

Chapter 271

“How is your friend Herodis?” His lips brushed against her cheek like a soft breeze. “Have you seen him since your return?”

“With everything going on, I haven’t had the chance.” A small pause followed. “I worry about him. Is he alright? What is he doing these days?”

“Maybe you should make time to go and see him.”

She tilted her head slightly, trying to glimpse his expression, but gave up when she realized it would mean leaving the cocoon of his arms. “I’m surprised you would say that. I know you don’t exactly…”

“That is in the past. He was a genuine friend to you. A good one who was there for you during dark times. He’s a kind of friend worth having.”

“He is,” she agreed, a touch of exhaustion entering her tone. “You know, when the lords bared their necks for me in court today, I thought about him. He always told me it would work out. That I should have a little faith.”

“I am glad you have such a friend. Genuine friendships transcend time.”

“Like you and Lord Vladya?”

She felt his head nod against hers. Sleep began to tug at her, the warmth of his presence wrapping around her like a blanket.

She was drifting off when she felt his hands tremble.

It was subtle at first. A faint quiver becoming unmistakable as he tried to still them, his knuckles tightening into a fist.

“I have noticed it a few times now,” she murmured drowsily. “The tremors.”

“It’s nothing. Go to sleep, dearling.”

“Is it the poison?”

He didn’t respond.

“No more secrets, remember?” she yawned. “Tell me.”

He exhaled. “I haven’t been feeding.”

Her eyes snapped open. “Bloodfeeding?”

“Mm-hm.” His acknowledgment was barely audible. “With everything happening lately, I need to feed more to heal faster, to heal completely. But…”

She sat up, untangling herself from his arms and turning to face him. “How long has it been?”

“A week, maybe two.” Then, under his breath, he added, “Might be three.”

Emeriel’s eyes widened to her hairline. “You have been starving yourself? Why? You should know better.”

“I do, actually.” He sighed again, his shoulders tense. “At first, I didn’t feel the urge. The older one gets, the longer they can go without needing to bloodfeed regularly. I can go quite a while without it. But then the arrow happened.”

His jaw clenched as he scowled. “Finding out it was my bloodhost who did that…”

“Yeah, well, the mistress has always hated me, so I’m not surprised,” Emeriel said with a huff. “But that is no reason for you to suffer. She should be the one suffering, not you.”

His frown dissolved, and he smirked. “She is, too.”

MISTRESS SINAI

She bent over, her body convulsing violently as she retched.

The coppery taste of blood flooding her mouth before it poured out in a gush, splattering across the cold, stone floor.

“Get the buckets! She’s vomiting again,” a soldier barked from his post by the door.

The clatter of hurried footsteps came, and then the groaning creak of metal gates opening and slamming shut.

Sinai barely registered the commotion, rocking back and forth uncomfortably. So focused on the pain. The sensation of her insides tearing themselves apart.

Her hands clutched her abdomen as she retched again, heaving so violently until there was nothing left to expel.

Then, she slumped forward. Her vision swimming, her breathing loud.

How long has it been? Hours? Days?

Sinai had no concept of time anymore. Her torture stretched endlessly.

Weakly, she crawled away from the crimson pool she had created, her fingers smearing the slick blood across the stone as she dragged herself to a corner.

Collapsing against the wall, she drew her legs up, wrapping her arms around them in a feeble attempt to shield herself from the cold.

Tears spilled down her cheeks, stomach churning violently.

Her skin felt tight. Stretched to its breaking point. As though her body would burst from the inside.

Every nerve screamed in protest, her muscles aching so much.

All because her master had not fed from her for weeks.

Pickspin to drain the excess blood safely she would be ok.

But Sinai had been denied access to hers.

My Daemon was being so cruel. So very monstrous punishing me in this manner.

“How could you do this to me,” she cried under her breath, more tears streaming down her face.

The filthy humans cleaning the mess she had made were watching her.

She glared at them, disgust and rage coiling in her chest.

I want to kill them all.

Sinai’s nails dug into her thighs. These filthy, worthless humans… Why must I suffer this way because of one of them?

The pressure within her rose again. Her veins pulsed as though they might burst.

“No, no, no.” Sinai pressed her hands to her ears, rocking harder. “It’s not real. It’s all in your head, Sinai. Your skin is not stretching. Your blood vessels are not swelling. It’s all in your head, it’s not real. It’s not real!”

It was no use.

The nausea bubbled up. Unstoppable like the blazing storm.

With a deep, moan of pure despair, Sinai doubled over again.

Blood spewed from her mouth in a violent stream, splattering across the floor and walls, painting the cell in her suffering.

Her body shuddered over and over again, her screams muffled by the sound of her puking.

Oh goddess, she was in so much pain. Too much…!

Vision tunneling, she fainted.

PRINCESS EMERIEL

She tilted her head, offering her neck. “Drink from me, My King.”

Daemonikai’s eyes stayed on the curve of her neck. “Bloodfeeding is going to make us horny.” Restraint was clear in his voice. “And as much as I would like to be inside you again… yesterday was your first time, and I was insatiable. You need rest.”

True.

Even with the warm bath and the soothing herbs, Emeriel’s body still hasn’t recovered from their passion. She was still sore and achy. But still…

“You’re hungry. I don’t mind,” she insisted.

His hands tightened around her waist, pulling her closer. “I am alright, Riel. It’s not that bad yet,” he murmured, his lips brushing her temple. “Besides, bloodfeeding will only awaken my appetite even more, making me hungrier, for your blood and your body.”

“If you want to… uhm,” she cleared her throat, whispering. “I’d let you.”

“No, you need to recover first. You have given me more than enough.” With that, he guided her head to rest against his chest. “Now, get some sleep. We will talk about this tomorrow.”

Her eyelids grew heavier, and she nodded against him.

“Damn, now I’m thinking about being inside you again,” he grunted.

Emeriel’s lips curved into a small smile, her body relaxing further into his as sleep claimed her.