

166 166- The Date

Aurora Stone: 1

This time, I decided not to go to Jai and ask him about a sister he never mentioned. I got ready and gave myself a once-over in the mirror.

Nothing fancy...

Just fitted jeans and a plain white top tucked in. There was no need to style my hair, though they were not that short. No makeup or sparkly earrings due to the mask.

"This is just a dinner," I reminded myself.

After picking up my phone, I debated whether I should text Sebastian and ask where we were supposed to meet.

Before I could type a text message, there was a knock on the door. When I opened it, Sebastian was there wearing an olive colored turtleneck with dark trousers, and hair styled back neatly with gel.

As always, he looked handsome in that effortless way that annoyed me.

He gave a low whistle as his eyes trailed over me.

"You look gorgeous, Aurora," he said, grinning.

"It's just a dinner, my king," I said, trying to avoid the mocking edge in my tone, "Don't read into it."

"Ahan. Why don't you let me decide that?"

He seemed... what? happy?

And I stayed serious. He reached for my hand without asking, and I told myself that I shouldn't make a scene over it.

We kept walking side by side quietly, and I couldn't ignore the feeling that the silence wasn't awkward.

By the time we stepped outside the wing, I wanted to tell him that I couldn't go anywhere too far, as I needed to start early tomorrow. But then I stopped dead in my tracks, caught off guard.

In the middle of the lawn, candles glowed, lanterns hung over the branches, and a table was set under the sky. 1

"Beautiful!" The word slipped off my mouth before I could stop myself.

He glanced at me, a proud smile tugging at his mouth, "Like it?"

I didn't answer and stared at the flickering lights.

"Two years back," he started, "I set up something similar," he pulled out a chair for me, "But... fire happened and you didn't show up."

Yeah. Because your fiancée wasn't happy that you weren't divorcing your wife.

I swallowed the unexpected lump in my throat, "I see," I said without letting any emotion show on my face.

There wasn't much to say anyway.

I didn't know why he would go to such lengths when we didn't even know each other back then.

I looked at him from under the lashes as he poured the wine with ease.

"Too smooth. Too practiced!" Aria remarked with a dreamy look on her face. *Stupid she-wolf!*

"So," he leaned back, eyeing me, "Are you always this quiet on a date?"

"It's not a date!" I said drily and took a small sip from my glass.

He chuckled, "You keep saying that, Emerald," he watched me from above the glass, "Are you convincing me or yourself?"

Closing my eyes, I set the glass harder than I meant to, "Don't you have anything else to talk

about, Sebastian?"

He rolled his lips and gazed at the table.

"What?" I demanded.

"Aurora... You... sound ... like a ..."

"Like a?" I nodded, demanding him to finish it.

"Like a nagging wife!" he shrugged and quickly took the glass to his lips. I kept chewing my inner lip, trying to decide if I should stay or leave.

He might have sensed it because he was quick to raise his hand, "Alright then..." he tilted his head, and I could see the amusement dancing in his eyes, "Let's change the topic..." he seemed to be thinking hard, "What else do you like doing other than bossing the warriors?"

"Sleep!" I deadpanned.

That made him laugh, "Seriously?"

"And food too," I added.

"What kind of food?" he got a little serious.

And that was when I realized why this date was set up. He was trying to know more about me.

About my likes and dislikes.

Two years back, he invited me for a date. Was this the purpose? To know me better?

"I..." I thought hard, "Umm. Just the regular..."

Uh. I wish Jai were there. He knew my food preferences better than I did. Damn! He knew me better than everyone else.

"Burgers. Pizza. With loads of cheese," I raised my shoulder, not moving my eyes from the napkin placed before me.

"Cheese! Interesting!" I felt his eyes traveling over my boobs, "That seems to work on you."

Sleaze ball!

I picked up the napkin and tossed it over his face.

"Sebastian. I think I should leave!" I was on my feet when he was quick to stop me by holding my hand.

"No, please. Aurora!" There was a bewildered look on his face that was unexpected for me. He pulled my hand against his chest and pressed it.

I narrowed my eyes, ready to spit back, but the look on his face stopped me. He looked... almost desperate.

I yanked at my hand, but his grip only tightened, "Sorry. I didn't mean to offend you, sweetheart."

"Listen to me, your highness," I spat in fury, "I

agreed to this date because you almost blackmailed me... while sitting in my office..." I told him flatly.

The sudden urge to slap his face was too much.

"I'm sorry," he rubbed the back of his neck with his free hand, and sighed, "I'm an idiot... I..."

I saw his Adam's apple move in his throat, "I ... just want to know ... about my wife."

Wife?

I swallowed hard.

For the last two days, I had become everything I had dreamed of.

Mrs. Sebastian King.

The Queen.

The wife of a powerful king.

I stayed silent, my heart annoyingly restless.

"Keep throwing those napkins at me," he leaned closer and gave a light kiss on my nose tip, "Because for once, I don't want to walk away."

I kept looking into his deep golden eyes and then decided to become bolder, "Fine," my hand reached up and took the mask off my face, "If that's the case, then it shouldn't be here."

With a smile, I tossed it off. 1

