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I couldn't say anything to blame him, so I could only nod.

'Then…"

He was about to say something else when I quickly cut him off, "Sleep." I closed my eyes after that.

"You still want to sleep?" Enzo whispered behind me. "You've been asleep the entire day." I ignored him, but my lips curled into a smile when I thought of his face behind me. I had no ways to describe my current feelings. It felt so sweet, like I had swallowed a spoonful of honey.

I quickly fell into a deep slumber because I was injured and drenched by the rain. When the first rays of the morning sun shone on my face through the window, I opened my eyes.

I felt around the bed without much thought, but there was no sign of Enzo.

I was stunned for a moment before I heard running water in the bathroom.

Putting on my cotton slippers, I stepped on the wooden floor and tip-toed closer to the bathroom.

The bathroom door was frosted glass, but perhaps the hotel had ulterior motives in making it more visible than it should be.

I could faintly see the man in the shower through the glass and his tan and toned, muscular body.

My ears reddened, and I couldn't help but recall the warmth of his chest pressed against my back last night and his well-defined muscles.

I directed my gaze away from him to the floor-to-ceiling window, taking a deep breath and letting it out slowly, trying to vent my desire toward Enzo with that breath.

The running water in the bathroom was cut off abruptly, and a drenched, muscular body pressed against my back soon after. "You're awake?" Enzo's voice was still raspy, as he pressed his chin against my shoulder. I nodded, hoping that my heart wouldn't embarrass me by wildly beating like it was on steroids.

Enzo seemed to be obsessed with my body's scent. He pushed his nose into my hair and sniffed gently then suddenly parted his lips to bite my earlobe. The arm he had wrapped around my waist wandered upwards, pulling me further into his body and completely closing the gap between us.

I let out a low grunt as he chuckled softly into my ear, gradually increasing the pressure of his arm.

I liked how close he was to me, but my principles wouldn't allow anything beyond this to hannen under an awkward circumstance like this.

So, even though I wanted him as well, I stepped on his feet and broke out of his embrace, .

I turned to look at Enzo, wanting to warn him not to do anything else more intimate than this.

"You still don't like me?"

Water droplets clung to his skin, dripping down his rock-hard packs slowly, and finally soaked into the white bath towel he had wrapped around his waist.

I gulped and looked away, not answering him.

In addition to the fatal temptation that I had towards him because of the mate bond, just based on his own charm and caring towards me, I couldn't help but grow fond of him,

These feelings intensified drastically if I took in the fact that he was my mate.

But for some reason, I felt something strange between us, but I couldn't put my finger on what it was.

It had nothing to do with the length of time I knew him. I just felt that a crucial link between us was missing, but I also couldn't pinpoint what it was exactly.

Overall, while pleasing to a certain extent, this excessive intimacy also made me feel extremely uneasy.

I didn't want to develop anything further with him until I figured out what was missing between us. This was definitely my self-defense mechanism at work

Enzo sighed, then walked to his closet and changed his clothes,

"Am I that unattractive?" he asked me.

I watched as he got dressed. Every inch of his skin seduced me, and he was naturally attractive.

There was never a man before this that could enchant me to this extent.

I suddenly realized that Enzo had led me around by the nose all this while. Frowning, after a long silence, I finally asked the man, who had put on his shirt, "Then... D-do you also. L-like

me?"

Enzo was tying his belt, and he paused at my words. After a few moments, he hooked his belt, met my eyes, and said, "Of course I like you. Why else would I keep pursuing you and not give up even after your rejection?"

"Then you... W-why do you like me?"

"Because you're my mate!" Enzo replied without hesitation,

However, his words didn't give me a sense of pleasure at all. I was even slightly annoyed by it, even though I didn't know why.

We were mates, so we should be together. It was a natural statement to make in our position.

However, I frowned at the thought.

"What's wrong?" Enzo came over to me and tried to hug me.

I took a big step back, turning my head away to avoid him.

"Are you unhappy?" Enzo was once again cautious as though he was afraid I would be upset.

I shook my head, tired of dealing with him. "Then, let's go eat breakfast?"

Enzo tried to take my hand once more, but I shook him off as though his touch electrocuted me.

For a moment, my gaze was vicious.

Enzo blinked at me with apparent disbelief. His hand, which was reached out mid-air, clenched tightly. He suddenly sighed after a while. "Okay, I won't touch you. I won't touch you until you allow me to. So, stop resisting me, okay?" His last sentence came out as a plea. My breath caught tight at that and finally I nodded. "Then, let's go eat. I'll take you back after a couple of days." He put on a smile once more, but it was my turn to be terrified. Melissa and Ellen wanted to kill me. To go back now meant a death sentence. Enzo noticed my panic. He reached out to pat my head but then suddenly retracted his hand. He raised his brows and said to me, "Don't be afraid. I'm not trying to

abandon you by taking you back. Since they almost killed my mate, I just think that I have to get justice no matter what it takes."

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A week later, countless eyes fell on me as I got out of the Rolls Royce, dressed in a tube top, floor-length rose gold dress and a platinum mask with luminous pearl butterfly wings on my face.

I ignored the stunned admiration of those present and slowly raised my head. My gaze swept the place I had not seen for a week, my lips curled into a smile.

I handed the invitation to the bellboy at the entrance, and he led me into Alpha Michael's manor.

Tonight was the Luna Masquerade Ball. Enzo told me that Michael would be announcing the union and marriage between his daughter, Melissa, and Enzo tonight.

With my appearance, this announcement would be more dramatic for sure tonight. I have never held my head up this high, not have I examined those in power this closely, because I had always been a poor, pathetic, lowly, and dirty slave to them. So, I could feel nothing but irony as I watched one man after another hand me their business card and give me fawning smiles. It was even more ironic when I caught sight of the white fence that I had painted was now tipped over and destroyed by the storm. Casually picking up a glass of wine, I stood in a dark corner to survey all the men and women who passed by me. All of them had masks on their faces, and it was difficult to tell everyone apart. However, I was still able to recognize Melissa right away.

She was wearing a fluffy, pink layered dress, and a white mask adorned with diamonds. She stood in the crowd, looking like a "doll" that she had described to me previously.

I narrowed my eyes. She really is a little princess. The spotlight follows her wherever she walks.

But this seemingly perfect girl had a heart as vicious as the deadliest poison in the world. I sipped on my red wine, trying to shove down the suffocating feeling in my heart. "What are you looking at?" A low voice whispered in my ear. I looked up to find Enzo standing beside me, studying me. "You look lovely today," he said. Enzo also looked very handsome in his white tuxedo suit. He was wearing a platinum mask with a luminous gold butterfly that matched mine.

After a brief moment of surprise, I replied, "You should accompany your fiancée."

"Awesome. You can speak in long sentences now," Enzo said as he chuckled softly. "But I'm indeed accompanying my fiancée right now. It's a pity she's ruthless and has yet to

acknowledge me as her fiancé."

The corner of his lips was slightly downturned, as if he was indeed sad and hard-doneby. I could never resist when he had such an expression, so I could only lower my head and not say anything. "You're ignoring me again," Enzo muttered. "I'm afraid that someone would see," I argued back "So what? Many men approached you tonight, right? What's one more?"

I had nothing to refute that. Enzo sighed in my ear. "Can't you tell that I'm jealous?"

Of course I could. The way he spoke sounded like someone owed him a million dollars.

"I didn't promise them anything," I said firmly. He nodded, then shrugged. "But you didn't agree to be with me either, right? I'm no different than them, then." He was acting like a discarded lap dog, honestly. I couldn't help but say, "You're not the same as them." But as I said that, fireworks suddenly exploded in the sky, drowning out my already faint voice. After the bout of fireworks, Enzo leaned closer and asked, "What did you say just now?" I opened my mouth but didn't dare to repeat my words. "You misheard. I didn't say anything."

Enzo looked confused.

He couldn't stay at my side for too long because he was Cold Moon Pack's Alpha after all, and one of the main characters of this ball. So, after reminding me not to drink too much, Enzo 'walked back into the sea of people. Alpha Michael went up the steps, holding a glass of champagne as he turned around to look at the crowd below him.

He seemed to enjoy this feeling of being surrounded by thousands of people. His old, wrinkled face looked a little more brightened than I remembered. If there had been anyone in this family that I still held expectations for, it would be Alpha Michael. Compared to Ellen and Melissa, he was my closest relative after all. Even though he hadn't cared about me in the past nineteen years, he also hadn't gone out of his way to make my life miserable. I always thought that he might have feelings of family love towards me deep down, but now it seems that it was just wishful thinking on my part. He seemed indifferent to the news of my death. This realization burned away the last vestiges of any attachment I had left for this family, and

I completely let go of any expectations I had for them.

The ball soon reached its peak.

Enzo would invite his female partner for the opening dance in the middle of the courtyard, where countless lights were hung.

And everyone thought that this female partner, by default, would be Melissa. Even Melissa thought so. Enzo walked through the crowd and under their watchful eyes, looked to be headed towards Melissa. Melodious, elegant music played in the background. Melissa held her head high, the smile on her lips grew bigger, as her chest rose faster with every step Enzo took.

'What a suspenseful scene,' I thought.

But...

When Enzo reached her, he didn't bow or stretch out his hand. Instead, he raised his chin slightly and gave her a mocking smile. He glanced at Melissa from the corner of his eye, then walked right past her joyful and excited gaze. The smile on Melissa's face froze, and she turned her neck stiffly to watch Enzo walked up to me and came to a stop.

Enzo stood tall in front of me before bowing. His left arm was slightly above his waist behind his back while he bent his right arm toward me. Then, a low, gentle voice floated into my ears. "May I?" he asked.

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Everyone's gaze moved from Melissa to me instantly. Even though no one knew who I was under the mask, everyone envied me at that moment. I gave Melissa a straightforward glance, then slowly placed my hand in Enzo's palm amidst her furious gaze. Enzo straightened up, one hand on my waist, while the other held mine. Then, we danced to the music.

"Oh my gosh! They are such a lovely couple!" "Yeah! Look at their masks. Definitely a pair." "Who's that girl? She has a great body!" "I think she's more attractive than Melissa."

Countless compliments floated into my ears, as I glanced at Melissa out of the corner of my eye to see her face twisted into an ugly expression. She was biting down hard on her lips, and I could tell she was about to explode from anger. I couldn't describe the feeling that swelled up in me at the sight. Perhaps it was the thrill of getting my revenge, but pity stood out more.

Poor Melissa had sold her kindness to the devil.

"Eyes on me!" Enzo said suddenly, tightening his grip on my hand.

'I withdrew my gaze from Melissa.

"I'm a little upset that you're being inattentive."

Enzo lowered his eyes to look at me, his breath burning like flames on my face. "So..." Enzo raised his arm, and I followed his cue to spin in a circle, then fall sideways into his arms.

His golden-brown eyes fixed on my face, as he said in a low whisper, "This is a small punishment."

Enzo suddenly leaned down and kissed me on the lips amidst my shock. An earsplitting scream and thunderous applause erupted immediately! His kiss was fierce and passionate. His nimble tongue easily pushed my lips apart and burrowed into my mouth, tangling and playing with my tongue. I closed my eyes without much thought, basking in the sudden kiss.

I only came to my senses when Enzo held me by the waist and straightened us up.

But the peaceful atmosphere didn't last for long. Someone suddenly grabbed my wrist in the next few seconds and yanked me out from Enzo's embrace.

Melissa's spiteful gaze was within my sight. Without hesitation, she raised her arm to slap me.

She moved so quickly that I could only close my eyes in anticipation of the blow.

But the expected pain didn't come, and I heard Enzo say coldly, "What are you doing to my fiancée?"

I opened my eyes to see Enzo gripping Melissa's wrist and deflected the slap meant for me. Melissa turned her head to look straight at Enzo and shouted, "I'm your

fiancée!"

Enzo released Melissa's wrist and tugged me behind him. He rubbed his ear and said, "From the start, I have said that my fiancée is Andrea. That's the union that Alpha Michael personally promised me, wasn't it?" Enzo glanced at Michael, directing the question at him. Michael cleared his throat, trying to maintain what little poise he had as he replied, "I did promise you that. But the truth is that a Rogue attacked Andrea, and she's dead." Enzo tilted his head slightly. "Is that so?" It was time.

I slowly removed the mask on my face and looked up at Alpha Michael.

After a beat of dead silence, Melissa suddenly burst out in a heart-wrenching scream.

"Impossible! You're dead! Dead!" she screamed as though she had broken down.

I saw Ellen was also shocked, but she maintained her composure. She put her arm around Melissa, trying to soothe her as much as possible. But I wasn't about to let her have her way.

I walked out from behind Enzo and to the front of Melissa, "Look at me. Do I look dead or alive?"

Melissa's eyes were wide as panic crept in her eyes. Her chest rose and fell violently, and the bones in her shoulders were stiff.

"Impossible... Impossible...!"

She pushed Ellen away as she backed up and muttered continuously to herself. Then, as though all the strength had left her body, she crumpled to the ground. "Why is it impossible?" I asked her.

My presence near her seemed to agitate her even more as she covered her ears and screamed," Impossible! You're not Andrea! You're not!"

She broke down completely, still covering her ears as she trembled violently. I forced her hands away and shouted with reddened eyes, "I am! I'm the Andrea that you and Ellen almost beat to death and threw out in the middle of nowhere! Open your eyes wide and take a good look at me!"

I had been desperately practicing my speech the entire week to express myself adequately. The hatred that bubbled in me drove me to shout out loud as though I was putting nineteen years' worth of words tonight.

There was uproar all around.

Melissa was just an eighteen-year-old girl at the end of the day. She had just come of age, and her parents had spoiled her since she was young. Her mentality was not enough to support her to face this situation calmly, to meet the person she had killed with her own hands now standing in front of her, alive and well.

"Impossible! She's dead! I saw her die with my own eyes!!!"

Melissa kept crawling backward. After a moment, her eyes suddenly widened even more, the fear more apparent than ever. "... You're a ghost! She's a ghost here to take my life!" Melissa screamed as she pointed at me. Tears and snot seeped down from under her mask, and she no longer looked as exquisite as she did before.

Ellen suddenly rushed forward and pushed me away, but Enzo caught me just in time.

"What nonsense are you babbling? Who beat you to death? You're falsely accusing us!" Ellen stood in front of Melissa, shouting at me. Enzo held me tightly in his arms, covering the back of my head with his hand. "It's too late for false accusations," Enzo said to Ellen as his gaze fell on Melissa, who was in a daze behind Ellen.

"Enzo was right. Melissa's performance had indirectly proved the truth of the matter.

If she hadn't done anything to me, why did she break down in terror when I stood in front of her, whole and alive? Why did she scream and claim that I was a ghost that had come to take her life?

Enzo looked at Michael and said solemnly, "Alpha Michael, please give me and my fiancée an explanation for this matter. I don't want our union to be broken, nor do I want this matter to affect our Packs."

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The night's drama ended with Ellen and Melissa getting locked up. Ellen's image as a virtuous wife and mother, and a kind Luna, was shattered overnight, while Melissa turned from a naive, beautiful princess to a tainted murderer.

Michael had never expressed his opinion at home, and I always had the impression he was even afraid of his wife. But when it came to the interest of the Pack, he would still make the most beneficial decision. This was perhaps the cruel responsibility of being a Pack's Alpha. I pushed open the door of the confinement cell where Melissa sat in the corner. Her hair was disheveled, and her arms were crossed. The delicate makeup on her face was all smudged, and she was wearing a prison uniform.

She looked up slowly when she heard the door open and met my eyes. She seems sane now. "Are you here to gloat?" she asked.

I frowned at her.

She stood up and tried to approach me, but the chains on her ankles limited her range of motion.

"Why else would you be here? To show off? To provoke me? To gloat about your victory?" Melissa screamed, glaring at me. I narrowed my eyes slightly. After considering a few moments, I sighed. "You don't seem afraid that I'm a ghost here to claim your life now." Melissa froze momentarily before throwing her head back and laughing maniacally. "Melissa," I called out. She stopped laughing. Tears slid down her cheeks.

"I... always thought of you as my best friend-," I started and looked at her. "Who wants to be friends with you? Who do you think you are? I'm the Alpha's daughter, and you're just a slave! No one would be friends with a slave!" Melissa interrupted me and screamed.

"Yeah, I know." I nodded, looking at her calmly. "Since you know, why else are you here? What do you want to prove? Your benevolence? Your kindness? What a joke!"

I was silent for a while. Then, I looked at her directly and asked something that had kept me wondering.

"You've never considered me a friend all this while, have you? Not even for a second?" Her eyelashes trembled, and she gave me a confused look. After a moment, she sneered. "Andrea, you're unbelievably naive! I've already told you that

you're just a doll I raised. Didn't you understand?" I lowered my head and took a deep breath, pushing down the sourness that welled up in my throat. "... I'm here to return something to you," I said after calming myself.

She narrowed her eyes.

I raised my hand and took off the rose necklace that hung on my neck, then placed it in the center of my palm.

She tilted her head to the side as she lowered her eyes. She squinted at the necklace in my palm but made no move to take it.

I waited for a while, then placed it on the table.

I squeezed the corner of the table so tightly like I wanted to shatter the light that had shone on me for the past eighteen years. This necklace was the beginning of our false sisterhood and let this entire farce end with it as well.

I hated her, but human emotions were never so clear cut. I still missed the kindness that she had showered on me in the past eighteen years, even though they were all a lie.

She had gotten what she deserved, and I wanted to sever our ties cleanly.

I let go of the table and walked out of the cell without turning back to look at her.

"Andrea! Just you wait! I'll never let you off! Not even in death!"

Melissa's voice rang out behind me, and her voice eventually cut off once the door closed behind me.

I gritted my teeth, wiped away the tears that welled up in my eyes and left the place.

I pushed open the door next to the kitchen. It had been a week since I was here, and it had already been converted into a storeroom. My things had all been thrown away, including the mattress that Melissa had given me.

No one had cleaned this room for a while, and sunlight shone from the small window, enabling me to see the tiny dust particles that floated in the air.

I stood in the room with my arms crossed. This was the place I had lived in for more than ten years, and there was a complexed feeling in my heart as I looked around. "I'll take you out of this place." Enzo had walked in at some point, standing not too far behind me. "As your marriage partner?" I asked with my back to him. "As my mate."

He countered my words, emphasizing my status as his mate once more.

I nodded silently.

Staying at his side as his mate seemed infinitely better than being his marriage partner in this union, but I was still uncomfortable. Though, I still couldn't pinpoint the reason for it.

"Okay, don't think about it so much. All your suffering here is over now."

Enzo moved forward to try to hug me, and I could feel the scent of wine that belonged to him come closer.

But perhaps because he had previously agreed not to touch me without my permission, he eventually dropped his arms before reaching me. I turned to look at him and stared into his golden-brown eyes for a long moment. "Why are you looking at me like that?" The corner of his eyes curved as he smiled.

I opened my mouth, but no words came out of it. Was it because I didn't like that he only treated me as his mate? That didn't seem like the reason. To us werewolves, being someone's mate was the most secure feeling one could have. So, why in the world was I dissatisfied? "You're standing there with your mouth open with no word. Are you inviting a kiss?" He lowered his head and approached me, the tip of his nose touching mine. The strong scent of wine wafted into my nose ruthlessly, tempting me.

I swallowed, moving my eyes from the bridge of his high nose to those seductive lips.

I had to admit, although I didn't think of this at the start, my heart was sorely tempted now. Enzo had successfully seduced me. Damn it. My desire overrode my logical senses, and I wanted to be near him so badly. "If you don't object, I'll take it as you agree." Enzo brought his hand up to caress my face tentatively. The warmth from his palm felt as though it had heated my entire body. "I'm going to kiss you." He exhaled, his hot breath fanning my face, and gradually closed the distance between us.

The atmosphere was great...

"Oh! Shit!"

Someone roared.

Kyle took a big step back and slammed into the door.

Enzo raised his eyebrows impatiently as he turned around to meet Kyle's eyes. He said in an irritated voice, "Is there something you want?" "There is something indeed," Kyle said as he rubbed the back of his head. His beautiful, soft blond hair now looked like a bird's nest.

He glanced at me and hesitated. Kyle seemed like he didn't want to say it in front of me.

"It's fine. Tell me," Enzo said as he looked over at Kyle. "I just caught a guy who wanted to poison Ellen." Enzo's face changed. "What do you mean?" "That person has our Pack's mark on him. I've checked it out and found that it's someone from our entourage. If I didn't happen to pass by the cells, I'm afraid that person would have succeeded."