

Fell for the Alpha-less Queen

Chapter 24: An Unexpected Encounter

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As Tessa stepped out of the school gates, her phone buzzed with a call from Luna.

"What's up?" she asked, her tone casual.

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"You're in Navoris, aren't you?" Luna asked, concern lacing her voice. Since the establishment of the Lightwing Order, Luna had never met Phantom in person. Now that Phantom was in Navoris, Luna couldn't resist the chance.

"Yes," Tessa replied plainly.

"Then let's meet!" Luna said eagerly.

"Why?" Tessa raised an eyebrow. Is there really a need?

"Because I want to see you! You're the only member of the Lightwing Order I haven't met yet. Everyone's dying to know what you're like."

"I'm just an ordinary person."

"Cut it out, Phantom! The top-ranked hacker on the global leaderboard calls herself ordinary? You're joking, right?"

"Luna, I'm here for something important."

"Do you need help?" Luna asked immediately, concern deepening.

Tessa knew how much the Lightwing Order cared for her, especially as their youngest and most skilled member. "No need. I can handle it myself."

"Phantom, remember, you're not alone. We've got your back, always."

Tessa softened slightly. "I'm at Chiaroscuro Lane. Come if you want."

"Got it! Send me your location. I'm on my way!" Luna's excitement was palpable. Meeting Phantom was a privilege others could only dream of.

Tessa settled into a cozy café on Chiaroscuro Lane, where laptops were available for customer use. She logged into her email, skimming through her recent messages.

One email caught her attention-it was from Dr. Gu Shi, asking when she planned to join the International Medical Organization. Tessa replied succinctly, stating she hadn't decided yet and would let him know in due course.

Just as she hit "Send," Luna entered the café. Spotting the breathtakingly elegant girl by the window, Luna immediately knew it was her.

"Phantom, it's me, Luna," she greeted, sliding into the seat across from Tessa.

Tessa glanced up briefly. "Just call me Tessa," she said. "We're in the real world. Let's keep it low-key."

"Tessa, how long are you staying in Navoris? I've got a job for you."

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"What kind of job? Something you can't handle yourselves?" Tessa asked, though she wasn't keen on taking new assignments at the moment.

"It's about Mr. Young. You've heard of him, right?"

"The scientist from the Academy?"

"Exactly. He's gone missing, and he holds critical technology-highly sensitive stuff."

"Got it. I'll take the job."

"Fair warning: the payout isn't as high as some of your previous gigs. Four million isn't much compared to what the big corporations usually offer to hire you."

"It's fine," Tessa said nonchalantly. For her, hacking was more of a hobby than a career. Earning money was just an added perk.

With business wrapped up, Luna leaned forward eagerly. "So, what brings you to Navoris? Are you sure you don't need our help?"

"I don't."

Just then, Tessa's phone rang again.

"Where are you?" Landon's deep voice came through the line as soon as she answered.

"I'm at Chiaroscuro Lane. Why?" Tessa asked, puzzled. Does this guy have nothing better to do?

"Wait there. I'm coming to find you. Don't move."

"Who was that?" Luna asked curiously.

"A friend's uncle," Tessa replied after a brief pause, settling on a definition for Landon.

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"An uncle, huh?" Luna teased, raising an eyebrow. "Your friend's uncle must be older. Be careful, Phantom. Sometimes older guys have a thing for young girls like you."

"I know," Tessa replied with a smirk.

"What do you mean you know? Never mind, as long as we're around, no one will dare mess with you. In Navoris, you can strut around like you own the place!"

"Lina, I never realized how cute you were," Tessa chuckled. How exactly does one 'strut around horizontally'?

Caught off guard by the compliment, Lina-blushed. "Alright, since your friend's coming, I'll head out. I'll send you the information on Mr. Young's case when I get back. You'll need to coordinate with the chief of the Navoris state criminal division."

"Got it."

Lina left not long before Landon arrived. Spotting Tessa, he immediately walked over and sat across from her.

"How are you feeling? Should I take you to the hospital he asked, his expression serious.

"I'm fine, Mr. Thorne. Don't you have better things to do?" Tessa asked, raising an eyebrow.

"I do, but I had to check on you. Did someone bother you?"

"Please, I'm lucky if I don't end up bothering others. Who would dare mess with me?" Tessa's words slipped out before she could filter them, revealing more of her true nature than she intended.

"The doctor advised you to rest. You should listen."

Landon had rushed over, but seeing her in good spirits, he relaxed. Ordering himself a coffee, he asked casually, "How's it going at Navoris High? Are you settling in?"

"Not bad," Tessa replied, her tone indifferent. The likes of Queenie and her gang were beneath her notice.

Landon opened his laptop, settling in to work remotely

The café became a scene to behold—two strikingly attractive individuals sharing a table. Landon, with his composed elegance, exuded an aura of innate authority while Tessa's ethereal beauty and laid-back demeanor caught everyone's attention. Together, they drew curious glances from passersby.

Though they exchanged only occasional words, Landon's calm presence seemed to anchor Tessa. For some reason, she didn't mind him being there.

Midway through a game, Tessa's phone rang.

"Grandpa? What's up?" she answered, her tone softening.

"Tessie! I was thinking, why don't you come home for dinner tonight? You promised to visit once a week, remember?" Walter sounded half pleading, half complaining.

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"Tonight?"

"Why, is it too much to ask for one dinner?"

"Alright, I'll come."

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"Promise? I'm holding you to it," Walter said firmly before hanging up, not giving her a chance to back out.

"Who was that?" Landon asked, curious to see her rare display of compliance.

"My grandfather," Tessa replied curtly, clearly unwilling to delve into details about the Sinclair family.

She began packing up her things. The Sinclair family's estate was over an hour away by car, and she didn't want to be late.

"I'll drive you," Landon offered.

Tessa didn't object. They left the café together, stepping out to find Landon's sleek silver Lamborghini parked by the curb. Its elegant lines drew stares from everyone nearby.

When Landon opened the passenger door for her with practiced grace and shut it gently once she was inside, it only heightened the onlookers' envy.

"I wish I were that girl," one woman sighed wistfully.

"Dream on. Look at her-young, stunning, and elegant. That face alone makes her a rarity in Navoris," another said, sounding defeated.

Unbeknownst to them, someone else was watching from a distance-Winona, out shopping with friends. Who's that man? I've never seen him before, Winona thought, narrowing her eyes as the car sped away.

Chapter 26: A Family Dispute

"Are you planning to return to Wisteria Apartment tonight?" Landon asked after dropping her off.

"Yes." Tessa didn't enjoy staying here. She'd only come back for dinner because her grandfather had insisted.

"Call me when you're done. I'll pick you up."

"There's no need; I can get back on my own."

"Just go inside," Landon said firmly, leaving no room for argument.

Tessa nodded, recognizing his goodwill. She didn't dislike Landon's presence. In fact, deep down, she felt an odd sense of comfort and even a little anticipation when he was around-though she couldn't explain why.

Landon's silver Lamborghini pulled away, heading back.

Meanwhile, Winona, returning home in a black Mercedes, caught sight of the car. She quickly rolled down her window, trying to catch a glimpse of the driver's face. But the tinted, anti-peep windows gave her nothing to work with.

As the Mercedes pulled up at the Sinclair estate, Winona stepped out of the car, surprised to see Tessa lingering by the gate.

"Who was that man just now?"

Tessa didn't even glance at her. The household staff, hearing the sound of their arrival, opened the heavy iron gates. Without a word, Tessa walked in.

Seeing her ignored, Winona's temper flared.

"Tessa, what's with that attitude? I'm your sister! I'm just worried you might be getting deceived. Do you even know how many older werewolves rent luxury cars to prey on pretty young females like you?"

"Thanks for your concern, but I'll manage," Tessa replied dismissively. If it had been anyone else, she might have taken the warning seriously. But coming from Winona? It was laughable.

Nobody in the world wished her ill more than her so-called sister.

Inside the estate, Walter was already waiting downstairs accompanied by Yardley Sinclair, the family patriarch.

"Dad, you're back!" Winona exclaimed, rushing over to embrace him. "I missed you so much."

Since sustaining injuries during the vampire-war five years ago, Yardley had been undergoing rehabilitation at a werewolf hospital.

Yardley patted Winona on the back.

"How's school going? The college entrance exams are coming up-focus and do your best."

"Don't worry, Dad. I'm consistently in the top five of my year. I'll definitely get into an Ivy League

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Yardley's gaze landed on Tessa, and his expression soured. The daughter who had humiliated the family five years ago... How could he feel anything but disappointment seeing her now?

"Why are you even back here? Haven't you embarrassed us enough?"

His warm demeanor toward Winona was gone, replaced by disdain for Tessa.

"It was my decision to bring her back!" Walter barked, slamming his cane against the floor. "Do I not even have a say in my own household anymore?"

Tessa moved to Walter's side, gently rubbing his back to calm him down.

"Grandpa, don't get upset. It's bad for your health."

"Tessie, I know you mean well, but I can't just sit by and watch them treat you like this," Walter replied angrily.

"Dad," Yardley interjected, his tone tight. "I understand you've always doted on her, but this time, she really crossed the line-"

"Crossed the line? And you've never made mistakes in your life?" Walter shot back.

*Please don't get mad, Grandpa. Dad, he's just worried about you," Winona chimed in sweetly, trying to diffuse the tension.

"Enough. Let's eat," Walter declared, cutting the argument short.

Walter pulled Tessa to sit beside him at the dining table Yardley, Winona, and Lila each took their seats as well.

Dinner began in tense silence, each person harboring their own thoughts.

Toward the end of the meal, Walter finally broke the quiet.

"I didn't just call Tessie back for dinner tonight," he announced.

The other three turned to look at him, though Tessa remained as uninterested as ever.

"I still hold 20% of Sinclair Corp's shares. I've decided to transfer them to Tessie. That way, she'll have some security."

Sinclair Corp might not rival Thorne Corp, but it was a top-ten company in Navoris and the Sinclair family primary financial lifeline, supporting the Frostmoon Pack as well.

"Dad, what are you talking about? You can't just give your shares to Tessa!" Yardley protested, his tone sharp.

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Chapter 27 Heir of Shadows: A Battle for Legacy

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"Dad, Tessie is still young. What if she sells the shares and harms Sinclair Corp in the process?" Winona's voice was laced with urgency, her frustration barely concealed.

She hadn't expected her grandfather to suddenly decide to hand over all his shares to Tessa. It wasn't fair. She'd worked so hard to prove herself, to become the perfect heiress. But as always, Tessa effortlessly stole the spotlight.

"Grandpa, please reconsider. This decision is too rash, Winona implored, her voice softening in an attempt to sway him.

"The shares are mine," Walter said firmly. "And I'll give them to whoever I please. Your attitudes toward Tessie are disgraceful."

"Dad, Sinclair Corp's shares aren't just personal assets; they're vital to the family and the pack. This isn't a decision to take lightly," Yardley objected, his tone growing increasingly frustrated.

"Tessie, say something!" Lila turned to Tessa, her gaze sharp. "You don't even know how to manage a company. What will you do with those shares?"

"What do you want me to say?" Tessa's calm reply carried a subtle edge of defiance.

"You must have whispered something to Grandpa," Lila accused, her frustration spilling over. "Do you even understand what you're asking for?"

"Tessa, you've already humiliated this family once. How can you have the nerve to take Sinclair Corp's shares now?" Yardley added, his voice dripping with disdain.

Tessa chuckled coldly, her gaze sweeping over them with indifference. They really think I'm the enemy, don't they?

"I didn't want the shares," she said, her voice steady. "But since you're all so desperate for me not to have them, I've decided I'll take them after all. Thank you, Grandpa."

Her words hit like a thunderclap. Yardley and Lila stared at her, their faces pale with fury.

Walter gave a satisfied nod. "Good. On Monday, I'll have my lawyer handle the transfer. Tessie, come by then to finalize everything."

Yardley's hands clenched into fists under the table, but Walter's authority left no room for further argument.

"Tessie, let me arrange for a driver to take you home," Walter offered, knowing how uncomfortable she felt in the Sinclair house.

"No need, Grandpa. I'll go on my own. You should rest early," Tessa replied with a small smile, her demeanor softening only for him.

After Walter retired upstairs, the remaining members of the Sinclair family sat in tense silence.

"Dad, is Grandpa serious?" Winona asked, her voice trembling with disbelief.

"You focus on your studies," Yardley snapped. "I've already paved the way for you. The youngest son of the

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Chapter 27 Heir of Shadows: A Battle for Legacy

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Yardley's hopes were pinned on Winona. Tessa's reputation was irreparably tarnished, and her lack of a wolf made her useless to the family, But Winona, bright and accomplished, was their best chance at securing the Sinclair family's position.

As Tessa exited the Sinclair estate, she spotted the familiar silver Lamborghini parked near the gate.

Landon stepped out, opened the passenger door for her, and shielded her head as she climbed in. The smooth, gentlemanly gesture caught the attention of the Sinclair household.

From her bedroom window, Winona's eyes narrowed as she watched the scene unfold. She couldn't make out the man's face, but his tailored suit and confident presence were unmistakable.

Who is he? And why is he being so attentive to Tessa?

Winona couldn't help the bitter jealousy that bubbled inside her. Tessa always seemed to attract what she desired most effortlessly. But who cares? she thought. What kind of decent man would want someone like her?

As the Lamborghini drove off, Winona clenched her fists. "Tessa, you won't stay lucky for long."

Inside the car, Landon glanced at Tessa as she leaned back in her seat and closed her eyes.

"Rough evening?" he asked, concern lacing his voice.

"I'm fine," she replied, her voice soft but firm. The Sinclair family... it's just a matter of time before I settle everything once and for all.

"Rest, then," Landon said. "I'll wake you when we're home."

"Hmm."

For reasons she couldn't quite understand, being near Landon always put her at ease. She hadn't meant to fall asleep, but the soothing hum of the car and his steady presence lulled her into a deep slumber.

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Chapter 28 The Alpha's Pursuit: Shadows of Destiny

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The silver-gray Lamborghini glided into the parking lot of Wisteria Apartment and parked neatly in its

space.

Landon turned to look at her peaceful, sleeping profile. He didn't wake her. In her sleep, she looked so serene, like a little angel. So calm, so beautiful.

She made him want to stay by her side forever, just to guard her and make sure she had sweet dreams.

I want to kiss her, Flex suddenly piped up.

Flex, that's not very gentlemanly, Landon replied in his mind.

I like her. I want her to be our Luna, Flex insisted, unyielding.

We'll have to wait until she's an adult.

For years, Landon hadn't found his destined mate. The Thorne family elders had repeatedly urged him to settle down, even suggesting potential partners—strong capable female werewolves with impeccable backgrounds.

None of them had ever stirred anything in him.

But the moment he met Tessa, he'd been captivated.

Even though she had no wolf and carried a reputation many would shun, he knew without a doubt—she was the one for him. She was the one he would choose, no matter what.

Tessa stirred awake, blinking herself back to consciousness. She realized she'd fallen asleep in the car—and for two whole hours, no less.

The first thing she saw when she opened her eyes was Landon, his striking features still the epitome of calm and control.

"Mr. Thorne," she murmured, her voice slightly hoarse from sleep, "are you trying to court me?"

Her blunt question caught Landon by surprise. He turned to face her fully, her sleep-softened demeanor tugging at his chest.

"Yes," he replied, his deep voice unwavering. "Can't you tell?"

Still groggy, Tessa blinked in confusion. "Why?"

He reached out, gently pinching her cheek—her baby-soft skin made his hand linger a moment longer than he'd intended.

"I'm following my heart," Landon said simply, his tone sincere and unhurried.

Her heart skipped a beat. Is he... serious? She couldn't quite grasp the implications of his answer. Why her, of all people?

Landon's calm intensity was disarming. He never seemed to rush or pressure her. Somehow, his patience felt even more dangerous than any impulsive declaration.

Chapter 28 The Alpha's Pursuit: Shadows of Destiny

Tessa quickly pushed open the car door, needing air and space.

Landon followed her out, watching her with an unreadable expression.

"Goodnight," she said hurriedly, retreating toward her apartment.

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Later that night, as Tessa lay in bed staring at the ceiling, her thoughts inevitably circled back to Landon's

words.

"I'm following my heart."

He had been nothing but kind to her-gentle yet firm, protective but never overbearing. For someone of his status to invest so much time and effort into her....it was baffling.

She was no stranger to people wanting something from her, but Landon? His sincerity felt real.

And that scared her.

"Emma" she whispered into the quiet of her room. Her wolf emerged, stretching lazily within her consciousness.

"Yes, my dear?" Emma responded, her voice smooth and warm.

"Do you think he might be... our fated mate?"

Emma chuckled softly. "Sweetheart, you're not eighteen yet. I can't sense anything until then."

A wave of disappointment hit her, though she didn't know why. I guess I'll just have to wait.

For the first time in her life, Tessa found herself eager for her birthday. When she turned eighteen, she'd finally know the truth-and a part of her hoped it would confirm what her heart already suspected.

Landon could very well be the one.

He has to be, she thought, her heart skipping in anticipation.

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Chapter 29 Obsession and Vengeance

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The next morning, as Tessa arrived at school, she immediately sensed that something was off.

Sure enough, there was trouble brewing.

Students at Navoris High were whispering and pointing at her from all directions.

Ysabel, who had been waiting for her by the gate, quickly ran up to her.

"Tessie, that idiot York is here again."

"Didn't he already break up with Queenie?" Tessa asked, her tone indifferent.

"Yeah, but this York is delusional! He's trying to chase after you now. Can you believe it? He doesn't even bother checking himself in the mirror before doing this nonsense."

To Ysabel, no ordinary werewolf could ever deserve someone as extraordinary as her Tessie.

As soon as Tessa walked through the school gates, York came running over.

He held out an absurd display: property deeds, bank cards, and savings records.

"Tessa, I'm serious about you! Just say yes, and all of this is yours!"

"York, are you here to make a fool of yourself?" Ysabel couldn't help but laugh. What an idiot!

Nearby, Queenie had overheard York's arrival and rushed over. She was just in time to witness this humiliating scene.

"Tessa, tell me-what do I have to do to make you accept me?"

York's eyes gleamed with determination, ignoring the growing crowd and the judgmental stares.

"Move," Tessa said coldly, her patience already running thin.

But York grabbed her wrist.

Tessa hated being touched. Her blue eyes narrowed dangerously, an unspoken warning flashing across them.

"Do you want to keep that hand?"

York, oblivious to the danger, grinned as if he believed his charm could conquer anything.

"Tessa, be with me. I can give you everything you've ever wanted."

Her patience finally snapped. Tessa twisted his arm sharply.

"Ahhh!"

York's scream echoed through the courtyard as his arm was dislocated in one swift motion.

"Don't touch me. I warned you."

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Chapter 29 Obsession and Vengeance

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Ignoring York's agonized groans, Tessa stepped on the pile of documents and cards he had so proudly displayed. Without so much as a glance back, she walked away with Ysabel.

Ysabel was stunned.

That fluid motion, that commanding aura...

She had to hold herself back from cheering out loud.

She's too cool!

Ysabel thought, her admiration soaring. Tessa could do no wrong in her eyes. Everything she did was downright impressive.

Nearby, Queenie's friends tried to pull her away.

"Queenie, let's go. York's just a piece of trash. He brought this on himself."

"Yeah, Queenie, let's leave. Class is about to start."

But Queenie shook her head.

Even after everything, seeing York in pain filled her with heartache. She still wanted to be with him. She told herself it was just a momentary lapse in judgment on his part..

She rushed to his side, tears welling in her eyes.

"Yorkie, are you okay? Let me take you to the hospital.

York's arm dangled awkwardly, the bones out of place. He'd need professional treatment before his body's natural healing could kick in.

But instead of gratitude, York frowned at her approach.

"Queenie, stay away from me. I don't want Tessa to misunderstand."

"York..."

Queenie couldn't believe what she was hearing. Despite everything Tessa had done to him, he still wouldn't give up on her.

"Queenie, I'm sorry," York said, his voice weak but resolute. "But I think... I've found my true love."

"True love? What does that make me,
then?"

"Everyone makes mistakes before meeting the right person."

Mistake... Queenie's bitter laughter broke into a sob.

"York, you won't get what you want. Tessa is nothing but a shameless-"

Before she could finish, York slapped her hard across the face.

"Don't you dare talk about her like that again!"

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Chapter 29 Obsession and Vengeance.

Queenie's tears fell freely now, stinging from both pain and humiliation.

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If Tessa hadn't come back....

If Tessa hadn't met York...

If Tessa could just disappear...

Wouldn't everything be different?

Consumed by these toxic thoughts, Queenie made a decision.

She dialed a number she hadn't called in years.

"Hey, didn't you always like Tessa? Well, guess what-she's back."

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apter 30 A Dangerous Game: Tessa's Bold Gambit

At 6:30 PM, Ysabel was heading back to school for evening classes. As she approached the school gates, she noticed Queenie crouched there, her face pale and drawn.

Ysabel didn't want to get involved, but Queenie looked genuinely unwell.

Reluctantly, she walked back.

"Queenie, are you okay?"

"Ysabel, my stomach hurts so bad. Can you take me to the hospital?"

Seeing Queenie in such obvious pain, Ysabel hesitated but eventually helped her up and out of the area.

By 7:00 PM, when evening classes started, Ysabel was still absent.

Tessa stepped out to call her.

"Ysabel, where are you? Why aren't you in class?"

"Tessa, it's me. If you want Ysabel to stay safe, you'd better come here right now."

Hearing Queenie's voice on the line, Tessa's expression darkened.

"Queenie, if Ysabel loses even a single strand of hair, I'll make you regret it. Believe me."

Queenie only responded with a cold laugh. "Come alone, Tessa. If you dare bring anyone else, I'll make sure Ysabel's face is unrecognizable."

Queenie hung up and sent Tessa the location from Ysabel's phone.

"You know who I am, Queenie? You're insane to kidnap me!" Ysabel fumed, glaring at Queenie.

"Ysabel, this isn't my fault. Blame Tessa. If it weren't for her, you wouldn't be in this position."

"You're absolutely crazy!" Ysabel shouted, furious.

"Shut her up," Queenie ordered.

One of the werewolves behind Queenie moved forward and taped Ysabel's mouth shut.

Ysabel burned with anger.

These idiots are going to regret this.

"Queenie, do you really think Tessa will come?" Hector Locke, a werewolf

mercenary and Queenie's cousin, asked.

"She will, Hector. Trust me," Queenie assured.

Hector had been infatuated with Tessa for years. Tonight, he would finally have her-or so he thought.

Meanwhile, Tessa arrived at the location: an abandoned factory.

She pushed the heavy door open and saw Queenie and her accomplices, with Ysabel tied to chain

Chapter 30 A Dangerous Game: Tessa's Bold Gambit

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Her sharp eyes scanned the room before settling on Queenie.

"Queenie, you've really grown bold."

Queenie smirked. "Save your breath."

"Let her go," Tessa said, her voice calm but firm.

"Let her go? Are you joking?" Queenie sneered.

"Queenie, you do realize this is a crime, don't you?"

"Don't try to scare me, Tessa. I'm not that easily intimidated. Hector, tie her up. She's yours. Didn't you always want her?"

Hector's eyes raked over Tessa, his infatuation evident,

"Tessa, do you remember me?" Hector asked, his gaze fixated on her.

Tessa's attention shifted to Hector.

"Hector, tie her up!" Queenie barked impatiently.

But Hector couldn't move. He was spellbound.

"You like me?" Tessa asked, her tone light.

"I do." Hector admitted without hesitation.

"Then tie Queenie up for me," Tessa said, her voice soft but commanding.

"What?" Hector asked, startled.

"If you really like me, you'll do it. Or is your so-called 'like' just talk? Can't even do this one little thing for

me?"

Even with her casual tone, Tessa exuded a natural magnetism, her stunning beauty amplifying every word. Queenie's panic grew. "Hector, don't listen to her nonsense!"

Tessa raised an eyebrow. "Is this what you call love? Forget it. Plenty of people like me better than you."

"Tessa, don't play games!" Queenie snapped, her voice tinged with desperation. Why isn't she panicking? Why does she always look so untouchable? I'll tear that facade apart!