

## Chapter 112

He expected her to protest, to push him away, but she melted into his embrace, a soft moan escaping her lips.

This won't do.

Daemonikai grabbed her, pressing her back against the wall. His body close, enveloping hers, his breath ragged gasps as he stuffed his lungs with a unique floral aroma and earthy ambrosia.

Ukxae, she smelled so good he could eat her up.

"Your Grace," she breathed shakily.

"Need more," he growled, his hot breath fanning across her neck. "I need more. I—"

"Please, please, please," she cried, her hand going around his neck, holding and guiding his head closer. "Take more."

A guttural moan escaped his lips as he pulled her flush against him, his fingers digging into her waist.

He nuzzled into her neck, his lips all over her delicate skin as his senses were overwhelmed by her sheer scent.

EMERIEL

Emeriel was on fire. Every nerve ending alight with a burning desire.

Having him so close...

A breathy moan escaped her as he licked her neck, twice. His warm tongue sent ecstasy through her. His arms tightened around her waist, pulling her closer like he wanted to embed her into his skin.

She clung to him, her fingers digging into the strong muscles of his back, nearly shaking out of her skin to be this close to her Beloved.

"Your musk," King Daemonikai growled, a deep rumble she felt being so plastered against him. "Holy Ukxae."

He knew. He could smell her arousal. Shame washed over her, yet she couldn't control the unbridled passion coursing through her veins. She mewled, hiding her face in his chest.

Emeriel wanted to stop, to pull away, but her body refused to obey. Helpless, trembling with need, she pressed her aching core against his firm thigh, grinding against him desperately.

Her arms tightened around him, her entire being longing to merge with his. To disappear into him. His broad shoulders shielded her from reality, the outside world fading into insignificance. Nothing mattered but her overpowering desire to be consumed by this male.

"Touch me," she cried, her voice raw with unrestrained longing. "I need you so much, I—"

He abruptly pulled away, leaving her aching for his warmth.

Emeriel sobbed in protest, her hands reaching blindly for him.

But his hand caught hers, stopping her. "No, Galilea. This is not only ill-advised, also it is dangerous."

She opened her eyes to find him staring down at her, a tortured expression on his face. King Daemonikai's body was rigid with restraint, his eyes burning with... something that both thrilled and frightened her.

"Your Grace," a soldier's voice called from outside the shed, shattering whatever spell held the meatpive.

King Daemonikai's eyes became hard. "What is it?"

"Lord Herod requests your presence. He has finished the notes and requires your assistance with the compilation," the soldier reported. "Should I inform him that you are occupied and need more time?"

"There is no need for that." His eyes remained locked on Emeriel, his voice was cold and composed.

"Thank you for walking with me, young princess. I must take my leave." Then, with a curt nod, he turned and walked away, leaving her alone in the shed.

Emeriel's legs gave way beneath her, and she collapsed to the floor. Ravenous hunger coursed through her, a relentless hurricane demanding to be fed.

Had he felt it too? In the throes of their connection, she hadn't been able to discern if he shared the same burning need.

Their bond was even stronger than she had imagined and it terrified her.

Emeriel had prided herself on the progress she had made in recent weeks. At first, it had seemed impossible, but she had finally managed to go at least an hour without thinking of him. A small victory, but a hard-won one.

But a few stolen moments in his arms with his nose buried in her neck, and all her efforts crumbled to dust.

"Pull yourself together, Emeriel," she muttered. Shakily, she rose to her feet, her heart racing.

She was supposed to be avoiding him at all costs. Not wishing for his arms around her and his tongue lashing at her neck. She should never have agreed to that walk.

Now, he not only knew her as Galilae, but had imprinted her scent to memory.

What have you done, Emeriel?

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She spent some time in the garden, lost in thought, finding solace in the tranquil atmosphere. By the time she returned to the manor, Lord Herod was alone in his study, the grand king having departed.

"Are you alright?" Lord Herod looked concerned as he closed the distance between them, gently taking Emeriel's arm and leading her to a plush couch. "I didn't know what to think when I heard he asked you for a walk. He's not exactly known for his warmth towards humans."

"I am fine, he did not harm me." Quite the opposite. Her heart raced with the memory of his touch. She glanced down at her hands, remembering how her Beloved had held her. He had been all over her, as if he couldn't breathe without her scent.

"I apologize for those lies... especially the part about you being my betrothed," Lord Herod said, sincerely. "It was the only way I could think of to protect you in the face of his unexpected visit. The grand king may harbor animosity towards humans, but he is also a fair and just ruler who values those dear to his people, no matter their species."

"It's alright. I suppose it's better this way," Emeriel replied softly. It will make avoiding him at all cost easier.

"Is it? What if he recognizes you at the fortress?"

"He would not. I reside in the Western Wing, while his territory is the Southern Wing. And unlike before, when I was assigned various chores, I now work primarily in the garden. Our paths are unlikely to cross." Not to mention the scent suppressors.

"I saw the way he looked at you, several times," Lord Herod remarked, his gaze piercing into her own. "Whatever did you do to capture the attention of a male like King Daemonikai, young one?"

Emeriel looked down, unable to meet his eyes. The truth was too complicated.

"I was present in court that day, you know. When his beast carried you away, I remember being worried sick. Then you returned, unharmed. I knew then that you were special to the beast, for it to fight against its feral instincts and protect you."

Emeriel's head snapped up, her eyes widening in surprise.

"You are his Soulbond, aren't you?" Lord Herod's tone was thoughtful.