

Chapter 190

She looked at her hands. "He attacked me twice during heat."

Lord Herod's smile faded, replaced by concern.

"I used to think his beast really liked me, even if the male... well, didn't. But now, I'm not so sure. His eyes glowed yellow both times. Even the night he confronted me."

The high lord looked sad. "As much as it seems like our beast is a separate entity that lives within us, we are still one with our beasts, Emeriel." The high lord looked sad. "You and the beast got along so well because he was mindless. Back then, it followed instincts alone, loving and protecting you as its mate. But now, awareness has returned, and some instincts overshadow others. Like the ingrained need to kill humans."

Emeriel looked up from her hands, to stare at him.

"The grand king is one with his beast. Whatever he feels, his beast feels too. They both lost their family, young one. That pain... it runs deep. It's not just him lashing out, it's both of them."

That made sense. "I guess I understand better now."

"It will get better." Lord Herod spoke with conviction, covering her hands with one of his. "Have faith in yourself. Have faith in your bond. Now, let us put all that aside. Tell me how you are faring."

MISTRESS SINAI

Mistress Sinai stood in the courtyard, staring out into the distance as the slaves toiled around her. They hurried past, murmuring greetings as they fell over themselves to get out of her way. She paid them no mind, still turning over in her head what she'd overheard earlier.

Emeriel is going to be set free. Emeriel is leaving Urai.

Sinai didn't know how to feel about that. After Emeriel's deceit had come to light, for the first time in as long as she could remember, she had fallen ill.

Bedridden. Sick as a dog.

Discovering Emeriel's true identity had not been a shock. No, it was much more. It had uprooted Sinai's world.

To think that the boy she had watched with suspicion wasn't just a boy, but Daemonikai's Soulbond... it had struck her like a poisoned arrow straight to her chest.

For three agonizing days, she had lain in bed, beating herself up for it. Blaming herself for not acting sooner, for not trusting her instincts.

She had been too scared of the Hole to kill the boy when she'd had the chance. Emeriel would have been dead long before the revelation came out.

Soulbond.

The word as always slashed through her gut like a burning, spiked whip. Sinai's body might have recovered from the sickness, but her mind was yet to recover from that revelation. What a joke.

And Daemonikai?

He had not even thought to check on her. He must have heard she was ill, but he was too wrapped up in his own problems to care. That hurt. So, she had paid him a visit, only to overhear his conversation with Vladya.

Should she be happy that Emeriel was leaving? Probably.

But was she?

No.

"Don't think I don't know Emeriel calms you down, soothes your soul, takes the pain and grief away. I watched you two for months when you were still feral. Don't think I do not know that girl is like a healing balm for you."

Sinai clenched her jaw so hard it was a wonder she did not crack a tooth. Her fists ached from clenching them too hard.

It was not fair. It simply was not fair.

How had that rotten human come out of nowhere and stolen her male?

Sinai didn't want Emeriel to leave Urai, she wanted her dead. Erased from existence. Her chapter closed forever.

She had asked Nora to keep an eye on Emeriel after the events in the arena, to summon Emeriel as soon as Nora caught sight of her. However, Nora had reported that the grand king had posted soldiers outside Emeriel's door, and they wouldn't let anyone get close. Since then, access to the girl had been nearly impossible.

But that was fine. Once Sinai had pushed past the blinding rage and the violent urge to beat Emeriel into a pulp, she had begun to carefully plot her next move.

She had purchased what she needed. Poison. One that killed quickly and left no trace.

People like Emeriel, who steal what doesn't belong to them, did not deserve a quick and painless death, and it infuriated her that the girl would receive such mercy, but Sinai did not want the poison traced back to her. She would make do with what she had.

Whirling around, she began to walk back to her chambers. "Leaving Urai, Emeriel?" Sinai's lips curled. "The only satisfying way you leave this kingdom, is lifeless. And I will make sure of that."

MISTRESS SINAI

"I'm sorry, Mistress, but I cannot let you in."

Mistress Sinai gritted her teeth, barely holding back her irritation as she stood at the door of the kitchen, staring down the older human female who had dared to block her path.

She had painstakingly planned this moment, deciding the best way to execute her plan was to handle it personally. Carrying out an inspection in all the kitchens would give her access to the one she needed to be in. There would be no mistakes, no loose ends.

What she had not expected was the headmaid denying her access.

"I need to inspect this kitchen, just as I have with the others tonight." Sinai glared, looking down her nose at the audacious human. "How dare you get in my way?"

"I'm really sorry, Mistress, but the grand king gave us strict instructions. No one is allowed in except authorized staff."

"What is your name, slave?"

"Livia, Mistress." The woman kept her head in a respectful bow. "I am the headmaid."

"And I am the grand king's bloodhost, Livia. There is not a single place in this fortress I cannot enter."

"I truly apologize, Mistress. But please understand, I am only following the grand king's orders."

The mistress's jaw locked hard. Her carefully laid plans were failing before her eyes, all because of this obstacle of a human. Anger breathed within her.

Perhaps she should have used a human for this.

Huh. Why had she not thought of that sooner? A human could slip in and out unnoticed, making it much easier for Sinai to either eliminate them or ensure they take the blame.

But no matter. Tomorrow would bring a brand-new day.

Tomorrow, she would execute her plan properly. Perfectly.

Mistress Sinai turned on her heel, her cloak billowing as she stalked away.