

Chapter 526 Carl's Last Words

Jennifer's POV:

"Don't die, Carl!" I screamed as my tears dripped onto Carl's pale face. He closed his eyes and never opened them again.

"Jennifer... Can you...pretend to love me before I die?" Carl's voice was very soft, like a gust of wind that could disperse at any time.

I took a deep breath and wiped my tears with the back of my hand.

I still couldn't believe what was happening. Biting my lower lip, I gently touched Carl's cheek.

His face looked somewhat similar to that of the thin boy in my memories, but it also felt so different. In the past, Carl was a weak little boy. But he had grown into a strong Alpha. He claimed to love me, but he had deceived me. And in deceiving me, he had deprived me of a lot of things. I should've hated him. But watching his life slip away, I couldn't bring myself to hate him.

"Carl..." I called his name softly. All of a sudden, I felt that the memories I had lost were trying to knock on the door of my heart. I bent over and stared at his pale, bloodless face. Tears gradually blurred my sight.

I couldn't remember. Carl said that I was the queen, but I had no memory of this. Who knew what else I had forgotten?

Covering Carl's eyes, I gave him a gentle kiss on the forehead.

I didn't know if he could feel it, but I couldn't dissuade myself from doing so. Although I didn't like him and even hated what he had done to me, I felt guilty. He died protecting me. His love was too heavy a burden for me to bear.

But did Carl really love me? Or the past me?

Emma's POV:

I felt like I was going insane.

I didn't know why, but I always seemed hear a strange voice recently.

The voice was so strange that I couldn't tell whether it was male or female. I just heard it from time to time. At first, I thought that I was just imagining things, or that it was just a maid or attendant speaking, but every time I asked them to repeat themselves, they said that no one had spoken.

After breakfast, I took a warm towel from a maid to wipe my mouth.

"Emma, eat some more."

My body stiffened and the hairs on the back of my neck stood on end.

The voice spoke again, and this time, it even addressed me by my real name. Impossible! How could it know my real name?

I was so scared that I didn't dare to move. After a while, I looked around and found that the maids and attendants were acting normally. Only then did I feel relieved. It seemed that only I could hear that mysterious voice.

"Who the hell are you?" I asked in a barely audible whisper, trembling all over. "Quit playing tricks on me and come out!"

How did the voice know that I was Emma? And why couldn't anyone else hear it?

Was I really going crazy? Had I begun to hallucinate voices because I couldn't stand the pressure of lying to everyone? I feared I wouldn't be able to last much longer if things went on like this.

But whenever I tried speaking to the voice, it would ignore me, as though it was simply toying with my mind.

There was nothing I could do but suppress my fear and act as normal as possible.

"What's the matter, honey?" Anthony, who was sitting across the table from me, looked at me with a smile. "Don't you like the food?"

I shook my head immediately and came up with an excuse. "Oh, no, I was just lost in my own thoughts. I don't know what to do today..."

I tried to hide my uneasiness and lowered my head, but I wasn't lying. Ever since I came to the royal palace as Jennifer, I had become increasingly bored as the days passed. The queen didn't need to deal with government affairs like Anthony did. These days, there was nothing to do other than share meals with Anthony and Elizabeth.

"Then let's go meet the elders who're visiting the royal palace. I'm holding a meeting today." Anthony smiled. "Tony will be there. You haven't seen him for a long time, so I bet you're dying to ask him about the Rainbow Pack."

I was stunned, but I tried to look calm. "What? Okay."

I completely forgot that Jennifer was also the Alpha of Rainbow Pack!

My nerves were starting to get the better of me. Oh, my God! How were Alphas supposed to act? What if I made a mistake and my secret was exposed? It was said that a meeting with the elders was a very serious occasion, and even the queen usually was not allowed to attend. But Anthony casually suggested taking me there. Obviously, it wasn't the first time that Jennifer had attended a meeting like this.

Oh, my God! Anthony must've really respected Jennifer. Even though I had known this for a long time, I still found myself surprised from time to time.

I swallowed anxiously. I didn't have the talent of an Alpha nor Jennifer's wit. If Anthony took me to the meeting, what if I made a fool of myself?

But despite my nerves, the meeting was still pushing through.

I changed into more professional attire and followed Anthony to the meeting room. It was the first time I had been to such a formal occasion. Looking at the wide round table, I felt my heart race.

"Come and sit next to me, Jennifer." Anthony led me to the seat opposite the door.

"Oh, okay." I sat on Anthony's right.

Just as we sat down, many elders filed into the meeting room one by one. Each of them bowed to Anthony solemnly.

I looked around and broke into a cold sweat.

Damn it! I didn't even know which elder was Tony! Jennifer knew Tony, but I didn't!

"Now that everyone is here, let's start the meeting." Anthony stood up and he surveyed the room full of elders. His voice carried the unique majesty of a king.

"Yes, Mr. Jones." All the elders stood up and bowed to Anthony respectfully.

"Well, who will speak first?" Anthony asked. "I want to know the living conditions of all the packs as of late."

An elder with fiery red hair stood up and raised his hand. "Let me report first, Mr. Jones. Recently, most of the packs have been very stable. Ever since the peace agreement came into effect, no vampire has ever invaded our territory. The GDP of many packs has risen steadily in the last quarter. I believe that we will be more prosperous in the near future."

Then, another elder stood up and said, "Mr. Jones, also the population of all the packs has been growing steadily. Many packs are facing a tide of newborn babies. According to the last census, three million and seven hundred thousand babies were born in a hundred and seven packs—a new record!"

"Very good. It means that the peace agreement is working and everyone feels safe enough to bear children." Anthony broke into a genuine smile. "Thank you for your reports. You may now be seated."

"Yes, Mr. Jones," the two elders answered in unison and sat down simultaneously.

I cast a sidelong glance at Anthony and sighed internally. So this was the daily life of our king. He was always thinking about his people. Anthony was such a kind and wise king.

"Does saying a few colorful words make him a wise king?" I suddenly heard someone sneer at me.

Stunned, I looked around in a hurry, only to find that no one was talking to me.

Again? It happened again!

That strange voice was taunting me again. And now, it talked to me at such a critical moment. I hoped it would stop torturing me.

I tried to calm myself down, but I felt panic welling inside my heart. Subconsciously, I stretched out my hands and clutched the hem of my skirt tightly.

"Jennifer?" Anthony suddenly looked at me with concern. "Are you feeling uncomfortable?"

I looked up blankly. Only then did I notice that everyone was staring at me. The eyes of the elders were full of disdain; no one looked at me with kindness and understanding.

What the hell was going on? I didn't do anything wrong. Why were they looking at me like this?

"Mrs. Jones, if you feel uncomfortable, there's no need for you to be here. This isn't an occasion for women after all," one of the elders elder said flatly.

"Exactly. You don't say anything useful during these meetings anyway," another elder echoed.

What the hell? Were they talking against me? My cheeks were aflame from embarrassment. Their words humiliated me, but I didn't know how to refute them.

"Be quiet." Anthony turned to look at them coldly. "I promised the queen I would bring her here. If you had any objections, why didn't you bring it up with me?"

Anthony's words silenced them.

"They look down on you. If the real queen was here, she would have stood up for herself and refuted them. But you're unable to speak a word." The strange voice echoed in my ears mockingly. "You're nothing like the real queen. Anthony will realize it sooner or later."

Enough! I gritted my teeth, unable to bear the humiliation any longer. I was really fed up with the strange voice. And I was really fed up with my life as a substitute.

"Shut up!" I suddenly stood up and shouted at the top of my lungs.

