

Chapter 20

Javier Solis was known as the "Smiling Fox" among the Fellows. He was always pleasant, always agreeable, but underneath that placid surface was a mind like a steel trap. He could read people, see through their lies with an unnerving accuracy.

He had seen through Eve from the very beginning. He knew she was a user, a manipulator, that her declarations of love were hollow. He despised her.

But he was also a master of using people. And he saw Eve as the perfect tool.

He knew Damien was torn. Torn between his sense of duty to Eve and his growing, unspoken feelings for me. Javier decided to force the issue.

He was the one who first planted the idea in Eve's head. "He's your brother, but you're not related by blood," he'd told her one day, his voice full of false sympathy. "Elena is determined to have him. A girl like her always gets what she wants. You have to secure your position."

He'd "accidentally" left a pharmacology textbook open on a table, a page detailing the effects of a powerful aphrodisiac clearly marked.

Eve, greedy and desperate, took the bait. She drugged Damien.

That one night changed everything. Damien, raised with a strict, old-fashioned code of honor, felt responsible for her. His feelings for her became a twisted, chaotic mess of obligation, guilt, and a warped sense of love.

He wanted me. He knew my love was a bright, clean flame in the darkness of his life. But he couldn't escape the twisted bond he now had with Eve. His loyalty, which had once been his greatest strength, became his fatal flaw.

And then Eve, his whole world, betrayed him in the most public and humiliating way possible.

Now, Damien stood in the wreckage of his life, his world completely shattered. He stumbled towards me, his eyes red and wild.

"Is there no chance, Elena?" he whispered, his voice broken. "Is there nothing I can do?" He was begging, his pride gone. "Please, just tell me you'll reconsider. Tell me there's a chance you could love me again."

I looked at his desperate, broken face, and felt nothing.

I turned away from him and took Hunter's arm, lacing my fingers through his.

"I'm going to marry this man," I announced, my voice clear and steady. "He is my future."