

K Lover 60

Chapter 60: Join The King For Dinner

"We are to join the King for dinner," Rylen said to Caius. He had just walked into the private study of the crown prince after attending to the call from the king.

"What?" Caius yelled, lifting his gaze from the paper he held.

"We are to join—"

"I heard you," Caius said and returned his attention to the paper. "No!"

He was sitting with his legs crossed on the table. Piles of paper littered the table and even the floor. There were several bookshelves, and each one was filled with books. Compared to the state of the table, the rest of the space was neatly arranged. Two chairs lay in front of the grand desk, which Caius currently had his legs on, and the chairs were empty. They also didn't look like they were occupied often. The chairs still looked new, and the cushions shone.

Rylen mentally and physically touched his temples, then he took a deep breath and tried again. Why was he the messenger? But he knew the King had solely requested him because he was the only one who could convince the crown prince.

Rylen ground his teeth; they had still not recovered from when Rylen made Caius see his father in the throne room, and tension lingered between them. Now, this. He also didn't like it, but an order from the King of Velmount wasn't exactly something he could refuse.

"You can't decline," Rylen said with a sigh, wondering if today was the day he would finally lose his head.

"I just did," Caius replied, clearly irritated.

"You can't. The King has instructed that neither of us will be served dinner unless we eat with him."

"Then you eat with him; it has nothing to do with me."

"I can't eat with him alone. He forbids it."

The paper made a sharp sound as Caius pulled it away from his face once again. "I warned you about doing something like this before," Caius said with a cold voice, the light from the window behind his head gave him a menacing look.

"You know I don't like this any more than you do," Rylen replied with a genuine expression.

"I am sure you can stay one night without a meal. If you must eat, I will hunt an animal and roast it for you. You don't have to give in to my father."

"But he won't stop until he has his way. You two are similar in that way."

Caius narrowed his eyes. "And he won't because I won't join my father for dinner."

Rylen bowed but instead of leaving, he moved closer. "Are these documents from the Duke of Hartfield?"

Caius grunted. "Not all of them. This one is. Have you had time to go through them?"

"Only the first set," Rylen explained.

Caius placed the paper down for Rylen to see as he leaned over his desk. "Look at this." He pointed to the middle of the paper.

Rylen let out an audible gasp. "What are they up to again?" he asked angrily.

"That's what I want to know," Caius said and picked up the paper.

"Do you think Redhill is at risk again?"

Caius's brows furrowed. "I don't think so. I think they are distracting us from something. What it is, is what I can't figure out. Check out the rest of the documents when you can and tell me what you think."

"About dinn—" Rylen tried again.

"One more word about it, and I shall shove this paper down your throat."

At least that was what he said, but Caius found himself in his father's room, seated at a table that had been arranged for this occasion. The man who had called him out wasn't even at the table; rather, he was on his bed with a tray beside him, and a trusted servant stood next to him. Caius knew the servant fed the King his meal.

His father's hands shook, which meant he didn't have a great grip, and that was especially obvious when he ate. Rylen didn't even wait before he began to eat. His cousin loved food; it was a trait Caius found odd compared to the rest of his behavior.

It didn't matter the food—from sweets to desserts to street food and full-course meals. Rylen tended to control himself mostly, but it was something he could easily be bribed with, and Caius knew Rylen respected the king and wanted him to make amends with his father. But that ship had sailed a long time ago.

"What's this about?" Caius said without touching his meal.

"Can a father not enjoy a meal with his only son?" King Gaius asked.

Next to the servant was a physician; it wasn't Rufus this time, and they all watched the king eagerly, ready to put their skills to use if he needed them.

"Is this about what happened during the meeting in the assembly hall?" Caius asked, cutting right to the point.

He had expected he would have to face his father at some point, but he had expected it to be after the meeting was over. It never occurred to him that it would be over dinner. Furthermore, his father liked to eat dinner alone, so there must be something going on.

"What meeting?" his father asked, feigning ignorance.

Caius's brow furrowed, and he shot his father a look, but the king suddenly started coughing, his face red and sunken as he gasped for air through the coughs. The physician was quick to put a cloth to the king's mouth as he started to cough.

This wave lasted longer than any Caius had ever seen firsthand, and his cold heart almost warmed to his father, but King Gaius stopped coughing and said, "Eat your meal; it's getting cold."

It was just a simple sentence, softer and nicer than Caius had ever heard his father speak to him, but this only made Caius lose his temper, and he hit his plate to the floor, scattering the food all over the King's room.

"Your Grace," Rylen cried, rising from his seat. He was appalled at Caius's action.

Caius didn't even glance at any of them and made his way to the door.

"Your Grace," Rylen called and started to rush after him, but Caius didn't listen.

"Sit, Rylen. Leave him," King Gaius said and started to cough again.

Rylen glanced at the coughing king and walked back into the room. He knew if he went after Caius, he would be angry again that he had roped him into this. He had half expected he would be starving tonight, but when he asked for the fifth time and Caius asked if Rylen would shut up if he went, he could barely believe his ears.

He should have known it would end like this. It always ended like this. Caius would go to see his father and then get very angry afterward. He knew it was best to stay away from the crown prince at least for

the rest of the night. He slowly sat at the table as he tried to eat while servants cleaned the mess the crown prince had made.

Caius's footsteps were loud as he made his way to his room. His father was forever going to be someone he couldn't stand. Being in his presence brought back memories Caius didn't want to remember, memories that kept him up at night, memories that were completely his father's fault. He would never forgive him.

"Get me, Rose!" Caius said as he got close to his chambers. The servants hurried to his request while the rest waited to attend to him.

"Your Highness, you're back early," the steward called, standing right in front of his door.

"Get out of my way, Henry. I am in no mood for whatever you may have to say."

"I understand, Your Highness," Henry said and stepped to the side. He could see the crown prince was angry, and bothering him in such a state was practically suicidal.

The door opened, and Caius walked into the room with servants behind him. They moved quickly, getting his robe ready while he went in for a bath.