

My Scythe Wielding Husband

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Chapter 10 - Death by Tequila

The stewardess left the bedroom first while Solene followed. The whole time she traipsed the hallway to the interior of the plane, her pulse double worked. She felt as if her heart was about to leap out of her chest. She felt as if her insides had somersaulted sixty-nine times or possibly even more. Her breathing picked up and all her senses grew hyper-aware.

She was about to see her soon-to-be-husband finally and she was going to give him a piece of her mind, planning to ditch hi's or hello's and other unnecessary pleasantries. After all, he didn't seem to care about that before the plane took off, or what's more, for the whole of her fifteen years of life since they were faithfully betrothed by their families.

Karma was in order and she was going to serve it in full.

However, as she got a full view of the man sitting on one of the leather seats facing her, she couldn't help herself but laugh—the I-should-have-known-this-would-happen kind of laugh. She wanted to slap herself for being too clueless, but clearly it seemed he deliberately didn't want her to know it was him.

He was busily fixing his cuffs, his hands covered with black leather gloves, as Solene stopped a few feet away. She never found such an item sexy, but she did now and it surprised her. Just like the other times she saw him, he looked well-dressed; his choice of clothes tasteful. The gloves were a perfect complement to his ensemble.

His cheek wound however was gone now. The skin was flawless and not a scar was seen.

'Weird,' she thought to herself.

There was a wine flute half-filled with sparkling red wine on the table in front of him and a dining set prepared for two. It was

clear enough to see they were both to dine together.

"Good evening Solene," the Master's puissant voice traveled through the pressurized air of the cabin towards her ears and for a moment, she felt as though it was mocking her. He was using her given name now, not the 'Miss St. Fair' he used two days ago. Does this mean he was staking his claim on her now?

"Good evening Mr. Henri," Solene said coolly, thinning her eyes, "or should I say, Hein? You didn't seem to mind using that name back in the library just to throw me off."

"Henri, please," he said, his timbre flowing like honey and molten lava she wanted to hopefully ignore, but she couldn't. God help her, she just couldn't. Since first hearing it, it had unfortunately stuck in her head no matter how she wanted it gone.

"I prefer my bride to call me by my given name. It's better. And with regard to our previous engagements in the library, the supermarket and the coffee shop, let's just say...I'm gathering intel. You can forget about it."

"Gathering intel? Forget about it?" Solene parroted, a brief mocking laugh coming out from her chest. "Well, that's a simple way for you to put it."

Standing next to the cockpit door, Arlene and Mr. Reynold blanched. Solene had an idea as to why. Was she the first person to talk to their Master like this? Like that of a human whose voice wasn't dripping with adoration and brimful respect?

"I could have died in the supermarket and the coffee shop and you tell me you were gathering intel?" She crossed her arms over her chest. "Huh, funny. Although..." She tossed a look on the window and considered an idea for a moment, "I certainly want to know more about those incidences. My information on

hand doesn't seem to add up. I have an inkling you can enlighten me, 'Henri'."

"It doesn't matter," he ignored her outburst and gestured to the seat across her. "Sit, please."

Solene lifted a brow and narrowed her eyes again at him. She could sense he was avoiding the subject and that irked her. But what irked her the most was his control over their conversation. She realized she'd have to play it cool if she wanted to wring some information out of him.

It took her a full minute before finally conceding. She took the seat with her chin lifted and shoulders squared, sending him a vibe that she wasn't letting the topic go.

"Arlene, kindly give my bride something to drink. Margarita perhaps," he paused and cast a look at Solene with questioning brows and continued, "or do you prefer something else?"

"Tequila. I fancy drinking hard liquor right now," Solene stated pointblank.

This earned an arched brow on Henri. "Tequila it is then," he said, a grin ghosting his lips.

Arlene, quick on her feet, went to the bar while Mr. Reynold remained diligently on his spot almost like a butler.

"I apologize I didn't properly introduce myself to you before take-off earlier. I had...an important matter to attend to. It concerned life or death."

'Life or death? That's an odd way to put it,' her mind commented.

"It's okay. No harm done, Henri. I understand perfectly how busy a man of such stature like you are," she stated, sounding like a robotic wife. However, in reality, she didn't believe his crap, but at least she gave him points for apologizing.

"Wise words for such a beautiful woman."

"Thank you for the compliment," she spat out, not at all blushing.

Their eyes held for a long moment. Solene had almost forgotten the effect his gray-green orbs had on her in the library: the electrifying feeling, the sudden vision on that balcony. She quickly cleared her throat and tossed her attention to the sparkling wine just to sever their eye contact.

At that very moment, Arlene brought over three shot glasses of tequila on a silver tray complete with freshly-cut lemon and a small dish of salt.

She grinned. Probably a shot or two of the drink would straighten her head on everything that was currently happening. On the one hand, yes, she was secretly happy that her groom wasn't an old man with a long, gray beard or someone who had a hideous deformation. From the recent encounters with him and including now, it was clear to see he had a good body built. More than an acceptable one even. She believed that if she were to be betrothed against her will, then they might as well give her at least that incentive.

On the other hand, she hadn't expected her stalker, Mr. Hein Masters, would turn out to be her soon-to-be-husband. After she last saw him on that bench outside the library, she was under the impression that he was sent by the Rantzen Family to be her bodyguard; maybe to guard her from paparazzi or possible suitors, or life-threatening accidents like that one in the café. But even so, still it didn't explain what had happened in the supermarket and the library, unless of course, he had some kind of weird mystical powers she didn't know about.

That would be cool actually. It would piece together all her unanswered questions. It would tell her she wasn't going crazy.

And then there was the issue of the betrothal itself. She couldn't wrap her head around it. Her family sure was uncooperative telling her about the real reason except that it was a promise made by her father and a member of the Rantzen Family. It was too sketchy. Too generic of an explanation.

She wanted to know more about it and she aimed to ask him that.

"I want to take this moment to learn more about you," the Master began first, cutting her chances of tossing the trump card.

Solene turned to look at him and lifted a brow.

"Hadh't you already run me in your database? Or at least, I assume you have one. We were basically betrothed when we were kids."

Henri nodded. "Yes, we have, and yes, I did, but I want to know who you truly are directly from your mouth."

'My mouth,' the word lingered in her head. Was the air-conditioner of the plane set to warm because she certainly felt hot now, especially when she saw him move those gray-greens to her lips.

"What do you want to know?" she snapped back, trying her best to ignore his blatant perusal of her.

"Let's have a fast talk to make it fun," Henri suggested.

Solene shrugged her shoulders. "Whatever you say."

"Preferred color?" he started.

Too elementary.

This earned him a glare from her but nevertheless, she replied: "Red, obviously," she pointed to the dark red coat she wore and

the myriad of red shades on her dress just to make her point, "but I'm also attracted to black."

His thoughts lingered on her second choice of color until he reminded himself they were still in a fast talk session.

"Any pets?" he started again.

"Lovebirds and a juvenile Burmese python, but the snake was long gone before my adoptive brother came to our lives three years ago."

His lips curled up, took a gulp on his red wine, and then continued.

"Flowers?"

"Tulips."

His expression immediately hardened. He briefly glared at his assistant head, telepathically chastising him for the wrong intel about the flowers. They had prepared white roses for the wedding just for her, now they needed to change it to tulips. And stat.

Mr. Reynold silently nodded in haste, the color on his face draining even more.

Solene saw this exchange and found it odd. Although the curiosity was killing her, she just mentally noted it for future references.

"Do you smoke?" Henri went on returning to his former easygoing mood.

"Negative. I hate smokers. I hope you're not one."

He scoffed. "I'm certainly not a smoker, so you can't hate me. Anyway, how about food?"

"Pasta and brownie," Solene replied quickly. "And my mother's tuna sandwich."

He nodded in understanding.

"Romantic walk along the shoreline or a fancy dinner in a classy restaurant?" he continued.

"Neither."

He groaned and frowned. "You're making this hard for me, Solene."

"Okay, I prefer long walks on the beach."

Just then, she noticed Mr. Reynold scribbling something on his pocket notebook. It hit her. Was he really writing all of her answers now? She couldn't believe that they actually know little about her even with their so-called database.

"Fruit?" Henri captured her attention once again.

Solene stared at him like that of an applicant in an interview. This was getting ridiculous by the minute.

"Mangoes," she replied anyway.

"What do you think about this arranged marriage?"

That last question definitely caught her off-guard, but it was a welcomed one.

"I think it's absurd," she stated grimly.

"Hmmm, an honest answer," he replied and then drank his wine again.

"What do you think of this arranged marriage?" Solene boomeranged, pulling out her trump card. She of course wanted to know what he thought of their situation. Never mind what he thought of her as a wife, if he saw her pleasing to the eyes, or if he disliked her lack of meekness. She just wanted to know if he too was forced like her. Maybe they could come up with a plan to stop the marriage if that was the case.

"Beneficial," he said.

All her hopes came crashing down with this one unsatisfactory word.

"In what way?" she added, not satisfied with his answer. "Your family is richer than mine times a hundred. What could you possibly get from our marriage?"

"You of course," he replied without reservation and this speared her heart.

She didn't peg him as a romantic person, yet here he was, telling her basically that he wanted her truly as his wife. Or was it just a ruse? A cover up for something more complex? Men like him – they just wouldn't bother with trivial things such as love and genuine marriage.

"Cut to the chase, Henri. I'm not a dumb woman," she sternly looked at him.

The latter released a long exhale. He studied her, really studied her, and a conclusion finally came to mind. "Hmmm, I see you're not briefed enough by your family."

Solene's brows knotted. "What do you mean?"

"Excuse me, Master Henri, we will be landing soon. Seatbelts are advised and the dining wares are to be tucked in as per the captain's instructions," Mr. Reynold interrupted nervously.

Henri glanced at the man and nodded once. "Thank you, Reynold," he said and then turned to Solene, "I see that dinner is deferred for later. You're not famished yet right?"

"No," she replied quickly.

His eyes roamed down the untouched drink and commented, "You haven't touched your tequila though."

With that, Solene took a swig of the liquor, not stopping until the third shot glass was empty. "There," she announced smugly. "Arlene can take it away."

Henri hid a grin in response and signaled the stewardess to clean the table.

The whole time this was done, silence ruled over the cabin. Despite her desire to pick up their conversation and ask him what meant about his words, she decided to reroute her focus onto the night view outside the window. Such conversation could be done at a later date, preferably when the plane has landed.

Henri, on the other hand, kept his gaze on her, delighting himself with how beautiful she looked: her long platinum blonde hair looking like the silver moon, her ethereal eyes of pale blue and violet that matched her hair, her heart-shaped face, her slender neck, her shapely lips...

He only had pictures of her in his office and those were even tucked inside a folder that was placed in the lowest cabinet of his table. The first time he saw her in person was in the library. She was so engrossed with her reading that he didn't want to bother her. He chose instead to distance himself and continue to watch her. It was only then that he decided to show himself when she was about to leave the library.

His thoughts back then was exactly his thoughts now.

'This woman will be the death of me.'

And as a Lord of a clan that hails an army of grim reapers every generation and basically an expert of all things death and dying-related, that was saying something.