

## Chapter 307

PRINCESS EMERIEL

One week later.

Emeriel woke in the early hours of dawn. Today was The Celestial Offering.

One of the most sacred ceremonies of the Urekai. And she wanted to help him prepare for it.

After the feral incident, Daemonikai had insisted she remain in her chambers instead of moving into his quarters. He did not trust himself not to hurt her again.

And although, Emeriel had fought to stay by his side, even she knew this was a battle she could not win, so she had reluctantly agreed.

But now, she barely saw him.

His duties kept him constantly busy, pulling him away from dawn until long past midnight. Each evening, she waited in her bedchamber, hoping to hear the announcement of his return. But exhaustion always claimed her before the hour grew too late, and she would wake to find another day had begun without him.

This morning, however, Emeriel was prepared.

Rising quietly, she slipped into a simple gown before making her way to the slave quarters. There, she roused Amie and two other human attendants who had volunteered to assist her, taking them to her bedchambers.

While they drew a bath, Emeriel went through the rows of ceremonial attire she had a royal servant bring to her chambers the previous day. Selecting one of the grandest robes, threaded with gold and silver, she laid it out carefully. Hoping she had chosen correctly as she paired it with matching footwear, a belt, and an ornamental hairpin.

With everything prepared, Emeriel made her way to the king's bedchamber. The guards stationed outside nodded respectfully as she approached, stepping aside to allow her entry. Twisting the handle, she slipped inside, the heavy door closing softly behind her.

Daemonikai lay sprawled in sleep at the center of the massive bed, his broad chest rising and falling in a steady rhythm.

The fact that he did not stir at her entrance spoke volumes about his exhaustion. Pausing, she took a moment to look her full.

This male, who carried the weight of the world upon his shoulders, who was depended upon by so many, yet bore his pain in silence—this male was hers.

Her throat closed up. I want so many things.

Emeriel ached with the desire to climb into that bed, slipping beneath the covers to pull him close and rest his head against her chest. To stroke his hair, easing the tension that clung to him even in sleep.

To be there when he wakes from one of those nightmares. To hush his racing heart, offering her breasts to him for solace.

But there was an invisible rift between them now. A distance neither of them knew how to bridge.

They had not shared intimacy since that terrible night. Daemonikai had made sure of it. And that was... okay.

Emeriel was not yet ready for that. But she starved for everything else.

His touch. His warmth. His closeness.

Emeriel swallowed thickly, clutching her gown. She missed the way he would look at her as though she were the only light in his world.

So many wishes. So many cravings. So many dreams.

Wiping the lone tear trailing down her cheek, Emeriel breathed deeply as she stepped closer. Leaning in, she gently touched his arm. "My King..."

His eyes snapped open. Yellow. Fierce.

They startled her, and she immediately snatched her hand away, as if burned.

But then his gaze focused. Recognition flickered. The yellow hue dimmed, retreating, until only warmth remained.

"Riel," he rumbled, voice rough with sleep.

Butterflies attacked her belly. "Yes, I apologize from waking you from slumber, but I know what today is, and I know you have to leave early, so... I prepared your bath."

Daemonikai rose, shifting to sit at the edge, but instead of getting up, he reached for her. Arms encircled her waist, pulling her closer until she stood between his legs. He buried his face in her chest, taking a deep, shuddering breath.

"You smell like heaven wrapped as a gift to mankind," his muffled deep voice vibrated against her skin.

He missed me too. Emeriel bit back a moan. Its good to know she wasn't the only one feeling this way.

Her hands hovered uncertainly for a moment before settling in his hair, fingers threading through the dark strands. His breath against her skin made her shiver.

Raising his head, eyes slitted drowsily, he said in a soft command. "Kiss me."

Emeriel's head lowered instantly, lips pressing softly to his. A shudder ran through her at contact.

The familiar heat of his mouth was sweet heavens. This was the closest to intimacy they had been since that night.

Pulling back just enough for only a breath to separate them, his hooded gaze lifted to her face. "Kiss me harder."

And so she did.

His lips remained still, letting her to take the lead. Tasting him tentatively at first, she explored the contours of his mouth, but soon, the pent-up longing inside her took over, and she kissed him with a desperate fire that left her whining and trembling. Hands gripping his shoulders, anchoring herself as the world tilted around her.

When they finally broke apart, she was dazed and breathing heavily. Her mind, blank. It took her a moment to remember why she was here in the first place.

Right. His bath.

"Come," she whispered in an unsteady tone. "Your bath is ready."

Daemonikai stared at her, as if debating whether or not to pull her back into his arms.

Then, at last, he exhaled and allowed her to take his hand. She led him out of his bedchamber and down the hallway to hers, savoring the feel of him at her side. The way his body leaned slightly into hers.

He would return tomorrow, and already, she missed him.

She wanted this king so much it was unhealthy. Longed for him to, one day, be hers completely, no barricades between them.

Emeriel was obsessed with him, and she was not ashamed to admit it to herself. She would die for him.

Today, she would help him prepare for the Celestial Offering. Today, she would remind him he was not alone.

And tomorrow, when he returned, she would be waiting. Always waiting.