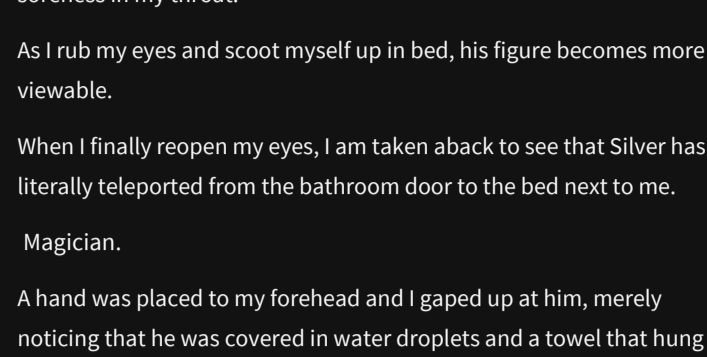


Chapter Twenty Nine



The next morning was fateful.

My immune system was fucking shit, and making out with a hot mafia leader in the pouring rain for five minutes or more was destined to get me sick.

Now here I was, jolting awake at eight a.m., to me sneezing and groaning in an extremely warm bed. Which really only consisted of a duvet and light sheets, no additional blankets.

"Serenity?" I heard Silver's voice call from the doorway, my blurry gaze catching a figure stepping out of a steamy room.

"Yeah?" I croak out, wincing at how raspy my voice was and the soreness in my throat.

As I rub my eyes and scoot myself up in bed, his figure becomes more viewable.

When I finally reopen my eyes, I am taken aback to see that Silver has literally teleported from the bathroom door to the bed next to me. Magician.

A hand was placed to my forehead and I gaped up at him, merely noticing that he was covered in water droplets and a towel that hung dangerously low around his torso, his very defined torso shaped into a V catching my eye also—

I sneeze and squawks again. Making my eyes widen in fear.

I am not about to spend my weekend in bed being sick.

"I think I'm sick," I mumble, looking up at him. He slowly takes his hand away from my forehead, giving me a concerned frown.

"You're hot," He motions to my head and I snort, giggly letting out a laugh—only making me laugh harder when he rolls his precious eyes.

"Here we go," He mutters and I stretch up lazily, poking his chest with my finger. "That's what she said." I flick my hair over my shoulder and he shakes his shoulder playfully, shaking his head and disappearing into his closet.

I lay flat back on the bed, kicking the sheets or me lazily and cuddling up into the pillow.

Sni ling. I pout my lips and caress in the warmth. My body felt all hot, yet I also felt cold. As soon as the blankets were kicked o, the air felt like ice piercing my skin.

I shivered and drew the blankets back under my chin. My bottom lip wobbled as shivers captivated my body; I frowned and desperately closed my eyes, hoping to warm up.

With a sigh, I hear the walk-in closet door open again, and I peep one eye open to see Silver striding across the room.

His bright blue gaze met mine at the right moment, and his brow furrowed as he took me in. Silver was now dressed casually in black sweatpants, a loose-fitting white shirt, and sneakers.

Accompanied with his usual chain and ring sets. He approaches, squatting to my level to where my cheek is pressed against his pillow and my mouth slightly parted from his godly appearance.

"Want me to take you home?"

I frowned.

Yes, but I want you to stay with me.

Instead, I nod and purse my lips, l ing my arms from around my body and up into the air, motioning for him to pick me up.

Lazily, he smirked and straightened to his full height, wrapping his muscular arms around me. I sni le again, wrapping my arms around his neck and cuddling my face between his shoulder and neck.

We started walking out of the room, but the desperate urge to pee seemed to corrupt me at the right time.

"Wait," I grumble and he pauses. "I need to pee."

Sighing, Silver redirects his steps and takes me into the bathroom, gently setting me down on the cold, tiled floor.

"I'll be waiting outside." He leans down and presses a kiss to my forehead, making me blush.

"Okay," I mumbled and watched him smirk and leave, knowing well what he did to me.

The door closes and I turn to the bathroom mirror, flinching when I see my appearance.

How did he even look at me? Surely he would have mistaken me for some sort of creature residing in his bed...

Hmm, maybe he's into that.

I shrug, turning around to the toilet and doing my business. Right a er that, I washed my hands and then drowned my face in cold water, my nose tinged red from blowing it more than five times beforehand.

My skin was slightly paler and my hair was messy and gross. I tried to tie it up as decently as possible, only for it to end up in a messy ponytail.

Mascara ran under my eyes, and my lips were swollen and red, most likely from the night beforehand.

And my jaw felt slack. Also probably from the night before.

A much, much wonderful night.

Memories of last night replayed in my head. Sex with Silver. Hot, passionate, rough sex. And later that night, I was faced with a truth that I never thought would be a truth.

My ex was trying to take me from my life.

How wonderful

And now I'm also sick. I'm sick and all I want to do is go home and curl up into Silver's arms and stay there for an eternity.

A er I washed my mouth with some mouthwash he kept hidden in the cabinets, I exited the bathroom and crashed into a very hard back that was attached to only Silver.

He turns around slowly, raising a brow at my sudden idiocy. Smiling sheepishly, I shrug it o and step forward, clinging my arms around him for an embrace.

Not a moment of hesitation goes by from when he placed his arms around me.

His hand rubs my back smoothly, lulling me to sleep and it was pathetic, really. I was standing on jelly-like legs and falling asleep in the arms of a man.

A graciously gorgeous and funny and sweet man.

Smiling to myself, I close my eyes and breathe in his intoxicating scent.

"Don't fall asleep, Amore." His deep voice fills the void, bringing me to roll my eyes.

"I'm not," I grumbled into his chest, my voice coming out nasally and mu led.

He chuckled darkly, "I can feel your eyes fluttering."

"Come on," He gently strays my arms away to make me look up at him. I groan, pouting like a baby and feel the heaviness in my eyes again.

One thing I hated when I was sick was that I acted like a complete bratty five-year-old.

"I'm taking you home."

His dark whisper follows with his hand taking mine, beginning to drag me out of the room behind him. We slowly descend the staircase, with me taking my time, sneezing every couple of minutes.

The more I walked, the further tired I got. Silver definitely noticed because once we had reached the bottom, his arms went right under my legs and he easily picked me up, holding me in his arms.

I grimmed lazily, resting my head against his chest as we exited the home.

Silver places me inside his car, buckling my belt and telling me he'd be back. Closing my door, I burned my eyes through his back, watching each powerful stride his sexy legs made before he disappeared back inside his home.

My nose began getting runny again, so I looked around the car for some tissues, finding a box hidden right underneath my seat.

Not without feeling the cold metal of a loaded freaking pistol on top of that box.

Jesus Christ.

I rolled my eyes, gently kicking it back under the seat. I would not trust my hands around that thing, no way in hell.

Grabbing two tissues, I blow my nose noisily and scrunch my face up from how gross it sounded. I tucked the dirty tissue into the pair of sweats I borrowed from Silver, the oversized clothes brought me a lot of comfort.

A few moments later, Silver had exited the home, surprisingly with another man stepping out behind him. Walking back over to the car, my eyes zero in on the plastic bag in one of his hands.

As he slides back into the car, a gust of wind entered which made me shiver instantly. I pulled my feet up on the chair, folding my arms around my legs to comfort me more.

Instantly, Silver turns on the car and turns the heater up. It was particularly a colder day, the wind was up and the clouds were rich with grey. No sun is visible.

The plastic bag in his hand gets handed over to me, making me frown up at his emotionless gaze.

"Your clothes from yesterday are washed. Plus your phone is in there." A giddy smile makes its way to my lips, I open the bag and my smile widens impossibly when I see two bottles of fresh orange juice, a white box of what smelled to be warm pancakes as well as some aspirin.

Dropping the bag in my lap, I reach across the car and wrap my arms around his neck. Silver seems shocked for a moment, not moving. He sighs deeply, finally wrapping his arms tightly around my waist.

"Thank you, D'Argento."

I feel his lips press against the top of my head, his lips brushing near my ear. "You're welcome, beautiful."

A laugh makes its way out of me as I pull away, sni ling and wrapping my arms around my body. I turn to his blank expression, eyes looking confused.

"I'm not really looking beautiful today. At least I don't feel it," I laugh again, grabbing another tissue and wiping my nose so I don't rub it on my sleeve like a child.

Suddenly, his strong hand grasped my cheek, so ly turning my face toward him. My lips part openly, staring into his burning gaze.

"Well, let me tell you this, Serenity," He grasps both of my cheeks, brushing strands of fallen hair away from my face. I blush from the way he stared at me, the intensity that overpowered his gaze that seemed to take in every inch of my features making me feel like the most beautiful woman in the world right now.

"You're beautiful every millisecond of the day. Don't let anybody tell you otherwise, Si?"

And then a er leaving me flabbergasted with his words, he leans his head all the way down and kisses me sweetly. I kiss him back just as so ly, savouring the tenderness of his pillow-like lips, the sweet taste of cinnamon dancing on his tongue.

We pull away slowly, my eyes closed and my lips curled into a smile.

"You really like cinnamon, don't you?" I flutter my gaze up at him, catching the twinkle in his eyes. "Cinnamon rock," he shrugs casually, "I use this cinnamon-scented body wash as well..."

I let out a giggle and kiss his cheek, loving this so side of him.

"That's why you always smell like cinnamon. I like it," I tell him, bringing my hands back around my legs as he begins to drive out of the driveway.

Smirking, he runs his tongue along his bottom teeth and lets out a slight chuckle—which sounded more like a rumble from his chest.

"Of course," He glances ahead of us, swerving right into the tra ic, "I'm assuming you use a honey-scented body wash too?"

My jaw falls slack, my eyes widening with amusement. "Well, well, looks like I'm not the only one with a secret addiction."

His eyes glance over at me for a quick second, emotionless but bright

"You're my whole damn secret addiction," He rumbles wordlessly under his breath, but I caught it just amongst the hum of the radio.

My cheeks turn a tinge pink, my toes flexing under my socks.

Another sneeze escapes me a second later, and I roll my eyes in annoyance, leaning my head against the window as we fly through the town.

The whole ride through was silent, although at some stage Silver's hand had crept its way from the gear and to my thigh, so ly residing there and running it up my skin, back and forth repeatedly.

Butterflies filled my stomach throughout the entire ride home, but also with the sensation of comfort.

Just before I could fall asleep again, we were entering my estate. Multiple cars filled the driveway, forcing Silver to stop the car somewhere in the far middle.

He killed the engine and exited the car, coming around to my side which still le me stunned a er all these times. I smiled to myself as he opened the door, extending a hand for me to take.

I did so, lacing my fingers through his and taking the bag of goodies with me.

We started heading up the staircase, my usual guards standing outside the front doors. I was confused with all of the unfamiliar cars around, only considering it could be my family.

The guards let us pass through with a single nod, my hand tightens around Silver as the door shuts behind us and the faint sounds of multiple voices tune in through the home—which sounded from the living room.

"Do you want to come in for a bit?" I look up at him, turning my body slightly.

He stares down at me, looking at nothing else but me.

"Sure," He traces his thumb along my hand, now glancing down at our connected hands. "I have to talk to your father anyway."

I nod my head, turning around and striding slowly throughout the house, the voices were getting louder and louder the further we stepped through.

Once we rounded the corner, I was faced with my family surrounded all around the living room.

I halted in my steps, seeing my parents, my grandparents, and what shocked me most, my Nonno who was my father's dad.

When I first met him, I was shocked at how similar he and my father looked. O en I see my father aging as well as him, looking like a replica of him later at that age. My parents were still young, they had a long to go before getting to that stage.

My father and my Nonno barely spoke, considering their rocky past which has been explained to me. For some reason, my father still had the heart to keep him in the loop, mostly because of me.

Now here he was, chucking next to my mother with the blonde lady I'd always seen him with—who also loved to make goo-goo eyes at my other grandfather.

Just before I could make ourselves noticed, I sneezed and gripped tightly onto Silver's arm from the impact—the entire room falls silent at the sudden outburst.

I look around, grinning sheepishly at my mother who stood straight, a knowing look written all over her face.

"Well, look finally returns home, huh?" She crosses her arms over her chest, glancing at Silver beside me who I think she had just realised was here as well.

"This is the Ceraso boy?" My grandfather had said, making my gaze switch to him and Grandma Layla. Pops had this daring look in his usually emotionless gaze, staring at Silver with this deathly look.

Oh no.

"Dad," Mamma warns, glaring over at Pops and then glancing back at Silver. "Thank you for bringing her home, Silver."

Mamma looks at me, scanning me with a lingering smile before slowly frowning and taking a step towards me. She extends her hand across my head, her worried gaze going back to me.

"You're sick."

I nod my head and smile sheepishly. "I got stuck in the rain yesterday a er school."

Pursing her lips, she shakes her head disappointingly and looks over her shoulder at Papa, who was casually leaning up against the threshold, observing everything that was going on.

He had a hard look on his face. Cold eyes and jaw tight, definitely pissed o, to say the least.

"Serenity," A deep voice calls, switching my gaze towards my Nonno. I smile, stepping away from Silver and my mother to embrace my grandfather.

"Hi, Nonno, how are you?" He kisses my forehead and gently smiles down at me, his girlfriend beside him also smiling down at me slightly.

"I'm well, Prezioso And you?"

Translation: Precious

I nod my head, sni ling slightly as I take a step back. "I'm well," I smile heartfeltly. Looking behind him, I quickly scoot my way through the room to greet my grandparents.

"Hi," I mumble, hugging my grandmother who manages to get me into a huge bear hug—not that I was complaining.

"Poor thing," She bats and smooths her thumb across my cheek. I give her a small smile, only for it to fall as a figure behind her towers over us and another hand lands on my forehead.

Pops looks down at me with a pinch of worry in his gaze, before snatching his hand away and pointing his cold glare to Mamma.

"Bella, go and get her some medicine."

I let out a snort and look over at Silver, who was now occupying my father quietly. I took this as my opportunity to browse around the room, seemingly to take in the fact that my Nonno had come all the way over from Italy.

Mamma comes back into the room with some medicine in her hand as I take a seat on the couch. I also took the plastic bag Silver had bought for me and emptied everything out—starting with my pancakes that were just ready for me to demolish them.

"You haven't had breakfast yet?" My grandmother says from beside me, sitting on one side while Pops sat on the other. I fold my legs beneath me while shaking my head in response, opening up a collection of golden-brown pancakes.

"No, Silver had these made for me beforehand. Also had bought me orange juice and aspirin as well," I shake the bag full of goodies, upon hearing his name being called, he glances at me from over his shoulder and I return the stare with a bright smile.

Something glimmers in his eyes, before he turned his pale gaze back around to speak to my father.

My grandmother grins cheekily, her eyes looking over at her husband from my other side, who also noticed the interaction but with a completely opposite reaction. Stone-cold eyes stared invisible bullets through the boy I was currently whipped for.

Grandma looked as if she wanted to say something, but Mamma hovered over me with the medicine and basically forced it down my throat, making me yelp a little.

I smack her hand away, swallowing the contents down with the bitter taste lingering around my throat.

"Now eat." She nods her head down to my food, turning on her heels and strutting away with a bounce in her step. I laugh as she smacks my father's bottom while walking past him, he frowns and stares a er her with an eye roll before looking away.

"How is college going, Serene?" Nonno sits opposite us in the love-seat chair with his girlfriend, wrapping his arm around her as she cuddled up into his chest.

I start chopping up my pancakes while replying.

"It's going okay. I was struggling a bit in my Business class but Silver helped me out." I shove my first slice into my mouth, closing my eyes with a smile. "This was definitely Chef Colin's cooking, I'll have to thank him next time."

Glancing at my Nonno, he shakes his head with amusement, obviously finding it funny that I was struggling.

"You're a very smart girl, Serenity. You can pass that class just as easily as you can with the others," He leans back and scans the room blindly. "And I'm always a phone call away, I'm more than happy to help you out as well. I know my fair share of knowledge."

Tipping his head down, he gives me a comforting smile, to which I try and return with my mouth full. I ignore my grandfather from beside me who sco s.

"Thank you, Nonno, I'll reach out if I need it."

He nods once, turning his attention to his girlfriend who begins whispering a few things to him.

I continue to gobble everything down in silence.

A gentle nudge on my shoulder has me suddenly turning in the direction of my grandfather, raising a brow up at him. He looks down at my half-eaten pancakes and subtly leans his head down to my ear.

"You know you can come to me if you need help, yes?"

I turn my head to him, seeing his entire symmetrical face plastered in seriousness. Smiling, I make a motion with my hand for him to lean down so I could whisper into his ear—something I used to do to him as a child.

He does so, and I make sure to hover my hand around my mouth so nobody could hear my thoughts.

"Don't worry Pops, you're still my favourite."

Slowly, his mask fades and a small smile appears on his lips, taking them to the top of my head. He ru les my hair, smirking and leaning back in his seat.

"As I should be." He replies arrogantly, wrapping an arm around the back of me and Grandma.

"I feel le owe," Grandma pouts from beside me, making me giggle slightly but I lean over and kiss her cheek.

Everyone else in the room seems to gather back around where we all were, Silver and my father shaking hands firmly and then turning back toward me.

Silver's dead eyes find mine immediately, striking my heart with sparks. I see his set of keys swinging on his pinky to the side of him, telling me that he was leaving.

I quickly stand and carelessly toss my pancakes onto Pops' lap, not staying to see his reaction, I instead moving fast over to Silver.

His lips quirk up slightly as I meet him. Looking down at me, he tips his head to one side and assesses me.

"You're leaving?" I murmur so ly and he nods his head slowly. Nodding back, I take his hand and make a step to walk out of the room with him, only to be stopped by his hand tightening.

Frowning, I turn around and he pulls me close to him, one hand resting lightly on my hip.

"Stay, Amore. Don't want you getting any more sick?" He raises a brow, enlightening warmth to my chest at the sound of his concern.

"Okay," I give in, looking down at our feet that almost touch. In the next moment, I was abruptly pulled to a very hard chest. My cheek rested on his chest, his arms gently but firmly wrapped around my waist in a secure state, with mine hanging limp in shock.

But I gradually bring them around him, having to adjust to this sudden a eraction. Silver was definitely a touchy-feel person, which I didn't mind because I was just as addicted to being around him.

We held each other for a little longer, his fingers brushing so ly against my skin as we drew away, his expression cool and collected.

"I'll check in on you later," He told me, giving me a cometary kiss on my cheek. I blush like a lovestruck schoolgirl, his gaze catching onto it with a smirk.

Silver steps back through the threshold, giving my mother a brief hug and she gushes over him when he turns around, leaving through the door.

But just before he could turn the corner, he looks at me from over his shoulder, containing a small smile and

I look away immediately knowing I'd been caught in the act.

Once the front door closes shut, my attention was redirected to the family around me. I let out a small sneeze, urging my mother to usher me back to the couch and I hazily comply, snuggling into the couch and my grandfather's side.

The pancakes were long forgotten, a desperate urge for sleep attended me as I lay warm in a sea of blankets that had been probed by my mother. I close my eyes lightly, feeling warm fingers stroke the top of my head.

As the adults around began to converse again, I hardly try to listen but all I had gotten was a few grumbles here and there from my father. He sounded much closer than I thought, he quietly spoke to my grandfather, explaining exactly what Silver had told me last night. I could feel myself slowly begin to fade away, my lips partially opening to breathe. My father's words lull me to sleep, along with the fingers caressing my hair comfortably.

Sweet dreams don't overcome me this time. Instead, I was greeted with a horrible nightmare.

Reality.

AUTHORS NOTE

I'm back!

thank you all for being so patient while I was away <3 my holiday was great and I'm glad to be home again (not really )

I hope you liked the chapter, we're currently half way through SL which is crazy! I'm hoping to finish this story on 55-60 chapters (if not 50?) depending on what I get in every chapter.

I've been reading all of your theories in the comments as well based o Silver's suspicion. I won't have a say in anything what you say but you all are very creative lol!

my next project is roaming around in my head and I'm so excited to introduce it to you guys a er SL!

once again, thank you for reading o

- lei