

## Royal Contract 7

### Chapter 7 - Royal Tradition

"Excuse me, Prince Alexander, but the Duke had sent me to escort you back to the palace as soon as possible." One of his father's trusted heads of security, Major Barry approached him in a club.

He was out celebrating the success of his new acquisition with Marcus, his best friend, and most trusted lawyer, who handled all the legal aspects of his business ventures.

He was not expecting the sudden intrusion, but he was not exactly surprised. This would not be the first time that his father summoned his presence.

"Tell my father, I'm busy." He took his glass of scotch and continued to talk to Marcus about the plans they have about the business. It was also not the first time he had declined his request. "I'll visit him when I'm free." He was sure this would not be the last.

However, he knew that ignoring his father's demand would not work, but he moved away for a reason. So that he would not be answerable to him or the king. He already denounced his claim to the throne so he would be free to pursue his life the way he saw fit.

Agent Tim, his head of security approached him, assuming that he might be needing his help. "Boss, is there a problem?" As always, he had a sense when he was in a bind.

He always had clear instruction with his man not to meddle unless it was quite necessary. He did not want others to notice that he had security details around him. So, he usually had at most four at a time since there were no threats at the moment in his life.

"There's no problem." He told his man as he signaled him to stand down.

"I'm sorry, Sir, but we have strict instructions to take you home through your willing cooperation or by force," Thomas said as he finally changed his formal address into 'Sir' for security reasons in the presence of a commoner.

His security did not exactly come from the Royal Empire. They were locally hired by him, but that was again a long story to tell. But he would trust his life with his team compared to the men who served his father.

"I don't think that would be possible," Tim said with a slight threat, sensing the unusual behavior of the man standing at his boss's side.

Knowing his father, it was not a mere threat anymore. Whatever his father wanted, he was seriously determined that he presented himself before him. He began to weigh in the pros and cons of conceding to his wishes. Then, eventually made a decision.

"I don't think I would be needing your service tonight. Take your men and go home. I'll contact you as soon as I got back." He instructed Tim.

"Are you sure, Boss?" Tim tried to confirm, so when he nodded, he had no choice but to abide by their orders.

Tim started to back out and signaled his men to vacate the premises. Leaving him with Marcus and his unwelcome visitor.

"Just give me a few minutes. Wait for me outside." He informed Major Barry who moved towards the exit.

"Well, whatever your father wants from you, he must be truly desperate." Marcus jokingly said, drinking the remaining alcohol in his glass.

Marcus might not share his royal blood, but he considered him as his brother. He knew everything there was to know about him and his family. The same went for him. He trusted him with his secrets, even with his life.

"It would seem. I have no choice but to check on what he wants this time." He ordered one more round of drinks and shared it with his friend. Hoping that it would ease his tension.

It had been more than a year since he last visited home. Although he missed his mom, Duchess Katherine, he still avoided going home. He was not particularly keen on talking to his father who always insisted that he should take his responsibility to the crown seriously.

In truth, he had run away from home for the fact that he did not believe in the Royal Empire anymore. He had stopped considering himself part of the Royal clan and decided to make it on his own with the money his grandmother left to him.

"Good luck with that." Marcus tapped him on the shoulder as they finished their drinks and moved towards the exit.

The trip was a swift one since they never have to go through customs because of their diplomatic privileges. Just some of the perks of having a title on his name. Although he did not want it, it was unavoidable. He was stuck with it.

He even used his mother's surname to avoid association with his father, but there were times that people did get the idea of who he was. Then, his team would do their best to conceal his identity once again. It was a tedious effort, but something that he valued. His identity remained a secret.

As soon as they landed at the tarmac, he was quickly escorted to a private helicopter that would take him to his home. The Blackstone House. Home of the Duke of Blackstone and his family.

"Where's my father?" He walked past his secretary and strode towards his office, opening the hugely heavy door without even knocking.

"He's in a meeting..." His father's secretary slowly said as he was already inside the room before he could stop him.

"Count Wellington, would you mind if you leave me alone with my son for a few moments." His father, the Duke of the Blackstone House said.

His father was the younger brother of the King of the Royal Empire. Although the Empire was still extremely rich because of its vast properties and businesses owned, it was nothing more but a title.

It did not exactly give them the power to rule over the country as it used to a hundred centuries ago. It was just a mere publicity stunt and a tourist attraction for the visitors of the land. The King and the rest of the royal families were mere celebrities playing a part to keep the fantasy alive.

"Why did you send for me? I already told you that I do not wish to be a part of this royal farce of a life." He expressed deeply to his father his sentiment.

"Your grandfather's blood and my blood still run through your veins, so no matter what you say, you will always be my son. You can never turn your back to this family and your true responsibility as one of the future heirs of the throne." His father, Duke Frederick Blackstone shouted at him.

He sat down on the chair, hoping to get this over with whatever his father wanted from him. "Tell me father what is it that you wanted to discuss with me." There was no use to argue with a stubborn man like him.

His father insisted that formality was a must when they were inside the palace. He might not be following their principle, but he still respected his father for all he had done for their family. He did raise him as a good son, and he was indeed a good father despite their difference in opinion.

"Your mother wants to celebrate your 28th birthday next month. She had already had it arranged. All you have to do is show up." Duke Frederick announced resignedly, already knowing his next reaction to the news.

"You can tell mother that she can call it off because I'm not coming." He had no time for this social gathering. His time was very important especially now that his company was growing tremendously.

"This time, you have to attend it or else you would be putting me and your mother to shame." His father proclaimed with a deep sadness in his eyes.

He had known his father for his strength, his ability to make people follow him with no questions asked. He was ruthless in his dealing but fair in his judgment. Seeing him with a defeated look was something he never thought he would see, not even in his death bed.

Somehow, this made him think of his mom who was going through all that trouble. He hated disappointing her and seeing her sad was the last thing he wanted. "Ok. Let me think about it." He said, not wanting to commit to anything yet.

His father continued after hearing his answer. "You know the tradition and although this is the modern times, we would still like to uphold what was practiced by our ancestors."

"What are you saying?" Although he already had an idea of where this conversation was going. His father opened his desk drawer and took out a big brown folder. He shoved it in his direction. "What 's this?"

"Those are the list of the ladies that were chosen to be most appropriate to be your wife." He explained. "We want you to present to us during the ceremony your future wife."

"What?" This made him lose his temper. "You want me to what?" His manners just went out the window. His Nanna would certainly turn in her grave if she saw him shouting at his father in that

manner. Forgotten was his discipline, drilled to him since he can learn to talk and walk by his grandmother.

"It is our tradition and we uphold it no matter what." His father said adamantly. "Your grandfather did it. I did it, and you will do it."

"But father this is already the twenty-first century, we don't have to continue with that illogical tradition." He insisted as he disregarded the envelope. "Besides, I don't plan to get married soon. I certainly would not choose my wife from a list."

But, like all their family and the Royal tradition, it was not to be broken. There were corresponding consequences when a tradition was not met properly or not done at all.

As his father said, it would bring shame to his family and his father's house. Something that his father did not take lightly. His honor was everything to him, that would also mean breaking his mother's heart, which was something he never liked to do.