

Hellbound Heart #Chapter 111 -120

Worthy - Read Hellbound Heart Chapter 111 Worthy

Elle ran to Abi with a big smile plastered across her face. As she ran over, her hands were reaching her welcome to the lady that had so quickly caught her admiration and partiality. She was visibly excited and happy and Abi looked exactly the same as well.

The lady even immediately got out of the car, not minding the rain and ran over to meet Elle halfway. Well, coincidentally, the rain had weakened since Alexander and Abigail arrived, and now the pouring rain had turned into a mere drizzle.

"Yo! Sebby!" Alexander approached Sebastian with a knowing smile on his face as the two ladies hugged and chatted animatedly with each other. From the way that they jumped straight into their conversation, it was as though they had not seen each other for ages already.

Sebastian tore his eyes off from his wife with much difficulty and looked at Alexander. "Don't you guys have any umbrella?" he asked, causing Alexander's brows to lift.

"What..." he leaned against Sebastian and whispered in a conspiratory manner, "...did we interrupt something?"

When Sebastian did not respond, Alex looked at him in amused disbelief. "Damn man, I already gave you almost an hour. I have already read your message an hour ago and stalled on purpose and yet here you are still looking so grumpy? Why haven't you gotten it on, boy?"

"We really need to go, Alex." Sebastian said as though he never heard a single thing Alex had just said. "My wife can't stay in the rain and get wet for long. She had just recovered from her sickness not too long ago."

And he walked towards the ladies, causing Alex to laugh out soundlessly and shook his head.

The short trip to Alex and Abi's house was loud and lively as Elle, Abigail, and Alex talked nonstop to each other. Their personalities matched each other and their topics of conversations flowed without a hitch, resulting in a cheerful and upbeat momentum.

Meanwhile, Sebastian who had been relegated to being the driver remained absolutely quiet until finally, the car drove in and parked in a garage. It had been quite foggy since they entered the village, so Elle was not able to see anything clearly of what the village looked like. She was actually quite curious and had been looking out the window from

time to time to have an idea of how the place was. However, not being able to see did not trouble her that much.

Elle and Abi continued chatting even after they got out of the car when Sebastian's voice rang.

"Iza!" he called out for Elle, causing everyone to look at the man who was already by the door, holding their luggage in his hands.

Him using that nickname again had Elle feeling a warm blush creeping across her face.

"You really need to get changed first. If you stay in those cold and drenched clothes any longer, you'll end up getting sick." He seemed to be trying his best to keep his voice and expression calm.

But it seems he had failed at his attempt as Alex and Abi pressed their lips together to stop their smiles. His sharp eyes could pick up the trembling of Alex's shoulders, knowing that the man was just short of bursting out into laughter.

"Geez..." Alex sighed, "this grumpy little devil..." Facing Elle, Alex smiled at her. "Go on Elle, or your husband will probably blow up or something if you don't go to him now."

Abi chuckled and gently shooed Elle towards her husband, looking at Elle with understanding. "Right, dear. Go on... we'll continue our chat later during dinner."

She winked at Elle and with that, Elle quickly went over to Sebastian. Once the duo entered the door, Alex chuckled. "Goodness, that little devil. I didn't know he could be this amusing."

"I'm really surprised too." Abi giggled and the two of them linked hands and entered the house as well to go prepare themselves for dinner.

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The sight that welcomed Elle and Sebastian the moment they went to the dining room was a heartwarming scene of a couple preparing the table together.

The apron on Alexander and his pulled-up sleeves told her that he must have helped Abi during the entire cooking process too. They were just so sweet in Elle's eyes, so happy and perfect together. They were, in Elle's opinion, the loveliest couple she had ever seen. So lovely that they were worthy of being envious of.

Soon, the four of them sat around the table. The dinner began and of course, the lively chatting continued especially between the two women.

"It's a holiday until tomorrow, so the kids are at their cousin's place right now. The twins always go to visit there when they don't have to go to school." Abi said when Elle asked about the twins' whereabouts. She had missed those two witty and lovely kids.

"Oh... I see... they must really love their cousin and the place."

"They love to stay there. Since we moved here four years ago, the twins had been frequently going there and now, they've fallen utterly in love with the place. Well, it's mostly because of their cousin too."

"Their cousin must be as lovely as the two of them."

"He is." Abi grinned.

"They'll be back here tomorrow night. We're going to go fetch them." Alex butted into their conversation shamelessly, smiling widely at Elle. "If you like, you are most welcome to come with us. I think you'll find the place fascinating too."

Elle smiled back. "I'd love to ..." she responded in excitement and turned to Sebastian, "we are following along with them, right? Seb..." she trailed off and her smile slowly faded at the expression she saw plastered on his face.

He instantly hid it well but Elle already saw it. He did not seem to like the idea of them going along with Alex and Abi to the place they were talking about.

This bonus chapter is dedicated to @Sacogun! Thank you so very much for the supergifts!

After the pleasant dinner, Alexander and Sebastian left the dining as Elle and Abi did the chores together. Amidst the laughter and chatter between the ladies, it was clear that they were enjoying themselves immensely.

The thick fog was gone when the two men stepped out of the main door. Even the moon had started to peek through the clouds and was shining up above along with the numerous stars that appeared in the dark sky after the thunderstorm.

"I need you to tell me the plans playing in your mind about this matter, Sebastian." Alex started without beating around the bush.

Sebastian brought his cigarette out and puffed out the smoke, staring up at the sky. He had messaged Alexander about this matter because he knew that Abigail was once as clueless as Izabelle about all these secrets they had.

He was still unsure of how to reveal everything to her. Or if it was even a wise thing to do. In his heart, he felt like it was too early. He was worried... really f**king worried. In fact, it was unbelievable how shaken he was now that the moment he promised her had come.

And the most shocking thing was the tinge of fear in his heart. Since they were getting closer to this town, his mind had started to scream at him, telling him that this was a bad decision. His mind was insisting that this would definitely push Izabelle away from him.

And then her terrified face from last night at the tub played over and over again in his head. What if this truth would only terrify her to the extreme? What if she...

"I'm not confident about the outcome." Sebastian finally spoke, his voice low and serious. "So, I'm seriously... hesitating right now. I believe it's still way too soon for her to learn about all these things."

Alex sighed but he looked at Sebastian with understanding. His expression held a message saying that he totally understood him.

"I understand, Sebastian. Of course, this wouldn't be easy. For now, I think you should stop thinking about this. Just relax and loosen up during your stay here, especially tonight and the whole day tomorrow. I really think that we should resume this talk after the festival tomorrow." Alex then suggested, reaching out and patting his shoulder in a gesture of comfort to the younger man. "For now, try not to overthink about anything. You're too tense, Sebby. You're really going to make her as tense as you are if you continue behaving like this."

Sebastian shut his eyes closed and exhaled heavily. He knew Alexander was right. He knew he could hardly hide anything from Izabelle lately.

"It's such a timely thing that you came during the festival. The last day and the most awaited day of the festival is tomorrow. You two should really just relax first and just enjoy the festivities. Everything can wait until later. I believe that Elle would love to spend a day just enjoying being with you on the outside. Do you guys have outfits ready for the festivities?"

"Outfits..." Sebastian echoed. His brows knotted together as he looked questioningly at Alex.

"Ah, I forgot you're that grumpy young man who never cared about these matters." Alex sighed like an old man disappointed with how clueless young men were about the old traditions. "It's the Masked Goddess Festival so everyone in town tomorrow is going to wear their own masks and long dresses. It'd be really such a convenient excuse for people like us so we can all blend in with everyone without any citizens noticing us. It's that time to be just like everyone so this is the perfect for you both to go out and let

loose out there. But for now, come on inside. We'd better go prepare your outfits for tomorrow."

Alex did not wait for him after he said those words and just left.

Staring up at the sky, Sebastian let out a deep breath. He was certain Isabelle would definitely love to go out there freely after all the days she had been kept cooped up inside the castle.

After taking a long time outside, Sebastian finally entered and found the trio gathered and continuing their discussion in the living room. Just as Alex had said, there were already boxes everywhere, containing outfits.

"Sebastian..." Elle smiled at him. "I've found something for you. I think this will look really good on you!" Her eyes sparkled as she spread out a royal blue robe for him to see. The festival was the time where women could dress up as the masked goddess and the men could wear long robes, representing the King who had stayed next to her in the legend.

"I wasn't able to use that a couple years ago as Abi suddenly decided to change outfits and I needed to match hers." Alex said as he looked at his wife.

"You're saying, outfits should match?" Sebastian asked.

"It's not a must of course."

Sebastian looked at Elle. "Where's yours?"

"Right here," Elle lifted the dress for him to see. It was also in a royal blue color.

Sebastian wordlessly took the robe from Elle and then sat next to her.

Alex, who was lazily sitting on the couch smirked in amusement.

"Now, let's make the masks. This one's the hardest part but we'll just recycle our previous masks for you guys to match with the colors.." Abi said and Elle joined her enthusiastically.

Abi decided to wear a silk face veil that covered up the lower half of her face and not one that was like the masquerade type.

"Which one would you like?" She asked Sebastian.

"I'm fine with anything." Was his answer, so Elle took the same-colored facial veil to try it on him.

"Let's try this one then." She said and carefully, she covered the lower half of his face with the veil, and then looked at him, only to pause at the realization that their faces were just inches apart.

Completely oblivious to the two pairs of eyes – silently screaming the word 'KISS' – that were surreptitiously glancing at them, Elle and Sebastian just held each other's gaze. Neither of them moved, nor looked away for an extended moment. It was as though the both of them had fallen into a spell and were frozen in time.

Anyone who would be looking at them in that moment would think that they would definitely kiss, even with the silk fabric that was now covering Sebastian's lower face. But seconds ticked by and nothing happened and neither Sebastian nor Izabelle moved.

Alexander, who was watching from the sidelines, began to grumble within his mind. 'Come on boy, kiss her already! What are you doing dragging your feet like this?!' He muttered wordlessly while Abi silently cheered like a reader rooting for her favorite ship to finally set sail. Her eyes were sparkling and it only made her already youthful face seem even younger looking.

That moment where a drum roll could already be heard in the background came. But just as they thought that the most awaited moment would finally happen, Sebastian suddenly spoke. "I don't think a face veil would suit me." It was as though the sound of glass cracking could be heard.

Alex rolled his eyes and face palmed. 'Good lord...!' he muttered like a disappointed old man. And he was about to say something when Abi pulled at his sleeves silently.

When Abi gestured for him to follow her, Alex immediately understood what his wife wanted him to do. Though a little reluctant, he could only follow her obediently like a puppy towards the kitchen.

"Let's give them some space," Abi whispered to him when they reached the kitchen.

Alex sighed. "They're moving slower than I expected. I don't think even we moved this slowly." he continued grumbling.

"But there had already been really such a big improvement since their wedding day," Abi defended them with a pleased smile. "I'm really glad to see that Sebastian is really into Elle with my own two eyes."

"Well, you're right about that at least. There's definitely been a lot of improvement since then. But I still can't believe that the two looked like they were still about to have their first kiss."

"Hmm... now that you mention it..." Abi suddenly gasped, and pulled Alex to the corner and whispered in a very serious expression. "I just remembered... I think I've overheard

from someone before that Sebby never kisses anyone... don't tell me, that really is true?!" Abigail's frown was deep and furrowed as she worried about this matter. Rubbing her forehead with her thumb and pointer, she shook her head.

Alex creased his brows as well upon seeing his wife frowning. He pursed his lips as he stroked his chin in contemplation, keeping silent for some time. But then his expression slowly changed. He looked as though something had dawned on him and now understanding shone in his eyes.

"I believe that what you heard must be true. That would be the only explanation behind his action a while ago. Sebby has traumas that he's hiding so perfectly and I'm afraid kissing might be one of his..." Alex trailed off at the sight of a sad and worried frown appearing across his wife's face.

"That's a bit..." Abi shook her head. "If they really have yet to kiss at all, I hope Sebastian has the decency to at least tell Elle about the reason why he is behaving this way."

"Let's hope he did." Alex pulled her into his embrace and consoled her as the couple continued chatting about Elle and Sebastian right in the dark corner of the kitchen.

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Back in the living room, Elle was surprised to see that Abi and Alexander were no longer with them. When did they slip away from the living room? Did they already go upstairs?

Elle was glancing around to look for the wall clock to check the time, when she saw Abi's family picture hanging at one corner. She was dressed in a yellow gown while Alexander was wearing a black robe embroidered with a golden dragon. Alice was cradled in Alexander's arms and was also dressed in a mini version of Abi's dress while Alexis stood right in front of Abi, dressed in the mini version robe of his father's.

The picture exudes a happy sweet family aura that Elle absentmindedly smiled at the sight of it. She then noticed the masks that were sticking out from the sides of their heads and she was surprised that Alexander and Alexis had worn a mask that looked so cute. It was a mask that looked like the face of a cat that could cover the entire face!

Rising from her seat, Elle went to rummage through the boxes Alexander had brought from their attic. She was so focused while she dug through the boxes, searching for something, while Sebastian just continued watching her silently.

"Aha. I found it!" she exclaimed and grinned animatedly at Sebastian before returning to rummage through the big box again. She was completely oblivious to how Sebastian reacted when she flashed that grin at him.

"Perfect! I've found the perfect one for you." She exclaimed but she did not show him the mask.

Hiding it behind her, she rushed to him and almost literally threw herself next to him. "Let's have you try this on." She added and without waiting for any approval from him, she put the mask on him, without letting him see its front design.

Elle nodded pleasantly as she pulled her head away and looked at him from every angle. "Looks great on you! Let's go with this one then." She decided, looking ever so pleased. And Sebastian just nodded, not even surprised anymore that it did not even tick him off anymore that someone else was deciding on things for him. He used to never tolerate letting anyone make decisions for him no matter how small it may seem.

This chapter is dedicated to @Ivette_M11. Thank you very much for the supergift!!!

"I think I'll need to paint on it to make it look more unique." Elle said as she studied the mask that was made of plastic. The size was somehow a perfect fit for Sebastian and she really thought that it was cute. The design was similar to the face of a panther who might have been grumpy at the time. It honestly made her think of Sebastian when she saw it. She really wanted to burst out laughing when she thought of the comparison. However, she managed to hold it in.

Pressing her lips together to hide her smile, Elle moved the mask away and continued staring at it. Thinking of the colors and decorations that were on their outfits, Elle drew more inspiration from them. "I just need to paint some parts blue to match our outfits." She muttered to herself and then she rose from her seat and rummaged through the boxes again.

Sebastian continued watching Elle as she kept herself busy. She had found a paint brush and some royal blue paint and now she was so utterly focused on her task of painting his mask. She had not realized that she was enjoying it so much, she was even humming a cheerful tune softly. But Sebastian who had his attention fully on her, noticed every single thing she did.

He was silent and unmoving and... relaxed. He could feel his usual frown relaxing, his tender muscles letting go and his entire frame just loosen up as he sat there and watched her. He never thought that just sitting there and watching Izabelle just moving about, doing something she seemed to really enjoy, could even be this relaxing. It was unbelievable how he felt like he could just sit here all night just watching her putter around and carry out her tasks until the sun rises again.

Time passed so quickly and unnoticed before she stretched her neck to the sides. Lifting her hand to her shoulders, she massaged it a little. At first the right side, then the left side, just to loosen her tight muscles as she had been overly focused and bent over

the mask that she had been decorating for the entire time. That made Sebastian think that she must be tired now.

Lifting his gaze to the clock, his brows creased at the sight of the hour hand hitting eleven. It was already so late. How did time run that fast?!

Looking at her again, Sebastian straightened and finally, he sprung from his seat and approached her.

He towered behind her and stared at the mask that she was still in the process of painting. She had even added some unique patterns on it.

Noticing him, Elle looked up at him and gave him a hesitant smile. "Does it look okay? Is it to your liking?" she asked. She seemed unsure if he would like the changes she had made. "Let me know if there's something you want to change."

"That's good enough." He replied. It did not look bad in his eyes. And to him, 'good enough' was the best compliment he could hand out, outside of the bed.

He saw her mouth pursed a little as she returned her gaze onto the mask. When she picked up her brush again, Sebastian spoke.

"It's late, Izabelle. It's time for you to rest. I'm sure you're tired. That's... already... more than enough."

"Really?" she looked up, looking a little doubtful.

"Really."

She stared into his eyes for a moment before she looked down at the mask again and to his relief, she finally put the paint brush down.

"Alright. I'll just tidy all these up. You can go back to our room first for now, Sebastian. I'll be there as soon as I'm done cleaning up here." She said casually as she started tidying away the art supplies she used.

He did not speak anymore so Elle thought that he had quietly left. But when she turned, what greeted her sight was, him picking up the masks and putting them back into the box.

Elle stilled and stared at him.

Noticing her gaze, Sebastian lifted his eyes to her. And dear lord... Elle felt her heart skipped a beat again the moment their gazes met.

Forcing a smile, Elle took the initiative to break eye contact first and continued on with her tasks.

Soon, they finished tidying up everything. Sebastian carried their outfits while Elle carefully held the mask to let it dry in their room overnight.

The feeling in Elle's chest at the moment was... hard to explain. This was the very first time the two of them did something like this together.

"I'm really excited for tomorrow." Elle broke the silence as she hung their outfits on the wall of their room. She was honestly starting to feel a little conscious. Somehow, everything seemed different tonight. Was it because they were in someone else's house?

"Then come over now and sleep. Or you won't have any energy to enjoy the festivities to your heart's content tomorrow." He replied. He was already lying on the bed, patting the mattress on the side that she was supposed to be on.

Elle secretly took a deep breath and went to turn the lights off.

She then climbed on the bed and laid next to him. The silence dragged on and she forced herself to sleep as she lay there, unmoving like a tensed corpse. Lord... she could not relax at all. It was like this was the first time she was sleeping with him again.

Turning to her side, Elle shut her eyes tightly closed, praying that sleep would come to her as soon as possible. But unfortunately, it did not and her body only grew more awake.

To her shocked surprise, his hand slipped around her waist and he spooned against her. Her body went very still at what he did.

"I think you need my help for you to relax and fall asleep, Izabelle." He whispered gently right into her ear.

The loud thudding of her heartbeats made Sebastian stay very still. Her reaction puzzled him and he did not like the way she became even tenser when he held her.

Why was she reacting this way? Did this mean that she was uncomfortable with him holding her like this?

Those questions that ran about in his mind had caused his expression to darken. He had started to become so conscious of her every reaction to him now, so unlike before. Even the slightest voluntary or involuntary movement of hers now no longer escapes his notice. And every little thing f**cking bothered him so much now.

"Tell me, Izabelle," he whispered, "am I making you uncomfortable?"

His question seemed to fluster her even more. That only caused his expression to become even darker.

"No..." she answered hesitantly but she immediately seemed to realize that he had managed to pick out the lie in her voice and therefore, added reluctantly, "just a little...."

"Why?" that one word was deep and full of curiosity.

"Because I'm still not really used to... this." Elle explained timidly, her hands helplessly gesturing in a vague manner that Sebastian could not quite figure out what she was trying to get across.

"This...??" he could only echo that word, prompting her to explain more so that he could understand.

"You and I haven't slept together in a bed that often... so... I can't help but be a little... nervous when you're here lying next to me. I just need some time to get used to it. I believe I'll get used to it quickly once we sleep together like this more often."

A short silence passed without Sebastian saying anything in response to her explanation.

"You really love playing around with me, Izabelle," he then said.

She moved to turn her head over her shoulder in surprise at his remark. "I'm not playing with..." her sentence got cut off as their eyes met.

"You refused to sleep with me and now you tell me we just need to sleep together more often –" Sebastian was getting confused. Why were her words so contradictory?

"Oh lord, Sebastian," Elle cut him off as she completely turned around and faced him. Her tone was full of disbelief. "I refused to have sex with you. That does not include just purely sleeping next to you. Those two things are totally not the same."

Sebastian was quiet again for a while. Elle could see that he was processing what she had just told him in his mind. It was dim as she had already turned the lights off and all she could see at the moment was his gleaming eyes.

"You're saying that you want us to sleep together more often. But... without sex...?" he sounded lost as he asked that, as though he could not even comprehend there was such a thing. And then he rolled over and laid onto his back, laughing exasperatedly. The sound of his disbelieving chuckle in the dark was so... it sent tingles down Elle's spines.

"You are asking for the impossible, Izabelle." He added and then he grumpily climbed off the bed.

"Where are you going –" Elle was flabbergasted at his sudden change of mood. This man's mood swings were even wilder compared to a woman's!

"Smoke." He cut her off. "Sleep while I'm outside. If you're still awake when I'm back, don't expect me to just lie next to you and literally sleep." Elle could sense a jab in his words there.

And then he was gone. Just like that. Leaving Elle speechless.

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Sebastian was smoking outside when Alex appeared, holding a bottle of alcohol in one hand and two glasses dangling between his fingers.

A knowing grin had flashed across his face as he shoved the bottle and glasses onto Sebastian. "Hold these, I'll go grab the chairs."

Frowning hard, Sebastian could only drop his cigarette and ground his heel to put it out. Sighing, he stretched his hand out and held onto the things that Alex gave him.

Soon, the two of them were seated on the chairs that were facing the garden.

"What is it?" Sebastian did not beat around the bush, immediately getting to the main point. "Did you change your mind and came to talk to me about the plan now?"

"Nah..." Alex sighed and took a generous swig from his glass before he continued, "I just decided to get down here since you're here and looking all troubled and obviously in need of some tête-à-tête with a wise old man."

"Wise old man..." Sebastian shook his head before gulping down his drink.

"I know you don't like to talk about personal matters at all... just so like someone else that I know, but I'm telling you, talking things out really helps Sebby." Alex's tone turned serious as he spoke. When Sebastian did not say anything, he continued. "And Abi and I are really happy to know you and your wife are really doing great."

Sebastian gulped the rest of his wine in his glass down at Alex's last sentence.

"We noticed Elle is much more at ease and comfortable now compared to when you first had her meet the entire family." Alex added once again as Sebastian still kept his mouth shut. And again, his response to what Alex had said was to refill his glass and gulp down another mouthful.

Alex pressed his lips tightly together and subtly drank. "You both seemed to really adore and desire each other now."

Another hard gulp from Sebastian and Alex could no longer stop his chuckle. "Hey, easy there. At this rate, you'll get drunk before you could even say a single word."

Sebastian whipped his head to Alex. His gaze did not look dazed drunk but surprisingly sharp and pissed off as hell.

"Tell me, Alexander. What does it mean when your wife refused to have sex with you..." he trailed off and pressed the heel of his palm against his forehead. F**k, he messed up. He knew Alexander brought out wine to loosen his tongue and make him talk. Yet... f**k it. He was really getting insane.

This chapter is dedicated to @Babsia! Thank you very much for the supergift!!!

Sebastian had been expecting an annoying grin or a chuckle from Alexander, knowing the man and his sense of humor. But unexpectedly, none of those came. And that was a shocking surprise - albeit a rather pleasant one.

He glanced at Alexander and saw him quietly refilling his own glass with a neutral expression. "Hmm... there are a lot of factors that could lead to that. But first, Sebby, are you sure you don't know the reason why though?" he asked, lifting his eyes to look straight into Sebastian's grey ones.

The look in Alexander's eyes was filled with genuine curiosity, something that Sebastian was totally not expecting.

Looking away, he stared up at the sky. This was strange to him, talking about such a private thing to someone else. Despite the amount of alcohol he had already downed to loosen up a little, his lips remained tightly shut. Alexander seemed to be aware of that though. And he spoke again as if he had already known in advance that Sebastian would no longer say anything more.

"If it's not because you had done something she wasn't okay with, then perhaps she might be wanting something else from you."

His words pulled at Sebastian's attention and his hand stopped mid-movement as he was about to take another swig of his drink.

"Maybe she wants it real and raw or nothing at all. My guess is because, knowing you, you're probably a little too shut closed even to her. Or you're not giving her the kind of trust and intimacy she must be longing for as your wife. And since I do know you, I believe you've been keeping her too much in the dark about all the more important things regarding yourself. I'm not really certain, as I don't know what's exactly the problem, but I believe the root is mostly because you don't say or explain a thing to her. You need to make her understand why you're not doing something or else she'd

overthink and come up with an answer all on her own. And believe me, women are just geniuses when it comes to cooking up things. That would definitely lead to more misunderstandings. Though the best thing still is for you to communicate and don't try to read her actions and thoughts on your own. You wouldn't know her thoughts. Ask her why instead. Ask her what it is that she wants or what's the problem." Alex was watching Sebastian's face like a hawk as he explained in those lengthy words of his.

It had immediately dawned on Alex the moment Sebastian blurted those words out that Abi's suspicion was right all along. That Sebastian had never even kissed his wife yet, and that he never explained why. Abi was certain Elle already had feelings for Sebastian and he was also certain Sebastian was already a goner for his wife. The two desired each other, and so much and that was freaking obvious. So, Alex could only deduce that it was definitely the reason.

Alex later left Sebastian alone outside and returned to their room.

He snuggled straight into the warm bed and pulled Abi close into his embrace, unintentionally waking her up.

"Where did you go?" she asked in a sleepy voice.

"Just had a drink and chatted with Sebby for a moment."

Abi blinked her sleepy eyes before it suddenly turned alert. She then looked at him curiously.

Without her even needing to ask, Alex could already read the questions in her eyes so he began telling her about their talk. Well, he just could not hide anything from his wife.

"What did he say?" she asked and Alex sighed.

"He didn't say anything. But he didn't need to. I know he got the message. Let's hope he'd try to say something and explain to Izabelle. But I'm afraid it would really be hard for him to open up about those things. Even the alcohol was not enough to make him talk."

Abi smiled with a lot of hope. "Love will do the magic on him, Alex," she said with quite the confident tone and Alex grinned back at his wife before kissing her mouth.

"Absolutely. Now why don't you start doing your love magic on me too, my love?" Alex purred and she climbed on top of him, smiling seductively as all traces of sleepiness were gone.

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The next morning Elle woke up early and since seeing that Sebastian was still deeply asleep in bed, she washed up and left the room and found Abi brewing some coffee in the kitchen. The two of them then went outside while drinking coffee and Elle was shocked at the scenery that appeared before her.

It was as though they were in the Alps, but she was quite sure they were not. To the east of the house, there was a range of tall, mighty mountains that had several dark peaks and an enchanting waterfall flowing down from it. To the west of the house, a vast field of flowers just spread before her eyes. Though they were wild flowers, Elle still thought they could not be more beautiful! To the north, there was a thick forest of pine trees that looked so cool and lush that it made her want to rush off to explore it as soon as she could. Abi and Alex's house was just so quaint and picturesque, situated in the middle of this amazing scenery - almost as though it were pulled out directly from a fairytale book! Theirs were the only house with ginger colored roof and white washed walls, while the other houses were the typical cottage styled variety.

Elle could not believe how beautiful the place was in daylight without the fog enveloping the entire village!

Too bad she could not stay out and watch the scenery longer as they needed to get ready for today's activities. She was not disappointed though, as Abi promised her that she would see the beauty of the village when they go out into town later on.

Later that morning, Alex and Sebastian were all dressed up impeccably in their royal robes while waiting for their wives to come out from getting themselves ready.

Sebastian looked bored as he sat there, staring at the mask that Elle had painted last night until he lifted his face and saw Izabelle coming out of the door.

A/N: Check out the image of Abi and alex's house on comment box or check my post in my instagram @kazzenlx.x

A royal blue gown made of a heavy satin material overlaid with a thin and light gauze of the same color wrapped perfectly around Elle's shapely body. It was a mermaid dress that was backless, with a deep V-neck and slim fit type and a long train dragging behind. The edges of the back were cinched in at the waist with embroidery of flower motifs, enhancing Elle's smooth and fair back. The front was revealing enough to show off her generous chest, but still maintained the elegance that needed to be carried for her position as the wife of the Crown Prince. As Sebastian looked at her face, he also noticed that there was a veil that had been strung across her face, from below her eyes and covered everything until just an inch below her chin and jawline. However, the material was a semi-transparent silk chiffon of a dark royal blue hue that complimented her dress perfectly and added an extra layer of allure to her already bewitching eyes.

Sebastian could not move an inch from his spot. His eyes were fixed onto nothing else but her.

Alex had long approached his wife and showered her praises before he also complimented on Elle's outfit as well. And then the trio just naturally started chatting animatedly.

"Now go to Sebby, Elle. He'd been sulking there on his own for a while now, waiting for you." Alex grinned, not minding his voice at all.

Elle's eyes widened before she blinked at Alex. "S-sulking? Why?" she was in disbelief. Well, because... Sebastian was sulking? No way! Sulking and Sebastian did not seem to go together in a sentence!

When Alex chuckled, Elle only then realized that the man was teasing Sebastian again. She laughed soundlessly and finally she turned towards her husband. He was sitting right on his chair, posture straight and at attention as his gaze was intently fixed on her alone.

A small smile tugged at the corner of Elle's lips before she began to approach him unhurriedly. Since this morning, Sebastian had not yet talked to her even once. His mind seemed to be occupied with something else and she had wondered if it was because of last night's happening between them.

But Elle decided not to think of anything negative and sad. At least for today, she will enjoy this festival like everyone else.

"How's my outfit?" she asked and gave an experimental twirl around before standing still right before him.

His gaze finally traveled down from her eyes. His gaze was so intense that she felt her cheeks turning a little hot as he eyed her from head to toe.

He nodded.

Elle was expecting for him to say something else after the nod but nothing came. Blinking, Elle could only force out an awkward smile before turning her attention to the mask on the table. She was oblivious of the scene that was happening behind her where Alexander was facepalming and shaking his head.

"Let's have you wear this so we can finally go." Elle took the mask and bent closer to him. Her delicate fingers brushed against his ears and then his hair as she tied the lace at the back of his head, taking care to not catch and pull on his hair by accident.

Once she was done, she looked at the grumpy mask on his face and barely managed to hold back a smile. "Okay, let's go!" she unceremoniously took his hand and turned to

Alex and Abi. "We're ready!" she excitedly told the couple as she tugged the man behind her. It was obvious to everyone that Elle was beyond excited to finally go to the town and enjoy the festival.

In fact, she truly was looking forward to it. She felt her inner child being so stimulated and excited by the thought of a festival that she could not stop smiling. And that was despite the fact that she was lugging around a quiet and seemingly bored-out-of-his-wits man along with her. She could hardly wait to experience enjoying a festival without any care and worry of eyes and cameras trailing after her.

Their car stopped at a vast flower field along the road. It was a garden of many different flowers solely for the purpose of the festival. The garden Alex chose was the most expensive one, not only because of the quality of flowers but also because there were only very few people in it.

"As per tradition of the Masked Goddess Festival, the male partners are to pick flowers by themselves and have the flowers made into a crown for their lover." Abi continued her explanation as the four of them headed to the garden's entrance. "According to the tale of the Masked Goddess, the relationship between the goddess and the mortal king was forbidden. When the two became lovers, the consequence was for the goddess to disappear from the King's vision forever. The king could never see her again even if she were to be there next to him. But the goddess somehow found a way for her not to disappear from his sight forever. All the king should do was to make her a crown of flowers every single day before the flower wilts. That's the story of this tradition. And it's really such a heartwarming and lovely thing."

"Wow, that's indeed a beautiful tale." Elle nodded, smiling as she clapped softly to herself. She was about to ask more about that tale when a gardener approached them and spoke with the males, instructing them about how to pick the flowers the right way.

Glancing over at Sebastian, Elle was curious as to what could be his reaction right now. Because oh dear... Sebastian was going to pick flowers!!

Somehow, just imagining it, already had her pressing her lips tightly together. She did not expect picking flowers as part of their itinerary. And that only made everything even more exciting.

Leaning against Abi, Elle whispered. "Can I borrow your phone, Abi? I think I need to capture this rare occasion of Sebastian picking flowers. I didn't bring my phone along because there was nowhere I could stash it anyway." She whispered, giggling a little.

"Of course, I got you, girl. Here you go." Abi immediately gave her a pocket camera.

A/N: Check Elle's outfit in comment box. Or go to my instagram for the HD photo.

This chapter is dedicated to @Sacogun! Thank you so much for the supergift!

The couples then separated and went their own way as the gardeners brought them to different areas according to the flower they were looking for.

Because Elle's outfit was blue, the gardener brought them to the area where the blue flowers were at.

"You can sit here and wait, ma'am, as we cannot risk your dress getting caught onto something sharp or pointy. It would be a shame if such an exquisite dress get ruined." The gardener politely told her. "It'll be enough for Sir here to go pick the flowers by himself while you watch over him."

After Elle nodded, the gardener then left them.

She smiled at Sebastian and he quietly moved to carry out his task that had been assigned to him. She really wished she could see his face and observe what kind of expression he was wearing right now behind his mask. Could he be annoyed, expressionless, bored, or just grumpy like his mask?

Elle could only sit there and secretly lift the camera that had been lent to get by Abi, once Sebastian was far enough. When he started bending over slightly to pick the flowers, she took a shot of him, a bright smile flashing across her face.

The sky was so blue and clear that if one looked straight up, their eyes would water and they would be forced to squint. She could smell the scent of the flowers lightly perfuming the air, hear the gentle chirp and melody of the birds from afar and feel the soothing, mind-calming ambience of the surroundings. Everything right now was just pure perfection.

Soon, she watched him return to her with a bouquet of blue flowers in his hand. She could not help but beam at him, even if she knew that the gesture was due to the requirement of the festival needing the males to perform this way. It was still somewhat unbelievable to her... all these... him with her and they being in a field of flowers, with him picking those blue little pretty things for her to wear.

He sat next to her before showing her the flowers in his hands. "I'm not sure which one you'd like most, so I had just picked all the types of blue flowers I could find. Is this enough?"

Elle was so tempted to reach out and lift his mask. But she curbed her desires and just smiled as she looked at the flowers. She felt really relaxed that her body, mind and heart seemed so light and carefree that she could almost float away. Perhaps, his mask

that concealed his face helped for her to not overthink if she saw an expression from him that could throw her off from this bliss.

"Hmm... let's see. I think so. These are all so beautiful, Sebastian." Elle just had to gush over the flowers as they were all so pretty!

He fell silent so Elle lifted her head to look at him when he suddenly averted his gaze. "Take this. I'll go get more, just in case it's not enough."

When the two couples finally met up, Alexander laughed out loud.

"What the hell, Sebby!? Did you plan on picking all the flowers available? What are you going to do with those? Make a whole bed of blue flowers?" Alex teased. "No wonder you both took so long!"

Sebastian looked at Elle and she just innocently giggled, not bothering to give any excuse. She did not stop Sebastian when he insisted to go pick more because she wanted to watch him for a bit longer. It was so rare that she could just spend some quiet time, watching his handsome figure bending over and doing such a simple yet meaningful action as plucking flowers for her. She did not know when this would happen again - if ever - thus the reason why she did not stop him.

They waited for the gardeners to make the crown and once it had arrived, the gardeners asked the men to put the crowns over their partner's head.

"I'll take a photo of you both." Abi offered and Alex quickly understood the assignment and began to become the assistant to the photographer.

"Sebby, don't just stand there, put your hand around her waist, man!" Alex said rather aggrievedly, wondering why he was such a block of wood.

Sebastian glanced at him but he eventually did as Alex suggested.

"No, not enough. You both should face each other and hold onto each other. Yes, just like that! Sebby, lower your head! Closer, boy! What the hell's wrong with you, Sebastian?!"

Elle could not help but chuckle softly while Sebastian whipped his head around and glared at Alex.

"I should be the one asking you that, Alexander. What the hell's wrong with you, suddenly yelling all crazy and testy in the middle of a flower field like that?" Sebastian finally retorted.

"It's because you're just so annoying, you little devil. You can't even pose properly. I told you to hold your wife closer! Position yourselves like you both are about to kiss, damn it!" Alex was literally roaring at this point.

Alexander's last line had both Elle and Sebastian stilled as their eyes met. Elle's smile slowly faded and all of a sudden, the air between them seemed to change from light to something sparkling. Kiss... the word echoed in her mind. Will Sebastian... ever kiss her?

She did not know how many seconds or even minutes had passed until they both snapped out of their daze and looked at the now suddenly quiet assistant photographer. Only to see the couple grinning at them and giving them a thumbs up.

"Perfect!" Abi told them and Elle rushed over to Abi to grab the camera from her hands.

"Your turn now." Elle beamed and Alex excitedly grabbed Abi for the photoshoot.

"Watch me, boy." He told Sebastian before he lifted Abi in his arms like a princess and then twirled her around before he lifted his mask right above his nose and kissed her smack on the lips right before them.

Alex smugly glanced at Sebastian after that before they all finally headed out of the garden. It was time for them to go to the heart of the town to enjoy the main courses of the festival.

But on their way to the entrance, other people started to arrive and it did not escape Sebastian's notice how the men all stared at Izabelle's bare back and his face darkened beneath his mask.

He threw the men a deadly glare before he took his robe off and draped it over Elle's shoulders, effectively covering the view of her tantalizing back.

When she looked up at him, he immediately uttered, "You might catch a cold."

Elle blinked but she eventually smiled. "I actually have a robe. I'll wear it once we're in town. My dress looks pretty eye-catching so I need to tone it down so as not to draw too much attention. Abi and I also have our sneakers to put on." She explained and he nodded in approval before helping her inside the car. It was time for them to go to town.

Elle's mouth was slightly parted as she stood there, looking at everything around her. Brightly lit and lively stalls were everywhere, many people in colorful dresses inspired by ancient fashions crowded the streets, and the sound of pleasant classical music echoed all about them, lending a relaxed and antiquated mood to the whole festival.

Everything gave off the vibe of a festival from a bygone era, but there still was a touch of something modern. And it was nothing short of amazing in Elle's eyes. Abi had told

her that the people in this town were still very much into old things and now that she was seeing it all with her own two eyes, it was true.

She felt like she had been sent back into the past and she could not help the excitement that surged through her even more. She could barely contain herself from riding off to roam around and take a look at what all those stalls were offering!

A few minutes after the four of them began to join the crowd, Elle did not know how it happened, but she somehow ended up walking next to Abi. She was happy with how it turned out though.

Locking her arm around Abi's arm, the two of them excitedly entered every stall that grabbed their attention. They looked for interesting items, souvenirs and of course food. All the vibrant colors and tantalising smells were causing them to salivate.

"Mmm... this is so so good!" Elle's eyes circled wide as she looked at Abi.

"I knew you'd love this one." Abi smiled as they enjoyed the street food they just bought. "This is the town's specialty, in fact. I loved this the first time I tasted it."

When Abi turned to look at the two men who were walking a few steps away from them, Elle finally looked at Sebastian as well. She had... momentarily forgotten about him!

The two of them approached their respective husbands with the sticks of food they were eating. Alex met Abi half-way and immediately placed his hand over Abi's and ate from Abi's stick enthusiastically, all the while grinning at his wife.

Sebastian on the other hand did not move from his spot and waited for Elle to approach him. "You have to taste this, Sebastian. It's so... so good!" Elle excitedly told him as she lifted the food up and nearer to his mouth.

Lifting his mask slightly, Sebastian took a bite.

Elle looked at him with doe eyes, excitedly waiting for his reaction and comments.

When Sebastian nodded, Elle's smile widened. "Delicious, right?!"

"Not bad." Sebastian replied with a nod of his head once he was done chewing.

His seemingly bland response did not even seem to bother Elle and after feeding him once more, she ran off to join Abi once again, leaving her husband behind, just trailing after them.

A few minutes later, Elle came back to him again with another stick of food in her hand.

"Taste this one too. It's sooo good!" she said with twinkling eyes and all Sebastian could do was eat what she was offering him. The same thing happened many more times until Sebastian felt like he could no longer eat even a single extra bite anymore.

Alex was chuckling next to him. "Now are you regretting the consequence of you delaying your secret reveal to her, Sebby? If she'd known your secret, you wouldn't be getting fed so much right now, would you?" Alex laughed and before Sebastian could even respond, they both heard her call out Sebastian's name again.

"Here she comes again. My condolence Sebby," Alex laughed pitifully at Sebastian before subtly walking away from them.

"This one's so good too, have a..." Elle paused when Sebastian suddenly caught her hand.

"I'm full, Izabelle." He told her, causing Elle to blink, her smile fading a little.

"Oh... okay. How about drinks then?" she perked up, thinking that he might need something to drink.

The moment he nodded, she immediately left and joined Alex and Abi, who were about to sneak off by themselves.

Later, Alex was back to Sebastian's side as Elle had managed to snatch his wife away from him once again.

Glancing at Sebastian, he sighed helplessly.

Sebastian's eyes were literally glued on Elle. As though it would kill him if he took his eyes off her even for a moment.

"I'm not happy at all with this arrangement. Your wife keeps stealing Abi away. Do something, man." Alex pretended to grumble. "Don't just stand here like some frigid bodyguard. You're supposed to be with her and enjoy the festival together! As a couple!" Alex could not help but stress on that word 'couple'.

"She won't be able to enjoy this much and let herself loose like this if I'm the only one with her." Sebastian replied in serious tone. "So, lend your wife to her a bit more, Alexander."

His words had Alex falling speechless for a moment. He had not expected such a reply from Sebastian.

Sighing again, Alex shoved his hands into his pants pockets and tilted his head towards him. "How would you even know that? What if she'd enjoyed it more if you joined her?"

Sebastian was quiet and did not reply but Alex got the message. This little devil did not think so.

"I'll only lend my wife until sunset, Sebastian. So, you better start loosening up now so you can join her later. Come on man, you're not here as her bodyguard. You're here as your goddess' lover. Please get that through your thick skull."

"I still need to be on guard especially with everyone in disguises. Someone needs –"

"Sebastian." Alex cut him off. All traces of mischief were gone from his voice. "Where do you think you are right now? It seems you've forgotten that this town is under my and Abi's territory now. It has been that way since four years ago. I assure you that nothing of the sort will happen if that's what you're worrying about."

Chapter 120 Enchanting

Bunos chapter dedicated to @Ivette_M11!!! Thank you so very much once again for the supergift!!! <3

Sunset came quickly and just as Alex had told Sebastian, he gave no apologies as he snatched back his wife from Elle and the two disappeared immediately after. Of course, Elle was not aware of the deal that had gone on between the two men, that even after a while, she was still looking around hoping to spot Abi somewhere.

She had enjoyed herself to the fullest for the past few hours. The food they tasted, and the games and everything... she had laughed so much and enjoyed her time immensely. She could not even remember when was the last time she had enjoyed herself so thoroughly like this.

"Don't look for Abigail anymore. Alexander said that he'd only lend his wife to you until sunset." Sebastian spilled the beans so unceremoniously that Elle gaped at him for a moment before bursting out into laughter.

"He... really said that?!" Elle asked after she managed to stop laughing, wiping at the tears that leaked out from the corners of her eyes.

When Sebastian nodded, Elle covered her mouth with her hands. "Oh dear, really?! Oh no... Alexander must've been pissed that I've monopolized Abi the whole time! Was he really upset?"

Elle probed Sebastian. She suddenly realized that it was quite rude of her to intrude into their couple time together as this festival was about celebrating couples in the first place. She had thought Alexander was totally fine about her monopolizing Abi! She had

asked Abi too, actually, but Abi told her it's totally fine because Alexander will be hanging out with Sebastian.

Seeing that she was embarrassed and a little worried, Sebastian grabbed her hand and led her somewhere else though he really did not know where to even bring her. "Don't worry. He's not pissed at all. He already vented his frustration on me by bothering me with all his antics."

That made Elle smile in relief and she sighed. She knew Alexander wouldn't be so petty to get upset but still, should really thank Alexander when she sees them later for lending Abi to her.

"Where are we going?" she asked Sebastian when they just kept walking ahead between the stalls.

He stopped and faced a stall. Only to belatedly realize that it was a liquor stall.

Sebastian was about to continue walking but Elle was already being sales-talked by a middle-aged lady offering her a delicious, fruity-tasting liquor.

"This is perfect for the lantern event later on, miss. As per tradition, you and your lover need to have a drink as you watch your lantern fly into the sky!" the woman said animatedly and Elle was totally sold on it.

"Lantern event? There's a lantern event?!" her eyes widened, sparkling excitedly when hearing that there was such an interesting thing happening later.

"Oh my, you're not aware of it? No wonder you two are still strolling around here when every other couple must be already preparing for it! Alright leave it to me. Give me a few minutes, my dear." The lady headed back into her stall and when she returned, she was holding a basket.

"Everything is here now. A delicious liquor, two glasses, a thin mattress and the lantern and its accessories!" The lady talked fast, explaining everything to Sebastian and Elle in one breath. "But wait, since it seems you both are visitors here, let me brief you both a little. Listen here lady, you both must fly your lantern together and then you two must kiss before the lantern is high enough, you hear me young woman? Do not forget the kiss or your relationship will be cursed. Now after the kiss, you two must enjoy your liquor while watching the floating lanterns. Remember to do it step by step, understood? Now for the payment, everything totaled up to a thousand bucks."

While Elle was still processing what she just heard, the lady put the basket in her hand and then stretched her palm out for the payment.

Elle turned to Sebastian and whispered to him. "It's a thousand bucks..."

Sebastian brought his wallet out only to find that he only had a few hundred with him.

Their eyes met and Elle blinked at him.

Approaching the sales lady, Sebastian spoke to her in a low tone. "Do you accept cards?"

"Oh, no cards are used, young man. Sorry, but we hate cards here." The lady moved towards Elle and took the basket back from her hands before turning back to her stall, muttering some inaudible words, which Elle suspects were to scold them.

Sebastian saw Elle pursing her lips as she watched the lady's back.

And before he knew it, he stopped the lady.

"We'll take this." He said but the lady frowned at him.

"You don't even have money to buy them. You go to another stall and see if anyone accepts cards. But I don't think –"

"I'll pay you later... triple or more. Whatever you want."

"Look here, young man. You think you can fool me..." the lady trailed off as Sebastian took his mask off and stared at her. Her mouth slowly turned agape.

"I'm sure you know who I am." he said and then he took his wrist watch off. "Here, take this as collateral. I'll have someone find you and pay you later."

"Sebastian..." Elle butted in when she saw him giving his very expensive watch to the lady. "No, it's okay, really. You don't need to..."

"It's fine." Sebastian glanced at her and then took the basket back from the lady after placing the watch on her palm.

"Seb... that's –"

"I said it's fine." He pulled her away from the stall as Elle hesitantly followed after him, constantly looking back at the lady who was still staring at them, her palms still held out with Sebastian's watch sitting on it.

"We'll just need to find Abi and Alexander to borrow some money from them first."

As Elle nagged at him, a couple rushed past them. "Hurry! The lantern event is about to start!" the woman said and then she watched them rush off ahead of them.

Suddenly, she pulled on Sebastian's hand and followed the couple rushing on ahead.

They arrived at an open space. Many couples were already seated on their mattresses on the grass.

The lantern event had already started as they saw some couples already lighting up their lanterns.

"Let's go Seb!" Elle pulled on him again and once she found a good space, she quickly grabbed the mattress and spread it on the ground. Then she took the lantern. "Do you know how to –"

"Relax, Izabelle. This is not a race." He reminded her calmly and then he rummaged for something in the basket.

"Sorry, I can't help my excitement." She told him as she watched him prepare their lantern.

He smiled behind his mask and then soon, he lifted his gaze at her. "Ready?" he asked and when her eyes twinkled as she nodded, Sebastian lit the lantern up.

Many other lanterns had already started floating upwards around them as the two of them stood, the lantern was between them as they both held onto it.

"Wow, this is amazing..." she whispered as she looked at their lantern. The soft glow of the light from the lantern's candle illuminated her face and had Sebastian unable to tear his gaze away from her.

"Do you know if we need to make a wish or something before letting this go?" she asked him, eyes gleaming so brightly as she looked up at him.

"I think... yes," he replied and with that, she closed her eyes.

Sebastian did not know why he had said that. He actually did not know about the traditions of this festival at all. It was just something he had blurted out after hearing her question.

As she made her wish, Sebastian could only stand there, watching her like she was the only thing he could see in that moment.

When she opened her eyes, she smiled at him and then, they both let the lantern float up.

Their eyes watched it until it was flying along with the others. The sky that was now filled with floating, beautiful lanterns looks so magical. Enchanting and romantic. It was so breathtaking that Elle could not stop smiling, until she remembered the stall lady's words. That they must kiss.

Her smile faded as she shifted her gaze from the lanterns to the man before her.

And then slowly, she reached out.