

A Spoonful of Sugar: Don't Beg for Love By Oopsie Daisy

Chapter 36

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"I don't want the money. Give it back to him." Hesper refused it expressionlessly. Her pride wasn't something that could be bought with a measly check.

Benji was going to say something, but she cut him off. "As for what happened today, I'll make a police report and let them handle it."

"I'll drive you home then."

Hesper didn't reject that. On the way back, Benji told her, "By the way, Mrs. Duval, the people at the hospital said someone drove you there. I believe that person would have seen what happened. If you could get him to be a witness and provide some information, it would help with the investigation."

Hesper's mind was filled with Matthew's face, but she didn't know who he was, so there was no chance that she could get him to be a

witness.

The man was very well-dressed and was in an extravagant luxury car. He would probably not want to get involved in this.

She calmly said, "He was just there at the right time. I don't think it will be easy to track him down."

Benji didn't say anything more until they got to the Duvals'.

Hesper got out of the car, and everyone in the living room was shocked.

Rickard, who was on the couch, saw Hesper walk past him without even looking in his direction, immediately going upstairs.

The man's face fell after getting the cold shoulder, but he calmly looked toward Benji, who was walking over. "Did you give her the money?"

He shook his head and handed the check to him. "Mrs. Duval says that she doesn't want it."

Rickard's veins popped. What was the meaning of that? Why was she rejecting the money?

Seeing how he looked, Benji awkwardly said, "Mr. Duval, from what I heard, Mrs. Duval would prefer justice. She wants the truth more than money."

"Didn't I ask someone to find out the truth? Does she expect me to make things up before that happens?" Rickard tore the check up into confetti, his patience having worn thin.

"If she doesn't want it, forget it. I, for one, want to see how much dignity she has."

"...What's going on? Why are you suddenly angry?"

The Duval ladies and Juniper walked over from the garden. Juniper could tell that the confetti on the floor was a check by the Duval Group.

She raised her thin brows, curious, so she prodded.

"Rickard, what's with the check?"

"It's nothing." Rickard didn't want to talk about it. When he looked at her pretty face, the image of Hesper accusing her of pushing her

down the stairs flashed across his mind.

A question that was deep in his mind popped up, and he casually asked, "Do you know where Hesper went today?"

Juniper's heart dropped, but she kept her pretty smile on. "No idea. After what happened previously, Hesper seems to hold a grudge. She doesn't really speak to us here and definitely wouldn't tell us where she's going."

“Really?” Rickard’s eyes were calm, but he didn’t look away. He didn’t want to miss any slight change. “She was drugged with an

aphrodisiac when she was out.

“What?” Juniper was shocked. “How is she then? Is she alright?”

Rickard took a good look at her and said, “Do you want her to be alright or not?”

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“Why would you ask that?” Juniper frowned, looking surprised. “Do you suspect that I did it? Or do you think I would be happy about it?”

Rickard didn’t reply. Juniper’s reactions seemed normal and her behavior didn’t seem odd. He couldn’t find a reason to convince himself that she had anything to do with this.

After a few seconds, he spoke. “I was just asking.”

Juniper was relieved but she still looked wronged and unhappy about it.

Sophia jumped at the opportunity and stood by her side. “What are you doing? You used to care about Juni the most but now you seem to question her a lot. Do you think she wouldn’t feel hurt? Or is

someone trying to twist the truth?”

Rickard knew what she meant and frowned. “What are you trying to say? Hesper made a police report, so the police is getting involved. I’ll investigate this too, so no one will be able to twist the truth.”

Sophia didn’t talk back after she was called out.

Rickard, agitated, loosened his tie then walked to his study.

Benji excused himself. “Madam Duval, Ms. Duval, I’ll be on my way then.”

“Go.”

Sophia's face immediately fell after the outsider left.

"This b*tch actually went to the police? Is she not worried that this would ruin her reputation if it gets out?"

They had immediately received the news when the two men failed.

Even though Sophia and Juniper were anxious, they expected Hesper to keep things under wraps for her reputation's sake. However, they never expected her to get the police involved.

"What should we do next? Have we gotten rid of the men?"

"Don't worry." Sophia smirked confidently. "I've paid them off, so if the police find them, they'll just say that they were seduced and won't rat us out."

"Really?" Juniper was still worried.

Sophia smirked. "Of course. I spent a lot of money on that. If I can't even handle this, I wouldn't be Ms. Duval!"

Juniper said a few comforting words, and no one thought about it anymore.

She was just a low-class woman. They just had to get someone to do the dirty work and she wouldn't be able to do anything to them.

The police acted quickly and managed to get surveillance footage at the same time as Rickard.

He sat in his study in the dark; only the screen glowed.

He watched as the men dropped the pill in Hesper's coffee and followed her to the garage. If she hadn't gotten lucky and gotten away, she probably...

An inexplicable anger rose. Rickard told himself that he was just annoyed that he might have been cheated on.

He immediately sent his men to go around the city to hunt for the men. Once they were caught, he personally brought Hesper to the police station to identify them.

“That’s them!” Hesper only had to take a look and immediately recognized them. Her trauma was still evident, as her finger shook.

Suddenly, her hand felt warm because Rickard held her hand.

He said in a strong voice, “Don’t worry, I’ll make anyone who hurt you pay.”

Hesper stood there and looked at him. She didn’t know why, but she wanted to trust him.

However, after the interrogation, the two men admitted that they were just horny and wouldn’t say who instructed them.

Hesper knew that the officers were going to close the case, so she yelled, “No, they knew that my last name was Rivera. They followed me, so it was obvious that this was planned. Someone is behind this!”

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The investigating officer looked at her. “But we’ve investigated this thoroughly, and the suspects were adamant that no one was ordering them around. We looked into their bank cards, phone records, and everything else. There were no suspicious transfers or calls.”

Hesper couldn’t put a finger on it, but she knew that the two men were targeting her.

“Please look into this again. I don’t want the actual culprits to get away!”

The officer hesitantly looked at Rickard, and when he nodded, the officer agreed to avoid wrongly closing the case.

“Alright, we’ll investigate further. Can you provide any evidence or

witnesses? The person who saved you, for example?"

Hesper hesitated, then shook her head.

"I don't know who he is, so I wouldn't be able to contact him."

Rickard noticed the slight change in her demeanor and his eyes darkened.

However, no matter how many times they interrogated the men, they refused to change their statements, so the outcome remained. The police were out of options.

Hesper insisted and put her last hope on Rickard. "You said that you wouldn't let people who harm me get away. Do you still mean it?"

"Yes."

"Okay, I have another suspect. Would you be willing to investigate?"

"Who?"

"Juniper Wight," Hesper said, pausing after each word as she looked straight into his eyes.

Rickard immediately frowned and sounded certain. "She wouldn't do that."

"How would you know without investigating?" Hesper was a little upset.

Rickard took a good look at her and sounded stoic.

"Hesper, I could do as you say if it was anything else, but Juniper would not do something like that. It would hurt her if I investigated."

"What if she was behind this? If you don't look into it, aren't you covering up for her?"

Hesper had had enough. How could he trust Juniper no matter what? All her accusations and suspicions had turned into a made-up fantasy!

She opened her eyes wide as her heart ached so her tears wouldn't fall. "If you can't do it, don't promise me anything. Rickard Duval, you better not apologize to me if one day you find out that Juniper was behind this because I'll never accept the apology, and I'll never forgive you!"

She ran out crying because every second she stood there made her feel more like a joke.

It was obvious why Juniper wasn't worried. Someone was protecting her without question.

She, on the other hand, had to go through endless trauma but still couldn't get to the truth... Why?

Hesper didn't understand and gave up on trying to. She picked a random bar and drank till her body was numb, then picked a random inn and rented a room to rest in.

When Rickard noticed that she was out the entire night, he sent people to go searching for her, but when he received some news, Madam Duval showed up.

"Rickard, I need to speak to you."

Rickard frowned out of exhaustion. "We can do that after I bring Hesper home."

"No, we need to talk now. I don't want to see you being tricked anymore."

Madam Duval insisted and Rickard relented.

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In the study, the mother and son sat down.

Rickard checked the time on his watch. "Go ahead."

Julie spoke. "I know that you're trying to get Hesper, but have you considered why she didn't come home? Has she ever done this since you married? Don't you think that this is out of character?"

How could it not be? He never imagined that she would do this, so he didn't notice that she wasn't home until the helper went to wake her up.

Julie scoffed and coldly said, "I'm going to say something that you wouldn't want to hear. I watched the video too yesterday. She was disoriented and couldn't even walk properly. Who knows if anything happened after she got into some man's car?"

"Mom!" Rickard cut her off.

"What? Am I wrong?" Julie continued. "I don't want to accuse her of anything, but the truth is right there. If they were both innocent, why did she not cooperate when the police asked to look for the witness? Also, why didn't she come home?"

Rickard's mind went to the moment when Hesper hesitated when they were at the precinct. 411

It was true. If she wanted to find the culprit so much, why wouldn't she tell the police who the man was? Furthermore, even though the video wasn't very clear, when they zoomed in, it was obvious that they were sitting very close to each other...

Mothers know their children best. When Julie saw his face fall, she knew that he was considering what she said, so her lips

subconsciously curled.

"You know that reputation is very important to the family. Hesper's situation was vague, but she blew it up. She has no respect for our family name and doesn't care what people say about you, a CEO,

about how his wife was almost..."

"Enough." Rickard looked bitter and his breathing was quick.

"Maybe we're overthinking this. I'll ask her about this later."

"Of course. You can figure it out. Don't let that woman trick you with her words."

Rickard didn't say anything, but his steps were a lot quicker. He could accept if Hesper didn't love him, but he wouldn't be alright if she betrayed him.

After hearing the car engine distancing, Sophia and Juniper walked over to Julie and smiled. "Do you think Dick would suspect her?"

"Once we plant the seed of doubt, it will always bloom." Julie coldly raised her brows. "Besides, all we need to do is make Dick feel disappointed in her. Once trust is lost, disappointment grows."

"That's true. You're brilliant." Juniper smiled, excited to see the couple fall out.

Splash! Hesper was woken up by a pail of water.

"Ah!" She yelled and shuddered as she opened her eyes to see the person standing in front of her.

"Rickard? What are you doing?"

1

Rickard was enraged. "Do you know who you are? How could you not come home last night? Hesper Rivera, am I too nice to you that you think you can walk all over me?"

Cold water dripped down her hair. Hesper was surrounded by cold air, but her anger rose, so she shouted back. "So what if I didn't go home?"

Are you crazy? We're going to be divorced soon, so why do you care if I don't come home!"

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When Rickard realized that she hadn’t come home, he immediately sent people to search for her and personally went to get her, but what he got in return was her yelling at him. His eyes glazed over.

“I haven’t signed the papers yet, Hesper. You’re being too arrogant.”

He pushed her away, but because he used too much force, she fell backward into the wet bed.

Rickard gave orders with no expression on his face. “Mrs. Duval is disoriented. Bring her to the car!”

Two bodyguards walked next to Hesper, one on each side, and dragged her out while ignoring her struggles.

“Rickard Duval, you’re crazy!”

Hesper was distraught. She was wet from head to toe and was manhandled as if she was a criminal.

She anxiously said, “It was just one night. Who actually cares about my safety? What’s the point of doing all this now?”

“Of course, there’s a point.” Rickard’s eyes were sharp and cold as he glared at her. “It’s one thing if we care about you or not, another thing to ruin our family’s reputation. Do you think I’ll just let you do whatever you want?”

Hesper didn’t understand. “What do you mean? When did I ruin your family’s reputation?”

“We’ll find out if you did once I investigate this.” He scoffed, then turned and left.

The bodyguards shoved her into the car, leaving her stunned.

She didn’t go home because she was angry at their behavior. She was

disgusted at how Rickard was blind to the truth, but she had to go through everything alone. She didn’t even do anything out of line.

In the car, she sat straight and explained. “Rickard, I don’t know what got to you so early in the morning, but I can firmly tell you that I did nothing. I got drunk, fell asleep, and only woke up when you splashed me.”

The man smirked. “Not last night, but what about when you were drugged?”

Hesper opened her eyes wide in shock. He suspected her?

He wouldn’t look into Juniper when she asked but instead turned around and suspected if she was tainted.

Hesper felt as though someone stomped on her heart and felt a stabbing pain.

“If that’s who you think I am, I have nothing to say.”

No one spoke after that and Rickard’s face was dark.

The suspense in the small space stressed everyone out. Hesper could no longer tell if she was feeling cold on the outside or in her heart. She shuddered but wouldn’t show it. She bit her lip and told herself that she mustn’t cry.

Suddenly, she realized that they weren't on the way back home, so she started panicking. "Aren't we going home? Where are you bringing me?"

"Where do you think?"

The man's eyes were dark, and it hit her like a sledgehammer.

She immediately snapped out of her hangover but the immense shock agitated her.

"Are you driving me to the hospital? Are you going to have them give me a check-up?"

"Why? Are you scared?" Rickard stared at her expression, trying to see her panic.

Hesper's face turned red. Anger and the feeling of being wrongly accused made her want to escape!

"You're really crazy! How could you even think of doing that? I'm not going. Let me out!"

But the driver would only listen to Rickard, so without instructions from him, he wouldn't do anything no matter how hard Hesper struggled.