

The King's Tainted Mate Chapter 15 - Tips

A dance of death. That is what it was. As dark as the night itself. I watched as he slashed, tore, dismembered his own men with unforgiving intent. He was a beast. A terror. A messenger of death. He was death itself, and yet I found him beautiful.

Eyes blazing with golden fury, growls as menacing as a deathly beast, his alpha wolf was a sight to behold. Towering over his enemies effortlessly and picking them off one by one in the most mesmerizing show of power and strength that left I and my wolf swooning. Despite our history, the pain, the betrayal, our hearts still puffed up with pride at the sight of our mate. He was perfect.

It was the mate bond, I knew that, but the way his impossibly thick muscles tensed and relaxed, the glistening of his canines in the darkness, the sound of flesh tearing when he pounced on his newest victim, the knowledge that he was k!lling without a second thought for our sake, melted my insides. Butterflies fluttered in my belly each time his deep possessive growl escaped his throat.

I wished to draw closer. In the midst of the battle, I wished to be by his side. I stayed rooted on my sp0t, however, guarded by the wolves that had flanked my mate earlier. Whether it was for my own protection or to keep me from escaping, I did not care for it. I was entranced. More so when that wolf shifted into the man I was supposed to despise. I didn't in the moment.

He'd won. His victory kept me from dwelling on his sins against me. He'd come to our rescue when we needed him and we were safe. I was grateful. Until I was the soul object of those menacing steps and all that fury.

"How could you be so reckless?" His alpha tone snapped me out of my hero worship moment and plunged me into the reality I had almost escaped. The one that almost got me k!lled. The one that was entirely his fault! "You put yourself in danger and for what?!"

I put his heir in danger. That is what he meant. I needed to remind myself of that. Now that I was not dancing to the tune of our bond and thinking clearly.

"I could have lost you?!" Again, he could have lost his heir. This was no way about me and when he violently yanked me towards himself, I knew that to be

true. If it wasn't, he wouldn't let his monster at me so easily. And if it wasn't for him I wouldn't have needed to escape in the first place.

"It's your fault!" I roared, pushing myself off of him and clearly surprising him.

"My fault?! I saved you and somehow that's my fault?!" Anger burned in his eyes and I surprisingly found satisfaction in riling him up. In standing up to him. I had not conceived such thoughts, but all those pent-up emotions wished to be let loose and I found myself unwilling to hold them back anymore.

"You did this. It's always you!" I accused, catching him off guard but only for a moment. He wasn't about to back off either. I noted as the gold in his eyes darkened, awakening something in me. How was it possible to feel so much attraction in the midst of a heated argument? His scent overwhelmed me.

"Tell me how sneaking off from the palace in such a stupid manner is any way my fault." He stepped into me, his closeness threatening the little resolve that was keeping me from giving into the temptation to lean closer.

"It's you. It's always you. Every time you show up, death somehow follows me!"

He froze, regret instantly replacing anger. I looked away, refusing to acknowledge the surprising emotion. I hated him and regret was not something I wished to see on his face. I wouldn't let anything erase the picture I had of him. He would always be the source of my pain.

"Shyla..." I turned away before my heart melted at his plea.

"Perhaps we should all calm down." The only face that had looked at me with pity while I was dragged to the dungeons spoke, his tone calmer than either me or my mate. "My lady, please understand his majesty. You are with child and wondering by yourself in the dark is clearly not wise."

My lady? I scoffed at the formal address but still agreed with this guard's sentiments. After what had just happened, I could not shake the feeling that this might just turn out to be one out of many attacks aimed at the piece of royalty I was carrying. I was not naive to all the plotting that went on within palace walls. And with the ring back where it belonged, I had nothing to my name. No gold and no way to protect my baby. I hated the only option that stared me in the face, but the palace would grant us protection. If what I'd just

witnessed was anything to go by, my mate would protect us. Even if it was for the sake of his heir. But I was not about to thrust myself into that world without some kind of insurance. I needed someone. In the midst of the obvious enemies and monsters within the castle, I would need someone to look out for me. To watch my back. My mate was clearly not that person.

"If you wish me to return to the palace with you, you are going to have to let me come back on my own terms." It was a deal with the devil, but even I knew it couldn't be helped. Our lives were forever intertwined. Forever... I had not idea what that looked like. Full of pain, no doubt, but I still chose to do it anyway. For my baby.

"Which are?" My mate asked through gritted teeth.

"I have to bring Gol."

"Gol? Who or what the hell is that?"

"He is the only one I trust in this world." Something that resembled pain flashed across his face but I did not care for it.

"He? You've been living with a man? And you trust him?" His chest rumbled with a possessive growl.

"Where else did you think a traitor like me would end up?" I spat, ignoring the fluttering deep in my belly at his possessiveness.

"No!"

"No?"

"I will not have some beast from God knows where to be near you!"

"And why not, your highness?"

"You are my mate—"

"Was your mate, your Majesty." With all the sparks that kept erupting each time we were close, and the obvious bond we still shared, that was not entirely true, but it felt good to point that out.

A vein ticked. "It's still a no. I won't have a brute near my son."

“Won’t?” Annoyance prickled.

“You know what I mean.”

“That brute has done more for this baby than anyone ever will.” Hurt flashed in his eyes at my words, but I refused to acknowledge it. “If he can’t come then we have nothing to talk about.” I hoped he’d stick to his word and throw me away. Not being chosen again would sting, but I had come a long way. I would endure it.

“Fine.”

“Fine?” I stared. Surprised at how quickly he gave in. What was he playing at?

“If that is what it takes to protect you, then fine.”

“What it takes to protect your child, you mean?”

He stared at me quietly before shifting his gaze. “I’ll send Rakon to fetch this... Gol.”

“It has to be me, no one else.” I was hoping for the man to change his entire life for me, the least I could do was be the one to ask for the favour. I wouldn’t let anyone go in my stead.

“You can’t be serious! Someone just tried to k!ll you!”

“What? You think an outlaw will just gladly roll over like a puppy just because his majesty asked?”

He scoffed.

“That’s what I thought. We’ll be at the palace before sundown.”

“Like hell you will, I’m coming with you.”

“What?!” That was unexpected.

“You are mistaken if you think am ever letting you out of my sight.” That I expected, but not in the possessive manner it sounded.

I gaped at him while deep down, in a place I didn’t even know existed, something leapt at his declaration. “I can take care of myself.”

“Right.” He snorted before pointing me ahead. “Lead the way, my lady.” He pointed to the royal carriage I had not noticed until now.