

## Chapter 52 There's Nothing To Tell

Walking down the corridor, Roxanne figured it would not hurt to wander about and take a look around. After all, she was free from now till whenever the emergency meeting with Lancelot's parents ended. But, where would she go that she had never been before?

Working with Lancelot had caused her to explore almost all the public rooms in the palace.

As she walked down the stairs, her eyes caught sight of a huge door. It blended with the wall so perfectly, you would not even know it was there if you didn't look closely. But, she had looked closely and found it.

Now, Roxanne was very curious to know what was hidden behind it, or inside it. She quickened her steps down the stairs, and finally stood in front of the door.

From all the boredom she had previously experienced, her heart rejoiced at the slight chance of an adventure.

Roxanne placed her hand on the door knob and turned it. To her utmost joy, it was opened!

She opened the door gently, and stepped in. When she did, she noticed the door was only a link to another corridor. This one was longer and darker than the one which led to Lancelot's room and study. Also, this one had portraits and pictures scattered all over the high walls.

Intrigued, she stood in front of the wall clad with portraits and began to admire every one that her eyes rested on.

Just then, she heard a door open and close. Roxanne jolted in panic, she had not expected anyone to be here with her. She felt silly at the thought, why did she expect no one to be here when it wasn't even her home?!

But, she stood still and watched as two figures emerged from the room. Her heartbeat regulated itself when she recognized the two men walking towards her. Prince Arthur and Prince James, she recognized the both of them from the dinner. Once again, Roxanne mentally smacked herself when she found herself wondering what they were doing here. This was their home, they could be wherever they wanted.

When they stood in front of her, Roxanne bowed with respect.

"Prince James, Prince Arthur," she greeted.

Above her, James looked over her scrawny frame. She was the silly human female Lancelot had brought into their home. He was clearly not in the mood to look at her now, so he scoffed and brushed past her.

Roxanne raised her head, but was careful not to shoot a glare at the rude prince. At least, not while his younger brother was standing in front of her. With his eyes fixed on her body.

She cleared her throat nervously and turned away from him. Roxanne's eyes continued to dance around different portraits, until she found a picture that captured her attention immediately.

Roxanne's eyes narrowed at the picture. In it, there was a family of six-four boys, a father and a mother-seated on a luxurious couch, dressed in beautiful clothes.

When Arthur turned to her, he noticed the keen interest in her eyes. Curious, he followed her gaze to the picture. When his eyes landed on it, something in his stomach curled. He straightened his stance and was going to walk away, but the human female called him back.

"This is a beautiful portrait, don't you think?" Roxanne called out, turning to him.

While avoiding her eyes, Arthur's eyes rested on the picture once more, before facing the wall the frame rested on.

"Of course, it is."

'The last picture we ever took as a family,' he wanted to add, but he figured it was better to keep shut.

His reply caused Roxanne's eyes to sparkle, and she focused her gaze on the picture again. In it, she could see Madeline seated beside her husband, clad in a beautiful white dress that caused the beauty of her flames of red hair to show. Beside her, the king sat with a broad smile on his handsome face. This picture had to be at least twelve years old, because all the boys in the picture were little.

"The King and Queen have always been so beautiful together," she commented. Arthur simply nodded in agreement. He still wasn't comfortable speaking to her after what he had done to her.

But, she was resilient.

With bright eyes, she turned to him again.

"Where's Prince Lancelot?"

Arthur took a short glance at her, before reaching out to picture and pointing at the little boy that sat beside Madeline. He was holding on to his mother's lap with a broad smile on his face.

Roxanne was taken aback, her orbs expanded in disbelief. The only resemblance between the little boy in the picture and Lancelot of now were the blue eyes and the dark blonde hair. Every other thing was extremely different. There was a brightness in young Lancelot's eyes and wide smile spread across his cheeks. Those were two things she had never seen in him since the day they met.

Where did all of it go? She thought. However, she had to shake her mind off it. Whatever it was, it was not her problem to worry about.

"Why isn't this picture in any other part of the palace, it's really beautiful," she commented, fighting hard to distract herself from her own thoughts.

Beside her, Arthur heaved a sigh. How was he supposed to start giving this stranger the history of their family?

He threw her a polite smile.

"I guess everyone wants to forget about it." He prayed she would not ask any more questions, and was grateful for her short silence.

With the way he answered her, Roxanne knew that Arthur did not want to discuss the reason the portrait was hidden here, so she carried on with admiring it.

She recognized Lancelot, James and Arthur. But, the face of the seemingly thirteen year old boy beside King Edward was very unfamiliar.

In her curiosity, she pointed at the boy's image.

"Is this Reuben?" she asked in glee. It could have been Reuben, after all, the boy had the same glitter in his eyes like Reuben did.

Roxanne was stunned when Arthur shook his head, with a sad smile on his face.

"No, it isn't," he replied. When he saw Roxanne's left brow raise in query, his smile seemed to disappear as he spoke.

"That's our older brother, Bran."

The news was a shock to Roxanne. She had always thought Lancelot was the first child. She was surprised to know that there was someone older than him, she could not help but ask Arthur about it. "Wow. That's a shocker. I did not know there was an older prince. I have never seen him

around. Is he on a vacation? Doesn't he live here? Would he return for Lancelot's..."

"He's dead."

Roxanne stopped talking. Her excitement dimmed and sympathy took over. She had really not expected such a reply.

"I'm so sorry." Her eyes softened and her tone told Arthur she really meant it.

Still, he shrugged.

"It's no bother, no one really likes to talk about it," he said out loud, watching her carefully.

Roxanne turned away from him. She was ashamed of herself for resurrecting sad memories for him.

Just then, Arthur spoke up again.

"I had thought you would know about it. Then again, Lancelot would not be one to talk about it."

His statement earned him Roxanne's full attention. She did a sharp 180 degree turn to him, with confusion in her eyes.

With that, Arthur turned on his heels and walked away.

Suddenly, an image flashed through Roxanne's mind.

"The Psychology of grief and healing," she muttered to herself, remembering the book she had found in Lancelot's room.

Roxanne stood there, trying to put bits and pieces of things together. However, something still felt out of place. There was a deep feeling in her gut. It told her that there was more to what Arthur had told her.

She could only wonder how much more.

Lancelot continued to stare at the door his parents had just walked out from. Still trying to make sense of all that they had said. Deep down, Lancelot knew that even if he spent the whole day in this study, trying to understand why they had not told him earlier, he still wouldn't get it.

With that, he decided not to bother. The only thing that was worth his time now was preparing for the ordeals ahead of him. He turned towards his table and was about to settle into his chair, before his door opened.

Lancelot groaned mentally, while thinking of what Madeline wanted to add to the list of shocking things she had said today.

But, his frown dissolved lightly when he saw Butler Lee instead. Lancelot wanted to smile, but he was not met by Lee's usual wink. Instead, the man had an urgent and worried look on his face. Lancelot's brows furrowed and his eyes narrowed at the man, why did he look so scared?

"Lee..."

"I am very sorry for barging in on you, Your Grace..."

"Okay, but..."

"You cannot do it," Lee barked out. The older man appeared to be shaking visibly. Lancelot walked forward, slowly closing the gap between them.

"Lee, what are you...?"

"I am sorry, I overheard your conversation with the King and Queen."

On hearing this, Lancelot frowned and stood still.

"You were eavesdropping," he noted, his voice had returned to its irritatingly calm and cold tone.

"With all due respect Your Grace, I am not sorry I did. In fact, I'm grateful to the goddess that she led me to your door! You cannot embark on this journey Your Highness." Even with the urgency and worry in Lee's voice, he bowed to Lancelot. Lancelot took one look at him, before speaking.

"Why do you say so?"

Lee's eyes rose up to meet his again. There was a deep sense of sadness and concern in them.

"You are not ready!"

Lancelot rolled his eyes and opened his mouth to protest, but Lee was faster.

"I know what this journey means, I know what it signifies Your Grace. I also know what it took from your father, I know how difficult it was for him. You have been undergoing therapy for the past fourteen years Your Grace! Believe when I say you are not ready for this, at least not mentally or even emotionally. And your PTSD... It is not as easy as your father, the king, made it seem. You have to listen to me."

Lancelot ignored the plea in Lee's eyes and turned away from him.

"You speak as though I have a choice," Lancelot spoke up, with a casual shrug of his shoulders.

But Lee wouldn't give up.

"You can speak to your parents, I'm sure they will..."

"Understand?" Lancelot cut in. He turned his back to Lee and scoffed, bitterly.

Lancelot was growing more bitter with every passing second. And it hurt him more that he could not bring himself to blame anyone for it.

"We are talking about the same people that put this mantle on my head in the first place. They have never given me a choice about anything. Not this position, not my life, nothing at all. We are talking about the same mother of mine that threatened Doctor Flinn when she found out that I was undergoing therapy..." Lancelot stopped to breathe. He was talking so quickly and with so much anger. Lancelot turned around and banged his fist on the table, his eyes were dark and they rested on Lee.

"Therapy is for the weak. That's what she said. I cannot be weak Lee. This is my duty to my family, and my destiny. I Don't. Have. A. Choice."

Standing beside him, Lee could see the hurt in his eyes; the hurt he had not been allowed to fully heal from. He sighed in defeat, and forced himself to smile. But, even his smile was sad. "Very well then, if you must go, you must see Doctor Flinn first."

The love in Lee's eyes caused Lancelot's heart and eyes to soften. He stood straight and nodded.

"Fine, I will."

With that, Lee turned away from him, but quickly turned to him again.

"About the human girl, you haven't told me anything," he said as his eyes dug into Lancelot's, looking for any expressions that he wasn't letting out.

Lancelot, on the other hand, wore a frown on his face.

"There is nothing to tell," he snapped, looking away from Lee to avoid his prying eyes. Lancelot began to walk to his executive chair.

Lee's eyes followed him closely.

"I really hope so." There was a strange depth to his voice. It made Lancelot look up at him.

Lee said nothing, he really hoped for Lancelot's sake that there was nothing to tell between him and the human female. If not, his dearest prince would be in deep trouble.

Without saying another word, Lee walked out of the study. Lancelot was left behind with his wandering thoughts.