

To heal a Rogue #Chapter 8: Murder in the library 2 - Read To heal a Rogue Chapter 8: Murder in the library 2

BONNIE

"You used the gun?" The second one's voice was tight and furious. "Are you fucking crazy? The sound will bring everyone in here."

"Oh, shut the fuck up." The gunman took a step back from the King, pistol still raised. "We were wrestling with this bastard for ten damn minutes. What was I supposed to do? Ask politely?"

"You weren't even supposed to be here." The second man rounded on him. "Your job was the fucking door."

"My job was the door until I heard you failing."

The second man's shoulders stiffened.

"Failing?" he hissed.

"Yeah. Failing." The gunman pointed toward the King's body. "I heard the struggle halfway down. You said it would be quick."

"It was going to be. Now all the retainers could be here in seconds. One is fucking right in front of us!"

"We can take care of him and escape here."

I immediately took a position when that was said.

"Can we?" The first one's breathing was rapid, and there was a particular quality to his stillness that told me he was deciding about me.

"Of course! It is just one, and we have a blade and a gun!"

I did not stand there and let them finish the decision.

The first one came at me, and I met him, because a few years of close-quarters training did not disappear, because I was half-dressed, barefoot, and running on biology-induced sleep deprivation. I got inside his reach before he expected it, catching his knife wrist as he slashed. The blade missed my ribs by inches and carved a bright line through my shirt instead.

He was stronger than I expected. He twisted immediately, trying to free the knife hand while driving his shoulder into my chest. I ignored it, got my arm around his throat, and my weight leveraged correctly, but keeping the hold meant fighting both him and the blade. His wrist bucked against my grip. The knife flashed once, twice, close enough that I felt air move across my skin.

I drove him into the bookcase hard enough that something fell. The impact rattled the shelves but did not stop him. He stabbed backward blindly, forcing me to jerk aside before the blade could find my stomach. His mask pulled sideways in the struggle, and

I got one clear look at his face before he wrenched it back into place.

The scar ran from the left corner of his mouth to his ear in a smooth, deliberate line. Someone had done that to him intentionally. I filed it away in the part of my mind.

Then the second started firing the gun in rapid succession.

He did not miss.

The first shot punched into my left side and dropped me to the floor before I could even register it. The second struck higher, the third tore into my shoulder, and suddenly I was slumped against the bookcase, warmth blooming from three wounds, none of it the good kind.

I pressed my hand to my side. My fingers came away dark.

They stood over me, and the first one crouched, grabbing the second's gun and wrapping my fingers around the gun with a clinical precision that made it clear this was not their first time staging a scene.

"Murder suicide," he said. "Much cleaner. Do you not think?"

I half hoped I would be able to use the gun on them. A shot to one's head but... I was too weak to even pick up the gun.

They went out the door, and I heard their footsteps down the corridor and then nothing.

I sat on the floor of the library and breathed and looked at my hands.

The blue glow lingered, which felt either perversely hopeful or quietly cruel.

I was not healing. That was the first thing I checked, because I always healed—since childhood, cuts and burns and wounds that should have scarred but never did. My body fixed itself quietly, automatically. But now the warmth refused to change, the blood kept flowing, and my shoulder burned as if someone had pressed a hot coal to the bone and abandoned it there.

The bullets... They were poisoned rounds... That was why healing was slower.

The thought landed with cold certainty. Someone had come ready for wolves tonight.

But I would not die.

Still, that did not soften things. If the Alpha King died here while I was in this state and could not run, I was finished. I had to help him.

I turned my head.

The Alpha King was slumped against the arm of the chair, and from where I sat, I could see his chest. It was moving. Barely, but moving. The shot had gone into his abdomen, and the blood was spreading steadily through his shirt, and he was not healing either.

I looked at the door and wondered if I could just, through sheer will, drag myself out.

But something humane still lingered inside me, and as much as I despised it, I could not help but feel pity when I looked back at him.

In response, my palm started to hum blue again.

I could feel its pull even now, the insistent tug of my ability whenever something nearby

hovered close to death. It never asked for context. It cared nothing for my plans, my escape, or the careful scaffolding of my anonymity. It only recognized damage and demanded to heal it.

I moved.

Crawling was slow and undignified, but it was all I had. I dragged myself across the floor on one working arm and two knees, leaving a trail of blood I refused to acknowledge. When I reached the chair, I hauled myself up and pressed my hand to his arm.

His eyes opened.

His eyes were glassy and sluggish, but aware. He looked at me like someone seeing a thing they could not quite believe, and I met his gaze, the blue light from my palm painting the lower half of his face in pale color.

"I can," I said. My voice came out smaller than intended. I cleared my throat and tried again. "I can help you."

His eyes dropped to my hand and came back up to my face.

"You are a healer," he said.

The words were quiet and precise, even now. Even bleeding. Even dying.

I opened my mouth to answer him.

But then the library tilted.

The floor rushed up, the blue light stuttered, and the last thing I felt was the chill of wood against my cheek and the warmth still fighting, stubborn and unbidden, to flow from my hand into him.

Then nothing.

Tip: You can use left, right, A and D keyboard keys to browse between chapters.