

Chapter 25

🌀 Luke's pov 🌀

"Now is that any way to speak to your father? Especially one you haven't spoken to in a year?" To anyone it would seem that he cared but I knew better. I could hear the cruel undertone in his voice.

I straightened myself and looked at Rose. Her eyes were slightly widened in surprise, mouth gaped as she peers at me in bewilderment. She clearly was stunned by the way I addressed my father.

I tear my eyes away, not being able to bear the weight of her gaze. I didn't want her to judge me more than she had already. "And it has been a wonderful year without speaking to you, I can tell you that." I grumbled.

I pinch the bridge of my nose, wanting nothing more but to get over whatever bullshit he wanted from me. It was obvious he needed something, it would be the only reason he'd be calling me after a year. Whatever it is must be huge. "What do you want?"

He laughs on the other end, not one ounce of humor in his voice. "What makes you think I want something from you?"

"Cut the bullshit!" My voice was rough and cold. I hear Rose take in a sharp intake of breath. My gut wrenches for making her uncomfortable.

He tsks. "Fine you caught me."

He heaves a breath before continuing. "Troy Liven wants to merge our companies together. Now I think this is a great opportunity and I won't pass it up. You know how I've been competing to get to the top and this might just be my chance."

I almost zoned him out, not at all interested in his business talk. I let out an irritated breath. "Just get to the damn point." I roared.

Rose is startled by my loud voice and manages to knock the plate that tumbles down and shatters on the floor. A loud gasp escapes her lips as she jumps out of the stool. She races to get a broom and dustpan then bends down to pick up the broken glass.

I prance around the counter to reach her and crouch down to grab her hands. Her eyes tear away from the floor and locks with mine. I shake my head, telling her to leave it, not wanting her to get hurt. She forces a smile on her lips and whispers. "It's okay, I can clean it up."

I scan her and with a reluctant nod I mutter. "Fine but don't use your hands, use the broom."

She nods and I stand up. She gets up and tucks a tendril of her blonde hair behind her ears. Then grasp the broom and start sweeping the broken glass into the dustpan.

"Who are you talking to?" Father questions.

"Just continue whatever you were talking about." I grumble, wanting to finish the dreadful conversation.

He sucks his teeth in annoyance before continuing. "You remember Riley right, his daughter?" At the mention of the girl I had slept with makes me still.

Of course I remember her, after sleeping with her she became clingy and psychotic. The girl couldn't get that it was just a one time thing even though I had informed her this before banging her.

It hadn't been the first time I slept with my father's business partners' daughters, it became a routine, something I did to rile him up when I dumped them. But this girl was far the worse one I had involved myself with and God I regretted touching her.

"Yes." My answer was sharp.

"Well we so happen to come up with the best arrangement." He takes in a breath as though afraid to speak the next words. "We want you and Riley to get married to merge the companies together." He rushes out.

My body goes numb, lips cold and heart pumping so loud that I was afraid Rose could hear it. My thoughts are racing as I'm struggling to understand his words. When the words finally sink in, rage overpowers the numbness. Never would I have thought he would ask this of me.

"You must have some nerve." I snapped. All I could see was red. "That's not going to fucking happen!" I roared getting angrier at the second.

"Don't raise your voice at me Luke." He yells through the phone. I clutched it so tightly that I was afraid it would break because of my deathly hold. "Don't forget you owe me."

I freeze, fingers beginning to become clammy as I registered his words. You owe me. My own father was blackmailing me to marry a woman I did not love. I really shouldn't have been surprised at this point. "Don't forget with just a snap of my fingers you could be going to jail." He hisses.

My blood runs cold as I remember why I owe him. That night when it happened, the dreadful thing that changed me. The reason why I want Rose to stay away from me, the reason I couldn't allow myself to fall for her.

I needed to think, I needed to get out of this. My eyes flicker to my blonde little temptress and a thought floats in my mind. As if sensing my gaze on her she snaps her eyes to mine. Our gazes lock as I opened my mouth to speak. "You see father, I can't do what you're asking of me. I so happen to be in a very committed relationship, I'm even planning to propose soon."

He stays silent for a minute, probably taking in my words before he clears his throat and asks. "You have a girlfriend?"

I rolled my eyes and bring my hands up to scratch my chin. "Don't act so surprised."

"How could I not, you've never been in a relationship." He wasn't exaggerating. I never put labels with the girls I mess with. It was easier that way and not that hard since the only thing I wanted from them was sex.

"Well she must be worth it if she has you changing your ways." He says but it's void of emotion almost like talking to a robot.

"She is." I couldn't help but look at Rose while saying those words. Somehow I felt that I meant it.

"Bring her over tomorrow. We're having lunch with a guest." He suggested but it sounded more like a demand.

"Yeah I don't think so." I answered flatly. There was no way I would let Rose meet my fucked up parents.

"Bring her or I'll force you into that marriage. You damn know well that I could have you married to Riley so don't try my patience." He snaps before ending the call abruptly.

"You have a girlfriend?" Rose asked when I rest the phone on the counter. I look at her and almost laugh at how adorable she looked when she's mad. If I didn't know better my little Rose was jealous.