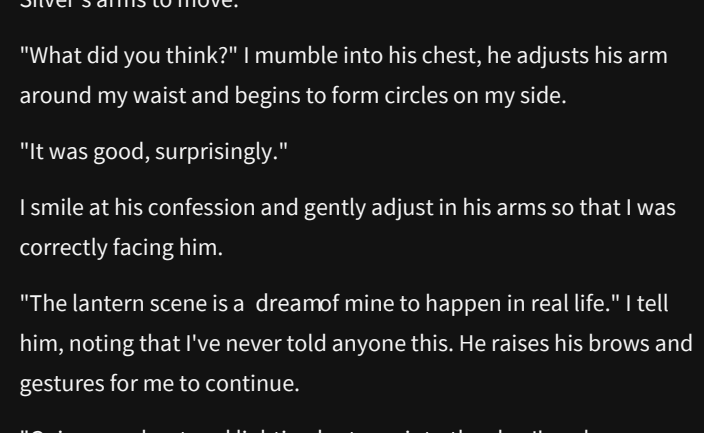


Chapter Twenty Three



"What a bitch," Silver grumbles, frowning at the screen in front of us.

"Right," I mutter back, deeply enhanced by the flashing colours.

Right now Mother Gothel was chaining Flynn to her castle while Rapunzel was running over to him, hoping to save him.

No matter how many times I've watched this, I will always shed at least a tear.

I felt my eyes water as Flynn assures her he'd be okay. Silver beside me remains apathetic watching the scene but genuinely seems invested.

The next thirty or so minutes are fulfilled with a few tears shedding, a glorified reunion with Rapunzel's parents and the happy ending I'd always hoped for.

The credits roll and I yawn, my body still but way too comfortable in Silver's arms to move.

"What did you think?" I mumble into his chest, he adjusts his arm around my waist and begins to form circles on my side.

"It was good, surprisingly."

I smile at his confession and gently adjust in his arms so that I was correctly facing him.

"The lantern scene is a dream! Mine to happen in real life." I tell him, noting that I've never told anyone this. He raises his brows and gestures for me to continue.

"Going on a boat and lighting lanterns into the sky. I've always wanted to do that..."

He nods his head slowly, travelling his gaze over my features, making me squawkish under the dark gaze he held.

"Noted."

A little smile plays on my lips and another tired yawn escapes me again. I feel a wave of exhaustion wrap around me, being curled in Silver's arms didn't help.

"Do you mind if I crash here? Or I can go home if you want..." I don't look at him as I ask this. Maybe I shouldn't have said anything.

"Of course you can." His voice falls deep within me, almost pulling me to sleep. And his response reassures my nagging thoughts because I was so worried about how I came across—whether I was being too clingy, too quickly, or if I was simply pushing my luck at this point.

Silver, on the other hand, never fails to inform me that my thoughts were wrong.

I could feel him shifting, but I sighed in protest since he was far too comfy for me to be moving right now. It seems that my sleepy brain decided to act just as if I were drunk, words spat from my mouth like I had no tongue.

"Don't move, Silver. I'm comfy..." I sigh into his chest and lighten my hold around his body, earning a deep chuckle from him.

"You'll be more comfortable in a bed, Fiore."

Grumbling, I say nothing but continue to let my body fall asleep with his musky, cinnamon scent in my head along with the lullaby of his voice.

"Just let me sleep here," I whisper, my voice fairly faint. Cold fingers start brushing through my hair, my head feeling even more relaxed and just before I could bare myself to sleep, I hear his voice for a final time.

"Sleep, my girl."

The next morning was bashful.

I was awoken in a dark room, white sheets curling around my body creating too much friction for my liking. Kicking the sheets o, I release a heaved sigh and blink my eyes up at the ceiling.

An unfamiliar ceiling.

Sitting face-up in the bed, my eyes wide with horror as I gaze around the dark room. Sunlight peaked through the sheer curtains for me to only realise that I hadn't been drugged or kidnapped.

I was with Silver.

Releasing my second sigh, I fall right back down onto the mattress, my thoughts swirling around while I rub my eyes of sleep.

Today was Sunday. Yesterday was Saturday.

Silver took me to his home.

Fed me.

Kissed me.

Watched I tangled with me.

Loved it.

And, finally, lulled me to sleep.

Wow.

For once, I smiled in the morning. I didn't dread getting out of bed, I was really happy.

Silver makes me happy.

Leaning up on my elbows, I search the unfamiliar room for a way to revive my appearance, and there was a restroom in the distant corner.

Smiling, I climb out of bed, only to stumble back onto the bed due to leg weakness.

"Fucking hell," I grumble, carefully standing up and taking slow strides to the bathroom.

Low iron things.

Doing my usual thing, I wash my face, find an unopened toothbrush and brush my teeth, wash that before disposing of the brush. I tie my hair into a messy bun at the top of my head and immediately feel refreshed.

Exiting the bathroom, my feet guide themselves out of the room and through the maze of corridors. I find myself standing at the edge of the semi-spiral staircase I had previously been through the night before. Following the same trail that led to the kitchen, being pulled in by the aroma of breakfast.

Entering the kitchen, I'm faced with a broad back behind the kitchen counter, unexpectedly dressed in a chef's uniform. This tall male moved swiftly around the kitchen, especially memorizing everything there and everything that he was doing.

As he turns, I see a middle-aged man, quite handsome for his age, cooking up a meal. He looked to be in his late thirties to early forties, he was quite built and he moved skillfully as he baked what looked to be waffles. Blueberry waffles.

Yummy.

Making my presence known, I pull my entire body into the kitchen and tread lightly. I see no signs of Silver anywhere, making me a little confused.

The man's head snaps up in the process of my thinking and I give him a small smile.

"Hi," I wave awkwardly and he chuckles lightly, looking back down at the batter he mixed.

"Good morning, Miss Serenity? I assume..."

He had a thick Italian accent, only adding to my questions.

Sci-ing, I take a seat on the stool opposite the man and raise my brows. "By your hesitation, it seems I'm the only woman walking around these halls..." I murmur jokingly and he immediately shakes his head, retusing my comment.

"Much the opposite, ma'am." He says and then explains further when he sees my confused expression, "Other than maids, you are the only other woman I've seen here."

I nod my head slowly, not really expecting such an answer. Silver's beauty wasn't just appealing to only me. No, he was fairly beautiful to all—appealing to all women and men.

Which only made me more possessive of him at most.

"Um, where are..." The man cuts me o, nodding his head towards a door behind me.

"Mr Ceraso had some early business to attend to this morning, he's asked me to make you breakfast and then he will be back to take you home."

I nod carefully, soaking in the information while keeping an eye on the digital clock shown on the oven across from us.

It's only 6:50 in the morning...

Silver must be an early bird too.

While I wait on breakfast, I take out my phone and begin scrolling through all of the notifications I had received overnight. Hayden had spammed me, asking if my parents or Silver had killed me. I quickly replied to him, giving him a summary of the night.

His reply was immediate and it was filled with lots and lots of dramatic emojis.

The only other message I received was from Mamma. It was an "okay you okay?" text. In her own words, that was "is he treating you any or do you want me to come and pick you up."

Smiling, I shake my head and assure her I'm being treated more than well.

My thoughts withdraw by the stack of waffles placed in front of me, buried in blueberry syrup with strawberries and blueberries scattered on top. I was nearly willing to take a photo because of how well presented it looked.

"Thank you..."

"Colin." He brings his hand forward politely, "Chef Colin. Or Colin, whatever you prefer..."

I giggle slightly, taking his hand in my own and shaking the kind man's hand.

"How long have you been working here?" I asked him, not so gracefully cutting my waffles and immediately plunging a fork-sized bite into my mouth.

Holding back my ungraceful sounds, my eyes close amongst the sugary goodness.

Holy moly.

"The Ceraso's had found me at a time I was in need and took me in. I've been working for them for nearly eighteen years now."

Hovering a hand over my mouth, I gulp down my food and give him a small smile. "That's incredible. Are you happy with what you do?" It might've been a little personal, but I was curious.

"Very much so."

Nodding, I gesture to my waffles. "Would you like some?"

Chef Colin laughs and waves me o, his brown eyes gleaming happily. "Now, if I did that, I wouldn't have a job anymore, Miss Serenity. But thank you for the offer, I have eaten already."

Nodding once more, I talk to the Chef some more. Admittedly not wanting to watch him clean the kitchen while eating the food he made for me.

He asked me about my studies, about my relation to the Ceraso's without prying too much, and also gave me some cooking advice—knowing I've got none.

By the time I had finished, Chef Colin had cleaned up for me and had left for the day. He had some other jobs to do around town until going back to the actual Ceraso home.

Now, I was alone in an empty mansion with only myself.

The time was nearly eight and I was busy scattered across the living room floor, watching an episode of Stranger Things.

Suddenly, the front door was slammed closed, capturing all of my attention. I pause the TV, scattering back onto my two legs as I move my way through the home.

"Silver?" I call out so loud enough for my voice to echo through the halls.

I hear a low grunt come from around the corner, and practically sprint towards the noise.

My feet halt once I see Silver's broad, clad back. His body is slightly hunched as he seems to be holding himself on the desk with his hands.

An unsettling feeling lurks deep inside of me, inching closer to him as I hear the worst.

"Silver?" I whisper this time.

He turns himself slowly, making me stop once again when my eyes meet his cold, lifeless blue ones. My eyes stare into his, mine swirling with emotions. Movement from my arm had me looking down questionably, finding my answer.

I gasped, immediately pulling myself forward into his arms.

Through the white t-shirt he wore, the side of his stomach was drenched in blood.

"Shit, Silver," I gasp, pulling him to the nearest bathroom. He wraps an arm over my shoulder, leaning his weight into me while we walk.

I could tell he wasn't trying to put all of his weight onto me because let me tell you, this man was built like Hulk! would've been crushed beneath the floor if he had let me carry all of him.

"There should be a first aid under there," I feel him grumble into my ear.

My head snaps to him, a deeper frown etching onto my features.

"I have to take you to the hospital." I state and he shakes his head, wincing from the motion.

"I can do it myself. It's a small wound..." His usually deep voice was raspy, breathless almost.

"By the way you're reacting, I don't think it's small." I muttered and jut my foot against the bathroom door, making it slam open.

Fast but steady, I get him to sit on the closed toilet seat. He eases onto the seat, spreading his legs and letting his head fall back against the wall behind him.

His eyes were hooded watching me, his plump, cherry lips parted ever so slightly as he breathes.

Ducking under the sink, I look through the cabinets and find the first-aid box. I immediately throw it on top of the counter and look through it.

I knew how to sew wounds, I had been taught as a child in case of emergencies. My family made sure I was prepared for every situation possible.

"Serenity..." He grumbles again. I don't look at him, merely concentrating on pouring all of this alcohol rubbing onto his wound.

"I'll treat it for you, Silver. Can you li your shirt for me?" I asked him so ly, trying to ease his oddly calm distress. I clenched the white rag I had drenched with disinfectant and get on my knees, kneeling between his spread legs.

He stares down at me, watching me closely. My eyes widen at how deep his wound was, blood oozed from it, some of it dried on the outer corners but blood still trickled from the wound—I kept in my gags and displeasure, only focusing on the wound itself.

"What did you do?" I mumbled, shaking my head disapprovingly. My nerves wrestled my insides, and Silver being wounded like that let me distressed.

I bring the rag to his chest, immediately snapping my gaze up at him as it made contact with his wound. His jaw was clenched so tight that it began ticking, and the hand that rested on his thigh came behind my head, digging into my hair.

Biting down on my bottom lip, I begin to clean it, trying to forget the grip he had on my hair and the way it made me feel things...

"Sorry," I mutter as I clean the outer areas, removing the blood and then applying pressure to the wound. Placing one of my hands on his, he peers into my eyes, still hooded but busy.

"Keep holding this against it while I prepare my stitches."

He doesn't reply but does what I say, replacing my hand with his and applying pressure to the wound.

I begin to rummage through the kit beside me, picking out the needle and everything else needed.

"You're good." He says quietly, I look at him for a second, capturing his observant gaze.

Ignoring his comment, I ask him another question.

"Why don't you want to go to the hospital?" Starting to thread the needle, I catch the flash of emotion in his half-closed gaze before it remains back to its lifeless state.

"Reasons." He mumbles and I perk back down on my knees, his gaze watching my movements. "Don't want to talk about it?" I push further, grumbling now.

He shrugs, not responding again.

I sigh, so ly grasping his wrist and removing his hand from his wound.

"I was coming back from a meeting and some men jumped me. I got rid of them all but managed to stab me in the process."

Another gasp falls from my lips, my hands becoming unsteady for a slight moment.

"Silver," I give him a glare and he returns my stare with a stoic look.

"You need bodyguards. You don't have them with you?" I stare at him sternly, not failing to notice that enlightened his gaze upon my concern.

He leans forward slightly, his jaw clenching from the small action.

Our faces merely apart, he grasps my chin harshly and pulls me in for a heart-squeezing kiss.

It was rough but gentle. He was gentle with me, but his lips were gruesome.

Matching his pace, I place my hands on his thighs to keep me upright from the pooling between my thighs. He grips me by the throat, controlling the kiss with his demanding lips.

I was panting by the time he'd let go. He rested his forehead against mine, breathing slowly into my mouth with his lips red and swollen from the kiss.

"I like your protectiveness." He admits, leaning his head in the crook of my neck and placing small butterfly kisses there.

"Silver..." I breathe out, pushing him back by his shoulders. He hardly budges but complies.

"I have to wound you and then you can smother me." He gives me an eye roll, finally slumping back against the wall again.

Hu ing, I confront back to his injury and began stitching him up.

Now that the injury wasn't oozing blood, he seemed more content and less tense. He plays with my hair that had magically fallen out of its loose bun, distracting himself as I stitch his bare chest.

I won't lie and say his so skin, tattoos, and carved abs weren't a distraction.

Although, his eyes that never let me were merely a distraction.

When I was finished with his stitches, I gently wrapped it up, making sure everything was clean and there were no further injuries visible.

Silver lets go of his bloodied shirt, allowing it to cascade down and obscure the prevailing view of his chest.

"Thank you." His voice trails like an echo into his ears. I look up at him, seeing that he was now standing to his feet, well-adjusted but still looking a little cloudy.

Pursing my lips, I sigh. "You should rest today. Don't worry about taking me home, I'll get Hayden—"

"No." He shakes his head, taking a step forward, making me take one back.

His intimidating nature overpowers him once again. Wrapping around me like a blanket, my gaze transfixed on him, stuck.

"I'll take you home." It wasn't a question, it was a statement. "I'm sorry you're here today, it wasn't your choice, but due to my severe worry for his safety, I recoiled back."

"Silver," He now caged me in with his arms, giving me access to his chest as my hands slide up and around the curve of his broad shoulders. "Rest, please."

It was clear that my urgency made some sort of impact on him. He released an exhausted breath and shook his head lightly.

"You don't realise that I go through shit like this every day." He mused quietly, I say nothing, only trying to read his emotionless expression. "I'm fine"

His eyes tell me to not press on anymore. To trust him.

I tip my head back against the wall, rolling my eyes at him.

"Okay," I confided, feeling his head inch to the crook of my neck.

He kisses me from my shoulder, feathering higher up my neck and to my jaw, falling under my ear. "You're stubborn," he murmurs deeply, butterflies resurging once again in the pits of my stomach.

My eyes flutter open, coming in contact with the bright ceiling. "And you're secretly a brat." His words pass through as a kiss envelops my tattoo. I gasp as his hands clasp around my waist, urging me to his body.

Silver's gaze swirled with mischief. Our chests touched, my breasts pierced against him, firm and exposed beneath his shirt I bared.

As if hearing my thoughts, he looks down between our merged bodies and tugs up a smirk on his expressionless expression.

As he slides his cold hand under my shirt and pushes his fingertips up my skin, the sensation between my thighs gathers and moistures. Sparks ignited wherever he touched with each crawl, leaving a craving line of heat behind as he reaches for me.

Our gazes remained locked as he reaches for one of my breasts, his massively large hand grasping hold of my breast and pinching the nub that longed for his touch. As ecstasy ripples through me, I release a small whimper.

I keep my arms locked around his neck, gripping him strongly.

"It's too bad I've got a thing for your attitude," He chuckles, wavering his tongue along the inside of his cheek, a larger smirk embracing his expression while he plays with my nipple.

He looked devilish

"You're wet," He whispers, leaving my breast, his hand travels down my stomach, driving my trembling thighs to clench and my chest to heave. "Aren't you, flower?"

Sliding his hand down the sweats I wore, he runs his fingers lightly over the fabric of my panties, discovering that they are far from dry.

I watch him in awe. Consumed with his hand cupping me below, his rough yet gentle fingers tease me around the edges.

"Vui che ti tocchi, Serenity?"

Translation: "Do you want me to touch you, Serenity?"

His fingers slide beneath my panties, making contact with my highly creased folds, rubbing his fingers between the slit and ensuring my nipple would be far from his word by now.

"Si," I reply, moaning when his fingers slide right into me.

Silver pushes me further against the wall, his knee coming between my legs as he parts them wider. His jaw flexes as he slides them out of me, right before curling them back in again with ease.

"So tight, amore."

I let out a pained whimper, grasping his shoulders for support.

"Silver," I moan, digging my fingers into his skin and he swi ly takes me by the neck, so ly bringing my head to face him.

"If you mean my name like that again, I won't hesitate to fuck you, Serenity."

I gulp, not minding the idea.

He could see the dare in my eyes, he li smy head higher and his fingers clench in and out of me, with his thumb grazing my nub.

"You don't want that yet, Serenity." His voice was thrillingly seductive, but it held warning to it.

"Fine," I manage to pant out, brushing my lips against his. "Fuck me with your fingers then."

His jaw clenches amongst my dirty words, his lips crashing down onto me and my body shivering in his hold.

All in a second I was sitting on the edge of the counter, my panties now gone from my torso and his fingers diving deep inside me. He fingers me and passionately devours me with his lips, his other hand doing wonders to my breast before nearly ripping the shirt I had on in half.

Now bare, Silver rubs his thumb along my clit, my arousal lifting off. He travels his kisses up my body, his fingers painfully sliding over me as his hands cup my thighs and squeeze them.

My head falls back against the wall when his lips make contact with the inner parts of my thighs, he was on his knees now, his face nearly buried between my thighs.

The black strands of his hair tickled my skin, and his so plump lips kiss the top of my torso, kissing below it, almost touching the area that longed for him.

He keeps his eyes on me, his lips falling right in the middle of my parted lips and I double-down in pleasure.

In between a gasp and a moan, I shiver, my thighs shaking and clenching a er with his head between my thighs. Suddenly, another kiss is put on my clitoris, with increased pressure, eliciting another long moan from my mouth.

"Oh my god, Silver," I groan, drawing my hands into his hair, and running through his silky locks. Silver groans, the vibrating hitting me from between my thighs which automatically brings my lips up to his lips.

An animalistic growl breaks through his chest, he spreads his lips and finally dips his tongue into me. I moan out his name again, he submerges more, his tongue devouring me whole.

Guiding my lips into his mouth, my hands tug at his hair, bringing him impossibly deeper. I look at us in the mirror, ecstatically smiling when I observe his head buried between my thighs, only his hair visible. My entire body is on display, with my legs spread wide for him to consume and my breasts bouncing with each roll.

Another wave of pleasure rumbles through me, Silver's hands rub up and down my thighs, he had parting for a moment to look up at me, his red lips glistening with a smirk.

"Hai un sapore incredibile"

Translation: "You taste incredible."

I giggle amongst my heavy breathing and pants, my palm moving from his hair to cup his cheek. I run my thumb over his bottom lip and wipe the glistening trace.

"You feel incredible." I smile and he smirks wider, never moving his gaze as his dangerous mouth lowers back into the depth of my arousal.

The smile gracing me is swept o the next second as my stomach was clenching from the feel of his tongue. His teeth graze my neck, his hands squeezing my thighs at the subtle grazes and kisses.

His hair was being pulled ruthlessly by my hands now, and my legs were giving out and wrapping around his head, locking him in.

My breathing was heaving, my hand reaching my breast as I play with the nipple, reliving more moans. All of my senses become heightened, my eyes now rolling and seeing stars.

"I'm coming," I moan, my legs quivering around his head and his tongue is mercilessly causing an overdose on my body.

I feel my body drop, relaxed as my undraining was released although the stars still see in this early morning.

He cleans me up with his tongue, and as his lips are far from me, my fingers tingle with sensation. He kisses my thigh and wakens my limp thighs around his waist, pulling my entire body flush against him.

Something inside of me jumps when I see the glint in his pale eyes. With me on him, his lips were crimson and gleaming. He leans forwards and kisses the edge of my lips so ly.

"Thanks for breakfast." He whispers softly, earning a subtle breathy giggle to escape me. He doesn't laugh but his lips tip up slightly, his eyes in a haze.

Silver gathers my panties, beginning to slide them up my calves.

"I'm assuming you've had yours?" He rasps, while I use his shoulders for support as I li my hips for him.

"Yes, thank you for that." I mention, now climbing into the sweatpants he gave me.

U ing me o the counter, my legs were still wobbly so ly, heald onto his arm until I gained proper balance. Silver chuckles at this, earning a glare from me.

Pulling the shirt back on, it tumbles down my body like a sheet. Silver places another kiss on my temple and grabs my hand, beginning to set us o.

"Are you taking me home now?"

We trail out of the bathroom, Silver's arm was lightly wrapped around my lower back, guiding me through the rooms.

"If you want me to," He

"I don't, actually.