

15. a ballet prodigy

Elliot Salvatore

I would be lying if I said I didn't imagine her growing up in one of those haunted looking mansion isolated from the neighborhood. I expected dead trees and crawling dying vines all over. Gargoyles would be guarding the place and scaring people away. Her bedroom would be the one on top with broken window and when lightning struck her green eyed glare would flash through the cracked glass.

The she devil was the prettiest sight in my eyes all the same.

Now, I sat in my car and looked at the Carmen humble estate with keen amusement. Nothing was out of the ordinary of course. It was your typical old money brown stone mansion with a garden bigger than your community park. I, for the life of me couldn't imagine little Jane running around the place or swinging on that swing I tracked on the side of their house. She was probably playing with roses thorn or making other children cried.

My girlfriend would have cut o my balls if she heard my thought about her right now but I was slowly losing my mind over here. I was simply entertaining myself without having to spill blood.

Another ten minutes passed. The bodyguards in black suits were still there, doing nothing. I tightened my grip on the steering wheel. My busted knuckles whitened from the force causing the skin to crack even more. They talked amongst themselves and to their ear pieces, glancing at my car from time to time. I drummed my fingers patiently and finally let my mind wandered away from her. I debated how to get away with the murder I was about to commit because I swore to my mother if I didn't go inside and see the blonde she devil with her Chanel purse in the next ten seconds, someone was going to be fucking dead.

One of the black suits walked over again and tapped on my window. I rolled it down halfway and leaned back. "Your name, sir." He asked. Like I haven't already told him for the fi eenth times.

I rubbed my jaw in annoyance but answered him anyways. "Elliot Salvatore."

He nodded his head and went away to his group. My patience thinned to a thread when they pulled out the name list again and started the routine all over. I applauded the security attempt they were taking a er the death of that one bastard who was still fucking with me from the grave. I would be concerned if Vaughn Carmen didn't lock his daughter in tight. But, I had been rigid for 23 hours on a goddamn plane and if I had to wait a moment longer to see with my eyes that she was really okay, I was going to lose my shit.

"Fuck this." I cursed under my breath as I dropped my hand to the stick and lazily steered the wheel with another, slowly backing away from the gate.

I honked the car, alerting the suited slow pokes to go away. My mouth curled up in a grin as I hit the gas pedal. The engines roared inside my ears and the car accelerated fast forward. My body crashed back against the driver seat. I watched the odometer hit 100 to 120. Adrenaline surged through my vein and cold air plastered against my cheekbones through the half opened window. I grinned harder when the car crashed into the gate in a satisfying bang.

I lunged forward and gripped the wheel tighter, trying not to bash my own skull in. Red siren blared as half of the metal gate flew through the air and crashed into the white fountain in the middle of the driveway. An amused chuckle escaped my throat at the scene. She was going to be fucking pissed. I thought as I reversed the car before I gently stomped the gas pedal this time and drove carefully inside.

The bodyguards freaked out behind me and started shouting at each other. I ran a hand through my hair, trying to look presentable as the Carmens and the evil step mother daughter duo bursted through their front door. Rounding, the ruined grand center piece of their home I glanced around and decided to park near where they were standing. The engines groaned to a stop as I grabbed the door handle and got out. I tried not to grin and focused on adjusting my cu links. Had to make a great second impression.

I saw her unimpressed glare first then I su ered her wrath. "I'm going to kill you, Elliot Salvatore." She practically growled at me.

Smirking at her, I shoved my hands into my slack pockets and headed over. Oakley saw me and jumped o of his mom's cradle. The snobby puppy ran toward me and stopped beside my feet, looking up at me as if daring me not to scratch his head. I bended down and grabbed him into my arms.

"Did you protect her?" I whispered, kissing the top of his head. He barked and looked at me like I was stupid for assuming otherwise.

Her green eyes narrowed harder on me when I finally reached her and I let Oak down to pull her to me. I examined her face and did a once over, totally didn't linger on the plunging neckline of her tank top. "Hi." I whispered into her hair.

Jane went rigid. Her body startled with alarm while I pulled her against me. I could hear the gears in her head turning as she fisted my shirt. Heat boiled over me and I only held her tighter. If I could super glue her to me, I fucking would. I wanted her to become as obsessed as I was, that she couldn't stand the idea of me not touching her the same time it disgusted her how much she wanted to be touched. I wanted her to share my crazy. Because this was fucking unfair and cruel.

"Your father is watching." I whispered dryly, kissing her temple hard. "You can't hate when I touch you or look at me like you want to slit my throat every time you see me."

"I'm your boyfriend." I added for fucking good measure.

She barely relaxed in my arms but let her head fell on my chest. Her words might as well be bitter venom but it still curled smirk because I was fucking crazy when it came to her. "Fake boyfriend."

"And, maybe slitting throat is my kink." She muttered to herself. I laughed out loud and pretended my dick wasn't happy to hear that.

"You broke my father's gate. I hope you get a concussion from that crash." She tilted her head on my chest to look at my head.

If there was blood, she would have smiled. I had never wished myself harm until right now.

"I'm breaking up with you." She announced.

I found myself smiling then. "No."

Jane glared and averted her gaze to the broken fountain and the pieces of jumbled mental that was her gate. "That was unnecessary."

"They wouldn't let me in." I shrugged a shoulder and followed her gaze.

"I told them I don't know an Elliot Salvatore." She looked up at me again. Her lips threatened to tremble into a smile as if she was proud of herself. Fucking evil witch.

I narrowed my eyes. "So, it was your fault."

"Are you trying to get out of this under a technicality?" She challenged, jutting her chin out and looking at me dead in the eyes.

I couldn't stop looking. My mouth opened and closed. Sighing, I accepted the fact that I was going to have a permanent hard on forever because of her.

I was still staring and thinking dirty thoughts when her father cleared his throat rather loudly, reminding us that there were other people here.

Vaughn Carmen looked between us, his eyes glinted with amusement. His new wife whose name I learned was Olivia Cooper looked at us with distaste. Her daughter had mascara smeared down her face but she shared her mother's expression. Jane groaned in my arms but didn't try to get away. I raised my hands from her hips and slid them around her waist, swirling her body to face the party.

I leaned down and whispered into her ear. "I assume we don't like the two ladies over there?"

Her answer was a pinch to my bicep but she discreetly nodded her head against my chest. Got it.

"Mr Carmen, sir." I greeted and o ered a hand for a shake, earning a sco from Jane. I knew damn well she was also rolling her fucking eyes.

The better Carmen however laughed and shook my hand. "Elliot Salvatore. Nice to see you again, son."

I gripped her waist, throwing the fact that her father just called me son in her face. She stomped her heel on my toes before relaxing against me again. She got the message alright.

"Rory always make her boyfriends wait outside the gate for hours before letting them in." He chuckled as he led us inside the house.

I raised an eyebrow at that. Of course she did. Although I wasn't sure how I felt on the boyfriends part.

"They usually wait. No one ever crashed their fancy car into my gate. I'm kind of impressed. You can call me Vaughn." He added, turning back to slap my back before walking o again.

"I'll put the bill on your tab." He continued, beelining toward the liquor bar.

Jane le me and went over to help her father mixed a drinks. I looked around the house carefully, taking it all in. Unlike her townhouse, there wasn't a single shopping bag in sight. The living room consisted of gold interiors with a floor to ceiling glass window that led to the huge garden outside. Vaughn had pots of green plants in every corners of the room. I looked from one huge paintings to another and studied the smaller photo frames displayed all over the surfaces.

Everywhere I turned there was a picture of little Jane glaring and scowling at the camera while her father grinned next to her. I wandered mindlessly around and no one seemed to care to stop me from invading so I took my time studying the evolution of Azrael Carmen. A small frame caught my eyes and I carefully picked it up.

She could not be more than twelve or thirteen years old in the photo. Her blonde hair pulled back into a tight bun with pink ribbon to match the tutu skirt. I stared at the golden medal around her neck and ran my thumb over her face. She had just won a championship and couldn't had looked more sad about it. Her face blank and eyes soullessly haunted.

Before I could look closer, the picture was plucked out of my hand. I snapped my head to the side to find her standing there, gripping the frame to her chest. I tried hard not to express my confusion because I thought it would set her o .

"Don't touch that." She said, dropping the picture frame face down from where I took it before grabbing my hand and pulling me away.

Everyone was seated on the couch with drinks in their hands despite it was barely twelve o'clock. I took the seat next to her and grabbed the drinks she handed me. Scotch on the rocks with a twist. The same one I ordered on our date. I grinned as she glared at me.

"I didn't know you're a ballet prodigy." I said, taking her hand into mine and bringing it to my lips.

Her profile stated she did ballet but I had thought it was merely a hobby. I had no idea she was in a fucking championship. The media also mentioned nothing.

"Not anymore." She stated like it was nothing.

Her step mother however chipped in like it was her business. "She's got a ton of awards and medals. Don't question or touch them or she will scratch your eyes right out."

"Olivia. Shut up, dear." Vaughn said calmly but he was looking intently at his daughter.

I furrowed my eyebrows further. Jane changed the topic then, shutting down this discussion. Her palms fisted on top of her thigh. I took them in mine and kissed both of them again.

"Why are you here?" She asked.

Noticing her curt tones, I knew better than to question her right now. If I was lucky, she would tell me about it when time came. Never was also a possibility but I was crossing my goddamn fingers.

"We're going out." I told her with a lazy smile.

"Out?" She scrunched her face before glancing at her father. "I've been held in here with them for the last two days. He won't let me out."

I looked at her father who looked slightly amused at her accusation. "She's always safe with me." I informed him with confidence.

He nodded his head without hesitation. His words implied he knew something only the two of us knew, my background. "I know."

Jane sco ed at us then said she needed to change. I followed her up the staircase to her room when her father shouted from the living room. "Keep the door open. I don't care if you're both adults. My house, my rules."

I chuckled while she rolled her eyes at her dad.

We made it inside her childhood bedroom the same time Oakley strolled out of the bathroom. I kept the door half opened as requested because I would never break my future father in law's trust like that. The horror of it all.

I walked around her room and tried to see as many things as I could. There was no embarrassing band posters to tease her about of course because she was her. I counted the throw pillows on her brand new looking bed. About one hundred and eighty two. I rattled the closet door next and peaked my head inside.

"There's no skeletons hiding in there, Elliot." She muttered from across the room where she hovered over her suitcase.

I switched the light on and instead of clothes, staring back at me were dozens of awards and medals from her ballet days. I let out a surprise woah, seeming to cannot stop myself. "You're so fucking cool."

I turned the light o and shut the door again. Jane looked at me from the ground beside her pile of clothes. Her eyes aimed the same in the photo I saw but it was gone as fast as it appeared. She crossed her arms over her chest and my eyes instinctively dropped to her breasts. Fuck me.

"I know." She taunted icily. She checked me out then let her eyes dri ed back to the clothes. "Where are we going? You dressed up. Should I do too?"

I looked down at my crisp buttoned down shirt and slacks before answering. "We're going to my niece's football game then brunch."

"With your family?" She asked, gasping.

"Where you will be one the most protected women in England? Yes." I answered with a grin.

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