

The Phantom Thief

The story of a strange love

Von Lluvia

Chapter eleven

I hadn't been wrong about Lucys reaction after all. As I confessed her that I once again didn't do what I should've done, not even stealing the painting, she stared at me as if I had gotten mad.

"Could you *please* tell me why - exactly - you destroyed that painting instead of stealing it?"

I shrugged. "Look, Alan passed out directly in front of me because he's ill. I couldn't carry him *and* the painting, because that thing was just too big. And really, what did you want with that thing? We don't need stuff like that!"

She let out an annoyed breath. "I know we don't need it, but you should've stolen it anyway! The frame was pure silver, do you know what I could've done with *that*?"

"Yes, I know, but come on...! I was worried about Alan...", I defended myself.

"Why do you favor him over your work anyway? He's just a policeman!"

I sighed. "He's not 'just a policeman'. Do you think I'd risk my job as a thief for the next best police officer? I mean, I like him."

"Maybe, but I still think it's too dangerous to do all that stuff just because you like someone."

I looked at her and raised an eyebrow, waiting for her to understand what I meant as I had said 'like'. She returned my look as if she waited for an answer, before her eyes widened slightly. "Oh... you mean you *like* him? As in... *like like*?" I nodded slowly and she slapped her forehead. "God, I'm so stupid! Sorry! That doesn't make it easier though, does it? And... does *he* know?"

I wondered why she took everything so calmly - the police was our 'enemy' after all - but I shook my head anyway. "I mean, he's not stupid, he knows that I like him somehow, but he probably has no idea how much."

She thought about it. "You know that you eventually have to tell him, right?"

"Yes... I even have an idea when I might do it, but I don't know what he'll think about me afterwards..." I sighed once more, letting myself drop on the couch. She sat next to me, patting my head. Looks like she finally got why I was acting the way I did.

"It'll work out. Lily and I will find a way to help you, okay? Don't worry, we've experience."

I frowned. Not only was my younger sister comforting me - which was already pretty strange - but... "What do you mean, experience? With what?"

She blinked. "You don't know?" I raised my eyebrows, shaking my head. "Well... Alecs boyfriend is a policeman, just like Alan. Though he's mostly doing desk work as far as I

know. And Lily and I also helped him back then, so... we'll help you too."

Wait, what?! I mean, I knew that Alec had a boyfriend, I was his twin brother after all, I even knew the guy, but nobody had told me that that guy went to the police afterwards (since he hadn't worked yet as they got together). But oh well, as far as I knew him he was okay, so... why not?

In the end, Lucy and I talked for a while, with her asking me a whole lot of questions - especially the ones I didn't want to answer, naturally - and finally clearing up the misunderstandings between us. She even encouraged me in the matter of Alan. Well... at least she knew now, what meant that Lily and Alec would know soon too, but it was okay, we supported each other so it would work out in the end...

The next morning - I got up pretty early - Lily made my wig ready and I went to visit Alan.

The streets were surprisingly empty - well, maybe not that surprisingly, it was a cold Sunday morning and it looked like rain so most people probably were either asleep or inside their houses - so it wasn't a problem to get to him and I was pretty fast.

I opened his door (something I grew accustomed to instead of ringing the doorbell) and went inside. I waited a second before walking to the kitchen, having heard the clattering of dishes. It seemed as if Alan just ate breakfast.

And really, when I entered the room he was just washing his dishes. In his pajamas. How cute. He hadn't seen me yet because his back was turned to the door so I walked up to him unnoticed.

"What are you doing, washing your dishes? Aren't you ill? Just stay in bed, doing stuff like that later when you're feeling well again.", I said after I was directly behind him, making him jump and nearly dropping the plate he held.

He spun around before backing away to the sink, wide-eyed. "Could you stop doing that every time?!"

"Doing what?", I asked innocently.

"You know what I mean! Every time you visit you sneak up to me from behind! Can't you just ring the doorbell like every normal person?"

"Nope! You know you like it! And otherwise it would be boring."

He shook his head. "Whatever... to your question: I might be ill, but I can still work at home. Better than having to do all the work the first day I'm healthy again."

I thought about it. "Well... I never thought about it that way, maybe you've got a point?" Shrugging I tousled his hair.

"Of course I have. It's not the first time that I'm ill, I know what I can do and what would be a bad idea."

"Okay, okay...! But whatever, did you like my soup?"

Now it was his time to shrug. "It was... okay, I guess."

I grinned, knowing that that probably meant a 'Yes, it was awesome.' in the Alan-language. He just couldn't give - or take, for that matters - compliments very well, so it was alright.

"Great! But go back to bed now, kay? You should rest. Then you'll be fit again in no time!"

I shooed him into his bedroom, pushing him with slight force into his bed and covering him with his blanket. He wanted to protest but I put a finger on his lips. "Just relax! Work can wait, don't worry..."

Of course, he glared at me, but he stayed put, so I just smiled and sat on the edge of

his bed.

"So... do you need anything else?"

The next few days I visited Alan every day, helping him a bit, watching out that he rested instead of working. Though I got the feeling that he got frustrated with staying in bed the whole day. But his fever only went down slowly, so I insisted that he didn't work.

"Oh *come on!* I'm not a kid anymore! Let me do my work dammit! Where is your problem?", he grumbled as I pushed him back into his bed the hundredth time this day.

"Easy: You should rest now. I told you already. Just stay in bed, then you'll get better in no time!"

"But I *am* well! I mean, my fever isn't really high anymore and my cold got better too, so what do you want?", he protested and I shrugged.

"I want that you get healthy fast. Who says that you won't get worse again when you work? Stress is bad. And not only for ill people."

Just like that, we discussed quite a lot as time went on, until it finally became really uncomfortable. Sure, I understood his motives but I had hoped that he understood mine too. Because really, was it that hard to just lay down and relax a few days until it got better?

So in the end - his fever had disappeared mostly anyway - he snapped.

"Let me do my work! I don't care if I get worse again after that, but it has to be done. It's not your business and I'm tired of you always trying to not letting me out of my bed! So go away and stop bothering me!"

That was the moment, when I had enough too. My patience was wearing thin and I really didn't want to snap too.

"Okay. Fine. I was just worried about you but it doesn't look like you even want someone that worries about you. I don't get why you don't understand that sometimes it's simply easier to rest a while before doing a great job than doing the same thing in a bad condition, maybe even with a bad outcome, but whatever. Do what you like if you think it's so much better. But think of my words if it goes wrong in the end."

With these words I left, earlier than planned. I'd give him some time to calm down I guess. Maybe he'd get better until then, especially since he actually wasn't that ill anymore anyway, when I'd return he should be completely healthy again. At least I hoped so, because I'd really feel guilty if he wouldn't be. I'd probably see.