

Chapter 124 Investigations

Aero

Serena was right. Viscount Daniel was everywhere. It was maybe because of the nature of his work or he just loved to travel.

For me, I say both.

I had known the man for almost three months now and had spent time with him enough on the cruise ship to say he was someone to be vigilant of. He was a careful man. His words were selective all throughout our time together in the ship. He didn't open up the subject of his position as representative on Earth, and neither did I. I wanted to hear these things on the point of view of another person; from Marcus dela Forte, to be exact. But the old man was still unavailable, so now I had no choice but to further step up my game.

Planning to meet the viscount, I found myself in Budapest with his scent lingering in one of the rooms of a five-star hotel. So I wouldn't arouse any suspicion of tailing him, I waited until he came down the lobby and I let him spot me instead. "Your Majesty?" He neared the check-in counter where I just made reservations for me and

Serena's future visit. "This is a surprise. You're in Budapest too?"

I faked a shocked expression. "Viscount? Why do we keep on bumping into each other?"

"I say this is serendipity, Your Majesty." He looked past me, left to right and towards the door as if he was searching for someone. "Is Queen Serena with you too?" he asked thereafter.

The male staff attending to me handed the reservation card. I took it before I answered the viscount's query, "No, she's in Ehnrelil, preparing for their new guardian's ascension."

Okay, she wasn't really in that particular place at this moment, but she will be soon since this was one of her duties as queen of Ehnrelil. I only meant to avoid opening the subject about Serena's pregnancy early in our meeting.

"I see," Viscount Daniel sighed. "Do you have other plans, Your Majesty? I would like to invite you for some coffee."

Oh, yes. This was exactly as I planned.

"I hate turning down an invitation, especially if its you, viscount," I answered, giving him another fake smile.

He led me to the restaurant of the hotel on the same floor as the main lobby. We picked the table in the corner, nearest the glass wall where no rogue ears could hear us. Viscount Daniel ordered

his café americano while I picked the hotel's best seller brewed coffee.

As soon as the server took our orders and left, the viscount redirected his attention to me and gave me a serious stare.

“Okay, you are a busy man. I am a busy man too, so I suggest we go directly to the intent at hand, Your Majesty.”

I couldn't agree more. I thought of the packet of folic acid pills I secured inside my coat pocket. I wanted to know more about them before Serena takes it as prescribed, and the easiest way to get that information was to ask the owner himself.

“You're following me, why?” Viscount Daniel abruptly asked.

It stopped me from my movements and I stared at him hard.

“What makes you think I'm following you?”

He didn't look smug, but he especially looked too confident as he slapped the signs to my face.

“Well, first of, you don't have any luggage with you proving you're just realm hopping.” He pointed to the vacant spaces next to me. There were no bags or anything to indicate I just came from a travel.

Huh. I couldn't help but inwardly laugh. This man was observant.

“Second, judging from the card the front desk handed earlier, you’re purchasing a reservation in this hotel, not a check-in status, which means you’re not staying long.”

A subtle lift of my brow was the only reaction I allowed to show, but deep inside, I was taken aback with how well he glued the pieces together.

“And third, well, my secretary told me you visited my pharmaceuticals office just an hour ago.”

He flashed a smile. I returned the gesture with a grin.

“Hm, I’m impressed, viscount. You have a keen eye and a sharp mind,” I stated.

This time, his posture relaxed, and he laid back against his chair and exhaled.

“Marius didn’t choose me for nothing, Your Majesty,” he answered. “So what do I owe you for this visit?”

Serena

I wasn’t supposed to return to Ehnrelil until the next day for the guardian ascension ceremony, but I decided to be early anyway. I wanted to use the realm’s library of knowledge to know more about fae pregnancies, give myself as much time to figure things out and maybe prepare from there.

The twins Adamar and Adaen were with me.

They weren't the best of company when it came to the topic since, well; they were males, and they were still unmated, but I loved their presence. It reminded me of our childhood antics and they provided me a sense of comfort.

While inside the library, they also gave me updates about the Rexhus Tower renovation, the priestess selection process, and those who were chosen to train.

I was in awe. They did a great job and more. There were several promising candidates that could easily become official priestesses of Ehnrelil. I was glad I didn't limit to just one priestess. If all of them were worthy, then I would be happy to grant that status to them.

Adamar and Adaen also gave me the tightest hug they could make—well, not that tight since they were worried my babies would be squished—but it was tight enough to convey their gratitude.

“Thank you for choosing our mother as the next guardian, Serena,” they said.

I gave them the widest smile I could make. “You're welcome. Your mother is the best fae for the position.”

Not secretive. Genuine with her work. Has a heart of gold.

Totally the opposite of Nevannir, I thought to myself.

I couldn't wait to attend the ascension ceremony tomorrow since it would be my first time visiting Quinta—the so-called main bridge of the realms. Or shall I say, the headquarters of the guardians. I always wondered what their lives looked like up there, their system and their relationship with one another. Farryl was there too. It had been weeks since I hadn't seen her because she was training with another guardian.

"You guys will attend the ceremony tomorrow, right?" I asked as they released me.

"Yes!" Adaen exclaimed with excitement. "We can't miss this milestone of our mother's life. She had gone through so much since having us, so we wanted to support her as much as we could."

Upon hearing it, I had a sudden epiphany.

Of course! Adamar and Adaen were twins, so this meant that their mother was my best possible resource when it came to my pregnancy.

"Hey, guys," I released the book I was holding and stared at them with hopeful eyes, "do you think I can visit your mother now? Maybe talk to her for a few minutes?"

Adamar twisted his brows. "Are you kidding? You can certainly visit her anytime. You're our queen!"

My teeth flashed towards them. "Thank you. Can you lead me to her?"

Adaen shot his hand around my elbow and said, “Certainly.”

Ehnrelil had portals everywhere connecting from one place to another, so it only took us a few seconds to arrive in their mother’s house.

Adamar and Adaen, since they turned nine-hundred years old—Earth’s version of sixteen, lived in separate abodes. They visit their mother always though and give her the best attention they could give.

Like Queen Adna, High Elder Hanhenna also lost her mate early in their union because of an illness. She had become a single mother ever since, but that didn’t deter her in giving her children love and care.

She was a mother figure to me, ranking third to my mother and Aunt Margaret.

We found her in her garden, tending to her flowers unique only to Ehnrelil. She warmly received me into her embrace. The twins, after placing their mother kisses on the forehead, gave us privacy and left.

We found a cozy spot nearby which had a table for two and under the shade of pine trees. In there, I asked her right away about her pregnancy with Adamar and Adaen. A warm expression painted her face thereafter, showing just how much she treasured carrying them for three months.

“It was tricky,” she said initially. “But my mate was present to support me all the way.”

I clasped my hands on the table and processed the information she gave.

“I’m not sure how much you know, Serena, but fae women the moment they learn of the pregnancy were advised to go to the pillar for a blessing.”

I cleared my throat. My mother used to tell me something about that in the past, but it slipped my mind the day I found out I was pregnant. I guess I had to do this even though it’s late.

“Afterward, they will religiously visit the pools in Ineri. The waters there assist the mother in her pregnancy and provide additional energy to the growing fetus. I advise you to go there if you haven’t, Serena. Fae pregnancies especially twins require five times the energy for their development. Yours are triplets. So, they would need more than that. Have you experienced sudden fatigues lately?”

I shook my head. “Not yet, Lady Hanhenna, but there was one time on my first month that I experienced spotting and felt really tired. Was that it?”

“It could be one symptom, but since you are half-werewolf, we will never know.”

“Did my mother went to Ineri, too?”

“Yes,” she answered right away with a gentle smile. “The other fae mothers loved to soak with her on the waters there because she gives off a regal vibe around them. It soothes them.”

I couldn't help but giggle a little. I could only imagine how that scene looked like.

“My mother never told me where it was located. Can you...uhm...maybe lead me there?” I asked, looking hopeful.

“Absolutely, Serena,” she declared. “We can go there now, if you want. I'll have Adamar and Adaen guard you while you're there.”

My brows furrowed. “Guard me? Why?”

Lady Hanhenna's face became solemn. She lowered her eyes and pressed her lips tightly.

“Remember Ehnrelil's nightly beasts?” she continued.

I was taken aback. “The Sacrishas?” I said. These beasts came from Sattus. Once upon a time, a portal somehow opened and allowed these beasts to roam free on Ehnrelil. When King Alduin found out, it was already too late. Many faes had been killed and eaten. He was able to seal the portal and subdue the beasts, but until now, the eggs hatched in hidden locations remain a current problem in the land. These remaining Sacrishas became an invasive specie that some fae knights often fight off.

“Yes,” Lady Hanhenna answered. “They love to eat unborn children, and they frequent Ineri to chance upon an unguarded fae.”

“Oh...” I clenched my hands.

Baby-eating monsters? What a way to start my journey.

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