

## Chapter 211 Any day now

Dear readers,

Thank you for following the story!

Here we go! As promised in my f b group Caroline Above Story, the sequel starts now!

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Doris threw her last slipper against the wall and folded her arms over her chest. It was the only pair that fit her swollen feet and now they were too small. <sup>1</sup>

"My lady, we will get you another pair." Penelope said. She was the only maid that Doris trusted since William had become king. She smiled softly at Doris despite how silly she was being and picked up the discarded slippers. "Why don't you get some rest for now? King William told me to tell you he will be back as soon as his meeting is over. He doesn't want you alone for long."

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Doris fell back against her pillows as her maid closed her door. She could barely see anything over the bump of her stomach. It was strange to think that any day now she would be giving birth to a baby boy or girl. Hopefully, with Beth here too. It had been a long, long nine months. Once the dust settled after the war and William was crowned king, everything had finally calmed down. Doris made this palace her home instead of seeing it as a cage.

William never restricted her from wandering from the palace. He knew what freedom meant to her and he made sure she had it. The only catch was that she now had guards to follow her every move

since she had his baby inside her. ②

Morning sickness turned to ridiculous midnight cravings and cramps. William had gotten up many times to make sure whatever insane food she wanted was delivered to her as soon as possible. He rarely let other males near her and insisted her staff be full of females. Doris didn't mind, it was exactly what she wanted anyway.

The kingdom had sent countless gifts to Doris once they learned she was pregnant with the next heir. His people were kind to her even without the title of queen.

Doris had William put off the wedding until after she had already given birth. He fought her at first, but then he eventually agreed when he saw how much she suffered day to day just being pregnant. She wanted to marry him without a large bump and without the fear of throwing up at a simple scent.

The maids and servants in the palace still looked at her as if she didn't belong next to a king... or at least it'd felt that way. They all knew she once was just like them. They all knew she had wanted to get far from the palace but now she shared a

room with its ruler.

Her wolf, Cordelia, was silent most days. She hadn't tried to get Doris to shift or run wild after she first started showing.

"It's because of how hard it is on your body when you shift." Cordelia said one night when Doris asked. "I don't want you to shift unless you absolutely have to."

Still, Doris knew how much of a strain it must have been on her wolf. She had spent so many years in the dark only to be pushed right back into it for nine months. Sometimes Doris could feel the hum in her bones that wanted her to let free. There was still so much she had to learn.

William's last remaining brother, Daniel, hadn't written much to her since he left to forge his own path. About once a month she would get a post card that let her know he was alright, but never once asking about William. Only ever about Doris and their baby. The wound was clearly still fresh for the both of them.

Beth, on the other hand, wrote to her frequently. William had given her a special messenger that

would leave the second she placed a letter in his hand to deliver to Beth and wait until she responded before he came back.

Beth seemed to like the north, but Doris could tell how much she missed sunshine and spring days. Enzo would occasionally send his own letter that he's clearly written away from Beth to update her on his crush of her best friend. Doris still wasn't sure if they had even kissed yet.

She knew one thing, the second she saw Beth she would see it on her face.

As much as she missed her friends, it brought her comfort to know that they were safe. They were healthy and well. Enzo made sure that rogues from the north ventured into the kingdom unharmed and those that disobeyed the new order were punished immediately.

Many rogues now live among the villages in peace like they had always wanted. Instead of being pushed away for a job, they were given opportunities that they used to only dream of. William made sure of it. 1

Meanwhile, William still had a lot to learn himself.

Preparing to become a king was different than actually taking the role. There were many nights that she woke up alone and found him in a meeting or head bent over scrolls that needed to be dealt with.

His temper flared when he was questioned so no one dared to step over any line he had drawn. Once, when she was about six months pregnant, a male servant had snuck in the room when she was sleeping. Doris had to pull William off the man before he threw him out of their tall windows.

Each day brought a small form of confidence back into William that had faded a little since the war. He had bigger, better plans and all he needed was for his people to believe in them.

Perhaps one day, they fully would.

"Doris?" William said from the door. She opened her eyes to see him cross the room and lift his golden crown from his head. "Sorry if I woke you." He muttered, not sounding the least bit sorry.

William sat himself on the edge of the bed and rubbed his hand across her stomach almost half minded as he gazed down at a letter in his other

hand.

"What's that?" Doris struggled to sit up. He helped her automatically as if it was a reaction that was now part of him. So different from the man she had once cowered away from.

"The neighboring kingdom of Heeled has sent a letter requesting a visit."

Doris furrowed her brows. "When?" She peered over his shoulder at the letter. "I hope not any time soon."

"It doesn't say. They worded it as if it would be their choice when they come." William grumbled. He crumbled the letter in his hand and tossed it aside. "As if I don't have enough to deal with."


"Respond and tell them no." Doris wanted to run her fingers through his messy hair, but he was too far from her with her massive stomach.

"I can't do that. I need all the allies I can get. I don't want to offend them no matter how good it would feel." He muttered and fell back against the bed beside her.


"We're about to have a baby—"


A knock at the door startled them both. William's

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face was already twisted into anger. "What?"

"Oh! Sorry to disturb you!" Penelope called nervously. "Lady Doris has visitors." 

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