

# The Duke 161

## Chapter 161 - The Villain's Appearance

In the novels I've read, there's always a scene where a villain will appear to ruin the peace. And this felt just like that one.

The knot in my stomach tightened as a lump of air clogged my throat upon laying my eyes on his figure covered with blood. "Sam..."

Sam walked languidly, dragging a body in his right hand. There was this strange, sinister smirk plastered across his lips as his crimson eyes exuded pleasure from the wary gazes on him. He may appear the same, but the air around him felt unfamiliar.

Was this just another illusion? How could he drastically change in a brief span of days? I bit my tongue and slapped my cheek to wake myself up, only to realize this was the reality.

"It's good to see you, Stefan." His menacing voice sent a chill down my spine as he dropped the body. I jumped when he set his eyes on me and added, "and I miss you, my bride," and his smirk stretched wider.

Did he really mean that? I didn't think so.

"As expected of you, Hell." Stefan glanced at the body lying beside Sam. "Your wickedness never ceases to amaze me."

"Don't exaggerate, my brother! He's not dead..." Sam trailed off as he batted his eyes towards the body next to him. "... he's just a little hurt." No one could tell whether he was trying to mock the king or humor him, but he's definitely dauntless.

Stefan scoffed under his breath as he asked, "Hurt? And what grave sin did Duke Delholm do to deserve such judgment?"

"He's annoying!" Sam answered almost excitedly as he clapped.

Growls and sharp inhales suddenly resonated across the banquet hall as half of the guests bore their fangs. However, none of them attacked as Stefan raised his hand.

"This devil never changed!"

"Did you come back to bring chaos in this kingdom once again?!"

"To show yourself in a grandiose way, Hell, you're truly something!"

Words uttered through their gritted teeth reached my ear, sending a shudder down my spine. I looked around just to see the deep hatred in their eyes; while Sam only placed his pinky inside his ear, unfazed by their snide remarks.

"Sam," I whispered, and my heart warmed up when Sam glanced at me indifferently before he smiled.

"To punish someone who has contributed to the wellness of this kingdom just because you find him annoying — I'm speechless, albeit not surprised," Stefan uttered calmly, shifting his eyes in a certain direction and ordered. "Take Duke Delholm and tend to his wounds."

"Yes, your majesty." The person who received the order bowed before he rushed towards Duke Delholm. However, he stopped steps away when Sam stepped on the unconscious duke.

"Samael," Stefan called out coldly as the pressure in the air thickened.

"You already took my bride away, brother." Sam cocked his head to the side, batting his eyes innocently. "And now my partner for tonight's banquet? Aren't you a little greedy?"

The more Sam spoke with such confidence, the more the heat of anger exuded from those same people who spat snide remarks earlier. One word from Stefan and they would surely attack, but Stefan wasn't giving out anything.

"When will you ever choose peace resolution over violence, Hell?" Stefan questioned coldly, only to receive a nonchalant shrug from Sam. "Lilou," Stefan called out, making me flinch before he ordered, "Stop breathing."

As soon as I heard those words, I held my breath while grinding my teeth as I shot him a glaring dagger. How dare he use such a cheap trick against Sam?

"Your Majesty!" Yul growled as he clenched his hands into a fist, but Stefan seemed unfazed by our glare, so Yul looked at me when he realized that. "Walking meat!"

'You're already suffocating, and he still calls you walking meat.' My subconscious mind scoffed while I clutched onto Yul's shoulder before shifting my gaze to Sam. I shook my head, hoping he'd understand I'd rather die than be used as a tool against him.

"Tasteless," Sam rumbled as his playful smirk faded away while watching me hold my breath. "Fabian, I want heads rolling down here every second that she doesn't breathe." A head immediately rolled down, which took everyone a second to realize what happened.

But even when they realized the situation, everyone was just too busy protecting their necks as chaos ensued. Some tried to attack Sam but ended up being slain by Rufus while others just escaped; Sam and the Royal Family stood motionless from their spot.

I can't hold it any longer... I pounded my fist against my chest as I stumbled down. But before my knees gave in, a firm hand held both my shoulders. I gazed up to see a pair of crimson eyes staring at me emotionlessly.

"Sa," I choked as I clutched on his chest desperately. 'I need to breathe,' I told myself, but all I felt was my brain suffocating as my vision blurred.

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"Sis," Yul was about to catch Lilou but stopped when Samael suddenly appeared before her.

"Who do you think you're trying to put your hands on?" Samael asked as his eyes glistened with killing intent, while he held her shoulders. He gazed down when she failed to call his name.

Even though Samael couldn't sympathize with her, seeing her suffocate only made his blood boil.

"Come here, my little bride," He whispered, pulling her to his embrace as he rested his chin on her head and rubbed her back gently. "Stefan... I accept her death."

"Hell!" Yul growled as soon as he heard Samael's remarks, but that didn't faze the latter.

"I accept her death, so know that tonight will be the requiem of the aristocratic faction." The expression on Samael's face made Yul swallow down a mouthful of saliva. "I can't fucking stand this tasteless behavior. So, let's get over this, shall we?"

Yulis's shoulder stiffened when he met Samael's pair of intimidating eyes. Samael meant what he had said, and everyone felt that he had accepted Lilou's death.

Lilou started coughing while panting for air when Stefan ordered, "Breathe."

## Chapter 162 - The Secret Memory

"Breathe," Stefan ordered, as his eyes darkened at the sight of heads rolling down and bodies piling up. "That's a little surprising, Hell." He added while nodding his head before setting his eyes on Samael's figure. "I didn't think you'd use your bride as an excuse to wreak havoc."

"Are you dense, my brother, the king?" Samael smirked as he chuckled evilly. "Can't you tell I just care?"

"If you care as you claim you are, you shouldn't have gone here dragging my injured retainer or refusing my people to tend to his injuries." Stefan's voice thundered as he hissed. "Alas, not only you beat Duke Delholm, your personal hellhound slaughtered the guests of the house of Thornhart. Have you had no shame?"

"Now, that hypocrisy never ceases to amaze me as well." Samael chuckled, obviously amused at the spiteful words thrown at him. "Brother, you have the power of foresight, don't you? How come you never saw this coming?"

Stefan didn't respond, as this was not the outcome he had seen, but he wouldn't admit that. If only he had expected this, he wouldn't use Lilou.

"Oh? Did you see it wrong?" A sinister smirk resurfaced on Samael's lips as Stefan's lack of silence only meant one or two things. "This is why you will never beat me, Stefan. You think you are so righteous and don't find fault in sacrificing one to save a hundred."

"Did you think I'd consider sacrificing a hundred people just to save one person?" Samael gazed down at Lilou, who had fallen unconscious in his arms. "You should've done your research, my brother." He added as he carried Lilou in a princess style. "It is not me whom you should have observed, but this feeble bride of mine who, unfortunately, fell into your trap."

"So, you'd sacrifice everyone instead?" Stefan chuckled, as he truly underestimated his brother's wickedness. "It's been centuries, Hell, and your only change is that you've become worse."

"What do you mean, brother? Can't you see I changed for the better? I even let that memory you hid quite well go!" Stefan froze instantly upon hearing Samael's remarks as the latter continued, "but you keep messing with me. Did you pick a fucking fight expecting no retaliation, brother?" His tone sounded colder as he stressed his last remarks.

"If you had seen it, that means you are aware of the real reason I've done what I did, Hell!" Stefan's eyes grew darker as his tone sounded even colder.

"Your change will do nothing good if you want to protect those precious to you. We both know I can't do anything twice to her if you're in your current state."

"And we also both know that this state will bring either destruction or restoration. You forced me to shut off the emotions I painstakingly built with her — ahh... this is aggravating me." Samael stretched his neck in a circular motion before he suggested, "Let's just end this fiasco."

"Dominique, Hanz, Luther, Maxine, and bearers of the Divine Order," Stefan called everyone, and they suddenly appeared in front of him.

"You're really going all out because of jealousy, brother?" Samael frowned in disappointment.

"Rufus, Fabian, Silvia, Yulis, get my bride out of here. These people are enough for a warm-up."

The sinister smirk on Samael's face showed his disastrous resolve, but Stefan didn't even flinch, as if he had expected that. The stifling silence smothered those who were lucky to reach this point, as they avoided making even the slightest noise or movements.

"I'll take back her ladyship, my Lord." Fabian appeared beside Samael, but before the latter could entrust Lilou to Fabian, the soft sound of a whistle made everyone stop.

Guests who were weak-willed collapsed one after another while those strong-willed fought the urge to lose their consciousness. The sound came from neither of the two forces who were about to fight head-on, but somewhere else.

"Stefan, aren't you lucky? Some annoying bastard appeared just when I want to end you." Samael awed in amusement, but Stefan ignored him as he spoke.

"Hell, are you sure you will keep her by your side knowing the current state of affairs?" Stefan questioned solemnly. "You've seen it. If I didn't take Lilou days ago, she'd fall into your enemy's hands."

"So, what?" Samael intoned. "I'll just have to protect her now."

"Don't you understand that you're the biggest threat in her life right now?"

Samael strangely didn't reply against Stefan's argument, because it was true. He knew that right now, he only knew he treasured Lilou, but he couldn't feel it anymore.

"I'll overlook and turn a blind eye to your actions tonight. However, I won't let you harm her and yourself, brother," Stefan expressed solemnly, hoping Samael would listen to him for once. "If you've seen that memory, you should know that I sincerely wish her well."

"My lord, please don't fall for his words," Rufus called out as he stood behind Samael. "We can just stop you if we deem you dangerous to the lady."

"Or, you can stay in the palace where you can see her," Stefan suggested, as he slowly shifted his gaze towards Rufus. "Are you willing to risk the life of the future duchess and this entire kingdom when I'm the only one who can stand a chance against Hell?"

Although they wanted to deny that, Stefan had a higher chance of stopping Samael from going out of control.

"Don't regret inviting me to the palace because I'll never let you sleep peacefully," Samael warned as he turned around and marched away with Lilou in his arms.

Stefan didn't say a word until Samael reached the exit. "I never slept peacefully for years," he whispered, as his jaw tightened. "Ever since I let her go."

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Rufus placed his sword back in its sheath, seeing that Samael and Stefan came into an agreement. As he walked away, he instinctively shifted his eyes in Silvia's direction.

Silvia sported a subtle smile, as she had been staring at him for a long time. She didn't even care about Samael and Stefan's conversation as her focus since the beginning was on him.

"Darling," she whispered under her breath, but Rufus averted his gaze as he followed Samael.

His usual cold treatment always left bitterness in her heart. Yet, she had longed for him for a very, very long time.

"Cruel, as always," she murmured, grinding her teeth as they left. Suddenly, she heard Stefan's voice.

"You should also let him go, Silvia," said Stefan, still staring in the direction where they vanished. "Only Hell had the audacity to cross that line."

### Chapter 163 - My Leash

Samael carried her straight towards the third prince's quarter, which was left untouched for a long time.

"Fabian," Samael called out, upon sensing Fabian's presence behind him. "Call someone to prepare the bed."

"They already changed it and cleaned your quarters, my Lord. It seems His Majesty expected this outcome."

"Of course, he had that annoying foresight ability," Samael replied as he walked through the hallway leading to his bedchambers. "Tell Noah to postpone my visit to his mansion."

"My lord, you won't hurt her, right?" Instead of answering the duke's orders, Fabian inquired solemnly. "You didn't mean it when you said you accepted her death, right?" He observed the corner of Samael's eyes but couldn't tell what the Duke was thinking.

Fabian had already considered the worst outcome that could have happened to Lilou during her stay in the palace, but Samael guaranteed him Stefan wouldn't hurt her. (For a reason Samael didn't explain.)

Although Lilou was unscathed, Stefan sired her, which made things worse. Therefore, even Fabian didn't know what was going on in Samael's head. Especially with the Duke's current state of mind, there was no telling how he would react if provoked.

"I won't kill her... that's for sure," Samael muttered as he kicked the door of the bedchambers open. He didn't waste time as he trudged inside, leaving Fabian behind.

Fabian noticed the dangerous glint that flickered across Samael's eyes as the door slowly shut closed on its own.

"My lady," Fabian whispered under his breath as his eyes brimmed with worry, "I wish you well."

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Samael stood beside the bed and gazed down on her, seeing her clasped on his chest tightly as she broke out in sweats. "Wake up." His tone was deep and menacing as his grip on her shoulder tightened. "We need to talk."

But nothing. She remained trapped in her nightmares while holding onto him desperately in her sleep. He had thought about how he'd feel once he laid his eyes on the woman he wanted to marry, but the crazy, jumbled emotions he felt were not on his list.

"I said wake up," he repeated as he shook her, but Lilou didn't bulge. "I need to know if he touched you anywhere." So he could decide whether this truce was worth it to consider.

"Whatever," he whispered as he attempted to toss her on the bed, but changed his mind at the last minute. Instead, Samael carefully laid her down while staring at her intensely.

He squinted his eyes into mere slits as the scene of Lilou choking flashed across his head, driving him madly crazy at the thought that Stefan lived another day. He would have killed him, but for her sake, he had to hold back.

"Lilou," He muttered through his gritted teeth, wrapping his fingers around her neck. "What should I do to you?" He asked with genuine wonder in his husky voice. "Should I strangle you? Or kiss you?"

Those were the thoughts that had been circling in his head when he laid his eyes on her. "Because I don't know, my love. Your very existence is driving me crazy."

Holding back was not his style, so snapping her tiny neck wouldn't take a second, but he couldn't. He couldn't kill her, even if he wanted to try. "Damn it!" He cursed under his breath, pushing himself up as he ran his fingers through his hair in distress.

"This won't do," He uttered as he sprung back on his feet. "Staying in this place won't quench my anger."

"Sam... don't... please..." He froze upon hearing her shaking voice, turning his head back just to see her still asleep.

"Then what the fuck should I do?" Samael gritted his teeth before he stomped his way back to the bed, bouncing as he laid beside her. "This is aggravating," he muttered as he rolled to his side and faced her.

"Who or what are you dreaming about making such a painful expression?" He asked despite knowing she would answer with a faint struggling noise. "You're making me mad," he whispered in distress as he reached for her trembling shoulders and carefully cradled her into his embrace.

"You..." He trailed off, brushing the strands of hair falling to her face. "... why did you do that?"

He was referring to the time Stefan ordered her to stop breathing. Samael planned to back down a little since he had a vague idea of the current state of affairs. However, Lilou's eyes told him not to save her.

It was the subtle hints he and Lilou could only understand because of the level of trust and love they shared in the past. He wished he didn't understand her, but he couldn't pretend not to know.

"With such a feeble body with a brief life, why did you refuse my help?" He asked, trying to contain the fury building up inside him. "The audacity to think you can save me the trouble."

If he was the Sam she had known, he would probably understand. But his resonance right now couldn't comprehend her reasoning.

Samael knew Lilou would choose death instead of being used as a tool against him. But in his logic right now, it made little sense. For someone as feeble as her, it was more understandable if she asked for his help, but she was more concerned about his well-being.

"This is annoying," He mumbled, noticing how she trembled under his grip. "Her existence feels like a leash."

To calm her down and bring her a sense of security, Samael rubbed her back. But not only Lilou calmed down, but her warmth soothed his raging heart.

"How strange," Samael muttered as he continued to rub her back before he traced the list of what he wanted to do with her to kill time. "I want to kill her, sink my fangs into her skin, own her, make love with her until she breaks."

But he didn't do any of that. Instead, he was lying beside her and comforting her in her sleep. "very... strange."

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Samael didn't notice time as he organized his jumbled thoughts, but there were some questions that needed an immediate answer. So he shot her a glare, shaking her while saying, "Wake up."

After several attempts, she finally let out a soft moan as her eyes fluttered weakly. Before Lilou could even grasp everything, he held her shoulders and pulled her to a sitting position.

"Sam?" Lilou rubbed her eyes as she blinked and set her eyes on him.

"Can I kill you?" He asked without beating around the bush.

Lilou let out a faint chuckle as she collapsed to her side, yawning. "Go ahead," she crooned, closing her eyes to continue her sleep.

Her indifferent answer made him frown, shaking her arm to wake her up again, "I'm serious."

"Mhm," Lilou hummed, believing it was merely a dream.

"You, don't you have any sense of danger?" Samael clicked his tongue in annoyance as he collapsed beside her before he mumbled. "I don't need this leash."

Chapter 164 - Let's Get Married Today

Last night, I wished it were all a terrible nightmare. No, I wished everything was just a long, adventurous dream and we're still back in Grimsbanne.

"Wake up," I heard Sam's voice as he shook me awake.

I slowly opened my eyes, and I found myself sitting with his help. Am I finally waking up from that long dream? I rubbed my eyes as I blinked and smiled upon seeing Sam's hazy figure.

"Can I kill you?" He asked and I could not help but let out a brief chuckle. Just as I thought, it was all a dream, after all.

So, I collapsed to my side and answered, "Go ahead."

Back in Grimsbanne, Sam would habitually wake me up in the morning to ask something or just to say his morning greetings. It was a habit I got used to, so I often slept a bit more.

"You, don't you have any sense of danger?" I heard him inquire, but I ignored him.

How nice... to wake up from that endless dream, it almost felt real. I smiled at the thought, ready to sleep again, and I did.

After a very long time, I slowly opened my eyes and met with a pair of crimson eyes staring back at me. The side of my lips curled up as my eyes softened.

Sam.

I raised my hand and cupped his cheek, caressing his lean cheek with my thumb. He arched his right brow, seemed confused at my actions, but he didn't stop me.

'It was just a long dream, after all,' I thought internally again, relieved that I awoke from it.

"I had a dream," I whispered as I smiled subtly, wanting to detail to him about the long dream I had, but I summarized it instead. "In that dream, you left me."

And that's the most tragic experience of that dream. Not even death could break me, nor the fact that I was sired to the king.

What scared me the most was the way he looked at me as if I was a stranger, without the evidence of love he bore. That, he had forgotten the memories we built together. And how he appeared to have this impregnable wall that no one could break.

"What nonsense dream is that? It can't even get my character right." Sam clicked his tongue in annoyance, a typical reaction from him. "If it's the real me, I will rather invite you or drag you to hell with me instead of leaving you behind. It's either we die together or live together."

I giggled weakly before I let out a sigh. That's how we built our relationship; for better or for worse. "That's right." I nodded, pressing my lips together with a smile.

"Are you daft, girl?" Sam abruptly inquired with genuine wonder.

"Huh?" I blinked, confused at his sudden query.

"Why would you want a man who would take you to hell just because?" Sam clarified as he arched his brow. "Are you a pushover?"

I blinked many times, hoping it would clear my head, and it did. So I looked around, recognizing the unfamiliarity of the room, which made my heart sink. "So it wasn't a dream," I murmured in disappointment, withdrawing my hands from him as I laid on my back.

"Good morning, Sam." I greeted while staring at the high ceiling, biting my lower lip out of habit before I closed my eyes to take a deep breath.

"You have quite the mood swings," Sam said as I felt his gaze on my side. "But, good morning. Now, we can talk."

I slowly opened my eyes and cast him a look. I stared at his indifferent eyes for a long time before I asked, "Do you still love me?"



"Uh." My question seemed to have taken him aback because he pondered before he answered with an uncertain, "Yes... I think."

He wasn't sure, and I'm certain he was serious. A mocking sigh slipped past my lips as I moved my gaze back to the high ceiling.

"You think?" I repeated under my breath. "So, do you also think you want to marry me?"

He didn't respond, and I'm not even surprised. The person beside me wasn't Sam. It was Hell — the one everyone hated. The person Sam hid from me; the side of him he, himself, detest.

"I think I still want to marry you," He answered after his long silence.

But I was not merciful to give him a break, so I asked, "Do you only think about it? Don't you feel like marrying me?"

"I feel like strangling you right now." Unlike his long silence earlier, his reply this time was relatively quick.

"So, why haven't you done it?" But I wouldn't back down with this battle of the tongue.

"Because I also feel like kissing you, tearing your clothes apart, and sinking my fangs into you."

My breath instantly hitched upon his last remarks, but I didn't get swayed yet. Why? Because he did none of them.

"I see," I whispered as I dragged myself to sit. "Where are we?"

I asked and looked around, recognizing the similar interior, just like the palace. I didn't expect that Sam would come to the palace, especially after what happened last night.

"The third prince's quarters. My quarter." He answered while pointing at himself.

My mind reviewed the map of the enormous palace before I nodded, "Alright, then." I picked myself up, flinging my legs out of the bed as I prepared myself to leave.

"Where do you think you're going?" He asked.

I looked back at him and saw him raise a brow. "Back to my quarters, my Lord," I replied, performing a curtsy before I prepared myself to leave.

I needed some time alone to think about our current situation and to stitch my heart back secretly. Just some time alone, because that's just what I need.

"This is your quarters from now on," Sam uttered as I walked away. "Someone will transfer your belongings. You just have to wait for them."

"Thank you, your highness. However, we're not married yet, and it's not proper to stay inside a room together." It was hypocritical of me to say such words, but I needed some excuse. Upon dropping that lame excuse, I resumed my steps.

Just when I reached the door and slightly opened it, Sam suddenly appeared behind me, pressing his fingers — from thumb to his middle finger — against the door and pushed it back slowly as it creaked.

"Then, let's get married today," Sam whispered behind my ear, sending a chill down my spine.

## Chapter 165 - Samael Will Not Be Samael Without Sam And Hell

My heart skipped a beat, but it felt a little painful. The difference of the sincerity in his words before and now sounded very distinct. I couldn't even fool myself.

"If that's what you think, let's do that then," I answered sarcastically, and gazed down, resting my head against the door. "But until then, I have to excuse myself."

My last remark was only a level above a whisper. I just wanted to be alone right now so I could gather my thoughts because this was a little overwhelming for me.

"Please," I whispered, desperate to be heard.

But the current Sam didn't understand that as he replied with a firm, "No." before wrapping his arms around my waist and rested his forehead on my shoulders. "You can't go."

"Why not?" My voice was muffled as I winced. "Can't I have a moment to think and try to understand this change? To understand why my fiancé suddenly lost his feelings for me?"

We were both desperate to understand the things that were beyond our resonance right now. I never thought that there would be a day that the time we shared would feel like virulent memories.

Do you think Hell truly loves you? He is the type of person who enjoys crossing the line. Are you sure it is genuine love and not just another rule he wants to break?

Suddenly, Dominique's words hovered over my head, making me clutch my skirt tightly. I couldn't think properly right now, and I might end up deciding something in the heat of the moment.

"Sam, please..." but the reply I received from this last plea was a threat.

"If you go, I'll kill everyone you pass by, everyone you'll lay your eyes on, and everyone you talk to. I'll pile their bodies in front of you so you remember them," Sam whispered through his gritted teeth as his arms around my waist tightened, pulling me closer. "That's the kind of man you're marrying. I won't hurt you, but that doesn't mean I'll be as lenient to others."

"Why?" I asked, as my voice shook and cracked in disbelief. "Why are you doing this? I just want to be alone to gather my thoughts. Must you go that far?"

"I can do worse than that, You." Sam suddenly spun me around, pushing me against the door as he slammed his palms on either side of me. His eyes glinted with murderous intent.

"I won't let you out of my sight again. Even if it means caging you, I will do so if I deem it necessary."

I held my breath, holding the tears that were tempting to spill out of my eyes. His gaze, so dangerous and desperate, broke my heart.

"Can I ask you something?" My breath hitched as I pant for air, and I clutched onto his chest. "Did you love me? Or, did you just see me as a line you must cross?"

Silence was the answer I received, making my clasp on his chest even tighter.

"Lie," I encouraged, nearly choking on the lump of air in my throat. "Just lie and tell me you loved me. That everything you did isn't just an illusion — I'll believe it. So, can you please, just tell me you love me? Sam?" My voice grew weaker and I'm unsure if he heard me until the end.

"They're real," Sam answered emotionlessly, bringing pain into my heart more than I expected. "At least that man you're calling Sam, he sincerely loves you. However, he can't protect you if he keeps being that Sam you loved dearly."

I slowly raised my gaze at him, meeting his pair of fiery eyes. He continued, "He puts your best interest despite knowing the dangers, so forget about him. I, Hell, will take care of you from now on."

Sam took a step back as my grip on his chest dropped. "If you need some time to gather your thoughts, you don't have to go. I'll leave."

I didn't even know what happened after those bitter words left his lips. All I knew was breaking down on that same spot, hugging my knees as tears soaked my skirt.

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I placed my hand on the cold glass surface of the window. My day passed by in a blur — I couldn't even remember how I changed into my indoor clothes and how the servants served me — and now the sun was about to set.

"My lady," Fabian called out from behind me. "It's us to blame that his lordship had to call out that side of him."

Fabian's voice sounded genuinely regretful, blaming himself for failing his duties. I don't blame him, though. It was not his fault.

"Before the duke changed, he ordered us to protect you from him. We won't make the same mistake again," He reassured. I believed he was bowing knowing his character.

"The outcome... will it be a little different if we all did our best? Won't we be in this tricky situation if we became more vigilant? In the back of our heads, didn't we expect so much worse? I'd been thinking about the answer to those questions all day, Mister Fabian."

I slowly turned around to face him and asked. "Do you know the answer I came up with?"

Fabian remained quiet as he stared back at me. Unlike usual, he wasn't smiling and I could see his eyes properly this time.

"The answer I came up with is, neither those questions nor its answers matter." I paused as I took a deep breath before I trudged towards the divan. "What done is done. Sam had returned to his old ways, meaning, the devil everyone feared had returned."

"My lady..." His eyes filled with worry.

"Hell is the monster created by the La Crox. The truth is a hard pill to swallow, that Hell is necessary for this battle," I huffed as I sat down. "It hurts now, but we have to accept that instead of denying it."

"I can't disagree." Fabian hung his head low, aware that I spoke the words he had known all along. "However, I worry about you, my lady. His lordship's current state is unstable and resorts to unnecessary violence. I'm afraid..."

He trailed off as he raised his eyes to me, glinting with bitterness and worry. Fabian had always been supportive of our relationship and had expressed his thoughts honestly.

"You're afraid I'll be the one who will get hurt in the end?" I continued with the words he failed to finish. Fabian pursed his lips and sported a bitter smile.

"I'm aware of that, but Mister Fabian, I made a promise with Sam." I took a breath and released it from the gape of my lips. "I told him before, if he can't love that part of him, I will love it in his stead. If Hell had a broken heart, I will split mine to complete his."

"My lady,"

I cut him off by continuing to speak about my resolve. "After all, Samael will not be Samael without Sam and Hell."

## Chapter 166 - The Current State Of Affairs

My day may have passed in a blur, but that was because my mind was preoccupied with the memories Sam and I built together. It brought me back to the day we first met; to the day he welcomed me home, and then to his proposal, to the time everything just felt right, until the present.

"It's not that Sam lacked in telling me about what to expect, I just chose not to see it. The fairytale-like life and love blinded me. I failed to see the darker side that had existed for a long time." I asserted with a tone full of conviction.

"Just like how I chose to only see the good side of you, Mister Fabian. I never thought you are more than what meets the eye," I added as I sported a subtle smile. "I can't change history nor do I have the luxury to sulk in this room. If you blame yourself, then, I am also one to blame."

"My lady, I feel relieved that you've matured." Fabian expressed bitterly with a sigh. "But, please, don't blame yourself."

"I'm not blaming myself. I'm merely saying, if you perceive it as your fault, then, I also have to shoulder the same burden," I replied, my tone unwavering, emboldened for everything that happened so far.

"Instead of blaming ourselves, shouldn't we think of a solution instead? I don't know what happened last night, that's why I called for you. You're the only one I can trust, Mister Fabian. So, please, I will appreciate it if you fill me in with the details."

Part of me was telling me my knowledge of this situation was not just the tip of the iceberg. I couldn't continue living in the dark, I needed some answers and clarity.

Mister Fabian nodded and murmured, "You've changed, my lady." before taking the seat across from me after my gestures.

"I had to, Mister Fabian," I replied, with a hint of bitterness in my voice. The situation had forced me to broaden my understanding and set aside my own feelings for now.

"I'm glad to know you've picked yourself up faster," Fabian said before he started.

"Back in Cunningham, the day you are abducted, we found a dreadful discovery. We encountered an undead." Fabian explained.

But I couldn't help but furrow my brows. "Undead?" I never heard of that.

"Unlike Vampires and Abnormals, Undeads are people who were resurrected from the dead. They don't feed on blood, what they devour is one's soul. At first, I assumed it was the king's doing,

considering that you were abducted on the same day. But I was wrong." Fabian stared at me straight in the eyes as his eyes darkened as they glinted.

"It is most likely another force; someone who has a grudge against the royal family or wants to bring ruin in this kingdom. It is also the reason the king had been gathering the divine order."

"What are the Undead and how do they pose a threat to the vampires? Also, if they have a grudge against the royal family, why are they targeting Sam first and not the king?" I asked a series of questions as I didn't want to miss anything at this point.

Everything I would learn from now on was crucial information. For my own and my people's survival, I had to be mentally, physically, and emotionally prepared.

"As I've mentioned, the Undead devour souls. Unlike blood which gets restored by the miracles of our body, souls don't, apparently." Fabian paused as he took a deep breath. "To put it simply, if they devoured a vampire's soul, it's an instant kill."

I nodded in understanding as that made more sense. "Undead, huh?"

"As for your last question, the answer is simple. The biggest threat in this kingdom for the other forces is the Duke. So, in a strategic view, it is only natural to nip the biggest threat that can overthrow their plan."

"Oh." How did I forget when Yul praised Sam to heaven and mentioned the purity of Sam's blood.

"The king had the ability of foresight. Therefore, it is not impossible that he had seen the future of this kingdom. Hence, he acted on his own accord, abducting you before the Undead could."

"If that's the case, why didn't he tell Sam beforehand? Why did he have to force Hell to come out? His claims now are less credible with everything he has done so far." I argued, as it was hard to see Stefan in a different light. "If he is someone we can trust, why did he have to sire me?"

Fabian's expression grew more solemn. "My lady, you know the duke more than anyone. Even if this kingdom will crumble down before him, he wouldn't bat an eye. However, since you are the first target, someone should force Hell out of him before it's too late. It can happen if you fall into the Undead's hands, but we all don't know if you can live for another day. Knowing this, the king had to pose himself as the villain to force Hell out while keeping you safe."

I remained silent, as I didn't expect such a twist. I had seen Stefan as the villain, my abductor, and the man who had made things difficult for me and Sam. Now, Fabian was telling me he was an ally all along?

Ridiculous, but I had to keep my mind open.

"The Duke had realized that when he shut off his emotions. It is hard to admit, but compared to the duke we'd been for months, Hell is sharper. Hence, he already knew that there would be a truce between him and the king." Fabian continued without beating around the bush. "I'm not saying we can trust the king, but they were our ally for now."

"For now," I stressed, and we both nodded in understanding, before I added and propped my temple against my knuckles. "But, why did the king have to save me before it's too late? He shouldn't care whether I fall into the undead's hands since the Hell they all want will come out, anyway. And even if I die, they will still join hands since they share a common enemy."

I mumbled as I pondered about it. The reply I was expecting didn't come, which made me raise my gaze back to Fabian.

"Mister Fabian?" I furrowed my brows upon seeing him purse his lips in a thin line. "Is there another reason?"

"I don't think I am in the position to explain it to you, my lady."

"Why?" I asked in puzzlement. "Is it personal?"

Fabian was the type of person who wouldn't hold back in giving me full details of what he knew. Unless it was something he deemed too personal or unnecessary.

"Yes," Fabian hung his head low, politely. "My apologies."

"It's fine," I replied, and nodded in understanding. "It doesn't matter to me, anyway."

"My lady," Fabian raised his head and face me once again. "As I've mentioned, the king is gathering the bearers of the Divine Order."

"Yes." I nodded as I recalled it, but forgot to inquire about its purpose. "What is it again?"

"The Bearers of the Divine Order were individuals who wield powerful weapons blessed by the Saintess Selena. The purpose of its creation was to keep evilness and destruction from befalling on the kingdom." Fabian explained which I understood immediately.

"I see. But why are you telling me this?" I cocked my head to the side before my eyes slowly widened upon realizing it.

Fabian nodded and said, "Lakresha is one of them, my lady."

## Chapter 167 - Match Made In Hell

The bearers of the Divine Order weren't obligated to receive orders from the royal family. They were a group of individuals — vampires or humans, sometimes other races — whose best interest was to keep the kingdom from falling.

'Didn't this kingdom fall a long time ago, though?' My subconscious mind commented sarcastically as I held onto my necklace, Lakresha.

"No wonder it reacted that way to Sam," I whispered, recalling the time I called Lakresha the first time.

"I'm unsure what decision they will come up with about Lakresha, but it is best to start taming it now," Fabian advised solemnly. "Even if you don't fight for this kingdom, you will need the power of the necklace to defend yourself."

Fabian was right. I couldn't keep playing this damsel in distress role and let others do what they wanted to me.

"You're right..." I trailed off, moving my gaze towards the door as Sam suddenly barged in. A pair of crimson eyes searched the room before they fell on me.

My brow quirked as I spoke, "Can't you knock?"

"No, why would I? I like the gradual change," Sam said as he trudged towards me and sat down. He spread his arm over my shoulders and pulled me closer to him.

What was he trying to do now? I raised my eyes, full of bafflement at his action.

"I miss you," He said in a monotonous voice, making me cringe as I couldn't conceal the dismay on my face. "I know I was wrong and I'm sorry."

He didn't have to apologize in such a disappointing manner. My heart would've skipped a beat if there was the slightest sincerity in his words, but I only felt like forgiving him just so he could stop.

"I'll take my leave, my Lord, my Lady." Fabian excused himself politely and I nodded in return as he bowed.

But before Fabian could leave, Sam suddenly spoke, "Fabian, tell everyone that Lilou and I will be joining them for dinner."

"Yes, my Lord," Fabian replied without putting up an argument and then left.

As soon as Fabian closed the door, I planted a palm on his chest and pushed him away.

"You don't have to strain yourself by doing this," I said as I created distance between us. "I'm pleased to meet Hell, even though I missed my Sam."

"Oh?" He raised a brow, placing his hand on my shoulder, pulling me closer to him.

"Ah. Please don't break my shoulder." I instinctively held my shoulder and leaned on him again.

"Then don't say another man's name in front of me!" He seethed, annoyed at my previous remarks. "You have 206 bones and I don't mind breaking one or two if you keep saying that."

"Mmm," I hummed as I leaned to my side and rested my head on his lap, pulling my legs up to fit the divan. "Is that so?" I asked and closed my eyes indifferently.

"What are you doing?" He asked with genuine puzzlement in his voice. "Is that it? You're going to sleep? Don't you want to argue? Or break down?"

I had no idea why he was saying such words. Did he become a sadist and now finds pleasure in other's misery?

"I want to rest," I said as I yawned. "Since we're back to scratch, I need some energy."

"Then, rest on the bed!" He said, annoyingly.

I didn't reply and kept my eyes shut and my thoughts blank. All I had been doing since this morning was trying to think, understand, and find a solution to every problem that was piling up one after another. So, I needed some peace. Now I understood the reason Sam used to nap on my lap.

Not long after, I realized the peace I was seeking would never come when Hell was with me.

"That fucking Stefan. He aggravates me so much I want to serve his head during dinner!" Sam fumed, cursing the king through his gritted teeth and cracking his knuckles. "Ah...? just the thought of when my bare hand pierces his throat through his nape makes me tremble in excitement."

I snapped my eyes open upon the abrupt air that blew past my neck. Sam looked away, whistling, when I turned my head to him.

"Did you almost chop my head off?" I asked in disbelief as I was sure that was what happened.

He smacked his lips as he gazed down on me, batting his eyes unaffectedly. "Almost, but you're fine!"

The way his eyes glinted with no remorse and his way of speaking reminded me of the night we first met. Back then, I felt like I was trapped in a loop with his constant shift of moods, but this version of him was more extreme.

A deep sigh escaped my nose. "Will you ever kill me?" I asked out of curiosity.

"I can hurt you." He smiled, reminding me of that devil that night.

"So you won't kill me, but you can hurt me? How reassuring." My indifferent reply made him frown as he pressed a finger against my forehead.

"It's no fun if you're this indifferent," He rumbled. "Should I put a hole in your skull to bring forth the sense of danger in you?"

My eyelashes fluttered ever so slowly as I stared at the pair of crimson eyes hovering over me. If he really meant that, he didn't have to say it aloud. He'd just do it. I wasn't testing him, I just knew him better.

"Dull," He muttered as he clicked his tongue in annoyance, flicking my forehead lightly.

His action brought warmth to my heart as I rubbed my forehead. I couldn't help but smile because Sam had that habit. So, I requested, "Can you do it again?"

"Do what?"

"Flick my forehead."

"Are you a masochist?" He questioned in dismay as his nose scrunched up.

"What's so bad about a masochist if you're a sadist?" I muttered innocently. "Aren't we a match made in hell?"

"Who said I'm a sadist?" He seemed taken aback by my answer.

"I did." I pressed my lips as I looked at him straight in the eye. "You, I don't care if you're Sam or Hell or even God, I will keep my promise to you and capture your heart."

That's my resolve. If we fell in love the first time, we would fall in love again the second time — or the third or fourth. I'm certain Sam made his decision with that in mind.

Alas, I had forgotten that Sam saw things a different way when he asked, "Is that a threat?"

Chapter 168 - I Had An Erection

"Is that a threat?" The expression on his face clearly told me he took my heartfelt resolve as an offense. "Should I start looking over my shoulders now that my bride wants my heart?"

A faint sigh slipped past my lips, as I didn't have the energy to retort. "Come to think of it, we didn't clear up that misunderstanding because I was too afraid to even mention it," I murmured as I reminisced about that dreadful first night in the duke's mansion.

"Misunderstanding?" He tilted his head as he observed my expression.



"Mhm! Do you remember when you captured someone's heart?" Sam traced back the memory I was referring to before I continued, "Back then, I told you to capture someone's heart and you literally brought a beating heart and squashed it to smithereens!"

Sam frowned as he gave me a look of disappointment. "How is that a misunderstanding?"

"What I meant at that time is to capture someone's heart, you have to make them love you," I explained, finding this time as the perfect opportunity to clarify a forgotten misunderstanding.

"But I already love you," He said with furrowed brows. "Why do you have to do that?"

The corner of my lips hooked into a subtle smile as I raised my hand, planting it on his chest.

"Loving is not knowing but feeling. You don't love with your head, but with your heart."

My words seemed to puzzle him as he narrowed his eyes to mere slits. I'm just glad he was still listening to me.

"No wonder you don't use your head." Sam nodded in understanding as he cast me a look, shaking his head as if I was a fool.

Well, I am, indeed. I wouldn't deny I was and would always be foolishly in love with him.

"Nevertheless, that's my decision. I will win you over and love you harder!" I affirmed, staring at him eagerly.

"Love me harder?" He arched his brow as a sinister smirk turned up on his lips. "Harder than Sam?"

He truly believed Sam and Hell were two different people. Well, I couldn't disagree anyway since they felt similar and completely different at the same time.

"I told you, if you can't love yourself, I'll love you in your stead. If the other half of you is missing, I'll split myself in two to complete yours," I asserted, staring straight at him. "Because I'll love your best and will love your worst harder. So, don't change."

My words seemed to catch him off guard as he stared at me, unblinking. His stunned reaction made me smile brightly.

"So, yes! Start looking over your shoulders now because your bride wants not just your heart but the entire You! I'm greedy, you know?"

"Silly girl, you're quite bold to play such a dangerous game." He smirked, but seemed pleased with my determination. "Didn't you consider that by trying to fix a broken man, you'll end up destroying yourself?"

"I did think about that, but I was never eager to do something else before. This is the first," I murmured as I blinked innocently. "Although I have a request!"

"A request?" His brow arched. "Hah, let's hear it."

I pursed my lips into a subtle smile as I took a deep breath. "Since this path I chose is not easy, will you let me die without making a fuss?" His amused smile slowly faded, but I didn't let it bother me.

"I'm not saying I'll give up on you, but just in case, I prefer a painless death." The mood that started to feel light immediately turned gloomy at my request. "Being sired with the king is something even you can't win. So, instead of being used as a tool against you, just kill me quickly or just let me die."

It would be no surprise if what happened at the banquet would happen again. I'm glad that trick didn't faze Sam, but just in case, I would like him to know that's also my decision.

"Sit up," He ordered, cocking his head. "Now."

I furrowed my brows, confused, but I did it anyway. I jolted when he placed his hands on my shoulders.

"Look at me," He said as his crimson eyes searched for my gaze. "Do you trust me?"

I said nothing and nodded as a response and then he asked again, "why?"

"Because I just do?" Should I need to list down the reason? It would be a long list.

"Let me tell you, I'm stronger and smarter than Sam. That buffoon's intellect shares the same level as Klaus so he couldn't protect you." He commented sarcastically. Funny how he insulted himself as if he was insulting another person.

"But I can. If Stefan used you again, we'll forget about the truce, and I'll just fucking kill him first. No one will attempt to harm you again. I'll see if they dare lay their fingers on you."

The fire beneath his eyes glowed brightly as I pursed my lips and nodded. I couldn't find the right words to say, as I didn't expect such sincerity in his arrogance.

"If worse comes to worst and we reach that situation, you decide what you see fit and I'll do the same." To my surprise, Sam still didn't close the slightest possibility that we'd be overplayed.

Surely, Hell was more broad-minded in this type of situation. I smiled unknowingly.

"Why are you smiling?" He asked, quirking his brow.

"I just think you're not as evil as you think you are." I giggled as I observed his face etching the difference between Hell and Sam's mien. "Even if you are, I always had a soft spot for villains."

"Are you trying to seduce me?"

"Huh? What gave you that impression?" I tilted my head to the side. I'm merely stating facts and hadn't made enough movements or gave him subtle hints that I was seducing him.

But he narrowed his eyes suspiciously, leaning closer as he bobbed his face to observe me.

"Because I had an erection."

Chapter 169 - Make Memories With The Devil

"Because I suddenly had an erection." Can he be a little less blunt? The heat on my face instantly increased as I instinctively held my breath.

"Haha! Breathe, Lilou. Breathe!" Sam laughed gleefully, patting my stiff shoulders before he clapped. "You get flustered easily! I jest! I'm not a dog in heat."

How could he tease so out of the blue? I frowned as I slapped his chest and looked away to hide my flushed cheek.

"Come on! I'm not serious," He cajoled mischievously. "But, I'm curious. What did you think when I said I had an erection?"

I glanced at him briefly and murmured, "I thought you want... something like that, obviously."

"Something like, what?" He asked, his expression quizzical as he guided my chin to face him. His thumb brushed my lip as his eyes glanced at them before raising them back at me.

I gulped when his gaze flicked devilishly.

"Something, like..." He trailed off as his arm snaked around my waist, pulling me closer as I instinctively planted my fist on his firm chest. He tilted his head, smirking. "...like how my arm will wrap around your tiny waist while I slowly pin you down?"

My breath hitched as Sam slowly pinned me down while staring at me intensely.

"And once your back feels the softness of the divan, I will notice how tempting your lips are and get distracted with your pulsating vein," He whispered as his eyes glanced at my neck and added, "but then, your chest that is moving heavily in and out will fight for my attention, so I will trace it to satiate my curiosity... or hunger."

Sam did everything that left his lips while I watched his eyes glistened with desire. "Should I rip your clothes off or go slowly? I will think about something like that too as I raise my gaze to your eyes to seek an answer."

My mouth opened and closed like a fish. What should I say? 'Yes, do that, please!' My subconscious mind instructed, but words wouldn't come out of my parched throat.

"Ahh, you're driving me mad, You." He caroled under his breath, brushing the apex of his nose against mine. "What can I even do with this feeble body of yours other than break it?" His grip on my waist tightened as if holding something fragile.

"I, I won't... break," I stammered meekly, being brave or just foolish, knowing the experience would be different this time. "You will be in pain if you hold it in."

"Oh, You." His chuckles were low and menacing as the tip of his nose traced the side of my neck. "How can you be so foolishly bold?" I flinched when I felt his tongue flick against my skin and his other hand slipping under my skirt.

"Well," I started, clearing my throat, but couldn't speak when he kissed my neck.

"Well?" He whispered, encouraging me to speak while he continued to trace a path on my thigh. "Go on, I'm listening."

"I," I quivered when he squeezed my thigh and bit my shoulders lightly. "I... am dumb," were the only words that slipped past my lips.

"Mhm. Are you?" He hummed, pulling the lace of my dress with his teeth as if he had planned to undress me by ripping my dress slowly. "Because?"

"Be — because." My mind short-circuited as he stood on his knees, unbuttoning the first three buttons of his white linen shirt.

He smirked at me before he bent over, inhaling my breath sharply. "Come on, You. Don't stop. I want you to tell me what's inside that brain of yours."

How could I continue when you're openly seducing me? "Is this your new way of torture?" I blurted out, and I covered my lips instantly.

"How can you say something so arousing?" He teased with a low chuckle. "I merely want to save time from knowing what happened to you in here while doing something I want."

"Because you wouldn't spare the time to just listen to what happened to me when I was abducted?" My mood instantly made a turn as I frowned. I winced when he suddenly squeezed my thigh harder.

"Because I don't think just listening to you alone is possible," He clarified as he nibbled my collarbones. "You need to learn to take advantage of the opportunities, You. Multitask."

"Lilou," I corrected with a pout, pounding my fist against his chest lightly. "My name is Lilou." But Sam suddenly caught my wrist and pinned it above my head with his crimson orbs hovering over me.

"You have too many layers of clothes, it's frustrating already!" He exclaimed annoyingly, gazing at my dress which he tore but still protected by my undergarments. Was he just diverting the subject? My frown revealed my disappointment.

"Hmm. Let me tear it.. "

He trailed off as I exclaimed an offended, "No!" and glared daggers at him while I struggled to free my hands from him. "No kissing or making love unless you call my name," I said bravely as I sat down while pushing his chest.

The excitement in his eyes faded as he squinted his eyes. "Did you really think you have a say in here?"

"I don't, but I can at least try, right?" I huffed. "You can just take me by force if that's what you want, but know that I didn't give my consent."

The expression on his face was more menacing than ever, but he did nothing. He only clicked his tongue in annoyance and clipped my skirt with his fingers, tugging it lightly.

"Come on, You. I thought you're concerned about me because I'd be in pain if I held it in."

"Is it so hard to say my name?" I gasped in disbelief, facing him squarely. "Even if it's, 'Lilou, I'll kill you,' it's fine!"

"If I say your name now, who will be in pain if it doesn't sound like the one you used to hear?" His response rendered me speechless as I watched him cock his head while batting his eyes languidly, before he added, "I'm not that Sam, and I hate being compared, You."

"Then, let's hear it," I suggested, emboldened by his consideration I didn't know until now. "Who said I want to compare? I love my Sam, but I will love Hell harder. I already said — ah!" I squealed, holding on to his arms as he yanked me on his lap.

"Very well." I slowly gazed up, only to see the devil smirking down on me. "Say, Lilou, will make memories with the devil as well?"

Chapter 170 - You Can't Marry Her!

"So, you will make memories with the Devil, Lilou?" His tone was deep and menacing, making me think the devil itself was luring me with a deadly contract.

My head answered with a courageous, 'of course, I will!' but what came out was a meek and stammering, "Ye- yes, sire."

He grinned and chuckled, pleased while nodding. Did he only expect hatred from me? Because Sam hated this side of him?

"Then, how about we start by getting to know each other with our lips?" He bent down but stopped as he moved his eyes towards the door. "What is it, Mildred?"

I moved my eyes towards the door where Mildred stood, seeing her bow politely. "Her royal highness request audience with His Highness' the third prince."

"Sivi is here?" My voice raised in excitement but backed up when met with Sam's pair of sharp eyes.

"What does Cassara want?" Sam asked indifferently. "Tell her I'm busy at the moment. We can talk... later." He trailed off as Cassara suddenly barged in with a huff.

"Hell! Are you refusing to see me?!" Her pitched was almost deafening as she planted her hands on her hips. "How can I..." she trailed off, eyeing me with clear dislike.

But I ignored it as I immediately got up and performed a curtsy. "Greetings to your royal highness."

"How can you greet me in such an unsightly state?" She seethed, making me realize my upper garment was torn open by Sam. I shuddered as my eyes dilated.

"You!" I instinctively staggered back upon sensing she would assault me. "How dare a mere human!" Cassara raised her hand, but stopped.

I gazed at her shaking hand in the air, her eyes glinting with deep hatred. What made her snap so abruptly? Had she lost her mind completely?

"Cassara," Sam called. His tone was low and menacing, sending a chill down my spine. "Did you barge in here just to humiliate my wife?"

"Your wife?" Cassara faced him squarely, balling her hand into a fist. "You're not married yet. How can you call her your wife?"

She was acting as if she was Sam's first wife instead of the king's second wife. I tried to keep the hysterical laughter from bubbling up.

"We're getting married tonight, so it's the same?" Sam shrugged nonchalantly as he crooked a finger at me. "Come here, love."

I instinctively walked towards him and sat down. I jumped when a piercing "Hell!" came out from Cassara's mouth.

"Can't you fucking shut up and leave?" Ticked off, Sam winced as he tugged his earlobe. "Why are my siblings so fucking annoying? Can't you dig your own grave and rest?"

Cassara ignored his previous remarks as she ordered. "You can't marry her." She lifted her chin up, eyeing him with superiority. "I won't let you," she added.

This woman knows no fears! If there was anything I could applaud Cassara for, that was her courage. Even Stefan had to walk on eggshells in dealing with Sam, but she was just going all out.

"You won't let me?" Sam asked with genuine wonder and amusement in his voice. "And how will you do that? I mean, stop me from marrying my bride?"

Cassara didn't answer as she took a deep breath, facing him squarely. "I will divorce Stefan."

Sam and I both tilted our heads in puzzlement. What did that have to do with our marriage?

"I married Stefan because you promised me marriage! How can you marry a lowly human who —" Cassara could not finish her sentence as Sam suddenly slammed her against the wall behind her. His hand grabbing her mouth and jaw, lifting her up with his bare hand.

"A lowly human?" His tone sounded more sinister, chilled to the bone. "Have you become asinine the older you get? Should I crush your jaw just so you can remember your place, my little sister?"

I froze on the spot as my eyes fixed on them. Cassara struggled under his grip, but that didn't faze him. Should I tell him to stop? But I'm scared that his anger would shift on me if I did.

"Sa — Sam." Before I knew it, I called him, which made me cover my lips in panic.

"Don't you ever call my bride lowly, and even if she is human, Lilou is MY human. Remember that before running off your mouth." Sam dropped her, and I saw dripped from the corner of her lips.

"The next time do you something as foolish as this, I'll end you, Cassara." He warned.

I saw the anger in his eyes before it flickered out when his eyes fell on me. I'm grateful he wasn't angry with me, but with Cassara who was behind him.

Once he sat down, he draped an arm over the seat. "So, where were we, Lilou?" he asked, rendering me speechless.

My mouth opened and closed like a fish. His quick shift of moods had thrown me in a loop, I couldn't keep up.

"Tell him Cassara is still here! So, how can he flirt with you right now?" My subconscious mind instructed me to speak, but words won't come out of my throat.

"Ah. We were about to kiss, right?" He nodded, remembering where we stopped. "Come here." Sam leaned closer as he instructed me to come closer.

"Hell... how can you?" Cassara muttered as she trembled in anger. "For someone like her... you will kill me?"

But Sam ignored her, as if those words didn't reach him. I instinctively glanced at Cassara and flinched upon meeting her eyes filled with killing intent.

"Your Highness, His Majesty had summoned your highness and my lady to dinner." Sam hissed when Mildred's voice suddenly came in to inform us of our scheduled dinner.

"Tell him I'm about to have mine and don't fucking disturb us again." He shot Mildred a glare that broke the latter's usual stoic exterior. Mildred gazed down, conceding.

Was this some kind that vampire could only understand? I knew Sam was pulling an aura, but I could only feel a slight tightness in my chest. So, I'm at a loss.

"Also, take that thing out of my quarters. The next time she comes near here or near my bride, all your heads, including yours, will roll."

"Yes, your highness." Mildred kept her head hung low before she assisted Cassara by her shoulders and left without another word.

"Tsk. These people just know how to tick me off." Sam clicked his tongue annoyingly before cocking his head to me. "See? They fucking ruined the mood."

I nodded awkwardly, aware of that, obviously. But I wasn't really displeased about it, as I didn't think sex as the foundation of our relationship would last long.

"Ugh! This is annoyi...ng." He trailed off. My face flushed in embarrassment when my stomach growled loudly and he set his eyes on me.

"You're hungry?" He asked. I gazed down as raw hunger clutched my stomach.

"You could have said so." Sam smacked his lips as I gazed up when he spread his hands for me to clasp. "Hand."

"Yes?" I muttered.

"Dinner. Let's join them." He said, batting his eyes languidly. "I'll hold you so you don't stray too far again."

And that last remark, laced with a little affection, made my heart skip a beat.

"Yes!" I nodded and clasped his hand, and he slipped his fingers in between the gaps of my finger. I smiled.