

## Chapter 21

### Silver

A knot formed in the pit of my stomach.

"I apologize..." I said.

"Were your achievements at the auction just a fluke then? Are you incapable of repainting that portrait?"

"Sir, I-"

"I expect better from my exclusive painters," he scolded, and then he hung up before I could say another word.

I looked at Rebecca who was staring at me with raised brows.

"Why would you turn down the offer?" She asked, curiously.

"I made a promise to Elliot," I told her. "I can't go back on my word."

"Maybe you should speak with him about it.

I sighed, not wanting to talk about it anymore. Picking up on my mood change, Rebecca changed the subject and the rest of the evening flowed nicely.

When Elliot returned to the palace after being away all day, he handed me a red blindfold.

"Put this on," he instructed.

I raised my brows at his request.

"What for?"

"I have a surprise for you," he told me.

Hesitantly, I put the blindfold on.

Elliot adjusted it to make sure I couldn't see anything and then he guided me away. I could tell from the various scents and sounds that we had wandered outside. Elliot surprised me by lifting me into his arms and carrying me the rest of the way.

A few minutes later, he was putting me down and untying my blindfold. When I adjusted my eyes to the new setting, I gasped at what I saw.

We were standing in the middle of a greenhouse and surrounded by roses of all different colors. I gasped at the beauties around me and then I noticed a greeting card on a small table in a small pavilion that read: A belated wedding gift.

I turned to look at Elliot, a crease between my brows and tears in my eyes.

"What's all this?" I asked, my voice coming out in a whisper.

"I noticed that roses often appear in your paintings... including the one you did of me," he said, shrugging and putting his hands in his front pockets almost sheepishly. "I figured they were your favorite flowers." I was at a loss for words. My heart swelled with gratitude, and I closed the gap between us, kissing him on the lips.

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A couple of days had passed since Elliot surprised me with the greenhouse and only one day had passed since I submitted my artwork to the Pandora Bloom gallery. However, my paintings were returned to me the following day. One of the workers at the gallery informed me that my paintings did not fit the theme and was told to return them to me.

Feeling rejected and annoyed, I had a feeling I knew exactly who was behind this and why.

The Pandora Bloom cocktail party was scheduled for this evening and considering I am an exclusive painter for the gallery, I'm invited to attend. I was going to confront Barrett about my paintings being rejected.

I wore an elegant red evening gown with shimmering silver heels. I let my hair down and curled it so it would bounce freely around my shoulders and down my back. I applied some makeup to bring out my brightest features before heading downstairs.

I paused in front of Elliot who was looking at me with desire in his eyes; it made my chest constrict and I cleared my throat to bring his attention to my face.

"I was wondering if you'd attend the cocktail party with me. I'd like to share my successes with you. Considering you are the reason behind them being my model and all."

"Sorry, but I have other plans this evening," he told me casually.

I didn't press him for more information and once again, I was left masking my disappointment. Without another word, I left and went to the cocktail party.

It was a beautiful event and just as elegant as described by everyone who attended last year. I never thought I would ever get the chance to attend such an event, but here I was.

## Chapter 22

### Silver

I saw Barrett mingling with a few guests and sipping champagne. I took a deep breath before confronting him.

"Can we talk?" I asked him as I approached.

He turned his scrutinizing gaze in my direction and plastered a smile for his viewer's sake.

"Miss Stormwind, you made it," he said in greeting. "We were just talking about your incredible art piece at the auction and how you'll be painting more for your fans soon." I pressed my lips together.

"I already told you; I'm not painting anymore using that model, Mr. Anders. I've made a promise I intend to keep," I told him firmly, causing murmurs to erupt around us.

Barrett gave a fake, and slightly nervous laugh as he glared at me.

"And I told you, I expect more from my exclusive writers," he said, his fake smile never leaving his face.

"Then why exactly did you reject the paintings I sent you yesterday?" I asked him, raising my brows. "I've worked hard on those, and they were well done in my opinion. Did you reject them out of malice?" His face turned red at my accusation.

"Are you saying I'm not professional, Miss Stormwind?" He asked through his teeth. "As my worker explained, your paintings simply did not fit the gallery's theme."

"That's funny because I made sure to match the theme properly before painting those pieces for the gallery," I said, raising my brows at him. I

was wholly aware of our gathered audience and the growing silence around us. "If you ask me, I will say you rejected my paintings because you were upset that I wouldn't cooperate with your demands."

"How dare you walk into my cocktail party and insinuate such nonsense," Barret growled, pointing his long finger at me. "If it wasn't for me, you would be nothing right now. You needed my auction to put your name out there and it was my gallery that is getting you the recognition that you have now. The least you could do is cooperate with my requests."

I folded my arms across my chest.

"I'm afraid I can't do that," I said with finality.

"Then I guess there's nothing more for us to discuss, Miss Stormwind. If that's your viewpoint, it would make better sense to just terminate the contract and forget this exchange ever happened."

He said, waving his hands in defeat. Just as he did though, a waiter walked by holding a tray of champagne and Barret's hand whacked the tray, causing all the champagne to fall and crash to the ground. I felt the liquid before I saw the giant stain on my gown.

Gasps erupted around me but before I could react, a strong hand grabbed my wrist and pulled me away from a very angry Barret. I looked up at the figure that stood in front of me and my mouth fell open. It was Elliot and he was fuming with rage.

What was he doing here? I thought he had other plans...

Whispers erupted around me as everyone took steps away from the scene.

"It's the gallery owner!"

"He's the big boss!"

"It's never good pissing the boss off..."

The gallery's owner? I thought to myself as I stared up at Elliot's back as he continued to glare at Barret who was now trembling in fear.

"Alpha Crown. It's an honor to see you," Barrett said, showing his head in respect.

Elliot took off his suit jacket and to my surprise, he turned to face me, draping it over my shoulders.

He spoke loud enough for Barrett and everyone else to hear, the anger evident in my voice.

"I came here as a surprise to my wife but imagine my own surprise when I arrive and see her being treated with such disrespect."

## Chapter 23

### Silver

My heart was racing as I stared up at Elliot. Was he really the owner of this art gallery? Did that mean he was the one who sent me the invitation for the auction?

My mind was whirling with different thoughts as Elliot turned to see a pale-faced Barret as he shrunk under Elliot's scrutiny.

Leo appeared by my side, and he took it upon himself to calm the growing crowd around us.

"Rest assured, Alpha Elliot is the owner of this gallery and Miss Silver Stormwind is his wife. If you disrespect her, you disrespect him as well. Please, resume your activities and pay us no mind," Beta Leo ordered, his voice having a sense of authority over the crowd.

The crowd murmured excitedly as they gazed at me and then at Elliot.

"He must be the one in her paintings!" Someone in the crowd said to the others.

"It makes so much sense now!" Some else cooed.

With curious whispers and glances in my direction, the crowd departed, and the music resumed.

"I... I had no idea she was your wife, Alpha," Barret said, keeping his head lowered. "Please accept my apologies."

"Apologize to my wife for your blatant disrespect, Mr. Anders," Elliot said, his voice bitter.

Barret looked at me and I could see the fear behind his gaze.

"I'm sorry, Miss Stormwind, please accept my apology."

I didn't respond; I was too stunned to speak.

"Good, now get out. You're fired," Elliot said, turning his back toward Barret.

I gasped and Barrett stammered backwards.

"But Alpha-

"Don't make me repeat myself, Barret. Leave before another scene is caused."

Without another word, Barret left the cocktail party.

Elliot motioned for one of the gallery workers to approach us and when she did, I recognized her immediately from the auction.

"Please take my wife to get changed. I know there's extra clothes upstairs," Elliot ordered.

"Yes, Alpha," she said, motioning for me to follow her. I gave Elliot a brief look before following the worker upstairs and into a bedroom. I didn't know this gallery doubled as a home as well and I wondered who lived here.

She rummaged through the closet and uncovered a gorgeous black dress, but it was a little too revealing for my taste and I felt a little strange putting it on. The dress was completely backless, and it revealed a little too much of my cleavage.

The worker looked at me with satisfaction though, so I swallowed my embarrassment and followed her back down the stairs and to Elliot.

When he saw me, his eyes darkened, and I saw a look of desire crossing his face as he took in the new dress. I thought he was going to be upset that I was showing off so much of my cleavage like Gavin would have been, but a small smile spread across his lips as he closed the gap between us.

"Dance with me," he said, wrapping an arm around my waist and pulling my flesh against him.

My heart leaped in my throat as I gazed up at him. The music had slowed down, and the lighting dimmed slightly. I wrapped my arms around his neck and allowed him to pull me toward the dance floor where others were dancing with their partners as well.

As we danced, I couldn't help but feel a sense of protection in his arms. The way he was looking at me made my cheeks flush and I was no longer feeling embarrassed about the dress. His warmth enveloped me, and I put my face against his chest, listening to the steady beating of his heart as we danced around the gallery.



I'm not sure how long we danced for, but I felt nothing, but ease and I wanted this moment to last for a long time.

Elliot bent to whisper in my ear, "Would you like to return home?"

Home.

That sounded nice coming from his lips. It wasn't just his home anymore... it was our home.

I nodded against his chest and peeked up at him through my lashes.

"Yes," I answered.

We returned to the mansion; Elliot's lips were on mine before we even got to our bedroom. He lifted me in his arms, and I kissed him with a hungry passion, never wanting to stop kissing him. His lips were sweet and soft against mine, moving in a familiar rhythm that made my heart sore and my core gush with need.

I felt my dress loosen as he undid my straps, leaving me in just my bra and panties. His lips trailed down the nape of my neck, sucking on a specific spot that sent incredible chills down my spine. I couldn't help but shiver against him as he paid extra attention to that soft part of my neck.

Elliot kicked something on the ground, and he froze to look at it.

I gasped.

I completely forgot I left that painting in here! I went a little risqué last night when I couldn't sleep, thinking too much about this cocktail party. One thing led to another and I made a painting...

## Chapter 24

### Silver

I should have hidden it in my studio when I had the chance. It was hidden under a sheet and propped against the wall, so I had a chance to hide it from him, but he was faster than I.

"What's this?" He asked as he reached toward it.

"Wait, don't—" I tried to stop him, but he was too fast and lifted the sheet.

His brows rose at the painting I did of him completely naked. Surrounding his nude form was a halo of red which blended nicely into the setting sun and pale blue skies behind him. He glanced over his shoulder at my very red and embarrassed face.

I had no idea what to say, so I hung my head shamefully.

"Is this part of your exclusive collection?" Elliot chuckled.

"I... uh—"

Before I finished my thought, Elliot's lips were back on mine, and he was kissing me deeply. He shoved his tongue deep into my mouth and twirled it around with my tongue. "Such a bad girl..." he murmured against my lips.

My heart was racing, and all traces of embarrassment were completely gone. He lifted me off the ground and placed me on the bed before him. He stood before me, watching me wiggle under his scrutiny as he undid his tie and then took off his shirt. My mouth watered at the sight of him.

I just wanted to reach out and touch his washboard abs. I wanted to feel every inch of him beneath my fingertips.

With a sparkle in his eyes, he also undid his pants and kicked them aside. The bulge in his boxers made my heart skip a beat.

He reached around me and unclasped my bra without a second thought before he positioned himself between my legs, pulling my panties off as he did so. I had never been this exposed to him before. When we had sex the first time, we were too drunk to remember much of anything, and the second time was a heated moment of weakness in my studio. It hardly counted as anything.

But now, I was completely naked, and he was fully aware of my body. He could see everything and the way he was looking at me made me wiggle uncomfortably. Yet, heat was surrounding my lower abdomen and I found myself wanting him so much more than I ever had before.

I grabbed a blanket, wanting to hide myself from his scrutiny, but he grabbed the blanket and tossed it aside.

"Don't hide from me, Silver," he said in a sultry voice that made my body even hotter.

Without another word, he buried his face in my core and his tongue pleased me to a point where I was screaming out his name. My legs tingled with pleasure as I dug my nails into the bed sheets. Moaning, I let him take me to new heights again and again until I couldn't take it anymore.

Pleased with himself, he kissed me deeply, allowing me to taste the evidence of my pleasure on his lips and tongue. I kissed him hungry like I couldn't get enough. I ran my fingers through his thick hair, loving the sparks that ignited my body from touching him and feeling him against me.

I didn't even realize he removed his boxers until his large erection was pressing into my center. I gasped at the fullness and then allowed my body to relax and welcome the pleasure as he thrust himself deep into me.

"Oh, Elliot," I moaned as he quickened his pace.

His lips crashed into mine and for a moment, we breathed as one unit. I had never felt this connected to someone before and I wanted more of him.

Without thinking, I pushed him slightly and he rolled onto his back, taking me with him. I straddled him and moved my hips rhythmically against his, chasing my own pleasure.

I threw my head back as his lips and teeth found my breasts. He nibbled on my body like I was his favorite snack, leaving tiny bite marks and hickeys along the softest parts of my flesh. These weren't mating marks, but they were something that showed others that I belonged to someone; that I was a taken woman.

Just as I was pushed over the edge in sweet bliss, Elliot came undone with me and I fell on top of him, both of us catching our breaths.

He rolled me over, so I was lying facing away from him in bed and his arms were wrapped around me as he spooned me from behind. Neither of us had the energy to get dressed. I was exhausted and my eyelids were becoming impossible to keep open.

Elliot peppered soft kisses on the back of my shoulders as sleep took over. But just before I fully fell asleep, that soft voice echoed in the back of my head once again, "Mark him..."

How could I mark someone as powerful as Elliot? Especially without a wolf? \

Would he even want me to?

I wondered, at that moment, what Elliot was thinking.

## Chapter 25

### Silver

I had framed my "exclusive" painting of Elliot on the wall in our bedroom right next to his model car collection. I smiled up at the painting, feeling satisfied with my hard work. Elliot walked into the room just then and froze when he saw it.

A bemused look crossed his face as he examined the picture and then his eyes found mine.

"You framed it?" He asked, noticing the golden frame I placed the portrait in.

I nodded.

"What do you think?" I asked him.

He thought about it for a moment, staring at the portrait intently before looking back at me. There was something in his expression that I couldn't quite read and for a moment, my stomach knotted.

Did he not like it?

Was he upset that I framed it and hung it up?

It's not like anyone would see this portrait besides us. Elliot doesn't like it when others are inside of our bedroom, including the maids.

"Did you frame Gavin's painting as well?" He asked, his tone indifferent.

I furrowed my brows at the question.

Why would he bring up Gavin right now?

"I painted that photo a long time ago," I told him, glancing up at him. "It was hidden in my closet at my father's house until recently. It was meant

as a gift to Gavin, but I was too shy to give it to him." I noticed Elliot's jaw tick and I raised my brows at the notion.

Did he only agree to be my model because he saw that painting and was jealous? Would Elliot be jealous over something like that?

"And where is the painting now?" He asked, narrowing his eyes at me.

"Still in my studio," I admitted; I'm honestly not sure what to do with it.

"Hmm," he hummed, turning away from me and walking towards the bed.

He was quiet as he took off his shirt and threw it in the laundry basket before removing his pants and doing the same.

I raised my brows while he got ready for bed, his silence speaking volumes.

"You aren't jealous, are you?" I asked him, my tone a bit mocking.

I couldn't help it; the big bad Alpha wolf was jealous over something so mediocre. I had to bite my lower lip to keep from chuckling as his body stilled.

"I'm not jealous," he said sternly, without looking at me. "I don't do jealous."

"Is that so?" I asked him, folding my arms across my chest and staring at his back.

He finally turned to look at me, his face unamused.

"Just go to bed," he muttered, clearly not wanting to discuss this any further.

This time, I did laugh.

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A couple of days had passed since Elliot showed his jealous side and I still found it humorous each time I thought about it. He refused to say anything

more on the topic and to save him the grief, I decided to get rid of the painting of Gavin.

I noticed there were a lot more people in the kitchen than usual and when I walked in to see what was going on, I saw Mariah speaking to a large group of workers. I assumed they were the kitchen staff at the packhouse.

They appeared to be going over a large menu for some event that was meant to take place soon.

Leo was also present for the meeting and when he noticed my curious and questioning looks, he joined me at the doorway to explain.

"The full moon is approaching, and we are going over the meal plan for the event," he explained.

I raised my brows.

"What event?" I asked him.

"Elliot insists on a pack gathering for this month's full moon. It's a way to introduce you as their Luna. It'll be held at the packhouse and everybody in the pack will be there," he explained.