

Chapter 55

"Excuse you," Aeliana snaps, "Damien worked very hard on this, can you—"

"How do you know what he did and didn't do?" I raise an eyebrow. Have they been spending time together?

"Because she asked," Damien says. "And I told her. Thanks for sticking up for me Aeliana." His lips curve into a smile, putting his hand up, and she slaps it, then they morph their hands into some sort of handshake. What? When did that happen? He certainly has been hanging out with her, and no one thought to tell me? "You will get a free membership, A."

"I'm honoured, but I want to pay for it."

"Because you're so sweet, unlike these free loaders," he tells her, draping an arm over her shoulder. "Come on. Let me show you around. It's much bigger and better than the photos." He says, leading her away.

Photos?

My arm twitches, and I set my drink down before I spill it or crush the glass in my hand. My blood boils, why are they flirting? And how does neither one of them see any wrong with that? 2

"Are you okay, big guy?" Rowan nudges me, his smile knowing. Of course, I'm not fucking okay, I haven't been any sorts of okay since Aeliana walked into this club—this pack. I'm always on the verge of losing my shit.



"I like this place," Danielle says. And unfortunately, so do I. Good money was spent on the place, a waste of money, but it's still nice inside and out. "Damien went all out, I think he might have something here." She sighs. "I hope."

"It's a waste of money, he couldn't even decide on a name."

"Maybe it will be different," Audrey says. "It could be a cafe if the bar fails."

"Not in this part of town." Rowan sighs, slowly shaking his head.

Danielle taps his shoulder, "I'm going to find my sister in love. See you later babe," she says, referring to Damien's wife.

I keep an eye out for both Damien and Aeliana, he takes her around the bar, disappearing into corners where I can't see them, but after what seems like forever, they part ways. Damien is pulled away but a bottle girl and Aeliana goes in the opposite direction—to the bathrooms. That's enough for me.

His wife and Danielle have found themselves seats at our table, both of them and Audrey laughing at each other's jokes. Rowan is chatting with Maddox, and his brother Trevor, they try to rope me into conversation a few times but I'm unfocused. I'm trying to see where my wife went and why my idiot brother is practically sweating by his stage.

A while later, Damien comes back to the table, jittery still. "What's going on?" I ask before he can begin to rumble excuses. I expected the club to last at least a month but judging by the state of him, this might not be possible.



"My opening artist is currently puking in the bathroom, there is no way she can perform." He says. So that's where my wife is? He has the Mooncrest Luna cleaning up puke? "My opening is screwed."

"Are you sure that's why?" I snap, irritated that he has Aeliana in the bathroom. "Or will it be due to your poor management?"

"Hey Alpha Kingston," River snaps, "My husband has worked really hard on this, could you not be negative?" She frowns, rubbing her pregnant belly. "Support your little brother and if he fails do it again because what else is there to do?"

"Babe," Damien whines.

"I'm defending you," She says, winking at me. This isn't our first rodeo with Damien, as I said, we love him, but we've been here one too many times. We are familiar with how his businesses end.

Aeliana returns, looking gloom, as if this were her loss. "So, Melorie will not be able to perform. She can't keep anything down, not even water." She says, talking and staring only at Damien.

"I need an artist, I could find someone to play piano but it's..."

"Just DJ the party yourself," I tell him. "Or was that phase all for nothing?"

A phase where I spent half a million on lessons and equipment plus gigs and a whole lot of other nonsense. Just thinking about it is pissing me off again.

Damien shakes his head, "I can DJ. I will be doing that thrice a week but opening night is supposed to be big, live music." He says. "I need



to find.." he trails off, eyes shifting to Aeliana. "Aeliana."

"What?" She frowns.

"Come with me," he says, already tugging her along.

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