



Chapter 13

"What?" I ask, looking as well. "Oh," I say, a little surprised to see a bruise starting there, just above the crease. "Well, that's new..."

"Those assholes," Christian grumbles, dropping my arm and raising his eyes to mine. "Bonetti's men are always so needlessly brutal. I'm sorry, we'll get you some pain killers –"

"It's fine," I say, crossing my arms and shrugging. "I've had a bruise before. And honestly, Christian, if you're mad about a bruise you don't want to know what else they were planning –"

"Iris," he says, looking at me hard. I shut my mouth, stopped a bit in my tracks. "I know what they were planning for you. All right?"

I nod, a little bit of the night's earlier fear coming back to me. Because, I mean, it's one thing to make a joke about it – but if I really think about what they were going to do to me...

"Thank you, Christian," I whisper, my voice shaking. "For saving me." I stare up into his eyes, tears welling in my own, not really knowing how to feel.

Christian sighs and takes another step towards me, cupping my face in his palm for a second before wrapping me in a hug. "Don't thank me just yet," he murmurs, pressing me close. "You're still stuck in this world, which is the last place I want you to be."

I wrap my arms around his neck and return his hug, clinging to him a little.

Christian breaks the hug first. "It's late," he murmurs, slowly letting me slip out of his arms. "Are you hungry? You should go to bed."



"Um, I could eat," I say a little awkwardly as I take my arms from around his neck and glance around the room, not really knowing what to do next.

"I'll bring you a sandwich, and the pain killers," he murmurs, heading for the door. "Get some sleep."

He doesn't even glance back at me as he goes, closing the door behind him. I stand for a long moment, looking at that closed door. But then I sigh and head for the bed, slipping in and wrapping my arms around my knees as I wait for Christian to return, my mind spinning over the events of the night.

I'm still staring into space when the door opens again. I sit up straight in surprise and disappointment when I see Frankie standing there with a plate and another bottle of water.

"Hey," he says, "can I come in?"

"Of course," I reply.

Frankie walks over to me and hands me the plate, the door drifting shut behind him. "You all right in here? Need anything?"

"I'm okay," I say, glancing behind him. Honestly, I'd expected Christian to come back...

"He's...a little swamped tonight," Frankie says, interpreting the direction of my gaze. "Don't take it personally, okay? He's got a lot to clean up after everything that went down at the club."

"Oh," I reply, feeling guilty. He said I wasn't bother, but I knew I would be – and I absolutely hate that.

"Hey," Frankie says again, firmer this time, making me look up into his



face. "None of that," he says, shaking a finger at me and giving me a smile. "You wouldn't be here if he didn't want you to be, all right? There are plenty of other safe houses where he could have dropped you. So just... don't overthink it. Eat up, get some sleep, and we'll figure it out tomorrow."

I stare up at him for a second before I smile, just a little. "You're really nice for a mobster, Frankie."

Frankie bursts out laughing at this, straightening up and giving me a pleased grin that lights up his handsome face. "Nico's mean enough for both of us," he says with a wink, turning towards the door. "Someone's got to be the angel to his devil."

I smile after him – can't help it – and when Frankie pulls the door shut after himself I pick up my sandwich, taking a bite and laying back against my pillow.

Because if Frankie's the angel and Nico's the devil...

Then what the hell is Christian?

And where on earth do I fit in all of this?



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