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(Extended Scene)

All of my life, I've walked by the pelt storage, noticing the stacks of cleaned furs and hides for trading. But never have I been inside with Erik. Never have I realized he's large enough, he could touch the exposed rafters, if he wanted to, or that his mere presence fills the room the way it does. He's a man with intent focus, whose body is honed from hard labor, and he's so beautifully broken, I can't bring myself to look away as the light flashes across his face.

The moment his attention shifts to my heaving chest, and I see in his eyes what I feel burning inside, all uncertainty is forgotten. An indescribable need takes over, and any discomfort under the weight of his stare smolders to ash, anticipation and a primal desire fanning a new, all-consuming flame.

I shove him against the wall, devouring the space between us, and my mouth is on his, hungry and demanding reciprocation.

Erik grips my hips, but instead of pulling me closer, he holds me farther away, keeping us apart. His fingers press into my flesh as he lets out a ragged breath. "What—" He swallows. "What are you doing?" The words are clipped and hard, but not with scorn. They are barely restrained, and there's a gleam in his eyes, too bright in the flashing light for me to mistake it for anything else this time.

"Taking what I want," I whisper.

There's a hitch of a moment, a space between breaths, when Erik's shock transforms into something dangerous. He grips my jaw, lifting my face to fully meet his gaze. There's no more resentment and hostility, only need, and he tugs me against him.

Our hips collide, and his hot mouth covers mine as one hand knots in my hair, his other sliding down my back, covering the swell of my backside as he presses me closer. He grips my thigh and lifts me up, spinning us around so my back is against the wall.

The wood is unyielding and snags against my dress sleeves, but I wrap my legs around his middle, too eager to care.

"This can't be real," he breathes against my neck, nipping at the flesh beneath my jaw.

"It better be." I rake my fingers through the soft bristle of his hair and lift Erik's face to mine, pulling his bottom lip between my teeth. I've never felt so consumed with need—so hot with desire, I can't keep still.

My nights with Link were a sweltering, sweet embrace—our time together only a bandage, protecting open wounds. But Erik? I gasp as he rips my corset open, the buckles and leather creaking in protest. The cool air accosts my exposed breasts as I tug my loose dress sleeves off my shoulders, but Erik chases the chill away with his fire-hot tongue.

Moaning, my head falls back.

His teeth graze my collarbone. His lips brush gently over the healing wound on my neck, but his fingers press into my hips with the pressure of a thousand curses. “Samara,” he growls against my skin. “Stop me now, or I swear—”

Shaking my head, I reach between us, fumbling with the buckle of his pants.

With a flash of challenge in his eyes, Erik makes quick work with one hand, drops his pants, and presses me harder into the wall.

“We have to be careful,” I rasp.

He nods and thrusts inside me, filling me so full it’s blinding. My back arches, and I cry out as my fingers score his flesh. Every thrust is so hot and punishing, I grip the beam above me, welcoming in the ache in my side. The burn makes me feel alive, and I’ve never needed Erik’s hate and anger more than I need it now.

My body, slick with rain and sweat, slides against his, and letting my head fall back, I lose myself to his hot mouth on my breast. To the thickness of him pounding inside me, and every guttural groan claiming me as his. Everything is pleasure-pain, new feelings colliding with the old, and a thirst so ravenous, I think it might never be sated.

Fear. Regret. Pain. Anger. It all melts away as bliss washes through me. A torrent making me so dizzy, I let my arms fall from the rafters and cling to him, riding out my wave of utter satisfaction.

After a final, feral thrust, Erik pulls out, takes himself in his hand before he peaks, and with a growl of ecstasy, he leans his forehead against my shoulder, scores my flesh with his teeth, and our ragged breaths are swallowed by the raging storm.