

Chapter 104 You Wouldn't Dare

He held on to her, allowing himself to bond with everything she had seen, and heard in the last few hours. The next thing he saw was Garrett, her father and head of the royal council of elders. He appeared furious, as he pointed a finger at her. The setting was in a car, probably his, and he was wearing the same clothes he wore in the palace, which told Arthur that the event had happened today, maybe even shortly after Lancelot's grand entrance.

"You must do anything and everything until you are crowned Luna queen! You have to be crowned Luna queen!" Arthur flinched. He had never realized Garrett was so desperate to have Ava become Lancelot's Luna. She must do everything and anything? What did that even mean?

However, it was the next thing he saw that really sent shock down his spine.

In the garden, Ava's hands held Marilyn's and the woman's eyes were shined with hope, and...greed? Then, he heard Ava's voice again.

"Once this is done, you would no longer be just the head of maids. You would be the butler, in charge of the whole palace."

In that moment, Arthur pulled away from Ava with force that caused him to stagger backwards. His heart began to race within his chest, as he looked over with, with doubt in his eyes. So many questions ran through

Arthur's mind. What was going on? What had she paid or bribed Marilyn to do?

His mind pieced it all together. The conversation she had overheard at the hospital, her father's admonishment; the bribe she paid Marilyn...fear clutched his chest in an instant. Everything was connected to one person; Roxanne. "Arthur, are you alr..."

He pushed past her, before she could finish her statement, and rushed to the stairs. Ava turned with one swift spin and watched him run up. She could not help but wonder what it might have been that caused him to run like that. So, she followed him behind, just to find out. However, when she saw him head towards Lancelot's stairs, she stopped in her tracks and retraced her steps to her room. All the while, she wondered why she had not heard Lancelot's scream echo in the palace since. Still, she would return to her room and wait for the good news.

Arthur took giant steps to Lancelot's room, where he knew his brother would be, and Roxanne would definitely be as well, knowing that his brother would not let his mate out of his sight, especially after what she had just recovered from. When he got to Lancelot's door, he met it already opened and he rushed in. Roxanne was seated in his brother's bed, beads of sweat gathered on her forehead. Immediately, his concern and fear took the better of him. He ignored everyone else, and everything else happening in the room and rushed to her side.

Roxanne was surprised to feel a soft hand on her forehead, wiping off her sweat.

"Are you okay? Are you alright? What happened?" he asked, breathing heavily as he did so. Roxanne looked up and found a young pair of eyes staring back at her. She had not even seen him walk in, but she could remember him. She had seen these pair of eyes first, on the morning she found herself in the palace infirmary. Since then, he had avoided her stare like a plague.

He was Arthur, Lancelot's younger brother. And the one who seemed to do anything to avoid her. But now, he seemed very worried, and it surprised her.

If he cared about her that much, why did he always try to avoid her?

ATHENS, GREECE (THE WITCHES' KINGDOM).

The flame of the sky, which others referred to as the "Sun" had already set upon the palace. Athaliah rose from the stool she had been seated on, after her routine consultation with the goddess and god of wisdom and power, asking for guidance to direct and the power to control, where needed. Those were the two things she required as the chief sorceresses and prophetess of the land.

When she spoke, even the king listened. And that was not a simple ability to possess or maintain. She stood in front of her large mirror and took off her cloak, revealing the red night dress underneath it. Her long strands of pure white hair were tied in a bun above her head.

With all her meetings and official duties for the night rescheduled, she was free to rest for tonight and was grateful for the chance to retire to bed early, until she heard a knock on her door.

No matter how hard it was, Athaliah managed to fight back the urge to yell at whoever was at her door to get lost. Instead, she stood straight and called out for the person to come in. She kept her eyes fixed on the door, until it opened, her unwanted visitor stepped in, and it closed again.

Athaliah's eyes brightened when she saw her daughter, Hera, and the second queen of the witch kingdom, step into the room. However, her daughter didn't seem equally enthusiastic, or enthusiastic at all.

Hera wasn't, and honestly, she couldn't be. She had spent all day, thinking. Thinking about herself, her life, what she wanted, PETER...Oh! He was one of the people she couldn't stop thinking about, and the night they shared together refused to leave her memory.

Hera was forced to make a choice. And it was that choice she was standing in front of her mother, to reveal.

Athaliah noticed the displeasure in her child's eyes, as she walked towards her.

"Is everything alright, dear?" She placed a hand on Hera's right shoulder, with concern etched in her stare. Athaliah might have been seen as powerful, ruthless and wise to the rest of the world, but it did not change the fact that she was a mother. A mother who would sacrifice anything for her daughter.

Hera sucked in a deep breath, then let it out slowly. She had rehearsed this conversation in her room, in front of her mirror, a thousand times, yet, she still felt unprepared. She had let her mother down, and her revelation would break Athaliah's heart the more, that was for sure.

"I have to tell you something," Hera started. No matter how she tried to sugarcoat it, the truth would still come out plain and ugly, so there was no need beating around the bush.

Athaliah sensed that whatever her daughter had to confess, it wasn't going to be good. So, she withdrew her hand and intertwined her fingers behind her back.

"Out with it," she ordered. She had no time to waste.

Hera heaved a long sigh, before she spoke.

"On the night of the Alpha King's coronation, I slept with his personal assistant, Peter."

Hera had expected many things, but for some reason, seemed to forget that there was a possibility that what happened next, could happen. That was why she was taken aback, when her mother's right hand came crashing down on her left cheek, throwing her face to the side. The sound echoed around the room and Hera held on to the cheek that was currently in pain. Tears gathered in her left eye, but she did not dare to look at her mother again.

However, that did not stop her from finishing her confession. Half of the truth was already out, and she would complete it tonight and rid herself of the lifelong charade she had gotten into.

"I am sorry, mother. But you might need to hit me again, because I am still attracted to him. I do not have any regrets, and I would do it again, if I was..."

She was silenced by the sound of another slap. This time, her right cheek was visited, flinging her face to the left.

Athaliah could not believe what she had heard. She had sensed something was wrong with her daughter, but refused to make anything of it. Now, she was livid with anger, her breathing rose and fell heavily. This better to be a joke, and she was hitting Hera for playing such pranks on her.

However, Hera did not tell her it was a prank, not even almost a minute after the second slap. Instead, she raised her head and stared blankly into her mother's eyes, raging with fury, threatening to explode.

"I did not want to be married to the king mother, you forced me. I... I have committed a sin mother, and I am not ashamed of it. I was never supposed to look at another man, talk more of being in bed with him, but none of that mattered when I was with Peter. I cannot do this anymore...sorceress Athaliah." The last two words slipped out of Hera's mouth in bitterness, as though she hated the name, and the title.

Athaliah chuckled bitterly.

"I forced you to marry the king? You ungrateful swine! King Ahab owed me a great deal, he still does. But, I never asked for riches for myself, all I asked was that he married you and secured an excellent future for you and the children you would give him. But you! You cannot do whatever it is you're planning to do Hera..." She paused and took steps closer to her daughter. The heat emanating from her mother's stare was enough to cause sweat to drip down Hera's face. However, if she was going to succeed in getting her happiness, she needed to be fearless.

"The king is too old for me mother! There are a lot of things I need besides a title and power, and he can't give me those. I want more mother..." she cried out desperately, matching her mother's intense stare.

"...much more than he can give me. And you know me mother. You know that I can never settle for less, you taught me that." When she saw that Athaliah's breathing had steadied, and her mother stood numb, Hera straightened her stance, held her head high and cleared her throat, fighting back the tears in them.

"I'm done pretending mother, I'm going to London."

Athaliah's jaw hardened.

"You wouldn't dare."

"But I would, because you...you raised me. And you raised me to be just like you."

With that, Hera gathered whatever was left of her strength, turned on her heels and stepped away from her mother.

Athaliah, who was still awestruck, watched in silence, as Hera walked out of her door and closed it behind her. She staggered backwards and fell into her bed. What just happened?