

## After the Secret Wedding Rise of My Queen Chapter 16

### Chapter 16 Xander's Intense Jealousy

Isabel's eyes widened as she stared at the handsome man before her, feeling both shocked and unsure of how to respond.

Xander, who had always kept his distance from women, was now holding her!

The sudden change made her remember that she had previously discovered Xander's usual avoidance of women. Before that, he hadn't confronted her because of her ability to heal Samuel's legs.

She knew she had to be careful not to push him too far, or she might end up being kicked out.

Yet now, he was carrying her upstairs, which was unexpected.

While Isabel was lost in thought, Xander told his assistant, "Leo, get Dr. Gill here."

"No need. I'm a doctor myself. There's no need for Leo to go. Just let him carry me upstairs," Isabel quickly interjected.

Xander's steps came to an abrupt halt, his face darkening as he turned to Leo Lambert with a menacing look

"Yes, sir," Leo responded and hurried away in fear.

Xander ascended the stairs with Isabel in his arms, his expression stern.

Rachel, unable to contain herself, rushed after them in a panic.

"Xan, you have to believe me! I didn't do anything to her! It was her who got angry and slapped me after I revealed her motives!"

Isabel, battling the pain in her stomach, defended herself, "My pain isn't related to you. Your face is your doing, not mine."

Rachel was momentarily at a loss for words.

"Xan, don't listen to her lies! I-"

"Get out," Xander said coldly.

Rachel was taken aback. She needed to make things clear today.

“Xan, you-”

“I said get out. Understand? Or should I have someone throw you out?” Xander’s tone was calm but carried a dangerous undertone.

Rachel fell silent, not daring to say more as she watched Xander carry Isabel into the room.

What a b\*tch!.

She cursed inwardly. She had been amazed by Isabel’s beauty when she first saw her earlier and felt a strong sense of crisis.

Reflecting on her initial reaction, she felt even more convinced. She must get rid of Isabel as soon as possible, or the latter would become a major rival in her romantic pursuits.

Just wait and see! I’ll make you regret trying to steal my mant

Rachel sneered and left the villa.

Inside the room, Xander carefully placed Isabel on the bed.

“Don’t worry. Dr. Gill will be here soon.”

In so much pain that she could barely speak, Isabel looked at Xander’s worried face. She thought he must be concerned about his younger brother, fearing that if something happened to her, there wouldn’t be anyone to take care of his brother’s legs.

Five minutes later, Xander’s frustration grew. He called Leo, “Why hasn’t Dr. Gill arrived yet?” “We’re almost there,” Leo replied, wiping his sweat and urging Dr. Gill, “Hurry up! Boss is waiting!”

Robin rushed in with a medicine box, sweating heavily

As they entered Isabel’s room, the tense atmosphere felt almost suffocating.

Leo observed Xander’s intense focus on Isabel and sensed something unusual.

Having worked for Xander for years, he’d never seen him show such concern for a woman before. It seemed like his guesses were correct.

After Robin diagnosed Isabel with a stomach issue, Xander visibly relaxed.

Since Isabel’s condition was severe, she needed IV fluids. After some time, her condition began to improve.

“How are you feeling?” Xander asked softly.

Leo believed his guess even more as he heard Xander’s unusually gentle tone.

“I feel better,” Isabel said weakly. “Just a bit thirsty.”

She then turned to Leo and asked, “Could you get me a glass of water?”

“Why ask him? I can get it,” Xander said, glancing at Leo.

Leo, sweating nervously, stood still.

Isabel was taken aback by Xander’s comment. She thought, If I don’t let Leo help, who else should I ask? I wouldn’t want to trouble the boss.

“Why are you silent? Are you interested in him?” Xander’s gaze narrowed at Isabel.

When Xander spoke, Leo’s forehead began to sweat heavily.

Isabel was momentarily taken aback. Why was Xander suddenly saying such things?

Before she could collect her thoughts, Xander had already stood up, poured her a glass of warm water, and handed it to her.

After drinking, Isabel looked at Xander with a curious expression.

“What are you looking at?” he asked in confusion.

“I didn’t expect you cared about me this much,” Isabel said, leaning in with a playful grin, the space between them nearly nonexistent.

Her eyes sparkled with amusement as she teased, “Are you falling for me?”

Xander felt a slight confusion at her words. If he weren’t so good at hiding his emotions, he might have given away his true feelings.

“You’re overthinking it,” he replied casually, then stood up. “Just focus on getting better, and then you can help Sam with his legs.”

Isabel pouted slightly, realizing he was indeed concerned for his younger brother rather than for her.

Once Xander left the room, he let go of the anxiety he had been keeping under control. His heart raced uncontrollably, and he felt an unsettling flutter in his chest.

Leo, stepping out of the room, observed Xander with a new perspective, thinking, I didn't expect the boss to be so complicated. He likes Madam but is in denial about it. If it were me, I'd stay by her side.

Stomach issues weren't usually severe, but they could be quite painful. After a night's rest, Isabel was already feeling better.

There was a knock at the door, followed by Xander's deep voice.

"How are you feeling? If you're still unwell, you don't have to come to the banquet today."

"I'm fine. Just putting on makeup. Give me a moment," Isabel responded.

She needed to attend the event to gain more of Xander's trust and favor. Helping him today would make future tasks easier for her.

Xander came downstairs and waited on the sofa, opening his laptop to handle work for the next day.

"Xander, are you truly going to bring her along?" Samuel asked, not wanting Isabel to be alone with his brother.

"Yes," Xander responded lightly.

"But don't you think she's too scheming? I heard she hit Rachel yesterday and then blamed her stomach pain on Rachel. That's outrageous! How can you tolerate such behavior?" Samuel said through gritted

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### Chapter 17 Are You Falling For Me?

teeth.

Xander abruptly looked up at him. "Who told you that

Samuel, sensing Xander's displeasure, said, "It was the maids."

Xander's eyes narrowed slightly with a touch of coldness.

"Leo, let them know this is their final warning. If there's a next time, they won't be able to stay here anymore."

"Yes, boss," Leo said, heading out to handle the issue.

Samuel was even more confused by Xander's reaction.

"Xander, what's going on?"

"Isabel never said her stomach pain was caused by Rachel. She has consistently said it wasn't related to Rachel."

"What?" Samuel was surprised and glanced up at Isabel's room. "But she might be lying. Isn't that typical of scheming people? They make themselves look like the victim while speaking up for the others to appear kind."

"So, do you think I have a poor judgment?" Xander asked, clearly displeased.

Thinking about the depth of Xander's insight, Samuel was well aware that his brother's ability to judge people was exceptional.

"But Rachel was injured. I heard her face was swollen. It's quite unbelievable that she hurt herself."

Xander shut his laptop and replied, "I'm not sure of the exact details. All I know is that when I arrived, Isabel was eating oranges, peeling them and chewing them."

Samuel thought this over, wondering if he had misjudged Isabel. Could Rachel have been the one deceiving everyone? Though he didn't particularly like Rachel, she grew up in a wealthy family. It seemed unlikely she would harm herself just to deal with Isabel.

As Samuel was deep in thought, he heard a noise from upstairs and looked up, stunned.

Xander noticed Samuel's reaction and turned around, his eyes reflecting a surprising glint..

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Chapter 18 Pestered by Ex-fiancé

Isabel was stunning in a black off-the-shoulder dress with lace accents around the neckline, which accentuated her striking beauty. The high slit of the dress elegantly displayed her long legs, giving her the grace of a top model, while her tender skin contrasted beautifully against the dark fabric, like a white flower blooming in the night.

She not only boasted a captivating figure but also had a dead gorgeous face.

Without realizing it, Xander rose from his seat, his gaze fixed on Isabel as she gracefully descended the stairs.

He had always known she was attractive, but she typically dressed casually and wore minimal makeup. He never expected her to look this stunning when she dressed up elegantly.

Isabel approached Xander, twirling slightly and lifting her dress. "How do I look? Beautiful, right?"

Xander nodded. "Yes."

She raised an eyebrow with a slight smile. "Now I can help you out."

Xander wasn't concerned about that. For him, Tiffany had nothing to do with him.

"It's time to go. Let's go," Isabel said, grabbing her bag and heading for the door.

Just as Xander was about to follow, Samuel stopped him. "Xander."

Xander frowned as he watched Isabel walk away.

"What's the matter?" he asked Samuel.

Isabel saw the siblings talking. She didn't want to wait for Xander and continued on her way alone.

"Don't let Isabel's appearance fool you," Samuel said. He was a little nervous because he was also amazed by Isabel's beauty.

He reminded Xander anxiously, "Even if she didn't harm Rachel, I still think she has hidden intentions."

"I'm aware. I'm not just going to be swayed by appearances," Xander replied.

Samuel felt relieved by Xander's response.

At that moment, Isabel's pained voice was heard. "Ouch-"

Xander's attention immediately shifted from Samuel to Isabel.

She was leaning against the wall, one hand gripping it while she rubbed her foot.

Had she injured her foot?

Reacting quickly, Xander went over to her. "What happened?"

“I’m not used to wearing such high heels. I think I sprained my foot a little. It shouldn’t be too bad,” Isabel said, examining her foot.

“Let me take a look.” Xander crouched down and checked her foot.

Samuel watched this unfold, his expression one of disbelief.

He couldn’t believe Xander was crouching to help Isabel. Wasn’t his brother supposed to be above such concerns? The way Xander was looking at her with such concern seemed like he was completely enchanted.

Could it be that Xander was genuinely taken in by Isabel?

This thought made Samuel anxious.

He needed to find a way to make his brother see the truth about Isabel before he was completely misled.

Xander inspected Isabel’s foot and was relieved to find it wasn’t a serious injury.

“It’s fine. Let’s get going.” Isabel withdrew her foot.

A woman’s foot and a man’s head were the most untouchable parts. Just now, her foot had been in Xander’s hands, making her blush uncontrollably.

Fortunately, no one seemed to notice her reaction.

Xander was too preoccupied with his feelings to notice anything else. He rubbed his fingers behind his back, still feeling the touch of Isabel’s skin, and frowned slightly.

“Can you walk?”

If she couldn’t, he would carry her.

“I can walk. It’s just a bit numb,” Isabel said, lifting her foot and giving it a little stomp to show she was fine.

Seeing that she was alright, Xander pursed his lips, and his frown deepened.

Isabel observed Xander’s reaction closely. She could tell he was displeased.

Was he annoyed because she was too troublesome by twisting her ankle in high heels? Or did he think she was trying to get close to him by pretending to be hurt?

Isabel also noticed Xander’s hand was behind his back. Was he disgusted after touching her foot?

He was indeed a serious clean freak.

As Isabel pondered, Xander instructed Leo, "Get a pair of lower heels ready."

"No need. These shoes are nice. I like them," Isabel said, not wanting to trouble him further. She didn't want to risk him getting annoyed and not taking her along.

"Are you sure? Didn't you just say you're not used to high heels?" Xander asked, puzzled.

"There's always a first time for everything. I'll get used to it," Isabel said, then quickly got into the car, waving at Xander. "Come on, get in."

Seeing her wave, Xander felt an irresistible pull. Without thinking, he got into the car.

Samuel, in his wheelchair, watched as the car disappeared from view.

Determined, he decided to continue tracking Isabel from the next day, enlisting others to help. He believed he could reveal her true colors.

If necessary, he would involve his mother.

Around 20 minutes later, they arrived at the hotel where Albert was hosting the birthday party.

"We're finally here!" Isabel said, hurrying out of the car. "I'll head to the restroom first!"

As she spoke, she lifted her dress and dashed into the hotel.

After finishing up, Isabel left the restroom feeling refreshed, only to bump into someone.

"Sorry, I didn't mean to."

"It's you!" a familiar voice sounded above her head.

Isabel looked up and saw Kaleb.

He looked at her with clear surprise.

He had known Isabel was beautiful all her life, but now she looked different.

Previously, she had always been elegantly dressed with straight hair and bangs, projecting an innocent girl image.

Now, without bangs, her smooth forehead and delicate features were visible.



Her straight hair was styled into soft curls, partially pinned back, with a few curled strands framing her face. In her black off-the-shoulder dress, she appeared like a captivating fairy of the night.

Compared to her previous appearance, this kind of dress suited her better.

Despite her enhanced appearance, Kaleb remained unmoved. Believing she was scheming, he wasn't about to fall for her again.

"Isabel, you're so hypocritical! You claimed to have cut ties with me, yet you followed me here! You're quite capable of finding out I'll attend Old Mr. Perkins' birthday banquet!" Kaleb said sarcastically.

Isabel rolled her eyes. "You're too confident. Did you think I followed you? I wouldn't be blind anymore. I'm already married and here with my husband."

Kaleb didn't believe her. Isabel had once been so devoted to him. She couldn't just move on like that.

They had been childhood sweethearts with feelings for each other. The current situation was of Isabel's making.

"Stop pretending. Are you testing my feelings for you?"

Isabel chuckled. "I did like you a lot before. I would even give up my life for you. But when you cruelly took my blood, I already gave you my life once. I'm extremely disappointed in you. I'm not going to do it again. You don't deserve it."

Upon hearing that, Kaleb recalled the scene on their wedding day when he had forcibly taken Isabel to the hospital for a blood draw. Isabel had been in tears, begging and insisting she didn't harm Eva.

If Eva had been truly pregnant, Kaleb might have believed Isabel's claims. But Eva was faking it. So, was Isabel guilty of pushing Eva? It was unclear.

Kaleb had never blamed Eva, understanding her desperation upon seeing the man she loved marry another. Even if Isabel had been wronged, he had witnessed her past actions toward Eva.

"Disappointment? That's exactly right. I feel the same way." Kaleb also looked at Isabel with a disappointed expression.

Isabel shook her head self-deprecatingly. If Kaleb had seen clearly, he wouldn't have been misled by Eva.

"Excuse me, my husband is waiting for me," Isabel said, trying to move past Kaleb.

As she took a step, he grabbed her arm.

Impatiently, Isabel frowned. "Let go of me."

Kaleb held her arm firmly. "You came here for me, whether you admit it or not. With Eva not feeling well, I need a female companion tonight. You can stay by my side. Just think of it as compensation for forcing you to give blood."

Isabel was extremely speechless.

Just as she was about to respond, she noticed Xander approaching from the corner of her eye.

## **After the Secret Wedding Rise of My Queen Chapter 19**

Chapter 19 Xander Is Kissing Her Back

Why is he here?

Xander arrived with a stormy expression, his icy stare fixed on the hand clasping Isabel's.

It appeared she had come for this man, a premeditated decision that explained her earlier agreement.

The realization tightened his grip, his face set in a frosty mask, lips a firm line.

Just then, Isabel called out, shifting the atmosphere.

"Honey, he's been mean to me.

That single word, honey, seemed to lift the storm clouds from Xander's demeanor, brightening his expression instantly,

Meanwhile, Kaleb's mood darkened like a stormy sky.

With swift steps, Xander reached Isabel, grasping Kaleb's hand firmly. "Release her, he commanded with authority,

Kaleb examined Xander, noting the refined yet commanding presence that contradicted his initial impression. As Kaleb assessed him, a sharp pain shot through his wrist—Xander was applying pressure.

Unable to withstand the force, Kaleb released Isabel's hand.

She quickly joined Xander, intertwining her arm with his in a show of solidarity and perhaps a slight taunt towards Kaleb.

“Isabel! Who is this guy?” Kaleb bellowed, frustration evident.

“Didn’t you hear? He’s my husband,” Isabel replied with a slight arch of her brow.

Kaleb scrutinized Xander further, puzzled by his absence from the circles of Solaria’s elite.

Examining the man’s looks, he appeared to be over six feet tall, with a balanced physique and striking features. Could he be a model employed by Isabel, or possibly a gigolo? Was this a deliberate attempt to agitate him?

Kaleb sneered at the thought, dismissing the idea of their marriage as genuine.

“Isabel, you can drop the act. Who is he really? Some paid actor or worse? It’s pathetic how low you’ll stoop to try to get to me.”

Before Kaleb could finish his thoughts, Isabel suddenly rose on her toes, wrapping her arms around Xander’s neck, and giving him a quick kiss on the lips.

“Let’s leave this egotist behind, honey,” she whispered.

Xander felt a jolt through his body, his pulse racing uncontrollably. His gaze lingered on her blushing lips, and he swallowed hard, his voice coming out deep and resonant when he replied, “Okay.”

Isabel blinked in surprise, momentarily caught off guard by the seductive quality of his voice, which seemed to echo pleasingly in her ears.

Flustered, Isabel did not dare look directly at him. She simply took his arm and they started to walk away.

Behind them, Kaleb’s face turned a shade redder with fury. He was shocked that Isabel would go to such lengths to provoke him by kissing another man right in front of him.

Despite their long history as childhood sweethearts, they had never shared such intimacy; they had barely held hands.

As he watched them leave, he ground out the name “Isabel” between clenched teeth.

Once they were out of Kaleb’s sight, Isabel released Xander’s hand and stepped back, putting some space between them.

“Sorry about that... I didn’t ask for your permission earlier. It was just to handle the situation,” she stammered.

Xander’s expression clouded slightly at the sudden distance, a frown creasing his brow.

Isabel noticed his displeasure and panicked, fearing she had upset him. Xander was known for his disinterest in romantic relationships, and she worried she had crossed a line.

“Would you like to... hit me back?” she offered nervously, almost saying “kiss me back” but thought better of it, worried it might anger him further.

Closing her eyes and tilting her face up towards him, she added softly, “Just be gentle, okay?”

Xander observed her upturned face, his breath catching as a spark of something flickered through his normally cold gaze.

His chest heaved once, deeply, and he gently cradled her face in his hands.

Isabel’s small face rested gently in Xander’s large hand, an intimate contrast to his usually distant demeanor.

His eyes, clouded with a rare intensity, drew closer.

At that moment, Xander seemed to forget himself. The lingering warmth of her lips haunted him, igniting a desire to explore that sensation further, to delve deeper,

He was lost in the urge to taste her again, to savor the moment fully.

Isabel, with her eyes still closed, felt an unexpected thrill of confusion.

What’s happening? This is supposed to be his retaliation. Why is he caressing my face so tenderly?

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### Chapter 20 Tiffany’s Regrets

Just as Isabel was about to open her eyes, Leo’s voice interrupted the charged atmosphere.

“Boss, glad I found you. I was just speaking with ...

He halted mid-sentence as he noticed Isabel snug in Xander’s embrace, an almost kiss hanging between them.

Caught in the act, Xander was mere inches from Isabel's lips.

Isabel, startled by the sudden intrusion and the closeness of Xander, blinked open her eyes in confusion.

Why was he so close, almost close enough to kiss her?

She dismissed the thought quickly; a man like Xander, if he had any interest in women, would surely have pursued someone already given his status.

Xander's face shadowed over with frustration. Leo's interruption had thwarted what might have been a sweet moment.

"What is it?"

Leo, sensing the tension, replied anxiously, "Mr. Perkins and his father heard you were here... They'd like to see you."

Collecting himself, Xander nodded, "Understood, let's go then."

Isabel, attempting to lighten the mood, chimed in, "You just saved me, so I guess it's my turn to help you out."

Hearing Isabel's words, Xander felt a deeper annoyance.

He knew that her kiss had been a ploy, but her blunt admission only intensified his displeasure.

As they started to move, Isabel, in a lighter tone, hooked her arm through his. "If you don't mind later, feel free to return the favor—kiss me in front of Tiffany."

She meant it as a playful jest, but Xander stopped abruptly, his gaze dropping to her lips, momentarily lost- in thought.

Is it possible to do it this way?

"Cough cough—I was just joking. I know you're not into women and you're a bit of a germaphobe. Asking you for a kiss is almost like risking your life."

"Who said I'm not into women?"

"Do I need someone to tell me that? You're 30 and still single, you avoid close contact with women." Isabel shrugged. "Plus, there's talk that you might be into men

Xander fell silent.

“Rumors often have little to do with reality.”

He felt the need to clear this up; it was important that she did not continue under this misconception.

“That makes sense.” Isabel nodded. Observing is better than hearing, and gossip is rarely accurate.

In the private room.

Tiffany was desperate to get out.

“Dad, I don’t want to marry him! Please, let me go.”

“Don’t be foolish! Mr. Bennett may be married, but the bond between our family and his is significant. He’s shown good grace by attending your grandfather’s birthday today. If you snub him, that’s on you. Plus, you ignored him a few days ago and he was not offended; that’s fortunate.” Morris considered this and felt a pang of worry.

“But he’s just not my type, Dad!”

“Enough!” Albert reprimanded, eyeing Tiffany, “Xander is nearly here, mind your words. And I heard he’s married.”

“Really?” Tiffany looked surprised.

Albert stroked his beard. “It’s just a rumor I overheard.

“It’s probably not true. Tiffany scoffed, suspecting the rumor was just a tactic by Xander to lower her defenses.

Just then, there was a knock at the door.

The expected guest had arrived.

Albert and Morris stood up to greet him, while Tiffany sat in the corner, facing away from the door, wishing she’d made herself less appealing, hoping it might repulse him.

Morris swung the door open and was immediately taken aback by the sight of the young, strikingly attractive Xander standing before him.

“Are you Mr. Bennett?”

“I’m Xander Bennett,” he responded coolly.

At the sound of that deep, resonant voice, Tiffany instinctively lifted her gaze.

Could a voice really be so compelling?

Overcome by curiosity, Tiffany turned around and when her eyes landed on Xander's strikingly handsome features, her expression shifted to one of sheer surprise and evident admiration.