

## The Devil's Fire by Mariam El-Hafi Chapter 32

Althaia

"You really don't know the meaning of a break." I told him when stepped out of the boutique. One thing lead to the other in the bathroom, and before I knew it, my hands were on the sink and he was behind me, thrusting fast and hard inside of me.

"Your fault for being se\*y." This time it was my turn to shoot him a blank look.

"Such a man thing to say. Men are always blaming it on women. when in fact you're the ones who can't control yourselves."

"I didn't hear you complain earlier. In fact, it sounded like you were very much enjoying it." He gave me a satisfied look while his eyes. started to trail down my body.

"So, what's the plan for today?" I changed the subject before it escalated to anything, and I couldn't handle another round of his rough f\*cking right now.

"Whatever you want to do."

"Really? You don't have work or whatever to take care of today?" I was surprised because it seemed he always had something to do.

"I cleared the day." Damiano gave me a small smile and I seemed to forget everything around me at the sight.

"I see. Who were you talking to earlier on the phone?" I asked as we walked through a park. It was full of people enjoying the good weather, and some were even having picnics and feeding ducks. It felt so weird to be walking around with him like this as if we were a

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normal couple when in fact, he was a big mob boss.

"Antonio." He answered curtly.

"You always give me one-word answers." I sighed. I was curious and I wanted to know about things, but I also knew it was a long shot to getting a proper answer.

"Is something wrong?"

"You don't need to concern yourself with these things." Damiano kept staring right ahead, his hands in his pockets as he glared at people who dared to come too close to us.

"You always say that, yet you drag me to an event full of dangerous people. Some info would be great actually."

"The less you know, the better." That thick head of his...

"Knowledge is power, did you know that? You can't keep me in the dark forever." I pointed out. He stopped walking and turned to look at me, tilting my chin upwards to meet his gaze.

"You're too innocent to be a part of this world. It f\*cks you up in a whole different way, so trust me when I say the less you know, the better." He stated firmly to let me know this was serious talk. But still, for some reason excitement rushed through me as he looked at me with his serious eyes.

"Am I not already a part of this world? I mean look who my father is." I was confused. Sure, I was kept in the dark but I was not exactly a secret anymore.

"Not exactly." We started walking again and I waited for him to elaborate.

"Your father might be a mob boss, but that doesn't exactly mean  
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you're a part of it just because you're his daughter. You have to take an oath."

"Omertá." I said as I remember reading about it. The code of silence and code of honor. If you broke that, you're pretty much dead.

"I thought it was made up, to be honest. Is it actually serious?"

"It's a blood oath. Once it is taken, there is no going back. Only death releases you from it." So, very much serious.

"How do you take it?" I rolled my eyes at the stern look he was giving me.

"Okay, so do you know anyone who has broken it?" My question had him go silent as we kept walking.

"I do." He said after a while. I glanced at him, seeing the blank expression on his face. As much as I wanted him to explain further about what happened, I knew it was a matter I couldn't press him into telling me.

"How many have you killed?" The question came out before I could realize what I was asking about.

"Don't even go there with me, Althaia." He warned but it was already too late as the next question came out.

"5, 10, 30, 100? Give me a number."

"Althaia." Damiano gave me a harsh look and I clamped my mouth shut.

"I'm just curious, that's all." I sighed but knew I had overstepped.

"Your curiosity can get you killed." He replied firmly.

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"Sounds a bit like an exaggeration."

"No more questions." He shut me down when I was about to ask him another question.

"Where is the fun in that...?" I muttered and we ended up walking in silence.

We came to an end that led us out of the park, and that was when I heard loud screams, laughter, and sounds of roller coasters going fast. My eyes widened and I looked in the direction of the sounds.

"No way! It's an amusement park!" I said excitedly. I haven't been in one in years! I let out a squeal of excitement, grabbed Damiano's hand, and practically dragged him toward the amusement park.

"This is awesome!" I felt like a child again as I looked around, the memories of spent in amusement parks rushed back to me. I turned to look at Damiano and laughed as he looked like he walked to the wrong place. He raised a brow in question at me when I continued to giggle.

"Don't be so serious here, it's a happy place! Brings back childhood memories, don't they?"

"Hmm, I see." He simply replied.

"... Have you never been to an amusement park?" I asked, unsure. Everyone had at least once in their life experienced going to some kind of amusement park, right?

"No."

"What?! What kind of childhood is that?" I looked at him in pure shock.

"Busy surviving and learning how to kill." He stated casually. My heart squeezed as I felt sorry for him. I pictured Damiano as a child, forced to live in a world over which he had no control. A child, robbed of his innocence only to be taught how to be a cold-blooded murderer.

My heart ached for him.

"Don't look at me like that." His eyes softened a little as he looked at me. I didn't have to think twice and I went up to him, wrapping my arms tight around him. I could feel my eyes burn and I blinked a few times to make sure no tears were showing. I cleared my throat before looking at him.

"I can't give you your childhood back, but I can make sure to give you a fun experience in an amusement park." I took his hand in mine and walked him in the direction of the different stands and roller coasters.

"And also, the best food is here. I don't know why, but it's like food in these places tastes a hundred times better." I grinned at him. The look of adoration showed in his eyes. Or so I thought. I blinked and it was gone.

"Damiano, you can't do that!" I practically scolded him as I dragged him out of the horror house.

"He scared you." Damiano scowled.

"They are supposed to scare you. That's their job! Not the other way around." I sighed. A poor guy, dressed up as Michael Myers showed up out of nowhere in front of me with a big-ass knife and scared the shit out of me. Damiano took it way too seriously and slammed the guy to the floor, threatening him to the point he took off running, screaming for his life.

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Maybe it was partially my fault. I should have known better than to take him to a horror house.

"Try and loosen up a bit." I smiled and grabbed his hand. I looked around to see what stands we could try, and my smile widened at a particular one.

"Perhaps this is more your area of expertise." I bit my lip to hold back a snicker as I led him to a shooting stand.

"You think you're funny?" A corner of his mouth turned up.

"Oh, I know I'm funny." I laughed and turned to the guy responsible for the stand and bought a round for us both.

"Wanna make it into a competition?" I picked up the rifle and aimed for the very small shooting mark that hung on the wall. It was a bit of a distance but I felt confident as I aimed with one eye open with a clear sight of the mark. I fired all of my shots and not a single one made it inside the circle.

I wasn't even close.

"Wow, that sucked." I huffed in annoyance.

"How am I supposed to hit that little mark when it's so far away?" I complained to no one in particular as I continued to scowl.

Damiano glanced at me and picked up his rifle. He stood casually, aiming and firing his shots. My eyes slowly widened when I saw him hit every single shot in the middle. Perfectly.

"You cheated!" I accused. ... Maybe I was a bit of a sore loser. So, what?

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"And how did I cheat?" He raised a brow. My mouth remained shut as I couldn't think of how in the world he could have cheated.

"We have a winner! Pick your prize, sir." The guy interrupted us. Damiano looked up at the choices and pointed to a big, fluffy, white teddy bear with big blue eyes, long lashes, and a pink bow around its neck.

"For you." His eyes softened a little when I gave him a warm smile and clutched the teddy bear into my chest.

He won that for me.

"Wait, I want to try one more time. I can feel a victory." I bought another round and picked up the rifle once again. I had one eye open as I aimed for the tiny spot on the wall. Just as I was about

I to shoot, Damiano stopped me.

"You're holding it wrong." I felt my heart skip a beat when he stepped close behind me. He adjusted the rifle against my shoulder and slightly lowered my aim.

"Both eyes open." He whispered, and I stopped breathing when he pressed himself against me. Trying to concentrate, I followed his instructions.

"Now, relax your shoulders and breathe." I relaxed my shoulders and let out a breath, focusing on my mark before firing.

"Oh my God, I did it!" I jumped up and down in excitement. I couldn't believe I actually hit that tiny spot! It wasn't perfect like Damiano's but at least they were all in the inner circle.

"That's my girl." He said quietly and kissed my temple. I gave a shy smile and my body tingled at his words. I picked my prize, a minion in a Hawaii skirt as I looked around for our next activity.

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"Uh, have you had a snow cone before?"

"No. I'm not into sugary stuff."

"I can see that. There is not like an ounce of fat on you." I poked at his stomach and felt his rock-hard abs.

"I'll undress for you later." He winked and that was when I realized I had started to feel him up in the middle of the amusement park. With people around us. But I couldn't be blamed when he got one. hell of a muscular body.

"Sit here and I'll be right back." I pushed him down on a bench, well tried to because he wouldn't really budge but sat down anyway. I gave him the teddy bears for him to hold as I quickly turned in the direction where I saw the stand selling snow cones.

"Hi there, what can I do for ya?" The girl behind the stand smiled brightly.

"Can I have a blue snow cone, please? Oh, and one churro with sugar and cinnamon, thanks!" I smiled but she just stood there and stared at me. I started to feel uncomfortable to the point I shifted around on my feet when she continued to look at me.

"Are you okay...?" I asked, unsure of what was wrong with her. She shook her head as if coming out of a daze.

"I'm so sorry! I didn't mean to stare like that. It's just that you're so pretty! Those green eyes are to die for!" She beamed.

"Oh, thank you. You're pretty too! I love your freckles." I chuckled a little, relieved that she was aware of her staring.

"You're being too nice. Right, let me just get you your order." She hurried to get me my snow cone and churro, her red hair in a high ponytail swaying as she hurried.

"Here you go! So sorry again. This one's on the house." She gave me an extra snow cone, and I thanked her as I was not one to turn down a free snow cone.

I made my way back to Damiano but stopped to readjust the things in my hands when I felt them almost slip. I suddenly got this. chilling feeling of someone watching, having me glance to the side. It was the girl who had just served me, talking to another woman while looking at me. She noticed me looking at them and she quickly smiled at me. I gave her a tight smile back and hurried towards where I knew Damiano was sitting. I didn't like the way they were looking at me. I didn't know what it was but it sure as hell gave me a strange feeling.

"You took too long." Damiano walked up to me, meeting me halfway. I lightly chuckled at how funny how a big and dangerous man like him was holding two teddy bears in his arms.

"It was five minutes."

"Five minutes too long." His eyes narrowed.

"So impatient... Here try this." I gave him a snow cone as we took a seat on a bench nearby. Damiano held it and just stared at it.

"I didn't poison it." I joked.

"I know."

"Then have some." I encouraged him and started to eat the shaved ice. I guess it was a long shot with the snow cone as he just ignored it and watched me eat mine. His gaze was intently fixed on my tongue as I licked the ice.

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"Well, at least try the churro. It's covered in cinnamon and sugar." I held it out for him to try, but he just shook his head.

"Your loss." I shrugged and took a big bite. I even did a dramatic 'mmhh' as I ate to tease him. I stopped chewing when he suddenly leaned in, close to my face. I felt myself stop breathing when he slowly licked my lip where some sugar was left.

"Sweet, indeed."