

Chapter 48

Atlas POV (Five years earlier continued)

As I approached, the big room went silent after everyone stood up from their chairs, as is custom for the King and Queen before dinner, and waited until I sat down at the head of the table before taking their seats. I always thought the custom was ridiculous but none of them wanted to change it, so now I just overlook it. The huge table had already been set with cutlery and a wide spread of food, as dragons consumed large amounts of energy and we were always hungry. I have been having dinner in my own room lately. I took note of everyone here.

My uncle Ellis sat at the other end of the long table, since other than myself and my brother, he was the most respected. Not only that, he is my most trusted advisor and second in command of my army. Almost like a second father. None of us knew how old he was, like my dad. Only his black hair and green eyes told his age, as they seemed to always look tired.

Beside him on the right sat his wife, Katrina, who was almost like a second mother to me, and his two daughters, Destiny and Kimmy, who were almost reaching their 14th birthday soon. Kimmy looked exactly like her mother, with her blonde hair and brown eyes. Destiny was the only one out of them who had black hair, but her eyes were the same shade of brown.

On the right side, next to me, sat Adam, whose looks he retained from our father, with his black hair and hazel eyes, followed by Sorena, who has black hair and purple

eyes that always seemed to seep into your soul and sometimes not in a good way. Next to Sorena were my other cousins, who were also twins named Parrish and Paris, who would be turning 18 in a few months, the same as I currently am. It's tradition that on the day of their day, dragons are to bathe in the lake of Azula to unlock the dragon spirit that lived inside of us, and we would be able to transform. If our God deemed it fit, he would bless us with extra powers.

The room was loud as Parrish, Paris, Destiny, Kimmy and Adam engaged in a heated discussion over their favorite show. I remember in my early years, when this table would be filled with numerous people, but ever since the disappearance of mom, things changed, and I was left to pick up the pieces. I turned them out and started eating, but I was feeling funny. Someone was watching me. I knew who it was though. She was the reason I tried avoiding dinner again.

"Now why do I feel like you're avoiding me," Sorena says, with her voice in my head as clear as day. Adam was busy in his argument; he hadn't even been paying her any attention.

"I've just wanted to be to myself is all." I told her, knowing that was a half-truth. The full truth is, I didn't understand why one look in her bright purple eyes made me feel like there was a hole inside of me that had been longing for someone like her, and she was my brother's mate. Those same eyes attempted to burn through my silver ones, but I held her gaze until she turned away.

"If you say so, Atlas," she replied, and turned back to the conversation they were having. I looked up and caught the eye of Uncle Ellis, who had just been studying me. He knew my feelings about Sorena, as nothing was hidden from him, and cautioned me away from her. I suppose he is the reason no one has been bothering me in the last few days about dinner.

Around two in the morning, I was in my room going over reports of a few witches caught near the barrier and banished back to their lands when a knock was heard at the door. I knew I hadn't requested anyone tonight. As I approached the door, I

smelled her. Why is it late here? I opened the door only to see Sorena in a black lacy nightgown with her hair trailing over her narrow shoulders.

"What are you doing here, Sorena?" I asked her, wondering if my hotheaded brother had done something.

"Can I come in?" she asked, and I hesitated. It would be assumed something happened and reported back to Adam if someone saw her at my door. He would think something was up.

"Come in," I told her, after looking around, making sure no one was here. Knowing Adam, as a deep sleeper, he was dead to the world at the moment and probably hadn't noticed she left. I closed the door and turned to her with my arms folded but my mouth almost dropped as I saw her on my bed with her gown off, and an all-black night set on. She was a sight for sore eyes, but I wasn't a weak enough king that I would bed my brother's mate.

"Get out Sorena", I told her annoyingly, as the realization of the situation started to dawn on me. Those purple eyes looked hurt.

"But I thought...?" She started and I knew where she was going. Lately, we had been exchanging glances and brushing against each other playfully, but it was harmless flirting. It always felt wrong to me after I had done it, until it got to the point where I stopped completely, which is why I always kept myself busy. To ignore her.

"You aren't thinking" I told her, which resulted in her face turning angry." Go back to your room, and do not come back to mine ever again, unless it is something of great importance", I told her, opening my door. She raised her hand and I recognized what she was trying to do easily, and I was pissed. So was Kai. At once, I was in front of her slamming her to the nearest wall and a loud thud was heard, as I held her up against the wall by her neck.

"My room is witch proof, Witch. Your powers won't work here", I spat at her. " Don't ever attempt that shit again. I won't spare you a second time", I told her, watching her eyes water, and I dropped her to the ground.

"Now get the fuck out of my room," I told her, and I watched her scurry away without another word. Even though I had been feeling a connection to her, I'd never betray my brother by fucking her, and the fact that she even thought I would ate at me in negative ways. She is lucky she is only useful to keep my brother's dragon contained, or Kai and I would have burned her on the spot.

I am to blame halfway though, for encouraging her flirting, even though I thought it was harmless, or her way of teasing and being playful. Had I been paying closer attention, I would have realized the smell of someone outside my door, watching Sorena running away from my room. Had I been paying even more attention, I would have realized all those fears I had about losing my throne were close to coming true. If only I had been paying more attention. If only.

Adam Pov

I woke up in the middle of the night to an empty bed. My mate was gone. I tried feeling her energy around the castle and used my powers of teleportation to send me to where she was. Imagine my surprise when I ended up in my brother's hall, close to his door. There was no way. Was it? Atlas and Sorena? A betrayal from my own brother and my mate? No, there was no way. I mean, yea, I had noticed them nudging each other playfully sometimes, and I never let it bother me because I knew he would never try to get with Sorena. As a king, he was entitled to anyone he wanted. Plus, there was a level of trust we had in each other. There was no way he would do something like this, I told myself and my dragon Smoke growled in annoyance. He told me he always felt like Sorena was in love with Atlas, but I wouldn't believe him.

As I prepared to give Atlas the benefit of the doubt, the door opened, and Sorena rushed my way as the door closed behind her. She had tears streaming down her face.

She looked my way and ran into my arms, and I transported us back to our room. "What happened?" I asked, trying my best to keep my temper under control, but there were many scenarios playing in my head, and none of them were good. She sniffled a little but, wiping her face before looking into my eyes.

"You're going to hate me if I tell you," she said, and those scenarios looked even more true. I smashed the wall with my fist before I said anything else. My body was heated. I looked back at her as she sat on the bed with her knees to her chest.

"Did you fuck him?" I demanded to know. I'd never admit it, but my ego would be hurt in numerous ways if I found out I lost my own mate to my brother. More tears welled up in her eyes as she yelled.

"What kind of person do you think I am? You think I wanted this to happen" she said, half choking through tears, and the realization of what she said dawned on me. I walked and sat beside her, and she flinched a little. I still put her hand in mine as I asked her the question that, if answered right, would forever change my life. "Did he rape you," I asked her, and she poured her tears out onto her knees. I had heard rumors around the castle from a few females about Atlas's roughness with women, so I could only imagine what he did to my poor mate, and his room is witch proof, so she wouldn't have been able to defend herself.

"Yes, she said, and with that, Flame and I let out the most monstrous growl we could. I stood up to transport to his room and kill him. All rationality was lost as Flame's thoughts took over my thoughts.

"He rapes our mate. We kill him. We kill him!" Flame's thoughts echoed into my mind, and at once I agreed, but before I could transport, Sorena was in front of me, hugging me.

"Please, don't leave me." She begged, and I stood stuck between comforting my mate and killing my own brother. I chose my mate. My brother's death would be next. After a few hours of holding Sorena, I hadn't even noticed I had fallen asleep. I had a dream where I was king, and a beautifully pregnant Sorena sat at my side, but then

Atlas was behind her all of a sudden, and stabbed the knife into her heart before disappearing, causing me to yell in pain from losing my bond with her before I woke up. This was not the first time I had had this dream. In fact, I had been having this very same dream for months now, but the idea of being king didn't appeal to me. It never did, but it was like something wanted me on the throne and Atlas off it. The more I had this dream, the more I was convinced that the throne was my rightful place, although Atlas was the first born.

I thought back to the last conversation I had with Atlas. I decided then that I wouldn't kill him. Instead, I would take away what he valued most. I would take away the throne from him, but how? I looked at my sleeping beautiful mate, and it was like everything just came to me. I knew what I would do, but I would need help. Who knows, this might benefit us all in more ways than one.