

War Song 18

Chapter 18

Lulu scoffed. "Ten thousand silver coins worth of betrothal gifts? Do they think the Warren family is that rich? When you married into this family, your mother only asked for a few hundred silver coins. It was such a loss."

Carissa sighed dramatically. "I agree. My mother settled for too little."

Lulu laughed with her, but as she laughed, tears started to fall. Carissa had endured so much when she married into the Warren family. Back then, Carissa had believed Barrett's grand promises he swore he'd never take a concubine.

In the end, it was all lies, and Carissa's life was ruined.

Wiping her tears, Lulu went off to fetch the watercress soup and chicken soup, and she invited the other maids to share some too.

The king's edict for an amicable divorce was still under wraps, but the people Carissa had brought from her family home were loyal and trustworthy. They knew what was going on, and it was necessary to prepare them anyway.

What worried Lulu was the possibility of the king not approving the divorce.

A divorce that was unilaterally decided by the husband and an amicable divorce based on mutual understanding were two very different things, with the main difference being that a woman divorced by her husband couldn't reclaim her dowry.

Why was the edict taking so long to arrive? Was the king planning to wait until after the wedding to issue it? That would be pure torture. She didn't want to stay here even a moment longer.

Later, Carissa called Amelia to go over the accounts. They should have done this sooner, but the recent chaos had delayed everything.

Amelia really didn't want to take on this mess. She genuinely felt sorry for Carissa, but her husband, Benjamin, had said that Aurora marrying into the Warren family would greatly benefit the family.

Aurora was the key factor behind Westhaven's surrender, and the Ministry of Defense hadn't forgotten that particular detail.

Barrett and Aurora's contributions had earned them this marriage edict, so the king hadn't made other arrangements. With the king focusing on promoting young military talent, adding Aurora to the family would make the Warren family even more influential.

Plus, Carissa was the legitimate daughter of a marquis. Her family had made great contributions to the court. Carissa's family's military merits were unmatched, with the only exception being if Salvador's brother, the Hell Monarch, recaptured the Southern Frontier.

"Amelia," Carissa said, handing her the account books. "Here's the current balance for Valor Estate. The annual rents and land incomes are detailed here.

"This year's income has been completely spent, and the remaining nine hundred silver coins. in the accounts is what I lent to the family. I'm taking it back now. Any objections?"

"You're taking it back? But that would leave the accounts completely empty!" Amelia exclaimed, utterly shocked.

"If the other family members pitch in to help, we'll get through the tough times. Plus, with Father, Benjamin, and Barrett's monthly salaries, we'll get by if everyone tightens their belts a bit, Carissa replied calmly.

"How can we be this broke?" Amelia couldn't understand.

It wasn't that she doubted Carissa. The household had already been struggling before she married into the family. They had laid off many servants, and it was Carissa's dowry that had allowed them to hire more staff and guards. Carissa had been paying for all these expenses, including Rebecca's medicine.

"I'm not sure," Carissa replied, though she knew the reasons all too well.

Firstly, with her constant need for expensive treatments and rare medicines, Rebecca's chronic illness had drained the family's resources.

Secondly, the family had mismanaged their businesses. Instead of finding ways to turn things around, they had sold off several shops, and the money from those sales was quickly squandered.

Now, the estate's income mostly came from renting out a few shops, some land, and the salaries of Jonathan, Gregory, Benjamin, and Barrett. If they didn't have the estate granted by the late king, they probably wouldn't even be able to afford a house.

Many officials in the capital couldn't afford homes either. Even the Civil Department's vice minister only managed to buy a decent three-yard house last year after borrowing money.

"Carissa, I can't handle these finances. You should keep managing them," Amelia said, feeling overwhelmed.

Asking other family members to contribute money to the family fund was no easy task.

Carissa smiled reassuringly. "No worries. Just handle it for now, Amelia. Once General Yates moves in, you can use your health as an excuse and hand over the household finances to her." Amelia thought it over and realized this was probably the best plan.

Carissa had once been easy-going, but now, her seemingly gentle words left no room for negotiation.