

# **The Hidden Princess At All-Boys Alpha Academy**

## **Read Chapter 391 -392**

### **Chapter 0391**

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"Get out," my father growls, taking a single menacing step towards the Atalaxian delegation. There's danger in every line of my father, and even our own people lean away at the sight of him. Dad - he really is the wolf incarnate, ready to leap across the room and destroy this man who has so casually threatened us with conquest. "Gladly," Gibson murmurs, giving a little shrug. As one, all of the Atalaxians turn towards the door, pausing before they begin to march. And I realize, as I did last night, that all of this is rehearsed.

That they...they probably never came to Moon Valley intending to have peace talks.

That it was always about this - about learning more about where we stand and then this moment of telling us that they intend to destroy us, and that the assault starts now. Sure, they probably intended to do it after a humiliating defeat of our boxing champion - and we screwed them right over on that one- but still. Their intent is the same.

\*The first assault comes in three days, Sinclair." Gibson says, smug, an eyebrow raised. "We will delay only not to insult the gods on Midwinter. But then... it begins. Get your armies - and your women-\* and here his eyes move deliberately over my mother, my aunt, and then me, his disgust perfectly clear, "in order."

Almost as if on cue, the Atalaxians march from the room. My mouth is hanging open as I watch them go, my mind working frantically to try to understand what this means for us, for our nation.

I spin my head to look up at Rafe, but he's looking towards my parents with a frown.

The far door slams shut behind the Atalaxians as the final one leaves and then the room bursts into action. I gasp slightly as everyone immediately begins to talk in harsh, worried turns, and many people begin to move into groups. My dad shouts out above them all, ordering his guards to immediately go with the Atalaxians, to arrest Gibson and have him placed under armed guard. He shouts out more orders which are immediately obeyed, but I can barely hear them - the room is chaos.

I feel a hand curl around my arm and gasp again, looking over to see my mother there, her other hand wrapped around Juniper's. "Come," she says, immediately, her eyes on mine. "We're going back to our rooms - right now."

I nod, turning, ready to walk, and I bump immediately into someone standing behind me. I inhale sharply, frightened, but when I turn my face up and see that it's Jackson I feel an immediate sense of calm. He gives me a single nod and then another to my mother, beginning to cut a path through the people to the door to take us to our private Royal suite.

"But," I protest, following Jackson even as I look back towards my father. "We should stay - we should help -" \*Let him manage this, Ariel," my mom says, her voice at once gentle and stern. "When he knows how we can help him, he'll tell us."

I scowl a little when I see that Jesse and Rafe go to my father's side, feeling a bit left out but...

Well. In times of emergency, I'll defer to my mother-do as she says. As Jackson opens the door to the antechamber, waving our group through, I realize that it's bigger than I thought. That Luca is here, and Daphne, and Ben, and Markie, everyone looking as freaked out as I feel. When Cora comes through the door last, murmuring to leave it to the military minds, we walk as a tight group back into the hall and then further along to our apartments, filing quickly into our little living room.

When that door snaps shut, the room rings with silence for a long, long moment, as we all stare at each other.

"Mom?" Juniper says, breaking it, her voice tremulous. "Are we...are they going to kill us?"

\*God, Junie, no," mom says, grabbing her youngest to her and holding her tight, stroking her hand slowly over my sister's hair. Markie moves to my side and I wrap my arm around him, sensing that he needs that kind of family closeness too. "Dad's going to handle all this, baby," mom murmurs to Juniper. "Don't you worry about it."

\*All right, everyone stop standing around so uselessly and sit down or something," Cora says, taking efficient control and waving her hand at all of us. There's a moment of hesitation and then people begin to move, heaving sighs and tensely taking seats. Because we're all aware that there's nothing we can do until we get further word from dad and Roger - and we all hate it, this new game of waiting.

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Mark starts towards dad's armchair, tugging me along with him. I let him pull me, knowing he's scared. "Do you think they meant it?" Mark asks, looking at me as I perch myself on the arm next to him. "That they're...going to wait until after the Midwinter holiday? Or...I mean...are they going to do a sneak attack?"

"They probably meant it," Jackson says, walking over with us and standing tall behind the chair, so close I can feel the warmth of him. "The Atalaxians are...very religious. They take their worship of the gods very seriously."

"Well then you'd think they'd give me and Ella a bit more respect," Cora says, her voice a bit dry, coming to join our conversation as other small ones break out elsewhere in the room. "Considering who our mom is."

\*Do they...know that? About your lineage?" Jackson asks, frowning, considering it.

"Who knows," Cora sighs, waving her hand.

"I'm not sure it matters," Jackson says with a shrug. "The Cult of the Goddess never really took hold in Atalaxia, except perhaps amongst the women. Which, considering the official state stance of sweeping misogyny, probably makes sense."

"Well, then who do they worship?" Mark asks, looking curiously up at Jacks.

\*The Dark God, primarily," Jackson replies instantly, looking down at my brother.

"Oh god, him again," Cora groans, her head tilting back on her shoulders. But then she snaps it back up, frowning at Jackson a little. "Wait, how do you know all this?"

"I go to...school," Jackson replies, frowning back like it's obvious. "We study this. We're supposed to know our enemy, through and through."

"Well then why doesn't Jesse know it?" She tilts her head to the side.

\*Jesse..." Jackson grimaces a little, measuring his words. "Doesn't try very hard with the books. He concentrates more on the fighting."

Cora scowls a little, her eyes narrowing, and I can see in her her very clear intent to have some words with her son later. "Well, I'm glad one of you is paying attention," she murmurs. I turn my head to look up at Jacks again, and see him fighting a smile, genuinely pleased to be complimented like that. It brings a smile to my face too, surprising after such a horrible announcement.

Cora and Jackson continue to chat about the Atalaxian world and viewpoint, Mark listening closely, but I let my eyes drift around the room. Daphne sits quietly on the couch, studying her hands, while Luca and Ben each lean against the wall, looking sick.

I sigh, feeling sorry for them, my eyes starting to drift away and move on, seeking my mother and my sister, but... My eyes snap back to the pair. Because Luca I understand - he's battling a hangover and what I can only imagine was an intense conversation with my dad before the meeting. But Ben?

Ben came home with me last night, and I'm....fine. Plus, before the meeting, he was laughing and joking with us. But now he looks...sweaty, and unsettled, and just plain ill. I frown, not understanding. What on earth is wrong with him?

But there's no time to think on it.

We all turn as one as the door opens again and my father steps through, Roger, Jesse, Rafe, and grandpa Henry coming in behind him. We fall silent.

"Good," dad barks out, still livid from the events of the afternoon. He stands in front of all of us and crosses his arms, glaring around at us like we're all his troops. Obviously, we all know that he's not mad at us, but still...it's very intimidating.

"Is this real, Dominic?" mom asks, her voice breathy, scared. My eyes dart over to see her sitting in the other

armchair, Juniper squeezed in next to her, looking smaller than she usually does.

"It's very real, Ella," my dad snaps, focusing on her now. "And we need to come up with a plan, right now, if we intend to survive."

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