

Chapter 33 This Had To Be One Big Joke

They all sat in silence. Peter and Edward sat on the bench at the other end of the room, each man watching Lancelot very carefully.

Many questions hung in the air, but none of them was ready to speak. At least not yet.

After thirty minutes, Doctor Stefan walked out of the room Roxanne was taken into. He took swift strides into the corridor. On hearing his footsteps, Lancelot's eyes rose up to meet the short man's sturdy frame. "Your Majesty." He bowed to Edward, then turned to Lancelot.

"Your Grace."

Lancelot stared at him, his face was void of any emotions. Even he didn't know what he was supposed to feel. Anger? Fear? Pain? Anxiety? He could not bring himself to feel any of it. What remained in him was emptiness, it was the only feeling Lancelot was used to.

"She's been stabilized now," Doctor Stefan spoke as he caught the gleam of relief in Lancelot's eyes, even though his facial expression remained cold and hard.

"She is asleep, but you can go in to see her," Stefan continued. He bowed once more to the Alpha and his son and turned on his heels, before walking away.

Lancelot rose from the bench and walked away, not giving either his father, or Peter a second glance. His left arm brushed the doctor's

shoulders as he walked. He looked straight ahead and took slow strides with a blank expression. The door of Roxanne's room was opened. Before he entered, he stood at the door and looked at her.

She lay on the hospital bed, her eyes shut in a peaceful sleep. Lancelot's jaw tightened. She was sleeping peacefully, and he was left here to sit by her side.

He walked into the room and fell into the chair by the side of the bed. His eyes returned to her again.

Her eyelids shut in rest, her lips were slightly parted, and he could hear the sound of her breathing as she slept. Before now, Lancelot had wondered exactly what emotion he felt, however, now that he was looking at her, he knew what it was. It was anger. Pure, undiluted anger. The type that you could not even frown on, the type that did not express itself on your face, but boiled and stirred up in the pit of your stomach.

And that anger was directed to her.

What was so important that she had to wander so far away from the palace at such a deadly hour? Exactly what had she been looking for?

He had tried so hard to keep her away from his family, at least until he was able to introduce her properly. Now, she had ruined everything. She had exposed herself in the most unconventional of ways.

Lancelot adjusted himself in the seat. As his thoughts continue to wander about, a calm wave of sleep seemed to wash over him. He battled with it for some minutes, struggling to keep his eyes open, until his mind and body gave in to the tide, and he drifted off to sleep.

Lancelot did not know which woke him up first. Whether it was the pain in his neck from his bad sleeping posture, or it was the feeling of a stare

burning through him. His eyelids parted slowly, he caught sight of Roxanne in bed sleeping peacefully, while he was in the chair with every joint in his body aching with fatigue.

If she was sleeping, that means the eyes he felt on him were not hers. In a swift move, his head tilted to the left. His blue eyes landed on his father's cold ones.

Edward stood beside his son, looking down at him with a frown on his face.

Lancelot knew that there was a lot he had to explain, so he sat up and brushed his eyes with the back of his palms, trying to wipe off the sleepy look in his eyes. When he was done, he turned back to his father. Lancelot was going to open his mouth to speak, but Edward was faster.

"My study, now."

Edward did not leave any room for further conversation. Once he spoke, he turned his back to Lancelot and walked out of the room.

Lancelot's eyes fell on Roxanne one more time before he rose up to leave.

In her room, Madeline continued to pace from one end to another. It was already 7:15 am, and Edward had not come to give her the good news yet.

She had barely been able to get any sleep last night, her heart continued to pound against her chest and would not stay still no matter how hard she tried. To calm her nerves, she had tried to get across to Peter. She knew the man would surely have updates about what was going on, but he did not answer or return any of her calls.

Madeline was not scared for Lancelot. In fact, she had a hundred and twenty percent confidence in her son. It was Albert and his greedy mother, Hermione, that she did not trust. She had often wondered why Edward kept them so close to the family, when they weren't even Dankworths.

And the bet that Lancelot had placed?

Madeline's left hand flew to her chest as she clutched the collar of her gown in anxiety.

The bet that they had placed would do nothing but fuel Albert's greed. There was no length he would not go to win it, now that it had to do with Lancelot's inheritance.

Finally, when her digital clock's 7:30 am alarm went off, Madeline threw on a jacket over her night dress and hurried out of her room. If the men were not going to come to her, then she would go to them.

As she rushed out of her room, James, her third son, was the room closest to hers. Madeline sighed in relief when she met the door slightly open. It meant he was in, James had a habit of never closing his door completely when he was in the room.

With her anxiety and nerves getting the better of her, she flung the door of James's room open, without bothering to knock.

Her son sat at the edge of his bed, his face to the floor. He did not look pleased at all. When he heard her close the door, his face jerked up with his brow raised in query as he stood. "Mother..."

"Do not speak too much James," she said, hurrying to where he stood.

Madeline's eyes examined her son's frame. She had not expected him to be this quiet on the morning after the hunt. She had not expected the house to be this quiet at all! Edward was supposed to be deafening her ears with songs of victory, but now she could not even find him.

"I haven't heard word from your brother or your father since last night. What's going on?"

She watched James's face in anticipation, but he said nothing to her. He only shrugged and turned away.

Her curious eyes continued to dance around him. What was going on?

"James?"

"I cannot give you the answers you wish to hear mother. I suppose Lancelot would be able to, he knows everything after all. Best believe mother, he has a lot to say about what's going on."

He was speaking in his normal envious tone again. Madeline thought of scolding him, this was not the time to be jealous of him, it was the time to stand and support him.

But she did not speak about that.

"Where is he? Lancelot?" he asked. James spoke without turning to her.

"In the infirmary with father. That was where Arthur and I left the..."

Madeline was out of James's room before he could complete his statement. She hurried through the corridor, down the flight of stairs, into the long hall and out of the palace, into the infirmary building. When she took the first step in, her husband's face was the first thing she saw. And he did not look very pleased.

In that instant, Madeline's heart fell. Something had gone wrong, and it was terrible because Edward looked utterly distressed.

Had something happened to Lancelot?! She shook her head violently.

No, that couldn't be the case. It just couldn't be.

She rushed to her husband and held his arms. Edward barely looked at her.

"Edward, what's going on?" Her anxious eyes continued to dance around his face, but he did not look at her. She shook his arm again, why wasn't he speaking to her?

"Is Lancelot okay? Did something happen to him? Tell me Edward! Is my son oka...?"

Her question stuck in the air when she looked over Edward's shoulder and found Lancelot standing there.

Just like his father, he was worn out. Large and dark circles around his red eyes, his blonde hair was rough, and he was walking towards her in a ... Madeline's eyes widened.

A bath coat?

She moved away from Edward and ran to her son. Lancelot's eyes fell on her, but there was no explanation in his eyes. They were blank and cold. "Lancelot, is everything okay son? Why isn't anybody speaking to me? What's going on? What happened?"

"Let's talk about this later mother, please." Lancelot took his mother's arm off his shoulder as he spoke. "But..."

He walked away before she had the chance to speak.

Madeline was visibly shaken.

James had ignored her, Lancelot and Edward had pushed her aside as well. There was now only one person she could trust to tell her what had happened. Her last son, Arthur.

Madeline walked briskly out of the infirmary, back into the palace, and headed straight for Arthur's room. He was just about to step out when she caught sight of him.

Their eyes met and he turned away immediately. That could only mean one thing; he knew something. Something he did not want to be the one to say.

Unfortunately, he would just have to tell her, because nobody else was willing to.

He turned his back to walk away when she called out to him.

"Arthur!"

He stopped in his tracks, but didn't look back at her. Madeline hurried over and stood in front of him. Arthur was making conscious efforts to avoid his mother's eyes, it caused Madeline to worry all the more. He already knew why she was here, he didn't need to pretend and ask her.

"Mother please, I really do not want to be in the position you are putting me now," he spoke, softly and calmly as well.

Madeline's eyes softened as she cupped her son's cheek with her palms.

"My boy, my sweet boy,"

Arthur's gaze fell on his mother's worried face. He did not like to see her so anxious and confused.

"Please, tell mummy what is happening. Please."

Arthur let out a faint disgruntled sigh and shook his head. He knew that he was going to regret what he was about to do, but right now, he didn't have a choice. Madeline was going to find out soon anyway, there was no need to delay the inevitable.

"Come with me," Arthur finally said. Madeline's eyes brightened with hope.

She followed her son behind as he led him to her room. Arthur closed the door behind them.

"Speak to me son, what is going on?"

As Arthur stood in front of his mother, he allowed his gaze rest on her as he mustered the courage to speak. When he finally found it, he spoke.

"During the hunt, a human female was found by Albert, in the forest."

Subconsciously, Madeline's eyes widened in shock. Did he just say a human female? That was not even possible!

Everyone within the walls of this palace, even down to the lowest ranking servants were werewolves. There was absolutely no way that human female could have been here! That was an abomination to her.

"Albert tried to attack her. But Lancelot..." Arthur's eyes fell to the ground.

"Lancelot attacked him and protected her instead. The hunt came to an end immediately. He opted out, ran out of the forest with the woman in his arms and wouldn't give anyone else as much as a second glance. That was how the hunt ended, mother."

Madeline staggered back.

This had to be one big joke.