Chapter 36 Repainting the portrait

Enzo's POV

Her powers were truly incredible. I could no longer feel the sting of the dagger and the wound was completely healed. It was as if it was never there, to begin with.

Lila used her powers so casually as if she's done it a thousand times before, but I'm beginning to

realize that maybe she hasn't.

She didn't say anything after I told her that she could use my portrait for her project; she trailed after me silently, keeping her head down. But I could sense that she was pleased. Max praised me for my generosity toward her.

A small smile was tugging al her lips, but she was stifling it. She was afraid to show me any kind of emotion.

I suppose I haven't been making it very easy for her.

Encountering the wolf who attacked my mother was only proof that Lila wasn't safe, and I needed to do whatever I could to keep her safe.

Even if it means rejecting her.

"Funny how you haven't rejected her yet," Max teased. "Why is that?"

"I'm just waiting for the right time" I say to him in return, but even I don't believe my words.

I wasn't sure why I couldn't bring myself to reject her. Every time she was around, my brain would just forget for a moment that I needed to reject her and be done with it. I would forget the dangers that swirled around us every time I was near her.

"Have you ever thought that maybe being close to her is what's going to keep her safe?" Max asked. "Why would you want to be far away from her? You won't be able to protect her that way."

"She has a less chance of being found out if I don't hang around her. These men are constantly on my trail, watching my every move. If they see Lila, especially if they find out she's my mate, then they would do anything they can to get to her. I won't let that happen. As far as they know... Lila means nothing to me."

At that point, I realized Lila had stopped walking. It was like she had heard my thoughts.

Could that be another Volana wolf ability?

I stared around her sunken face; she lifted her gaze to meet mine.

"I'll make you another portrait," she said softly. "Come by the art room tomorrow evening and we can get started.

Lila's PoV

"I'm really glad you decided to submit your project to the art exhibit," Miss Grace said with a fond smile. "It's going to be a huge hit."

"That's if it gets accepted," I reminded her. "It's one out of hundreds of submissions. Do you really

think I have a shot?"

"Yes," she answered. "I really do."

At sat in front of my blank canvas; it was after hours.

"You should get something to eat and rest" Miss Grace said as she grabbed the coat off her desk chair.

"I will in a bit, I just want to finish some stuff up," I told her.

It wasn't odd for me to stay longer than Miss Grace. Sometimes I would lock up for her; she trusted me enough to do so.

She smiled and nodded as she handed me the keys to the art room.

"Just put the keys in the usual spot for me," she told me as she walked towards the door.

"Have a good night Miss Grace ," I said to her kindly.

"You as well, Lila."

She was gone without another word.

I turned back to the canvas frowning; I was ready to repaint Enzo, but I needed him here as a model before I began.I told him to meet me here after hours, but he didn't confirm if he would be there or not.

"He didn't deny it either" Val reminded me. "Have some faith in our mate. He will show up."

I wanted to believe her but a part of me didn't. A part of me knew how badly Enzo couldn't stand being around me. I could tell by the way he looks at me and how he acts around me. He didn't want me as his mate, he didn't want me as his anything.

I suppose that wasn't a bad thing; I wasn't sure I wanted him either. He wasn't what I thought

having a mate would be like.

I wanted a redo.

As time grew later, I realized I was right, Enzo wasn't going to show up.I could feel Val's pure disappointment as I started to pack up my things.

But then the art room door creaked open, and I got a familiar scent in my nose. Val perked up instantly, wagging her tail like she was a common dog, I could feel her excitement, which made me excited as well.

Enzo stood at the doorway, leaning against the frame, and pouring his dark gaze into mine. For a moment, I had forgotten how to breathe.

"I didn't think you were going to come," I said, swallowing the lump in my throat.

"I almost didn't," he said in return. "But then I thought about my mother and how badly she wanted that portrait. I figured it's the least you could do."

He walked into the room, closed the door behind him, and made his way toward me. I cleared my throat, placed my things back down, and sat in front of my canvas.

I pointed to the empty chair on the other side of the canvas.

"You can sit there" I told him.

He did so without hesitation, crossing his leg over the other and entwining his fingers. It was the same pose as the other portrait.

I began to work quickly and effectively, I didn't want to linger too long after hours in the art room, but I also wanted this portrait to be just as good, if not belter, than the last one.

I traced all his features with a pencil before I went in with some paint. As I got to his lips, my eyes lingered on his actual lips for a long while. They were so full and the memory of kissing them invaded my mind.

My heart began to race quickly as I pulled my eyes away from his ace and started painting on the canvas.

The silence between us grew thick as I continued to work and then he spoke, which surprised me more than anything.

"How long have you been into art?

I glanced over at him briefly before continuing.

"For as long as I could remember, I answered. "My mother taught me to draw when I was young, and I wanted to be able to capture everything I could. Pictures don't do justice; they're only pixels.A painting is like looking through someone else's eyes and seeing what they see."

"So, that's what you want to do with your life? Painting?"

I raised my brows at his question, why was he showing interest suddenly?

"You act like that's a bad thing," I said in return. "But I wouldn't say that's the only thing I want to do. I want to do a lot of things. But I want to paint the journey ahead of me as well. I don't want to simply take pictures of everything I accomplish and every road I take. I want to capture it on a canvas and put it in a gallery for everyone to see and enjoy.I want them to see the world through my eyes."

He didn't say anything in response to that.

I soon finished the portrait anyways, so it didn't really matter. I stood to my feet, pleased with myself as I turned the portrait to face him so he could see it as well.

He stayed in his seat, and I stood next to him; he was quiet for a long while, processing what he was seeing. I couldn't tell from his facial features if he liked it or not.

He was just... quiet.

What do you think?" I finally asked.

"It's perfect."

I was relieved to hear that and made that known when I sighed and relaxed my body.

"Can I ask you a question now?" I asked, peering down at him; he remained in his chair, but he glanced up at me with almost curiosity in his gaze.

"You clearly don't want me as your mate.." I found myself saying before I could stop myself. "So

why haven't you rejected me yet?"

He stared at me for a long while, trying to process my question. As soon as I asked, I regretted it. I should have just kept my mouth shut. I felt foolish and embarrassed.

He hasn't rejected me yet, but he was certainly going to do so now.

But then, his arm wrapped around my waist, and I was being pulled onto his lap before I could even grasp what was happening.

I gasped as his lips neared mine and with a heated passion burning through his hungry eyes, he kissed me.

Next Chapter →

Previous