

Chapter 41

Chapter 41 brought a mix of strength and uncertainty. I had grown stronger over time, especially after connecting with women in AA who taught me a lot about navigating life with courage and honesty. I was feeling more empowered, though the nagging suspicion that my father might be plotting something lingered in the back of my mind. Despite this, I focused on staying positive and building on the inspiration I had gained. My birthday was a bright spot, with Hesam taking me to a special place, and I had started making plans for the holidays. However, things quickly took a turn when my father insisted that he would be taking my children for Christmas, and if I wanted to see them, I would have to see him as well. When I resisted, his response was firm: “The boys don’t want to be with you this year,” he said. His words stung, but I found myself reluctantly agreeing, even though it hurt deeply.

At the same time, the Vegas show was still ongoing, and I was actively working on the performances, hiring new dancers, and refining the routines. One day, during a rehearsal, I found myself struggling with a move that one of the dancers, who had been with the show for years, demonstrated. The move was difficult, and I expressed that I didn’t want to do it, thinking it was a minor issue. But before I knew it, my team and the directors had disappeared into a room, leaving me feeling as if I had made a serious mistake. I couldn’t understand why a simple refusal to do one move in a routine would lead to such a response. After all, I was five years older than when the residency first started, and my body had changed. We were having fun, laughing, and communicating—at least, that’s how it felt to me. However, the way my team reacted left me uneasy, making me wonder if something was amiss that I wasn’t aware of.

The unease grew when, during my therapy session the next day, my doctor confronted me about energy supplements that had been found in my purse. I had taken these supplements to boost my energy and confidence, which I felt were necessary for my

performances, but the doctor made it seem like a serious issue. “We feel like you’re doing worse things behind our backs,” he said, adding that I was giving everyone a hard time during rehearsals. I was furious, as I had worked so hard and felt committed to doing my best. It seemed like everything I had been doing was being questioned, even though I had always given my all. But things took a dramatic turn when I was informed that I would be sent to a mental health facility over the holidays. A doctor, who I had seen on TV and disliked instantly, came to my house to conduct hours of cognitive tests. My father informed me that the doctor had declared I failed the tests, labeling me as mentally unwell. The solution, according to him, was a “luxury” rehab program in Beverly Hills that would cost \$60,000 a month. I was devastated, crying as I packed my things, unsure how long I would be gone. The facility’s staff gave me no clear answers, only telling me it could be one month, two, or even three, depending on how well I performed in their program. The idea that I was being sent to a place where I would be isolated from everyone made the whole situation feel even more suffocating.

This series of events highlighted the complete lack of control I had over my life. Not only was I being told what to do with no room for input, but I was also isolated from my loved ones. This experience revealed how vulnerable I was in a system that claimed to be “helping” me, but in reality, it was stripping me of my autonomy. In addition, the fact that I had to rely on supplements to feel energized during performances spoke volumes about the emotional and physical toll I was under. No one seemed to understand or care about the immense pressure I was facing. My work ethic and dedication had always been clear, but it felt like no matter what I did, it was never enough. This constant scrutiny made me question my worth and my ability to control my own destiny. It also made me wonder how anyone could thrive in such an oppressive environment, where even the simplest choices were taken away. The “help” I was receiving felt like a prison rather than a solution to my problems.