

Chapter 175 Primal Lust

The young man who'd been apprehended at the nightclub was bedraggled, pale, hungover and practically jumping out of his skin.

I didn't sit right beside him like I'd done with the soldiers. I sat across the table instead. And I didn't touch him when he came in. I just waited quietly, keeping the man under my watchful gaze.

He was twitchy and anxious, with a gray cloud of confusion hovering around him. His wide green eyes darted back and forth from me to Alexander compulsively, clearly intimidated by the both of us.

Alex was a lot more forceful with this suspect than he'd been with his pack members, I suppose knowing a civilian would be easier to crack under pressure.

"Your name," Alexander commanded.

"S-S-Simon. Simon Harris. They call me Zigzag, though. Wh-why am I here? What happened last night? Why—"

"We are the ones asking the questions, Simon."

He went quiet.

"When's the last time you saw Lucas?" Alex asked next.

"Uh, wh-who? Lucas who?"

Alexander walked around the table and paused beside our interrogee. He used his foot to slide Simon's chair to the side. It screeched as it slid across the hard floor. Simon's body started to tremble all over.

"We are not doing that, Simon." Alexander shook his head slowly. His voice was creepy quiet. "No playing innocent. No stalling. No lying. My wife here has a special skill, by the way. She knows if what you are saying is truthful or not. And you will not like what will happen to you if she catches you lying. Are we clear?"

Simon's head bobbed up and down frantically. "Y-yes, Sir," he stammered.

"Lucas. Tell me the last time you saw him."

Simon looked at me over his shoulder. His eyes were glassy with fright.

Alex growled, "Remember what I just said about stalling?"

Simon whipped his head back to Alexander, who opened his hand and delivered a hard slap to the man's face.

"Ah, fuck!" he slurred, cowering. "I'll tell you, okay? You don't gotta do that shit. Ugh."

"Let's try again." Alexander's voice was quiet once more. "Last time you saw Lucas."

"I haven't seen him, man. He was supposed to meet me last night, but he didn't show. I swear."

After a pause, Alex said coolly, "That's three times I've asked you now. Three times you haven't answered my question." He grabbed hold of Simon's jaw and before the young man could react, gave him another slap in the face; this time he held Simon's head anchored in place so he couldn't flinch and diffuse any of the impact.

"Aaaaarrgh! Fucking shitttt! Okay, okay, okay. I ran into him a few days ago. But he was edgy, man, didn't say shit to me and took off before I could even get near him. I swear, I didn't even talk to him."

"Where? Where did you see him?"

"Blackout. The casino out in the valley. He was in the Velvet Lounge, one of the strip clubs in the hotel. I was there on a delivery and saw him trying to pick up on some girls. I thought maybe he was being weird when I tried to say what's up because he thought I was gonna kill his game or something. Not like he needs any help with that."

Simon opened and closed his mouth slowly, working his sore jaw. The entire left side of his face, the side that Alex had hit twice, was cherry red.

"I get it now," he grumbled. "Guess he wasn't trying to be seen. But anyway, that's where. Few days ago, like I told you, so I have no idea if he's still there. I texted him yesterday. We were supposed to meet at Bad Wolf. He didn't reply and he didn't show, either. That's all I know, I swear."

Alex looked to me. I shrugged. Seemed like Simon was being truthful, but I wasn't totally sure.

My husband understood me. He pushed Simon's chair back to face the table. To face me directly. Then he took the man's right hand – Simon whimpered, flinching as Alex took hold of his wrist – and laid it on the table.

I took hold of Simon's cold, bony hand.

He was scared senseless. He felt guilty, too.

"What do you have to feel guilty about?" I asked calmly, my eyes fixed on his.

He started shaking more violently, spooked out of his mind.

"Answer her. Remember—no stalling."

"A-a-a lot of things, I guess... I, uh, I dunno, lady, I'm sorry, I can hardly think..."

"Was it true – what you said about seeing Lucas in the casino?"

He nodded, his eyes huge and pleading. "Yeah. Swear."

I let go of his hand and moved my eyes to Alexander. "He's telling the truth."

Simon exhaled heavily. "So... does that mean I can go now?"

Alex coughed out a single laugh. "My men will escort you from the palace now, yes. All the way to the city jail."

"What? No—I told you everything I know, man—"

"My officers apprehended you with tens of thousands of dollars' worth of illegal substances in your pockets. You are going to jail tonight, Simon."

We took a break for a quick, late lunch before heading back to the interrogation room for one more meeting.

Kayden brought Roland up from the dungeon and handed him off to Alexander.

The soldier sure looked different today than yesterday. A night in a cold, lonely cell had clearly had an impact on him.

But still, he did not break easily. We were in the room with him for hours.

Alex had told me he didn't plan to use physical intimidation to bully the truth out of Roland. Not yet, at least. Because he had trained all of his men to withstand torture, and it simply wasn't liable to produce results.

Instead, we played a game of sorts.

Alex asked questions while I held the soldier's clammy hand in a tense grip. He was prepared; he went fast through the questions, one after the other, not giving Roland any time to think. And I made note of his emotional responses to each query, whether or not the man even opened his mouth to answer verbally. It was moderately successful, but did seem to take forever. And the longer I held onto Roland's hand, the more depleted I felt.

But we got something.

His anxiety had surged to an extreme when Alex asked if Roland had been working for Scarlet. And then again when asked if she was to credit for the idea of inciting the soldiers to abandon the palace on the night of the fight.

Roland tried to deny these things at first, but my sure insistence on knowing that he was lying, plus Alexander's intensely menacing energy, finally got him to spill a confession. "Yes, she paid me to get them out of the palace... but that was all I did, I promise you, Alexander."

"And why? What was the purpose?"

No response to this. Only a shake of his bowed head.

"Because she was infiltrating the West Wing? Setting up some sort of surveillance on us?"

Another swell of panic swept through Roland at this question, and I knew that was it. That was the reason for her removing the pack from the premises. So she could install spy cameras or bugs.

"I promise you, I only encouraged the guys to go out and party, I don't know what she did when we were gone, That is all I know. That's all I did. I am so sorry..."

I extricated my hand from Roland's and felt immediate relief.

"Still lying," I told Alex flatly.

"Then back to the dungeon he goes."

"No—please, I promise you, I am telling the truth now."

Alex grabbed the soldier by the throat and used this choking grip to lift the man to his feet.

I suppose thinking he could emotionally manipulate a woman, Roland darted his eyes to me and murmured out a strangled, "Please." Like he wanted me to tell my husband to show him mercy.

"Please what?" I asked sharply, staring daggers at the traitor.

His lips began to shake, and I am pretty sure I heard his teeth chattering. Alexander's grip tightened around his throat. Roland gasped at Alex's wrist, trying in vain to tear it away.

This was hardly an appropriate place or time to be getting aroused, but I couldn't help it.

I adore my husband's sweet and doting side – the side of him I'd been seeing a lot of lately – very much. I do. I cherish it.

But this was another side of Alexander that I don't get to see much, and it was thrilling me. Watching these displays of my Alpha's power today, watching him easily physically dominate another big strong man in front of me right now... it riled up my wolf, heated my blood and turned me on at a primal level, filling me up with lust.

As if he knew what I was thinking, Alexander suddenly locked eyes with me and smiled darkly.

No, he couldn't read my thoughts. It was more likely he smelled my arousal.

Oops.

Alex began dragging Roland out of the room, pacing backward slowly. But he locked eyes with me, gave me a smug half-smile, and then mindlinked me... saying something very, very dirty that had my cheeks flushing and body aching.

You are bad, I replied in the privacy of our minds. Very bad.