

The Duke 734

Chapter 734 That's yours

When Lilou left her son's room, she stayed idle outside. She rested her back against the door, sighing deeply. 'Law knows me too well,' she thought, letting out another sigh. 'I should keep my head together.' Lilou let out a sharp breath, nodding encouragingly at herself. She pushed herself from the door, looking back at the shut door for a second. Her eyes glistened with mixed emotions, dragging her feet away. Since Samael knew she was resting, she already planned to return to his room, which was the room nearest Law's. 'Will he get angry?' she wondered on the way. 'He seemed adamant about letting me rest for the day, but I just think I didn't spend time with Law today that much. I missed him for some reason...'

Another long-suffering sigh escaped her lips the closer she was to Samael's room. When she stood in front of the door, Lilou reached for the knob and carefully pushed it open. As she did so, she held her breath and tiptoed her way in. But as soon as entered, barely making a noise, she froze at the person standing in front of the window. 'Uh oh,' her brain snickered at her, making her purse her lips. Much to her surprise, Samael stood still in that spot and in silence. Her brows furrowed, tilting her upper body to get a better look at his side profile. 'What is he doing?' she wondered inwardly, catching a glimpse of his solemn expression under the soothing moonlight, that was the same as his hair. 'Is he thinking about the enemies?'

Lilou pursed her lips, and instead of what she initially planned to keep her sneaking out a secret, she approached him silently. She stopped at arm's length, studying him with clear intrigue in her eyes. 'He seems to be deep in thought,' she thought as it seemed Samael hadn't noticed her despite standing at arm's length. 'Well, our problem is quite something. I don't even know how to resolve it.'

Her eyes lowered at the thought of being protected instead of being the protector. She loved Law, but right now, Lilou wasn't so stupid as to believe she had the capabilities to protect him. She couldn't even protect herself, and thus, the reason she was in this place for months with Stefan.

"The mainland had fallen." Lilou flinched when Samael suddenly spoke after a long silence. His voice was low and menacing, but there was a tinge of worry in his tone. "I knew that man. I even painted his portrait..."

"Was he a wise king?" she asked out of plain curiosity.

"He was a good man," answered Samael without taking his eyes off of the direction he had been staring at. "It reminded me of Stefan."

"Your brother?"

"Mhm..." Samael's eyelids drooped. "He is neither kind nor was he wicked, but he was definitely a good man. At least, he tried his best to save everyone and be fair to everyone. I owe him a lot and no amount of wealth can repay my debt to him."

"What did you owe him?" she blurted out, biting her tongue, but her eyes still shone with anticipation. Samael slowly turned his head to her, keeping quiet as if to ponder for the answer. "Our life on the mainland," came out a low, melancholic voice. "We were outsiders, and I used to sell anything in the streets. We didn't have titles or assets that had value on the mainland. But His Majesty recognized my work and gave us freedom."

Samael walked in the same spot until he was facing her squarely. "He had protected my family from the clans who don't welcome my family in their land, and I want to return the favor. We won't have another place to go if the mainland isn't restored."

Lilou pursed her lips into a thin line, biting her inner lower lips, eyes on him. She knew it wasn't that they didn't have a place to go and settle, but the mainland was already a place they called home. There might be many things she couldn't understand, but her heart somehow understood some things that her brain couldn't remember.

"How... can I fight?" she asked under her breath. "I want to help, but I don't know how. You need to help me train or something."

"You... do not have to train."

"What?" she frowned, displeased by his answer. "I don't need to fight? Then what am I going to do? Sit still and allow my husband, my son, and everyone to protect me?"

"Don't misunderstand." Samael shook his head mildly and shoved his hand inside his pocket. When he took out his hand, he tossed something to her, which she caught on instinct. Looking down, Lilou furrowed her brows as she opened her hand and saw a necklace. She looked back at him with confusion in her eyes, waiting for him to clarify what this meant.

"That's yours." He pointed his chin to the necklace. "Her name is Lakresha. I figured since your heart and body remember things... for instance, not staying in the bed after a tiring night of passion. It might've also remembered how to wield Lakresha."

Samael nodded at her encouragingly. In the past, Lilou had always been paralyzed on the bed, especially during their first night together. However, even now that he had taken her first, Lilou was able to run around just like how she was on the mainland. Not just that, but there were many signs that proved his theory after days of observation. The regression affected Lilou, but only her memory took the hit. Her heart, body, and soul remembered who and what she was. "It's all hypothetical, but Lakresha might help bring your memories back," he added. "I don't see any reason why we shouldn't try."

"How..." Lilou looked down once again, caressing the beautiful pendant. How could this necklace call a weapon? There were myriads of questions in her head, and one of them was 'was she ready?' But there was also this part of her that felt relieved. The necklace felt familiar in her hand as if she had a reunion with a dear friend.

"La..." her tongue rolled back, taking a deep breath, marveling at the sensation while staring at the necklace in her hand. "Lakresha."

Chapter 735 Suffocated to death

"Lakresha."

Lilou held her breath while Samael stared at her carefully, but nothing. She frowned while he let out a deep exhale. "It didn't work," she mumbled, a little disappointed at not retrieving her memories. Lilou was slightly nervous, but at the same time, she wanted to become that version of Lilou her son was talking about. "That's fine." Samael breathed out, watching her raise her head only to see the deep frown plastered on her face. "Lakresha will eventually respond to you."

He sported a smile on his face, nodding at her encouragingly. But that didn't appease her. So he let out another faint breath and approached her. However, as soon as he took a step forward, Lilou mumbled, "Lakresha," one more time, and his pupils dilated.

Not just him, but Lilou was just as stunned as a dark shroud wrapped around her hand that was holding the necklace. It crawled from her fist up to her arms, and then neck. Lilou panicked and yelled, "Sam!" but as she did, the dark shroud entered her mouth.

At that moment, Lilou's breath hitched as if someone suddenly strangled her. Her eyes were forced open while her limbs stretched, making her stand on her toes as if she was being possessed by the devil.

"Love!" yelled Samael, taking another step, only to halt as she raised a hand to stop him from approaching. He balled his hand into a fist, watching her stumble back, gagging, hunching in as if she was in pain.

"Ah..." came out a helpless scream, scratching her neck to stop the invisible force that was strangling her. "Ah...!"

'It's killing me,' her brain screamed at her, but Lilou could only continue hunching in until she was on the floor. 'Make it stop!' As Lilou balled on the floor, she took a peek at Samael. She stretched her hand to him, asking him for help silently. She was being suffocated to death for real. It wasn't painful, but she was losing oxygen. "Help." Lilou forced out a word, but her heart sank when Samael simply looked at her. Seeing him watch her suffocate to death, tears formed in the corner of her eyes, blurring her vision, and thus failing to notice the pain and anger in his eyes. Knowing he wouldn't help her, Lilou crawled away. She dug her nails into the floor, ignoring the scratches and splints. Her fingertips soon bleed as her face dyed a deep red. She was at her last straw and at the second; she knew she would die. Literally.

"Help..." another whisper escaped her mouth before darkness embraced her like she was its old friend. As soon as those last words slipped past her lips, Samael hang his head low. His eyes were blank while listening to the sound of her fading heartbeat. It didn't take long when her heart pumped one last time before it stopped beating. She had suffocated to death. "Those bastards..." he whispered, balling his hand into a fist. "... I'll fucking kill them all."

His eyelids drooped as he moved his gaze on Lilou's back. She died crawling, and the stench of her blood from her fingertips prickled under his skin. Samael slowly shoved his hand inside his pocket, taking out his cross ring in his hand. For minutes, it was nothing but silent, but the aura he exuded continued to grow, catching everyone's attention in the manor. When a glint flickered across his eyes, his fangs grew longer, hissing, "Catharsis."

CLANG!

A bright spark flashed in their eyes as a set of different colored eyes — green and deep red — glowed between his heavy sword and a scythe of death. Their metals rattled with the increasing force in their grip. "Samael Vaughnn Caecilius La Crox," came out a shaking voice full of anger, hissing as her fangs grew longer. "I will kill you."

Minutes before Lilou and Samael's confrontation...

Fabian stood in the middle of the garden while staring at the thick darkness covering the land of Karo. He blinked ever so slowly, rubbing his ring with his thumb. "Oy!" Klaus called from behind him, strutting his way towards Fabian's figure. He stopped at a safe distance, hands on his hips. "I do not have time to apologize to you, Your Highness," Fabian replied, raising his head without taking his eyes off the direction he was looking at. "Hah! Do you take me for a fool? I would rather believe the angels would crawl underneath the ground than hear a sincere apology from you." Klaus clicked his tongue in irritation, studying the butler's back. "I'm still fucking angry that you abducted me and bound me in that filthy place. But my angel told me to behave, so I am behaving, alright?"

Klaus ruffled his hair in irritation. If not for Lilou and her kindness, he would've challenged every single one of them in here. Sure. He might lose, but the result didn't matter. Klaus simply had to preserve his honor. "It's about the goon," he continued. "That one with a thick untrimmed beard. He keeps calling me uncle, but I don't know him. However, his name is the same as Lucia's child."

Klaus took a deep breath and huffed it sharply. "Was it true?" he asked solemnly. "About the reversal of time. Is it true that we were simply back in the past?"

"Yes," Fabian answered without beating around the bush, but he kept his attention on the darkness ahead. "Ten years from now, you... will become the captain of the knight brigade of the Earl of Monarey. Before that, you'd be the captain of the knight brigade of the Duchess of Grimsbanne..."

Fabian and Klaus furrowed their brows as they both looked back at the sudden burst of aura between Samael and another person. Without thinking twice, Fabian advanced in the direction where the clash of dominance was coming from. But then he halted when he noticed Klaus not moving an inch. When Fabian looked back, Klaus was looking in the same direction where Samael and Lilou were fighting with blank eyes. To his surprise, Klaus suddenly whispered.

"Lilou..." In a snap, Klaus disappeared from his spot like a shadow. His movement and speed, and his reaction time, were what stunned Fabian in his spot. The latter, instead of rushing in the same direction, narrowed his eyes. "During this time... he shouldn't be that strong," whispered Fabian with narrowed eyes before a thought crossed his head. Klaus... was Lilou's vassal. Even when Klaus vowed to Claude, the Earl of Monarey, Klaus had sheltered Lilou's blood back when she was the Duchess of Grimsbanne. "Oh..." Fabian tilted his head, idling instead of coming to Samael's rescue. "... that's interesting."

Chapter 736 Tonight would be a long night

Fabian narrowed his eyes while staring at Klaus' retreating figure. His brow arched, snapping his eyes in the direction where Klaus rushed to. A shallow breath slipped past his lips, bending his knees slightly, and then sprinting to where the clash of auras was coming from. Boogsh!

Fabian's strides halted several steps behind Klaus. The latter jumped back slightly, raising his arms to shield his eyes when a wall of the residence exploded from the inside. When Klaus lowered his arms slowly, he narrowed his eyes to see through the thick smoke from the mansion. "What the..." Klaus breathed out in disbelief while the smoke thinned out, revealing two silhouettes; one was attacking while the other one was on defense. "What did he do this time to anger her like this?"

Fabian glanced at Klaus' back, advancing in the latter's direction. He stopped beside Klaus, studying the dismal countenance plastered on him. "You know them?" asked Fabian, warranting a snort from Klaus. "The hell? What do you think of me? An outsider?" Klaus looked at Fabian from head to toe,

scoffing and shaking his head mildly. "Goodness... you and that damn mouth of yours. I can't believe there will be a day you will ask me if I know my brother and my sister-in-law..."

Klaus trailed off, furrowing his brows. Seeing his reaction, Fabian sported a slight smile, but this time, it didn't reach his eyes. "Wait, what the?" Klaus turned his attention to Lilou and Samael engaged in a heated battle, and then cast Fabian a look. His pupils slowly dilated as memories from the time they abducted him until this point surged in his head like the waters from a dam breaking the walls after a small crack. His mouth fell open, staring at Fabian in dismay. "What... is going... oh..." he rocked his head in understanding, recalling the predicament these people were in, which he kept hearing throughout his stay in the food storage as a hostage. "... reversal of fucking time — ehh?"

Fabian let out another shallow breath, watching Klaus gather his thoughts as it seemed the latter hadn't realized it until now. He then raised his head and his eyes fell on the furious Lilou and then at Samael's distressed figure. "I think... the madam regained her memories," explained Fabian, studying the large scythe Lilou was swinging effortlessly. "And since she had regained her memories, those... who carry her blood had recovered their memories as well."

"What?" Klaus looked at Fabian's side profile, slacked jaw.

"It is only my theory. Was it because you were just around her? That's why you remembered? Or would it work even if you're still in the royal palace? Moreover, how did she..." Fabian trailed off, narrowing his eyes, keeping it on Lilou and Samael. "Oh."

"What, 'oh?'" asked Klaus in intrigued, knowing Fabian and he was certain the butler had realized something.

"She... died," Fabian remarked, twisting his neck to his side to see the people who also rushed in here to see what was happening. He slightly tilted his head as soon as he met Stefan's eyes, and then Fabian shifted his gaze to the rest, who came one after another; Tilly was holding Law's hand, and behind them was Claude.

"Mother..." Law called worriedly, knitting his brows, and seeing his parents clash. This wasn't the first time Law had witnessed his parents fight — they used to spar — but this was the first time he had seen Lilou this furious. "She..." Stefan trailed off as his tongue rolled back, his eyes fixed on Lilou's figure.

"She regained her memories." Tilly kept her eyes ahead, finishing what Stefan had failed to say. She didn't look back at Stefan when the man glanced at her, but instead shifted her eyes to Klaus. "Him, too. He had regained his memories."

"What?" Claude gasped, puzzled at Tilly's insufficient explanation. "How?"

Tilly pointed at Samael and Lilou with her chin. "Listen."

And as instructed, everyone refocused their attention on Samael and Lilou, who were engaged in a one-sided duel. Lilou's every blow against Samael's sword sounded heavier than the last, grinding her teeth in anger. Her eyes, bearing different colors of red and green, which everyone failed to notice aside from Samael, glinted with murderous intent. "Lilou! My love!" Samael winced, blocking his wife's scythe. "Calm down! Let's talk about this in a much more peaceful way!"

"Peaceful?" Lilou roared, jumping back, only to charge at him once more. When their "You wanted, but you didn't!" she growled.

metals rang loudly, piercing the still air like thunder, she barked once again. "You let me die!"

"I didn't! I wanted to help you!" he argued in panic, pushing her back only to hop back when her foot raised to kick him. Samael hadn't even recovered when her figure appeared right before him. CLASH!

"Ugh...!" he ground his teeth, barely blocking her attack in the nick of time. "You wanted, but you didn't!" she growled.

"You raised your hand and stopped me!" "You... watched me die!" His mouth opened and closed, only to blurt out something stupid which triggered his wife even more. "But you're alive now!" "You!" PANG! Lilou didn't hold back, swinging her scythe without care. Each clash of metals would sometimes make a few of their audience flinch, making them wonder which weapon would break first with the strength she was exhibiting. Every one of them knew how Lilou fought, and she might sometimes be reckless, but not this reckless. She cared for her weapon as if it was an extension of her body and soul, but the way she fought now appeared as though she was planning to break it. "Wait, Lilou! Lakresha will break!" Samael exclaimed, only to hear an angry shout, "I don't care! I will break Lakresha, and you!"

"Damn!" Samael yelled back before he was too occupied dodging the scythe of death. Meanwhile, as their conversation slowly came to a halt, replaced by the sound of their weapons, everyone — Klaus, Fabian, Claude, Rufus who had just arrived at the scene, Law, and Tilly — looked at each other in silence. Stefan kept his eyes on the two. Although they didn't say anything, they came to one understanding.

Tonight... would be a very long night for everyone.

Chapter 737 Problems just keeps piling up

It had been three hours since Lilou and Samael started fighting, and they hadn't shown any sign of stopping. Klaus, Tilly, and Law were already sitting on the grass while Fabian served drinks and snacks to quench their grumbling stomach. Meanwhile, Stefan, Rufus, and Claude stood still, watching how Lilou would kill Samael. "Damn... are they not done yet? How is he still alive?" asked Klaus in a dull voice, biting a cookie whilst shaking his head mildly. His brows rose as he chewed, looking down at the biscuit in his hand. "Oh? This is good."

"Heliot gave them to me as a gift," Tilly explained, catching Klaus' attention.

"What?" he looked at Tilly suspiciously. "Are you sure it was a gift he knew about? Or did you steal it and called it his gift?"

"You make it sound like Lady Tilly is a liar."

"She is a liar," Klaus stressed. "Oy, Fabian, I haven't forgotten how you enjoyed rolling me on a hay that day! After them, it'll be you and me!"

"But I did it so you don't feel so left out." Fabian smiled until his eyes were squinting, making Klaus gasp in dismay. "This is why Lady Tilly is so corrupted!" the latter exclaimed in disbelief, darting his eyes between Tilly and Fabian. "She isn't," Fabian argued calmly, and at the same time, Tilly also defended herself. "I'm not corrupted."

"Tilly, please wake me up when it's time for my father's funeral." Law lazily wobbled down, resting his head on Tilly's lap, and yawned. "I will store my tears for him."

Tilly nodded, brushing Law's silver hair. "Alright."

"Goodness... tsk tsk tsk." Klaus could not help but click his tongue continuously. "I don't even feel sorry for Hell. He deserved it. How can he watch Lilou die right in front of him, right?"

"But she wouldn't regain her memories if she didn't," Fabian argued calmly, straightening his back and smiling at Lilou and Samael. "How nice. The night is already so deep, and yet, they had so much energy to spare."

"What — ah, now that I think about it, Lilou died?" Klaus tilted his head to the side. "Did Hell kill her? No, but she said he watched her die."

"It seemed Lakresha killed her," Fabian explained, opening his eyes slightly. "As a member of the divine order, the holder and her weapon had to share a similar understanding. Lakresha had understood her master's predicament."

"But Lilou used to wield Lakresha even as a human," Klaus explained, recalling the time before Lilou's untimely death and also the time she was still a human. "That's right. She had wielded Lakresha as the Duchess of Grimsbanne."

"But back then, she had experiences that gave her strong will to fight and wield a powerful weapon such as Lakresha." This time, Rufus broke his silence, using just the bare information he had gathered throughout the night. "The current her... is apparently not enough to wield Lakresha."

"In other words, if Lilou was strong enough, she wouldn't even die wielding Lakresha," Tilly backed up Rufus' claims. "Really?" Klaus rocked his head, recalling the time he first met Lilou in the territory of Cunningham. Back then, Lilou had undergone intense training under Rufus and then would spar with Samael from time to time. So, somehow, that made sense.

"Thing is... was this the answer?" Rufus narrowed his eyes before his gaze fell on Tilly. "Was dying the answer to retrieve their memories?"

"I doubt." Stefan finally broke his silence, keeping his eyes on Lilou's figure. "Lilou is the last... she's the last pureblooded member of the Bloodfang. Not to mention, because of her clan's sacrifice to hide her as a human, she was hovering between two races: humans and vampires. She can be former and the latter."

"But what we're certain now is that those who had carried her blood had a possibility of regaining their memories as well," Fabian continued as he gazed down at Klaus. "We're unsure if this only worked on the people close to her, or the entire third squadron, who had pledged fealty to the duchess, was just as confused as you were moments ago."

Klaus's brows rose, darting his eyes at the pairs of eyes looking back at him. His mouth opened and closed, but his voice was stuck in his throat. Just how was he supposed to answer that? When he sensed Lilou's wrath, it was as if a switch was flipped within him. Klaus didn't even realize the situation until Fabian caught up to him and started talking. Klaus let out a shallow breath and gazed at the ongoing stalemate duel from a distance. Back when Lilou claimed the title of the duchess of Grimsbanne, the third squadron followed her because Samael faked his death. It lasted for eight

months. They served Lilou, received her special blood to strengthen their own blood, and pledged loyalty to her.

In other words, one way or another, Lilou had always been their master. Even though Klaus ended up serving Claude in Monarey, Kristina and Noah Remington under Rufus' reign, deep inside their heart, they would come to Lilou's rescue. Not just because they cherish Lilou, but because it was their duty. "Would it become a problem if the third squadron regains their memories?" Klaus murmured with genuine wonder in his voice. "Right... Yulis and Silvia received her blood for months as well."

Silence fell on their shoulders, but the echoing sound of Lilou and Samael's weapons deterred the silence to reign over them. Would it become a problem if those people regained their memories with Lilou's memories awakening? Expectedly, the answer was supposed to be a no.

However, they couldn't be sure. Just like Klaus, those people had no idea of the reversal of time. They might misunderstand the situation, and that... was the reason none of them could stay optimistic. Anything could happen if those people regained their memories because, in the first place, Stefan was... a known enemy.

"Fuck..." Klaus cursed under his breath. "We haven't even resolved one dilemma, but the problems just seem to pile up."

Chapter 738 Where is Sunny?

Another two hours had gone by before Lilou and Samael finally collapsed on the landscape. They were already catching up to their breathing, staring at the starless night sky. Law and Tilly had already gone inside the manor an hour ago so the boy could rest properly on the bed. But the rest remained until the two lovebirds collapse.

"Ah, goodness!" Samael breathed out, patting his chest as if that would help him calm his racing heart. "I think I'm growing old. How am I out of breath just after five hours of blocking my wife's attacks?"

Lilou closed her eyes, slacked jaw. Just like Samael, she couldn't believe she was out of breath after just five hours of fighting. They used to fight their enemies all the time; sometimes, each battle would last overnight. As for Samael, it would last for days. "Lilove," Samael called in between his ragged breathing, glancing to where she was lying flat on her back. "Did you calm down now?"

"No." Her voice was cold, casting him a side-eye. "I can't believe you."

"Oh, come on."

"Sam."

"I'm sorry." Samael zipped his mouth and focused on recovering his strength. His wife had gone all out and if he had lowered his guard, he would've lost a limb. Worse. His life. Surely, his wife had always been so intense and her anger wasn't easily quenched.

Lilou remained silent, keeping her eyes on the darkness enveloping the world. She licked her drying lips, gulping to bring moisture to her parched throat. Just moments ago, she knew nothing, and then... after the pain of being suffocated to death, her mind welcomed memories she wasn't ready to recover. She recalled everything, and when everything, she meant from start to finish. The last memory she recalled was rolling with Samael on the grass, making out with him, smiling and

laughing as if they were the only people in the world. It was a moment they usually cherished, but also the time they were the most vulnerable to the outside world. And then, in a blink of an eye, she was back to her shack, knowing nothing but the dread of crashing someone's skulls. Deep in Lilou's heart, she was aware she wasn't just angry at Samael for letting her suffocate to death. She was angry at many things, and Samael was there to allow her to release that anger without Lilou running amok, killing everyone in sight. "When Lakresha went inside me, it was painful, Sam," she muttered, breathing out heavily. "I was scared, watching you look down on me and not reach back when I stretched out my hand. I know the reason why you didn't reach your hand out... somehow."

She paused, picturing the image of them back in his room. Lilou, indeed, reached out and called for help. However, the more she thought about it, the reflection she had in his eyes. Lilou wasn't reaching out for help but rather raised her hand to stop him. Her mind wasn't ready to remember the lost memories, but her heart was more than ready to deal with it. Even so, she didn't know which part of her was the dominant one. Because right now, all she could feel was anger toward whoever did this to them and the high emotion to end them all once and for all. "I feel like I'm being torn, Sam. Am I angry? Or relieved? The guilt of taking the lives we had taken and the sacrifices we had made while gritting our teeth... are we supposed to go through all that once again?" she continued with a dry scoff. "But above all that, the first thing that came into my head when I retrieved my memories was... is this retribution?"

Lilou swallowed a mouthful of air as her eyes, which bore a different color of olive and red, shone with mixed emotions. "What did my children do to deserve such punishments?"

Samael glanced at her side profile before setting them back at the night sky. He had the same sentiments as his wife. If they were going to be punished, he would happily accept this world's verdict for as long as his family wasn't involved. But their situation involved not just him, but the damned blood he passed on to his children. His anger was beyond words. Not just to his enemies, but especially to himself. "I'm sorry," he whispered, balling his hand into a tight fist. "I'm sorry you have to go through this."

Lilou remained silent, pursing her lips into a thin line. Normally, she would tell him it wasn't his fault, but her voice was stuck in her throat. "We... failed, Sam," she uttered under her breath after a minute of silence. "We failed to meet Marsella or Abel and things went downhill. Tilly had told us to seek them, but we... we shouldn't have made a stop in the Heart's Kingdom. It's my fault."

"No. The situation would still be the same even if we didn't make a stop."

"You don't have to make me feel better."

"I'm not. Trust me, Lilou. I'm not." His eyes went solemn while staring at the night sky. "I know no matter what I say, words will not make you feel better. Neither it will make me feel better."

Lilou pressed her lips into a thin line, biting her lips out of habit. "Everything already happened and we can only try to regain control over our lives," Samael continued with a deep exhale. "You can wield Lakresha and Catharsis is still responding to you. But I have to borrow Catharsis, for now, to send some motherfuckers back to hell where they belong."

"Catharsis had been yours, to begin with." Her eyes bore melancholy, but an underlying danger lurked within. She gripped the scythe that was still within her grasp as it slowly turned back into a necklace. "Using this necklace... I will surely choke them all to death. How dare they mess with my family?"

Samael let out a low chuckle and cast her a look. His eyes softened, staring at her sharp side profile. His wife was back, and he had mixed emotions about it. Would he feel relieved now? Or would he prefer if she was that naive, innocent Lilou? He couldn't know for sure, but what he was certain was that he would miss that version of her one way or another. "Lilove, I miss..." he trailed off when Lilou suddenly murmured Sunny's name. His eyes slowly dilated, watching Lilou face him with genuine wonder in her eyes. "By the way, where is Sunny?" 'I'm dead...' Samael carefully moved away, making Lilou's eyes narrow.

"Sam?" she called, propping her shoulder against the ground. "Where is my daughter?"

"I'm..." he laughed awkwardly before hopping away like a grasshopper. "... sorry!!!" "Samael La Crox!!!" Lilou roared as her eyes lit up once more, jumping from her spot. She ground her teeth, calling Lakresha, to kill her husband for real this time. Meanwhile, as Lilou disappeared from her position in a blink of an eye to catch Samael, their audience could not help but shake their heads. "Seriously... just when I thought we can discuss this properly." Klaus let out a deep breath, shaking his head in dismay. "I don't think they can sort it out until the morning."

With that being said, Klaus dragged his body up and dusted off his trousers, heading back inside without care if Samael die. As he returned inside, he glanced at Claude's figure, only to sigh once more.

'Whatever... I'll talk to him tomorrow.'

When Klaus left to rest, the individuals who were left behind also returned to rest for tonight. And yet, no one prayed for Samael's safety, nor did they ever think he would even come back tomorrow in one piece.

Chapter 739 Sisters

[Heart's Kingdom: Avolire Palace]

Silvia stood in front of Cassara's chambers. She drew a breath and exhaled it slowly from her lips, raising her fist to knock at the door. She hesitated for a second, but clenched her teeth and knocked three times. "Cassara, it's Silvia," announced Silvia, keeping her chin up. "I would like to talk to you regarding something."

Silence was the answer Silvia received from the other side of the door, making her sigh once more. Cassara had been locking herself in her room, which was very unlike Cassara. Silvia wouldn't get worried if her sister was acting like a pampered princess and annoyed her. However, after Samael's visit that night, Cassara never left her room. Therefore, Silvia was worried. Her sister might not be that likable, but Cassara was still her sister at the end of the day. As Cassara's big sister, Silvia couldn't overlook her sister's odd behavior.

"Can I go in, Cassara?" Silvia voiced out once more, this time a level louder than the last. "If you don't respond, I have to go in."

Silvia waited for straight two minutes, and when she heard no response, she reached for the knob to open it. But just before she could touch the knob, the door creaked ever so slowly from the inside. Raising her head, Silvia let out another sigh.

Cassara opened the door, but only enough to peek at Silvia. Seeing that it was indeed Silvia, Cassara left the door ajar and walked away wordlessly. 'She's really strange,' Silvia muttered

inwardly, pushing the door open as she walked inside Cassara's chambers. As soon as she stepped her foot in, she looked around Cassara's room. It was clean and everything was in order, a bit surprising, since this pampered princess used to throw things whenever she would throw a tantrum. "Ca –"

"What do you want?" Cassara asked, stopping in front of the corner stand to light up a candle. "Let's not beat around the bush. It's already late and I would like to rest."

Silvia stood near the set of settees, eyes on Cassara's back. "I'm worried."

"About?"

"You, obviously." Silvia breathed out, dragging her feet to the armchair. She sat down comfortably, leaning back, eyes at Cassara. "You've been cooped up in your chambers for days now. Thus, I came to check if you're faring well."

Cassara let out a shallow breath, making the flame on the candle dance. She bit her inner lower lips, forcing a sneer on her face before turning on her heel to face Silvia.

"Well, as you can see, I am faring well." She shrugged nonchalantly. "Or... are you basing my well-being on how many times in a day I throw a tantrum?"

"If you are well, then that's good." Silvia rocked her head, ignoring the tinge of sarcasm in Cassara's tone. Cassara laughed briefly. "How about you, sister? Have you been well after meeting the love of your life?"

"Barely." Silvia kept honest since there was no need to hide it. All her siblings were aware of her tragic love story with Rufus, and thus, she had no reason to hide it from Cassara. "Cassara, about Hell..."

"Don't mention him to me." Cassara dragged her feet to the settee across Silvia, keeping a firm countenance as she sat down and looked Silvia in the eye. "Lest you are not aware, I don't care whether Hell dies. He can just die for all I care — him and that damn butler."

Silvia furrowed her brows. Her lips parted, but her tongue rolled back for reasons she couldn't understand. Silvia was there to witness Cassara bring back Fabian's 'lost memories.' "Cassara..." she called, narrowing her eyes suspiciously. "What sort of memory did you see in Fabian's mind?"

Cassara kept quiet, but her eyes were fixated on Silvia. When she opened her mouth, she closed them again. She lowered her eyes, clenching her teeth until her jaw tighten.

"Nothing," she breathed out. "I saw nothing that is worthy of your concern."

"My concern here is your well-being, Cassara," Silvia argued. "I don't care if Hell brings forth hell in this place, but I know your ability. That butler had led a cruel life and now he shares those memories with you."

"Are you worried I'll end up just like my mother?" Cassara scoffed, her eyes full of ridicule. "Do you think I'll lose my mind just because I brought forth someone else's memories? And I wouldn't discern which were mine and his?"

She shook her head, laughing with her lips closed. Cassara leaned back, resting her leg over the other, hands on her lap. "Don't worry, Silvia. I can perfectly sort out my memories and his because we led a very different life. You said it yourself. That butler had led a cruel life far different from

mine." Cassara's eyes glinted as her expression turned solemn. "If you think the reason I'm staying in my chambers is that I'm having an identity crisis, you are wrong. I stayed in here because it was silent and peaceful."

She chuckled with her lips closed, tilting her head to the side. "You should be concerned about your own well-being. You are not well yourself after meeting your first love, and I bet you're dying to chase him to the ends of the world to get your answers. I advise you don't do that because it'll definitely hurt someone."

"Who? Stefan?" Silvia snorted, shaking her head. "Very well. Since you are obviously fine, I'll be on my way. I hope you have a good night, sister."

Cassara watched Silvia stand up. They exchanged eye contact in silence before Silvia turned on her heel and walked away. The latter didn't even look back at Cassara, leaving without another word, and closing the door behind her. "That poor girl..." Cassara whispered, staring at the shut door silently. "I saw in his memories she will eventually fall in love with Yulis and marry him. I guess there's no point in pitying her and letting her know it was that butler's idea to ruin her and that knight."

Chapter 740 The ripple effect.

Silvia let out a deep exhale as she closed the door behind her. She looked back at Cassara's chamber, shaking her head mildly. "I guess she's fine," she whispered. "Since she's speaking nonsense again, there's no need to be worried."

Cassara's ability wasn't that useful in a battle; it was considered very weak in the world of vampires. However, it was also considered a very convenient one. Cassara's ability had protected her from any powerful vampire abilities such as illusions, rewriting of memories (just like Silvia's), and the sort. Even so, just like every ability, there were risks. For Cassara, using her abilities to bring back someone's memories could be fatal. Because Cassara had to see those memories from that person's perspective, feel that person's heart and sufferings, and it would be her memories to carry. The reason Cassara rarely used it was because that was how her mother lost her mind. Cassara's mother allowed the king to use her ability and didn't pick the people she would help, losing her sense of identity in the end. Silvia stared at the shut doors for minutes, thinking about Cassara's ability, which she inherited from her deceased mother. She was relieved that Cassara seemed to have strengthened her will for not cowering in the corner just as Silvia expected before knocking on this very door. "Well... that's good to hear," she whispered, turning on her heel to walk away. "But that's strange. Why do I have to think about my own well-being? It's not like this is the first time Ru hurt me."

Silvia shook her head, tossing the last memory she had with Rufus that night at the back of her head. The pain that Rufus continuously fed her, already numbed her. Therefore, she was almost used to it... or rather, she had learned how to distract herself to forget about the longing and pain she had for that man. "It's not like—" Silvia halted in the middle of the dim hallway, clutching her chest as it throbbed painfully. It was only for a split second, but her back and forehead had already broken out in cold sweats. Her breathing turned heavy as her pupils slowly dilated, feeling her heart race inside her chest. Silvia's lips quivered as it opened, feeling another pang in her heart that froze her on the spot. "What...?" the pain once again struck her, but this time, it crawled under her skin. It was as if thousands of needles were prickling every pore of her body. Her mouth fell open, catching up to her breathing. As her knees trembled, turning soft like tofu, memories she never knew she had

surged in her head like a waterfall. It wasn't just one memory, but tons of memories that she was certain had never happened before. "Ah...!" Silvia dropped to her knees, clutching her chest tighter.

At first, the memories were hazy as they surge in her head in a flash, only showing Silvia and the rest was a blur. And then it slowed down to a memory where she and Rufus were sitting across from each other in a sitting room, not like any sitting room in the royal palace. The two of them were smiling, but it wasn't a smile that was considered romantic. It wasn't the same smile they shared in the past that would bring butterflies to her stomach. From what she had seen in her memories and felt in them, the energy between them was just... serene. She wasn't in any more pain sitting before Rufus, but rather relieved. And then Silvia was pulled into another memory, holding a faceless man's hands. There, she looked happy and content, wrapping her arms around his neck and closing her eyes when he bent over to plant a kiss on her lips. Silvia's eyes shook as she absorbed all these foreign memories of hers like a sponge. She remained silent, catching up to her breathing. As the memories continuously filled her head, she hung her head low. Minutes had passed in silence with Silvia trembling in the hallway. When she raised her head, her complexion had already turned pale. "Yul..." she whispered, lips quivering, as her heart was filled with dread. With the memories she knew were hers, but not in this timeline, and then Samael and his entourage coming in here, Silvia was quick to grasp something big happened. After all, Silvia... wasn't Stefan's wife anymore.

The last thing she remembered before waking up in her chambers in this Avolire Palace was in her own estate in the capital because she was Rufus' wife's, Florence Von Stein, lady-in-waiting. "What... is going on?" her heart thudded, realizing she went back in time to where Stefan was still alive. Silvia clutched her skirt as she stood up. Her knees were still trembling, but she forced herself to rush to the inner palace to see Yulis. Her heart pounded against her chest at every step she took, and at every breath she made.

'This can't be-' her face contorted in pain, keeping her eyes ahead as she rushed to Yulis's chambers. If she remembered correctly, Yulis was the same. He didn't remember anything, or them, or the story they had shared that eventually led them to marriage. "No..." Silvia panted for air when she reached the hallway that led to Yulis' room. She drew a deep breath, taking a pause. Her eyes glinted with determination, swallowed the frustrating tension building up in her throat.

Silvia approached Yulis's room and stopped in front of the door. Her eyes shook with worry, forgetting everything, as Yulis' well-being was what mattered to her right now. He was her husband, her beloved, and she didn't know how she would protect him with them traveling back in time.

She raised her fist but hesitated to knock on the door. Silvia shook her head and mustered every bit of energy to knock on the door. However, before she could, the door opened from the inside. Silvia held her breath, watching the person peeking from the other side of the door. Her pupils slowly dilated, and her heart melted the second she held Yulis's gaze.

"Silvia?" Yulis opened the door wider, furrowing his brows, and cocking his head to the side. "What are you doing here?"

Silvia studied the genuine wonder in Yulis's eyes, and her heart sank that second.

'He... still doesn't remember.'