

The Duke 421

Chapter 421 - Arouse Your Appetite?

The lips that were dominating mine gradually parted away. Sam rested his forehead against mine while I opened my eyes weakly, inhaling each other's hot breaths. The corner of our lips curled up as we chuckled.

Sam cupped my cheeks while I held the back of his hand, pressing my cheek against his palm. He looked at me without blinking, as if he was afraid that I'd be gone once he did.

"I missed you," I said and subtly smiled. "We should fix our sleeping schedule so we sleep at the same time."

I tried humoring him, but he just smiled weakly. Since he liked to stare, I let him for as long as I could. The plethora of questions could wait. Unlike the eight months that I had waited for him back then, five years was way too long. I couldn't imagine how Sam managed.

I had missed a lot. And when I said a lot, it was a hell of a lot.

"Say it again," Sam uttered, making my brows raise. "Can you speak more?"

"Uhm... I missed you, Sam," I repeated before pressing my lips together. He looked as if he was waiting for me to speak more, so I cleared my throat. Honestly, I had a lot to say, so I might just say them now that he wanted to hear my voice.

"I remember walking in the dark without a destination for a long time; it was tiring. No matter how I screamed, cry, ask for help, or even whisper, there's nothing but me and the voices. I felt helpless, Sam. I thought I wouldn't get to see you once again. I thought I'd be there forever. It was scary..."

I paused to swallow down a mouthful of saliva. Honestly, I didn't ponder on everything I said just now. They just naturally came out of my mouth as if these thoughts had been at the back of my head all along.

"Sam..." I sighed and smacked my lips. "I'm really, really, really glad to see you. I don't know what to do if you actually had another wife and son. I thought I will lose my mind."

A dry laugh escaped my mouth as I thought about how foolish I was to assume.

"Me too," he whispered, caressing my cheek with his thumb and smiled in relief. "I will lose my mind if this isn't you who came back to me."

My frown turned grim. "You kissed me when you aren't completely sure if it's actually me and not the bad Lilou?"

"She's cunning," he shrugged, pulling me into his embrace as his arms wrapped around me once again. "She will do everything. She's the only person who actually terrifies me."

"Sam..." I snaked my arms around his waist as I leaned the side of my head on his chest. I could understand this doubt and longing. Also, it was not like I had the right to condemn him since I had sex with him back then, even when I was thinking he was an imposter.

"I'm sorry. I will make it up to you, I promise."

Sam only hummed a tune, and we stayed in each other's embrace for a long time. When I broke away from him, he smiled at me, closed-lipped. I could not help but arch my brows, noticing that something was amiss.

"Sam? What are you thinking?" I inquired cautiously, out of instinct.

"Now that I am sure this is you, come with me." Sam reached for my hand and raised them up. The side of his lips stretched into a smile until his eyes squinted into slits.

"I told you, didn't I? Even if you kiss me, it won't be effective."

"Oh no," I mumbled and shook my head, but Sam already dragged me with him. Although he was dragging me with my hand, his grip wasn't tight to hurt me. Actually, I found myself skipping my steps to keep up.

"Sam... where are we going?" I asked as we turned into the hallway.

"I still have unfinished business, my wife. I won't let you go off on your own again," he replied without looking back. "You and your son just do whatever you want. So, while he sleeps, help me out for a bit."

"But Sam! Shouldn't I be resting too?"

"Goodness. Have you become lazy now?" Sam gasped and looked back at me, peering at me from head to toe without pausing in his steps. "You've been sleeping most of the time for over five years."

I pressed my lips together and averted my gaze. I didn't want to go with him since I planned to visit Bey and then watch Law as he sleep. Sam can do all this 'business' without keeping me by his side.

"So clingy," I muttered, and he halted abruptly. I looked at him, wide-eyed.

"My wife, it's a surprise you just realize how clingy is your husband. If only I can, I will cement you on my body."

My nose scrunched up as my eyes flickered with dismay. What sort of things had been going on in that vicious mind of his? I imagined myself glued to his body and immediately erased it in my head.

"Husband, I missed five years and I don't think I can help you in decision making right now."

"It's fine. I just need you by my side to feel secure."

Once again, Sam pulled my hand as he resumed his steps. Although he was slower this time, I still dragged my feet to follow him wherever his destination was.

Soon, we reached the estate's drawing-room, where Ramin was standing outside. He looked at me with a bright smile, but my smile in return was weak.

Sam didn't pause in his steps as Ramin immediately opened the door, and we entered. I looked back at Ramin and saw him checking the outside before entering the room with us.

Inside the drawing room was Jaime Malum. He wasn't restrained, but he sat on the armchair obediently. He was still in a terrible state, with his nose bleeding, making me lick my lips.

"Don't do that." I popped my eyes open as I turned to Sam when he spoke. He was looking at me and waved a finger.

"Don't do what?"

"You." Sam didn't explain but pointed at Jaime. "If you don't want me to squeeze out every bit of your blood, stop bleeding in front of me before I do."

I looked at Sam in pity and asked.. "Does his blood arouse your appetite?" but the reply I got was Sam's dismal gaze.

Chapter 422 - [Bonus]Take It Slowly

Sam never left me out of his sight; even when he was interrogating Jaime Malum, I stayed. I had no reason not to, so I listened to their conversation. It was mostly about Jaime's shady connections. Of course, the viscount could only tremble in fear the more my husband spoke.

Jaime didn't expect that he had already caught the emperor's eyes a long time ago, and they had been investigating him. So, Sam knew more than Jaime thought. Hence the fear in Jaime's eyes. Still, since the young Earl needed to establish his position, killing Jaime wasn't smart. Another person would just replace Jaime and try to control the Earl.

So, my husband ordered this viscount to guide the young Earl and slowly transfer the stolen power and influence to him. If Sam deemed his execution proper, he would reconsider what punishment he would give to the House Malum.

After that, Sam asked him to give the son who tried to harass me. Although he didn't need to, my husband was adamant about proceeding in teaching Jaime's son a lesson. The latter didn't even fight for his son because he just agreed.

This boring discussion went on for about an hour as they extracted information from him. It was still a surprise that they were treating Jaime Malum as if they were doing proper business with him. Instead of holding him in some kind of dungeon where Fabian would have fun with him.

When all was done, Sam and I returned to where Law was sleeping, as per my request. Honestly, I felt like I had a loose leash because Sam really didn't stay away even for a second. I couldn't blame him, though.

"He said, 'I hate him,' because I was in slumber because of him," I recalled softly, sitting on the chair beside the bed while staring at Law. He looked to be in pain even when he was asleep, clutching the sheet tightly.

"He is quite the emotional kid," Sam answered as I glanced at him. He was standing in front of the window with a glass of wine in his hand. My husband glanced back at me before leaning his back on the side of the window, arms crossed.

I pursed my lips and peeled my eyes away from him to my son. "This feels weird."

Sam didn't speak after my remark. Staring at Law felt strange and the thought of waking up only to find out I had a five-year-old son.

"This is not how I expect it to feel," I said as my eyes softened, letting out a shallow sigh. "Am I happy? I don't know. But I am definitely shocked... that is what I am sure of."

I extended my arm and stroke Law's hair with the tip of my fingers. A weak smile dominated my lips, staring at him who looked like his father more when asleep.

"We occasionally talk about starting a family, Sam, and I'm always the happiest whenever we talk about it. I always imagined what our family would look like countless times. I wondered what our child will look like, and I consistently feel this strong anticipation and excitement just thinking about it. I told myself I will shower our child with all my love once the time comes." I paused as bitterness flickered across my eyes. "But now that he is actually here, I don't know what to feel."

That was my hundred percent honesty.

Although it pained me to see this child cry because he blamed himself for what happened to me, I couldn't really feel this... motherly feeling I had always heard from the ladies in Grimsbanne. I didn't even know what that felt like. What I only knew was this guilt, fear, and many other things but that 'motherly feeling.'

None of this was motherly love, I thought. The rewarding feeling everyone talked about didn't even cross my emotions; only this anxiety was one of the distinct emotions I felt while staring at Law.

"What if I kill him?" I wondered under my breath, biting my lower lip lightly. "Five years... but I don't even know him. What if I can't meet his expectations? What if I end up hurting him?"

Tears already formed on the corner of my eyes and before I realized it was already rolling down my cheek. Law had waited for five years. He grew up without a mother and the oblivious Sam suddenly needed to raise a son.

"Five long years... I missed five years of my life, our life, Sam." I breathed out sharply as I withdrew my hand away from Law. "How can I catch up to those missing five years of our son's life?"

This would be easier if I only needed to continue my life, like before I went into slumber. However, a lot of things changed and all of them were enormous changes. I now had a son, and my husband became the emperor. It was hard to take everything in just a single night.

"I..." my breath hitched when I felt his arm wrapped around me from behind me. I reached for his arm and leaned closer to him, closing my eyes while tears continued to pool behind my eyelids.

"I'm... scared, Sam." — terrified was even an understatement of these sudden roles I woke up to.

Sam embraced me in silence while I muffled my cries. As usual, his presence and warm embrace were enough to comfort this overwhelming anxiety creeping into my heart.

"I understand how you feel," he whispered, resting his chin on my shoulder while stroking my bicep with his thumb. "We'll take it slowly, love. No rush. Our son is smarter and more mature than you think he is, and it's not like this is the first time I had to wait to see you. We have time, Lilou... a lot of time to fill those missing five years."

His tone was gentler than ever. It was soothing. I pursed my lips and nodded, clutching his arm tightly.

"I'm just glad I didn't need millennia to see you again," he added in the same tone, leaning the side of his head against mine. "I really missed you and I'm more than delighted... words can't even give justice to how happy I am to be with you."

"Sam..."

"You will be a great mother, Lilou," Sam affirmed softly. "Just giving birth to a life is already amazing in itself. Thank you for giving Law to me."

There was something in his words and tone that made me cry a river. My tears just wouldn't stop even when I was hiccuping and had to catch my breath. Sam didn't let me go and held me tightly, but not tight enough to suffocate me. We stayed like that all night while staring at Law.

Although everything still felt weird and surreal, I didn't dislike staring at Law. Actually, it brought this smile to my lips for no reason.

"He is adorable," I commented after a long time, but Sam disagreed.

"If he is asleep. I swear, my dear, he is the only one aside from you who makes me feel helpless.." I chuckled at Sam's remark as he exhaled.

Chapter 423 - First Morning

Morning came, and I was still sitting on the chair beside the bed. My husband had to go after dawn to attend to some business matters. Sam was reluctant to leave me, but I insisted on staying this time with our son. After negotiating with him, Sam agreed on one condition.

That was to keep Charlotte around me. I was certain she was just outside, watching me without taking her eyes off of me. Not that it bothered me because I didn't want to be careless around Law. Although I was never afraid of children, being around my son made me want to be extra cautious.

"Hmmm..."

Suddenly, Law moaned and moved, stretching his short arms and feet. As he did so, he accidentally hit the young Lord sleeping next to him. So, Adam, the young Earl, let out a protesting hum and also moved. Watching the two of them stretch with their eyes closed and hitting each other lightly looked so adorable.

Law frowned as he slowly opened his eyes. He immediately turned his head to the boy whose palm was planted against his cheek. Adam also opened his eyes and the two of them stared at each other for a moment. I bit my lip when Adam's eyes dilated as realization struck them.

"Law!" Adam gasped as he abruptly sat upright. "What are you...!"

Unlike Adam, my son lazily sat up, using his elbow. His head still turned to Adam, frowning. He tilted his head when Adam's eyes veered in my direction and I offered him a kind smile.

"Huh?" Law let out a confused tune and turned his head around. As soon as our eyes met, his eyes dilated as he gazed at me blankly. He blinked every three heartbeats as if processing what he was seeing.

So cute.

"Good morning," I greeted softly while darting my eyes between the two. "Are you hungry? You shouldn't move around since you two need to rest more."

I reached for the bell and rung it to get Charlotte's attention. But instead of Charlotte, a different maid came in. My brow raised while I studied her wrinkly yet stern countenance. She seemed to be around in her early sixties. She must be the head maid.

"Will you fetch some water so the children can wash their faces?" I requested politely, refraining from asking about Charlotte. This was still the Earl's estate, and we were just guests. But it seemed what happened here tonight hadn't reached many people's ears as the old maid gazed at me coldly.

Jaime Malum was already busy, so it probably slipped his mind to treat the guest properly. So, this maid didn't seem to feel the need to pretend that they care about the young Earl.

"Sure, Madam." The maid bowed slightly before walking away.

I glanced at Law and he was still staring blankly at me, and then I set my eyes on Adam. He was just gazing down. Although it didn't seem he was scared, it was more like this had become his habit.

'Honestly, I don't know what to tell them.' I thought, biting my tongue, afraid I would say something stupid. 'My son is just staring at me and his friend seemed to need some comfort.'

A sigh slipped past my lips as I bit my lower lips lightly. I insisted on staying in this place, but now that these two were awake, I didn't know what to do.

"Uhm... do you want to stroll the downtown later?" I blurted out, making Adam raise his head and gaze back at me. Now, two boys were staring at me blankly. Oh, good, Lord. Who would have thought there would come a day I would feel awkward around children?

I cleared my throat and kept my smile on the surface. "I thought of visiting the downtown. I thought you might want to come."

There was this awkward silence that descended in the room, making my back swelter. My son and his friend liked staring as they looked at me for a very, very, very long time without saying a word.

'Sam!!! I need help!' were my internal screams, feeling helpless about how to make them talk to me! I was about to weep when the door creaked open again. I looked up only to see the maid previously with another two maids who were bringing ewer and basin for the children.

'Good save!' I thought and smiled at the two. "Come. Let's wash your faces."

This time, I had to act. So, I sprung to my feet and extended both my hands for the two of them to take. My brows rose when they gazed at it and looked back up at me.

"Come." I wiggled my fingers playfully and grinned. "Hold Mom's hand."

My last remark just came out naturally from me and I didn't even notice it. Still, the two of them blinked and clasped my hand after a second. My grin grew broader as I helped them out of the bed, trying to squash down the anxiety of making mistakes creeping into my heart.

Law and Adam voluntarily got out of the bed with my help. Even when getting off the bed, they never let go of my hand. This simple gesture made me smile for no reason. They only let me go when I told them I would prepare the waters for them. I wanted to wash their faces myself, but when I saw the water, I frowned.

'Isn't this water used to wash rugs? Surely, these maids are being too much.' I sighed, realizing that Jaime Malum had forgotten to brief the servants. Or it could be he was too busy pleasing Sam that he forgot about the situation in this estate.

"Wait," I called, stopping Adam from washing his face, as it seemed he didn't mind such dirty water. Law also frowned and didn't move an inch.

Adam looked at me with his doe eyes, blinking innocently. Had he been using such dirty water to wash his face all along? This thought made my blood boil as I gazed at the head maid.

"Can you bring clean water?" I asked, trying to be polite since children were looking. The old maid just gazed at me coldly while the other servants behind her snickered.

"Madam Roux, this is the cleanest water we can offer to the Earl and to your son," said the old servant, as her eyes glinted with contempt. "The well is a bit far, and everyone in here has too many things to do because of the upcoming festival. If you do not mind, you can fetch for them, Madam."

Wow....

Chapter 424 - Madam Roux

"The well is a bit far, and everyone in here has too many things to do because of the upcoming festival. If you do not mind, you can fetch for them, Madam."

Wow... I thought. 'The audacity of these people, even in front of the guests.'

And then realizations struck me.

Even though we were the guest of the Earl, the Roux Family we go by had no noble status. These servants probably believed that Jaime Malum let us stay for the night because my son was friends with the Earl.

Were they trying to give me a hard time so we won't come back again? Hah... how silly and pathetic. I truly felt bad for the young Lord in this place. Just what sort of person were they trying to create by maltreating this innocent boy? It reminded me of the sad childhood of the La Crox siblings.

"This is the cleanest, huh?" I glanced at the two boys and smiled at them weakly. "I'll fetch you some waters myself."

Law's frown grew grimmer, reluctant for me to leave. So I smiled and placed my hand on his head.

"I will come back. This will be quick, hmm?"

"Alright." He nodded reluctantly. Of course, I also ruffled Adam's hair and returned his apologetic expression with a smile before facing the maids.

"You can take these back." I cocked my head to the ewers and basin. The head maid stared at me straight in the eye and then signaled the younger servants to pick them up again.

A pleased smile appeared on my lips as I watched the servants carry the ewers filled with filthy water. As they took careful steps back, I looked back at the head maid.

"Can you give me the direction where I can fetch fresh water?" I inquired in a kind tone. A brief smirk appeared on her lips and a glint flickered her eyes, but I ignored it.

"Yes. Follow me, Madam Roux."

I nodded in satisfaction and followed them. As I did, I glanced at the two young boys for a moment and gave them a gentle smile. They smiled back weakly. When I peeled my eyes away and set them on the head maid's back, my eyes sharpened as a malicious glint flashed across my eyes.

As soon as we left the room, the maids who were holding the containers didn't idle and went away. While they leave, the head maid faced me with her chin up. She appeared to be looking down on me, and only under her gaze did I understand why Sam detested people looking down on him. Especially by someone who didn't have the shred of redeemable traits.

"Madam Roux, there is a well in the estate that you fetch water with. You can --"

She couldn't finish her sentence as I grabbed the lower half of her face without a sweat. Before she could realize what just happened, her feet had already left the floor with her eyes dilating in shock. This old maid held onto my sleeve and struggled, but I didn't budge.

Instead, I looked at her coldly. "Since you liked looking down on people to make yourself feel superior, isn't this view better?" I tilted my head to the side; my countenance emotionless.

She flung her feet and let out a protesting moan. The sight of her brought this thrill within me, but I squashed it down as soon as I realized how I indulged in watching her struggle under my grip.

"Servant, I don't care if you are acting like this to please the Viscount Malum, but you don't try to treat my son or his friend like that." I cautioned, staring at her straight in the eye. "Be thankful to those children because I would've crushed your skull if I don't worry that it will make a mess in here. I don't want to scare them with the sight of your filthy blood."

I tightened my grip across her jaw, but not tight enough to crush it. If only those two boys won't use this path later, I wouldn't have a problem silencing this person. But those boys would surely wonder what happened, and I didn't have the heart to lie to them.

"Don't die just because of water," I said, letting her go as she instantly collapsed on her knees. She slowly raised her head at me, revealing her pale complexion and shaking eyes.

"Fetch them clean water to wash their faces and prepare a proper change of clothes. If you don't do properly this time..." I paused while squatting down to her eye level. "... you better hang yourself because you don't want to know what I will do to you before you speak your greetings to Satan."

I heard her gulp while I kept my eye contact. "Understood?"

The head maid, who was initially looking down coldly at me with eyes full of contempt, now looked back at me with fear and panic. Ramin was correct when he said the people in here were disappointing. The enemies we had faced so far wouldn't look this desperate. Even before death, no one would give up this easily.

I could say I abhorred our enemies, but at the same time, I respected them. It just so happened we were fighting for different things.

"Go." I jerked my chin to the side lightly. "Don't make us wait."

"Ye — yes..." the head maid tried to stand, but all she could do was crawl away before she recovered her strength. I watched her stagger, clinging to the wall as she stood.

"People in here are just arrogant without substance," I mumbled and let out a deep exhale, shaking my head in disappointment. "All they know is pick on the weak and I can't stand it."

Just when I was about to go back inside the room, I glanced at the window almost in front of me. I marched towards it out of instinct, planting my palm against the glass.

I first looked at what was outside and I could see some knights walking from the pathway. It didn't seem like there was anything out of the ordinary. So, I thought of going back to the children. But when I was about to peel my eyes away, I noticed my reflection.

I stared at my reflection in the transparent glass until my eyes focused on me. My eyes slowly widened as soon as I caught the slight smirk that appeared on my lips and the vicious glint in my eyes.

"Who... are you...?"

Chapter 425 - Young Friendship

Meanwhile, when Lilou and the maids departed the room, Adam turned his head to Law. The latter was still staring at the door as if he wanted to follow his mother, but suppressing this desire for a reason.

"Law," called Adam and waited until Law turned his head to him before he spoke. "Your mother is very beautiful."

"I know."

"But, didn't you say she is sleeping for a long time?"

"Mother finally woke up last night," Law explained, keeping it short and simple. "It's my first time meeting her."

He gazed down while holding his hand on his lap. This was his first time meeting the conscious Lilou. Law had imagined what it would be if Lilou woke up, but now that she was, it felt surreal.

"She said she is my mother..." his eyes softened as an innocent smile no one had ever seen resurfaced on his face. Even Samael had rarely seen Law smile genuinely, and all those times was when he was accompanying Lilou.

"Do you think she hates me?" Law inquired while raising his head, setting his eyes back to Adam. The latter pursed his lips and shook his head.

"I don't think so."

"But, why?"

"I don't know? My father used to tell me that my mother loved me even though she died in childbirth." Adam shrugged as his mood slowly dwindled at the thought of his parents. "I'm happy that your mother is finally awake, Law. And I'm sorry that you and Madam Roux are being treated terribly because you are my guest."

Law stared at his friend and sighed. He was aware of Adam's situation and how Viscount Malum maltreated him. The reason it frustrated Law was that he couldn't do anything for his friend. They were, after all, without a noble status. Samael was just wealthy, but their fortune couldn't touch those with noble status.

"Why are you apologizing? It's not like you want this." Law clicked his tongue and smacked Adam in the head to stop him from sulking. "I promised you, didn't I? Once I become an adult, I will become a knight and surpass the military general in the capital and swear my loyalty to you!"

"We can't do anything right now, so you have to survive until then. You understand?" he continued while staring at the timid young boy straight in the eye. His hand on the young earl's shoulder, nodding approvingly.

"Let's not run away anymore, Adam. We will train and become stronger so we can protect what is precious to us."

Adam pressed his lips into a thin line. "But I don't have anyone to protect. Mother and Father are dead and all my relatives sided with Viscount Malum. To be honest, I just wish they chase me out since I don't want to become an Earl, anyway."

Again, Adam let out a sigh as he looked down. Law was Adam's only ally and the only person who didn't treat him differently, even after knowing he was the earl. Instead, Law had been protecting him in ways he could, but they were too young to resolve the bigger problems.

"Ah!" Adam frowned and teared up when Law smack him once again. He gazed up, only to see Law fumed.

"Is your life not precious? Am I not your precious friend?!" Law harrumphed while glaring daggers at Adam. "My father told me that if someone has nothing to protect, they don't live a long life. It's like a curse, he said. So you need to find that reason!"

If only Samael's explanation was clearer, Law wouldn't misunderstand such a piece of advice. But well, for these children, this simple misunderstanding was enough to get their point across.

"Alright..." Adam nodded as the determination in Law's eyes was contagious. Although his determination wasn't as strong as his friend's, he wanted to try what he said.

'Find someone or something precious to protect.' He stared at Law and a weak smile resurfaced on his lips.

"I know now," he said, making Law nod and smile. "By the way, did Madam Roux say she will fetch water herself?"

Law snapped his eyes and looked up briefly before he nodded. "Why?"

"But the well in here is a bit far," Adam muttered in worry, turning his head towards the door.

"Should we go and follow Madam Roux? It can be quite exhausting and dangerous. That is why the maids only go there once a week."

Well, that was what Adam knew because that was the reason they give him when they serve dirty water to him. He was already used to this treatment at this point, so he was alright with it. But it still embarrassed him that his guest was receiving the same terrible treatment.

Law hummed a long tune before he gazed at the door. "Should we?"

"Who... are you?"

My eyes dilated as I studied the reflection looking back at me. I didn't notice it last night as it was dark and even in the restaurant because I had a lot of things in mind. But now that it was bright and my misunderstanding was resolved, I finally had time to notice things I failed to notice last night.

Right now, my eyes were red, fading to their original color. My hazel hair had a few streaks of silver. Aside from the physical appearance, the way I was smirking right now with eyes full of evilness bothered me the most.

I knew deep down I was panicking, but the reflection bore a different expression. I didn't know this Lilou. This wasn't me. I balled my hands into a fist, about to punch the window when I heard the creak of the door behind me.

"Mother?" came Law's voice, and I was frozen in place. "What are you doing here?"

I closed my eyes and took a deep breath. I couldn't understand myself and my sudden urge to wreak havoc, but Law's voice chased all that away. A smile replaced my smirk as I turned to face them.

"I was looking out the window," I answered as I trudged towards him and Adam. My fingers spread, gesturing the two to take my hands, which they did.

"The head maid said she will fetch water herself," I explained, treading carefully back to the bedroom. "Let's wait for them before we have breakfast, alright?"

The two boys were looking up at me and smiled. They looked so adorable, but it was hard to keep this bright countenance if I knew there was still something wrong with me.

Did Sam notice it last night? Was he trying to deceive himself by telling me there was nothing wrong with me? Again, a plethora of questions hovered over my head, but no answer.

Chapter 426 - Mother, Are We Sneaking Out?

The maids returned and brought everything I asked the head maid. She seemed to have recovered a bit, but she didn't look at me in the eye again. She was too scared for that now.

I helped Law and Adam wash their faces and change clothes, mainly to distract myself. It helped; these two managed to distract me.

After that, Charlotte returned. I thought she was simply watching from afar, but it turned out she helped in the kitchen. It was strange that Charlotte, who would usually sneak away from chores and would rather train herself to death, would bother with these menial tasks. Either way, it reassured me that the food we would eat was safe.

"Mother, are you not going to eat?" Law's question snapped me back from my trance. I blinked and gazed to my side, where he was.

"Don't worry about me. Eat plenty," I replied with a subtle smile while ruffling his hair. "You too, my lord. Eat plenty so you grow up faster."

I turned my head to the head seat where Adam perched on this long table. Charlotte was the only maid present in the dining hall, standing in the corner in silence. Having fewer people around seemed to give Adam more freedom, after all.

Adam smiled sweetly at me and nodded before resuming eating. As these boys ate, I gazed at my plate. I already had a bite and was certain the food was great. However, I didn't feel satisfied. It felt as though no matter how I would eat, it would never be enough.

'It just like last night...' I thought, recalling eating with Bey in the restaurant last night. Even though Bey and I ate a lot, I didn't truly feel full. It felt like I had this bottomless stomach.

"Right..." I snapped my eyes up at Charlotte. "Charlie, have you heard about Bey?"

I almost forgot about that poor lady, as there were too many things to do after they captured us. I hadn't even talked with Sam about important things as well. What a busy man for living a double life.

"You mean the lady who was captured with you? Master had bailed her out last night, Madam. Please do not worry about her."

I nodded in understanding. "That's... good."

Charlotte only smiled back while I refocused on being a mother to Law. Sam told me he would return a little late since he had a lot of work to do. Because I was unconscious for years, Sam had to drown himself in workloads to keep himself sane. Waking up unannounced didn't mean he would drop all responsibilities so suddenly.

'He truly changed,' I thought, thinking the husband I knew would predictably toss all important documents if he deemed he had enough.

"Madam Roux, are you going to return home today?"

Suddenly, Adam inquired while gazing at me. When I looked back at him, I pressed my lips into a thin line, seeing his expression. He looked as though he didn't want us to go.

"Yes, my lord," I replied softly and offered him a kind smile. "Your lordship had already let us stay for the night. We are very grateful for your kindness."

Adam frowned, as he knew he did nothing. There was also fear and worry in his eyes; the fear of what would happen once we leave the estate.

"My lord, if you'd like, you can always visit us in the Roux Estate," I offered with a shallow exhale before casting Law a sweet smile. "Right? My son?"

Law's face slowly brightened up as he looked at me in awe. He bobbed his head and grinned.

"Yes! Or I will come in here to play with you!" my son reassured the young Lord, making Adam smile helplessly.

The young Earl of Minowa had been through a lot. Even though he was the heir, the second he was born, the untimely death of his father was too soon for Adam to bear the responsibility of the title. That was why people like Jaime took this chance to get this young Earl under control.

'I hope I can just take him away from here as well.' my eyes softened while staring at Adam, whose situation reminded me of some people I knew. If he had to experience abuse all his childhood, there were chances this young Earl wouldn't have an option but to go on that dark and bloody path once he had grown enough.

This sort of situation was where most monsters were born.

"Right! We will still go downtown! You will come with us, right? Adam?"

I was brought back from my trance at my son's remarks. He looked at me with twinkling eyes, as if waiting for me to back up this invitation.

"Well..." I cleared my throat and gazed at Adam. "It'll be an honor to have his lordship's company."

"Really??" Adam's eyes lit up but were immediately replaced by a frown. "But... Jaime wouldn't allow that."

As soon as he said that, Law also pulled a face. I couldn't help but chuckle seeing their expression and how their mood kept swinging back and forth. I was thinking too much about other things and was ignoring what was right in front of me. I should let things flow on their own. Whatever these issues with myself could be dealt with later.

"Don't worry about the Viscount," I said and waited for Law and Adam to look at me with confusion in their eyes. The side of my lips stretched into a playful grin, placing my finger in front of my lips.

"We won't be in trouble if no one will find out about it, right?"

I darted my eyes from Law to Adam and witnessed how their brows rose in surprise. Adam opened and closed his mouth, but the first to speak was Law.

"Mother, are we sneaking out?"

"Shhh." I turned to Law and bent down a little so he could hear my whisper. "You can't tell your father as well."

Law blinked adorably while staring into my eyes. I then looked back at Adam and wink.

"What do you think, my lord?" I asked. Adam's eyes flickered with hesitation, but he bit his lower lips before nodding profusely.

A chuckle slipped past my lips when the hesitation in their eyes was replaced with determination. I glanced at Charlotte on instinct and caught her sighing and shaking her head.

"Then, that's settled!"

Chapter 427 - The Devil In Us Is Just Sleeping, But Not Dead.

Although Adam, Law, Charlotte, and I didn't need to act suspicious to sneak out of the estate, it was fun this way. Also, it would raise questions about why Jaime was being so considerate towards us. The least I wanted now was to be bombarded with questions when I had a plethora of unanswered inquiries.

So, we snuck through the garden where Adam had this secret passage he hid in a bush whenever he was sneaking out to meet Law. The one he had created before was sealed, but this young Lord was also sneaky and smart to create another one, just in case.

Sadly, the secret passage was too small for adults to fit. Law and Adam could go through without a problem, but Charlotte and I wouldn't — no matter how small her frame and how thin I was. The two youngsters looked up at me in worry, holding both my hands while I gazed down at them.

A subtle smile resurfaced on my lips. "It's alright. I think I will be jumping off the fence."

They gave me this baffled look before they both gazed at the wall. I also looked up and winced, realizing how high it was.

"Uh.. how do I explain this?" I cleared my throat and squatted down, holding both their hands and squeezing them to get their attention.

"Mother, how can you jump over the wall?" asked Law curiously, and Adam looked at me the same way.

"Actually..."

"Madam used to be a thief. That's why..." I glared at Charlotte as her help wasn't helping! What did she mean by a thief? I was a vigilante, but not a thief... that sounded even worse.

"Don't listen to her. Actually, I used to be, uhm... I used to have an inkling in the circus. Do you know the magic shows? I tried learning one of their tricks." I lied and the two young boys didn't seem to buy it!

'Of course, they won't! They're smart, silly!' my mind scolded, making me sigh helplessly.

"Madam Roux, can you show us your magic tricks later?"

To my surprise, Adam's eyes twinkled and when I gazed at Law, his eyes had also lit up. I bit my tongue, pondering whether if this was a blessing or I was simply shooting my own foot.

Still, I sported a smile and nodded. "Of course, but before that, you should go now. I will be on the other side when you come out."

"Really?" Law inquired with doubt.

I smiled, nodding reassuringly at them. "That's the first magic trick."

Law pressed his lips while staring intently at me. "Alright."

Adam seemed to doubt my words as fear filled his eyes, but Law turned and faced him. The latter said nothing aside from, 'Let's go!' while tugging at the young Earl's sleeve.

Law went in first, and Adam glanced back at me before crawling to the small passage. I waved at them with a smile and watched how adorable they looked while sneaking out.

"My lady, they didn't need to crawl their way out, you know?" As I watched the two, Charlotte leaned to my side and whispered. "We can just carry them and hop over the wall."

"I know, but they look mischievous and cute, don't you think?" I crossed my arms and cast her a knowing look. "What time will my husband say he will pick me up?"

"Hmmm. I'm not sure since his Majesty was normally working in your room all day."

"Knowing him, he will surely try his best to finish his duties as fast as he could." I gazed up at the wall, calculating that Law would soon reach the other side of it. "So, we should act fast before we get caught by him."

"Madam, since when did you become..."

I didn't hear the rest of Charlotte's sentence as I bent my knees and launched a high jump. I planted my palm on the flat top surface of the wall, raising my legs up over it, before landing smoothly on the other side. Just as my feet touch the concrete, I heard another 'thud' behind me because Charlotte also jumped right after me.

"What were you saying?" I asked, turning my head behind.

"His Majesty will surely scold me for this. He told me to stop you from doing something reckless," she murmured helplessly, casting me a despondent frown.

"Don't worry, Charlie. We are doing this so I can build my relationship with my son and make the young earl happy." I patted her shoulder and chuckled playfully. "Besides, I've been in slumber for years. How do you expect me to stay inside when I was born in the street?"

"Mother?!"

Charlotte and I turned our heads to the small hole in the lower part of this wall. My eyes instantly fell on Law's small head. He was looking up at me in surprise before crawling out. Adam followed behind and bore the same surprise look on his face.

"See? Magic," I bragged proudly, and Adam awed while clapping.

I squatted down in front of my Law to dust off the little dirt and leaf that were on his clothes. It still felt awkward that he was my son, but I was always good with children. So, I only needed to do what I used to do. After dusting off Law's clothes, I motioned for Adam to come close and did the same.

After I was certain these boys were clean, I turned my head back to Charlotte. "Charlie, where is the carriage you prepared?"

"My lady, how did you know?" she frowned while the corner of my lips just stretched into a wide grin. "It's waiting in the corner of the street."

"Great!" I exclaimed, facing the two once again while holding their sleeves excitedly. "Let's go?"

My enthusiasm seemed to rub in them as they smiled brightly before nodding. And with that, the four of us, including Charlotte, roam the street of Minowa to have a family day out.

Meanwhile, in the borders of Minowa, Samael stood on top of the watchtowers, eyes on the fort where all sorts of trade usually happened. Ramin, who just arrived and stood behind him, observed the emperor's back.

"Your Majesty, are you sure Her Majesty will be fine?" asked Ramin when he couldn't take the prolonged silence anymore. "I don't want to overstep, but it seemed Her Majesty still had that person in her."

Silence still reigned between them. Ramin let out a sigh as his eyes flickered with bitterness. The Lilou they had been meeting for the past five years was vicious as if she was born out of pure evilness. Although the Lilou now was the same Lilou they had known, Ramin couldn't shrug off the faint aura that 'bad Lilou' was still within her.

"Ramin, does that matter?" Samael inquired in a low, solemn tone, catching Fabian's figure step out of the ship. "You need to understand that extremely bright, kind, and loving people have their own dark sides... which is just as extreme."

He paused as he turned around to face him. Ramin looked back at him with worry, sighing deeply as his king had been through a lot for the past five years.

"She had loved the selfish and conceited Hell..." Samael spoke, recalling how Lilou loved him regardless of his selfishness.. "How dare I not accept a part of her that even her heart couldn't acknowledge? I had gone this far and I will not give up on my wife and the mother of my son, Ramin."

Chapter 428 - How He Became Emperor

Thinking about Lilou and Law brought Samael back to the past. Those dreadful and dark days led him to be the person he was in the present.

"It's been a month, Hell," Beatrice broke the silence in the third prince's chamber, sitting on the divan while staring at Samael, who was on the chair beside the bed where Lilou was at. "Have you thought about what Heliot told you? This kingdom, this empire, needs a person who leads."

Samael didn't budge as he kept staring at his wife, arms crossed, with his leg resting over the other. "I will support Rufus. This country was theirs, to begin with."

"So you will push this responsibility to Sir Knight? Alphonse and Alistair are dead, but Zero and Stefan are still out there. Although we're not sure if Stefan was still alive or what happened to him, it's still dangerous, Hell. This empire and its subject need someone who can protect them."

"By protecting them, do you mean by violence?" he inquired, peeling his eyes away from Lilou to where Beatrice was sitting at. "Rufus can protect this land in his own way. I believe in him."

A shallow breath slipped past her lips. "It's not that I am doubting Sir Rufus' capabilities. I know he is exceptional, but he doesn't scare our enemies!"

"Haha! Beatrice, I don't think you believe your own claims." Samael chuckled at the hilarious argument while gazing at her in dismay. "If I ask you, are you confident in challenging Rufus to a duel right now?"

Her silence was enough for the two of them. He let out a faint scoff and rocked his head, setting his eyes on Lilou once again.

"I don't plan to become a king or become a duke anymore," he said after his long silence while his eyes softened at Lilou. "This is not the life I wanted for my wife. If only I could reverse the time, I would've done it already. Instead of coming back into this hell, I will just ask her to travel the world with me. There is a lot more in this world she hadn't seen yet."

"Now, here she is, unconscious while carrying a thing inside her who might kill her later." His jaw tightened as he swallowed down hard. "I hate it. I hate that she is protecting that thing that may put her life in peril. But it's my fault since it's my seed."

"You better speak less, Hell. Lest you might regret that mentality later." Beatrice quirked a brow while fanning herself.

"I won't," He asserted while shaking his head lightly. "If my wife dies because of it, I will kill it."

Beatrice studied Samael's side profile and sighed. She understood that he didn't have the energy to recognize their child as a gift, considering Lilou's current situation. But Beatrice was certain Samael would regret everything he had said today.

"I will surely use this information in the future," she murmured, but Samael ignored her even though he heard her. "Hmm?"

Her brows rose as Samael suddenly leaned forward. What she heard next made her eyes dilate.

"Mhm..." Lilou grunted, making a sound after a month of being unresponsive. Before Beatrice could think, she already sprung to her feet and marched towards the bed in a hurry.

"Lilou?" Samael also stood up, planting his palms on her side with his worried countenance hovering over her. "Love?"

He watched her eyelashes flutter weakly, squinting from the golden light of the sunset filtering through the window. She blinked many times until her eyes adjusted to the light, furrowing her brows at the face hovering over her.

"Lilou," came out a relief exhale as he cupped her jaw. Unlike her lifeless eyes for the past month, her eyes glimmered with life.

"You're back?" he asked, eyes welling up with happiness. She looked at him with confusion, but he assumed she was simply puzzled because she was clueless that she had been in slumber.

"I'm so happy."

Samael cradled her in his embrace while Lilou remained silent. Her confused eyes fell on Beatrice, who was staring at her with a soft smile, relieved that she finally regained her consciousness.

"What's... going on?" she inquired with a sweet voice.

Beatrice cleared her throat and glanced at Samael. "I will leave you two first." She didn't wait for Samael to respond as she bowed at Lilou and left.

Lilou's gaze followed her figure until Beatrice closed the door behind her. As soon as Beatrice was gone, Samael withdrew Lilou out of his embrace, clearing his throat while wiping the tears on the corner of his eyes. He perched on the edge of the mattress, raising his leg up while facing her.

"Lilou," he called, noticing that she was assisting herself to sit up properly. So, he helped her first, making her lean against the headboard with a pillow behind her.

"Better?" he asked, and she nodded. A loving smile dominated his face, feeling thankful that she had finally awoken after a long month of slumber that felt like a decade.

"I'm so happy," Samael expressed, reaching for her hand to clasp gently, eyes still on her. "You're finally here with me."

Lilou pursed her lips before forcing a smile on her face. "What happened?"

"Well... you've been asleep..." he trailed off, trying to find the right words so as not to shock her. "... for quite some time."

"Quite some time?" she stressed, tilting her head to the side with furrowed brows.

"For a month, to be exact," he clarified, expecting her to react strongly. But to his surprise, Lilou just blinked and looked down briefly.

"A month..." she whispered, nodding in understanding. Samael didn't think much about her reaction, as he was just thankful that she was more understanding about her situation.

"Hungry?" he queried, recalling that she had little food intake during her slumber.

"Yes." She nodded and smiled, staring at him as if she was observing him. "I missed you."

Her last remarks, although spoken in a rather light and unaffectionate tone, still moved his heart. He truly missed, yearned to hear her voice once again. Samael cupped her jaw, caressing her cheek with his thumb.

"I missed you more. I'll grab you some food and we will talk later, hmm?"

Lilou nodded and smiled sweetly, exchanging gazes with him before he dragged himself away from the bed. She watched him walk towards the door, staring at his back, and her eyes glinted menacingly.

Samael felt a sense of dread crawl up his spine, making him halt momentarily. He swallowed down and turn his head back, only to see her smiling gently.

"I'll be back," he said when he was by the door, ignoring the intuition that rose in his head.

Chapter 429 - [Bonus]How He Became Emperor II

Samael could've prevented what was about to happen that night if he listened to his intuition, but he was in denial. He convinced himself that the sense of dread he felt was just a figment of his imagination. That he was simply exhausted mentally and emotionally.

Just like what he said, he returned to the room after requesting healthy a meal for Lilou. The news of Lilou waking up spread faster than the speed of sound, making everyone rush to the third prince's palace.

"Damn! Why can't we enter?" Yulis huffed, standing in front of Rufus, who was blocking the door, along with Kristina.

"Her Grace needs more time to rest," replied Rufus while keeping his stern countenance. He also rushed here when Samael called for him, knowing that these people would barge in the quarters once they get the wind of the news.

"Sir knight is right," Silvia chimed, standing in the hallway with them. "It's already good that Lilou is fine now."

"What?! But we still need to see her so can be sure she's fine!" Klaus exclaimed aloud while Claude, who was standing beside him, nodded in agreement.

"Really... what is there in 'she still needs rest' can you not understand?" Kristina scorned while darting her eyes from Yulis to Klaus. "Her Grace will surely meet you all once she recovered. I'm very sure a lot of things still confuse her. Give them some time."

Klaus and Yulis clenched their teeth tightly but didn't argue back. Ramin, on the other hand, was leaning on the wall not far away from them and observed. He also wanted to see Lilou, but Kristina was right. Lilou needed more rest.

"You should return to your post. The empire is still unstable. The least we can do is keep this place from falling while His and Her Grace are not yet ready to rule." Rufus scanned their faces with his solemn front, heaving a sigh of relief when he felt they weren't being stubborn.

"Fine!" Klaus clicked his tongue in annoyance and gazed down at Claude. "Let's go, Claude. We'll see Lilou next time."

Claude nodded and followed his uncle through the hallway. Klaus glanced at Ramin as he passed by him, but the latter just gave a nonchalant bow. Meanwhile, Silvia let out a sigh and set her eyes on Yulis's side.

"Yul, we should head out as well," she urged in a soft voice, but Yulis didn't answer while gazing down. A shallow sigh slipped past her lips and glanced at Rufus.

"I'm very sure Lilou will be delighted if she sees him. I will excuse myself first." Silvia's eyes didn't linger at Rufus that long as she shifted her eyes towards Yulis once again. "You know where to find me, Yul."

After spewing her reminder and staring at him for a moment, Silvia pivoted on her heel to leave. She didn't look back once again. Then the only ones who were left in the hallway outside the room were Rufus, Kristina, Yul, and Ramin from a good distance.

"Ninth Prince, I know --"

"I'll wait." Yulis cut Rufus off as he raised his head, staring back at him straight in the eye. "I won't barge inside or intrude their time together, but I want to wait."

Kristina frowned. "Ninth Prince, why are you so stubbo --" she paused, turning her head to Rufus as he raised his hand.

"Kristina, return to your post. I trust the ninth prince's words," Rufus expressed without taking his eyes off of Yulis. "You've been working hard, Prince Yulis. You should rest as well."

"Thank you."

Rufus tilted his head down and darted his eyes from Kristina's frown and then to Ramin. "Let's go."

Kristina opened and closed her mouth while Rufus walked past her. In the end, she said nothing and just cast Yulis a look before following Rufus behind.

Ramin also stared at Yulis for a moment until Rufus walked past him. He also kept his thoughts to himself as he pulled himself away from the wall, treading away beside Kristina.

As they left, Yulis stood in front of the door until the footsteps resounding in the hallway faded into silence. His eyes softened the more he stared at the shut door.

"Sis," he whispered with relief laced in his voice. "I'm glad you finally woke up."

He planted his palm on the surface of the door, smiling bitterly. Even though he wanted to see her and berate her for thinking that he needed protection, he respected that Lilou and Samael needed time together.

"Welcome back, Sis."

Meanwhile, in the guest quarters of the imperial palace, Beatrice knocked on the unguarded door. She didn't hear permission from inside the room, but she still invited herself in.

"Have you heard?" she inquired as soon as she entered the room, closing it behind her. "That Lilou had finally regained consciousness?"

She searched the room until her gaze caught the person on the chair near the window. His midnight blue hair and tanned skin matched his nonchalant expression while reading a book.

Beatrice let out a shallow breath, trudging towards the seat across Heliot. But even when she had plopped her butt down, Heliot didn't take his eyes off the book.

"I said, Lilou is now awake and Hell doesn't want the throne. You don't have any cards to pull any more," she said in a knowing tone, but then sighed, thinking that pushing Samael to take the throne was more challenging than she thought.

Heliot fluttered his thick eyelashes as he slowly gazed up at her. He cocked his head to the side, looking back at her with misplaced puzzlement.

"I don't have cards to play anymore?" he repeated, making her roll her eyes and shrug indifferently. "Hell will be the emperor after tonight."

"Huh?" her brow arched before her eyes narrowed. "How are you so sure about that?"

Heliot didn't reply immediately as he turned his head towards the window. "If she is that important to him, he will have to be more ambitious and leave his naivety behind."

"Prince Heliot, I find calm men attractive, but I can never read what you are thinking." Beatrice let out a helpless sigh as she stared at his side profile. "Do you like Lilou or what? It's already a surprise that you are pushing Hell to become the emperor."

"Princess, I like Lilou as she is my dear friend. Also, our Karo Kingdom is under the Great Heart Empire, so of course, I support those who I think befitting to lead. Sir Knight Barret will make a wise king, but with the current things at hand, the third prince is more convenient."

"Convenient, huh?" she let out a short chuckle, amused by Heliot's simple reasoning. Well, not that it mattered to her since they have a common goal in the end.

"But how are you certain he will want to be the emperor?"

"He will learn a lot of things tonight, Princess," Heliot whispered, making her furrow her brows, but he didn't explain anymore. "That's for sure...."

Chapter 430 - [Bonus]How He Became Emperor III

"Careful, love." Samael chuckled, watching her eat quickly as if she had starved. Well, Lilou didn't get to eat properly in the past month, so she actually starved. His eyes softened while she chugged down the glass of water while pounding her chest.

"Goodness," he whispered helplessly as soon as Lilou heaved a sigh of relief. "Just eat slowly. No one will take away your food."

Lilou licked her lips while raising her head to him. He noticed some sauces on the corner of her lip, so he extended his arm and wiped it with his thumb.

"You're so cute," he muttered and smiled lovingly.

"I didn't have solid foods for a month. Of course, I'm famished." A frown resurfaced on her lips while he chuckled soothingly. "Also, why is it so loud outside?"

Samael glanced at the door as the side of his lips curled up subtly. "They just missed you, that's all."

"Missed me? Who?" she tilted her head to the side, sporting a misplaced innocence.

"Your people, who else?"

Samael humored as he peeled his eyes away from the door to her. His brows furrowed as soon as he noticed her puzzlement. It looked like she didn't have any idea of who he was talking about.

"Klaus? Silvia? Yul? The third squadron?" he listed in a knowing tone, refreshing her memory. Lilou nodded in understanding as her lips formed an O-shape.

"Oh, right... My mind is a little... jumbled," she explained, along with her quick chuckle. "I feel like I was asleep for a longer time and missed a lot of things."

Samael stared at her and let out a shallow breath. He didn't dwell on these small yet strange details he had been noticing and just smiled.

"It's fine, love. There aren't many things that happened for the past month." He stretched his arm and reached for her hand, squeezing it lightly. "Just focus on recovering, hmm?"

Lilou looked at him and nodded lightly. "Thank you."

With that, she continued on eating, although she took it slowly this time. Samael just watched her, content to see her active again, and just wanted to enjoy this moment of peace. The noises outside had already subsided, but he could still feel Yulis's presence outside their room.

"This food is great," she praised after a long time, making his brows raise. "Do you want some, honey?"

"Hon?"

Lilou also raised her brows, finding zero faults in her endearment. "You don't like it?"

"Uh, no, that's not it. It's just your first time calling me that."

"Ohh... haha! Then, you should get used to being called different endearments."

Samael chuckled as he leaned back, planting his palms on the mattress with his eyes still on her. He found it strange, but he didn't dwell on it.

"I don't mind." He shrugged indifferently, smacking his lips while gazing at her. "My love, should we start a family?"

Upon his last remarks, Lilou suddenly halted and held the spoon in front of her lips with eyes on him. She blinked wordlessly, tilting her head to the side a little.

"I mean, now that the problems here are well, quite resolved, I'm thinking of moving away," he explained in a gentle tone as that had been in his mind for a long time now. "I was thinking of traveling the world or just settling down to another place to start over. What do you think?"

"A family? You and me?" she inquired under her breath, making him furrow his brows. "I mean, sure. But, don't you think traveling to places while starting a family is a little inconvenient? We're already happy with just the two of us, anyway."

"Well, yes... but —" Samael bit his tongue, narrowing his eyes while gazing at her. Lilou seemed she couldn't understand the essence of family, nor did she understand how happy they were together. It was as if she was simply saying the things she knew he wanted to hear.

"Of course, I am happy if we are blessed with a child. As long as it will make you happy." Lilou chuckled to lighten up the mood, but that only made his heart restless. "I'm just saying we can do more things before that."

"Do more things..." he mumbled and paused for a while before continuing. "... like?"

"Like, uh... going into places, duh? You just mentioned you wanted to travel the world, and that is what we are going to do."

Silence descended into the room as he peered at her, saying nothing. Lilou's brows arched innocently as she stared back.

"Did I say something wrong?" she asked after the prolonged silence, putting her spoon down while holding the bread knife on her left discreetly.

"If I say you did, will you stab me with that bread knife?"

Right after Samael spouted those words, Lilou already flipped the tray over her lap and pounced on him. She didn't waste a millisecond and stabbed the bread knife on his shoulder, pinning him down with eyes glinting. It was not like she completely caught him off guard, but stabbing him without a second hesitation was what he didn't expect.

His eyes dilated as he gazed at the pair of menacing eyes hovered over him. That instant, he knew this wasn't his wife.

"My darling, you should've pretended you heard nothing wrong and kept denying your intuition." Lilou let out a deep sigh while he froze under her. "Oh... you're bleeding... how enticing."

Her eyes fell on his shoulder as his thin white blouse absorbed the blood seeping out of his wound. She pulled the knife out, sliding its blunt blade to the slit of his cloth to see his bleeding wound.

"Lovely," she whispered, shifting her eyes back to him, who was dumbfounded and could only stare at her blankly. "Look at you, so shocked... it's cute, my love."

Lilou smirked, planting her palm on his chest while she bent over until her lips were right beside his ear. Her brow quirked briefly as her eyes glinted with malice.

"Stay like that and don't make a sound," she whispered, plunging the bread knife in his abdomen... repeatedly. "Uh... how can you smell so sweet?"

The more blood gushed out from the stab wounds, his scent immediately filled the air. It made her stab him more and more, while he just clasped her shoulder, still in shock from what was going on.

"Lilou!"

Suddenly, Yulis's voice made her stop as he barged in when the scent of Samael's blood wafted into his nostrils. Samael snapped his eyes and turned his head in Yulis's direction.

"Get ou —" Before he could warn Yulis, Lilou had already appeared in front of him and kicked Yulis on his abdomen, which sent him flying.