

## Chapter 8

Celia

I was reeling due to the rage boiling inside me. And I saw Borivin's jaw twitch as he looked at me with an ice-cold gaze.

I had openly wounded him despite being a nobody. I wore no royal emblem nor was I marked by any of the Prince which must have given him the boldness to act like that with me.

But royal or not, I would not let anybody openly insult me.

Borivin had begun saying, "Oh a particular part of my body is extra dark but it is not the heart, sadly. I will probably show you if-"

However, the doors through which I had entered flew open as a pin-drop silence blanketed the large hall.

Striding in through the hall without a care in the world was Prince Jasper.

While all others were dressed in robes and heavy dresses including the King and his brothers, Jasper strutted in just wearing black pants and a white button down shirt.

The two top buttons of his shirt were open and his hair looked a bit messy.

But the way he walked in left no room for doubt that a deadly and vicious beast had walked in on a party of mice.

I could feel the shift in the air as suddenly a pressure weighed down on me and I had difficulty breathing.

Jasper was wearing the simplest of clothes but he looked like a royal prince in every particular way. Even the King and his brothers with all their regal dressing sense paled in comparison.

The entire hall watched him in silence as he grabbed a chalice from one of the palace servants who had stopped serving drinks upon noticing Jasper walk by.

Jasper grabbed the chalice and took a sip while the palace servant visibly paled.

"What is this?"

"P-poison beer"

Jasper took another sip and smacked his lips together.

"Needs a bit of a tanginess to it. Don't you think?"

The servant was at a loss for words. His expression showed that he had never tasted it before.

Obviously, servants would not eat or drink food fit for royalty.

"M-My My lord, I do not know"

Jasper only raised an eyebrow but held the chalice and

continued walking forward as everybody looked at him with awe.

I heard a few ladies beside me give a gasp as he raised his hand up and his shirt rode up a little when he let the last few dregs at the bottom of the chalice fall on his tongue.

Not just me but the entire castle got a peek at his sculpted abs that made the ladies swoon. Every single female began salivating at those juicy abs and I was overcome with jealousy.

I imagined what it would feel to roam my hands on those abs, to feel those hard coiled muscles beneath my touch, to let my hand dip further down and-

I shook my head as if to clear my head and looked up.

And that was when his gaze met mine.

Those silver eyes looked at me with the same predatory gaze as he roamed his eyes lazily over me.

He took me in as my heartbeat went frantic but I tried to keep calm as his eyes roamed leisurely over me, slowly rising from my legs and traveling up my hips, observing every single curve before they settled on my eyes.

And I felt I would pass out.

I was falling down a cliff, and would probably crash against the stones but he had not even touched me.

He had only looked at me and his gaze had been enough to make my heartbeat go haywire.

Not to forget that he had seen me completely naked before. Then why oh why had he bothered looking at me when I was dressed?

His eyes flicked to something else and my chest heaved as I took in lungfuls of air. The moment had passed but it felt as if I had been trapped in it for eternity.

And only now I had found freedom.

"Glad that you made it on time, Jasper"

King Brigdain, his father raised his chalice at his youngest son with a smile that did not quite meet his eyes.

Was he truly complimenting him or was he taunting him for being late?

I had no idea.

But Jasper just gave a small smile and tipped his chalice sideways.

And with that, the tension in the air dispersed as if the fog had shifted and the moon was now visible.

Jasper began walking towards the chair, I had correctly thought to be his.

I was standing in his way, like a fool as I had been engaged

in a verbal spar with Borivin.

And, Violet looked at me with an urgency as if to say, 'take your place girl' and my brain was telling me that too.

But, my feet felt glued to the ground and my mouth had suddenly gone dry.

Jasper looked around lazily and nobody dared meet his gaze or even look his way so obviously nobody had seen him undress me just with his eyes.

I felt butterflies flutter in my chest as he neared me and stood directly facing me.

And then he looked at me and asked, "Are you going to gawk at me all day?"

His voice was loud enough for even the heavens above to hear and I felt heat rising up my cheeks.

My eyes ducked not because of his gaze but because of the fact that I had truly been gawking at him.

I did not need further coaxing and immediately ran behind the chair, hoping that now that he was around, people would forget I exist.

A ghost of a smile appeared on Jasper's face as he circled the table and followed me. His hand lightly brushed my back while he pulled the chair behind and I tried not to gasp.

Goodness, I was blushing and going all gaga over this mouth

-watering prince.

Violet hissed from beside me, "Serve your prince"

I blinked and looked at her in confusion as she nudged me to follow her steps.

I nodded my head and immediately lifted a delicately carved glass carafe studded with a few jewels.

Jasper's chalice was placed on the right while I was on the left so I had difficulty reaching it.

I thought of going to the other side of the chair but Violet was busy serving his brother and blocked my way.

Having no idea what to do, I held the carafe and leaned forward to pour the liquor.

I was small so Jasper towered over me and I hoped I would not block his view of the remaining court members.

But, as I bent down, I felt him take a whiff as a loose strand of my hair went astray and tickled his chest.

I was busy pouring wine so when I tried to get away, I felt a resistance.

I feared he had grabbed my lock of hair for my misbehavior and nervously glanced his way, ready to see a pair of glaring eyes, wanting to skin me alive.

But when I did muster enough courage to look at him, I saw him only look at me curiously as I saw the lock of hair

tangled in one of the buttons.

How the hell did it get entangled there?

I gave a nervous smile and I placed the carafe back on the table without looking away. Or rather the prince did not let me look away.

He held my gaze, his bright silver eyes looking deep into my soul as I fiddled with the button.

His minty breath intermixed with the taste of liquor he had just drunk wafted towards me, grazing my cheek as I shuddered.

Looking at him was hard and not looking at him was not an option.

Goodness, this silver-eyed prince had a way of making me want to both run away from him and sit on his lap, and run my tongue over his rock-hard chest.

I blinked furiously to push back that indecent image away from my eyes as Jasper spoke,

"Wait, my lady"

And...he wasn't looking at me when he said that but somewhere else.