*Chapter Thirteen—*

After her fateful meeting with Mateo Morales, the sweeping reforms that Valeria made were not very popular.

Not because the vast majority of the people in her country had to worry about losing any money. It was because those rich and powerful enough who stood to lose anything from higher taxes and regular donations still had more than enough money to run smear campaigns against Valeria and her regime. Her unpopularity spread down to the very cracks in the roads, with even the homeless being told tales of what a tyrant their Madame Presidente had become.

“She could not become one of the elite, so now she punishes them.”

“These new tax laws are the work of stuffed shirts—soon they will come after *all* of our money!”

“The Presidente has gone mad with power, and she must be stopped.”

But let it be said here, if nowhere else, that Valeria knew how to handle dissent. She may not have known how to handle it diplomatically, but she understood the concept of squashing rebellions before they could rise. Why could they not simply understand that she was doing this for them? For the people who had never had anything in their lives? Collecting this money was the biggest hurdle left in running this country as it should have been. And with the new tax laws, there would be enough money for paved roads, a stronger economy, and the ability to import goods from the mainland more regularly.

*Why* was it so hard to convince people of her good intentions?

Why had she *had* to resort to brute force?

“It is because of those spoiled children in the upper class.” Valeria corrected herself aloud, “Pequeño put the crowns on their heads, and they do not want to lose it.”

She slurred and sloshed on the couch, the weight of her great gut now drooping in front of her and over the lip of the small couch that she had claimed for herself. Retreating to her bedroom had seemed like the best way to get some solace in a mansion where everyone seemed to want to know what to do next, right then, immediately. She didn’t *know*—that’s why she had advisors!

“I cannot govern anything if I am too stressed by my staff’s inability to do anything without my input.” She poured herself another glass and then downed half of it in a single gulp, “Something has to be done about that too… I need to get this place running efficiently. No gilding, no ostentation. We’re beyond that…”

In her attempts to sit at attention, Valeria still wobbled uneasily from side to side. She didn’t want to admit it, but she was far too drunk to be doing much of anything—certainly not her job. But at the same time, she didn’t know what else to do! Her people hated her because she prioritized the needs of the many over the needs of the few. Just because the rich and powerful in her country told the poor that she was a monster, suddenly she was a monster.

“I hate this.” She finished her glass, “I hate it… hate it more than anythin’… anything I ever hated before.”

The seat groaned and bowed beneath her mighty brown bulk. Her stomach rolled over the edge of the flattened cushions as fat, pancake breasts drooped to either side of it. Her round face, chinned thrice over glowered to the empty room as she dealt with her mental anguish in the best way that she had come to know how. A spread of scrumptious food, prepared for her by an overworked chef, and a bottle of the finest rum in the country with a full decanter to compliment it. Surely she would be able to relax this way. Surely, if given enough time, they would all just figure it out. How to do it themselves. Why should they need her? She may have been the Presidente, but she hired experts for a reason. She had put people that she trusted into their positions, so why were they so insistent on bringing her into every little thing?

“I hate this.” She said it again, posture succumbing to the great weight of her meaty back and the almighty swell of her stomach as she fell back into the couch, “I rully… rully hate’is…”

Her head fell backwards, her arm went limp and the glass shattered on the floor. Blinking slowly, taking all the time in the world to process the fact that she’d just spilled her drink, Valeria’s face did not furrow in frustration. Instead, her eyebrows raised and her eyes closed as a small stupid smile creased her cheeks to dimpling.

“Well… I suppose I’ll need another glass.” She chuckled, the couch arm bending at the added weight as she nestled her fat body into its crevice, “Affer… after a lil nap…”

Being the Madame Presidente was a stressful job. She had earned that much, right? It wasn’t enough that she had to be hated and surrounded by incompetent people that she herself had placed in their positions, but she had to be tired as well? Surely they could spare her a few hours.

Besides, she was drunk. She wouldn’t be doing any quality government labor while she was drunk…

With one hand laid flat over her apron of a gut and the other drooped awkwardly out to the side, the sound of snoring filled the room in short order as Valeria managed to drink herself to sleep. She would be the only person in the Presidential mansion getting any for a good, long while. And while she might not have realized it, all of her enemies were not outside of the mansion walls.

Some were just on the other side of the door, discussing her while she was not around to hear it.

And how best the country might get along without her.

*Chapter Fourteen—*

It was becoming more difficult for Ramone to remember when the Madame Presidente hadn’t been quite as rotund as she was in her current state.

Not difficult in the sense that it was inconceivable—he still remembered that Valeria had cut an impressive figure in uniform once upon a time. And that, despite the intense disdain that she felt for him, he would admit to being attracted to her. Not just for her looks, but for her ferocity and tenacity. Her ability to get things done. For the certain aloofness that she carried with her from her days as a rebel leader in the People’s Liberation Army.

As it was now, however, those feelings were also similarly becoming more and more difficult to remember.

And not just because of her rotundity.

He had come to her as a former ally in the war that had deposed General Pequeño. He wanted to try and talk some sense into her. That the draconian laws that she was enforcing in the name of taking money from the rich were going to cause problems not only for her popularity, but also for the economy in the long run. As more and more of the wealthy elites, the investors and the socialites and even some of the politicians, began to discuss openly immigrating to the mainland.

However, it appeared that he had come at the wrong time.

“Ramone. You are telling me that there is *no* money to spare in the account of a man who owns six homes in this country?” Valeria stabbed a plump finger downwards, her jowls jiggling as she spoke, “I can name at least ten rich and powerful people in your social circle who have circumvented paying us *at all* even before I—”

“Before you sent armed guards to accompany the tax men?” Ramone held up his hands in disbelief, “Do you understand that this country is in a very delicate state right now? Do you understand that there are people who would sooner *burn* their money than to give it to the State?”

“…I’m not quite sure I like what you’re implying.”

Valeria stiffened back up, arching her back in an attempt to make her look bigger, and more intimidating. It worked. Her wide, circular chest spread out that much further as her swaddling double chin shrunk between her jawline and pectoral fat. Her arms may have been undeniably doughy, but Ramone found himself wondering how much muscle was still underneath those pillowy wings that filled the sleeves of her uniform…

“I am not implying anything.” He said firmly, “I am saying; if you do not back off now, there will be consequences from the people whom you cannot afford to make enemies with.”

“There has been a class war in this country since I was a little girl. Now, the tide is turning, and you rich little brats cannot handle the fact that yours is the losing side.” Valeria smiled wickedly, “In time, I am sure that everyone will come to see that this is for the best.”

“The best for whom—why should we suffer simply because we are wealthier than the other people in our country?”

“Why shouldn’t you, when you have done nothing to earn that wealth than inherit it, or ally with tyrants.”

It had become increasingly clear, by this point, that there was no reasoning with the Presidente. As much as Ramone would have liked to have been able to blame it on the bottle, Valeria’s lips were dry and her decanter full. Her belly was full and round, clearly having not gone without despite her insistence that the wealthy portion of the population should do so in order to ensure the prosperity of their country.

Ramone sighed, excused himself from the office, and apologized for upsetting his leader in as polite a way that he could manage. Truly, if he had known the sort of trouble that falling in line with that woman would have lead him to all those years ago when he through his hat in with the People’s Liberation Army, he would have remained neutral—despite his parents’ deaths, and despite the stable growth of his own company since the handover of power, there was simply no reasoning with Valeria when she didn’t want to.

And she had made it clear that she didn’t want to—either out of sheer dismissal of his needs as a supporter, turning a blind eye to his struggles because he was rich, or out of sheer ignorance of just *how much* her people were taking from them. Either option did not inspire confidence in her ability to lead the country justly and without prejudice.

It was clear now that he had made a mistake. He didn’t want to admit it, but the woman that Valeria was when she had been nominated to rule this country was gone. If she had ever existed. All that laid left was the mountain of flesh squished tightly into a custom-ordered set of fatigues that existed solely so she could go stomping around and pretend that she was still a great military leader.

He leaned against the walls of the presidential mansion, his hand over his heart, and slowly slid down to the tiled floor as a low stream of air escaped him. He knew what he had to do. He just didn’t want to do it. Let alone think about the fact that he was considering treason for the second time in his young life.

But he had a son now. A wife. An entire company with employees to consider. He didn’t want anyone to suffer because of his mistakes any more than was necessary. And it had become obvious that staying by Valeria’s side as a continued ally was going to cause him more trouble than it was worth.

For the second time in his life, Ramone Tavarez would throw his hat in with the leader of a coup.

*Chapter Fifteen—*

Outside of her office, the country raged.

But behind the windows and doors, behind the protective field of her balcony and from behind her armed guards, there was little of that strife to trickle up into the presidential mansion. The Madame Presidente had just finished another lavish meal and enjoyed more than a little too much rum.

Valeria unbuttoned her top after a long, grueling lunch that had melted into dinner. Her soft, chubby hands running lines across the swell of her bulging brown belly as it fought against the taut material of her collared button-up shirt. The loose belt dangling at either end of the widest part of her gut had been unbuckled rather than burst apart this time, but still maintained a certain hopelessness at being refastened until such a time when Valeria’s stomach shrunk back down.

Laying both of her hands flat along the swell of her gut, she breathed out a small sigh of relief. Finally, she was full. The great meal had finally ended, and she could take a little nap to help digest. Maybe she could try and scrounge up Tijo for a little roll in the sheets afterwards? She needed to burn some calories…

She hiccupped drunkenly, the glass at the table in front of her couch sitting empty. She had gotten up to nearly half a bottle now with hardly any ill-effects. As much as it pained her to admit it, she had grown quite accustomed to the stuff. Her tolerance was through the roof.

She supposed, with a playful slap of her dangling stomach, that she had worked up a tolerance for both food and drink.

It was like a tank—full and fed to the point of a drum tightness. Her fat flesh rippled with the impact all the way to the other side of her stomach and up along the swell of her arm wings and even into her chins. Valeria couldn’t believe that she’d let herself go so far from the fit, toned, and muscular upstart that had helped lead this country into greatness as to become the bloated career politician that crushed couches beneath her.

She supposed, idly and drunkenly and stupidly, that this was just a sign of growth. Albeit in a more literal sense than that usually meant.

When she was drunk—hell, even when she was just tipsy—Valeria didn’t have to worry about the things going on outside of her office. Now that she had instructed her advisors as to how best to carry themselves when she was unreachable, she could fully trust in their ability to get things done without her constant input. Why bother worrying when she didn’t have to? The rich would pay their taxes, the poor would benefit, and there would be enough left over for her to treat herself with.

Maybe have a nice party? Like the old days, when she first set foot in the palace? It had been some time since anyone had gotten to indulge themselves behind mansion walls *besides* the Madame Presidente. It had been so long since she had seen some of the constituents. Maybe they wouldn’t recognize her, with all of the weight that she had put on?

Valeria *oof*ed as she struggled to heave one leg up, kneeing herself in the underbelly as she reclined on the sofa. Nestling herself to get more comfortable, the Presidente wriggled into the crevice of the couch as she prepared herself for a nice, long nap. The weight of her own stomach may as well have been a blanket. She was certainly well-insulated for any temperature other than hot, with her huge fleshy stomach and wide insulate hips. She outweighed anyone on the streets of her country’s capitol, easily. And thanks to the security of her station and the copious amounts of wine and food that it provided, she slept twice as well.

However.

Outside of the mansion walls, there was a rebellion brewing. Slowly, percolating and bubbling beneath the surface of the serviceable economy that Valeria had helped to destabilize with her well-intentioned methods. Taking money from the rich had not ended nearly as well as she would have thought it would, and she was going to find out sooner, rather than later, the consequences of irritating people with plenty of disposable income…

“UURP.” Valeria’s sleepy belch happened to coincide with the sound of shattering glass in the story below, “mrmrm…”

The fat woman nestled back into slumber as the siege of the presidential mansion took place. Funded almost entirely by the wealthy elite, the mercenaries made record time in making their way through the floor plans, as laid out to them by their man on the inside. The Madame Presidente’s shift changes in protective staff, the time when the chefs were the most busy, right down to her usual nap times had all been planned out to the letter.

Meanwhile, the brown whale slumbered peacefully, completely unaware of what was happening around her. Fine soldier’s instincts had been dulled to the point of nonexistence as she drunkenly slept off yet another incredibly large meal, stroking herself while she slept in a decadent display of arrogant and hypocritical indulgence. Her fat, sausage fingers pressed down on her inflated squishy stomach as she stretched luxuriously onto the couch, making it creak in agony at having to support her weight and the force that she applied onto it.

And by the time the door into her bed chambers had been busted down, it was too late. There was no escaping the hired thugs of a professional mercenary corps, certainly not in the shape that she was in. She hadn’t even fully woken up before the room was compromised, and she was surrounded before she knew what was happening.

“Madame Presidente, please remain seated.” One of the Morales men said in a gruff voice, “You are now a prisoner of the People’s Army of Freedom.”

Valeria was left drumbstruck and cow-eyed, but unfortunately for her, unable to stay seated.