

She strode beside Leon and he filled her in on Bellamy's condition. He'd arrived last night after his forty-eight-hour stint in the New York rehab, which he'd checked himself into and was able to check himself right out again to board a plane to LA.

Reaching the elevators, they didn't have to wait long for one of the doors to open. Leon allowed her to step inside first and he followed behind. He reached over to the panel on the wall next to the elevator doors and pushed a button to close the doors but didn't hit a button for a designated floor. He turned to look at her as he rubbed a hand over his head and then massaged the back of his neck. "I know you're Bryce's sister and all... You came highly recommended when we checked with your work, too. It's just— Oh shit. What I'm trying to say is Bellamy is complicated. You've heard things I'm sure from the press. Some not so glamorous, but you can't believe all they say. Can Bellamy be a pain in the ass? You betcha, but he's also a good guy, you know?"

"I'm sure he is," she said and wished she could tell him what she knew about Bellamy. How he donated money to help the less fortunate. How he started drama schools in four different states to help underprivileged teens and donated money every month to keep those facilities going. How he volunteered his own time to see a dying child because it had been her wish to meet him. There were other things too, many unselfish acts, but no one knew any of this until after he died. In life, the media wanted to make him out as the bad boy rocker gone wrong, but in death, they tried to paint a halo over his head. She was sure the real Bellamy, the real man, was somewhere in between the two.

"The latest news," Leon continued, "the press filmed him punching a reporter, but they didn't show the reason for him losing his cool. The bastard he'd punched deserved worse. He'd endangered a group of teens at a high school rally. Bellamy was outside the gym signing autographs. The reporter drove his van through the roped off area, leaning out the window and driving at the same time, mind you. He lost control and if Bellamy hadn't thrown himself in front of one of the girls, and shoved her out of the way, the bastard would have run her over. Bellamy lost it. He went after the reporter who was still filming the incident. Bellamy yanked him out of the van and hauled off and punched the guy."

"I've never put much credit behind the tabloids," she reassured him. "What I'm wondering though, is what exactly did you hire me to do for Mr. Lovel? Just so we're clear. Bryce hinted I was to keep him on schedule. Is there anything else I should know?"

"I'm worried about him. He can be wild and fun, but he's also vulnerable. He's had a few bad relationships and he hasn't been the same since he lost his father. I've known Bellamy for a long time and his smile doesn't reach his eyes if you know what I mean."

She did know what he meant, more so than Leon realized. "I'll be a friend if he wants one."

"Hmm... He may not be warm and cuddly about having you around. Just a warning. I'm hoping you'll be able to keep him on schedule. He's notorious for forgetting where he's supposed to be on a good day, and now..." He let out a tired sigh.

"Understood." She nodded.

Leon looked like he wanted to say more, but then turned and pushed the button on the panel and the elevator jerked into motion.

"By the way, none of us are checked in under our real names," he told her. "But don't be surprised," he added, "if reporters get wind that we're staying here. They'll especially be on the lookout for Bellamy. I swear the reporters can sniff him out like they're part bloodhound. Even so, I know once we begin rehearsals, the reporters will be drawn to us like flies on a half-eaten carcass." He cleared his throat. "Sorry. Didn't mean to be so graphic."

"Don't worry about it." She noticed they'd taken the elevator to the top floor.

Leon held the elevator doors open as she stepped out into the hall. He then proceeded to a door that had 'roof access' written in bold black letters. Leon hesitated before pushing the door open and glanced at her. "He's been extra moody since he's arrived. Have I scared you off yet?"

"Nope." She took off her glasses and cleaned them on the edge of her shirt before placing them back on the bridge of her nose. "And moody doesn't bother me." She glanced at Leon with his blonde hair and kind eyes. He was worried about Bellamy. Out of all the band members, Leon had been the closest to him. *Is the closest*, she reminded herself. Right now, Bellamy was very much alive. "Don't worry. I don't scare easily. Nothing you said bothered me in the least and I'm glad you told me. I'm a great listener too. If Mr. Lovel wishes to talk, I'll be there for him."

"You don't know how much I appreciate you saying that."

Her gaze landed once more on the letters printed on the door, stating roof access and the implications of Bellamy being up here registered as a warning bell in her mind. Dear Lord, why had they allowed such a thing in his unstable condition? Then she realized the band didn't suspect he was suicidal. They believed he had a drug and alcohol problem he was trying to kick.

Leon opened the door and they took a flight of stairs to another door and opened it. The bright sunlight blinded her at first until her vision adjusted. She spotted Bellamy standing on the ledge a few feet in front of her. Fear rose up inside of her like a tangible force that urged her to go to his rescue. Her legs carried her swiftly and her hands grabbed his dress shirt with some kind of wild print on it, and she yanked him toward her.

Bellamy's hands flew out in front of him as if to grab onto something to steady his fall. "What the—" Her cry of alarm muffled Bellamy's curse when she realized he was going to land on top of her, but at the last millisecond, Bellamy twisted, grabbing hold of her as he fell onto his back with her sprawled on top of him in an unseemly manner. Her hair had come loose from the knot at the back of her neck. Her glasses were askew on her nose and she tried to adjust them as she pulled on her blouse, which had risen above her waist. Bellamy's hot hands were on her flesh and for a moment she'd forgotten to breathe. She met his startled gaze and his lips pursed into a fine line.

"What is wrong with you, lady?" he said and shoved her away, not exactly rough but with a purpose to be as far away as possible from her.

She sat in a heap next to him, feeling a bit deflated that he didn't appreciate her attempt to help. "I was saving you," she said and lifted her chin.

"Saving me? Lady, you almost sent me tumbling over the edge."

"I most certainly did not," she sputtered. "And what were you doing up there, anyway? Who stands on a ledge and not think: Hey, I might fall to my death?" She rolled her eyes and that seemed to set him off.

His nostrils flared and he looked like he wanted to say more on the matter, but then he turned toward Leon, who stood there with his arms folded against his chest and his lips appeared to be twitching as if he were holding back a full out smile.

"You need to fire the security guard," Bellamy stated, "that allowed this crazy broad up here." He flew to his feet and brushed off his white pants that were smudged with dirt from the gravel rooftop. He flipped his curly hair away from his bright and beautiful blue eyes. God, he was handsome. A lean five-foot-ten, he appeared taller than he truly was, or maybe it was because she was still sprawled at his feet.

Leon cleared his throat. "Bellamy, I want you to meet your personal assistant."

It took Bellamy a moment to realize what Leon meant, and then he shook his head. "No. Absolutely, no." He narrowed his eyes on her, and she scrambled to her feet as graceful as she could, considering how she ended up there.

"I'm Evie Reid." She extended her hand.

He stared at her outstretched palm for a second then leveled his gaze on Leon. "I don't need a personal assistant, and especially one who thinks attacking a person is a great tactic to get to know each other." He turned on his heels, and murmured something in Romanian, which she knew he spoke since his parents were both from there. She loosely translated it as *Crazy chicks are not my thing*.

"Well yeah," she shouted back. Then decided to play his game and spoke in Romanian too. "Good thing I'm not crazy then." Loosely translated of course, but that seemed to catch his attention for about a second. He turned around and met her gaze in what she believed was supposed to intimidate her, but she refused to look away. "Giving me the evil eye doesn't work." She stared back and he dropped his gaze first.

He harrumphed and grumbled something that she was sure hadn't been flattering, and continued on his way to the door that would lead him back inside the hotel.

"Well, that went splendidly," she muttered. "Why was he up here anyway?"

"Sorry, should have warned you. It's his thing. When we're about to begin a tour, he heads for the roof of the first hotel we stay at, to meditate and put him in the right mindset, or so he says." His shoulders lifted in a shrug. "For good luck, I guess," he added.

"And I just messed that up."

"Don't worry, I have hope he'll warm up to you. You did speak Romanian to him, right? Usually, he's thrilled when someone knows the language."

*Maybe*, she thought, but not if he believed she was crazy.