

Her Unwanted Mate On The Throne by Caroline Chapter 81

Chapter 81 I think I got it.

Doris followed Enzo back to camp and tried not to seem obvious she was looking around for William. The villagers glanced at her curiously as she passed but said nothing. She was quite positive most of them still didn't like her and were only tolerating her presence. Not that she blamed them, she supposed. It wasn't easy to allow outsiders in especially when you were taught not to trust them your entire life. It was clear the villagers felt uneasy whenever one of the royal party was near especially William himself. They looked to Enzo for guidance and his ease calmed their fears just enough but it still lingered on the surface of every expression they made. "Would you like to join me for dinner?" Enzo asked, snapping Doris out of her racing thoughts. "Oh," Doris trailed her eyes across the barely familiar faces and still couldn't find the one that had those deadly blue eyes. "I shouldn't." "Why shouldn't you?" Enzo asked as they stopped in front of her cabin. His brows were raised in an almost humorous expression as he looked her over. "Afraid the prince will think we're getting married?". Doris blushed and turned her face away. "That's absurd. I shouldn't because I should be trying to figure out my wolf. She's quite difficult to understand right now." "Well, more the reason you should dine with me. I can give you some advice that your prince might have been neglectful to share." Enzo clasped his hands behind his back and flashed a grin at her. Doris sighed. She knew she shouldn't accept, if William saw her alone with him he would think the worst. But-figuring out her wolf was much more important than whatever he thought of her. Which, at the moment, wasn't much. "Alright. When?" "I'll send someone to get you." Enzo said and turned away. Doris watched as he left, offering smiles to those that passed him. She'd never met someone who was so loved and feared at the same time. For his villagers, she assumed he was more loved than feared by the way they looked at him with such adoration. • Inside her cabin, Doris locked the door and flung herself on her bed to bury her face deep in her pillow. Flashes of William entered her mind, she tried to force them out and think of something-anything else. Her lips tingled as if she could still feel the brief touch he pressed upon her. What did he expect from her? His rough hands turned a bit soft as he turned her face to his to kiss her and then spit her out. She would never forget the look on his face when he realized how rotten she truly was. How much he didn't want her. 1 Doris turned and stared up at the ceiling. Her fingers lightly trailed along her lips and could swear he lingered there long after he was gone. His disgust for her set him in a new light that she didn't dare try to touch-nor did she want to. Her shame and sorrows were long pushed down by the time the sun had gone down she only wanted her mate and wanted Doris to bow down to his needs. Especially when the man that she claimed was her mate hated her guts and grew sick just by their kiss. "What if I don't listen to what she wants?" "You have to find a compromise. I recommend taking a full day to try and figure her out otherwise she will never want to listen if you don't get along with her. It won't happen over night, but it will help more than you think. Give it a shot." Doris nodded and picked at her food. It was delicious and the meat melted in her mouth in the best way possible—but her stomach turned on her. She was starving before she stepped through the door, but now that William was here she could only think about the way he spit at her feet after he kissed her. "I know she doesn't like being told

what to do, she refuses to come to me when I call her and she only shifts when she wants. I was caught out in the snow storm and she wouldn't even change to save me." "It will be like that for a while. She's trying to show you she's the dominate one inside you so you will answer to her. They don't care what they have to do to show their control, even if it kills them." Enzo said, William shifted in his seat. "Mine tried to control me for years when I was younger. It made me do horrible things it wanted just so I could get it to change until I realized it wasn't right. We are the ones that control our wolves." Patrick took a long drink and cleared his throat. "She will learn, don't fall for anything she tells you." Doris felt as if it was the same advice over and over, but none of it helped her understand what to do. Argue with her wolf until it agreed to change? Threaten her wolf or try to show dominance she didn't have? They all stared at her as if they expected her to understand them. She didn't understand anything, they'd all been wolves for so long they didn't know what it was like to know nothing about it. Doris took a deep breath and let it out slowly before she spoke. "Okay. I think I got it."

Her Unwanted Mate On The Throne by Caroline Chapter 82

Chapter 82 I would kill anyone that tried to take our freedom.

The sky was still dark when Doris rose the next morning. She bundled up against the harsh temperatures and brought extra clothes and a cloak in a small bag. No one was awake when she stepped out of her cabin and treaded towards the woods behind her cabin. The absolute silence was strange. Only her steps that crunched in the snow made a sound and made her feel as if she was completely alone in the world. She supposed she was, in a way. Doris walked down a path she had taken many times before. The air was still and calm, no sense of a storm was brewing but she wanted to make sure she stayed close to a path she knew well enough in case one came. Once she was far enough away from the camp, she broke off the trail and found a wide clearing between the tall trees. She set her bag down and stood in the center to look up at the sky. The sun was just barely starting to rise. The grey skies had a bit of blue and yellow mixed in. She inhaled the fresh air and felt her head almost spin from it all. She didn't normally enjoy morning air, she preferred the smell of the night. "I know why you're out here. You realize I can hear your conversations, right?" Cordelia spoke up in her mind. Doris almost flinched and looked around, but held herself firm enough not to make a fool out of herself again. She had to get used to this. This voice was a part of her, as strange as it was to admit Doris laid out a small blanket and sat atop it with her legs crossed. Come to a compromise they told her. "I thought we could get to know each other a bit more." Doris said out loud. "I already know everything about you and all of your desires. Even the ones you try to hide away." Cordelia said with a laugh. Doris pressed her cold hands to her cheeks to prevent a blush. It didn't matter if she knew everything about her. No one would be able to speak to her anyway. "Okay, then I came out here to learn about you. I'm new to all of this, I don't know what it is I'm supposed to be doing." Doris admitted. "That's obvious. You can't get away with acting clueless forever, my dear Doris. Sooner or later I'm going to call your bluff." "I wish I was acting!" Doris huffed and closed her eyes. She wished she could see her as she spoke instead of staring at trees or darkness. It made her feel a bit crazy. "I know you want to be with your mate." Doris said after a breath. "I know you want me to curl up to William

and bow down to his needs, but it's not like that." Cordelia scoffed, the sound was loud and harsh against her ears. "It can be if you weren't resisting so much. Our mates are made for us for a reason. If you let me be with mine, I would be more willing." "I know you would." Doris sighed and rubbed her head. Already a headache was forming. "Please understand that William and I are not a good match. He hates me tr more than you think. He hates the very idea of a mate and he refuses to end up with

one_"

"If that was true, why did he seek you out so hard at the palace when that nasty maid took your place as his lady? He searched high and low just to find you and you still hide from him to this day. Do you think he likes knowing his mate despises him?" "I don't know! I don't think he knows why he searched for his mate so hard either, but I know that he doesn't want this life. If you're always watching and listening, you know how he acted after the kiss." "Perhaps he was only that way because you didn't kiss him back. You deserved it." Cordelia hissed. "Maybe. I don't know why he does anything, but I know how bad it hurt to have him spit at me as if I was disgusting to him." Doris lowered her voice sadly and looked around. "No man is worth giving up freedom for. He could offer us the world but it would never be better than the choice of fresh air. We have to stop living for others, don't you get that?" Cordelia was silent for a long time. Doris was sure she had curled up back inside herself to shut Doris out, until she heard a softer version of her voice. "I only want to be loved. I know my mate is waiting for me and I can hear his calls when you can't. We long for each other." "What can I do?" Doris asked helplessly. "I can't change who William is. Please, tell me what would make you happy that doesn't involve me selling myself away." "I... I want you to stop distancing yourself from him. I can hear your thoughts as they push further and further away from William. You convince yourself he hates you before he even opens his mouth. Give him a chance." Doris parted her lips to object, but quickly clamped them shut. Her wolf was offering her a door and she would be stupid to deny it. Even though deep down, she knew it was ridiculous. "Okay. If I try to warm up to him a little, will you answer when I call for you? When I need you if I was in trouble? I don't want to wait around to be saved anymore. I have you, we can save ourselves." Silence. She could practically feel the wheels turning in her wolf's mind. All the thoughts that must have been racing through her head to be willing to give up a sense of her power for Doris to have. "Yes." Cordelia finally said. "You understand there's no promises. don't you? This potential love you want would be doomed from the start. He's a prince and I am only ever going to be a maid to him. I can't force him to love me and I can't force myself either." Cordelia sniffed. "I wouldn't sell yourself short. I have seen several princes turn their heads for you over the years." Doris rolled her eyes and stood before she slid off her jacket and shoes. With a shaky breath, she held out her arms. "I call to you, Cordelia." Doris swore she heard a laugh before Cordelia took over every inch of her body all at once. She doubled over and watched in horror as her arms cracked from human arms to those of a wolf. White fur coated her legs and her back hunched over as her bones cracked until she formed into a wolf once again. The pain of every inch of her bending and breaking until she was transformed would never be something she could live with. It felt just as awful as the very first time. It felt as if her skin was stretched over her broken bones to form her into a new shape. Pure agony ripped through her throat. Once the transformation was complete, the pain faded almost instantly as if it was never there in the first place. She blinked and looked around through her sharp wolf eyes to see her clothes in shards all around her. She took a step in the cold snow and winced a

little. "Don't be so hesitant." Cordelia whispered. "Let me show you how to be free." Cordelia took off through the trees and Doris had no choice but to come along. Her paws beat down harshly in the snow and hopped over rocks and fallen trees without a second thought. The wind blew through her fur and left her feeling breathless as she raced against it. She felt... wild. Every inch of her wasn't able to be touched, nothing could reach her or stop her. She felt free. She dodged the trees and raced against small animals that found her. They ran from her in fear, she only raced past them with a sense of determination. She could beat them all, she could run free. She raced up a small mountain as fast as she could. Faster and faster, nothing could slow her down. Nothing could Cordelia skid her to a halt at the cliff's edge. Doris's heart was running a million miles an hour as she tried to catch her breath. It was much easier to do in this form,

almost as if it didn't bother her at all. She looked down at the valley below her. White snow stretched on for miles and miles. The sun was raising up behind the trees at the perfect spot for her to appreciate. "You want freedom, you will always have freedom in this form." Cordelia said gently. "No one can hold us down. We are a force on our own and no one owns us." "I want to believe that." Doris said. "You'll see the truth in time. I would kill anyone that tried to take our freedom." 1

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Chapter 83 Why do I feel this will go terribly

A sense of ease settled in Doris as she walked out of the woods. She wrapped her cloak tighter around herself as she smiled a little. It was like a hole inside her had been filled more than it had been when she went in. How long had she had that hole? How long had she felt that empty? Now she understood what it was like to feel a bit more complete. Perhaps she had been missing her inner wolf her whole life and she only realized it now. The villagers were wide awake by the time she'd gotten back. A few royal guards were scattered in the crowds. It was almost getting hard to tell them apart as some of them bonded with the others. She watched as they shared jokes and tipped their heads back to laugh with one another. She didn't see William out yet, nor Enzo. It was strange to see such order in the camp without some sort of supervision. Perhaps they were getting along more than Doris had realized. Or maybe it was just William they had their concerns about. Her stomach growled loud enough for her to quickly cover it with her arms. The smell from the center of the courtyard could have lifted her feet off the ground with how delicious it was. Fresh bread? Cinnamon? She wasn't sure what it was but it only made her feel ravenous. All the running had given her an appetite she hadn't felt in

quite a while. She joined a line to grab a serving of the frosted bread and went to waver through the growing crowd to find an empty seat. It was freezing outside, but it was a nice enough day to enjoy Doris couldn't catch herself in time when someone held out their foot to trip her. Doris fell face first into her bread and had to bite her lip to keep in her screams. It burned her face, she quickly wiped it off and then stared down at the sad remains of the one thing her stomach

desired. "You should watch where you're going." Doris looked up to see the woman that tried to seduce William standing above her with her arms crossed tightly across her chest. Doris stood and wiped off the snow from her pants and tried to pick out the bread pieces from her hair. "I suppose I should be on the look out for people trying to trip me."

The woman narrowed her eyes a little as if she didn't expect Doris to say anything back. The crowd had quickly thinned around them as if they were afraid to get caught in the crossfire. She looked Doris up and down with disinterest. "I can see why he would already be bored of you, you're not much to look at." "I assume you're talking about William? Everyone can see that you're drooling over yourself for him." Doris moved to walk past her, but she stepped in her way again. Doris curled her fists at her sides and tried to tame the beast inside her. "I heard you were nothing but a maid, do they let you talk back to people at the kingdom like this?" The girl asked with an almost mocking tone. Doris had to tilt her head back a little just to look up at the girl. "Not to people I respect. I don't even know who you are, so don't expect me to fall at your feet because of my job." The girl scoffed and tossed her light hair back. It wasn't very long, she looked about a foot taller than Doris with long legs and a lean frame. "I'm Jude, I'm one of the main wolf's here. I would advise you to watch your mouth around me" "Is that so? That's odd, I haven't heard your name once for being a main wolf. Excuse me," Doris went to move around her again and the woman gripped Doris by her shoulder and pushed her back. "Let me out, I'll take care of her!" Cordelia raged inside her. It felt as if her wolf was pacing angrily with her claws ready to take her down. Doris tried to silence her. She wasn't about to let her wolf rip apart this girl that just wasn't worth it. They'd think she was insane, even if at the moment it felt justified. "I don't take kindly to disrespect from someone like you. You think you're good enough to be dining with royalty? You'll soon realize the only thing you're good for is laying on your back." "Did you discover that from experience?" Doris almost growled as if the wolfish side of her couldn't help it. She felt the rage bubble up from inside her in a place she hadn't yet fully explored. "Get away from me." 1 Jude grabbed her arm when she went to pass. She dug her long nails into Doris's skin hard enough to make her gasp. "How dare you? You're nothing but a useless whore

Doris didn't notice William was there until he grabbed Jude by her arm and yanked her off Doris. Jude's lips parted in shock as she took in the sight of an angered prince. It was a look Doris knew all too well. "Prince William—I didn't see you there." She winced when his grip tightened "Is there a reason you're harassing her?" William said through his teeth. Even though Jude was quite tall, he still towered over her. "Or are you just ashamed that I would never want you like her?" Doris swore she'd heard him wrong-or at least didn't understand what he meant. A strange burst of excitement swirled inside her and she knew it was coming from her wolf. Doris wanted to shove her wolf further down and quiet her. "I—" William pushed her away from him as if he didn't want anything to do with her. "If I see you talk to anyone in my party again, I will rip out your tongue so I never have to hear another word. Her life is worth a hundred of yours, don't forget that." 2 Jude stared at him in a shock that mirrored her own. Doris felt her wolf curl up inside her with a sigh of content. She didn't have to say a word, Doris knew exactly what she was thinking and her face warmed at the thoughts. Another burst of anger doused her strange energy-she wanted to scream at him and demand he stop saying things that confused her more than anything. She didn't need him to stand up for her—but a sick part of her liked it. She liked that he had a weird protectiveness over her even when he seemed repulsed by her.

What was wrong with her? William didn't even spare Doris a glance as he walked away. Jude watched him leave in a sort of daze that made her look as if she was half asleep. It took her a moment to realize they had several onlookers in the crowd and of course those that tried to pretend they didn't see a thing. What—? "He couldn't be more obvious about his feelings. Don't pretend you didn't hear him." Cordelia whispered. Doris stomped towards her cabin and slammed the door for a bit of privacy. Her emotions swirled in several different directions, she wasn't sure what to grab onto. Should she scream about how horrible Jude was? Or how frustrated she was at William? "How do you figure he's being obvious? Please, enlighten me! He can't even look at me anymore!" Doris shouted at the wall. Why did it bother her so much? Why did he act one way and then do something the counteract his intentions? Her chest felt as if it was going to burst. Was this what it was like having a wolf inside her? Cordelia hummed in her mind. It was a sort of disapproving sound that made Doris want to throw something. She couldn't even understand her own anger and she didn't know where to place it. "Let's do something for him, it might soften him a bit." "Soften him? That's impossible." Doris snorted and stopped the pacing she didn't even realize she started and furrowed her brows. "What did you even have in mind? What would we do?". "Remember how jealous he was of Daniel and how you would make him things?"¹ Doris rolled her eyes and plopped down on the couch by the fire. A part of her missed Daniel, she was ashamed to admit she hadn't thought about him at all since she left. "He wasn't jealous—" "Why are you so blind? Truly, I'd like to know."² "Just get to the point." Doris said as she rubbed her head. Perhaps William was always so grumpy because of his inner wolf. If it was half as annoying as her own, she understood completely. Every time they talked, she gained a new headache. "Let's bake something for our mate. It'll cheer him up." Cordelia suggested. It was hard to describe, but she thought she heard a bit of a smirk in her tone.¹ "Why do I feel like this will be a terrible idea?" Doris groaned.

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Chapter 84 At least you finally found a way to make yourself useful.

The main kitchen in the camp looked like any other regular kitchen she would expect in a home. It was good enough sized and homey, but she had to admit it was a little hard to imagine how the cooks managed to feed the whole village with such a small space. They were truly talented—since there was always an endless amount of food being passed around. The room was hot enough for Doris to strip off her jacket after only seconds of standing in the entryway. An older man turned to look at her with a curious lift of his brow but said nothing as she hung her coat. The ovens were on, but it appeared that nothing was inside them yet. It made her wonder if they were always left on, just in case. A large pot on the stove was filled to the brim with some sort of warm soup that made her long to curl up by the fire with the largest bowl possible. "Hello, sir." Doris stepped further in and held out her hand. He glanced down at it before he seemed to decide to oblige her. "I was wondering if I could use some of your ingredients and ovens to bake something small. I promise to clean up after myself and replace whatever I use." "Oh, you like to cook?" The man asked. He had a thick accent that she wasn't familiar with, but it was lovely and went along with his kind face. "Yes sir, I love to bake. I've missed being in the kitchen, it's been a long time."

Doris glanced around and felt her head spin with all of the delicious scents. It was so calm in here. The kitchens at the palace were always so loud and busy. It was hard to find any sense of peace there without a string of anxiety to follow. She wasn't sure if there were more cooks that helped, but for the moment it was just him. "Hmm, I see." The old man crossed his arms. "What did you have in mind?" "I was thinking something simple. A chocolate cake and frosting." Doris brushed her hair behind her ears. "I'm Doris, by the way." "I know who you are, my dear. You can call me Poe." He turned his back on her to pull down a glass bowl. "You may use my kitchen and ingredients on two conditions." "Of course, anything." "You have to keep an eye on my soup, and you have to clean up after yourself." He turned and placed the bowl in her hands. He smiled a little and winked. "Stay for as long as you need and have someone come find me when you're done." "Oh! That's so kind of you. Thank you, Poe." Doris smiled widely. Poe went to the coat rack to pull on his jacket. This village was full of some of the kindest people. Each day that passed only made it harder when she realized they would soon leave this place and she would have to go back to her old life where she had no choices. "You'll find everything you need for sweets in the lower cabinets." He pointed. "Maybe leave me a slice, eh?" He said and smiled.

Doris laughed a little. "Absolutely." Once he was gone, Doris searched through all of the cabinets to pull out everything she needed and got to work. Her wolf remained silent the entire time, most of her was thrilled to have the silence. Her head could get so loud, but baking always centered her and reminded her how to keep a bit of clarity. There was nothing to stress over, only getting the recipe right. She missed those sort of simple worries. She couldn't help but think of the times her largest worries were finding misplaced books and removing all the cobwebs around the shelves. Now she worried if she would witness another murder almost daily. She moved around the kitchen as if it was her own. It felt like an old dance as she placed the cake pans in the ovens and spun around to clean up the mess she made. By the time she wiped the counters clean, she was pulling out the hot pans and starting the frosting. She set the blazing pans by the cold window and had them cooled in no time. She cut the cake into pieces and left one on the counters before she carried the rest of it out. She was almost sad to be finished so soon. Time always seemed to fly faster when she was enjoying herself—but at least she had a taste of what it was like to feel lighter. At least for a little while. Each step towards William's cabin filled her with a heavy weight once more as her unease and nerves came rushing back in. What if he turned her away? He hadn't spoken to her once since he spat at her feet. The memory burned worse than any fire ever could. She swallowed her pride before she knocked on his door. His deep grumbled beyond it. "What?" "It's me." Doris leaned closer as if it would make him hear her better. She glanced around and was glad to see no one was around to see her pathetic attempt at civility with a grumpy prince. There was a pause that lasted hours in her mind. She cleared her throat and took a small step back as if to prepare herself to run as fast as possible away from this door. It wasn't worth it, she knew it was an awful idea "Come in." He said. Doris released a breath and opened his door slowly. Her eyes found him instantly by the dimming fire. His eyes lit up beautifully against the light. What a curse it must be to have such beautiful eyes like that. His dark lashes raised and suddenly they were on her without a warning. She closed the door behind her and lifted the plate in her hands. "I made you some dessert." "It's not even dinner time." He said blandly. Doris felt her cheeks heat instantly, she took a step back towards the door. "Yes, right. I meant for later-of course." Doris looked around for an area to put it so she could leave. "I'll leave it over here—" "Come here." He said. His words rooted her in place and she hated he had

that sort of power over her. He leaned forward in his seat and gestured to the chair next to his. Her feet had no choice but to obey. She gently placed the plate of cake slices on the table in front of him before she sat. She shifted uncomfortably in her bulky coat. William looked over the slices as if he'd never seen such a dish before. "Did you already have some?" "Oh! No, of course not. The nice old man in the kitchen asked for a piece if I used his things." Doris pulled her arms free of her constricting coat. Why did she always feel as if she was about to suffocate in his presence? William brushed his thumb across his lower lip. She wished her eyes hadn't seen that, now she couldn't look away from his mouth. "Have some with me now, then." He said. Doris almost thought she imagined it. Her wolf woke up a little and made a sound of approval. "Are you sure? I can have dinner brought for you first if you—" "No." He said and grabbed a slice with his bare hands. Doris laughed in surprise when he took a large bite. His eyes snapped to her and took in the sight of her smile as if he was drinking it in. Doris clamped her lips shut and brushed her hair behind her ear. "I wasn't sure of your favorite so I made chocolate." She cleared her throat and leaned forward to wipe a bit of frosting off the plate with her finger to have a taste. "Oh," Doris moaned a little. "I've missed the taste of chocolate." William watched her with such intensity, she felt as if a fire erupted inside her chest. His blue eyes trailed across her face and along her lips with a different sort of heat she wasn't used to. "It's good." He finally said. His large hand gripped the edge of her chair and brought her seat closer to him. She held her breath as he used his thumb to wipe a bit of chocolate near her lips. He was so close to her, she knew he could hear how loud her heart pounded. "Why did you make me this?" He asked with a voice that was meant just for her. "I... I just thought you would like it." The air felt thicker when he looked at her like that. His eyes watched her mouth whenever she spoke and had a hard time looking anywhere else. He shoved the rest of the piece in his mouth and leaned back away from her. "You were right." He stood and brushed the crumbs off his shirt. "At least you finally found a way to make yourself useful." 7

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Chapter 85 Not meant for those who want nothing to do with their kingdom.

Doris stared at his back in silence. Her face grew hot and her throat closed instantly as his words pierced her skin. Doris silently stood and left his cabin before he could even turn around. If he was anyone else, she would have stood up for herself for once in her life. She would have took the cake and threw it in the trash right in front of him. His stupid title held her tongue and prevented her from smashing the dessert in his face like she wanted to so badly. The look on his face alone would be worth it all. Her rage replaced her embarrassment. She didn't realize she had forgotten her coat until she was back in her own cabin. Not a lick of cold touched her, her anger heated her nicely. She wanted to strangle her wolf for even suggesting being nice to him when they both knew he didn't deserve it. He didn't deserve an ounce of anyone being nice to him when all he knew how to be is horrible. She did something nice for him and all he could do was insult her in return. Reminding her she was nothing but

a useless maid and that's all she'll ever be to him. Doris roared and threw a candle against the wall and watched as the wax broke into a hundred pieces on impact.

How could she be so stupid? Was having control of her wolf worth being near him for more than a second? "You see what he is? And you want me to be with that? I'd rather die!" Doris shouted at her wolf. She wanted a fight and one was building inside of her. This new anger was confusing and strange, but she knew she wanted to release it all at once instead of letting it bottle inside her like she usually did when she was mad. All the years she let people insult her and walk all over her because she was nothing to them. Nothing had changed. 1 "You misunderstand him. He didn't mean it—" Cordelia spoke up almost hesitantly. Doris laughed bitterly. "Your excuses only make you blind. I don't know what his wolf is like, but if he's anything like William—he's not worth it." Cordelia growled. "How dare you insult my mate? He's worth more than you ever will understand. How many times do I have to explain how sacred a mate bond is?" Doris went in the bathroom and yanked off her clothes as she prepared a bath. She was so hot, she didn't bother to heat the water. She lowered herself into the freezing tub and didn't feel this chill hit her bones at all as she scrubbed her skin. She wouldn't be surprised if the bath heated into boiling water just from her own rage "It's normal to have these moods." Her wolf said calmly. "Your body is changing to adjust to the wolf. You're feeling this way because of me, remember that." "Of course I'm angry because of you! If I wasn't angry, I would just be crying. What he did was rude and-ugh! He's an awful man. Awful and rotten!" Doris shouted and rubbed soap through her hair as if it would clean herself from his existence. If only it were that easy, she would have been clean of him ages ago. "You promised to give him a chance—" "What do you think that was?" Doris snapped, then immediately felt helpless. It was like a flicker of sadness wrapped its hand around her emotions and tried to strangle the rage out of her. She dipped her head beneath the water and tried to rub it all out of the soap. It would be so easy to stay underneath and let go, Her wolf caught wind of her thoughts and forced her up in a painful way. Doris started gasping for air, it felt as if her wolf shoved her head above the surface by stabbing her insides.. "Are you insane?" Cordelia growled, her voice rattled through her aching mind and almost made her grasp her ears. "If you have a thought like that again, I'll never allow you near another bath in your life." "Wonderful," Doris gasped and gripped the sides of the tub. "Then I'll ward him away with my smell if you do that. I think it's a great idea." Doris stood and wrapped a towel around herself before she stepped out of the tub. "I truly think you're exaggerating." Cordelia said, almost as if she was amused but Doris wasn't laughing. "I am not. He's the most awful person—" Doris stopped dead when she opened the door to her room and saw William standing in the middle of it. He had her coat clenched tightly in his hand. Her grip tightened on her towel, suddenly she felt hot again. "William—" She gasped. How long had he been there? How much had he heard her say? As much as she wished to give him a piece of her mind, he was still a prince and she didn't wish to lose her life over her true thoughts. His face gave away nothing as he looked her up and down, his eyes lingering on her bare legs. She cleared her throat. "Can I help you?" His eyes lifted to her own. "You left your coat." "Okay. Thank you." Doris reached out for it, but he threw it on the chair nearby. "The cake was good." He took a step towards her. She forced herself not to take one back. Every time he was near her, her thoughts turned on her and made her feel something she shouldn't. Unsurprisingly, her wolf was completely silent as if it left her entirely. "Glad you liked it." Doris crossed her arms over her chest. "Where did you learn to bake like that?" He asked in a tone that suggested he might have actually been curious. "I was taught by my mother when I was younger. She showed me all of her cake recipes and I suppose it's the one thing I can never forget." Doris shifted her weight on the other foot before she went to the drawers to pull out her clothes. She could practically feel his eyes follow her back. "Is there anything else you need?" She asked over her shoulder. His silence made her think he was already

gone, but she turned to find him watching her still as if she was his prey. A shiver ran across her skin, suddenly she felt ice cold and her heat from before had been fully doused. His eyes trailed the mark he left on her neck all those months ago. Her eyes almost dared him to say something about it, but he didn't. "No." He said before he slowly walked to the door and left without another word. It left her convinced that he'd heard her shout about how awful he was to her wolf. At least he didn't hear the things her wolf said about him, then she'd truly wish the death penalty on herself. Doris quickly dressed in case he came back-but he hadn't. Her wolf didn't have much to say either, she stayed quiet inside her as if his appearance scared her off. Good. She glanced out the window and saw William in the courtyard speaking with Enzo. Their heads were bent in a deep conversation. She could tell they were both serious with the way Enzo's face was completely empty of humor. She didn't think that was possible for him. Enzo gestured towards his cabin and William followed. Doris quickly opened her door and met them halfway before she changed her mind. "Good evening," Doris said lightly with a smile. Enzo stopped and grinned down at her. "Ah, Doris. Lovely to see you on such a beautiful night." He reached out to touch her wet hair that had already turned to ice. William shifted beside him, she didn't dare sneak a look at him this time. "You might want to let your hair dry completely next time. It'll keep you frozen all night and you'll wake up in a soiled bed." "It's near impossible for my hair to dry here. It takes at least a few days." Doris laughed a little. Her eyes flickered towards William to see a frown on his face. "What are you guys up to?" She asked as she clasped her hands behind her back. Her curiosity had been eating at her for days. William and Enzo had been spending a lot of time together but neither of them had brought it up to her as if they hadn't been having secret meetings almost every night William had been here. She knew it was most likely over politics and it wasn't her business, but she was still curious to know what William was up to. "Nothing to concern yourself over. Just a bunch of boring talk, truly." Enzo smiled and stepped around her. "Yes, Enzo is right. Not meant for those who want nothing to do with the palace." William said as he passed her without a single glance towards her. He followed Enzo into his cabin and closed the door to leave her out in the cold.