

# REJECTED: CLAIMED BY THE ALPHA MAFIA

## SABOTAGED

Kiara:

My morning is marked by a fresh bouquet, and paper bags scattered around my room. It should feel like a grand occasion, but something about the flowers and bags makes me think otherwise.

Making assumptions isn't my forte, so I choose to ignore everything and carry on with my day.

"Have you tried your dress?" Zane's voice comes from behind me just as I get out of bed. I turn around to see him already dressed in his suit, standing by my door.

I shake my head and face him squarely. "But I wonder, did the godfather ask that you get me some flowers as well?" I question, and he keeps a straight face.

"Try your dress on, then come down for breakfast," he says before leaving, shutting the door behind him.

Ariana walks in shortly after. We try on the dress, and it fits perfectly, flowing down to my legs with a little opening at the back. Afterward, I rush downstairs for breakfast with Zane.

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The event comes faster than expected, and in a few hours, I'm standing in front of the mirror, fully dressed in the black gown Zane got me.

The way it accentuates my curves makes me feel great, but the feeling in my stomach washes away when Zane appears behind me.

"You like it?" he asks.

I peer at him through the mirror, wondering if this is still part of the act. "You have quite a taste," I say flatly, grabbing the jewelry box. He takes it from me.

He opens the box and takes out a necklace, gently patting my hair to the side as he places it around my neck. I watch him through the mirror as he helps with my earrings.

"Shall we? The guests are waiting," he says, and I force a smile.

'It's just one night. It can't be that difficult,' I tell myself as I place my hand in his. His hands are rough, but they feel safe, which baffles me because this man is my sworn enemy.

He walks me out of the room and down the hallway. As we make our way to the stairs, I see the family members gathered in the room, turning to face us.

The men are dressed finely in tuxedos, and the women wear gowns that glitter under the brightly lit room.

I try hard to hold the smile on my face, and then Zane brings my hand to his lips, planting a kiss on it. After that, he walks me down the last flight of stairs, and as soon as we reach the bottom, he wraps his arm around my waist.

He presses his lips to my neck, sending an inexplicable shiver down my spine. The feeling fades when I lock eyes with Gia standing in the crowd with a glass of wine in hand. She stares at me for a moment before turning away and sipping her drink. Then she goes over to a guy who looks like her, and I assume he's the rejected son, Yusuf.

"My boy," Boris says, all smiles as he approaches us.

He takes my hand and kisses it, and I smile at him, trying to make a good impression on the crowd.

Zane and I walk with the godfather, who introduces us to many people. Mostly, Zane does the talking because I want nothing to do with this, and all I can think about is escaping the crowd, especially since Gia can't stop staring at me.

I try to hear what she's saying, but the chatter from the crowd prevents me from filtering her words.

"Is he going to take her as a wife?"

"I heard she was formerly married."

The rumors make me uneasy. Their words are preposterous. I'd rather be six feet under than consider taking Zane as a husband. And who says divorced women can't marry again?

The room feels like it's caving in, and whenever I hear people speak, their faces seem to pop up close to mine.

"I'm going to let you off, but stay close," Zane whispers as the godfather cocks his head towards the front of the room.

Zane lets go of me, and I let out a deep breath, searching for the wine table. It's the only thing that can bring me peace. I grab two glasses at once, chugging them down as I glance back to see Gia's eyes still on me from across the room.

"Ugh, I hate that she's pretty," is all I hear from her, which oddly makes me feel good because, apart from that, I get unwanted looks from the family members.

My inattentive thoughts are drawn back to reality when the godfather taps his wineglass with a cutlery. I looked at the front of the room to see him standing with Zane.

"Today marks a very significant day in my life as the leader of this great brotherhood," he begins, his face beaming with smiles. "We've been taught to protect our own and live in love and harmony, irrespective of what family we come from. That is why today I let everyone know I am handing over this empire to the one I consider safe."

The crowd murmurs when he says this.

"I present to you my son, Zane Malibu, the head of the Malibu Vipers."

The crowd hesitates, then slowly applauds until the room is filled with applause.

My jaw drops. I had no clue he would actually hand his empire to a total stranger. If he trusts Zane so much and raised him as a son, then Ariana was right. Boris is a snake that can't be trusted, because Zane was a spiting image of him.

The old man is still smiling when the door bursts open, and the room fills with armed men, aiming their weapons at Zane.

Before anyone can react, they fire, bullets piercing his body and sending him crashing to the ground.

"I'm here to take what's mine, family!" Yusuf declares, stepping to the front of the hall. The entire crowd gasps in shock.