

The Alpha King's Claim

Chapter 134 Meeting The Hermit

## **Chapter 134 Meeting The Hermit**

Aero

Call me overprotective. I don't care. This is what I am, especially when dealing with my wife and my children.

This quest, I expected, would lead us to danger in one way or another. Honestly, I wanted Serena safe and sound inside our castle instead, but she fuels me. She gives me inspiration. She pushes me to move forward, find my mother, and be done with it. Selfish as it may, I needed her presence in this quest.

Luckily, so far, we encountered no danger as we trekked the fields and hills of Elaga. I expected Geraden's foolhardy supporters waiting to avenge him, or maybe Sattus's baby-eating monsters to attack us, but neither of these groups appeared. Instead, I came face to face with an Amazonian-wannabe woman whose spiky and likely poisoned-tipped arrows directed our chests once we entered the portal's zone.

Aside from this hostile act, she rubbed me differently. I didn't know what it was, but I hated this woman in that instant.

Serena, again, acting as the sense and reason of the group managed to convince her. She led us to

the fae hermit's lair in the end under his prophetic words.

Despite this, I still felt wary about her, so I volunteered to cross the rock wall first. It was simply an easy jump from one corner of a room to the next. Once I was inside, I caught a scent and it awfully smelled similar to Geraden's. My hands retracted its claws again, and I heightened my hearing.

'Is it clear, Aero?' Serena asked me, likely feeling impatient.

I mentally shook my head. 'No, it's not. Remain there until I say so. Be cautious with that woman too, Serena. Something is fishy here.'

This cave room didn't look like a cave. For one, it had high arched ceilings and stencil-designed walls. Second, the floor was carpeted from one corner of the room to another. Third, natural light from outside an open stone balcony flooded in, brightening the entire room.

There were no stalagmites or stalactites like the area I jumped from, and I thought maybe this fae hermit placed an enchantment all over his lair to make his stay bearable and presentable. Either that or this was really the product of that long enlightenment journey.

Slowly, I advanced to the inner room where wooden furniture with eccentric designs stood. Far

ahead, I saw a hearth already lit up with logs and an old man who I assumed was Calahiem stood and faced it. Dressed in Ehnreil's typical white robe and a brown cincture around his waist; holding a wooden staff that looked overused and what looked like a beret hat protecting his long scraggly chalky hair, he pulled the hermit position with flying colors, including the hunch back he sported.

"Welcome to my humble abode, Alpha King of Phanteon," he spoke without looking at me.

I arched a brow. I knew he could sense me. I just didn't expect he'd specifically know my name.

"You are Calahiem," I stated matter-of-factly.

He shifted to face me and lowered his head before speaking again, "Yes, I am, and you seek truth about your real mother."

Damn. He wasn't only a hermit, he was also a soothsayer it seems.

"Good that you're not beating around the bush, old man," I replied, feeling relieved, but still I maintained my cautiousness around him.

He chuckled and projected a serene face. "I have no intention to, Your Majesty."

"Tell me, why do you smell like that harebrained, rejected king of the faes?" The stench was all over the room despite the incense lighted on top of the mantel. It was messing up my olfactory

system.

“Nothing escapes your notice, huh? Do you mean to say Geraden, Your Majesty?” he simply

asked, not at all concerned. “We once underwent a blood pack to make us both brothers-at-arms.

We did this before I took my enlightenment journey.”

I clenched my jaw. Hell, this one could be our enemy and we just fell right into his trap. “So you

support him,” I asked through clenched teeth.

He quickly shook his head. “On the contrary, I don’t, Your Majesty. This is why I decided to be a

hermit. I saw Geraden’s sordid future. I want nothing of it.”

That felt fucking good to hear.

“Hm, good choice, old man,” I remarked. “And the woman guarding the portal to Sattus? Who is she?”

His serene expression changed to a secretive one.

“She is a different matter to discuss entirely.”

He lowered his staff and pointed to a chair near me, telling me to sit, but Serena captured my attention when she asked:

‘My king, I sense your guard lowering. Does this mean it is safe to enter?’

She was definitely impatient as I was.

‘Yes, Serena.’

It didn’t take long before all of us, including the woman, crowded inside the inner room. She kept

her stiff posture and her shifty eyes. At one point, our gazes met and she, for some reason, glared at me. I returned the favor. We could have a staring contest and I would easily come out the top.

“Ah, finally, I am graced by my queen,” Calahiem stated while he dipped his head, angling it even lower than he did with me. Tsk. What a selective old man.

Serena, as usual, reciprocated the gesture. “High Elder Calahiem. It is an honor to meet you.”

He shifted to the right and directed his eyes on the twins.

“And of course, the famous twins of Lady Hanhenna. Adaen—” he stretched his staff and touched the tip of it briefly on Adaen’s head, who didn’t jerk away. He just seemed completely mesmerized in front of the old man’s presence. “—and Adamar, the true mate of my apprentice, Aurora.”

He did the same staff ritual—whatever that was called—to Adamar, who looked sheepish.

Never mind the fact that Calahiem’s eyes landed on the woman or the fact that he called her by name. What I was stumped to know was the fact that they were mates. Actual, fucking mates.

Serena and Adaen shot a surprised look at Adamar, while Adamar cleared his throat and stared at

the woman. She on the other hand remained impassive, as if the revelation didn't ruffle her. I snarled inside. Was she mocking my best friend? "What? You will all know eventually," Calahiem stated, shrugging when I tossed him a disbelieving look. "Besides, these two know that by heart already."

"I will be outside, Master," the woman declared, and swiftly, she left. I was no matchmaker, but my gut told me a pairing like that would only result to disaster. I didn't like the woman. I didn't like her to be Adamar's mate, but I knew my opinion would fall on deaf ears judging from Adamar's lovesick face. Serena looked like in heaven too, seeing another matchmaking opportunity like the one she did with Alpha Aaron. "You should follow her, Adamar. We will be okay here," she said, already in character.

He nodded once to all of us and turned heels straight to the path we earlier entered; where the woman ran off to.

Good luck to him taming that vixen.

"Well now, I'm sure, you want information," Calahiem started while a chair materialized behind him and claimed it. We did the same with the sectional behind us.

"Sarah, Luna of Bastion and Aero's grandmother, said you have information about Donna, High

Elder Calahiem,” Serena answered for me. She placed a hand on my cold fingers and squeezed it tight, her way of soothing my troubled heartbeat. With our mate bond, she could feel it and feel it like it was her own.

“Yes, I have,” Calahiem answered as he stared at me. “Your mother is living on Earth now and living rather happily with her human husband. If you want to see her, then check for the address written on a piece of paper I placed in your coat pocket, Your Majesty.”

He looked at me and smiled cheekily.

And he was right. As I dipped my eyes, I noticed the object tucked inside my front coat pocket, mocking me, inviting me to pull it and read the contents. Although I didn’t know how this offending thing came to be in my possession, I strongly believed it had something to do with Calahiem knowing spells and magic like Serena does.

An ability to summon any matter—solid, liquid, energy, or gas—at will.

“Can I see it?” Serena turned to me and poked my rib. Her eyes mimicking a puppy trying to steal my hamburger, but she didn’t need to do that, actually. I’d give the world to her if she asked me to.

Pinching my two fingers, I fished out the paper from its enclosure and handed it to her.

“House 1 SW 29th Street, Ocala Florida,” she recited.

I closed my eyes and without meaning to, I memorized the address to heart. Then, the memory of

Sharon’s words popped out of my head.

‘She doesn’t want to see you.’

With this, I started to second-guess myself.

‘You can do this, Aero,’ Serena mind-linked me as she squeezed my shoulder.

I awarded her a smile that was only reserved for her.

A smile that showed my vulnerability, my sadness, and pain.

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