Chapter 12: Chapter Twelve

We finally make it to the last hallway that will lead us to the royal ballroom in our dark cloaks. My heart is pounding, and my knees feel weak.

This is not the time to get cold feet.

"Mort, are you sure people will not ask who I am? My dress is an eye-catcher, to put it mildly, would hate for the royal guard to be called," I say dryly.

"Five hundred people are in attendance tonight. I think you will be fine. Tonight is about mystery anyway, and I think it's rude to ask someone's name."

"That's a lot of people," I whisper with a frown and good point.

This might be a little harder than I initially thought to get close to Laura's glass. I bite my lip as I watch Mort take off her cloak and toss it to the side. She is in a dark blue gown resembling a peacock with feathers everywhere. It isn't horrible, and it isn't great either. Very neutral, like always.

"Game face," Mort says, urging me to get going with her raised brows. "I will go around the side to see if I can get a clear view of Laura. Destiny stated that she is very careful of not let any of her DNA to be left around, probably guessing that we desperately want it. I will hold up my fist when I can get a clear view of her, which means you need to keep me in your eyesight and Visa-Versa."

"Very German soldier of you," I say and take a calming breath. Tonight, I am not myself. I am a woman who is seeking revenge.

Nobody likes a blond, stuck-up bully.

I slowly take off my cloak, exposing the stunning gown of glistening yellow and black onyx. My skin looks like perfect ivory contrasting with my stark black locks. I'm wearing so many black and white striped petticoats. I doubt I will be able to find my own legs, and the corset is so tight it leaves little to the imagination. My breasts look glorious; they really do, perfect ivory globes if I were to compare to something. I'm proud of the girls, and I'm aloud to be without any judging. Charming did a fantastic job, and I can see why he is Zora's right-hand man. Using the ladies' room will be a challenge, though, so I need to keep my champagne intake to a glass.

I lower my black lace veil and whip out my yellow fan.

Eyes narrowed, we make our way to the grand entrance, which is magnificent in height. The silver doors must be two stories high, their splendor I have never seen before. Masses of people swarm everywhere in all different vibrant shades and styles, taking my breath away. I have never been permitted to go into the royal ballroom, and the sheer size of it would be a world wonder on Earth. The lighting is low and exotic, the many chandeliers emitting a sensuous glow that makes a shiver slide down my spine. Deep sapphire and silver adorned the elaborate décor, and the dark marble floor sparkled and glistened with the dim lighting.

When you first enter an enormous staircase leads you down into the ballroom floor. A grand entrance is an understatement here. The most exquisite sapphire velvet is draped down the center of the stairs completing the masterpiece. As my eyes scan the majesty of the ballroom, I almost have pinch myself, it was incredible.

Intoxicating.

The music seems to weave its way around your soul, transforming you into someone else entirely. The manifestation of something seemly sinful that tantalizes and tickles your senses, whether you're ready for it or not. The vibrations are mysterious and romantic, all in the same. I stand now at the top of the staircase, gazing down at the fantasy, a world that I never thought existed.

I suddenly smile, feeling a surge of adrenaline.

I pick up my glittering gown and begin my descent to the main level. A server ran into a pillar to my left, the crash of glass being lost in the buzz of the ballroom. Maybe the yellow of my gown blinded him, I think, with a nervous smile. This is thrilling, a body high I have never experienced. I glance to my left and see men in dark masks gawking at me, so lift my lace veil, and I wink at them. One of their mouths drops open as I pass, feeling spirited.

It's like you take me out of my slave attire, and I am a wild woman. I think I'm experiencing cabin fever being a slave, and now I feel free.

Even if it's just for tonight.

I ignore people's stares and whispers and search for Mort, grabbing a champagne glass from a passing server. I down the contents, needing all the help I can get and dispose of it on another passing waiter. I spy Mort, and she shakes her head at me, and then I lose her as groups of people block my view. It's rather hard to see, but I spot the throne seating down on the far end of the ballroom.

If I were to bet, Laura and Apollo would be seated there. There are curtains and a luxurious lounge area, almost like it is the V.I.P area at a club. I bite my lip, praying she is getting a little drunk and leaves her glass unattended. This is the perfect setting to catch Laura off guard, hoping this can be a quick mission so I can enjoy the rest of the night. She still thinks I am locked away, licking my wounds, no doubt.

I also want to be out of Apollo's view.

He will not know it's me, so I doubt I will draw his attention for more than a minute or two. There are tons of women here, and more importantly, he is an engaged man now. That makes me want to vomit. I wonder as I make my way down to the throne seating what dress Charming made for Laura.

Hopefully, a brown gown with an itchy turtle neck. A little healthy wishful thinking never hurt.

"Excuse me, madam," a male voice says next to me as I still. "You are a vision in yellow. Please allow me a dance."

I turn to see an average height male with a purple feathered mask on. His black and plum finery is appealing enough, and I do a quick glance at the dance floor, which happens to be right in front of the throne seating. That will give me a great view of Laura, if she is there, that is.

Perfect.

I smile at him and hold out my hand for him to kiss.

He raises his blue eyes up to mine and sighs. "We were trying to guess what kingdom you belong to, for I don't remember seeing you at the feast."

Oh, I was there, cleaning up your messy dishes.

I wave my hand. "There are so many people you must have just overlooked me."

He laughs and tucks my arm in his. "Impossible."

"Oh," I laugh, feeling nervous and glance around for a sign of Mort. "You flatter me, Sir. I would absolutely love a dance with a gentleman as charming as you," I say playfully, hoping I sound like a well-bred woman.

Actually, I have no idea what the hell I'm doing.

He looks a bit intoxicated as he peers down at me with heavy lids, his gaze drifting to my chest. "I will be the envy of every male here. You honor me. You look so exquisite, I almost forgot to breathe when I caught sight of you," he laughs and leans in like he is going to tell a secret, "And, my dear, there is no such thing as a gentleman. Just a patient wolf." He leers at me, and I catch his meaning loud and clear.

He's going to have to be very patient then.

Indeterminately.

He talks about the vast estate he holds in Mont Gallow like that should make me swoon or something. I just nod with the occasional giggle as he leads me to the dance floor. My gown is sparkling beautifully as I twirl and get into position. Now I must say that I know how to dance perfectly. My knowledge is on key. I guess along with the language we also know the customs like dancing. Thank goodness, or this would be a very awkward encounter.

Their style of dance is a little like the classic ballroom but with added spice. A little tango here and a little close dancing there. There are a lot of people on the dance floor, but as we start to move to a waltz-like dance, I begin to move closer to see the occupants in the elevated lounge. I only have a few seconds with every turn to get as much detail as possible.

With another spine, I am close enough to see people in masks talking, drinking, and laughing. I bit my lip when I am twirled again. At this rate, I will need to dance all night to get a clear view. I spine again and see Laura in a gorgeous lavender gown, of course. Charming doesn't do anything that is not breathtaking. But, I will say mine is better.

In my humble opinion.

She is walking on the arm of a masked man that is definitely not Apollo, maybe a cousin? Looks like he is leading her to the large dance floor. My heart skips a beat when I see a wine glass just sitting on a glass table where she came from. Is it hers? I would have to get closer for a better look. I prayed it had lipstick on the glass that matches the pink on Laura's lips. I also see almost all the occupants of the royal family descending to the dance floor.

The dance stops.

I frown as I glance around.

Everyone, including my dance partner, starts clapping. I glance in front of me and see Laura laughing and clapping, and to her left is the magnificent Apollo Augustus Garthorn. I suck in a harsh breath, realizing I'm so close, too close. I happen to be at the front of the dance crowd by chance, which is not ideal. I'm terrified Laura will recognize me and call me out in front of everyone. And with that thought, I try to scoot back as best as I can but to no avail. It is drawing more attention to me. Apparently, the royal families will participate in a dance, and everyone is honoring them, from what I gather. My mind is in panic mode.

My eyes take in Apollo, who is laughing what someone said. He looks like a version of Zorro with his plain metal mask and dark attire. The buttons at his neck are undone, and his billowy back dress shirt is making me feel lightheaded. Did Apollo ever look bad?! Never in his life probably. I feel bad for the other normal looking men standing around Apollo. It is like seeing Jason Momoa standing next to Zack, from Saved By The Bell. His muscled thighs are well displayed in his tight gray pants showing every bulge, ehem, of muscle.

My cheeks heat, and I curse, looking away.

Get a grip, Viola.

Not wanting my gaze to travel to the family jewels, which appear to be quite impressive. When I glance back my whole-body freezes, Apollo's dark gaze is currently inspecting my yellow gown with an expression I can't read. It's normal, I tell myself, the gown is, in fact, stunning. I take a big breath and shift, looking away like I don't notice. I most likely just drew attention to my impressive cleavage, no more big breaths idiot. La-la-la-la, just another average girl with just an amazing dressmaker. Nothing to see here.

I feel my dance partner put my arm in his like he is staking claim from Apollo. Please. I roll my eyes and slowly glance back to find Apollo, still staring at me. He can't see my eyes, but I can see his, and they are definitely zoned in on me. He raises his chin and tilts his head a little, an expression somewhat stony and indifferent. It's so hard to tell with him in that silver mask. I'm sick with nerves, wondering desperately what he is thinking. Why on Earth did Peirce put me in such a bright dress?! Now I'm regretting wearing this masterpiece of a gown. I need to get out of here, or at least out of Apollo's view before I blow my cover. I feel like I can't breathe, suffocation.

I mentally slap myself.

I need to stay calm and stop being awkward. Apollo is just being a typical man and merely admiring female beauty, nothing more. He's engaged for Pete's sake. I am over-reacting like normal.

I hiss under my breath because the dance is starting, and to my horror, it's an interchanging dance. Of course, it is. The music is exotic and enthralling, precisely what I do not want. I am just thankful for the low lighting and masks. Laura is now paired with Apollo, good. She looks completely infatuated with him, pursing her lips and standing too close. This dance is not fast, but you do change partners throughout it.

I grab my partner's hand and curtesy, and he bows.

We dance, and I feel like I'm in some sort of twilight zone, where my body is moving, but my brain is in a fog. I can only hear the seductive notes of the symphony and my beating heart. I must dance my way to the edge and make a clean escape without being detected. I'm in the danger zone. We are intertwining now and I spine and raise my arms as a new gentleman takes my hand. This continues as I near the edge of the dance floor as I'm twirled again. Just a couple more twirls and I'm free.

I make it to the edge, and I feel a strong hand take mine and yank me back into the dance floor, spinning me forcefully. Somewhere in the depths of my panicking mind, I know I'm screwed. I know who I will see when this twirl stops. Dark, glittering eyes gaze down at me, leaving me little to what he is thinking. My whole body tenses up, and I forget to breathe. Just act natural, please.

I feel his hand low on my hips, much lower than the other men's hands, and too low for an engaged man. As he spins me his fingers trail over my midsection and lower, applying pressure here and there. Seems deliberate, but I can't be sure. I hate this tension, this panic. As I spin, again, I become face to face with him, and it's so unnerving that his expression has not changed.

Does he know?!

It was time to change partners, but he didn't move, he just grabs my hand again and spins me.

Uhh...he might know.

Apollo did not change partners, and I am petrified to ask why. Maybe it is a mistake on his part, I think quickly. I don't want to jump to conclusions quite yet. Surely this is all my paranoia, my demented thinking. I suddenly feel the heat of his body against my back as his hand presses me hard to him. I feel every inch of his rigid body against mine, and we are no longer dancing. Luckily the crowded dance floor and low lighting almost hides us in the swarm.

My heart pounds in my chest.

I feel like the little mouse being caught under the lion's paw.

His hand that is splayed over my stomach moves upward, applying more pressure as his palm ascends. I try to move, but his free hand grabs the glittering fabric of my gown and yanks it back. Okay, I'm in trouble. Warning sirens are ringing in my head, escape now! Red alert! My adrenaline is flowing through my veins, and I gasp when I feel his hand under my breasts. Apollo's mouth is hot against my ear as he lets go of my gown to rip off my mask, tossing it somewhere to my left.

I try to move again, but his hand grabs my neck, squeezing it just enough for me to panic. His fingers under my breasts move up, feathering over my impressive cleavage. Butterflies scatter in my stomach as I feel him boldly caress me. Under different circumstances, I would be considered the luckiest girl in the kingdom.

He is provoking me.

His mouth on my neck almost makes me groan. I feel his fingers dip below my lace corset to cup my breast fully, but somewhere in the back of my mind, I find my senses. I whip around to slap him. He barely flinches as he catches my wrist midair. Our gazes clash like the mighty Titians. His dark gaze is hard, and his jaw is flexed, he looks slightly manic. Unstable. Unpredictable. He is breathing hard, and I can tell the beast inside him has awoken. Apollo moves so fast the only thing I could do is yelp as he holds me forcefully to him.

I prayed no one is witnessing this.

His mouth hisses into my ear, "I will give you a five-minute head start."

I jerk my head up to his. "For what? Until you force yourself on me?" I spit back, feeling almost dizzy from my adrenaline.

He throws off his mask, and the look he gives me makes my knees buckle. He is still breathing hard as his gaze drifts over my yellow glory, and he licks his lips. I shiver, seeing the desire flair to life in his eyes. "Unfortunately, not Angel. I will give you five minutes before I call the royal guard for your arrest."

I gasp. "They w-will kill me."

He tilts his head and holds up his five fingers and whispers. "Five." His eyes seem too dark, and the grin that spreads over his lips makes me want to scream.

This side of Apollo I have never seen before.

Abort mission!

I back up and turn to run!

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Chapter 13: Chapter Thirteen

I run blindly.

My heart is beating like an ancient war drum echoing loud in my ears. I glance behind me just in time to see Apollo whistle loud in the air and hold up his powerful arm, his dark eyes zoned in on me. He looks ominous, his tall frame gaining everyone's attention. This is bad.

I think I scream, and body check a half a dozen people on my mad dash out of the ballroom. A waiter is carrying a tray of sparkling champagne that I manage to crash into, shattering glass everywhere. I have tunnel vision as I hurry as best as I can in this elaborate gown. I can hear gasps and yells as I run past people.

Apollo didn't even give me five minutes.

I'm in shock.

I hate him with a passion.

Taking off down a long dark hallway, I try to remember how to get out of this damn castle. There is a fork in the hallway, so I stop out of breath and desperately try to remember. Which way?! Cursing I take a left and force myself into several different corridors and rooms. I hear the deep rumble of guards heightening my panic. I end in a large storage room and pause to gain my thoughts and wits. Focus, I need to operate on a higher level than I am right now.

"Viola!"

I tense then turn around to see Mort materialize before.

"Mort!" I scream, relief washing through me. "We are screwed, he knows!"

She runs up to me and starts typing quickly. "Not quite yet." Mort continues as she glances around the room. "I was scared this was going to happen. I will find us transportation. But you need to get out ASAP, seeing how you are limited to only your human form. Go through that far door and take your immediate left, then up the small stairs and to your right. After you go to your right climb the servant's ladder and sneak into the laundry shafts, you will want to take a sharp left then right, then another left, but not the sharp left. Go down that long hallway and proceed to take your left three more times and keep going straight. That should bring you to the servant's exit."

I give Mort a, are you shitting me?! Look.

She exhales and frowns.

I squeeze my eyes shut. "I will make it to the bottom floor and jump out the freaking window, the old library in the east wing that is barely occupied. I know how to get there I think, searching my brain for clear directions. I did after all clean the chimney there for two days straight. Meet me on the outside of the window. It's a bay window." This is probably a horrid idea, but it's the best I can come up with.

She bit her lip then nods. "You go quickly, stay in the shadows."

I look down at my sparkling yellow gown. "I need a cloak."

"On it."

Mort left in killer bee form, and I now stand here mentally preparing myself. My black cloak hides my gown, giving me more confidence. Now or never. I take off, being sure to stay in the shadows. I am thankful that the castle is dark due to being nighttime. Going through that many doors without being seen by anyone could not have been repeated. I am sure I didn't breathe for a good three minutes as I ran past the Grand Library. Really though, it is not some secret ninja talent that I possess that got me to the East wing undetected, but by pure dumb luck. I hide in the shadows while a group of guards runs past me.

Closing my eyes, I jump out of hiding and turn a sharp corner, then gasp, clasping a hand over my mouth to keep in a scream. My heart is pounding as I look at a statue of a Garthorn warrior.

Just a statue.

Madness.

I hear voices, and my whole body stiffens code red. I can literally see the east wing library from where I stand. Should I make a mad dash to the door?

Before I can decide, my legs are already sprinting to the library. It's like when you choose to go for it when the traffic light is yellow, praying there're no cops around. It's more instinct than anything.

If my heart beats any harder, it's going to break my ribs.

As I turn the golden knob, in the back of my mind, I realize that I do not hear any more voices. I shut the door and take in a laboring breath, trying not to hyperventilate. I want to scream in relief.

I made it.

I am breathing hard as I survey the room—empty. I push myself off the door and run over to the large bay window, Mort must be there by now. Jumping on the couch, I peer through the glass, the pane fogging with my rapid breaths. As my eyes scan, I suddenly hear distant whistling.

I pause with a frown, listening.

Tilting my head, I realize it's coming from down the hallway where I just came from. As the eerie whistling becomes louder as my whole-body freezes in dread. The little hairs on the back of my neck rise, and my breathing escalates. It sounds too calm, too self-assured for the frenzy of the castle.

It can't be.

I stand slowly as the whistling stops right in front of the door. I don't even move. I can't. I am in a state of shock when the door is thrust open, and there in all his glory stands Apollo.

What in the ever-loving—

"There you are," he says with a smile that seems a little on the wild side. Apollo has lost his marbles, it would seem.

"How did you find me," I whisper harshly.

He leans a hip on the large black piano and looks offended, his dark eyes glittering. "Surely, I thought you'd give me more credit than that, Angel." He clicks his tongue, and the look in his gaze reminds of a feral animal. Wild. Unpredictable.

I just stare at him, pulse hammering in my neck. I have no idea what his intentions are at this point. I feel like a cornered animal if I choose to bolt, he would have me in his jaws in seconds. So, I stand as still as I can.

"Don't feel like talking?" He tilts his head and looks concerned.

"How did you know I was in here," I ask again, taking a little step back.

"I'm like a bloodhound. I can smell you a mile away." He murmurs with a twinkle in his graveyard eyes. He crosses his arms, making his biceps appear gigantic.

A chill runs down my spine, and I'm not entirely sure if he is serious. But a part of me thinks he's very serious. The man does have abnormally weird eyes, which puts me on edge. I really have no idea what Apollo is capable of.

His pale hair catches the moonlight. "And I can see in the night. I might warn you if you decide to run into the darkness."

"What are you?" I say before I can stop.

He better not say, vampire.

But Apollo chuckles like I'm, cute...?

And for the love of everything holy, why is his voice so sensual? It's deep enough to command armies into battle but still beautiful enough to tempt any woman into delicious seduction. I grit my teeth, mentally slapping myself. I feel like I'm going to jump out of my skin. I'm drawing blanks here, and this guy has me on a whole new level of messed up.

"Take off your cloak."

My eyes widen. Before I tell him to go to Hell, something flashes to my left. I barely look and see a silver bow behind the desk out of Apollo's view. That was not there before, which means Mort is in here! She just must have had Pierce beam me down a bow.

I'll be damned.

I quickly glance back to Apollo, and he frowns like he can sense a shift in me. I take a couple of breaths and move to the side towards the arrow. He pushes himself off the piano and steps forward. Now. I immediately jump and dive and grab the arrow; it all happens so fast that I forget to breathe.

I'm breathing hard as I am aimed right at Apollo. "Don't-move," I get out through breaths.

He looks genuinely shocked. Apollo holds his hands up, and a slow smile spreads over his lips. "I was not expecting that, Angel, bravo."

"I want you to back up."

"I'm afraid I can't do that."

I swallow. "I will shoot, and I will remind you that I have very good aim."

He narrows his dark eyes and tilts his head. "I bet you do."

"Last warning."

Apollo whips out a long blade that catches the firelight. It looks lethal. He twirls it and winks at me. "Fire away, Angel."

He is crazy.

I bite my lip and aim for his thigh, but really though I didn't want to kill him. "I'm sorry," I say as I let the arrow fly through the air.

Time stands still.

I have never seen a human move so fast. Apollo jumps to the left so quickly that he dodges the damn arrow. Double damn. Impossible. I fire another one and aim for his arm. He looks focused, a perfect form of a ninja warrior as he takes his knife and slices the arrow in half. My eyes widen, this might be harder than I thought. My pulse is hammering as I watch him, just as arrogant as ever.

He twirls the knife again and grins at me like he's ready for more. "I'm starting to think you're not an angel at all."

"I am going easy on you."

That makes him laugh. "So am I, Angel." He pauses as he flips his knife again. "I want that cloak off."

"In your dreams."

I always wanted to say that.

"You have no idea," he murmurs.

In the next second, he throws his knife at me, making me scream. I was not ready for that. The force of the throw is powerful, piercing my cloak at my side, and before I know it, I'm pinned to the wall behind me. The knife embedded deep into the wall and my cloak. The blade is centimeters from my skin, he could have killed me.

"You're lucky I have very good aim as well," he says and walks toward me slowly. My stomach flips, trying not to notice how insanely good looking he is. His shirt is unbuttoned at the neck, showcasing his golden skin.

Focus, woman!'

The irony does not escape me that I must free myself from the cloak to escape. I yank the cloak off to free myself.

This man is either insanely clever or mad. "You're mad," I say, deciding to voice my deep thoughts. I run to the other side of the room, my yellow gown glittering.

"That would depend on who you ask," he says as he continues to follow me. "And, where did you get such a gown?"

"I'm resourceful."

"So many lies from your pretty mouth," he murmurs and clicks his tongue. Apollo wipes a blond lock from out of his face as his dark gaze consumes my body. He shakes his head as they rest on my cleavage. "Maybe I shouldn't have removed the cloak. Quite distracting."

"Why do you think I wore it?" I wink at him and step around the large desk

I'm baiting him for some reason.

"Not smart."

I stare at him.

"I am going to make you pay in more ways than one," he says darkly and continues to walk towards me, slowly stalking me.

A thrill shoots up my spine, and I must look away. Apollo's sinful eyes are going to be my downfall. They are so deliciously abnormal, a wicked gleam dances in their mysterious depths. I continue to circle around the desk, hoping I can get close to my bow that I stupidly left by my cloak. I have to end this little thing we have going on here before it goes somewhere I don't want it to. Well, in these particular circumstances where Apollo wants to throw me in prison.

Apollo pulls out another knife from his boot, the silver flashing. "Who do you work for, Angel?"

I swallow. "No one of consequence."

He raises his brows mockingly. "Well, that's a relief."

I'm in trouble without my bow, my heart is pounding in my chest. I slowly make my way towards it as he watches me with an amused smirk.

He holds up his finger and shakes it at me like I'm a naughty kid. "I don't think so," he barely says as he chucks his knife at me with speed and accuracy.

Duck!

Move!

I squeeze my eyes shut as I try to dodge it, but it pierces the vibrant yellow skirts. I scream in frustration as I am once again pinned to the wall. I am on the ground, trapped like an idiot. This guy throws a knife with such force it is entirely unnatural. What do they feed the men in the world? Steroids? Steroids for breakfast lunch and dinner? I try and yank my dress free but no use.

Unbelievable.

"If you want to escape, you can take the dress off," he offers with a shrug and a tilt of his head.

I glare at him.

He chuckles as he makes his way to me, making me panic. I'm so screwed. Where is Mort? Did she leave? She must have! "Are you going to call the guards then?"

Apollo kneels in front of me, his eyes traveling over my body like a starved tiger. I think I hear him make a sound in the back of his throat, but I am not certain. I look away because I don't want him to see what his desire does to me. He is purely erotic; his smell alone is making me dizzy. I can feel his heat, his energy like electricity. My pulse is thrashing against my neck, and I try to take a steady breath without success. I feel his gaze on me, and it's making me senseless.

"You wore the dress for me?"

I try to shift into a different position, slightly yanking on my skirt again. I hear a ripping sound to my quit relief. "No."

I gasp as I feel him grab my hair, forcing me to look up at him. "Try again, Angel."

He is removing the pins from my hair, and his grip tightens. "No, I did not wear this gown for you."

Why am I provoking him?!

"I'll stop as soon as you tell me the truth," he murmurs as he leans his head down to my breasts, which were on brilliant display. He jerks my head back for better access to my neck and chest. His hot breath fans over my cleavage, making my skin ignite into flames. When his lips touch my skin, I am nearly undone.

I need a cigarette.

I need a firetruck.

I need something!

He shifts his position as his arm circles around my back, lifting me, giving him better admission. The feel of his scorching mouth on my sensitive flesh makes my lady parts come alive with alarming force.

Apollo moans into my breasts, and the sound makes my toes curl. I feel so much power around him that I feel completely weak, venerable. He can probably snap me like a twig if he wants. "Angel," he whispers. He drops his knife on the floor and grabs my right breast to massage and caress through my corset.

He dropped his knife.

My brain whispers through heated desire.

For a fleeting second, I don't care. The feel of Apollo worshiping me is so intoxicating that it wipes out my sane thoughts. I feel him licking, sucking, caressing. He is losing control in the most delicious way for his breathing is escalating, and his kisses are becoming frantic. Apollo takes a harsh breath as he uncontrollably lifts my skirts knocking the knife next to my hand.

Oh, mercy.

I don't want this to stop.

But I grab the knife as I feel him reach my thighs then dangerously higher. My mind is now in fragments, shattered glass. My head falls back as I feel his fingers rub me there. Just a little bit longer... I can barely breathe; my skin is on fire. My neck muscles are no longer working.

I hear fabric rip then his hand is on my bare flesh, I scream in pleasure as he starts to work me into a wild animal, with each deep plunge. He is maneuvering his fingers as I have never felt before. I can't even think. I feel his hot mouth on my neck, breasts, shoulder, jaw, and ear as he works me harder. He is unrelenting, not allowing me to think for one second. His fingers swirl over my most sensitive parts, my core hot and throbbing. I feel him smile into my neck as the pressure builds, and I let out a moan, moving my hips in sync with his hand.

The only thing I can do is moan and whither.

I scream, biting my lip to quiet my voice. I know nothing. I see stars, fireworks, and an atomic bomb exploding with the mushroom cloud.

After the waves of sensation leave, my brain returns.

Holy molly, what did we just do? I suddenly feel him kissing his way up my leg and red alerts ring loud. I close my eyes, wanting this so bad, but I know if I let him and he returns to his senses, realizing I have his knife I will not escape. This is my only chance to catch him off guard. I feel him grip my thighs hard, and I must shove the erotic thrill back down. I need to hurry because if he reaches his destination, I'm gone with the wind.

I feel his tongue licking his way to my core, and his moan sends lightning streaks through my body.

I F-ing hate to do this.

I use the sharp knife to slash my pinned dress free and in a split second. I feel him instantly react but too late as I drive the sharpened blade into his thigh.

He will not die, and it should heal nicely.

Tunnel vision sets in as I get up, hearing his yell in agony. This is a dick move, but I have no other choice. I'm sorry. I want to yell thank you for the amazing experience we just had, but that might come off wrong. Everything seems like I'm in a dream now as I run towards the bay window. Slow-motion. Somehow, I find something heavy on the desk and throw it at the large pane. It shatters into a million pieces.

I'm outside now, and it's raining hard. I have blood on my arm, probably from the jagged window.

I'm dizzy.

Very disoriented.

"Viola!"

Mort is running up to me, soaked from the rain. "What took you so long?!"

I might not expound on that.

I glance back at the window, expecting to see Apollo cursing me to hell, but I do not. All I hear is a loud siren. The eerie sound is ringing loudly in the night air. "What's that?!"

Mort wipes the rain from out of her eyes. "Similar to when an inmate escapes!"

Apollo.

He must be livid.

"How do we get out of here?" I ask desperately, flinching from a crack of lightning.

"Too many guards! I could not find a horse!"

I grab her shoulders. "You be a horse!"

She looks horrified, "Hell, no!"

"You have too!"

Mort closes her eyes then nods. She shape shifts into a powerful gray horse, and I don't have time to be impressed. I jump off her back from pure adrenaline, my dressmaking it challenging to feel confident. But I have an amazing horseback talent thanks to one of my three wishes.

"Alright, Mort! Let's outrun Apollo's men!"

I squeeze my eyes shut and find my inner badass.

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