

“**F**or fuck’s sake, not again,” I hiss, dropping my outstretched hands as the painting in front of me stirs. I glance around the quiet museum, the faint echo of distant footsteps reminding me that I’m not entirely alone. By some miracle, though, no one else is in this room.

The man on the canvas before me blinks, slowly taking in his surroundings. His eyes roam over the dull beige walls lined with paintings, probably noticing the lack of windows—if I were him, I’d be looking for an escape too. Eventually, his midnight-black eyes land on the slightly ajar dark brown walnut door to our left, the only way out of this room.

While he does his little recon, I do my own, assessing him from head to toe. His beauty is unnerving—sharp lines and shadows make him look like he’s been carved from stone. Even his perfect stubble looks deliberate, like an artist painted it just so. As he runs a hand through his short-cropped black hair, his t-shirt stretches tight around his biceps. His onyx eyes scan the room one last time until they finally land on me.

“Who are you?”

I roll my eyes at the harsh, demanding tone in his voice.