



8-I Will Serve The Alpha King Of North.

Carena:

Lady Mary Jane departed with her guards, leaving me behind with a mind in disarray. I felt utterly clueless, as no one had bothered to fill me in. My father had actually stepped out to follow Lady Jane to inquire about the details, while Maanya hadn't uttered a word to me.

"What debt have you guys received?" I couldn't bear it any longer and followed her into the kitchen, where she was stowing away all the food they had prepared to serve the queen mother, who hadn't even bothered to taste a single thing.

The power dynamics within our pack had deteriorated significantly. Imagine being in debt, yet wasting so much money without receiving any appreciation for it.

"Why the sudden return, Carena? Didn't you depart with your family to live a life of luxury with the enemy of our pack?" She tossed the sponge into the sink and turned to face me.

"Sis, I am no longer his mate," I responded, averting my gaze. I couldn't discern what angered my sister and father more: my decision not to punish my step-sibling for my mother's sins or to accept the enemy of our pack as my mate.

"Oh! He rejected you, didn't he?" she placed her hands on her waist, though her smile seemed more bitter than mocking.

"Why?" she inquired, "and where are those scums that clung to you like leeches?"

She was right to ask that question. I felt like I learned a great lesson from this marriage: never leave anything for anyone, because when they leave you, you'll be truly alone.

"They didn't want to come back," I quickly glanced aside and grabbed the food items to place them in the fridge. I couldn't make eye contact with her.

"Why? Why would he keep them and kick you out of the pack?" She moved closer and seized my arm, turning me around to face her.

"He—accepted Tabitha as his new Luna Queen," I mumbled, eliciting a yelp from her.

"What?"

It was not she who exclaimed that word and let out the loudest gasp. My father had overheard me. He strode towards me and seized my arm to drag me out of the kitchen.

"You're not staying here. Not after you betrayed us for those snakes," he hissed, attempting to evict me from the house.

"No! Please, I don't have anywhere to go," I clung to the couch, protesting against leaving. I was still soaking wet and feeling terribly dizzy.

"Father, stop!" Thankfully, my sister intervened, positioning herself between my father and me, freeing my hand.

"She has nowhere to go," my sister placed her hand on my father's chest, and the look of fatherly love I saw in his eyes made me feel insecure. He wouldn't raise his voice at my sister. I guess this is what I get for leaving him and not listening to him.

"Please, Papa!" she pleaded, and my father relented.

"But you don't remember how she sided with those bastard kids of your mother? Her taking their side was like a slap to our faces. Then she left with the man who was our pack's enemy, and now she's back after those snakes devoured her happiness? She's using us like they used her," my father continued, gripping my sister's hand tightly.

"I understand. I'm as upset with her as you are, but kicking her out wouldn't benefit us. Especially now that Lady Jane has requested her service," my sister explained, causing my father to zone out before nodding in agreement.

The tone of their conversation shifted along with their body language. My father took a deep breath before walking away from my sister and added, "Then you better fill her in on what the whole chaos was about. If she wants to earn our

forgiveness, she needs to find a purpose for her existence."

It wasn't easy for me to watch my father not even look directly at me. I had deeply upset him, to the point that the only reason he was allowing me to stay here was out of debt.

He finished speaking and then walked away with his hands clasped behind his back.

"Go back to your room and get cleaned up. Your belongings haven't been relocated," my sister addressed me, turning her back to me.

"All these years?" I asked in a broken voice.

"Huh! We're not like you, Carena. We never moved on. Father and I suffered alone all these years; our lives stopped after that," I heard a little snuffle from her but couldn't bring myself to face her.

"I'll change first and then find you to talk about what Lady Jane said," I murmured, and she only nodded without even turning around to face me.

I walked upstairs to the second floor where my bedroom used to be. The house really hadn't changed, but one could tell nobody had visited the second floor as both bedrooms had locks on them.

"Here's the key!" Before I could even complain about the locked door, my sister came after me and handed me the key. Second floor had two bedrooms facing each other and

then a big hallway that led to the balcony with a great view of the alpha king's mansion ahead.

"Thank you—" my words never even reached her ears because she had already sped downstairs. Being in my bedroom was really hard for me. It brought back all the memories of my life before acceptance. We were never rich, but at least we had a better life until my mother decided to run away with some rogue.

She returned after a few years with twin toddlers and a little girl.

"Ah!" a sigh escaped my lips when I opened the closet and found my clothes gathering dust. Tears streamed down my face because so much had happened, and somehow, I had become the main reason for everyone's pain.

My father was more hurt that I didn't agree with his method of punishment than at my mother's betrayal or her demise. 1

I quickly changed into a pair of blue baggy jeans and a gray sweater before stepping out of the bathroom to find my sister leaving a tray of food for me on the bed.

"Maanya," I called for her, and she slowed down near the door.

"What was the whole purpose of Lady Jane's arrival here? What did she mean by service, and what debt was she talking about?" I asked, wondering what I was expected to do. My father didn't even ask me if I was willing to provide

any services before he made the decision that it's the only reason he's letting me stay here.

"A few years ago, we took on heavy debt for some emergency purposes," I heard her gulp, but then she turned around to face me. "I had some illness and needed an operation. Father borrowed money from them, and they asked us to pay them back after a year. However, we couldn't save anything because I'm still on heavy medications and have to undergo surgeries every few months. Instead of saving to clear the debt, it's like we keep getting more money, and now—we're going to be kicked out," her lips were quivering, and her hands were being rubbed together.

I badly wanted to ask her more about her illness, but she seemed so uncomfortable.

"So, are you better now?" I inquired, and she sniffled, wiping her cheeks.

"If I was, wouldn't she have hired me for the service? I feel like we wasted so much money only to get kicked out and then not have access to medicine and surgeries to heal entirely," she was smiling, but tears were running down her cheeks.

"Maanya! Why didn't you ever call me? I would have managed to help you," I reached her, but as soon as I held her hand, she pulled away from me.

“You chose others over us. I had promised myself that I would rather die than beg you for that enemy’s money. The one who is our pack’s enemy is our enemy,” she swallowed with difficulty while raising her chin determinedly.

“So what services was Lady Jane talking about?”

I watched her rub her face in her hands before answering me, “she wants someone capable of taking care of the alpha king Sawyer Wolf.”

I frowned, wondering why it was such a big deal.

“The alpha king is 26, why does he need a babysitter?” I asked in confusion. I remember the alpha king was young when he was in the process of crowning, but I had left around that time.

“Would you help us out or not?” she dropped her hands down and faced me.

“Is it just that? Taking care of him?” I questioned.

“Full time,” she added.

After taking a deep breath and thinking it over, I came to the realization that in order to achieve their forgiveness, I needed to help them with the debt. They were already suffering, and I didn’t want to become a burden on them.

“I will do it,”

I watched her face form a little smile before she forced it

away.

“Very well then, I will tell father to let Lady Jane know you will be coming tomorrow to sign the agreement papers,” she rushed out quickly, as if she couldn't wait to go tell dad that I had agreed to help them.

As she left, I couldn't help but feel a bit odd that Lady Jane was willing to forgive such a large debt for a service that a regular omega maid is not paid much for.

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