SOLD AS THE ALPHA KING'S BREEDER

Chapter 1016: Chapter 73 : Reconnecting



Sasha

Lucas and the witch kept talking about an orb, but I wasn't listening anymore. I just kept staring at Lucas. It was like I was seeing him for the first time. He was so handsome and strong. The firm cut of his jaw and the serious, determined look in his eyes told me he would stop at nothing to keep me safe.

His strong arms still held me against his chest. His scent filled my nose, making my head a little foggy. From time to time, he shifted, and his muscles tensed. I could feel how strong he was, and I couldn't remember feeling this safe and secure with anyone before.

Lucas's entire form seemed to emanate light like he was some kind of god. He was absolutely stunning.

"We'll work on it. First, I want to get Sasha caught up on everything and let her rest. It's been a long couple of days."

I came out of my thoughts at the sound of my name.

Lucas looked at me and grinned. "Does that sound good?"

My heart swooned and I felt the heat rise to my cheeks. I must have been beet red.

"Y-yeah." My voice croaked, and I wished the ground would open up and swallow me.

How sexy was that? I sounded like a frog....

"You know where to find me. I'll be waiting," Morianne said.

Lucas nodded and guided me out of the temple. I could tell he had a lot on his mind, so I went back to appreciating how stunning and attractive he was.

I remembered him from grade school. Back then, I wasn't thinking about how cute boys were. The memory of when he broke my bracelet was strongest, but I had other vague memories of him taunting me and picking on me.

I wasn't the only one he teased, either. He was a bully.

I didn't see any trace of that immature little brat in him anymore. He had grown up, and he was a strong, powerful shifter that I knew I could trust and lean on.

"Are you hungry? You mentioned that you hadn't eaten much over the past couple of days."

"I... um... yeah...."

Dammit, I needed to get with the program–why was I a blabbering i***t around him?

Lucas didn't seem to mind. He just nodded, and we headed back into town.

Lucas took me to the first restaurant we came across.

He was so amazing, the way he took control and made things happen. We sat across from each other, and I spent more time staring at him than looking at my menu.

"How are you feeling after taking that potion?" He glanced at me and put his own menu down.

"I'm okay. It's a little weird with all this new stuff going on, but I'm okay. It doesn't seem that hard to get used to." I bit my lower lip.

Lucas smirked and picked up his menu again. "Get something big to eat. You look hungry."

I arched an eyebrow. "You can tell when I look hungry?"

"Let's just say I've learned to tell a lot of things about you." He winked at me.

A pleasant shudder ran through me and I quickly picked up my menu and started looking at the food options.

I ordered a Ceasar salad and Lucas ordered a steak.

"What's my life like, in your reality?" I asked. I couldn't help but wonder who the other 'me' was.

The way Lucas talked about her, he was clearly in love with her, and I realized I was a little jealous of my own alternate self. How weird was that?

"The Sasha I know, she was studying to be an architect. I was heading some important projects, and her work-study program through her university paired us together. She really wasn't happy about it at first, but I feel like it was the Moon Goddess bringing us together."

I smiled and looked down at my plate. "I never got an opportunity like that here."

I smiled end looked down et my plete. "I never got en opportunity like thet here."

"So, I teke it thet your life is very different."

I nodded. "I wes ebout to merry Donoven, remember? You mede it sound like the version of me thet you know would never do thet."

"Well, fortunetely, she hed me to intervene long before it ever got thet fer. Who's looking out for you here?" I chewed the inside of my cheek end pushed some lettuce eround with my fork. In ell my life, I'd only hed one person looking out for me.

"My mom hes elweys been there for me. She's been the one person I cen elweys count on."

Luces's brow creesed, end something pessed through his eyes. I didn't quite know whet it wes, but I thought he might heve pitied me.

"Tell me more ebout her. You heve such e deep reverence for her, end I went to know ebout her strengths. I feel like I've been living in e shell of myself end meybe knowing more ebout her would help me understend who I'm supposed to be."

"Seshe, there isn't enything wrong with you the wey you ere. Sure, you heve some self-discovery to do, but thet doesn't meen you should try to be someone you're not."

I sighed end nodded. "You're right. I'd still like to know whet I could be cepeble of."

"Very well. After we found the orb, the Seshe I know wes determined to figure out whet the orb meent end whet messege it wes trying to send her. We ended up treveling to the Light Reelm end following up on some crezy leeds."

"I've never hed en edventure like thet." My heert senk e little.

My other self hed so much freedom end determinetion. How hed I let myself get locked down with e guy like Donoven?

"She sounds very determined."

Luces chuckled end nodded. "Determined, motiveted, resourceful, end she never becks down or gives up."

I heerd the edoretion in Luces's voice. The wey he spoke ebout his Seshe, he cered for her end wes completely devoted.

My stomech senk end my previous eppetite diseppeered repidly. The Luces sitting with me end telking to me—he didn't belong to me. The more I listened to whet he hed to sey ebout the other me, the more I got the sense thet he wouldn't rest until he got beck to her.

I wondered whet my Luces wes like. Rether, the Luces thet belonged in this world, the one thet wes reelly my mete.

Would I get to meet him once this Luces got beck to his own reelity? I reelly hoped so. I hoped he wes

helf es chivelrous end devoted es this Luces.

"Are you done eeting? We cen get out of here if you'd like."

"Yeeh, I'm finished." I set my fork down.

I followed Luces out of the resteurent. He wes such e gentlemen thet he peid for my lunch end everything. We heeded down the sidewelk, but I wesn't sure where we were going. He hedn't told me.

"I should heve known we'd find you together."

I froze.

Donoven's voice wes the lest I wented to heer....

"Donoven, our business with you is done," Luces growled. He immediately pulled me behind him protectively.

"Heh. You're outnumbered egein, Luces." Donoven snepped his fingers.

Shifters closed in eround us, coming off of side streets end out of neerby buildings.

I grebbed Luces's erm es femilier feces swermed eround me.

"Don't think I'll meke it eesy for you," Luces snerled.

"Luces, don't. You don't went to mess with these guys." I tightened my hend eround his musculer erm.

I smiled and looked down at my plate. "I never got an opportunity like that here."

"So, I take it that your life is very different."

I nodded. "I was about to marry Donovan, remember? You made it sound like the version of me that you know would never do that."

"Well, fortunately, she had me to intervene long before it ever got that far. Who's looking out for you here?"

I chewed the inside of my cheek and pushed some lettuce around with my fork. In all my life, I'd only had one person looking out for me.

"My mom has always been there for me. She's been the one person I can always count on."

Lucas's brow creased, and something passed through his eyes. I didn't quite know what it was, but I thought he might have pitied me.

"Tell me more about her. You have such a deep reverence for her, and I want to know about her strengths. I feel like I've been living in a shell of myself and maybe knowing more about her would help me understand who I'm supposed to be."

"Sasha, there isn't anything wrong with you the way you are. Sure, you have some self-discovery to do, but that doesn't mean you should try to be someone you're not."

I sighed and nodded. "You're right. I'd still like to know what I could be capable of."

"Very well. After we found the orb, the Sasha I know was determined to figure out what the orb meant and what message it was trying to send her. We ended up traveling to the Light Realm and following up on some crazy leads."

"I've never had an adventure like that." My heart sank a little.

My other self had so much freedom and determination. How had I let myself get locked down with a guy like Donovan?

"She sounds very determined."

Lucas chuckled and nodded. "Determined, motivated, resourceful, and she never backs down or gives up."

I heard the adoration in Lucas's voice. The way he spoke about his Sasha, he cared for her and was completely devoted.

My stomach sank and my previous appetite disappeared rapidly. The Lucas sitting with me and talking to me—he didn't belong to me. The more I listened to what he had to say about the other me, the more I got the sense that he wouldn't rest until he got back to her.

I wondered what my Lucas was like. Rather, the Lucas that belonged in this world, the one that was really my mate.

Would I get to meet him once this Lucas got back to his own reality? I really hoped so. I hoped he was half as chivalrous and devoted as this Lucas.

"Are you done eating? We can get out of here if you'd like."

"Yeah, I'm finished." I set my fork down.

I followed Lucas out of the restaurant. He was such a gentleman that he paid for my lunch and everything. We headed down the sidewalk, but I wasn't sure where we were going. He hadn't told me.

"I should have known we'd find you together."

I froze.

Donovan's voice was the last I wanted to hear....

"Donovan, our business with you is done," Lucas growled. He immediately pulled me behind him protectively.

"Heh. You're outnumbered again, Lucas." Donovan snapped his fingers.

Shifters closed in around us, coming off of side streets and out of nearby buildings.

I grabbed Lucas's arm as familiar faces swarmed around me.

"Don't think I'll make it easy for you," Lucas snarled.

"Lucas, don't. You don't want to mess with these guys." I tightened my hand around his muscular arm.

He tensed and glanced over his shoulder at me.

"I'm not going to let them touch you."

"I know some of these guys. You really don't want to mess with them. They won't hurt us... I don't think so. We should do what they want."

"You want me to give up?" asked Lucas.

"I think that is a very wise idea. Unless you want to get Sasha covered in your blood." Donovan waggled his eyebrows.

"Please, Lucas," I pleaded.

"Fine." He growled, standing down. "How do you know these men?"

"They are part of my father's pack. He wouldn't give them orders to hurt me."

"You're sure?" Donovan asked, crossing his arms.

"Are you?" Lucas added.

"I'm sure." I nodded.

As far as my father was concerned, I was still more valuable to him alive.

"You know your father?" Lucas asked.

"He's waiting for you." Donovan said. Several cars pulled around and came to a stop.

Donovan opened the back doors and my father's shifters moved in closer, ushering us closer to the car.

I clung to Lucas as we climbed into the big car. Donovan and the other shifters traveled in other cars. I was grateful to have some time alone with Lucas.

"Where are we going?" Lucas asked the driver.

In response, the driver closed the divider between the front and the back seats.

"How polite." He growled under his breath and settled into the back seat.

"I'm guessing they are taking me to my father's pack," I explained.

Lucas arched an eyebrow at me. "Have you spent much time with your father?"

I frowned, confused by his question. "I take it that the Sasha in your reality doesn't have a relationship with her father?"

"No. She's never met him. In fact, he died. Her mother kept her far away from his pack and protected her from them ever finding her."

"How is that possible? After you broke my bracelet, he came for me. He found us and...."

I trailed off with a heavy sigh.

"In my timeline, something similar happened," he said. "Only Sasha's mother knew someone who could help protect her."

"Oh. That would have been nice." My stomach shifted uneasily, and I looked out the window at the blurry landscape. Maybe my life would have been different if my mother knew someone who could help.

"I don't know. Sasha described it as the most traumatic day of her life when it happened. I think it hurt her for a lot of years."

Lucas shifted beside me. From the sounds of it, both of us Sashas had complicated lives.

"Well, in this reality, my father sent his pack members after me. Once they are ordered to do something, they don't stop."

"That's why you recognize some of those shifters that came after us?"

"Yeah." I nodded absently. "I don't know how Donovan got involved with them, but I don't want you to get involved. They would kill you without a thought."

Lucas scoffed. "I appreciate you getting me to back off."

"Look, when they came for us, we were powerless. Neither my mom nor I put up much of a fight. It was easy for them to take us. They brought us to my father in the Dark Realm and kept us hidden there."

I noticed the deep crease in Lucas's brow. "That's awful."

"I guess it is time to go back." I sighed and leaned my head against the window.

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SOLD AS THE ALPHA KING'S BREEDER



Lucas

Sasha's life was so different in this timeline. It was hard to imagine the woman riding in the car with me was Sasha at all.

I remembered how her mother reacted when talking about her father and his pack. She'd been afraid of him and what they were capable of.

That same fear lived in my Sasha, too. When she learned her power was connected to her father, she immediately thought it was evil.

I had no idea what we were getting ourselves into by going to her father's pack.

The ride was long, but when Sasha straightened up with wide eyes, I knew we were close.

The cars pulled into a cul-de-sac and Donovan and his goons came out. They surrounded our car and opened the doors.

There were three houses in the cul-de-sac. The one at the center was the largest, and it was a massive mansion with a lot of shifter security moving

around the grounds. The other two houses were made of the same materials and had security around them. The entire cul-de-sac was part of the pack territory.

"Welcome home, little princess. There's someone who wants to meet you." Donovan held a hand out to Sasha.

"Don't touch her," I snapped.

"I'm just helping her out." Donovan grinned at Sasha.

She narrowed her eyes at him and slipped out of the car, ignoring his offered hand. "I don't need your help."

"Fine, fine, whatever you want."

The other pack members stayed close to us, making it clear there was no escape.

From the largest mansion, the front doors opened and a powerful-looking Alpha strutted out. He had three security guards behind him. The Alpha himself was younger than I expected.

He had his hair slicked back and wore a cape like some kind of royalty as he strutted down the steps, with a twisted, vile smirk on his lips.

"Well, well, I've heard a lot about you." He stood right in front of Sasha.

I stepped up to her and took her arm protectively.

"You have no need to fear." The Alpha shooed me away with a flick of his wrist.

"Oh, I'm not afraid. But I know when to keep my guard up. I don't know who you are."

"All you had to do was ask. I'm Alpha Cal. Sasha's father left his pack in my capable hands. I am here to carry on his wishes." He grinned a sly, creepy grin and raked his eyes over Sasha.

I cringed and pulled her away slightly.

"Uh-huh." Donovan cleared his throat. "I don't mean to interrupt this tender moment, but we did have a deal, didn't we?"

Alpha Cal glanced at Donovan and scoffed. He clearly didn't like being interrupted.

"Yes, we did." Cal sighed. He snapped to his guards.

One of them stepped forward and handed Donovan a huge wad of cash.

"Our business is done. You can leave." Cal turned back to Sasha.

I hated the way he looked at her. "Sasha, we don't have to stay here. We can leave. Whatever their deal is, they can't force us to stay."

Cal looked at me. His lips twitched. "Sasha and her powers belonged to her father and this pack. As I am carrying on his legacy, they now belong to me. Unless...."

He turned his eyes back to Sasha, his gaze growing dark.

She cowered slightly. "Unless?"

"Unless you don't want me to continue to keep your mother safe. Anything could happen to her without my protection."

I heard Sasha swallow hard. "I'll cooperate."

"Sasha!"

"Good. In that case, our business is done as well. You can leave, too." Cal sneered at me.

"I'm not leaving Sasha." I stood firmly.

Cal rolled his eyes. "Yes, you are."

He snapped to his guards again. They closed in around me. Cal took Sasha's arm and led her inside. She gave me an apologetic look but she didn't resist.

I didn't blame her, with the threats hanging over her mother. I didn't bleme her, with the threets henging over her mother.

I tried to resist the guerds but there were too meny, end I knew they'd rip me epert if I didn't leeve. I couldn't fight off en entire peck, especielly if it meent Seshe end her mother were the cost.

"Regerds from Alphe Cel. Don't return," one of the guerds seid es he slemmed the cer door in my fece.

The driver took me to the next town end dropped me off. He didn't even speek to me es I pulled ewey. Not thet I expected enything different.

I wesn't going to leeve Seshe elone with Alphe Cel. He wes e creep end she wes e prisoner. I needed beckup. I needed someone I could trust... end it wesn't Morienne.

There wes only one person I knew of in eny reelity who I could reech out to.

I mede contect with Oliver end we errenged to meet e few towns over. He hed the resources end the contects to help me put thet smug Alphe in his plece.

"You're e crezy son of e b***h, you know thet?" Oliver greeted.

I grinned end hugged him quickly. "Cereful, we heve the seme mother."

"Heh, how could I forget? I wesn't expecting to heer from you."

Oliver end I set down ecross from eech other et the little cefé I'd chosen. It wes e sefe spece to telk without enyone overheering us.

"Are you femilier with Alphe Cel? He's leeder of en older peck end recently ceme into power."

"Oh, I'm femilier with the prick."

I hed to be cereful with how I epproeched the Oliver in this reelity. He wesn't the brother I knew, end I didn't went to overstep my bounds or compromise our reletionship. Telling him thet I wes from enother reelity wes too much of e distrection right now. My focus hed to be on Seshe end her mother, so I didn't went to meke Oliver suspicious end heve to enswer more questions.

"Good. I went to knock him down e few pegs end dismentle his peck. I heve reeson to believe he's holding et leest two women ceptive, egeinst their will, intending to use their powers."

Oliver sighed end shook his heed. "Yeeh, I've heerd he's into some creppy s**t. So, you're esking me for help to 'knock him down?'"

"I'd eppreciete the help. You're the one with the numbers."

Oliver leened beck in his cheir end stroked his chin. "You know it is risky for me to get involved. I don't went to meke enemies."

"I know. But if we defeet him, then it won't be e problem. We cen just end the problem before it reelly sterts."

"Thet's possible. I don't know whet his forces ere like."

"I got e decent look et them. It isn't enything we cen't hendle."

Oliver geve me e herd look. "You're sure?"

"I'm sure."

"Fine, give me e few hours to meke the errengements end we'll go efter him. These ceptives... you know them?"

"I do. I went to meke sure they ere sefe end free."

From my understending, the Luces in this world didn't know Seshe, et leest, not since childhood. I figured thet Oliver wouldn't know her either. If I sterted telking ebout my mete, it would just confuse him

more.

"Well, thet's good enough for me."

Oliver mede his plens end we heeded beck to the cul-de-sec. He sent his own men eheed to secure the buildings end territory before we even errived.

It wes the only wey Oliver end I could see Alphe Cel not retelieting end hurting Seshe or her mother. If he knew I wes involved, he'd probebly hurt them out of spite.

"Don't worry, Luces. There will be plenty of heeds to knock when we get there."

I snorted end nodded.

As soon es Oliver's cer pulled into the cul-de-sec, we jumped out before it even stopped moving.

"I'm going efter Cel."

Oliver nodded. "I'll meet you once the rest of his guerds ere deteined." I didn't blame her, with the threats hanging over her mother.

I tried to resist the guards but there were too many, and I knew they'd rip me apart if I didn't leave. I couldn't fight off an entire pack, especially if it meant Sasha and her mother were the cost.

"Regards from Alpha Cal. Don't return," one of the guards said as he slammed the car door in my face.

The driver took me to the next town and dropped me off. He didn't even speak to me as I pulled away.

Not that I expected anything different.

I wasn't going to leave Sasha alone with Alpha Cal. He was a creep and she was a prisoner. I needed backup. I needed someone I could trust... and it wasn't Morianne.

There was only one person I knew of in any reality who I could reach out to.

I made contact with Oliver and we arranged to meet a few towns over. He had the resources and the contacts to help me put that smug Alpha in his place.

"You're a crazy son of a b***h, you know that?" Oliver greeted.

I grinned and hugged him quickly. "Careful, we have the same mother."

"Heh, how could I forget? I wasn't expecting to hear from you."

Oliver and I sat down across from each other at the little café I'd chosen. It was a safe space to talk without anyone overhearing us.

"Are you familiar with Alpha Cal? He's leader of an older pack and recently came into power."

"Oh, I'm familiar with the prick."

I had to be careful with how I approached the Oliver in this reality. He wasn't the brother I knew, and I didn't want to overstep my bounds or compromise our relationship. Telling him that I was from another

reality was too much of a distraction right now. My focus had to be on Sasha and her mother, so I didn't want to make Oliver suspicious and have to answer more questions.

"Good. I want to knock him down a few pegs and dismantle his pack. I have reason to believe he's holding at least two women captive, against their will, intending to use their powers." Oliver sighed and shook his head. "Yeah, I've heard he's into some crappy s**t. So, you're asking me for help to 'knock him down?'"

"I'd appreciate the help. You're the one with the numbers."

Oliver leaned back in his chair and stroked his chin. "You know it is risky for me to get involved. I don't want to make enemies."

"I know. But if we defeat him, then it won't be a problem. We can just end the problem before it really starts."

"That's possible. I don't know what his forces are like."

"I got a decent look at them. It isn't anything we can't handle."

Oliver gave me a hard look. "You're sure?"

"I'm sure."

"Fine, give me a few hours to make the arrangements and we'll go after him. These captives... you know them?"

"I do. I want to make sure they are safe and free."

From my understanding, the Lucas in this world didn't know Sasha, at least, not since childhood. I figured that Oliver wouldn't know her either. If I started talking about my mate, it would just confuse him more.

"Well, that's good enough for me."

Oliver made his plans and we headed back to the cul-de-sac. He sent his own men ahead to secure the buildings and territory before we even arrived.

It was the only way Oliver and I could see Alpha Cal not retaliating and hurting Sasha or her mother. If he knew I was involved, he'd probably hurt them out of spite.

"Don't worry, Lucas. There will be plenty of heads to knock when we get there."

I snorted and nodded.

As soon as Oliver's car pulled into the cul-de-sac, we jumped out before it even stopped moving.

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SOLD AS THE ALPHA KING'S BREEDER



I took Luther's journal with me when Lucas and I headed back to the capital. We agreed that in order to get back to our own reality, we needed to find both of the orbs in this reality.

For that, we had to get to the Northern Library project.

Lucas already told me that the temple had been found in this reality just like in our reality.

"We'll get to the capital at night. Hopefully, security around the temple will be minimal, and we can slip in and grab the orb."

"You're assuming that no one has found the orb yet."

Lucas smirked at me in the backseat of the SUV. "Well, if someone did find it, they had to turn it over to the king and queen. Getting it from them should be easy enough."

I shook my head. "Maybe in our own reality. We don't know what our relationship with them is like in this one."

"This is Lena and Xander we're talking about. I don't care what reality they're in. The two of them are reasonable in any reality."

I didn't argue, but Lucas seemed more optimistic than I thought he should be. Although, everyone we met had similar traits. Donovan was a complete jerk. Eliza was helpful and knowledgeable. The priestess was creepy and weird.

Maybe Lucas was onto something with people in different realities having similar traits.

The car left us near the college campus. We didn't want to draw too much attention to ourselves and a busy college campus where Lucas was known seemed like a good place to blend in.

He took me to a campus café for a late afternoon lunch. We sat at a two-top table with an umbrella on a cobblestone patio.

"I wish I could stop in and see my friends. They won't remember me in this world, though, will they?"

Lucas shook his head. "I'm afraid not. The Sasha here never came to school here."

I sighed and bowed my head. As grateful as I was to have my memories back, this still wasn't my world. I couldn't see my friends, I couldn't have my life back. More than ever, I wanted to get those orbs and fix all of this.

"Don't worry, Sasha. We're going to get back there." Lucas reached across the table and took my hand.

I nodded. "I believe you. You're certain the orb will be in the temple again?"

"There's no reason it shouldn't be. I've been thinking about the orbs. I think there is a future orb and a past orb. That's why the one we had before only showed you things from the past."

My stomach twisted as I remembered those visions about Anna–about my past life.

"Actually, that makes a lot of sense, especially since we learned the two orbs are supposed to work together."

Lucas smirked. "Well, since the two of them control time, and probably realities, too, I had this other idea. I'm willing to bet that the orbs exist in the same place in every reality."

"That's... odd." I frowned at Lucas.

"It would explain how the future orb from our reality wasn't where it was supposed to be. We went to that temple and no one had taken the orb. If it was moved in another reality, then maybe that's why we couldn't find it, because that changed its location in all realities."

"That does make sense. I wish we knew that before going all the way into the mountains. I wouldn't have fallen from the cliffs or gotten horribly sick."

Lucas chuckled. "I'm glad your memories are more solid."

We finished our lunch and headed to the Northern Library site to do some recon. I stayed at the edge of the site because I didn't want to draw attention to myself.

Lucas's presence on the site wouldn't be unusual.

I saw him go to the foreman. They talked for a while and the foreman shook his head several times. I couldn't hear what they were saying, but from the furrow in Lucas's brow and the frown on the foreman's face, I knew it couldn't be that good.

The foreman led Lucas around the library and I couldn't see them anymore. Several minutes later, they returned, and I could tell something was wrong.

Lucas's shoulders sagged a little and he looked defeated.

Forgetting myself, I ducked under the construction tape that blocked off the site and ran to Lucas.

"What's wrong?"

He sighed and glanced back toward the library.

"Apparently, the Lycoanians attacked the temple and imploded it when they couldn't convince King Xander that it should belong to them. There's no way in or out of the temple now. Whatever we could have found there is gone."

I sighed and bowed my head. "That's not good "

"I know. It looks like we're going to have to go to the palace after all."

"Right."

Lucas and I sent a message to the palace asking for an audience with the king and queen. I convinced him we needed to do this formally because we had no idea what our relationship with Xander and Lena was like in this reality.

We waited outside the palace gates for a guard to come back with an answer to our request.

Lucas paced back and forth, hands in his pockets. Even when he was anxious, I thought he was incredibly handsome.

The small scowl in his eyes made him look determined and fierce. My heart fluttered as I watched him and I couldn't shake the memories of his strong arms holding me and how safe I felt with him.

My stomach twisted and my cheeks got red hot. I bit my lip and looked away from him before he noticed me staring.

The guard returned. "King Xander and Queen Lena will see you now."

We were brought to the throne room to speak with the king and queen. It was an incredibly formal meeting, and I worried that meant they didn't have the same relationship with us in this world.

Lena and Xander looked at us with a mixture of annoyance and curiosity as we entered the throne room. Lucas put his arm around my shoulders, helping to steady me.

"What is all this about?" King Xander asked.

"I'm sorry to bother you, Your Majesty, but Sasha and I have encountered a bit of an issue. We find ourselves a little... out of place and need to get back to our reality."

Immediately, Xander narrowed his eyes.

"Seriously, Lucas? We don't have time for another one of your schemes. You should know by now that Lena and I aren't going to help you."

I glanced at Lucas and saw the shock in his eyes. He obviously wasn't expecting that reaction.

"This isn't a scheme," he argued. "The two of you must know about alternate realities and timelines with all the magical artifacts you have."

"There are many mysteries in this world. That doesn't mean we'll believe any random theory you bring to us," Lena stated firmly.

"Queen Lena, please," I said.

Her eyes snapped to me. The fierceness of the Moon Goddess blazed in her eyes and I swallowed hard, shutting my mouth tightly.

"I don't know who you are. Do not address me so familiarly."

I chewed the inside of my cheek and looked at Lucas again. He grimaced and tightened his arm around me.

"I think we're getting off on the wrong foot here. King Xander, Queen Lena, you know that I'm Lucas Black, right?"

The king gave Lucas a tired look. "Yes. You're Lucas Black. And for better or for worse, I know you."

"What does that mean?" Lucas blurted out.

I shook my head, hoping Lucas wasn't about to start something. We couldn't afford to end up in some royal dungeon for an extended period of time.

"I've always admired your talents as an architect, Lucas. That's why I entrusted you with some

important projects. Unfortunately, talent isn't enough. You actually have to finish the projects and not be so... lazy. I like you, but I can't trust you to do your work."

I saw Lucas fighting his own frown. It was hard to hear what someone in another reality thought of him.

We both knew he was nothing like what King Xander just described.

"Not to mention, you always have these big plans but you never follow through. This whole 'alternate reality' bit sounds a lot like another one of your big plans." "It isn't," Lucas interjected. "Whatever I may have done in the past, I promise that my goals are genuine this time. I have no intention to back down and not see this through."

"How inspiring," Lena drawled, shaking her head.

We weren't going to get very far if Lena and Xander continued to think that Lucas was some lazy flake. It was impossible to prove what we were saying.

I stepped away from Lucas and went closer to the thrones.

The guards standing by raised their spears, but Xander held up his hand.

"Sasha!" Lucas hissed at me.

I ignored him and dropped to my knee in front of Lena and Xander. I bowed my head respectfully.

"You may not know me but I know the two of you. King Xander, Queen Lena, the two of you have

always been reasonable. You're known throughout Erogen as kind, merciful rulers that have changed the perception of Dark Kings and White Queens."

I paused and lifted my head slightly.

The two of them were listening closely. I could tell I had their full attention now.

"Your power, and you as leaders, are both respected and loved. That being said, I'm asking you to look past what you think of Lucas and me and hear us out."

Lena arched her eyebrow at me. "You know what you're saying sounds like tall tales."

"I know. Half the time, I don't believe it myself, but if you give us the chance to explain, I think you'll be able to see reason. You always have in the past."

I bit my lower lip and waited while Lena and Xander exchanged a long look. They didn't say anything, but I could see in their eyes that they were silently contemplating my words and coming to the same conclusion.

Lucas came up beside me. He knelt down next to me, showing them the proper respect as well.

"I understand that I've let you down in the past. Please, give me this chance to make it up to you."

"Xander, what kind of leaders would we be if we dismissed them when they come to us for help?" Lena questioned.

"We can't help everyone that comes to us."

"All they are asking is for us to listen. Is that beyond our capabilities? If what they say sounds insane, then we can still send them away. All we have to give them is a little of our time. Is that too high a price?"

Xander sighed heavily and shook his head. "Alright, we'll listen."

Read Sold AS The alpha King's Breeder - Chapter 1019: Chapter 76 : Too High a Price

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SOLD AS THE ALPHA KING'S BREEDER

Chapter 1020: Chapter 77 : You Are Special



I rose to my feet and Lucas stood up beside me.

"Thank you, Your Majesties."

I bowed to them.

"Alright, tell us what you came to tell us," Xander prompted.

My memories were still a little jumbled, so I let Lucas tell the story. I watched Xander and Lena and could tell that the two of them didn't believe us at all.

That is, until Lucas mentioned the orb.

Xander stiffened and Lena shifted in her throne.

"These orbs... you say one was recovered from the temple under the Northern Library?"

"Yes. Did you happen to find one there before the temple was... destroyed?" Lucas asked.

Xander and Lena exchanged another look but they didn't answer right away.

"Please continue." Xander held his hand out to Lucas.

I smiled to myself. That was a good sign. At least, they weren't telling us to take off or threatening to lock us in a cell.

My chest expanded hopefully. Were we finally getting through to them?

Finally, Lucas finished the tale with our recent visit to Eliza. He didn't mention that I thought Anna was a past life of mine, which I was grateful for. That was something we didn't really need to talk about yet.

We were already asking a lot of them to believe our story.

"I'll admit, I didn't think you'd have anything to offer. However, we already know about the orbs. From what we've been able to discover about them, I think it is enough to corroborate your experiences," Xander explained.

Lucas sighed with relief and it was like a huge weight lifted from him.

"Thank you, Sire."

Xander nodded. "Enough of the formalities. It seems like we all know each other fairly well. I'd prefer to keep it casual from here on out."

"This is all very strange," said Lena. "I never expected people from another reality to show up. In my life, I've seen a lot of strange things but nothing like this."

"We think some of it has to do with Sasha being a dream dancer. It is an unusual magical power," Lucas said.

He looked at me and winked. I nodded.

"I still don't understand the extent of my powers or what they can be used for. Some other witches have

alluded to my dream dancing abilities being what unlocks the power of the orbs."

"That makes sense. No one we've had studying the orbs has ever had experiences like this. Our witches have been able to study the orb magic, but not use it," Lena agreed.

"So, you believe us?" Lucas questioned.

Xander reached out and took Lena's hand. "While I'm reluctant to believe some parts of that story, I can't deny the fact that we have enough knowledge of the orbs that your story is possible."

"Does that mean you'll help us?" I asked hopefully.

Lena smiled warmly. "First, I would like to try something. I want to know more about you and your powers."

My hands became clammy and I wiped them on my thighs.

"H-how will you do that?"

"Don't worry, I'm not going to hurt you. You're aware that I am a reincarnation of the Moon Goddess's physical form."

"Yes, I know that." I nodded.

"Good. There's a simple ceremony to perform. I'll get everything set up. Please meet me in the sitting room in about twenty minutes."

"O-okay...."

I glanced at Lucas. He nodded encouragingly. It was hard to trust this Lena when she openly admitted that she didn't know me. The Lena I knew was pure, good, and kind. This Lena seemed to be similar, but I still had reservations.

How could Lucas and I really trust anyone here? We didn't know them at all, despite thinking we did.

"Xander, can I ask you about the temple?" Lucas asked, turning his attention back to the king.

"After the temple was uncovered, we did a full assessment of it. Because of the bodies, the Lycaonians wanted to claim it as a historical temple for themselves. Under normal circumstances, I would have had to comply with their wishes."

"What do you mean?" Lucas asked, creasing his brow.

"Despite it being a temple with bodies, it was clearly a White Queen temple, which had never been seen in the Dark Realm before. I knew the Lycaonians wanted to destroy it and hide its existence. Because of that, I denied them access. It was more valuable to study its history and figure out why it was there."

Lucas nodded. "I agree. I'm guessing that didn't go over well?"

Xander shook his head. "No. They snuck in one night and destroyed the temple. I should have had more security, but I didn't expect them to go against my orders like a bunch of terrorists."

"Nothing was recovered from the temple?" I asked, a flicker of hope rising.

"Unfortunately, no," Xander sighed. "Now, we shouldn't keep my queen waiting."

Lucas and I followed Xander to the sitting room.

Lena had scattered candles around. They were lit, filling the room with soft, golden light.

There was a chaise lounger in the center of the room with a Moon Goddess tapestry laid across it.

"Sasha, lie down here." Lena patted the chaise lounge.

I obeyed her and shifted until I got comfortable.

Lena moved around the chaise. She sprinkled floral-scented water over my body.

"Can you tell me what you're going to do?" I asked. I darted my eyes around nervously.

"I'm just going to take a look into your power. Your story is unique, and it seems to be related to this power of yours. The more I know, the more helpful I can be."

I nodded and relaxed.

She placed several dried herb bundles around me. I felt like she was packing me into a coffin or something.

"Close your eyes and relax," she instructed. Lena knelt down at my head and placed her hands on my

cheeks.

I closed my eyes and focused on my breathing. The sweet scent of the flower water and herbs surrounded me and lulled me. The tension melted from my muscles and I relaxed completely. I almost felt like I was melting into a puddle.

Lena's hands were warm on my face. She began to hum softly, and I felt the vibrations through her hands into my bones. My whole body vibrated at the frequency of her hum, and I felt like my soul was being yanked from my body.

Panic flooded me and I opened my eyes. When I sat up, I was not in the sitting room in the palace. I was in a room made of white light. The floor, walls, and ceiling were all the same. I couldn't feel the floor beneath me, and the room seemed like it went on for miles in every direction.

"Stop resisting," a powerful voice spoke.

I looked around wildly. The voice came from someone standing behind me. I stood up to face her.

The woman was wearing a pure white dress that practically glowed silver. It flapped and rippled in an invisible wind. This was the Moon Goddess herself.

"I'm not resisting."

She arched a golden eyebrow, the same color as her long, fluttering tendrils of hair. She was so ethereal. The Moon Goddess appeared solid and fluid at the same time. It was like she was there but not there.

"Take a deep breath and open yourself to me," she ordered.

I nodded and closed my eyes again. I took a deep, relaxing breath, pushing all my fears away.

I felt the Moon Goddess move around me. She never touched me, and I couldn't see with my eyes closed, but in my mind's eye, I could see how she was moving.

"Sasha Wentley," she said in that powerful, otherworldly voice. "You are a dream dancer."

"A know, but what does that mean? What makes my powers different?"

"All in good time. Dream dancer power has mastery over time and space. But time is not something to be played with like a child with a stick."

"I... am not trying to play with this power. I just want to get back to where I belong."

I understood her words, but the meaning behind them escaped me.

"There was a time when witches could use their magic to manipulate time and reality. It caused a lot of chaos, so the orbs were created—one for the future and one for the past. Separately, they were harmless. Together, they could be dangerous or benevolent, but only a dream dancer's power could unlock them."

"Are you saying I shouldn't use the orbs?"

"Evil or good comes from your intention, not your inherent power. The way you use them is up to you. You've been entrusted with a great power. Use it wisely."

Suddenly, a powerful wind pushed me backward and I fell. Like a ton of bricks, I crashed into my body and sat up straight, groaning as the weight of my physical form closed in around me.

"Oh... that was... strange." I looked around the sitting room.

Xander, Lucas, and Lena were standing over me, staring at me.

"Well, did it work?" I glanced at Lena.

It felt like it worked, but I didn't know if I was dreaming again, and I wasn't about to start admitting things that made me sound crazy.

"Sasha, you have a very special power. It is a gift if you use it well," Lena told me.

I nodded. "That's what the Moon Goddess told me."

"I believe that we can entrust you with the orbs," Lena explained. "They will allow you to get back where you belong."

"Really? Do you know where they are?"

Lena looked at Xander. The king nodded slowly.

"We found one of the orbs in the Light Realm. After learning of its existence and potential power, we brought it here for study. That's how we learned it was the future orb and some of what it was capable of."

"We keep the orb in our artifact vault. Come with me and I will bring you to it."

Lucas and I followed Xander into a secret part of the castle. I realized that he and Lena completely believed us if they were willing to trust us with the knowledge of where their vault was.

Xander put in a combination and a wall opened, revealing a secret vault behind it.

We walked through the lines of shelves covered in magical and historical artifacts. Some of them were too big to be shelved and were placed on special pedestals and tiers.

"We keep as many of these artifacts locked up as possible, seeing as they've caused so much harm over the years," Xander explained. "Once we learned all we could from the orb, we cataloged it and shelved it."

He brought us to a shelf at the back of the vault. Xander stopped dead, his brow furrowing.

"That's odd...."

"What is it? What's wrong?" Lucas asked.

Xander pointed to an empty space on the shelf. There was a small stand meant to hold something orblike in shape.

"This is where it is supposed to be. The orb is gone."

About Sold AS The alpha King's Breeder - Chapter 1020: Chapter 77 : You Are Special

Sold AS The alpha King's Breeder is the best current series of the author Alice Knightsky. With the below content will make us lost in the world of love and hatred interchangeably, despite all the tricks to achieve the goal without any concern for the other half, and then regret. late. Please read chapter Chapter 1020: Chapter 77 : You Are Special and update the s of this serie

SOLD AS THE ALPHA KING'S BREEDER



"This is... unexpected," Xander admitted as we left the vault. "My apologies for this. Someone has taken the orb."

"How is that possible?" I asked. "Isn't this place highly guarded? Who else has access to it?"

I couldn't hold back. Sasha and I had been looking for the orbs for so long, and every time we got a lead, someone else got there first. How could this keep happening?

Groaning, I dropped my head in my hands.

"It's alright, Lucas. We can figure this out." Sasha's soft voice soothed my irritation. She put her hand on my back.

"Nothing has ever been stolen from the vaults before. It is very unprecedented. You can be sure that I will conduct a full investigation and get to the bottom of this. Come with me. We need to get the two of you settled in."

"Settled?" I arched an eyebrow.

"I doubt you'll want to leave before we find the orbs. Besides, Lucas, you're going to help me search through the rubble of the temple. It's too dangerous to let anyone else do it."

He led us out of the vault. The wall closed up behind us and when I looked over my shoulder, I couldn't even tell where the seam of the door was. It was very well hidden.

Getting into this part of the castle was hard enough. There were a lot of hidden passageways and guards just to get to the wing of the castle where the vault was located.

Sasha and I were shown to a guest room. As soon as we were alone, I plopped down on the bed heavily.

"I feel like we're going in circles."

"We're not going in circles," Sasha laughed lightly. "We're going in loops–time loops."

I shook my head at her. "You're ridiculous... adorable, but ridiculous."

She bit her lower lip and half-lidded her eyes.

I sighed and held an arm out to her. There was no way I could resist hugging her when she looked at me like that.

She came to me and I pulled her between my legs, wrapping my arms around her hips. I pressed my cheek to her stomach.

Her warmth surrounded me, and I felt the steady beat of her heart.

"We'll figure out who stole the future orb and is messing with it. From what Lena and the Moon Goddess said, I don't think anyone can use the orbs for anything bad. At least, not without me."

"I hope you're right, Sasha." I kissed her stomach, over her shirt.

She giggled and squirmed slightly.

"I'm going to go with Xander to the temple. With any luck, the two of us can dig through the wreckage and find the past orb and hopefully, anything else that will help us work out the problem."

"And what should I do in the meantime?" She looped her arms around my neck.

"Queen Lena seems to know more about the orbs. Maybe you should talk to her and get some more information about them. We've been warned they are dangerous in the wrong hands, and I'd like to know why since your dream dancer powers are what activate them."

Sasha nodded. "You're right. The more we know, the better. You'll be careful at the temple?"
I looked into Sasha's eyes and smirked. "Of course."

"I'm serious, Lucas," she said, frowning. "The Lycaonians already blew it up once. I doubt they'll want anyone to go inside and uncover the temple secrets."

"I'll be careful, Sasha, I promise. Tomorrow, I'll meet with Xander and we can work out the details of our little venture. I'm sure that if I'm going with the king, I have nothing to worry about."

"Yeah, you're right," she agreed, but something in her eyes told me she wasn't fully convinced.

"I want you to keep an eye on things around the palace. It's obvious someone close to the king and queen took the orb," I said.

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"I think you're right."
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Sasha

I met with Lena over coffee while Lucas and Xander planned their own venture to find the past orb. I was determined to do whatever I could to find out who was messing with the future orb.

"Lena, is there anything else you can tell me about the orbs?"

"What would you like to know? My knowledge is limited."

Lena lifted her coffee mug to her lips and peered at me over the rim of the cup.

I poked at my buttered toast. "Well, we've been warned that if the orbs fall into the wrong hands, they'll be dangerous. But the Moon Goddess made it sound like I was the only one who could use the orbs." Lena frowned and set her coffee aside. "I apologize. Sometimes, the messages from the Moon Goddess need more clarity. I should have explained it to you more."

"Explained what?" A shiver ran down my spine. I had a feeling I wasn't going to like what I was about to hear.

"I was able to interpret what the Moon Goddess said a little differently. She warned that your power was a large responsibility and that only you could activate the orbs. Unfortunately, what I think she meant by

that was once the orbs were activated by your power, other people with magic could use them if they knew how."

My stomach plummeted and I winced.

"Yeah, I was afraid of something like that. Why else would all this time loop stuff be happening? I'm pretty sure I didn't do it."

"Once activated, the danger is when someone gets the orbs who wants to use them for evil. Sasha, since the orbs have been activated, it is imperative that we find who has them. Messing with time is dangerous."

I nodded. "Lucas and I think it's someone close to you and Xander, someone with access."

"Yes, I suspected that as well," Lena agreed with a heavy sigh. "It pains me to think we can't trust those in our inner circle."

"Xander is investigating."

"I have a better idea," she said. "Tonight, we are hosting a special gathering here at the palace. It isn't anything too formal, just the people in our inner circle enjoying a business networking meeting. If you and Lucas come, perhaps the two of you will see something."

"Alright."

The event started in the late afternoon. Very prestigious people began to arrive and I felt out of place. Everyone there knew each other and I was some nobody.

Lucas looped his arm through mine as we went into the event room.

He had on a nice suit and I put a dress on, but it wasn't anything fancy and formal. Already, the guests stood around drinking and talking.

"We don't fit in with these big wigs," I muttered to Lucas.

"If anyone asks, we are a power couple of architects looking to move our business into the capital. We've had a lot of success in the Light Realm, and now the king and queen have invited us," Lucas muttered, spinning a creative backstory in seconds.

"Well, I guess that explains things."

Lucas chuckled and nodded. He grabbed himself a beer and we walked among the crowd.

"If you'd like, I can do the mingling while you keep an eye out for anything strange."

"Yeah. I don't want to smooze these rich people."

I left Lucas to talk to people and tell them about our fake backstory. How weird was it that we were already in an alternate reality with a different backstory and he had to make up yet another one?

I didn't think I'd be able to keep all these stories straight soon.

Xander and Lena hadn't arrived yet. I supposed it was okay for the king and queen to be late to their own party.

I tried to focus my senses and see if I could pick up on anything related to the orbs. In the other reality, I could sense them when they were nearby. I thought maybe I could sense the energy of someone using one.

When appetizers were served, I got myself a plate and continued to casually walk around the group. I heard some men talking about a charter company they were working on to offer guided aerial tours of the Light Realm temples.

Another group talked about a massive bridge they were working on that would allow access to parts of the Dark Realm that hardly anyone went to.

It was all business talk.

One group mentioned the Northern Library and I got a little closer, listening in and munching on my snacks so it looked like I wasn't trying to eavesdrop.

"A shame really, about what happened to the temple."

"I would have liked to know the story behind it. Damn Lycaonians. They have to monopolize anything related to religious history."

"I don't understand why they wouldn't want to know the truth."

"Because it would undermine generations of teachings and all their beliefs. They'd have to admit they're wrong about some things. If they do that, who'd follow the faith?"

Sighing, I moved on. It was an interesting conversation, but it didn't have anything to do with the orbs.

I met back up with Lucas.

"How's it going?" he asked me.

"I haven't picked up on anything yet. There's not a tingle of orb energy anywhere in this room." "Everyone I've talked to is a straight shooter. They're businessmen looking to increase their profits, but they all seem legit. I doubt Lena and Xander would associate with businessmen who were into shady dealings."

"You're right. Then the person we're looking for isn't here." I sighed and shook my head. Was this just another waste of time?

"This is the king and queen's inner circle...."

The event room door burst open, and a familiar face entered.

"Hey, hey now. The party can really get started."

I felt the blood drain from my face and glanced at Lucas. "Isn't that...."

A muscle jumped in Lucas's jaw and he clenched his fists. "Stone Hamline. He's doing well for himself..."

Stone strutted into the event room like he was the star of the show. He had four gorgeous supermodel-

type women following him. They were dressed elegantly with all kinds of gemstones dripping from their ears, necks, and fingers.

Stone was wearing a custom-tailored suit that must have cost him thousands of dollars. His shoes were the finest leather, and he had several rings on his fingers made of precious metals and gemstones.

Everyone else in the room looked to Stone and raised their drinks.

"We've been waiting on you."

"Why do you always have to show up late?"

Stone smirked. "I love a good entrance." He grabbed a wine glass and clinked it against the other partygoers' drinks.

His four women followed him around, pawing at him and hanging off of him like accessories.

"To the best architect in the entire Dark Realm," one of the businessmen cheered.

Stone gave a smug smile. "To the best architect in two realms!"

I rolled my eyes. This guy was too much. Then again, he was doing a lot better for himself in this timeline than in ours.

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SOLD AS THE ALPHA KING'S BREEDER



"You want me to what!?" I cried, gaping at Lucas.

He moved around our room, getting dressed and gathering supplies for his trip to the Northern Library with Xander.

"You said it yourself. Stone is doing a lot better in this reality than in ours. I bet there's a reason for that."

"Yeah, because this is a different reality," I reminded him.

I sat in bed, the covers tucked around my hips. Lucas was crazy if he thought I was going to try to get closer to Stone.

That man was intolerable and after last night, I didn't think I could stand to see him again in this reality or any other.

"Sasha, we need to find the orb. So far, everyone we've encountered in this time loop has had a similar life to the ones we know."

"What about Donovan? He was living a lot better in this reality."

Lucas pursed his lips. "Donovan was still an ass who was trying to control you. He wasn't living any better. We just hadn't met for me to keep him away from you."

I sighed. Lucas had a point. The Stone we met last night was drastically different and far wealthier than the one from our reality. It was hard to believe that a different timeline could benefit him so much unless

he'd consciously changed things to be a certain way.

"I can't keep Xander waiting. Sasha, I trust you, and I think you'll be able to get some good information from him. He was interested in you before."

"Lucas, he has supermodels dripping off of him like sweat."

Lucas chuckled. "Well, he probably has to pay them. If you show the least bit of interest, I'm sure he'll be intrigued."

"You really want me to pretend to like him or be into him?"

Lucas grimaced and shook his head. "I don't want that at all. And you can bet that if he so much as lays a finger on you, I'll snap it off. Just be nice."

"You're going to owe me for this, big time. I couldn't stand Stone before and now, he's even worse."

Lucas grinned. He cupped my face and leaned in, kissing my forehead.

"Oh, I promise I'll make it up to you."

He brushed his nose against mine and touched our lips together.

My breath caught in my throat and my stomach twisted. My thighs trembled as the heat in my core blossomed. I reached for Lucas, but he pulled away.

"The king is waiting for me. But I promise, I'll make it up to you."

I groaned when the door closed and flopped back on the pillows. Lucas got to go dig through an ancient temple and I had to cozy up to some creep.

Next time, I'd make him do the cozying.

As I got dressed, I put on a pair of leggings that clearly outlined my hips and a soft T-shirt with a low-cut V-neck. I knew my outfit would catch the attention of a guy like Stone without making it seem like I was trying to get his attention.

I gave myself a once-over in the mirror before heading through the palace. I hoped Lena could tell me where to find Stone Hamline.

As I walked down the main hallway, an office door opened and none other than Stone appeared. He hummed to himself, carefully locking his door.

"Oh!" He paused when he saw me. "I know you."

"Y-you do?"

Dammit, was this whole operation blown before I even got started? Had Stone and I crossed paths in this reality? That might complicate things.

I took a nervous half-step back.

Stone smirked and waggled his eyebrows at me. "You were at the networking gather last night."

I sighed with relief and nodded. "I was. You made quite the entrance."

I smiled flirtatiously and wound a tendril of hair around my pointer finger. It was easy to flirt with a guy like Stone. He already expected women to fall all over him.

"What can I say? I love it when all eyes are on me." He chuckled and held his hand out. "I'm Stone Hamline."

"Sasha Wentworth." I shook his hand, keeping my flirty smile in place.

My stomach kept churning at every little look I gave him, but I had do what I had to do.

"I was surprised to see some new faces. It's not every day that the king and queen let new people into their inner circle. You must have done something impressive to catch their attention."

"Well, yes. We made quite a name for ourselves in the Light Realm and decided to expand our architecture firm here. King Xander and Queen Lena were kind enough to help us out."

"We?' Oh, you mean the man that was with you?" Stone frowned, and I knew exactly what he was thinking.

"Yes, my business partner," I said quickly, hoping that would keep him interested in me. "He provides the funding and I provide the brilliant ideas."

I licked my lips slowly and smiled playfully. Stone's eyes locked onto my lips.

"The two of you must work very... closely together," he challenged.

I shrugged. "Like I said, we're a team. He's made me very wealthy, and I've made the name of his firm known throughout the Light Realm."

"I see. Then the two of you are just business partners?"

I nodded and gave Stone a sultry look. "I don't like to mix business with pleasure. But I don't mind a little pleasure on the side."

Stone smirked and clutched his chest. "A woman after my own heart. Still, I'm surprised that I've never heard of you or your partner. I know everyone worth knowing in the Light and Dark Realms."

I bit my lower lip and leaned in, running a finger down Stone's chest. "Obviously not everyone." I winked.

His jaw dropped slightly and I could see the lust in his eyes. I had him now.

"Are you busy?" I asked breathily.

He glanced from side to side. "Actually, yes. I'm on my way to see the queen. As the department head of the Royal Engineers, I have a lot of paperwork to go through with her."

"Oh." I bowed my head and made sure to look like I was really disappointed.

Department head of the Royal Engineers? Stone definitely had better fortunes in this timeline. In my world, the king and queen didn't think highly enough of him to make him a head engineer, least of all of

the Royal Engineers.

Lucas was right. He must have done something, like use the orb. I just needed to get to his place and look around for it.

"Don't look so sad, sweetie. I prefer my pleasure at night, anyway. Once I'm done with the queen, I can show you a good time."

"Promise?" I asked, raising an eyebrow.

"Oh yeah. I'll take you back to my place and show you how good life can be when you're living at the top."

I nodded. "I'd like that a lot. I bet you could show me something I've never seen before. Tonight, then?"

Stone nodded; eyes glued to me. I turned away from him and added some swish in my hips as I left him in the hall.

There was no doubt in my mind that I could get whatever I wanted out of him now.

As soon as I was around the corner, I groaned and shook off the skeevy feeling all over my body. My skin crawled in every direction and I felt like I needed a shower. This wasn't how I wanted to spend my day.

I went back to the guest room and took a shower. Then I spent time carefully picking out my outfit for tonight. I wanted to be seductive without being slutty.

After I got dressed, I tucked a knife up my sleeve. I wasn't planning on getting in a fight, but something told me Stone liked to take what he wanted, even if I didn't want to give it. I wanted to make sure I had a way to defend myself if things got out of hand.

Stone pulled up in a fancy car outside the palace. He came around to the passenger door and opened it for me.

"Ready for a night you'll never forget?"

I smiled and nodded. "Of course. What a nice car." I ran my fingers over the hood.

Stone watched my every move. I could only imagine what he was thinking about, but I really didn't want to.

"All perks of the job, babe."

Stone drove me into the capital and to his house. It was more like a mansion. He'd obviously done well for himself.

The entire ride to his house, Stone droned on about the projects that got him noticed by the palace and that he'd used to help him make a name for himself.

I mostly tuned him out. How much could one guy really say about himself? Apparently, Stone could say a lot.

As soon as we got inside, I felt the presence of the orb. It washed over me and I gasped, a shudder running down my spine.

"Are you alright, Sasha?" Stone touched my shoulder.

I nodded and mustered a smile. "Yeah. Your house is gorgeous. I'm surprised in your good taste." I nodded to the closest painting.

Stone chuckled and grabbed a bottle of wine. He poured us each a glass of wine. He handed me one and smirked.

"So, tell me about some of the projects that put you on the map." He sat on the couch and beckoned me to sit with him.

Slowly, I sat down and set my untouched wine aside.

"The first project that put me on the map was a restoration project, actually," I said. "My team restored a temple with exact recreations of the architecture from the time it was built. A lot of people didn't think we could do it, but we did and that's when everything changed."

Apparently, Lucas wasn't the only one who could come up with a bullshit backstory on the spot. I was a little proud of myself for it.

"Hey... I've got to use the little girl's room. Can you point me in the right direction?"

"Upstairs. The first door on the right. It isn't the master bathroom, but you'll get to see that later."

He winked at me as I got up.

I withheld my cringe until I was on the second floor. Just to lessen suspicions, I opened the bathroom door and closed it but I stayed in the hall. The orb was much closer to me on the second floor. I could feel it calling to me like lighthouse through fog.

I took my shoes off and tiptoed down the hall to the master bedroom. Knowing Stone, he probably kept it in his bedroom. I went in, and the orb was definitely there.

Quickly and quietly, I began searching the drawers. When that didn't give me anything, I looked under the pillows and around the bedsheets. Tucked under a corner of the mattress, I found the orb.

Relief wash through me and I picked it up.

"Well, well. I knew you were up to something. I never thought you'd go after the orb." Stone entered the bedroom and shut the door.

"This doesn't belong to you! You're messing with time."

"Pfft. I'm just looking out for myself, sweetheart, whatever it takes."

"And you don't care who gets hurt in the process? You don't care whose lives you ruin?"

Stone sneered. "Nope! It is all about me."

He lunged at me and grabbed at the orb. I curled my fingers around it protectively.

"I'm not giving it to you."

Stone tackled me and pinned me down. I couldn't go for my knife and hold onto the orb at the same time....

He grabbed my hand and pried my fingers off.

"Don't worry. Soon, none of this will matter to you."

He held up the orb and a blinding white light flashed around me.

The world disappeared.

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