

Sold as the Alpha King's Breeder

Chapter 234



Chapter 14: Tell Me About Maeve

"We can go north, Maeve. North across the tundra. No one knows what's on the other side. I could... I could take you home. Where you'd be-where you'd be safe."

The words I had said to her as I pressed her against the wall in the alleyway the night before still rang in my ears. I should have just done it, whether with her willingness or by force. I should have picked her up and ran, stealing through the night until we reached the port and tossed her on a ship. I would have. I really would have done it, if we hadn't been interrupted and my strength hadn't been needed elsewhere. I had already been reeling from too much drink, my already weak filter totally useless as I begged between kisses to run.

I couldn't let that happen again. I wouldn't let myself take advantage of her. I would be her breeder in name only. And if I had to touch her, well, no child would come forth from our union. I would die before I let Romero get his hands on her baby.

Our baby

I rolled off the couch, my head pounding and mouth dry. It was late morning, the sun beating through the windows and casting low shadows on the long, dusty carpets. It smelled strongly of leather and ink in the library, the intense heat of the day seemingly melting the ink from the pages of the thousands of books that lined the walls.

I folded the blanket that had been draped over my body sometime in the early morning, setting it gently on the end of the couch and left the quiet confines of the library, my feet tapping on the stone pavers in the hallway as I made my way back to my room. I was sore from the fight, my bare chest bruised and my nose feeling stuffed up and slightly throbbing.

"Healing powers, huh?" I said under my breath. Maeve must have forgotten she had them, because she definitely didn't offer me any assistance.

I sniffed, reaching up to wipe dried blood from my nose when Horace appeared in front of me. "Jeez!" I stammered, jumping backward as he practically floated out of a shadowed doorway like a ghost. "Can you make some noise every once in a while?" "She's ready. Go to her tonight. Do your duty." Horace said dryly, as though what he was telling me to do was like telling me to brush my teeth or give me directions to the nearest pub.

"You knew all along, didn't you?"

Horace only looked at me, his beady black eyes totally expressionless.

"Does Damien know about this plot? To start a war, to kill off the Drogomor families and take over the pack?"

Again, no answer. He looked me up and down, his eyes settling back on mine with a chilling intensity.

"If you don't comply with his demands, Maeve will meet an unimaginable end."

He disappeared as quickly as he had come, and I stood alone in the corridor once more.

Six Weeks Ago

The stateroom on the ship was just that, stately, with glossy wood trim along the walls and a comfort able, albeit minimal, bed and coverlet. The journey from Red Lakes to the port of Breles had been plagued by rough seas, but the trek from Breles to the port of Valoria? Much quieter, almost peaceful, the warm, turquoise waters off the northern end of the Isles of Denali a welcome respite from the bitter cold salt spray of the gray waters of the north.

I was lounging in my stateroom like usual, my ankles crossed and my hands knitted over my chest as gazed out the small, circular window on the wall next to my bed. The slow rock of the boat had lulled me into a shallow yet restorative slumber. But I had awakened to the crunching metal sound of the anchor being dropped and the little window was shrouded in darkness.

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It couldn't possibly be night already. The journey from Breles to the port of Valoria was supposed to take just over a week, but it had only been three days. Surely we weren't already there...

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Trose onto my knees in the bed and peaked out the window, seeing wood. Just wood.

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"What-"

Muffled voices in the hallway outside my door interrupted my surprise. I turned my head to the door just as it swung open and bounced off the wall, a burly, unfamiliar man in shabby clothing catching it with his hand as it tried to swing back into place.

"This 'im? This tawny aired fella?"

"Excuse me!" I bellowed, hopping off the bed and tripping over my own feet as the man stepped into the room. "This is-these are my quarters!"

"Up with ya, lad," he said as he grabbed me by the collar, yanking me in front of him as he walked back through the door.

"Let go of me!" I screamed, gripping his wrist with both hands and trying to pull away from him.

"No can do." He pushed me up the stairs in front of him as we ascended to the upper desk. I opened my mouth to protest further but was quickly stunned into silence at the sight before me.

It was incredible, something out of a fairytale.

A massive man-of-war ship was rocking in the waves only yards from the smaller cruise ship that had been my ride to port in Valoria. Its size was nearly triple in comparison to my boat, stretching four stories out of the water with sails that would have covered the length of my boat twice over. Though it looked vintage, its sails were clearly just for show, as it was powered by massive modern engines that roared in the waves. I gulped, biting my lip to keep my mouth from hanging open as I gazed at the craft with its great, wooden body

I barely noticed I was being dragged across the deck as I stared up at the ship. I'd never seen anything like it up close.

"Good Goddess," I croaked, my eyes wide in admiration, just as I felt the ground drop from beneath me and I fell through the air, landing with a wet thud into a small boat drifting in the water between the two ships. "HEY!"

The little boat rocked violently as the burly man made contact with it, having used a rope to climb down from the little vessel.

"What is the meaning of this?" I said, panicked. But the only answer was a sharp blow right in the face, my lip splitting as the knuckles of a young, shirtless man met my teeth.

"Ooow!" I cried, bringing my hands to my bloodied mouth. I looked up, petrified, as my cruise ship began to pull its anchor back up. "No!!!"

"Shud' up, lad. We ain't gon hurt ya... yet," said the burly man, matter-of-factly, as he took the oars in his hands and began to row into the shadow of the man-of-war. I looked up through my fingers at the ship, its wood gleaming in the sunlight. The word 'Persephone' was carved and painted onto the stern

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Lv. 1

"I demand to be untied!"

I was kneeling on the quarter deck, my wrists bound behind my back. I couldn't look up at my captures without being blinded by the sun, their figures shadowed by the contrast. They were snickering at me. Snickering! Someone spit so close to me that I felt the spray on my cheek. I turned my face away from the onlookers, trying not to vomit.

"Do you know who I am?" I said through gritted teeth "My da- FATHER, who is an ALPHA, will have all of your heads!" Hoots of laughter rang out around the semi-circle of seamen, and I bit my lip to stop myself from bursting into tears.

"Leave him be, boys." A rich, caramel voice rang out over the laughter. I looked up, surprised and thankful to hear someone pronouncing their words like they had at the very least an informal education.

I squinted into the sun as the figure stepped forward, crouching, his head blocking the sun and giving me a full view of his face. A stunningly beautiful man, he was. His deeply tanned, golden skin was vibrant against his crisp, white poet shirt that billowed in the wind like the sails above our heads as he tilted his head to the side, his long, bleached blond hair swaying around his face and highlighting his hazel eyes ringed with gold flakes.

Was ... blushing?

"So, Aaron, is it?"

"Whatever you want-" I stammered, my breath catching in my throat. "Money? I can get you money. I can

He waved his hand in dismissal, standing up and giving his crew a tight-lipped but genuine smile. "Untie him, for where could he possibly go?"

Another wave of laughter erupted as someone bent behind me and used something sharp to slice through the thick rope binding my hands, purposefully slicing into the skin of the palm of one hand. I groaned, bringing my hands forward and wringing them together, rubbing the stiffness out of my flesh.

Bloody pirates, the lot of them. Even their beautiful leader was just a dirty, stinking criminal.

"What do you want? Like I said, my father-"

"Oh, my boy!" the man, the captain of this ship no doubt, laughed. I looked around, feeling incredibly small as the crewmen snickered and clapped their thighs with their hands.

"What? What's so funny?"

"The don't need your money. In fact-" The captain stepped forward, clapping me by the shoulders, "you've just won an all expenses paid vacation to a private, secluded island off the coast of Papeno."

Several people clapped, sarcastically of course. I looked around in sheer horror, my mouth gaping. Papeno was an island in the Isle of Denali, an island dotted by even smaller, more secluded islands where the shark infested, sharply currentated waters were a death sentence if you found yourself shipwrecked, or stuck ashore

This was it I was going to die "I'm expected in Valoria -"

"Aye, so are we But we have time for a detour, don't we boys?" Several men nodded and mumbled in agreement, nudging each other

"I don't understand -"

"Come," he said, gripping me by the shoulder and forcing me to stand. "It's almost supper time, if my cook knows what's good for him Ever had turtle stew? It's his specialty." He pushed me forward, the crew parting to allow us to walk toward the stern where the captain's quarters were located. My mouth was dry, my stomach clenching as though I were about to succumb to a bout of seasickness

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Lv.1

I followed him into what ended up being an extremely luxurious room, the walls lined with ornate wall paper and the dark wood furniture covered in red velvet. He pulled out a chair at a long, polished table, motioning for me to sit down,

I sat, gingerly, looking around once more before taking my seat at one end of the table. He lingered for a moment, looking down at me with a strange, smug smile on his face. Then he shook his head, rolling his eyes before taking a seat at the other end of the fine table. He swung up his feet and slammed them down on the table, crossing his arms over his chest. I flinched.

"So, a breeder, aye?"

I looked up. "How-how did you know that?" "Did you not notice how none of the crew of your ship stopped us from taking you?" paused, realizing for the first time that I had been kidnapped in broad daylight, and no one, absolutely no one, had come to my aid. In fact, the ship had brought its anchor up, drifting away as I was hoisted up onto the Persephone, too stunned by the ship's prowess to pay any mind to my situation.

"Ah..." He tapped his fingers on his chest, shrugging, "Now, why would they do that, do you think?"

"I-I don't know?"

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He brought his legs down onto the floor, leaning forward in his chair. "Breles has a large port, as you know. But it wasn't hard to find you, being one of the only passengers coming from down the western coast. It was easy, but not as easy as paying off the captain and crew of The Mary-Beth to meet us in open waters for a little... trade, if you will."

"You paid off the crew? But...why?"

"I've never heard of male breeders," he said, examining his fingernails. "What an honor it must be for you, bedding the princess. And she'll be the Luna, once you've done your duty and helped her produce a sweet, fat babe?" He grinned, his teeth straight and white against his full lips,

I blushed. "What do you want with me?"

"Nothing, actually. We just needed to stop you from making it to Valoria."

"But... why?"

"Because your services are no longer needed there."

"I don't...I don't understand,"

"You're no longer the breeder, boy. Look, I'll shoot straight with you. We're going to Valoria, eventually. We'll be there in a day or two with these winds. But you won't be getting off there, oh no, no. You'll remain with us until we reach Papeno, and then..."

"And then what?" I squeaked, unable to hide my fear any longer.

He smiled, reaching up to touch the diamond earring he wore in one earlobe. "Well, we wait. We sit, and we wait."

"For what?"

"Oh, Aaron! Must you ask so many questions?" He stood, walking over to a hutch and pulled out a large bottle of what smelled like coconut rum when he opened it. He really was a pirate.

A knock sounded on the door and it opened, the sound of footsteps in the short corridor.

"Keaton, is this him?" said a low voice, a man's voice, and I fought the urge to turn around and look at the man.

"Aye, it's him alright."

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"Are we sure?"

"Couldn't be anyone else, Troy. He fits the description, and he hasn't said otherwise."

The man's footsteps grew louder and he walked over to me, standing so close I could almost feel him. He was a large man by his tread, but not the clunking, uneven steps so many large men had. No, this man was light on his feet. Like a predator.

"We'll be in Valoria soon. I'll drop you off as planned, then we head back to Papeno to wait. We'll head back to Valoria again to pick you up by the next full moon."

"That's plenty of time," said the voice of this Troy character, and I felt my heart drop into my stomach. How could I get out of this? What could I say to save my life?

Suddenly, the man was before me, broad chested with a lean waist. He wasn't at all like the lean, exquisitely handsome captain. No, this man was big, a workhorse, his dark brown hair thick and wavy and his jaw wide and tight. This man could kill me with one blow. I thought as I looked at his hand that was resting on the table as he leaned in, his eyes raking over me.

And his eyes? I had never seen anything like that before. One was a clear, steel gray, the color so unique I couldn't help but hone in on it for a moment, marveling at the flakes of black around the iris.

The other was blue, a pale glacier blue. A color so vivid as it reflected off the white of his poet shirt that was untied, showcasing a strong, muscled chest.

Topened my mouth to speak but found I had nothing to say.

"Tell me about her," Troy said, leaning close. "Tell me about Maeve."