

The Dark Side of Fate

Chapter 352



Chapter 352

Alpha Justin

~Liam~

Josephine and I lingered outside, anxiously awaiting the arrival of the ambulance. The woman's condition was critical, and though the odds seemed bleak, we clung to a glimmer of hope that the medical team would save her life.

My mind couldn't escape the haunting question: why would anyone want to harm a mere housekeeper? It baffled me as we stood there, trying to make sense of the senseless act.

Throughout the traumatic ordeal, Josephine tightly held onto me, seeking comfort and solace. I wished I could shield her from the gruesome scene we had just witnessed, sparing her the burden of such a disturbing sight.

With heavy hearts, we both knew our plans for the evening were shattered. The experience was too overwhelming to carry on as if nothing had happened, so we decided it was best to call a cab and return to the safety of the pack house, where we could process this unsettling event together.

"I apologise for how everything turned out, Jo. I truly wanted us to enjoy ourselves," I expressed as we strolled toward the road. She interlocked her hand with mine, offering a comforting touch.

"Putting the housekeeper incident aside, I genuinely had a great time, Li," she confessed, and the sincerity in her voice brought a sense of relief to my troubled mind.

I hailed a cab, and we entered. I was determined not to let any distance come between us. Pulling her close to my body, she nestled in, and a wave of calm washed over me. In that moment, holding her close, everything else seemed to fade away, and I cherished the connection we shared.

The drive to the packhouse was brief, and we soon arrived. It being late at night, my assumption was that everyone would be asleep. To avoid encountering or disturbing anyone, Josephine and I quietly made our way toward the staircase, intending to head to my wing. However, our path was unexpectedly blocked by Justin, whose expression revealed clear anger—undoubtedly related to the incident at my grandmother's house.

"What the Fuck, Li!" he exclaimed, causing Josephine to flinch slightly. Josephine wasn't an alpha, so she couldn't help but feel intimidated by Justin's imposing presence. She clutched my arm tightly, seeking reassurance, and I glanced at Justin.

"Please, let's keep it calm," I linked him, hoping to diffuse the tension. His gaze shifted to Josephine, and he realised his mistake, acknowledging her vulnerability in this situation.

"Why would you jeopardise both your lives like that? What if the assailants were still there in that house? Why did you even decide to go there in the first place? When did you leave this place?" he questioned, clearly agitated and concerned. He resembled my grandparents whenever they feared for my safety.

"You know this isn't a game, and you're not supposed to take matters into your own hands. Why involve Josephine in all of this, Liam?" he pressed, leaving me speechless as I had no valid response. He was the one in charge, not me.

"Taking Josephine along was reckless. What if something had happened to both of you? You were just a toddler back then, but I still vividly recall our parents hurriedly hiding us in a safe house when the Stepanovs clashed with the Volkovs. It was precisely because of situations like this.

Do you honestly believe Lord Alexei will take it lightly that his daughter died while trying to solve a case you brought to the table? Do you think he will consider the bond between our families? This kind of behaviour is what I expected from Noah and Sebastian but not from you, Li," he expressed, his gaze shifting to Josephine.

"You should have stopped him. Just because he's an alpha and the crowned prince doesn't mean you have to unquestioningly obey his orders," he added, his anger evident in his words.

"Your father tried calling seven times, desperately wanting to speak with you. I had to lie, claiming you had locked yourself in your room and were asleep. Unfortunately, I was caught in the lie when it turned out you had actually called your grandma to ask her to postpone her trip.

You should have informed me about such matters. You were meant to come home. I can't help but feel disappointed in you," he conveyed, his disappointment sounding sincere.

I remained silent, choosing not to respond. Taking the blame for the situation was fine with me because, in truth, it was all worth it.

"It's not his fault, Alpha Justin," Josephine asserted, pulling away from me to face Justin directly. I tried to signal her to refrain from saying anything that might lead to trouble, as the last thing I wanted was for Justin to report this incident to Lord Alexei and risk Josephine being sent back to Gad.

"There's no need to cover up for Liam," Justin replied sternly, but Josephine shook her head firmly. "Liam has never been the impulsive type, and you know it," she countered, and I saw a glimmer in Justin's eyes, suggesting he believed her.

"We were at the fellowship park when we heard the sirens. Liam wanted us to return, but I got curious and ran toward the event. It was all my fault," she confessed, taking responsibility. Justin fell silent, seemingly processing the information.

I could sense that Justin was at a loss for words. He turned to me, seeking confirmation, but I shook my head subtly, urging him not to reveal this to Lord Alexei, knowing the consequences that could follow.

"Please, Justin, you know how he is with his family and what he might do. He'll insist she returns. We'll be more careful next time, I promise," I linked him, hoping he would understand.

"Excuse us, Josephine," he said gently to her and then turned his attention to me. "Follow me to my room," he ordered, and Josephine looked worried. I managed to give her a reassuring smile as I followed Justin to his room. She proceeded to my wing, and I knew she would be feeling anxious and concerned.

"Be more cautious, Liam," Justin advised firmly as we entered his room, and I nodded in agreement without hesitation.

"I know you're determined to find Sophia, but don't jeopardise our lives in the process," he cautioned, assuming that my actions were connected to Sophia's disappearance. However, I disagreed, as checking on the fire had nothing to do with her.

"Honestly, it had nothing to do with Sophia," I clarified, but he shook his head and picked up his remote control. He pointed it towards the television, turning it on, and a picture of a man wearing a ski mask appeared on the screen.

"This came in a few hours ago," he informed me, pressing play to reveal further details.

"This message is for Prince Liam. The key to freeing your girlfriend lies with the council. We have certain demands, which we will share with you soon," he conveyed, followed by an unsettling image of Josephine and me preparing to hail a cab outside. The chill down my spine confirmed that they wanted us to be aware of their surveillance.

"Your father and Lord Alexei have seen this. I haven't heard from Lord Alexei yet, but I can only imagine what's going through his mind. Please, Liam, I need you to be extremely cautious. We have no idea who these people are or what their intentions might be. It's crucial that we stay vigilant as we proceed with our investigation," he urged, and now I understood the reason behind his distress.

My father must have rattled him after witnessing that scene, and it was clear that the situation demanded heightened awareness and caution.

"I apologise, Justin. I promise it won't happen again," I said sincerely, knowing he deserved an apology. He smiled warmly and nodded in acceptance.

"What are big cousins for?" he said playfully, attempting to come closer to ruffle my hair, but I quickly stepped back, wary of his tricks. He raised his hands in mock surrender, and the moment I relaxed my guard, he seized the opportunity to ruffle my hair and swiftly stepped back to avoid retaliation. We both shared a good laugh at the playful exchange.

"Now, tell me, anything you want to share about the crime scene?" he finally inquired, and I couldn't help but beam at him, ready to share the details of what we had discovered.

"The van that caught fire was initially at Grandma's house. We noticed tire tracks leading from Grandma's gate to the burnt vehicle, and it was Josephine who spotted it. We suspect the perpetrators of the crime at Grandma's house were the ones connected to the burnt van. It's puzzling why the van would catch fire just around the corner, burning a neighbour's house," I explained, and he furrowed his brow in contemplation.

"That's indeed perplexing. They should have made a clean getaway unless someone didn't want them to escape. Perhaps someone was watching, ready to cover their tracks?" Justin speculated, not dwelling too long on the thought.

"Tomorrow, our investigation begins Li. I'll request reports from the fire service to see what they've discovered. We can't fully trust them either, as corruption can seep into any organisation. Nevertheless, it's a starting point. Additionally, we'll question the neighbours and thoroughly search Grandma's house," he outlined, giving me a reassuring smile.

"Your idea to ask them to postpone their trip was wise. Your father wasn't too thrilled when Grandma called him, but with the update, he should have a better understanding of the situation," he added, and I chuckled.

"Thank you, Liam. You've had a long night, so have a good night," he said, indicating it was time for me to leave his room. I expressed my gratitude and left to attend to my own matters.

I hurried towards my wing, hopeful that Josephine hadn't fallen asleep yet. As I reached my destination, I pondered whether I should knock on her door to check on her before retiring for the night. We had shared some special moments earlier, and I wished they had led to something more, but our encounters were continually interrupted. It was frustrating, and I felt a strong desire to resolve the situation.

Standing outside Josephine's door, I hesitated for a moment, contemplating whether or not to knock. Eventually, summoning up the courage, I gently tapped on the door, but there was no response. I tried again, but it seemed like she might have already fallen asleep. And I couldn't blame her; the day had been filled with running around and expending a lot of energy—we were both likely exhausted.

I returned to my room and headed straight to the shower. The unsettling video that Justin showed me lingered in my mind, and I couldn't help but feel relieved that Josephine and I had made it back home unharmed. The realisation hit me that we needed to be more cautious; those bastards could have posed a serious threat. We were fortunate, and I silently expressed gratitude to the moon for keeping us safe.

After finishing my shower and donning clean shorts, I prepared to lie down when I heard a soft knock on my door. Knowing it was Josephine, I hurriedly opened the door, and there she stood with her hair still damp from the shower.

"I was in the shower when you were knocking," she admitted, and I stepped aside to invite her into my room. She seemed a bit hesitant at first, but eventually, she walked in.