

Chapter 39

## Chapter 39

[Vivienne]

Panic sets in as I see the guns pointed at us. Marcus, still outside the car, looks at me with a mixture of anger and concern. He gestures for me to stay calm.

I slowly reach for the door handle, my hands trembling. The men continue shouting, their voices harsh and impatient.

"Get out, now!" one of them repeats, banging on the window.

I push the door open and step out, my heart pounding in my chest. Marcus moves protectively closer to me, his eyes never leaving the armed men.

"What do you want?" Marcus demands, his voice steady but edged with tension.

One of the men steps forward, his gun aimed at me. "We don't want to hurt you. Just come with us quietly, and no one gets hurt."

My mind races, trying to figure out who these men are and why they've targeted us. I glance at Marcus, who gives me a slight nod, silently telling me to comply for now.

"Fine," I say, my voice shaking. "Just don't hurt anyone."

The man nods, seemingly satisfied with my response. "Smart choice. Now, move."

With Marcus by my side, I start walking toward the car they came in. The other man keeps his gun trained on us, ensuring we don't make any sudden moves.

I don't know who these men are or what they want, but I know one thing for sure: this day just went from bad to worse.

I have no clue where they are taking us, as the moment we get into the car, they blindfold the two of us.

Now, all I can hear is the way my heart thumps loudly against my chest and the sound of them talking in a language I don't understand.

Their accent is thick and sounds like native Italian, but again, I can't be sure. I'm too scared and worried to think clearly about anything right now.

The drive seems endless. Every bump and turn makes my anxiety spike.

After what feels like an eternity, the car finally comes to a stop. The men's voices grow louder, and the sound of a door opening and closing echoes through the vehicle.

Someone drags me out of the car and up what feels like stairs. I trip and almost lose my balance a few times, but the man keeps grunting and dragging me along.

Once we reach the top, the man finally yanks off the blindfold.

I blink rapidly, trying to adjust to the bright light. My surroundings come into focus—a run-down warehouse with peeling paint and

broken windows. The air is thick with dust and the smell of decay.

I look around, but Marcus is nowhere to be seen.

"Where's Marcus?" I ask the man, but he completely ignores me and pushes me forward.

It's only then I notice someone sitting in the only chair in the massive room. The chair looks regal, as if it belongs in a museum. I can only guess the man must have brought it with him.

The man in the chair looks up as we approach. He's dressed sharply in a tailored suit, a stark contrast to the decrepit surroundings. His face is partially obscured by the shadows of a large-brimmed hat, but his eyes are sharp and piercing.

The man stands up and examines us with a cold, calculating gaze before speaking. "So, you're the one I've been hearing about, causing trouble for my family left and right." His accent is unmistakable now—a smooth and rich Italian.

His words make my assumption stronger. "I think there's some misunderstanding. I have never seen you in my entire life. I don't even know you."

The man laughs, but there is no humor in his voice.

"That's right, you don't know me. Many people don't. But that's because I don't want to be known. You know what I mean, right?"

"What do you want with me?"

"Well, that's not for me to decide now is it?" he chuckles and then

slides his hands into his pockets.

"Maria, baby. Look, I got you an early anniversary present."

At the sound of the woman's name, a beautiful lady clad in an evening gown with a fur coat wrapped around her shoulders walks in, her heels clacking on the concrete floor.

I gasp as soon as I recognize her. "You?"

She's the same sly woman from Rosita's store who bumped into me and then made a huge scene about it. Rosita even banned her from her store.

"What? Surprised to see me?" she scoffs. "Did you really think you could get away after humiliating me in front of everyone?"

She walks around me, looking me up and down. She gives me a fake smile.

"Oh, dear. I must say, you look exactly how I remember you—like an ugly old hag who doesn't know when to back off."

I scowl at the woman. "Well, it's not my problem that you're blind."

"Excuse me?!"

The woman glares at me, her eyes burning with hatred. She takes a menacing step closer, her fists clenched at her sides.

Before she can do anything, though, the man puts a hand on her arm, stopping her.



He smiles, his face calm and collected, but the threat in his eyes is clear.

"That's enough. You will have your fun soon."

The woman pouts but steps back obediently.

The man looks back at me, a cold smile on his face. "You know, it's funny you say that. I have a client who desperately needs a lovely pair of eyes for his sister. And as much as I want to, I can't refuse him.

The man is some big shot. And I have been trying to appease him for a very long time. But this...these eyes...they will make him very happy. I'm sure of it."

My heart starts pounding in my chest. What does he mean? What is he going to do to me?

The man laughs and then walks up to me, getting so close I can feel his breath on my face.

"Don't worry," he trails a finger down my cheek. I cringe. "A life without eyes can't be that bad, can it?"

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