

## Chapter 0023

"We'll talk about this later, yeah?"

Maverick did another one of those grunts that would've scared the pants off of anyone sane and extracted his hand from my hold. He scowled at me, but quickly turned his gaze to Alpha Caius.

"Good to go."

Caius tipped his head, "Thank you, Maverick."

"Wow. So, he does have manners. Who would've thought it?" Ziva tittered.

On the ride to Mercury, Caius went over the security detail. There would be men stationed outside of the building, hiding in the shadows. Ghost, whose ability not only made him invisible but also incorporeal, would follow us inside. There were men planted within the club, given aliases so that they blended in with the other patrons. Even the cameras had been hacked by Damon, who was a bit of a tech genius.

"Now I see why you call him Ghost."

Alpha Caius glanced up from his phone, half his face illuminated by the light pouring from the screen. "That isn't why we call him ghost."

"Why do you call him Ghost, then?"

Slowly, he slipped his cellphone into his pocket. I tried and failed not to glance down at those powerful thighs of his. "Is it true what you said about Maverick and studying his fighting style?"

A question for a question. Like I didn't see that one coming.

"Of course," I guffawed. "Most of the werewolf world knows my father is a righteous dickhead who thinks women are best suited on their backs or rearing children. He never wanted me to train or learn strategy, which made me want to do it even more. I've idolized Maverick my entire life." Flicking my fingers at him, I smirked. "Now answer my question."

Caius tipped his head to the side, eying me in a way that made me feel even more underdressed than I currently was.

"We call him Ghost because of how quickly he kills."

The nightclub sat on the corner of a busy street, making it difficult to place a car to stakeout the place. A line full of people wrapped around the side of the building, trailing off past a liquor store and a few closed shops.

We pulled up to the red carpet reserved for VIP guests. It spanned the distance from the front door to the curb and was littered with security. According to Caius, a few of those men belonged to him. They were keeping tabs of everyone entering the place, flagging anyone who seemed suspicious.

The handful of reporters loitering on the outskirts sprung to life, clamoring to get a good shot of us emerging.

Before Caius could open the door, I grabbed his wrist. His nostrils flared as he glanced down at where we connected, his rough skin against my softness. I wasn't sure why his reaction had me fighting a smirk, but it did.



"Time to flex those acting skills you claim to have." I winked, "Don't forget to smile for the camera."

Alpha Caius slid from the vehicle, igniting a maelstrom of questions from the reporters. Flashes went off as they snapped photograph after photograph. From the looks of them, we weren't the only VIP guests arriving tonight.

With his patented scowl in place, Caius ignored them all. He held out his hand for me to take, easing me from the vehicle with a gentleness that had butterflies filling my lower belly. Before I could thread my arm through his, he snaked a hand around my waist and tugged me into my side, causing my heart to jolt.

He was so damn warm, practically exuding heat that seeped into my very bones, and while I couldn't pick up his scent, I could bask in the masculine aroma of his cologne.

"Okay, so maybe he's a little charming when he wants to be." Ziva confessed, "But in a grumpy, brutish sort of way."

I muttered back, "It's a shame that's exactly our type."

We made it halfway down the red carpet when Caius slowed, pivoting us to speak to one reporter in particular. The man had bronzed skin and hair the color of an oil slick. It was pushed back on his head, held in place by a layer of gel.

He grinned at the two of us, flashing his pearly white teeth. "Leonardo Ackermann here from Werewolf Weekly. It's an honor to see you again, Alpha Caius. Dare I say it, but you're looking better than ever. Who is this lovely woman at your side tonight, Alpha? Care

to introduce us?"

Caius gazed down at me, those golden eyes of his swirling. My breath hitched, though I wasn't sure why. His stare was potent, I already knew that.

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