



## Chapter 37



The heavy wooden door swings shut behind us, sealing us within the chamber. The scent of parchment and ink fills the air, mingling with the lingering traces of burning oils from the torches that flicker along the stone walls.

Scrolls and maps are scattered across the vast table before me, detailing the lands Amen rules, the wars he must oversee, the fate of an entire kingdom resting in the ink of those careful strokes.

Yet at this moment, nothing in this room matters—nothing except him.

Before I can fully process what is happening, I am lifted onto the table with effortless strength. The cold wood presses against the backs of my thighs, but I barely notice. My pulse hammers in my ears, drowning out every rational thought.

Amen stands between my legs, his hands bracing the table on either side of me, his body so dangerously close that the heat radiating from him is intoxicating.

His breath is warm as it brushes against my skin. The space between us is almost nonexistent, yet it feels unbearable. His lips hover just inches from mine, so close that I can feel the whisper of every breath he exhales.

"You have done nothing wrong," he murmurs, his voice low and raw, sending shivers cascading down my spine. His dark eyes burn into mine, the intensity of his gaze so fierce that it nearly steals my breath.

My fingers tighten around the edge of the table. "Then why have you been avoiding me?" I whisper, my voice barely more than a breath.

His jaw tenses. "Because wanting you—touching you—could hurt you."

The words hit me like a physical blow. Confusion flickers through me. "What do you mean?"

He takes a slow, measured breath, as if he is struggling to force the words out. "Whenever I touch someone, I drain their life force."

I stare at him, my mind reeling.

He continues, his voice dropping lower. "The longer I go without a stabilizing ritual, the worse it becomes. I cannot control how much I take. It is one of the manifestations of Osiris's power—a curse that lingers in my blood." He pauses, his throat working as he swallows. "The last time I touched you... You nearly lost consciousness. You bled. And I don't know what would have happened if I had not stopped."

I blink, my breath catching. My mind flashes back to that night—to the dizziness, to the sudden weakness that had overtaken me, to the way my body had trembled in his arms. And then, the blood.

Realization dawns.

He hadn't been pushing me away because he didn't want me. He had been protecting me.

Amen's eyes darken, his control visibly slipping. "I burn with the need to feel you beneath my hands, Neferet. To taste you, to lose myself in you." His voice is husky, rough with barely restrained longing. "But I cannot risk it. Not until the next ritual. Not until I have regained control."

His fingers curl against the table, his knuckles whitening with the force of his restraint.

"If only you knew what I feel right now—" his breath is uneven, his words thick with hunger, "—being this close to you, seeing you in that intoxicating, beautiful attire, breathing in your scent, feeling your warmth, watching every movement, every glance..." His voice lowers to a whisper, dangerously soft. "If only you knew how much it takes for me to hold myself back."

If I did, I would reward him with all the gold in the world for his restraint.

A slow, searing heat unfurls in my belly. His words wrap around me like a vice, leaving me breathless, aching. I can feel his control unraveling, the air between us charged with something primal, something raw and desperate.

And gods help me—I don't care.

I don't care that he is cursed. I don't care that his touch is dangerous. All I know is that I have been starved of him for too long, and every inch of my body screams to bridge the unbearable distance between us.

Without thinking, I reach for him.

My arms wind around his neck, my fingers tangling in his long, dark hair as I pull him to me.

And then—I kiss him.

It is not soft. It is not hesitant. It is pure, reckless hunger.

A sharp, broken sound escapes him, something between a groan and a growl. I have never felt anything like this—never felt so utterly consumed. Every inch of me, every breath, every thought is lost to him.

And then a sharp gasp rips from me. Not from pleasure. From pain.

A sudden, searing cold sweeps through my body, like ice flooding my veins. It is subtle at first, creeping up my spine, but then—then it intensifies.

I shudder against him, my limbs trembling.

Something is wrong. But I don't care.

I don't care that his touch is dangerous. That he drains life with every caress.

Because I know, in the deepest parts of my soul—I would risk everything for him.

## End of The Chapter

A Chance Meeting



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