

Chapter 41

The Kiss

Lauren

I was just beginning to relax when I scented Darren and his bitch. My whole mood deescalated from there but I kept a brave face up. I kept smiling even though all I wanted was to punch his smug face.

“You okay?” Sebastian asks me, leading me to our designated table.

“Yeah,” I say with a smile.

He scoffs and I know that he knows that I am lying. I wasn’t fucking okay. We take our seats and the speeches begin. I sit there hyper aware of Sebastian near me. His dominating presence and his hands on the back of my seat.

He is asked to make a speech and he reluctantly does. Sebastian looks great in a suit, but in a tux. He looks deliciously yummy. My eyes stay focused on him. Unable to tear them away.

He stands up tall at the podium. His confidence sucking you in like a vortex.

It's natural for females to be attracted to the strongest male. The confident types. The one that screams dominant energy.

Sebastian was all that. That's why every woman in the room including me was attracted to him. Was drooling over him.

He finishes his speech and comes back. I am ashamed to say I didn't hear a fucking word he said.

"We should leave," he whispers next to my ear sending a shiver down my spine.

I clamp my legs shut. This was definitely not the time to get aroused. My only hope was that with the many different perfume scents in the room, he won't be able to smell my arousal.

"No. You're the benefactor of the event. Let's stay for about an hour." I reply placing my palm on his thigh.

He groans as if I have asked him to take a dip into a lake filled with piranhas. It makes me chuckle at how much he hates being here.

Food is soon served and we dive in. The conversation is pleasant enough and I find myself engaging in it.

Darren was seated three tables away. I was actually surprised that he came. He usually doesn't attend these type of things.

In fact, the one thing he has in common with Sebastian is that they downright hated these social events.

When we were together, he used to deny me the opportunity to go to such events. So, Claire was mostly our representative.

Darren also hated the constant media attention, so he had made me stay out of the public eye even though I was a fashion designer.

Up until the story with Darren and Miranda blew up and the media dug into my life. Most people didn't even know that I was co-owner of Ruby with Claire.

I was mostly just known as Claire's friend. Back then I didn't mind because I loved Darren so much that I would have done anything for him. Now, though I see how toxic he was.

"Would you like to dance?" I am interrupted from my thoughts by Sebastian's sexy voice.

"I am not much of a dancer." I shyly tell him.

If I was being honest though, I was a terrible dancer. I had two left feet.

"Don't worry. You'll just follow my lead." he says softly.

"Fine, but if I step on you don't blame me. I warned you in advance."

He chuckles then wraps his hands around mine. Before pulling me up. I laugh a little as we join the other dancing couples.

"Put your hands on my shoulder." he instructs and I do exactly that.

His arms go around my waist, bringing me flush against his hard chest. I feel every inch of him and it is driving me insane.

We start dancing and the fear kicks in. Fear of making a fool of myself and also stepping him.

“Relax, you’re so tense its making your dancing stiff.” he points out, his arm tightening possessively.

“Don’t think about anything. Let the music lead, your body will know what to do.”

I take a deep breath, then let it go. I feel myself relaxing into his arms and it feels amazing. I realize that I am actually dancing and not falling flat on my face.

“I’m doing it.” I say in excitement looking up at him.

The look that greets me almost freezes me on the spot. I see hunger in his green orbs and it kicks my desire up.

I feel my nipples harden. I hope to the goddess he doesn’t feel it through the fabric of my dress.

My steps falters a little making me almost fall. Sebastian catches me before I face plant and I am thankful for that.

We continue dancing and my eyes remain glued to his lips. The urge to taste him almost chocking me.

“Lauren,” he warns lowly. His voice husky.

Without thinking or heading to his warning, I lift my head and kiss his strong jaw. He was probably going to murder me after this but I didn’t care.

I needed more of him, so I moved my lips and pecked him on his. It was a tame kiss but the thrill I got told me all I needed to know.

The song comes to an end and he steps away. The burning stare of those around us brings me back to the present. Breaking the spell and making me hyper aware of what I just did.

“I need to get some air,” I start hyperventilating.

“Red.”

“I’ll be right back.” I say.

I leave before he can say anything else. I was slightly embarrassed and mortified by what I had just done. I wasn’t supposed to kiss him. No matter how small or harmless I thought the kiss was.

I let myself get carried away.

The eyes of those present continue burning through me but I don’t even care. Not when I have likely put everything on the line.

Once I get to the garden and away from the crowd I take deep breaths. Each one relaxing me bit by bit.

I was just starting to relax when Darren emerged out of thin air.

Fuck my life. I had no time to deal with him.

I immediately turn to leave but he grabs my hand firmly.

“Get your fucking hands off me.” I whisper yell at him, ripping my hands from his.

He raises his hands up in surrender.

“I swear that I come in peace. I just want to apologize for the other day. I crossed the line and I am sorry.”

I study him and I feel a pang of disappointment when I see his bruises are healed.

I would have been glad to see the marks of Sebastian’s beating marring his face.

“Apology accepted. Now, bye.” I reply.

I was about to turn but he stops me again.

“How is she doing? I haven’t gotten a chance to come see her.” he tells me.

“You haven’t gotten the chance or you just don’t want to? If you really wanted to see her you would have moved heavens to make it happen.”

“Well, your mate.” he begins sarcastically. “Told me not to come near you or his compound.”

I rub the bridge of my nose in irritation. “And you couldn’t call me to ask how she’s doing? Or better yet ask me to have her dropped at your place.”

Why the hell was he even making excuses? Couldn’t he just admit that he was turning into one of those drunk deadbeat dads?

I sigh. “She’s doing okay. Her wounds are closed up and healing well...now if there is nothing else, I need to get back to my mate.”

He doesn’t say anything. His eyes look behind me and I swear I see him give a small nod. Just then out of nowhere someone bumps me from behind.

I was unsteady on my feet and I end up stumbling into Darren’s arms. He wraps his arms around my waist just as hear a terrifying growl.

I jump in fright and turn to find Sebastian watching us. His fist closed and eyes glowing.

Shit. I know what it must have looked to him. I turn to search for whoever bumped into me but I find nobody. Just air.

“We are leaving.” Sebastian says, through ground teeth.

“Look man...” Darren goes to say but Sebastian cuts him off.

“You better shut your fucking mouth before I forget we are among humans and rip off you fucking arms.”

Sebastian snarls, making Darren swallow hard.

Sebastian holds out his arms for me and I silently take it. He leads us back into the hall where he proceeds to find the hostess. He offers some excuse and apologizes before we leave.

I can tell by the tension in his arms that he was pissed off. His breathing was hard and his grip on my hand was tight. We get outside but Hunter is nowhere to be seen.

I turn to face him. “It wasn’t what it looked like. Someone bumped me from behind and I stumbled into Darren.” I try explaining.

I wasn’t sure if he would believe me. Especially since the mysterious person had vanished into thin air but I had to try. I couldn’t have him believing that something was going on between me and Darren.

“It was a setup.” was his only reply.

“What do you mean?” I ask in confusion.

“Miranda was hiding in the shadows. Darren signaled her and she bumped you. They probably thought I’d catch you two like that and accuse you of cheating” he says, his fists balled.

I gasp remembering the small nod that Darren gave. He had signaled Miranda.

I force the anger down. “Hey it’s okay. At least their plan failed.”

“Yeah, but it also seems like they have joined forces. Looks like they’re trying to cause rifts between us.”

I nod my head in agreement. That was a more likely explanation.

“Speaking of which, we were to get back at them. How are we going to do that?” it’s not the best time to talk about revenge but given what just happened I needed to know.

He say nothing. He looks past me for a while. His eyes then come back to me. He shakes my hand off and wraps his arm around my waist, bringing me close.

“There’s a man taking our photos.” he tells me.

“Let’s give him something better to work with.”

“What do you mea...”

I don’t get to finish my sentence because his mouth comes crashing down on me.

Sebastian doesn’t just kiss me. He fucking claims me. Every square inch of his mouth on min is pure ecstasy. His kiss is scorching and I can feel it down to the tips of my toes.

This is the toe-curling kiss I have read about. The type that sends delicious tingles down your spine.

The kind that you want to go on forever. It leaves you breathless but you feel like you don't even need to breathe.

All too soon he breaks the kiss. Our breathing is hard and I can feel him in every fiber of my body. He takes out his phone and it's only then that I realize it's ringing.

"Yeah?" he answers, his breathing back to normal.

I was still in his arms so I feel him stiffen

"Where?"

"I'll be there in ten." he replies before ending the call.

He puts the phone back in his pocket and lets go of me. I immediately feel the loss of the connection we just had a moment ago.

"What is it?" I ask him worriedly.

He seemed he was back to being pissed off. Our earlier kiss already forgotten.

"They found another body. I need to go." he growled. Just as Hunter pulled in next to us.

"Hunter will take you home while a catch a taxi."

He opens the door for me. Before getting in, I kiss him on the cheek.

“Be careful.” I breathed.

He nods and I get in. He closes the door and Hunter drives off.

I really hope that they are able to catch the killer. Maybe then I can get more time with him.