

Hellbound Heart #Chapter 51 -60

This bunos chapter is dedicated to @Sacogun and @Ivette_M11! TYSM for the supergifts! <3

As Elle watched Elijah sauntered off the dance floor as though all the earlier drama had not happened, she could not help but think how incredibly confusing this person was. Something in him truly make one wonder if he was actually a friend or an enemy. She could not quite tell if he was truly evil or not – even after being so physically close to him while they were dancing and conversing at the same time. r

This was the first time she had ever felt so comfortable with someone and at the same time, feeling as though she wanted to run away from him like her very life was in danger. This was the first time she had met someone that could scare her to bits and then make her feel so bad for him like this – all in the same breath. r

Her thoughts and gaze were immediately pulled away from Elijah's retreating back as Sebastian scooped her up into his arms in one swift movement. The action gave her a shock and she let out a small gasp before she could even have the presence of mind to hold it back.r

Elle naturally curled her arms around his neck and finally looked up at him. But she could not quite see his face clearly from this angle. All she could see was the tight set of his sharp jaw. r

"Seb... Sebastian... Elijah had asked you to stay on for a bit longer." She said out in a low voice because Sebastian had not brought her back to their table. He was striding swiftly towards the entrance instead. "I think we should stay back a little... even if it were just for a few more minutes. I mean... since you are here already." r

She had thought about the words that Elijah had said. That this was the first time ever that Sebastian had attended his birthday was the main reason why Elle was saying this. No matter what Elijah had done to her, he had already apologized for it. Furthermore, he had not hurt her. She still hoped that Sebastian would grant him his wish and stay even for a bit longer. r

"Sebastian..." she called out to him again and his hold on her tightened a little before he finally halted in his steps, making her breathe out in relief. r

Finally, he looked down at her. His jaws tight, his eyes cold and stormy.r

He was not wearing any mask as per the theme of the party. His dark hair was tousled as if he had driven over for miles with his car windows opened. And yet, that tussled dark hair did not make him look any less gorgeous. In fact, it even made him looked

more attractive – like some rogue underground prince on the run. His intense metallic grey eyes bored into hers and she could not help that her heartbeats responded to that alluring picture he made by dancing around in chaos.r

"Please put me down... let's go back to our table..." she trailed off as he finally put her down.r

"Just fifteen minutes." He finally caved in. His dark mood did not seem to positively improve. Elle could tell that he had just forcefully buried and restrained whatever dark emotion deep within himself. r

He grabbed her hand and pulled her towards where the champagnes and wines were served. Grabbing a glass, he sipped on it first before handing it over to her. r

Elle blinked at him before she accepted the glass and slowly drunk it while looking at him over the rim of her glass. Why had he tasted it first? Could it be... that he was testing it for poison? Realizing that it might be the case, her heart skipped a beat as a warmth flowed through her. She tried to compose herself by sipping quicker on her wine. But why would someone put poison...r

"More?" He asked when he saw that she was almost done with her drink, cutting her thoughts off.r

When Elle shook her head, Sebastian led her back to their table. He sat quietly. His focus was fully on the dancefloor, but he seemed not to be watching. There was a slightly blank look in his eyes that Elle caught, telling her that he was lost in his own thoughts. He looked like he could not wait for the fifteen minutes to be over so they could finally leave the place. r

Then an unexpected announcement echoed within the hall. "Let's have our most special guests for tonight take the dance floor. Please give Prince Sebastian and his lovely wife an applause everyone!"r

Elle shot her eyes towards Sebastian, widening at the unexpected announcement. That was... certainly a surprise. r

Sebastian did not turn to look at her. He simply stared at the stage but then, he unexpectedly stood up, causing Elle's heart to pump uncontrollably hard. r

He faced her and offered her his hand. r

Elle stared down at his gloved hand as she tried to stay calm. She told herself that just like her, Sebastian must be thinking that this was their chance to shut down the rumor mill. Right, she still could not quite get over what Elijah had said earlier. There were already rumors flying around about them. So, they must shut it down now. This was a chance.r

Lifting her hand, Elle finally rested hers into his outstretched ones.r

When they stood there on the dancefloor, facing each other, Elle maintained her gaze on their hands. Her heartbeat was not calming down no matter what she told herself.r

A beautiful music started playing as she placed her hand on his shoulder and then their waltz began. r

Sebastian could dance! And he could dance really well! Well, she already knew that he could, because it was kind of expected as he was a royal – a crown prince even. But she had expected him to only be the type who mastered the textbook type of waltz, just like her. But dear, was she ever wrong. He may not be as mastered and choreographed as Elijah, but he danced with such lazy grace. The way he held her made the dance seemed so easy, so light, that she almost felt like she was flying. r

When Elle made the first turn, she was brought so much closer to him that the moment their eyes met, Elle felt like something had jolted her heart. r

But she smiled it out, trying to distract herself. She was trying hard to not get lost in those wonderful eyes of his. r

"Why... did you come over here?" she suddenly asked him.r

Background music: Adam Hurst's Midnight Waltz

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Something flashed in Sebastian's eyes at Elle's question. But she did not manage to read whatever it was that was in his eyes, as he had already led her to take a reverse turn immediately after that, followed by cross steps. The turn was just perfect... just as perfect as him. r

And before she could even realize it, she was smiling in awe at him, her eyes sparkled as they looked up into his own grey ones. She could not quite believe how their bodies were moving in such harmony. It was as if this was not the first time that they were dancing but the hundredth time. There seemed to be a tacit understanding every time either she or he looked at the other and their next move just flowed as though it had been done hundreds of times before.r

She could not believe how smooth every glide was. How graceful every movement they took and how natural and effortless every step and turns were. Perfection. That was the only word she could think about if one would ask her to describe it. They were pure perfection.r

Everyone who were present at the party except for the two of them, had long since disappeared. The question that was torn from her mouth earlier had been long

forgotten. Abandoned in favor of experiencing more of this magical moment she was sharing with Sebastian. r

There was just the two of them dancing in the dark, under the stary night sky. r

Elle could not take her eyes off his. She had been effectively caught again by his gaze. She had underestimated the intimacy a dance could bring. She had so wrongly thought that this dance would be no different from the one she had shared with Elijah. r

But here she was now, caught under his spell. Though knowing, she was somehow not wanting to get out of it. She knew she would not be able to break free until he deemed that the dance was over. And the worse thing was that she did not want the dance to end yet. She was reluctant.r

The restrained dark emotions in his eyes seemed to be completely gone now. He was staring at her like nothing else in the world mattered but her. And as the seconds passed, his gaze just kept intensifying as it continued focusing on her. His grey eyes had taken on a luster so bright that it was impossible for her to draw her eyes away. The occasional touch of his breath against her cheek, and the closeness of their bodies brushing up against each other so intimately, all of it were only making her face and entire body heat up way beyond what she was expecting to. And suddenly, she was reminded of his touch when he had held her that night. r

"My... my question... you're not going to answer it?" she stammered out, forcing herself to ask him that question again. She wanted to erase the erotic scene that had just flashed in her mind. r

Another graceful turn before he drew her even closer, she was now literally pressed right up against him. r

Her eyes widened as she blushed harder, her heart skipping a beat. "Sebastian..." she called out. "Uhm... I think... people might..."r

"Might what?" he whispered so close in her ear. "Did you forget that I'm your husband, huh? Izabelle?" r

Oh Lord... why would you need to talk so huskily like that? That ticklish and velvety feeling brushing over the insides on her ears was just...r

"It seems as though leaving you on your own for a few days turned out to be a bad idea, isn't it? To think you'd even forget –" Sebastian's deep mellow voice continuously rumbled into her ears as he spoke. Elle was thrown for a loop as she felt as though he was suddenly being so relaxed around her, going as far as to tease her.r

"W-what are you saying? Who would forget someone like..." she stammered out, not realizing what she had revealed at first. But when she did, her voice had trailed off,

blushing extra hard at the intoxicating and irresistible sight of that dimple that had flashed into being, gracing his face. r

"Someone like me?" he supplied, finishing her incomplete statement. The tone of voice somehow communicated to her the feeling of him being extremely pleased and satisfied with something. Narrowing her eyes just a fraction as she looked at him, she noticed that he now looked genuinely amused as his grey eyes appeared to be like they were gleaming. Why was he... no... he must just be acting right now, isn't he? It must be because people were still watching them. He must be doing all these just for the sake of keeping up the pretenses. Sebastian was amusedly teasing her and being so intimate with her like this, all because everyone's eyes were on them. r

Elle had somehow convinced herself. She understood and nodded, knowing that as husband and wife who had just gotten married not too long ago, he must have felt the need to keep up the fantasy that they were madly in love with each other.r

"You, cocky prince." She rode with the flow, chuckling quietly, but she had also really wanted to say that because she honestly thought that he really was. "You are actually right. I had almost forgotten that I am actually married for the last three days." r

His pleased smile immediately faded, causing her to blink in surprise at the sudden change in facial expressions. She had even felt a sudden cold breeze that sent a tiny shiver down her back. Err... Huh? What was with his current expression? Oh... wait! Is this another act that he was putting on? If so, she needed to be quick on the uptake and go with the flow. It would not be good for the both of them to be on different pages.r

"But it's a good thing that you came back tonight," she continued the teasing, grinning at him with a bright and wide smile. "Because if you had not, I might have even forgotten your name when I wake up tomorrow." r

Elle was expecting a cocky or arrogant retort from him, but surprisingly, it did not come even after she waited the normal time for him to respond. His expression had actually darkened, shocking and confusing her for real now. r

Oh dear... could it be that she had gone too far? But there was no way, right? She had not said anything wrong...r

Sebastian led her to another graceful turn and then suddenly the dance seemed to become even sexier. Like something incredibly sensual had suddenly sparked between them both.r

And then he finally spoke. "How naughty of you Izabelle... to say such a thing right into your husband's very face. You better prepare yourself well because from here on out I am going to..." he paused for a moment and when he continued, his voice was so deep and raspy, "...stick with you all night... and day until you will never be able to forget about the existence of your husband ever again. Be it awake or asleep."r

53 Nickname

Goose bumps rose on Elle's neck and back due to the implied meaning from his words. Her pulse skittering and missing a couple of beats, as was reflected along with their dance.

Their eyes held each other's as their bodies finally stilled from the swaying and spinning. Elle's breath was a little labored, but she knew it was not because of the unforgettable dance that they had just shared together. It was more due to her poor little heart that had been attacked quite vigorously by those last words of his. Those words had really shaken her resolve up quite badly.

And because of that, her heart and mind had descended into a heated war yet again. The former kept insisting that there was no way his words were not serious, but the latter was hellbent on arguing that it was nothing but an act.

Elle was so torn for a few moments, not knowing to listen to the angel or devil part of her. But in the end, once again, her brain – the more logical side of her – had finally won the battle. All she had to do was remind herself of that night again. That avalanche of awful feeling that came lancing through her, immediately and cruelly after the pleasure. She will never let herself naively go through that again. She had made a promise to herself that she would never fall for the words that comes out from the exact same lips that had called out for another woman's name while he was still sleeping next to her. And those very same lips that could not even kiss her own.

Effectively shutting her heart off, a naughty smile curved on her face. "Oh my... should I start running away from you now?" she continued playing along as they both finally stepped off the dance floor. Both were completely unaware how the two of them had enthralled everyone with their romantic waltz. Even as the couple sauntered away from the dance floor, all eyes were still focused on their figures. Wonder, intrigue, envy, and disbelief – different emotions were flashing across the many different eyes trailing after them.

"Go on." Sebastian leaned closer into to her as he uttered his response, not even bothered to whisper anymore. "Run if you can, my dear wife. Try me..."

Elle stumbled at that last line. Her treacherous heart betraying her again, before it was being reigned in by her mind. Thankfully Sebastian had moved so quickly that no one even noticed her slight misstep. Oh lord! T-this man!

"S-such confidence." She managed to click her tongue playfully at him as she regained her composure, willing her racing heart to slow its pace. "You might not be aware, but I run pretty fast, Sebastian."

He smirked. His lips opened and said something, but she could not quite catch it because the host's voice suddenly echoed loudly over the hall.

"That was such a surreal dance!" the host exclaimed with pleasure, and everyone clapped, following his hint. Their late reaction had Elle blinking at first but then she blushed hard when she was reminded again of the intimacy of their dance right in front of all these inquisitive eyes.

Instead of letting Elle settle on her seat, Sebastian smoothly grabbed his coat off the back of his chair and turned to face her.

"Your requested fifteen minutes is over, my dear." he reminded her, seemingly quite certain that she had completely forgotten about this one little thing. And before Elle could even react, Elijah's voice had sounded from behind her.

"Leaving already, brother? Why don't you let Elle enjoy the party a little bit more? She seems to be enjoying herself quite a bit." he commented rather casually. Sebastian's brows furrowed as he noticed the way his brother had referred to his wife. His face darkened as the earlier light and playful mood surrounding him suddenly dropped and the atmosphere grew heavy and cold.

Elle too, was surprised that Elijah had called her by her nickname. And in an incredibly casual manner at that. How could he refer to her that way when they had literally just met each other?! It had not even been more than an hour and he was already being so casual?! And to top it all off, she had not even seen his face yet. She literally did not know who he was!

Frowning behind her mask, Elle could not help but feel a little awkward as she looked at the still masked Elijah. She could not help but really wonder now what was up with Elijah. His actions and words were really starting to confuse her. Somehow, it seemed as though he had some hidden agenda. And it did not feel like it was going to be simple.

"And besides," Elijah continued, "I think you've been enjoying the party quite a bit too, brother. This is the first time I've seen you looking so human like that. Your arrival was truly a big surprise, so I didn't have enough time to prepare something entertaining enough for you. So..." he paused, something in the air seemed to have changed again as he approached closer to Sebastian. "... so, why don't you stay a little bit more? I have a surprise for you and Elle."

"Did you forget that you're the celebrant here, Elijah?" Sebastian was quick to respond this time. His voice was calm and neutral, but still felt so absolute. Looking between the two of them, Elle felt like she was caught in the middle of a fight between two powerful and dangerous beasts. 'A mysterious prince in a dark fairytale and a devil blessed with a face of a fallen angel' would probably be the perfect description for them both right now.

"So don't bother with it, Elijah." Sebastian added quickly, cutting Elijah off before his first words could even be formed into something understandable. "My wife and I better get

going so the spotlight would be able to return to you, the rightful man of the hour. And Iza here is tired. It's time for her to rest."

Elle's eyes stretched so wide as her head snapped back to look at Sebastian. What... what did he just called her?! Seriously?! Did he just give his very own nickname for her?

Your gift is the motivation for my creation. Give me more motivation!

Creation is hard, cheer me up! VOTE for me!

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"That's too bad then." Elijah sighed and then he leaned closer to Elle. "Your presence truly imparted such color and light to my usually uninteresting parties, Elle." His tone changed into something seemingly serious and genuine. His words were effective enough to distract her from the chaos and shock that was rampaging around within her mind at the moment.r

"Oh... you do flatter me, Prince Elijah." Elle shook her head with grace, trying her best to ignore the casual way he was addressing her. She doubted he actually meant what he said. Perhaps he was just trying to make conversation and being nice. "I'm sure you are just being kind in saying that."r

Elijah shook his head in disagreement. "It's not flattery, my lady. I meant every word that I said. I will never forget the fact that you still honored my invitation despite my family's warnings." He chuckled and winked at her knowingly. It seemed that even without her saying anything, he had already known how his family would have reacted to his invitation.r

Elle did not know how to respond now. She was at a loss for words on how to respond to him too. She had not expected him to say that. Was commenting on his own family that way not too straightforward? And dear lord... he knew that his family had tried to stop her from attending... r

Even after a couple of seconds, she still did not know how to react. Elle finally decided that she could only express her gratitude.r

"Thank you for inviting me to your party. I've really enjoyed the night." Elle walked towards Lucas and took out a box from inside the bag that was sitting next to Lucas. "Please accept my small present. And... happy birthday to you, Prince Elijah." r

Some kind of inexplicable silence reigned as Elijah stared at the box that was sitting in Elle's hand. She was not certain, but it seemed as though Elijah was not expecting to

receive a gift from her. Though the mask shielded his face from being seen, Elle could feel the shocked aura radiating from his person. Was it so strange to present a gift to the birthday man at his own birthday celebration? Elle was a little puzzled.r

Just as when she thought that he was not going to accept it, Elijah extended his hands and plucked the box from out of her palms. "How thoughtful of you..." was all he said in what she thought was a much weaker tone than his usual voice.r

"Oh, don't mention it. Please enjoy the rest of the night and I would like to apologize for leaving early." r

"No. It's already a surprise that you've come and stayed this long actually. So, there is truly no need to be sorry." His response was generous and his tone courteous.r

Elle was about to respond again when Sebastian suddenly took his coat off and then draped it around Elle's shoulders, covering her exposed back, causing her heartbeat to once again increase its pace. r

"I can see the goosebumps rising on your skin..." Sebastian whispered, "how could you forget your coat huh, Iza?" Sebastian once again used the personal nickname he had decided on for her.r

"How sweet..." Elijah commented and then he patted Sebastian's shoulder, leaning even closer to him and whispered. "I have something really interesting I wanted you to know, brother. But since you could no longer wait to leave, I guess I'll postpone this secret reveal for another time. But I'll be generous and leave you with a tiny clue... it's about your wife..." and Elijah allowed his voice to trail off there, causing Sebastian's eyes to narrow slightly. But it was not noticeable to anyone else.r

Due to another wave of shock Elle was experiencing, she had not noticed the suffocating darkness that had momentarily reigned between the two brothers. r

She also did not hear what Elijah had whispered to Sebastian just now. But it was not only because of her loud heartbeats and the background noises, but also because Elijah seemed to really not want her to hear what he was saying to Sebastian this time.r

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The trip back home was silent and heavy. The flirty and seductive and sweet Sebastian she had experienced at Elijah's party seemed to have returned back to normal now. He did not speak since they left Elijah's mansion and was just quietly driving the car. He seemed to be lost in his own thoughts.r

p Elle could only snort at herself within her. See? I was right all along. The gentle teasing and lovey-dovey actions from earlier were all but an act. Good thing her rational side had won out.r

She could only sigh in relief because she had just spared herself from more disappointments or whatever negative feelings it would have brought her right now if she had allowed herself to naively believe and fall along with his top class acting. He truly was such an accomplished actor. r

Her mind was itching to ask. To question him why he even bothered coming over to the party. She wanted the real reason as he had always dodged the question all this time. But she did not want to be the first one to break the silence. If he did not want to speak to her, then so be it. She would speak to him then. Wait...!! No, she must learn not to care about what he does. Whatever it was that he does.r

Soon, the car finally stopped. r

Elle was so preoccupied with her own thoughts that she had not realized they had already arrived back at the castle.r

Sebastian stepped out and when she saw him walking around the front of the car to come over to her side, Elle quickly reached out for the door handle and wanted to push it open. But he was just too quick for her as he still beat her to it. r

Holding the car's door open, Sebastian placed his large hand over her head as she stepped out. It was another gesture that had her heart warming up whether she liked it or not. r

When their gaze met, Elle's heartbeat skipped a beat at the dangerous intensity that she caught swirling around in his eyes. W-what now? r

"You had said earlier on... that you run pretty fast, right Izabelle? How about we make a bet? I'm giving you a couple of minutes to run ahead of me..." he said in a husky voice. "If I catch up to you before you step inside our room..." he pinched her chin lightly, "... don't expect me to ever let go of you again tonight."r

Elle's mouth hung open in disbelief. His words and that look in his eyes only made her feel dizzy, making her unable to think. Seriously... what was wrong with him? Why was he... acting like this? No one was watching them anymore. He did not need to look at her as though they were deeply in love with each other anymore. What was he trying to achieve by saying and doing things like that?

She had spent three whole days without him and came out of it just fine. She had already managed to get him off her head with much effort and was able to focus on the work that she needed to get done. Her life without him had been pretty good, carefree even. But now that he was here, so close to her, looking at her with those compelling metallic grey eyes... as if he was holding back from pinning her against the car. As if... if she had not known better, she would even think that he was looking as though he wanted to kiss her right now.

And she did not like it one bit. She did not like that how he easily create such chaos within her because it only made it harder for her to hold her ground. Was he trying to set her on fire and then pour a flood of ice water on her afterwards again?

Biting the insides of her lip, Elle swallowed as subtly as she could. She could not let him see her nervousness. She would not let that happen. She would not allow herself to be that silly to make the same mistake twice.

Tipping her chin up a little at him, Elle replied in an unfeeling tone. "And what will you do if you don't manage to catch me? What will be your punishment?" she raised a brow in defiance. With her speed, and if she uses the elevator, there was no way he would be able to catch up to her. Unless he was playing with her right now or he was planning to cheat and will in fact, follow right after her just a few moments after she runs off. But even if he comes after her immediately, provided she takes the elevator, there was still no way he could catch her.

He held her gaze. The distracting storm in his grey eyes did not subside at all despite her acting cold to counter the hot and heavy atmosphere he was creating.

"Punishment..." he half bite on his lip and it was too late before Elle could even stop herself from staring at his lips. "Don't you know how dangerous that word is, huh? Izabelle?"

"You're... dodging the question again, Sebastian." She managed to retort, not allowing his words to distract her from her question.

He smiled. She really hated how that deadly smile and that damned dimple kept showing up at times like this. Times when she really needed to stand firm. They are literally his cheat sheet!

"I will sleep on the couch tonight." Came his response, causing Elle to widen her eyes. H-him? This man will sleep on the couch?! No way, right?

As if he had read the doubts in her mind, he removed the heavy long coat draped on her back and said, "Take the elevator. I'll take the stairs. Will that be enough to erase your doubt?"

Elle's lips fall open. This... little... big devil... he must be thinking that she was lying about her running speed, right? The thought that he must be comparing her pace with a turtle's had her fighting spirit surging within her. Fine. She was ready to go! She would show him what happens when he underestimates her too much.

"Alright." Elle looked at him with a challenging gaze. "I will believe that you'd be a man of your word for this, Prince Sebastian." She made this disclaimer as a precaution so that he would not back out on his words.

A short breathy laugh escaped his lips after hearing her say that. He knew she was reiterating that just so he could not back out of it. Then he finally leaned away from her, releasing her from the iron jail of his which were his two arms. He propped himself back against the body of the car and lit up a cigarette.

"Rest assured, Izabelle." He said reassuringly as white smoke came out of his lips. "This husband of yours will be a man of his word tonight. You can trust in that."

Elle felt her heartbeat skipped a beat at him referring to himself using the word 'husband'. But she stared hard at him before she kicked off her heels one after another without averting her gaze from his.

Sebastian's hand halted midair as he watched her slip out of her heels. The corner of his eyes twitched a little and just as he was about to say something, Elle sped away from him without any warning.

His lips were parted as he watched her quickly disappearing from his eyes. He did not move for a moment as if something so unbelievable had just caught him off guard.

A low chuckle echoed in the silence as Sebastian ran his gloved fingers through his hair. He looked so amused he even bent over in his attempt to control his laughter. His shoulders were shaking a little as he did that.

But after a while, he took a deep breath and when he lifted his face again, something wicked shone in his metallic eyes.

"Run... faster Izabelle..." he murmured as he drew hard on his cigarette, looking up at the direction of their room.

Pushing away from the car, Sebastian killed his cigarette between his fingers, not bothered about the sting, and with a thrilled and wicked smile, he sauntered towards the entrance. "Forgive me though... because this devil will never let you win. Not tonight my dear." Perhaps, not ever... that swift thought came and left as well.

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With a confident smirk, Elle stepped out of the elevator. She was very sure that she had given her all and ran like the wind the moment she was ready. The corridor was empty, but she still did not lessen her pace at all. It was no good to be too confident that she would relax her guard.

She ran as fast as she could with victory plastered all over her face. No matter how fast he could go, there was just no way she would lose. Not with the speed that she had

employed. Unless of course if he had magic. An amused glimmer flashed across her eyes at the thought.

When she saw the large double doors at the end of the corridor awaiting to be opened, Elle finally slowed down. She shook her head and smiled. What was she doing? 'Seriously... Elle...' she muttered to herself, unable to believe what she had just did.

Reaching her hand out for the gold door handle, Elle laughed at herself. But oh well, that was one enjoyable way of running away from his grasp. And an exercise for her too. With this, she could probably immediately fall asleep even if Sebastian was around. She really hoped so.

As she pushed the door open, her body stiffened. Her eyes slowly stretched wide as she watched a large hand covered hers, effectively stopping her from pushing the door open any further.

"Caught you!!" Came a rumbling whisper against her ear, jolting her heart so damned bad that her hand flew to her chest as that traitorous organ jumped and thumped with such anticipation. She readjusted her mind and the sudden welling of longing stirred up by his velvety and dark tones.

Her gasp was loud as she turned around with a start. Wait...!! That could not be possible!

The world stilled for a moment as she looked up at him. Her ice blue eyes so wide that it might have popped out of their sockets if it was possible.

"Breathe, Izabelle." He muttered lowly in her ears and Elle snapped back to reality from the intense shock.

Her lips opened and then closed. How... just how did he manage to...

His dimple appeared again as he lifted his hand and wiped off the sweat on her temple. "Indeed, you truly run fast, I'm impressed." He commented in a sultry deep voice. "But..." he bent over, bringing himself close to his ears and whispered, "... it's just that too bad because I'll catch you no matter how fast you run. There is no escaping me."

Elle unconsciously stepped back only to hit her back against the door. Oh my...

"H-how... how did you..." she still could not believe it. She had lived in this wing of the castle for the last three days. The butler had told her everything already, even the position of the secret passages. So, she was extremely confident that there were no areas and secret paths she still did not know. There was no way that Sebastian could have used another elevator, right? There was only one elevator in this wing of the castle! So how? How on earth?

Tilting his head innocently, Sebastian did not wait for her question to be completed anymore and answered. "I have my ways, Izabelle."

"Ways? What ways?" she pressed him for answers, her eyes still circled wide. No, she could not just let it off so easily!

He braced his hands on both her sides and leaned on her. His smile had faded. What was left was the storm in his eyes that seemed to be sucking her breath away.

"Running and leaping." His answer came out flat and direct.

A heavy silence reigned before Elle closed her eyes and sighed so heavily for a couple of times before she lifted her gaze at him again, expecting to see humor and victory flashing in his eyes. But what she only saw was him staring down at her with that peculiar look.

Elle could only bite down on the insides of her lip. There must be some kind of secret short cut that the butler did not show her. Perhaps the butler thought that as the master of the house, he needed to have some secret passageway that was only known to himself and that was why he had not revealed it to her. That was the only explanation on why Sebastian was able to catch her.

But oh lord... now there goes her chance to have him sleep on the couch! What will she do now to...

Her thoughts were cut as she was suddenly being lifted from the ground.

Sebastian was scooping her up again in his arms. Why... oh why... Did he like to lift people without any warning like this? Was he actually trying to kill her by means of a heart attack?!

"What are you doing? Please put me down, Sebastian. I can walk." She quickly protested but the man did not listen to her pleas and entered their room with her securely tucked in his arms. He had kicked the door with the heel of his shoes after entering their room with her still held in his arms.

"Sebastian..." Elle called out to him again when he did not speak. But he continued walking silently towards the couch.

When he finally sat her down, Elle was about to sigh out in relief when he squatted before her and reached out for her feet.

Shocked once again, Elle gaped at him. "W-what are you..." the words were stuck in her throat as she watched him gently lift her feet and started checking on it. Was he trying to see if she had hurt her feet?!

After placing her right feet down, he checked on the other one casually. As if that was not the first time that he had done something like this to her. As if this was something so commonplace for him to do.

She clenched her fists that were on her sides as her heart drummed up a crazy beat within her chest. Why... what was wrong with this man tonight? Why in the world was he suddenly like this?

Without putting her feet down, he finally lifted his gaze to her. And Elle's breathe snagged in her throat.

"Be thankful you had not suffered any wounds, Izabelle." He had said it so seriously. "Because if you had gotten even a tiny scratch..." he trailed off, his gaze trailing down from her eyes to her lips and then down to her throat.

"What...?" she creased her brows at him. "So what if I accidentally scratched myself while running? What are you going to do about it?"

"I'll teach you a lesson so you would no longer run barefooted like that again and end up harming yourself."

"H-huh?"

He rose and towered over her, never releasing her from his gaze. He reached for his necktie and loosened it. The set of his jaws changed and now he looked like the dangerous rage that he had buried back in the party had been unleashed. He braced his hands against the couch and said in low voice. "You've done something really dangerous tonight, Izabelle. You need to be... disciplined... for your sake."

Elle silently swallowed as her heartbeat sped up within her. Why did those words sound so dangerous in her ears? "Wh-what discipline are you talking about?" she forced out a nervous laugh, trying to dispel the tenseness that she was feeling. "I'm afraid I'm not keeping up with you, Sebastian. Why don't you enlighten me?" r

She hoped that his dark and hard expression will melt even a little with her joking around, but it did not. In fact, those eyes turned even harder if it were possible. And she could not help but feel a little scared that she had really done something wrong that might have angered him. Cracking her mind, she scrambled in trying to think back on the things that she had done which might have been the trigger point.r

"Do you truly not know why you need to be disciplined, hmm, Izabelle?" Sebastian's tone was deceptively light. But Elle knew better as she shivered lightly. It was the calm before the storm.r

"I don't." She replied stubbornly, hardening her stance. She refused to just back down and cower. "I don't know why you're looking at me like I had done something grave to anger you. I don't think I have done anything that had wronged you, Sebastian." r

"I had warned you before, didn't I? That you need to be very careful with Elijah. And yet..." he trailed off and his jaws tightened. "... and yet you had stubbornly gone on ahead and attended his party despite all the warnings I and everyone have given you. Why do you always throw yourself into the wolves' den? Huh, Izabelle? Do you find joy in encountering situations where you can't get out of? Do you like being cornered with no way out?" r

Elle's eyes widened for a moment before they slowly narrowed, her brows creasing before she replied. "Did you just call your brother's home a wolves' den?"r

"Yes." He replied confidently and without hesitation. The raging storm in his eyes intensified as he reached one hand out to cup her jaw. "You absolutely have no idea what might have happened to you tonight had I not..." the tiny muscles in his jaw twitched as he seemed to struggle to control his emotion. After a few moments of silence, he managed to speak again. "There's a reason why everyone is warning you about Elijah. He is not as harmless as you think, Izabelle. He's a man who's capable of doing things you couldn't even begin to imagine. So you need to listen to the warnings, do you understand what I am saying?" his words came rushing out in an low but angry tirade. But Elle could hear something like worry that was concealed within his tone as well.r

Elle swallowed. The look in his eyes was so intense that it had her heart shivering a little. She was not expecting this. She could see how utterly serious this matter about Elijah was for him. She could not deny she had already felt something very off about Elijah when she had interacted with him earlier. But Sebastian's reaction right now was what had convinced her that her guts about Elijah was not all false. r

As she was still reflecting, Sebastian went on to say, "If you really think I am just scaring you, then consider our family's words. Would they simply tell you to stay away from Elijah if there was no real need to do so? Would they be such a petty people to warn you away from another person just for the fun of it?" And these words from Sebastian hit her hard. What he said was true. r

"Yes... I understand." Was all she could say in the end. She just wanted his rage to subside now. She could not even make herself ask any more questions about this matter related to Elijah even if she wanted to. Because all she wanted for now was to have that burning quiet anger in his eyes to just dissolve first. She did not like him being like this. This was the first time she had seen him behaving like this and she was afraid of what might happen if this continued. "I get you." r

Silence reigned thickly for a moment and to her relief, the set of his jaws loosened. He shut his eyes closed tightly and when his long thick lashes fluttered open again, his grey orbs were back to normal. r

"Good girl," he muttered before plopping down to sit next to her. "But I'm not done yet, Izabelle. Like I said, you need some discipline for you to never forget about this." His heavy voice sounded out from beside her.r

Elle snapped her head back to look at him. r

"Come here," he held her arm and then quickly pulled her towards him.r

The next thing Elle knew, she was brought over his knee. Her eyes stretched wide after registering the position she was in. She then quickly turned to him. "Seb –" well, she tried but he held her down.r

"Shh... Izabelle. I've already promised you, didn't I? Tonight, I will be a man of my word." His sultry voice echoed out in her ears. "So, since I already said that I need to discipline you, I should do it or else you'd label me as man with only words but no action." r

Oh lord... why on earth was her heart throbbing so wildly at this moment as though she was thrilled instead of scared? Was it because of the seduction in the way he spoke to her right now? Or was it because she was... oh my lord... r

Her face burned as she realized how embarrassing her position was at the moment and she struggled in his grasp. But his strong arm continued holding her down and a second later, one sharp spank landed on her behind, jolting her and making her gasp out loudly. r

"Stay still, baby..." he whispered as he caressed her ass, and she felt her entire being heating up again. Oh, dear lord in heaven! r

"From here on..." he continued, "... promise me that you will never... ever go to that place again or anywhere near that Elijah invites you to go without me. Understand that? Izabelle?" r

When Elle was still struggling to process her answer, Sebastian yanked her dress up and slapped her right across her butt cheek. She jerked sharply at the contact. r

"Answer me." His dark velvet voice sounded.r

"Yes...!" Elle did not know what was going on with her anymore. She should be dying with humiliation with what he was doing to her at this moment. She was not a child to be laid across the knees and spanked like this. And yet, she was actually feeling something

completely different from this 'punishment' and it might even be stronger than any other emotions she's feeling right now. r

"That's my good and lovely princess," he praised as he caressed the expanse of skin he had just slapped, soothing it so lovingly, reminding her of the pleasure he had made her experienced just a few nights ago.r

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A/N: Don't forget to vote with your Golden Tickets hellbounders!

Goal for this month

Top 2 in GT ranking= mini mass release

Top 1 in GT ranking = mass release

Elle gasped as Sebastian splayed his large hand over the curve of her behind. It was so demeaning having her husband bend her over his knees before proceeding to give her sharp stinging slaps on her derriere! Well, that was what she was supposed to think. r

However, Elle did not know what was going on with her brain. Did she somehow got the wires hooked up wrongly today before leaving the palace? It must be it, right? If not, why was she responding in the total opposite of what she was supposed to be doing? Why on earth was she even feeling the slightest bit of excitement from this 'punishment' that Sebastian was meting out?!r

Lost in her own contemplation, Elle had not noticed that Sebastian had seen how she was no longer focusing on him fully. Thus, he raised his hand and brought his palm down on her butt cheeks again.r

Another loud sound echoed within their otherwise silent room. r

It was then followed by a short shriek from Elle. She jerked again at that slap. Struggling to get away from his weird way of punishing her, Elle used both hands to push against his legs and kicked both her legs hard. She was hoping that it would cause him to relent and release her. Who knew...r

"Are you trying to excite me more, Izabelle?" his sudden whisper flowed into her ears. Sebastian had leaned over and pressed her down with his upper body weight, while his warm hands clutched hard on one cheek, sending her freezing into shock. "Not that I mind it. In fact, I'd like to see how you do it." And a beguiling chuckle fell from his lips.r

"N-no...!! I... I'm just—" Elle stammered but her voice trailed off. She did not know what she wanted to say. All she was aware of was that a large hot object was poking at her upper abdominal area! She suddenly felt a gush of warmth flooding her body and a

heavy lethargy sinking into her womanly place. She could not help but rub her knees together awkwardly in that position Sebastian was keeping her in. r

Mortified of what was happening to her body, Elle turned her head back and glared at him through thick lashes that were wet due to tears. However, she knew that those were not tears of fright. Instead, they were tears of embarrassment from her wanting him to do something more to her so badly even when he was treating her this way. Upset with herself, she bent her head into his lap and bit down on his thighs. Hard! r

"Sss— !!" a sudden hiss escaped Sebastian's lips and his arms that had kept her pinned down loosened. Elle took this opportunity to escape from her forced restraint in facing downwards. r

Sitting up, she came face to face with Sebastian. She could see the tinge of surprise at what she did reflected on his handsome face, now made even more enticing as she was barely a couple of inches away. No, she needed to put more distance away between them! r

Just as she pushed herself up off him, in the hopes of making a full escape from this man she called her husband, he suddenly shot his arms out and wrapped them around her waist and pulled her back again into his embrace. As she was not expecting this and had been taken aback from his speedy reactions, she fell back into his lap and the first thing she registered in her mind was the feel of his throbbing hot length against her bottom. r

She blushed hard at the thought of how she literally had slammed her butt down on his covered manhood. Though she was so embarrassed she was wishing the floor would open up and swallow her whole, she still could not help but enjoy the sizzling tingle that started from their point of contact and spread through her whole body. r

"Sebastian... please..." Elle pleaded as she peered at him through lowered lashes due to embarrassment. Not knowing that by doing that, it would only arouse the predatory instincts that were barely subdued within Sebastian. r

Sebastian nuzzled his head into the crook of her neck. r

"Please what? Hmm? Izabelle?" his dark and mellow voice rumbled out. And it surrounded her like a warm comforter, making Elle feel warm and comfortable. r

Oh, dear lord in heaven! Did he just purr? What was... just what in the world had happened to this man? Why had he suddenly made a one-eighty?! Just a couple of seconds ago he was still in punishing mode, but now here he was, behaving so gently and lovingly! r

No... he was just trying to seduce her! NO!! She must not give in and fall for his tricks! r

"Please! Let... go..." Elle squirmed in his hold, trying her best to get out of his embrace that was more like a trap to her.

However, Sebastian's arms were like iron bars. No matter how much she squirmed, pushed or pulled, she could not get out of his hold. He continued nuzzling his face into her neck. And Elle could feel his soft lips brushing – back and forth – against the sensitive skin of her neck. He also kept inhaling – giving her a ticklish sensation when the air rushed between his nose and her skin – and exhaling – sending warm and moist puffs of air – while he was doing that.

An intense feeling of ecstasy flooded through her, and Elle could feel her muscles trembling with the effort of fighting back the want of just giving in and melting into a puddle in his arms.

The fight was real! But the pleasure was all the more tangible! A small moan escaped her lips while she was distracted. Sebastian of course, heard it and tightened his hold on her slightly.

She forced herself to bite down on her own tongue. A sudden pain lanced through her as a sweet tangy liquid filled her mouth. She was afraid something else might end up coming out from her lips. Therefore, she had no choice but to do this to stay focused. To stay sane.

This bonus chapter is dedicated to @Chinawa and @Monica_Ceja! Thank you so much for the supergifts!!!

She must not let him seduce her so easily like this. He just most probably wanted to have sex with her again. That was why he was even bothering in doing this. There was no way he truly wanted more than just the physical act.

"But I'm not done yet." Sebastian whispered hotly into her ears, immediately sending shivers over her cool skin.

"What?! Didn't you already –" Elle exclaimed loudly, pushing both palms on his chest. However, it was a futile attempt.

"Nope. I'm nowhere near done yet. Because... you ended up liking it so much, didn't you? It won't count as punishment if you enjoyed it, right?" he teased her, twirling one finger into her wavy locks.

"Wh-who said that I liked it?" Elle stammered a little, retorting loudly even as her face flamed red in embarrassment for being called out.

"Hmm... you don't? Are you sure?" Sebastian drawled out lazily, his eyes looking at her knowingly. r

Elle bowed her head, breaking eye contact with him.r

"Who in the world would like being... being spanked like that?!" She snapped back at him, a little agitated at herself for actually liking what he did to her earlier. Secretly within her own mind, she scolded herself.r

"Look at me in the eyes... and tell me that you don't like it." Sebastian challenged her.r

Elle jerked her head up quickly to look at him and shouted, "I don't!"r

She looked so adorable as she blushed so hard, lying at him with those teary eyes of hers.r

He bit the smile that was threatening to break through. He looked like he had changed some decision that he had earlier made in his mind.r

"Then that settles it... for now." He muttered.r

And then he turned her around in his lap like she was as light as feather and before anymore protests could come from her mouth, she was bent over his knees again.r

"Sebastian! What are you...?? Wait –!" Elle's words kept on getting cut as she was maneuvered around like a doll by Sebastian.r

"Shh... Izabelle. I told you before, didn't I? What you did isn't something that is worthy of just two spanks alone. What you did actually deserves a punishment that you won't forget any time soon. That is to ensure that you won't ever do it again. And since you said that you didn't like being spanked like this, I guess this is the right punishment for you. Remember... a punishment cannot be something that you enjoy." r

"Wait. Seb –" r

A sharp spank sounded and had her gasping again in disbelief.r

"Sebastian...!! You devil –" Elle cursed, not caring if he was upset at her calling him that. r

Sebastian suddenly yanked her panties down to her ankles in one swift move, causing her to widen her eyes. Wait!! What was happening now?!r

Another spank. This time, it sounded louder. More full, as his palm landed right on her naked butt cheeks. It wrenched a shameful yelp from her as her face burned. r

She tingled everywhere! Especially at that place down there.r

"Please..." Elle sobbed out. Wanting this torture to stop. She did not know how long she could take this. Her mind was in shambles.r

"Please what? Tell me you were wrong, and I will stop." r

Another spank landed. Followed by a squeal and a sob.r

"I was wrong. I was wrong!" Elle quickly gave up and said what he wanted to hear.r

"Good girl." His tone was pleased as he praised her. His warm palm soothed her burning ass and then lifted and turned her around before cradling her in his arms.r

Elle covered her face in both of her cupped palms. She needed to hide her face from him. This was just too embarrassing.r

But if she were to tell the truth, her embarrassment was mainly due to herself. Though she had yelled at him that she did not like him spanking her in the ass, deep down, only she knew that her body actually somewhat enjoyed it. Though it was a mixed feeling. She disliked how demeaning it was that she had been reduced to be like a child, being spanked on her bottom. But there was still that underlying spark, every time Sebastian's hands landed on her butt cheeks, it zinged right into her core and started to get her all hot and bothered. Suddenly, she was jolted out of her own thoughts.r

He had stood up with her in his arms.r

She could feel herself swaying as she felt him walking. She was not planning to look yet, as her embarrassment was still through the roof. But after some moments, she realized that he was still walking. He must be bringing her somewhere. r

"Sebastian." She called out as she finally lifted her face out of her hands. Looking around, she realized that he had entered the bathroom with her in tow. "Put me down..." Elle asked nicely. She did not dare take a superior tone with him, just in case he decides to continue on with the punishment. r

To her relief, all he did was to put her down to stand right beneath the shower head. r

Then without warning, he turned the knob of the shower on to full blast, drenching them both in a spray of warm water.r

Elle was so shocked that she could not speak for a moment. Her mouth was agape as she turned around to face him.r

p "What... what in the world are you doing?!" Her tone was clipped, more than a little displeased that she had been drenched while still clothed in her dress.r

The storm in his eyes was back in full force. r

"It seems you didn't realize yet. But Elijah's damned scent is all over you. And you're asking what am I doing? I'm going to wash every single trace of his scent off of you, myself!" Sebastian declared, his grey eyes blazing with possessiveness. r

Chapter 60

Elle could not believe the look she was seeing in his eyes. She was quite sure it was possessiveness that she is seeing. And the feelings conveyed were so intense and so raw she that could not even convince herself to believe that they were not real. But... why? Why would he be acting like this over her? As though he was... jealous? She almost laughed out loud from the thought. But looking back at his eyes, the urge died in her throat, rendering her silent.r

Her heartbeats then thudded even harder within her chest. Confusion and wonder and shock were rushing through her as her eyes trailed back to trace his unbearably gorgeous face and spellbinding grey eyes. r

"Tell me Izabelle..." came his sultry yet heart-shivering dark voice. "How is it that his scent is... all over you like this? What kind of activity did both of you share that allowed his scent to be transferred to this extent?" Though his tone was calm, Elle detected a dangerous hint within it. r

The storm in his eyes kept intensifying that Elle could not help but feel a little scared now. "W-what do you mean? You know Elijah and I danced, Sebastian. That was all we did. And I don't think his cologne was that strong to be..." she trailed off at the sight of his jaws tightening. r

"If you did not already know, my sense of smell is extremely sensitive, Izabelle." He informed her, his grey eyes were just like shards of ice, glittering down at her before he brought her crashing against his chest with a jerk. "I can smell even the faintest foreign scent that is transferred on you." r

Cupping her chin to make her look up at him, he continued in a low tone, "Now tell me, my dear wife... why is his scent not only on your arms and front but... literally all over you? It was as though you had been drenched from head to toe with his personal... flavor." That last word came out in an angry and clipped tone.r

Elle forgot to breathe for a moment due to the suffocating rage he was exuding. He was truly angry. She had never seen him this angry before. She did not know what he was like when he became angry. She did not know what was suddenly going on.r

But what she saw next in his eyes had her blossoming fear immediately replaced with rage. There was clear accusation shining from within his eyes. Was he... was he accusing her of doing something improper with Elijah? Seriously?!!r

A disbelieving and quiet laugh escaped her as she glared venomously at him. "Are you... are you accusing me, Sebastian?" she asked with a voice shaky due to anger. "Are you implying that I wronged you and our vows?" r

He was silent for a moment, but his dark expression did not change. "I'm accusing him for trying to provoke me. Did anything happen before I arrived that I know nothing about? Did he touch you all over and put his scent on you? What did he do to you –" r

"He didn't do anything to me! We only danced, that's all!" she yelled at him, unable to take it anymore. How dare he suspect her of such behavior! If anyone was to be suspected, it was more likely to be him rather than her!! Fuming, her eyes were sparking with challenge as she stared defiantly at Sebastian.r

"Then explain this." His voice turned even harder, darker. "Why in the f*cking hell am I smelling his scent literally everywhere on you? Huh? Isabelle? How are you to justify this, huh?!" r

Elle could not explain what she was feeling right now. She should be used to this already. Back home, her father had always asked her to explain what she did, and when she did explain herself, he would not believe her explanation. His anger would only escalate the more she tried to explain the truth and then she would still end up being slapped and screamed at. Since she was a teenager, telling the truth, telling what she knew and really felt, had never did anything good for her. In fact, it had always done the opposite. Always. And it was now that she realized just how bad all those experiences had affected her. r

She could not say even a word right now. Even if it was just a simple 'I don't know'. She had thought her trauma would only be triggered when she was with her father and Brandon Haze. But it seemed that she was wrong. She could not believe that all she could do at this moment was to just stand there and look dumbly at him. Unable to stand her ground, unable to respond to him. All she could do was to stand there mutely, as though accepting all the accusations as it were the truth of her actions.r

All she could feel was her trembling lips and her aching throat. The worse was that this case with Sebastian was different. Because she felt an indescribable ache in her heart. He was not screaming at her. He was not even lifting a hand to her. And yet... why does this seemed more unbearable compared to those other times she had experienced? Was it because it was him and not her father or Brandon Haze?r

Suddenly, she felt his grip on her loosening up. When she blinked away the layer of haze that had covered her eyes, she saw him wearing a peculiar expression as he looked down at her. The stormy rage in his eyes had subsided. Or... were they just securely tucked within him again and would come out sometime later? r

He looked like he wanted to say something else, but he bit down on his lips instead. And then he suddenly yanked at his shirt. The buttons all went flying everywhere as he

harshly and effortlessly tore his clothes off him, revealing the perfection of his body underneath those clothes. r

After that, he raked his fingers through his wet and dark hair, throwing his head back into the shower that was still pounding down on them. And when he looked down at her again, his face was impeccably calm. r

"There... I'm not angry anymore, Izabelle," he breathed out in a controlled voice, "you can now stop looking at me like I'm going to kill you if you say a single word." r

He lifted his hand and reached out as if to touch her face, but he stopped midway. His jaws clenched and then he turned around. r

Just when he took a step to leave the bathroom, Elle reached out and grabbed his wrist. r

Sebastian instantly halted at the cool touch of her hands wrapping around the skin of his wrist. r

"If..." Elle's voice was so weak, as if she was having a hard time to even speak. "If I tell you that I really don't know what happened... will you... believe me?" r