

The Devil's Fire by Mariam El-Hafi Chapter 6

Althaia

"Leave her out of this." My father said with a furious look on his face.

"Why should I? You're the one hiding her, Gaetano." Damiano challenged him with a devilish smirk on his face.

"She has nothing to do with anything!" My father yelled at him.

"Now, now." He chuckled a little, completely unfazed. "I'll be the judge of that." He pulled me in front of him. I felt like I was like facing The Devil himself as I looked at his golden-brown eyes that looked so deadly right now. He leaned in closer to me. His face was so close to mine that if I moved, we would bump heads. I gulped as I looked at him with wide eyes, scared of what he might do to me.

"We'll have a little chat together soon, okay?" His golden-brown eyes looked intently into mine as he ran a thumb along my jaw.

I couldn't talk.

I couldn't breathe.

just stared at him wide-eyed while my heart was beating like crazy. What was I supposed to say anyway? Tea or coffee? I was pretty sure he preferred blood.

And I could only hope it was not mine he was after.

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He leaned back, winked at me, and turned to walk away. I let out a breath and my weak legs finally gave up under me, making me stumble before I hit the ground. But arms wrapped around me before I could hit the ground. I turned around to see Michael had managed to grab me in time.

"Are you okay? Are you hurt somewhere?" He frantically asked as he looked around at my face. Instead of answering him, I looked around, confused as to what just had happened. Just then I noticed how both Damiano's men and my

father's men had their guns drawn out but were slowly tucking them away when nothing happened. But they were still cautious, sizing each other up.

"Althaia!" Michael called my name sternly. I whipped my head to face him again, he looked me in the eyes waiting for an answer. He looked so serious and it made me quickly answer him.

"I'm okay." My voice was barely audible. Physically, I was pretty much okay. Mentally? I probably needed to talk to a therapist and tell them that I had just met The Devil himself and that I was probably going to be traumatized for life.

"Michael, take Althaia to my office." Michael didn't hesitate one bit and pulled me closer to him and started to walk back to the mansion. I was slowly coming out of my daze when I realized that Michael was walking fast and was practically carrying me inside.

Damn, he was strong too. Nice.

"You can let me walk now, I'm okay," I reassured him when we got inside the mansion. He loosened his grip on me a little but he was still holding me close and led the way to my father's

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office.

My father's office was a classic mahogany Oaktree style with a large brown leather office chair, and in front of the desk were two small couches facing each other with a round black coffee table in between. Floor-to-ceiling windows covered the entire right side of the office with double doors leading out to a balcony.

I plopped down on the couch and started to slightly massage my temples as I felt a headache coming through. My thoughts were not helping one bit as what felt like a thousand thoughts were just running through my mind. What in the world just happened outside? One moment we were shaking hands and the next people are trying to shoot each other.

Talk about bad luck.

Michael went to the minibar that was incorporated into the wall and took out a water bottle. He sat on the table in front of me and gave me the bottle.

“Thanks.” I gave him a small smile and took a big sip of the water.

“You good?” He leaned forward a bit and rested his forearms on his thighs.

“Yeah, I’m good. I’m just so confused right now.” I groaned and leaned back on the couch. Before Michael could say anything back, the door opened, and my father walked in. Both Michael and I stood up and watched him as he walked to the front of his desk. He leaned against it as he faced me with a furious expression on his face.

“Do you have any idea of what kind of trouble you have put

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yourself into for coming here?”

My jaw dropped open.

“How the hell have I caused any trouble by showing up?” I exclaimed.

“Watch your language.” He firmly said, and I scowled at him.

“Besides, I should be the one asking questions because that man, Damiano, said some really creepy stuff about me out there.” I crossed my arms across my chest and eyed him suspiciously. Because even though the last name was off, everything else was correct. And as much I would like to think it was coincidental, deep down I knew it wasn’t.

Something fishy was going on here.

“Why did he call me Volante, hmm? And why in the world did he say that I have died three years ago?” I squinted my eyes at him as I looked at him suspiciously. My father closed his eyes and pinched the bridge of his nose.

“I was trying to protect you, figlia. But I’m afraid I have done more harm than good.” He sighed and opened his eyes, and looked at me again.

“Protect me from what?” I uncrossed my arms as I started to get worried. Should I be scared for my life? Move to a different country and change my name to Fifo? But I was pretty sure I didn’t look like a Fifo.

"I don't want you to get involved in this mess, but since he already knows you're well and alive, there's no point to hide this from you." He said while he walked over to the minibar, poured himself a drink, and gulped it down in one go.

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Still confused as to what in the world was going on, I waited for him to elaborate. He motioned for me to sit on the couch, and he sat on the other in front of me. Michael moved to stand next to the couch with his hands in his pockets, listening.

"I'm only going to tell you what you need to hear. I faked your death when we started the business with the Bellavia family. At first, things went smoothly but then things took a turn and it looked bad. A war almost started, and the last thing I wanted for them to do is to find you. So, I faked your death." He casually shrugged.

"What?!"

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