

## 7. green-eyed glare

### Elliot Salvatore

Azrael Carmen was hotter than the fucking sun. I knew the moment she graced the party with hellfire in a dress as black as her soul. So beautiful I felt my skin crawled in literal disgust.

I watched her burns the ballroom with her green eyed glare and let obsession seeped inside my vein, pumping through my system. A cunning woman behind a face of an angel, a cheat and a cold liar. I fucking hated her for being so perfect and loathed that the mere idea of her was fucking with my head.

She talked to no one as she walked through the crowd, looking almost as furious as I was while sipping on champagne far less golden than her hair. I jutted my chin at a white gloved server who passed by and grabbed another glass of whiskey scotch. My eyes stayed firmly on her. And, I thought I was never going to not look when she was in the same room.

In a perfect world, I was nothing if not the perfect gentleman. The one who wouldn't get a raging hard on while I analyzed a dozen ways to break her apart. She was mine. And, I would be damned if her icy heart wasn't bleeding blood between my palm.

A er all, I had always been a selfish bastard.

"You have the most fucked up taste in women." Derek started with a dry laugh as he walked toward me.

I broke away my gaze and raised an amused brow at my dear friend. The bastard was one to talk. He knew what exactly was on my mind and going to come out of my mouth when he caught the looks on my face and proceeded to shrug his shoulders, sco ing at me.

A petite red head with a sleeve colorful tattoos draped herself over his expensive suit, Tom Ford and nothing less. Because I remembered him vaguely telling me how he wouldn't be caught dead in a non designer. His restless soul would come back and haunt me for the rest of my life for allowing such thing.

I hadn't seen the fucker's face since he went on his three months long business trip to sunny California and got said face plastered across about a hundred magazines with di erent women on his arm every other nights. But, he was irrelevant at the moment so I had turned my head away and ignored him.

"Azrael Carmen can and will turn you into stone with her glare. You're no match. Although I would love to see you get your balls handed to you inside a Chanel purse." he chuckled into his champagne flute, lowering his hand to his date's ass.

"I will pay for the bag of course." he added with a wink. Fucker knew how to enable my interest.

"You know her?" I cocked an eyebrow at him.

"Our fathers are good friends." he said casually, testing the water as if I wasn't a second away from murdering him for more information. "She's running a corporation and selling a brand name at twenty three. Everyone here knows her, Elliot."

"Unless of course one was an ignorant fucker whose world revolves only around himself."

I scowled and downed the rest of my drinks. Leaving my oddly smug friend to his date with a parking middle finger, I wandered around with my usual grin but I was definitely fucking sulking in the inside. How the fuck I never noticed her was beyond me. I cursed under my breath and caught my father looking at me weirdly from the across the room.

I looked back, seeing how they all stuck out like a fucking black storm in the middle of a bright sky. My family travelled in a pack. Father was glued to his lovely wife and Nico was a lost case, too busy staring at my sister in law soothing their fussy son. Bastard was star struck. If my twin brother was here, they would have been the whipped triad. Too bad my other sister law was still recovering and trying to get back on her feet.

I swept my eyes over my family, forgetting the irritation as pride shi ed through my body. An easy genuine grin quirked up my lips and strike across my face when my niece classily walked into my legs. She smiled up at me, causing me to playfully roll my eyes. Madeline Salvatore wasn't one to forget a promise made to her.

"When can I go dance, uncle Elliot?" she looked at me with eyes so adorable I surrendered. Fucking Christ.

I bent down and picked her up. She shi ed in her dress, trying to settle in my arms as I caught a flash of blonde hair on the corner of my eyes. Except now she wasn't alone but was talking to an elder man who I knew was Vaughn Carmen, her father. Perfect.

Glancing at my niece again, I placed a loud kiss on her pink cheek.

"You're going to be my wingman tonight, Mads Salvatore. Are you up for it?"

She hu ed then followed my gaze until she saw her next victim. A slow grin flashed across her little face and before I knew it she was smiling as if she was a Cheshire Cat. "Deal."

We bumped our fists to seal our contract. From a Salvatore to another. I let her down and we said our temporarily goodbye as I walked over to her father and mine. I trusted my niece with my life. The only person that should be worried was the boy who sold his soul to the little devil for a dance. Mads was going to chew him up like her pink bubblegum and spat him out like a wasted trash. And, his father wasn't going to enjoy having snipers aiming bullets at him.

I pocketed my hand and sipped on a new drinks, strolling toward my circle. Father cocked an eyebrow at me and Nico was already glaring at me. Madeline better be the best fucking wingman ever.

"I thought you were dancing with Maddie." my big brother scowled from beside his wife.

I took another slow sip, grazing my mouth on the rim. "The sweets table caught her attention. And, I need to talk to you and dad. Coop's with her."

Declan Cooper, otherwise known as Coop was my most trusted man. A former assassin who was almost as good as Ace Beckett. And, he was really looking over the little Salvatore. Except she was breaking heart instead of consuming sweets. But, what Nicholas didn't know, couldn't hurt little old me.

"What do you want to talk about? Did something happen? Do you need helps?" Nico asked, looking genuinely concerned I almost laughed. He gave my sister in law a kiss on her forehead and stepped toward me the same time father did.

Shit just got real.

I led them over to a secluded balcony outside the crowded party. They stared at me in silence, waiting. I looked up the starless sky dramatically. More silence. I could tell they were getting impatient. I had never asked them to talk in a long while and the last time I did was when I pissed o the whole Taiwan mafia by fucking up their computer system with the help of my cousin, Ryan King. So, I totally understood the concern and suspense building inside their head, assuming the worst.

I finally cleared my throat, breaking into a smirk. "I'm going to meet my future father in law. Any advice?"

"My father in law was dead before I married his daughter." my father furrowed his eyebrows.

Nico shared the same looks, nonchalantly muttering under his breath. "My wife killed my father in law."

Jesus Christ. I visibly flinched despite already knowing all the facts. We could have made easy money making a reality show. We were a fucked up bunch.

Seven seconds passed before they truly broke out of confusion and realized my question.

"Wait. What the fuck did you say?" my brother snapped his eyes to my face. Father narrowed his eyes.

My phone pinged inside my tux jacket five seconds later. I smiled to myself. A text from Coop. Maddie was already bored with her dance. My prediction was correct. I saluted both men and le the balcony and beelined for the blonde witch and the man behind her cold existence.

If witchery beauty could kill, I would have murdered about sixty nine times over. Up close and in my arms, no other women compared. She smiled up at me like I hang the moon in her sky then decorated it with sparkling stars. It was so fake I felt my blood running cold.

I dipped my head down an couple inches to meet her ears as she leaned on me like she didn't wish to strangle my neck. She smelled like a meadow of poisonous flowers today and her skin was colder than the dead. The longer I looked at her face the more I wanted to slammed her against a wall and choked her pretty little neck until she gasped between pain and pleasure.

"You fucking lied to me, sunshine." I whispered with irritation, sliding my hand down the curve of her hip.

Her smile widened and I watched how shiny her lipgloss was under the chandeliers. She grabbed my shoulder for support and stood on her toes to brush my hair back. Like she was running her fingers through her lover's hair.

Then her lips pressed gently on my pulse. It felt as if she wanted to tear out my throat with her teeth. "I play dirty too, dickfucker."

I shivered. Her words went straight to my dick and under her touch I was nothing. Fucking fuck. I fucking hated her.

I tightened my grip on her small waist, mindlessly introduced myself to her processing father. I shook his hand and smoothly discussed his business, praising his strategy. I was charming him but I would have respected him as a businessman anyways. He was good at his job and I trusted my hacking skills with the information I found on him.

"I didn't know you and my daughter knew each other. Rory never mentioned you." Vaughn Carmen said, looking between me and the lying liar.

I chuckled dryly, tugging her even closer to me. "Jane doesn't like sharing me."

His eyebrows raised while his daughter clawed the hand resting on her waist. I swore to fucking God the woman wanted my blood.

"Jane? No one ever addressed her by her middle name and live another day in peace." he asked.

"It is my favorite name for her and she was the one who told me to call her as such." I said, earning a smile from the older man.

"I named her Jane a er her grandmother and to so en the edge on her first name. Azrael is fierce and it suits her well but I want to believe my daughter isn't all ice." he said, looking lovingly at her.

If I didn't know any better, I would stupidly thought she was an absolute angel from the looks on his face.

"It was partially my fault. I raised her to be strong but never seem to able to even it with her so side." he chuckled to himself like a proud father he was.

The pretty liar grumbled beside me. "That's because I don't have a so side, dad."

Vaughn Carmen was frozen midway when the real angel interrupted us. I glanced down at my niece as she greeted the old man like they had known each other forever. I didn't bother excuse my niece. She was adorable that even Jane put her glare away and replaced it with a sti smile.

"Would you like a dance, sir?" she asked him with her round puppy eyes. Salvatore's manipulative blood through and through.

The old man throw his head back as he laughed at the little girl before holding his hand out for her. "The pleasure would be all mine. A er you, m'lady."

She placed her little hand in his with a grin. I had a hard time keeping a straight face when she suddenly turned around like she forgot something and I knew damn well she didn't.

"You and the pretty lady should dance with us, uncle Elliot." she blinked at us.

She quickly scanned the room and pouted like the whole world upset her. "The dance floor is empty."

Jane opened her mouth then closed it again as she continued staring between me and my niece as if processing what scheme were we playing at. I grinned so fucking wide my whole face hurt.

"You're a fucking bastard who's going to hell for using a child as your pawn." she whispered, glaring at me and smiled awkwardly at the waiting girl.

I looped her hand through my arm and dragged her to the dance floor. Everyone was suddenly watching us and even Vaughn Carmen was amused by the whole thing.

"Dance and pretend you don't want to murder me." I grazed my mouth on the crown of her head.

"I have a room of witnesses and they're all watching you, Jane."