

906

"We won't know everything until the discovery phase of the prosecution's case," he politely answered.**w w (w) . © e v © © W a r m . C o m**

"It keeps getting better," I sighed. "They have nothing because there is nothing. As far as I know, my Father never fired a gun in his life."

"I'm not a gun-runner. I'm not a runner of any kind. I'm a cyclist. I've never been arrested for anything. I'm pretty sure my Dad never was. All my wages in sin were earned through my phlandering ways. When sex is involved, I can be incredibly deceptive," I told him. "Outside of sex, I've never seen the point."

So you don't know me and you don't know what's going on yet you assume I'm guilty - thus in need of your services. I have proven I don't need someone who knows less about this shit than I do. You can go out there, find out what I'm charged with and what evidence they have, proving your worth, or you can get lost. Either way, good day, Mr. Pratt," I yawned.

Off went Lawyer Pratt and down my head went on the table for a bit of a nap. They had taken all my clothes and accessories at the Medical Examiner's crime scene. I had no way to tell time, except through my hunger and thirst. Theodora came storming into my room, hellishly infuriated. She flashed a phone at me.

"What is the meaning of this?" she snapped. Two other agents were crowding into the room. I looked at the picture of an African-American girl around seven.

"It is a girl," I responded. Theodora looked like she was going to slap me.

"Which one of your sick friends broke into my house and did this?" she was truly steamed.

"What? Huh? Is the girl okay?" I stammered. I was seconds away from a police brutality suit.**w W a r m (c) © & f w (c) r © . c o m**

"Someone broke into my house and did this... put the bows in my daughter's hair," Theodora trembled with rage.

"Why do you think it was me? For starters, you've stolen my phone and clothes. I've been held in this box for God knows how long and I don't want to know you, much less your little girl," I growled as I stood.

Theodora tried to slam me back into my seat, but I blocked her and retreated to the corner. Hands went to their holsters.

"Sit down," Theodora seethed. I sat down in the corner. "Sit in the chair."

"Wow... you've just told me you suspect me in something odious happening to your daughter," I said. I was also curious why Pamela had done that to her daughter. I'd find out later.

"Why you are even investigating this is beyond me," I added. "Conflict of interest maybe?" Brock pulled Theodora back.

"Take your seat, Mr. Nyilas," he demanded. I took my seat. "Now..."

"Shut the fuck up," I lost my temper.

"Shut the fuck up. You are keeping me in custody without charging me with a damn thing," I spat my outrage. "I get the feeling this is SOP for you sons of bitches. Congrats. I'm sure there is a long list of people sick and tired of you shitting on their lives and getting away with it under the cover of law and justice.

Now, since none of you are shouting about a death, or kidnapping, I'm going to guess that someone fucked with Theodora here," I kept attacking. "From my limited experience with you dipshits, she deserves it for forgetting she - and the rest of you - are public servants. So some wacko broke into your house and put bows in your daughter's hair. Boohoo."

"You get to go home tonight to your family. I get to sit in this room because... hell if I know why? Is it because I know people? Guns? Drugs? Terrorist chatter? Speeding? Jaywalking? An illegal wire-tap? Littering?" I mocked them. "Theodora, you are giving me shit over your daughter who you can hug tonight... if it is still night, while I will never get to do that to my Father and you don't seem to care about the 'who', or why."

"When I pin this on you, Nyilas, I'm going to find out what real law and justice is," Theodora menaced me.

"I don't know what is more hilarious," I groaned, "you switching your priority to a maniacal bow-tie, from some group that has been running around, shooting up Chicago, or..." I coughed.

My throat was getting dry from my blathering and a lack of something to drink.

"Or, you have learned nothing. Whoever did this was sending you a cautionary note. Having been under your boot heel for-fucking-ever, I couldn't have sent anyone to do anything because of your perverse fascination with pummeling my civil rights.

So, someone else was/is trying to send you a message," I muttered. "If it wasn't some helpless child involved, Theodora, I'd wish on you the heartache of losing someone you love so you will have an inkling of how bad I feel right now. I'm not that guy though. I hope your family stays safe. When I have a problem with someone, I come right at them.

I certainly don't hide behind the innocent... the legal system, or the abuse of power," I wound down. There was a knock on the open door. Holy Shit! It was Nicole Lawless, Attorney at God.

"Who are you?" Brock spun on the newcomer.

"Hey Nicole," I yawned.

"Hey Cael," she answered. To the rest, "I'm Nicole Lawless with [the Legion of Undead Litigators] and I'm taking over Mr. Nyilas' case."**w w W . (c) © v E L © e r m . c o M**

"Wait!" I raised my hand. "I need to know something first." There was a pause. "Nicole, are you wearing underwear?"**w W W . N O v E I W o r m . C o @**

"Sweet God, you are exhausted," Nicole compassionately noted. "No, I'm not." Underwear.

"Great. You are hired," I declared then slumped in my seat. After Nicole's arrival, things got easier. My only request of Nicole was that she rescued Rachel as well. That minor miracle accomplished we left the federal offices - the Federal Plaza downtown didn't contain this madhouse.

The first stumbling block was instantaneous. There was a nice stretch limo waiting for Nicole, me... and Rachel with the two well-dressed bodyguard types by the front and back doors. Since Nicole was certainly a tool of my aunts and my aunts had set the wheels in motion that got my Father killed, I went with option B; the second outdoor couple - Pamela and this woman I didn't recognize.

"Cael?" Nicole was surprised when I deviated and headed down the street.

"Nicole, you could be working for the people who had a hand in my Father's murder," I enlightened her. "I don't hold it against you. I don't think you knew. I'm still not getting in that car. When I figure out where I'm going to end up, I'll give you a call."

"Cáel, are you sure?" Nicole called out.

"Absolutely. Let me get some sleep and we can talk," I sighed. "Tomorrow over breakfast?"

Nicole nodded, a bodyguard opened the door and followed her in. The woman by the front-passenger door got in then the limo pulled away.

For me, it was back to the GL550s and away we went.

"I am Esmeralda Carbonne," the newcomer introduced herself. She was a 'Runner', probably working with some Havenstone operation in Chicago. The Amazons couldn't be everywhere in strength. They weren't built on the octopus-model like the Illuminati, or Egyptian Rite.

They had three types of holdings as far as my Executive Services experience had shown me. There were only a handful of urban strongholds, Havenstone HQ NYC being the biggest. The most common holding were rural centers much like Doebridge - places where Amazons were the majority, if not all of the entire population.

The third kind of holdings were like Chicago with a few businesses owned by Havenstone being monitored by a small band of Amazons. Esmeralda was one of the latter. She'd be our eyes and ears in my hometown and it was clear Esmeralda was unhappy. Figuring out why wasn't all that difficult.

There had been a serious miscommunication between Esmeralda's group and the SD team sent to Chicago that had ended up at my Father's. The SD had requested an address and background information then insisted they perform their own reconnaissance. Afterwards the locals had been frozen out of the information flow.

"Hang on to your disbelief," I cautioned Esmeralda. "My Father and I are descendants, by an ancient male line, of a deceased Amazon First House. My ancestor dates back to the end of the Second Betrayal. He was sent on an official mission and told someone would come back to him and the few males with him."

"Since he was on the rolls of the Host, so were all his offspring - until my Father and me," I said. I let her digest that.

"Your father was the... Head of a First House," Esmeralda gasped. "I had no idea."

"I don't think any of us truly appreciated the position my Father was in," I met her worried gaze.

"I was awarded the Head of House Ishara because I was the only active duty member of Havenstone. Late Sunday night/early Monday morning, it was revealed that my Father had married a prominent member of the Illuminati. That is what went wrong," I confessed.

"We should have been..." Esmeralda grumbled.

"You weren't because we both work for some highly competent, trained, brave and proficient knuckleheads," I espoused the frustration Esmeralda felt. Her eyes flickered to the SD team. "I'm a Head of House," I patted her knee. "I can get away with crap like that. There is no denying the SD team fought well."

"Had a member of the local holding been present they would have only performed better - in my opinion anyway," I added. Esmeralda was soaking up a freight train of new information. Male - male Amazon - male member of the Host - and finally, Male Head of House. She had psychologically defied a male-dominated world and here she was confronted with a male authority figure.

The social experiment went to the next level.

"How so, Ishara?" Rachel challenged me.

"Good question; Esmeralda, it is late at night, a team is scouting out the side and back of a single family, corner lot dwelling. Three cars roll up, covering both streets. What do you do?" I asked Esmeralda.

"During a recon - I would assume hostile intent, let them deploy into the yard then verbally confront from cover. That many people in that situation - I would prep an ambush," she said.

"The Protocols," Rachel countered.

"The second they cross the property line of a dwelling under our protection, they are acting with hostile intent," Esmeralda answered.

"There is a codicil concerning the presentation of force," Pamela spoke up, "that agrees with Esmeralda. The section of recognition agrees with the Security Detail. Rachel, the team at the Nyilas house did nothing wrong. They would have been better off adding a few local 'Runners' to provide situational relevance. We honor the dead by learning from their deaths."

"I concur," Rachel admitted. "In haste, we failed to utilize the local sisterhood's expertise."