

Darkness Mate Cheated Versus Fated by Victory Done

Chapter 31

Chapter 31

Chapter **31**

Zora's POV

The servants glided gracefully, collecting the plates, while Darius instructed them to leave the fruits and dessert undisturbed.

1288 Vouche

Curiosity tugged at me, and I couldn't resist asking, "What about Shanon?" Darius drew me nearer, creating an intimate space between us.

Seated upon the plush carpet, our backs supported by the bed, we reveled in the coziness of the dimmed lights. It was the perfect setting, but Darius wasn't quite in the mood for such ambiance.

"She was younger than me by a year, and we had dreams of a shared future." He began, his voice tinged with emotion. "As the Alpha in my family, I knew I needed to be at my strongest, but she was more than enough for me. She belonged to the beta breed, but that was sufficient. However, fate had a different plan for her brother. He found his destined mate, and it wasn't his girlfriend. The heartbreak she endured from witnessing that haunted her, so she chose to move to the southern region with her uncle before my eighteenth birthday. She wanted to shield herself from potential heartbreak if she wasn't meant to be my fated mate. Since then, I've never heard from her again." My heart ached for him, recognizing the profound sadness in his voice.

"He expressed his willingness to defy destiny for her sake," he remarked, evoking a smile from me.

Chapter 31

"Much easier said than done," I replied, averting my gaze. However, he gently redirected my attention towards him.

"I understand that you've heard those words before, only to see the person backtrack on them, but I'm n

ot like Casey. If I were in his position, I would have wholeheartedly stood by my promise, even if it meant enduring challenges. I would have embraced the opportunity to train harder,” he declared firmly, instilling a sense of belief in me. However, I

wasn't naive.

“Regrettably, she departed without purpose because I never encountered my destined one, and I had to settle,” he confessed, prompting me to stroke his hair as I looked deep into his eyes.

“The pain is indescribable. I empathize with her apprehension,” I acknowledged, recollecting my own past experiences. In response, he kissed me, and this time, he didn't withdraw.

Our lips intertwined, and I heard Monica's ecstatic howl resonating in my mind as he skillfully removed my shirt. His eyes glistened like jet-colored sage, compelling me to tear his shirt apart since I struggled with the buttons. I delighted in touching his body, tracing the muscles I had yearned to feel beneath my fingertips.

As I ran my hands over his muscles, a surge of desire coursed through me, causing

my core to tighten and an uncontrollable moan to escape my lips. His scent enveloped me, captivating my senses, and I yearned for him. We shared passionate kisses, shedding our clothes until we lay bare on the carpet. Suddenly, a deep growl echoed through the room, vibrating through his body. His primal instincts had awakened. With strength and grace, he lifted me effortlessly and gently placed me on the bed.

Chapter 31

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“I've been craving this moment ever since I laid eyes on you,” he confessed, his voice filled with longing, as he laid me down on the bed. I clung to him desperately.

I didn't want an inch of separation between us. Every fiber of my being ached for his touch.

“Let’s savor every moment,” he whispered sensually into my ear, teasing it with his nibbles.

Then he sensually licked and sucked on the spot where a mark should be. Teasing me with his teeth, sending waves of pleasure through my body. and eliciting passionate moans from me. The wetness between my thighs intensified, and I surrendered completely to the overwhelming sensations.

He journeyed to the sensitive curve of my neck, softly sucking and nibbling, causing me to lose control and become a moaning wreck on the bed. I ran my fingers through his hair, gripping it tightly, craving more of him. I couldn’t explain the intense hunger and desire I felt for him, but I yearned for him nonetheless. He eagerly suckled on my nipples, taking them one by one, while I surrendered to his every whim. The sensations overwhelmed my senses.

“Ahhh!” I cried out, unable to contain the immense pleasure that surged through me.

I reached for his arousal, and he allowed me to touch it. It felt rigid and throbbing, and I desperately wanted it. He moved away from my breasts, allowing me to feel him fully. He positioned himself on the bed, his length in my hand. His eyes filled with lust, and I mirrored his passion. Leaning in, I took his member into **my** mouth, eagerly pleasuring him.

Chapter 31

He gently grasped my head as I moved my head up and down his shaft. He groaned and moaned, rhythmically thrusting into my mouth.

He was well-endowed, so I firmly held his shaft with my hand, working on it diligently. I took him deep into the back of my throat, even causing myself to gag. My eyes welled up with tears, but all I could focus on was the gratification that awaited me when he filled me completely. He pumped, and I bobbed in sync. His grip on my hair tightened, signaling his impending release.

“Fuck! Zora,” he growled.

“Oh, my goodness!” he exclaimed, his voice filled with pleasure, as he continued thrusting until

I felt his manhood twitch, releasing his climax into my mouth. I eagerly swallowed it all, sensually teasing him by licking my lips.

“Wow, Zora, you’re absolutely incredible,” he praised, still catching his breath.

Breaking away from his embrace, I gazed into his captivating, wise eyes. which held a hint of intimidation. I had taken him by surprise, and the anticipation of experiencing the fruits of my labor made my core tighten with excitement.

He gently laid me down, parting my legs wide open, and remarked, “Time for a delightful treat,” leaving me speechless with anticipation

He passionately dove in with his mouth, his tongue **expertly** exploring my most intimate depths. Overwhelmed with pleasure, I instinctively squeezed my own breasts, intensifying the sensations. He skillfully licked

Chapter 31

and sucked, tracing his way from the entrance all the way up to my sensitive pussy.

“Ah! Oh!” I cried out in ecstasy.

ZBB Vouchers

I trembled with delight as he tenderly caressed my pussy, his tongue teasing and exploring every sensitive inch. Waves of pleasure crashed over me, intensifying with each lick and suck until I could hardly bear it. Unable to contain myself any longer, I instinctively dug my nails into his shoulders, giving in to my untamed desires.

“Oh God, I’m about to climax,” I moaned.

The anticipation built rapidly as his skilled tongue worked its magic. Relentlessly, he maintained the perfect rhythm, and as the orgasm overcame me. I couldn’t help but cry out in ecstasy. Ignoring my pleas for mercy, he continued to suck, sending me into a frenzy of pleasure. I quivered and moaned, unable to hold back the overwhelming sensation, until I began to scream, completely consumed by the intensity of the experience.

“Now, Darius. I need you inside me,” I pleaded, craving his presence.

He paused momentarily and swiftly positioned me on all fours. With a forceful thrust, he penetrated me, starting a relentless rhythm. His grip on my hips guided the powerful motion, his hardness reaching deep and stretching me in all the right **ways**. Feeling completely fulfilled, I couldn't have asked for a better birthday gift. He ravished me with unbridled passion, satisfying all the pent-up desire and anticipation that had consumed me until that very moment.

Chapter 31

"Mine," he growled possessively, pumping into me.

"Yes," I managed to gasp, completely under his spell.

288 Vouchers

He knew exactly what he was doing, claiming me with every powerful stroke. I realized there was no turning back from this encounter. He spun me around, lifting my legs onto his shoulders, and continued to thrust into me with an intensity that left me breathless.

"No one will ever take you away from me," he snarled, his rhythm unyielding and swift.

Overwhelmed by the building sensation, I lost sight of everything else. The climax approached rapidly, and I knew he had only just begun. My orgasm washed over me, and he relentlessly drove into me, prolonging the ecstasy. He refused to stop, plunging deep and shattering my very core, unlocking confessions I never thought I would reveal. It was as if I was transported to another world, seeing stars and not wanting to descend from such unimaginable heights. He had taken complete control of me.

"Promise me you'll always be mine, no matter what," he groaned, reducing my thoughts to mush with his mind-blowing lovemaking.

"Yes, yes!" I managed to utter, consumed by another wave of anticipation.

"Keep your eyes on me when you climax," he commanded, fixing his gaze up on me.

I locked eyes with him, and as the orgasm surged through me, he maintained his steady rhythm. Eventually, he stilled himself, releasing everything into me.

Breathless, Darius lay beside me, attempting to recover. I felt completely

Chapter 31

288 Voucher

satisfied, content in his embrace as I nestled my head against his chest.

“Don’t ever leave me, Zora,” he whispered, his fingers gently stroking my hair.

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Chapter 32

Content

Chapter **32**

Casey’s POV

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Zora’s letter arrived in my hands, bearing the unexpected mark of the Dark Lord Alpha. My astonishment knew no bounds as I pondered the depths of their unlikely alliance.

Zora, a woman so captivating and dear, ventured into realms unknown. Through her letters, a picture formed, assuring me of her well-being. I couldn’t help but feel a pang of envy that she had found happiness without my presence. Alas, my own heart still bore the scars of a shattered love, a void left when I set her free. I wondered who provided solace during her trying times.

Lori, having returned to our house, busied herself adorning the living room with care. Yet, I denied her access to the room once shared with Zora, desperate to preserve the lingering scent until time washed it away. The arduous task of reconstructing the ravaged aftermath consumed my days, rendering me absent from regional gatherings. Two summon

ses arrived, neither of which I acknowledged. Cruz, in my mind, bore the weight of blame for my misfortune. Some may argue that my marriage had withered long before the attackers arrived, but I persevered in my attempts to mend it.

I was trapped in a web of emotions. Despite the undeniable connection between Lori and me, I felt imprisoned. It seemed as though destiny had snatched away my freedom and played cruel games with my life. The malevolent Dark Lord Alpha had torn Zora away from me.

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Chapter 32

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While I genuinely wished Zora happiness, deep down, I longed for the Dark Lord Alpha to release her from his clutches. I fervently prayed for the day when she would return home. With open arms, I would shower her with boundless love, vowing never to cause her tears again. It was a promise I had made to myself, etching it into my heart. In the midst of my contemplation, I found myself in my office, overcome by a sense of stagnation.

Suddenly, Dustin entered and presented me with an enormous package, accompanied by a letter. Curiosity piqued, I inquired about the sender, causing my Beta to appear visibly troubled.

“It’s from the Dark Lord Alpha,” he replied, his voice filled with concern. My heart skipped a beat, fearing the worst for Zora. Trembling hands gripped the strings securing the box, my anxiety growing.

As I cautiously opened it, a gruesome sight greeted my eyes: the severed head of an Eastern warrior. Although the image was grisly and sorrowful, relief flooded over me as I realized it wasn’t Zora. My trembling fingers then unfolded the letter.

“Alpha Casey Grady, I graciously received your letter and fulfilled your request by delivering it to your former spouse. I also showed kindness by allowing her to send you a letter in return, granting you some closure. I hold you in high re

gard as an honorable man, but I currently have grievances with the eastern territory

Your region joined forces with Alpha Hardy and launched an attack on my sanctuary in the north, aiming to forcibly take Zora away from me. They resorted to using poisonous gas and attempted to eliminate my people. Consider this a message that I won't stand idle while your people insult and provoke me. I am sending you this **package** as a warning, reminding you that I won't take another attack lightly.

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Chapter 32

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Chapter 32

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Chapter 32

1288 Vouchers

I understand that your packs are still recovering from the previous encounter, which makes this move quite foolish. The only reason I'm refraining from striking back immediately is because of Zora. I am aware that she would be upset if I were to harm you but don't test my patience, Alpha Cas eynardo. Whatever business you have with Hardy should remain confined to the east and south. Zora now belongs to me, and any further attempts to snatch her away will be seen as an act of war.

I won't settle for mere trophies or peace offerings. I am prepared to bring the entire east to ruin, burning it to the ground.

Yours in defiance,

Darius Hand."

As I read the letter, my trembling hands conveyed the intensity of his rage. It was evident that he felt a possessive attachment towards Zora. I didn't need to speculate further, he had made exceptions for her, which went against his usual character. It seemed he might have developed feelings for her.

I couldn't fathom why Hardy would send men to rescue Zora from the north, nor did I know who provided the eastern soldiers he needed. Missing the meeting had left me in the dark. The time for mourning my loss had passed; now was the moment to embrace my role as a leader. It **was** time for me to seize control and take charge of the situation.

I glanced at my Beta, locking eyes with Dustin. "Dustin, have you heard about the **attack?**" I inquired.

“Just caught wind of it, **Alpha**. Seems Alpha Shepherd wanted Kara back

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Chapter 32

and joined forces with Hardy to reclaim Kara and Zora,” he replied, provoking my fury.

288 Vouchers

“Without consulting me? Who the hell do they think they are? I hold dominion over the East. This is a grave insult,” I exclaimed, my anger simmering. Dustin fell silent.

“Summon a meeting and invite that despicable bastard, Hardy. I demand answers as to why he and Shepherd would betray us like this,” I commanded, and Dustin departed.

I pondered what gave Hardy the audacity to risk a full-blown war over Zora. They barely crossed paths, shared a single dance, and suddenly he believed he had the right. Did he imply that my love for her wasn't enough to pursue them? Zora had willingly surrendered herself to save others. If it meant only my life was at stake, I would have gambled everything to retrieve her, even if it meant dying in the attempt.

Without hesitation, I immediately dialed Cruz's number, for he was the one responsible for introducing Hardy into our lives.

“Hey, there,” he slurred over the phone, clearly intoxicated. I had no idea what he was drinking, but I didn't bother questioning him about it.

“Have you heard about the attack?” I inquired, and he remained silent

“Just found out. Can't wrap my head around Shepherd and Hardy putting us in his mess. I'm scared, Casey. If the Dark Lord Alpha strikes back, I'll have nothing to offer,” he confessed, and I could see why he sought

solace in alcohol.

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Chapter 32

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Letting out a sigh, I relayed, “We better pray he doesn’t retaliate because he’s not planning to seize anything. He sent me a message declaring he’d set the entire east ablaze.” His gasp echoed through the line.

“We must prove our innocence to him.” Cruz asserted.

“What about Sheperd?” I inquired, and he let out a weary sigh.

“Sheperd’s dug his own grave,” he declared.

“But you’re the one who brought Hardy to the east. You orchestrated the alliance with that scumbag, and ever since then, it’s been nothing but trouble. The Dark Lord Alpha never bothered with us until we forged ties with the South.” I accused.

“What are you suggesting, Casey?” he asked, and I couldn’t help but sigh once **more**.

“Tell me, if you claim innocence in orchestrating the initial attack, then who do you think will carry it out on your behalf?” I inquired, and a heavy silence fell upon him. I could sense his comprehension, yet fear silenced his words.

“Do you believe Elbert intends to get us into trouble with the formidable Dark Lord Alpha?” he asked, to which I chuckled

“I cannot say for certain, but my suspicions lie with him. That’s why he plans to join forces with Sheperd and launch an assault on the northern region. Deep down, he knows he cannot emerge victorious. We’re dealing with the Dark Lord Alpha, after all,” I conveyed, and Cruz remained quiet.

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Chapter 32

“I expect to see you at tonight’s gathering. Be in a clear state of mind.” I informed him before ending the call.

After conversing with Cruz, my deductions occupied my thoughts Elbert was cunning. The initial mission was meant to be swift, but Sheperd served as his backup plan. If his soldiers failed, it wouldn’t just implicate the South, the East would also be drawn in, compelling us to unite and confront the North in case the Dark Lord Alpha sought revenge.

I hoped, for the sake of us all, that my speculations were incorrect. Because if they proved true, we were in deep trouble.

Content

Chapter 33

288 Voucher

Chapter 33

Casey’s POV

I faced the skilled and strong warriors from the north during a fight. While I was on my way home, my phone rang, and I answered it, it was Sheperd

His first words were, “Casey, I am sorry,” Sheperd said, then continued. “It sounded like a good idea at the time. He didn’t inform me that he was going after Zora. He only mentioned helping me retrieve Kara.”

I found it strange that Sheperd would want Kara back, considering all the suffering he had put her through because of Gabriella Shieldse. I had heard that he used to abuse Kara. Why would he now desperately want her back?

I asked him, “I thought you wanted her out of your lives?”

He sighed and replied, “I want her back. My life has fallen apart in the past month. Gabriella Shieldse is only good for sex, but her attitude is terrible. I’m starting to suspect that the things she claimed Kara did to her were lies. She simpl

y wanted to remove my wife from the picture I regret everything. I should have handed Gabriella Shieldse over to them. Now I'm fulfilling Luna's duty and doing my job. It's infuriating that fate has connected me with such a worthless piece of shit You know the messed up part? I can't hate her. Whenever she's with me, I feel foolish. My wolf just gives in. I should have risked being weak and rejected her " He ranted, and I let out a **sigh**.

Chapter 33

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I expressed my disapproval, stating that he had no right to pursue her at this moment, especially considering the madness of the Dark Lord Alpha. In response, he **let** out a growl.

He countered, saying that he didn't care. In return, I growled back.

"I care. I really care, for heaven's sake. Lives were lost the last time; how many more are we willing to sacrifice? Let it go. I'm certain she's alright. The man is treating them well," I assured him, hoping to bring him peace.

"And how can you be so sure? That man is a twisted individual. Are you aware of what happens to captured Lunas in the north?" he questioned, causing me to sigh.

"He is different, Sheperd. Zora sent me a letter confirming that she's fine. If anything was amiss, she would have found a way to subtly convey it in the letter without alerting them. I'm confident that Kara has come to terms with her belonging to the North and has moved on. You should do the same," I reasoned. His response was silence, and I let out another sigh.

"I'll see you at the meeting tonight, and make sure Hardy comes too," I told the person on the phone before hanging up. When I returned to the house, I found Lori crying at the table.

Knowing how Lori often used her manipulative tactics, I had become immune to them. So I headed to my bedroom, took a shower, got dressed, and then went back to the living room to wait for the meeting.

"Casey," Lori **called** out **as** she approached me on the couch with swollen

eyes.

Chapter 33

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“You haven’t shown any affection since I came back. I haven’t done anything to deserve this,” she said, and I looked into her eyes. She was sad, and although I knew it wasn’t her fault, I was still grieving. Part of me wanted to comfort her, but I held myself back.

“Give me some time,” I said gently, kissing her forehead.

Despite my anger, I couldn’t bring myself to hate her. She stayed with me on the couch until it was time for the meeting. I didn’t want her to come along, but she insisted, so I allowed her. As I waited for Lori to get ready. I knew I would arrive at the meeting late.

Upon reaching the meeting hall, I found an intense argument taking place. Shepherd was trying to confront Hardy, accusing him of deceiving him.

“You wanted Kara, and I wanted Zora. How did I deceive you?” Hardy defended himself, recounting what had happened. I approached him and attempted to punch him, but he caught my fist.

“You won’t hit me twice, Alpha Casey. I’ll show you respect because of our alliance, but don’t try to hit me again,” he warned, his yellowish wolf eyes flashing.

“The alliance is over. Go back to your region. You’ve caused enough trouble,” I stated firmly.

There was no need for a long discussion. They had admitted their actions, and everyone present was aware of the possible consequences. The only thing I left **was** to respond to their behavior.

Hardy looked around, hoping to find support, but no one opposed me.

10 17

Chapter 33

288 (Vouchers

“I may not be as famous or powerful as you are, but this **is** my territory, these are my people, and I am the leader. Cruz formed that alliance with my permission. I’m breaking it tonight,” I declared, and he nodded, accepting his defeat.

“You’ll regret this, Alpha Casey. The North can’t be trusted. The Dark Lord Alpha is cunning and wicked, and he will come for all of you when you least expect it,” he warned, and I chuckled.

“What does taking Zora from the north have to do with conquering it?” I questioned, highlighting the absurdity of his words.

He gave me a strange look. “It wasn’t wrong to try to rescue Zora from that jerk. She deserves better, Casey. Maybe you don’t have feelings for her. but she deserves better than being a fuck toy for the Dark Lord Alpha and his officers,” he said with pain

and anger, and I could swear he was in love with Zora. I had never seen Hardy break character before. What was wrong with him? They had only met once.

Content

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Chapter 34

Chapter **34**

Zora’s POV

1288 (Vouchers

I woke up, tangled in the sheets alongside Darius. The thought of getting out of bed didn’t appeal to me at all. As I observed him peacefully

slumbering, my heart melted with affection. His serene state stirred something deep within me, and I couldn’t resist planting a gentle kiss on his lips.

In response, he embraced me tightly and playfully tickled me, causing me to feel like a carefree teenager once again. Laughter escaped my lips, but soon subsided when he pulled me closer and planted a passionate, hungry

kiss on me.

“I’m a man with an insatiable appetite, my emerald-eyed enchantress,” he playfully remarked, prompting me to giggle in response.

“We really should venture out for dinner first. We’ve been cooped up in this room all day,” I complained, feeling the pangs of hunger after the countless waves of pleasure I had experienced.

“I thought Monica could handle it; she said all night and more. We haven’t even reached the ‘all-night’ part yet,” he teased, causing me to reluctantly leave the bed in an attempt to escape his playful advances.

He swiftly caught up with me, his mischievousness shining through as I couldn’t help **but** chuckle. **His** lips found my neck, exerting a gentle suction.

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Chapter 34

“Darius,” I gasped, to which he responded with a playful laugh.

288 Vouchers

“Come on, let’s freshen up and dress up,” he suggested, and a warm smile adorned my face.

As we showered, he took daring liberties, exploring areas that sent my excitement soaring, yet he never ventured beyond that point.

“What do you think you’re up to?” I queried as he began to dress.

“Off to dinner, my emerald-eyed beauty, just as you suggested,” he replied, and I understood his intentions.

As I reached out to grab his shirt, he halted my motion. “Feed my eyes tonight,” he uttered to me, and a mischievous grin spread across my face.

I selected a delicate lace lingerie in a mesmerizing sage hue, accompanied by a short silk robe.

I slowly adorned myself with pantyhose, intentionally drawing out each movement to tease and excite him. As I completed my dressing ritual, his desire had grown evident with a noticeable bulge.

With a seductive tone, I suggested, "Shall we proceed?" which elicited a low growl from him.

His eyes sparked with intensity, and I sensed his commanding presence looming over me. Cremin yearned for dominance.

"We wouldn't want our meal to cool down," I remarked, leaving our room

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Chapter 34

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He trailed behind me, catching up swiftly. Then, he slid his hands around my waist, skillfully concealing his erect member. With his shirt unbuttoned, his chest remained exposed.

Onlookers gazed at us in admiration, and whispers circulated among the crowd.

"Did you see how she pulled it off?" I overheard someone whisper, and it dawned on me that Darius appeared invincible to them, but he was absolutely enchanting to me.

"They make such a perfect couple." remarked someone, gazing at us in awe.

"You know she wasn't some innocent girl from the countryside. She used to be a Luna dancer in the Far East. He'll probably dump her soon," jeered a spiteful individual, and it took all my strength not to burst into laughter.

Darius tensed up, having caught wind of that last comment. I placed my hands on his chest, seeking to soothe him.

“Words **can’t** shake me, my Alpha,” I reassured him, and he gradually relaxed, yet he made sure to remember the identity of the person who uttered those words.

The woman appeared unsuspecting, but I had a strong feeling that Darius would address the situation with her later. We stepped into the dining room, and a hush fell over the crowd. It **was** evident they had been discussing us. Eloise glanced at my attire and playfully winked.

“Looks **like** someone’s finally **getting** lucky,” **she** whispered to me, and I

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Chapter 34

blushed.

“You should, too,” I encouraged her, but she averted her gaze.

1288 Vouchers

I looked over at Kara, and it seemed like she and Marcel had reconciled. They were moving faster than any of us. Darius and I took our seats, eagerly awaiting the arrival of the meal.

I gazed at my companions, realizing that our friendship had blossomed unexpectedly. The circumstances that brought us together forged a strong bond between us, as we faced similar challenges. It wasn’t what we had expected, though. We were meant to be prisoners under the control of the Alphas. Yet, here we were, being treated like royalty.

Kara and Eloise were treated better than they had ever been at home, while I found solace in my mended heart, learning to trust again. As we sat down for a meal, Darius reached for my hand and kissed it tenderly, his eyes speaking volumes.

“Enjoy your food,” he whispered, and I couldn’t help but smile, understanding his underlying message.

While we ate, our conversation revolved around the recent attack. Kara and Eloise were still caught up in the exhilaration of the fight.

“Those men belonged to Sheperd’s pack,” Kara informed us, leaving me astonished.

“That’s why I found it satisfying. I recognized some of those scoundrels. They always sided with Gabriella **Shieldse** against me,” she reminisced, **as Marcel** pulled her close.

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10 17

Chapter 34

288 Vouchers

“Well, at least your husband didn’t force his men to use you for his amusement,” Eloise remarked, and I struggled to come to terms with the fact that Cruz could subject her to such cruelty. I doubted Eloise would ever fully recover from it.

“You can’t relate because Casey was amazing. Even Lori couldn’t turn him against you, except for sharing your bed,” Kara interjected, and we laughed to lighten the atmosphere

Those scars would never completely fade, but I was grateful that the men allowed us to openly discuss our past traumas. It was a crucial part of the healing process for Kara and Eloise. As for myself, I believed I had found closure.

“Honestly, I’m glad. Otherwise, I wouldn’t be here.” I expressed, and Kara shook her head.

“We would have ended up here regardless. Cruz would have still gone ahead and caused trouble. Those men aren’t deserving of leadership. I suggest you take charge of the East before they jeopardize innocent lives for their own gains.” Kara advised Darius, who smiled appreciatively

His tolerance impressed me, and I admired that quality in him.

Content

10:17

Chapter 35

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Chapter 35

Zora's POV

He grasped her fury, recognizing her rightful anger. No one should endure such mistreatment. Jada bore visible silver scars, undoubtedly inflicted by brutal beatings, as our conflicts seldom took place in the eastern territories. The noble white wolf had endured much.

288 Voucher

"I have no affinity for seizing control of other domains. It was my father who conquered the West. As long as no one provokes me, there is no need for such actions. I trust the Alphas to make the best decisions for their people. Besides . Casey Grady will surely keep them in line." Darius stated, glancing at me. He searched my eyes, seeking something that was absent. Despite that, he still harbored an apprehension that my heart belonged to Casey. It was endearing to witness.

After we finished our meal, Darius suggested heading to the local club, which surprised me since newcomers were typically restricted to the premises.

Returning to his room, I realized that I couldn't don lingerie, transparent tunics, or elegant gowns for the club.

"I've got nothing to wear," I complained, and he grinned at me

"Don't worry, I ordered some clothes this morning. They'll be here soon," he reassured, pressing me against the wall.

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Chapter 35

I wrapped my legs around him, and he passionately ripped apart the delicate lace panties, diving into me with an overwhelming eagerness. Darius growled with contentment, and I couldn't help but be incredibly turned on as I witnessed his teeth elongating. It was a thrilling sight for

me..

His claws extended, and I held onto him tightly as he moved with a primal intensity. We were completely absorbed in our own world, paying no attention to the knocking at the door. I climaxed rapidly, and he followed suit.

Gently, he lowered me down, and I burst into laughter.

“I’ve got quite the appetite,” he murmured, playfully nibbling on my ears.

“Always ready to please,” I responded, and we shared a joyful laugh together.

He adjusted his posture, while I quickly covered my torn delicate lace lingerie with my robe. The door made a soft click, and two rolling hangers brought in a selection of clothes.

The workers silently placed two boxes on the vanity table and left the room discreetly.

As I examined the clothes, my eyes widened in delight. They were truly stunning. One box contained exquisite jewelry, while the other held an array of makeup items.

Darius had gone above and beyond. After taking a refreshing shower, I sought Darius’ assistance in choosing the perfect outfit from the new clothes.

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Chapter 35

288 Voucher

He approached the task with great care, displaying an adorable attention to detail. Eventually, we both agreed on a captivating short club dress in a deep blue shade, made of luxurious velvet. The dress had a halter neck, revealing a backless design and tastefully arranged sequins adorned its surface.

I opted for silver heels to complement the dress and let my hair flow freely, keeping my makeup simple yet elegant.

Darius wore a stylish sage-colored shirt, paired with blue jeans, and neatly tied his long hair in a ponytail. He looked absolutely breathtaking.

“You look absolutely stunning, Zora,” he complimented, and I couldn’t help but beam with joy.

“Well, you’re quite the sight yourself,” I replied, appreciating his appearance.

He smiled warmly, drew me closer, and took a deep breath, savoring my fragrance

“Zora,” he whispered into my ear, his breath sending shivers down my spine

“Yes, I promise,” I replied, locking eyes with him. He delved deep into my gaze, searching for any trace of falsehood, and I met his gaze without hesitation.

“You don’t **have** to be cautious around me, unless you want to end it. My relationship **with** Caseynardo has reached its conclusion. I’ll be by your

Chapter 35

288 uch

side, steadfast and unwavering.” I confided to him, and he leaned his forehead against mine, letting out a heartfelt sigh. Then, he pulled me into a firm embrace.

“I give you my word. I won’t let this slip away,” he vowed, and I slowly wrapped my arms around him. Our relationship was progressing rapidly, filled with fervor.

As we arrived at the castle entrance, my eyes fell upon three Jeeps, each occupied by someone. Eloise sat in one with Raphael, glimpses of her vibrant red top catching my attention.

It seemed red held a special place in her heart. Kara, on the other hand, donned a purple outfit while accompanying Marcel, and we settled into the final Jeep.

The journey was far from smooth, as we descended along the rugged road leading to the property. We ventured through a dense forest, the trees enveloping us in their majestic presence.

“We’re embarking on a journey towards the heart of a magical town known as Wonderland,” Darius announced, leaving me awestruck by the revelation that he had a family.

“I had no idea you had relatives,” I admitted, genuinely surprised, and he chuckled.

“After my father’s tragic demise, my brother and I made a pact to protect our mother. So, we whisked her away from the opulent Hand Estate and settled her here. Despite being the youngest, I inherited the Alpha genes, making me the leader. My brother **pays** occasional visits, but we don’t always see eye to eye,” he explained, piquing my curiosity.

Chapter 35

“**What** are your disagreements about?” I inquired eagerly.

288 (Vouchers

“When I assumed control, I implemented several changes, discarding some of my father’s cruel practices. He didn’t take kindly to it, and we’ve been at odds ever since,” he responded, his pain evident in his words.

“How does your mother feel about all of this?” I pressed further, and he let out a weary sigh.

“She shares some common ground with him, but not everything. You see, my mother is furious with me because I haven’t brought my father’s murderer to justice yet. And because of that, she perceives me as feeble.” he confessed, leaving me intrigued about their personalities.

If they deemed Darius weak,
I couldn’t help but wonder what their concept of ‘strength’ entailed.

“Do you know who’s responsible?” I inquired, observing as he gripped the steering wheel tightly, his knuckles turning white.

“Elbert,” he replied, pressing down on the accelerator. “That scoundrel alleged that my father had trespassed, but it was a lie. My brother engaged in a war with him,

but he wasn't prepared, so Elbert emerged victorious. My mother and brother resent me for not joining and leading the battle. However, I couldn't do it. Despite my yearning, I knew the truth. My father was a wicked man, so I couldn't entirely blame Elbert for his actions.

According to him, my father took his mother as a tribute, and she never returned to them, driving his father insane and compelling him to assume the alpha role at a **young** age.

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Chapter 35

288 Vouchere

My father ruined his life, and honestly, my father was at fault since the South hadn't committed any wrongdoing. He desired to enforce their submission and collect taxes from them. They resisted, and he retaliated. The East and West agreed to comply, but the South resisted, so he attacked. Therefore, I could fathom Elbert's fury towards my father and why he sought vengeance by killing him. Although Elbert's actions were cowardly. I could comprehend them. I purposefully abstained from joining that battle against the South because we couldn't perpetuate a cycle of killing in the name of revenge. I had to break that chain at some point," he sighed.

"Anyway, that's how the jerk ended up with the name Elbert. He killed the former wolf lord and triumphed over my brother in the war. My mother and brother despise the fact that he's still alive, which is why my older brother, Abelardo, believes he should be the Wolf Lord instead of me," he explained, and a perplexed expression crossed my face.

"But he's not the Alpha," I argued.

"Well, being the lord doesn't necessarily require Alpha genes. Abelardo attempted to convince the council of elders to remove me from power, but he failed miserably. It's a messed up situation, Zora," he said, glancing at me with a smile before returning his gaze to the road.

"I don't want you to worry about my family problems tonight. I want us to have a great time," he assured me, continuing to drive.

We chatted and giggled about insignificant matters until we finally reached Wonderland, a breathtaking city. It made me forget that we actually lived in a modern world, slightly more advanced than Mountain. Our destination was a fancy club called Starnight. It had an elegant vibe, and I clung to Darius, leaning on him,

Content

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Chapter 36

Chapter **36**

Zora's POV

As we approached the entrance, a seemingly endless line stretched out before us. However, to our delight, we were granted special treatment and whisked past the waiting crowd. Some grumbles were heard from the disgruntled onlookers, but once they realized our identity, their complaints faded into silence, replaced by a reverent and respectful hush

We were guided towards the exclusive VIP section, situated on the upper floor and equipped with its own luxurious bar. The plush sofas, provided the utmost comfort, and the lack of overcrowding added to the appeal. From our vantage point, we had a splendid view of the bustling club below, where a DJ took the stage, fueling the crowd's wild energy. All around, people embraced the freedom to dance with the help of strategically placed poles, bathed in vibrant, dimly lit hues. The pulsating beats of electronic dance music filled the air, captivating my senses.

Casey had never allowed me to experience such unbridled enjoyment. Our usual outings consisted of attending serious functions and dignified white-collar gatherings, void of the carefree and untamed nature of this vibrant atmosphere. I found myself relishing in this newfound exhilaration.

Darius decided to order champagne, and to my surprise, the waitstaff presented it to us adorned with sparkling sparklers, creating a breathtaking spectacle.

"Do you fancy a dance?" Darius inquired, his eyes filled with

Chapter 36

anticipation.

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“We’ve only just arrived; let’s wait a little while,” I replied, and he nodded understandingly.

His fingers traced a tantalizing path along my upper arms, sending shivers down my spine. As his lips met my shoulder, a moan of pleasure escaped my parted lips, and I instinctively pressed my body against his. With his arm securely wrapped around my waist, we observed the lively scene unfolding on the ground floor. Mesmerized, we watched as a group of talented girls effortlessly swayed and twirled around poles.

Kara and Marcel were the first to succumb to **the** irresistible beats and hit the dancefloor. Feeling the contagious energy, I couldn’t resist joining them, leaving Eloise and Raphael behind. Deep down, I hoped Eloise would eventually let go of her inhibitions, knowing all too well that fear held her back.

The music pulsed with an infectious rhythm, and Darius and I were transported into our own euphoric realm on the dancefloor. At that moment, he wasn’t the formidable Dark Lord Alpha; he was simply Darius, my adoring boyfriend, and I was his mischievous accomplice.

As our bodies grew weary from the exhilarating dance, we returned to our seats, only to discover that Eloise and Raphael had also surrendered to the music’s call. Eloise seemed to have loosened up, and Raphael’s boldness in his movements suggested a newfound connection between them. Sensing my curiosity, Darius drew closer and whispered in my ear.

“Are you enjoying yourself?” he inquired, his voice tinged with genuine concern.

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Chapter 36

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A smile graced my lips as I turned to meet his gaze. "Yes," I replied, my eyes sparkling with delight.

"I'll make it a point to bring you out more often," he pledged, and I nodded.

Feeling a touch of urgency, I rose from my seat and made my way to the restroom. I hurriedly entered and positioned myself in front of the mirror, intent on touching up my makeup. Just as I was about to close my purse and depart, a striking red-

haired woman entered the room. Clad in a short, elegant white dress, she possessed captivating hazel eyes and plump, luscious lips.

She adjusted her appearance in the mirror and glanced in my direction.

"Are you part of the fresh recruits?" she inquired, causing me to furrow my brow in confusion.

"Excuse me?" I responded, turning to face her.

"You arrived with the enigmatic Dark Lord Alpha. I suspect you might be one of the eastern Lunas they brought here," she divulged, leaving me speechless.

"I couldn't help but notice the way you were getting cozy with him on the dance floor. Don't be carried away. They engage in such activities with all their new conquests. They have their fun for a while and then move on. To him, you're simply a used commodity. He'll never have anything serious with you. His heart beats only for one person, and I'm certain he's still on the quest to find her, which is why he remains unattached," she explained, wearing a sly grin.

10:18

Chapter 36

"Why are you bothering to tell me this?" I questioned her, sensing her ill intentions.

"You appear to be a kind person, and as a fellow woman, it pains me to witness other women being deceived. Don't set your expectations too high with him. His heart already belongs to Shanon Sullivan. For now, he might make you fe

el like the center of his world, but he's the kind of person who will eventually move on. Consider yourself warned," she revealed, trying to provoke me. However, I responded with a smile.

"Well, then I shall savor every moment." I retorted, causing her smile to fade. I could tell she wanted to harm me. "I don't know you or this Shanon Sullivan, and quite frankly, I couldn't care less. The fact that you went out of your way to confront me in the restroom indicates that my relationship with Darius is rock solid. Save your breath for someone else," I

concluded, closing my purse.

"Excuse me," I added, leaving her stunned and speechless. The woman was likely envious that I had managed to attract someone significant. Well, tough luck for her.

As I approached my seat, I noticed Darius engaged in a heated argument with another man. They bore a resemblance, although the older man didn't have long hair like Darius. I assumed he must be Abelardo Hand. Darius's brother. Uncertain if it was safe to approach them, I decided to remain where I stood.

"You should be ashamed of yourself, engaging in mischief with exotic courtesans from the East. They are meant to be your captives Your duty is to learn about their culture and conquer their lands Why are you betraying our father's vision? The four regions should be loyal to our bloodline. That's how things were before this democracy nonsense Father worked towards it, which is why he kept prisoners. I have no objection to

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Chapter 36

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you being intimate with them, but you're taking it too far," the man reprimanded, and I discreetly eavesdropped on their conversation.

"Mother is deeply disappointed in you, Darius. You neglect visiting her. yet you bring women to the club and fool around. How irresponsible." Abelardo chided, while Darius struggled to control his anger.

"I will have you overthrown. You're too foolish to be a ruler. I witnessed you acting like a fool on the floor with your lover for a whole thirty minutes." he declared, prompting Darius to grab him by the collar. The onlookers quickly distanced themselves.

"Don't you dare call her that again," Darius seethed through clenched teeth, and his brother chuckled.

"You've lost your mind. What happened to finding Shanon and bringing her back as Luna, as Mother and Father expected? Instead, you're involved with a war captive. You're a laughingstock," Abelardo sneered, as I sensed the brewing intensity of Darius's anger. I knew he was capable of causing harm.

"Let's go to him," Monica suggested, and although I was partially responsible for the situation, I approached him anyway and gently touched his hand.

"Please release him," I mentally connected with Darius, whose hand trembled with rage as he pulled his brother closer.

"Although you're **my** elder brother, I am your Lord, and I owe allegiance to no one. Be cautious with how you address me, Abelardo. I **won't** go easy on **you** next time," Darius warned, finally releasing him

Chapter 36

The red-haired woman from the bathroom came forward, holding Abelardo's hand, indicating they had planned this encounter. She had attempted to upset me in the bathroom, but her efforts failed as I was not easily swayed, unlike Abelardo approaching Darius.

"Mother wishes to see you, and don't bring your belongings near the house, or I won't be so forgiving." Abelardo threatened, adjusting his stance.

Darius laughed and looked directly at Abelardo. "You can't do a damn thing. I can be with whomever I please, and as for Elbert, I will deal with him when the time comes," he calmly asserted, taking a seat and relaxing in his chair.

Abelardo glanced at me and smiled. "Don't let him deceive you. You won't be the first, nor will you be the last," he remarked, and I returned

the smile.

“Thank you, sir. I eagerly anticipate a delightful experience. It beats languishing in a cell,” I expressed my gratitude, surprising him more than making him angry.

I didn't react the way he had anticipated. Frankly, I didn't care. I was enjoying myself, and Darius appeared genuine. I was willing to see where this would lead.

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Chapter 37

Content

Chapter 37

Zora's POV

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I settled into the chair, leaning against Darius, while Abelardo made another attempt to approach us. However, Marcel and Raphael stepped in and prevented him from getting any closer. Darius appeared composed, but I could sense that his brother's words had unsettled him, especially since he knew I had overheard everything.

Abelardo eventually walked away, and Darius got up, signaling the end of the evening. I couldn't approach him because his anger was palpable. The intensity of his frustration was overwhelming, so I chose to remain silent. We left the club and started making our way back to the Hand Estate.

The entire drive back was filled with silence as we both contemplated the events of the night. Once we reached the bedroom, I undressed and took a shower, putting on Darius' t-shirt with nothing underneath. I could sense his concern.

Darius sat at the edge of the bed, and I knelt behind him, wrapping my arms around him and planting gentle kisses on his cheeks.

“I have complete faith in you, Darius. Nothing he said affected me I understand you and wanted this just as much Don’t let him get under your skin. He’s simply envious, nothing more,” I reassured him, as he held my hand and kissed it.

He turned his **gaze** towards me, and with a confident expression, he

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Chapter 37

spoke, “This is the end of the line for me, Zora. I can feel it deep within my soul that you’re the one. Don’t let these people mess with your mind. I haven’t kept a harem for more than three years, and I’m not searching for Shanon.” As he finished speaking, I gently placed my hand on his face and passionately kissed his lips.

“Darius, I know you’re sincere. I trust you,” I assured him, and a moment of silence enveloped us.

“Let’s get some rest,” I suggested, and he agreed, surrendering to sleep.

The next morning, I awoke to find Darius absent from the room. Concerned. I attempted to establish a mental connection with him, only to realize he wasn’t on the premises. After taking a shower, I made my way to breakfast. Everyone was present except for Darius.

I exchanged greetings with everyone and found a place to sit.

“This morning. Darius had an urgent reason to rush off and visit his mother, all because of something that went down at the club. It caught us off guard, and he entrusted me with the task of extending his apologies. He’ll return tomorrow,” Marcel explained, causing me to furrow my brow in confusion.

“Wonderland isn’t exactly a long way off. Why wait until tomorrow inquired, curious about the delay.

I

“He always spends the night whenever he pays his mom a visit,” Marcel replied, and I nodded in understanding. It made sense for him to devote time to **his** mother.

Chapter 37

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“By the way, Zora, I don’t know if Darius filled you in on anything, but can you shed some light on the nature of your relationship with Elbert?” Marcel asked, raising another strange question about Elbert. First Darius. and now Marcel.

“I’ve only met the guy once. We danced at the party, and then he had his friend give me a ride home,” I summarized.

“Then why would he send an entire army to retrieve you from this place?” he questioned, leaving me utterly astonished.

“What!” I exclaimed, and even Kara joined in with a surprised exclamation.

“Yes, that attack was his daring attempt to liberate you from this place.” he declared, leaving me utterly bewildered.

“But here’s the twist, my dear. While we could comprehend Kara’s ex-husband’s desire to reclaim her, we simply cannot fathom Elbert’s intentions towards you,” he remarked, leaving me intrigued

“Now, let me enlighten you about a long-standing conflict between the North and the South. I doubt Darius has divulged this information to you, but you must choose between affiliating yourself with Elbert of Darius Being aligned with both would lead to disastrous consequences My Alpha deeply cares for you, and I wouldn’t want him to suffer emotional harm,” he warned, his eyes searching for Darius’s well-being

“So, **is** it because Darius didn’t retaliate against Elbert for murdering his father?” I inquired, seeking clarification from Marcel. He shook his head in response

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Chapter 37

“No, Zora. It goes deeper than that. Elbert believes he should claim the title of Dark Lord Alpha by virtue of slaying the former Lord. The ongoing struggle between Elbert and Darius, which forms the crux of Elbert’s campaign to amass an army, aims to seize control over the North. East, and West. I share this secret with you because anyone aligned with Elbert is an enemy of the north,” he r

revealed, causing my hands to tremble uncontrollably, realizing that Casey had forged an alliance with him. Marcel's words rang with truth, leaving no room for doubt.

Worry consumed me, not just for Casey and the entire eastern region. While Kara and Eloise appeared indifferent, I couldn't help but care deeply. Casey was there, and his mate was expecting.

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Content

Chapter 38

Chapter 38

Darius' POV

288 Vouchers

The argument at the club deeply affected me. I **was** concerned that Zora might not believe Abelardo's version of events. Having just gone through a painful heartbreak, it was understandable that she would be cautious. My intention was for the evening to be enjoyable and memorable for Zora, but they completely ruined it.

While I admired Zora's handling of the situation, I firmly believed that Abelardo was in the wrong, and I was determined to confront him. When Zora embraced me and expressed her trust in me, a wave of relief washed over me, strengthening my resolve to never betray that trust. Although I hadn't explicitly confessed my feelings, I was certain about them. It was evident in her eyes too – loving her would come effortlessly.

I woke up exceptionally early to visit my mother in Wonderland. I couldn't ignore her summons. Despite my lack of enthusiasm, mainly because I would have to encounter Abelardo, it was crucial for me to see my mother.

I rose from my bed, casting a tender gaze upon Zora who peacefully slumbered in my t-shirt. Contemplating the idea of awakening her for an intimate encounter before departing, I ultimately dismissed the notion at the eleventh hour. Recognizing her potential fatigue and the importance of

preserving her energy, I bestowed a gentle kiss upon her and commenced preparing to take my leave.

My destination was Wonderland, where I **aimed to partake** in a **hearty**

Chapter 38

288 Vouchers

breakfast. Hoping to avoid an overnight stay and return to Zora's side, I harbored the belief that our fledgling relationship required proximity and uninterrupted time together in order to flourish. Quietly donning my attire, I departed from the premises, reaching out to Marcel as I exited.

"Hey, I'm in route to visit **my** mother. I neglected to inform Zora of **my** departure, so kindly extend my apologies and inform her of my whereabouts," I linked Marcel.

"Alright, rest assured, she's in good hands," he reassured me, prompting my expression of gratitude.

Leaving the estate, I felt a rush of excitement bubbling within me. It had been a while since my last serious relationship, ever since Shanon, but my time with Zora, although brief, felt mature and genuine. She understood me on a deep level, knowing precisely when and how to act and speak. Her strength and determination were admirable, and her resilience and wisdom were truly captivating. In my mind, she was nothing short of perfection.

As I drove, a smile crept across my face as I reminisced about all the moments we shared yesterday. The echoes of her moans, her passionate responses, and the way she moved against me on the dance floor lingered in my mind. Even her witty comebacks to Abelardo's remarks replayed in my head, bringing a sense of amusement.

Arriving at our house in Wonderland, I was just in time for breakfast. Stepping into the room, I greeted my mother, but she remained silent. I could sense that Abelardo must have fed her some negative information, leaving her **visibly** upset. Surprisingly, Abelardo was nowhere to be found.

Chapter 38

288 (Vouchers

“Mother?” I called out, taking a seat next to her. Pouring myself a **glass** of juice, I caught her gaze, waiting for her response.

“I didn’t expect you to come,” she expressed, and I gently kissed her forehead, sensing her anger through her expression. Taking a seat beside her, I prepared myself for the impending argument.

“Look at the place I’m living in,” she finally spoke, causing a furrow to appear on my brow.

“I used to be Luna of the northern lands, the wife of the Wolf Lord. And now, because of Elbert, I’m stuck living in a duplex. Instead of focusing on hunting him down, you’re wasting your time with the prostitutes you brought from the east,” she vented, provoking me to clench my fist.

“When did you lose your way, Darius? Didn’t I raise you properly? What happened to your sense of duty and leadership? What happened to your moral values?” she questioned, leaving me in silence.

“Mother, why do you always take his side?” I questioned her, noticing tears welling up in her eyes.

“I feel this way because Abelardo is accountable. He truly knows and comprehends the pain I endure. I find myself in solitude, Darius, all because of Elbert,” she expressed, and I couldn’t help but shake my head in disagreement.

“Please don’t **speak in** such a manner; you have Abelardo and me,” I reassured her, but she continued to shake her head.

“I truly have nobody,” **she insisted**, leaving me **feeling** disheartened.

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Letting out a sigh, I decided to confront her.

288 Vouchers

“Mother, it **was** our father who caused all of this, and deep down, you know it. You **say** you feel alone? Well, what about all the Alphas he unjustly stripped of their lunas, leaving countless children to grow up without their mothers? And what about the Alphas he mercilessly killed, leaving their Lunas without companions, simply because he believed he was entitled to rule the world? Have you ever thought about their happiness? Do they not deserve justice? Father received the consequences he deserved.” I firmly expressed, only to receive a sudden slap across my face from my mother.

“How dare you?” she exclaimed, her words piercing through me. “If I hadn’t given birth to you, I would have called you a bastard.”

I couldn’t bear to sit there any longer, so I rose from my chair, fueled by a mix of anger and hurt. Her audacity was astounding.

“Where do you think you’re going?” she interrogated, her tone filled with disdain. I took a deep breath, trying to keep my emotions in check.

“Home,” I replied, my voice steady but laced with exhaustion. “I can’t endure this any longer.”

She grabbed hold of me, her grip tightening like **claws** digging into my skin. The physical pain matched the emotional turmoil I **was** experiencing.

“You dare not **walk** out on me,” **she hissed** through gritted teeth, her anger palpable.

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Chapter 38

1288 Vouchers

“What have you accomplished for the north since you became lord?” she demanded, her words cutting through the air like a bitter wind. I felt the weight of her disappointment in every syllable.

“You haven’t expanded our lands or increased our wealth. The north relies solely on past glories, and yet you have the audacity to be proud of yourself?” She spat out, her words like venom. I clenched my fist, feeling the fire within me intensify.

“Why haven’t you expanded your control to the east? Instead, you and your officers are indulging in promiscuity with women and taking them to nightclubs. What’s going on in your mind? I’m not saying you can’t have relations with prisoners, but developing emotional attachments is unacceptable. Your father had relations with many prisoners, but it was merely a means to advance his agenda,” she expressed, and I couldn’t help but burst into laughter.

“He didn’t need to engage in such activities to further his cause. He was simply a deranged man.” I responded, causing her to attempt another slap, but this time I swiftly caught her hand.

“Don’t try that again,” I warned her firmly, and she withdrew her hand.

“I want you to step down as the lord in favor of your brother. You can still be the Alpha, but not the lord of the wolves,” she calmly proposed, and I found myself chuckling.

“I refuse to comply **with** your request. Mother, please do not test my patience,” I firmly expressed, just as Abelardo entered the room. With a confident demeanor, he **grabbed** an apple from the kitchen island and took a **bite**, ready to **head** out.

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Chapter 38

288 Vouchers

“You think you can make demands, Darius?” he challenged. “What will happen if I don’t?” Abelardo questioned, intrigued by my audacity. He seemed to have acquired some inside information about Elbert’s soldiers seeking retribution from him.

“Your actions have transformed our family name into a mockery,” he accused. “Elbert dispatched his troops to retrieve what he believes is rightfully his, yet you have failed to retaliate,” Abelardo taunted, a hint of curiosity lingering in his eyes.

“You are nothing but feeble,” he sneered, provoking a reaction from me. I couldn’t help but burst into laughter.

“Coming from the man who went to war and came back empty-handed,” I retorted, savoring the impact of my words. His anger surged within him, evident from the change in his expression.

“Abelardo, you will never be able to match me. I will confront Elbert on my own terms.” I declared, maintaining my composure. My mother observed the exchange, her gaze shifting between the two of us.

“Is Elbert’s woman under your care?” she asked, a mischievous grin playing on her lips.

“No, I don’t have Elbert’s woman under my care,” I replied to her.

“Whatever you **say**, but it seems this person was important enough for him to send Brians to attack and retrieve her. Zora Rohan, they **say**,” he mentioned, causing my eyes to widen,

“**We** can **utilize** her,” **my** mother suggested, and I instinctively distanced

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Chapter 38

myself from her. My patience was wearing thin.

288 Vouchers

“I nearly lost my life, and she saved me. She fought and sacrificed her own people to protect me. She could have chosen to go with them, and I wouldn’t have been able to stop her, but she fought on my side, risking her life,” I passionately explained to my mother, who observed me intently for a moment.

“I’ve never cared for anyone the way I care for her, and the feeling is mutual. Don’t force me to choose because I will choose her, mother,” I declared, causing her eyes to widen in surprise.

“A leftover alpha. Discarded goods. Trash offered as tribute.” Abelardo chimed in, to which I smirked.

“Well, your information is incorrect. Her husband didn’t abandon her. She willingly sacrificed herself to save his life. He would have died trying to protect her. It took a lot for him to let her go. She has that kind of impact,” I clarified, prompting Abelardo to laugh.

“Of course, she does, she’s attractive, and her flirtatiousness is off the charts,” he remarked, taking a bite out of his apple.

Impatient, I looked at my mother and inquired, “Was this the reason you asked me to come? Because if so, I’m prepared to leave,”

Content

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Chapter 39

Chapter 39

Darius’ POV

288 Vouchers

“I called you here for a reason,” she began, her voice tinged with urgency. “I implore you to relinquish your title as lord, for the sake of our family’s dignity,” she pleaded. I couldn’t help but chuckle at her request; it seemed absurd to me.

“Should it ever come to that, let it be known that my comrades and I will not fight under Abelardo’s command. He will have to gather his own troops and lead his own battle,” I cautioned, making my stance clear. I had no intention of stepping down willingly, but I wanted her to understand the consequences if I were forced to.

With a firm tone, my mother instructed, “Abelardo, please leave us.” In response, my brother nervously toyed with his car keys before exiting the house, leaving us alone.

Leading me to the living room, my mother guided me to a seat and motioned for me to sit. She appeared more a

nxious than her usual facade of bravery, expressing her concern in a vulnerable manner.

“Elbert cannot be trusted; he will undoubtedly come after you,” she confided, her worry etched across her face, overshadowing her attempt to appear strong.

“**I can’t** bear the thought of losing you like I lost Collier,” **she** whispered, her **voice filled** with anguish.

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Chapter 39

288 Vouchers

“That despicable man has aspirations to conquer the entire world; we **must** outsmart him, Darius, or he will surpass even the cruelty of your father. Your father will seem like an angel compared to that twisted fiend,” she confided, and I could sense the depth of her apprehension.

“Are you absolutely certain this woman isn’t working as his spy?” she questioned, her eyes betraying a mix of fear and concern.

“I’m certain. She claimed they met innocently at a party and shared a dance, nothing more,” I reassured her, but she shook her head disapprovingly.

“You must delve deeper, Darius. One does not encounter someone just once and risk plunging into a full-blown conflict for their sake. She isn’t being entirely forthright with you. Exercise caution and thoroughly investigate her background. She may be concealing the truth out of fear or some ulterior motive. I won’t allow anyone to be the cause of your downfall,” she emphasized, her gentle touch caressing my cheeks, showing her unwavering love and concern for my well-being.

“Please, conduct an investigation. This woman is not being truthful. Take a moment to consider it,” she earnestly implored me.

Despite my mother's valid concerns, I had faith in Zora. I couldn't imagine her fabricating such a story.

It struck me **as** peculiar that he would risk a war for someone he had only encountered once.

I had a plan to **gently** interrogate her, seeking **clarity** so I could navigate **the** situation **effectively**.

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Chapter 39

288 Vouchers

"I will delve into this matter," I assured my mother, prompting a smile to grace her face.

"That is sufficient for me," she replied, visibly relieved and beaming at

1. me.

"Before long, you won't toy with your captives anymore. I'm working on finding you a suitable Luna from the northern region. Specifically, a virgin," she said, with a smile on her lips.

"I have no interest," I declared firmly, causing her brows to furrow in disappointment.

"You can't go through life remaining single forever, dear. Your father had Abelardo by your age. You need an heir and a partner," she insisted, to which I simply nodded.

"I'm working on it," I reassured her, but she grew furious, realizing the implications of my words.

"You cannot choose a tainted and aged Luna. You need someone young," she argued, but I interjected.

“I am tainted and aged as well. I am not a virgin, and at twenty–nine, mother, we are a perfect match,” I replied boldly, causing her to shake her head, unable to win the argument.

“I’ll wait for you to get her out of your system,” she said, leaning back in her chair.

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Chapter 39

288 Vouchers

With a composed demeanor, she reclined in her chair and retorted, “I’ll patiently await the **day** you finally let go of her influence.”

A mischievous smile played on my lips as I replied, emphasizing the magnitude of her wait, “Ah, mother, you’ll be waiting for an eternity if that’s your expectation.” My resolve firm, I rose from my seat, preparing to depart.

Baffled, she inquired, “What on earth do you think you’re doing?” Frustration laced her words.

A sigh escaped my lips, carrying a hint of weariness. “I’m simply walking away,” I stated, my tone tinged with resignation.

“Why?” She inquired, her voice laced with curiosity and concern.

I let out a weary sigh, feeling the weight of the situation settle upon me. “You see, I left behind a woman who holds my heart in her hands, someone I’m utterly infatuated with, just to be here with you. But ever since I arrived, I’ve been greeted with a cold reception. All you’ve done is belittle me, insult my intelligence, and criticize my choices. You even had the audacity to disparage the very woman who has breathed new life into my soul, attempting to diminish her worth. If I were to stay any longer, I fear you might utter words that could irreversibly damage our relationship, dear mother. Since you cannot find it within yourself to be grateful for my happiness and newfound hope, and instead try to undermine it, I see no reason to prolong my stay here,” I explained, the frustration evident in my voice.

As my words sank in, her expression turned melancholic, realizing the consequences of her actions.

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Chapter 39

288 Vouchers

“Please, **stay**. I **give** you my word that I won’t utter a single negative word about your girlfriend. I’ve genuinely missed you, and I believe we don’t need to engage in a heated argument over this,” she pleaded, her eyes filled with sincerity. Examining her closely, I pondered her proposition.

“You know what? I genuinely want to get to know her,” she exclaimed, excitement lighting up her face.

I immediately shook my head, fully aware of how things would unfold. I had reservations about allowing anyone to influence or manipulate Zora’s thoughts.

“Rest assured, there won’t be any mischief. I genuinely desire to meet her. All I’ve heard about her is through your brother’s account. I aim to make an unbiased assessment,” she assured me, her determination unwavering.

Realizing she wouldn’t let the matter go, I finally relented, nodding my head and taking a seat.

“I’ll take some time to ponder over it.” I stated, my voice tinged with uncertainty. Her disapproval was evident as she shook her head in response.

“No, just go ahead and do it,” she urged, her determination unwavering.

My **silence** served as my response, indicating my hesitation.

“Does she have any children?” she inquired, curiosity gleaming in her **eyes**. I shook **my** head, denying the existence of offspring in her life.

10.19

Chapter 39

288 Vouchers

“She’s never been pregnant, and before you pass judgment, there’s absolutely nothing wrong with her. She tied the knot at nineteen, and her spouse insisted on taking precautions because he wasn’t prepared,” I swiftly clarified, defending her innocence.

“So you’re telling me they’ve been cautious for five years?” she probed, seeking confirmation.

I nodded, confirming the length of their carefulness.

“That Alpha really made a foolish move,” she remarked, a touch of exasperation evident in her tone. We found common ground in our agreement and shared a hearty laugh.

“It’s clear that you genuinely care about her. I’ll make an effort to warm up to her,” my mother declared, her anger dissipating.

I knew that Abelardo had influenced her and coerced her into spewing all those nonsensical words. It was fortunate that despite being the Dark Lord Alpha, I possessed patience and held a deep love for her. I had no choice but to let it slide; after all, she was my mother.

Content

10:19

Chapter 40

Chapter 40

Zora’s POV

288 Vouchers

After munching on my morning meal. I found myself adrift in a sea of boredom. Ever since our arrival at this grand estate, Darius had been a constant presence, showering

me with his undivided attention. However, amidst his companionship, the surroundings seemed both fresh and desolate, leaving me feeling strangely alone.

Meanwhile, Kara and Marcel were engrossed in their meticulously crafted plans, while Eloise and Raphael were busy forging a bond of their own. I didn't want to inconvenience them with my own thoughts and concerns. Thus, I retreated to the familiarity of our bedroom, seeking solace in deep contemplation.

As I pondered the words Marcel had shared about Elbert, the cryptic tales of a silent war, and the enigmatic east, worry crept into my mind. My heart ached at the thought of the east being ensnared in chaos and turmoil. The last thing I desired was for the East to be entangled in a catastrophic mess.

I didn't wanna stress about it too much, so I thought I'd chill with Neva in the garden. I knew some of the ladies in the harem liked hanging out there, so I rocked the latest jeans from Darius' dope clothing collection and slipped into his tee to bask in his fragrance.

Before putting it on, I took a moment to inhale his scent from the shirt. Ahh, it felt comforting. **Energized and ready, I made my way to the garden with a skip in my step.**

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288 Vouchers

As I arrived, a bunch of harem gals rushed over to welcome me. Neva came forward, and we shared a warm embrace. "Zora, you're totally slaying that tee," she exclaimed, and I couldn't help but beam back at her.

Finding a cozy spot to settle, a group of women gathered around me. From afar, I spotted Cindy shooting daggers my way, but I couldn't care less. Her scorn was beneath me.

Out of the blue, Neva hit me with a curious question, "So, is it official? Are you Darius' new main squeeze?" I furrowed my brow, wondering why she'd even ask such a thing.

“What’s the deal with this ‘new woman“?” I inquired, graciously accepting a steaming cup of tea from one of the ladies. With a touch of sophistication, I subtly sniffed the aroma before letting the cup graze my lips, pretending to take a sip, and then gently placing it back on the saucer. I wasn’t about to drink anything served by the women in Darius’s Harem who weren’t romantically involved with him.

“Oh, you know, ever since he dumped Cindy,” Neva clarified, providing context for her question, and I couldn’t help but burst into laughter. Clearly, Cindy hadn’t shared the whole truth with them. Just as I was about to speak, I noticed Cindy approaching our group.

“Well, look who decided to join us,” she greeted with polite formality, and I responded with a warm smile.

“You **didn’t exactly** spill the beans, did you?” I remarked, calling her out, to which she simply shrugged.

“Zora, Alpha only uttered those words to bring **you joy**. **Who** am I to

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Chapter 40

288 Vouchers

doubt his sincerity? After all, I’m just a war captive, caught in the tangles of **fat e**. If he claimed he wasn’t fooling around with me to ease your mind, so **be it**,” she expressed, attempting to maintain her dignity.

“Well, Cindy, I’ll support whatever brings you happiness,” I replied, realizing that the other women had deciphered our conversation.

“So, are you telling us that you’ve been deceiving us all along?” one of the women inquired, and Cindy shook her head.

“How could I possibly lie when we’ve spent countless hours together in his office and his chambers?” she argued, but I decided to steer the conversation elsewhere.

Clearly, Cindy was filled with shame and too mortified to confess the truth. Since we both had the same alpha, I could now establish a connection with her.

“You ought to be cautious with your falsehoods, so he remains oblivious, Cindy,” I cautioned, and she scowled at me.

“Let’s shift our focus,” I proposed to the women, rising from my seat without sipping the tea.

It was my clever **way** of declining the beverage, showcasing my ingenuity. I had read a book about treacherous political intrigues in royal courts, and I had no **desire** to fall victim to such schemes.

“What do you fabulous **ladies** do to have a **blast?**” I inquired, curiosity piqued, and Neva **gracefully** rose from her **seat**.

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Chapter 40

288 Vouchers

“Painting, quilting, sewing, embroidery,” she replied, her words flowing like an artist’s brush strokes, and I couldn’t help but roll my eyes ever so playfully.

“Don’t get me wrong, those activities are wonderfully calming, but I crave something exhilarating, something that gets the blood pumping,” I explained, a mischievous glint in my eye, prompting laughter from some of the ladies.

“Croquet, Volleyball,” Neva suggested, her eyes gleaming with a hint of adventure, and I beamed at her like a kid who just discovered a hidden

treasure.

“Now that’s what I’m talking about! Let’s kick off with some Volleyball and then unwind with a thrilling game of Croquet.” I proposed enthusiastically, leading the charge towards a field designated for our athletic escapades. Teams were promptly formed.

The

women shed their tunics and gowns, revealing a surprising twist- each of them sported alluring, lacy lingerie. I followed suit, embracing the spirit of the game. The atmosphere buzzed with excitement as even the guards couldn't resist gathering to witness the spectacle.

It was my team versus

Cindy's team, and Neva had my back in this electrifying showdown. Cindy seemed visibly relieved, realizing that I wouldn't embarrass her **as** she had initially feared.

With a swift serve, I set the ball in motion, and from that moment on, history was **made**. We reveled in the thrill of the game, laughter echoing through **the air**, **as** the women genuinely basked in pure delight.

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288 Vouchers

In no time, we set up impromptu courts to ensure others didn't have to wait long for their turn. It was a **blast!** Kara joined our lively game, and as I looked around, I spotted Marcel standing nearby, watching with a grin.

This **was** supposed to be their special day, as Beta was always occupied. I suppose this **was** part of the excitement they shared.

"Alpha won't be too thrilled to see you frolicking in your skivvies out here," Marcel warned, chuckling, and I playfully pressed my finger against my lips.

"Well then, let's keep it our little secret." I whispered mischievously.

We had an absolute blast; it evolved into a full-blown celebration.

When we grew weary of our volleyball escapades, the guards arrived to set up the grounds for a game of croquet. It took them a while, giving us a chance to catch our breath.

While the guards worked diligently, we relaxed with some wine and delectable bites.

Unexpectedly, the atmosphere turned into a festive gathering, and I noticed some ladies getting cozy with the officers.

“Is that even **allowed?**” I inquired **of** Neva, and she beamed at me.

“Absolutely. The **Alpha, Beta, and Gamma may** keep their distance, but dating is permitted. Some women are even married **to** top **officers** or regular folks, with **kids** and **all**. **It’s** strange that **the Alpha calls it a harem,**

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Chapter 40

288 Vouchers

though,” she shared, and I hoped her words held truth because I certainly **didn’t** want anyone meddling in my connection with Darius.

As the others played croquet, I sought out Marcel to seek his approval regarding the women’s flirtations. He nodded approvingly. It seemed that everyone was free to mingle, except for my friends and me.

As the sun sank low in the sky, signaling the approach of evening, we made our way back to our abode, eager to rejuvenate ourselves and indulge in a scrumptious dinner.

Reluctantly, I hesitated at the door, reluctant to cross the threshold and leave behind the captivating company of Darius.

Yet, duty called, and I found myself stepping into the room, instantly engulfed in a sense of solitude once more. It was as if a vibrant thread had been abruptly severed.

In that moment, the realization hit me like a tidal wave— I had become accustomed to Darius’s affectionate gestures and tender care. But only now did I comprehend the true extent of his impact on my life.

I hastily rushed to the shower, hastily cleansing myself, keen to join the others for the eagerly awaited dinner.

As I **emerged** from the bathroom, I discovered a sea of expectant faces, -
patiently awaiting **my** presence.

Content