

Chapter 709 Real Target

At Elliana's words, both Cole and Jason fixed their eyes on her, curiosity sparking between them. How did she know about Maxine's past?

Elliana drew in a breath and started to unravel the story behind Cameron's old storybook.

"I'm pretty sure Cameron was the main character, and 'Max' referred to Maxine. After their breakup, Maxine went back to the Griffiths family. She never moved on—she couldn't bring herself to love anyone else, and the idea of having a child with another man was impossible for her. However, in the meantime, Cameron got married and built a big family. That jealousy and bitterness consumed Maxine, and she wound up kidnapping Cutler and poisoning Barbara with that deadly Scorpion King toxin."

Both Cole and Jason let out a long sigh. The thought of the formidable leader of the Griffiths family being consumed by a love she couldn't have, unraveling into jealousy, was almost impossible to believe.

Jason thumbed through his book and stopped at Miguel's profile. "If my hunch is right," he said, "the mysterious 'Mr. Griffiths' behind everything is actually Miguel—the same Michael we spoke to on that video call."

Elliana and Cole bent closer, reading through the details about Miguel. The truth quickly became clear. Now it all made sense.

Elliana murmured, her voice low with unease, "No wonder he acted so strange when he talked to me. He's obsessed with my mother, and he's putting all that unresolved love and hate on me. The modern Griffith family's line traces back to that exiled princess, always led by women. It's no wonder the men have faded into the background over the years, but Miguel is different. He's sharp, ambitious, and almost impossible to read. He's hidden himself better than anyone else. We'll have to tread very carefully."

Jason gave a firm nod. "Once we're home, I'll upgrade every inch of the security system, close any gaps, and make sure Miguel doesn't have a single chance to strike."

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Cole's attention drifted to the pair of bracelets in Elliana's grasp. "So Miguel has stirred up all this trouble over those? Does he realize they're the key to this treasure? Is this all just his pursuit of the money?" But then, he shook his head, brow furrowed with doubt. "Honestly, I don't buy it. There's got to be something bigger at play. This all feels too layered

serpents, one male and one female, is obviously tied to the Griffiths family crest. But here's what's strange: the totem on the wall is so simple. But these bracelets? Whoever made them went to insane lengths, carving out these elaborate patterns. That kind of detail can't be for decoration alone. I think there's a deeper secret hidden in the designs."

Both Cole and Jason listened, nodding as her theory sank in.

After a moment, Jason looked at Elliana, his brows drawn in concern. "There's one thing I still can't figure out—what's Maxine really after when it comes to you?"

A faint smile played on Elliana's lips. She already had her suspicions.

Unaware, Jason kept going. "Everything I've read says this treasure vault was the Griffiths family's last line of defense. Back when the Serpent Society was wiped out by the Campbell family three centuries ago, the survivors stashed their legacy here. Whoever has control of this vault basically runs the Griffiths family now, which means Maxine is the leader. That beast tamer we fought must be her watchdog. So why is she playing both sides? Why send killers after you, but then tell her guardian to let you in and show you every Griffith's secret she's got?"

Elliana's hand instinctively settled on her growing belly. "If you ask me, Maxine's real target is my children."

Silence stretched for a heartbeat, and then realization flickered in Cole's and Jason's eyes.

Jason's jaw dropped. "Wait, you're saying she wants your kids to inherit the Griffiths legacy?"

Elliana gave a slow nod. "That's what I believe. When Maxine adopted my mom, it was all about my mom's genetics—she saw my mother as the perfect vessel to strengthen the family bloodline. Maxine tried to pair my mom with one of the top Griffiths men, hoping for a daughter with extraordinary talent. But when my mom fled from the marriage arrangement instead, the dream was shattered."

Pausing, she added, "Now, Maxine's turned her eyes to my babies. They have both the Griffiths family's lineage and my mother's genes—exactly what Maxine's been chasing. Even with Campbell blood mixed in, she's desperate enough to accept it. If my children ever bring down the Campbell family, that would be Maxine's ultimate victory."

Elliana met Jason's gaze. "Did you get anything on the Serpent Society leader who ambushed me last night?"

Jason replied, "Just like you asked, we took her alive. She's already been

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moved to Ublento in secret, but we're still trying to confirm who she is."

Elliana's eyes glinted with certainty. "I'll put money on it—it's Katrina."

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