

Episode 20- "Regrets...I've Had a Few"

I dropped Harley off at school then hit the handsfree caller on my steering wheel. "Call Jonny" I said.

"Calling Jonny" the system replied.

It rang a few times before I heard the line pick up.

"Hi, give me just a moment." Jon said putting me on hold. He came back a minute or so later. "Sorry babe, I saw it was you but I was finishing an interview. Had to get away from the reporter. How are you?"

"Hoping you're in LA." I said.

Jon chuckled, "As it happens I am. I'm leaving the record company's office right now."

"You have time for me today?" I asked.

"I do. I have some phone interviews but I can do those anywhere. If you don't mind me working then we can meet up. And I hope you don't mind because I miss you so much." Jon said.

"Of course I don't mind. I need to do some writing for my new album anyway...and you inspire me." I said.

"You inspire me. OK. Your apartment in 30?" he asked.

"I'm just leaving Angel Grove so with traffic give me an hour." I said.

"OK. See you soon baby. I love you." he said.

"I love you too. Bye babe." I said hanging up. I sighed. "Call Rock."

"Calling Rock."

"Hey babe." Rocky answered.

"Hey lovie. I just dropped Harley off. I have to go to LA today to do some work at the studio and I have some meetings about the show. Can you pick her up for me?" I asked.

"Of course babe. Will you be home for dinner?" he asked.

"I'm not sure. Depends how recording goes. I'll let you know." I said.

"OK. Be safe. I love you." he said.

"I love you too Rock. Bye." I said hanging up. I hated lying to my husband. I really did love him. I just also loved Jon a hell of a lot. I couldn't give him up. I loved being with him and I loved how good he was with Harley. OK, so bringing my daughter into this may have been a mistake...it's not the worst thing I've ever done to a child I bore. Speaking of... "Call Hayley James."

"Calling Hayley James."

"Hello?" Hayley answered.

"Hey! It's Mich...how's Savannah?" I asked.

"Oh Mich, hi! She's good. She's back in school. Thank you so much for saving her. I'm glad you're ok too." Hayley said.

"Thanks. I just wanted to be sure Savannah was ok." I said.

"She's good. She was shaken up and took a couple of days off school...but she's a tough kid. She bounced right back. She has a cheer competition this weekend in LA if you're interested in coming." Hayley said.

"Really? You'd be ok with that?" I asked.

"Of course! You saved her and I never said you couldn't be part of her life. Being a freshman it's her first big competition. She would love the extra support." Hayley said.

"Text me the details and I will be there." I said.

"Will do." Hayley said.

"Thank you so much Hayley. I'll see you this weekend." I said.

"Sound good! Bye."

"Bye."

I hung up and smiled. I was super excited to get the chance to be there for Savannah's first big cheer competition.

I finally arrived in LA and went to my apartment. I pulled into the parking garage and parked my Jeep then I went up to my apartment. The door was unlocked so I knew Jon was there. Sure enough when I went inside I saw Jon watching sports in the living room. He saw me and turned the TV off.

"Hey baby." he smiled.

"Hey." I sat on his lap. "I missed you so much." I kissed him.

He kissed me back. "I missed you too. The tour was rough. I thought of you every moment I was on that stage."

"One leg left?" I asked.

"Yeah. I have a couple of weeks off then back on the road for another month. But we're wrapping it up...and starting on the next album." he said wrapping his arms around me.

"I'm working on my next album too." I said.

"You touring soon?" he asked.

I sighed, "I want to but I don't want to book a tour while I'm in the middle of fighting Balassario and SPD. After we finish this mission I absolutely want to tour."

"I thought this superhero thing was over." Jon said.

"So did I...but it never is. And I'm starting to doubt it ever will be." I said.

"Yeah...me too. I've come to accept this is who you are." he said kissing my head, "Even if it means I might lose you someday. I've come too close too many times recently."

"I know...but you're right...it's who I am. I can't say no if I'm needed." I said.

"You know Harley needs you too...I need you." he said.

"And I will do whatever it takes to make sure you both have a safe world to live in." I said.

Jon sighed and kissed my head again, "I'm not sure a world without you is worth living in."

"It is. But I'll be fine. I've lasted this long." I said.

"And what if one day you don't?" he asked.

"Then you deal with it then. Until then you enjoy me. And right now we have business to discuss." I said.

He raised an eyebrow, "Business?"

I nodded. "They are reviving my show."

Jon laughed, "Palisades High? No shit?"

I laughed, "No shit."

"You are going to let cameras follow you again? And Harley?" Jon asked.

"Hell no! Oh god, not a chance. It's going to be what it was before. 'Scripted reality'. Although I think the proper term these days is 'heightened reality'." I said.

"Like 90210 did?" Jon asked.

"Exactly. A different version of me." I explained, "Like, what would have happened to that version of me. The version that was on TV."

"So different husband...kids...etc..." he said.

I nodded, "Yes. Different career too. I'm the new choir director at Palisades High."

"Wow...ok then. No image to up keep this time." he said.

"Nope! Everyone will know from the start this is just a TV persona. No more pretending or hiding who I really am off camera." I said.

"OK...you said we had to talk business. How do I factor in to this?" he asked.

"Well...how would you like to be my TV husband?" I asked.

He blinked, "You're joking, right?"

"No. Everyone knows that we dated secretly back then so I figured it would be funny to poke fun at all the rumors and crap by having you play that Michelle's husband." I said.

"And our real spouses will kill us." Jon said.

"I'll handle Rock. You handle Dot. Or I can always cast an actor to be a fictional rockstar based on you." I said.

“Um, what? You want a fictional knock off of me?” he asked.

“No, but I will.” I said. I knew good and well his ego couldn’t handle being fictionalized like that.

Jon looked to be pondering this. “I’ll see what I can do.”

“Let me know soon. If you can’t do it then I need to put out a casting call.” I said.

“How much would I have to film?” he asked.

“As much as you can. We can always have you on tour off screen for most of the season.” I said.

“And we have a fictional kid?” he asked.

“Yes. A teenage daughter.” I replied.

“Have you cast her yet?” he asked.

I shook my head, “Not yet. I’m putting out the casting call next week.”

“You get to do the casting?” he asked.

“Well, sorta. I will be working with the casting director but I get a say in the casting. It’s in my contract.” I said.

“Ah, you’re a bigger star this time around. More pull.” Jon laughed.

I smirked, “Well, yeah, pretty much.”

“I’ll discuss it with my family and management. I’ll let you know in the next couple of days.” he said.

“Thanks.” I smiled.

“Now, enough business. I came to spend time with you.” he said kissing me.

“Yes...but not in bed. I’m still regaining my strength from the whole Amethyst thing.” I said.

He nodded, “I understand...that whole thing scared me.”

“Me too. Hey, you want to watch a movie? I could go for some relaxation and mindless entertainment.” I said.

Jon smiled, “Sounds amazing. You pick a movie and I’ll go make us some popcorn.”

“Awesome.” I smiled as I slide off his lap onto the sofa and grabbed the remote. I looked through the various streaming services to pick a movie while he went to the kitchen and made popcorn. I really was enjoying this. It made me feel like we were married again and I realized how much I missed that. I missed living with him...the mundane life we had...such as it could be. I missed quiet afternoons at home with him just being together. I needed to shake it off and enjoy the moment. I had a family and I couldn’t break that up. I could just enjoy what time I did have with him.

I finally settled on “Book Club”. It was a bit of a chick flick but it was also one of my favorite movies. Jon came in with popcorn and sodas and sat with me. We cuddled up and started the movie while we munched on popcorn.

I actually fell asleep on Jon’s chest during the movie. I’m not sure how long I was napping but when I woke up he

had laid me out on the sofa and covered me with a blanket. He had gotten up and I could hear him in the other room doing a phone interview. I smiled. I was falling so in love with him all over again. This was bad. So very bad.

After I heard Jon end his interview I went into the room. "Hey." I smiled.

"Hey." he smiled back.

"How many more interviews do you have today?" I asked.

Jon thought for a second. "Two more."

"OK. Well, I'm going to the bedroom to write some. Come find me when you're done." I said kissing him.

"Sounds good." he agreed.

I went to the bedroom and laid on my stomach on the bed and started to write. I needed more new material for this album ASAP. I really wanted to get this album rolling. It was hard not to wish this could be my life again. No powers...no responsibility other than my career and child...a normal life. Well...as normal as one could get when famous. And that is one thing I wouldn't trade for the world. My career had brought me some ups and downs to be sure but I wouldn't change a moment. I worked really hard to get where I was. I was actually quite proud they wanted to revive my show! That means people cared enough to want to see, what amounted to, a sequel. My albums still sold well enough to maintain a music career all these years later. I did movies as I felt like it but I never had trouble getting a part I wanted. I was pretty lucky...especially to still have a career in an industry this fickle. Sometimes I felt being a Ranger threatened everything I worked for. Sometimes I didn't want to be the Queen of Saturn. Most times I didn't want to be a Ranger. And, hate me for this if you must, but sometimes I wish I wasn't married to Rocky. Don't get me wrong, I did love him and he treated me like a princess. There was no doubt how in love with me he was. It was a good life...but sometimes I wish he wasn't a Ranger too. And I wished he was famous and could relate to that aspect of my life. Jon could. Jon could never understand the Ranger side, but he understood the fame side. He understood the life I wanted.

I sighed and put my songbook away. I wasn't gonna get any writing done in the mood I was in. I needed to stop wishing for something that could never be. I pulled out my laptop and opened a document I'd been working on with ideas for the show. I was really excited about this the more I thought about it and I wanted to get to work on casting my fictional daughter as soon as possible.

I finally had distracted myself with planning the show and compiling a list of actresses I wanted to talk to about auditioning. I had a groove going...then my communicator went off.

I sighed, "Go for Mich."

"It's Cam...we need to meet about the Red Ranger project I mentioned." he said.

"OK...I'm in LA and I'd rather not leave my car. Can I drive to you or should I ninja streak?" I asked.

"It's not absolutely urgent. You can drive. How long will you be?" Cam asked.

"Depends on traffic. Probably about 45 minutes to an hour." I said.

"OK see you then." Cam said.

I sighed. I knew this was important because Cam had been shady on details until now. Back to reality. One way or another both Balassario and SPD were about to go down.