

And Then There Were Four (Lilith Carrie)

Chapter 182

Chapter 182: The Solstice Ball

Cassie.

A few days had passed since I had spoken with the girls in the living room with Freya. I couldn't believe what Freya had told me. I was going to have to go to another ball and on top of that, Thor's son-my cousin-actually thought he stood the chance of being able to possibly win my hand in marriage.

The discussion of that crap was completely unsettling. I got it. They may have thought once upon a time that was a pure way to keep bloodlines and so on and so forth. But there was no way in hell my 21 st-century ass was ever going to subject myself to some kind of bullshit like that.

But instead of continuing to cause a ruckus, I made myself presentable and dressed in an entire floor-length gown I was unprepared to actually go venture out. It was not the most comfortable attire I would have chosen.

The floor-length ball gown was white with a golden sheer overlay, and a corset with gold and diamond jewels on it that were enough to put royalty to shame. Of course, this type of attire was normal here in a godly realm, but it didn't stop me from staring in the mirror with a look of unease as I tried to mentally prepare myself for the shit I was about to go through.

'Come on, Cassie, Jesus Christ, woman,' Sansa yelled from the living room as I stared at my reflection, not recognizing the woman staring back at me. The smokey eyes Trixie had mixed with the pale pink lipstick gave me more of an innocent look that contrasted my bright pink hair.

I wasn't sure what it was about my appearance of myself that made me think of my mother, but thinking about her longer than I desired caused an emotion to build inside me I quickly had to blink back in order to make sure my eye makeup didn't run.

With a heavy sigh of defeat, I walked towards the living room, letting my friends finally take in the completed look they both so desperately work hard to achieve, and by the smiles on their faces, I knew they approved.

'Damn, you look good,' Sansa said with a low whistle that made me smile. 'Trixie, I think we should start doing this shit professionally.'

Trixie turned from the mirror she was looking in to give me an approving smile. She herself was dressed up as well as Sansa for the nightly event. However, she settled for a more floral dress of white, pinks, and light shades of purple. Her hair piled halfway upon her head as it fell down in ringlets over her shoulders.

She honestly looked like a fairy princess, and with Sansa decorated in a black beaded formal trimmed in silver—the three of us were prizes to be sought after.

'You look beautiful,' Trixie said softly. 'I wish Lux could be here right now to see you.'

A pang of guilt filled me, knowing Trixie had to spend so much time away from her mate to be here with me. I hadn't meant for that to happen, but I didn't feel like I could do any of this without her and of course, she was willing to help.

No matter how much my brother pissed him off, I could tell she loved him.

'After the ball, you can head back, Trixie... I know you want to be with him.'

Shrugging her shoulders, she waved the comment off as she made her way towards me, taking my hand in hers. 'And leave Sansa to do all of this alone? No way. I can always travel back and forth between things. Plus, it's not like this is forever. It's just until the games are over.'

'She's right, Cassie. We are going to be here by your side to see you through this. Now come on and let's go before we're later than we already are,' Sansa replied, causing me to look at the clock on the way to see we were indeed almost an hour late.

'Shit... I didn't realize that was the time,' I muttered as I moved towards the door, with Trixie and Sansa following behind me.

Freya had explained how important the event tonight was, but time had kind of slipped my mind. Being on time for anything in my life wasn't something I was really capable of doing.

Walking through the halls of the building, the sound of music chimed in the distance, signaling we were getting closer. I wasn't sure what it was about this whole thing that alarmed me, but the closer I got, the more my heart began to race.

'I can't do this,' I whispered breathlessly as I stopped just outside the grand golden and white double doors, fear undoubtedly hiding beneath the depths of my eyes as Trixie and Sansa both came to stand in front of me.

'Cassie, deep breaths,' Trixie said slowly, doing breathy regiments to get me to follow. 'In through your nose and out through your mouth. It's going to be okay.'

Sansa stepped forward, taking my hand as she gently pulled me forward, my feet obeying as I followed the two women into the grand ballroom. 'Don't you guys leave me tonight.'

The whispered demand made them both chuckle as the sight of hundreds of people filled my sight, and once again, I felt breathless in the moment. I hadn't expected this many people to be present, and the moment I entered, they all seemed to turn and stare at me.

Many of the faces in the room were guys I had seen around campus, obviously having decided to participate in the games. While others I took note of with glowing golden eyes and even some with pointed ears I had never seen before.

'There she is!' Odin bellowed with a smile on his face as I made my way towards his throne, prepared to do the proper thing-like Trixie told me-and greet him as I should.

'Grandfather,' I whispered softly as I bowed my head to him in respect only to take the seat next to him as he offered for me to do. Sansa and Trixie took two smaller seats next to me that had been presented as if Odin knew they would be at my side.

'I'm pleased that you were able to join us, Cassie. I was beginning to wonder if you had gotten lost.'

Opening and closing my mouth, I looked at him speechless as I tried to formulate a reason for me being late. 'It took a bit longer for me to get ready then I expect... girl has to look her best.'

It was a bullshit excuse because me being late had more to do with the fact I didn't want to come and did more complaining while Trixie and Sansa were trying to get me ready than actually getting fucking ready.

However, Odin seemed to believe my reasoning as his eyes gazed over me with a smile on his face. 'Your friends did a very good job in preparing you. There are very important people that you will be meeting tonight.'

That was what I was afraid of, and as I glanced to my friends—who were in quiet conversation with each other—I didn't miss the way the eyes of so many people out on the dance floor all looked to me with more interest than I cared to see.

Standing to his feet, Odin smiled with everyone on the dance floor, who all stopped to stare at him with interest. 'Thank you all for being here tonight. I know some of you traveled a very long way to be present. As you all know, my granddaughter and heir apparent, Castor, or Cassie as she likes to be called, is the prize at this year's games.

The winner of the event will be the one who takes place at her side.'

The entire time Odin was speaking, I felt nausea seep through me. The last thing I wanted to be was a prize for everyone to desire. I wasn't like other girls who would have thought this event to be a night to remember. The idea of men competing for my hand was... nauseating.

'Tonight, Cassie will mingle with you on the dance floor... and perhaps even agree to dance with a select few. Let us all enjoy the evening for now because starting tomorrow, things will begin to be more challenging.'

'Tomorrow...' I whispered glancing at Sansa and Trixie, who both seemed just as surprised as I was. I had thought the games weren't for a few weeks, but it seemed Odin had other plans, and I wasn't sure how when he said I could help with the games.

By the time he was done speaking, he took his seat back next to me and with a courageous breath, I figured it was best I found out what was going on. 'What's happening tomorrow?'

He turned to me, a smile spread from ear to ear as he picked up his horn and drank from it. 'The games begin, of course. Freya gave me the information you and your friends were working on. It's brilliant, and depending on how this goes, your friend Sansa has a real future in how things work around here.'

My head quickly snapped to Sansa, who heard what Odin said, and while she was shocked at that, she knew exactly why I was looking at her. 'I didn't give Freya anything'

The plans Odin was referring to were plans we hadn't even gone over so I had no fucking clue what he was talking about or if it was even something I wanted to do. The only thing I could do though was discuss with Sansa when this was all over to find out what she had written down.

With a sudden shift in the mood, I was asked to join the floor with my friends where I was reluctant to grace everyone with my presence on a more personal level. I didn't want to be around these people, and I sure as hell didn't want to dance with anyone.

However, slowly but surely, one by one men came up to me to ask for a moment to spin me around the dance floor as if that was an easy task to do. I, after all, couldn't dance to save my life.

'So you and I could be a thing,' Bronn, Sansa's brother, said as he eyed me over with a hungry look on his face. He was a dark-haired man whose chocolate-colored skin matched the gold and white suit he was wearing very well.

Had I not known he was Sansa's brother, I would have thought he had stalked me to find out what I was wearing so he could match my attire. No doubt he overheard Sansa talking and took it upon himself to try and look the part of royalty. 'Yeah... but for now, we aren't. So please keep your hand at my waist.'

My murmured and narrowed response to his hand slowly traveling down my ass quickly made him stop just as the music ended to have him walk away.

For a moment, I thought perhaps I'd be able to escape the hell of this place, but just as I turned around, satisfied for putting Bronn in his place, I ran into the chest of another man with deep, celestial eyes like my own, and black hair as dark as coal.

'Well, hello there, my fated... we meet at last.'