Chapter 12

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Here's a double whammy for all you guys! Thanks for the amazing
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A/N

Enjoy! Serena Basco

comments and votes. I just couldn't resist adding two chapters today!

I had many scenarios built up in my head on how this day was

supposed to go. Using some of the money we'd have won from our bet, the girls and I were going to treat ourselves to some pancakes. There was this

bakery in the city that was featured in some Food Network show and

Melanie's car and have a road trip while the boys cleaned up our rooms or something. Then we were going to watch one of those 4DX movies where the chairs moved and rain dropped from the ceiling or something like

they made excellent blueberry pancakes. We planned on taking

that. Then, of course, we'd shop our hearts out in the city while pop songs played in the background like those shopping montages in movies. Brunch with the royal family? So not part of the plan. The brunch was in some patio walled with glass windows. Ceiling

fans blew so ly from above—I didn't notice how much warmer it was in Lightwing than in Eastern Claw until now. There was a white rectangular table filled with food and drinks, and I resisted the urge to lick my lips in hunger.

Thank Goddess.

immediately blushed and looked down. From the corner of my eye, I saw Jon glare at them and they immediately went back to their own business. "Have a seat, you two." Queen Robin said, motioning to the two empty seats across her and Patrick. Jon pulled a chair out for me and

I silently sat down.

motioning for a maid to come close. I looked up at her and blushed. "Oh, some apple juice please?" I asked, still uncertain about this whole situation. The maid nodded and a few moments later, I had a cold glass of apple juice in front of me. "Jon, aren't you going to o er your mate something to eat?" Queen

"Would you like something to drink?" Queen Robin gently asked me,

Robin gently asked, giving Jon a pointed look. Patrick coughed, and masked it o as a choke. Jon blinked and cleared his throat. What?

blushed to my roots and I could see that some color had flooded Jon's cheeks as well. He clenched his fork and looked at his brother murderously.

"Patrick!" The King admonished. Patrick looked down ruefully.

get to know my new sister." Patrick said, winking at me. I giggled

"How else are we gonna get them to start talking? Besides, I'd like to

"Why didn't you fight Jon?" Patrick chortled. I coughed, putting down

"Patrick!" Now it was The Queen's turn. Jon awkwardly reached over

so ly at his antics. Jon growled under his breath. "What...what would you like to know?" I asked, trying to loosen up. I gulped and sat straighter. I was in the presence of the royals now.

the apple juice.

to stroke my back, helping me recover from my coughing fit. "Fine, fine. I'll ask another question. How do you feel about my brother going to war?" Patrick asked as he chewed on a pancake. I looked at him curiously.

"My brother usually sits in...he's the future alpha. I honestly don't know a lot about the terrain...or the war..." I said. This seemed to satisfy the King, but not Patrick.

"What do you think of that whole deal?"

reaching for some jam.

meaning every word.

violence, I'd prefer that."

"Oh come on, mom. The war hasn't even started so it doesn't count." Patrick stubbornly said. "What do you think, sis? Are we all going to war soon?" Patrick asked, wagging his eyebrows playfully. "Oh, I hope not." I murmured. The whole table fell silent and I

"But you're The Alpha's daughter, and a Gold Ranked female. Shouldn't you, like, know everything?" Patrick asked. I took a deep breath and turned to Jon, who continued to eat. Gee, thanks for the support buddy.

"I wasn't much for pack life." I murmured. "But I do hope war doesn't

"That's a very unique way of looking at things, dear." Queen Robin

said, smiling at me. I breathed a sigh of relief. I hope that was the end

come. If we can solve our problems diplomatically...with non

of that conversation. "What do you think, bro? I think we got ourselves a peace envoy. Ready to go across the border, Serena?" Patrick joked. Jon looked up and slammed his cutlery on the table. He growled at Patrick. "Stop talking, Patrick." Jon said in a menacingly calm voice. I gulped.

You could cut the tension in the room with a knife.

King growled at him. I recoiled, looking down. Just another day at Lightwing. "Yield, son. I am still your King." The King growled, his voice making everyone shiver. I gulped and placed my hand on Jon's arm as if to comfort him. He tensed at my touch, but relented and sat back down.

"You will show restraint, son. I still have not forgiven the both of you

"Punish me if you must, father. But leave Serena out of this." Jon said.

"The Tribunal will certainly not. I've gotten calls all morning. Our

for the trouble you've caused at The Claiming ceremony." King

Me? Excuse me, King Armand, what the hell did Ido?

Armand said.

The King snorted.

glanced at him.

sco ed.

him curiously.

to look me in the eyes.

time, Patrick." Jon hissed.

Oh, so he speaks.

"A lot." He said.

How articulate.

menacingly at him.

What?

said.

room."

helplessness.

bracelet.

"Workload?" I asked. Patrick nodded.

I did not know that.

Jon was fuming. "Armand, I'm sure the tribunal will understand. Besides, what did they expect? There was a Gold Ranked female in the roster. Something was bound to happen anyway." Queen Robin said, stroking her mate's hand with her own.

"Mom's right, dad. A hundred years ago, someone also died when a

Gold Ranked female was being claimed." Patrick o handedly said. I

"A hundred years ago, that was a di erent time!" King Armand

"Okay, that's it. All of you, stop. What's done is done. My son has

brought home a lovely mate and I will not allow any of you to take

home under better circumstances." The King said in that calm, dangerous voice that Jon definitely inherited. He stood up and o ered his hand to the Queen. Gracefully, they exited the patio. I let out a sigh of relief. Patrick smirked.

"Don't worry, it's not like that everyday." Patrick chuckled. I looked at

"How are you so happy about all of this?" I asked. Patrick grinned.

"Having a new sister is fun! Besides, now that you'll take some of my

workload, I'll have more free time." He winked, leaning back on his

chair. I looked at Jon accusingly, and he in turn sighed, still refusing

princesses. Now that you're here, you're going to be taking some of it.

You know, equal share." Patrick explained. I nodded understandingly.

"What duties do I have?" I asked Jon. Patrick looked between the two

of us and grinned. He leaned back and put his arms behind his head.

"It's not exactly equal when I end up covering for you most of the

"Uh-huh. Jon and I currently split work meant for princes and

"Don't worry, we'll start you o easy. I haven't been doing a good job of categorizing and organizing pack files. You can begin there. I'll show you later." Patrick said. I sighed. That sounded easy enough. I was a very organized person,

"What duties do you have?" I asked Jon. He looked at me for

"Jonathon is a workaholic. Don't get upset if he doesn't have too

much time for you." Patrick said, drinking some water. Jon growled

"Kidding. Jeez, what is with you? You're usually just a statue." Patrick

Patrick stood up and exited the room. I looked around and saw that

"Well?" I asked, starting to get annoyed by how mute he was getting.

"I'm going to need your number." Jon said, brandishing his phone.

"That is not how you ask a girl for her number." I joked. Jon blushed

said, rolling his eyes. "This isn't fun anymore. Bye."

the maids were gone. It was just Jon and I.

I rolled my eyes and chuckled.

probably the first time the whole breakfast.

and looked down. "Kidding. Gimme." I said, reaching for his phone. He easily gave it to me and I inputted my number. I gave him my phone so he could do the same. "I might...I might not be around that much this week." Jon said, almost apologetically. I frowned at that.

"Oh. Okay." I said, sighing. So I really wouldn't be seeing him a lot. Somehow, the thought of that made my eyes sting but I was determined not to cry. "I'll assign some guards for you later. I should have done it earlier.

to himself. I put my hand on his forearm, pushing him so that he'd

look at me. When I looked into his eyes, I saw worry, anxiety, and

Damn it. I'm messing this mating thing up." Jon muttered frustratedly

fight me on any other thing, but not this." I relented. I'd talk to him about it again when we were both in better shape. Our moment was interrupted by a ping his phone made. He took it out and read the message. "I have to go. Duty calls." He said, almost apologetically at me. I

"I'll see you tonight." He said before exiting the room. I looked around me. I was alone. So it begins.

Continue to next part

The King was seated at the head of the table, holding his glass out to a maid who quickly filled it with juice. The Queen was nibbling on some fruit and Patrick was greedily scarfing down some bacon. When we arrived, everyone, including the maids, looked up. I

"Sorry. Sorry. What would you like? Some fruit? Pastry?" Jon asked, flustered. He gestured at the table and I took a deep breath. "Just the croissant, please." I murmured. Jon put some on a small plate and set it in front of me. Silently, I began to eat, nibbling the flaky pastry as gently as I could. Jon began to eat some pancakes and gulp down some co ee. "Well, isn't this awkward." Patrick said, finally breaking the silence. I

"War?" I asked, looking at Jon. He refused to meet my eyes. "Jon was in Eastern Claw to take a look at your borders and terrain, right?" Patrick asked. I nodded. "Yes. I didn't get to sit in during his meeting with dad, though." I said. The King frowned at this, tilting his head exactly like how Jon did.

"Why not?" The King asked. I took a deep breath and looked at him.

"But you have heard of The Rogue King?" Patrick asked. I nodded.

"Patrick, war isn't good table conversation." The Queen scolded,

"You don't think there's cause for war, Serena?" The King asked. Oh how I wish I just shut up. But the King asked a question and I now had to answer. "Oh...well, I'm not really updated with news about the rogues." I said,

blushed deeply. The King tilted his head and looked at me again.

opened up a new option. Peace. Goddess, why didn't we ever think of that?" The King chuckled, putting his hand on his stomach in laughter. "Don't you think it might be a little too late for that, father?" Jon challenged, leaning towards his father and baring his canines. The

"Don't be like that, Jonathon. Your brother and mate may have

people have begun to mistrust us. The West is angry. They've called your actions an extreme abuse of power." The King declared. My heart started beating quickly. My breaths began to be shorter.

that joy from me. I don't care who our family has to face, the two marks on her shoulder means that Serena is a Lancaster now. She will be treated with respect." Queen Robin admonished, causing the whole room to go silent. The King sighed. "I apologize, Serena. I only wish my son could have brought you

Jon sighed and glared at Patrick. Patrick sighed apologetically. I'm sure I could do it.

"Why?" I asked. "I'll have to talk to my generals about the information I gathered in Eastern Claw. Then, deal with the fallout from the Alpha Theodore situation." Jon sighed. "Oh. Okay. Who's going to show me what to do? I mean, Patrick said I had a job to do now." I carefully said.

"Patrick will. Don't let him boss you around, you're his superior. I

more settled. I just...didn't realize how behind he was." Jon gru ly

"It's okay. It'll give me something to do." I said, shrugging.

"Oh, there's really no need..." I trailed o.

looking down in frustration.

actually didn't want you to start work until next week when you were

"Your things are already in our room, you can unpack. You're also free

to change anything inside the room." Jon said. "My mother probably

has some maid assigned to you already, she'll be waiting inside our

"She'll be showing you around. That's supposed to be my job but I've

missed a lot of work just sleeping in this morning. I'm sorry." Jon said,

Most of all, I saw exhaustion. My instincts told me to intervene, to care for my mate and make sure he felt better. But I didn't know him well enough to be able to comfort him properly according to his likes. I cursed myself for that. "Jon...it's okay. Besides, I don't need guards." I said, raising my hand so he could see my bracelet.

"Doesn't matter, even if you had two of those I'd still want my mate

guarded." Jon stated, running a finger casually to touch my gold

"Don't fight me on this, Serena. Please." Jon murmured. "You can

gently. He stood up abruptly. "Can you find your way back to our room?" He asked. "Yes. Don't worry. I'll be fine." I said. It was a bit of a lie, I wished he could spend more time with me but I couldn't be selfish. He nodded, buying my half lie. He leaned and kissed me at the top of my head. I blushed at the contact.

"I'm not going to keep you from your job." I said, shaking my head

nodded understandingly at him.

"Jon..." I started to protest but he cut me o .