

## Chapter 161

### Zander Played a Long Game

"I found the same scent from one of the knight's belongings," Darius reported. He had been asked by Dawn to check on the scent that attracted the monster and he found it.

"Are you sure?" Zander asked.

The seven of them were inside Zander's tent, discussing about this revelation.

"I am. I smelled it once in the first attack. I recognized it when I encountered it again."

Dawn then told them about her conversation with Lyra and the connection with the west people, who tried to topple down Zander's reign.

But, when Dawn mentioned Jason's name, aside from Zaya, they didn't seem to be surprised.

"You don't look surprised," Dawn noted.

"We have suspected Jason for long," Zenith said. "In fact, we have gotten in touch with gamma Alex."

Gamma Alex was her father's gamma, he used to be away and handled the trade, but Dawn was not surprised too, because in the first life, Zenith also got in touch with Alex for some business.

"Thank you for your help, little sister," Zander said, as he ruffled Dawn's hair, but Zenith caught his hand.

"What are you doing?" He swatted his hand away and combed Dawn's messy hair because of Zander. "I think we are done here," Zenith said and then took Dawn's hand to go back to their tent.

Darius followed his alpha and luna.

"He looked like he is going to kill me..." Zander sighed and turned to Zaya. "Don't you want to hug me?" He opened his arms widely.

"Don't be ridiculous," Zaya said. "I am going back to my tent."

"My siblings don't love me anymore," Zander said, he clicked his tongue, but Pyro could only roll his eyes.

Yet, once there was only the two of them, Zander took off his golden mask, his expression was serious and his blue eyes were sharp.

"Have you had everything prepared?" he asked, his voice was rather cold.

"Yes." Pyro nodded. "There is another letter from the Holy Kingdom that demanded princess Zaya to return to Andel Continent, because she should have returned months ago. They also demanded for Aurel to be returned to them and also about the magic stone..."

Apparently, because the magic stone that they could get was only from the west, as they were the only distributor for the meantime, the price skyrocketed to the point it didn't make any sense at all.

"Zan, don't you think that this will be back fired at us?" Pyro had been worrying about this matter. "You helped them to get the money to build the new kingdom."

"Yes, but not for long." Zander crossed his arms.

Magic stone was essential for magic user because they couldn't use their magic without it, no matter how powerful you were. The healer also used magic stone, but not all the time, thus they were not really relied on it.

However, the magic users couldn't do anything without it and the only magic stones mines were in this continent, while the main consumer of the magic stone was people from Andel Continent. Therefore, the relationship between the two continents were rather complicated, especially with the merchant from Karam continent, who did the trade with magic stone, it complicated thing even more.

But there was one thing that Vemion miscalculated.

While fire magic stones were more expensive than earth and water magic stone, this kind of magic stone was rare. If Vemion kept exhausted the source at this rate, he would be left without anything to dig for more than ten years from now.

"So, you waited until they ran out of the magic stone in their mines? But, for how long?" Pyro looked disagreed with Zander, but he had to admit, this plan would be effective in the long run, as the west relied so much on this fire magic stone mines.

"You heard it yourself that they raised the price to ridiculous amount," Zander said. "It's not because they wanted to get more benefit, but they started running out of it."

The distribution of fire magic stone in the market started dwindling and Pyro had reported it himself.

"Let's wait and see," Zander said, as he caressed his golden mask. His eyes dimmed.

The next day, early in the morning after they had their breakfast, they continued their travel to the capital city and reached the palace before noon.

The entourage of the knights from Marca El caught everyone's attention, since this was the first time for other people to see the knight from that continent, especially with this huge number.

They were fascinated by their armors and their war horses, little children hid behind their mother's back when they saw the knights, because they looked very scary in their eyes.

Once they arrived at the palace, the maid servants tended to them. Their lunches would be sent to their room, while they would have dinner together later.

"You shouldn't have stayed here for long, Zaya." Elder Isaac approached Zaya before she entered her bedroom. "You shouldn't have indulged your brother's craziness and convince him to send Aurel back to Andel."

"He is going to send her back, the only think that he wanted is justice, poisoning the king is a crime that's worse than a treason and using black magic is a crime that granted a death punishment. Aurel did both and Holy Kingdom refused to take responsibility of it. What my brother did is justified."

Elder Isaac's face turned red when Zaya called him out on his bullshit.

"Zaya, you grew up in Holy Kingdom, you lived there for years, you know how vital magic stone is for our people, yet you did nothing to help us." Elder Isaac changed his approached, but Zaya wouldn't buy it.

"I grew up there, because you kept me there, telling me that I have to learn how to use magic, since I am a magic user and I can't even return to my homeland because my father and mother trapped inside the Great Shrine."

## Chapter 162

### Awfully Familiar

"You kept me away against my wish, what do you think my brothers will do if they learned about this?"

Zaya was fifteen when the last time she met with her mother and father. She was too young to know what to do and the people around her kept telling her the thing that she should have done and she had to follow that.

She couldn't even ask for help to her brothers because they told her about the situation in Ogregon Kingdom and how her brothers were busy to deal with the traitors, who wanted to take the young king down from the throne and her plea would only distract them.

They told them that if Zander lost the battle against the traitor, it was most likely, they would kill him and Zenith, since that was how thing would turn out for the fallen sovereign.

Therefore, Zaya was afraid to add more trouble for her brothers.

It was not that they treated her poorly, but sure enough, they isolated her from everyone and forced her to study and learn magic. They were

interested because she was her mother's daughter, the powerful magic user, who saved their continent from a powerful black magic user decades ago.

Zaya had to leave for years in Andel continent alone and not relied on anyone, but herself. She had to learn quickly how to read the room and how to protect herself.

Not like they were abusive or something, but sure enough they were really manipulative when it came to what they wanted her to do... or rather, to be...

"You and all the elders in the Holy Kingdom forced me to stay and even check on all the letter between me and my brothers..." Zaya said, she spoke very softly and clearly, but the look in her blue eyes could make your heart skipped a beat. "What do you think they will do to you?"

Elder Isaac was taken aback, he was trying to find a way to retort that but how could you deny the fact?

"I am tired. If you have something to complain about my brother's way to handle thing. You can complain directly to him." Zaya pointed at her left side. "You can go there, take turn to your left side and climb down the stair and on the right side, you can see the throne room, my brother usually will be there."



After saying that, Zaya didn't want to engage in conversation with Elder Isaac anymore and chose to enter her room. She didn't even wait for his reply when she closed the door in front of his face.

Two warriors approached Elder Isaac and told him to leave.

Meanwhile, inside the inn at the harbor, Blake once again met with his father. He reported everything that happened and how many of knights that came from Marca El.

He also reported their strength.

"I think they could fight against a shifter one on one. They are as strong as the rumor said." Blake didn't even exaggerate his words when he said this. He witnessed it with his own eyes of how they killed the trolls and Vermeyes.

Yes, it was him, who had put the scent of Asturi Stem on one of the knight's belongings to attract the monster.

The funny scent that Dawn smelled came from that plant. Its smell could lure monsters.

"But how could monsters appear in that forest when that place usually free of monsters?" Blake was curious for this part.

Jason tapped his fingers on the table. "Someone in the west could use magic. They could create a portal to bring the monster to different places in a second."

But of course, for being able to do so, you would require a lot of magic stones, which currently was a very valuable thing. The two monster attacks had made them lost a lot and they couldn't afford more than that.

But this piece information was what they needed.

"Who is this person that you have been in contact with?" Blake asked casually, he tried not to sound too impulsive.

"Later. This is not the right time for you to know," Jason said, giving his son the same answer and Blake looked nonchalant, but inside, he was actually seething.

If he could get to contact this person from the west, he wouldn't need his father anymore... he was still alive only because for the fact, he was still useful for him.

"So, what the west has offered to us?"

The Moonlight pack's strong point was their harbor, it was a critical point for trading, various business and mobilization, therefore, they wanted Moonlight pack.

However, Jason was no use now and Blake could give the west more helping hand with his current position, only if he knew, who his father had been in contact with.

"I am very thankful for you, son. You are still with me despite what happened," Jason said. He looked very genuine when he said that. "How's your mother? Is she alright?"

Blake drank his wine and sighed deeply. "She still didn't talk much."

"Can I see her? I missed your mother."

Blake glanced at him, there was this disgusting look on his face, but he hid it quickly before Jason could notice that.

"We can't risk that father, she is still mad at you for what you have done and we can't guarantee she will not let alpha Tony knew about your whereabouts if you met with her. It will ruin everything..."

"I know... I know..." Jason missed his mate so much, despite what he had done, Ava was his destined mate and they spent more than two decades together. "She seduced me, I shouldn't have fallen into her sweet words."

Blake lowered his gaze. That sounded awfully familiar. He glanced at his father and wondered if he looked that pathetic when he said those words?

## Chapter 163

### Someone from the West

After the uneventful dinner and some entertainment here and there, the next day someone made a fuss in front of the palace gates, asking to meet with prince Zenith.

"I am here to get my money back."

He was a young man with red hair and had a messed-up haircut, he was holding a box and was livid when he was not allowed to enter the palace.

"Are you trying to fool me?!" He raised his voice. "He owed me money, if you didn't believe me, ask him! Tell him to come here!"

Because he made a ruckus, the guard took him inside, but not to the palace, but the dungeon, as the other guard informed Zenith about what happened.

Currently, the alpha was with his mate, having their peaceful breakfast. It was not sure since when it became a habit, but Zenith would taste Dawn's food first before she ate it, though Dawn would find a way to figure out if it was safe to be eaten or not.

"That must be your old friend," Zenith said and the guard was surprised what that man said was right. He asked what they had to do with him.

"Where is he?" Dawn asked, as she chewed on her meat.

"Because he made a ruckus, we put him in the dungeon," the guard replied.

"Oh, no." Dawn immediately stood up. "Get him out of there!"

The guard was confused, so did Zenith with Dawn's strong reaction, but he immediately went away to let his comrade knew about this.

"What happened?" Zenith followed Dawn, he frowned because she tried to walk quickly, but with her heavily pregnant belly, it was not easy for her. "Slow down." He put his arm behind her back.

"Hecate hated a dungeon." Dawn then told Zenith that he was born in the dungeon because his mother was thrown there after being caught stealing food, at that time, his mother was pregnant and he spent ten years there, until his mother died and they simply didn't care of him and released him.

"Ten years for stealing food?"

"They forced her mother to work in the mines because they needed to people to do a labor work to dig magic stone. He worked in the mine too since he was three years old."

Zenith was silent for a while, before he noted. "You knew a lot about him."

"I remembered that we were close. The memories returned in more detail when I saw him. Flashes of memories when we were together, came to me here and there."

They finally reached the dungeon, but Zenith stopped Dawn. "I will handle this." He was not going to let his pregnant mate to enter the filthy dungeon.

"No. I will go with you. He must have done something."

As if on cue, they could hear someone was freaking out from inside the dungeon and Dawn hastened her steps. She knew this would happen. They should have let the guards knew to let him in beforehand, but because of what happened, they simply forgot, since she wouldn't have thought they would put him in the dungeon.

From inside, they could hear the commotion and Hecate's voice, screaming at the guards, who tried to get close to him.

"We can't kill him! Prince Zenith wanted to see him!"

"The hell! He is poisoning us!"

With the mention of poison, Zenith was about to stop Dawn, but she reassured him it was not something lethal.

"Don't worry, I know what it is."

And just like what Dawn had predicted, she saw the guard was wailing on the ground, clutching to his stomach, while the other scratched his body relentlessly, until his skin broke and bled.

"Stop this, Hecate. Give them the antidote," Dawn said.

All the guards immediately quieted down when they realized the alpha and the luna from the north were there. They lowered their heads politely.

"Gave them the antidote," Dawn said again.



"No! They are going to lock me here!" Hecate was furious.

"I am here to get you out, but you need to give them the antidote," Dawn said.

And after some back and forth between the two of them, Zenith's patient ran very thin, as he snatched the small box in his hand and threatened to take it away until he gave the guards the antidote.

It was childish, but it worked.

Begrudgingly, Hecate gave the antidote and he followed Dawn and Zenith out of the dungeon.

"Swindler," he said under his breath to Zenith. "You told me to get half of the money here, but you want to put me in the dungeon. Swindler."

Dawn immediately grabbed Zenith's hand to prevent him from doing something bad to Hecate.

"Come with me, you will get the money." Dawn smiled meaningfully at him. "There is something we want to offer to you."

And an hour later, they were in the king's study room, along with Zaya and Celine as well.

"Is this the man that you recommend to fill Aurel's position?" Zander asked, he narrowed his eyes at Hecate. His appearance must have made him look unreliable. "Are you sure?"

"I am the greatest man in my field. I will only help you if you paid me. I only accept gold."

"Are you sure, he is the right person? What the greatest thing that he had done?" Zander looked at Zenith.

"Saving your ass," Zenith replied, technically he was right, since they got the last two items from Hecate.

"Well, I deem that important." Zander nodded. "Fine, I will give you gold, but tell me about the situation in the west, everything that you knew."

"Why should I? I am not a spy."

"I will give you gold for each information."

"Gold and all the rare herbs that you have."

"You can have them all since you have agreed to work here."

"So, the west is not in a good situation..." And with that Hecate blabbered out all the information that he knew willingly.

## Chapter 164

### You are not My Type

"The alpha told me to introduce you to four warriors that will be your personal warriors, Dawn," Darius said, as he approached her when she was with Zaya and Celine.

Dawn was happy because she had Zaya and Celine as her friend and they got along well, though she was sad that Celine still didn't have any idea what happened to Lance, but Zaya reassured her that Celine had given up hope on him.

Therefore, when everything unfolded, she hoped, she wouldn't be too sad.

After what Lance put Celine through, Zaya felt less guilty, especially when she learned everything that happened that night. Celine didn't know the truth though.

"Who are they?" Dawn asked, Zenith had told her last night about this and Darius had been busy to find the four warriors. The requirement got very complicated because the alpha wanted the people, who could get along with Dawn too, but kept their distance from her.

How would Darius know, whether they would get along with Dawn or not?! Whenever it came to his mate, the alpha became more ridiculous each day.

"You have met them before," Darius then reminded her about the incident when the warriors were having a hard time to sleep because of the smell that came from the area where they burned all of the traitor dead bodies after they hanged them. "You helped them and they expressed their gratitude to you."

When Darius told them about this, they were so eager to fill the position and Darius deemed it was enough for them to be able to get along with Dawn.

More so, Dawn was not a complicated person to get along with, she simply loved her own company instead of roaming around to make friend with everyone.

"My brother indeed doted on you so much. He gave you four personal warriors, while he always assigned his own personal warrior away." Zaya teased Dawn. She loved to see how her sister-in-law blushed with the mention of her brother's name only.

Celine chuckled to see that. She had been guiding Hecate to adjust himself in the palace and tried to get along with him, but the man was rather... unique. So, probably it would take a while.

"Let me introduce you to them," Darius said excitedly, he then called the four warriors.

All of them greeted Dawn, Zaya and Celine politely, bowing their bodies to show their utmost respect to the two princesses.

"Barrett, Burke, Denzel and Chase," Darius introduced them quickly.

Barrett was the tallest among them all, but Burke was the bulkiest and while Denzel looked scary, Chase actually looked like a sweet boy. Dawn was sure that Chase only came to age and join the rank of warrior, thus for him to be chosen by Darius as her personal warriors, she believed her skill was great.

And now, Dawn only needed to wait for her due date, which could come any time. Therefore, Zenith had been spending his time with her, ditching all Zander's effort to come with him in the meeting with king Rowan.

"You are the one, who called them here and got them involved, you handle him yourself."

That was what Zenith said, which made Zander speechless. Even for the hunting game, Zenith excused himself, telling him that he couldn't leave his pregnant mate.

On the other hand, king Rowan didn't mind it whether Zenith came or not, because he had his eyes on Zaya. He would be happy enough for the auburn princess to accompany them in this hunt.

His intention was very clear and this was something that Zander failed to predict when he involved the people from Marca El. Who would have thought this barbaric king would fancy his beautiful, delicate and witty little sister.

"I present them for you, princess," king Rowan said, as they hunted monster in Goffa mountain. The mountain stretched out along the capital city, where there would be some monsters here that you could find.

Every two months, they would do this hunt to kill the monsters, so they wouldn't reach the city, but this time, Zander made it more excited by inviting king Rowan and his knights, since they looked so eager to swing those huge swords of theirs.

"Thank you, king Rowan, I appreciated that." Zaya nodded gracefully.

Zander watched everything and the king every movement behind his golden mask. His blue eyes darkened, as he started disliking this situation.

He needed to make it clear that his sister was off limits, but the king verbalized his intention by asking Zaya's hand directly to him.

"Marriage alliance is the best way for our kingdoms, what do you think?" King Rowan asked, as they talked in the strategy room about the steels business. They needed steels as the main material to make sword and they figured out the best steels came from Ogregon continent.

As shifter, they didn't need to use weapon in their attack, since they themselves were a weapon, therefore, steels were not really popular here, but apparently, just like magic stone mines, Ogregon continent had the best steels among the other continents.

"Pardon me?" Zander lifted his head, his eyes were sharp when he looked at the other king, Pyro could feel the air shifted inside the room and the tension was so high.

"What do you think about marriage alliance between our kingdoms to mark our alliances?"

"I am sorry, but you are not my type, king Rowan," Zander replied sourly.

Pyro wanted to facepalm himself when he heard that. Of course, he knew that Zander was not that stupid to think King Rowan was asking him to marry him, but what kind of answer was that?



On the other hand, king Rowan guffawed when he heard that. He found this very hilarious, his laugh sounded like he was barking and Zander was not amused in the slightest, especially when the other king made himself clear who he wanted to.

"I need a queen, not another king and I am sure, princess Zaya is the best option."

## Chapter 165

### A Peaceful Night

With the way king Rowan verbalized his attention and how he made it very clear to the point Zander couldn't twist the word, it left the king with no other option, but to answer for that offer.

It was a tricky situation, since he had to answer this question carefully. He couldn't offend the other king, because Zander involved him with this whole mess for a reason, but there was no way in hell he was going to let this barbaric man to have his sweet Zaya.

Well, she was not particularly sweet and sometime her words could be sharper than any blades, but still.

"Zaya doesn't like man," Zander blurted it out.

King Rowan raised his brows; he repeated the words. "Princess Zaya doesn't like man?"

"Yes. You don't need to ask her; she is a little bit iffy with the topic." Zander's expression couldn't be seen behind his golden mask, but Pyro's

was on full display. King Rowan knew it right away, as the royal beta was in disbelief with Zander's choice of words.

He knew that Zander could be shameless, but he felt so embarrassed for the princess right now.

"Probably because she doesn't have a good man in her life."

Pyro wanted the ground split, as the tension heightened. The two kings didn't back down and they bit back with their words.

Zander chuckled with that statement. "That's the opposite actually. Zaya is very picky, because her expectation is very high, since she has a king and the alpha from the north as her standard."

Pyro really wanted to leave the room at this point.

"Is that so?" king Rowan raised his brows with that statement.

"Don't you agree?" Zander asked lightly. It would be seen as an insult if king Rowan disagreed with the statement, since Zander had made it clear to use his status as the king, instead his own name in the matter.

Therefore, it could be said as him brought the whole kingdom in this entire light conversation.

And thankfully, king Rowan was clever enough to see this tricky question. In fact, the more Zander tried to dissuade him not to pursue her, the more he became interest with her.

"I am glad that I am the king too," he replied.

Pyro could see Zander spit fire when he heard that relentless answer.

"Such an interesting status," Zander replied.

The royal beta felt the need to stop this before thing escalated further. He made a mental note not to leave these two alone.

"What is more interesting is the fact that magic stone could be used as the material for sword, our blacksmith had just confirmed that." Pyro was very tactful.

Thankfully, the two kings dropped the topic and changed their discussion. This conversation about the sword that made of magic stone lasted for two hours and once they were done, they would make a short trip to the magic stone mines two days from now.

After that, king Rowan took his leave, leaving Zander and Pyro alone in the strategy room.

"Zaya is going to kill you if she found out what you said," Pyro said.

"Zenith will kill me if he found out I brought a barbaric and let him fancied our sister."

Pyro shook his head and clicked his tongue. "You are a dead man, Zan."

Zander took off his golden mask, some time it was weird to see how identical the two of them, but with how different their personalities it made them very different in a way.

"Proceed with our plan. We will do it tonight," Zander said. His eyes dimmed and he looked a little bit distraught.

Pyro knew what he had to do, because they had prepared this for some time now. He then left the room to carry the order.

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Dawn could feel something big would happen tonight, because Zenith let her know about all the detail of their plan and she felt bad for Celine.

It would break her heart.

They had become so close because Zaya was a good friend with the healer for years and she was very grateful that they could accept her, but it broke her heart to know that Celine would be in so much pain tonight. She cared about her friend.

"What are you thinking about?" Zenith approached her and kissed her cheek. He couldn't get enough of her, as he gave her more kisses.

The alpha hugged her from behind and placed his hand under her belly, to support the baby in her womb and Dawn very much liked it when he did this, because their baby was getting heavier by the day.

"Nothing, I only felt bad for Celine. She will feel sad."

"She will feel sadder if she knew what he did to her."

"But you said it yourself that he is under the influence."

"The magic will not work if he didn't have feeling for her in the first place. Lance didn't even fight it. He chose to fight his own mate instead and justified it."

Zander, Zenith and Pyro didn't show how distraught they were for having to kill Lance, but no matter what, it was his own fault for ignoring the king's warning. He succumbed too deep into Aurel's influence, it would be hard to keep him around.

"Lance is an opening for the sect to attack Zander. Even if we managed to get rid Aurel, the sect will find a way to use him, since he will be a weak spot close to Zander."

Zenith explained everything to Dawn, as they stared at the moonlight, it was as peaceful night, but a few hours later, it wouldn't be as peaceful.

"So, Aurel is indeed involved with the sect?"

"Yes." Zenith learned everything when he killed both of them. "The future has changed so much."

Dawn nodded. She agreed with that and she wondered what would happen then. She also wondered how Zander lost his wolf spirit, but was still alive until now.