

Darkness Mate Cheated Versus Fated by Victory Done

Chapter 241

Chapter 241

Darius

“That chair is dormant, and you are a Hand,” Lucas Vanhill said.

“I am also a Balyeav. Since my brother is the Lord, I am the only one to represent my mother’s family unless we ask her to come and represent her family herself,” Abelardo said, sounding a bit impatient, and they were silent.

“Not necessary, but there are certain documents to sign before you can head the council. Sir Abelardo. It is the law. Your father made that seat vacant by refusing to let your mother ascend the seat. It is okay if you want to assume the responsibility, but there are documents to sign to put that into action. Vino Lawrence will head this one at least for today until all necessary measures are taken,” Joan said cautiously.

“Very well, I still represent the Balyeavs in all matters. Should there be a need for a vote, I would carry the Balyeav vote,” Abelardo said; they could not dispute that, so they were silent. It was now time for the back and forth to begin.

Larry was the first to stand and address all of us. Since Makhailovs were indisposed, the responsibility fell on him.

“We all know why we are here today,” he said, clearing his throat.

“I will bring you up to speed for those who do not know,” he said, looking at the alphas from each region to ensure he had their attention.

“Three nights ago, Darius Hand, acting in the lord’s capacity, made a massive arrest, arresting alphas, council members, mates and so on. He arrested people, randomly targeting them. Took over the council prison by

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force by installing **his** enforcers and **was** unapologetic about it,” **He** said, and many people gasped.

“We have a report that states some people were beaten up and denied their rights. We have a witness that claimed they saw the people Darius Hand arrested, requesting that they be brought before this council for a fair trial. He did not only deny them but threw them into prison.

We tried reaching out to him in good faith, but he refused to respond. He acted as if he was above the law and could do as he liked. Right now, we do not know his victims’ condition, nor know if they are still alive. This tyrannical behaviour should not be allowed to stand,” Larry said, and people began to murmur.

“As a lord. Darius Hand protects and serves us. Every suspect has the right to be brought before this council. He locked some up in the dungeon in his estate, and when it was filled up, he took over the prison. We can’t allow this. So today, the council has decided to relieve him of his status as lord and try him for violating the people’s basic rights,” Larry said, and everyone grumbled. It was clear it did not sit well with some people.

“We do not want a war; leave Hand alone,” I heard some alphas say, afraid of what I might do. My family’s reputation was really strong.

“I object!” Casey said, standing up, and everyone was silent.

“This council will make no such decision without me and my colleagues’ points of view in consideration,” he said, and there was silence.

It was clear the council wanted the regional leaders to refrain from speaking.

They were supposed to table Casey’s letter instead of what they tabled. They feared losing power before getting rid of me.

Removing me as lord meant anyone would be installed **as** King. I bet Casey saw it coming. He made the best move.

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“I object to this nonsense. I sent a letter yesterday, and that **is** what **we** are here to discuss,” he said, tabling the fundamental matter.

“Eh, Alpha Albert, we have to deal with the issue before discussing your matter,” Larry tried to explain.

“The issue at hand and the matter we are discussing are one and the same. The council no longer wants a lord, and I agree,” He said, and there was total silence because the implications of his words meant the council had

Won.

“I do not want a lord because this lordship thing has not helped us. There is a terrorist group trying to cause war by all means, and there is no way to catch them because of the stupid laws and protocols we have to follow.

Recently we let a suspect go because we couldn't pin anything on her. How can we succeed under these stringent laws that favour criminals?” He said, referring to Lori. No one wanted to let her go, but we could not pin anything on her, which still baffles me.

“This system could also be corrupt, which is why I see a few empty council seats. I do not want a lord but a King.” he said, and people were surprised.

“A king does not need to follow protocol. He does what he must for his people. Sixty per cent of my region has been taken by the traitors. What has this council done? Nothing.

I am sure Lord Hand had to do what he did for peace. I wrote to this council a few months ago to make specific complaints. Nothing was done.

My Beta calls, and all he keeps getting is that they are working on it. For how long do we want to go on like this? The system is corrupt. We are on the verge of war, and the perpetrators are faceless. I want a king, and I say we take a vote.

I want a king and the original order restored with Darius Hand **as** King

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and the other three families as the lords. That is what I want. Because he is the only one I know who has the balls to do what this council failed to do.

He single-

handedly slowed down their activities in my region, and you want him to step down for putting the safety of the people first?

You want to disgrace him for locking up suspects so we can breathe and think straight?

Jake Brighton's pack was destroyed by an order passed by this council. Even though they claim it was from Lord Hand, we later discovered that he knew nothing of it, and the council failed to confirm whether he authorised it.

Is the council not supposed to

keep the lord in check? Then why authorise taxes to be increased and a pack to be attacked? Why did this council not challenge the order?

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Lord Hand has to be a tyrant, so we can survive these faceless people. He is doing what he must.

Though slow to solve the problems our region has faced, the council is quick to condemn the one person who has done something about the situation.

However crude, it was necessary.

Is the council a part of this group, or are they just complacent?" he asked. and the members of the council became worried and agitated. None of their names was on our lists, so I knew they were not involved, but Casey's words got to them.

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Darius

"I am not a fool and refuse to be treated as one. Today this whole charade stops. I want Darius Hand as King, and we should take a vote," Casey said, livid.

There was no way those things he said were rehearsed. He meant every word.

The murmur was so loud after Casey's speech that Vino had to bang the gavel.

"We are sorry for your grievances, Alpha Albert, and If I had known anything of it, I would have personally seen to it that your matter is resolved." Vino said to Casey gently, and Casey ignored him.

"However, you alone can not decide you want a King. We should vote," He said, and Hardy stood up.

"I agree, and so does alpha Christian, so please get on with it. We do not have time to waste. We have all suffered the same things," Hardy said, and Larry cleared her throat.

"Those are compelling allegations. If a group of people is trying to cause war, we have to investigate it. We also have to be sure this isn't a plan by Hand to force this to happen." Larry said, and there was uproar.

I realised many people wanted to change the order and the system.

"How dare you!" I heard some people say. Mostly western Alphas because the noise was more in their section.

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"How dare you!

I **say we vote** and get **this** over with," **Some** people **from** the southern loge **said**.

"I say we **carry** out this vote just as Alpha Albert requested. **This is** the most useless council in history, and we no longer want the council in power. This democracy isn't working for us.

Wolves need a leader, not leaders. They need one they would follow that would have absolute control. That is how best we function. This system has almost altered our nature and caused unnecessary behaviour.

I agree with Alpha Albert and Alpha Corrigan that we take the vote now and move on." Christian said, and from the look on the faces of the council, they already knew how this would go.

I had the majority votes of the nobles and the head Alphas. I was going to be King.

Vino banged the gavel with difficulty this time and stood up.

"Very well, this council would take a vote; the head alphas would take a vote, and the elite families would vote. I will be standing in for my family and my late Aunts' family," he said, and we did not see that coming.

The Babanins were nobles too.

Casey got up immediately to speak.

I knew he did not like Vino.

I did not know why or whether anything had transpired between them, but he seemed to hate the Lawrence family.

“The Lawrence have no business voting in this, Vino. You are not a true northern noble family. The last King might have given your ancestors noble status, but you have no rights here,” Casey repeated what he had once said, and everyone **was** silent.||

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Casey's words **had** hurt Vino. I had never seen Vino so angry before.

“How dare you, Albert! How dare you belittle my family like this?” he asked with his alpha command. He was strong, but Casey wasn't a weak Alpha; it brushed past him like nothing.

“Say I am lying, and I will rest my case. Only true northern elites can be involved in a matter like this. You can vote on behalf of the Babanin by proxy, but that is it. Lawrence would have no say in this other than the council vote; they will have no votes as nobles,” Casey said with his Alpha command, and everyone was silent.

The man was a powerful Alpha. Thinking of the strength he wielded, I realised that he was as just stupid and weak where Lori was concerned. What an irony.

Everyone was silent, and Casey won the argument.

The vote was cast, and Vino, Joan and Pamela voted in my favour. I was surprised that Vino voted that I be King after all Casey said to him.

He should have voted against it knowing it was Casey's cause.

The alphas cast their votes, and all four of them, even Sean, voted in favour that I become King.

When the noble families voted, they all agreed that I become King.

Even Vino used the Babanin's seat to vote in my favour, there it was; I was no longer Lord of the north but King of our world.

The inauguration was set for the next week, but because of that vote, I could start acting as a king, meaning no one could question me or ask me to explain myself again.

I hoped we had not created a monster for the ones that would come after

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I looked at my mate and kissed her hand **to** ensure this would not destroy **us** in the future; we must instill strong values **in** our children.

I was grateful to everyone who voted in my favour and was glad that part **was** over.

It was time to start questioning, and Ramsey was the first on my **list**.

Vino came to my booth to congratulate me.

“Your Majesty,” he said with a broad smile and looked at Zora and smiled. He always smiled at Zora. I suspected he had a crush on her, one he could not act on.

“Thank you for the vote, Vino. I will **try** my best to serve,” I said, and he bowed his head.

“Do you mind telling me what The Makailovs and the Peakmans did?” he asked curiously.

“They belong to a group,” I said, and he looked confused.

“A treasonous group,” I added, and he nodded understandingly.

“Very well then, I wouldn’t want to be in their shoes,” he said, and I smiled.

“No one would want to be in their shoes, and trust me, by the time I am done with them, people will feel very sorry for them,” I said with a promise in my tone.

He congratulated me again and congratulated Marcel and Raphael on their lordship. I looked at where Larry was, and he was unhappy about the outcome. The man genuinely hated me, and I did not know why.

We stayed a while in the council hall while I bumped Casey, Hardy and Christian up to noble status; my reasons were clear. I will only work with people I trust.

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Darius

Abelardo would be made lord under the Balyeav family. Unfortunately, he would have to bear the Balyaev last name. Our father had wiped out the family, and Abelardo would have to resurrect the bloodline.

“I feel this thing was planned,” Larry said after I had made my declarations, trying to incite people, and I laughed and stood up. His opinion didn’t matter any more, and he knew it, so his head remained bowed.

“I may be King, but I want to work with people passionate about our world. Alpha Albert, Corrigan, and Zakharov have shown their zeal to make this succeed.

I may be King, but I need trustworthy people to succeed. While their families will now have representation on the council, I will officially make Sean Kingston head Alpha of the west, restoring a seat that my father made vacant due to mutiny.

My main goal is to restore peace, and I know I have made this decision because of this purpose.” I said and ended the conversation.

Unlike the past when the council will argue and debate the matter. All they could do now was advise. I was given total control.

Now it was time to fish the bastard out.

I could not wait to question Ramsey. I would start with him and then move on to the others. As for the Makhailovs, Peakmans and Wayats, I had something special for them.

We **left** the place and returned home. Zora was very tired, so I

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accompanied her to the room so she could rest. My mother wanted all the juicy **details** of how the event went, and Kara offered to tell her, leaving **me free** to do **my** work.

I freshened up and decided to visit the council prison to question Ramsey. There **was** no way I would sleep without interrogating him.

Casey and Hardy had pleaded with me to participate in the questioning, and I obliged them.

It was the least I could do, seeing they were the ones that championed the cause at the council.

Abelardo and Christain proceeded to question Lenny Mikhailov so we could find Jacob.

Theo and Marcel proceeded to handle Peakman; Wayat would have to wait his turn.

I walked into Ramsey's cell with Casey and Hardy. News had gone around that I was now a king. Even the enforcers at the prison greeted me. I should delegate this to someone else because of my status, but I wanted to do it myself.

Casey was related to Ramsey even though Lori had left and was now far away, starting over. I could understand why Casey would want to participate in Ramsey's interrogation. The man had ruined his home because of greed, and Casey needed answers and revenge.

Hardy excused us to check on something and told us to go ahead.

I let him go.

I knew we had to move quickly. I needed all the information I could get, and I needed to catch the so-called King.

Being his **right-wing man**, I knew Ramsey would lead me to him. So far, everyone had spoken Ramsey's name; it had to account for something.

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I drew a chair **and** sat **in** front of him while Casey **decided** to stand.

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Ramsey had a silver bracelet on, so his hands weren't tied, but he was useless because he could not shift or access his wolf abilities. Questioning him would be easy.

I looked at him, and he smiled at me. I knew he was trying to keep a brave facade. He knew he was busted, and his life was forfeit. It seems he

would rather die a brave man than a coward.

His smile meant he was smiling at death.

I represented death to him, and his mind was right.

There was no way I would let him live.

Letting him survive to tell the story another day would be stupid.

"Your game is up, Ramsey," I said, and he nodded.

"I agree," he said, not putting too much of a fight, and I knew something was off

"Who is the king?" I asked him, wanting to get straight to the point.

"Well, you are, of course. You got crowned today," He said, and I got impatient.

I wanted to be done with this and prepare for my crowning and wedding.

“I do not have all the time in the world. I have a list of all your associates,” I told him, and he frowned at me.

“A list? What list? Who compiled this list?” the man asked, and even though I should be asking him the questions, I knew I needed to rub it **in** that his very own had sold him out.

“Well, your daughter **gave** us a flash drive **of** the **list of** your associates,” I

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said, and he began to laugh. He laughed so hard that I felt stupid.

Casey wanted to punch him, but I stopped him.

“Lori?” Ramsey said, and I nodded, and he shook his head.

“My my my, you are even a bigger fool than I thought. Your father wouldn’t have fallen for this,” he said, and I frowned at him.

“Where did she get this file from?” He asked.

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“Your computer Ramsey, so quit acting,” Casey said, and Ramsey bowed his head as if he was hurting.

“Do I look stupid to you?” Ramsey asked me, and I did not respond, making a straight face.

“So I would somehow compile a list of my associates and save it as a file on my computer. Lori miraculously knew my password, and out of the many files on my computer, she happened to know which one to pick and copy?” he said, and putting it that way, it seemed a bit off, but the specific folders copied made me relax.

“She copied many files,” Casey said, and Ramsey shook his head.

"I do not keep a list of associates on my computer. I never have and never will. I play solitaire and chess with my desktop and nothing more. That list isn't mine. You can send for my computer and give an expert to check if I have deleted anything from it," he said and looked at both of us.

"Where **is** she now?" He asked me, and I looked at him.

"Far **away** from your reach," I said, and he laughed.

"And I guess she is far away from yours too," he said, laughing, and I **was** impatient.

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"You are pissing me off, Ramsey," I said with **my** command, and he shook, remembering why I was a Hand, to begin with.

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"You have been had," Ramsey said, and Casey wanted to attack him, but I stopped him.

"I do not know what my darling daughter told you, but she is cunning like that. She was smart enough to plan her escape if she got caught," He said, and I shut him up.

"Annika said you..." I said, and he interrupted me.

"Annika is a blind fool. And I am sure she is dead now because Lori always cleans up her mess," He said with sadness in his eyes, and I became confused.

"You have let go of the only person that knows the king's identity," he said, and I punched him. I thought he was trying to get back at his daughter for giving him up.

Touching his broken nose, he tried to fix it a bit.

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Darius

“I am not lying, your majesty,” he said with sincerity in his eyes.

“Lori schooled in Cains most of her life, where she met the King. He did not live there, but he visited there often, and they shared the dream of ruling together,” he said and sighed.

“She met Casey a day after she arrived in the east. She came there with the sole purpose of recruiting me.

I would have declined if I knew she was setting me up as the fall guy. But what they offered was too good to refuse.

I had been disgraced in the east; it would have been nice to become a nobleman, more important than the man that took my position.

They did not have an army, so they needed to cause war. She sweet-talked me into it. Something about restoring our family’s glory and giving me a seat on the council.

She said her mate was a Hand and that they loved each other so much. He did not claim her, of course. Their wedding was to occur after they succeeded at creating the war.

Getting with Casey wasn’t part of the plan, but she went to Dustin’s party, and they were fated. It was a massive setback because she was torn between her wolf and her desires,” he said, and I called Brian Wilson on the phone to check on Annika in her cell. There was no way Ramsey was lying. I could see the resignation in his eyes.

The call did not **take** long. I instructed Wilson to hurry up and get back to

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After the call, Ramsey continued to speak.

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Lori informed the King of the development with Casey the night she returned from the party. She feared he would dump her, but the guy had a >right idea of using the mate bond for themselves and their cause.

Unfortunately, Casey wasn't as stupid as they hoped he would be. She never won his heart, so she never got to control him, but she helped her boyfriend cause damage," Ramsey said, and I felt foolish.

'Why will she set you up, and why did Annika not know she was the nastermind? Your niece named you," I said, and he laughed.

'Lori never forgave me for what happened to her mother. But I had to kill that bitch because she was the one that got me in trouble with Collier Hand, both her and Annika's mother. I guess the two decided to get revenge for their mothers.

Annika is a fool for Lori and would do anything her cousin says. To her, everything Lori does is for the greater good. I allowed it simply because it was beneficial to me. By now, you must have established my character. There is nothing to hide," He said, and I was speechless.

I was also worried that Ramsey was right about Lori cleaning her mess where Annika was concerned.

"What about the threats and the targets? The gun assassination?" Casey asked, sounding confused, and the man began to laugh.

"None of you would be alive if we could do all that. Lori controlled the information that would be in circulation. She was smart like that. Once you hear the same thing from two to three people, then it is true. I can never put a target on my d

daughter's back. During the game, I sat in your booth with you. Did I behave in any suspicious way?

She told you **what** she wanted you to believe, and she pretended all through. I won't blame any of you. Lori **is** smooth like that," he said, and I

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was stunned.

What about her **visits** to your house?" Casey asked, and he sighed.

She did not visit me; she was visiting him. That pregnancy isn't yours, Casey. They claimed each other, so you won't feel it. Think of it this way. If Lori had her way, both you and Zora would have died the day the north attacked, and who do you think would have control of the cast if that happened?" He asked, and I knew the answer before Casey even said it.

'Lori," He said, and I became impatient.

I did not want to even listen to the rest of it.

We had an Ace and let her go out of pity and sentiments. Because of the stupid council laws. I wanted to punch Ramsey.

If only he had spoken up, I would have held her by all means. We had nothing on her, and so we had to let her go. I was glad Zora put someone on her. I kept that part to myself.

"Everyone knew no one stood a chance against the northern Army. Being fighters, Casey and Zora should have fought to their last breath, what Lori did not expect was that Zora would refuse to fight and give herself up. That spoiled many things because Casey remained alive.

Now that Zora was in the north, there were limits to how we could complicate issues between the east and the north," he said, and I began to laugh from frustration. Casey was growling. His bitch had outsmarted

everyone.

“I am just a pawn in this thing. One thing I know is that the guy is a Hand. She told me that much, but I did not know which one. Some council members are in league with him because he promised to make them lords when he becomes King. A position their family can never attain, and it seemed plausible.

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Honestly, I thought about who this **guy** must be. I thought it was David at **first**, but then I found out he was married with children, and I doubt it is your brother, so this **guy** might be lying or delusional. I do not know, but he is resourceful and has a very powerful person behind him. That is all I know,” he said, resigning himself.

My phone rang, and it **was** Wilson. I **was** afraid of answering, but I did.

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Darius

“Your Majesty, we got to the cell, and when Annika realised what we were there for, she swallowed something, and now she is unconscious. We found a tiny capsule filled with eastern silver dust in her hand. I believe someone gave her

two. She did not get to swallow the second capsule,” Brian Wilson said, confirming what Ramsey said.

I remembered the odd conversation Zora spoke about between Annika and Lori, and I was livid.

Annika had confessed, so we could not keep her under the same condition as the other prisoners.

I wish I was King then; I would have waived her rights. She should have had silver on her to stop the mind-linking ability. Casey was right when he said that the laws do not favour our society.

Becoming King was a gamble. If I knew I would win and that I would get the support I got, I would have damned it and broken all the rules.

I punched the desk between Ramsey and me and hung up.

Suddenly what Ramsey said checked out.

I did not need him to elaborate any more than he already had. The woman had played us.

“We will put a wanted ad of Lori Kuhn,” I said calmly.

“**Why** didn’t I feel the pain of her being with someone else?” Casey asked Ramsey, and he laughed.

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“She is an Alpha, like you, Casey; she did not reject you. She did to you what you did to your wife. Claimed another man while connected to you, **so** you won’t feel it.

You see, we all know that once claimed by our fated, we could claim a chosen and transfer the bond. The bond with the fated would remain, but

it will be weak.

Have you looked at the mark on her neck? If you look closely, you will notice that there are two bites almost in the same spot.

Your

bond with Lori was transferred to this guy, so they did not need a blue moon to claim each other. It happens.

If you find your fated and reject them, the bond transfers to the one your heart desires, but you must have found your fated or possess a fated bond to create that connection. A few people have done it in the past, so it isn't news to my generation.

They had to claim each other even though they weren't ready to do it, so you will not know when they are intimate.

They did not need the blue moon to claim each other because of your existing bond with Lori. So your bond with her was transferred to him. She chose him.

You can easily dismiss his scent when she returns to you because she has always had it. She had been intimate with him before you, he had marked her with his scent. They love each other deeply," Ramsey explained, and Casey swore.

The woman had played all of us, and no one was the wiser. I was heartbroken. I did not know how Zora would feel about it knowing the woman had deliberately ruined her home for nothing. There was no way Zora would not take this personally. This was very bad.

"Do you know **where** she would be right now?" I asked him, and he shook

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his head.

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“Must have gone into hiding. You won’t find her, your majesty. **They** are resourceful, and they love each other. That much I can tell you. Even the mate bond could not stop them from getting together.

With Casey, she would be head Luná of the east and live in Zora’s shadow for the rest of her life, with this Hand guy, she would be queen. It was an easy choice,” he said, laughing.

“Sorry, Casey,” he added, and Casey wanted to hit him, but I stopped him. Just then, Hardy walked in, and it was clear he had not heard anything Ramsey had told us.

I told him everything, and he cursed.

“Honestly, I felt it was weird she had that flash drive. Why didn’t she give it to Casey before he brought her to the estate? I believe it was her last resort, and it worked. She tried to be a victim and played on Zora’s history with Ramsey to get the sympathy she desired. The bitch,” Hardy said, and I was mad.

How could we have been so stupid not to see Lori for what she was? A mastermind.

Everything we had learned disrupted my emotions. I did not know how to feel about being outsmarted.

We had her within our reach, and the laws had forced us to let her go.

I blamed myself for it.

I should have been ruthless where Lori was concerned, but I let her go. I felt sorry for her because I thought she was carrying Casey’s children. She cooperated, and I genuinely thought she was a victim in a bad situation. I was angry and ashamed.

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There was no way we would let her succeed. I knew **if** we put our **heads together**, we would come up **with** something.

I looked at Ramsey, who **was** silent, and I decided to use him.

“Very well, Ramsey Kuhn. I appreciate your cooperation, and because of that, I will cut you a deal.” I said and sighed.

“A reduced sentence for everything you know about your daughter’s mate,” I said, and he shook his head. His eyes were a bit misty.

“I do not want a reduced sentence, your majesty. Right now, I choose death,” he said, and I realised I was dealing with a hardened man.

Just like his niece that tried to take her life. The man had resigned himself.

“I have nothing to live for. My daughter betrayed me. My niece might be dead. I killed my mate. I am alone. Even if I get a reduced sentence, what would I do with my freedom when it comes? I have fallen so low that I can never get back up again. There is nothing for me in this world. To think Lori held on to her grief and destroyed me for it breaks my heart. I do not want reduced sentencing, your majesty. I want the death penalty.”— he said, and I knew he meant it

“But I will give you all the information in my possession. I will cooperate with you until you do not need me anymore,” He said, and I was surprised

at his resolve.

“And why will you do this? You sound exactly like Lori,” I said to him, and he nodded.

“Just keep me locked up in silver, you know you can trust me. Put me in the darkest cells. I have absolutely nothing to prove,” he said, and I looked **at** him.

“For **starters**. I think you should send someone to Cain to fish her out. She

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might not go there, but something there would lead you to her.” he said, **and** I fought the laugh knowing Zora had sent someone to watch her when she left the mansion. I just nodded.

Getting up, I decided to excuse myself. I needed to find Lori, who would lead me to Jenny’s bastard, and then he would lead me to the person supporting him. Either that, or we search for Jenny’s bastard and find the person supporting him. Either way, I needed to look into the Lawrence household.

There was no way Jenny’s pregnancy and son were a secret to them. Someone in that house would know. Even though Louis is dead, someone in that generation would know.

“Let’s go.” I told Hardy and Casey, and they agreed.

Chapter 246

Content

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Chapter 246

Darius

We left Ramsey in his cell for an enforcer to take him away, and we left the prison. I dreaded telling my pregnant mate all that we had learned. I was in knots.

We entered the vehicle that would take us back to the estate. There was complete silence in the car. Brian William was driving, and I sat at the back with Casey while Hardy sat in front.

Casey had complete sorrow in his eyes. He had thrown away everything for a lie.

“I asked Zora to shift that day so we can defend ourselves,” he said, speaking to himself, and I saw tears trickle down his cheek.

“I pleaded with her to shift so we could fight the northern soldiers. I told Lori to go to the shelter and hide because she wasn’t cut out for that situation,” He said and bit his fist. He was angry.

“I indirectly asked Zora to risk her life for Lori,” he said, blinking away his tears.

“I did not see it that way back then, but that was what I did,” he said.

“All because she was pregnant, and I thought it was mine. I wasn’t ready for it. I took precautions, but she said Sage did it, and I had to accept. She played me and tried to kill Zora and me for her personal goals. I wish Zora had let me die that day,” he said, and I heard the rage in his voice.

“She gave herself up because she wanted me to live and Lori and me to have a happy home without her. She took her chances with you because she wanted out **of** the mess I created. If I find that bitch, I will destroy her

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and her bastards,” he **said**, biting into his fist until blood began to spill.

“I will destroy everything about her, and it will be **as** if she had never **existed**. Both her and her mate,” his wolf growled, and I honestly did not want to be in Lori’s shoes right now.

It was personal to Casey.

It **was** cruel **to** think they ruined his home because they wanted to take over the north.

They could have carried on their agenda without him.

Their actions were beneficial to me because they brought Zora into my life, but I felt sorry for Casey and

the life he would have had. I had often looked at him and Zora, and they did look good together, but she was

mine now.

pulled Casey's fist from his mouth before he crushed his hand.

"You need to be calm and maintain a sharp mind. They won't get away with it. We will hunt them down and destroy them." I told him with promise, and he was speechless. Even with Lori dead, the damage would still remain. Their actions had chipped away at his soul.

We arrived at the mansion, and Hardy requested to speak to me privately. I wondered what it was about, but I chose to oblige him.

While Casey went to his, Hardy and I went to my lounge to discuss.

He seemed unsettled, and I wondered what his issue was.

"After all that I have learned, I need to tell you something," he said, and I **was** attentive.

"Nikolas Sullivan lived in my territory with his niece Shanon who I later learned **was** your ex. I did not know **that** Nikolas and his daughter, Glenda were in on this shit," he said, and I frowned at him because I had

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Glenda in custody. Nikolas was **at** large, but **I knew** it was a matter **of** time before we caught him.

"What I am trying to tell you here is that after seeing what happened to Casey, I do not want to have the same issue," he said, and I still did not get him.

"Shanon and I started dating a week ago, and she is staying in my hotel room. I do not know if she is one of them and is just using me," he said, and I could hear the fear in his voice.

It was an epic match, and if all this shit wasn't there, I would have laughed.

I was with his fated, and he was with mine. It was funny.

“Are you two fated now?” I asked him, and he shook his head. I guess the goddess blessed Zora and me.

“I do not know what to tell you, Hardy, but I will advise you to be careful and keep an eye on her. Now that you are on the council, if her hands are dirty, it would reflect badly on you,” I said, and I could see fear and reluctance in his eyes. Shanon had that effect; I just hoped she was being real with him.

“One more thing. I do not know if this will help. She did not mean to leave, but Collier conversed with Nikolas, divulging some things she did not hear. She walked in on their conversation, and Collier thought she heard everything he told Nikolas, so he ordered that she be taken away, or he would take her life. Nikolas chose to leave with her. She never moved on until the day you rejected her, she was afraid to come to the north, thinking your mother might be in on it too,” he said. I wondered what my father might have discussed with Nikolas to warrant that kind of action. I realised we needed to catch Nikolas too. He was one of the people who escaped because of the tip. If I catch him, I might discover something.

“I have declared him wanted. You should do the same.” Hardy said, and I

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Chapter 246

sighed.

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“You should be careful. That is all I will **tell** you,” I said, and he nodded.

“Why did you excuse us when we wanted to question Ramsey?” I asked him, and he handed me his phone.

“Shanon tried to reach me all day, and I wanted to call her and tell her I was fine.” He said, and I did not bother because I do not have her current number. I honestly do not care about anything that concerns them.

“It’s okay,” I said and refused his phone.

“Will that be all?” I asked, and he nodded.

“When is our next meeting?” he asked, and I sighed.

“Honestly, I want to rest while we try to hunt that bitch down,” I said, and he nodded.

“I understand. I will remain in the north pending the solution. My beta can handle things in the south,” He said, and I thanked him.

Hardy said there has been calm in the south since we made the arrests. and he was willing to stick around to help us finish.

I left the lounge and headed to my room, worried about how Zora would take the news about Lori.

I was glad Zora had Lori followed, but the thought that we could have caught the bastard if we had only held on to Lori a little longer was disturbing.

I entered the room, and Zora was sleeping peacefully on the bed. The commotion and waiting must have exhausted her.

We waited for three days before we got the result that we wanted.

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She was bound to sleep.

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I moved close to her, and she looked peaceful. I just hoped that the news that I was about to give her would not take her peace away.

I went to shower, and after standing under the warm water for almost thirty minutes, I got over my anger and anxiety and decided to meet the problem head-on. I decided I would have the Lawrences interrogated by the next day.

I exited the bathroom and called Marcel while in the closet, on the phone. because he was still at the council prison interrogating prisoners.

I told him what I had learned from Ramsey, and he was in shock.

“We need to do something. We need to ensure we catch her and bring her back to the north for questioning.” I said, and he sighed.

“We should discuss this when I return,” he said, and I hung up.

I exited the room, and Zora was awake. She sat up in bed and smiled at

1. me.

“You are home,” she said, looking beautiful with her messy hair and sleepy eyes.

“Yes, I am home,” I said with a smile and sat beside her in bed. I

intertwined my fingers with hers and kissed her hand. Then I pressed her palm to my beard and closed my eyes. I needed her scent to calm Cremin down.

“What is the matter, darling?” She asked, and I sighed and looked at her. I did not know how she would take what I was about to tell her, but it was

necessary.

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Content

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Chapter **247**

Zora

Darius's movements woke me up from sleep. I heard him talking to someone in the closet on the phone, and I wondered what the matter was.

I must have been asleep for hours.

After winning the votes to be king, all the tension that built up dissipated, leaving me tired and in need of rest.

I was feeling refreshed, but Monica could feel Cremin's uneasiness which meant Darius had learned something disturbing or something had gone wrong. I braced myself for the worst and waited for him to come out.

He finally exited the closet and joined me in the bed. Though he seemed relaxed, he felt nervous. His gestures could not fool me. I felt Cremin's turmoil, and I knew something was wrong. I wondered what he must have learned that would cause him to behave like this. I looked at his dark eyes and smiled.

"Your majesty," I teased, and he smiled at me.

"Oh, Zora," he said, and I knew it was serious because he did not call me green-eyes.

"Lori was our link to the king," he said, and I sat up in shock.

"Elaborate," I said, and he sighed.

"Ramsey told us everything. Casey was there. How she recruited him, how they used Casey, how they planned that you and Casey would die. It's a mess, Zora, but she planned it all and those babies aren't Casey's. They belong to **Jenny's** son because she claimed her lover, who **is** the king, is a

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Hand," he said, **and** I gasped.

I felt terrible for **Casey** because he did not deserve that degree **of** deception.

“Yes, and that is why we would have the Brian arrest her,” he said, and I shook my head.

I knew everyone was angry, and emotions were running high. But we had to be smart about it.

I had someone watching her quite alright, and that meant our cause wasn't hopeless, and she had not gotten away, but we had to be wise.

“I do not think that is wise. Let her believe she has fooled all of us and gotten away with it. Let us watch her so she can lead us to the king. She is still a pawn in this. Whether she is his bitch or not, it doesn't matter. she is replaceable, but if we catch him, we will end the threat,” I told him, and he nodded, understanding my point of view.

“So you think we should just watch her?” he asked, and I nodded.

“Yes. She will not go to him immediately because we have her father in our custody. We have to make her believe that we have lost her and she is free. She is bound to visit the king, and then we will catch them. Meanwhile, pull all your resources together, let's find that bastard,” I said.

“What if...” he began, and I interrupted him.

“If we had held her here, she wouldn't give him up, and she won't lead us to him. He won't come for her either. The bastard seems selfish and wicked to allow his pregnant mate to play a dangerous game.

He left the woman he claimed to love with another man. Casey fucked her day and night, Darius. While I was there, they were like rabbits. No man that genuinely loves a woman would use her like that. To the so-called king, she is **a tool** and a means to an end,” I said, and he frowned.

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Chapter **247**

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“He claimed her, Zora, and he got her pregnant,” he said, and I nodded.

“She wanted him to claim her, so he gave her what she wanted. He knew she would carry out the task diligently if he possessed her heart. If he treated her like a hit, she would have betrayed him to Casey, but she didn’t because she had the illusion that he loved her and they would end up together. That is very dangerous thinking.

He doesn’t care about her or the babies in her womb. She is just another tool. If we held her, she won’t give him up because of love, and he won’t come for her, but allowing her to be free would make her unwillingly lead us to him.

Just wait and see. Let’s focus on your crowning and our wedding. Once Lori leads us to the bastard, we will catch him.

Let us maintain the status quo and continue to drill the prisoners. Let us keep Lori’s involvement out of it. We do not need to tell the prisoners what we know

Tell all the people that know of Lori’s involvement to keep it quiet. Word must not get out that we know. I want her to be free. I want to fool her the way she fooled us.

She might even reach out to Casey to determine if he knows anything: he mustn’t let her know. He must maintain his behaviour. Pretend Ramsey did not give her up.

We need to treat her the way she treated all of us. Fool her. She is our only viable lead to the bastard king. We have to catch him through her. It would be sweet justice,” I said, beaming at him.

I needed him to relax. I was worried internally, but I needed my mate to be sharp. He sighed with relief and nodded.

“She gave Annika a silver dust capsule. The girl is in a comma,” he added, and I gasped.

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I remembered the hands Lori kept in her pocket and how **she** rushed to hold Annika's hand through the bars. That **was** when she must have handed it to her

.

I was angry at Lori that she would go **as** far as encouraging her cousin to kill herself for her selfish benefit.

Lori would suffer and die a slow and painful death. I know I will enjoy it because finding out she never cared for Casey broke my heart.

She ruined my marriage and my friendship for selfish reasons. I hated her. Poor Casey is alone now because of her. She would die a very painful death, and I would dish out the pain.

"They should feed her milk and tea tree oil. She would come through in a day or two. If the silver caused damage, it would take a few weeks for her

to repair fully, and she would be ready for questioning.

"They should use a feeding tube." I said, knowing the remedy of what she took.

Silver dust belonged to the east. The bitch knew the north did not understand how the poison worked.

"Once she is alright, I will drill her about her secret conversation with Lori. Lori must have wanted her dead for a reason. Annika knows something, and I want to find out what it is." I said, and he nodded.

"Thank you for making sense of all this, Zora. I was confused and mad. I will reach out to everyone to act normal, but I won't tell anyone we have eyes on the bitch." He said, and I nodded.

He went to make some phone calls while I went to the bathroom to freshen up

.

It wasn't long before I stepped into the shower when Darius joined me. He held me under the water from behind, and I giggled.

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Chapter 247

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I **wasn't** expecting he would be in the **state** of mind to make love to me, but **his** hardness said otherwise.

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Chapter **248**

Zora

I turned to look at him, and he bent to kiss my lips. He lifted me up, and I wrapped my legs around him.

Kissing me, he placed himself inside me and began to pump. I liked it.

I knew we couldn't do this soon because of my growing bump, so I enjoyed it.

He travelled with his kisses to the sweet spot on my neck, and I looked up with my eyes shut to enjoy the feeling. I wanted him to claim me so severely, and Monica wanted it too.

Darius carried me out of the shower into the bedroom and laid me on the

bed to continue what he had started in the shower.

Laying spent on the bed, he turned to look at me.

“Guess what?” he said, and I was attentive.

“Hardy hooked up with Shanon,” He said, and I gasped and then smiled.

“Wow!” I said because I did not see that coming at all.

“How did you find out?” I asked him, and he smiled.

“After hearing what Lori did to Casey, and knowing Nikolas is involved and that he is at large, Hardy became worried that Shanon might be a part of it too and might be playing him just like Lori played Casey. You needed to see him; he was a confused mess,” Darius said, and I frowned.

“That **is** serious,” I said, and Darius nodded.

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Chapter 248

“Apparently, **she** told him my father was discussing something

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confidential with her uncle when she walked in on them. My father thought she heard the discussion, and because **of** that, her uncle offered to **take her away** to spare her life.

Also, she did not return because since my father must have done that to her, my mother might do the same.

It was weird, but I know my father has killed people for less, so it is plausible that she had to follow Glenda’s father to the south to avoid my father’s wrath.

When we catch Nikolas, I want to find out what he was discussing with my father that made him send Shanon away. It must be very serious.” he said, and I had a theory.

“What if it was his bastard? What if Nikolas knew of the bastard or what transpired between him and Jenny. Looking at everything, Jenny was your father’s darkest secret. What he did with that woman was enough for him. to lose face. He had to somehow salvage himself.

He did not want people to know of her. He flirted with many women but kept Jenny a secret because something bad might have come out of it. So he might have been discussing either Jenny or her son with Nikolas and thought Shannon heard,” I said and shook my head after thinking of my theory and realising I had nothing to support it with.

“I might also be wrong; she might have lied about the reason. I guess we will never know until we catch Nikolas,” I said, and he nodded.

“Alpha Ramsey told me that the fake king has a very powerful person behind him.” He said, which made it more interesting because if that was the case, then this bastard was not the one at the top, but a means to an end.

“We need to catch the guy to know what is really happening here,” I said, not wanting to overthink the situation.

“Let us follow the plan and see what happens from there. Your

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inauguration **is in five days**. Let us rest so you can look sharp that day. I **can’t** wait for you to be crowned,” I said, and he smiled and touched **my**

nose

“And you will be queen a week after the inauguration,” he pointed out, and I beamed at him.

I had butterflies thinking of my upcoming wedding and claiming. I could not wait to be completely joined to Darius. I looked forward to it.

We remained in bed in each other's arms until we finally fell asleep.

Morning came, and we went for breakfast. Everyone was present. There was an awkwardness in the atmosphere even though not everyone present knew of Lori's treachery, the ones that knew made it radiate into the atmosphere.

I noticed Jake was not around, and when I asked about him. Nellie said he had gone to Wonderland to see his son. His daughter was still locked up in the Estate, but I doubted we would yield anything important. As things were, all that mattered was Lori, the Hand guy, and the person supporting

him.

None of the people we had locked up presently could give us useful information. Lori and the Hand handled the information so well that no one would be useful if caught.

Lori might not be the mastermind, but she was his tool, the one he sent and the only one that had direct contact with him and knew who he was. She was all we needed, so I will be satisfied with having an eye on her until they meet and we swoop in.

"How did the questioning go?" Nellie asked. I wondered why she decided to have breakfast with us instead of David and his family.

"We are still trying to get as much information as possible from the prisoners," Darius said to stop others from telling her what was really going on, and she smiled at him.

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Chapter 248

"Your Majesty," she teased and looked at Abelardo,

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“Your Eminence,” she teased him too, but both Darius and Abelardo had false smiles on their faces. No one could miss it. They sucked at acting, and Nellie caught on.

“What’s with the two of you? You should be in celebratory mode,” she said, surprised by their mood. Darius nodded at her.

“We can’t celebrate when the king is still at large, and some people are missing,” he said, and Nellie nodded.

“Still, you got some victory, you should be proud of yourselves. Now you have the power to deal with them as you see fit without that corrupt council getting involved. It is a huge improvement,” She said, and they nodded.

“Anyway, we are almost done with the wedding plans for the blue moon. I wanted to know if you all will be going on honeymoons before we start implementing the plan,” She asked, and Darius nodded.

“Yes, I will be taking a short holiday with my wife,” He said. The others agreed to do the same, and Nellie nodded.

“I will look for the perfect spot. Fit for Royalty,” she said. There was genuine joy in her eyes. I wondered what would happen if she found out the truth.

After breakfast, Darius went to speak to his friends while Kara and I joined Eloise in her wing.

The Gamma wing was stunning, and I noticed that Eloise had made plenty of modifications to the place. She had always been the type to own a place thoroughly, and this was her own wing.

We entered her bedroom and sat in the living section of the room.

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“**What is this** I hear about that **snake?**” Eloise asked about Lori and **then** served **us** juice.

“**I was** surprised too.” Kara said.

“What are we going to do? We let the ring leader go,” Eloise said, and I nodded.

“I still can’t wrap my head around it,” I confessed.

I had maintained a strong facade to lend Darius strength, but the truth of the situation was that Lori outsmarted us, and it did not sit well with me at all.

“She wasn’t dumb after all, cunning bitch,” Kara said, giving Lori a promotion.

“I used to think she was dumb, but after Theo told me what she managed to pull off, I have to give it to her; she is smart,” Eloise said, and I stood up and began to pace.

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Chapter **249**

Zora

“Crying, trying to look weak, begging and pretending to be desperate, pretending to care about Casey,” Kara said, describing Lori’s behaviour.

“I know you might find this offensive. Zora, but I do not feel sorry for Casey. He made his bed with thorns, he should lie on it, but damn to set her father up a

and ask her cousin to swallow poison while she roams free is cold. There was no way she did all this for love, that selfish bitch.” Eloise said, and I nodded.

“I think she did.” I said, and Eloise shook her head.

“No, Zora, she is incapable of love,” She argued, and I shook my head.

“On the contrary. She is capable of it, and it is the dangerous kind. Being pregnant while planning an uprising isn’t easy, but she wanted to tie herself to the man. That was why she transferred her bond and got pregnant by him too. She did it all to keep him. Call it what you must, but it is an act of desperation. A way of holding on to something you believe might slip away. If anything, I believe he is using her,” I said, and Kara asked me to elaborate; I told them the same things I said to Darius, and they understood that aspect.

“Well, she is out of our reach now,” Eloise said, and I shook my head.

“Not really. I have a Brian on her trail. I did not want her out of sight, so I had someone watch her from the moment she left.” I said, and Eloise

beamed **at** me.

“Brilliant,” She said happily, and I nodded.

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Chapter 249

“How **did** you know to **do** that?” Kara asked, **and I** smiled.

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“**Her** weird conversation with Annika, the fact that she gave me the drive instead of **Casey** and that every one was uneasy about releasing her. It was enough for me to double-check. I needed to make sure,” I said, and Kara

smiled.

“Very well. Send reinforcements and have them drag her ass back here,” Kara said, and I shook my head at the same time Eloise said no.

“Why not?” Kara asked, and Eloise spoke before me.

“The snake is home free; she is bound to slip up,” She said, and I chuckled because Eloise was right.

“Think of it this way: She believes she has fooled everyone and is free. She will try to meet her lover or mate, whatever the douchebag is to her. Once she does, we will know who he is and catch him.

If what Zora suspects about their relationship is true, then to him, she is dispensable. If we catch her, he would just go into hiding, and she might be too stupid to want to give him up.

We need her to reach out to him and then go for both of them together,” she said, and I smiled at Eloise because she understood why I had not moved to arrest Lori.

“Then send that Brian reinforcements. It wasn’t difficult for Liam to know he was being followed,” Kara pointed out, and I nodded.

“We had amateurs following him because of the impromptu situation; in his case, he knew he had been made, and his associates were also hunting him. It is a different scenario, but I will send Levi for good measure. They are good at their job,” I said.

Just then, **my** phone rang, and Wilson **was** on the line. I answered immediately.

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Chapter 249

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“**Your Majesty**,” **he** said, addressing me by my future title, and I could not **believe** it had happened. Everything seemed unreal, but it had happened, and that **is** where we are now.

“Yes, Wilson,” I said.

“Lori Kuhn checked into a hotel in Cain, and Jacob Mikhailov just joined her,” He said, and I was on alert.

“Send reinforcement to the Brian. I want a minute-by-minute detailing of their meeting, discussions and behaviour towards each other, now,” I said.

“Okay, I will have the Brian contact you after their meeting. I will also deploy two men there.” He said.

“No, send Levi,” I said and hung up.

“So?” Kara asked, eager to hear what was happening.

“Lori is in Cain, and Jacob Mikhailov just joined her at the hotel.”

“Do you think he is the one?” Kara asked eagerly, and I shook my head.

“I am not sure. I doubt he it, but we could never tell. The Brian on her has been asked to stay on her and watch them. If they end up fucking, then we will move in on the bastard. If not, we will wait for them to finish the meeting, and when they are far apart, arrest the bastard. We do not want him roaming about the place freely.” I said, and they agreed.

We talked about our wedding and what we would wear on that day. And even though we tried to make it sound as if that was the only thing that mattered, the situation with Lori loomed at the back of our minds, reducing the joy and enthusiasm that we were supposed to feel. We did not know what to do about it.

Three hours later, a **call** came in from a number on Cains Island. I answered immediately.

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Although we had a lot of issues to deal with, life **was still** passing by, and we could not allow Lori and her king to stop us from living it.

I **was** proud of how far we had all come, and becoming actual Royalty was a considerable step up.

I planned on enjoying every moment and supporting the man I love through this huge milestone and remarkable transition.

It was truly great because Darius had peacefully achieved the one thing Collier wanted but did not know how to do.

Casey had come through for him, and I was grateful to my ex for his loyalty.

On our way out, Nellie stopped us, but when I told her what we were planning to do, she decided to take the whole gang along and soon what was meant to be an outing that consisted of my friends and I, Neva, Nicole and Nellie became a part of it and just as expected, Nellie took charge. We let her and tried to rest our minds. As long as we had an eye on that bitch, Lori, she was still a mouse in our maze.

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Chapter 250

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Chapter 250

Darius

After breakfast, we had to converge at the lounge to discuss matters. Zora went with Eloise and Kara while my mother left us to handle the issues concerning the upcoming ceremonies.

I have never been this mentally busy, but dealing with this king forced me to put my brain cells to work.

If it weren't for the lives it threatened, I would have said I was enjoying the cat-and-mouse game the uprising was playing.

"Four days to go, and you will be the official king. How do you feel about it?" Abelardo asked me, and I looked at him, searching my mind for an honest answer.

"Honestly, Abelardo. I feel nothing. I feel under pressure like I will be taking up more responsibilities," I confessed, and he laughed.

"To think father fought tooth and nail for what was given to you on a platter," he said in deep thought.

I knew Abelardo cared for our father a lot and wasn't aware of what our father did to him. I hope the time won't come when I must tell him the man he held on to in his happy fairytale memory never acknowledged his worth.

"I never agreed with your ideology, Darius, but I do now," he said and sat beside me.

Marcel and Raphael were making themselves comfortable, while **Casey** and Hardy were yet to join us.

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Chapter 250

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"If you had **attacked** the south and destroyed the east **as** I advised, these people would have won. I am glad you know when to be merciful and when to be ruthless," he confessed, and just then, Casey and Hardy joined

1. **us.**

"Since you told me what Ramsey said, I took it upon myself to check the people on that list and the names checked out. The list she gave us was accurate. I returned to the prison to show Ramsey, and he agreed with the list. Those were names of their associates and members," He said with

concern.

“So, what are you driving at?” Abelardo asked him.

“Lori and her lover planned on using these people, and if it goes wrong. dispose of them. See what she did to her cousin and father. They are trying to make us clean up their mess,” He said, and I knew where he was driving.

“The uprising group has ended, and the so-called king man would look for another means of getting what he wants. See these people and the uprising thing as a failed project.

These people on this list do not have any viable information about the king man and Lori.

They make her seem like a victim and keep saying he is an older man. That would force us to a point at Ramsey, but we know Ramsey doesn't have the capacity and smarts for this.

They have stylishly disposed of their allies so they can go into hiding and start afresh later.” Marcel said, and Raphael cleared his throat.

“That is why it is paramount that Annika wakes up. She must have information that is not in circulation to make Lori go as far as slipping her poison. We might be wrong, but it's worth the attempt,” he said, and I nodded. Just then, Zora linked me.

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Chapter 250

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“Lori is in **Cains**, and Jacob Mikhailov just visited her. They argued, and

T

he left. I asked Hendrix to stay with her. Levi will be joining him in **Cains**,” She linked me.

“Let's talk about it later,” I said, and she closed the connection.

“What is the matter?” Marcel said, he must have noticed my eyes glazed over while Zora and I communicated. A not so nice giveaway that I always do my best to mask.

“Lori is in Cains,” I linked Marcel and Raphael, not wanting Hardy and Casey to know.

“Ramsey said we should check there,” Marcel linked back.

“She is in Cains, and Jacob Mikhailov visited her at her hotel to complain and argue,” I linked them, and Marcel gently nodded, not wanting us to discuss it further.

“So what are we going to do? You asked that we should not declare her wanted,” Hardy said, and I nodded.

“Yes, we want her to think she succeeded and is home free. She will contact Casey. He is now on the council and very powerful. She will contact him,” I said, and Casey frowned.

“I believe there will be trouble in paradise soon,” I said with a broad grin.

“What do you mean?” Marcel asked me, and I cleared my thought.

“Just as everyone on that list was a target for a specific reason and their emotions were worked on, I believe the king man targeted Lori,” I said, and they were confused.

“Her father was the only one that survived the uprising against Collier, my father. It had to count for something. This king man knew he needed a protective shield in case the operation blew up. So he recruited Lori,

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worked on her and made her fall in love so she would wholeheartedly do his bidding: to recruit her father and make him the face of the operation

On the surface, it would look like a continuation of what happened in my father's era, but in actual sense, it is something new," I said, and **Casey** shook his head.

"I think they fell in love," he said, and I nodded.

"I thought as much until Zora broke it down for me," I said and looked at Casey because what I was about to say would make both of us

uncomfortable.

"We fell in love with the same woman. I can never imagine sharing Zora with someone else so I can achieve my goal, I would find another way. Likewise you

.

It took you a while to let go of her, and you are still battling yourself. Would you have sent Zora to Hardy, allowed him to sleep with her and claim her so you can have power over his region?" I asked him.

His eyes were misty, and he shook his head.

I knew he was fighting fresh tears, and I did not mean to be cruel. I just wanted them to see my point.

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Content