

## Chapter 40

I woke up to searing wrists and a full bladder. My eyes burst open and I let out a groan before the vile scent struck my nose. Burning flesh and silver. I clamped my mouth shut to repress the urge to gag and glanced around the room, realizing that I was not in my own.

But, though it was not mine, I still recognized it as one from the home with all of its paneling and so colours. I was still in the manor, so that was a good sign at least. But this one was much smaller and the heavy curtains were pulled across making it much darker as well.

"What the fuck?" I groaned, trying to use my arms to prop my body up. The burning sensation in my wrists on increased, causing me to let out a hiss and let my body go slack again.

"You're awake," Sebastian rumbled from a dark corner of the room. He was sitting in a leather arm chair, his eyes glowing in the dark.

"Yes, now please let me up," I whined. "Why would you do this to me? I don't even remember-"

I clamped my mouth shut when Sebastian suddenly got to his feet. His movements were harsh and the tension in his shoulders was undeniable as he yanked open the curtain. Light poured in and I winced squinting away as I adjusted. Why on earth was I in bed during the day? And why did I feel like I had slept for days?

"Hey!" I protested with a thumb pressed on my eyelid, pulling it upwards and exposing my sensitive iris to the bright light.

"Looks like your eyes have changed back to normal," he grunted.

"What do you mean 'back to normal'?" I spat, jerking my head away from him. "And why have you chained me to the bed?"

Sebastian didn't answer. His amber eyes were narrowed down at me and he stood a fair distance away. When he folded his arms over his chest I was able to see half healed scratches, now only pink scars and tiny scabs. And it all came back.

I remembered calling him Hades in the morning, hating him so much that I couldn't stand to be near him. He had le me and I had lost it, trying to escape him like he was a rash or an infestation. I worked out and tried painting, then ended up in the kitchen...

"Oh my god, Ethel," I gasped.

Sebastian said nothing, still just standing and watching.

"Sebastian, I-I."

But what could I say?

"What blood debt were you talking about?" he demanded, paying no mind to my shaking hands and watering eyes.

"I-I don't know."

"You don't know? You lunged at my throat, you tried to kill Ethel or at least wound her very badly, and you don't even have the decency to tell me why?"

"Sebastian, I'm not lying. I honestly don't know," I managed, feeling like my throat was closing. My fingers curled up like they were trying to keep the tears at bay themselves. It didn't matter, they spilled down my cheeks regardless.

"I don't believe you, this isn't the first time. It was just worse," he denied.

"I don't know what happened," I choked out, trying to meet his gaze but failing. All I could think about when I looked at him was how I had tried to attack his throat, wanting blood more than I wanted anything else. "I woke up and I hated you. God, I hated you. I felt like you had wronged me, like we were back to where we started when I thought you killed Caleb was unjust."

"Tell me right now if you still blame me for killing him. I don't care if you think I don't have to know or you're embarrassed. I need to know."

"I don't blame you. I don't love him anymore, either. I hate him, hate what he did. He hurt the most innocent, most vulnerable."

"Do you understand that the other people I deal with are in a similar position? They aren't good people, Charlotte."

"I knowthat," I assured.

"Then what fucking blood debt are you trying to settle and if you have an issue, you take it up with me. You leave Ethel out of this," he snarled. "God, I thought we were passed all this shit! How could you do this to me when I trusted you?"

"I don't know what happened," I whimpered, feeling the tears come more freely now. The dam had broken. I continued to speak through hiccuping sobs, "I just saw her and thought of you, how you took me away from everything and I was already so angry with you, you were everywhere. I couldn't touch the car, or my paints, or even the knife, I just kept thinking about how much I hated you." I sucked in a breath that was choked out so many times it hurt. "Then the screaming when you got close to me in the morning and when you tried to protect Ethel."

"Screaming?" Sebastian repeated, the hardened look giving away to concern.

"What screaming? You were the only one who was yelling."

"This woman, she was screaming when you walked by this morning, like wailing. I tried to cover my ears but it was like it was coming from inside me, inside my head."

"From inside your head?" Sebastian repeated, slowly lowering himself to sit on the edge of the bed.

Seeing how far away he sat from me and watching his brows lower into a furrow made me suck in a rough gasp, more tears gushing down my face.

"Am I going crazy, Sebastian? I swear, I don't hate you! It felt like my body wasn't my own. All I could think about was the screaming and the blood debt," I sobbed.

"Hey, hey, it's going to be alright," he soothed. But I saw the hesitation when he extended a hand towards me to touch my cheek, almost like he thought I would lunge upwards and snap my teeth at him. "I can tell that you really didn't want to hurt either of us. This isn't you."

"Then what is it? What's happening to me?" I choked.

"I don't know, Char, but I'm going to help you figure it out, okay?"

I could only nod my head.

~~~Distraction Section~~~

Hope you guys enjoyed the surprise update. We crossed 60,000 reads which is crazy be I celebrated 20,000 not that long ago. Seems like Hades is winning more and more hearts. Any idea on what's going on with poor Charlotte?

Question of the Day:

Describe your ideal significant other in three words.

I've been dating the same guys since high school. He's adventurous, funny, and hardworking.