

## Chapter 56

### The Day of the Ceremony 2

Darius laughed. "No. This is not alcohol. He asked a healer to make this potion so you'll feel less nervous during the ceremony, it will help calm your nerves." He tilted his head to observe Dawn. "I think he is right, you look so awful."

Dawn squinted her eyes. "Just earlier you said that I am beautiful." She glanced at the bottle. "A healer? You meant Aurel?"

She swore she wouldn't eat anything that came from her, even if the potion was not poisonous, who knew if she spat in it?

"Of course not, knowing the bad blood between you two, there is no way Zenith will order her to make this potion," Darius replied. "He asked a healer from our pack to make it. It was just delivered this morning, it should have been here last night, but there was a delay."

Dawn stared at the bottle. "Thank you."

"Oh, one thing..." Darius talked in a low voice. "Don't tell Zenith that I just gave you the bottle this morning, okay? I lied to him last night saying I have already given you the potion."

"Don't tell me that the delay is because of you?" Dawn gave him a look and the gamma scratched his head, ruining his perfectly neat hair.

"Well... I was busy, you know, so I forgot to send a letter to the healer at the pack."

Dawn chuckled. As long as this bottle didn't come from Aurel, she was fine. "You owe me one, then."

Darius grinned. "You are the best! Happy to have you as my luna!" He patted Dawn's shoulder, but was chided by the maid again, because he was not even supposed to be here, let alone touch the bride!

"You are happy because there will be a lot of food."

Darius widened his eyes, he feigned being offended. "I am not a foodie... I am truly happy for your union." Dawn squinted her eyes. The gamma couldn't care less about the union; that was the reason why he insisted on going with them to the capital city. "Well, to be fair, many people waited for this ceremony."

"If you are done with your business, get out now, we still have a lot of things to do!" All the maids were anxious.

"Geez, I am the Gamma, but I am being shooed away. Royal maids are something else..." Darius got up and waved at Dawn, while she laughed.

Actually, with his presence and talking a bit with him, it helped her to calm her nerves. But she still drank the potion after she was sure there was nothing worrying about the liquid inside this bottle.

It was thoughtful of Zenith to know that she would be very nervous and send this potion to her.

And he was right, this drink did help her to calm down a bit, she felt warm inside and her mood improved. She would ask what drink was this later.

There was one thing that Dawn felt slightly down about was the fact that her father was not here to see the ceremony, but at the end of the day, this was her decision.

"My lady, it is time," one of the ladies said. She helped Dawn to stand up because the dress that she was wearing would make it difficult for her to walk, even so, she was expected to walk as gracefully as the princess she would be.

Today was not only a ceremony for the union between her and Zenith, but also a mark of the day, where she would be bestowed the title of the princess. Therefore, the procession would be long and tiring...

"Come, I will help you."

"Thank you."

"Don't worry, my lady. I will remind you if you forget any steps of the procession."

Dawn smiled. "That's very comforting."

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Ever since that day when the king was poisoned and Aurel didn't have the ability to find a cure for him, she had been locking herself inside her bedroom.

She was waiting for that time, she was waiting for him to come looking for her, but even when the time came, he still didn't find her and ask for her help like usual, thus the only way for her to know the reason was to look for him directly.

"Who allowed you to enter the room?" Zenith growled viciously when he saw Aurel was inside the bedroom. He was going to punish those incompetent guards who let her in.

Of course, Aurel used her status as the royal healer and a little bit of lies to be able to go through those guards.

"Why didn't you come to me? Why didn't you look for me?" Aurel asked directly, because she knew Zenith hated it when someone talked in a roundabout manner.

"Get out of this room. I don't need your service anymore." Zenith's eyes turned darker when Aurel tried to approach him. Thankfully, the healer stopped her advances seeing how viciously the alpha glared at her.

"How?" Aurel couldn't understand. "There is no way you didn't need that anymore." She shook her head. "Come here. I will alleviate your pain. I will..."

"Guards!" Zenith had enough of her.

"Zen, don't be difficult, you will be hurting yourself if you refuse!" Aurel became a little bit panicked when the guards entered the room to escort her out. She wanted to stay, but she wanted to keep her dignity too. It

wouldn't look good if she was seen dragged out of the room. "You know how important this is for you! You know that it's only me who can help you!"

Aurel was desperate.

"What are you waiting for?!" Zenith wanted to drag Aurel out himself, but he didn't want to touch her. He was not willing to touch another woman right before the ceremony between him and Dawn.

"I care for you!"

"Then tell me what the concoction is."

Aurel didn't answer that.

"I see."

"You will not look for me if I tell you." Aurel looked miserable.



## Chapter 57

### The Day of the Ceremony 3

"Zenith, why is it so hard for you to understand how much I care for you?" Aurel was desperate. For almost a decade, she helped him with this, but not even once Zenith glanced her way willingly.

"If you really care about me, tell me what the concoction is made of." This was the second time Zenith repeated the same thing and Aurel should have known better not to push her luck too far, yet the healer was too emotional.

"No. You will stop looking for me if I do." Aurel then shook her head. "I will let you know with one condition. If you stop this ceremony and this union, I will tell you about it."

Zenith was not willing to spend another second breathing the same air as her. He was done. Nobody could stop him from having Dawn. He couldn't care less about the whole ceremony, but Dawn would be his.

The guards then grabbed Aurel by arms to escort her out of the room, but the healer snapped at them.



"Don't touch me! I can walk out on my own!" She screamed in their faces and then stormed off, feeling humiliated because she was outright rejected in front of these lowly guards.

Once the room fell quiet, Zenith walked toward the window, he stared at the bright sky. Today was the union between him and Dawn, and he hoped... he could make it right for her.

"What are you thinking now?" Zander entered the room through a secret door, so no one would know that he came to meet his brother before the ceremony. "Are you thinking of running away? Having second thoughts about killing the woman that has potential to kill you?"

Zenith threw him a vicious glare, as if to warn his brother not to touch a strand of her hair, yet Zander looked immune to his brother's rage. He walked toward a chair and sat down leisurely.

"Get out."

"What is it? You developed a habit of chasing people out now?" Zander saw what happened with Aurel. "How can you survive this long without her help?"

Zenith didn't want to answer that. He changed the topic. "Elder Max approached me with the same intention."

"For you to take the throne? The same old song from the old people." Zander chuckled. "Actually, if you want the throne, I will give it to you for free. Just kidding." He changed his tune quickly when he received a nasty look from Zenith. "Being a king is a lonely job with too much power and responsibilities." He sighed and stared at the ceiling.

"Have you figured out who the people that used poison on the warriors were?"

"I have a few suspects, but I need to be sure and lure them out first."

"Just kill them all."

"Killing some of them will only startle them and make them more aware, but if I let them think that they led the game, they will be reckless enough to expose themselves."

This was why, in public, Zander and Zenith played opposite parties. People who wanted to take Zander down from the throne, would seek Zenith and campaign in his name to put him on the throne.

This was the best solution that they could come up with ten years ago, when everything started to go downhill.

"Smoke the snake out," Zenith said. That was what Zander usually did. His twin sibling was a meticulous planner, he thought every move he made, unlike him. Zenith didn't have the patience for a long game.

That was why Zenith believed if Zander really wanted to kill Dawn and disregard his opinion, he would have her dead already.

"Exactly." Zander chuckled childishly, he tilted his head. "You look awesome! Very handsome! I love your face! Congratulations on your union!"

Zenith glanced at Zander's cheerfulness and there was a complicated feeling that flickered in his blue eyes.

"I know what you are thinking. Please, don't. I don't need your pity." In a second, Zander's voice turned stern. He looked serious, though the face behind the golden mask was hidden.

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Dawn took a deep breath; she bit her lip and started to walk out of her room. There were around twelve royal maids, who followed behind her while four walked in front of her. Meanwhile, the royal warriors stood apart every few meters on both sides of the corridors.

The palace had been decorated in purple and black, the royal colors. Everything looked beautiful and ethereal. People would talk about this royal ceremony for ages, probably until the next royal ceremony that would occur in the future.

The trail of her dress was so long, the ten royal maids had to help her with it so it wouldn't tangle when she walked, but then with every step she took, Dawn felt like she was exercising. She was panting slightly.

Damn it. It seemed what Zenith said about her needing more exercise was right. She was already very tired when she finally arrived at the main hall, where the ceremony would take place.

This dress was quite heavy and her legs were tired from dragging the trail of her dress, while walking gracefully. Her hair was styled in such a way that would make it easier for the king to put the crown on her head. She wondered how heavy the crown would be.

Dawn's mind was thinking trivial and unimportant things to help herself avoid breaking down from nervousness and anxiety.

Especially when the guard announced her presence and they opened the doors. All eyes immediately fell on her. These were the people she had never seen before, but they were important figures for this kingdom. Merchants from Karam continent, people from Andelus Continent, Marca El continent and many more.

She would be doomed if she made a mistake here. She would not only embarrass herself, but also Zenith.

Dawn felt quite overwhelmed, until she found a familiar figure standing at the end of this long red carpet. Zenith looked at her, his eyes met hers.

## Chapter 58

### The Day of the Ceremony 4

Dawn felt overwhelmed with the attention that she got from all the people inside the main hall. How many were there? Five hundred? Seven hundred people? The room was dead silent. She could hear her own heart beating so fast in her ears.

The dress that she was wearing felt heavier than before, as if someone sewed additional fabric to the trail of her dress. She didn't think she could take another step.

Her hands were clammy and she was having this imagination that the small bouquet of daisy flowers that she was holding started withering in her hands.

[I think she is going to cry.] Zander said through the mind link, he was standing on the highest platform, ready to bless this union and crown Dawn as a princess, but after a minute, he realized that woman couldn't take another step under the pressure.

Zander was not the only one, who realized that, of course, Zenith could also tell.

[Hey! You are not allowed to go get her!] Zander frowned behind his golden mask when he saw his brother walk toward Dawn to get her instead.

However, Zenith closed the mind link and Zander couldn't complain when that was what he did.

Zenith came to get Dawn; she indeed looked like she was going to cry. The expression she made looked more like she would go to the gallows, instead of the ceremony of their union.

Dawn's eyes widened to see Zenith walk toward her, he did it with ease, even under so many eyes, as people wondered what he was going to do.

Zenith was wearing a cloak in purple and black color; he was already wearing a crown that suited his status as the prince of this kingdom. He looked regal and this must be the first time it clicked in Dawn's mind that she would have a union with a royal family member. It was finally happening.

"It's okay. I got you." Zenith took her hand and walked beside her slowly and this made all the audience gasp, because this was not how it should be done, but the women smiled secretly, they thought it was very thoughtful for someone, who was infamous as a cruel alpha to be this considerate toward his future mate.

"I am sorry," Dawn said under her breath, she knew she ruined the process.

"No need to feel sorry. Let's get it done quickly, these people annoy me."

Dawn almost laughed at that comment and tilted her head to look at him, at the same time, Zenith was staring at her too, making sure she did not stumble because of her complicated gown.

"That looks uncomfortable," Zenith said.

"It is."

For some reason, Dawn found comfort in his deep blue eyes. People saw him as a monster from the north, but she would give up everything she had to be with this monster.

Probably, this was the best thing that had ever happened to her after enduring all those years of negligence from her family. She should thank Emily for taking Blake away from her life, because evidently, Zenith was a thousand times better than her cheater ex mate.

"I feel like my legs are going to be broken. This dress is heavy as hell."



They were talking in very low voices. Even though people couldn't tell what they were talking about, they could tell they were having a hush-hush conversation.

"Do you want me to carry you?"

Dawn widened her eyes, which could be translated as; don't you dare.

Finally, they reached the king, but even so, Zenith was still holding her hand tightly. Zander was still wearing his golden mask and he was wearing this magnificent cloak in the color of purple and black, but it was more vibrant than the one Zenith was wearing, emphasizing his status as the king.

"Here, we will witness the union between..." Pyro's voice echoed inside the main hall, as he stood behind Zander, on his right side, while Lance was holding a tiara on the king's left side.

Dawn didn't follow what Pyro was saying, she kept reminding herself about the next step she should follow and not to mess things up again.

Zenith could feel her nervousness and squeezed her hand, to remind her that she was not alone. He was there with her.

'You look beautiful.' Zenith mouthed, which made Dawn blush and Zander cleared his throat to make his brother focus on the event and stop talking.

Usually, this brother of his was very taciturn, but on this occasion, he was exceptionally talkative.

Zenith gave him a nasty look, in response to which Zander glared at him.

Meanwhile, those people who were close to them and were privileged enough to see this silent squabbling between the siblings could only frown.

"You need to get down on your knees," Zenith said in a low voice after Pyro finished with his speech.

Dawn then knelt down so Zander could put the crown on her head.

And after that, Dawn actually didn't need to remember what she should do next, because Zenith would guide her every step of the way.

Dawn really wanted to kiss this man!

There she was, thinking Zenith didn't care about the ceremony and she had suffered alone because of that exhausting preparation, but actually, even after all the lessons of the royal etiquette along with every step of the ceremony that she had to obey, Dawn didn't think it would go well if it was not for Zenith's help.

He saved her from embarrassing herself in front of so many people. Dawn didn't even remember that her father was not there with her.

Meanwhile, outside of the palace, the four bells rang at the same time, indicating that the procession had been done and they had a new princess in this kingdom.

Everyone cheered and sang together, as the sky had turned bright red, welcoming the evening.

Among the people, Alpha Tony stared at the majestic palace, he felt this emptiness in his heart. He waited, but Dawn never reached out to him.

## Chapter 59

### The Consequences

"She is going to be your chosen mate. I need you to keep your act together," Jason said sternly once they arrived at their house.

No matter how tired they were during this journey back, Jason still wanted to address the problem with his son before anything.

"I told you that I am not going to mark her. I am going back to the capital city." Blake's eyes dimmed, he was going through another phase of insanity now and if he kept rejecting Emily as his mate, he would become a mad man in no time.

This was not the end that Jason wished for his only son.

"Insolent!" Jason smashed the table in front of him and Ava was startled, she was listening from behind the door, trying so hard not to rush in and save her son from his father's wrath. "Do you know what kind of trouble that I have to go through to get your ass away from the gallows!? Did you really decide to die?!"

Meanwhile, Blake didn't even flinch. He looked his father straight in the eyes when he spoke. "I didn't ask you to do that."

Jason was so mad, he grabbed a small box and was about to smash it against his son's head, so he could gain some clarity in order to see the whole thing, but then, he stopped himself in time. His hand was trembling, the box still in his tight grip.

"Get out of my sight. Get out!" Jason was so exasperated. "You are not allowed to leave the house! You are not allowed to step out of your bedroom until that fucking woman gave birth to your child and you mark her!"

That was not even a warning. That was an ultimatum.

"I am not going to mark her. She is not my mate. Dawn is my mate. She is the one that I want."

Unexpectedly, Jason laughed out loud when he heard that, which made Blake furrow his brows. "Too bad, son. Tonight, Dawn will be marked by the Alpha of the north."

Tonight was the mating ceremony, where Alpha Zenith would mark his mate.

Blake was visibly shaking, not because he didn't know about this, but because he didn't want to believe it.

"I am going to kill that fucking alpha and take my mate back."

A harsh punch landed on Blake's face, which sent him stumbling down from the chair he was sitting on. Blood splattered on the floor and table before staining the carpet.

"If there is someone to be blamed here, it's you and your dick! You should have kept your dick inside your pants!" Jason was furious. He was breathing heavily. His vision was blurry because of how enraged he was. "You shouldn't have touched her in the first place! Have I fed you with shit so you couldn't use your head properly?!"

Ava was crying from behind the door, she didn't dare to intervene, knowing really well that she would only anger Jason further.

"You need to grow up! This is the consequence of your own actions!"

"I don't love her!"

"Who cares whether you love her or not?! The moment you fucked her sister, you lost her! Are you that dumb not to realize that?!" Jason then called two warriors to drag his son out of the room. "Give him

Rottingbane! I don't want him to cause trouble until the day of the ceremony!"

It would be less than two months from now. Within less than two months, Emily would give birth to the baby and the ceremony would happen.

After that, Blake would mark her and someone from the capital city would confirm that, only then Blake would be free from the gallows, the noose around his neck.

Blake didn't fight back, but the hateful and disgusted look that he gave to his father was enough to make anyone feel dread in their hearts.

Jason was taken aback for a while and then saw the disapproving look from his mate, who followed their son to his bedroom.

"Damn my life!" Jason growled, he punched the wall and left a huge crack there.

At the same time, Julia wanted to have the same conversation with Emily. She wanted her to be patient with Blake. He would eventually come around.

"What? Just like when you were patient with Alpha Tony and waited for him to come around?" Emily raised her brows.

This was still a sensitive topic and Julia was not ready to have a conversation about this, but since she kept pestering her, Emily wouldn't make it easy for her mother either.

"Tell me mother, is he my real father?" Emily's eyes turned very cold.

"Where did you learn about this?"

"It doesn't matter where I learnt about this, now answer me, is he my real father?" Emily stood up from her chair, they were having this conversation in the kitchen. "Fine, let me change the question. How long has your affair been going on?"

Julia was visibly upset with the question, but she couldn't answer that. She gritted her teeth.

"So, he is my father?" Emily emphasized this, but Julia didn't want to say anything. "You made me feel grateful for what he has done to me, to us, when in reality that's his responsibility from the beginning." And then Emily seemed to remember something, the crucial question. "Did he know that I am his daughter? When did he learn that I am his daughter?"



Emily looked at her mother closely. She gritted her teeth, her body was shaking in anger and she hated it when this fucking baby kicked her. It hurts!

What the fuck did this baby want with her!?

"So, he knew? All this time he knew?" Emily laughed derisively. "Every time he chose us over his own daughter, when I thought I won, we won his heart, was it actually because he wanted to compensate us?"

Emily felt sick to her stomach when she finally put two and two together.

"Fuck you mother! And fuck him!"

## Chapter 60

### Execute the Plan

Today was the second day of the seven daylong celebration and Dawn felt like she was done already.

"I can't move my body..." Dawn didn't even feel like she wanted to smile anymore for the rest of the month.

She had met with a lot of people, a lot more than she had ever met in her entire twenty-one years of life, in just two days. She was fed up; she didn't want to meet any more people.

"Come, I will help you clean up." Zenith bent his body and carried Dawn in his arms, but this time, she didn't protest, she couldn't care less about those guards, warriors and guests, who stared at them.

"Should I pretend to faint, so I don't need to attend tomorrow's event?" Dawn suggested it quietly.

"Good idea." Zenith kissed her forehead. "I can arrange that."

Dawn chuckled. She wrapped her arms around his neck and actually fell asleep even before they reached their bedroom.

Therefore, it was up to Zenith to clean her up. The alpha could ask someone to do that, but he didn't want anyone to touch her. He was going to do it. He liked taking care of his woman. His mate.

Carefully, Zenith took off her dress, so he wouldn't wake her up and then wiped her body clean.

The hard part was not taking care of her, but to keep his head leveled even after looking at the beauty before him. Heavens knew how much effort he had to exert to keep himself calm in front of her when his instinct bothered him, urging him to mark her, she was the woman he wanted since forever.

No one could say otherwise, not even his king brother.

Dawn woke up when Zenith dressed her in a comfortable nightgown, but he kissed her forehead and lulled her back to sleep. Dawn was completely exhausted.

[I am outside.]

Zenith stopped himself from growling in annoyance when Zander mind linked him. His brother was just right outside of the door; he could smell his annoying scent from here.

[Scram.]

[Go out or I will go in.]

[I dare you to do it.]

[Do you want to wake your sleeping beauty?]

Zander had seen how spent Dawn was, therefore he handled all the guests and cut tonight's events short.

But there was something that he really needed to speak with Zenith about. And he knew how to get on his brother's nerves.

"What do you want?" Zenith closed the door behind him.

"Walk with me."

"Let's talk here."

"Can't we agree on one thing."

"People will see."

Zander frowned. "Why do I feel like we are having an affair or something? Can't I walk with my own brother?"

"That's not how it works."

Unless Zander was ready to make a move and wipe those old hags from his court, they had to keep up with their charade, so that they could gather the names of the people in the court, who had done a dirty job and vied for the fall of the king.

"What do you want to talk about, Zan?"

"Tomorrow is the mating ceremony. Are you sure you want to mark her? You can mate her, then not mark her."

"I am going to mark her."

Zander took off his golden mask, he looked frustrated. "The prophecy!" He hissed viciously.

"I don't care, Zan."

"She will not complain even if you didn't mark her."

"And let her bear the humiliation because I didn't mark her?"

"You could die!" Zander didn't know how he could get to his brother's thick skull.

It wasn't like he didn't know about this. He was also well aware of his predicament, he himself said he was going to kill his mate. But, from the looks of it, there was no way Zenith would wish any harm on her.

"I will..."

But, before Zander could finish his sentence, Zenith had cut him off first. "You swore that you will not harm her no matter what. A life for a life, remember?"

Zander gritted his teeth. He closed his eyes in frustration and to control his rage.

"Have you not yet seen Aurel, what are you planning?" Zander learned about this because Aurel told him herself. "You know your condition will get worse without her concoction."

"I know the concoction."

"You know?" Zander frowned. "How? How did you know?" There was no way Aurel told him about this, because this was only her leverage to get to see Zenith and the only time he gave a fuck about her.

"You don't need to know about that. Don't ever bring the prophecy up again. None of that is right." Zenith turned around, but when Zander was about to stop him, he gave him one last word. "Don't stand between me and her, Zan. I have chosen you for the last ten years, I am going to choose her now."

"Are you telling me that you are going to rebel if I try to harm her?"

"I only want you to know that I hold as much power as you do."

And after saying that, Zenith entered the room and closed the door behind him to lie down beside his woman. Dawn was sleeping soundly; she was not aware of her surroundings or the storm that was brewing in the capital city with the eye of the storm being the palace.

"I love you, Dawn." Zenith kissed Dawn's forehead. "I hope when the time comes, you are going to forgive me."

Zenith pulled her closer against his chest and closed his eyes. He would savor this moment while it lasted, before the storm would shake the entire continent.

Zander had said that he only needed one more year and everything would be over. Zenith hoped he would stick to his plan without bothering about his decision to choose Dawn.

That night, Zander gathered his royal beta and royal gamma.

"Execute the plan." Zander stared into the distance; his eyes filled with hatred when he stared at the golden mask that was sitting on the table.