

Chapter 376 A Letter From The Vampire King

Anthony's POV:

The situation was critical. I immediately ordered my men to gather all the elders to the meeting hall as soon as possible. In less than half an hour, all the elders who had received the noticed rushed to the meeting room, one after another.

When everyone was present, I looked around the meeting room and said loudly, "I believe everyone knows the purpose of this meeting, so I'll go straight to the point."

As I spoke, I pointed to Jennifer, Caroline, and my mother, who were sitting beside me, and added, "My mother, Austin's wife and Jennifer are also present. They are witnesses of Austin's expedition, so I asked them to attend this meeting. Does anyone object?"

"No, Mr. Jones." All the elders shook their heads in unison.

"Good. Then, I hereby declare that this meeting has begun," I said firmly.

"Mr. Jones, what're your thoughts on Austin being captured?" Eric asked bluntly, looking straight at me.

I returned his gaze calmly and said, "We must get Austin back."

I paused and looked at everyone in the room carefully. "Austin was caught by the vampires only because he was trying to protect the soldiers of the Osman Kingdom. No matter how serious his past mistakes were, he is still our soldier. Our country can't let our soldiers die for nothing, or else our people will think that we view them as disposable pawns."

After I finished my statement, all the elders in the meeting room exchanged wary glances and didn't dare to speak.

"Mr. Jones, may I ask if you know the real reason why Austin was captured?" Atwood, a new elder, raised his hand and asked furtively.

"Yeah, Mr. Jones, do you have any intel?" The other elders echoed his sentiment.

"With all due respect, Mr. Jones, it's not that I don't trust Austin. But he does have a criminal record. How can we be sure that he didn't just surrender to the enemy willingly? I suspect he let the vampires catch him deliberately," Primo said in a loud voice.

I had already expected that someone would question Austin's intentions, so I wasn't surprised to hear this. Caroline, on the other hand, couldn't accept what Primo just said and turned pale from either fear or anger.

"Elder Primo, I understand where you're coming from, but you have to be able to provide evidence whenever you claim something." I raised my voice and looked at the elder seriously. "I don't think Austin would do that. When he went to the front line to fight, he put his family's life on the line as a guarantor. It's extremely clear that he's loyal to his country."

"Mr. Jones is right. Quit talking nonsense!" Eric glared at Primo unhappily. "After all, Austin was once the king of this country. Although he made some mistakes in the past, his loyalty to the Osman Kingdom is irrefutable. We must save Austin!"

For once, I agreed with Eric. "Yes, I not only plan to save Austin, but will also reward him. After all, he has won more than one battle against the vampires, and he has made a great contribution to our kingdom."

"I beg to differ!" Primo refuted with a snort. "Mr. Jones, Austin went to atone for his crimes this time. It's his duty to fight and win all his battles. He can only make amends for his mistakes at the most. Why should he be rewarded?"

"Exactly! Austin killed his own father!" Atwood echoed, pounding his fist on the table. "What if he really has surrendered to the enemy? We only know that he's been captured and we don't know any details about it."

"Nonsense!" Eric stood up from his chair and pointed at Primo. "Why don't you go to the front line yourself? You don't do anything but stir up trouble here!"

"Why, you—!" Primo was so angry that his wrinkled face turned red. "Who are you to talk to me like that? You didn't go to the front line either, did you?"

Before the quarrel could intensify, I quickly stepped forward to mediate.

"It's no use arguing. I have my reasons. Please calm down and I will explain them to you." Sure enough, the elders fell silent and turned to me expectantly. I continued, "Stop doubting Austin. He wouldn't risk his wife's and child's lives. Also, the soldiers who went out with Austin can prove that Austin was captured when he tried to protect them. He didn't surrender himself on purpose. Now, our top priority is to save Austin."

Caroline's POV:

I looked at Anthony with awe and respect. I didn't think he would defend Austin like this. Hearing him speak on behalf of my husband, I felt warm in my heart. The embarrassment I felt earlier when the elders questioned Austin's intentions dissipated instantly.

I sighed emotionally. Anthony was really an open-minded man. Austin had committed unforgivable crimes in the past, yet Anthony was willing to forgive him and even reward him. I couldn't help but have newfound respect for him.

But seeing the elders arguing over Austin's fate, I couldn't rest easy just yet.

What if the elders didn't agree to have Austin rescued? Alice didn't have the chance to call Austin her daddy yet. When this thought crossed my mind, my heart sank to my stomach.

"Don't worry, Caroline." As though she could read my thoughts, Jennifer took my hand and comforted me. "Anthony would never abandon Austin. They're brothers after all."

"Yes, don't worry, Caroline. Anthony is the king. He'll save Austin," Elizabeth echoed. "The elders who oppose saving Austin don't mean to offend you. It's just, Austin has sinned against us in the past. It's only natural that they question him."

I nodded vigorously. "You're right. Thanks for trying to comfort me."

Yes, I needed to put my trust in Anthony. He would never leave Austin alone. Thinking of this, I firmly clenched my fists and proceeded to listen carefully to the meeting.

Just as Anthony was reassuring the elders, an attendant suddenly rushed into the meeting room.

"Mr. Jones, the vampire king has sent a secret letter specifically for you." The attendant anxiously made his announcement and handed an envelope to Anthony respectfully.

"What?! A secret letter? Damn it! He must be declaring war on us!"

"So what? He's no match for us werewolves!"

"Don't be so complacent. Austin was captured, remember? They're still a force to be reckoned with."

The elders broke into chaotic discussion.

I was also stunned. I stared at the letter in Anthony's hand and clenched the hem of my clothes tightly. No, no! Please don't let it be about Austin!

"Everyone, be quiet!" Anthony stood up and barked just as my heart leapt to my throat.

"Mr. Jones, can you read the letter aloud in front of everyone?" Eric suggested.

Anthony nodded silently. Then, he proceeded to open the envelope in front of everyone carefully. However, he did not read the letter aloud immediately. Instead, he read it in silence and his expression darkened.

His reaction made me nervous. I couldn't sit still any longer. I blurted, "Anthony, what does it say? Is... Is Austin okay?"

Anthony looked at me and said slowly, "If we want Austin to live, we have to hand over the vampire king's daughter in exchange. That's all it says."

Huh? The daughter of the vampire king? Hearing this, I was stunned speechless.

