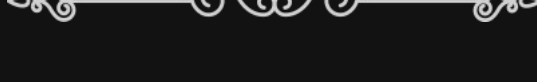


The Dark Side of Fate

Chapter 355



A little drilling

~Liam~

We followed Justin as he guided us to the visitor’s room where the Gamma and Delta were waiting. Walking beside Josephine, I found comfort in her proximity, realising that being apart from her was becoming increasingly difficult.

As we entered the room, the Gamma and Delta were seated on the couch, and we each saluted them in turn. They reciprocated the gesture by standing up and saluting back. Justin then asked us to take our seats so he could proceed with his inquiries.

“I want to extend my apologies for any inconvenience our presence may have caused all of you,” Justin began. “This arrangement is only temporary. Our grandparents reside here, and their safety has become a top priority after the incident. The council and the royal family are also concerned about the recent crime, accident, and fire that occurred in our grandparent’s home. I assure you that we are not here to take over your roles or positions.”

Upon hearing Justin’s words, Gamma Lebedev leaned forward with a smile on his face, seemingly reassured by the Alpha’s explanation.

“Not at all, Alpha. We fully comprehend the gravity of the situation. In all honesty, we initially assumed you had come to investigate Beta Mike’s crimes, especially considering that the crowned Prince, Beta Liam Volkov, had a close relationship with his daughter. It seemed natural for the Prince to pull strings to ensure his girlfriend’s safety, so we understood the circumstances,” Gamma Lebedev replied.

I couldn’t let this misconception persist any longer, as it could jeopardise what I had with Josephine. I had to make things clear.

“Allow me to correct you, Gamma. Sophia Maguire and I are friends, but we have no romantic involvement whatsoever. I just wanted to clarify that,” I asserted, noticing the surprise on their faces. It seemed they had genuinely believed that Sophia and I were together. I couldn’t let that misunderstanding continue to impact Josephine and me.

“Understood. We respect the Head Alpha’s authority, and unless he explicitly seeks our assistance, we cannot interfere with his ongoing investigations. Our hands are tied in this regard, which is why we haven’t dispatched anyone to the former Alpha’s or Beta’s houses. It falls outside our assigned duties,” Justin explained with a sigh.

“However, since you raised the topic, would you mind sharing your perspective on what you think happened?” Justin inquired, turning his attention to the Gamma, who nodded in response.

“Well, we aren’t entirely sure. On the day of the murder, Alpha Thompson gathered all of us and led us to the docks. He had received an anonymous tip suggesting illegal activities taking place there that night. Alpha Thompson was so suspicious that he withheld the tip’s details and our mission, as he believed one of us might be involved. I think he was right, and the culprit turned out to be Mike.

Given the presence of the Royal heirs at the graduation event, we had to heighten the security of the area where the venue was situated. So, Delta Miguel and I left to handle the security for the event while Alpha Thompson and Mike stayed at the docks to conduct the investigation,” the Gamma recounted with a sigh.

“According to sources, Beta Mike and Alpha Thompson were arguing, and Alpha was walking briskly, asking Mike to leave him alone. Mike appeared angry and anxious, continuing to follow him. As they had driven there together in Mike’s car, he offered to drop Alpha at his house, and Alpha accepted the offer.

It seems that the murder took place after that ride because it aligns with the timing. It’s possible that Alpha stumbled upon something that could expose Mike, and in a desperate attempt to cover his tracks, Mike made a sudden decision to commit the crime. It appears to have been an impulsive act, not premeditated.

We may never know for certain, but that’s what we’ve uncovered so far. We thoroughly searched Alpha Thompson’s house and office but didn’t find any incriminating evidence,” the Gamma concluded, and Justin nodded in acknowledgement of the information.

“Did you conduct the search under supervision?” Justin inquired, and the Gamma confirmed with a nod.

“Alpha Christian’s men were present during the search. They have secured Thompson and Mike’s residences and offices to preserve the integrity of the evidence,” the Gamma explained, and Justin acknowledged the precautionary measures.

“Beyond the night of the incident, how would you describe Beta Mike?” Justin further questioned, and the Delta shifted uneasily in his chair.

“He was mostly unremarkable, following orders quietly, but at times, he acted as if he were an Alpha unto himself. His behaviour could be disrespectful, and he displayed aggressiveness. He had a short temper and wasn’t always rational. However, aside from these traits, I believe he was a good guy,” the Delta expressed.

As I listened, I couldn’t help but feel sceptical. The information they shared indirectly pointed to the possibility of Mike being the culprit. I questioned if they truly function as a team, for in such situations, loyalty might deter them from speaking ill of a fellow member. Their willingness to expose Mike’s flaws and offer hints of his potential guilt left me with a sense of sadness and doubt about their alliance.

“So, in essence, you are suggesting there’s a strong likelihood that he’s the culprit?” I impulsively asked the Delta without Justin’s permission, realising I might have overstepped my bounds. Surprisingly, Justin seemed to understand, and he didn’t appear angry or inclined to reprimand me.

“Your Highness…” the Delta began, but I interjected.

“Beta Volkov. I prefer to be addressed by my current title,” I said.

“Beta Volkov,” he corrected himself, seeming somewhat uneasy addressing me formally.

“I understand how personal this matter is, especially considering your close connection to the Maguires, particularly their daughter. However, the question isn’t about whether or not Mike committed the crime; that much has already been established. What we’re trying to discern are his motives,” the Delta explained, and I nodded, not wanting to engage in a contentious discussion with them.

After a brief moment of silence and awkwardness, the Gamma leaned forward, breaking the tension.

“We would be more than willing to assist you in any way possible,” he offered to Justin, who acknowledged his willingness with a nod.

“I’d appreciate the help,” Justin replied, indicating that the formal part of the meeting was concluded. Even though we were currently occupying their residence, the packhouse, they remained our guests. Justin suggested that they be offered refreshments and gave us permission to engage in conversations with them.

Josephine approached the Gamma to talk, and I naturally stayed by her side. There was no way I would leave her alone with people we weren’t entirely sure we could trust. Since I stayed, everyone stayed.

“Do you have any information about the housekeeper who was attacked in Lady Brighton’s home?” Josephine inquired, and the Gamma shook his head.

“Unfortunately, there isn’t much known about her. She is a new pack member and currently unmated. She began working for the Brightons around the same time she joined the pack. The Brightons aren’t locals, so they didn’t crosscheck with Alpha Thompson before hiring her. However, since she has never raised any concerns, it’s baffling that someone would target her,” the Gamma explained, providing what little they knew about the housekeeper.

Charlotte stepped closer, adding her thoughts to the conversation. “Could the attackers have mistaken the housekeeper for our grandparents and attacked her when they realised our grandparents weren’t present?” she speculated, and her suggestion seemed plausible.

I knew we had more theories, but we had to be cautious about discussing sensitive matters with the former officers.

“Well, we may not know for sure until the culprits are apprehended, but rest assured, we’re here to offer our assistance,” the Gamma reassured. However, Noah couldn’t resist making a sarcastic remark.

“I think you two should stick to helping Alpha Christian. I heard you haven’t made any progress in the Maguire case. We’ll take care of the crime at Brighton’s house,” he taunted, and Sebastien joined in the laughter.

Their discomfort was evident, prompting Josephine to give Noah a warning glance.

“Come on, Jo, it’s true. How can they help us when they can’t even catch their own colleague? If anyone should be able to find Mike or know his connections, it should be these two, yet they seem clueless. Based on the footage of you and Li, it’s apparent they are in Grizlo watching everyone, yet these men haven’t made any progress. Unless they prove their value to Alpha Justin and us, they’re better off elsewhere,” Noah stated, delivering the harsh truth.

Though Noah’s words were blunt, it was difficult to deny their accuracy. The tension in the room was palpable, but the truth remained that he had yet to make significant headway in the Maguire case.

They had proven unhelpful to Alpha Christian, and it wasn’t likely they possessed information about Mike that could aid in his capture, unless they were intentionally avoiding it to protect themselves and their family members, while also shielding their colleague. Perhaps they were deliberately slowing down the investigation to keep Mike safe, given their friendship and professional ties. It was either that, or they truly were inept, as Noah had suggested.

“I apologise on behalf of Delta Albert,” I interjected, attempting to defuse the tension in the room. However, Noah didn’t appear receptive to the apology.

“I bet they were the ones filming you and Jo,” Noah linked me, and suddenly, his perspective made sense. If that was indeed the case, I understood why he was so upset. The situation was becoming more complex, and tensions were escalating as we delved deeper into the investigation.

“We hope the Gamma and Delta can prove you both wrong and assist Alpha Christian in making a breakthrough,” Marvin playfully remarked, addressing Noah and Sebastien, but it was evident he was teasing our guests, subtly taking their side.

The Albert Twins continued their questioning, pressing the Gamma and Delta until they appeared visibly uncomfortable. I allowed them to proceed because their inquiries were indeed valid.

“I’m just curious how you all could head to a dock for an investigation, and yet your Alpha wouldn’t provide any hints or information about the mission. What exactly was your purpose there when you were in the dark about what Alpha Thompson was looking into?” Noah raised a legitimate query.

“And then, at some point, you either got dismissed or chose to leave, leaving your Alpha and the suspected murderer alone,” Sebastien chimed in, directing his gaze towards me, hinting at the possibility of their involvement in the crime scene.

“Was there security present at your hall?” Josephine inquired, prompting me to think back to the party. I couldn’t recall seeing any security personnel during the event. I looked at Charlotte, then Oliver and Marvin and they all shrugged.

“Could it be that the security arrived late at night or after the party?” Noah asked, already knowing the likely answer but wanting me to confirm it.

“We stayed until the end since our class had gifts for us,” I replied, and he nodded in understanding.

“So, Gamma Lebedev and Delta Sokolov, how did you allocate your resources that night?” Oliver pressed, and the men hesitated to answer.

“As we mentioned earlier, it was late at night, and we might have arrived late. We didn’t really keep track of the exact time,” the Delta explained, with Josephine nodding in acknowledgement.

“In other words, your team members were tardy in carrying out their duties? Regardless I am sure you would have known the party was over?” she questioned, and the men reluctantly agreed.

“It was a party, though, so I wonder why there was a need for heightened security and why you sent your men there,” Josephine continued, her curiosity evident. Gamma Lebedev quickly interjected to respond.

“The royal family was present,” the Gamma admitted, and Josephine’s nod confirmed that she had gotten the answer she was looking for.

“Exactly, which is why your security should not have failed. Securing that place should have been a priority over checking the dock with Alpha Thompson. If the Alpha and Beta were left alone there, it implies that your presence was not required at the dock in the first place,” Josephine deduced, and Noah concurred.

“I had the same thought, Jo. Their explanation doesn’t add up, but regardless, it’s not our concern. Our focus is on ensuring the safety of the Brightons and stabilising Grizlo after the terrible incident they experienced. We need to do this before Alpha Christian appoints a new Alpha to the position. While solving the Maguire case would be ideal, it’s not our responsibility,” Noah asserted, and Marvin agreed with his sentiment. I could see the officers relax a bit and what Noah had done was wise.

“Good luck with that one. We hope you solve the case quickly so people can stop wondering what happened,” Oliver calmly conveyed, and the Gamma and Delta nodded in response.

“It was enjoyable chatting with you, and we hope you didn’t find our questioning offensive?” I inquired, and they assured us that it wasn’t offensive, although we couldn’t be entirely sure if they truly felt that way.

After leaving them in the visiting room, Justin escorted them out.

As we were yet to head to our grandparent’s house for the investigation, we decided to gather in Justin’s office to exchange ideas and thoughts.

I couldn’t help but wonder whether the Gamma and Delta were genuinely ineffective in their roles or if they were intentionally stalling the investigation to protect Mike. Regardless of the truth, we were determined to get to the bottom of the matter.

As we interrogated the Gamma and the Delta, I witnessed a fiery determination in my cousins’ eyes, confirming why our parents had chosen us for this task. The Alberts displayed the same passion as their father, and Josephine matched their intensity. Charlotte was equally relentless, and Marvin and Oliver showcased their capabilities. We were a formidable team, and there was no doubt in my mind that together, we would unravel this mystery and find the truth.

While walking, my phone buzzed with an incoming text. I noticed it was from Sophia’s mother’s number and hastily opened it.

“Stop looking for me. I think they are planning something,” the message read, prompting me to share it with everyone immediately.

Deep down, I knew they were scheming something, but Sophia would have called me instead of sending a text. It seemed like someone else wanted to halt the search or establish contact with me, raising concerns about Sophia’s well-being. The fact that she no longer had a phone left me worried and questioning her safety.