

## Chapter 108

Kenji seemed caught up by the options, too. "Skin rash is interesting, though nasal infection would be good too. It'd be hard for them to keep that attitude when their airways are interfered with."

Patterson protested, "Why isn't anyone considering brain damage? The Robinsons' brains had been the very thing that caused us all that trouble. Even internal bleeding is a better option. Bleed their brains, for Christ's sake!" In response, the blood red flower with petals shaped like red blood cells bloomed bigger, taking up more space than its counterparts, luring to be chosen.

"How about..." Sush's voice, finally at her normal volume carrying the usual firmness, came as her hands rested gently on the branch at each end of the row of flowers. "... we don't use these and just put our hostages to sleep for now?"

"WHAT?" her colleagues exclaimed, not ready to let go of the flowers.

It was taking every bit of restraint in Greg not to join them, willingly letting the sparks from the mate bond numb his disagreement, reminding himself that he was on her side.

Patterson's eyes went to the flowers when he noted pointedly, "You seem to want the internal bleeding as much as I do, Sush."

"I don't."

"Then why are you waving to get our attention and pointing at that particular flower?"

It was only then Sush realized her dominant, left hand was doing exactly that - waving to get attention and pointing fervently at the blood red flora

From the side, Kenji remarked, "It's weird, isn't it? I can't really control them either."

Sush realized she could make it stop - with effort - but it was still struggling to make a point until her right hand slapped her left. And when the latter tried to point at the flower again, Sush instinctively glared at it and admonished, "No."

Resigned, her left hand flopped like it was upset. Ignoring the oddity for now, she turned to her colleagues and explained, "I agree that the Robinsons and thugs should die, but looking at the long-term consequences of where that would leave us, I'd say they shouldn't die by our hands. Like it or not, they have a lot of evidence against themselves and the Ferdinands, and probably people we're not thinking of yet. Weeding out the Robinsons isn't enough. We need to pull out every last thorn in the system, and what they know can get us there."

"What makes you even think they'd talk?" Kenji groaned.

Flowers of transparent petals bloomed along the branch nearing Kenji, and Pelly explained its truth-telling element, which Greg confirmed was used on Izabella to excavate the truth out of her, so it worked on hunters as it did on their species.

Kenji turned to Sush like he was pleading. "Not even a tiny internal bleeding? A faint rash? For one short minute?"

With a conclusive tone and firm eyes, Sush uttered, "No."

At the side, Patterson muttered under his breath, "What a waste of fantastic resources." At that compliment, the beige flower with polka dots grew by his side, and - like Millicent - he politely picked it off the ground.

Turning back to Pelly, Sush said, "I like whatever you gave the proditors. What pollen was it?"

With a warm smile, Pelly casually replied, "Oh, that wasn't any pollen. I used their own fears against them and drove them into losing consciousness."

Patterson, Millicent, and Kenji saw that as a freaking genius alternative! They turned to the Chief Octopus once again, eyes practically begging her to say yes. The Robinsons' anatomy wouldn't be tampered with so they wouldn't die, and any evidence they'd be able to produce could still be produced without health complications getting in the way.

Sush turned to the Robinsons, Hazel still making a fruitless attempt to loosen the branch, mouthing things no one could hear and taking breaths before repeating the process when the Chief Octopus finally said, "Yeah, if you could have them faint that way, it'd be great, Your Imperial Majesty."

Waving a hand, Her Imperial Majesty responded, "It's just Pelly, Sush. Just the three or all of them, by the way?"

Sush turned to her colleagues, who silently mouthed, "ALL!" before she conveyed their request.

"Raf! Some help!" Pelly hollered at her closest friend.

The empire's most powerful decipio entered their circle and offered everyone brief smiles before his friend explained the task at hand, "Faint through fear. You take those on the left, I'll take the right."

"Let's go. First one to wipe them out wins," Rafael mused with a playful smirk and a competitive glint in his eye, one that Pelly instantly matched as they began, with Octavia at the side shaking her head slowly with an amused smile.

The Robinsons' eyes and those of every thug around them turned dark green. Their eyes grew wide and faces morphed into nothing short of terror. Some began quivering at their lips, some chose to close their eyes, some shook their heads like it would shake away the nightmare

conjured by the manipulation. Within a minute, every hostage had turned pale before surrendering consciousness.


Rafael won by a second and a half.

"That was actually quite satisfying," Kenji muttered to Patterson.

The Chief Chameleon rolled his eyes. "Would have preferred brain damage."

Chapter Comments



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