

Chapter 13 - Sun burn

I awoke gasping for air. My lungs burned and my chest felt excruciatingly tight. What happened? Sitting up I take in my surroundings. I made it! A couple metres from the shoreline were trees, thick with foliage. Bird songs echoed through the air, giving the place a tranquil and calming feel.

I stand up, ignoring the protests from my muscles. The sun is high in the sky and the boat is nowhere to be seen. My best bet is to find another boat. I must have been so exhausted that I collapsed on the shore, su ocating myself. Stupid

This time I cannot enjoy the beach or hot sun. I see no civilisation anywhere. The thought of being all on my own on an island with no means of escape makes me think of ‘ Cast Away I practically limp around the island, inhaling deeply the sweet smelling air. There is nothing on this island. I was wrong. No one lives here. I’m screwed and doubly stupid. Noticing big locks lying around and I hastily make a HELP sign in the sand. Maybe an angel will pass by.

I pass the time playing with some of the crabs that emerged out of the sand. What would it be like to hide under the surface? Only appearing when you want to.

“I envy you Mr Crab.” I say. Great, now I’m talking to freaking crabs.

The sun was beginning its decent. I had made a zoo out of sand for my new companions and was telling them about my grams, when I heard a thump behind me. Jumping up in excitement I spin around, expecting Luke. I should have known with my luck I would be wrong. 2

“Hello my dear.” He grins. He does not look the same as last time, his wings are a dull grey colour and he looks skinnier and lanky. Like his limbs are too long for his body. His cheek bones protrude out hideously and his eyes are pure black, the coldness in them sends chills down my spine.

“Raziel.” I spit. “What do you want?”

“Is that any way to talk to your rescuer?” He places his hand on his heart with a hurt expression.

“Why would you want to save me?” I question, crossing my arms across my chest. This guy is all about deception. I may be stupid, but I’m not that stupid.

“It seems you have the archangel in knots sweetheart.” He looks down at his manicured nails.

“Luke?” Why would he send the one guy he beat up a er me?

“Yes, you see I work for him dear. He has his minions scanning everywhere within a 50 mile radius, just to look for you. Aren’t you a special little thing? People are dying and remaining suspended between heaven and hell, because the people who are meant to guide them are all looking for you. And luck would have it that I saw a boat floating in the currents and followed it back to here, and voila, here you are!” He claps. 2

“If you work for Luke, why did he beat you up that night in the woods?” My gut is screaming that I will not like the answer, but my brain says I do.

“Oh yes I remember that! I put that glamour on just for you!” He says that like I should be honoured. “Anyway, it was a test.” He finishes bluntly; like that silly answer would be su icient.

“Seriously? That’s all you’re going to tell me? Some elaboration would be nice considering what you both put me through.” I hiss.

He sighs heavily. “Ok, so the boss ran in the woods a er ditching you, yes?” I nod. “And you followed like a love sick puppy, yes?” I scowl, which just makes him chuckle. Infuriating angel. “Ok, then you met the amazing me. I was supposed to only scare you, but you smelt and looked so good. So I got carried away, and the boss just happened to come by and check on you and BOOM You have yourself a fight. Stupid guy is strong. Do you know how humiliating it is to have to flee so you don’t die?” He looks at me, as if he is expecting sympathy. “But you simply proved you fell for his plan. Gullible little human. Death does not have any emotions; if he did his job would be bloody di icult.”

So Luke staged it. The betrayal is agonising, and mixed with heart break, it’s deadly. I had started gasping somewhere during his rambling, which didn’t help my already strained lungs. My vision began to blur and a throbbing headache assaulted me.

“Don’t worry my dear, I’ve got you.” I feel myself being picked up bridal style followed by the sound of beating wings. Darkness was closing in and I tried to fight it, but it was closing in fast. Exhausted I closed my eyes a succumbed to it, with Raziels annoying humming in my ear.

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Death does not have any emotions.

Raziels voice echoes through my mind before I can even fully gain consciousness. Ok, maybe his voice isn’t in my mind. I can hear people talking, so I concentrate on keeping my breathing the same. Which is actually quite di icult.

“I did what you asked.” Raziel rasped. “It is not my fault she got sun stroke!” His breathing sounds laboured.

“You should have called me!” The other guy bellows. Is that Luke? “You are forbidden to touch her!” The sound of something hitting flesh fills the room, followed by an agonised groan which makes me inwardly cringe.

“I... I am sorry master.” Raziel gasps. Wow, I’m actually starting to feel bad for the guy. And ‘forbidden’ to touch me? Who does this guy think he is?

“Your apologies mean nothing! You had your filthy mitts on her! Is it that di icult to follow a simple rule? I bet you opened your filthy mouth too didn’t you? Cannot resist the forbidden fruit?” The horrible sound fills the room again and Raziel gurgles something. That’s it. I can’t take it anymore. I reluctantly open my eyes, mentally preparing myself to be in some sort of dungeon. But I’m surprised to find myself surrounded by silk on a massive bed, attached to an IV drip. I look around and see Luke standing over a blood covered Raziel, who looks unconscious. He is breathing heavily, and he has his wings out, their magnificence still, even with everything that is going on, takes my breath away. They twitch and move with his every inhale and exhale, and he is clad in his familiar leathers.

I’m disgusted when he spits on the body at his feet, and even more surprised when a sizzling noise fills the room. His saliva is burning Raziel’s arm, leaving a strange brand on his bony bicep.

“Holy shit! Your spit is acidic!” I screech. My eyes widen when Luke spins around with inhuman speed to stare at me. Oops.

“I see you’re awake.” He responds calmly.

“Yep, something woke me up.” So maybe I injected a little too much sarcasm into that sentence.

“Good to know you’re still the same, Emma.” He responds the same way.

“Why wouldn’t I be? I’m peachy.” I go to sit up but my skin stings and pulls, causing me to visibly wince. Luke approaches slowly, holding his hand up in a peace gesture when he notices me scoot away, almost falling o the other side of the bed in the process.

“Since you stupidly ran o you were in the sun for a long time, so you are now awfully sunburnt.” He chuckles. “You look like a tomato.”

“Glad you find my discomfort funny.” I hiss. I can’t stop my eyes from moving to Raziels still unmoving body. Blood has seeped into the carpet and bruises are now visible on every surface of his skin. He may be an arse, but no one deserves that.

“I guess I should get that cleaned up.” He spits the word ‘that’, as if Raziel was nothing but shit under his shoe.

“He is a person. If he hadn’t caught me when I fainted, I could have seriously hurt my head.” I’ll throw ol’razy a bone. It will give me something to use against him later.

“Oh? And you care now do you?” Luke’s voice had got dangerously low. This guy is definitely bi-polar. “I’ll leave him to look a er you while I go and clear up the damage your running away caused!” He yells.

“Who are you? Where is the Luke I met? One minute you nice and caring the next you’re screaming in my face. And lately it’s just been the screaming!” I scream in his face to make a point. “And I never asked you to come find me! That was all you!”

“You would have died of dehydration and sunstroke if I hadn’t sent someone to find you!” He roars.

“And yet you beat that person practically death! Who does that! If I would have died of dehydration and sun stroke, then didn’t Raziel do the right thing? I hate you! I know what you did that night in the woods! A test? Who does that! What if someone else had found me instead of Raziel? It would have been your fault if something had happened to me! Did you find it funny to toy with my heart! Do you not think I have su ered enough?” And there go the tears, streaming down my face in their own little race.

“If that is how you feel then fine.” He has the emotionless face on again. Without another word he turns and walks out the room, slamming the door behind him.

He le me alone with Raziel just like he said he would. But another thought invades my mind. No birds have been following me, where are they?

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