

Chapter 19 Tete A Tete

Edward, after watching the dramatic display of his sons and nephew at the golf course the previous evening, decided it was best to have a word with Lancelot the next morning.

There was a lot that father and son had to discuss. Since his return, Edward had tried to find a means for both of them to discuss. But all his efforts had proven futile. So, when he found his son on the terrace of the palace, Edward knew this was an opportunity he could not miss.

He took slow strides towards where his son stood. Arms spread across the brick railings.

"Son," he called out. Lancelot turned to him.

"Father. Aren't you supposed to be visiting the orphanage with mother today?" Lancelot asked, a slightly suspicious gaze aimed at his father.

"I should be. But I have more pressing issues to handle."

Lancelot looked over his sixty-five year old father one last time. Alpha of the London Pride pack and his father, Edward stood as tall as his son, even taller. Lancelot knew he had inherited his father's jawline, height, and charisma. But his aura of authority, his hair and his eyes were strictly his mother's.

The two were a perfect combination. While his mother was hard headed, authoritative and spontaneous, his father was calm, meek and intelligent. It could never have been better.

"Which would be?" he asked.

Edward moved to his son's side.

"You, Lancelot."

Lancelot fought back the urge to roll his eyes.

"Father..."

"Listen Lancelot, I know and I understand how hard all of this must be for you. It is one thing to be born into power, it is another thing for it to be bestowed on you, especially when you don't really want it..." "Father..."

"No Lance. I want you to know that I feel what you feel. I see how hard you're trying to be perfect. How hard you're trying to meet up to everyone's expectations, including your mother's and mine's. We have been extremely tough with you, but it's only because we know what it means to be at the top of affairs. To have so many enemies waiting on you to misstep. Up here where I stand above the helm of affairs, is a wild jungle. A wild one. Only the toughest can survive and I know you're tough." He paused to take a good look at his son.

"I just need you to believe it. James and Albert? They are only a fickle of the adversity you would face when you're finally crowned Alpha King. There would be so many then who would want to kill you, so many who would hate you just for being yourself. I have no doubt that you would make me proud Lancelot, starting with the hunt."

Lancelot's eyes rested on his father's once more.

The hunt.

The ritual which was to take place seven days before his coronation, was the first significant ritual to his beginning of life as the Alpha King. He had a responsibility to bring back the best catch. Even if he didn't, it would not affect his coronation, but it was an unspoken rule that he had to adhere to.

Plus, he had a bet to win.

Lancelot nodded and looked away from his father.

"James needs to be put under control, nonetheless," he finally spoke up after his father's long speech.

Edward chuckled and placed a hand on his son's shoulder.

"You're Alpha King, you should know how to do that."

Before Lancelot could manage an equally humorous and witty retort, Edward turned his back to his son and exited the terrace.

Lancelot scoffed and turned his face back to the garden below him. He was going to enjoy the view and think less about everything.

It was nothing less than thirty minutes when Lancelot heard someone call his name, snapping him out of his range of thoughts. Since his father left, he found it hard to think about anything other than his life after coronation. Right before his thoughts wandered back to America and all that had come with it, including the woman.

Lancelot wanted to desperately find a way to forget about her. Her face was all Ziko thought of day and night. Her name continued to resound in his head every passing hour. Ziko yearned for his mate, needed his mate. Mate.

His mate.

The word suddenly became scary. His mate was supposed to be by his side and be crowned his Luna queen on the day of his coronation. Still, he had found it impossible to tell his family about her.

How would he say it? That as Alpha King, he was going to pick a human, not just any human, but an American one, as his Luna Queen.

Madeline would have his head, and James would laugh him to scorn. There would be nothing that would save him from the wrath of the Dankworth family. Absolutely nothing. "Sir Lancelot."

When Lancelot finally acknowledged the voice, he turned around to see Peter standing behind him. A laptop opened up in his arms.

Lancelot looked over the man, eyes saddled with a silent query. Peter knew better than to let Lancelot ask what it was. He made it his point of duty to speak up first.

"There was a call from the Manhattan branch earlier this morning. The managing director said they have began the process of recruitments."

Lancelot's eyes narrowed at Peter. He couldn't believe the man thought it best to interrupt him for such a trivial issue, when it could have been said anytime. Including when he was doing his usual evening training and work out. "Of course they should. I don't pay them thousands of dollars for nothing."

Peter sighed. He knew it was going to be hard convincing his boss to go over the name of possible recruits. Still, he needed him boss to look at it. It was very important that he did so.

"So, they emailed you a solid bio-data of all the intending recruits and the curriculum vitae. You should go through each and narrow down the list of applicants, so they can know who to invite for the physical interview," Peter spoke up, looking up from the name he was staring at in the laptop, to his boss.

"And you can't do it because?"

"Sir. It is your company, your establishment, you know what you want. You wouldn't want me picking just anybody with a CV I find worthy. You're a highly intelligent man and you know what is required of all your workers, only you can do this sir." Please God. Just let him check it. Peter prayed silently.

Lancelot shot a glare at Peter, since when had he come lazy?

"Peter Robertson. You're going to go over the documents," Lancelot said, the definite tone in his voice caused Peter to shrink under his gaze.

What was he going to do now?

"Alright sir. But the document also needs your signature. There is a file attached to the email that needs your signing. I cannot do that on my own sir," Peter lied. He prayed that his lie would work, and also not cost him his job. Lancelot shrugged as he pulled away from the railings he had been leaning on.

"Fine, let's go to my room. I'll take a look at it and sign it there."

Peter did a celebratory dance in his head. Alas! His plan had worked, the goddess had answered his prayers. Now, he just hoped that when his boss found out he was lying, he would focus on the more pressing issue at hand and allow him keep his job as a reward.

They walked down from the terrace into the flight of stairs, then into the corridor of rooms and headed straight for Lancelot's.

When they got in, Peter closed the door behind him and stood at the door until Lancelot was properly seated on his study table. He waited for the go ahead.

"Bring it here," Lancelot ordered.

Peter took slow strides towards Lancelot and finally placed the laptop in front of him.

Lancelot's eyes grazed Peter's small frame once again. He couldn't help but notice the sketchy looks and stance Peter was taking. It was almost as though there was something he was hiding.

The thought caused Lancelot to frown. If Peter was indeed keeping a secret that concerned him away from him, he would feel his full wrath if he ever found out.

And Lancelot knew he would. Nothing was ever hidden from him for long, nothing. Whatever he sought to find, he found. Whatever he sought to have, he had. And nothing would ever change that fact.

"I would take my leave now sir," Peter spoke up when Lancelot's eyes finally rested on the laptop.

"No, stay," Lancelot spoke, without looking away from the screen.

"But sir, there are a lot of things I need to set up for your..."

He stopped talking when Lancelot's gaze commanded him to be quiet.

"Stay," was all he said again.

He was going to keep Peter close to him. Get under his skin until he blurted out whatever the fuck he was hiding.

But before that, he had official issues to attend to.

Lancelot continued to go through the names, sorted in alphabetical order.

When he found a person's profile interesting, he said the name out loud so that Peter typed it down in his mobile note.

He was impressed with a lot of their portfolios, but Lancelot only needed the...

That was when his eyes met her passport photograph etched in the copy of her ID.

Subconsciously, his fists rolled into balls. His heart began to pound against his chest. He blinked twice, to make sure that he wasn't hallucinating.

Had she gotten so deep into his head that he now saw her face in another person's photograph? Or was he slowly going mad?

The name. He thought.

The name would solve everything. He would see that it wasn't her and he would make sure he went on the run Doctor Flinn advised him too, before he went any crazier.

His eyes skimmed through the name on the CV beneath the ID card, and his lips spread out so he said it aloud.

"Roxanne Harvey."