

## Chapter 7

My eyes stared down at my bottle before I drained it. "We should head back. I don't want to get yelled at because we stayed away too long after the she-bitch told us to get out."

Carl chuckled and nodded. "Thanks for the help today."

"Thanks for letting us work."

"Next week then?" Carl held out his fist.

I gave him a fist bump, followed by Emmett. He answered, "At the latest."

Carl walked us to the bus, and since it was already dark outside. We waved as we got on and sat in the back.

"Think we should pick up dinner?"

"If we take it home, you're holding it. Last time it just got wasted in my hands."

Emmett chuckled. "Maybe we should just eat it there?"

I nodded. "The usual place?"

"Sure."

We got off after two stops and jaywalked across the street to Giorgio's. It was our favorite Italian place. Once we were seated, Emmett immediately ordered garlic bread, two

cokes, and an order of their fresh mozzarella cheese. We talked a bit about school and the upcoming assignments before switching to our favorite topic, our shop.

Over the years, we'd both done some not so savory things in order to get money to fund our dream shop. However, it was pretty much finished. Everything was paid for and we'd built everything to our dreams. Slowly, it was building up stock so that we could work on any type of car coming in.

"Oh great. Guess who just walked in."

I turned to look and see where Emmett was looking. Sure enough, our sister walked in. As if feeling our gaze, she looked at us and I sighed, turning back around.

"What's the probability of her leaving us alone?"

Emmett sighed. "None."

His head rose which meant she was now walking over to us. Taking a deep breath, I plastered the fake smile on my face.

"Hey, you two. You're out late. Looks delicious, mind if I..."

I pulled my plate of food out of her reach. "Hey Rin, long time no see."

Her eyes narrowed. "Come on, Anasta..."

"Don't fucking call me that. That isn't my name."

She seemed taken aback but we'd had this conversation every single time she did it. "What's crawled up your butt?"

She turned to Emmett and before she got anything out, he cut her off.

"It's Emmett, Rin. I have a hard time believing you've forgotten our names when you've been using them since we were four."

She pouted, putting her hands on her hips. It showed off her baby bump, though she wasn't trying to hide it. "What's gotten into you two? Dad and Mom named you. Named all of us."

I chuckled, stabbing my fork into the pasta. "No, they named you. You had a first name. Emmett and I didn't have first names because our real mother didn't get a chance to name us. We only got Dad's stupid choices for middle names." I stabbed the plate again. "Also, that woman will never be my mother."

"I honestly can't fathom why you two hate her so much. She's been kind. Mom and Dad provide you with everything you need. Both of you are being incredibly ungrateful."

As I stared at the pasta, my appetite flew out the window. I'd wondered how my sister had come to be this way. If maybe she was brainwashed or hypnotized. Something changed her senior year of high school and now she was on her way to being a Francesca 2.0. I felt bad for her kids.

"Is there something you wanted, Rin?" Emmett was grinding his teeth and I kicked him under the table. It was a bad habit

he picked up years ago when dealing with our sister or with Greg.

"I just wanted to talk with you guys but apparently, you're both in a mood. I'll talk to you later, Anastasia, Sebastian."

We both winced as she walked off. Grabbing the takeout bags, she exited the restaurant and we let out a breath.

"Whoever used brainwash on her, I'd love to give them an award for job well done." I bit into my pasta.

My appetite may have flown the coop, but I wasn't about to let food go to waste. Emmett seemed to have the same idea and we made the slog through our meal. After we finished, it was back to the house. Both of us were quiet the next couple of stops before we walked the rest of the way home.

The lights were on, but the front door was locked. Emmett sighed and grabbed the extra key that was hiding in the third plant from the door. As soon as we opened it, we realized we fucked up. We should have never come home at all. The house looked like it was under a haze. Cigar smoke settled in a thick layer along the ceiling. There was a pungent aroma that was even worse; whiskey.

Anxiety filled me as the smoke whispered closer to us, escaping out the front door that we had opened. My heart started to pound hard and fear bled into me. I did my best to try and tell my brain there wasn't a fire, that this was just

smoke. It was just cigar smoke, but the other part of my brain was refusing to let go of the fear.

"We need to go, now." Emmett whispered in my ear.

His hand slipped into mine and I felt the tremors that had started. I nodded and we silently skulked through the hallway. We were hoping they were in father's office but as soon as the hallway opened up to the living room, we were disappointed.

Alphas in various levels of intoxication were lounged around the living room. I saw Caleb in the corner, cigar in hand, talking to one of the other younger Alphas. Disgust twisted my features, but I knew better than to say anything in this group. We made it to the stairs, and I was mostly up them when one of the Alphas drunkenly called out.

"Isn't that your son, Devon? Have him join us! He'll be out of high school soon right?"

I turned, wide eyed as Emmett froze.

"Caleb is the only one able to be Alpha. That boy is too weak. He was weak coming out of the womb and he's weak now."

My fists balled up and I stood up straight. Emmett was not weak. If anything, he was stronger for taking all the bullshit without blowing up like I was prone to. His gaze caught mine and he gave a shake of his head.

"He's just a backup in case anything ever happened to Caleb. He's of no use to me until then."

The group of Alphas laughed and I saw Caleb looking at him sadly. Not that he would ever defend us out loud anymore. He was always the favorite. It didn't matter what he said, he was going to be Alpha. Not saying anything was a choice.

"Let's go." I said quietly, motioning him forward. He walked towards me slowly, waiting to hear if he was getting called back.

"What of the girl? Your first daughter found her mate before you could use her."

This time I froze. Emmett had reached me, but he was holding onto my arms and we headed up the stairs. His hold tightened.

Our father hummed. "She will be put to use before then."

Another Alpha in the room added, "That she will."

I felt fear deep inside me, it was cold as it made its way back through my body. Emmett started to push me up the stairs.

"Come on, Sky, we need to move. You won't be around for them to do anything. We are leaving, remember?"

I nodded, letting Emmett's words give me the strength to move. Pulling down the access to the attic, we climbed up

the ladder and pulled the access shut. Falling back on my mattress that was on the floor, I curled up into a fetal position.

"Sky...Sky...it will be okay. We are leaving this fucking place. We are leaving and never looking back, you hear me? They will never find us. We will be free."

Emmett came over and took my hand, holding it tight.

"I know, Em. I know."

We were quiet for a while, both of us changing into PJ's and laying facing one another. Emmett was the one who broke the silence first.


"Did you see Caleb?"

My eyes were closed but he knew I wasn't asleep. "I did."

"You think he's completely transformed?"

My eyes peeled open and I looked at my brother. His brow was furrowed while he chewed on his bottom lip. When we were younger, Emmett idolized Caleb. He'd saved us a couple times from the wrath of our father and so Emmett did everything to mirror Caleb. Even down to the classes he took in middle school and he had started to do it in high school. Only, Caleb started to disappoint us at every turn. Stopped working on Thing. Made plans only to break them. Stopped defending us and looking out for us.

Over time, I'd accepted it. Catherine's transformation was

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sudden and abrupt, but Caleb's was slow. It was painful for Emmett, the one who looked up to him so much, to be let down.

"No. Not yet, anyways. He didn't laugh with the other Alphas."

"He was smoking with them."

I started to say something but clamped my mouth shut. Water was Emmett's trigger. He'd been almost drowned by our father when we were younger. Caleb actually saved him. Breaking him out after our father left him in there. Smoke and fire was mine. It had to do with the scar on my back, but Caleb had always said he refused to smoke because of it. Well, used to say that, apparently.

"It's not a big deal. It's just some cigars."

"Sky..."

Closing my eyes again, I didn't reply. It didn't matter. Like he said earlier. We were leaving. We would get out of here. We had a plan and all we had to do was graduate. All we needed to do was survive until then.

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