

Forever in the Past and Forever in the Future

Chapter 221



Chapter 89

As we make our way across the room, people begin to notice Bronx and me. They stop to pay their respects and smile, happy to see US together and holding hands, looking healthy. They look at him longer than usual, as if they are trying to figure out what is different about him. It's not clear whether they notice it, but no one points out his missing eye patch.

As we get to the head table, Lenora is sitting next to Codi, who claps happily in her high chair when she sees US. Lenora is digging through a diaper bag looking for something to keep Codi occupied until the kitchen staff can bring food for her. Bronx conveniently lets go of my hand before Lenora notices US and makes his way in the opposite direction to avoid her.

"Au Ka!" Codi squeals and raises her arms up to me, clapping gleefully. Lenora smiles and pulls the toddler from the seat. She gives her a kiss on her chubby cheek and hands her to me. I gladly pull her into my arms and give her raspberries while she giggles and claps. 1

"She's all yours, Aunt Kas. She has been a terror today wanting to see you but she keeps calling you Kat, not Kas. Something we need to work on, I guess" Lenora says.

"Well, I will keep an eye on her, but you need to speak to your brother. He has some news for you before we sit down for his announcements," I say nonchalantly. I tilt my head in his direction as I walk away with Codi.

"Wait - Are you-?"

"No, Lenora, I'm not." I confirm before she can get the words out of her mouth. I don't need any rumors starting about being pregnant.

As I step away with Codi in my arms, I hear Lenora gasp and Bronx laugh. Milo and Reggie walk past me with concerned looks on their faces.

"What's going on, Little Sister is Bronx alright??" Milo asks, stopping in front of me. Ashley said we needed to find him right away." 1

'Go see for yourself," I smile and motion to Bronx, who is being hugged tightly by his sister. Tears are streaming down Lenora's face. Milo and Reggie give each other a concerned look and jog off to go see what's going on. I smile at them and take Codi further into the crowd. 1

"What do we have here?' I hear Delilah's beautiful voice chimes like bells at me. Behind her, James is speaking to an off duty guard, "You look like the cat who swallowed the canary, Iokaste Mason. You also look exhausted. Are you alright? You had me worried in the conference room earlier." 1

She pinches Codi's cheek and coos at her, but keeps her eyes on me searching my face with concern.

'I'm fine, Delilah. You'll see why I'm so tired when Bronx gives his speech to the pack," I say, looking around the room, trying to avoid her gaze. She has a way of making you want to tell her the truth when you look her in the eye, "I see some of my sisters. Let's go try to make peace. What do you say?"

"So we aren't going to talk about what happened in your office today?" Delilah asks as we make our way through the crowd.

"Nope. Tonight is about celebration and fellowship, Delilah. We can discuss whatever happened earlier, tomorrow, when we reconvene with my sisters," I dismiss her concerns.

I hear her give a little frustrated sigh while I greet pack members who are happy to see me, but she drops the issue. We make our way through the crowds, saying hello and making small talk with people until we find Amari and some of her Giatros.

"Amari, I-I want to apologize for today," I look at her sympathetically, "I need to do a better job at controlling emotions."

"It's okay, Kas. Things happen. We'll be able to start fresh tomorrow," she nods in understanding, "If you think that is the worst we have been through in the thousands of years we have been alive, you are mistaken."

"Hi," Codi's giggly little voice says shyly to Amari. I look down as she buries her face in my shoulder. Embarrassed by her own bravery.

"Hello, darling. What's your name?" Amari addresses Codi directly in a sweet, warm voice.

My normally outgoing niece pokes one eye out from my shoulder, then goes back to hiding her face with a giggle.

"This is my niece, Codi. Our Betas, Milo and Lenora's daughter,' I shift Codi's weight on my hip to get her to look at Amari, "Codi, this is my sister. Her name is Amari. Can you say Amari?"

Codi peeks out from my shoulder again at Amari, then quickly pulls her head back to my shoulder. Making all of US chuckle.

"She's not usually this shy," I dismiss her silliness, "It must be because there are so many new people here."

"Well, she certainly looks like her mother and her Uncle Bronx. Doesn't she? I'm sure she is just as bold," Amari muses, "Oh, speaking of whom, have you met my mate, Jaysen?"

I look to Amari's right at a tall man whose features make him appear like he could be related to Bronx, except he's built more like a long-distance runner, not a warrior. He has dark hair, green eyes and an olive skin tone just like Bronx. His features are softer and less defined than Bronx's, but he still looks like they could be cousins. I am reminded of what Amari told me about the Titan Perses and the Guardians. I'm beginning to understand what she meant when she said he made them in his image.

We trade pleasantries and try to get Codi to come out of her uncharacteristic shell. Jaysen seems genuinely nice and caring, cooing at Codi gently. He is obviously good with children and seems to make some progress with a game of peek-a-boo. His gentle nature is a perfect match for Amari. I can see why he is mated with her.

In front of me, I see Katherine waving at US, smiling with a measured practice. I wave her over so she can join our conversation. I owe her an apology as well.

"Look Codi! This is Aunt Kas's big sister, Katherine," I jostle her a little to get her out of her shy mood.

As Katherine makes her way to US, Codi lifts her head from my shoulder and sniffs the air. She looks around excitedly until she sees Katherine. Her little green eyes turn big and she looks like she is going to cry.

I look up at Katherine, who stops short in her tracks. The look on her face is a complex mix of happiness, sadness, and horror. It is a stark difference from the composure she usually holds onto. 2

"KAT!" Codi screams at the top of her lungs directly in my ear. I lean my head away with my ear ringing from the sound. She stretches and reaches for Katherine, crying and whimpering, "Kat! KAAAAT!"

Lenora and Milo appear at my side from nowhere.

"Codi, what's wrong, baby?" Milo pulls her from my arms, but she keeps screaming and reaching for Katherine.

I look back at my sister, who is closing the distance between US. She has her hand in front of her mouth and her eyes are wide and watery," Cordelia?"

'How do you know my baby's name?' Lenora says with a little growl, putting herself between Milo and Katherine. Cordelia is the name Milo and Lenora put on Codi's birth certificate by request of Milo's mom, but I never recall them actually referring to her with that name.

"She-she's going to be my mate one day," Katherine's voice breaks, "but if she's already alive, that means it's time for me to die."