

The Alpha King's Claim

Chapter 109 Changing Beliefs

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Aero

Exactly after the couple's first dance, Elijah met with me in my study. I was already in my executive chair when he entered, showing a half-confused face.

"I know..." he trailed off. "I am surprised with the crescent moon marks Rhea and I have too. Is this what you want to talk about brother?"

"Affirmative," I answered. "Sit down. This might be a long chat."

He hesitated for a moment, looking at the chair in front of the desk as if it had a witch spell.

"You know I can't leave my bride alone in there," he muttered; his voice roped with worry.

"Me either," I agreed. "I can't give Hale an opportunity to spend time with Serena."

"Well, that's hardworking of him. I didn't think he'd still do it after our d—"

He suddenly halted and gulped. Then, he flipped his hands in the air and started laughing. "Ah ha, ha, ha. Nothing. Just ignore me."

I saw his shifty eyes and the dry smile he showed right before claiming the seat. I ignored it since I had more pressing matters to discuss with him.

“I’ll go straight to the point, Elijah. What do you know about the current beliefs of the mating process in our realm?”

He angled his head to the side, looking like a puzzled puppy, and then, he answered, “It’s ah...created by the Moon Goddess, Selene. She’s a celestial spirit that guides werewolves and lycans of different gender into their destined partners.”

“Correct, but the question is how do our people know they are destined for that person?”

His brows flinched. This one, I knew he could answer very well.

“Through attraction and an ultimate sense of desire and completeness. The feeling that they couldn’t live without the other and of course, tangible lust.”

“Correct again,” I bobbed my head and leaned against the table, “but do you know all these things are just subjective?”

“Subjective...?” he echoed. This time, his face showed utter confusion.

“They are all just reports, Elijah,” I continued.

“Firsthand accounts of the people who experienced it. You experienced it with Rhea. I experienced it with Serena, but lucky for us, we have these crescent moon marks to show that what we’re feeling is indeed real.”

“That we are exactly blessed by the Moon Goddess,” he supplied further.

“Yes, that,” I answered dryly, “but you know I had never been a believer of the Moon Goddess.”

“Right. You always said that our father and Sedsah made up this story. What was your basis, bro? Why did you think this way?”

My eyes lowered just as I released a deep sigh.

“I don’t know. I just feel like that made sense.”

I was very young when I first heard of the goddess. I even made a unique word for my mate: my eshtha. At first, I didn’t question it, but over time, when my mother and her handmaidens started showing me their promiscuity, I changed my beliefs. I mean how could these women, especially my mother, do such sexual acts with different persons if they were truly mated to each other? What happened to loyalty? To fidelity and love?

“With our crescent moon marks, do you think you need to change these current beliefs?” Elijah asked, finally picking up what I was trying to say.

“I could, but we need to investigate further. There might be unaccounted experiences like this throughout the kingdom. I plan for us to personally visit each pack territory and look for clues or historical documents.”

His lashes fluttered and then, he cleared his throat again.

“Agreed, but uh...not us, but you, Aero.”

I furrowed my brows after hearing this.

“I just got married, remember? I want to spend as much time with Rhea as possible,” he reasoned.

“You applied twenty days leave away from your royal adviser duties,” I pointed out. Surely, twenty days was enough, right?

“Exactly!” he answered in haste, telling me otherwise.

I couldn't blame him. Men like him...like us with our new bride and our true mates, twenty days weren't enough to enjoy the honeymoon. I got mine for a few days only since well, I was a fucking busy king, and after that, I desperately took advantage of what little time I have with Serena.

“Alright, I understand,” I replied whilst massaging the bridge of my nose. “I will deal with this myself.”

He flashed me his widest grin ever.

Serena

I was just about done with a dance with my father when Lord Hale appeared before us, claiming the next dance.

My father, who surprisingly showed a friendly smile towards the vampire lord, stepped backward and handed my hand to him.

Finding it odd, I took note of the change. Father was known to dislike vampires too, but their earlier interaction told me otherwise. Was there some kind of pact I wasn't aware of? Or maybe Lord Hale gained his trust after the great war? Whatever the reason, this change made me happy. "Queen Serena," Lord Hale muttered as our bodies almost pressed. His right hand covered mine while the other rested at the small of my back. We began to sway to the music and enjoyed it for a few twists and turns until I started, "You seem different right now, Lord Hale. Did one of your women in the harem finally straightened you up?" He shook his head ever so slightly and cracked a ghostly grin.

"Not like how you put it, Serena," was his vague answer.

I arched my brows. "Oohhh...so someone really straightened you up."

The notion filled me with excitement. I wasn't a matchmaker but I always enjoyed seeing my friends—yes, I considered this vampire lord a friend now—settle with their partners.

He released my hand and pulled out something from his coat's inner pocket.

"It's because of this," he said.

My eyes rounded in an instant.

“Wait, this is one of Aero’s collections!” I cried out, sure that this stiff, weirdly cut paper was that object displayed inside my husband’s glass shelf.

“Yes, correct,” he replied, not even hiding the truth, but he looked smug when he said that.

We continued moving to the beat of the waltz until I decided to interrogate him.

“Did you steal it?”

For good measure, I threw him a glare, mentally telling him that I don’t settle for lousy alibis and white lies.

His smug expression changed all of a sudden.

“You hurt me, Serena. I may be sneaky but I don’t steal.”

“So, how did you get it if that wasn’t the case?” I continued.

Fluidly, we danced a few steps until he guided me to a less used balcony of the grand hall. It was partly lit by the moon and the outside spotlights, but overall, it still had an element of danger, especially with a vampire’s company.

I could confidently hold my own when in danger, but that wasn’t the reason why I allowed to be led to this place. It was because I trusted the man and because I really wanted to know the reason how the Matrix ticket came to his hands.

“Elijah gave it to me after a successful deal,” Lord Hale started, standing a few feet away from me

near the balustrade.

Hearing this, my mouth dropped.

Elijah?

I didn't expect this at all but I also remembered that time inside Lord Hale's castle when Elijah made a deal with him in return for Rhea's release. This must be the payment.

"I see," I simply answered. "But I don't peg you as someone who loves Earthly materials, so why, out of all the objects in Aero's collection, did Elijah give this?"

"Because I want it," was his direct answer.

"Why do you want it?" I fired back.

Silence punctuated our conversation for a few seconds until he replied, "It will help me find that which I have been looking for over five hundred years."

"And what is that if I may ask?" I was stubborn. I didn't care anymore if I intruded on his privacy.

The way I see it, I had the right to be since I wanted to know if his cause was worthy of my husband's collection.

But Lord Hale coolly tossed me a grin.

"You're very inquisitive, Serena. Do you know that?"

I narrowed my eyes at him.

"It's one of my selling points."

Silence again followed and then...

“I plan to take this to Lady Ursula. I want to look into a certain past that somehow connects to what I’m looking for.”

His answer was still vague but I accepted it anyway.

“Oh, you want to experience the same thing I experienced before the great war broke?”

“More or less, yes,” he admitted.

With Lady Yllana’s help, Aero did it. I did it. And now, Lord Hale wants to experience it too.

It seemed the past only holds answers the present couldn’t provide.

“I see,” I sighed and finally gave in. “Well, then I wish you the best of luck. I hope you’re looking for a woman because dear me, Aero has been very moody when you’re around me.”

He chuckled all of a sudden.

“Teasing him is an old habit I don’t want to stop, Serena.”

I crossed my arms and tsked.

“You guys would fit well in a BL story.”

“What’s a BL?” he quickly inquired.

“Boys Love,” I answered.

That placed him in a fit of laughter. It was so profound that I found it unsuitable for his dark, gloomy, and dangerous vampire lord vibe.

“That may be true but we are men, Serena. Not boys,” he finally remarked.

“Whatever.” I rolled my eyes at him and chuckled again.

“I trust that you’re keeping my wife safe, Lord Hale?”
From the balcony threshold, Aero’s voice emerged.

I turned to look at his direction and found him already scowling and this was all directed to Lord Hale.

Huh. Typical.