

The King's Tainted Mate Chapter 86 - Tips

Evarius, I realized, was no different from the men in the council chambers when it came to how he perceived me. He'd made the same mistake they all had. Drunk on the experience and successes the traitorous wolf had enjoyed over the years, he didn't think me capable of matching what he'd acquired plotting, winning and gaining his current position. At the very least, he thought me nothing but the gods' pawn. A clueless one at that and one easy to beat. It explained his reasons for trapping within the palace walls those he deemed more experienced and would willingly fight by my side, leaving me to face him alone. To Evarius, all that remained was an unguided chosen, who'd not yet come into the fullness of her gift and his niece. Everything that would have him easily take what he wished for. I wasn't about to let him think otherwise. Not yet anyway.

"You will not be accepting his rejection." I mind linked Myrna once Evarius was done rejecting her. I'd had no intentions of using my newly acquired gift just yet, but when I realized that Evarius was already playing his pieces in this game of war, I naturally responded, against him.

Lips still trembling, her face marred with pain, Myrna nodded at me once, without question. "Thank you!" She linked back, a smile full of relief graced her lips and left me feeling almost guilty. Almost. This was by no means something I had done for her sake. She was nothing but a pawn in my hands that I had simply played with the same intentions as Evarius.

Turning back to her mate with faux determination, Myrna shook her head. "No."

"No?" The man was taken aback, surprise gracing his features before masking it. "My love—" He scooted to her side. "...you have to accept my proposal."

Proposal? I gritted my teeth at the man for reducing such a painful ordeal to something as simple as a proposal that he expected his mate to simply say yes to. And even if I thought Myrna deserved everything coming to her and more, I couldn't stomach Evarius making light of rejecting his mate in such a manner. Greedy bastard!

"What of our baby?"

“He’ll always be taken care of.” Evarius laid his hands on Myrna’s shackles, his face devoid of any consideration for his mate. The bastard was merely interested in manipulating her and getting his way. The sight both angered and justified my own actions. “You have no need to worry about him or yourself. I did give you my word, did I not?”

That seemed to brighten Myrna’s countenance and for a moment I thought she would give in, until she shook her head. “I trust you, my love, but I cannot simply do it.”

“And why the hell not?” Temper flared as Evarius reached for her only for him to let go of Myrna’s hand so hastily one would think he’d been scorched by it. His action was followed by a string of curses from his lips, giving me a glimpse of the man hidden behind the mask. The entire display was quite enlightening. More so when the man seemed to piece together what had just transpired right under his nose.

“What is this?” Evarius swung around to face me, his glare morphing into an unintended smile that seemed to c***k on the edges. He had no intentions of angering me, I realized. Was that how he intended to win me over? To gain his worthiness? I would have scoffed at the idea, but instead, my serious gaze landed on Myrna.

“She still remains my prisoner. A traitor still on Xatis’ soil. Surely you don’t expect me to simply hand her over so easily for you to do with as you please?”

A deep breath and that smile appeared more smooth and genuine. I had to hand it to Evarius for how effortless he made that seem. “You are right. I did say a mate for a mate after all.” At the mention of my mate, the longing to be close to Elian that I’d been masking ever since I’d gotten into the carriage threatened to make itself known, but I was quick to mask it, yet again. Evarius’ eagerness to note the change in my demeanour did not go unnoticed either. I had no doubt the man was very interested in my reaction to the news of my mate. He was after all banking on the weakness that came with the mate bond to get what he desired. I was not about to give him that either. “Right this way, chosen one.” Masking his disappointment, he invited instead.

I let him lead the way while I let my gaze wander to the world around me. Admiring my home, however, was not the reason for it. Strategy had everything to do with it. Between me and my wolf, we knew that a bloody future was on the horizon. And whether the realms and its people would see

the light of day yet again would depend on every one of our actions. No matter how simple.

Guards flanked my sister at my command, ensuring she kept her distance. Despite her earlier submission to me, she'd glared and looked to her mate to do something. But nothing about her state seemed to bother Evarius enough to care for her. I even suspected he was happy she'd remained shackled for my sake. He was trying too hard.

"Allow me." I frowned at my uncle's extended hand that forced me to a stop while he merely smiled. "Wouldn't wish for my beloved guest in that delicate condition to miss a step." His gaze went from the flight of steps leading to my home to my heavy belly.

"I'm perfectly alright." Knowing his intent and refusing to indulge him, I grabbed onto my gown and began the short climb. Stepping into my family home was overwhelming and also left me on guard. The inside was beautiful, but it was the burly figures standing guard in almost every place that grabbed my attention. And for whatever reason, they reminded me of Gol.

"What do you think of my warriors?"

His warriors? Pride was evident in his tone and it was the thing to remind me of the little detail I'd momentarily forgotten. Evarius was a king. And while he was lord beyond the walls of the mansion, something I had wondered why it had remained so, inside my home he was a king. The atmosphere spoke of it and I should have been intimidated by it, but I wasn't. For some reason the loyalty of the men he claimed to be his warriors did not strike me as one naturally given and I'd decided it would be easy to overturn it. I did not know how, but that would be one surprise I was certain Evarius would be in for when it came down to it.

"My mate." I demanded instead of answering his ludicrous question. This was not a social call after all and now that I was this close, I couldn't wait a second longer.

"Right this way." Evarius continued leading the way, making everything seem so easy, but I was not oblivious to anything as I followed silently. Until I got to my mate, I would play his game. My heart relaxed a fraction when every turn into a new hallway did not lead to a dungeon. Yet not for myself, but for the sake of whoever would have decided to imprison my mate in such a filthy place. "I figured placing him in what would have been your room was

appropriate.” Evarius beamed as he gestured to one of those burly figures to open the doors.

Once he did, I was instantly hit with a wave of my mate’s scent and how long it’d been since we’d been together. I missed him more in that moment when he was right before me than any of those moments when wishing to see him was all I had. And I would have rushed in like the lovesick mate I was, but I remained composed, much to Evarius’ surprise. That did not last however, when the reality of what Evarius claimed to be my room turned out to be worse than a dungeon.

“What did you do?!” One look at Elian...my Elian and my composure cracked. Saying he was a shadow of his former self would have been an understatement. A menacing growl tore from my throat and I could have sworn the room shook with it.

Evarius, however, remained unfazed as he shrugged his shoulders. “I merely evened out the playing field, chosen one.” His answer was unsatisfactory and insulting.

“Evened what?! You are klling him!” I lunged at Evarius without thinking, catching both myself and the wolf off guard. And despite my mindless action, mine was a perfect aim. The wolf gagged as my claws dug into his side, taking his breath away.

“I wouldn’t do that if I were you, sister.”

“Kerina?” I glared at the red head whose presence I only became aware of once she’d spoken. Myrna stood unshackled by her wretched sister’s side, a smug look on her face. I ignored it and focused on the maiden who’d dared to intimidate me.

Kerina merely waved me away. “Let father go. It hasn’t come to that kind of violence yet.”

“Yet?!” I thundered, my claws digging deeper into Evarius’ flesh, making the wolf whimper.

“It’s not yet time for my king to leave yet or for my father to meet his end.” Kerina caressed an invisible wall that seemed to hold my mate prisoner. “Of course, all that depends on you.” A painful gr0an, deep and full of anguish emanated from beyond that invisible wall and straight to my heart. Elian...

Whatever spell bound him, I felt it. And not that I had been familiar with sorcery, but the darkness behind it explained his powerless state. "Oops. Didn't mean to do that."

My eyes widened as realization hit me. It was her. She was the one behind the spells. Evarius' witch! And the pain in my side at the moment. Blinded by rage, I let my uncle fall to the ground before every one of my wolf instincts focused on Kerina. She retreated and I would have gladly stalked my prey, but with her retreat came painful growls that filled the room and drew my attention. He was dying! The sight of my mate gasping ripped something in me and I felt both mine and my wolf's control slipping. I would have thought I was shifting, but this was not it. The heaviness of it engulfed and pressed, but instead of being buried by it, the strange sensation only intensified and seemed to flow out of me like a river and spreading all around.

"Kerina, that is enough! Do you wish to get us all killed?" Somewhere in the room, Evarius' breathless growl drew my attention. The man was glaring at someone and just as suddenly as I'd lost my control, it all stopped.

I was just as breathless myself while I wondered what in God's name had just happened? My gaze fell on my hands, but whatever evidence I sought there was simply non existent, making me wish Zillah was by my side to guide me.

"Are you alright, my dear?" The genuineness in my uncle's tone was surprising. Whatever had just transpired had caught Evarius off guard too and judging by the unguarded look on his face, he did not wish to have a repetition of it. He seemed even more willing to appease me than he'd been before. But I cared not for it as I sought to catch my breath and ensure that the child I carried remained safe. And my mate... Elian remained in his seat. Calm once again. That evened out my breath quicker than me taking deep ones..

"Leave me." I demanded.

"Very well. But you will have to forgive me for the barrier, child. I have to ensure that you two stay apart." Evarius spoke, his words not exactly meant to appease this time around. And while he'd claimed I would get my mate for his mate, this was not exactly it, but I cared for none of it as I only longed to be left alone with my mate.

"You should probably know that this is much worse, or should I say better than the spell around the palace?" Kerina bragged, but I ignored her and merely waited for her annoying self to leave me alone.

"I would also suggest that you make the most of this moment too, Shyla. Because after this, I'll ensure that your mate...our mates, will be nothing but distant memories." At that, I lifted my gaze to my uncle. His figure was the last one in the room, a vision of the future to come.

I would definitely be making the most of the moment, not just in the manner Evarius so carelessly assumed. As soon as we were alone, my gaze fell on my mate. And despite Kerina's warning, my feet moved of their own accord as a familiar tug drew me closer to him. It was faint, weak, but with every step it was as if our souls remembered each other and that tug grew stronger. It was not enough to get my mate off that seat, however, but his eyes found mine, the gold in them lighting up instantly and revealing a longing in them that comforted me in ways I had not been aware I'd needed.

"Shyla?" My name from his mouth was like a siren's song that drew me in without a care for the dangers I'd been warned about. Something knocked out a piece of me, but it was not enough to keep me from him.

"Elian..." I had not been aware of my own tears until I was inches away from reuniting with him.

"I'm sorry," he whispered. And while I frowned, seeking to understand what in the world he was apologizing for, his form, unbelievably frail and lacking in strength straightened up and filled in those inches separating us. His touch felt alien, but only for a moment. Only until the searing pain that invaded my neck sent me spiralling into a world unknown.