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## **Chapter 28 : Under his gaze**

Waking the next morning, I laid upon the soft sheets of my bed. His scent still lingered, even after his long absence.

Memories flooded my mind of the way he touched me – the way he kissed me.

I was enraptured with the feeling of him upon my body, and I knew that the sinful thoughts shouldn't be there, but I couldn't help it.

I didn't want them to stop.

Running my fingers across my lips, I closed my eyes and smiled before slowly pulling myself from the bed. Ethan had acted differently last night...

So much differently that it seemed bedding me might be more than just a job to him.

Looking through the large closet that sat adjacent to my bed, I pulled on a denim blue dress and matched it with a cute pair of white panties. The white sneakers Vicky had given me the week before seemed more appropriate with my outfit choice than sandals or heels- not to mention more comfortable.

Pulling my long hair up into a ponytail, I left my room, heading down the stairs towards the kitchen. Vicky had invited me for breakfast, and I was looking forward to our morning chats before I set about finding a way to occupy my time.

Turning the corner, I spotted her tall, slender figure perched upon a bar stool, sipping on a cup of coffee. Her hand rested against her temple, and there was a frown upon her face.

"Vicky, are you okay?" I asked with a concerned stare.

Her eyes looked up to meet my own, and she smiled. "Yeah. I just drank too much last night."

"You did?" I asked, not remembering her drinking that much at dinner.

"Yes, I had my own party after you left last night, and now I am suffering."

glass of juice. I was rather ravenous this morning. When I took my place next to her, I heard the soft voices of Ethan's guests walking our way.

A chuckle left my lips as I moved towards the large array of food. I picked up a muffin and some fruits to start my day off with a

closer to Vicky, and she looked up from her coffee at me when she felt my movement. I watched her eyes dart towards the newcomers, and a smile play across her lips.

I kept my eyes low not wanting to meet their gaze. The sound of their feet against the floor as they entered the kitchen drew me

"Good morning, Alpha Romero-Madalynn.. I hope you both had fun and slept well last night."

There was amusement in Vicky's tone, and I wasn't sure what she was up to.

"Good morning... Vicky, wasn't it?" Romero's smooth voice said. "And of course, Rosalie...marvelous singing last night."

I gulped as I slowly looked up to meet his dark eyes. Every part of me screamed to run away.

"Good morning... and thank you."

For a moment, I wanted the ground to swallow me whole. However, Romero's Beta entered the kitchen at the right time and seemed to diffuse most of the conversation. Seeing him, Madalynn scoffed.

Victoria..."

"Father, leave her alone, she isn't worth it..." Madalynn started with an annoyed tone. "I heard what pack she came from, from

My eyes widened hearing what Madalynn had said. I didn't think anyone would know where I came from... Why would she ask about who I was?!

"Miss Madalynn, I wouldn't think it is polite to go snooping around in other people's lives," Vicky said coldly. I could almost feel

Competition? I wasn't in any competition with her, and I wouldn't be part of whatever her plan was.

"Yeah, well, I have to know who my competition is," Madalynn sneered.

The amusing look Vicky gave the girl had me on alert; then, Romero's distinct chuckle pulled my attention back to him.

"We leave this afternoon for the capital. Come sit down, Madalynn." He slowly stood from where he had been sitting and placed

his cup down on the table. "Don't make a fool of yourself. I raised you better than that." I watched as Romero walked past me, inhaling deeply before his eyes locked with mine again and a smile crossed his lips.

When he retreated, I released a breath I hadn't known I had been holding. I turned to find Madalynn glaring at me.

A sadistic smirk crossed her face, and she turned quickly to leave.

"Watch it, or my father may take you for himself. He wouldn't mind adding you to his collection."

Romero's Beta, however, held back a moment, slowly turning to me and Vicky.

As the Beta quickly turned and disappeared, I found myself genuinely surprised and confused by his actions. I had thought he

"I apologize, ladies," he whispered, looking around. "Please don't let it ruin your morning."

I glanced back at Vicky, who had a worried look on her face. Some emotion flickered in her eyes for a moment, but then Talon appeared in the kitchen doorway.

would be just like Romero and his daughter were. However, he seemed different. I suppose one shouldn't make such assumptions.

"What happened?" he asked.

"It seems," said Vicky, "that Romero wants Rosalie, and his nasty daughter wants Ethan."

to me. "You have to tell him..."

"Did he touch you?" Talon quickly asked.

I shook my head.

Talon gaze darkened with anger as he stepped toward me and started looking me over as if searching for something.

"Tell me what?"

like this. I wanted to go back to my room and be far away from it all.

"I know, Vicky." Talon sighed. "However, the situation is a delicate one."

place.

Ethan's sultry voice enveloped me once more, and my heartbeat picked up. This was way too much action for me this morning. Quickly, I stood to my feet and placed my dishes in the sink, no longer hungry. I didn't want to be anywhere near conversations

"I wouldn't have let him get close enough to her, Talon. You should know me better than that," Vicky scolded him, stepping closer

"I think we should take this conversation to your office, Alpha," Talon said very professionally. Every step I took, I felt Ethan's gaze upon my own. As I tried to walk past him to escape, his hand caught my arm and held me in

"What happened?"

I slowly lifted my eyes to his, and then fell speechless beneath the intensity of his gaze. "I–I..." "Rosalie, it's okay—" Vicky started, but Ethan quickly held his hand up, gesturing for her to stop talking.

"She can answer," Ethan said clearly, his eyes still on me.

and quickly I made my way back up the stairs towards my room.

why was his daughter entertaining such horrible comments as well?

"N-nothing... I just finished eating. May I be excused, please?" I asked, wanting nothing more than to disappear. Ethan stared at me for a moment as if searching for the truth before releasing his grip on my arm. I took that as my cue to leave,

When my feet hit the top step and I turned down my corridor, I felt someone's eyes watching me.

Turning to look over my shoulder, I saw Romero standing at the other end of the hallway, watching me with a curious gaze—along

with his Beta, who had a smirk on his face. This wasn't the first time I'd noticed him watching me. With a feeling of dread, I admitted that Vicky was probably right.

He was similar to Ethan, but there was something far more dangerous in the way he carried himself. He wasn't someone that you wanted to get mixed up with... but he also seemed to know to watch himself around Ethan.

Picking up my pace, I reached for my door and quickly opened it, shutting it behind me and locking it.

It was already enough that I was what I was to Ethan. To have another man look at me that way—as a prize to be won—I didn't like it.

I was terrified of what was going on, and I didn't understand why the other Alpha was giving me this unwanted attention. And

I made my decision that until they were gone, I wasn't leaving the safety of my room.