movie, she asked me if she could kiss me before leaving. I smiled at her and said yes. She kissed me on the cheek and my heart slowed down. It felt like the whole world paused for a second or even longer. She got up and left and I slowly came back to earth.

*Expecting anything makes everything so special,
Even the smallest gesture can amplify my emotion and just
a single kiss on the cheek is big enough to steal my soul,
Perhaps you gave so much to someone that they got used to it,
He forgot little things like kissing and turned
back from a prince to a frog,
All the little things you do add up together
to form my whole universe,
How does one forget the warm feeling where your
lips touched my skin and it spread out covering
more space on my face, than I knew there was?*



*Hearing the air being sucked while you
 started moving away from me,
 Pulling softly the area you blessed with your touch,
 How soft, wet and warm it felt and how sorry I felt,
 When you thought you gave me so little,
 And to me, it felt so great and glorious,
 Maybe because I'll never know if you will ever kiss
 me again, was that what makes it so special?
 Maybe because I didn't know you wanted to kiss me like this?
 I wish to discover what more you would do to me if you could.
 But my dream is to experience every single little thing
 that perhaps means so little to someone else,
 But to me represents everything,
 When you asked me for a kiss, with your blushing smile,
 It melted my entire heart,
 Wishing you would do it every day and anywhere
 on my body, wishing even more,
 Because I just don't want to risk it all to lose
 you and I don't dare to kiss you myself.*

After the wonderful day with her, going back home always left a sour taste. The more I learned about her situation, the more I wanted to do something. She couldn't even go out freely with her son because in her husband's mind, she could run away. He was correct about it, and when Angie wanted to go out with her son, her husband needed to approve it. I rode the bus and wrote to comfort her at least with my words.

AngieHope:

Thank you for the bracelet.
I love it.

Don Juan:

Thank you for the wonderful time
I wrote something for you on my way back home.
Would you like to read it?

AngieHope:

Please send it.

Don Juan:

I want to draw your face but I'm afraid I will fail,
How could you copy what God's hand made?
How could you even dare to try?
All I can do is watch your beauty hoping you stay
long enough,
Long enough to resemble a good image of you in
my mind,
To keep your clear memory in my loneliness,
Long enough until the wind erases it off the sand in one
blow,
To make me miss you,
To make me want to come back and see you one
more time,
To make me appreciate that moment when our eyes
met again,
To make you sing for me and give me a straight gift from
heaven,



To make me write love to you with my hands as well as
my body,
And hide it in a single note for you to discover when you
need to find it the most,
To hide it but not keep it buried because love will always
find its own way and its own light,
Like you found me or I did,
Like I heard exactly what to write or maybe I am just a
good listener and I am just repeating every heartbeat,
Maybe you are replying the pure sound of your heart in
one song,
Or maybe it's just simple love.

AngieHope:

It is beautiful.
Did you Google it? Lol

Don Juan:

Hahahaha
I'm glad you like it.

AngieHope:

Ok, let's see your writing skills.
How would you describe me?

Don Juan:

Wait, I have very poor reception here and the internet is
really slow to use Google :)

AngieHope:

Lol

Don Juan:

Ready

AngieHope:

Wait.

Write it like if I wrote it.

Don Juan:

I am the type of fragile that can bend but will never break,
Strong look like a lioness that protects and hunts for
her cub,
I speak with silence and when I'm talking it's
never ignorance,
I think before words come out, to be precise
and accurate,
I am adventurous and a fast learner from taking risks,
Once afraid of emotions and now I'm learning to control
and face my inner fears,
Once a dependent and now I'm willing to do
everything myself,
Once I listened to my conscience and now following
my heart,
I'm not anymore the one who will look back and
feel sorrow,
I'm the one who chooses to live life the way it makes
me happy,
I'm living in full the way I want to live.



Don Juan:

Despite your situation of course, and this is something I admire about you.
You tried to make the most out of it.

AngieHope:

I am glad that I met you. You make me feel so happy in time of sorrow.

Don Juan:

My heart is full of compassion and willingness to help others,
I expect the best in everyone even when that caused me so much pain in the past,
I don't like to be used unless I see people really need me,
I always had the attention of a princess; now I share my entire heart like a Queen,
My eyes make no distinctions and look beyond the physical,
Distinctions to me come with the actions of those who hurt me and love me,
I always look for ways to settle things peacefully and I try to skip the sour taste with a smile.

Don Juan:

Poor reception, but wait..
There is more :)

AngieHope:

Searching this fast is a skill :)

Don Juan:

It's really hard to open myself up to strangers and my trust is very hard to gain,
I protect myself a lot because I am very sensitive inside,
I like to keep things to myself and my way to express is more with actions than words,
I love challenges and I like to work hard to accomplish everything I want,
I don't like things being given to me because I like to earn them,
My eyes are opening up to a different way of seeing things,
I am breaking every wall and doing things I once never thought were possible,
My mind is learning not to limit itself and hold me back,
I feel full of joy and hope.

Don Juan:

I am sorry for doing all the talking here, but when I think of you, my mind never stops thinking and I want to make sure I don't leave anything out.

AngieHope:

I wish I could read faster to keep up with you :)

Don Juan:

I am an optimist and even when I'm down I like to learn from the bad experiences I had because every lesson molds my judgment and helped me grow into who I am now,



If I could be a place, I would be a beautiful day on the beach,
My priority is my child and family means a lot to me,
What truly makes me happy more than anything? It's affection from my loved one,
Every little thing that my child comes up with to me is a blessing,
I like having fun and enjoy jokes,
One of my biggest passions is fashion and to me, my dream job is being the owner of a clothing line with a lot of franchises,
I also love acting, so don't be surprised if you see me in the next movie hit.
Since I love romance, I hope it's a love story,
To simplify who I am?
I'm just going to say that I am full of surprises and mysteries that I love to keep hidden like a treasure to myself.

AngieHope:

Hey, how did you know I like fashion?
And I never told you I wanted to be an actress.

Don Juan:

I Googled it.
Isn't every rich girl's dream to be an actress?
Lol.

AngieHope:

Lol
How do you know all that about me?

Don Juan:

You dress really nice and sophisticated, which means you like to keep track of fashion.
Also, you are married to an old rich guy, and those guys usually go for young models.
You are very beautiful so you were probably a model before you got married, and if you were a model you must have dreamt to be an actress.

AngieHope:

I'm impressed.

Don Juan:

Would you like another one?

AngieHope:

I would love it.

Don Juan:

Let me see what I can find in Yahoo now.

AngieHope:

You are funny.

Don Juan:

I'm simple and complex like the lightbulb,
I bring the light to everyone around me by simply switching on and off my smile,



I am complex to everyone ignoring what provokes that
spark that brought joy to my lips,
A mystery that everyone wonders but no one explores
with the exception of the one connected to my heart,
I am the flower that some people admire and some wish
to cut,
Full of talents buried in the ground like the root that
spreads under and covers more space than the
beauty outside,
It is everything I am, my base and my beliefs but to
everyone, I'm no more than the stem and beautiful petals,
A root that holds on to the superficial that you see,
Where I fill with emotions and stay grounded,
My eyes are clear like the calm river,
If you look deeper into it you will see the depth right into
my soul,
The sound of my voice is like a breeze that just brings
peace all around,
My body is the grass; when you lay on it, it's kind
and supportive,
My mind flies in the sky like a plane, free and away
from pollution,
I touch the rainbows and dive into the waterfalls of love,
Flirting with the golden leaves in my hair,
Risking everything in a kiss or a look,
Afraid to lose my heavenly place,
My heart has two rhythms: with and without you,
Without you is constant, always the same,
With you means changing melodies in every pulse,
I'm this earth that you explore and sometimes exploit,
But still, provide you a place to be in my heart.

AngieHope:

Wow.



How come you don't write a book and do this for a living?

Don Juan:

Because I don't like to write :p

AngieHope:

And why do you write to me then?

Don Juan:

Because this is the only way I could talk to you.
I love writing to you because I can make you happy when you are there.
It is another escape for you.
Would you like to try another one?

AngieHope:

You are so sweet.

Don Juan:

My name is my personality and Angie her soul,
She is the shield that is covered with makeup,
I'm the fragile part that's soft,
You will see her walking down the hallway with a
character that almost no one will dare to approach,
She's been around too many sharks of society for so long
that she can swim like one,
She is not a quitter and can digest pain faster than you
and I,



You'll see her on the floor all sweaty and tired of fighting
to get back up;
She's been punched and knocked down but holds her
guts together to keep on moving forward,
I am that little moment down on the floor vulnerable
and hurt,
She tries so fast to get up, get up, get up, in my head,
I might feel like crying but in her heart, there's no space
for weakness,
She is the warrior that fights battles in the war-torn world
we live in,
I'm he who cleans the blood, covers the wounds and
calms the pain,
She analyzes and slowly plans a strategy for any
situation,
Like a general, she suits up with class and glamour,
She is the one who makes every tough decision,
And I am the influence behind every execution,
She is the soft smile followed by any action and attitude,
I am the lovely smile you will barely see,
You will barely see it or maybe will never know
my softness,
You'll never know the mother, the lover, and the wife
inside me,
Those close to me will understand my "don't mess with
me" look and my serious face,
But inside I'm a dreamer full of compassion, in love
with romanticism with a twist of sweetness in my heart
that rides on my toughened character to protect my
vulnerability hoping to be one day who I truly am; just a
soul in love to be free like the wind.

AngieHope:

You have to tell me: how do you do that?



Seriously.

Don Juan:

A charming mystery is hidden in the surname of hope,
Never still like the weather, emotionally changing,
Good breeze as if transitioning from a cold winter to spring,
Empathetic after the storm,
Like the rain that showers the land like tears of the sky.
Eyes that provoke a gentile love,
Smile that reflects my crystal heart,
Passion flowing like my hair, down to my spine,
Emotions that wish no harm to others but bliss,
Rational to society judgments,
Anxious for a taste of freedom,
Never fooled by appearance,
Zooming in for a close up of everyone's heart, not the face,
All under a personality that is overshadowed by my beauty.

AngieHope:

Wow.
Angel Esperanza.
That means Angel of Hope.

Don Juan:

When will I see you again?

AngieHope:

Tomorrow, I promised my son to take him to the movies.
I would love if you could come and sit behind us.



I would love to at least know you are in the same room with me.

Don Juan:

The pleasure will be mine.

AngieHope:

Thank you.

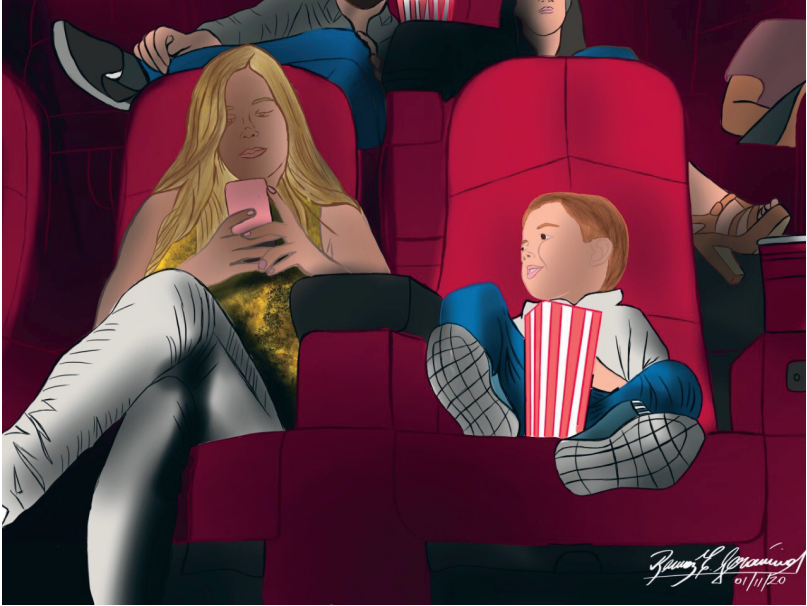
I was more concerned than ever thinking that perhaps tomorrow is the day we get caught. Since her husband didn't trust her thinking she could run away, it wouldn't surprise me if he had people spying on her every time she went out with her son. If I was not careful, Angie and I could be exposed to a powerful man capable of anything while I was drugged with the fantasy of being around her.

What would it mean to be exposed? I didn't even carry a knife with me when I saw her. Would he send someone to kill me or worse, would he kill her?



CHAPTER III

Seduce Me



*He'll notice your difference from far away,
He'll contemplate that smile that he hasn't seen in a while,
He'll wonder "What if," thinking maybe, "Could it be possible?"
Comparing you with him and his old ways, because,
Like an old fox, he smiles when he hides his bad actions,*

*And likewise, of an impulse,
He'll feel you don't belong to him anymore,
Rage will guide his work,
Be careful and look up and watch him looking at you,
Coldly calculating each step,
What moral insanity to judge you for
discovering happiness again,
And finding a means of escape from his rough hands,
How unfair the mentality to justify that you're socially worse,
My great actress of diluted dreams,
Fake the smile that you give to me the same
way as you pretend about your pain,
Make him feel as the protagonist of your changes in the scene,
Make him feel he is the reason why, instead of making
him doubt; the true answer lies in your heart,
Maybe guilt will teach him to appreciate you and deserve you,
But you can't wound pride and ego with guilt,
Perform your best act, my great actress, because
society will not understand our role,
And if the mere idea of not eating flesh
is so unusual to society minds,
What if you try to explain my nature?
As Jesus to Magdalene just by being good to
her and relieving her from her pain,
Rocks will fall on you and for centuries people
will divulge the fallacy of false offspring,*



*But how would I feel if by trying to relieve
your pain you become injured?
Sadness would cover my soul for being
helpless to take care of you,
Understanding the fleeting waste of your lips
tired of being so serious the whole day,
Go back to being that girl again loaded with
illusions even for a moment and don't allow reality
to stain your gift, your treasure, your secret.*

Another day had come where I was able to see Angie. This time I was only able to enjoy her presence some feet away from her. She asked me to sit behind her like the day before, but instead I sat in front of her so she could see me.

AngieHope:

Is that how you seduce a woman?
Doing the exact opposite of what she asks you to?
Lol.

Don Juan:

Who said I was seducing you?
I don't know about you but I really want to watch this
movie :)

AngieHope:

Then how would you seduce a woman Don Juan?

Don Juan:

It depends on the situation and every woman is different.
But you can be sure that it is not by doing like
everyone advises:
"Oh, just be yourself."

AngieHope:

So, you are not being yourself with me?

Don Juan:

I don't know where you got the idea that I am seducing
you.
All this time I thought you were seducing me, lady.
I am the victim here and therefore I am 100% myself lol.

AngieHope:

If you see me in the mall, how would you get my number?

Don Juan:

I will ask you nicely to let me use your phone for
an emergency
Then when you lend me your cell phone
I would dial mine lol.

AngieHope:

Hahahahaha
If a guy does that to me, I would kill him lol.

Don Juan:

More than words, it's the way you do it.
That's why I said to you that you don't act like yourself
You act like the situation that suits you better for
that moment.

AngieHope:

How do you do that?

Don Juan:

Body language and eye contact.
You have to present yourself with confidence when she
looks at you.
You have a few seconds to catch her attention.
Before you approach her, you want to make sure she is
ready for you to do so.
Let's say she is with some friends or doesn't want to be
seen like you ;)

AngieHope:

How would you seduce me if you can't approach me and
can't use your body language?

Don Juan:

Being able to kiss you now and not doing so,
Creates in me a feeling of not knowing if time will put our
lips so close again,
Prolonging the passion and desire in me by taking the
risk of not seeing you anymore,
I'll think of you and what I could've had when I'm gone,

I'll imagine the taste of your lips and feel your imaginary
tongue caressing mine,
With my eyes closed, I'll create that scene,
I'll create the passion in my heart of a perfect kiss to mark
our souls,
I'll see my hands passing through your hair, face, neck
and painting landscapes with my fingers on your
shoulders down your back,
I wouldn't want to stop if it were the last time I kiss you,
I will slightly bite the bottom of your lips,
Suddenly and smoothly I will turn away my lips from
yours to see how you chase my mouth,
I will smile until you catch me with yours,
The appetite for a kiss will grow until we devour
one another,
Without looks and words only that animal instinct,
Us, reduced in a passionate kiss that has been prolonged
in time until we meet again.

AngieHope:

I'm speechless.

Don Juan:

Why do you look at me like the prohibited fruit, my Eve?
Coveting what is so close to your hands to be plucked
with a kiss?
Are you waiting for the fruit to ripen until I fall?
But how will you justify the bite on my skin?
The traces of your uncontrolled passion for the time
biding,
How would you contain the fiery beast?
Or would you try to contain yourself until you can't hold
on anymore?



Perhaps I will have to tame you by grabbing your hands,
While your legs persist, entangled around my lower back,
Will I have to calm down your emotional and agitated
breathing that rises with each throb?
By placing a hand upon your belly and collecting the
accumulated sweat between your navel,
I'll go down slowly so you feel shaken while I get lost in
the valley of your beautiful eyes,
And when your mouth reveals my arrival by forming into
a slight "o,"
I will intensify it a little more, before changing direction to
your knee,
Just a finger will be enough to climb up to reach and
penetrate the germination spot on the seed,
And once again you will reveal with a bite on your lips the
coming of your rain that puts off the fire from your body.

AngieHope:

Why do you do this to me?

Don Juan:

What am I doing? O:)

AngieHope:

You know exactly what Don Juan.

Don Juan:

You asked me to seduce you.
Would you like me to stop?

AngieHope:

No.

Don Juan:

There will never be better poetry than the one I'll write on
your body with mine,
Your skin will be my paper and the ink will sprout from my
pores to dissolve with your perfume,
I'll make a full stop with my lips and with your hair I'll
erase my mistakes,
I'll cover every corner of the paper and finish at the tip of
your feet,
With your sharpener, I'll sharpen my pencil,
Highlighting my prickly touch,
I will know when to emphasize with my nails on
your back,
Slightly pulling your hair to hear your moaning,
You'll tremble when I shudder,
And your two front mountains will be a climb,
I will dive into your pit and you'll hear my roar splashing
you with all my grace,
And I'll behold your fatigue while the strong echo of your
heartbeats fuses with mine.

AngieHope:

You are so mean to me.
Mommy needs some alone time lol.

Don Juan:

What would you do when I lock you in the dresser?



When your conscience tells you everyone outside can
hear you scream,
When I force you against the wall and kiss you,
What would you do when I touch your body and you want
to scream my name?
How would you swallow it and hold it down your throat,
I want to see you desperate and to see if you let go
or stop,
Force your clothes down and turn you around,
Help you keep your mouth shut and feel you bite
my finger,
How would you react? If you know you like it hard,
You fight your way to face me and wrap your legs
around me,
I wonder when you'll come to me,
I wonder when you'll come,
The dresser will be closed,
I'll do it real slow,
I want to see your guilt,
The shame to come with me,
You'll leave but will be back,
We'll do it many times,
You'll burn into my arm,
You'll burn within the inside.

I get up and turn my face slightly to see her before I leave. I took advantage that her son was focused watching the ending of the movie and I moisten my lips and smile at her.

AngieHope:

Where are you going?

Don Juan:

The movie is about to end...
Don't you remember the drill?

AngieHope:

Please don't leave the mall yet.
Hang around until I buy my son some ice cream.
Let me see you at least from far away.

Don Juan:

I will see you from the coffee shop stand.

*A lot like love, because I miss you, I want
to see you and be with you,
Very much likely, if you cry, I'll feel so sad
and if you are hurt, I really care,
Could it be the same?
If you are in my thoughts from dawn to dusk and in my sleep,
Where I see your being, then what is it?
A lot like love, you don't have to say for me to know, don't have
to see me for me to be or don't have to touch for me to feel,
Very much likely mutual you and I,
It's one reflection, one connection same purpose,
Could be the same stimulus, that will protect you,
Inspire my feelings, sharpen my senses and make me strong,
Is it or not?*

*How would you know? If you never even feel
the lowest layer of that emotion,
That craves the body in a search for pleasure,
and that a manifestation of an affectionate kiss
has been the symbol of the entire word,
A mother kisses but in the cheeks, she feels
more a hug and loves much more,
You have been in love and you said you haven't,
You love your child and here you have me,
A higher layer of love and much purer,
Beyond the complexities and imperfections,
And much closer to a heavenly meaning of simple love,
Romeo and Juliet couldn't ever be,
He wrote to her and he found his getaway,
She felt so special having his love and when they chained it,
Love got so wrong,
We hide our ways so society doesn't see,
We love the feeling, we love, but don't say,
The physical expectations create all the imperfections,
They fill the flesh and mind with wanton desire,
Changing what's pure into something immoral,
You can fake the act but not the heart,
The love you had and maybe seek,
Will die so fast when you realize that no
one's mind will be satisfied,
You can become an addict to find and lose,
Feeling just in fractions, and getting confused,*



*Turning into suffering for not being able to retain that
magical moment that goes away in every touch,
The essences are still there but we lose the sensitivity
to feel and we look for more and fail to retain,
Believing in something so mundane
that can turn into an illusion,
Without faith, without hope, believing love never exists,
Believing in something so mundane; a routine
that suffocates and imprisons the soul,
It hurts, and in one impulsive act to get
our fix we can kill or be killed,
Due to the flow of emotions raging out
of control at the same time,
Don't say that it is love, just call it our thing,
It's not fragile, it's not thin, and it's just what you need,
I don't want you with just my mind but
I'll give you my all with my heart,
I won't kiss your lips but I'll stay by your side.*

I still remembered her yellow blouse that day after the movie with her son. I even remembered seeing a guy approach her while she was buying ice cream for her son. I didn't blame him because she was so gorgeous and looked outrightly angelic in yellow. Her attention was distracted because she was watching me smile so she was a bit startled when she turned into and almost bumped into him. Still, she was very respectful and friendly while talking to him. Women sometimes put up a saucy attitude when people approach them but she wasn't like that.

She received his compliments graciously and then politely excused herself before mouthing good-bye to me.

That day I knew what was coming next. I knew that the next time we see each other things were going to get heated. Even though I wanted her badly, I didn't want to make a move on her like I would have and must have been expected to.

I didn't want her to feel that I was taking advantage of her vulnerability, and for once in my life, I had something good that I wanted to keep. I didn't want to kiss her until she was sure about her feelings for me. I wanted her to be sure because I was falling badly for her. I didn't know much about love. But with Angie, I was willing to stay close to her even as just a friend. I would rather I have her like that in my life than not having her at all. A kiss or any act of intimacy with her could have risked everything. So, I was afraid to lose her.

*Allow me to kiss you but rather chastely,
As my hands softly remove your sorrows,
My conscience cannot ignore your vulnerability even
though my heart cries out for your presence,
My pulse is so strong that I could hear it thumping,
Bidding me not to listen to my conscience,
Wait until you know about my eyes that dream
of and imagine you every moment,
You are the first and last thought when I open and close them,
I feel your manifestation in my stomach in a gracious
way as if it's the only one that understands your smile,
The energy flows and intensifies my desire down below,*

*Try to listen to my hands when I touch you because they
 steal my soul's words, transmitting my emotions,
 Within me, everything rallies against my
 conscience, questioning my reasons,
 But wouldn't I be like everyone else if I go for a kiss?
 If I let lose my desire and I disrespect you, my queen,
 My countenance of a gentleman will be lost
 and my honor would crawl on the floor,
 Scared of making you feel afterwards that
 I abused your sensitive being,
 Allow me to love you without taking advantage of you.
 To give not what you want but what you need.*

And what about my feelings? You might wonder. I knew I was going up so high that it would hurt me greatly if I came crashing to the ground. At that time, we had nothing going on but a friendship, yet I couldn't be away from her for so long. I was missing her as soon as I was on my way back home. My heart was so strung up with anxiety and excitement that the mere thought of her made me feel like I was walking on a tightrope. I wanted more this time, and it was so painful to think that I couldn't get more than what I had. I wanted to spend time and share everything in my heart with this woman, but I couldn't. What hurt me more was the fact that whoever had that opportunity to know her and be with her didn't appreciate her at all, perhaps living life the same way I used to live it, chasing every woman I could. I wanted to scream at him to open his eyes and see what he was missing out on. Coming from a guy like me who has been with

a lot of girls, it was basically like saying some other guy like me was sitting on the most valuable treasure but wasn't paying attention. But how many valuable women did I miss too?

I never took the chance to know anyone, or maybe I never let myself. And I never let anyone know me as I truly am. It got me curious about the fact that maybe there is really only one person out there who will make you feel the way I feel. That one person exists for you and you will love that person because they're your soulmate. And you will be miserable without her and she will be miserable without you.

Imagine you came from heaven already loving each other. You arrive on Earth and you forget who your soul is and don't remember where you came from or who are you looking for. You think maybe it's money, fame, pleasure but everything is an illusion and a trick of your mind. Imagine I came to Earth to find her and remind her how we love each other. Just for a moment, think you are here looking for that someone you lost in heaven and true happiness is in finding that loved one. Wouldn't you do anything to look for her? Wouldn't you care about her current situation after you find her? The only hope in my heart is that her soul remembers me like I remember this feeling for her coming strangely from above.

Would you care who she's with, if you understand the consequences of her being miserable without you? Would you really care about social criticism if deep inside your heart you know she belonged with you way before she came here? The reason we call heaven a happy place is that there, you are with the right ones; but on Earth, we suffer because we make so many mistakes and wrong decisions that keep us apart from this right person. Imagine Earth is a test to evaluate how

much you love your soulmate by finding her and making her happy in a place far from perfect, and if you fail you will have to retake the test as many times as possible until your love grows strong enough to make it work no matter what happens. Imagine how many times you already failed that test and how many times you will retake it, coming to Earth and dying.

Imagine it depends on you to make it work, and then imagine the many times you let her down and now she is suffering because you were distracted.

*One time I lost my life and I became the light,
Crossing dimensions and recalling once again the forgotten,
And there you were; white and bright, and I, confusing you,
For an angel, my guide of mysterious gardens,
Chasing you became my hobby in a place
where time and stress did not exist,
Running around until finally, you slowed down,
Ending the march for me to reach you,
Touching you was like fusing with you,
Your light and mine became intense,
Another sun that lit and warmed half of the universe,
Then I closed my eyes and you were gone in an instant,
I desperately searched for you to feel once more
what you gave me at that moment,
But I didn't feel your warmth anymore in any other dimension,
It wasn't my time to come back to Earth and I took the risk
to embark on this journey even if I was never able to return,*



*After birth, thousands of miles away
from you, I forgot my quest,
That garden and that flame became the fuzzy
cloud of a beautiful and confused dream,
Leaving the need for something unfinished
not specifying what or who to seek,
Yet I knew I would suffer if I didn't find
on time what I was looking for,
I knew the misery that I would live if I
didn't discover my purpose,
So, those angels who saw us shine in the sky
guided us every day, helping us meet again,
I crossed your path several times without recognizing you,
As you crossed mine without asking who was that?
Miserable and empty was my quest in
the world of the unknown,
But worse was finding pain instead of love,
So close to revive that moment at least once more,
And yet we ignored the signals, distracted,
Hundreds and thousands of years will
pass in heaven if I lose you,
Perhaps a thousand lives more to remember you,
Would you be the one who will find me?
At least before departing,
Or could you have already given me everything in that garden?
If that's so, at least give me back my soul that you
took with you when you got out of my life,*



I need it in order to make it easy to forget that memory.

Don Juan:

I'll love to spend some time with you alone, somewhere
we don't have to worry about who is looking at us.
I hope you trust me; I won't take advantage of you
But I feel we should speak freely and be ourselves.

AngieHope:

I love spending time with you.
And I feel I can trust you.
I will love being able to hug you without hiding.

Don Juan:

What I would ask you will sound crazy but it's the only
way we could be alone.
I hope you don't take it the wrong way..
Let's rent a room for a few hours?

AngieHope:

I'm afraid of what could happen there..
You know I feel attracted to you,
But I don't think I should refill an old bottle of wine with
some new one.

Don Juan:

I wouldn't risk losing you but I also wouldn't forgive
myself for not trying to know you better.
For the first time, I am afraid too but not about what
could happen.



Just afraid of letting you go.

AngieHope:

What if I want to kiss you?

Don Juan:

I wouldn't let you unless you are ready to love me.

AngieHope:

So, you wouldn't have sex with me?

Don Juan:

To me, you are more than sex
The only reason why I wouldn't have sex with you is
because I prefer to make love to you instead.

AngieHope:

Do you have a car?

Don Juan:

I can use my brother's van.

AngieHope:

I will park my car in the mall's lower level.
And then I'll text you when I'm there so can you park next
to me.
That way I can switch to your car.

Don Juan:

What color is your car?

AngieHope:

It's a black SUV.
I'll be there around 4.

Don Juan:

My little princess who finally knows love,
And from your castle window, looks when I pass in front,
I wish to be lost in your eyes that elude me when I try to
catch your eyes,
That lower, smiling and do not let me fully witness you,
As you dance inside wearing your royal dress,
Doing turns imagining it's me with whom you dance,
You peek again looking outside for me,
And when we make eye contact, you dodge again,
You throw me your handkerchief to remember you,
With your scent and perfume, I breathe,
My little princess in love who incites me to climb,
Aspiring for only your hands to grab,
Where is hidden the key that contains your heart?
If he is brave enough to show me where it's hidden, I will
be brave enough to steal it for love,
Do not cry, princess, someday I'll rescue you,
And you'll give me that look that enchants me with
your existence.
The moon is jealous of you because it knows you are the
one I truly want,
With sadness, she shines for you are my desire,
The stars that I see are your eyes,
And I hate your eyelashes for hiding your eyes from me,

My princess who understands the magic of my love,
 It doesn't matter to me that you conceal yourself until I
 find your heart,
 Though poor and penniless, now I have a great treasure,
 In my soul I keep it hidden as it is worth more than gold,
 Don't distress over not being able to hold me, princess,
 Since the kiss I send to you will be felt in your soul,
 Never think that I am gone to never return,
 Even if you're still locked up, I will still climb the wall,
 Until the day I'm caught and I'm judged for being a crook,
 I could get killed and I will never care if the crime was
 stealing your heart.

I couldn't describe the mix of feelings I had. The excitement to finally be alone with her, the worries of getting caught, doubting if I would be able to contain myself and the fear of losing her to an awkward situation. In other words, I was really nervous, like it was my first time alone with a woman and to be honest, it was my first time with a really special one. The pressure increased even more after she texted me,

AngieHope:

I can't wait to see you tomorrow.

I started feeling I was being followed and looking over my shoulders. But what really scared me was not knowing if tomorrow would ever come. If I was being followed by someone it meant her husband knew about us and she had to sleep in the same bed with him tonight. If tonight he confronts her and kills her, I wouldn't be able to live with myself.



Should I start carrying a gun with me from now on? And should I bring one tomorrow to see Angie? The sad story behind my worries is that if he kills her tonight, I don't even know who he is or where she lives. If she doesn't show up tomorrow it might take months for me to know if she's ok and that she just decided to end what we have. I didn't have a photo or anything to file a report and unless some relative reported her as a missing person, how would I even know that she is safe?

CHAPTER IV

If I Kiss You

I couldn't sleep that night thinking of her. I was so excited to finally be able to speak to her while looking directly in her face. I wanted her to feel that I was there for her and that she could count on me. For me, more than anything sexual it was a situation of deep caring.

By now you only know a fraction of the truth. You only know how the romance between us started. You know about how we used to text and how we used to rendezvous. But it is merely the fraction I want you to know before introducing you to her ugly truth.

No one will ever know all the details in my conversations with her on the cell phone and our live chats on Skype. It is part of the story that I don't like to remember because it reminds me of her husband. It is the part of the story she is currently living somewhere.

They shared the same bed even though they didn't speak to one another. It wasn't a secret anymore to her that he was seeing someone else. She wanted to divorce him in the first place, anyway. But for him, divorce was not an option. He wouldn't split up a dime with her, and he made it very clear to her that she was able to leave whenever she

wanted but without the only thing she really wanted. Not the expensive cars, not one of the mansions, not the jewelry, not his business, but her son. He made it very clear to her that he would use everything in his power to keep Angie away from her little boy if she ever left. Her son was the reason why she couldn't leave her husband. Her son was the reason why she suffered all the abuse and humiliation. Living in the mansion was a battlefield for her.

He used to come home drunk after a wild night out and wake her up with screaming, forcing her to take her clothes off. Sometimes she escaped and locked herself in the bathroom and sometimes she couldn't. It got to the point her eyes didn't cry anymore and her body got numb to all the pain. She covered with make-up every bruise on her neck and arms. Sometimes she needed bigger glasses to hide the black eye, but most of the time she just stayed home. Her body was no stranger to being battered; she went from broken lips and bruises to jammed fingers, back injury and cracked ribs. On and on again. But that was the price she had to pay to be with her son.

You find lots of women living under similar situations nowadays. I divide them into four groups. The first group is made up of the ones who find a way out. In the second group, the women are still in that situation. The women in the third group are not so lucky and are those brave women who have been killed. Women in the last group are the ones that can't take it anymore and kill themselves in desperation. When I said that this was more than sexual and was a caring situation, I truly meant it.

I couldn't sleep when I wasn't with her, because all I could think of was *what if today is the day her husband beats her to death? What if tomorrow never comes?*

But the worst feeling was not even being able to do anything about the whole situation. I was good just supporting her by talking to her and being there. But I wanted to do more and it was killing me.

The day we were to meet alone finally arrived. I left my house really early because I wanted to buy her a yellow rose and some chocolates; a yellow rose as a symbol of our friendship.

I remember hiding the flower and the chocolates in the glove compartment.

She parked her SUV in the lower level of the mall and texted me to pick her up.

AngieHope:

Hey,
I am here. A4

My paranoia kicked in again and I replied to her:

Don Juan:

I think it's best you enter the mall and walk around to the upper level in case you were followed
I will be by the elevator in F3 in a grey van.

It was funny to see her while I was driving and got closer to a crowd or stopped at a red light. The way she tried to stay hidden by sliding down the seat, reminded me of a melting ice cream. She sat in

the back of the van all the way to the hotel. I parked and she waited in the car until I got the reservation and the room key. Once I was in the room, I texted her:

Don Juan:

Hey I'm already in Room 59, take your time.
And can you please bring me my cell phone charger?
I think it is in the glove compartment, thanks.

When I opened the door, her pink face and her smile said it all. The way she hugged me was indescribable. We laid on the bed and I hugged her and played with her hair. She was clearly very happy lying next to me.

I said to her as if it were a poem:

*Now is when I go back to that moment,
When we looked truly at each other lost in space and time,
Surprised that first day we touched hands and our destinies met,
It was very obvious an angel had fallen by my side,
Giving up her wings to revive my existence,
I was a fool back then for almost accepting never seeing you again
and letting you go,
But the writing in the stars was an intense force, attaching two souls
without many words,
Fate revived the occurrences and, in my dream, I saw your presence,
You looked at my eyes as if calling forgotten memories,
It was obvious that after that meeting, the affection would grow
undiluted in such a nice way,
A love dose so intense that took us to the stars,*



*Warming our souls and healing us from when we are apart,
Recalling slowly the way into your arms,
Longing for you with the mind and today is the day I enfold you
into my arms,*

*Today we are so close that you hear my heartbeat,
And I can feel the pleasant air between each breath,
Your hair lays on me and your hands simulate your emotions,
They're out of control,*

*I won't mention your mouth since it's already banned,
If I kiss you right now, we will not stop,*

I conform to your presence,

I conform to looking at you,

I conform to knowing you want me,

*As this moment arrived, so the moment to love you will come
as well,*

*You'll love me with your body and soul and kiss me without making
me stop,*

*Then, time no longer will be our enemy and we'll stay as long as
we want,*

For you to do whatever you want to do to me,

A moment when you don't stop smiling and hugging me happily,

I will wait for that day,

You don't have to ask me because you know I will,

Even if I have to spend other lives waiting,

I will always return to you."



She got closer to me and hugged me tighter. I continued with my poem in a soft voice:

*“And if you with those eyes,
Suddenly trap me, attracting me to your lips,
Poisoning me with your love,
In an indecent way to put away my innocence,
Leaving my discernment judgment of forbidden touch,
Laughing full of malice while summoning your spell,
And scratching with your fingernails my back,
Collecting your hair inciting me to suck,
Feeding me with your neck and inviting me down,
With a sly smile, as you get undressed,
Then raising your eyes, you glimpse the wolf that is within me,
Ready to devour you impatiently like you want me to,
With your grace you tame me, changing your move,
Touching me in ways you know are not legal,
I let myself go to your mermaid wails,
What if singing passionately you control me with your charms and
steal my heart?
It’s so easy to convince me with your sweet beauty,
Do not hurt me and do not leave, just give me your tenderness.”*





September 19th was the date. I would never forget it.

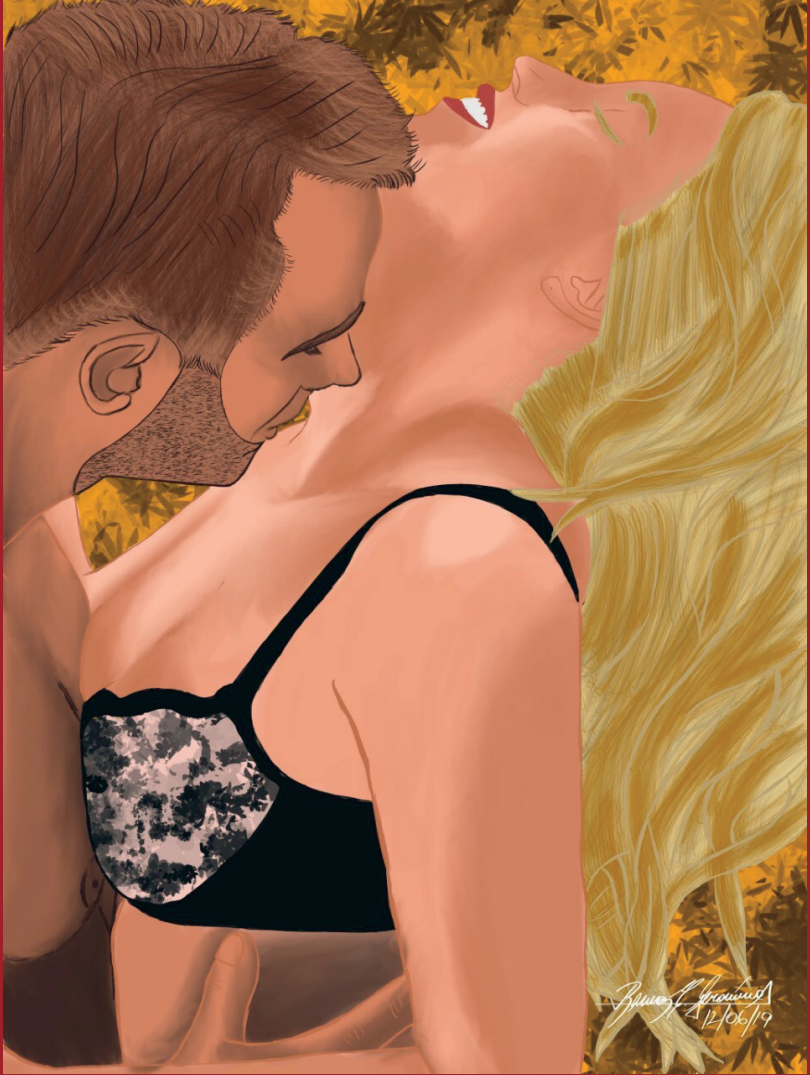
Right after I finished saying my poem to her, she kissed me. And then we lost control of ourselves. The way we made love; the passion and the heat between us was so intense, it is inexplicable.

This is how I remembered it...



*I'll keep the secret,
My angel is a little demon who has never
been caught, except by me of course,
And she possesses me when I kiss her
and remove all her clothes,
My angel speaks trying to convince me,
"Please stop it, not that spot, please don't touch me in
that area," while she grabs my hands real tight,
Then your demon whispers under your
breath "Why do you do this to me?"
"Remove your clothes," it says to me,
Red flames spread in your eyes like a mist,
Your strength doubles like a snake as you
wrap around me like your prey,
I feel the free movement of your body and the
pleasure that you have when letting go,
It is the sound of your voice that brings
the excitement in your hunt,
The time you take to bite, scratch and kiss, becomes
the time I accept to be yours and to be eaten,
There's nowhere else to run, I am caught,
If I ever escape, I will love one more time to be hunted by you,
Take your time to enjoy; I won't run, bite me
hard, lick my wounds with a roar,
Take the pain in my heart with this act,
with your passion and love just attack,
I will splash over you all my blood,
It will be just a sign of my love.*





September 19th. She tried but she couldn't contend anymore, and when she reached her climax "I love you," escaped her mouth; and at that instant, I noticed shame washed over her. She apologized to me for saying too much.

Her words hypnotized me into a catatonic state; I was unable to respond. She may have been ashamed for admitting it, but it was the most beautiful moment of my life, because I was in love with her too. I worried that if I said, "I love you too," that it would make things awkward. I should've told her my feelings, but I didn't.

*I still feel the waves of your waist crashing against my rock,
 My ship was being wrecked by your storm,
 Swaying from one side to the other with your strong rainfall,
 Your robust breezes sinking my crew,
 Just when I thought it was over, I was whipped by your tempest,
 All broken and with my body in pieces,
 floating in the residue of your water,
 Almost without strength to swim when suddenly, in my chest,
 I felt an immense heat that relieved the
 cold atmosphere of your departure,
 I was floating, exhausted but desiring you come back,
 To face your anger one more time and navigate you
 with my body even if you wreck me again,
 I'll swallow a thousand mouthfuls of your water and
 row harder when your large waves cover me,
 What a pleasure was left after exhaustion,
 the calm when you took pity!
 I still wonder if you stopped crashing against me not to hurt me,*



*Sending your dripping waves all over the edge,
I still hear the echo resounding, the sturdy winds
and the moan in your voice in loud breathing,
Do not think that I have been beaten,
Once again, I'll raise up my ship and
continue rowing to the horizon,
Pursuing your cloudscape in each dawn
and dusk until we meet up again,
And once again drown in your tempest of love.*



September 19th. That day I was in heaven. I wished we could've stayed forever there. But she had to go back.

I didn't want to ruin the night worrying her about my concerns of getting caught and how I started to feel that someone was spying on me. She had too much on her plate but it was time for me to find out if I was a target or not, and if she was in danger.



CHAPTER V

Would I See You Again?

I woke up full of joy and happiness. I felt unstoppable and ready to crush my meeting with Don Emilio. I was really excited because I was finally meeting with the guy who could invest in my business, but honestly that was not the main reason for my amazing mood. I could only think about last night with Angie. Don't get me wrong, I knew my business presentation well enough and I was focused on my goal. In my heart, I was not worried about anything but Angie and when I would get to see her again.

Before meeting her, I was so nervous about not closing this deal, but she made me realize that there are more important things in life than a business. If I got to choose only one option between being with her without closing the deal or closing the deal and losing her, I would choose her in a heartbeat.

I ran so many scenarios in my head that morning. I thought of the possibilities of asking her to leave with me and her son to a place that no one will know who we were. Or if the deal goes as planned and my business takes off, I could use my share to hire lawyers that

could give her total custody of her son and she could finally divorce him to be with me.

Yes, I know it was too soon for me to be thinking of a life with her and the places we could go to start our lives together. It was the first time this had ever happened to me. I used to criticize my brother for calling on the same day after getting a girl's number; now here I was, floating in my mind, full of her.

Don Juan:

When you wake up, I promise to make your reality more beautiful than the fantasy you are dreaming of,
And that you will smile more with me than the characters in your dream,
Which perhaps, is a version of me last night that you are holding on to,
But wake up and allow me to give you another memory to dream on, when I am away from you,
Wake up, even if you are dreaming of me so I can imagine your angelical face, after reading my deepest feelings for you,
But if you decide to stay asleep, I only wish you dream of me.

AngieHope:

Yesterday you made me feel so special, and waking up to your beautiful words this morning makes me feel like the luckiest woman to find you when I needed you the most.

Don Juan:

When can I see you again?



AngieHope:

I don't want to sound too clingy but I wish I could see you this afternoon.

Don Juan:

You're thinking of being clingy and I am the one who wishes to be with you right now. But this afternoon I have a business meeting with my new assistant to go over the business plan before our meeting with a possible investor tonight.
But what about tomorrow?

AngieHope:

Yeah, What I'll do is I will change the appointment I have today to fix my nails for tomorrow. That way I can justify leaving the house.
I wish you the best today in your meetings.

Don Juan:

I wish I could cancel the meeting with my assistant but since she is new and today is the big day, I want to make sure we are on the same page.

AngieHope:

Don't worry, I understand. I'll be thinking of you until I see you again.

Don Juan:

Is it too soon for wanting to run away with you?

I am sorry but you are making me break all the rules, and the way you make me feel, it's like nothing else matters and I am kind of afraid to push you away for being too intense and telling you my feelings but I've never felt like this before.

AngieHope:

Please never stop telling me about your feelings. Before you, I was in a dark place and now, your words give me light, hope and happiness. I don't care about any rules when it comes to you. It makes me so happy that you wrote to me this morning. I know it's a guy's rule not to write first or right away after...

Don Juan:

So, you know some of the rules :)
What other rules do you know?

AngieHope:

I know guys don't say the L-word first because they think they will scare girls away. I also know the lies a man can tell you:
1. I never felt like this before.

Don Juan:

Wow, I think you got it all wrong. If I could get a penny for each time I heard a woman say that before, I would be rich. That is the biggest lie a woman can tell you. Well, that and:
2. It's so big, I never have seen one this big before :)



AngieHope:

I think the biggest lie a woman can say is
1. I came like five times :)

Don Juan:

Wait you said that to me yesterday :)

AngieHope:

Well, I kind of lied about it.
Only in the last one I came multiple times, at least five
times, not counting the first three times. Just thinking
about it makes me so horny...

Don Juan:

That's it, I am calling my assistant right now to cancel all
my meetings so I can see you. Hold that thought.

AngieHope:

No, I wouldn't let you cancel. Today is an important day
for you and I want you to do great and tell me all about
it tomorrow.

Don Juan:

That moment when you feel that time stops and you
grasp every detail and ask yourself,
Did I just find the person to whom my heart belongs?
My life's meaning became finding you and making you
happy until the day I close my eyes,

The only thing that matters is your astonishing smile that
lights up your beautiful face,
Tomorrow when I see you, I will find the courage to tell
you the missing words in each message,
I won't be afraid to say to you what I truly desire or to lose
you for asking if you can you simply just be mine?
I am far from perfect but I am not afraid to show you my
true self anymore,
I'll see you tomorrow.

AngieHope:

Just don't break my heart 😊

Don Juan:

I would rather die than see you cry :)

Claudia:

I am on my way
I'll be there in thirty minutes.

Don Juan:

I am heading out now.
I am ten minutes away. I'll be sitting inside the
coffee shop.

Claudia:

OK.



It was actually my brother's idea to hire an assistant to help me keep things organized and in focus. It sounded like an amazing idea until that moment when I couldn't see Angie because of my meeting with Claudia.

Claudia was so efficient and sharp. She had a great sense of her surroundings. And a bad-ass attitude with a look that can take anyone down who gets in her way. It was like a killer instinct, really. I guess that was why I hired her. And of course she was the only one who replied to my job post.

After meeting Claudia, I headed back to the apartment to shower and to get ready for the meeting with Don Emilio. The meeting place was one of Don Emilio's properties. The place was closer to Claudia, so I picked her up on my way.

We arrived to the Don Emilio meetup place. A huge gate started to open up in front of us and I waited excited to get in like I was about to ride a rollercoaster.

"Look at this place, Claudia..." My eyes lit up, and I continued, "And this is just one of the many properties he owns."

"I wonder how he made that kind of money?" Claudia asked in a tone that insinuated illegal activities.

"Well I am pretty sure that to get where he is, he had to bend a few rules, but at his level, even for the police, it must be really hard to get to him." I say this as I drive into the place. Then I add, "As long as he does not mix my business with shady stuff, I'm fine."

After parking, two bodyguards walk Claudia and me to Don Emilio's office.

The security guard opened the door.

Don Emilio was seated, waiting for us.

“Please have a seat,” Don Emilio requested. “Would you like something to drink?”

“Water would be fine for me,” Claudia replied.

“Yeah, water for me as well.” I followed Claudia’s request.

Don Emilio ordered one of the security guards to bring the water.

“Please start,” Don Emilio said, prompting me to begin the presentation.

I started with the problems that sports fantasy was facing and then I moved to our solution.

The door opened right when I finished explaining the differentiations of my startups in comparison to our competitors.

One guard had a yellow envelope while the other guard was carrying the water. The guard handed the envelope to Don Emilio while the other one served Claudia and me the water.

“Today you can walk out of here with a lot of money or nothing,” Don Emilio says.

“And what would determine that?” I asked.

“Are you willing to kill a rat?” Don Emilio replied with a dead serious tone.

Both guards then drew their guns and pointed them at Claudia and me.

“Give him a gun,” Don Emilio said to his guard just as he walked out of the room. “If he doesn’t kill her, kill him too.” These were Don Emilio’s final words before leaving the room.

One of the security guards removed the gun’s magazine, leaving only one bullet in the chamber, and then handed me his gun.

“You don’t have to do this,” Claudia said, adding, “my team will come in any minute. Next time, search for wires, dumbasses.” She sneered at the guards with a brazenness I can’t fathom, while I panicked in my head thinking of Angie and what news of my death will do to her. I wasn’t about to die after just finding the most important thing in my life.

“No one can hear you in this room,” the guard whispered in Claudia’s ear, and knocked her down with a punch.

“You have one minute to kill her, or I will kill you both.” He stood right next to her, pointing his gun to her head, while the other guard stood right next to me.

I raised the gun and pointed it at her unconscious body.

“I was right, Claudia; at his level, he can get away with anything and not even the police can touch him.” These are the words I spoke with a deceptive calm as I lifted the gun’s safety lever.

Time slowed down for me lost in thought playing different scenarios to get out of the situation.

One shot and two guards. The one with the gun is pointing at her. If I make a drastic move to shoot him, he’ll shoot Claudia before I kill him. OK, I’ll pull the trigger a few times with the safety on to distract them both while bringing the gun closer to my face as I pretend to look for the safety lever; this will give my arm the height to shoot him in the head as I take the safety off.

His partner will either attack me or maybe he’ll go for the gun. Either way, I have to neutralize him.

Click, click, click, I pressed the trigger a few times and the gun did not fire as I planned because the safety lever was on.

“Take the safety off,” the guard with the gun said.

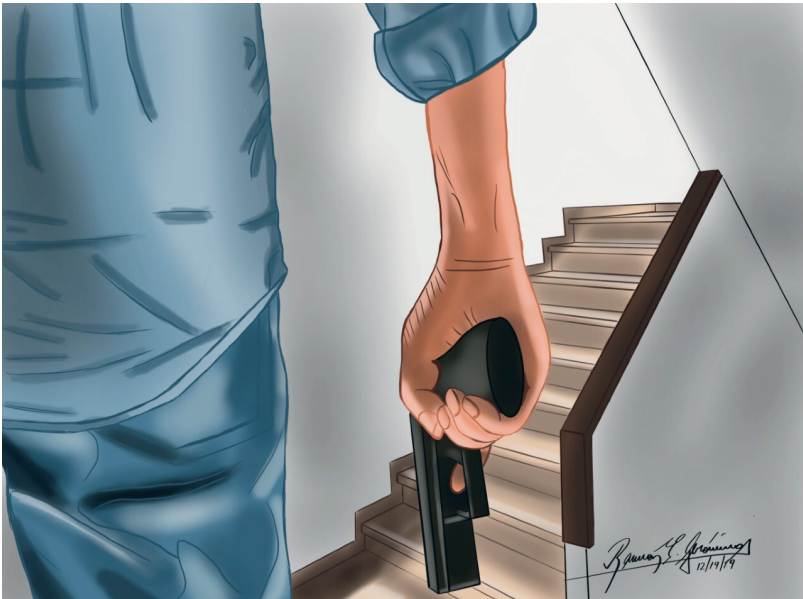
“Of course, the safety,” I replied, while lifting the gun and searching for the lever.

Boom, I pressed the trigger when my arm reached at the same level of the guard’s head. This time the gun released the bullet.

Bullseye, right into the guard’s head. I watched his body fall down.

I quickly threw the gun into the second guard’s face. He tackled me over the desk, but I was able to grab a pen and stick it into his neck a few times until he got off of me, bleeding all over.

By the time I got up, Claudia was still unconscious. I took the loaded gun from the dead guard next to her and went after Don Emilio.



I didn't think about it twice, because I was right, at his level, not even the police can touch him—but I am not the police. The front door was open and I heard a woman and a child screaming upstairs. As I was going up, Don Emilio was coming down carrying a child, and behind him was Angie.

We both froze. Don Emilio pointed the gun at the child.

“Put the gun down or I kill him,” Don Emilio demanded.

“Nooo! You are a fucking animal. How can you do this to your own son?” Angie said hysterically.

“OK, OK, I'll put the gun down,” I said. At that moment I couldn't say more, as I was distraught over the situation.

As I put the gun on the stairs, I could only think of how Angie felt seeing me there, thinking I am an undercover cop who used her to get to her husband and that everything I said was a lie.

“Take the gun and kill him,” Don Emilio told Angie.

She took the gun and looked into my eyes. I could feel anger and hate, but I stood there silent. If I said anything to her that exposed her, Don Emilio wouldn't hesitate to kill her.

She pointed the gun at my heart. I could only think of our last conversation that afternoon and the last thing she said to me.

AngieHope:

Just don't break my heart 😞

She shot my heart thinking I betrayed her. I couldn't blame her either as she was following Don Emilio's commands who had a gun to her son's head and if she would've hesitated or I would've given him

the impression I knew Angie, he wouldn't think twice to get rid of her now that the D.E.A. is breathing on his neck.

And as I fell down the stairs, tears fell from her eyes. But I don't blink to make sure my last memory before leaving this earth was her beautiful face. The back of my head hit the floor hard, and my eyes began to see everything in red as I fought to see her for the last time as she passed by me.



She stopped looking down at me, but can't contain herself, and more tears came down her face.

“Move!” Don Emilio yelled at her.

She wiped her tears with her right hand. While moving away, her hand swung down and her tear lands on my cheek. Her pain was torturous to watch, so I closed my eyes.

*I wished I could've told you I loved you when
I had the chance this afternoon,
That I didn't wait for the perfect moment to make it
more romantic and I didn't care if it was over a text,
I wished I could've told you all the crazy ideas I had
this morning about running away with you and
your son to a place where nobody knew us,
Now it doesn't sound that crazy and tomorrow seems so distant,
The pain of dying without letting you know
that my feelings for you are real,
Hurts me more than the bullet in my chest,
From feeling blessed in the morning to my last breath tonight,
But perhaps it is better you never knew the
truth, thinking I broke your heart into a million
pieces and that I took advantage of you,
Perhaps it's better now that your last memory of me is that I
am a liar and that you hate me so much that you will never
feel guilty for shooting me, and you can forget about me,
I only care now that you can find the
same happiness I found in you,*

*Use that hate to erase me, as the truth will die with me today,
and you will never find the real answer to the question of why
I was there and if I played you to get to your husband or not,
God, take my soul but please don't let her lose
hers over what happened with me today,
She doesn't deserve to suffer more than what
she has been suffering all these years,
I am begging you before I am gone to let her
find happiness, to let her find true love.*



CHAPTER VI

Someone I Used To Know

Perhaps you think I haven't changed. Sneaking out of her bedroom in the middle of the night. Perhaps you see her gorgeous face and her beautiful hair, but look closer at her body. Not the smooth curve and her small waist, not down to her thighs.

Do not look at her wedding ring, or dwell on the fact that her husband can come in at any second either, but look at her upper arms. Pay attention to the bruises around her arms, the finger marks squeeze into her delicate skin. Can the pillow allow you to see, from your angle, her nose job because of a broken bone? Perhaps she likes rough and dirty talk.

"Mmm." – The sound of a stranger next to me followed by a yawn as she wakes up. The only thing I knew about her is what her file case says and that she is married to a drug dealer that can get me closer to the love of my life.

"What is that scar?" The woman asked me while touching the scar right above my heart with her index finger.

"A bullet," I replied, turning my back to the woman to show her the scar on my back from where the bullet came out.

“You either have no heart or it’s a miracle that you are still alive,” she said, sounding intrigued and surprised. “Who shot you?”

I smiled knowing I was really lucky to be alive.

I didn’t want to blow my cover so I only said the obvious to her about me getting shot and not remembering exactly what happened to me which it is the truth.

“I woke up in the hospital. I couldn’t remember how I got there, and there was a lot of pain in my chest. Not to state the obvious because I got hit by a bullet, but it was something else. I felt empty like I had lost everything in my life. It was really frustrating not being able to remember. I was able to remember memories with my family but not the recent memories before the accident. But there’s a woman who I can’t clearly see. Like a blurry image of her that I don’t know if she is alive or if she is the one I lost. I feel that she is somewhere waiting for me but it kills me either way not to remember who she is or thinking that she could be dead because I couldn’t protect her.”

Even if I wanted to share in detail I couldn’t. In my head I kept trying to remember by putting the pieces together of what I could recall.

I woke up and my breathing was agitated with my vital signs elevated.

“The patient just opened his eyes!” a nurse shouted out from my room to the nurse on the desk. “Notify Dr. Guante that he is awake.”

Police officers tried to get into the room, but the nurse didn’t allow them in. “You have to wait until Dr. Guante authorizes it,” she said sternly, turning away the officers at the door.



“Everything will be just fine,” she said to me. “Just breathe. The doctor is on the way.” Her voice was soothing while checking my vital signs.

A doctor opened the door and approached to check on me.

“Juan, I am Dr. Guante. I provided the anesthesia during your surgery and continued medicating you for the pain while you were in a coma. How do you feel?”

“My chest and my head hurt and I can’t remember how I got here,” I replied, confused.

“You got shot in your chest, and got severe head trauma from falling down the stairs after getting shot,” Dr. Guante said. “The police will give you more details in a few minutes.”

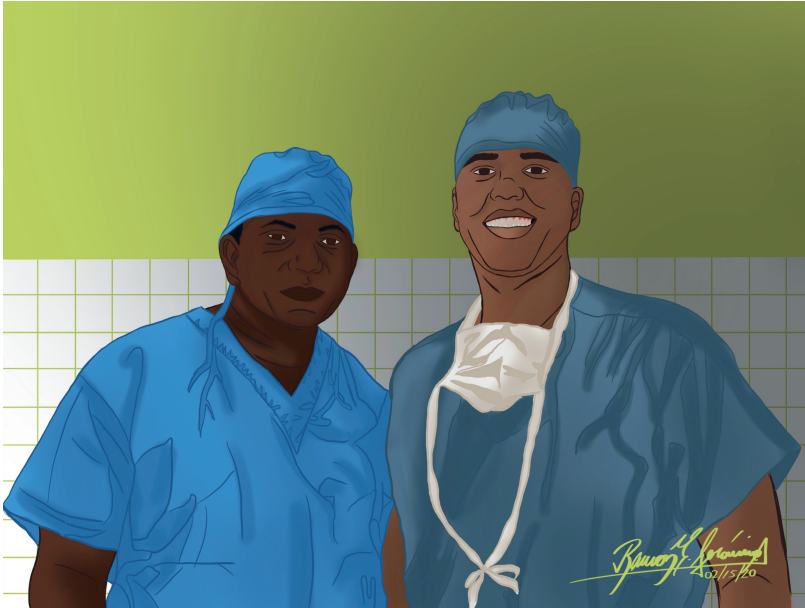
The doctor then open my file. “The person who shot you aimed directly at your heart from a close distance, and the only reason you

are alive is not that the person missed but because of your congenital situation where your heart is placed in the middle right of the thorax, a genetic condition called dextrocardia.”

Another doctor entered the room.

“Dextrocardia occurs in the fourth week of embryonic development,” the second doctor said, “when the primitive cardiac tube bends to the right when it should normally bend to the left.”

“Juan,” Dr. Guante said, “this is Dr. Geronimo, your cardiovascular surgeon.”



“Were you aware of this condition, Juan?” Dr. Geronimo asked.

“No,” I replied, more confused with all these medical terminologies.

“Many people with this condition are unaware. Also, patients with dextrocardia usually have an anomaly called ‘situs inversus,’ which means that the organs are on the opposite side from where they should be. This situation affects only odd organs and that is on a certain side of the body—for example, the liver, pancreas or stomach. Another reason a patient can manifest dextrocardia is because the neurotransmitter serotonin is altered during the embryonic development; this alteration can also cause situs inversus and heart defects. Women who receive SSRI-class antidepressants tend to have a higher risk of their children having malformations of this type.”

A knock on the door interrupted Dr. Geronimo’s explanation, and for a moment I’m glad for the reprieve, until it opens and I see it’s the police officers again. This time, Claudia is with them.

“Juan, who shot you?” Claudia asked.

“Well, part of his memory has been lost because of the head trauma,” Dr. Guante said gravely while I nodded my head.

“Juan, do you remember me?” Claudia asked me, and I nodded my head again.

“You knew me as Claudia, but I’m special agent Jessie Pichardo with the D.E.A. I took an undercover job as your assistant to infiltrate Don Emilio.”

“He will need time to answer all your questions and to remember things as he continues with his life,” Dr. Guante said. “His memory can come back as his subconscious familiarizes things and objects that will help him remember. It’s recommended that he goes to therapy to speed up the process.”

“When can I leave?” I asked.

“You have been in a coma for almost two months,” Dr. Geronimo explained. “We would like to take at least two weeks to monitor your heart during physical therapy, and if everything goes well, you can continue with your life.”

“Then help me get up and let’s start today,” I said, removing the cables attached to my chest while trying to get up.

“Easy!” Special Agent Jessie grabbed my right arm when I almost fell because I was too weak.

I looked at her, lost for a moment, trying to come in terms with the night. Suddenly I grabbed my head, showing discomfort and pain as I recalled a memory from the incident.

“You found me dying on the stairs and grabbed me by my right arm. There’s a gunshot but you stayed with me and called an ambulance—I remembered when Jessie grabbed me—Aaaaarrgh!” I yelled, still holding my head tightly as if there was a lot of pain in my head I was trying to contain.

“I think he’s had enough for one day,” Dr. Guante said, calling the police off. “Let him rest and tomorrow you can continue asking him questions.”

That night I dreamt of a blonde woman being taken by a man pulling her by her hips as she extended her arms, trying to reach out. It was by the beach and I couldn’t distinguish her face, but I could see tears falling down her face and for some strange reason it made me feel very sad. Then the scene changed and I was on my knees waiting to be executed by two men. I remember feeling incapable of protecting her and “boom!”





The dream was so familiar to me. The hitman looked into my eyes and shot me. The blast and explosion of the gun as the bullet traveled out and toward my head, was enough for me to open my eyes.

I woke up dripping in sweat and agitated, once again with that emptiness and feeling that I lost a loved one. In my dream it was her, a blonde woman whose face I couldn't figure out. I didn't know her name or if she was even real, but I have this strong feeling that I should look for her.

Two weeks passed by. My brother helped me during therapy. I started walking with crutches from my room to the physical therapy. By the third day, I was walking with a cane and by the end of the week, I didn't need support. After training my body by swimming in the pool and using the bike, treadmill, pull-up bar, and weights to

monitor my heart, I began the most difficult part of my training: my mind and my memory.

The doctors discharged me and recommended that I visit a physical therapist. I was so happy to leave the hospital.

“Lunch is on me!” Special Agent Jessie shouted from her car when she saw me walking out. “C’mon, get in,” she said, nodding at the passenger seat.

I walked towards her car and got into the passenger seat.

“I thought that being my assistant was an undercover job, Special Agent,” I said as I fastened my seat belt.

“You got it mixed up. This time it’s the other way around. You are assisting me; I am recruiting you.”

“And why would I want to work for the D.E.A.?” I asked, a smile tugging at my lips.

“I am not going to bullshit you because the benefits and the hours suck, but based on the police report you mentioned a mystery woman. I’m no expert in love, but the way you describe this person, it sounded to me that you care for her and you want to find her.” She paused to allow her insight sink in. “What better way than being on the inside with access to first-hand intel?”

“It seems you have given this a lot of thought,” I replied already going over the offer.

“In Don Emilio’s office, he ordered his guards to kill us if you didn’t kill me, before one of them punched and knocked me down. I heard a gunshot and I woke up to find the two guards dead. I don’t know what you did and how you did it, but I owe you my life.” Jessie said.

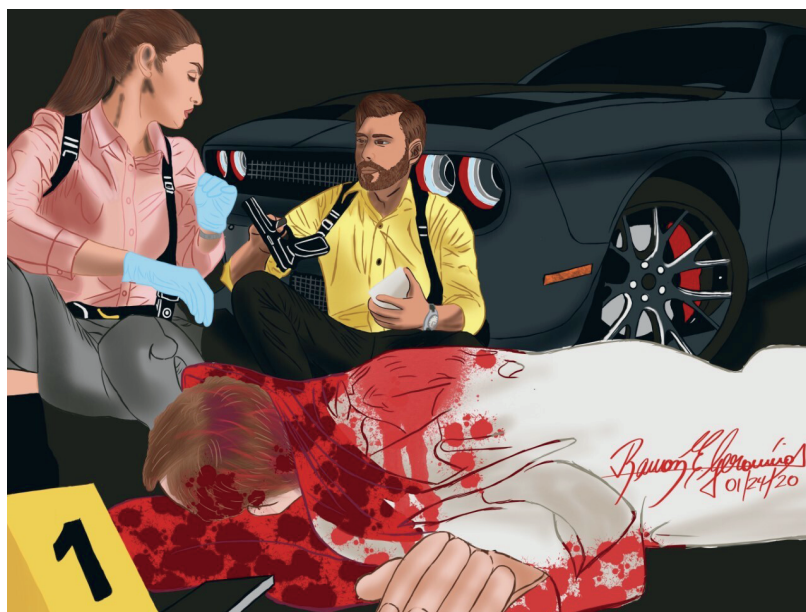


“I guess we are even because you found me and called the ambulance,” I said.

We arrived at a diner, and after ordering, she placed a folder on the table.

“Don’t you want to know what happened after I found you?” Jessie asked.

I opened the folder and saw it was a crime scene of a dead man in front of a house’s driveway.



“Do you recognize him or the place?” Jessie asked.

“I don’t,” I said, a frown furrowing my brow. “Who is he?”

“That’s Don Emilio’s body. That was the gunshot you recall hearing when I found you.”

“Who shot him?” I asked, intrigued.

“No one knows. The theory I have is that it is the same woman you mentioned. I could hear a child crying when I was walking out of Don Emilio’s office. But this woman is a ghost. No records of her or Don Emilio having a family. The only person who can identify her is you, but you can’t remember what happened. And get this—after Don Emilio died, a new name came up running his operations—the Black Widow,” Jessie concluded, letting out a frustrated sigh.

“Female black widows kill their partners after mating,” I mentioned.

“The question remains, how do you know this woman?” Jessie questions, turning a serious face on me.

“Why are you so sure I knew her if you said yourself that she is a ghost?” I fired back.

“You had a gun with you, and you were able to kill two trained guards in the office, so my bet is that Don Emilio used her as a shield and asked you to put the gun down and you did because you cared for her,” Jessie responded, an unreadable expression on her face.

“If what you are saying is right, and this woman is the Black Widow and I remember who she is, and happen to care for her, why would you trust me?” All smiles were gone from my face at this juncture, as I sat forward, as if hunched over from the weight of it all.

“You could’ve shot me after finding out I put you at risk, but you didn’t, and I don’t know what would happen if you were having an affair with her and we find her to arrest her, but I know you will do what’s right. Do you want to protect her? Then help me find her before the other cartels get to her first and kill her.”



What is the point of finding someone you love to betray her and lose her again? But Jessie is right, other cartels might be targeting her to take over Don Emilio's operations and territory.



“There’s only one way I would help you, though.” I had a poker face on, though I was ready to move with the offer. “If we find her, I don’t care about the crimes she is being held accountable for as the Black Widow, and I want full immunity for her and her child.”

“You don’t even remember this woman and are cutting deals on her behalf?” Jessie replied.

“I don’t care.” I inched closer to her and continued. “You said I would do the right thing and she is just another one of Don Emilio’s victims. Think about it: if she didn’t act to take charge over Don Emilio’s territory as the Black Widow, the other cartels would’ve had her head and her child by now. She is just doing whatever is necessary to survive and to protect her family.” I finished stating my case, saying, “Now tell me, special agent, wouldn’t you do the same in her situation, to protect your family? Because not too long ago you were OK doing whatever is necessary to catch Don Emilio by infiltrating my business and risking my life as an undercover agent.”

“I’ll see what I can do,” Jessie replied grudgingly, knowing I had a point.

“OK, so what is your plan?” I asked, now eager to help out.

“We have female undercover agents in the field who infiltrate the private parties thrown by the narcos. The problem is that at these parties, the narcos’ objective is to get wasted and have sex with the models they hired. Their phones are burners, so there’s too little information to gather or follow up with.” Jessie paused for a bit and continued. “So the idea is to have you seduce the narcos’ wives or girlfriends, because if you think about it, most of these women are unhappy and mistreated by them, always cheating and overpowering them with their

male ego, and if these women find out about their partners' infidelities that my female team can provide to you, then these women will turn against the narcos in exchange for an immunity deal and protection for the information they have."

"Why do you assume I am good at seducing females?" I asked, incredulous and amused.

"When I explored the possibility of you having an affair with Don Emilio's mystery wife, I interrogated your brother to see if there was a possibility he might have known her or seen you with her," Jessie said.

"And what did he say?" I asked, curious, before adding, "Don't you have male agents who can do this undercover job?"

"Your brother told me about your special talent with females, and that if I go down that path, looking for all the women you have been with, I would have to interrogate over ten-thousand women, because according to him you were in the path to surpass Fidel Castro's claim of having over thirty-five-thousand sexual partners." She paused a moment, and then continued. "Do you remember that, or is that part of your memory also fuzzy?"

"Special agent, in my defense, I am a victim of females' dirty minds and sexual fantasies. They are curious to explore and try new things, and I happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time to be sexually abused," I justified.

"A victim," Jessie exclaimed with sarcasm. "And how do you do it?"

"Everyone has three sides: the one they show to everyone, the one they show their sexual partners, and lastly the part that they are too ashamed to share with anyone. Even you, special agent, have that part;

and this side of you is full of secrets you did when you were alone, fantasies you want to explore that for some reason you don't see yourself doing with your sexual partner, maybe because he would think you were too crazy or maybe he is too conservative to do it. But in most cases, male partners are too busy trying to satisfy their own needs and fantasies, and so are careless of what you think. So, I communicate most of the time with that part of them, and I listen to their needs and desires, but there's no special trick," I explained to her. "And why is a beautiful woman like yourself all alone? Please don't tell me it is because of your line of work, which would be understandable, but I see you as the kind of woman who is not afraid of taking what she wants when she wants it. And since you choose to be alone, it means you're a master of not getting attached to the guy you pick for a one-night stand at a bar when you crave more than the vibrator on your nightstand or the gentle touch of your fingers. How are you different from me? If you use it as you need and then dispose of it like it never happened. As I said before, like those men in your life I am also a victim." At this roundabout point, I smirked at her.

"Wow! You must love her very much because you never gave me the impression of being that kind of man when I was your assistant and never talked to me in an unprofessional way like you are doing right now. My private life is not your business because I am not the target, but I am impressed," Jessie said.

"I apologize, special agent, it is not my intention to cross that line. But you asked." I smirked again and continued. "All I am saying is, that if you ever feel the need to talk and express what's inside, I am here for you." I winked at her.

“I am glad you are enjoying your new job. You will be saving these women’s lives in no time, like the sexual version of Dr. Phil but with a happy ending,” Jessie jested with her new partner.

“Who is the target?” I asked, intrigued. “Cause we wouldn’t be having this conversation unless you had someone in mind.”

Jessie pulled up another file on the table.

“Her name is Roselyn, and she is the wife of Ricardo, the most wanted Sicario associated with Don Emilio. I believe he is the reason why other cartels haven’t moved against the Black Widow, and the intel we have from the undercover agents is that Ricardo is her right hand and her protector. I can expose Ricardo’s infidelities and get you closer to Roselyn when she is vulnerable, and your job is to earn her trust until she is ready to cut a deal with us,” Jessie briefed me on the plan.

“If I show up after you expose Ricardo, Roselyn will be suspicious. I have to be a familiar face to her before everything happens and then you can make your move,” I pointed out, making some adjustments to the plan.

“I knew you were the perfect man for the job,” the special agent said, happy with the suggestion. “By the way, here is your cell phone and the personal belongings you had that day.” Jessie returned my cell and my wallet in an evidence plastic bag.

“What happened to my phone?” I asked, after seeing the cracked screen.

“It was in your back pocket, and it probably cracked during your fall.” Jessie added, “Don’t worry, we didn’t access any of the information without your consent,” she winked.

“You didn’t or you couldn’t? Because my lack of consent never stopped you before,” I replied.

“Let’s just say that your military paranoia about the government secretly accessing your information finally paid off,” Jessie quipped.

“You are calling my privacy ‘paranoia’ after attempting to hack my phone?” I said with mock anger.

“Well, get it replaced and see if you find something useful that can link us to the Black Widow—if you remember your password, of course,” Jessie said light-heartedly.

“Of course I remember. I am having trouble with my recent memories. Unless I changed the code recently and I forgot about it.”

“About your memory—is there anything new that you now remember?” Jessie asked.

“Just a dream on the beach. I was getting executed, but I saw a blonde woman being taken away from me. Her face is foggy and I wouldn’t recognize her if she stood in front of me,” I said, a note of worry in my voice. “Tomorrow I am supposed to meet a therapist to begin sessions that will help me with my memory. But first I’ll go to replace my phone and see what I can find there.”

“Let’s go, I’ll give you a ride,” Jessie said, offering to take me to replace my phone as she paid the food bill.

Special Agent Jessie dropped me off at the store to be able to replace my phone. My message log from September 20th showed messages from Claudia, or I must say special agent Jessie, and AngieHope. I opened my conversation with AngieHope and the last message she sent me.

AngieHope:

Just don't break my heart 😞

When I was a little kid, back in the Dominican Republic, I got a puppy. I was so happy and excited when I saw it that my reaction was to carry it and hug it so hard that I broke his neck unconsciously. I cried for weeks and it didn't matter how many times my parents told me it was not my fault and it was an accident. I still felt guilty about it. It is the first thing I think when I see a dog and neither my tears or knowing it was not my intention and how sorry I was, will not remove the guilt I feel. The puppy was dead and I didn't even have the chance to name it.

Reading Angie's last text, made me feel worst than my childhood memory. She was out there somewhere that if I find her I might be able to explain. How would Angie see me after breaking her heart and finding out that I am still alive? Perhaps for the Black Widow this puppy is dead, but for Angie, would she regret I am not dead?

When I got home, I laid back and started reading AngieHope's messages history.

I saw in my writings how much I cared for her, yet I couldn't remember writing any of this. But now I understood why I felt the need to find her. She seemed to care for me very much, but if Jessie is right about Angie being there when I confronted Don Emilio, she must be thinking I am a liar and I was working with the police all along and our feelings never existed. I didn't break her heart, I shattered it into a million pieces. She needed to know the truth.

I began typing her a message hoping she kept this number.



Don Juan:

Angie are you there?
I need to talk to you, please answer.

But then I came to my senses and erased it.

I couldn't send her that because that could jeopardize the mission with Ricardo. If she thought I was dead and I sent her this, she would think it was the police and not me. Besides, I'm sure she got rid of her phone by now.



The next morning, I visited my therapist for the first time in quite a while. Her name is Diana. In the past, I used to consult Diana about my women situation. My brother referred me to her, because, according to him, I needed help.

He must have thought of me as some sort of nymphomaniac or sex addict because of my lifestyle with women and I didn't blame him. Back then I never took therapy very seriously, but now it's different, I needed help to remember and to find Angie.

"Diana," I said with a sensual tone and smile, which was just how I always saluted her.

"Well, well, well, back from the dead, Don Juan," Diana doubles back on me with her response. "So it is true that you have no heart," she said, placing a hand on the left side of my chest.

"No heart! You heard wrong, Diana, the bullet just split it into a million pieces so I can love equally," I replied, smoothly placing a hand on top of hers, which was still on my chest. "I never lied to you about your place in my heart. It just moved a little bit down here but it's still there." I smile deviously while dragging her hand closer to my left nipple.

"I warn you, Juan, that if you are not taking this seriously, I'll kick you out of here. Are we clear?" she said in mock anger as she twisted. "Now sit down and tell me how I can help you, my heartless Juan," she said, changing her tone fluidly from aggressive to polite and a little more professional.

"I am looking for the love of my life," I said, tone serious, as I sat down.

“HA, GET OUT!” Diana jumps from her seat and shows me the door. “I knew it! I agree to see you as a courtesy to your brother, but you’ll never change.”

In case you were wondering, I am very professional too. I don’t eat where I shit. Diana and I never had another kind of relationship but a therapist–patient relationship, but she has every right to be angry at me.

“I’m serious. See, I lost part of my recent memory, and during that time there’s someone who I cannot see clearly in my mind or in my dreams, and ever since I woke up from the coma I have these strong and weird feelings that I miss her even without remembering her and that she is out there waiting for me.” I explained my plight, the words literally stumbling out of my mouth by themselves.

“There might be hope for you after all,” she said as she took a seat, finally getting the gist of my problem. “You’ve never expressed your feelings like this before.”

At the hospital, when Special Agent Jessie grabbed my arm, I was able to remember how she found me dying on the floor, so I mentioned this to her.

“A memory by association,” Diana says, explaining further: “Your subconscious might trigger that memory by recalling a similar action when she grabbed your arm.”

“So, what should I do to get my memory back?”

“Have you heard of the memory technique called Memory Palace?” Diana asked.

“No.”



“A Memory Palace is a mental place you create in your mind to place pieces of information you would like to remember later on. Think of it as a file system for your brain. I’ll give you an example, but I want you to lie down here and close your eyes,” Diana said, pointing at the chaise lounge.

I lay down as she asked, and closed my eyes.

“Try to relax by taking a few deep breaths. I want you to imagine that you are in your room lying on your bed. Now I want you to look around your room and tell me what you see? And try to be specific.”

“I see my TV straight ahead. On my right, I see a lamp and a deck of cards on top of two plastic bins with four drawers, and on my left I see two more plastic bins but the difference is that these bins have three drawers. There’s a fan on top of the left bins and I have a book bag by the bed with my laptop. I also see a picture on the right side of the wall and two sliding doors on each side of the bed straight ahead of me. Under the bins is more storage space and on the left.” I surprised myself by describing the exact position of each item.

“Your room is a Memory Palace, and if you place information in any of the objects you described to me, your brain would be able to recall this information when you walk around your Memory Palace,” she explained. “You can open your eyes now. Your brain is very good at remembering images, associating events and linking stories. What I want you to do is to ask the agent assigned to your case to allow you to see all the images from the crime scene and then try to recreate in your mind this place using all the details that you see. And once you have a clear picture of the place, use the police report and the pieces of the story to walk the same path in your mind. This exercise can help

you trigger part of your missing memory. I will write you a letter and sign it just in case the police won't allow you access to these files."

"That won't be necessary," I said. "The special agent asked for my help in the case and I agreed. I think that can help me find her." I was barely able to cover my optimism to find Angie.

Diana was very helpful; I left her office full of hope that this technique would help me.

Don Juan:

I need to see you.

Jessie:

Diner in twenty minutes.

Don Juan:

Bring everything you have from that night.
The files might trigger my memory.

Jessie:

OK.

I arrived at the diner before Jessie. She walked in and placed a stack of files on the table.

"As you asked." Jessie took a seat and asked the waitress for coffee. "I suspect the department is compromised," she whispered under her breath to me. "That is the only logical explanation for why Don Emilio found out about my cover. We need to run this operation outside the

force and no one can find out you and I are working together. You report to me only, and if any other agents approach you for more questioning, you can't remember anything, and take their card in case you remember. They might be the rat, or worse, they could be Sicario's."

"We need to find a place to operate," I said, "and I might have someone who can help. Ex-military too. Mathew and I served together, and his specialty is cybersecurity. He flies under the radar and can only be found if he wants to be found. He can help us find your rat and set up the operation. I recommend Mathew because I trust him with my life. He was my eyes from a remote station while I was on the enemy's line in combat."

"We could definitely use a hacker, especially if you trust him like that," Jessie says, instantly agreeing to recruit Mathew. "How would you find him?"

"I don't. He will find us," I replied.

"And how will he even know you are looking for him?" Jessie asked, full of curiosity.

"After the military, he gave me specific instructions on how to leave trails for him in case I get into trouble and I needed his help," I said, just as I started taking out three business cards from my wallet. "See, each card has a three-word domain name and different dot extensions. Now, I need to create three different domain names using the first name from the red card, the second name from the white card and the third name from the blue card, using the dot tv extension from the white card. That would take me to a login that I don't have the password for."

"Then what is the point if you can't log in?" Jessie interrupted me.

“I have to enter my name as the user name and try to log in five times with whatever code I want to, and after the fifth time, a chatbot will speak to me only if the honeypot confirms that I am trying to login within the radius around an address from the blue card. All I have to say to the chatbot is “I need to log in right now.”

“Jesus! And I thought you were paranoid,” Jessie said, looking thrown. “You remember all this sequence and code and you can’t remember who shot you or a woman’s face? That is a whole new level of PTSD,” she said, shaking her head dramatically. “Make contact and text me when you do,” Jessie said, and left the diner.

I stayed a little longer. A few minutes after Jessie left, a woman walked in and smiled at me as she passed by. She sat behind me and the backrest of the double sided booth was so thin, that I was able to smell her perfume. The scent was very familiar. It was a mix of flowers like jasmine, rose, lily, iris and ylang-ylang with a bit of vanilla. I could see the reflection of her hair in the mirror straight ahead of me. Her hair touched my neck when she turned to place her order. At contact, a memory came to me. I was seated at a public place, like a mall, and Angie was sitting behind me reading from my cell. I couldn’t see her clearly, just a reflection of her in the store glass that was in front of me. The scent was the same floral smell as the woman sitting behind me. I turned around.

“Someone I used to know used to wear a similar scent as yours. Do you mind me asking what perfume that is?”

“She must be the one who got away, that you still speak of her and remember her smell,” the woman said, cracking a gracious smile to show beautiful teeth. “Chanel Number 5,” she said.

“I couldn’t describe her better myself; thanks, you are very helpful,” I said, full of gratitude.

“What was her name?” she went on, eager to continue the conversation.

“Angie, but that’s probably not even her real name.” I smiled and prepared to leave.

“Lesley,” she volunteered, extending her hand to me as I got up to leave.

“Juan.” I took her hand and introduced myself.

Just when I touched her hand, I was able to remember a time when I was holding hands with Angie at the movies and I gave her a bracelet with a dolphin and sharks. She loved the turquoise color and it was made from Larimar.

“You are the dolphin swimming around all the sharks in your social circle.” I unconsciously quoted myself aloud, remembering her.

“I don’t know what that means,” the woman said, a little confused.

“I’m sorry, you remind me of her,” I said, trying to stay focused on the memory, but she got up and kissed me on the cheek.

“I hope you find her someday,” she whispered in my ear. “But not today.”

CHAPTER VII

The Ghost

Before contacting Mathew, I laid out all the pictures of the crime scene and visualized the place, as Diana instructed. I used the police report and Jessie's story to walk around the scene in my Memory Palace using my imagination to fill in the gaps.

According to the police report, the D.E.A. never saw a car leaving the house, but they heard the gunshot that killed Don Emilio and decided to move in. It took them less than five minutes to break in and get to the special agent and me. By the time they realized the gateway door that the driver took, it was too late.

I thought maybe Mathew could help us getting footage from the street cameras to see where that leads us. It wouldn't hurt if we had a fresh pair of eyes double checking every footage and comparing the intel we had from the case if the D.E.A. had been compromised.

I followed Mathew's instructions to contact him within the radius around the address in the blue card. I logged in using public Wi-Fi in a coffee shop around the area; this way Mathew could track my location using the IP address. I waited there for further instructions.

"There's an Uber outside for Mathew," a waiter called out.

I went out to meet the Uber.

“Mathew?” a driver asked me.

“Yes,” I replied, and got into the car.

“Smart move giving me the coffee shop’s number before your phone died,” the driver said. “I have chargers for different types of phones here, feel free to charge your phone,” he offered, obviously looking for a five-star rating.

“Thanks, man, will do so,” I said, while connecting my almost full cell phone.

He took me to a multi-level parking lot and stopped at the last level.

“This is it,” the driver said. “Enjoy the rest of your day.”

“Thanks.”

I got out, looking for Mathew or the next signal.

I heard the beep of a car unlock nearby. I approached the empty car and sat down in the driver’s seat.

A phone started ringing inside the car somewhere. I looked in the glove compartment and answered the phone.

“I hear you are looking for me?” Mathew asked before I could say anything.

“Same old habits.” I jested about his methods.

“One can never be too careful, old friend,” Mathew said, adopting a drawl for comic relief. “This must be big that you decided to go through all this trouble to reach out to me, so what is it?”

“I am running an operation with a D.E.A. agent. I recently got shot after an undercover operation went wrong, and the D.E.A. has been compromised.” I briefed him quickly and then moved on to recruiting

him. “I need you to be my eyes in combat, a place where we can operate and get all the information you can gather on the targets and the missing pieces of the crime scene.”

“I thought you were out?” Mathew asked, slightly amused.

“I was. I will brief you with the details when I meet you in person, but there’s not a lot of time. Are you in or out?”

Mathew hung up on me.

Then I had an incoming text from him.

Mathew:

Keys are on the sun visor; I'll text you the address.

After finally meeting Mathew in person, I explained to him in detail everything about Angie, Don Emilio and Special Agent Jessie. He became part of the operation and the next step was to execute the plan to catch Ricardo through Roselyn. Even though I was not very comfortable with the idea of Mathew going through my messages with Angie, I agreed to allow him to analyze the data in my phone for clues and locations that might help me find Angie.

Don Juan:

I made contact.

I'll text you an address and wait there for instructions.

Jessie:

OK

We have in custody someone that used to work for Don Emilio.



I got more intel on Roselyn and Ricardo.

The place was a restaurant where Mathew had connections. He used that place to make sure that people he met didn't have a tail. A waitress would serve the target some water and leave a note saying, "Drink the water and go to the restroom in the back." Once in the back, the waitress would take the target to the back alley, where Mathew would pick them up.



“Special Agent Jessie, this is Mathew,” I said, when she got into the car.

“Welcome to the crew,” Jessie said, turning to face Mathew. “We can really use your skills.” She paused and turned to me, “Did you brief him?”

“Yes, I am up to speed,” Mathew answered directly. “I have a place we can operate, but to take precautions in case any of the team has a tail, we will use a list of restaurants in my network for back-alley getaways like today. But before we get there, download this app I created for secure messages, and if your phone is being traced, the app will act as a honey pot, showing them a fake path and end-point. Once they get to the end-point, I’ll be able to identify them.”

Mathew then sent a link for the app download.

“Add your cell number and hit activate for the location honey-pot,” Matthew said, “but make sure you are off-site, otherwise they will notice the current location doesn’t match the one shown in their tracking device. And always deactivate the location when you are away from our meeting place,” Mathew emphasized.

“Roger that,” Jessie said, while following the instructions on the app.

We got to the meeting place. Mathew sat down in his working station ready to start working. I gave him the crime scene address, date and time according to the D.E.A. report, to hack traffic cameras on the getaway path that the driver took when leaving the scene.

“Let’s see what our mystery driver looks like,” Mathew said, as he was pulling images from the street-light camera. It was a black Mercedes-Benz. “The windshield has a tinted cover too dark to identify



the driver or passenger, and I lost track of them after this point. There are no traffic light cameras around this area, and they knew that and probably switched cars. There are twenty-five possible exits around this point and no black Mercedes. This is a dead-end.” Mathew closed the window on the computer and faced us.

“Our target is Roselyn Nuñez.” Jessie handed the file to Mathew. “She is a dentist and Don Juan’s her new patient.”

“What is your approach, brother?” Mathew asked. “I can set up an appointment for you and you can run your magic.”

“No, it has to be natural. Look for places you can eat around her dental office and see if anyone matches her credit or debit card statements.” I already had something in mind.

“We have a match,” Mathew said, after gathering the information. “So, what is the plan?”

“I will go for lunch and after I see her, I’ll make sure she notices me. After flirting a little from a distance, I will bite a bone and pretend I hurt one of my teeth and that should be enough to get an offer from her to take a better look, and then I am in.” I smiled.

“Incredible!” Jessie raised her eyebrows. “I can’t believe you are willing to break a tooth to seduce someone. Who does that?”

“Men do crazy things to get into a woman’s pants,” Mathew mocked, shaking his head in derision all the while.

“After you get her number, Mathew will send this picture of Ricardo in a text,” Jessie instructed, and gave Mathew a USB drive with Ricardo making out with another woman at a private party. “Make it seem it’s from a jealous lover and pick a fight.” This was going to be the icing on the cake.

An alert went off. Mathew rushed to check on one of his monitors.

“I have a hit on the location honeypot,” Mathew pulled the cameras on the screen. “Do you recognize this guy?” he asked Jessie.

“That son of a bitch!” Jessie went red in anger. “His name is Eric; I have to deal with him,” she said, sounding like she was going to do something very rash.

“We don’t know who else is involved,” Matthew advised. It is better if he doesn’t know anything until we find out more, and meanwhile, we can use him without him even knowing.”

“When I get my hands on him...” Jessie began through gritted teeth, knowing that Mathew was right. She stewed like that for some minutes before finally calming down. “Alright, I won’t do anything stupid to compromise the mission,”

Matthew got back to business. “I took a look at your phone data and her nickname popped out to me. Her association with the Angel of Hope reminds me of something I read once in a cemetery, but I need to do more digging.”



CHAPTER VIII

The Angel Of Hope

Mathew:

She is on her way.

I was waiting for Roselyn on the street, in front of the restaurant. I planned to make contact before getting into the place. “I was afraid you wouldn’t show,” I said to Roselyn by the door. “Who are you?” Roselyn asked, confused. “You are my date, aren’t you?” I made a sad face. “No,” pity dripped from her thin lips. “Do you mind telling me the time, please?” I asked her politely. “A quarter past noon,” she replied. “I’m sorry.” I pretended I didn’t hear that to get closer to her, leaning into her with my ear and placing my left hand on her lower back. Her mind was more concerned about repeating the time than a stranger entering her personal space. “A quarter past noon,” she repeated louder to my ear. “I’ve been stood up again, we were supposed to meet at 11.” I did my best to act embarrassed. “Please let me get the door for you,” I said, opening the door.



“Thank you, and I am sorry about your date,” she said before entering the place.

I dialed up the charm. “She’s probably not the one and not nearly as beautiful and kind as you.” We both shared a smile. “I’m Robert” I introduced myself using a fake name.

“Roselyn” she introduced herself.

I sat down at a table where I could see her and she could see me as well, not that far apart. We both ordered our food and I didn’t stop looking at her. She tried not to make eye contact but every now and then our eyes met and we both smiled.

As I planned, I bit a small piece of bone as hard as I could. “Aaaaarrghh!” I yelled. The fork clattered to the floor getting everyone’s attention along with my roar.

I lowered my head grabbing the side of my mouth so Roselyn could see it.

“Are you OK, sir?” A waitress approached to ask what the matter was and ascertain I was okay.

“I think I broke a tooth with a piece of bone,” I said, a bit loud, with my head down.

“Please let me take a look,” Roselyn said, approaching me after hearing that. “Robert, I am a dentist, may I?” she asked gently. “Lift your head and open your mouth so I can see.” Roselyn placed her hand lightly on my cheek.

“Your hand is very soft,” I laid on the charm, before opening my mouth for a check-up.

“I can’t see very well, but I work not too far from here if you would like for me to take a look and give you something for the pain.” Roselyn threw the question open, offering to examine my mouth as I planned.



“Only if you promise me you’ll finish your lunch,” I said to her, smiling.

“OK, then sit with me and we’ll go right after.”

Back at her table, I smiled as she finished her lunch.

“I’m sorry I ruined your lunch,” I told her. “I must confess that I was so distracted by your beauty that I didn’t see that piece of bone. Do you believe in destiny?”

“Why do you ask?”

“When I first saw you outside, I felt like the luckiest man thinking you were my date, and when I found out I got stood up, it didn’t feel that bad around your beauty. Then I broke a tooth and what are the chances of you being a dentist? I want to believe we were meant to meet for a reason.”

She smiled and continued finishing her lunch before heading to her office. In the past, I never had a problem talking my way into a woman’s bed, but for some reason a part of me didn’t feel comfortable using Roselyn this way to get closer to her husband. Perhaps because I have become exactly what Angie thought of me, and I am doing to Roselyn the same thing that Angie hated me for.

I sat in Roselyn’s chair for seemed like an eternity. She finally finished what she could do for me. After Roselyn took care of my tooth, I asked her, “Do you think I can see you again? Maybe for lunch to make it up to you for ruining your lunch today, but please show up because if I get stood up by you it will break my heart.”

Without pausing for her reply, I passed her my cell with the contact app open, hoping she would input her information. She did.

Robert:

Thank you for taking care of my tooth today.
This is my number, Robert.

I sent her a text in front of her.

“You don’t trust I gave you the right number?” she smiled.

“I don’t trust I am awake right now and that the most beautiful dentist just gave me her number and agreed to have lunch with me. I always thought I was unlucky with women, but today I feel that destiny was saving me for the right one,” I smiled, turned, and left.

Roselyn:

You seem like a nice guy Robert but I am filing for a divorce and I don’t think it’s a good time for me to meet other people. I am sorry.

Today I am giving my husband the papers and I am terrified.

He doesn’t know.

Robert:

I understand. Maybe we can meet as friends and take things slow.

Divorce can be tough. If you need someone to talk I am here for you. Why are you terrified?

Roselyn:

My husband is very impulsive and aggressive.



I am afraid of how he will react and that's one of the reasons I am leaving him. He was the sweetest guy when we met and his job turned him into a monster. I am not safe if I stay.

Robert:

What is his line of work, so I never apply to that position?

Roselyn:

I'd rather not talk about it.

Robert:

I don't think you should give him the document today. I'll tell you what, meet me for lunch tomorrow and we'll talk about it a little more. That way I can suggest to you a few ways of giving him the paperwork without endangering your life. I'll be in the same place at the same time, what do you say?

Roselyn:

OK, I won't give him the paperwork today. Thank you so much for listening and for your advice. I feel relieved for now :)

Robert:

Don't thank me yet. It makes me happy knowing you feel better :)



I immediately texted Jessie and Mathew to let them know I was in.

Don Juan:

No need to send Roselyn any pictures. She is leaving him.

Mathew:

Roger that.

But at least send her this meme to make her feel better.

I am using steganography so when she opens the image a piece of code will run in the background and I'll have access to her info and location.

Don Juan:

Roger that.

I sent Roselyn the meme to gain access to her phone like Mathew advised and finished briefing the crew about my meeting with Roselyn.

Jessie:

When are you meeting her again?

Don Juan:

Tomorrow at noon.

Jessie:

Wow, I am impressed.



Mathew:

Men do all kinds of crazy things to get laid these days :)
Next time I'll break my tooth on purpose.

The next day I waited for Roselyn in front of the restaurant like the first time. It was a quarter past noon and there was no sign of her.

Robert:

Hey, where are you?

No reply. After waiting until half past noon, I decided to stop by her dental office. I honestly couldn't believe I was being stood up after playing that role yesterday.

"Hi, I am here to see Roselyn," I informed the receptionist.

"Do you have an appointment with her today?" she asked.

"No. I don't know if you remember me from yesterday, but she fixed a broken tooth and today I am in a lot of pain."

"I am so sorry to hear that, but unfortunately Roselyn didn't come to the office today. Would you like me to schedule something for tomorrow maybe?" she asked, ready to book an appointment.

"I tried to reach her this morning with no luck because I couldn't take the pain, do you mind giving her a call to see if there's anything I can take meanwhile?" I insisted, feeling there's something wrong.

"I've been trying to communicate with her since I got here as well, but she hasn't been answering her phone or her messages. I think she is not feeling well because that is so unlike her," she said, confirming that something was off.

“OK, then book me for tomorrow around this time.” So, I set an appointment.

I followed my instincts and I was right about something being off with Roselyn not showing up for lunch today. I needed to find her, afraid she was in great danger.

I rushed out of the dental office and texted the team.

Don Juan:

I need you to track Roselyn. I think there's something wrong.

Mathew:

I am on it.

Jessie:

What's the situation?

Don Juan:

She didn't show up at the restaurant or her office. She is not answering her phone. Her receptionist also tried with no luck.

Mathew:

I'm sending you her location right now. You are twenty-five minutes away from her.

Don Juan:

I am on my way.



Jessie:

Do not engage, Juan. Wait for backup.

Don Juan:

I am sorry Jessie, but by the time you get here, she could be dead.

I arrived at a private-property farm. I was able to get in with no problem. The farm had a security post in the front with no guard at the time, but I assumed it was because of the lunch break. That was before I heard some very disturbing screams. I followed the noise and what I found was devastating. I counted thirteen male guards on the farm and I had a visual on Roselyn. She was tied up and being sexually abused by one guard while the others seemed to be waiting in line for their turn.

I was so full of rage that all I could think of was killing each one of them. My face expression changed into combat mode. I furrowed my brows and gritted my teeth so hard that I couldn't feel the pain in my chipped tooth anymore, only the taste of blood in my mouth that dripped from my inflamed gums. I kept pressing to prevent my unconscious reaction from screaming out. The tears of anger blurred my eyes the same way my judgment of justice got blurred out and became revenge at all cost. Roselyn screaming from the struggle and pain blended in my head with memories of gunshots, explosions and screaming from the war that replayed in my head. The shaking in my hands was a sign that I was losing control of myself and that I was not ready to engage without putting myself at risk blind with all the rage

burning through my veins, but I couldn't wait for backup and continue watching Roselyn getting abused by each one of those animals. At that moment it stop being about Angie and became only about saving Roselyn even if I didn't make it out alive. I shook my hands and opened and closed them as hard as I could to stop the shaking. Even though I couldn't stop it, I wiped my eyes and engaged.



I was not armed, but I snuck my way in, and since the guards were distracted by abusing her, I was able to take down the last guard waiting in line. I took his rifle quietly.

I opened fire, killing each one of them except the one on top of her, in order to question him.

She was covered in blood and with a lot of bruises. It was hard to recognize her face after the beating she took.

“Untie her,” I commanded to the last guard standing.

I couldn’t believe what I was seeing, the cruelty and barbarism of it.

“Cover her,” I demanded. “You have one second to talk.” I pointed at the guard’s head with the rifle.

“El Patron ordered us to rape her and kill her after,” he said, indicating that he was following Ricardo’s orders.

Roselyn couldn’t stop crying as she covered herself up.

“Where is the boss?” I asked, full of rage and anger.

“I don’t know,” he whimpered. I put the gun down without shooting him. I wanted to kill him with my own hands. I punched his face again and again and deformed him the same way they hit her. I shouted releasing all the rage pent up inside me. His blood covered my face and the rest of my body. My hands finally stopped shaking as they got numb and swollen from beating him to death. My knuckles were covered in a mixture of his blood and mine. I got a fresh cut every time my knuckles landed on his now missing teeth. My DNA was all over the crime scene and only fire could cleanup the trace that I was there.

Roselyn was still crying half naked. I took off my shirt and covered her and looked around for gasoline to start a fire before getting out of there. “They never call Ricardo, El Patron”– Roselyn whisper to me before passing out.



A part of me died at that farm. By the time Jessie got there, the bodies were burning up with the building. I carried Roselyn out of there knowing she would never be the same and I promised myself I would find Ricardo and kill him myself. Later that day when Jessie had the chance to question her, Roselyn told Jessie about her plans of leaving Ricardo though she never gave him the divorce papers as she agreed with me. Her lawyer must have told Ricardo about her plans and he decided to humiliate her before killing her so as not to have her loose with all the incriminating information she had on him. After the event on the farm, Ricardo became the most wanted target for the D.E.A. along with the Black Widow.

As for Roselyn's lawyer, well, the next day I paid him a visit and killed him. I didn't care anymore about what was right or wrong when it came to finding justice for those helpless women. I knew how to clean up crime scenes and get rid of the bodies.

After Roselyn, I developed a craving to avenge women from abusive husbands before it was too late for them. It was the same way a dog still triggered a bad memory of guilt from my childhood. An abusive husband triggered memories of Roselyn on that farm and the only thing that got me under control was when the puppy was dead.

I was ready to lose myself into this cause and willing to do whatever was necessary from stealing drug money to fund our ops to kill and disappear if I had to, in order to capture any narco that's untouchable for the D.E.A and that it's protected by the law and their constitutional rights bullshit.

It was time to expand the team and recruit. I texted the crew to start ASAP.

Don Juan:

We need to recruit more agents if we want to have a fair chance against the cartels.

Mathew:

I agree with you brother.
One man in the field is not enough to win the war against cartels.

Jessie:

There's only one like you. What are you suggesting?

Don Juan:

I can train them in the art of seduction and combat.

Mathew:

I can be the eyes and brains for each operation.
And we use tech for surveillance and gathering info.

Don Juan:

Meanwhile, you feed us with the mission and D.E.A. activities as a Special Agent.

Jessie:

And where do we find new recruits?



Mathew:

Ex-military maybe?

Don Juan:

No. We find them everywhere and we train them.
We train them to Capture Narcos for the D.E.A.

Mathew:

One more thing.
The Angel of Hope is a statue inspired from a book.



In the story, an elderly woman mourns the death of her little daughter by making regular trips to the child's grave, which is marked with an angel statue, The Angel of Hope. I couldn't find in your phone data anything about Angie losing a child. Do you remember anything about it?

Don Juan:

I can't remember.

Jessie:

If she is mourning a child, perhaps we should check in every cemetery and in hospital records to see if we can find anything there.

Don Juan:

Roselyn mentioned that her abusers never referred to Ricardo as El Patron.
The abuser said the order came from el Patron.

Jessie:

El Patron was Don Emilio and he is dead. This could only mean two things.

1- Either Ricardo killed the Black Widow and became the new Patron.

2- Don Emilio is still alive.

Mathew:

If this is true, in both scenarios Angie is dead.

Don Juan:

Or even worse, still living with that animal. I have to find her before it's too late.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

One day I was working out at the gym and a friend of mine which was a baseball scout at the moment approached to tell me “Hey I see you are spending a lot of time training this player (I reserve to say the name for privacy). That kid has a lot of problems” I sat down on the bench and continued paying close attention to the scout “His father would hit his mother in front of him. We wanted to sign him but we passed because he might be a higher risk to the organization.” At that point I undertook the ramifications of domestic violence and what’s worse is how the opportunity to fulfill his dream came to an end not because he wasn’t talented, or he did something wrong but because he was a victim. What the scout didn’t understand was that the reason why this player ran the extra mile, stayed after practice, and pushed harder than everyone else, was because baseball was a way for him to support and protect his mother.

Domestic violence has been a common factor among a lot of young athletes I’ve been blessed to coach and advise and that is why it is so important for me to raise awareness in this matter.

When I decided to pursue my double major in Applied Computer Science, God blessed me again by putting me next to a wonderful kid also with a rough childhood. I was given the most valuable prize in life, someone that looked up to me as a father figure he was missing

in his life and I became his Papi to guide him, give him advice and most importantly to learn from him. Same problem, different industries and same goal, “work harder than everyone else to take care of their mothers.”

Although, their stories are not mine to tell, I cannot stay quiet and I have to find a way to say STOP DOMESTIC VIOLENCE. This book is just my way.

Jessie inspired me to write, they inspired me to pick the subject.

Jon, Ricardo, Mathew and Eric thanks for your support and for being my teammate developers. I feel I can build any project because you guys have my back and I am very grateful to have you.

Special thanks to my coach Dan, my iOS instructor Adriana (profe), my CS instructor Alan and backend instructor Dani, without you, this project would be still in my mind living as a dream, you gave me the necessary skills I needed to make it tangible. Thank you so much and thank you Make School and the staff members specially Ian, Jen, Anne, Megan, Jeff, Komal and to the rest of the instructors and the founders Jeremy and Ashu.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ramon Geronimo is a highly energetic yet professional Software engineer, Entrepreneur, Content Creator and Media Director/producer/editor well-recognized for his dedicated work ethic, humble persona, ambitious nature and most importantly his passion for professional baseball.

Born in Santiago, Dominican Republic and currently living in San Francisco, California, Ramon earned a Bachelors in Business Administration and Management while playing professional baseball with an Independent League. To pursue his life-long dream, with all the blood and sweat it takes, Ramon had to suffer through sports human trafficking which almost cost him his life. But being a proud survivor he decided to step ahead and came forward on National TV to raise his voice for several others suffering in silence.

Having been through such crucial circumstances, Ramon realized what kind of obstacles and hardships young athletes have to face to pursue their dreams. Therefore being an embodiment of commitment, excellence and entrepreneurial spirit, Ramon started a nonprofit startup “Rising To The Top” to help out young athletes get scholarships, paving their way to their dreams.

Apart from it Ramon opted multiple ways to generate as much funds as he could to help maximum people. In a bid to extend his

reach, Ramon produced and directed a few Reality TV Shows inspired by his personal story, running baseball tryouts and touring US college coaches in the Dominican Republic for getting scholarships.

Besides that, Ramon went back to school to earn his Bachelors in Computer Science. As a software engineer Ramon has created incredible applications and startup ideas to auto generate sufficient funds to complement the scholarship program. Ramon continues to learn new skills each day and spends his free time drawing.

Ramon finds his biggest emotional strength in the love and support of his highly-encouraging parents and awesome wife. Ramon shares a unique bonding with his father, Dr. Ramon Geronimo Guante. His father is his idol who taught him lifelong lessons of kindness and generosity as well as introduced Ramon to baseball too. His father always instilled in Ramon the significance of education and that is why Ramon never stops learning. His father also calls Ramon “El Incomprendido” or “The Misunderstood” because of Ramon’s complicated yet intricate ways of observing things. Hence, his father has always been with him, sometimes boldly encouraging his ideas and sometimes silently allowing him to explore his true calling.

Ramon’s mother, Virgen Adames “Doña Charo”, is Ramon’s inspiration to never give up and to never be afraid to start all over again. Doña Charo quit her career to fully dedicate her time to raise Ramon and his siblings. Only when they became old enough she started Law School and became a lawyer taking classes at night. He learned from his mother that it is never too late to begin a career and pursuing his Double Major in Computer Science and starting all over was not a hard decision.

Moreover, Ramon really treasures his beautiful 17 year relationship with his wife Jessie and to him, there's no feeling as ecstatic as to give her a reason to smile. With Jessie, Ramon feels emotionally and mentally content enough to focus his mind and channel his inner creativity. He believes that with Jessie by his side, he can dauntingly conquer all obstacles of life and stand in the face of all odds with pride and prestige.

