

“When you lie, it’s written all over your face, Canyon. I’m sorry. I know things are tough for you all right now.”

“Not for Dad,” I say bitterly. “Everything is hunky-fucking-dory for him.”

“I know.” She hugs me, filling me with her raspberry scent. “I wish I knew how to make things better.”

I palm the back of her head, resting my chin on top. “You’re doing it.”

We remain in our affectionate embrace until my gaze catches *his*.

Alister Sommers.

Every muscle in my body tenses when his bleached white hair enters my line of vision. His dark brown eyes are cold and expressionless like the robot he is. Being the only son of one of the wealthiest men in Florida, you’d think he’d act the part. But Alis dresses like a fucking hobo. Today, he wears a white T-shirt that’s had one too many cycles in the washing machine paired with jeans that are covered with holes not meant to be stylish. His black Vans have scuffs all over the sides, and his green socks can be seen through the seam on one side.

“Hey, bro,” he mutters out as he passes, an antagonistic smirk on his face.

Like the ticking bomb I am, I go off.

Pushing away from Naomi, I rush the motherfucker. He lets out a surprised grunt when I shove him into some lockers. The fabric of his shirt makes a ripping sound as I fist it in my hand.

“The fuck you say to me?” I demand, spittle landing on his face.

Since he’s only a little taller than Naomi and I tower over them both, he has to crane his neck to meet my glare. And boldly, he does. Where I have fury rippling from me, though, he has a coldness that chills me to the bone. His nostrils flare, and his lip curls slightly up, drawing my attention to his mouth.

“Our dads are getting married in November in case you forgot, *big bro*.” He laughs, dark and taunting. “Denial doesn’t make it untrue.”

I rear back my fist, ready to knock his head off when Nae grabs my bicep. “Babe, no.”

Releasing the bastard, I glower at him. “I’m not your brother. Stay the fuck away from me and my family.”

He sets down his violin case to inspect the tear in his shirt. “This was my favorite.”

“Boo fucking hoo. Have your rich daddy buy you another one like he bought you.”

Reminding him he’s adopted is a low blow, but it hits its intended target. He picks up his violin case and swings it at me. I barely dodge it as it flies by my head. His features are still impassive, but his fathomless dark eyes flicker with hatred.

“Say that shit again, and you’ll regret it,” he warns, his voice low enough for only Naomi and me to hear despite the growing crowd around us.

I open my mouth to do just that when Nae slaps a hand over my mouth.

“See you around, Alis,” she says, forcing a smile his way, and then to me, she mutters, “Let’s go.”

I allow my girl to take my hand and lead me away, but I keep my hard stare on the kid who’s going to pay the price for our fathers’ sins.

His expression is even and unperturbed.

For now.

One day, and soon, I’m going to discover what the hell pisses him off, and I’m going to make sure he feels every bit of the anger and betrayal I do. I’ll ruin his life like his dad has ruined mine.

This is war, and I’m playing dirty.

He'll never stand a chance against me.

I'll enjoy every second of his demise, and when it trickles over to his father, then ultimately to mine, I'll laugh in my dad's fucking face and say, "This is for Mom."