

## Northwest 17

### Chapter 17

On the road of the dense forest, Lil hid with Cesar as they watched a group of soldiers flocking to the other side. Relieved to see the troops go, Lil rubbed her forehead against Cesar's chest. She flinched her shoulders when she felt unexpected pain.

Liloa, are you hurt?

Liloa.

His hand, which had been covering the back of her head, carefully swept her hair out of her forehead.

Your forehead is swollen. Now that I look closer, it looks bruised. Does it hurt a lot? How did this happen? Is it because of him?

Lil grabbed his collar.

That pervert, he was expecting me.

Expecting you? What?

Yes. I ran into him on our first day in Amiaeng. I let him tag along with me because I thought he could give some helpful information. Later, when it turned out that he was in the Navy, I became suspicious. I was him again. That time, I somehow got the information I needed, but when I noticed that he was hiding something, it disturbed me. He was not some ordinary guy and his eye patch turned out to be fake. I don't understand. Why was he waiting for me?

He was waiting for you?

Yes

What else did he say?

Well

Lil shrugged as she remembered the terrible scene. She wondered if she should tell Cesar that he tried to violate her but opted not to. Cesar will return to kill the guy if she tells him. They're on the run now, and isn't that man from the navy? It will only cause a bigger problem if we kill a soldier from the empire.

He said that he and I need to talk. He asked me who I really was.

He did question her about her purpose, so she wasn't completely lying. Lil remembered the guy's strange demeanour. She still resents him, but he didn't rush in as soon as he saw her, making her wonder if the reason why he was waiting for her was really just to talk. However, it was a very untrustworthy hypothesis. She recalled that repulsive sensation. For no apparent reason, she rubbed her ear against Cesar's shoulders.

I told you it could be dangerous.

Uhh yeah. I was afraid we would all be captured. He caught me when I tried to run away. His strength was no laughing matter. I couldn't do anything, ah, come to think of it

Remembering something, Lil looked up at Cesar. His dark red eyes were already on her.

Do you know anyone with that level of skill and is around your age? That perv, he must be from Lebrun. Earlier, that aggressive stabbing was a technique taught by the academy

Liloa. You're bleeding.

What?

Cesar tapped near his own brow. Lil attempted to imitate Cesar as if he were a mirror but was stopped by his hand.

Dont touch it.

Ha! I knew it since I was thrown against the desk!

Cesar's eyes sharpened.

Thrown against the desk?

Lil took a deep breath and recalled what had happened and how she had sustained her injury. She doesn't want to think about it. Lil rolled her eyes and hesitantly added.

Ah So, I was running away

But Cesar wasn't convinced.

Liloa. Because I thought the study was quite noisy, I kept a close eye on what was going on downstairs. When I heard your scream, I immediately ran there. If the noise I heard was when you banged your head in the middle of the fight

His gaze remained unchanged. Lil swallowed her saliva and looked into his eyes.

Then It's my fault.

I shouldn't have left you alone.

Lil blinked, suddenly embarrassed by her own lie.

It's not your fault. It was my fault Can you just stay here? I'm not in pain anymore, but it can be dangerous to go back.

Cesar nodded gently.

Okay.

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Cesar looked down at Lil, who was fast asleep. The rough-wrapped bandages were cascading down over her pitch-black hair. Usually, she doesn't toss and turn so much in her sleep, but her hair on the pillow is especially unkempt today.

Cesar smiled softly and stroked her skin which was faintly touched by moonlight. After caressing her cheeks and earlobes, he traced her neckline and shoulder. It was a path he knew so well and remembered so vividly. Her beauty never changes, so Cesar felt the same way every time he was swept away and amazed by her. Even in such a simple outfit, he felt the same way as he did the first time he met her.

*It was the same on the day we first met.*

Cesar kissed her moonlit forehead.

After putting on his coat, he quietly opened the door. The rest of the crew had celebrated the successful raid on the counts mansion. The drinking, which lasted until late, was truly a sight to behold.

Cesar frowned.

He told them to return to their cabins when they were finished, but the setting was like that of a slaughterhouse. Cesar walked down the stairs, checking for any signs of sobriety. However, after a few steps, he realised it was pointless. Even when he stepped on their hands and feet while they were lying face down, the crew didnt respond. Cesar made his way to the door and exited the building.

Even the night air in the South wasnt cold. The sea breeze gently slapped his face. When Cesar briefly looked up at the sky, the moon told him the time.

He began to walk slowly.

As he moved forward, his thoughts became more and more intense. Thinking about the admiral he encountered a few hours ago.

*The two of them metHe accompanied Lil for a while. After that, he waited for her at the Counts house?*

Cesar took a turn and walked into an alley. It was a waste of time to inquire whether it was a coincidence or not. A coincidence was not even an option. His first guess would be correct. The admiral wasnt an honourable man who cared about pirates. So, what motivated him to pursue Lil? Within a second, a name came to mind. He clenched his teeth.

*Duke Mireille. But why now*

Cesar pushed the wooden door that appeared in front of him. It was the neighbourhoods largest inn. Looking around the hall through the thick smoke, he noticed a man waving his hand frantically. Another wave of rage erupted. Cesar closed the distance between him and the man.

Seeing Cesar, the man smiled and spread his arms out in delight.

Hey, I didnt expect to see you so soon

In a split second, Cesar punched Ed.

The broad smile on Eds face faded away. His body staggered as the chair he was sitting on made a loud noise as it collided with the distant wall. The sound was so loud that everyone inside the inn focused on the man sprawled out like a corpse.

Ugh

Hes still alive

How boring

There were some voices heard left and right before the surroundings became noisy again.

Not only did you try to harass her, but you also caused her to bleed. Youve gone completely mad.

Mad, you say? I get that a lot.

Want to get hit again?

Ed spat out blood.

Ugh You really hit me hard. Wow.

Ed looked leisurely around with a finger in his mouth, checking his teeth. He then wiped his bloodied hand on his shirt, pretending to be surprised.

It hurts

In one swift motion, he threw a punch at Cesar.

I havent forgotten your tricks.

Ed lowered his fist which was caught in Cesars palm. He had swung it short, thinking it was going to make it, but it was blocked instead.

Damn itI see youre still as sharp as ever.

Ed immediately gave up and dragged his chair over to sit down.

I guess she did hit her head pretty hard. It was an accident, I didnt purposely use too much force

Ed cleared his throat as he gazed into the other persons cold eyes.

OK, fine. I should have treated her as a lady, not as a soldier from the Empire. You must be upset that the woman, who was merely a visitor of the Count, was treated so harshly. I concede.

Ed nodded alone, but soon changed his gentle expression and slammed his fist down on the table.

But what are you talking about? Violate? Huh! When did I do that?

Dont act as if you dont know.

No, no, no! Im sure I didnt do anything like that. And why are you suddenly speaking so formally?

Are you not an Admiral?

Ha, cant remember the last time I was this happy about my promotion. Anyway, did she say that? I might be a bit of a rebel, but Im not the type to mistreat a lady.

Ed snorted, indicating that he didnt want to reflect at all. In this heated debate, he was accused, but he swore to be innocent from start to finish.

*I never removed any layer of clothing, so this accusation is ungrounded. Even if it wouldnt be a shame if she had taken off some, no*

Who the hell do you think I am? You and Liloa keep treating me like trash.

Ed smirked as he looked at Cesars stiff expression. He always thought Cesar had a unique face, but seeing it now being the same as ever made Ed happy.

Cesar had sun-brightened blonde hair and deep red eyes An ice-cold man with a beautiful exterior.

The man in front of him now is no different from the man in his memories.

*Or was he more stoic at the time?*

Ed cocked his brow.

*When he returns, the Sesbron women wont be able to stop talking about him once again, it will be a hilarious sight to see. But will he ever return?*

Staying silent?

*So why is he in Amiaeng?*