

## **The Devil's Fire by Mariam El-Hafi Chapter 81 – 90**

"You snore." I whipped my head to look at Lorenzo. He looked slightly amused.

"No, I don't!" I felt my face starting to get hot as I frowned at him.

"You do." Arianna and Cara said at the same time, making me gape at them.

"Shut up! I don't." I turned to look at Damiano, who had a small smile on his lips.

"...Do I?" I half-whispered to him.

"Just a little." He caressed my hair and I was mortified to learn that I snore. My entire body was hot at this point, and I knew my face was as red as it could be right now.

"Well, thank you all for visiting. You may now go back home." I walked away from them, not being able to handle the embarrassment. Even more so when they just laughed at me.

"Hey, get your ass back here, I'm a customer! I want to buy dresses now that I'm here." Arianna called after me, making me stop and look at her.

"For what?"

"First of all, my brother is getting married soon. Secondly, I just want to spend money." She said as she went through the dresses.

"All right, then." I shrugged as I went to grab my things.

I measured her as it would be easier for me to find the right size. Luckily, she wasn't picky when it came to dresses so I picked out a few different styles for her to try that I thought would look great on her. And for Cara too as she also wanted some new ones.

Damiano and Lorenzo got comfortable on the couch and watched me go

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back and forth between the two changing rooms. Lorenzo either nodded or shook his head at whatever dress Cara had tried on, while Arianna tried to get an opinion out of Damiano.

“Uh, this one is sexy!” Cara pulled the curtain to the side and stepped out. It was a tight burgundy dress. It was over-ruched and it clung to her figure like a second skin. It was very short, and the cups were too small for her full breasts, pressing against them and making them look insanely huge.

Before I could give my opinion, Lorenzo stood up and walked so fast over to Cara, blocking her from the rest of us.

“Change, now.” Lorenzo almost growled out. He gently pushed Cara inside the changing room again and closed the curtain.

“You don’t like it?” Cara laughed, knowing exactly what she was doing. I let out a chuckle and slightly shook my head as I found it funny how she was working him out. It reminded me of how many times I had done the same to Damiano.

“You can’t wear it.” Lorenzo said firmly. He was still standing in front of the curtain, making sure she was changing.

“I wasn’t planning on wearing it in public, you know.” She popped her head out for a second and winked before handing him the dress.

“Ew, gross! Other people are present, Cara.” I gave her a disgusted look before making my way to Damiano. He immediately took hold of me and placed me on his lap.

“Why are you acting all innocent? As if you haven’t been fucking like crazy after so long.”

“Cara!” I yelled at her, completely embarrassed by her saying such things in front of them all.

“How about you don’t talk about sex and my brothers in the same freaking sentence. You’re making my ears bleed!” Arianna yelled out to Cara which

only made her laugh and continue to talk about it. I let out a small chuckle, forgetting how much I missed their bickering.

I let out a sigh of relief, happy to be off my feet as my heels started to feel uncomfortable.

“You’re overworking yourself again.” Damiano frowned while rubbing my back.

“I’m fine, I’m just wearing the wrong heels today. They’re not as comfortable as I thought.” I gave him a reassuring smile but he didn’t look convinced.

“You fell asleep. If you’re tired, you should close and get some rest.”

“I was bored and didn’t have anything better to do, so I took a nap. Trust me, I’m okay.” I gave him a quick kiss on the lips. Damiano still didn’t look convinced but let it

“I think this is the one!” Arianna pulled the curtain open, making me look. She came out in a stunning one-sleeved, shimmering lucite green dress. The top hugged her waist while the skirt was loose as it had a long slit on the left side. Her tanned skin and golden-brown hair made the dress look absolutely stunning on her.

“Wow...” I breathed out, stunned at how beautiful she looked.

“I know, right?” Arianna stepped onto the small stage to get a good look at herself in front of the large mirrors and even spun around so we could see all of it.

“This is definitely the one! Right, Damiano?” I asked and he took a quick glance at the dress.

“Sure.” Damiano shrugged, not caring about the situation.

“Would it kill you to give a compliment?” Arianna scowled and placed her hands on her hips.

“Yes.” He smirked, making her let out a curse under her breath. She was about to turn around when she suddenly looked down at my stomach, watching Damiano rubbing my stomach.

I quickly grabbed his hand to stop him and got up on my feet. I had gotten used to him doing it, making me forget that it could look a bit odd considering they didn’t know I was pregnant. I didn’t want to tell them right now as I thought it was still too soon. I also wanted to get to my doctor’s appointment first to make sure everything was okay before I broke the news.

“How does it feel on you?” I asked as I checked if too tight on her.

“It’s perfect! It doesn’t need anything.”

“Let me see!” Cara came out of the dressing room once she was done showing Lorenzo the dresses. She gaped, amazed by the dress Arianna Wore.

I started to pack their massive pile of dresses and bagged the long and extravagant ones into gown bags when they were done shopping

“Which one of my brothers is treating me today?” Arianna looked back and forth between Damiano and Lorenzo with a bright, sweet smile on her lips.

“Didn’t I tell you not to depend on a man to buy you anything?” Damiano frowned.

“And I’m not. This is my brothers spoiling me.” She held her hand out, wiggling her fingers and waiting for one of them to give her their cards.

“More like demanding.” I pointed out. She shushed me as she continued to smile sweetly.

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“Here.” Lorenzo handed her his card and she happily snatched it out of his hand.

“That’s why you’re my favorite brother! You’re so cheap, Damiano.”

"I bought you a car last week. Which you crashed."

"You were in a car accident!" I shrieked out in shock.

"Not really. Rafaelle purposely drove into my car for being a sore loser." She explained, only making me more confused.

"Why would he do that?"

"We were racing and I beat him. He got jealous that my car was faster than his, so he crashed into it." She said sourly. I just blinked, barely believing what I was hearing

"You guys are too rich for your own sake.

"

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Althaia

"Thaia, remember that one time where we took mom's car and we accidentally dented it in a parking lot?" Cara laughed, making me smile at the memory.

"Don't you mean you dented it? You were the one who drove the car yet I was the one who got spanked with the wooden spoon." I said, now frowning at the memory.

"Wait, your mom hit you with a wooden spoon?" Arianna looked at me both surprised and amused.

"Yup. My mom is not shy with the wooden spoon and would pull it out whenever we misbehaved. However, Cara being the favorite child, got out of it almost every time. By the way, how does it to be the favorite child?" I gave her a fake sweet smile.

"Amazing! You should try to be one." She winked while grinning and I flipped her off.

"It was always me and Michael who got in trouble. Actually, Michael got spanked the most." I chuckled. The three of us were known to be a bit wild when we were younger.

I already felt Damiano's gaze on me as soon as I talked about Michael, and I purposely kept my eyes down as I bagged the last dress.

"Who's Michael?" Arianna asked.

"Just a friend we grew up with." I said dismissively so we wouldn't keep talking about him with Damiano present. I didn't want Cara to accidentally reveal that I had a huge crush on Michael when we were

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kids. And maybe a little bit before I got involved with Damiano. He would not be happy to learn about that.

"Here you go!" I handed them their bags which were quite heavy with the number of dresses they had bought. Arianna took her bags and practically shoved them into Damiano's arms for him to carry.

"You're too spoiled." Damiano frowned but still carried them.

"I'm your baby sister, I deserve to be spoiled!" She dramatically flipped her hair back, making me laugh at her.

"See, this is what happens when you spoil them too much." I gave a knowing look to Damiano, hinting at the conversation where he said he was going to make sure to spoil our baby. He gave me a half-smirk with a wink, making me roll my eyes with a smile.

"With the shit I had to go through, this is the least they can do for me. I deserve to be spoiled for life with the long hours of them beating my ass in training." Arianna scoffed and handed me Lorenzo's black card.

"I bet he regrets giving you his card now." I chuckled. They had chosen some pretty expensive dresses and even with a discount, the total was still at the high end. I felt sorry for Lorenzo.

"Please, this isn't even going to make a small dent in his bank account. While you're at it, you should give yourself a hundred percent tip."

"You are seriously enjoying spending someone else's money, huh?"

"It's fine." Lorenzo said, not caring about the amount Arianna was spending. Sometimes I did forget what kind of people I was involved with.

I guess it was not a too shabby career path.

"No, thank you. You bought half of the boutique and that is more than

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enough."

Just as we were done, the sound of the door opening made us all turn to see who it was. My mother, who was distracted with rummaging through her purse while walking further into the shop, didn't notice the rest of the company present as she was focused on getting something.

"Hi, mom." I greeted her, trying to get her attention.

"Hi, honey." She said while still distracted with whatever she was trying to get from her purse.

"I have just put my phone in my bag, and now it has disappeared! How does that even work?" She said frustrated, and let out a sigh of relief when she finally managed to get her phone. Finally, she looked up and stopped in her tracks. She looked at Lorenzo first and then at Arianna, confusion written all over her face.

"Mamá!" Cara said excitedly, making my mom look at her and gasp in surprise at the sight of her.

"Cara, my love!" My mother opened her arms and hugged Cara tightly.

"You see what I mean with her being the favorite child? I didn't even get half of that when I came back home." I joked to Arianna. She chuckled and patted my back to comfort me, making me let out a small laugh.

I knew my mother loved us both equally. She just made sure to show it more toward Cara since she rarely saw her. It didn't bother me because Cara didn't have a parent who showed her love the way my mother did. It only made me happy because she truly deserved to be happy and showered with love when she was stuck with a father who deserved to rot

in hell.

“Look at you! My beautiful Cara.” My mother leaned back to look at Cara with a big smile, her eyes twinkling with happiness.

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“When did you come?”

“Couple of hours ago. Thought we would make a surprise visit for Thaia.” Cara explained, making my mother look back at Arianna and Lorenzo

with slightly raised brows.

“And since I’m getting married soon, I thought you should meet my fiancé, Lorenzo.”

“I see. Hello.” She gave a smile to Lorenzo without stepping closer to him. I sighed, knowing it was a fake smile as I knew she wasn’t fond of anyone from the Bellavia family. Lorenzo gave a short nod in return with his blank face. Not that I was expecting him to smile back.

“And I’m Arianna.” She walked up to my mother to give a handshake with a big smile on her face.

“I’m the younger sister and also the prettiest one.” Arianna grinned, making my mother chuckle at her comment.

“Nice to meet you.” My mother took a look around after she shook Arianna’s hand, watching them carefully. I didn’t know if I should be annoyed with the way she was looking at them or if I should be more understanding as to why. Damiano and Lorenzo were both very tall, intimidating men, and together, they were taking the word terrifying to another level.

“How long are you staying?” My mother asked Cara, giving her a soft smile as she spoke.

“Just a few days before we have to go back. There are still things I need to get done before the wedding.” Cara explained and started to talk about the wedding.

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My mood dampened when I heard they would only be here for a few days. Would that mean Damiano was leaving with them? He did say he couldn't stay for too long and had to leave in a few days. Even though I would be going to California soon, the thought of being away from him, even for a little, was already making my heart clench in sadness. The last time we had to say goodbye was hard on me, and now that I was pregnant, my need to be around him was stronger.

I shook the thoughts of him leaving soon out of my mind. They were starting to make me feel sad to the point tears started to form in my eyes. I didn't want to cry and then have to explain why. I could only imagine how pathetic they would think I was if I said I was crying because Damiano was going home soon. And I couldn't blame it on my hormones. That would be too suspicious.

Shit... If I was already this emotional then I couldn't imagine how it would be when I was further ahead.

A hand caressing my cheek brought me out of my thoughts. The beautiful golden-brown eyes that I had fallen deeply in love with were looking at me, making me forget about the people around us. Sometimes it was terrifying that he had this much effect on me. To have me forget about everyone else and only focus on him. I felt hypnotized by his eyes. Like I was drowning in them as I couldn't look away.

"What's wrong?" Damiano asked quietly only for me to hear. His brows were slightly furrowed but his expression was soft. I smiled a little. He could always tell if there was anything wrong.

I didn't say anything and leaned into him. He wrapped his arm around me, pulling me in closer. For now, I was going to enjoy

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every minute I could get with him.

"... How about you all come to dinner tonight?" My mother asked, making me look at her in surprise.

"Since we're all going to be family, there is no reason why we shouldn't get to know each other." She smiled, and her gaze lingered on me and Damiano for a little while longer.

“That would be lovely.” Arianna replied for everyone, and Cara started to excitedly talk about what kind of food she wanted as she had missed her cooking.

“It’s settled then. Althaia, let’s close so we can do grocery shopping and prepare for dinner.”

“All right, then.” I shrugged. It was way too early for us to be closing but since it was dead quiet today, I was happy to

close.

The rest of the group took the bags to put them in the car. I pulled Damiano slightly away from the rest and waited for them to get out of the boutique. My mother went downstairs to lock up anything important in the safe as she usually did before we closed.

“I was thinking that we should keep the pregnancy to ourselves for now. It’s still too early to tell anyone, and I want to make sure everything is fine.”

“Why? Do you feel something is wrong?” His body tensed, looking at me with worry, and put a hand on my stomach. My eyes widened a bit because I didn’t realize my words had come out as if something was wrong.

“No, nothing’s wrong! I just meant that after we have been to

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my doctor’s appointment.” I said quickly. The tension from his shoulders slowly disappeared when I reassured him I was fine.

“That’s fine. Whatever you want.” He gave me a small smile.

“Oh, and also, can you at least try to get along with my mom tonight?” I gave him my best innocent, sweet look.

“Get along with your mom?” He raised a brow, not liking the idea.

“You keep glaring at her...Can you stop doing that? She’s my mom and your baby’s grandmother. She’s going to be around whether you like it or not. So please, try not and kill each other tonight.” I was not in the mood to watch them glaring at each other from afar. Especially now that my mother had just

said she wanted to get to know them all. He should at least make the same effort.

Damiano looked at me for a while without saying anything, making me think he was going to dismiss the whole idea.

“...Fine.” He frowned, having me laugh at how he said it. Even though Damiano wasn’t quite the type to show his feelings, he sure as hell made sure to show his dislike towards my mother. And judging by his tone, he wasn’t happy about it but at least we were making small progress with the two most stubborn people in my life.

“Thank you! I love you.” I wrapped my arms around his neck and placed a soft kiss on his lips.

Hopefully, it would be a peaceful dinner with my mother,

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Damiano

“I understand what you mean now. Her mother seems nice but it didn’t go unnoticed how she looked at you.” Arianna said and sat down on the couch. We were back in my hotel room, waiting until we had to leave for dinner. Cara had joined Althaia and her mother to help them prepare for tonight, leaving the three of us alone. I was suspicious as to why she would invite us but it was fine with me. The closer I was to her, the faster I could find out what kind of person she was.

“She doesn’t even try to hide the fact that she hates you.” Arianna laughed and I smirked. If only she knew why her mother hated me this much. Not only did she hate me for who I was, but also for getting her daughter pregnant. That alone was giving me satisfaction because I knew she hated that her daughter was carrying my child. And there was absolutely nothing she could do about it.

“Did you talk to Cara?” I turned to look at Lorenzo.

“She doesn’t know much either. She noticed Althaia’s parents were growing cold towards each other and were fighting more. They had one big fight, she left and never looked back.”

"There is definitely something interesting about that story. I will suggest a sleepover and see what I can dig out. Who knows, maybe even her mother will start to open up." Arianna said.

"What makes you think you will get her mother to talk? She's wary of you too." I raised a brow at her.

"Yes, but less of me than the two of you. I have my ways and you have yours. Mine is to slowly get them all drunk, let her warm up to me and she will talk. If she's anything like Althaia when she's drunk, she will definitely talk." She snorted in amusement.

"The good old spiking trick?" Lorenzo looked at Arianna, giving a half-smirk.

"It has proven to be very effective in the past." She snickered. It was her favorite trick to do whenever she wanted to get any kind of information. It was only effective because of the way she looked. Arianna could look innocent if she wanted to, and since not everyone knew she was our sister, no one got suspicious of her. Arianna was great at what she does and always came back with valuable information on whoever was the target.

I had seen her in action, and though I was not particularly happy with how she worked, she always got the job done. She would casually walk up to the bar, and pretend she was lonely until her eyes landed on target. She would flirt with them from a distance, and smile at them now and then until they approached her. And they always fell for it. Being intrigued by the beautiful woman who was all by herself.

Once captured by her, it was game over for them.

The only reason I let her do her own thing was I knew she was highly skilled with weapons and knew how to defend herself. Otherwise, there was no way in hell I would have ever let her go near anyone.

"That's fine, but you can't spike Althaia's drinks." I told her firmly. A frown formed on her face.

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"I can't only let one person get drunk. I need them all drunk so they don't get suspicious of my questions." Arianna continued to argue.

"She's right." Lorenzo commented but I only shook my head at them.

"I said don't do it."

"I get that you're protective of her, but I'm not going to get her drunk to the point she gets fucked up and dies." She kept pressing on. I pinched the bridge of my nose, annoyed she couldn't follow a simple order.

"Arianna, I said no." I gave her a harsh look to drop it already.

"Why not? Don't you want to find out what's going on with her mother?" She stood up to face me and crossed her arms.

"Find another way."

"No. I'm going to do it whether you like it or not." I stepped closer to her, towering over her, my eyes cold as I stared down into hers.

"I said no. What I say, fucking goes. Don't defy my orders." My voice turned low in warning.

'Don't talk to me like I'm one of your men.' Arianna wasn't backing down and continued to annoy me for not listening. Lorenzo clicked his tongue in annoyance as he watched us. This wasn't unusual. She would always try and challenge me when she wasn't pleased with the answers I gave.

'You're working right now so I'm going to treat you like the rest.' I pointed out and her frown only deepened.

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"Exactly, I'm working so let me do my work!"

"You can't get Althaia drunk."

"And why not?" She asked in frustration. I rubbed my jaw, having me clench my jaw at her being a pain in my fucking ass right now.

“She’s pregnant.” I finally said, making her look at me in shock. I couldn’t risk her spiking Althaia’s drinks behind my back. This was the only way I could make sure she wouldn’t do anything reckless and cause Althaia and our baby any harm

“She’s pregnant...?” They both looked at me, not knowing how to react to the news but the corners of my mouth tilted up a little. This was enough to let them know that it was great news, and Arianna’s face brightened with a big smile on her lips.

“A baby!” She almost screamed and immediately wrapped her arms around me.

“Oh my God, I can’t believe it... This is going to be so great! Lorenzo, did you hear that? I’m going to be an aunt, and you an uncle!” She kept exclaiming in excitement after she let go of me. Lorenzo walked up to me with a smile and slapped my back a few times, congratulating me.

“I’m so happy for you. You’re going to have a little one!” Arianna sniffed and went to hug me again. I put an arm around her, comforting her as I knew why she was being emotional about it. She had witnessed me at my worst, and she had seen how I had found happiness in Althaia.

“I was wondering why you kept rubbing her stomach. By the way, you were not doing a good job being discreet about it.”

She smiled while wiping away her tears.

“I wasn’t trying to. But she told me she wanted to keep it on the low for now. So keep your mouth shut about it.” I glared at Arianna. I knew Lorenzo wasn’t going to say anything. He knew how to mind his own business. Unlike Arianna.

“Okay, relax! No need to kill me with your eyes.” She rolled her eyes at me and then resumed beaming in happiness about her becoming an aunt.

I stepped away from her when my phone buzzed in my pocket.

“Antonio.”

“Jacinta went to several banks and also made phone calls. I had Rafaelle look into the calls she made, but as usual, they are untraceable.” He reported,

making me furrow my brows. Whoever she was making calls to knew how to make sure none of the calls could be traced. Even someone like Rafaele hasn't been able to crack the code yet.

"I will look into it. Keep your eyes on her at all times." I hung up and turned to look at Lorenzo.

"Let's go.

The sun was already set low on the horizon when we arrived at their boutique. We made our way behind the shop to the back door to not cause any attention. I went straight to the keypad on the door and punched in the code I had watched Althaia do several times.

Except, this time, it denied me access and remained locked.

"She fucking changed it." I scoffed and pulled out the small, black device I had them get from Rafaele. I placed it on the keypad, watching the screen of the device roll with different numbers before revealing the six-digit code Jacinta had changed it to.

Once inside, I made my way downstairs to where the safe was while Lorenzo checked the desk and computer to see if there was anything new. The safe was checked earlier but there wasn't anything in particular that stood out. But now knowing she went to several banks and came here right after, the safe must contain something new we hadn't seen.

My eyes immediately landed on the new file in the safe. I grabbed it, looking over the papers which had me frowning the more I looked at them. I turned to Lorenzo when he stopped next to me and showed him the papers.

"Of course." He tsked out as he looked at the papers, familiar with this kind of work.

"She's still in the game. Now the question is with whom." I said, turning my attention back to the file.

Jacinta was using the business for laundering money.

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Althaia

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We were preparing dinner in a full swing while Damiano and Lorenzo were sitting in the living room. Arianna asked if she could look around, and I told her to try not to make fun of our normal-sized house as I was pretty sure that our downstairs floor plan was the size of a bedroom in the manor.

And that was without exaggeration. The manor was incredibly massive and beyond majestic.

They didn't show up empty-handed as they had brought bottles of nice wines with them, which I later noticed was

Damiano's very own brand. But what almost had me gasp in 'surprise was Damiano gifted my mother a large bouquet of beautiful flowers.

It was a peace offering to her, and it made me so happy that he was trying to get along with her. My mother was surprised. And a bit skeptical about it which had me sighing. I kept reminding her to make an effort to get to know him now since he wasn't exactly going anywhere either.

We were almost done helping my mother make dinner. Well, Cara and I were bickering back and forth than actually helping. I suddenly craved Mac and Cheese and we decided to make some at the very last minute.

"That's not how you make it. You're turning it into a soup!" I told Cara, staring down at the pot of whatever she had going on. I put Cara on the job since it was the easiest thing on the

menu.

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But somehow she was screwing it up.

"This is how you make it! It just needs to boil for a bit and it will reduce." Cara said annoyed, looking focused as she stirred the pot.

"No, it's literally soup! It looks disgusting." I scrunched up my nose. I had no idea what it was but it sure as hell wasn't Mac and Cheese. It looked like poison.

"It's not!" This turned into a heated discussion as we continued to fight over who was right.

Until my mother kicked us out.

"I can't stand listening to you two anymore! Get out and go set up the table." My mother scolded and pushed us out of the kitchen.

"This is your fault." Cara continued as got to the dining area, which was connected to the living room since it was one big space we had divided.

"You're the one who can't cook to save your life!" I was just as annoyed because I really wanted Mac and Cheese. By now, we were fighting in front of the siblings, but we didn't care.

"You were the one telling me how to make it. You're the one who fucked up, bitch!" Cara said loudly, making me look at her with wide eyes. She then gasped and slammed her hand up to her mouth as she realized her mistake.

We heard my mother's footsteps coming in our direction. I quickly went to escape into the living room, and Cara followed closely behind.

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"Young lady, I did not just hear such words coming out of your mouth." My mother frowned, pointing her beloved wooden spoon at her. I was biting down on my lip so I wouldn't burst out laughing at the scenario in front of me. Cara, being a grown-ass woman, was being scolded like a child by my mother.

And in front of her fiancé.

It was so hilarious that tears were forming in my eyes as I tried to contain my laugh. Arianna leaned forward on the couch, watching us with a grin as she got to witness the infamous wooden spoon in action.

"Is that such language your father teaches you?" My mother raised her brow, and Cara was on the verge of breaking out laughing at the question.

"Ah...you see, my dad doesn't talk much these days." She casually said, making me snort a laugh. My mother looked back and forth between us, her eyes narrowing, not understanding what she was talking about.

"What do you mean? That man never stops talking."

“One evening, Uncle talked too much and now he can’t anymore.” My voice was shaking from trying not to laugh. It didn’t help that Cara couldn’t hold it anymore and laughed, making me burst out laughing too. We were holding onto each other as we continued to laugh, barely being able to stand up and tears were now escaping. Damiano had a small smirk on his lips. He was, after all, the one who made sure Uncle couldn’t talk anymore.

“You two are not making any sense.”

“A lot of shit was coming out of his mouth.” Cara continued, which earned a quick slap with the wooden spoon on her arm, making her let out a yelp and rub her arm.

“And yours too! Don’t use that language under my roof.” She warned her and pointed the spoon at her. My mother then looked at me and gave me a whack on the arm too with the spoon, making me gape.

“I didn’t even do anything!”

“Oh, you know what you did.” She gave a knowing look and quickly glanced at Damiano before going back to the kitchen. Her words had me blushing at what she had hinted at. I was still feeling a little awkward that my mother knew I’d done... it.

With Damiano.

The thought of that had me slightly embarrassed.

“I can’t believe I actually got to see that. You were really not joking about the wooden spoon stories.” Arianna laughed.

“I’m telling you, she doesn’t care how old you are, if you misbehave, she will come after you.” I shook my head in

amusement.

“I forgot how hard she hits with that stupid spoon.” Cara still rubbed her arm, having us laugh as we went to set the table.

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Dinner was served and we all dug into the food hungrily. At least that was what I did. I didn't pay much attention to the others when food was in front of me, and I was starving!

"Oh, none for me." I told Cara when she was about to pour a glass of wine for me.

"That's a first. Why not?" She looked at me surprised and I had to come up with an excuse as to why I couldn't drink.

"I'm on a cleanse." The words just rolled out before I had the chance to think it through. I shouldn't have said that as she gave me a blank look, not believing me.

"I don't think you know what a cleanse is." She gestured to my plate of food which consisted of everything that you shouldn't eat if you were on a so-called 'cleanse'.

"Well, I'm doing it my way. First, you get rid of the alcohol, then you slowly work on your food." I explained, hoping she would buy it but she just scoffed. Cara knew I would never be on a cleanse because I loved my food too much to let it go. And my occasional drinking.

"Whatever you say... It would have been more believable if you said you were pregnant than on a cleanse." She joked and I stopped eating, raising my head to look at her. She then looked at me, her eyes slowly widening.

"...Are you pregnant?" She half-whispered. The room fell into silence, making it seem she had said it loud and clearly for everyone to hear.

"No!... Maybe...Just a little...?" I stumbled on the words. I always had a hard time lying to Cara. We shared everything, and I felt guilty trying to lie to her like that. It felt so wrong

and I couldn't help but give in even though I had wanted to wait before breaking the news to them.

Cara's mouth formed an 'o' and her brows raised in surprise. It took her a full minute to realize that I wasn't joking before letting out the biggest grin on her face.

“You’re pregnant!” She screamed and jumped out of her seat, ran around the dining table, and gave me a bone-crushing hug. I got up from my seat as well to give her a proper hug with a smile on my face. Cara leaned back to look at me and I noticed her eyes were glistening with tears, and with so much happiness.

“Oh, well, this was bound to happen sooner rather than later with the two of you going crazy

“Okay, too much information.” I interrupted her by quickly putting my hand to her mouth to stop her from talking. But she just laughed at me and went back to her seat. She gave Damiano’s shoulder a small squeeze, congratulating him as she passed him.

“Dear Lord...” My mother commented, taking a sip of her wine. I noticed my mother’s cheeks were getting flushed by Cara’s words, making me clear my throat in awkwardness. Luckily, it was saved by Arianna getting up and hugging me too.

“Congratulations! I am so happy for you! I’m finally going to be an aunt!” Arianna beamed.

“You’re going to be the crazy aunt who will teach the kid how to use a gun. And I will tell them all about how to practice safe sex since you can’t!” Cara laughed loudly.

“Cara, shut up!” I hissed, feeling my face getting hot.

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“And don’t blame it all on me. It was just as much his fault.” I pointed at Damiano, trying to shift the attention away from me. Damiano wasn’t bothered by it at all. In fact, he looked rather proud.

“Dinner is getting cold. Please, help yourself.” My mother cleared her throat, almost chugging down her wine.

“Sorry, mamá.” Cara chuckled. Before I could get back to my seat, Lorenzo made his way to me. I looked at him, and he smiled before embracing me, leaving me shocked by his action. It took me a few seconds before I reacted and hugged him back with a smile.

“Congratulations, Althaia.”

“It’s happening! Someone take a picture!” We stepped away from each other just as the sound of a picture being taken rang out.

“No! Hug again, I didn’t get the picture.” Cara exclaimed, ready with her phone.

“That’s enough.” Damiano said unhappily, making Cara look at him with a brow raised.

“He’s your brother.”

“I don’t care. I don’t hug you, do I?” He said with slightly furrowed brows. Cara leaned forward and rested her arms on

the table as she grinned at him.

“Do you want one?”

“No.” He said immediately and in a rather firm tone.

“It’s okay Damiano, I will give you a hug.” She quickly went

Spoon(?)

over to him and hugged him while he remained seated and as still as he could. I couldn’t help but chuckle at the sight in front of me as I watched Damiano’s frown only deepen when she wrapped her arms around him.

I understood now what they meant when they always cringed at me and Lorenzo. I could just see how awkward Damiano was feeling right now. Luckily for him, the hug didn’t last long before she returned to her seat.

“I had no idea my brothers were this awkward...” Arianna sighed and shook her head. Even my mother had the faintest smile on her lips as she observed the rest of us.

After dinner, Cara and I played a quick round of rock, paper, and scissors on who should do the dishes since my mother made dinner. And we were to no big help.

“Rock! Ha, I win again!” Cara erupted, having me scowl.

“Whatever. This game sucks anyway.” I huffed out. Then a small smirk formed on my lips, and I twisted her nipple and

ran away.

I was a sore loser, so what?

Just as I was finishing wiping the counter, hands rested on my waist and pulled me back into them. The action had me smiling and my entire body fluttering.

“This dress looks hot on you.” Damiano buried his face into my neck. He started to plaster small kisses on my neck while his hands trailed down and grabbed my ass.

“Damiano, not here.” I whispered to him, struggling not to make a noise as he knew how to work his way on my neck.

“No one’s around.” His hands continued down to the hem of my dress and lifted it slightly to get under it. His hand rested right between my legs and slowly started to tease me over my lace thong. The way he touched me sent shivers down my spine and having me rest the back of my head on his shoulder

“Someone might come...” I whispered to him as I let out a quiet moan.

“Then they will get to see how I got you pregnant in the first place.” I could feel him smiling against my neck, making me shake my head at him as I felt his hard bulge against me.

Damiano turned me around, lifted me onto the counter, and hungrily kissed my lips. His fingers pushed my thong to the side and made their way inside, making me bite down on his lip and he let out a grunt in pleasure.

“Okay, enough. Not here.” I pulled his hand away, struggling to come to my senses.

“Fine. The bathroom then? It’s closer than your room.” He asked, continuing to attack my neck, making it difficult to even have a conversation.

“They will wonder where we went to...” I breathed out. It was too risky. Even though I really wanted him right now, I didn’t. want to risk them noticing what we had been doing. I can only handle this much embarrassment for one day.

“We’re leaving soon anyway as Arianna and Cara are spending the night here. I want to feel you before I go. I’ll be quick.”

“They are?”

“Yes, now come.” He helped me down from the counter, and took my hand, making me roll my eyes at his impatience.

“You really can’t keep it in your pants, huh?” I chuckled.

“I’m a fucking addict when it comes to you.”

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Althaia

“What is it with you and having your way with me in the bathroom? Now that I think of it, the last time we had dinner with my family, we ended up in the bathroom together.” I told him as we got into the hallway.

“I didn’t hear you complain back then.” He gave me a playful smile and pulled me in for a kiss. I melted right into his arms as his kisses never failed to make me shiver. It was the kind of kiss you have waited your whole life for and left you

completely breathless.

Ever since he found out I was pregnant, not only was he watching me like a hawk, but he couldn’t keep his hands to himself for long. As if it was a need for him to touch me, and I enjoyed every bit of the attention he was giving me.

Damiano pulled slightly away, looking at me with his golden- brown eyes that held so much affection in them. Drawing me in like a magnet and having me fully lost in the depth of his beautiful eyes.

“You have no idea what you did to me that day. It was the day you looked at me with your big, innocent green eyes, and your cheeks were a faint red color as you looked at me for the first time without being scared. That day, you had

me spend the entire time looking at you, admiring your whole beauty while you were oblivious to what you were doing to me.” His deep voice went low yet he spoke so softly with a hint of huskiness.

Damiano cupped my face, having me forget how to breathe

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with how he was looking at me.

Like I was his entire world.

“That day, you captivated me right there on the spot.” His eyes darkened and let out his devilish smirk as he leaned in closer. His lips faintly trailed from my cheek to my ear, having me take a sharp intake of breath when he nibbled my earlobe. He let out a faint grunt, which went straight down between my legs.

“It was also that day it took everything in me not to fuck you until you couldn’t walk straight anymore.” He held me tightly into him, my heart beating fast and a steady pulse appeared, having me squeeze my thighs together.

I was too stunned by his words to say anything. I didn’t know Damiano had observed me that closely that evening. My heart was going crazy and tingles erupted in my stomach and a strong surge of desire made its presence.

“I had no idea…” I breathed out. He gave me a lazy smile in return as he caressed my cheeks, and continued to draw me in with his golden-brown eyes that seemed to shine in the most breathtaking way.

“From that day, I swore you would be mine as I knew you were the one for me.” He had me smile shyly, making my heart burst with such an overwhelming feeling of love.

For every day that went by, my love for him only grew deeper and stronger. I have never felt this way with anyone but with him. At times, it still felt unreal that this beautiful Devil in front of me was all mine.

And I was his.

2/4

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We were two completely different people, coming from two different worlds. A world where he grew up to be a leader and a killer, and I grew up in a rather normal world with a sheltered life.

They say opposites attract and maybe that was why we were enchanted by each other.

He was tall, dark, and mysterious in every way and I was everything but that. And still, we found beauty in each other and loved each other for exactly who we were.

Instead of answering him, I grabbed his face and kissed him. Kissed him as if my life depended on it because words couldn't justify the feelings I had for him.

"You just know how to make a girl swoon with words... And horny." I whispered against his lips with a smile. My hands went down to his pants while pushing him inside the

bathroom. He grabbed my ass and lifted me, making me wrap my legs around him.

Our kiss was sweet, yet wild as he claimed me with his tongue. He had me against the wall, his hand moving my thong to the side before slowly entering me.

"I can't get enough of you. Fuck, you feel so good..." Damiano groaned, almost painfully. He picked up the speed, slamming himself inside me, making me want to cry out as waves of pleasure ran through my body. I tried to muffle my moans by burying my face into his neck and plastering small kisses around. I lightly brushed my lips over the spot where I knew he was ticklish, making him slightly shiver in response.

"Yes... Yes..." I kept moaning quietly. He went even faster, brutally thrusting inside of me and giving me a hard time

being quiet. The tightening feeling in the pit of my core was building increasingly just as I noticed the change in Damiano's breathing, letting me know he was close too.

He was breathing hard, grunting as his fingers dug into my ass and pulled my lip with his teeth.

“Fuck.. Come for me, baby.” Damiano breathed out a groan in pleasure. And right on cue, I clenched around him. It had me closing my eyes, moaning against his lips as I reached my climax which had my entire body trembling. He gave one final, deep thrust before I felt his warm release inside of me.

We stood still for a moment, still in position trying to catch our breaths while he rested his forehead on my shoulder. Damiano raised his head, giving me that boyish, lazy grin of his. Our lips met in a small, sweet kiss before he placed me on my feet.

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“Let’s get out before they notice we have been gone for too long.” I took one last glance in the mirror to make sure I didn’t look like someone who just got fucked in the bathroom. Even though it was exactly what just had happened.

I unlocked the door and swung it open as I stepped out.

Only to stop in my tracks.

My eyes immediately met with Lorenzo’s. He was leaning. against the wall with his arms crossed and a teasing smirk on his face. He made a tsking sound and slightly shook his head while looking at me. My face was burning to the point I was sure I looked like a bright red tomato.

“Had fun?” Lorenzo raised a brow at me, and I felt like I could die right on the spot. I looked at him with wide eyes and my mouth was opening and closing, struggling to find any words to say.

‘What are you doing here?!’ I scowled, trying to fight through the embarrassment.

‘I was looking for my brother, but it seemed he was rather busy. I didn’t want to interrupt.’

‘So, you just thought you would stand here and listen, you pervert!’ I whisper-yelled so the others wouldn’t hear.

I wouldn’t have heard anything if you weren’t loud.” He

pointed out and then looked at Damiano.

I see you got yourself a screamer.” Lorenzo’s smirk widened, making me want to scream at him for saying such things.

You have no idea.” Damiano said. I turned around so fast to face him and slapped him on the chest for saying that.

“D-Don’t say that!”

“Are you done?” Lorenzo asked Damiano, still with his stupid smirk.

“For now. I just had to make sure she stays pregnant.” Damiano winked at me, and my jaw dropped.

“So eager to please me today, aren’t you?” He smirked, placing a finger under my chin, and closed my mouth.

Words refused to come out at this moment. I felt completely mortified. Without saying anything, I turned around and walked away from the brothers.

Only to feel a hand grab me and turn me around.

Damiano put his hand behind my neck and leaned down to kiss me.

“I love you. Now you can go.” He said quietly against my lips. If it was possible to blush anymore, I would have. My body was so hot it was unbearable and I turned around once again to walk away from them. I let out a surprised yelp when he slapped my ass, making me walk so fast I was practically running while I heard them chuckle behind me.

...Horny bastard.” Lorenzo chuckled before I was out of hearing distance.

heard laughter when I got to the living room, seeing they were all sitting close together. They opened a new bottle of wine while they were looking through the family album.

guess we took longer than expected...

288 Vouchers

“Look who decided to show up.” Arianna commented as I took a seat. Cara looked at me, wiggling brows.

“She totally just had a quickie with your brother.” She snickered and Arianna gave a disgusted look.

“Cara!” I almost screamed her name. She clamped her mouth shut and turned to look at my mother, completely forgetting she was there.

“I did not need to know that...” My mother awkwardly cleared her throat, and I looked everywhere but at her. I was slowly dying of embarrassment.

“Tell me about it.” Arianna muttered in disgust and poured more wine for my mother.

“Oh, no thank you. I’ll get drunk if I drink any more tonight.”

“Well, I am trying to get drunk to forget! Do you want to remember those words that came out of her mouth?” Arianna glared at Cara.

‘Saluti.’ My mother raised her glass.

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The longer we sat in the living room, the more drinks they had. They were drunk to the point they laughed at every single meaningless thing. It sucked I was the only one sober out on the other hand, I was happy that my mother was happily chatting with Arianna.

At least she got along with one member of the Bellavia family.

Are you also attending the wedding?” Arianna asked. My mother scoffed and shook her head.

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“No. I’m not going anywhere near those bastards.” She gulped down the rest of her wine.

“Bad blood with your ex-husband?” Arianna casually asked, making me look at her in surprise at the question. I didn’t say anything, curious to see if my mother would tell us anything. But she remained silent, frowning a little as it looked like she was remembering back to those days with my father.

“... We didn’t exactly end on good terms.” She decided to answer.

“What happened?” I asked. It was something I have been dying to know but it was something we never talked about. My mother let out a sigh, looking at the fireplace with a distant look.

“It was an arranged marriage. We never loved each other.”

“But you always looked happy together?” I was confused. I didn’t know it was an arranged marriage. What I remember seeing as a child was two people who were happy together and loving toward each other.

“We had to make it work for the sake of our families. My father married me off because he didn’t have a male heir to take over. What a male chauvinist world it is.” She laughed bitterly as her expression turned cold.

“It’s all about power, and of course your father accepted.” I didn’t know what to say but I felt sad for my mother. I couldn’t imagine what it must have been like, to be married to someone you didn’t care for.

“Lunnyy svet...” She muttered quietly under her breath before I could say anything to comfort her. Her expression softened

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and the corners of her mouth turned up in the slightest, making me tilt my head in confusion at the unfamiliar word.

My mother shook her head and suddenly got up from the couch.

“Don’t mind me, girls, I’m talking nonsense. I had a bit too much to drink.” She let out a chuckle.

“I’m heading in now. Goodnight.” My heart squeezed at the look of sadness that washed over her face. It was just for a quick second before she went her way.

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Althaia

“So, pregnant, huh?” Arianna said as she looked around my room. After my mother went to bed, we decided to head

upstairs to mine so we wouldn’t disturb her too much.

“I can barely believe it myself.” I smiled. I changed into one of Damiano’s t-shirts I had stolen from him and took a seat on the bed.

“Were you not on the pill?” Cara asked, coming out of the bathroom after getting ready for bed.

“Well, yes... But I forgot them when I came to your engagement party. I thought I would be fine since I was only supposed to stay for a week anyway. It was not like I was expecting to, well, mess around with anyone during my stay.” I explained, feeling my cheeks heat up.

“Really? To be honest, I thought you would with Michael since the two of you were constantly flirting.” Cara chuckled, making Arianna look at me with a raised brow.

“You were flirting with someone else?”

“No! Okay, yes, but it was before I even got with Damiano.” I said defensively and glared at Cara for opening her big mouth, but she was oblivious to it and plopped down on the bed.

“Does my brother know?”

“Why would I tell him about my past relationships and flirting

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when it doesn’t even matter anymore?” I frowned, feeling annoyed with how she was questioning me.

“If he asks, I will tell him. Just like I’m not pressuring him to tell me about his past relationships. Even though I know he was engaged at some point.” Arianna whipped her head to face me so fast I was afraid she would break her neck. She looked at me for a long time with furrowed brows, and even Cara sat up on the bed with a shocked expression.

“Damiano was engaged?”

“How do you know?” Arianna ignored Cara as she looked at me with a serious expression, making me slightly raise my brow in surprise.

Was it supposed to be a secret?

“I wasn’t too sure about it but you just confirmed it for me.” I crossed my arms.

“I have known for a while actually, but he doesn’t know that I know.” I observed her closely, trying to figure out why she had reacted like that but it was like she was being careful with her expressions now.

“Why didn’t you ask him the minute you learned about it?” She was less tense now and sat down on my desk chair. Arianna checked her nails as if she wasn’t interested in the conversation anymore. I let out a sigh and shrugged my shoulders.

“I don’t know. I figured eventually he would tell me if he wanted to. I’m not exactly eager to hear about the women he has been with in the past.” I scowled a little, the feeling of

jealousy bubbling inside of me at the thought of him being

2/5

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with other women.

!

“Why did they break up?” Cara asked, pulling me out of my thoughts.

“That’s not my story to tell. If you want to know, ask him.” She smirked at Cara, making her roll her eyes at her before getting comfortable on the bed again.

“But you’re right, it doesn’t matter. You’re pregnant with his child anyway. I can’t believe you two are going to have a little one.” She gave me a soft smile.

“Ever heard of a condom?” Cara suddenly asked, having me burst out in laughter as Arianna groaned.

“We did use protection! Well... the first night at least...” Now that I thought of it, we only did use protection the first night together and then he pulled out the other times. The first time he didn’t was when we were in the car on our way back from the auction, and then every single time after that. I wondered if it was during the car ride back to the hotel our baby was conceived...

It did make good sense I was pregnant and I really shouldn’t have been surprised. Even though it wasn’t planned, I was happy about it and I couldn’t wait to meet our baby.

“Damiano was too excited to dip it he forgot to wrap it up.” Cara snickered.

“I fucking hate you right now.” Arianna threw a pen after Cara, shuddering in disgust as Cara wouldn’t stop talking about it. And I, of course, had to endure another round of people talking about my sex life.

I sighed in defeat.

My growling stomach woke me up early in the morning. I grunted as I sat up and looked around with my eyes half open. Surprisingly, I was the first one to wake up before all of them.

That never happens. I was always the last one to wake up.

I looked at Cara’s sprawled body and it was a good thing my bed was big enough to fit the three of us since Cara loved taking up space. I thought of smacking her face with a pillow, just for the fun of it and for the many times she had forcefully woken me up early. But it would have to be another time and I made my way downstairs to make breakfast since my stomach kept growling in hunger.

“Oh, it smells so good!” Cara appeared with Arianna just as I finished making a breakfast buffet and placed everything on the dining table.

“Hope you’re hungry.”

“Starving!” Arianna said and took a seat.

“Well, dig in!” I was about to take a seat as well when the doorbell rang. I checked the time, wondering who it could be this early.

“Hello there, beautiful! Missed me?!” Rafaelle yelled out and hugged me as soon as I opened the door. It took me a full `minute to process that Rafaelle was here. I hugged him with a

laugh as he took me by surprise.

“Oh, my God! What are you doing here?” I leaned back to look

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at him, happy to see him. I did miss his goofy ass as he never failed to make one laugh.

“Everyone just left me and I was feeling lonely. So, I came here!” He said happily and hugged me tightly again.

“Careful, Rafaelle.” I suddenly heard Damiano’s voice when he squeezed me a little too hard. I stepped a little to the side to see Damiano and Lorenzo were here as well. I hadn’t even noticed them as Rafaelle practically ambushed me.

## Chapter 90

Post Views: 9

? Views, Released on February 11, 2024

Tiny Hod Shoes(7)

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“You came at the right time, I just made breakfast.” I gestured for them to come in and Rafaelle was cheerfully skipping in the direction of the delicious smell of the food. Damiano stopped right in front of me, frowning at what I was wearing.

“You answer the door dressed like that?” For a second I just stared at him confused and I looked down at myself, remembering that I was only wearing his t-shirt.

"I wasn't expecting anyone to come..." I half-shrugged. His shirts were big and were almost knee-length on me. He was still frowning, being pretty much unhappy about it. I wrapped my arms around him, giving him a sweet smile.

"I've missed you." I said quickly before he could say anything. It worked as he gave me a half-smile and kissed the top of my head, making him forget why he was upset in the first place.

"...It's like I can't get a break from your annoying ass. Why did you come?" Arianna scowled at Rafaelle when we stepped into the dining room. She was already annoyed with his presence.

"Don't flatter yourself. I'm not here to see your stupid face." They continued with their bickering, making me smile as I watched them while I ate. It was free, live entertainment. What was not to like?

"I can't remember the last time I drank this much..." My mother groaned as she walked in with her eyes closed while holding her head. The sight of that alone was funny as I had never seen my mother like that. I couldn't help but chuckle a little, making her open her eyes to frown at me. Then she noticed how everyone was present and looked at every single one of them before her gaze rested on Rafaelle.

1/5

"Damn, Althaia! You didn't tell me you had a sister." Rafaelle let out a whistle as he neared my mother to check her out.

"I don't. That's my mom." He raised his brows in surprise before he let out a smug grin.

"I see where Althaia gets her beauty from."

"Who are you and what are you doing in my house?" My mother came to her senses and her eyes narrowed.

"It depends... Do you like young meat? If so, I can be your future baby daddy." I choked on my food to the point Damiano had to gently pat my back a few times and handed me a glass of water.

Was he seriously hitting on my mother? That man had no shame.

My mother didn't even respond and gave him a blank look.

"I don't like you, whoever you are."

"Don't worry, la mia bella rosa. An hour with me and you will love me."

Rafaelle said in a low, flirtatious voice and winked, having me drop my jaw. My mother scoffed, not impressed at all, and looked at him from head to toe.

"I bet you can't even last for a minute." She turned around and left us, making Rafaelle drop his smug smile. Everyone had been silent as we observed the whole thing. Then we burst out in uncontrollable laughter. I was laughing so hard that no sound was coming out.

"This is the best shit I have ever witnessed in my life!" Arianna managed to get out in between laughter. Rafaelle put his

2/5

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hands on his hips and scowled at us all, not finding it funny at all.

We ended up heading out and I showed them around until we hit the shops. Arianna still hadn't quenched her thirst for shopping. I thought I had a shopping addiction but it was nothing compared to Arianna's because within ten minutes she was already carrying five bags in her hands.

My mother joined us as well as she needed a few things of her own, and also to spend more time with Cara. But Rafaelle was not making it a joyful time for her. For some reason, he wouldn't leave her alone, and she was desperately trying to escape him and his shameless flirting.

I was walking slowly in the back with Damiano while the others were ahead of us. The weather was nice with the sun shining brightly and I was loving walking around with Damiano like this. Holding his hand, chatting, and just being so carefree at the moment.

I felt Damiano slow and I looked at him but he was focused on something else. Before I could ask if something was wrong, he gently tugged me in a different direction before coming to a stop in front of a shop.

A baby shop.

I didn't say anything, curious to see what he wanted. I felt

myself smile big when I saw him pick up a pair of baby shoes he had seen at the display window. The tiniest shoes I have ever seen were covered entirely in red roses and had a big red bow in the middle. They were truly too cute!

"We don't even know if it's going to be a girl." I chuckled.

"It doesn't matter. We will keep trying until we get a girl." He said in all seriousness.

"Even if we end up with five boys, would you still want to try for a girl?" I raised a brow and Damiano gave me a soft smile. He tucked a strand of hair behind my ear before resting his hand on my cheek, his thumb lightly caressing me.

"I was being serious when I said we should have as many children as we can. My love, I want everything with you." He said quietly as he smiled. It made my heart skip a beat and fill me with warmth and love with his words. I leaned into him, wrapping my arms around him. How did I ever get so lucky to be with a man like him?

"We'll see if you still have that opinion after this one." He let out a small chuckle and kissed my temple before going to buy

the shoes.

"This is seriously so cute. Imagine tiny baby feet wearing these! I seriously can't wait!" I beamed in happiness while holding the baby shoes as we got out of the shop. I couldn't get over how tiny they were!

"Are you happy?" Damiano suddenly asked. I stopped in my tracks and looked at him in surprise.

"With me. Are you really happy with me?" He had a small frown on his face while looking at me with a serious expression. I was about to ask him why he was suddenly asking that but stopped myself at the last second.

I couldn't help but let out a small laugh when I realized why he was asking. I found it adorable that it was coming from him.

I pulled him down to me, pressing my lips to his and his frown slowly disappeared as I did so.

“I have never been happier.” And that was the truth.

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