

25. "I'm not jealous."

"I'm not the jealous type, but what's mine is mine. End of story." 𐄂

Chapter Twenty Five

Elena's POV

My temple felt hot of embarrassment. Coming face to face with the man whom grandpa fixed as my ex-boyfriend.

"I'm sorry. Trust me, it's not my own doing." 𐄂

"I know," he smiled gently, "it's with my permission though." 𐄂

That surprised me. The starstruck feeling I had earlier abruptly died.

"So you're one of those he paid to destroy my reputation," the corner of my lips twisted. 𐄂

His forehead furrowed instantly, "nope. I'm just returning a favor. Besides, your grandpa only wanted to protect you from the press and paparazzi who wanted to dig into your past." 𐄂

I gave him a suspicious look, "are you saying that you know me?"

He nodded, "more than you thought. This arranged marriage thing, which you agreed to because of your ill mother. Working as a gasoline girl on weekends as a teenager, then an all around assistant in a fashion manufacturing company a er graduating senior high. I can tell you more if you want." 𐄂

My lips pressed together, "so you know everything."

"Yeah," he moved closer, as we stood side by side, watching the elevator going up to the 100th floor, "unlike your husband, you have nothing to hide from me." 𐄂

The mention of Adonis brought heaviness in my heart. I wished he knew everything about me. And once he did, I hoped he would understand. 𐄂

My attention shi ed back to the man standing beside me.

"How did you come to know about my life? Are you related to grandpa?"

"Not by blood, but he's close to my family. He was my grandfather's best friend."

"Wow. Interesting to know that he had a best friend. I'm sure they shared the same personalities."

"Nope," he shook his head vigorously, "my grandpa was very calm. He did not know how to get angry. He shared the same qualities with my dad."

"And you did not."

He laughed, "you're right. I got my personality from my mom. She's like a thunderstorm."

"Seems like a good combination." 𐄂

"Nope. They got divorced a er two years of marriage." 𐄂

"I'm sorry."

"It's okay," he shrugged, then said, "do you know, your mom was supposed to marry my dad. Of course in an arranged marriage. But she ran away with your father." 𐄂

The information made my eyebrows rise.

"Seriously?"

He nodded, "we could be siblings."

"Or never been born." 𐄂

We both laughed together, then our smiles slowly faded as we stared at each other.

"You're really cute in person. You have the most beautiful brown eyes I've ever seen." 𐄂

His compliment was not welcome. Coming from a single man to a married woman. Besides, I was suspicious of him having this connection with grandpa.

"Have you seen a photo of me before?"

"Photos," he said, emphasizing the 's' at the end, "your grandpa had been tapping at you as you grew up. Everytime he went to our house, he showed me photos of you." 𐄂

I rolled my eyes, my hands clenched in anger.

"Disappointed, huh?"

"Very. I could not believe how I became related to a devil."

He bursted into laughter, "yeah, he is."

"So you agree, that he's a horrible person."

"Definitely," he clasped his arms together, "that old man is savage as fuck. I had been a victim of his cruelty too. He made me attend some crazy old stu that I was forced to pay, and set me up on a blind date with a young rich heiress. I could have been in prison for child abuse."

We laughed together, glad that we agreed on something.

The elevator stopped and we stepped out, walking in the long corridor leading to the Grand Ballroom.

"You want to know more?" he asked, making me curious.

"Okay, tell me more."

"Brace yourself, because this will surely shake you," he warned.

"Ok, try me."

"Our grandfathers arranged for us to get married." 𐄂

My mouth instantly dropped open, and he laughed.

"Seriously?"

He nodded, "but then... my grandpa died, and Constantine found out about the massive stack of gold bars that Stavrakos is hiding. Adonis Stavrakos is rich as fuck, I could not compete in that level. So, your grandpa thought he was the better choice for you." 𐄂

My temper escalated, blinding my eyes. So, grandpa planned this all along. An arranged marriage, with or without mom getting sick. He surely treated me like a toy, passing from one man to the other. His greediness overpowered his decision. The richest won. 𐄂

"What about you? You seemed agreeable to the arranged marriage. Was my inheritance motivated you?"

"Nope," he denied, "there would be a prenuptial agreement. I wouldn't get a cent from you." 𐄂

"Really? Why do I find that hard to believe."

"It's the truth. I agreed to your grandfather's requests, because as I've said earlier, I'm returning a favor."

"Oh yeah... a favor," I smiled sarcastically, "did he help you build your career?"

He shook his head, "more than that. He saved my life."

Grandpa saved his life? Seriously? Satan is not merciful! 𐄂

"How?" I asked, as we stepped inside the Grand Ballroom together.

"I'll tell you when I see you," he leaned his head closer to mine, his hand touching my bare back, "I'll go ahead. Your husband is coming, and I can see murder on his face." 𐄂

He was right, Adonis' face was a mask of anger.

I stood alone at the entrance of the Grand ballroom. My eyes focused on Adonis who looked devastatingly handsome, in black suit and white shirt. He looked like he was on the cover of a GQ magazine. 𐄂

"Why were you with him?" He drawled angrily at me, his lips pressed tightly together. 𐄂

"Hi. Good evening too. I'm fine, thank you." 𐄂

He held my wrist, as he led me towards the balcony. When we were alone, he removed his hand on my wrist, like he was burned.

"Don't play games with me, Elena. Answer me," he hissed.

"I'm not. I met him in the elevator, by coincidence."

"Don't give me that crap, you can't fool me." 𐄂

"I swear, it's the truth." 𐄂

"Dammit," he said in a low, steely voice, "how could you humiliate me again, making a grand entrance at my mother's celebration with your ex. Does it give you satisfaction making me a laughing stock in front of everyone?" 𐄂

"Of course not. I'm telling you the truth. It was not intentional meeting him at the elevator. I'm sorry that I humiliated you in our wedding, that was so wrong of me."

He shook his head, not convinced of my explanation.

"You flirted with him," his jaw clenched, his eyes turned red in anger. 𐄂

"Oh God, Adonis," I sighed, "I did not."

"He touched your back." 𐄂

"That was nothing. I did not feel it."

"Liar."

I took a deep breath. What is wrong with him? He's making an issue on something so small. 𐄂

"Okay, okay, I did... but what I mean is, I didn't feel anything. It feels nothing." 𐄂

"Nothing huh?" His lips twisted, not believing me.

"You don't have to be jealous of him..."

"I am not," he snapped angrily, his face was murderous, "I just want you to behave as my real wife. Isn't that too much to ask?" 𐄂

I clenched my fist, not liking where our conversation was going. I felt perspiration started to form at my temple.

"I'm trying, Adonis. I swear. I'm doing my best." 𐄂

"Then, you have a strange way of showing it." 𐄂

It made me feel frustrated that he was putting me at the wrong side. 𐄂

"I don't understand why you're so upset. I've done nothing wrong. It so happened that we were in the elevator together. It could also happen to you and your ex." 𐄂

"I would get o the elevator if that happens." 𐄂

I felt like he was pushing me at the edge of the cli . 𐄂

"I don't want to be rude. He was just being nice..."

"Nice?" He interrupted "dammit! That bastard was undressing you with his eyes." 𐄂

"Oh God, Adonis. You're the one acting so strange. Will you just stop? We're at your mom's birthday party, this is not the right place to argue," I clenched my teeth, feeling the frustrations building inside me "at least, can I greet her a happy birthday first?" 𐄂

He let out an exasperated sigh, then finally, he agreed with me.

I put my hand on his arm, and we went to his parents.

We talked. Sadly, it only happened when we argued. 𐄂

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At eleven, we went home together, not talking at the back of his car. When we arrived at the mansion, he said to me,

"Take a shower and make sure you scrub your back." 𐄂

I thought it was a joke, then I realized why. He wanted to remove the imprint of Christian's touch on my back. 𐄂

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AN: Hey Dreamers! Hope you enjoyed the update. 𐄂

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