

The Forced Maiden For The Cursed Alpha King

171 – 180

Chapter 171

Chapter **171**

Xander's POV:

All three of them attacked at the same time.

I watched them charge at me, my skin prickling with tension. They moved fast, cutting through the night like they were made of it.

I dodged a sword aimed at my neck, the sharp edge of it nicked my skin.

It burned.

I skidded to a stop a few feet away and touched the wound. My hand came off stained with blood.

They weren't joking. Whatever it was they had coated their blades with was enough to deal damage to me. At this rate, if I'm not careful, my head will roll on the ground.

A grin lit up my face. My my, Caldan has truly outdone himself. I'm thinking about being careful in a fight, something I haven't done in a very long time.

I faced the assassins. "You're good," I said. I meant it. They were good. Good enough to draw blood before me.

"What do you think?" The vampire said and charged.

When I said they were good, I meant the other two.

I grabbed her by her neck midway. She swiped at my face with her claws, missing by a few inches.

"I feel sorry for you, Aeris. You feel for my brother's lies." I said. She grabbed my hand and tried to wiggle out of my grip. Her claws dug through my skin. It burned like a fucking bitch, blood pouring out of the slashes.

Without wasting time, I dove my free hand into her chest. Her scream echoed through the night. I ripped her heart out while it was still beating. Hm, I thought vampires didn't have beating hearts.

Oh well, the more you know.

The light dulled from her eyes and her body went limp in my hold.

I dropped the organ on the forest and turned to the other two. They wasted no time to mourn their fallen comrade and attacked me. I blocked the snake man's sword, the fallen vampire losing an arm in the process. The sword came close to my arm. From behind, the yellow eyed one attacked. I stepped out of the way, the sword caught in my hair.

Fucking hell. They're relentless.

Their swords came from all angles, whooshing through the air, strike after strike after strike. The vampire was soon torn to bloody pieces and useless.

I don't think I've had such a fight in years. I can feel the cuts on my body bleeding.

I am bleeding, unarmed, and cornered.

For the first time, I see the full extent of Caldan's hatred. But whatever happens, I must survive this night. There's no way I'll leave my throne to a child.

I targeted the snake man and appeared behind him..before he could strike, I grabbed the snake coiled around his neck and wound it tight, using it as a rope. His foot slipped and he stumbled back, his sword falling out of his hand and clattering to the ground.

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The snake hissed furiously and snapped its jaws at me. It began to glow a furious orange, its body solid like it was carved out of metal. The scorching hit seared the skin of my palms. Yet I held on, tightening my hold around it. This happened in under a second. Using my speed, I moved the snake man right under the attack of his comrade.

The yellow eyed man struck, and his sword caught his partner's arm. His arm fell to the ground, severed off cleanly. The snake man howled, his voice full of raw pain. I dropped him and swerved around, picking up his sword and in one smooth motion slicing off the

yellow eyed man's head. His head dropped to the ground, followed by his body. Blood poured in rivers out of his neck, soaking into the earth.

I turned to the snake man. He crawled away, clutching the bleeding stump off his arm. I pointed the sword at his head.

"What did Caldan promise you?" I asked.

He crawled to his knees and bowed his head. His voice trembled as he said; "Please, don't kill me. I don't want to die, I beg of you."

"I will kill you. First, tell me what Caldan promised you."

He didn't reply. His body trembled with the weight of his breaths.

I sighed softly. I don't know what makes them think they can act however they want.

I pulled the sword back and swung it down on his shoulder, slicing off his other hand. He cried out and looked up at me, eyes full of tears.

"Well?" I asked, bored with his screaming. "I don't delight in torture, but you've got two legs I can take. Speak? Or not?"

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"He promised us seats on the council when he becomes king!"

"Is that all?"

"H-he...oh goddess..."

I pointed the sword at his lap. "Speak."

"Immortality." He breathed out.

"What?"

"He promised he'll give us the gift of immortality."

My brows shot up.

"And how was he going to do that?"

"H-he said he w-was going to get it a-after he killed the girl in the palace"

“What girl?”

“I don’t know! He just...he just s—said he’s b—
been keeping her under his watch in the palace!”

“How was he going to get the immortality?! Speak! I know he told you!”

“There was someone...vermin...told him about the Portal of magic inside the girl. He said it was enough magic to go round for a dozen men. Even more. He is going to kill her and harvest it.”

My blood turned to ice in my veins.

I grabbed his hair and pulled him up. “Who is this woman? What is her name?”

He stared at me, silently pleading. “S—us? S- sabrina, or erm, something...”

2/3

09:33 Sat, 8 Mar M

Chapter 171

Sabrina.

My mind went to her. Oblivious, unaware. Fuck. I never should have let him get close to her!

“Sabrina?” I asked.

“Yes. She’s the one.”

I dropped him on the ground.

Caldan. That little piece of shit.

The snake man turned and began crawling away. Like a fucking snake. I walked up to him, anger brewing inside me. Where does he think he’s going?

I stabbed the sword right through his midsection. He sobbed with pain, writhing and groaning. I pulled the sword back and stabbed him over and over till his body stopped moving.

I can’t believe this! Sabrina’s life is in danger. Somehow Caldan has been aware of her gifts, and the extent of them. Before I even knew about them.

“Caldan!” I screamed into the night.

I’m going to skin that boy when I see him.

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Xander’s POV:

“No...no don’t...” Orion grabbed at my arms and held tight.

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“You have to go back home. I undid the last of the ropes that bound him. “Go back to yo
ur mother. You have seen how dangerous it is for you to be here with me.”

“I don’t want to go back.” He said firmly. “Damn! You’re so strong! You took them all do
wn! And so fast too”

“Orion, just be obedient, for once.”

“And you came back for me?” He clapped his chest and sighed dreamily. “I always kne
w you were a kind hearted man under the...um...emotionless aura you give off.”

I rubbed my temples, annoying with him. “For heavens sake...” Sabrina is in danger. An
d this elf boy won’t listen to me and go back home.

“The lady they talked about, Sabrina, is she someone you like?”

I looked up at him. “What? How on earth would you arrive at that conclusion.”

“Well,
you pushed away every woman I brought to you. Is it because of this lady? You like her,
don’t you?”

“You won’t go back home?”

He shook his head firmly. “Nope.”

I looked to the heavens and sighed. It feels like I’ve got a rebellious teenager for a son.
What on earth was I thinking?

“Fine.” I sighed. I turned my back to him. “Get on.”

“Huh?!” He shouted, his voice startling a few bats. They scurried off into the sky, their wings flapping erratically.

I glanced at him over my shoulder. “Look, kid, I need to move. And fast. If you can keep up, then fine.”

“No no! I can’t. Um...that spell has ran out so...”

I grabbed his arm and slung him over my shoulder. Without wasting time, I sped off. He screamed the entire way. And for some reason, it was easier to ignore his screaming than it was to ignore his yapping.

We arrived at the palace a few minutes later. I dropped him, watching as he swayed and tried to catch himself.

“Are you okay.” I asked. He flashed a thumbs up, but he looked green.

“Do not speak a word of this ever again. Am I clear?”

He nodded. “Yes. I won’t speak of it ”

“Make you self useful elsewhere..don’t follow me” Without waiting for his reply, I walked ahead. The palace guards were ever active. I gave them a command to forget what they had just seen.

The moment I walked into the courtyard, I felt an unsettling aura in the air. A dark presence, one as has never been allowed into these grounds.

My skin prickled and the air felt chilly. Too chilly to be natural.

Chapter 172

Something was wrong. And my mind inestly went to Satrina

Gods. I hope she’s okay, I can’t imagine anything happening to her, not even a scratch on her

I headed into the castle. The hulk were empty, as most of the servants were asleep. My mind race with thoughts of Sabrins, and the things she could be going through at this very moment.

Caldan. If Caldán hurts her then he is going to be one very unlucky man

I headed to his wing, my steps faster as I got closer. I clenched my fiers, trying to control the rising rage inside me

The last time I had seen her, she was clear with her word. 'I hope you never come back.'

I didn't want to believe she meant that. I had so much I wanted to tell her, so much I wanted to do. So much I wouldn't do if

she was hurt.

Fuck it. What the hell was I thinking? I should have been more honest. I should have told her the truth, about how I drove myself half mad with worry looking for her.

I should have held her. I should have...

I halted in my tracks.

Caldan's scent was strong here. The evil presence I felt got stronger and stronger. Sabrina's scent was here, faint, barely there.

I picked up the pace and got to his room. The door wouldn't budge when I tried to open it. It was bolted shut, unnaturally

So.

Muttering a curse under my breath, I took a step back.

It's been a long time, I think a hundred years or so, since I last did this.

I allowed my wolf to rise to the surface. Strength surged through my veins and my rage intensified. With my new strength, I slammed into the door. It disconnected from its hinges and fell.

The scene before me made me pause.

Caldan stood by the bed, chanting in a low tone. On the other side was a woman. She held a staff which glowed, matching her eyes. Laid out in the middle of the bed was Sabrina, unconscious. There was a red pattern drawn on her chest, her hands and her forehead. The red lines glowed subtly, pulsing on her skin.

My wolf growled.

Caldan turned to me. His eyes went wide and he let out a shout. "You!" He shouted.

I rushed to him and grabbed him by his collar. My body moved on its own, my fists striking every inch of him I could reach. His cries rang out in the air, further fueling the rage inside me.

Suddenly, my body became weightless. I felt myself float into the air and thrown into the wall. I barely felt any of it, my gaze still focused on Caldan. His nose was broken, blood dribbling down his chin. The woman with the staff walked over to Caldan and pulled him up.

He snarled at me. "How are you alive?! How?!"

"What the fuck are you doing, Caldan?" My voice was a gravelly growl. My eyes darted quickly to Sabrina and back to Caldan. "What is this?"

He laughed, wiping the blood off his nose. "Why do you want know? Sabrina is none of your business. Nothing of her's concerns you."

2/3

16:53 Mon, 10 Mar MG.

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I pushed myself off the wall and charged at him. The woman when her seat and melible hand pulled me back to the wall

"Very good Amelia, Caldan said to her. "Keep him right

"As you wish" She replied.

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"I'm finally happy, your majesty, that you're finally getting of what you're darting Sabetica di tiste a few fusurs agis?"

"What do you mean?"

He pointed to her unconscious form. "You didn't tell me the hard power Quine the thing to keep away from your brother. don't you think?"

"Caldan, let this ring clear in your head. I will fucking skin you

"Well you can't do shit" He shook his head. You're powerless. You claim to be all that and more but when faced with real power, look at you. Harmless"

Oh he has no idea what he's doing.

"Sabrina, oh she is a well of power. And I am going to use that power. When I get it, I will be superior to you. Finally

I pulled against the invisible restraints. The more I pulled, the harder they became.

Caldan laughed, mocking. He was finally showing his true colors. The stars were gone from his eyes.

I stared at Sabrina. Looking so small, so helpless there.

My body immobilized with magic.

And it hit me how truly powerless i was in this situation.

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Comment

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Xander's POV:

Caldan brushed himself up and walked over to where Sabrina lay. He stared at her and shook his head, muttering something I didn't catch. He carried her up and turned me.

"This is where we say our goodbyes, brother." He said in that fake, controlled tone he always used. "I will be back, definitely, You cannot be allowed to roam this earth any longer. And I will be glad to put you out of your misery.

"Coward." I hissed at him. "You want to kill me, do it now. And leave Sabrina out of this. This is between the both of us"

He laughed. "Yeah, no. I don't listen to you anymore." He turned to leave and paused. "By the way, I have a question for you?"

I narrowed my eyes. "What?"

"Sabrina. You knew I showed interest in her first. And yet you fucked her. Why did you do that?"

I inhaled sharply.

"You knew I loved her. But the moment I was gone, you swooped in and made your move. Quite shameless of you, don't you think? And while you're my older brother nonetheless. Why did you do that?"

I admit, I deserve his harsh words. But I can't simply sit back and watch him leave. Not with Sabrina. "Caldan, drop her this instant. That's an order."

"An order?"

"Yes.

He dropped Sabrina on the bed and walked over to me. I expected a lot of things, one of them wasn't him delivering an uppercut to my jaw. He grabbed my collar and forced me to look into his eyes

"Listen up here. I'm sick and tired of you ordering me around! My entire fucking life! Do this! Do that! Stay back! Stand down! Fuck you!"

"Caldan-

"Don't call me! I said fuck you! I'm sick and tired of you!" He pulled back, breathing heavily. "I'm done. You're useless to me now. You're fucking dead to me."

"Caldan I wasn't asking."

"Yeah. Do you think I'm asking? Oh that's right. You actually need me. You're pretty useless without me. Who will represent you at your meetings right now? Huh?! Who will you your perfect little representative?!"

That doesn't concern me. Caldán being my representative wasn't set in stone. Anyone can do it.

All I care about right now is Sabrina. I can't let him leave this place with her. I simply can't.

"Nothing to say huh?" He spat. He went to pick her up again

I pushed against the magic holding me down. The witch moved her staff, slamming me into the ground. I forced my head up, her mocking laughter filling the air.

"Oh this is fun." Caldán said, joining her.

"Yes..it is. But I'm afraid I'll be dead if he comes free."

1/3

16:53 Mon, 10 Mar MO.

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Caldan waved dismissively. "That's impossible. Once we're out of here, he won't be able to find us. Or por

"Is that so?"

"Yes. And besides," He turned to me. "I'll be back to kill him. His only selling point is his immortality side that he's we

I would laugh at the absurdity of it all, if he wasn't carrying Sabrina up again

"When I kill him, I'll take his throne. And then, I'll make you my queen. That way he would never loves you" He said so the witch.

Ah. Another one falls for his sugar coated lies. I was right. He is doing everything he can to kill me, and that included promising every random woman who had powers he could exploit that she'd be his queen

My heart skipped a beat. Did he make the same promise to Sabrina? And now she's going to meet her death at **his** handst

No. No way.

My heart began to race. The entire time I've been able to keep calm. I can't do that any longer.

Caldan turned to me, his eyes pools of evil. "Goodbye brother. Till we meet again,"

The world slowed.

A cold feeling settled in my chest. It took me a second to realize that it was.

Fear.

If Caldán steps out of here with Sabrina, I may never be able to find her.

The cold claws of fear gripped my heart and squeezed. It felt difficult to swallow, **my** vision tunneled and a ringing sound exploded in my ears.

Never had I felt this amount of fear, fear of losing someone before.

Not even when I lost Katherine. Back then it was swift, I could barely react and she was gone.

But it's different right now. Sabrina is right here. Caldán is taking her away from me. And I can't move. I'm frozen, trapped to the ground and crushed under invisible weights.

Forced to watch as he takes her away.

“No...” I can’t recognize the anguished voice that came out of my throat.

I can’t lose her. I can’t fucking lose Sabrina. Not when I just found her. Not after all I went through searching for her, believing she was dead, only to see her in the flesh again. Whole. Healthy. And angry.

I haven’t had the chance to apologize to her. I haven’t had the chance to make up for all my shitty behavior. I haven’t given her the chance to take out all her anger on me, I haven’t done anything.

And she’s going to be gone.

“No. Caldan. Stop!” I can’t hold back the emotions in my voice. My eyes went wide, and my heart thumped faster. “Put her down! Let her go this instant!”

Caldan turned to me, his face full of disgust. “You’re still ordering me around. Pathetic.”

I can’t lose her. I never thought I could be so fearful of losing someone. My heart won’t be able to take it. I can’t do this to

her!

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16:53 Mon, 10 Mar

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“Take us of here dear,” Caldan said to the woman. “Somewhere far away where he won’t be able to find us.”

“As you wish” She lifted her staff. Suddenly, she froze.

Right before my eyes, she turned to a solid figure of ice.

Hope soared in my chest. There was only one person who could use ice magic like that.

The weights vanished from my body and I sprang to my feet. Nifra rushed to my side, her eyes glowing an icy blue. She bowed and glanced over at the witch. Her eyes hardened and she waved her hand, freezing her over again.

Caldan stumbled back, panic crossing his eyes. He turned to leave and was suddenly frozen in his track.

“Not so fast now.” A voice said behind me. I didn’t need to turn to know it was Acheron.

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Xander’s POV:

“Your majesty,” Nifra said, reaching out to help me to my feet.

“I’m fine,” I said and pushed myself up.

Acheron rushed up to Caldán. “Drop hier. This instant.”

“Bold of you to assume I’ll listen to you.” Caldán said, taking a step back. “Stay the fuck away from me!”

“I see you want this to end in your death. Fine by me.” Acheron charged at him, ready to tear his throat out.

Caldán threw Sabrina on the bed and pulled a knife out of his belt. He waved it in front of him and Acheron paused. I walked up to Acheron and gently pulled him back.

This was between my brother and I.

“Caldán, you really think a knife would stop me?” I asked, but I couldn’t shake off the feeling of wariness.

Caldán’s eyes are wild, untamed. The knife itself looks weird, it’s blade black with traces of red veins on it

Caldán laughed. “You think this blade is for you? Oh brother, how wrong you are.”

Before I could reply, he stabbed the knife right into his chest.

Only then did I see the hilt of it. It had a large dark stone attached to it, glowing and pulsating with life.

“Your Majesty! Please move back!” Acheron shouted. He grabbed my arm and tugged me back. “That’s no ordinary knife. It’s dark magic. He just fused it with himself.”

Fuck. so this was his backup plan. When all else failed he was going
to

use himself.

I watched as he transformed into something from hell.

He crouched down, double over in pain. Deep, strangled groans came from his chest. He let out an ear piercing scream, throwing his head back.

His hair turned black from the roots. The veins on his arms and face began to turn black and grew long, slithering and hissing under his skin. His sunny blue eyes turned an unsettling pitch black. He slowly got to his feet, revealing his new form.

He had just grown taller, larger, darker.

The Caldan I knew was gone. And in his place was this monster. He laughed, his voice a mocking sound.

“You won this one brother, but I’ll definitely be back for her.”

I lunged at him, reaching out to grab his throat. He took a step back. The space around him warped and he vanished. I grabbed only air.

His laughter echoed in my head, like a promise of pure evil to come.

I stood where he stood just a second ago, my mind racing. What the hell had he just done? What kind of magic did he just tap into right now? I hadn’t seen anything like it before.

“Your majesty?” Nifra called behind me. “Is everything alright?”

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16:53 Mon, 10 Mar MO.

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I turned to her. She stood beside Acheron, both their faces reflecting deep worry.

Are you okay my friend?” Acheron asked.

Sabrina!

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I turned and dashed to the bed. She was still there, limp and unmoving. I cradled her body close to me, as close as I could get her. She's real, she's right here with me. My body trembled as I held her, my face buried in her hair, breathing in her

scent.

She felt so small in my arms. I could feel her bones poking through her skin. But that didn't matter to me.

All I could think about was how grateful I was that I came here on time.

Had I been a second late, she would have been dead.

I collapsed to the ground, rocking her body back and forth, my eyes wide and unfocused in front of me. If this isn't a second chance to correct all my mistakes, I don't know what is.

"Your Majesty," Nifra cleared her throat. "Please, I need to check if she's alright."

I looked up at her, only then did I realize that I wasn't alone.

I nodded and gently laid her head on my lap. Nifra knelt beside me and touched her chest, her eyes fluttering shut for a few seconds.

"She's fine," She said when she opened her eyes and sighed with relief. "She's still breathing."

Acheron knelt beside her. He peeled back Sabrina's eye lid and peered closer to her face. "It appears to be a sleeping spell. Nothing serious."

"Well can you undo it?" I snapped. He glanced quickly at me and nodded.

"Yes. I just did. She should be awake in a few hours."

I looked down at her face, and my hands twitched with the desire to touch her. I can't believe I almost lost her, just when things were about to get good. Just when I was about to give her the world she deserved, the world I wanted for her.

Never again .never will this happen again.

"My king, I wasn't sure you cared about her. But you have proved me wrong."

I glared at him. "Of course I fucking care about her." I still hadn't forgotten what he did, the role he had to play in all of this. But his punishment will come later.

"She came to me," Nifra said, making me turn to her. "She said your life was in danger. She begged me to help you, and because of that I was able to get Acheron to pitch in to help."

"What?" I said, my chest tightening. "She did that...for me?"

Nifra nodded silently.

I looked back at Sabrina, and my heart ached. I thought she hated me. All this time I was wrong, I was so fucking wrong. She knew of the danger to my life, and she went to the one person who could help.

I hugged her to my chest, guilt eating me up. How would I ever repay her for this?

"Thank you, Nifra." I said, looking up at her. "And you too, Acheron."

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"You're welcome, your majesty." She said.

"Your welcome too. I would have to come up with a barrier to prevent anyone from teleporting, except you of course?"

"And traps too."

"Yes. Those too. Because he will be back."

Nifra sighed. "I can't believe he has this in him."

"You always didn't like him," I said.

"Yes but...this? I just thought he was a harmless womanizer. My Spirit never liked him. And now I know why?"

"I always knew he was capable of this." Acheron said. "It was always in his eyes. He had a thirst for power that can't be quenched."

“Did he really send people to like you?” Nifra asked with wide eyes. I nodded. “I’m so glad you’re okay.”

“Glad? Nifra, have some faith in your king.” Acheron said.

“Stay out of this,” She shot back at him.

“Both of you,” I called and they stopped. “I have a guest, he’d waiting outside. A fae. Nifra, kindly give him a room and treat him well. He’s been through quite the ordeal.”

She bowed. “Yes, your majesty.”

I got to my feet, carrying Sabrina with me. “We’ll continue this tomorrow. I’m retiring for the night.”

Nifra reached out for Sabrina. “I’ll take her to her room, you don’t have to worry.”

“It’s fine. She’ll stay with me till she wakes up”

I felt Acheron’s eyes on me. And truly, he was staring. Judging, silently. But I didn’t care about that. I just reunited with the woman I was scared as heck to lose. Some judgment isn’t going to ruin that for me.

“Thank you, both of you. I won’t forget the kindness you’ve shown me this evening.”

“You’re welcome.” Acheron said.

Using my magic, I teleported to my room. I need to rest, and so does Sabrina.

And for the near foreseeable future, she will be here with me. Where she belongs.

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AD

Comment

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Chapter **175**

Sabrina’s POV:

My eyes flew open, and with it came a rush of fear.

I sat up hastily, looking around me for Caldan. The last thing I remember was him knocking me out with that strange substance. Where is he?! Where am I?

“Sabrina,” a deep voice sounded beside me. Warm hands grabbed mine and squeezed. “Hey, you’re alright.”

That didn’t sound like Caldan’s voice.

And on second take, this room was oddly familiar. I had been here before...

I turned to the side. And my eyes met the King’s.

For two seconds I was stunned, frozen in place. I’m in his bedroom.

His eyes bore into mine, his face aglow with a half smile. He squeezed my hand again and I looked down to the mattress where we were connected. And slowly back up at him.

He’s alive.

Dear goddess. He’s alive!

My body moved on its own. I dashed at him, nearly knocking him over. Straddling his waist, I grabbed both sides of his face. I had to make sure he was real. And not a phantom of my imagination.

His skin felt warm under my touch, his chin rough with stubble. His eyes widened a fraction, and then he smiled warmly.

“You’re alive,” I whispered, my voice choked up. “I...I thought you’d be dead. Caldan...he...he said he was going to kill you!”

He gently grabbed my wrists but didn’t pull me off him. “You seem surprised.” He said.

I nodded, swallowing the lump in my throat.

“I thought you hated me, and my death would bring you immense joy. I’m pleased to know that you actually care about me.”

I lowered my hands from his face and went still. “That’s not true. I never wished you death. Yes, I hated you more than anything and I still do, but I never wanted you to die.”

His eyes remained unreadable. “Is that so?”

I drew back and moved away from him. My eyes scanned his form, from his face and down to his legs. He's okay.

I'm glad.

And with that realization came a twinge of pain. Why am I so relieved that he's okay?

"How are you feeling?" He asked.

My mind immediately went back to the dinner with Caldan. And then his room, when he tried to force himself on me. And all the disgusting things he spewed. All the women he's been with, some kind of fucked up way of making me feel special? How **gross**.

All the emotions I felt came rushing back, the fear clogging up my throat. My body began to tremble, and my vision blurred.

1/3

07:02 Tue, 11 Mar

Chapter 175

The bed dipped as the king got closer to me. He pulled me into his arms and held me, my head pressed to his chest. The steady thump of his heartbeats resonated in my ear, and I felt his warmth through his clothes

"You're safe, Sabrina. I'm right here with you. Nothing will harm you, not while I'm here?"

"I was so scared," I whispered, gripping fistfuls of his shirt tight. "I thought I thought he'd kill me"

"He won't ever touch you again," He stroked the back of my head, his touch calm and reassuring,

Tears rushed down my eyes, staining his shirt. I couldn't hold it back anymore. All the tears I had been pushing back. The fear. Everything came rushing back. The king's scent filled my nostrils, and oh how I had missed it

He held me while I cried, his whispers of "I'm here" soft in the Air between us.

I raised my head and looked at him. "Where is he? Caldan? Where is he now?"

He cupped my face, his thumb wiping my tears away. "Don't think about him. He will never get his hands on you again"

“Promise?” I asked, trying not to keen at his touch.

“I promise, on my honor as king.”

My shoulders relaxed at his words. I don't think I can handle **it if I** ever see Caldan again. He was going to kill me, he made it very clear.

“Thank you,”

“You're welcome, always,”

For a moment, I was lost in the eye contact between us. The warmth of his palms on my cheeks. The fact that I was straddling him.

That's right. I shouldn't be here.

I still hate him.

My eyes hardened and I pushed his hands off my **face**. I turned and tried to get off the bed. He grabbed my arm and yanked

me back.

“Where are you going?” He asked.

I glared at him. “I'm going back to my room. I shouldn't be here.”

“Why?” He asked with a frown.

I scoffed. “Really? Your majesty, perhaps you have forgotten, allow me to remind you. “I faced him fully. “You threw **me** out of the palace. And then when I returned, what did you say to me? You hated me. You insulted me. And now, I would like to take my leave.”

“Sabrina, you're not leaving.”

“Even now, you still pull this card?”

“It's not that. There's a lot that you

don't know.”

I cocked my head to the side. “Very well then. Tell me. What is it I don't know? Tell me, I'm listening.”

He went silent.

2/3

Chapter 175

I waited, Tense seconds passed. Anything at all. A decent explanation as to why he was so cruel to me after all I thought we had.

He held my wrist and jerked me closer to him. His arms enclosed around me, his face buried in the crook of my neck. He inhaled my scent deeply and his breath shuddered.

It crossed my mind to pull away. To tell him to get his hands off me.

But my body was starting to relax. I missed this. I missed him, so much. And I liked the feeling of his arms around me. Caldan couldn't compare to that, ever.

I'm being stupid.

What is a hug when he'll throw me out himself once he remembered how irrelevant I am

The thought hurt. That one day this would become a thing of the past. No more of his warmth. **Nothing**

"Sabrina," He called, his voice deep and raw. Goosebumps covered my skin and I shivered.

"Yes, my king?"

"I don't know what I would have done if I lost you Tonight."

My heart skipped a beat.

"I can't lose you." He said, his arms tightening around me. As if to make sure that yes, I'm here.

I hugged him back, my mind racing with a million different thoughts.

He can't lose me.

That's crazy. Who goes about saying things like that? I must be hearing things.

He shifted, and his lips pressed to the side of my throat. I gasped softly, shivers running down my spine. He kissed my neck slowly, each press of his soft lips a whisper of softness.

"I will never let you go. Never."

2/2

Chapter 176

Chapter 176

Sabrina's POV:

The sun rays peeking through the curtains woke me up.

The feeling of warm arms around me made me pause for two seconds.

The memories slowly came back, waking up in the middle of the night scared. Fearing that Caldan was coming to get me. And then The king was with me.

The king!

I inclined my head, and my suspicions were confirmed.

His arms were secured around me, his head rested on my crown lightly. He held onto me like he was worried I'd vanish into the night and never come back.

The soft words he whispered to me came rushing back.

Did he mean any of them? Or were they just empty promises?

I rested my head back on his arm, my heart racing like war drum in my chest. He sounded genuine. I felt the crack in his voice when he said he'll never lose me again.

And that just made everything worse.

What the hell brought that up? All of a sudden he's all mushy with me and doesn't want to lose me? Wasn't he the very same one who hated me?

I could still remember how disgusted he was at me. Especially since it was Caldan that brought me back and I refused to continue being a slave. He didn't show a smidge of worry for me. He didn't care. I doubt he even noticed that I was gone. He said it himself. And he didn't show any regret for what he did. Nothing.

How could he? Bet he had Blair.

And now he holds me close, through the night? And tells me that he doesn't want to lose me, patiently.

lose me? And when I died he comforted

I don't get it. And just like that I've given myself a headache first thing in the morning.

It's hot. He's radiating too much heat. And the sun is beginning to irritate me.

Why the fuck is it shining right in my fucking face?!

The king moved, "Sabrina?"

I pushed myself away from him and sat on my heels. "Good morning, your majesty."

He propped his head up on his palm, his eyes lazily scanning my form. "Morning."

He's not immediately sending me out. That's...strange?

"What's wrong? What were you thinking of?"

"Nothing." I said, defensive.

"Stop thinking so much and come over here. You're so far away."

1/4

51%

Chapter 176

"Come over there?"

"Yes. Give me a kiss."

I blinked. He wasn't joking. "I should be going now." I said, heat rising to my cheeks. "I don't...I don't know what this all means and I'd prefer not to be messed with after the events of last night."

He grabbed my hand as I tried to jump off the bed and pulled me slowly to him. He kissed the back of my hand, his red eyes

intense on me.

"I know this all very confusing.

Shivers ran up my spine. "Yes."

"I'll explain everything, after breakfast of course."

Everything huh?

I wonder what he's going to say.

With a reluctant sigh, I slumped my shoulders. "Alright. After breakfast then."

I tried to leave and he pulled me back again. I gasped as his hands grabbed my waist and his knee pushed between my legs.

"How about that kiss?" He asked, a small smile on his lips.

Anger washed through my body. I can't believe this. He's asking me for a kiss?! After all he did to me?!

"your majesty, kindly let me go." I said, as politely as I could.

"Don't be shy," He said. I met his eyes, and any other day I would have fallen under his charm. My eyes moved to his lips. And the memories came rushing in.

Those lips on mine, my face, my neck, and lower...lower.

I closed my eyes and inhaled. Don't go spiraling now, Sabrina.

When I reopened them, his eyes were darker.

I leaned in, as if I wanted to kiss him. His hands on my hips tightened, pulling me closer to him. Just when he had let his guard down, I raised my knee between his legs and rammed his crotch as hard as I could in our position.

He groaned, his voice strangled. In that split second, his grip on me let loose. I jumped off the bed and sprang a safe distance away.

He raised his head and looked at me, a vein popped in his forehead.

"I'm leaving now!" I shouted and turned to the door

"Hold on."

I froze in my tracks. Ah shit! I just kicked him in the balls. He's going to kill me!

"Take a shower first. Here."

I slowly turned and looked at him. He didn't look ruffled at all. He propped his head back on his hand and stared at me with an easy smile.

My left eye twitched.

Chapter 176

“What?”

“You heard me.”

3 51%°

“No no, I did. I’m just asking, what are you doing?”

He raised a dark brow. “How?”

“Are you planning to return to that fucked up routine of ours just because once again Ca ldan is out of the picture?! I am not sleeping with you. And I will sure as hell not be your dirty little secret anymore. Not after how you treated me.”

“Sabrina-”

“Well Incase you- Incase you didn’t know, your majesty, I have some self respect. And I value myself. And I will not involve myself in anything that will disrespect me not even if i t’s you.”

He laughed.

And heavens alone knew how I badly wanted to kick him again. Harder this time. Let’s s ee how fast he’ll recover from that

one.

“Do you mean it?” He asked, his eyes twinkling with mirth.

I folded my arms tightly. “Every word.”

“So, you don’t have any intention of fucking me again?”

My words got stuck in my throat. My cheeks turned red and I huffed. “That’s what I said. ” I snapped. I won’t let him turn this around. No fucking way.

“Do you trust me, Sabrina?” He asked with a sigh.

No. I almost said.

But last night he saved me from what was a very certain death. I knew it was him, only he could do that. I don’t know how, but right n ow it’s not my concern.

I stuck my cheek out with my tongue and refused to answer.

He got down from the bed and walked over to me. Still wary, I watched him closely, ever ready to spring into action. Instead he grabbed my shoulders and gently led me to the direction of the bathroom.

“Don’t worry about clothes, someone will bring them for you.”

I opened my mouth to say something snarky but then decided against it. Against my better judgement, I am actually interested in whatever he has to say to me.

And this...this felt nice. Being taken care of. I missed it. Caldan did try, in his own way. But it never felt as it does now.

I walked into the shower and slammed the door shut.

Maybe it’s because Caldan isn’t the king. And he never will be.

I took a long and hot shower, making sure I washed the red markings on my skin off. And with it Caldan’s disgusting touch,

Once I was done, I stepped out wrapped in a towel. A change of clothes and clean underwear was laid out on the bed, a pair of flats beside the bed. I looked up to see the king leaning on the doorway. his hair draped down his shoulders, and I noticed it was longer. He was dressed in a simple white shirt, dark pants and boots. He must have taken a shower too and got dressed. He looks good like this. laid back and casual.

3/4

51%

Chapter 176

Don’t think that way, Sabrina.

“Please turn around,” I said, clutching the towel knot close to my chest.

His eyes raked over my body, slow and hot, making me squirm.

“I’ve seen you Naked before, Sabrina. And now you want me to turn around?”

My cheeks turned pink. “That doesn’t matter.”

He sighed and shook his head. “Very well.” And he actually turned around.

I raised a brow, shocked. Last I checked, he wasn't the kind of person to actually listen to me. I mean come on, he's the king. He can do whatever he wants.

I got dressed quickly before he could change his mind. Thankfully, he didn't.

"I'm done now." I said.

He turned to face me, his eyes assessing me. He motioned for me to come closer. I closed the space between us and walked up to him. He brushed strands of hair out of my eyes and behind my ears. His fingers lingered, and he smiled.

"You're stunning."

Butterflies filled my stomach. "Thank you."

"Are you ready for breakfast now?"

"I'm more ready for after breakfast. I have a lot of questions"

"I'll try to answer all of them as much as I can. And I have my own questions too."

"About what?"

He shook his head knowingly. "After breakfast."

I sighed softly. At least that makes the two of us equally curious.

He held out his arm for me to take. I hooked my arm with his and he led me out of the room.

It feels like I'll suddenly wake up, and all of this was fake. And he had actually died.

4/4

Chapter 177

Chapter 177

Sabrina's POV:

I didn't realize how starved **I was** till **I** was at the breakfast table.

(23

My stomach growled, painfully so. It hit me that last night's dinner had gone to trash. I stuffed my face with the breakfast meats and rice bread, pausing to swallow before I could choke.

Everything tasted so good. The past few days, food had been tasting like ash. Matter of fact, **ever** since I came **back** from captivity, everything has been tasting like trash.

But now I could eat and eat. My taste buds seemed to have woken up.

I bit a piece of fruit and reached for my glass **of** water. My skin prickled, and I realized I wasn't alone.

The king stared at me, a smile on his lips and his eyes soft. "I'm pleased. I was worried for a moment that I would have to force you to eat. Like the days behind us."

I chewed the fruit and swallowed. Then I drank my water. My mind went to the past. Did he only force me to eat? No. He forced me to do a lot of things.

"Well there's no need to worry. You won't be forcing me to do anything again."

"You belong to me."

My back bristled. "I don't. I stopped being your maid after you tossed me out. That arrangement is done and over."

He didn't reply. I waited a few more seconds, my stomach growling.

Whatever.

I faced my plate and picked a half eaten piece of bread. Just as I raised it to my lips, I heard his voice. "I'm sorry." He said.

The bread fell out of my hand. "What? Why are you sorry?"

"I-

"My buddy!" A loud cherry voice yelled on top of their lungs.

I jumped, startled at the sound. I turned to see a tall, slender man with pointy ears and ink black eyes. He glided over to the king and gasped.

– "My goodness! You look so handsome today! None of those scowls on your face this morning!"

An elf!

My eyes widened. Oh my goodness...I hadn't seen an elf before. I didn't even think they existed.

The king stared at him, all smiles wiped from his **face**.

"You should always have smiles on. They make you look infinitely better." The elf said with a dreamy smile. He clasped his hands to his chest and sighed. "I wish I could show this to Faye."

"And why on earth would you do that?!"

"I don't know? Because it's phenomenal?!" He laughed without a care in the world. "And now that frown is back. Bummer."

1/3

Chapter 177

Who is this elf? **And why is he so free with** the king?

Personally, I like **to** think that I was close with the king..but even back then, I wouldn't dare speak to him this **casually**. But

this elf doesn't have any fear at all. Even Caldan, the King's brother, wasn't this casual.

"Keep it down for fucks sake. It's too early." **The** king said, waving him off dismissively.

The elf turned to me. His eyes flashed with remorse and he faced me.

"Who are you?" I asked.

"Where are my manners?" He walked over to my side. "My name is Orion, and you are?"

"Sabrina."

"My king, is she the one you rushed home to protect?" He turned to the king and asked.

The king choked. On his water. A servant rushed in and quickly removed the glass and cleaned the table off.

I blinked, shocked beyond words. He wiped his lips and glared at Orion.

"Oops" The elf said.

“What do you mean by rushed home to protect?” I asked. Orion turned to me and flashed bright teeth.

“Don’t even try it.” The king said, his voice a low growl.

Orion grabbed the chair close to me and sat down. “My lady Sabrina, it’s a most wonderful story!”

“Sabrina, how do you like the bread?”

I raised a brow. “It’s good, your majesty.” I turned to Orion. “Yes?”

He cleared his throat. He went on to tell me in detail all that had transpired last night. The three assassins Caldan sent. The king using his superhuman speed to get here.

The more Orion spoke, the more my confusion grew.

He actually did that for me? He cared for me? I couldn’t believe it. Not after all that happened, not after all that he said to me before he left. Without a doubt, I was fully convinced that he hated me.

So what **is** all this?

“Don’t listen to him.” The king said, interrupting Orion. “You should be leaving now don’t you think?”

Orion sighed and made to stand up. I grabbed his wrist and pulled him back. “Stay, why don’t you have breakfast with us?”

“What?!” He and the king said at the same time.

I looked at the king. He glared at Orion. If looks could kill, the poor elf would have been dead.

I won’t let that happen.

“Does it bother you, your majesty?” I asked, making the king meet my eyes. “Correct me if I’m wrong, but aren’t you two friends?”

“The best.” Orion sang.

The king sighed. He ducked his head, rubbing his temples. He muttered something about how we were out to get him under

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Chapter 177

his breath. It made me shake my head.

“Fine.” He grumbled. “He can stay.”

“Thank you so much!” Orion said.

“Wow. All this looks delicious can’t believe I’m eating The Chronicle’s breakfast. Oh Faye would be so jealous!”

“Faye?” I asked.

He began piling his plate with food. Meats, vegetables, a spoon of gravy, more meat. “Faye is my sister. She’s really lovely, her head in the clouds a lot. And she’s pretty quiet too.”

“If only you learned that.” The king snapped.

Orion grinned brightly. “But all of us can’t be quiet. That’s boring”

“You’re right.” I said with a small smile.

Orion is like a ray of sunshine, and I’ve barely known him for ten minutes. I wonder if all elves are like him.

“*That* reminds me,” He said and turned to me. His plate was near overflowing. “I’m so sorry, I have to get this off my chest.”

“Get what off your chest? You just met nez what are you apologizing for?”

He rubbed the back of his neck, and the tips of his pointy ears turned red. “Back home, there was this party. I didn’t know my dear friend was taken, and I kept pushing women on him. **I’m so** so sorry”

My heart ached. I recognized that feeling immediately.

“Oh,” I said.

“He didn’t take any! **Just** so you know. And if I had known, I wouldn’t have done that.”

Women. I bet they must have been elves. And if I wasn’t wrong, they were fucking stunning.

“He rejected them all. And he was **so** gloomy and droopy, like a wilted flower. I finally understand why. Again, I’m sorry.”

I picked up my glass of water. "It's fine." I said.

No. It's not fine. Not one bit.

t,

Chapter 178

Chapter 178

Sabrina's POV:

"It's fine, we aren't together anyway." I said.

+5

The king looked at me,

a look of disbelief on his face.

"You aren't?" Orion asked, equally shocked.

The king held my gaze. I couldn't tell what he wanted. But I could take a said firmly. "We aren't."

wild

guess. I turned

to

Orion and I smiled. "No." I

He glanced between us and sighed. "I see." He said.

An awkward silence settled upon us. My mind was in a disarray with all I had heard. The king rushed back for me? And those assassins Caldan sent over. He could have died. They weren't ordinary **assassins** at all.

Why would

he do all that?

"My dear friend-" Orion suddenly spoke up after **a few** minutes of silence

"It's your Majesty to you, Orion."

“Yes,

I’m sure. Remember I I said I came back Iso I could I work for you?”

“Yes?”

w

XX

“And also how I admired you so much I was willing to leave mountains and-”

my life back in the elven lands

with

all the fae wine

and

“And I said no, Orion. Didn’t I? You aren’t going to ever work for me. You are way too loud, annoying, and everything in between.”

“Please?” Orion asked, drawing out the word. “I will be good..I swear on Faye’s head.“.

The king sighed. “Lies.” He said, a frown of annoyance on his face.

“Okay. What

do I need to do to make you accept me?”

“Maybe **speak less** than five sentences in a day?” The king asked. I would have thought he was being serious if I didn’t **see** the wicked glint in his eyes.

Oh.

He’s joking.

He actually...he likes this. He’s enjoying taunting Orion.

My

heart warmed

at that. I bet he likes

him too. I I mean, who wouldn't?

Orion drew

back with

a sullen pout.

"Can we make it ten? I can

do

ten sentences per day."

The king wasn't buying that. "Really?"

Orion sighed. "Yeah. I can't."

"That aside for now. How was your sleep?"

1/4

Chapter 178

Orion blinked. "You're asking **after** me?"

"Forget it."

"Wait! I slept well! The room was cold, which reminded me of home. And it was good. Really good."

The king **gave a** curt nod. "I'm glad. You should make yourself at home."

"Really-"

"Don't cause any trouble for me. And stay in your room."

"You want me to stay?"

The king rubbed his temples. "For fucks sake. Anymore and I'll send you back to your mother."

Orion flew out of his seat and ran to the King's side, arms spread wide as **if** expecting a hug. The king moved, **faster** than the eye could track and stood behind him. Orion crashed into his seat with a yelp of surprise.

The king laughed to himself.

Awww. That's **so** cute.

"That wasn't very nice " Orion said as he got to his feet. "Why won't you let me touch you?"

"Keep your hands to yourself. Thank you."

The elf sighed. "Fine. Anyway, I would like a tour of the castle."

The king tilted his head to the side. "And why are you asking me

"I want you to give it to me."

"No."

"Oh come on! You always tell me no. Why? I'm sure you give the best tours ever. Even though you're quite icy and."

"I have other things to do." The king said and his eyes drifted to me. "Important things."

"Oh," Orion gasped, looking between us. "I see. Lovers things."

My cheeks turned red. "No! That's not what he meant by-"

"I'll see you later! Bye!" He waved and hastily ran off.

I turned to the king. "You just gave him a wrong impression of us."

"Did I?" He asked with a smirk.

"Yes you did. And he seems very kind, I like him."

"Why?"

"He's pure hearted and he's kind." I said, while pretending not to notice the note of jealousy in his **voice**.

He stared at me silently for a few seconds. "Did you eat to your fill?"

"Yes. Can we talk now?"

Servants tramped in and began to clear the table. The king calmly walked over to his seat.

"We should rest a little first, Sabrina."

"I can't. We can't. What are we waiting for? I'm anxious, really so to hear what you have to say."

He reached out for my hand across the table and I pulled back, here's no reason for you to be anxious. I assure you that everything will be explained to you."

"My king!" Before I could reply, I was interrupted by someone. I looked up to see lady Nifra and Acheron walking in.

My body went tense as I saw Acheron. The last time we had met it wasn't a good encounter at all. He stared at me for two seconds and then turned to the king.

"Your majesty," He said with a bow. "Good morning."

"Good morning my king." Lady Nifra greeted too.

"Acheron, Nifra. Good morning. I hope you rested well?"

"We did." Lady Nifra said. "And you?"

"Thank you, I am fine. And thank you too for last night."

"Last night?" I asked, making them turn to me.

"Yes. They helped me in rescuing you from Caldan last night." The king explained.

"Did Lord Acheron help too? Because the last I remember he tried to kill me."

The air grew tense.

The king faced Acheron, his expression cold as ice. "Is that true?"

"I had my reasons." Acheron said, with that prideful disdain on his face.

"I spoke to him after that." Lady Nifra added. "He promised not to *try* harming you again, Sabrina."

"Am I supposed to believe that?." I asked. I trusted Lady Nifra. but Acheron? No.

Acheron didn't say anything. But he didn't look remorseful either. The king glared at him, his red gaze murderous. Acheron noticed this and sighed.

"I helped her last night. She's alive partly because of me."

“Acheron. After all I said, after all the warnings, you still went ahead to do what you wanted?”

They faced each other. Acheron cold, the king angry. Lady Nifra grit her teeth and jammed her elbow into Acheron’s ribs.

“I’m sorry,” He choked out, as if the words were venom on his tongue.

“You won’t hurt Sabrina again.” The king said.

Acheron nodded in reply.

“Words. Swear a solemn vow to me, right now

Acheron gasped. “I am here for her, that’s the only reason I’m still hanging around this place. Because of her! Isn’t that answer enough?”

“No.” The king simply replied. “Swear it to me.”

“You really want to do this?”

“Yes.”

10 94%

I noticed. When Acheron first came to the castle, he was free with the king. Like Orion, if fre was more cheerful and hyper. But now there seemed to be a wall between them.

“Fine.” The wizard groaned. “I swear it. I won’t hurt Sabrina ever again.”

I would be lying if I said I expected that.

My heart bloomed with a strange and warm feeling. Relief? Or something deeper? I couldn’t be too sure.

“Good.” The king said.

Lady Nifra cleared her throat. I turned to her. Her icy blue eyes were warm as she smiled at me. “Did you sleep well? Are you having any pain at all?”

I shook my head. “I’m fine, thank you. You listened to me last night. I’m so glad.”

She took my hand and squeezed it. “It’s fine,”

I turned to Acheron. Truthfully, I am still wary of him. But he did save my life last night. And that is worth something in my books. "Thank you, Lord Acheron. I appreciate your help."

"You're welcome." He said pointedly.

"Lady Nifra, I don't understand how you sent the message to the king last night, about the traps."

"What message?" The king asked before lady Nifra could reply.

"My king, Sabrina tried to save you last night after she learned of Caldan's plans. That was before he kidnapped her."

I hadn't seen a look of shock as the one the king had. He stared at me, his eyes wide and lips parted. "You did?"

My cheeks warmed, and the tips of my ears turned red. I wished I hadn't brought it up at all.

Now it's going to look like I was so worried!

Chapter 179

Chapter 179

Sabrina's POV:

+48)

Their eyes were all on me. I felt like I had been stripped naked and under intense scrutiny. I wish I could take it back. Cool. Now they all know that I cared.

"It was nothing, I didn't think much about it." I said, before I could be asked any more questions. I immediately tried to change the subject. "Lady Nifra, did you remember the-"

"Your majesty," Lady Nifra said pointedly and turned to him. "Allow me."

"Yes, Nifra,"

I bit my lip and sighed.

"Sabrina noticed something was wrong. Apparently, Caldan has revealed his grand plan to her. When she came to me, I'll admit I was a bit skeptical about the validity of her claims."

I grabbed my water and sipped it, using the cup to hide my red face.

Right, lady Nifra. I trust you and you betray me.

“But then I decided to not doubt her. And to my greatest surprise, she was right. Before I could do anything, Caldan took her. I was so worried something would happen. But in the end, she saved you. And I was so glad she did.”

away.

Embarrassment settled deep in my chest and I sighed. I dropped the glass and turned to the king, fully expecting to see him with an arrogant smirk on his face, or a gloating remark.

Anything.

He didn't say anything. His eyes held no sign of mocking, or jesting. Just warmth. He reached out and took my hand under the table and gave it a gentle squeeze.

My heart skipped a beat. And went into a full frenzy. I tried to pull back, but he wouldn't let me. I gave up and just let him hold my hand.

“That being said,” Acheron said and cleared his throat loudly. “We have very little time to act. Caldan would soon be back, to finish what he started. And that won't take long.”

“Where did Caldan go?” I asked. Acheron sighed and nearly rolled his eyes. But his attitude was the last of my problems right now. “What happened to him? Was he...was he captured?”

Lady Nifra sighed and shook her head. “Unfortunately, no. He has gotten involved with dark magic. And he used it to run away.”

“Is that bad?” I asked.

“Yes. It's bad news, Sabrina. Very bad news. The kind of magic he used is very powerful. And it is of a kind that is controlled by will power.”

“You've got to be kidding me. Of all things it had to be will power.” The king groaned.

“I'm not.” Lady Nifra said gravely. “And we all know Caldan is a strong-willed person. That magic in him will continue to grow and grow. And that will be disastrous when he comes back.”

“My goodness.” I gasped. I can't believe this! And to think that I assisted him all along! I sat still and smiled while he was this evil the entire time!

1/3

Chapter 179

And I believed him.

I can't believe that I fell for any of his bullshit.

Dark magic that is driven by will power. That sounds dangerous already. Now they are on Caldan..

"That sounds very bad." I said.

"Please, Sabrina" Acheron said. "Don't get your knickers in a twist. I have taken measures to make sure we would be prepared if he returns."

"What measures?" I asked.

"There's a magic cloak over the palace that will prevent any sort of dark magic from coming in"

"That's right." The king agreed.

That makes me feel safe at least. Acheron may not be the best person on earth but he is a pretty good wizard.

"Before I forget, there is still a frozen witch in the castle. And I need to question."

"I'll do it." Acheron said immediately. "Your majesty, may I have your orders?"

"Go ahead. But take care not to kill her, no matter what."

"Boring " Acheron grumbled under his breath, but he bowed.

Lady Nifra turned to me. "Sabrina dear, after this incident, it is crucial that you figure out the specifics of your magic. You need to understand and be able to use it."

All eyes turned to me again, Acheron's the heaviest.

"Now is not the time." The king spoke up. "Sabrina is currently overwhelmed. She just survived a near death attempt. That will come later. This meeting is dismissed and we will continue tomorrow."

I blinked up at him. Huh?

"I have an important conversation with Sabrina"

“As if last night wasn’t enough. We are all here for her benefit, your majesty.” Acheron said.

“And I said there is no need to rush, Acheron.”

Acheron’s eyes narrowed. “There is need to rush. I felt it last night, how strong the magic was. And it is getting stronger, right now as we speak. So we have to do something about her magic too.”

“We will talk later, Acheron. Perhaps tonight.”

Acheron gave a curt nod. “Yes, your Majesty.”

He turned to Lady Nifra. And a beat of silent communication passed between them. He extended his arm for her and she glared briefly at him. Then she sighed and hooked her arm with his.

“Have a pleasant day, your majesty. Sabrina,” Lady Nifra said with a soft smile, like she hadn’t just thrown me under

Silence descended between me and the king once Lady Nifra and Acheron *had* left. Too much unsaid words hanging between

1. 118.

I felt his eyes on me, but I wouldn’t dare look up. I tried to pull my hand over his grip, but he wouldn’t release me.

2/3

10:25 Sun, 16 Mar

Chapter 179

He got to his feet and gently helped me to my feet. “Would you like to go somewhere with me?” He asked.

I finally met his eyes, surprised to see a small smile on his lips. “Where are we going.” I asked, trying to mirror his smile and failing at it. So I kept my face neutral.

He nudged his head in the direction of the door. “My favorite place in the entire palace.” He said.

AD

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Chapter **180**

Sabrina's POV:

The king led me out of the castle and through a back door that I didn't know existed. Ahead lay a long dwindling path was a glass dome. I looked up at the ceilings, and I could see the sky overhead, the thick vine leaves.

And the sun.

I turned to the king, mildly alarmed. "The sun is out, your majesty."

"Oh that?" He glanced up quickly. "It won't harm me. The glass doesn't let the sun rays through. It's completely fine."

I raised a brow slowly. "And if it's not, and I get frames for the murder of the king?"

He laughed to himself. Then he took a step forward and walked into the dome.

I waited with bated breathe. A second passed. Then five. Nothing happened.

I exhaled a breath of relief.

"You were worried about me," He said, extending his hand to me.

I took his hand. "Not exactly."

"In that case, let's keep going." He said, a knowing smile on his lips.

He led me to the end of the glass dome where there was this massive glass greenhouse. The walls stretched miles and miles into the sky, the ceilings covered with a lush canopy.

My jaw dropped as I took in the beauty of the garden.

I could hear the twittering of birds, butterflies drifted about lazily, their wings colorful and ethereal. Flowers of all forms, roses in colors I hadn't seen in my life. I thought the harem gardens were beautiful but this...this was straight out of paradise. The air carried the soft scent of flowers, so many notes mixed together it was almost overwhelming. Most of the sun was kept out here, but it was still stunning.

A blue Morpho butterfly drifted across of my face, and I could swear it paused for a second for me to admire its glowing wings.

“Woah,” The word was out before I could stop it.

“Do you like it?” The king asked.

“Like it? It’s more than lovely,” I gasped, unable to find the words to describe it with. “I didn’t know somewhere like this existed.”

“That’s because no one is allowed here.” He gently nudged my hand and led me deeper into the garden.

“Why did you bring me here then, if no one else is allowed?” I asked.

“It felt right to do.”

We got to a lounge area with luxurious couches, multiple bookshelves, and a tea table that had already been set. He took me to the tea table and pulled a chair out for me. I mumbled my thanks as I sat, my hands folded delicately in my lap.

He sat opposite me, red eyes focused intently on my face. “Tea?”

1/3

08:52 Mon, 17 Mar BNA

Chapter 180

“No thank you, I’m still full from breakfast.”

A few seconds passed between us. His gaze was beginning to make me feel squirmish.

“Why are you staring at me so much?”

“I can never tire of looking at you, Sabrina.”

I was taken back by his words. I’m sorry is this the same king I knew? What is going on?

“Well that is um...a bit uncomfortable. I am not used to his side of you, and pardon me if it takes a while to get used to.”

“I understand. I’m not used to being so shut down anyway. Things weren’t always like this.”

“Like how?”

“Well for one I wasn’t always....stuck up?”

I didn’t know when I laughed. “Is that so?”

He smiled fondly. “It’s surprising? Isn’t it?”

I tried to imagine

a once not stuck up version of him. I couldn’t come up with a mental image.

94%

(40)

“A lot happened, which is not why I wanted to speak to you. But know that you were the one who pulled me out of that dark place i fell into. And I didn’t realize it took last night.”

Last night. And just like that the memories came rushing back. Caldan. The witch. Passing out helpless.

I shaved them down.

“I cannot stop thinking about you, Sabrina. I never stopped. Not since the day I saw you in that throne room, kicking and – yelling.”

My jaw dropped in shock. I quickly shut my mouth and cleared my throat.

The throne room?! The very first time we met and he sentenced me to a life of pain and suffering because of Zayn Crue?!

He saw my expression and laughed. “You look so shocked. Don’t be.”

“Are you being serious right now? The throne room?”

“Yes.” He nodded.

“How is that even possible, your Majesty? Barely three...four days ago you left, you called me irrelevant to you. You said all those mean and hurtful things to me. And now you’re telling me that you’ve been thinking of me since day zero?”

He sighed, regret etched on his brow. “Sabrina...”

“I don’t understand. Why?”

“Sabrina before I sent you away from the palace, I have been in love with you.”

I felt

like a bucket of ice cold water had been thrown on my face. I reeled back, a deep frown on my brow. "What?"

"That was why I send you away. I was getting terrified by those overwhelming feelings towards you. I wish I hadn't done that. It did nothing to help. That made everything worse. I was wrong."

"You were?"

2/3

08:52 Mon, 17 Mar B

Chapter 180

94%L

440

"How couldn't I? I realized how crazy I had acted, fueled by anger, I had to get you back. What I did was....stupid to put it best, and I think this is the part where I apologize."

Wow. I must have gone to sleep and woken up in an alternate reality.

The king just admitted to doing something stupid. My jaw nearly hit the ground, and it's been barely ten minutes yet.

"Sabrina, I am deeply sorry for how I treated you."

I deadpanned. "That's all?"

He blinked. "All?"

I leaned back and folded my arms. "You treated me badly? That's being vague, your majesty. Please be more specific, because you have been horrible to me in so many different ways. And a vague apology will not cut it."

"You've got no mercy in you, right? I knew you wouldn't make this easy on me." He said, his eyes soft as he gazed at me.

I straightened my back and flipped my hair over my shoulder. Don't fall for those eyes, Sabrina. Hold your ground and get every last apology out of him.

"If I'm going to get an apology from you, I deserve a decent one. Wouldn't you agree, your majesty?"

AD