

The house was in chaos.

Two people were talking at once. Miles seemed like an irritated cat, clawing at people and asking them to shut up and listen. The dining table was being loaded on, chairs were taken away. Six men stood patiently with a folded carpet heaved on their shoulders.

Orders being barked, feet moving. . .

Emma stood on the threshold, looking at the once silent mansion come to life with so many people hustling around. She located Diana easily. She had a mic stuck to the collar of her dress as she kept instructing everyone left and right.

"—the engagement is supposed to be in one week, people! Bust your asses! Impeccable is what I want! You're not doing this for free!" Her voice boomed in the mic and then her jade eyes fell on the silent figure. "Emma! Just the person I was looking for!"

Everyone in the house turned their necks at the intruder.

Emma felt under the spotlight, feeling their eyes on her, quickly she walked towards Diana, noting her exhausted state.

As Emma came towards her, Diana turned the mic on.

"Is this the rehearsals?" Emma chuckled softly.

"If only!" Diana puffed. "It's on the weekend. He's busy finding the perfect ring although I kept asking him not to fret over it but, damn." she rolled her eyes in annoyance but Emma could see she was beaming from inside.

"Well, how can I serve you, queen?" Emma did a mock bow earning a bright smile from her.

"I'm afraid I might ask you to slay the dragon for me." She teased and seeing Emma's puzzled face, she started. "I need to organize the guest list. I had scribbled down all the names but it's a rough draft. Just fetch it for me. It's at my office."

Emma nodded, startling a little when Diana boomed in the mic again. Asking Miles not to fly away on the handle.

"Tomorrow I have to set up a party for my family. It's going to be an intimate affair. John, please be careful with the beige theme." Diana asked the team, making them wince with the boom.

Emma smiled knowingly. She was one frazzled bride. She seemed under pressure about everything being pretty and perfect.

Will a day like this ever come in her life?

Just as the thought filtered in her head, her heart stung slightly. Her plate was already full to the brim, it was hard imagining life with no worries. Hard imagining life with a partner.

The only thing she was happy about was a roof and food.

Stumped by her own thoughts, she trudged towards the stairs. . . the second she set a foot on the first stair, her heart thudded wildly.

Don't stick your head into things you don't understand.

Emma smirked.

What the hell was happening between them? Or did it have to do with her? Since the beast always seemed so closed off, like nothing had happened. . .

Looked like he was the type who shrugged everything under the carpet.

Just her luck to fall in—

Her eyes widened.

Fall in what?!

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Hurrying, she tied her long hair up into a messy bun.

Putting her hands on her hips, she looked over the flipped coffee. It seemed Diana had went berserk over the room.

Documents laid on the floor. Drawers were pulled out as if she had been rummaging through them. Some of them were shut and some didn't make it.

Multicolored Confetti were strewn across the carpet, giving the whole room a unicorn appearance with the sparkle. What caught her eyes was the brilliant bouquet with blood red roses tucked in them. . . a golden intricately card stuck between the roses. . .

Must be from him, she mused.

Curious about the card, she made her way towards the table and then bent down a little. . . inhaling the scent. . . seemed fresh. . .

And then she glanced over her back, making sure the door was shut.

She wasn't stealing.

She was only taking a peek. . .

Looking back at the bouquet, the card was enticing her to read it out and she couldn't say no to the devil.

Slowly, she plucked out the card and skimmed over it, the cursive writing somehow seemed familiar. . .

Frowning, she started to read.

My beloved Diana, one week till you be mine. Here's to forever.

Yours —

"It's you."

Emma jumped a foot in the air as she whirled around, hiding the card behind her back in her fist.

Her nerves tightened at the sight of him, watching her in a careless manner. Decker was in a charcoal black button-down shirt and pants spiked up her heart rate. He looked so. . . handsome!

"You. . ."

That's all Emma could utter.

A dark eyebrow raised up.

"Indeed. Me." He said softly and Emma was barely sorting her herself when he took a step towards her.

Not letting her fix herself.

All the blood in her body seemed to have rushed towards her face as he moved towards her in two long strides and Emma couldn't help but take a step back. . .

"You seem afraid. As if I'll devour you." His eyes turned dark, his voice went down a few octaves as he watched her take another step back. "Why do you keep stepping back?"

"Because you keep coming forward." Emma blurted out, her legs against the table.

He was standing so close to her now. . . a breath of space between them. . . if he took another step—

"Emma, won't you say thanks to me? For accepting your apology?" He asked. Liking the affect he had on her.

She was looking at him but not really. . .

"Thanks. . ." She breathed out.

Could he step back? He was stealing her breaths!

Maximus didn't say anything but the small smile on his mouth did. . .

Emma's eyes widened when he lifted his hand and horrified, she watched him—felicitous hand going on to her bun and gently pulling the scrunchie off her hair in one swift movement—her long hair tumbled down in waves over her shoulders, down to her back.

His gaze didn't deter from her lovely face. The soft flush in her cheeks made him feel. . . empowered. He was the one who brought up the flush under her skin! No one had the right to bring that color to her face! No one should look at her like he did! A streak of possessiveness went over his heart.

Surprised at his inner thoughts, he stepped back, unsure for the first time in his life. As she stood there, looking like a clueless beautiful puzzle only he could solve.

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