

## CHAPTER 41

Chapter 41

XANDER'S POV

A scene unfolded in front of me as I watched Sabrina cleaning one of the many ballrooms with another servant who had been assigned to the same place as her.

The girl turned around to get a rag, knocking over a bucket of water in the process. She slipped and fell. Sabrina paused her humming and turned.

"Are you okay?!" She rushed to the side of the servant girl. The girl staggered to her feet and nodded.

"I'm good, just a scratch." The girl said uneasily, rubbing her hip bone.

It wasn't a scratch. From the sound of it, she had sprained something. Sabrina stayed by her side and helped her get to her

feet.

"You should go to the healer. That didn't sound like a scratch."

Her eyes were wide and full of worry, worry which would have been superficial had I not seen that it wasn't.

The servant girl nodded. She looked uncomfortable and tried to move away from Sabrina's hold. Sabrina didn't let her, holding on tightly. "I'll take you there."

"But my work..."

"I'll do it for you. Don't worry your head about it."

That was strange.

I watched the whole encounter from the shadows, the way Sabrina rushed to help that girl.

She wasn't as horrible as her mate.

The thought planted a seed in my heart. Was she really how I had judged her to be? Vile and evil and repulsive? Just like that useless Crue of a man?

This girl before me wasn't anything like that. As much as I've tried to see her prove me right, she never did that.

Did I misjudge her? Is she actually a good person?

If that's the case, then all this while I've punished her would be....

I pushed those thoughts out of my mind.

Anybody can help a maid in need. Anyone can put on a look of concern and worry. It's so easy to wear a mask, I know that very well. A mask.

Just like the one that was on Sabrina's face last night.

Fresh irritation flashed through me.

Last night. She hadn't answered my question, and I hadn't forgotten about it. Why did she hesitate? Why didn't she give me an immediate answer?

I found myself analyzing her facial expressions from last night with startling clarity. The subtle pink that came to her cheeks when I asked if she was in love with Caldan. The way she ducked her head, bit her lower lip. The shakiness of her voice. A simple question.

Yes or no.

Are you in love with Caldan. That simple. Chapter 41

If she wasn't in love with him, she shouldn't have hesitated. She's a sharp mouthed woman. She doesn't hold back, I've seen that. And if she was in love with him, she wouldn't have hesitated too. Love was meant to be shouted from the rooftop. It wasn't supposed to be hidden. So why the hell did she hesitate?

I felt a deep growl growing in my throat. Thinking of her and Caldan was driving me mad. In the healers room. At the festival.

Damn it. I'm losing my control.

I turned and walked out of the hallway. I headed back to my office. I sent for Nifra, telling her to show up immediately.

For a brief moment I wondered if I was interrupting her work. But she showed up before the thought was done forming.

"Your majesty." She greeted.

"For the next fifteen minutes. I am your friend," I said.

Her eyes widened as she understood the meaning of my command. Instantly, she snapped into a more laid back mode. "What's the matter? Did something happen?" Good.

One of the reasons Nifra was my right hand was her professionalism. She's been with me for years, and in that time she has been nothing but professional by default.

And on the very rare occasions that I seek a heart to heart, she is the one I talk to.

I'm not a man who discusses his feelings often. I haven't done that since...well since Katherine was gone.

But this matter at hand right now, with Sabrina, I need Nifra's perspective on it.

"Do you think Sabrina is in love with Caldan?" I asked.

Nifra choked on air.

I waited for her to calm down. Her eyes watered with the weight of her coughs, and she wiped tears with the heel of her palm. "My king, that's a..." She said, pausing to clear her throat. "That's a very direct question. Where is that coming from?" "Nifra answer the damned question. You've seen them hanging around. You don't have any emotions towards either of them that can cloud your judgment. Do you think she's in love with him?"

Nifra's icy eyes became warm. She took a step closer, her shoulders relaxing. And for a moment I saw a flash of the Nifra who held me when I was but a boy. A side of her that has been slowly disappearing as the long years went by. Still there, but diminished. "My king, you don't care about things like this. Who loves who or not. This isn't like you."

I grit my teeth so hard I heard a crack. I know. My actions baffle me. I can't understand what's going on anymore. Why do I care so much about what a slave does?

Nifra sighed and closed her eyes briefly. "Sabrina is... she's a lonely child." Nifra said, choosing her words carefully. "And lonely children will latch onto the first person who shows them even a sliver of affection, or attention. And in Sabrina's case, Caldan is showing her both."

"Affection, and attention?" I asked. I know she's right. Caldan has been showering her with affection; and taking time out of his very busy day to frolic with her.

I don't like how that makes me feel. I don't like the anger stirred up inside me each time an image of her and Caldan together flashes through my head.

Yes. Fuck!

My king. Affection and attention Nifra nodded. "So yes, Sabrina could very well be in love with Caldan.

Now how do I respond to that?

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"You're angry, Nifra said. It wasn't a question.

"I knowe" I didn't mean to sound so pissed, but it happened.

Is this...is this jealousy? This feeling that burns in my chest, is that me being jealous of Caldan!!

Absurd! That's impossible!

Sabrina is a slave! She's not even a woman of royal breed, and worse still she's affiliated with Crue!

And yet...and yet those sound like excuses I made up to convince myself otherwise.

Filmsy words that even I couldn't believe.

And Caldan...he dared to try and buy Sabrina off!

The audacity on him! My personal slave, he wants to buy her off my hands. In which world did he think I would allow that to happen?!

What shocked me even more about the whole buying incident was, I wasn't the one more pissed about it.

My wolf had been raging since Caldan opened his tiny mouth to utter those words.

My wolf that's always silent. My wolf that didn't care about anything or anyone since his mate died. He sprouted in anger, wishing to tear Caldan apart bit by bit.

"This is giving me a headache." I grumbled, rubbing my temples.

My body felt hot. Hot with rage.

I needed an outlet for this, and fast.

I raised my head and met Nifra's eyes. She blinked slowly.

"Is anything the problem?" She asked.

In times like this, I would tell Nifra to send for Blair.

But I remembered, much to my annoyance, that I had punished Blair and sent her to the prisons because she tried to kill

Sabrina.

It's Sabrina isn't it?

My consort is gone. And now I need the relief her body provided.

I don't want to pardon Blair just yet. The anger I felt when she tried to kill Sabrina hadn't sizzled out one bit, it still burned bright.

And she's the only tribute I ever fucked. The idea of having multiple sexual partners is one thing that has always disgusted me from the time I became aware of myself. Blair fulfilled her duties well, which was why she was my consort for a good number of years. She was pliant, obedient, maybe she talked a bit too much, but she was good at what she did.

The harem girls are...they're off limits. I have no interest in going after any of them. And I sure as hell don't want to fuck just any random girl.

"You have that look in your eyes. Nifra said.

I realized I had been glowering at her while my thoughts ran off.

"My apologies," I said and looked away.

"Shall I arrange someone?" She asked. Tentative. Controlled.

"There is no one." I said.

Then Sabrina flashed through my mind. Sabrina, with her eyes of the finest sapphires and her hair of molten lava. Sabrina, and her sharp mouth that will surely land her in trouble one day. Sabrina and her cold hatred for me. Chapter 41

Shall I send for her? Will she fuck me if I asked her to, if I ordered her to? Knowing her, she would probably vomit if I touched her, or if she was forced to touch me. The times I'd found her passed out, she always moved away whenever I tried to touch her face. Caldan rushed to my mind. Would she have the same strong aversion to him?

And I felt angry all over again.

She's probably fucking Caldan.

"Of all the thoughts... I groaned in exasperation.

And that set off a spiral of unholy images in my head. The both of them entangled in a mess of sheets and limbs. What sounds does Rina make? What faces would she make? What would she like when she's.....

Caldan is the one who gets to see her like that now. He's the one who gets to gaze upon her face, and hear her moans. To touch her skin and feel her pressed close to him.

That fucking bastard of a brother I have.

"Fuck!" I grit out, my fist slamming into that table.

It split in half.

I rose to my feet and walked away from it, pacing the floors back and forth.

Sabrina and Caldan.

Fucking.

"My king, I'll get some tea for you." Nifra said.

"There's no need." I said.

I don't need tea. I need those two separated. And fast.