

Darkness Mate Cheated Versus Fated by Victory Done

Chapter 231

Chapter 231

Darius

Casey and Hardy, Sheperd and Cruz had a separate list. The Brians had a different list. We were all to move at once.

I sent Brian Levi and Brian William to ensure everyone we wanted to arrest was in the arena. It was paramount that they were taken at once. We would have to deal with the rest later.

We all went to our respective booths, and my Itinerary was brought to me to sign.

I wondered why I had many guests on a day that no one knew I would be at the arena. The Brian that brought the list said it was a spillover, and I had to deny them admittance because some of the names were on my list of suspects.

“I will be playing today, so I will see them tomorrow,” I said, making it seem like a meeting would hold tomorrow. I knew there would be no meeting because we would be busy questioning the prisoners. I also knew the council would call an emergency meeting after the arrests to question my conduct. That is when I would take over as king.

We had it all planned out, and everything would have to go as planned.

“Alpha Christian is here to join us, I said he should join Casey’s team for the arrests,” Marcel told me as soon as the Brian with the itinerary had left, and I nodded.

It was wise to place alpha Christian with Casey since his wife **was** in our custody, and some of the people we arrested might know.

We tried to **keep** it under wraps, but we could not **deny** that they were

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resourceful.

We spent a few hours in our booth, and soon it was time for our game. Playing polo without our mates present was boring, but we had to keep up our appearance; there were a lot of Brians on the watch for snippers and suspicious movements.

The game went smoothly, and I noticed Cruz and Sheperd putting in some effort. Since we did not know how the arrest would go, we were not rough with the opponent. We wanted everyone to be in good shape when we moved in on our enemies and arrested them.

During the game, I noticed Casey's team was good, and it was our brutality that had caused them to fail the last time woefully. The crowd also hoped to witness what they had seen the last time. Too bad we had to disappoint them.

My team won the match, and we went to freshen up and return to our booths.

I presented some medals later and gave a short speech. So far, so good we did not do anything suspicious. Once we finished at the arena, it was time to move in on the people on the list. Abelardo remained to honour the medalists as planned.

I became nervous because we did not know what we would find.

They could be prepared or not. They could fight back or not. Anything could happen, and it wasn't given that we would succeed, but we knew we had to move in on them.

Casey's team split into two: Casey, Hardy, Jake and Christian, Cruz and Sheperd. The Brians had six groups altogether. Everyone had their lists. It was time to move in on the suspects.

We abandoned our cars and used vans instead. My team started with the Mikhailovs.

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We followed **the** Mikhailovs with our van, overtook them and blocked **their** car. Lenny exited the vehicle, not knowing we were the ones, and I stepped out **of** the van to make the arrest.

We arrested him and his brothers. They protested, but I did not care. My wedding was coming, and I didn't want trouble.

We drove to Gaston Wayat's house and arrested him and his mate. They protested, but I did not speak a word, and it was too sudden for them to put up a fight.

I maintained my silence and saved my questions for later.

While taking them to the van, I called Hardy on the phone, and he informed me that their arrests were going smoothly and none of the suspects had fought back.

Due to the number of people we were arresting, we would lock them up in the council prison. I had changed the guards to my men a few days ago so no one would be allowed to escape.

"What is going on here? Lord Hand, you cannot do this. You have no right." Gaston said while I bundled him and his mate into the back of the van. The moment he saw Lenny, he knew his game was up.

"Not talking now, are you?" Raphael said, smacking the back of his head and pushing him in. His mate was in tears.

Raphael sat with the prisoners at the back while I closed the back of the van and went to sit in the passenger seat in front, happy for the ease with which we were arresting the suspects.

"Sometimes, when you need something done, you do it yourself," Marcel said and started the van.

We were enjoying it, and Cremin **wanted** to be let out, but none of the **suspects** had shifted to warrant that type of brutality.

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We picked up **Gezel** and her mate and likewise Carla and her **mate**. Our van **was** full, **so** we drove to the council Prison.

“What is going on here, Marcel?” Gezel said, and Marcel did not respond. He was too disappointed to speak.

“Thoe!” Carla asked, and he growled at her.

“You had it all, Carla, why do this to our family’s name?” Theo asked her giving her a hint that their game was up, and she became silent

immediately. Her husband kept asking what was happening. He clearly didn’t know what his wife had gotten them into.

“Ask your mate,” Raphael said, and there was silence.

We arrived at the prison and moved quickly.

We did not want time to lapse or for the rest of the suspects to find out about our activities and escape.

One of my trusted Brians, Tom, was in charge of the prison guards, and Donald was helping him. I did not want him there, but Jake said we could trust his son.

I had not spoken to him, but I instructed Brian Tom to keep an eye on the guy.

We put the people we arrested in different cells in the council prison and moved to arrest the remaining people on our list.

When we got to Neil Peakman’s house, he was loading his suitcase in the trunk of his car.

I exited the van and clapped for him.

“Going somewhere, Councilman?” I asked him, and there was fear in his eyes. Someone must have informed him that we were making arrests. Seeing that we were arresting everyone, I wondered who had the time to do that.

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“I am innocent,” **he** said, and the man looked **pathetic**.

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“**Save** it for your questioning.” I said, and Marcel cuffed him with silver. We loaded him into the truck and arrested two more people before heading to Ramsey’s hotel.

When we got to the hotel, we found a commotion in the front, and I saw Casey’s van parked there. Ramsey wasn’t on their list, so why did they come there?

“What the hell, Casey!” I said aloud.

“We had to get here as fast as we could. My Brian said he was running away. Someone had tipped them off,” he said, defending his actions, and I wondered who that person might have been.

“Have you gotten everyone on your list?” I asked, and he shook his head,

“Gabriel escaped. I have declared him wanted,” He said, and I nodded.

“Where is Ramsey?” I asked, and he pointed at the reception of the hotel.

“In there acting crazy,” Casey said, and I noticed that Hardy and Jake weren’t with him.

I moved close to Casey to ask him about Hardy and Jake.

“They went to get in through the emergency at the back. My Brian would open the exit from the inside for them to get in. Ramsey is focused on us, so he won’t see them coming,” he whispered, and just then, Hardy and Jake came out dragging Ramsey in chains.

Ramsey **was** screaming he wouldn’t **say** anything until he was put before the council. A little torture would change his resolve.

He had also received a beating, and I did not need to guess who did it. Hardy looked very pissed.

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“**We** got the bastard!” Jake said, enraged, and I knew his **daughter’s** involvement was part of it.

I **was** so elated so much that I had a big grin. I felt a weight lifted, knowing we had caught a break.

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Maybe not **a** solution but a break, a massive break! I could not wait to get on with the rest of the plan.

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Zora

I was worried about the arrests, primarily because of the rumours about the gun assassination. I did not know if it were the truth or a piece of false information to mislead us. Anything was possible because the people were intelligent, and they were multiple steps ahead of us.

After Darius and the other men left, I knew we had to set some things in motion and reduce the workload.

Iris’s questioning would have to wait. I was curious to find out what was in the flash drive.

Darius had asked a valid question, and I was tempted to ask Lori, but I changed my mind. No one trusted her intentions, and they all had valid reasons.

I needed to consult with my friends to figure out what to do.

Carrying Darius's laptop, I took the drive from where Darius kept it in the closet and headed to Kara's wing so we could check the content together

We decided to have breakfast there because time was of the essence. Since the information wasn't encrypted, there was no need for a hacker. We would just do well enough.

"Where are you?" I heard Nellie's voice in my head, and I honestly did not want to see her until I was done, but I knew she would just come looking for me.

"On my way to Kara's room," I replied.

"Nicole wanted us to have breakfast together. I do not want to be there

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alone," She confessed, and I giggled.

"You will have to. I have been given a **task** which I have to complete before Darius returns," I confessed, and she **was** silent a bit before responding.

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"Very well then, I will see you later," She said, giving up, and I was glad she was letting the matter rest.

I arrived at Kara's door and knocked. She answered, and I let myself in

Eloise was there eating a sandwich, and we all greeted ourselves.

"Doing some tech stuff?" Eloise said, pointing at the laptop, and I giggled.

"No, Eloise. We are going through the flash drive Lori gave us," I said, and Kara rolled her eyes.

"You mean the snake because that is what she is," Kara said, not wanting to give Lori the benefit of the doubt.

Looking at it, nobody gave the woman the benefit of the doubt. We all believed she was up to no good.

"You have to agree with Kara, Zora," Eloise said.

“We were there, remember. Casey took her everywhere, introduced her as his luna to people. They abandoned you at home most of the time and left you to attend serious meetings only. If Casey could admit more than one Luna or replace you, he would have. We all knew how she was eager to attend those meetings, and he had to say no because you were the strategist,” she said and stood up.

“The three of us have come a long way, Zora, and the goddess has smiled on us again, but we should not forget our enemies and the pain of our past. It **is** what has brought us this far.” Eloise said and looked at me.

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“Lori should have gracefully walked **away** from **that** party and returned to **Cain** Island when she realised her fate was already happily married. She should have exposed her father’s lies when he tried to force her into your home. And if **she** did not dare to **do** so, she should have rejected Casey and **stayed** out of the **way** of your marriage when they brought her to your home; she is an Alpha breed, Zora. Unlike you, she could let go without his consent. Casey is rich; he would have set her up wherever she wanted. She ruined a perfect marriage and claimed she did it because her father said so. Please,” Eloise said, rolling her eyes.

“She continued her deception,” Kara continued, “just like the women that took those douchebags from us. Lori continued her deception after you had left. She had Casey all to herself, and she knew what her father was doing, yet she did not tell Casey. It is almost as **if** she wants her father to succeed. Claiming she fed him lies? Was that really necessary? She did not need to lie to anyone; All she had to do was tell Casey the truth, Zora. and she didn’t. For whatever fucked up reason she may have, she didn’t tell him the truth, and that is the most painful part of all this. She held on to the truth and continued to allow Ramsey to succeed. People died in that attack. What if our men weren’t so nice? Do you know how we would have ended up? They were going to kill Casey, you say. Why didn’t the bitch give herself up to be taken as a tribute? Why did you have to do, it? I bet she hoped you would shift, fight an

d get killed in the process. She is only crying now because she got caught,” Kara said, and I knew both she and Eloise were right.

I sighed and sat on the chair, a bit weak in the knees because they had opened fresh wounds. No matter how much I say I forgive Lori and Casey, my heart couldn't let the pain go. Casey and I were best friends, and he betrayed me for a total stranger. He was my first in almost everything, relationship and friendship—wise, and he betrayed me. Pain like that does not go away. I fought my tears because this wasn't the time to break down.

“I agree **with** both of you. Darius and I discussed **it**, and we felt it **was** weird that she **did** not give **Casey** the drive after he confronted her. What

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was she **playing** at?” I **asked**, and **Kara** laughed.

“Last resort, if all **fails**, she will pretend to be on the winning **side**,” Eloise said, and we laughed. As funny as the answer **was**, it **was** true.

“You know the painful part of all this is that Theo told me we can't hold the bitch here for long if we can't link her directly to anything. Casey would have to send her back to the cast, and then they would solve their matter there.” Eloise said, and I nodded, knowing that bit too.

“The arrests might yield something no matter how little, we might get something that we can pin on the bitch and deal with her, pregnant or not I do not care. She deserves to suffer. Maybe sentence her to prison and take the babies from her when she gives birth. I am just thinking. But she has been too wicked to you, Zora, for her to go scot-free,” Kara said, and I appreciated their support.

“I would like that too, but unless someone says something to implicate her, we will have to let her go soon,” I said, and we were all silent.

I turned on the laptop, and Eloise frowned at me.

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Zora

“Is that Darius’s?” she asked, and I nodded.

“I do not think connecting Lori’s drive to that laptop is wise. What if there is spyware in it,” she said, and it did not cross my mind.

“You need a blank laptop, one that is not connected to the internet and that has nothing on it to monitor or copy. I am still baffled that she gave you the drive instead of Casey. What if it is all part of the plan? After all, that was what Cindy was doing for them here before the two—
timing, two-faced bitch got caught. I am just saying,” she said, finishing her sandwich, and I felt foolish.

How could I have been so careless?

I was very grateful to Eloise for her wisdom. I guess that questioning and critical thinking had slowed me down mentally.

I linked Brian Wilson to get me a laptop that wasn’t used for anything serious. I was glad Darius left Wilson for me. The Brian has been an asset, and even though we started off on the wrong foot because of the slap, he has been respectful and efficient. I wouldn’t change him for anything

“Yes, Luna. I will bring one to you now.” He said, and I relaxed.

Food was brought, and we ate while we waited for Brian Wilson to get the laptop I requested.

“Our wedding is fast approaching, and we have not decided what to wear,” Kara said, sounding worried.

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“I hate this uprising group. They are a pain. We should be receiving beauty treatments and having the wedding planned, but as things **are** looking, it would be rushed, thanks to those bastards,” Eloise said, and I felt the same way.

Although Darius and I did not need the blue moon ceremony to claim each other and be connected, we still wanted to experience it and be a part of it. It was a fantastic feeling. Our wolves and us would have ceremonies, and people would witness our declaration of love and union as we claim each other under the particular moon. But these bastards were occupying our planning time. I didn’t want it rushed, so I thought of an idea.

“How about I have Neva, Nellie, and Nicole plan it? Neva will be getting married on that day, Nicole is looking for something to do, and Nellie has been bored lately. We can ask them to do it, and we would just worry about our dresses.” I said, and Eloise smiled.

“That is very smart. I hope your sister-in-law won’t mind and Nellie would willingly oblige because we both know how the woman is. She comes off as unstable sometimes,” Eloise said, and I knew Nellie gave that vibe. but I knew she wasn’t unstable. Yet, I could not defend it because I knew Nellie’s secrets, and Darius and I vowed not to tell anyone of the demons that haunted the woman. As things were, it was clear that it would soon be out in the open, but I was hopeful we would nail the bastards before all that happened.

“I understand, but I am sure she would love to do it,” I said, and Eloise nodded.

Wilson soon brought the laptop, and I connected the drive to it.

On it was a folder labelled Files. Inside that folder were other folders marked Desktop, downloads, and documents.

We went through them, and they all had just one file. Each had a document file of **lists of** names. The one in the downloads **was** from an

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email, while **the** others were screenshots of a folder. The information **wasn't** coherent initially, but it soon made sense. By **the** time we finished going through the drive, we had found over eighty names of the members of the uprising.

We didn't even have that number of names. The people we arrested were about thirty–forty altogether, eighty names of which we already knew twenty–seven on the list was a huge break.

Lori really had in for her father. The sad part was their aliases weren't there, so we did not know who the king was and if he was among them. I would have to have Casey question her about the king before he decides what he would do to her. So far. Lori has cooperated and has no direct link to anything. We had nothing to hold her with, we would be violating her rights by holding her in the North. Unless Casey decides to take her to the east and deal with his problems there, there was no reason to hold

her.

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Casey

The arrest went smoothly. It would have been easy if it weren't for the informant that might have tipped them off. I had an idea of how it might have happened, but we needed to question the suspects to conclude.

Ramsey was despicable. He kept yelling he would not speak until he was brought before the council. If only the arsehole knew what we had in mind for him.

With the present hierarchy, he was right. The lord would have to take him to the council to question him before passing judgement, but Darius would be king soon and then have the power to do as he wills with the prisoners.

It was a lot of power to bestow on one person, but I trusted Zora's judgement of character and decided I would support the cause.

We parked at the estate and walked in.

Hardy was excited; I am sure he had not had so much excitement in a while. For someone that likes to fight a lot, this was thrilling for him.

As for me, I felt nothing.

My life would still be fucked up after this. One thing was sure, no matter what Zora said, I would let Lori go. If the children were mine, I would find a way to be in their lives.

Thinking of all the damage she caused broke my heart completely. Although we couldn't link her to anything, and the song the suspects were singing made her seem innocent, I still did not want her. There was **just** something off about her behaviour that did not sit well with me.

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The only reason I wasn't going to push **was** because of her condition. If **we** could not prove that she **was** actively and deliberately working with these people, then she was a free woman. One thing I was certain about is she would never **be** the head Luna of the East or my mate. I was willing to move on from Zora, but I wasn't willing to move on with Lori.

We arrived in the early hours of the morning, tired from the arrest and headed to our room. I did not know what would happen the next day, but I knew it would be fast-paced henceforth.

We also had to wait for the council to summon Darius for an impromptu meeting so we could move and install him as king.

Christain was with us, so we were complete.

Everyone that had a say in making Darius king was with us: the only pushback we might have was from Vino Lawrence, who might see it as a slight, but as far as I was concerned, the guy should be happy that he remains on the council. His family aren't truly northern. They originated from the west, and his aunt had a big hand in this mutiny.

He should be happy if we leave him on the council. It was a shame that Gezel and Carla were involved. If not, I would have pleaded with Darius- not to abolish the law that holds every family member accountable for the crimes of a member. It would have been nice to have the bastard resign because of Jenny and Neil's conduct. I knew it would also affect the Babanins, but the Lawrences, through Jenny, had stylishly taken over that seat so far. It was all a colossal mess.

I went straight to my room, and sleep came quickly.

I woke up late. It was expected since we arrived at the estate in the morning, and we were tired when we arrived.

I looked out the window and saw the sun was up in the sky, which meant it **was** afternoon. I freshened up in a hurry and left the room.

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Entering Hand's lounge, I noticed everyone **was** there. Darius, Marcel, Raphael, Hardy, **Christian**, Jake, Abelardo, Cruz and Sheperdwell. I **was the last** to join them, and Darius smiled at me.

"Must have slept well," he said, and I nodded.

"Like a baby," I lied, and Sage grumbled in my head.

"We found out that Mikhailovs were the ones that warned the others of the arrest," Hardy said, just as I had suspected, and I was relieved that there was no traitor in our midst. It would have been another headache to

deal with.

I sat and picked up a sandwich from the table. There was a list in Darius's hands, and I wondered what it was.

"What's that?" I asked him, and he handed it to me.

"Eighty—
three names of their members that we got from your mate's drive," He said, and I knew he meant that mate thing as a jab since everyone knew how it offended me. I had to let it go because I deserved it. I had thrown away a gem for that shit, and Darius now had my gem. He wasn't letting her go.

"I do not trust her information," I said, glancing through the document. None of them seemed surprised, and I was glad we were on the same

page.

"Well, we still can't link her to the events, and everyone is singing the same song where she is concerned. They claimed she fed her father lies, and he put a target on her," Darius said, and I shook my head.

"You all do not know Lori like I do. She had all the opportunity to come clean to me but held it," I said, and Hardy shook his head.

"You were not easy to be with, Casey. I saw you in the east. You did not seem approachable. She might have been scared of your reaction and

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chose to handle it the best **way** she could," he said, making a valid point, but something did not **sit** well with me about her still. I **felt** it **was** odd.

"**I am** just uncomfortable letting her off the hook," I said, and Raphael sighed.

"Well, the north has to let her go. We can't hold her here. She has

fulfilled all obligations. She has confessed and cooperated. According to our laws, she is free. It would have been a different case if we could link her to these people as actively among them. We have to let her go today, Casey,” he said, and I looked at him in shock, then looked at Darius, who

nodded.

“We do not want anything to work against installing me as king. Holding a pregnant Luna prisoner after she has confessed and cooperated might be seen as a tyranny, and that could make the council try to push back longer than we can afford. Of course, they won’t win, but it would unnecessarily prolong the situation. We need to strike once and hit hard. So I will advise you to figure out what you want to do with your mate today so we can move on to more pressing matters, like figuring out who this king is. Sixty per cent of the people on this list

are from your territory, Casey You still have a lot of work to do to keep your place clean.” Darius said. and I was a bit angry. I did not want Lori to go scot-free for all she did to

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Zora

“I know you have scores to settle with your mate, but it is between you two now. I cannot be involved.” Darius added gently, knowing exactly how I was feeling, and I decided to do the right thing.

“I will deal with it now, but please, I want to be a part of the questioning,” I told them. They laughed.

“We won’t question anyone until Darius is king. They all demand to be brought before the council before they speak, so we can’t question them. There is a possibility they would go free if we allow it.

It will be a shocker when Darius is made king, and they have to answer to him,” Raphael said.

Stalling their questioning with the council is the fastest way to make Darius king, and we all knew it. The council will send Darius a summon, which he is meant to

ignore. Then the four leaders would be asked to come to the council and vote that Darius steps down for blatantly refusing to see the council and violating rights.

During the voting session, we would push forth our agenda and demand he be made king because the current situation is not helping us. For whatever reason we choose to come up with, however stupid it may be, we would just unanimously agree that we want a king and not a lord

anymore.

After a long debate between the council members and us, the top families would be asked to choose sides. We knew what the top families would decide, championing our proposal.

After the top families side **with** us, the council would have to back down.

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This process **might** take a day or two, pending when the council chooses to act between summoning Darius and **us**.

I knew dealing with Lori’s issue was essential so we could **focus** on the problem at hand. She was more of a distraction and liability.

I excused myself to go deal with my problem.

I moved through the hallway, and when I got to the room that Lori was being held in, a

Brian came to open the door for me. I walked in, and she was sitting in the chair reading a book. She looked at me, and there was fear in her eyes.

“Casey,” she said, and Sage growled at her.

“It is alpha to you!” I said, and she darted her gaze.

“I guess you have not forgiven me yet.” She said, putting down the book and standing up.

“I can never forgive what you did to me,” I said, and she shook her head.

“I did not do anything to you. We are both guilty. You could have rejected me but refused to do it, so do not put this on me. Do you think I wanted this life? Do you think I wanted to play second fiddle to Zora? I didn’t. Casey, but you put me in that situation. You put my wolf and me in that situation, so don’t blame me for this. Zora has the right to be angry but not you. I did everything I could to fit in her shoes. I loved you the best way I could, but I was never enough,” She said, tears streaming down her face, but I was numb to them.

“You could have come clean about what your father was doing, what he was making you do,” I said to her, and she shook her head.

“Would you have listened? You rarely spend time with me, and when you are around, you are buried in work. I was alone, so I had to figure it out alone.” she said, and I nodded.

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“I do not trust **you**, Lori, and I do not want to waste any more **of** my precious time with you. Darius **says** he can’t hold you, but I still believe you have a hand in all this. Because if you can sleep with me, and hide this magnitude of infor

mation from me, then you can as well kill me in my sleep the moment I stop being useful,” I said. She looked hurt, but I did not feel a thing.

“You can say all you like but do not belittle my love, Casey. I love you, and you know it, so don’t say things like that,” she said, crying, and I exhaled.

“I will let you go, but you can’t be my Luna. I do not even want you in the east. You can go home and pack your things. When you settle, let me know where you are. I will find a way to be in my children’s lives after they have been tested. But our relationship is over Lori,” I said, and she looked at me angrily.

“Very well, I do not need you to take care of my children,” she said, and I did not know if she wanted me to plead with her or not. I did not care.

“Suit yourself. However you want, it is fine by me,” I said, and she nodded.

“I will let them know the kind of man their father is,” she said as a threat. and I nodded.

“While you are it, tell them how you got into my life and ruined it. Tell them how you helped your father almost destroy me. There might be no evidence linking you directly to this shit, but I don’t trust you. I promise you that if I find out you had a hand in all this, I

will hunt you down and destroy you,” I said; she stepped back.

“I, Casey Grady, reject you, Lori Kuhn as **my** mate. May your days be full of the anguish and pain you brought me,” I said, finally speaking the words I should have said on the balcony that day, a little too late.

She stepped back, anticipating pain, but it never came. I looked at her and

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frowned.

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“Accept!” I yelled at the stubborn woman, and her tears began to fall freely **as** she shook her head, refusing to accept the rejection: hoping I would take it back, but my mind was made up. I was done.

“Accept!” I yelled.

I needed her to accept because she was an Alpha breed. Getting impatient, I advanced towards her, and she accepted before I could reach her, but the pain did not come.

I felt a disconnection and emptiness but no pain.

With Zora, there was pain. Did it have something to do with the blue moon?

Finding a fated was hard, let alone rejecting them, but Darius had felt pain when he rejected Shanon even though he masked it. I knew it, which was why Zora took him out of the ball, but I felt nothing with Lori.

“May I see Annika before I leave?” She asked, wiping away her tears.

“My father misled her, and I felt I should have saved her. I would like to see her before I leave,” She said in tears, and I nodded.

“I will tell Zora to permit you,” I said and turned my back. I was a free man, and even though I felt empty, I knew I would start on a clean slate.

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Chapter **236**

Zora

I **was** glad when Darius returned home. I felt him snuggle into bed with me in the early hours of the morning, and the fact that he was home with me made me thankful. It was hard to express my fear.

I woke up early and snuck out of bed. Darius was still asleep, so I decided to let him rest.

I freshened up in the bathroom and headed out to speak to Nellie, Neva and Nicole about the wedding plans.

The truth was we couldn't continue to put it off, we needed all hands on deck, and those were the ones available.

Due to my last experience, I did not want to trust the planner without having people there to watch her if she wasn't getting it right.

I knocked on Nellie's door, and it took a while for her to let me in.

I stepped in and could pick up Jake's scent in the room but kept it to myself. So much for being just friends with the Alpha.

Nellie seemed to be getting her groove back. I maintained a stoic face and went to sit on the couch.

"Good morning, Luna," I said, and Nellie smiled at me.

"Out with it, Zora; I know you smell him," she said, and I laughed, then made a lip-sealing gesture, and she smiled at me.

"What can I help you with?" She said, knowing I must have needed something to show up in her room the **way** I did.

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288 Vouchers

"**I need** you to help plan our wedding; of course, Neva and Nicole **will** help, but since we are too occupied to do anything, I was hoping you could do it for us," I said, and she beamed at me.

“I get to plan my sons’ wedding; why not?” she said, and I was thrilled. I got off the couch and hugged her. Nellie was slightly off, so it hit me that Jake might still be in that room. I decided to take my leave.

“Do you mind telling Neva and Nicole on our behalf? Neva should be happy, it’s her wedding, too,” I said, and she nodded, wanting me to leave the room badly.

I got to the door and touched the knob.

“Tell Alpha Jake that he should make sure he rounds up and make himself available in Darius’s lounge before the lord wakes up,” I said, and Nellie sighed

“Oh, Zora,” she said, and I giggled and opened the door. I stepped out of Nellie’s room, still giggling. Done with it, I returned to my bedroom to

rest.

I went to lie down, and soon I fell asleep too.

I woke up later, and it was almost noon. Darius was awake, and he was getting dressed.

“You are finally up,” I said, and he giggled.

“You are the one that was sleeping, Green-eyes,” he said, and I shook my head.

“I woke up, freshened up and returned to bed,” I said, and he looked at me and **smiled**.

I got **off** the bed and handed him a paper with the list of names on Lori’s flash drive. I handed it to Darius, and he glanced through the content.

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288 Vouchers

“Those **are the** list of names we got from the **flash** drive. Maybe we can **use** it to question the prisoners,” I said, and he sighed.

“For now, I won’t be able to question them. They have requested to be brought before the council. A request I have deliberately denied according to our plan,” He said, and I was surprised.

“Of what use are they if we can’t question them and get to the bottom of this?” I asked, and he nodded.

“Very useful. Their arrest would force the council to reach out to me. I would deny their request, and they would reach out to the regional Leaders to vote me out of office because this is a tyrant behaviour I shouldn’t partake in. On the contrary, the regional leaders, who are now my allies, would raise a bill for reasons known to them that I should be installed as king. There will be a back and forth, and the elite families will be asked to resolve the problem. Once I become king, we can question them as we see fit,” He explained, and I understood that was part of the plan already, but we needed to be ahead no matter what. Some of these people would want to talk, but I did not want to push it, so I held my tongue.

“Very well then, what would we do while we wait for the council to reach out to you?” I asked him, and he smiled at me.

“It has been a long time since we spent quality time together. Today I want to spend time with you. Go hunting in wolf form, have a picnic, and make love under the stars,” he said, and I beamed at him.

The idea sounded so irresistible that a moan escaped my lips. It was most welcomed.

“I see you approve,” he said, smiling at me, and I nodded.

“First, I would go to the lounge to catch up with everyone, then we will start our **day**,” he told me and pulled me close.

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Chapter 236

He searched **my eyes** for **something** and then **smiled**.

“Soon, we **will** be free of these people and live in peace,” **He** said, touching my tiny bump and kissing my neck.

288 Vouchers

I could not wait for him to sink his teeth and complete the bond. We did not need the blue moon, but it was worth the wait.

Darius left the room to head to his lounge while I searched for my friends.

“Where are you?” I linked Kara.

“Having a tea party in the eastern garden. Eloise and I were bored and decided to hang out with the girls. Neva and Nicole are here too. Your sister-in-law is the life of the party, Zora. She and Neva are bonding well Oh, lest I forget, Nellie is here too, and she reeks of Jake Brighton,” she added. I giggled, remembering Nellie and Jake.

I wonder how Darius would take it. I was happy for both of them. They were having fun amid all the craziness.

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Content

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Chapter **237**

Zora

I went to the eastern garden, and the party was alive. People were gossiping and laughing.

I also realised that they knew what had happened to Cindy. I wondered who had told them.

While some girls felt she was misled, others felt it served her right. They figured she lied about many things, especially her relationship with Darius, and they did not wish her well.

Seeing how many people hated her, even her sidekicks, who were always with her. I guess loyalty wasn't part of their friendship.

After spending two hours in the garden, Brian Wilson linked me that Casey wanted to see me.

I did not know how to feel about it, but I obliged him.

I excused myself from the party and returned to the mansion to meet Casey.

He was waiting for me in the hallway close to Lori's room.

"Is everything alright?" I asked him, and he nodded. His eyes were expressionless, and I knew he was mad about something.

"What is the matter, Casey?" I asked him, and he put his hands in his pocket and stood straight.

"Lori wants to **say** goodbye to Annika before she leaves," **He** said, and I frowned **at** him. Surprised **that** they couldn't work it out.

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288 Vouchers

"I know what you want to **say**, Zora, but please save it. It **is** best this way," **He** said, knowing I would **talk** him out of it.

"What about the babies?" I asked, worried for the unborn children, and he sighed.

"I offered to be there for them, but she said no," he said, and I knew Lori might have said that out of pride. Alphas were proud.

"And you let her?" I asked him, and he nodded.

"I did, Zora, and I do not regret it. I should have rejected her on the balcony that day, and none of this would have happened. She was the beginning of my downfall. It won't work.

If I keep her, I will always see her as the reason my life crumbled.

I need a clean start, and she does too. I want to help with the children, but it seems she would try to use them, and I do not want to give her that room, so I have rejected her. If the children ever desire to know their father, they will come looking for me. I have a lot of issues to handle, and Lori can't be one of them," he said with a final tone, and I knew his mind was made up. I was also confused that he felt no pain, but I kept it to myself, wanting our conversation to be short.

"She had the opportunity to come clean, and she never did. She could have given me the flash drive when I confronted her, but she refused. I would be careful around her if I were you, Zora. The woman is dangerous and cannot be trusted. I can't believe that I threw away my life for her sake. What I did was stupid, and it would haunt me for the rest of my life, but I want a breather for now. I want to take a break from the love department and re-evaluate my life and self-worth. One thing I know is that I will never risk what I have for something fleeting again," he said with misty **eyes**, and I hugged him.

He bent his head on **my** shoulder and wept.

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"I am sorry, Zora." he wept bitterly, and **I let** him hold me.

"I forgive you, **Casey**," I said, but I knew he would need time to forgive **himself**. We broke the hug, and he wiped away his tears.

I Linked Brian Wilson to join me so we could escort Lori to see Annika.

I entered Lori's room, and Casey walked away. He did not want to see her. For fated people, his hatred for her was so intense that it was almost palpable.

I saw Lori weeping on the couch. She looked as if she was utterly heartbroken. She looked at me with her swollen eyes but remembering what Eloise and Kara said and Casey's mistrust towards her, I had my guard up

"I heard you want to see Annika before you leave," I said, and she nodded.

“He rejected me, Zora. He rejected me.” She said, and I did not know what to tell her.

“You shouldn’t have refused his help, Lori, but I won’t ask you to. Come on. I do not have all day. A driver is waiting to take you to the airport. You can have five minutes with your cousin, that is all,” I said sternly, and she nodded. She stood up and placed her hands in her pockets.

We exited the room, and Wilson and I escorted her to the dark dungeons with heavy security. I noticed the food served by Luna’s in-service, and the prisoners seemed well cared for. I wondered when Darius planned on moving them to the council prison. I guess I will discuss it with him later.

We went to where Annika was being held, and Lori went to her. Their hands touched through the bars, and Annika was in tears.

“Amy,” She said to her cousin, and Lori began to cry.

“I am sorry. Annika, I should have kept..” she started, and Annika

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interrupted her.

“It is not your **fault**. I failed myself. I made the wrong decisions and failed,” She said, and I did not feel an ounce of sympathy for them.

“They will bring you before the council. Just tell them,” she said to Annika, and Annika nodded.

“Once you are free, come find me,” Lori said, and Annika nodded. I hated spoiling their hope, but Annika would not be free because a council won’t oversee their trial, I would oversee their trial as queen. I wanted to laugh, but I held it.

I knew they were mind-linking each other, and we did not have the full information of what they were

discussing, but I noticed that Annika began to weep seriously. I could only guess what Lori might have told her.

Lori was crying too, and it was time for her to leave.

“Say hello to her for me,” Lori said to Annika, and I felt it was a strange conversation. Maybe Lori knew Olga too. Too bad they won’t be getting out of this free of charge.

“Uncle will burn,” Annika said, and I figured they both hated Ramsey. What a dysfunctional family.

I asked Brian Wilson to have a Brian watch her just in case her hands were dirty because her conversation with Annika was a bit off.

We left the dungeons, and Brian Wilson led her to the car while I joined Darius in the western garden.

78.05%

Content

III

10.16

Chapter 238

Darius

I waited for Zora in the western garden. I had the staff prepare a picnic for us. I stood and paced around the garden waiting for Zora to join me. I was told Casey had sent for her, and it had something to do with Lori. I wasn’t worried, but I did not like that she would be dragged into their mess.

They chose each other they should leave my mate out of it, but Casey was yet to learn that Zora was permanently out of his life.

I would leave the issue for both of them to resolve. I might have approved a friendship, but it was wrong for Casey to involve Zora in his problems with Lori, the woman he broke her heart for

Soon I saw Zora approaching, and she had a broad grin. It was clear whatever Casey called her for had no adverse effect on her.

She rushed at me, and I lifted her from the ground, and we kissed passionately.

It felt so good holding her in my arms in the garden. Breaking the kiss, she looked around at what I had prepared for our time together and was beaming.

"It's lovely, Darius," she said, almost on the verge of tears, and I held her to my chest. That was when I caught Casey's scent.

Had he been hugging my mate? I controlled Cremin and broke the hug gently.

"Jealousy **does** not suit you, big guy. He rejected Lori, and she left. He needed a shoulder to cry on. You, of all people, know the emptiness that comes with rejection," She said, knowing exactly **what was** the matter

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with me, and I **smiled** because it **was okay**.

"You **can't** blame me for being possessive," I teased.

We sat and enjoyed the scenery.

I rested my head on her laps, and she ran her fingers through my hair. We were catching our breaths and relaxing. I noticed Zora had been

overwhelmed lately, despite not complaining about it. I knew it, and I was glad we were relaxing.

"Nellie. Neva and Nicole are planning our big day," She said, and I

already had that information. David had told me when I took Abelardo to see him. He was still with Abelardo, and I hoped my brother would let our half-sibling in.

"I know; David told me when I took Abelardo to see him," I said, and she giggled

“How did Abelardo handle seeing him?” She asked, knowing how Abelardo was.

“He was shocked to see how much David looked like our father. Abelardo liked our father, so it was easy for him to look past the Alissa thing. They are together as we speak.” I said, and she sighed.

“The conversation Lori had with Annika was a bit weird. I did not want to say much, but I think we should keep an eye on her, Darius. I asked Wilson to put a Brian on her just in case her name comes up somewhere in the middle of all this, we would know where to get her,” She said, and I sat up.

“How weird was it?” I asked her, worried because everyone wasn’t comfortable with Lori’s business, and there had to be something to it.

If only we had something we could pin on her, I would have stylishly held her, but no one had mentioned her name. The way we caught her was

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based **on** speculations.

If she had not admitted anything to Casey, she would have been an innocent party in all this. She was too clean to be clean, but there was nothing.

I was proud of my mate for taking that initiative. I wished Casey would have kept her as his luna for a little longer, but he had his reasons for letting her go, and I could not blame him.

“Did they not feel the pain?” I asked Zora, and she shook her head.

“Not that I know of. It was just like Hardy and me,”

She said, and I frowned.

“So why was mine with Shanon different?” I asked, and she shrugged.

“Maybe because Shanon wasn’t pregnant? That is the only common factor between Lori and me,” she said, and I did not want to stress her to think of it.

“I think it was a brilliant idea to have someone watch her. Hopefully, her name doesn’t come up, and we do not have to see her again.” I said, and we laughed.

She bent to kiss me, and soon I pulled her close, and we were lying on the picnic mat.

We went into the woods to allow our wolves to run wild and soon returned to where the picnic mat was. It was close to evening.

Returning to my human form, I checked my phone and saw many missed calls from Vino Lawrence. It had already begun.

My few hours with my **mate** were the only time I was spared.

I decided to **call Vino** back because he had called with his personal phone
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and not the official number, **so I expected** it to be confidential.

“What **is** it?” Zora asked, wearing my **t**-shirt.

“Vino called me four times,” I replied, and the smile in her eyes faded. I knew what she was thinking, but we had set things we needed to complete in motion.

I called, and Vino answered after two rings.

“Lord Hand,” he said calmly.

“What is it, Vino?” I asked him, sounding short, and he cleared his throat.

“I am sorry to disturb you, your eminence, and I hope this isn’t a bad time,” he said, and I was silent, giving him room to speak.

“We learned you made some arrests last night and have taken over the council prison. Please, your eminence, I do not want to sound disrespectful, but only the council has the right to deal with such issues. You must hand the prisoners over to the council and let them have a fair trial. The fact that some of these prisoners are council members has created an uproar. We have been trying to reach you all day to no avail,” He said, and he was silent.

“So what do you want?” I asked him, sounding uninterested.

“If it won’t be too much trouble, your eminence, we hope you will come and defend your actions. We also ask that you give the council control over the prison, as it should be based on our laws.

I promise you that I will see to it that your reasons are heard, and proper investigation is carried out to bring justice,” he said, and I sighed.

I noticed he **was** watching his words trying not to offend me, but we had a plan, and however nice Vino may be, I had to follow it through.

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Content

10:17

Chapter 239

Darius

“I do not care about the law in this regard, Vino. These people have been a problem to me, and I want peace. I do not trust the council, so I am taking the law into my hands to do as I see fit. You should tell the council that I dare them to do their worse. I will not back down this time around. Where were these laws when these people ran around me and tried to cause a war? I will deal with them as I see fit. It would be wise for you to stay out of my way, Vino. You and the council you represent,” I told him, and he sighed.

“I am not your enemy, Lord Hand. I am just speaking on behalf of the council. Please, I do not want this matter to escalate beyond the way it is. You are lord , not a king; you do not have the power to overthrow the council. They will agitate, and I do not want what happened with Alpha Christian to happen again.” He said, talking about the petition they raised.

“And how well did that go?” I asked him, and he sighed.

“It didn’t go well, but now you have arrested members of prestigious families and the council. They will all be against you. Please hand the prisoners over to the council so we can get to the bottom of the matter, and there won’t be hatred towards you,” he said, pleading with me to consider.

He wanted to prevent me from getting into trouble, but he did not know I was looking for that trouble. All the cards were in my favour already, and I did not need to do much to get what I wanted.

“Do not worry about me, Vino. I will advise the council to stay out of **this**. I will do as I please; end of the story,” I said, and he was silent.

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“I guess we are **done**,” I said to Vino and hung up.

“**What’s** with him?” Zora asked, and I smiled at **her**.

“What we expected,” I said, and she frowned.

“The council wants me to turn over the prisoners, and I said no,” I said, and she smiled, knowing exactly what would ensue.

Ignoring the call, we spent time in the western gardens and made love under the stars. It took a lot not to claim her. I took comfort in knowing that the blue moon was just fourteen days away and we could complete our bond.

I did not claim Zora because I did not want my friends to feel left out. We rarely would find our fated mates, let alone reject them and find second- chance mates. We were truly blessed; there was no need to rub it in their faces. The love bite would have to do for now.

Two days passed with no word from the council, and I began to worry because they were moving slower than I expected.

Abelardo told me they had been debating in the council, and Larry and Vino had been on my side, but the rest of the members were livid.

I had decided not to get involved, but Abelardo had been invited severally so they could speak to him to convince me to do as they wished.

Besides Larry and Vino, everyone called for a vote to take me out of office. However, they were not planning to remove the lordship as I had hoped; they wanted Abelardo to take over. In that case, they would not need the regional leaders to vote.

It was a smart move.

They were going to call for the vote the next day. So we decided to have a meeting early in the morning and move.

27.91%

III

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Chapter 239

288 Vouchers

I arrived at my lounge, and I could see the disappointment in all their eyes.

The council had behaved differently. We needed to counter them.

I sat down, and even though my mother wasn't there, I could pick up her scent. I looked at everyone present, wondering who was carrying her scent. Not wanting to dwell on it too much, I chose to address the matter at hand.

“So what should we do now that they have done this?” Hardy asked,

sounding a bit impatient. I understood his issues. We were yet to question the prisoners. We had more people to arrest, and this king guy was still at large. It was a huge setback.

“I can’t believe we are worried about this. We will just push on,” Casey said, and I looked at him.

“Only Leaders from three regions are present. The exact number of votes needed to push our agenda. We will write the council and demand we want a king. It would be our vote against theirs, and they will still have to call Sidorov, Orlov, Belyaev and Lawrence to vote. Thank goddess, we need three of the four. Abelardo would stand in for the Balyeay, and that is it. We still get what we want.” Casey said, sounding angry and impatient.

His anger wasn’t directed at us, but at the situation we were facing.

“It would be more forceful and look like a plan, but at this point, I really don’t care. They can call it whatever they like. We have to do this. This king man is dangerous; we have only two options. Make Darius king or let this man take it by force, and he would do it easily. He is smart and has his tendrils everywhere,” Christain said, and it was a done deal.

That day a letter was composed and sent to the council for a vote to occur the next **day**.

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Chapter 239

288 Vouchers

Casey wrote **the** letter, and there were a lot **of** complaints about how the council had failed to protect the east from the terrorist group. Hardy had **the** same complaints, and they all agreed that since the protocols were not working, they would prefer they install a King instead of the nonsense we had.

I needed only three of the four regional leaders’ support, likewise the noble families, I needed three of the four, and I had the numbers on my side. It would be a quick and easy v

ote, and I could not wait to get it over with. Once it was done, I planned on unleashing hell on the prisoners until I found the king. I will go dark on them.

I stood in front of the mirror in my room, adjusting my official outfit.

Zora stood behind me, and even though it was a given that we would win. we were still worried.

Many things didn't go as we had hoped, but we held on to the hope that we would succeed eventually.

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Content

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288 Vouchers

Chapter **240**

Darius

Casey had pushed for immediate effect pertaining to the letter he sent yesterday.

They had called an impromptu meeting to vote and decide.

All parties concerned were to attend, and I was eager.

Abelardo had decided he would stand in as a Balyeay today.

That was the only way we would not allow Vino to vote. I did not know how it would go, but I knew it would be a long day.

I looked at Zora through the mirror and noticed her dress was free on the waistline. Her bump was already showing, which meant time was going by.

We need to restore peace before our bundle of joy comes into the world.

The blue moon ceremony **was** also a part of it. I also did not want any more surprises.

I wanted to maintain order and prevent a war

We all wanted to go back to our lives.

These people were like parasites, vermins, weeds that needed to be uprooted . They were a problem.

One thing I have learned so far is that anyone who challenges physically in the open **is** true in comparison to one that hides in the shadows.

The King's personality was clear to me. He was a brilliant coward that

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Chapter 240

288 (Vouchers

liked to manipulate from the darkness. He was also not sure he **would** win. That was why he was yet to make a move.

"Let's knock them dead," Zora said with a big grin, and I smiled at her.

"You know you look smashing in your uniform," She said, and I spun around so she would admire it.

If everything went well, this would be the last time I would wear the uniform I had on.

"I am sure the king outfit would be more exquisite," she said, and I pulled her close and kissed her passionately.

We went for breakfast, and everyone was ready. The only member of the family that wasn't going to the council was David, and because of that, my mother chose to remain.

I did not mistrust David; I just did not want his presence to be used against us. He, too, was an Alpha Hand. Even though he did not want anything, I had to protect the plan on all fronts.

We sat in silence; everyone was nervous about the outcome.

Making a plan was one thing, but carrying it out was another. We had planned this but had to make some slight changes. I hoped it worked out.

The regional leaders left ahead of us. No one knew they were at the estate, so they must arrive at the council hall before us.

It also didn't matter whether they were at the estate or not; we just did not want a situation where it would be apparent that it was all planned.

"Shall we," I told Zora as we stepped out of the mansion and entered the Limo waiting to take us to the council hall. We had to do an entire convoy with escorts. I was moving **in** an official capacity.

Marcel and Raphael were nervous in the Limo with Kara and Eloise. I

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288 Vouchers

could see the worry **in all** their eyes.

We were all worried because the people we were dealing with were resourceful and intelligent.

The rest of the people on that list had gone into hiding. Casey and Hardy had organized to start transporting the people arrested in their regions to the north to turn them over.

We needed to conclude the meeting today because when those prisoners arrive, Casey and Hardy would have to hand them over to the ones in charge, which is the council.

They can't bring them to me, and they do not have the power to do what I did with the prisoners we arrested. So, it was an issue.

Soon we arrived at the council hall, and people were present.

Everyone had heard of the terrible thing I had done, and there was no admiration in their eyes.

I could swear that I heard some people call me the Dark Lord Alpha.

My pack was the Dark Wolf Pack, but I knew what they meant by the Dark Lord Alpha.

It was usual for the council to present the matter in the worst way possible to hold on to their power.

Every alpha from the packs in all the regions was present. They must have all flown in last night. Even Cruz and Sheperd were in attendance.

When we entered the council, it was a full house. Everyone was in their seats. I looked at the empty Balyaev seat and smiled internally.

Marcel, Raphael, I and our mates proceeded to our box. Everyone went to their seats.

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Chapter 240

Casey, Hardy, **Christian** and Sean were **seated in** their section.

288 Vouchers

Sean was the top leader of the west but not **the** head Leader because my father ensured the west would not have a head leader. So Sean occupied the western head leader's seat.

It was clear the council had bumped him up without my consent. Looking at the mix, I was bound to lose.

Casey was my mate's ex-husband; he was meant to hate me for attacking his territory and taking his mate from him.

Hardy and I had the worst history possible, first with my father and then with me. There was also a pending war between us.

Christian had raised a petition to remove me from office. He must have had his reasons.

All of them had a reason not to install me as King. Because even though they wrote a letter requesting a king, they needed to be more specific. It could be anyone.

After we were all seated, Abelardo strolled to the Balyaev seat, and everyone was shocked.

Larry stood up immediately to speak. He always liked to say something whenever Abelardo was concerned. As my father's friend, I must say he preferred Abelardo to me.

"Sir Abelardo, you should be in the lords' loge, not here with us. You are part of this too," he told Abelardo, letting him know he could get something tonight, perhaps a promotion.

"Thank you, Councilman Larry. But today, I am representing my maternal family, the Belyaevs, and I will be temporarily heading this council," he said, which was a no-brainer.

The Belyaev family was the original head of the council until my mother

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I

Chapter 240

cut a **deal with** Jenny and Louis.

288 (Vouchers

99.35%

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Chapter 24

288 Vouchers

Content