

## Chapter 37 There's Fire On The Mountain

Lancelot walked briskly behind his mother. Madeline wasn't in her right frame of mind, and he knew it.

With her current mood, Lancelot knew that she would rain hell and high water on Roxanne. He knew that she was going to make a scene. He needed to make sure she spoke to him before meeting Roxanne. Whatever venom Madeline had in her mouth to spit, he had to make sure she spat it to him first.

Madeline would surely get to question Roxanne. But he had to make sure that she was in a clear state of mind before doing so.

However, Madeline got to the room before him. Lancelot managed to appear behind her before any damage was done.

His mother was an extremely dangerous woman when she was furious. And right now, Madeline was more than furious, she was enraged, mad with anger and disappointment. Right now, Madeline could say and pronounce anything on Roxanne, and her word would stand.

Lancelot did not need that drama, not now.

"Mother," he called out to her as he stood by the door. His eyes rose up to meet Arthur's, then drifted to Peter. His jaw tightened and his eyes narrowed at his personal assistant. What were they doing here?

But that was a question for later. Right now, Lancelot had more urgent things to focus on.

He made sure he did not look at Roxanne. He was not ready for any form of communication, not even the smallest of eye contact, between them.

Lancelot's eyes returned to his mother's raged ones. She looked up at him with a scowl on her face.

"If there's anything you want to say, say it to me."

Madeline was annoyed by her son's audacity. How could he be so cold towards her even after what he had done? He was supposed to be remorseful, trying to soothe her so she could think of a way to pull him out of his mess.

Still, there he was. His two hands in his pocket, and a cold and nonchalant look in his eyes. He appeared as though he did not care what she thought, and his tone was more of a dismissal than a cry for approval.

However, Madeline was going to listen to him. He wanted her to say what she thought to him right? Very well then, she would talk to him, because she had a lot to say.

Lancelot watched his mother approach him. She tore her eyes away from him and walked ahead. Her shoulders brushed his arm roughly, his eyes followed her trail, before he turned and walked behind her.

Madeline remained quiet as she walked back to her chambers. Her blood boiled with rage, confusion and anger. However, amidst her anger, she still found a way to plot and strategize. She began to think of ways to defend Lancelot in the council of elders. She might not be given the opportunity to attend the meeting, due to the severity of the case, nevertheless, she could convey her thoughts to Edward, and he would speak at the council.

Madeline had always been the brain, while Edward's father was the fist. It was how they had been able to acquire much more power and riches than any of Edward's fathers. Their pack had flourished immensely since

Edward's reign as Alpha King, and that was all she had wanted for Lancelot.

All he had done was disappoint her. It hurt Madeline, a great deal.

With the way she walked, Lancelot knew that his mother's mind was far away from here. While her body was physically present, her mind was absent. He was certain that she was either thinking of one way to say the many things that were in her mind, or she was thinking of what to say to the elders at the council.

Finally, when they arrived at the Queen's chambers, Madeline opened her door and walked into the room. Lancelot followed behind her, closing the door gently after his mother.

Madeline began to pace horizontally around the room, from one end of the wall to another. This time, Lancelot stayed quiet and watched her walk about.

She was visibly furious. Her face had turned a darker shade of red, and her eyes had a demonic glare in them. She was like a snake who was running out of patience to strike its prey. Finally, she turned her gaze to him.

"You should be ashamed of what you have done," she said, her tone was oddly calm. Madeline was not screaming at the top of her voice, but Lancelot knew his mother enough to know that her calm tone did not mean she was less furious, or less dangerous. If anything, it meant that you had to be scared.

So, he stood with his head slightly bowed, saying nothing.

Madeline walked closer to him with slow steps. She stopped when she stood right in front of him.

"What do you have to say for yourself?" she asked again. But now, her voice was becoming louder.

Still, he stayed quiet. And his silence only infuriated Madeline all the more.

"I am speaking to you Lancelot! And you would answer me! What did your father and I not do?!"

'A lot of things.' Lancelot wanted to say. However, he did not. He simply remained quiet, his gaze fixed on his mother's toe nails. He had to distract himself with a more pleasant sight.

But Madeline was not done talking yet.

"We did our best to mold you into the man you needed to be. We spared no expense in making sure you attended the best schools! From elementary, even to college! You never lacked anything, all we asked from you was discipline, intelligence and the charisma of the Alpha King you are supposed to be!"

They were in close proximity. As she screamed, bits of saliva touched Lancelot's face.

His teeth clenched, his jaw tightened and his fists curved into balls behind his back.

'The Alpha King he was supposed to be'? Lancelot fought back the urge to scoff bitterly.

Had it ever occurred to any of this parents that he did not want to be Alpha King? Had it ever occurred to them that he did not want any of this? The responsibility bestowed upon him, the expectations, the numerous people he fought hard to beat at everything every single day?

No. Neither of them had ever stopped to ask him what he wanted for himself.

Hell! He was not even given a chance to decide. After the incident that happened all those years ago, he was pushed into preparation to become the next king. He was detached from his reality and planted into a different

space entirely. Fourteen years had already passed, and Lancelot was still not fully comfortable in his new space. How could he be? It was not destined to be his in the first place. He had only carried on because he was left with no choice. The honor of his family came first, before any other thing.

"You have nothing to say for yourself, don't you? Not even a good reason why you made the stupid mistake of allowing a weak and filthy human desecrate this palace walls and ruin a ritual so sacred?!" Madeline thundered before laughing bitterly.

Lancelot's eyes rose up to meet Madeline's. When she stopped laughing, she threw him a stony and freezing glare.

"Your father and I entrusted everything into your hands. But I can see we made a mistake..."

"Mother..." Lancelot tried to cut in, but Madeline did not give him a chance.

"Don't. You. Even. Dare," she counted her words as she spoke, waving a finger at Lancelot's face. Tears gathered in Madeline's eyes as she spoke. But it was not for pain or sadness, it was for anger.

"Your father and I taught you everything we know! I expected more from you Lancelot. I expected you to know that the future of this family rests on your shoulders! So we pushed you, after Bran died, we pushed you to become a greater man! You do not know the stakes on that throne, do you? Every one of our enemies want it, your cousin, Albert, has eyes on the throne! What do you think he and his greedy mother would make of this situation?!..." She paused, and moved closer to him.

"Wherever he is, Bran would be ashamed of your poor decisions, and frankly, so am I."

That was the finishing blow for Lancelot. The mention of his brother's name caused him to remember the one night he so desperately wanted to forget. The night of the incident that changed their family's life forever.

The night of the incident that plunged him into the dark cave he had not yet been able to escape. It was the night that his whole world came crashing down, and a new one which he did not belong to was built for him. Or rather, he was thrown into the world.

Why? Why did his mother decide to speak of Bran now? After all those years, Lancelot thought that he would be less hurt by the mention of his brother's name. But as he heard it now, he realized that with time, the pain seemed to increase, instead of reduce.

"If Bran were alive..."

"Mother!"

Lancelot could not hold it in any longer. His sanity had been hanging on to a thin thread since. But, with the mention of Bran's name for the second time, Madeline managed to cut the thin thread.

Madeline stared at her son's face. She was surprised by his outburst. It was the first time in a long while that he showed any form of emotion. Madeline did not know whether to be happy, or sad. But immediately she blinked, the sadness in Lancelot's eyes was gone.

It was almost as if she had only imagined it.

His eyes and face returned to their normal nonchalant and blank stare again.

Madeline was going to say something when she heard a knock on her door.

Lancelot turned his back towards his mother in order to open his door.

When he did, he found his grandmother, Lady Marion, standing at the foot of his mother's door.

Lancelot bowed.

"Grandmother."

Lady Marion looked over him, a frown on her face.

"I would advice you and your mother to go to the throne room now. There's fire on the mountain."