

The King's Tainted Mate Chapter 11 - Tips

I was caught off guard! Once when the most enticing scent overwhelmed my senses. Twice when he had stepped through that door in all his majestic glory. And thrice when his eyes locked on mine.

Accused of stealing from the king of Xatis, I had sworn a thousand times, declaring my innocence when the first buyer who laid his eyes on the precious ring had alerted the king's guard. The man's excitement was written all over his face at the unusual find, he claimed and I was only too happy at not having to struggle to find a buyer in the crowded capital. Little did I know that the buyer's excitement had nothing to do with the actual jewel, but with the reward that came with finding the jewel. He'd asked to wait for him as he had gone out back to collect my payment. He'd claimed the ring's worth of gold was not something he kept in his little shop, but when the man returned with men dressed in familiar royal colours, I wished I had listened to Gol. I wished I had stayed in Dovah.

I was arrested on the spot for simply being in possession of the rare piece of jewellery that I only learned then was stolen. By me apparently. I couldn't let them drag me to the palace. Not only because I was no thief, but because I knew of the possibility of meeting the prince, my ex mate and because of the little matter of my being banished from Xatis. I might not have been a thief, but being an outlaw in the capital still made me a lawbreaker that was worse than a thief. And given my past with the prince, I had no doubt he would seek the worst punishment for me.

I had pleaded with the man who'd bound me like a common thief to let me go, but my pleas had fallen on deaf ears. My precarious position would not let me give up however, as I shamelessly narrated how I had come in the possession of the ring. Of course the men laughed. With my not so glamorous garment and looks, they had looked me over with distaste, before warning me against tarnishing his highness's name by what I was insinuating. I had insisted that I spoke nothing but the truth, even offered to give up the precious ring to prove my innocence, but those wretched guards had dragged me to the palace still. Insisting that I was to face the king and only he could declare my innocence.

The journey was overwhelming as I envisioned all the ways my monster of a mate would have me punished for a crime I did not commit. I could only hope the king was a just man and would hear me out before declaring his

judgement and that I would not come face to face with my mate. Of course I should have known that fate was not in the business of granting me anything.

I was being held by the soldiers in a fancy study inside the palace when the first of my hopes shattered. It was just the mate bond, but now that I had shifted, the temptation was overwhelming. Citrus with a hint of wine or berries, I was not sure, but the scent was every bit enticing, alluring, a welcome pleasuring of my senses and only the guard holding me down kept me from springing up from my seat and dashing out of the fancy room to seek out its source.

I did not even like citrus, but my wolf and I greedily inhaled as we longed to be bathed whole in it. We did not have to wait too long too. The door opened wide and we got our fill as my wolf howled in my head...mate! The entire room flooded with his scent and I could have sworn a moan slipped out of my mouth as it caressed my senses in ways that made me desire to be touched by him. I had not even laid my eyes on him yet, but I knew his were the only hands I wished to caress every part of my skin, bringing me untold pleasures. Then he finally stepped through and all air was knocked out of my lungs.

I had never seen a more perfect creature. It was as if I were seeing him for the very first time. Were men said to be beautiful too? Because my mate was. Breathtaking.

I should have been halfway around the realm, away from him, but all I wished for in that moment was to draw ever so closer to him. Against my better judgement, I had allowed myself to dream. For a fleeting moment, I had indulged. I had let myself be drawn in by his gaze. Eyes deep as the ocean, beckoning me to dive to its depths with a deathly symphony. Everything in me had screamed, ached to be in his arms. Until he spoke.

"How do you have that?" As sweet as that voice was and as much as it felt like the best caress on my soul, it snapped me back to the reason I had been dragged to the palace. It was barely a whisper, but it was enough to get my head working again, to break out of my daze and see him for who he really was. A monster in my mate's skin, but when my eyes landed on his crown, I had realized he was something more too. Something that threatened to turn my whole world upside down. He was no longer a prince, but a king! And remembering the soldier's accusation, I had prayed to the gods to spare me more heartache, but I had seen it in his eyes. Realization, regret and a thousand emotions I did not wish to see on his face. Everything screamed of the truth I was ready to deny. Even fate would not be that cruel...

"If you did not walk into his room, then which low life did you end up in bed with?" Myrna's words spoke of how cruel fate could actually be. I was its puppet, had been even when I did not know it. And even when I knew that I could not escape it, I chose to fight.

"I, Shyla, do hereby accept your rejection." I mumbled, ignoring my mate's question while pain shot up in every part of me. Our bond cracked and it was killing me, but I rode the wave, hoping it would be over soon. There was no way I was letting him anywhere near me or my baby.

We were both panting by the time everything stopped. And now that I was finally free of him, I did not need to be banished a second time. I stood to leave.

"No!" His deep growl filled up the entire room before taking menacing steps towards me. I stood my ground, determined to show him and fate that I was done being hurt by either of them, but the bastard simply smiled before yanking me by the arm and pulling me flush to his muscled chest. "Mine!" He growled and I wished to protest. Wished to declare that I was no longer his, but the sparks that erupted with his touch left me with my lips pursed and a painful realization that with fate, nothing was ever that simple.