

SPELLBOUND 131

Chapter 131 - Message

Once Caius finally left the father and daughter pair, Evie could barely compose herself. Only god knows how hard she tried to stay passive from all the things she had heard. She was surprised at herself on her own persistence and will. She never thought she could actually act this well. From the outcome of things so far, her acting must have been quite convincing. Perhaps it was true that people could really do the impossible when pushed into a desperate state.

However, she could no longer stop the surge of anxiety inside her. For some reason, this news made her feel so worried to the point that she was feeling sick. She did not know why but she had a premonition that something bad was going to happen.

After glancing at the closed door, she grabbed onto her father's clothes.

"Father... I'm really scared. What if something bad happens to you? What if..."

"Hush, Evie dear. Didn't I told you that everything will be fine?"

"But father... I'm..."

Sighing, Lucius could only hug his daughter patiently. "Trust your father, Evie... alright, you must be very tired now. Go to sleep, my darling. Come, I worried you are too anxious. You need to calm down and rest, Evie."

He led her to her bed and when Evie protested, Lucius patiently coaxed her until Evie was finally lying on the bed. Despite everything that was happening, Evie was so glad that her father was here at least. He was being so gentle and patient with her. Evie could not help but reminisce on the times when she was younger. Due to the frequent wars in the previous years, her father was rarely home but when he was home, her father was still treating her the same. As though she had not grown up at all. Her mother even scolded him as he was spoiling her too much.

It somehow soothed her heart, but her fears were growing. And she knew that this is the last chance she would have to come clean with him. So, she must tell him everything now!

"Father," Evie tugged on Lucius sleeve as she looked up at him, "I don't think I can sleep. Would you sing me that lullaby you always sang for me when I was young?"

Lucius looked surprised at her request and Evie understood why. A grown woman like her still asking something like this from her father must have sounded weird. But her father only smiled and eventually Evie knew why. Her father was thinking she was still traumatized and that was why he was being so considerate and patient of her.

"Of course, darling." He sat at the edge of Evie's bed as he started to sing. Evie loved the low baritone vibration of her father's singing voice and it brought her back to those times when things were simpler, and her life was still sheltered.

The song was soothing and sounded so mystical because of the unknown language of the song's lyrics. Her father had mentioned that this song was passed down from generation to generation of the Ylvia family. And for some reason, only they, the Ylvia family could understand it. They did not even speak this unknown language but for some reason they just understood it even without learning it. This song actually became the test that their family used since long ago to prove that one

was a part of the Ylvia bloodline. Anyone who could not understand this song only meant that they were not related to the Ylvia family. As to the reason why only they could understand the song, remained a mystery until today.

Midway through the song, Evie began to join her father in singing and they both sang the song together until Lucius stopped and he let his daughter continue on the song. It was because this was how Evie was when she was young. She would continue singing the song until she fell asleep.

Lucius patiently patted his daughter's hand as he listened to Evie's melodious and beautiful voice. He was smiling, utterly pleased and glad that his beloved daughter was with him again. Only he knew how much he was missing her after they sent her off once her wedding with the vampire prince had concluded.

However, his smile slowly began to fade when Evie began to modify the song's lyric. The tune of the song did not change but the lyrics was now completely different. Evie was thankful that this Ylvian song was so long that there are many words she could use to send her message. The word 'husband' wasn't in the song but there was the word 'love', so she inserted that instead.

'I lie... My love is not evil... everything is a lie... my love loves me... and I love him.' Evie sang and Lucius's eyes widened as Evie continued with her eyes pleading him for help. He could clearly see she was begging him to understand her through her eyes and her song.

'We are happy... I love him...' Evie repeated those lyrics and her eyes looked even more desperate.

The lines on Lucius' forehead deepened as he gazed down at his daughter with severe eyes. He was not a fool not to understand what message his own daughter was trying to get across to him. Those words and the look in his daughter's eyes – he knew that those eyes were desperately asking for help. Lucius was always aware and even awed by his daughter's intelligence since she was young. He had seen so much potential in her because of her intelligence that could surpass many great minds. He had always thought that if only his daughter was not a woman.

So, these cryptic lyrics she had created was not even a surprise to him how she manage to come up with it. However, he was shocked by the meaning he was deciphering from her cryptic message and the reason why she had to go through all this hassle when the two of them were already alone inside her bedchamber. The only reason he could think about why his daughter was going through such great lengths was because she was afraid someone will hear her even in her bedchamber. This only went to prove that she knew there was someone who was eavesdropping and perhaps, watching too, since his daughter could have just written him a letter. But she did not.

Chapter 132 - Next Plan

Realizing that someone must be watching them from somewhere hidden at that moment, Lucius held himself back from asking Evie any questions until the song ended.

Though he wanted to know more about this, Lucius was not certain on what he should do next. He understood the hidden message his daughter was trying to tell him, but he needed more explanation. With this message, things just got even more confusing and messed up. She was trying to tell him that all this while, the things that she had said and done was all a lie and that she loves her husband? It was hard for him to accept this so suddenly. It does not make any sense to him and though he loves his daughter dearly and would literally do anything and everything for her sake, Lucius could

not take that fact and had the notion that Gavriel must have manipulated her into saying all these things.

He had heard from Lorcan that this prince was a vicious and manipulative person. What if he had also manipulated Evie? What if he had seduced Evie and now, she was actually madly in love with him to the point of doing everything for him?

Seeing the calculative look in her father's eyes and the obvious signs of doubt in them, Evie clenched her fists tight into her blanket. She recognised and knew her father's every expression. She knows when he is having a dilemma and now it was obvious to Evie that her message was not enough to make him understand the entire story. Or perhaps he just does not quite believe her fully as of yet. She was sure he needed to hear more explanations for him to understand what was going on. However, she was glad to know this was coming as all she needed to do now was to move on to her next plan.

"Father," Evie started in a weak sleepy mumble, "will you still be here when I wake up?"

"I may not be here anymore my darling."

"I see... what if I tell you that, I want to come along with you, father?" she tested out the waters and Lucius was quick in shaking his head. Even though Evie had thought of begging her father to go along with him when she heard that they were going to pursue Gavriel, Evie chose not to do so. That was because she trusted fully in Gavriel's promise that he would come and take her back with him. She did consider the fact that, what if Gavriel appear here in Dacia and ended up with her not being here just because she wanted to follow along?

Thus, Evie ended up deciding that she would wait here patiently. She cannot risk any chances now.

"No Evie. You can't. It's too dangerous for you." Lucius told her. "You are going to stay here and wait for me to come back and get you, understand?"

Evie pouted and acted like she was about to cry. But eventually, she nodded. "I feel like I'm going to have a fever." She muttered pitifully and Lucius eyes widened in worry.

He immediately put his hand on her forehead to feel it. However, Evie's temperature seemed to be normal.

"Maybe my discomfort is caused by the rain. I think I really need to sleep and rest or else I might really get sick." Evie spoke before Lucius could even say a thing. "Could you bring me a towel before you go, father? I'm sorry, I don't like to have a vampire maid so I - "

"It's alright my darling, I'll go get it for you."

"It's in my dressing room, father." She said and Lucius blinked again. But he eventually stood up and headed to the bathroom. Almost hesitantly. Was Evie trying to send her in her dressing room?

Lucius wasn't certain. However, he felt that there was something else behind this action as well. Because he felt she was not feverish at all.

When Lucius entered the dressing room and saw a fluffy folded towel, he slowly searched it and he paused for a moment at the sight of a small paper that was folded and hidden under it.

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All the humans were already asleep when Caius entered emperor Lorcan's chambers.

"Did those humans finally settled down for the night?" asked Lorcan while he sat leisurely on a chair and was enjoying a glass of blood.

"Yes, father."

"And?" he lifted his brow. "Did you manage to find out anything else?"

"I have assigned someone to follow and watch Lucius and his daughter secretly. However, there had been nothing suspicious so far."

"Are you certain?" Lorcan arched a brow sceptically.

Caius blinked, seemingly not expecting his father's strong doubt.

"I made sure to even get someone to spy over them even inside her chambers. Lady Evielyn never spouted anything suspicious. Their conversations were all normal and as expected between father and daughter."

"Are you saying that the princess' claim is indeed the truth?"

"I could not find any signs of her claim being false, father. If she were lying, she would've been begging her father right now to help Gavriel. But she didn't and still seemed to be traumatized at the moment."

Lorcan narrowed his eyes. His fingers lightly tapping on his glass as if he were contemplating something else.

"Don't you think that something is strange here, Caius?" Lorcan asked and before stroking his chin lightly with his thumb. "I feel as if a brazen little someone is trying to play mind games with me."

Caius creased his brows in confusion.

"Whatever do you mean, father?"

Lorcan stood and walked towards Caius. "Oh well, it doesn't matter whether my suspicions are true or not at the moment," he said as he halted before Caius. "Because no matter what happens, we are going to end this nonsense very soon, you hear me Caius?" his voice suddenly became serious and deadly sharp.

"Yes, father." Caius was at attention as he knew his father was deadly serious.

"Once Lucius kills that damned prince, make sure you execute our plan flawlessly. I won't forgive any mistakes at this point. Do you understand?"

"Yes, father."

"Good," Lorcan patted his son's shoulder, "do not worry, I will watch over that human. If you come back victorious, she will be yours. But if you make any mistakes, you know what will happen." The threat in his voice was heavy with unconcealed danger.

"Rest assured, father. I will not make any mistakes and fail your expectations of me."

"Good spirit, son. Now go and prepare for our next plan."

"Yes, father."

Chapter 133 - Summon

Back in Evie's chambers.

Lucius was shocked at everything that Evie had written to him in her letter. And now that he was reading the last remaining part, his expression became darker and darker.

'Father, I suspect that this must be a trap for Lorcan to get rid of you! They only want to use you to kill my husband and once they get what they want, they would definitely do something to you! Believe me father, they had tried to kill me because they planned for a war to spark between you and my husband. However, my husband saw through their plans and that's why Gavriel and I escaped from the capital. He was the one to decide to bring me to a safe place. He was labelled a traitor because he saved me! He is not the enemy. If he is a monster, would I still look this fine by now? You won't be able to find a single scratch on me, father. He never treated me badly because he loves me dearly. You can tell, right father?'

Clenching his fists, Lucius crumpled the letter. Of course, he could tell. If it were true that his daughter was a prisoner of that man and was tortured by him as how it was made up to be, his daughter would not have been looking this fine. In fact, Evie looked better now compared to the last time he saw her when he was sending her away to Rennox castle. She definitely does not look to be maltreated at all. If she were not crying and trembling, Lucius would have doubted that she was kidnapped and imprisoned in Dacia for nearly a month based on her appearance.

However, if his daughter was right about everything, what was he going to do now? What about all the elaborate plans and discussions that had been carried out and decisions that were made? If this was all an elaborate trap orchestrated by emperor Lorcan, what was the best step for him to take now? How should he proceed with caution but also with tact? He was sure that any wrong moves would just cause more problems to be visited onto their heads – both on him and on Evie.

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The next morning, Caius and her father led their armies out of Dacia. Evie felt a little calmer upon finding and reading the note her father left in her dressing room. He had told her he would first go and meet Gavriel and that he would be extra careful with Caius and his men.

Evie was confident that her father would believe her. Even when Evie was young, her father would always be on her side even during those times when she had done something naughty and bad. He would always choose to believe her. Evie somehow had seen this decision of his coming. As for Lucien, he believed his daughter, but he was still unsure about Gavriel. Evie could already tell what her father was hoping for to happen. When he meets up with Gavriel, he would definitely confront him. However, Evie was not so worried on this matter because she knew that when her father finally meets Gavriel, he would know that her husband was not a monster. All she needed was to have her father talk to Gavriel. Once her father has a chance to have a straightforward and truthful discussion with Gavriel and see for himself what kind of a person was he, things would be able to proceed as they have planned. Evie was that confident in Gavriel and his ability to convince her father into turning his views around.

And she also knew that Gavriel would definitely be able to convince her father in no time at all. She just knew it. One reason was because of the fact that her husband was the most charming creature she knew. And she was quite sure it not only applies to the female population, but also to the males. Just that he would need to put in the conscious effort of doing it in the first place. So far, she has yet to see her husband fail whenever he was being his suave self and had set his mind to convincing

someone or a group of people on something that he wanted to get across. Thus, in this case, she was sure he would be putting more than a hundred percent to succeed as this not only as it concerns both their future and happiness but also the lives of the many Dacrians.

As Evie watched the exiting army from her chamber's window, she prayed for both of her husband's and father's safety. And for the plans that they have made to turn out well.

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Nothing unusual happened in Dacia since the day her father left. It was quiet in the last two days that passed since her father had left.

However, for a reason she did not know about, Evie was suddenly summoned by emperor Lorcan. And the thing that gave her pause was she did not get called to the throne hall but suspiciously into his chambers. Why would he suddenly summon her? And why to his personal chambers? Evie shivered as she did not even dare think of what might come her way. However, she could not avoid this summon.

Evie kept glancing at Leon as they walked along the corridors in silence. She had not spoken to Leon since he was assigned to be her personal guard. Because she was aware that they were still being monitored secretly. Thankfully, it seemed as though she was not the one being watched this time but Leon. The presence that she felt lurking in her bedchamber when her father was still in the castle had also disappeared the moment her father left.

By the time they finally reached the huge door of the emperor's bedchamber, Evie swallowed hard. She glanced at Leon again and when Evie saw a hint of worry in his eyes, her heart began to thump wildly. She thought it was only her who was having bad feelings about this. She thought she was just being too nervous or even overly paranoid. But seeing Leon's expression now made her realize that her intuition might not be all that wrong.

"Come in Lady Evielyn, the door is opened." A voice echoed from the inside of the room and Evie felt goosebumps crawl all over her skin.

Chapter 134 - Appetizer

Evie's initial jerk reaction was to turn around and run back to her room without looking back. But she knew she could not escape this as it was a royal summon. Thus, taking a deep breath, Evie steeled herself. Though she knew something was definitely off with this summon, she did not have a choice. She could not turn around and leave or disobey this summon. Because if she did, who knows what this emperor would do? She could not afford to anger him when her father and Gavriel were not here to defend or save her if and when this emperor decides to do something funny. Though Leon was here, she knew his power would not be enough to deal with royalty, and this being the emperor himself.

When Evie nodded at Leon, the half-blood clearly struggled to make himself move. But when Evie flashed him a forced smile, Leon clenched his jaws and moved to push the huge door open.

She squared herself as she entered and clenched down hard on her jaws. She would not give the emperor the satisfaction of seeing or hearing how nervous she was. However, the moment she stepped inside the door, the heartbeat she tried so hard to keep normal began to drum loudly in her ears when she saw the emperor lounging on the chair. He was wearing only a bath robe and his hairy chest was on full display. Evie's heart shook and her legs almost gave way as she took in the

sight. But his clothes were not the even the issue right now because his blue eyes now looked incredibly dimmer, as though dark blood had just been mixed into them.

The emperor chuckled. "Sigh... don't be so frightened, Lady Evielyn. I had wondered if you also reacted the same way in front of Gavriel." He asked as he rose languidly from his chair. He then glared hard at Leon who had followed Evie in. "And you, who permitted you to enter?"

"I... I asked him to come along, Y-your Majesty. As you can see, I am still quite scared around vampires." Evie threw out the only excuse she could come up with for now.

The dangerous glare in his eyes somehow subsided. "Like I said, you have nothing to fear. I am not a monster like Gavriel." His gaze on Evie gentled, like the way it was when Evie had first seen him at the ballroom in his imperial castle.

"However, I will be needing this man to step out." He waved a hand, dismissing Leon. "You can wait for her outside the door." His tone became frosty when her gave the order to Leon.

When Leon did not immediately obey his command, his face darkened, and Evie saw a serious threat in them. "J-just go, Leon." Evie pushed Leon. "I'll be fine. His Majesty only wants to talk with me. Wait for me by the door."

Leon stared hard into Evie's eyes but Evie was certain that this emperor would not hesitate to end whoever that opposes him. She could see it in his eyes. The threat looming in there was alarming and he did not bother to veil it at all.

Evie forced herself to nod at Leon and thankfully, Leon did not continue being stubborn and finally moved. Though it was obvious he was extremely unwilling.

Once the door closed behind Leon, Lorcan sighed before mildly slumping back into his comfortable looking chair. "What a stubborn half-blood." He hissed.

"May I know the reason in you summoning me here, Your Majesty?" Evie asked. She was curious but yet, at the same time nervous on wanting to know the reason behind this summoning.

Lorcan began to pace slowly and elegantly before her. Evie who was closely observing every move of the emperor thought that no matter how he tried, he was never going to be as elegant and regal as her beloved husband.

After pacing about for a while, he halted, and his gaze moved over to Evie before travelling from her head right down to her toes. What he just did gave Evie the creeps. She somehow managed to maintain her poker face and showed no outward reaction whatsoever. Inside her mind however, Evie was screaming bloody murder and wanted to slap that rude emperor.

"I need something from you, Lady Evielyn." He drawled out and Evie could not help but stiffen up in fear.

He laughed again at her slight reaction, but this time it was stomach-churning laugh.

"Do not worry, Lady Evielyn. Though I admit your beauty is incomparable, I am not interested in your body. It's my son who is the one that wants you badly... so you do not need to show that wary look on your face in front of me." He informed her and Evie would have sighed in relief if not for the way his gaze was continually fixed on her neck.

He began to take a step closer towards her. "Your body will soon belong to my son. But your blood... it will belong to me." He whispered before smiling widely, showing his fangs. Warning bells then began to toll in Evie's mind.

The horror that filled Evie's eyes made him smile again. As though her fear was a kind of appetizer to the main course – which was her of course. And now the hungry look in his eyes turned into something that was beyond starvation.

"Don't be scared, dear girl. I only want to taste the blood of the infamous Ylvia family. I told you, my son wanted you as his reward. So, I will naturally not harm you." he added as he took a few more steps closer to Evie, like a ferocious hyena drooling at a piece of juicy meat. "I initially had planned to wait until my son's return. But since this damned place has no available human to serve me, I don't think anyone else would be able to quench my thirst now but you. I will only take a little sip as an appetizer. This good emperor promises you that." He swore and then launched himself at her.

Chapter 135 - Chase

On the other side of the door.

Leon already had his eyes turned red the moment the door closed behind him. He knew the emperor was planning on doing something unforgivable. Though a half-blood, he was still a vampire and a strong one at that. Thus, his hearing was not impaired at all and was every bit as good if not better than the average vampire. And now that he had heard all the things emperor Lorcan had said through the doors, he could no longer stop himself from taking action.

He knew what was at stake and he understood why the princess was trying her very best not to make the emperor doubt them. However, Leon could never let this happen. Prince Gavriel had entrusted Her Ladyship's safety and well-being into his hands. Thus, allowing her blood to be drawn and taken as food for another vampire – and the emperor, no less – was definitely going against that order. Even though the emperor did swear to have just take only a sip of her blood, Leon knew that once he tasted the princess' blood, he would never be able to stop drinking until he drew every single drop from her body and will eventually end up killing her.

Prince Gavriel had told Leon before he left to never let her get wounded – not even a single scratch. And Leon very well knew the reason where that order stemmed from. Because the princess getting wounded would be the same as game over for the both of them. Just a small scratch and the emperor and every vampire here would all go crazy over the princess' scent!

Gritting his teeth, he saw the huge and powerful vampires who were guarding the emperor's door notice the change of color in his eyes and they walked over to him, prepared to drag him down or even to kill him if he does anything suspicious like barging inside the emperor's chambers.

Leon noticed the vampires' approach, but he calmly turned and knocked on the door when he suspected that the emperor was about to launch himself on the princess. He was hoping that the knock could at least do something, anything. But as expected, the emperor ignored his knock and Leon did not receive any response. However, Leon blatantly continued rapping on the heavy wooden door without care still hoping that it would serve as a distraction to deter the emperor from continuing on his deed.

"If you knock one more time, you're dead." The vampire behind him threatened. "A mere half-blood like you does not have any rights to disturb his majesty's –"

The vampire could not even finish his sentence because Leon had already sent both the big men flying. He had delivered a surprise punch to the face for each of them and he did not bother to reign in his strength. And in the blink of an eye, Leon pulled the door instead of pushing it and broke it completely as he was afraid that the princess might be right behind the door. 'I'm sorry Princess, but this is the only thing I could think of doing right now.' He uttered within himself as he flung the broken door carelessly behind him, not caring if it hit anyone. As he knew anyone who was there would be people who are on the emperor's side. Thus, it was only deserving if they did get knocked down.

As he moved, he was already planning to snatch the princess away and escape the castle immediately before Lorcan could sink his dirty fangs into her neck and bite her. But when he finally stepped into the emperor's chambers, his eyes were greeted with a surprising sight. To his utmost surprise, there was a long and ugly slash running across the emperor's face – from his temple to his chin – with the princess on the opposite side, slightly crouched. In her hand, a beautiful but wicked looking dagger was tightly clutched in her hand.

"You little conniving bitch!!!" the emperor roared. "How dare a mere human like you do this to me!!! I'm going to kill you!!!"

Leon jumped forward and swiftly grabbed Evie and the next thing Evie knew, they were being pursued as though they were wanted criminals. The imperial army came after them and Leon slashed wildly and mercilessly at the unfortunate vampires who tried to block their path.

Evie only knew that they were being chased but she could not see anything clearly. She was being hauled around like a sack of potatoes over Leon's shoulder as he leapt, ran, and fought against their pursuers. The sudden turn of events was so abrupt that Evie could hardly process everything that was going on. Oh God. What was going to happen now? Would everything she worked so hard and planned for going to crumble to pieces now? More importantly, how are they going to survive this?

Evie lifted her head and looked back to where they had been fleeing from. What she saw made her heart nearly stop. There were too many soldiers who are now chasing after them. She could not even estimate the numbers that were coming at them – it was that many. How could they escape this predicament that they have landed themselves in?

Her thoughts were disrupted at the sound of something falling and crushing. When she turned to look at the source of the loud noise, she saw the great chandelier that was hanging from the ceiling of the grand hall they were running across come crashing down on many pursuing vampires and blocked up the grand staircase. It appeared that Leon had found the opportunity to slash at all the chandeliers they passed by. This had caused the vampires who were chasing them to fall a little farther back from where they are.

In no time, they both arrived inside Evie's chambers and Leon was already hurriedly wrapping her up in her thick travelling cloak.

"I'm sorry princess, but we don't have any other choice but to escape this city." Leon said before he pulled her hood down. However, this time he did not throw her over his shoulder as he did before. Evie did not know this, but Leon was told that the princess could be pregnant with the precious heir. So, he was trying his very best to be gentle in his handling of her person. He was so conscientious

of this matter even though they were in this situation where they could hardly afford to breathe. Evie spied her bow and arrows lying on the chair nearby and ran over quickly to grab them before Leon made her sit on his strong arm and hold onto his neck when the door was smashed open. There also already vampires swarming outside the windows.

Evie heard Leon curse quite colourfully and she could not help but flash a wry smile quickly. She did not expect the proper and usually silent Leon to be such a sailor in this aspect.

"Get ready, Princess. And please don't get wounded or else..

." Leon whispered as he pulled down Evie's hood even further.

In the next instant, Evie heard another crushing noise and the sounds of sword slashing against flesh. Then there was that feeling of them being suspended in air as Leon jumped from the castle's window.

Chapter 136 - Happiness

Leon landed lightly on the courtyard with Evie carefully held in his arms. A group of the imperial army who were already stationed and ready on the ground came at them at the instant they landed, and Leon was forced to fight their way out. He had to exert more care and caution so as to ensure that while fighting, he was also protecting Evie from getting injured.

Their situation was getting more and more impossible since Leon could not even fight to his best capabilities not only because he had her in his arms, but he was also safeguarding her. He had to honour the order given by his prince to protect her from all harm.

"Damn!" Leon cursed as he paused, pointing his sword towards the vampires who were surrounding them. They need to escape, or it was truly over for them. They must leave the walls before the soldiers blocked all possible escape routes. That was right, they still have a chance. They must reach the walls before the emperor's words reach the soldier's ears.

Suddenly, an incredibly strong aura seeped out of Leon's skin and the vampires immediately felt that the half-blood was about to become the deadly weapon that he was famed to be. Everyone started to be more wary and focused as their instincts sensed an immense danger.

Evie on the other hand, felt that a ferocious clash was about to commence so she tightened her hold on Leon. She had not seen Leon in a real fight before. But she had a feeling that he was far stronger and way more skilful than any of Gavriel's men.

When the first vampire launched themselves at them, Evie could only gasp at Leon's sudden and fast-as-lightning movement. She felt them spin around in the air and the next thing she knew, there were large patches of blood splattered all over her snow-white cloak. What did he just do?

The sight of the dismembered bodies on the ground made Evie's eyes widen. That did not take any time at all. All it took was just a few seconds. It seemed that her intuition was on the dot. This man was strong. And he was stronger than Samuel!

The other group of vampires who had leapt down from her chambers, attacked them and somehow, Leon still managed to break free from their confinement. However, she did not have the luxury to be amazed or praise Leon's skill as he started to move at an incredibly fast pace again. No, this time, it was much faster. This was the first time Evie travelled at such a rapid pace since Gavriel always

made sure to slow down whenever he was carrying her. However, Evie understood that time was of the essence at the moment.

Evie could only hold on to him tighter as she hid her face against the wind that was hitting her and peeked through to look behind them. She could see black figures jumping and following after them. But they were still quite far behind to be able to catch up to them anytime soon. However, that was provided that Leon maintained his current pace. At this rate, there was a very high possibility that they could manage to escape!

Silently, Evie prayed and hoped for a miracle to happen. She somehow knew that if the army ever caught them, the emperor would most probably execute them both. She had seen the murderous rage in his eyes right before she slashed at his face with her dagger. Lorcan was truly a real cold-blooded monster, and she knew he would not hesitate to punish her and Leon in the most inhumane way if he catches them!

And she was certain Leon was aware of this as well, and that was why he was doing everything he could right now for them to be able to escape.

As they passed through the town, Evie saw the streets where she and Gavriel roamed around just recently. Dacia was so lively in her mind and the face of Gavriel appeared so vividly in her eyes as she looked down. It was hard to believe that it was only a few days ago.

Now here she was, escaping for her life. It was hard to believe that she just experienced the happiest days of her life not long ago when everything was so peaceful, dreamy, and magical. Why was it that happiness seemed to always end so fast? As if it were just a fleeting dream? Somehow, she had that niggling thought that whenever she experienced a little bit of happiness, there will be the negative side to it. The payment that she needed to compensate for that happiness she had acquired.

As Evie continued staring absentmindedly at the town that was now as quiet as a ghost town, a flash of light caught her attention and her eyes widened.

"Arrows!" she immediately yelled, and Leon cursed again.

He immediately secured Evie and shielded her with his body as it was too late for them to change course.

Evie felt something hit Leon's shoulder. Was he hit by an arrow?

Her heart jumped when she peeked over his shoulder and saw a couple of arrows planted into his broad back.

"Leon... !!!" Evie cried out but Leon continued running as if he was not being targeted to play the hedgehog. Those arrows sticking out of his back did not even seem to slow him down.

"Stop peeking, Princess. I can't afford to let you get hit!" he told her but when Evie saw more and more flares that she knew were arrows being reflected by the sun, Evie swallowed in dread. If Leon were to get hit again...

What should she do?! Do something Evie!!

All of a sudden, Leon halted.

When Evie looked back to the front, she realized they had finally reached the wall. However, to her surprise, the soldiers were already waiting for them at the top of the walls and arrows were pointed

menacingly at them. And these arrows were not meant for vampires or humans. One look and Evie knew the purpose of those arrows. These were the kind that were used to shoot down a dragon – not a human or a vampire. Though at that moment, those arrows were being used to aim directly at them.

Chapter 137 - Order

Those massive arrows levelled at them just confirmed the fact that orders had already gone out demanding for their lives. It was a take-no-hostage situation at this point, and Evie realised how dismal their prospects for escape were. At that moment, Evie's already pale complexion became even paler, as if all the blood from her was drained all at once.

Was this the end for the both of them? She felt as though her heart was now in her throat as dread gripped her entire being. The sight of the top walls now swarming with enemy vampires all at attention and more than ready to finish them off at the mere shout of an order from their commanders just made Evie subconsciously tighten her grip on Leon. It seemed there was no way they would be able to escape out of this alive now!

She heard another harsh curse coming from Leon, and she swallowed hard as she nervously glanced around them, surreptitiously checking if there could still be a small opening for escape that they might have missed out earlier due to their panic.

"Damn it all to hell! Are these soldiers so terrified of me or something, that they even end up deciding to use an arrow intended to take down a dragon instead of fighting me straight up?" Leon grumbled as he gritted his teeth.

Somehow, having him not cowering despite their obviously hopeless situation made Evie cheer up somewhat and she managed to squeeze out a little smile. There was no doubt that she was terrified to death, but she was also aware that there was nothing her could fear do to help them out at this moment. Thus, she kept taking in deep steadying breaths to keep the gripping terror at bay and stay as focussed and composed as she could. This she could do as the least of her efforts as she already knew there was nothing else that she could contribute to help Leon in fighting the armies.

"I'm so sorry, Princess," Leon said after a long sigh as he slowly put her down on her feet. As he faced her, Evie knew he purposely did that as he was using his body literally as a shield for her just in the event that the enemy archers decided to fire at them out of the blue.

Evie bit down on her lips so hard it nearly broke her skin and bled at the sound of his apology. "No. Don't you apologize to me, Leon." She said now feeling utterly anxious again. She knew that Gavriel had given him orders to keep her safe in his absence. However, she did not think it was necessary to the extent of giving up his own life. Though he was in service to his lord and master, Evie did not feel comfortable with the concept of having them guard and protect without care for their own well-being. They were individuals with feelings and fears too!

The half-blood smiled at her and for a moment, his blood red eyes that were burning intensely, quietened down, and reverted to their original calm purple. But all too soon, they returned to being flaming red again, as though a pair of purple diamonds were being swallowed by thick dark blood.

"They'll definitely shoot at us immediately the moment I make a single move," he stated before he lowered his head, looking ashamed and defeated. Evie was confused at his defeated look as Leon was definitely one of the strongest vampires she knew if only for the fact that Gavriel had assigned

him to guard her. So, what was with the defeated look? After a few moments, Leon explained. "I don't know how to get you out of here anymore, Princess. Please forgive me."

Evie then realised that defeated look on Leon was not for himself, but for her sake! But before Evie could even respond to that, Leon turned around and faced the wall again all the while making sure that Evie was well shielded right behind him.

Seeing the couple of large arrows planted in his broad back, Evie's eyes could only glimmer with unshed tears as she choked back the sobs that were threatening to break free from her throat. But she clamped back hard on it and swallowed it as to not bring more distractions to Leon whose senses were already strained to the maximum in trying to protect the both of them. The least she could do was not break down and cause a disruption in his focus and allow the enemy to make use of it to take the advantage of sneaking in an attack on them. And judging from his stance, it was obvious that he was now prepared to just stand there and use his body to shield her. Because that was the only choice they have right now. They could no longer flee. They could not even run back to the castle to seek refuge.

The sudden sound of a sword falling on the ground echoed loudly in Evie's ears. Leon had dropped his sword and spread out his arms wide in surrender. Evie's eyes widened as her heartbeat sped up, afraid of what that action meant. She had a bad feeling in the pit of her stomach and sensed that things are really spiralling out of control real quick.

"You can shoot at me but spare the Princess. I had kidnapped her against her will." Leon shouted out when a bulky man jumped from the wall and landed before him.

He had a wicked smirk on his face as he stared at Leon's sword on the ground. "And why the hell are you trying to kidnap the princess?" the man asked with a raised brow. "Oh wait. It seems that the answer is already obvious. You have already sworn loyalty to that traitor of a prince, have you not?"

The man shook his head when Leon just stared back at him and did not bother to respond. "It seems it was true that half-bloods are helluva strong, but they are also glorified idiots at best. How could you swear loyalty to a prince who don't even have any allies?" The man guffawed as he continued on rambling. "Oh well, it doesn't matter anymore because you're going to die now. And sorry to let you down, but we didn't receive any orders to spare the princess' life. She had done something unforgivable to His Majesty, the emperor, after all."

Leon's eyes widened. It was already a surprise that these soldiers were already perfectly prepared like this as if they had anticipated that they were coming. They even already knew about what the Princess had done to the emperor? But just how did they receive the news? Their pursuers had just caught up to them. So how was it that they seem to already know everything that had occurred?

In his long days of service to the emperor, he knew that there was no other special way for the vampires to send information other than sending the fastest messenger. He was quite certain no one was able to outrun him during the chase a while ago. So why? How come they already knew of the details and how come these soldiers were already on alert like this?

Gritting his teeth, Leon decided that the only explanation was because there was something shady going on behind the scenes.

When Leon saw that the man had stepped back as if to get away from where they were, he narrowed his eyes in suspicion and wondered what was behind that move. After scanning the surroundings

quickly, he realised that the man backed away so that the army could finally shoot. He then clenched his fists tight. "Wait! You can't possibly shoot at the princess along with me like this. Have you forgotten that she is the daughter of the dragon guardian?" Leon was grasping at anything and everything that he could think of right now to just stall for whatever little time he could buy. Every extra one second would be a second extra for the princess to live.

"We don't have to care about that. The emperor already sent an order to kill her along with you."

Anger immediately burst forth from Leon's body at what he had heard. "You think that the dragon guardian will forgive any of you when he finds out that you lot harmed her?" Leon threatened and snarled.

"Of course, we will make it look like you were the one who killed her." the man said as he laughed and then he lifted his hand to signal the vampires to get ready to shoot.

Leon immediately turned around to grab Evie and pulled her down to the ground. "Crouch down!" he yelled out as he picked his sword again and towered above her. "I'll protect you until the end." He smiled at her before he pulled her hood to cover her eyes. No! This cannot be happening!

As Evie scrambled in utter fear as she pulled her hood back to look at him, a familiar voice suddenly echoed forcefully, breaking the tension at the battlefield.

"STOP!" the voice roared powerfully, "Or else... this damned emperor of yours is dead!"

Chapter 138 - How?

Suddenly, the world seemed to become eerily silent as everyone looked around to seek for the source of that ominous voice that reeked of nothing but danger and authority. Even more than that, they were curious at who was it that could so easily shout out and threaten them with the life of their emperor itself.

Everyone froze in shock except for Evie who had felt the hideous tension in her body immediately disappear. How? How could it be that he was already back? And the more curious thing was that he did not appear from the walls or the gates... but from the castle?

Evie felt her heartbeat hastened but it was not due to fear and dread this time. She could not believe that she would be hearing his voice again anytime soon even though it did sound quite like death warmed over at that moment. She could not help but release a small chuckle then, owing it to both the strain and stress of the chase as well as the sudden relief that came at the right time.

Slowly, Evie turned around and the moment her eyes fell on Gavriel, she felt as though she had finally seen the saving light after being confined in the deepest of darkness for days. He looked dishevelled and his dark wavy hair was a tussled mess. However, even that could not hide the murderous fury that was coming off him in waves nor the burning intensity in his eyes, as he was more than prepared and happily ready to behead the stinky emperor that he currently held captive in his hands.

No one dared to move a muscle nor make an unnecessary sound right then. Perhaps, the vampires were still stunned to their cores and unable to believe what they were seeing. Or perhaps, it was because Gavriel looked like a beast with eyes screaming bloody murder and look that was ready to slaughter anyone who dared to make one wrong move. However, the clear and undisputed fact was that their emperor was now hanging off his hands like an unfortunate rat hanging off the mouth of

the cat. So much for showing off the power and might of the great emperor Lorcan. Leon had a wicked smirk as his body finally relaxed a little.

All creatures at the scene including Evie and Leon had the same question. What had just happened? How did it be that the emperor was already held captive all of a sudden? And where did that Prince Gavriel appear from, seemingly out of nowhere.

"All soldiers drop to your knees and throw down your weapons!" Gavriel roared once again, he had never glanced at Evie, "Make sure they are far enough away from you... Or else I'll behead your beloved emperor right now!"

Most of the imperial army had already left with the crown prince and the human army led by the dragon guardian. However, there were still enough numbers in their ranks to guard the entire city. There were still too many of them to go against just Gavriel and his five men. This could be one of the major reasons why he chose to keep the emperor alive even though it was taking all he had to control himself from slaughtering him now that he was finally at his mercy like this.

When the soldiers remained frozen at their spots, Gavriel pressed his sword against Lorcan's throat until a line of blood appeared on his neck and began to trickle down. "You wouldn't want me to repeat myself another time!" Gavriel snarled threateningly, his dark aura that was screaming of bloodlust spread out so strongly that even the soldiers on the walls felt a violent shiver ran down their spine.

Gavriel felt the emperor's body shivered a little and when Gavriel's sword pressed down even harder, Lorcan burst out like a desperate man, shouting at his soldiers.

"Drop to your knees now!!!" he screamed in fear and as though they were jolted awake, they all fell on their knees. Gavriel's men immediately appeared and began to collect all their weapons.

In no time at all, the unarmed soldiers were gathered on the ground and rounded up into a circle. There were a few Dacrians who appeared as well and though they were not soldiers, they were more than capable to maneuver the arrows. With Zolan's signal, they went to the walls, replacing the imperial army who were once stationed there.

When everything was finally under control, Zolan forced the emperor to drink something from a small bottle and in a matter of seconds, the emperor went limp and fell over. The huge wound on his face did not heal, but instead, it became bluish black, making him look even more awful.

The soldiers on the ground had their eyes bulging out when Lorcan seemed to end up losing consciousness.

"Don't worry, he's not going to die. We still needed him alive." Zolan said upon seeing the soldier's reaction. "Samuel! Put him in the cell." He told Samuel and the huge man unceremoniously haul off the unconscious emperor right away and took him to be thrown into the cell.

"Now what should we do these soldiers?" Zolan then faced Gavriel who was still unable to erase the extremely deadly look on his face.

"Chain them all up. I don't think these men would easily turn their backs on Lorcan." Gavriel ordered grimly.

"Right. We will give them enough time to calm down and think for themselves before you talk some sense to them. Perhaps, we could make them serve you too, like Leon."

As his men and a group of Dacrians who came to their aid began to chain the imperial soldiers up, Gavriel moved from his spot and finally looked over at Evie.

When Evie saw him finally walking towards her, her feet subconsciously moved with the intention of meeting him halfway. However, before she could even take one step, Gavriel appeared right before her. His heavy sword was released from his hand and clattered to the ground with a loud clunk before he seized her in a bear hug. She was whirled around before being crushed against Gavriel's chest.

Chapter 139 - Perfectly Fine

All the stress and tension that Gavriel had been keeping so tightly constrained inside him was released through a violent shudder as he crushed her hard against him with that one hug. Deep groans and curses escaped from his lips as his shaking fingers slid from her back into her glorious silvery locks. His large palm curved over her skull and then dragged her head back before his mouth moved feverishly over her face, planting hot little kisses wherever it landed.

"Damn it all to hell, Evie. Gods," he whispered as he drew in a shaky breath. She could no longer see any sign of that incredible calmness he was exuding just a while ago. He sounded like a total mess right now, before her as he kept her caged tightly in his arms, as though he had just gone through the scariest moment in his life.

"Holy hell." He muttered again and Evie lifted her head to look up at him. Seeing his face still frowning with concern, she then lifted her hands and caressed his face.

"Gavriel." She finally managed to speak. Gavriel froze for a moment as they stared at each other before he closed his eyes and bent his head to rest his forehead on hers while letting out a deep sigh. Evie felt as though he had just deflated like a punctured balloon with the release of that long breath that Gavriel let out. His palm moved to cover the back of her hands that were on his face before he lifted his head and gently bumped his forehead against hers, causing Evie to wince with a start. Evie blinked as she tilted her head up to look into Gavriel's eyes.

"I was so scared. I thought I was... too late..." he whispered in a hoarse voice.

Seeing the dread in his eyes, Evie pulled him to her and hugged him. "You were never late, Gavriel. Remember when you suddenly arrived at the very last second that time in the little forest?" she whispered while caressing his hair gently. Even though Evie had also just gone through such a mind-numbing fear, she could just feel that the fear Gavriel just experienced far surpassed hers by a whole damned lot. "Whenever those times I thought that it was over for me, you always appeared out of nowhere and manage to save me... and always just in the nick of time." She smiled and then planted a kiss on his lips. "I am alright now that you're here."

The tremors in Gavriel's hands slowly calmed down and the couple hugged each other again. Not minding that there were so many curious eyes who were watching their public displays of affection.

When Evie felt Gavriel's body loosened up a little, she pulled away from his embrace and looked into his eyes again. "What happened?" she asked but just as Gavriel opened his mouth to answer her, Evie suddenly took her gaze off him and started looking around. "Wait, where is Leon? Gavriel, Leon is —"

"Don't worry. Zolan is already in the midst of treating his wounds." Gavriel said and Evie's shoulders dropped in relief as she heaved out a big sigh.

"He is going to be okay, right?" she asked him anxiously. Her grip on Gavriel's cloak was tight as her large eyes looked at him with so much worry. "He was hit twice while protecting me. And those arrows... they were so large..."

All of a sudden, Gavriel lifted her into his arms and rested her head on his shoulder. "Don't worry. Leon isn't someone that mere arrows such as those could take down."

Gavriel brought Evie to where Leon was and when she saw that the man indeed was looking quite fine, Evie sighed in relief. In fact, Leon was even quite cheerful in the company of his fellow men.

"I told you, I wouldn't have chosen this man to guard you if he could be so easily taken down by mere arrows." Gavriel said as he looked at Leon. He had put Evie down, but still kept his arm wrapped around her waist protectively, never letting her go.

"Is he alright?" Evie walked forward and asked Zolan, "the arrows don't have any poison on them, right?"

"Actually, they were tipped with poison but there is no need to worry, Princess. Because I have the antidote for it." Zolan smiled and Evie's eyes widened. She was shocked that the arrows indeed had poison coated on it. "As long as it is not a poison as strong as nightmist, then there is nothing for us to worry about. Now all he need is to sleep it off as the side effect of the antidote I gave him will make him dizzy."

Just as Zolan said those words, Leon who was already drowsy, fell asleep.

Zolan then rose and faced the couple. "How about you, princess? You are unharmed, right?" he asked. Evie nodded positively at him.

"I am perfectly fine. All thanks to Leon's protection."

"I see. That's a relief then." Zolan sighed. Relieved that the princess was indeed unharmed since there was no hint of her blood's scent leaking out, it only meant that she was not wounded at all.

"Alright, I'll get everyone to gather around now, including the duke and duchess. Also, I'll send someone to fetch you both once everything is ready." He informed Gavriel and the prince nodded.

"Find me in my quarters."

"Yes, Your Highness."

When Zolan was gone, Gavriel did not waste another moment and he gathered Evie into his arms again. He brought her into his quarters inside the wall and as soon the door closed behind them, Gavriel pinned her against the door and kissed her.

Evie gasped in surprise, but she quickly opened up to him and the two of them found themselves tangled in each other's embrace and were kissing hard like it had been years since they had last tasted each other's flavour.

"Gods, I've missed you so much, Evie." He murmured as he dragged his mouth over her face.

"I've missed you too, Gav." Evie replied breathlessly. "What happened?"

Gavriel pulled away a little before fondly caressing her cheek. "I'll explain to you later. For now, I'd like to know if you're truly fine as you have claimed."

"I really am fine!" Evie insisted as Gavriel pushed her forward.

"I'll be the one to decide that." He said, his silver eyes gleaming in the dim room as his fingers moved and swiftly removed her cloak. "After I finish checking every part of your body."

Chapter 140 - So Close

Evie's eyes widened as her face immediately flushed a deep red. The intense glimmer in his bright eyes made her feel that familiar feeling Gavriel always evoke inside of her. It was as though her body was melting like butter on a hot pan before his scorching gaze and she was rendered utterly helpless.

Blushing hard, Evie swallowed and forced herself to look away from his hypnotizing eyes. "I really am fine, Gavriel. If... if I am hurt, you'd immediately know right? I mean, you'd be able to smell my blood immediately if I even have a single scratch on me." Evie realised that she was blabbering due to being slightly embarrassed at the intensity of his seductive gaze on her. When that registered in her mind, she bit down on her lip and blushed even harder. She could even feel the heat radiating from her cheeks.

Even though she wanted them to be with each other like this, Evie just felt like it would not be good for the both of them if this continues. She wanted to hold him and kiss him more and never let go but they have more important things to deal with at the moment. If she allowed him go further and do what she suspects he was planning to do now, she was almost certain there would be no way on earth that she would be able to stop him anymore. Of course, that is provided if things escalated towards something that was more than just checking. However, knowing this god of seduction husband of hers, there was a very high chance that he would do more than just merely checking. More than likely was that checking he mentioned was just a pretext for him to initiate something more once the clothes came off.

"I know," he whispered as he jailed her between his strong arms. His eyes smouldered through the strands of his dark hair, like a pair of moonbeams peeking through the veil of the night. "But wounds aren't the only indication of you getting hurt. I need to be more than a hundred percent sure, my love. Or else, there would be no way I will be able to calm down."

"B-but..." Evie tried to protest weakly before getting cut off.

"Damn Evie..." his expression changed suddenly. His calm and collected facade disappeared in an instant. And then the next second he was resting his head on her shoulder and his voice came out in a harsh agonizing rasp. "I can't believe I came so close to losing you. Had I arrived just a little later... if I was even a second late... you don't know how scared I was... I still am just by thinking about what might have happened if... if..."

"Gavriel." Evie had swiftly caught his face with her hands and looked at him intently before planting soft and gentle kisses all over his face, hoping that by doing this it would calm and sooth him down a little. "I am so sorry I scared you," she whispered, coaxing him with all the love she could muster.

"What if the third time something like this happen to you and I can no longer make it in..." he trailed off snarling. "Heavens... I can't bear it, Evie. I can't..."

Seeing the fear in his bright eyes and feeling the tenseness in his muscles, Evie could not help but to just hug him tight and providing support. She had never seen him this emotionally vulnerable before. And she could not believe that just the very thought of losing her seemed to be his greatest

fear. She could not imagine if something bad really end up happening to her... how would he react at that time? Her heart swelled to the point that she felt like it would burst from all the love he was showering her with, yet at the same time it her heart ached for him because she was causing him all this fear so intense that it could even make a man like him tremble.

"I know you would never let anything happen to me." She whispered as she caressed his back with all the gentleness in the world. "Even if something like this would happen again, I know you would definitely arrive in time to save me." She smiled. "You would do everything and anything... even to the extent of giving me the whole world, but nothing can stop you from saving me, right? I will always trust in you, Gavriel. You are my hero after all."

With those words, Gavriel's body finally uncoiled and relaxed as his arms gripped Evie even tighter against him as if he wanted to have her permanently stuck to him so as to be closer than what was physically possible.

He did not bother to speak anymore but just quietly embrace her, fully enjoying the way she felt being cuddled in his arms. But for Evie, it felt as though he was finally coming to terms with his inner demons and his fear was now slowly being thrown away. She smiled again at the feel of his taut muscles slowly relaxing as she continued caressing him. She felt so pleased that she could cause this powerful man to tremble and then calm him down.

Evie had the feeling of wanting to protect this man at all costs as well, even though he seemed to not need her protection at all.

When Gavriel finally pulled away, his expression was no longer looking like a drenched trembling wolf. He was back to his usual cool, calm and composed self. Looking at him, Evie was astonished at how fast he managed to gather himself from that emotionally messed up wreck back to a calmed and controlled. She wondered if he ever showed others the many expressions he had shown her a while ago. Was he always this good in acting all tough and unbreakable?

"But wife... I still want to check every part of your body, or else, I would keep worrying about you actually hiding injuries beneath that thick clothes of yours from me." He said as his hands were already skilfully pulling at the complicated ribbons tied behind her dress and Evie could only hang her mouth open in astonishment. Wait!