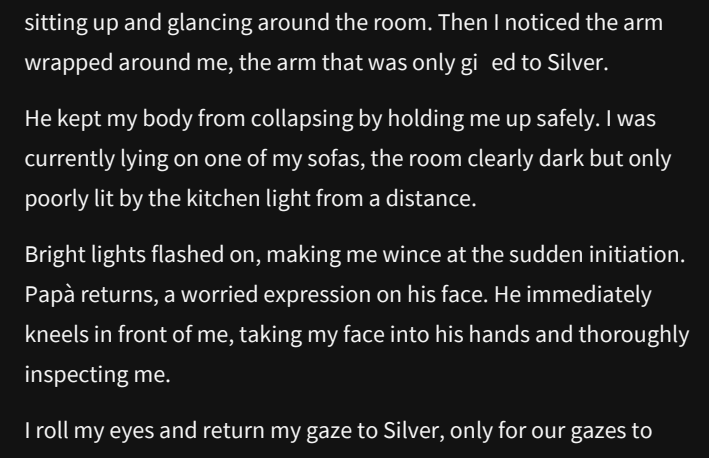


Chapter Eleven



"What the fuck happened?"

Second by second, the muted voices start to become clearer. My body is lowered onto a cushiony surface, and more voices can be heard almost clearly now.

"Fuck," another voice curses, as so are one.

Slowly, my eyes flutter open, the evening sight of my father, mother, and Silver.

I frown, and confusion washes over me as my body moved to sit up, only to push it back down as a pounding pain consumed my head.

"Shit Serenity, what's happened, baby?" My mother's soothing voice fills my mind, allowing me to process the events of the night.

The fight, Wendy's Silver, and then the migraine.

"I'm fine, Mamma. I just had a headache and fell asleep." I mumbled, sitting up and glancing around the room. Then I noticed the arm wrapped around me, the arm that was only a few inches away from my face. He kept my body from collapsing by holding me up safely. I was currently lying on one of my sofas, the room clearly dark but I only poorly lit by the kitchen light from a distance.

Bright lights flashed on, making me wince at the sudden initiation. Papa returns, a worried expression on his face. He immediately kneels in front of me, taking my face into his hands and thoroughly inspecting me.

I roll my eyes and return my gaze to Silver, only for our gazes to collide at the moment as he was already looking at me. He did, however, have seemed concerned too.

"Serenity," my father calls sternly, rapidly possessing my gaze drawn to him.

His expression told me what he was about to ask, but he still spoke. "Do we need to go and get your medication again?"

Mamma soothes my back while I shake my head in refusal.

One thing about those stupid pills was how tired they made me. I hated pills, all they did was make me never want to get but only sleep.

"Can we talk about this later, please?" I mumbled again, looking up at silver, who was also listening in. My father immediately notices and nods his head, straightening up.

"Serenie, I'll go get you some water, do you need anything else, flower?" My mother asks, her grey eyes shimmering with concern—I shake my head, giving her a reassuring smile.

She leaves, leaving me with my father and Silver.

Said father glances between Silver and me, a growing flame arising in his gaze and I couldn't tell if it was protectiveness or curiosity.

"Ha avuto mal di testa mentre veniva qui." Silver's thick accent shrill my ears in goosebumps, that sound so easily distracting.

Translation: "She developed a headache on the way here."

My father and I both look up at him, Silver's stare first on my father and then on me.

"Pot riavere poco dopo." He finishes, looking straight into my eyes with no feeling.

Translation: "Then passed out a er."

"Si," Papa declares, looking down at me and then pecking my forehead. "Grazie per averla cercata."

Translation: "Yes, thank you for looking out for her."

He had turned toward Silver, holding his hand out for him to shake. And willingly, Silver takes it.

My eyes switch between the two men, both overly dominating and intimidating—quiet too. Stepping back, Papa walks toward the kitchen to where my mother was—officially leaving me alone with Silver.

I seize this opportunity to sit suitably, adjusting myself to my liking without having prying eyes observe every move I make before I happened to collapse again.

I was fine.

"Thanks for taking me home," I look up at him, noticing that he's now moved in front of me. I tilt my head all the way up to look into his eyes, visualising his own subconscious thinking about what the fuck was wrong with me.

"Pills?" He questions, folding his arms and tilting his head as he studies me remotely.

With a sigh, I uncross my legs and slowly rise from my seat. I hated sitting for too long, my legs got all jello and agitated.

The spinning started again once I was on my feet. Silver could evidently tell as he grasped his hand under my arm, keeping me upright but never forcing me to sit back down—to which I was grateful.

"I used to get these intense migraines back in high school, my family doctor gave me some medication for it but I haven't been on it in months since the migraines stopped coming."

Silver allows me to hold his arm for support, severely listening to my words and then seeming to process them a er.

Our bodies were close, not too close but close enough for me to smell the cinnamon and mint lingering on him. So, so intoxicating and yet it heats my mind.

His bicep under my hand was tense, and his hold on my body was too. Either he liked physical touch or he didn't—either way, my touch was an ecting him physically.

I slowly allow my hand to release as I come to a standstill in front of him. My legs are still on the ground, and my eyes are peering into his cold ones.

"Do you know why it triggered tonight?" He asks in a faint whisper—it was so... real, so... it made me wonder if this was what his so or side was like—the side that was fonder if the boy I had first met.

"Um..." I so shyly, trying to register that concern he held all the while gazing down at our shoes that nearly touched at the point. "It might've been because of all the people tonight, or the incident with the guy who tried to steal my purse." My tone became quieter, treading lightly so my parents wouldn't hear.

I could see the change in his appearance just at the mention of the incident he saved me from. Physically, his expression went from so... right to completely cold. His eyes darkened and narrowed in on the wall across the room—even his jaw was ticking from it.

"Quello bastardo ce cerca di farti del male per soldi," he scolds and shakes his head at his words as if not believing the situation and somewhat let out a small laugh too.

Translation: "That bastard trying to hurt you for money."

"You're right," I shrug and give him a small smile, to which he just stares and his lips tilt up a bit as well, bringing my smile wider.

His gaze switches back up to me, right at the same time as mine did. Silver and I stare at each other, lost in our gazes with that spinning feeling of tension and attraction utterly whirl-pooling around our bodies.

"I do really appreciate you helping me," I whisper to him, inching my body closer to his. Our gazes never falter as his words slip next. "You don't need to thank me," he allows his hand to fall between the curve of my neck and my jaw, "I wouldn't have done it for just anyone."

He wouldn't have done it for anyone? My heart pounds beneath my chest, that mind-squalling theory that he may be just feeling the same way I do, the burn in my chest to ask him not to be friends but more...desires me.

We were in a trance, a trance that span a realm of only us—and the rest of the house, the rest of the world was just silent.

My lips part insignificantly whilst our eyes flicker to each other's lips. I ignore my mind, which tells me to back away, to stop leaning in, and to resist his most alluring nature.

But our lips were only inches away, his hand so delicately on my warm skin and my own on his chest, our breathing hollides before our lips could touch that second.

"Roman, stop! Serenity needs her water," My mother's squeals break the trance.

Our gazes break and then lock for the second time. We slowly pull away, our hands removed from each other.

Those pensive, red-looking lips were just inches away from colliding with mine—the scenarios my mind had been hiding came back in and I just wished they touched so I could know if they were as soft as they looked.

"I'm going to head out," He licks his lips, backing away while grasping his keys from his pocket. I slowly nod my head in understanding, my parent's now walking back into the living room.

"Here Serene," My mother hands me the water, her face all blushed up and her eyes a little wild—Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

"I'll see you Sunday, Ceraso." Papa said from the threshold, the slightest tilt of his lips brought up only the doing of my mother. Silver greets him back by nodding once toward both my parents and then turning to me before he spoke.

"Get better, Serenity."

With a small smile, I lifted my hand and waved goodbye as he turned, walking right out of the living room and out the front door as it thumped shut.

Whew.

"Do you like him?" I jump in shock at my mother's not so subtle question.

"Mamma!" I turned around swiftly and shook my head, already feeling that burning feeling at the back of my neck making its way to my cheeks.

"What? I'm just asking..." She curls up on the couch next to my father, seeming to also be curious while raising a brow.

She curls up next to my father on the couch, who also seemed to be curious while raising a brow—or he was just sassing out if I liked him and then would proceed to kill the boy.

"I don't like him, I've sworn boys o, remember?"

She presses her lips together, holding her hands up in surrender and my father merely just nods looking into the distance.

"It's kinda obvious though," Arabella continues, making me groan and my father partially agrees with her too. "I don't know what you mean," I pick up Butterscotch that was scooped around my feet.

He lays over my shoulder as I rub his back, continuously staring between my two parents.

"The glances, the eye contact, held? I know when my daughter has it for a guy."

My father then becomes uncomfortable still not having said a word, but as he sits in his spot could tell that this conversation was making both of us uncomfortable.

"But I don't, you're reading into it, Mamma. We're just friends, Hayden and I glance at each other all the time..." I fail to make a point as she just giggles and my father rolls his eyes, finally speaking up.

"He's gay, flower, there's a difference."

"I just think the way he took care of you was... sweet. He reminds me of your father—" with that, said father's head snags in a growing frown—"he's cold, but so on the inside." She smiles brightly at me, my father looking at her strangely like he couldn't believe the words she spoke.

"Ella, I'm not so..." He grumbles, and she just kisses his cheek and rubs his hair driving me to smile a little.

"You are so fine..." Mamma smiles up at him and he begins to smile too, rolling his eyes and hugging her to his chest, then starting to whisper into her ear.

Taking that as my cue to leave, I spin on my heels and walk away rather quickly still with Butterscotch in my arms. He purrs as I continue to pet him, sliding into my room and shutting the door with more oomph.

Placing Butterscotch on my bed, he curls up to sleep in—which, making me sigh when he takes up my favourite spot to sleep in—while also seems to be happy.

I quickly get changed into my PJs, which were only some cotton shorts and an overnight serum. After removing my make-up and rubbing on my overnight serum, I climb right into my bed with my cat curled up beside me.

It doesn't take long for me to fall asleep, the warmth caressed me and my mind quietened down for thoughts.

Finally allowing me to dream.

~ Dream ~

The silence of my home occurred to me, gesturing that there was no one here.

Falling onto the sofa bed, I held my eyes looking deep into the evening sky. I loved our little terrace, it held only the view of our garden and the sky—so many stars crawling in and the crescent moon now fading replacing the sun.

The door to the balcony slides open, making me sigh that I had only hoped I was home alone.

But the person who entered wasn't one of my family members. My body heaves up at the pure sight of Silver.

He stands in front of me, blocking my view of the sky, better yet, giving me an equally as perfect view—him.

"Silver?" I frown and he steps forward, "What are you doing here?" Surprising me, he peers down at my lips and grasps my chin with his ringed, cool fingers. My back straightens as he squats down in front of my body, now meeting my height.

"Finished business with your father, I just wanted to say goodbye to you..." He murmurs softly, his heavily accented and deep voice caressing every part of my soul.

I felt a magnetic pull toward him, something so magnificent yet so desirable.

Those lips of his just inched forward right until they were touching mine.

He kisses me, a so delicate kiss. One of his hands cupped my cheek, unconsciously pushing some hairs back behind my ear.

It took me a moment to kiss him back, but when I did, sparks flew.

I moaned silently into his mouth, and we breezed easily into each other's hold—things moved by fast, one moment he was kneeling, the next his legs were between mine and my back was against his sofa.

My hands run down his dress shirt, easily unbuckling each button right until the warm flesh of his abs was under my hands.

Our lips smother each other, every kiss, every stroke, turning rougher by the second.

We break away to breathe, but instead, he catches his breath by following kisses down my neck.

It made it easy being in a sports bra, those veiny hands travelled from my hip-dips higher and higher until reaching the elastic of my bra.

Removing his lips from the dip of my neck, Silver placed then right back in front of mine, he leaned back a little and caught my gaze.

"Can I see your beautiful body before I leave, Serenity?" He licks his lips and stares at mine, "You can say no, Amore."

Translation: "Love"

Refusing, I shake my head and bring both of my hands to his cheeks, our lips colliding once again.

Taking that as approval, I moan from his mouth once he releases my breasts from the suzeal fabric. The sports bra was now bunched at the top of my chest, and now they bounced freely into his peripheral vision.

"My fucking god, Serenity," He groans, still not touching me where I wanted him to—only looking.

I giggle a little at his reaction but immediately sober up when his hungry gaze snaps directly into my eyes.

Finally, he squeezes my right breast and I choke out a moan right as he plays with my nipple. "Be good girl and keep quiet." He brushes my hair away from my face, places a hand behind my neck and lets it up from the couch angling for my lips to brush with his.

"You don't even fill my hand, Serene," He chuckles darkly, adjusting his lips to press against my jaw, hovering over my ear.

"Let's see if my mouth will, hm?"

Tossing his bottom lip into my mouth, he keeps his dark gaze on me as his tongue connects with the bud of my nipple.

And then my body heaves up in pleasure, seeing pure stars.

~ ~ ~

Sweating profusely, my gaze wanders around the room in search of Silver, then settles on my lilly clothed body.

I sigh out a longing breath, my breathing as incredibly high as my pulse. Slumping back down, I recollect the same dream I had the previous two nights—which simply identifies as the day Silver and I almost kissed.

Every night, this misty dream would replay, and when I woke up, I would essentially search the room for him because it was always far too real.

It was so sinful, so dirty and uninviting. But lord was I more than turned on—precisely dripping wet from my forehead all the way down to the throbbing pulse between my thighs.

Racing out of bed, I immediately take cover heading for the shower. Today was Sunday. I was heading to Hayden's house today—which wasn't that far of a drive from my place.

As it was Sunday, it was a lousy day for me. That meant I could wear whatever I wanted, which resulted in baggy sweatpants and a yellow crop top with pink daisy flowers all over it.

I tied a sweatshirt around my waist in case I got cold later, then slid my phone into my pocket and exited my room.

As I'm walking down, I couldn't help but think of my strategy to avoid Silver today. He'd be over soon, which meant I wouldn't have to face him. I simply couldn't, not a er my dreams.

Hopefully I would be at Hayden's long enough up until Silver was done with work, until then, I went straight to my father's.

Once I arrived downstairs, I lently hoped I was done with my father. I'd be leaving.

"Papa?" I slowly creak the wooden door open, his slumped, tired figure now in view.

In the way his hand was buried in the mess of curls similar to mine, and right as he dull eyes snapped up from the computer—he had my heart aching all over again for him. He just works too hard.

I slowly shake my head and start walking up to him, he allows me to squeeze him into one of my bear-cuddling hugs.

"You should rest for a few hours, Dad," I whispered to him, hearing him sigh a er hearing my words. "I'm all good Serene, you worry just like your mother." He shakes his head at my concern and I continues to grow.

"I'm heading out to Hayden's now," I mention, moving away just enough to see his tired features.

He gives me a little smile and looks back down at his laptop right as a notification sounds.

"Have fun, but be home for dinner or I'm coming to get you." He says sternly, glancing up at me for a second.

Laughing, I nod and peck the top of his head before running his already crazy hair.

"Love you, Papa, tell Mamma I love her too," I trail out of the room just in time to hear him say I love you back.

Continuing my path, my driver was patiently waiting outside for my arrival, having seen me, he opens up the door to the backseat and I nod once at him in thanks.

I slid right in and relax amongst the leather seats.

Gerald was one of my few drivers, I had my father call him last night for me and tell him where I would be o too. He was a quiet, older man. Probably around my father's age, I've heard of his son that lives around in our town—a teen dad apparently.

We start the drive to Hayden's and with all the silence and my endless thinking, it equally only took fifteen minutes to arrive.

I told Gerald the time to pick me up, having said the late afternoon—hoping Silver will be gone—and then with that, I leave the car and heard it drive away behind me.

Hayden's house was a mansion, nearly the same width as mine, though it had many levels above ground.

Its interior was simply a reminder of the term gloomy, like something out of Harry Potter, but it still had that tinge of comfort and a sense of home about it.

As I started to step up the staircase covered with flower pots on each end—I do distinctively remember them not being here last time.

"Oh! You're here!" Hayden's booming voice from above caught me off guard, having me jump in my spot and nearly stumble up the stairs.

I snap my head up to the sky, blocking my view of the streaks of light hitting directly into my eyes—right then as Hayden's grinning head replaces it.

"I'll be down in a second!" He shouts again from his balcony and I rolled my eyes, shaking him away with my head.

Boy nearly had me blind and crushed on his doorstep.

Just as I reach the front door, the black oak swings wide open revealing the face of a very beautiful woman, only known as Darla Hart.

Her blonde locks curl over her shoulders and fall down her slim waist, a scowl placed on her features, allowing her hazel eyes to harden but then so as to immediately once they meet my own.

"Oh, my darling Serenity, thank goodness it's you," She immediately takes my waist and wraps her arms around me tightly.

For a short woman, she sure had a lot of strength.

"Who else would it be, Darla?" I manage to creak out beneath her hold. She swiftly pulls away, grabbing me by the shoulders and looking me dead in the eyes.

"Hayden's fuck buddies."

"Mum!" My voice brings Darla to whirl around and face her son, all the while I'm trying to keep in my atrocious laughs.

"No, Hayden!" She scowls, jabbing a finger in front of his face, "I'm sick of seeing all these men in my home, do you not know how disgusting they are? Absolute pigs." She mutters, shaking her head disappointedly at Hayden.

I cover my mouth with my hand and squint my eyes closed as I desperately plead for my life to not be pledged by Darla.

"Mum, you need to get over this shit. Can't I have fun? I'm not falling in love..." He mutters and I'm starting to think that they've forgotten I was even here.

"You better not be, and you!" She now swirls back around to me, making me freeze and my face suddenly drops as she narrows her eyes down at me. "I don't want any nonsense between his Ceraso and you. He's bad news, Serenity. If I find out from Hayden—"

I cut her off by shaking my head and placing a hand on her forehead. "Don't worry Darla, no boys remember? Plus Papa would probably kill him before he could even touch me..."

It wasn't a lie, but it wasn't the truth.

She does physically relax, still keeping on her scowl but at the mention of my father, she seems reassured.

"I think you're Mamma's bella would get to him before Roman does," She states, already flipping her hair over her shoulder and walking past both Hayden and me. "I'll be heading o for a few hours my baby's, don't do anything stupid and no—"

"Boys." Hayden and I say at the same time, sighing at his crazy but wonderful mother.

She gives us a little smirk before hopping into her bright pink Lamborghini.

"Fuck my life," Hayden mumbled, pulling me inside his home with my giggles falling behind him.

"She needs to find a boyfriend because this whole hating men thing is making her lose her shit, 24/7..."

I laugh louder and he chuckles right a er me. My laugh was something I wasn't ashamed of but it was highly disturbing to some. It could be mistaken for a gonia being in pain or pleased, however you want to hear it I guess.

"Come, come," He grabs us some smoothies and then we can sit upstairs to the kitchen.

"So, tell me why you're hiding at my house again?"

Pouring the pink-red contents into tall, clear glasses, Hayden waves his hand in the air to gesture for me to talk.

"Silver's going to be there doing business with my father," I sigh and fold my arms across the kitchen counter. Hayden narrows his eyes in on the glasses, somewhat trying to perfect the amount of juice we both get.

"And why are you bothered by this? It's going to be an occurring thing, and such, you've been hanging around him all week, why are you so bothered by him now?"

Some sort of realisation occurs to him, bringing him to stand straight and look me dead in the eyes—exactly that his own mother did to me only a few minutes ago.

"Did something happen between you two?" A rising smirk crawls to his lips, that mischievous glint in his eyes while his curls bounce over them.

Gulping, I snatch my smoothie from the table and sprint up the stairs.

"Hey!" Hayden yells, the grin on his lips being censored from miles away—even if he was running right behind me.

"Nothing happened!" I stammer from the balcony door, sucking in the contents of my smoothie through the metal straw.

He gawks and gapes at me, "So something almost happened?" He starts walking forward and I stuff my back, running onto the balcony and plopping onto the cream sofa bed.

Hayden chuckles and takes a large gulp of his smoothie, slumping his body down across from me and lazily placing his legs over my lap.

I pout when I see his manicured feet and then slap his thigh in annoyance. "Did you get your toes done without me?" I look down at his painted black nails and he shrugs. "Went with Mum yesterday."

Sighing, I lean back against the bed and look up at the bright morning sky.

"Tell me what happened, Pooh Bear," Hayden's voice sang and I groaned loudly.

"Fine we almost kissed and now I'm having sex dreams about him."

Silence. Birds chirping, cars roaring, but silence on either of our sides.

"Well, are they good?" Those were his first words a er a minute of nothing and I happened to just throw a cushion at him.

He laughs and throws it away, sitting up and staring at me.

"Gonna answer me?" He grins and I nod.

"Yes," I say blankly and sip my smoothie.

"Yes?"

Sighing frustratingly, I swivel my head in his direction and glare. "Yes, it's mind-blowing sex dreams that constantly replay in my head daily and they have me literally shaking and sweating when I wake up each night."

Hayden blows out a breath and smiles, shaking his head and clapping his hands arrogantly.

"Our innocent Serenity is slowly sinning, it's only a matter of time before you're actually in his bed."

I blush red and shake my head, refusing to believe that.

"You know I'm not like that, Hayden?" I sigh, leaning my head back again.

"I know, but...maybe he'll change that? These recurring dreams can't be for nothing, hm?"

Not answering him, I continue gazing at the sun-filled sky, even wondering if what he said was true. The experience I lacked, but I wanted it with someone special, not to just give myself up to the living just for the fun of it.

Although, this attraction for Silver was more than just mild.

It continued day in and day out. The dreams were nothing more than the illusion of turmoil in my mind. The hidden scenarios I envisioned before going to bed and then remembering to hide them deep inside my mind before falling asleep.

He was slithering inside my heart, slowly, ever so slowly. I knew deep inside the attraction was nothing compared to my emotional feelings that just kept growing, exactly like the roots of a rose. But those stems always had thorns, those thorns were my personal red flags—do not get attached.

But the unfortunate reality of this hit me here and there—because the more I was around Silver Ceraso, the more I became obsessed.

~ ~ ~

AUTHORS NOTE

I need to stop fighting people in my comment sections

no because I hardly read comments anymore because of the hate but every time I glimpse at one it's always some random judging my shit

anyways that went is done now...