

Benefits 731

Chapter 731: Brothers Or Love Rivals

"What are you doing here?" Kael asked, surprised to find Rafe lounging casually on his couch as he returned home.

"Well, I was curious," Rafe replied, a mischievous grin spreading across his face.

"Curious about what?" Kael raised an eyebrow, tossing his keys onto the table and shrugging off his jacket.

"About the weather!" Rafe waved a hand dramatically, leaning back into the cushions. "Do you think there will be a hurricane today like it was predicted 150 years ago? How did I get such a dum dum for a brother.." Rafe muttered under his breath before asking loudly, "Of course, I was curious about your blind date."

Kael sighed, pinching the bridge of his nose thinking back to the torture he had endured at her hands. "Curiosity kills the cat, Rafe. Go back to your own place."

"Then it's a good thing I'm not a dog," Rafe quipped, swinging his legs off the couch and standing up, eyes gleaming with anticipation. "And don't think you can escape so easily. I mean, you just went on a date with the woman I admire. I'm allowed to live through you vicariously."

Kael made a face at that, shaking his head as he kicked off his shoes. "Really? Do you have any idea how creepy you sound?"

Rafe shrugged, clearly unfazed. "Not really. But I do have an idea that you're not answering me, and that's making me more and more eager to get some tea¹."

"There is no tea, okay?" Kael walked past him into the kitchen, grabbing a glass of water and taking a long sip. "It was a blind date. We went, talked, and then came back to our respective homes... as you can see."

"What I can see," Rafe said, folding his arms and leaning against the doorframe, "is how disappointed someone is about having to come back home alone. In fact, I was prepared to wait all night, knowing your reputatiom with women..."

"Give it a rest, Rafe," Kael muttered, running a hand through his hair in frustration as he slumped onto the couch. "I am not in the mood..."

Rafe's expression shifted, his teasing smile fading as he straightened up, suddenly more serious. "Well, okay then, Mr. Not-in-the-Mood." He took a step closer, his voice dropping slightly. "Why did you agree to the date? I know you've been pining for a woman all this while, but suddenly you agreed to go on a date with Isis. Why? Are you interested in her, or is it something else?"

Kael's eyes narrowed at the shift in tone, and he shot a sharp look Rafe's way. "Why do you call her Isis?" he asked, his voice laced with irritation. Why was Rafe so close with Dora that he could call her Isis. That nickname and the way Rafe was behaving almost like a jealous lover, made him shoot his brother another considering look.

"Because she's like a Goddess," Rafe replied casually, shrugging as if it were the most obvious thing in the world. "So, answer my question."

Instead of responding directly, Kael leaned his head back against the couch, exhaling slowly and looked at Rafe. "I thought you knew things between her and you were impossible. So why are you being jealous now?"

"Fcuk you, man!" Rafe exploded, his voice cracking with frustration as he threw his arms in the air. "Just because I see the practicality doesn't mean I don't want her! I want her, damn it!"

Kael stood up ggressively then, "Well, you cannot have her!" his voice seething with anger as he pointed a finger at his brother. "And you better give up on any plans now, because she's going to be your sister-in-law."

Rafe's eyes widened as if Kael had physically struck him, his face blanching for a moment before he quickly masked his shock with a forced laugh. "Don't be so impulsive, Kael!" he retorted, though his voice wavered just slightly, "Just because you're trying to get over your heartbreak, don't jump into something that—"

But Kael wasn't listening. His heart was racing, and all he could focus on was the possessive rage swirling inside him. He could not—would not—allow Rafe to compete with him for Dora. She had to belong to him and only him. The very thought of her being with someone else was enough to send him over the edge.

Without a word, Kael pulled out his phone, his fingers shaking as he stabbed at the screen pulling out a few pictures from his gallery... Finding the photos he was looking for, he tossed his phone toward Rafe.

"See this! This is who I was suffering over." Kael muttered as he paced back and forth now.

"You're the boyfriend she mentioned?" Rafael asked cautiously, his voice careful but strained. He sighed inwardly, frustration bubbling under the surface. The one time he was willing to compete for someone, and it turned out his rival was his own brother.

Kael's scowl deepened, his jaw tightening as he crossed his arms defensively. "No," he muttered through gritted teeth. "I'm not her boyfriend. That's someone else." His gaze flickered, a shadow of regret passing over his face. "But I did mention that I hurt her, didn't I?"

"So, are you guys together or not?"

"Not yet!" Kael gritted out, not liking the gleam in his brother's eyes.

"Good. Very good. Then, my dear brother, Kael Ignis. You now have a love rival in this race. You can try your best to win her over and get her forgiveness and I am going to give my best to make her mine.

"Rafael! What do you mean you are going to pursue her? Have you forgotten that everything is impossible for the two of you."

"I don't care. I am not going to let this go or I will forever live in regret. So, I am going to compete with you and whatever boyfriend you claim she has."

"You would lose, Rafael. Dora is going to be only mine..."

'We'll see about that, little brother. We'll see. Remember, when I want something, I get it.'

Chapter 732: Reference

Rafael Ignis returned to his room with mixed feelings. On the surface, he had played his role perfectly, if he did say so himself. But perhaps it had been too perfect. For a brief moment, he had almost felt like a real love rival to his brother. What really amazed him, though, was Cai's ability to predict something like this. It was eerily scary how spot-on Caius Frost had been.

As he sank onto the couch, Rafael's mind wandered back to the conversation he'd had with Cai six months ago. He'd expected a tough negotiation, and prepared himself to give in, try to offer the maximum benefits that would be attractive to a man like Caius Frost. Unexpectedly, what he'd asked for in return had... He shook his head, thinking...

"Yes, business. As you know, Petrovia is looking to expand its medical infrastructure. We're aiming to become a hub for medical tourism in the region. And for that, we need the best. And..."

"You are offering to build me a lab?" Cai asked lazily.

"Not just a lab," Rafael corrected, his eyes gleaming with ambition. "A full-fledged hospital, specializing in cutting-edge neurosurgery. Petrovia is well-positioned geographically, and we have the resources to support such an endeavor. With your expertise, it would put us on the map as a medical destination."

"That's quite an undertaking. You're proposing to build an entire hospital from the ground up."

"Exactly. We'll offer you the land, resources, and whatever else you need to get it up and running. Think of it as a partnership. Petrovia gets its medical hub, and you get to establish one of the most advanced neurosurgery centers in the world. Your reputation will grow, and the patients will come from all over. So, it's a win win for us."

"It's ambitious," he mused, his tone thoughtful. "But it could work. With the right team, and the proper infrastructure... it could definitely work." He then leaned back in his chair, eyes half-closed as he considered the words. A beat of silence passed and Rafe wondered what the man was thinking before he finally spoke. "I don't lack the investment, Prince Rafael. If I wanted to establish a hospital here, I could do it without needing the government or your support. You're asking for something that benefits Petrovia more than it benefits me."

Rafael frowned. Yes, it was true that the project might benefit them more in the long term but this was the best offers that Cai could receive and Rafe knew it.

As Rafe tried to think of something that might add more weight to their argument, Cai spoke up again, "But I appreciate your honesty and straight forwardness in the offer, Prince Rafael. And while we can work out the details regarding the investments, if we're to move forward, there's one condition.

"What kind of condition?", he'd asked warily. He knew of course there were no free lunches in the world. Cai had already made it clear that he did not need help to set up the research centre so whatever the condition was, it could be dangerous...

"When the time comes, you'll owe me a favor."

Rafael blinked, taken aback. "A... favor?"

"Hmm."

"What kind of a favour?"

Though it sounded simple, as the crown prince of Petrovia, he simply could not promise anything that might later raise questions...

"Don't worry. It is nothing harmful. In fact, you might thank me for the favour later...but I'll give you a hint... about six to eight months from now, you have to pretend to pursue someone who your brother might be interested in."

His musings were interrupted by the ringing of the bell and Rafe shook his head. Think of the devil and the devil called.

"Cai."

'Rafe. How are you doing, my friend?"

"Considering nominating myself for oscars for the act I just pulled." Rafe said drily.

Cai laughed at that, " Well, the hospital is going to be your grand award, isn't it?"

"If it ever starts. I've already arranged for the people to arrange a tour for you! I can't believe it. Kael was foolish enough to play with Princess Isidora, but are you sure this is the best course of action?"

"Of course, it is. You've confirmed that Kael has been sulking and pining the last half year and so has Isidora, which means that they're both mule-headed enough to keep torturing themselves and not clear the air. So, it is only right that we step in."

Rafael chuckled and nodded, " Well, I can agree with that. They went out on a date and Kael returned so riled up, he looked ready to bite my head off."

Cai chuckled, " I almost wish I could be there and watch the scene."

Rafael chuckled along with Cai. "I almost wish you could've seen him, too. He was like a caged lion pacing around, ready to snap at anyone." Rafe paused and then questioned him, "But honestly, why does Kael think Isidora has another boyfriend? Where did that come from?"

Cai's smile widened, but there was a glint of mischief in his eyes as he leaned back in his chair. "Let's just say Dora has her own ways to get back at him. Besides, a little jealousy never hurt anyone, wouldn't you agree?"

"You're not answering the question, Cai. What's really going on? Is there another man, or is this all part of your grand scheme?"

Cai sighed and shook his head, " Your brother thinks I am her boyfriend."

"And are you?"

"Rafe... do you know Alexander Sterling?"

"Minister Sterling? Yes. He's princess Isidora's father.."

"Yep. He is also my grandfather's younger brother..."

Rafe blinked at the connection though it took him a moment to come to the conclusion, "Holy shi*! Isis is your aunt?"

"Shush! Don't let anyone hear you say that, okay?"

Rafael chuckled. This was amazing as he looked at Cai and sighed, "My gosh! You've set up your aunt? And of all the people you chose Kael to be your uncle by marriage?"

Cai grimaced. "You think I had a choice in that? Its all Dora's fault for having such bad taste.."

"Hey! That's my brother you're talking about..."

"Hey.. That's my uncle by marriage I'm talking about..."

Chapter 733: An Agreement

In a promising turn of events, relations between Estania and Petrovia seem to be strengthening as ongoing negotiations are being viewed in a positive light. This can be considered a significant step for Princess Isidora, who is leading the negotiations between Estania and Petrovia. Her well-known friendship with Dr. Caius Frost has only strengthened these diplomatic ties. Recently, Dr. Caius signed an agreement to establish his research center in Petrovia, marking a new era of growth for both nations. Estania on the other hand is set to benefit from increased trade, particularly through the export of medicinal equipment to Petrovia, as this partnership between the Frost family and the Petrovians continues to flourish."

Keal glared at the picture of Dr Caius Frost and Isidora that was being shown on the screen. Why did they have to use such a picture where the two looked like a family. There were so many other pictures

of her on their bloody social media account! And what was with holding a baby between them? Who was the kid?

Kael paced his room as he wondered if he should really talk to her. He knew he needed to apologize to her. But then didn't she owe him an apology too. She'd been two timing him as well with that Cai.. Or maybe it was two timing Cai since that man seemed more preferable to her.

He looked at the message he'd received from his parents. Did they really have to make this sound like some sort of a business deal? Ask her on another date and try to court her. She is a good match for you. If he wooed her now, wouldn't she have another chance to accuse him later on, claiming that he was with her only for the business. Also, why did it feel they were trying to sell him off and even making him play his own salesman?

What he needed was to find a way to have them back off for now and concentrate on whatever it was between him and Dora. That was of utmost importance for now.

He picked up his phone, to type out a message and then when he saw an incoming message from her, he almost dropped it...

Instinctively, he lunged to grab it midair, but his fingertips only grazed the edge. The phone bounced off his hand, sailed through the air, and landed with a loud thud across the room.

"Damn it!" he muttered, rushing over to retrieve it. He picked it up quickly, eyes darting to the screen, hoping the message was still there. But instead, the phone had gone blank, the screen dark.

"What the—? How can a phone be this delicate?" he growled, pressing the power button, but the device remained stubbornly off.

Frustrated, Keal ran a hand through his hair, pacing. Damn it! He needed to know that what he had read was indeed what he had read.

Keal jabbed at the landline, dialing the number for his usual tech guy, pacing as he waited for someone to pick up.

"Come on, come on..."

Finally, a voice answered. "TechConnect, how can I—"

"My phone's dead, and I need it fixed. Now."

"We'll send someone right away, your highness."

Kael placed the phone back on and glared at the blank screen again. There were some benefits to being a prince. If only he could use his rank and order the phone to turn on again!

After what felt like forever, the technician finally stood up, handing the phone back to Keal. "All set, sir. Just needed a reset, nothing major. Your screen is also not harmed..."

Keal grabbed the phone, barely muttering a thanks before rushing to unlock it as the technician took his leave. His heart raced as the screen flickered back to life, the message still there. He opened it and grimaced. Holy sh*t! She really had written what she had.

Clutching the phone in his hand, he bolted out of his house and straight towards her hotel room, leaving behind smoke as his car raced away.

Dora glanced at the message she had sent and sighed. He'd seen it almost an hour ago and had yet to reply. Her finger hovered over the delete icon. She should not have listened to Cai. Why did she have to be so foolish?

Just then, there was an urgent knocking on the door and she frowned. Who could it be at this hour? She opened it cautiously, and her breath caught in her throat. She'd been waiting for a reply and instead he's shown up here?

"Kael? What are you doing here?"

He didn't answer her immediately. Instead, his intense gaze roamed over her, taking in her slightly rumpled appearance. He clenched his hands and then without a word, he stepped inside, brushing past her as if he owned the place. Dora stumbled back, bewildered, and turned to face him as he closed the door behind him with a sharp click.

"What the hell?" she began, but Kael was already moving. His eyes darted around the room, scanning every corner. He walked briskly over to the curtains and yanked them back, peering behind them. Then he checked the closet, swinging the doors open with force.

"What are you doing?" Dora's voice was incredulous now, her confusion mixing with irritation.

Kael continued his search, his movements brisk, as if he was hunting for something—or someone. "Where is he?" His voice was low and gruff, laced with frustration.

Dora's brows furrowed. "Who? What are you talking about?"

He stopped and turned to her, his expression unreadable but tense. "That bastard! Who else?"

Dora frowned and with a hand on her hips pointed at him, "What are you talking about?"

"I am talking about the bastard with whom you are planning to use these!" He said as he showed the phone's screen to her

It took her a moment before she started to laugh. He thought... As she caught her breath, her eyes fell on his disgruntled expression and then on the condoms in the picture and she laughed harder.

Chapter 734: Who do I?

Kael stomped to her then and quickly pulled her into his arms as he questioned, "What kind of a man is it that cannot even bring his own protection and leaves it to a woman! And how can you ask me about something like this..."

The laughter caught in her throat, Dora raised her chin, "Why can't I ask you for your suggestion on what brand and flavour of condom to use? I am pretty sure that you are quite experienced in this. So I just sought expert opinion."

Kael glared at her and then at his phone where the picture of condoms that she had sent with a question about which is better was still open. "Just tell me where that bastard* is! I'll go and teach him a lesson about making you buy these things!"

"Bedroom." Dora smiled and uttered the word.

"What did you say?" Kael asked slowly, his entire being now focused on her.

"The man I want to use these condoms with? You'll find him in the bedroom."

His thoughts clouded by irrational fury, Kael let go of Dora and made his way to the bedroom, rolling up his sleeves as he stormed towards the room. If it was Cai Frost that he found there, he would take extra pleasure in beating him to a pulp.

Kael burst into the bedroom, his eyes scanning the room fiercely. He was almost wishing that he'd brought a bat in here just to beat the man better.

"What the—" Kael's voice trailed off as he took in the empty space. He looked around, confusion replacing his earlier anger. "Where is he?" As if the man might be hiding under the bed, Kael even walked to the bed and looked under it.

He turned to look at Dora who was now leaning against the doorway as she watched him and said, "Dressing room."

Kael scoffed. What a coward. The man had actually chosen to hide in the dressing room?

However, as he walked inside, his frown only deepened, "There is no one here."

"Yes. There is." Dora's husky voice had him turn around. "Look carefully."

With a tilt of her chin, she pointed to the packets of condoms lying on the small table as she walked to him slowly. As he was glaring at the cards, her hands came to his arms. Slowly, she traced his biceps while he looked at her with something akin to shock.

She pushed him gently and he stumbled, his knees hitting the chaise lounge and almost giving out under him as he sat down. He turned his head as she walked behind him but she pushed his chin away with a finger. You can see me in the mirror there.

He looked then. Him sitting on a chaise and her standing behind him. "Do you see the man I want to use these condoms with?"

She bent down then, her arms going around his neck and he watched, transfixed, as she bent slowly, offering him a tantalizing view of the valley between her breasts...

He stiffened when she blew against his ear, "Tell me Kael. Who do I want to fuck?"

"Me." Kael wanted to say but he'd already lost his voice. Never before could he have imagined that he would be seduced like this. He, who was always in control could only sit there and stare as her hands slid down his chest, tugging at his nipples as her hands moved lower, stopping at the waistband of his jeans.

He wanted to see what she would do next. He yearned to know.. Would she hesitate? Expect him to take the lead or would she...And his question was soon answered.

Her hand bunched on his shirt and she yanked, pulling the shirt out. But even then, she seemed to not be in a hurry. Instead, once she was done, she straightened up and walked around the lounge, coming to stand in front of him. He leaned forward then, wanting to kiss her but instead she pushed him backwards and said, "Shush! Eyes on the mirror."

Before he could protest, she straddled him. Her knees came to rest on either side of him as she lowered her ass on his thighs. This time, he could not help but groan, "Dora..." But she was relentless. Her hands moved to his stomach again, slowly but agonisingly undoing his button. He watched as she leaned down then, and kissed his stomach. The view making him harder than ever..

From the front he had the perfect view of her while the mirror behind her, offered a view of her barely covered a** as she bent...And then her hands moved to the next button, slowly...and in that moment, kael was tempted to simply rip off his shirt...

This time, she did not kiss him but instead, her fingers slipped into his shirt, tracing his abs, " You really can be dense sometimes, Kael. Have you discovered yet, who I want to use these with?"

He stared at her, knowing her lips were moving but having no idea what it was she was saying. But then she stopped, and her nails scraped against his skin then, making her breath catch. " Tell me, Kael. Who do you think I want to fck?"

Kael gulped and spoke softly, " Me."

She smiled and tapped her fingers against his stomach then, " Good answer. And what are you going to do about it?"

"Give in to your wish." He leaned up then and caught her face, sealing her lips in a hot kiss.

His hands moved to clasp her waist, pulling her forward, his hands moving to the hem of her short dress and then sliding it upwards. His hands kneaded the soft skin there, before moving upwards, towards the little string that he has spotted in the mirror and tugging at it.

Soon, her panties had been ripped off and then his hands moved to caress her bu**. He opened his eyes then, still kissing her as he watched his hands on her. It was the most arousing scene he'd ever witnessed or even experienced...

Chapter 735: Run

Dora woke slowly, a lazy smile spreading across her lips as she stretched beneath the sheets. A slight wince escaped her as the soreness from last night's activities made itself known but it was quickly replaced by a satisfied grin. So what if she was sore? The ache was a badge of triumph. She had successfully seduced him- the experienced playboy. And by the look of it, he probably hadn't even realized it was her first time... Perfect.

Her gaze drifted to her side, and her eyes widened in surprise. He was still there. She had fully expected him to be gone, slipping away in the early hours of the morning to avoid any 'post night after' awkwardness.

She turned and raised herself on her elbow, carefully observing his sleeping form. He really was a handsome man and even now, with all the 'acrobatics' they had done last night. She still wanted to explore him, to trace every line of his body, as if last night hadn't been enough to satisfy the curiosity she'd harbored.

And why not? Dora rolled over and checked the time on her phone. Her first appointment of the day wasn't until later in the afternoon, which meant she had the entire morning to indulge herself—plenty of time to lazily lounge in bed, or perhaps... something more. She smirked at the thought, already feeling the mischief that had carried her through last night starting to bubble up again.

She flicked off the airplane mode, intending to message Tasha to not disturb her before the afternoon. But before she could type a word, her phone buzzed rapidly a cascade of notifications flooding the screen. Her eyes narrowed as she looked at Cai's name.. Why did he send her so many messages? And then her stomach sank as she read the messages

6:30 AM - Cai: Hope you're awake. We need to talk about something ASAP.

6:45 AM - Cai: Still asleep? Call me when you wake up.

7:00 AM - Cai: Dora, seriously. Turn on your phone.

7:15 AM - Cai: Okay, now I'm getting worried. Are you okay?

7:30 AM - Cai: I'm not sure if you're still asleep, but this is why I tell you to not turn off your phone when you sleep!

7:45 AM - Cai: Dora. Please, call me. It's urgent.

8:00 AM - Cai: You can't be sleeping in this late unless...Look, I don't know if you're alone, but you need to know this before it's too late.i

8:10 AM - Cai: Fine. Since you insist on sleeping with your phone turned off, let it be clear that what happens next is not on my conscience.

8:15 AM - Cai: Dora? Are you there?

8:20 AM - Cai: Alright, I'm guessing you're still out cold, but you really need to wake up now. Seriously.

8:25 AM - Cai: The storm is heading your way. ETA: about an hour. Go save yourself.

8:30 AM - Cai: if you're not alone, NOW is the time to get him out of there.

Dora bolted upright, her heart pounding in her chest now. An hour minutes? Her eyes snapped to the man beside her, still peacefully asleep. And then she glanced at the time. Holy shi*! It was already ten past nine!

9:10AM - Cai:

Finally the messages are getting delivered! I swear, if you're still in bed with someone... you've got 15 minutes before they're at your door. I'm not kidding.

9:11 AM - Cai:

I really hope you're reading these. And if you are, why are you still reading, do something!

Panic surged through her. Yes! Why was she not doing something. She threw the phone down and shook turned to shaking his shoulder frantically. "Kael! Kael, wake up!"

He groaned, slowly blinking awake, clearly disoriented. "Mmm... What's the rush?" he mumbled sleepily, reaching for her with lazy satisfaction. With one swift movement, he caught her wrist, tugging her back onto the bed and pulling her beneath him. His lips grazed her neck as he nuzzled her, a husky chuckle escaping him as he murmured, "You're up early for someone who worked out so much last night."

For a moment she froze. How could someone's sleep voice sound even more sexy...

But then reality crashed back down. The storm.

"No, no, no," she gasped, pushing at him. "Kael, we don't have time for this! You have to go!"

"What's the hurry?" he asked, still teasing, his lips ghosting over her skin.

Dora gave another half-hearted shove, her fingers slipping against his warm skin. But the panic in her chest finally snapped her back to focus. "Kael, seriously!" she pushed harder, squirming out from under him, heart racing as she stumbled out of bed.

She darted across the room, frantically pulling her clothes on as she glanced at the clock on her nightstand. Nine-fifteen. A wave of panic rolled through her again. "Shit! Shit!" she muttered under her breath.

"What's going on?"

Kael finally seemed to have clued in to her panic as he sat up and watched her putting on clothes.

Dora didn't answer immediately. She threw his shirt at him and fumbled to toss the rest of his clothing toward the bed, glancing anxiously at the clock again. "You need to leave. Now!"

"Why?" Kael asked, slowly standing up and starting to straighten his clothes... while Dora muttered something..

"Dam* it! Why are you slower than a turtle? You need to leave before Cai... Just go. Okay? I'll call and explain everything later."

Kael stopped as he narrowed his eyes, watching Dora straighten her hair in the mirror. Cai was coming. And that was why he was being thrown out of her room like a... used condom?

Instead of putting on his pants, he stopped and straightened, instead walking towards the bathroom. He heard her voice calling after him, "Where are you going? Why are you not putting on your pants? Why?

"I need to use the washroom?" As Dora followed him, he walked inside and closed the door while hearing her stomp her foot outside, "Dar* it! Can't you use the washroom later at your home?"

Chapter 736: Panic

Dora glanced at the bathroom's door in a panic. Darn it! It was already nine twenty! At this rate, they might come face to face in the hallway which might not necessarily be good. Adfter all she was the only one on this entire floor so that might be...

Out of patience, she knocked on the door impatiently and hissed, "Come on, Kael! You can go home and do your business."

Before she could say more, the door to the bathroom opened and she breathed a sigh of relief before glaring at him, "Why are you wearing a robe?"

But then she shook her head, "Fine fine. This works too. Just go in the robe and..." Instead of letting her push him out of the bedroom, Kale dug in his feet and placed his hands on her shoulders, gently pushing her towards the bed until the back of her knees met the bed and she fell backwards. He came to lean over her then as he narrowed his eyes, "If you think I am going to leave you here and pretend this never happened then..."

As he said this, the doorbell rang and Kael smirked. Perfect. Cai Frost was here, hmm? She wanted to hide him from Cai? Well, it wasn't going to be so easy.

Straightening, he sent her a look before purposefully walking towards the door. Dora watched him leave, her heart thundering in her chest before she realized why he had gone. Oh shi! The doorbell.. She

tried to call out to him to not open the door, but he ignored her and she could only watch in horror before racing after him...

While Dora followed behind him in a panic, Kael was relaxed. Finally, Dora was his. And he hadn't failed to notice that she'd never been with anyone else. So, no matter how close she was to that man, he- Kael Ignis, was the only man she had been with physically.

His smug expression, however, disappeared when he opened the door. Because standing there, on the other side of the door was not Cai Frost.. Or atleast Cai was there- standing with a shi* eating grin on his face... while in front of him stood a man who looked like an older version of him and a woman who was now giving him a knowing look.

Nora's gaze swept over Kael with an amused glint before turning toward her husband, Demetri, whose expression was nothing short of murderous. Oops. Standing behind them with a look of pure panic on her face was Dora, wide-eyed and clearly caught in the chaos.

With an all-too-pleased grin, Nora stepped past Kael, as if he weren't standing there in nothing but a robe and beamed at Dora. "My little kiddo! Good morning! Surprise!" she sang, her voice light and overly cheerful, adding to the tension.

Demetri, however, was far less cheerful. His broad frame filled the doorway as he deliberately shoved past Kael, his shoulder connecting hard, sending a message without saying a word as he muttered, "I wonder who is more surprised."

With her back to her husband, Nora widened her eyes to signal Dora to snap out of the shock and winked at her. Catching on, Dora quickly grinned at Nora and hugged her back before moving to Demetri, "My favourite brother-in-law is here."

Kael meanwhile stood frozen still, clearly caught off guard by everyone's unexpected presence. But just as he was about to recover, Cai walked in last, glancing at Kael with an air of smugness. "You might want to put some clothes on, mate," Cai muttered dryly, not even bothering to hide his grin as he closed the door behind him.

Cai Frost needed to be punched. Kael decided. The man had a face that deserved to be punched. As he thought of this rather ridiculous statement, he realized that all eyes in the room were now on him.

Dora swallowed hard, as her eyes met his and then began awkwardly, "Uh... everyone this is... uh, Kael. Kael Ignis."

Nora gave a teasing smile and wiggled her eyebrows at Dora, clearly enjoying the situation before she turned to smile at Kael, extending her hand, "Oh, Prince Kael, is it? I was wondering why you looked familiar. "Nice to finally meet you. And thank you for... taking care of Dora during her stay here..." she teased, making Kael blush.

For the first time, Kael the charming had no words as he cleared his throat and muttered, "No thanks needed. The pleasure is mine..." And then realizing the double meaning behind his own words, he shook his head and walked backward, "Right, uh... I'll just go get dressed."

As soon as Kael was out of sight, Dora let out a long, exasperated breath and collapsed onto the nearest chair while not looking at Demon. She could not handle that.

Nora, never one to miss an opportunity, plopped down next to her, elbowing her playfully. "Sooo... Kael, huh? Didn't expect that when we came over this morning."

Cai leaned against the wall, arms crossed and grinning from ear to ear. "I told you not to give her a surprise. Now look what you did!", he said, unable to resist rubbing it in.

Dora shot him a look then as if telling him, "You should have tried harder to convince them to not come so early."

Cai shrugged back to say that it was her own fault for turning off the phone!

While the two glared at each other, talkign without words, Demetri and Nora were sending signals to each other too. Amidst this, the door to the bedroom opened and Kael stepped out, dressed and more composed...

"Good morning, everyone. Sorry, for earlier. We.. uh... didn't expect company."

Nora's grin widened. "Neither did we!" she said cheerfully. "But here we are."

Demetri's eyes narrowed, locking on Kael, the threat still evident. "Yes, here we are." His voice was even, but there was a distinct edge to it.

Kael cleared his throat. "Well... I suppose now that everyone's here, perhaps we can all... get some breakfast?"

Dora groaned inwardly as Demon and Nora both nodded in agreement.. This was going to be a long morning.

Chapter 737: Many Times Husband

"Do you know how to cook?"

Kael froze mid-bite, his spoon suspended in mid-air as he glanced up. Nora Frost was staring at him with an expression that could only be described as curious, though her gaze felt sharper than he might have liked. Added to that, the one sitting on her side seemed to be sending laser beams his way. If looks could kill, Kael was sure he'd be lying dead now, his face in the porridge bowl in front of him.

Clearing his throat, Kael forced himself to answer, "Uh, no... not really." Somehow it felt incriminating to answer that. As if it would be a negative mark for him

Nora raised an eyebrow, her curiosity only seeming to deepen. "Why not?"

Kael blinked, caught off guard by the question. Why not? Who just asked that out of the blue? He fumbled for an answer, feeling the awkward weight of both pairs of eyes on him. "Uhh... I guess I spent most of my childhood learning about... random things, like politics and political families, you know. Cooking just never came up."

Nora leaned forward slightly, a teasing smile playing on her lips. "So, you're saying you can debate foreign policy but can't make scrambled eggs?"

Kael's face heated up. "Something like that." while Demetri snorted and turned to look at Dora who was trying to stay invisible as she ate her porridge.

Feeling Demon's gaze on her, she looked up as he said pointedly, "The Frost all know how to cook."

Dora grimaced and hurriedly looked back into her porridge. Okay okay. So he was not like the Frosts. She'd already accepted that. No need to rub her face in it.

Demetri then turned back to Kael and spoke a single word, "Learn."

Kael blinked, even as he found himself nodding before realizing what he'd done. He'd just agreed with Demon's orders to learn to cook.

Just then, the door to the dining room opened, and Cai entered, balancing a stack of pancakes on a plate in one hand and something else in the other. Kael frowned. Could the man have had worse timing? Just when he'd been asked to learn, he turned up with his perfect pancakes.

At least the man was grumbling something under his breath as he dropped the pancakes onto the table with a soft thud and muttered, "I don't get it. This hotel has an entire kitchen downstairs, so why am I the one making breakfast?"

Without missing a beat, Nora and Dora chimed in at the same time, both in perfect sync, "Because you make the best pancakes."

In the next moment, the two dark heads turned to look at the respective women. Nora, already used to Demon, winked playfully at him, "Best pancakes in the next generation of Frosts, of course..."

While Dora ignored the gaze on her as she pouted at Cai, "Gimme!"

Kael's eyes flicked between Dora and Cai, his stomach knotting with a familiar twinge of jealousy. He didn't know what irritated him more—the fact that Cai had it easy with Dora or that Dora was so comfortable demanding pancakes from him. As if she'd done this a countless times. Either way, something in Kael tightened as Cai picked up one of the pancakes from the stack and, with an easy, unbothered grin, held it out to Dora while bowing to Dora, "Of course, my princess."

Dora didn't hesitate. She leaned forward, took a playful bite right out of Cai's hand, and then leaned back with a satisfied smile, as if this was the most natural thing in the world. "Mmm, perfect as always."

Kael shifted in his seat, his fingers tightening around his spoon as he tried to keep his expression neutral. It was just a pancake. There was no need to feel territorial over a stupid pancake. But as Dora licked off the sugar from her lips, the jealousy was harder to ignore. Did she not realise that he was sitting right here, enduring the interrogation for her? She was treating him like he was invisible.

Of course, none of his changing expressions was missed by Nora and Demetri who exchanged a glance again. And then Demetri leaned back, with a satisfied expression, ready to watch, while Nora began causally, "See that? Dora has a soft spot for Cai due to his cooking."

Kael composed his expression and answered, "Of course."

Cai, meanwhile was not to be left behind, "What do you mean she has a soft spot for me due to my cooking? She likes me for other reasons as well. Don't you, Dora?", he finished with a poke on her cheek while Dora narrowed her eyes, oblivious to everything as she nodded her head.

Nora agreed, "Okay. okay. I agree. She might like you because you married her so many times."

Three people coughed at the same time while Nora sat back, with the most innocent expression on her face while Demon suppressed his laughter.

Dora, having finally caught on, hurriedly gulped the pancake in her mouth before glaring at Nora and then turning to Kael to explain, "She means the school plays, okay? Me and Cai were usually paired off so he's been my husband a lot of times..."

Kael nodded and yet, he couldn't help but shoot a glare at Cai who was now pulling a chair next to Dora to sit...

But of course, Nora was just starting, "Of course, I'm talking about school plays. Kael probably guessed that Don't worry, Dora.." Nora then turned to Kael, "Since you seem to be dating Dora and Cai has so much experience maybe he can teach you how to..."

Dora kicked Nora under the table as she interrupted Nora, " Cai does not need to teach Kael how to be my husband."

"I meant pancakes. Dora. Cai can teach him how to make pancakes and your other favourite dishes." Nora said sweetly while making poor Dora sweat over her own guffaw.

Cai nodded amenably, "Of course I can teach him how to make Dora happy... with her favourite foods..."

Chapter 738: Stop

"Why are you staring at me?" Dora demanded, her eyes narrowing at Nora and Demetri as they sat side by side, watching her with an intensity she found unnerving now that Kael had left the room.

She glanced at Cai, who immediately mimed zipping his mouth shut, offering her a sheepish grin that screamed 'not getting involved.' Traitor, she thought.

"Nora Frost, if you don't tell me what's going on in those devious little heads of yours, I swear I'll teach your baby every curse word known to man! And not just in one language either—ten different languages at least. So before that sweet little thing says 'Mama,' they'll be screaming 'Fuck!' loud and proud!"

Nora's eyes widened in horror as she protectively covered her pregnant belly, shooting Dora an icy glare. "How can you be so careless with your words? I won't let you anywhere near my baby if you do that!"

Dora smirked, folding her arms smugly. "Ha! I'm to be the godmother, Frost. You can't stop me from fulfilling my sacred duty."

Nora raised an eyebrow, not backing down. "Oh, really? You want to play dirty with threats, huh? Fine. Let me just call Uncle Alex. I'm sure he'd love to hear how his precious daughter is behaving these days."

Dora winced at the mention of her father but wisely kept her mouth shut, offering nothing as Nora dialed the number. But then turned to Demetri imploringly, asking him to intercede only for him to shrug in reply, leaving her to fend for herself.

Sighing in defeat, Dora raised her hands in surrender. "Alright, alright. I'll tell you whatever you want to know. Just don't involve papa yet."

Nora paused mid-dial, one finger hovering over the screen. "You sure?"

"Yes, yes," Dora grumbled, already inwardly cursing her situation. "Do I have a choice?" She muttered under her breath, furiously planning her escape from this verbal trap. If she could steer the conversation carefully, she could edge around the truth. They probably just wanted to know about him, anyway... Surely, it couldn't be anything too difficult.

"Why is your boyfriend jealous of Cai and you?"

Nora smirked, her eyes sparkling with that infuriating, all-knowing look. "I said, I want to know why your boyfriend has been glaring at Cai like he wants to bury him six feet under the ground. He looks awfully jealous of your relationship."

Crap. Of all the questions in the world, why this one? Why did Nora always have to strike where she had no defenses?

"What kind of a question is that?" Dora spluttered, scrambling for time. "Aren't you more concerned about- I don't know- what kind of man he is, where I met him, what I think of him? You know, the usual interrogation?"

But of course, Nora wasn't taking the bait. She snorted, unimpressed. "I don't need to know the answers to that. And as for what you think of him, I'd say you think plenty highly of him, considering you let him spend the night at your place."

Dora felt her heart stop for a split second. "How do you know he spent the night here? Maybe he came over in the morning."

"How do you know he spent the night here? Maybe he came in the morning?"

"Really? There was no water in the Royal Palace of Petrovia so he came over to your place to take a bath?"

"Really?" Nora crossed her arms and gave Dora an incredulous look. "Let me guess—there was no water in the Royal Palace of Petrovia, so he just had to come over to your place to take a bath at dawn?"

Dora grimaced, while Cai, let out a loud guffaw, unable to contain himself any longer. His laughter echoed in the room having both the women immediately turn their attention to him, narrowing their eyes in unison. Cai winced, raising his hands. Wrong time. Wrong place. "Oops," he muttered sheepishly.

"Him! Ask him! He's the one at fault here! He's the one who told me I should sleep with Kael!"

Cai's mouth dropped open, his eyes widening in shock at the betrayal. "I did not!" he sputtered. "That's a total misrepresentation of the facts! Also, the next time I tell you to jump into a well, will you?"

"Nice try, Dora, but you're not dodging this one. Now, spill. What's going on between your boyfriend and Cai? Because he's got the kind of death stare that says he's ready to pick a fight, and we want to know why."

Dora's shoulders slumped and she slowly explained the entire story from dating Kael to his betrayal to ultimately letting him think that she was two timing him. Finally, once she'd spilled the entire story, she expected Nora to reprimand her for the lie, etc but instead Nora looked at her and started to laugh, "So, you're teaching him a lesson?"

Dora nodded slowly, glancing sideways with trepidation towards Demetri before Nora laughed again, attracting her attention, "And how did this lesson teaching turn to this..."

"I don't know..." Dora said sheepishly before glancing another look at Demetri, "Will you say something?"

Demetri smiled then... and gave Dora chills as he said, "Of course. I think Petrovia is a beautiful country."

Dora frowned while Nora whipped her head around to stare at Demetri as she said, "Oh no!"

Cai and Dora both leaned forward now, knowing something big was about to be announced...as Demon continued," Do you remember I told you there will come a day when you will regret taking the Frosts as your brother?"

Dora's stomach sank at the words, a weird feeling inside her making her queasy..."That day had finally come..." Demon finished before turning to Cai," Tell your father and the others that I've found the perfect location for the next family holiday destination. Oh... and they should bring some fishing and hunting gear... We will be going fishing and hunting..."

Cai nodded then while casting a sympathetic glance towards Dora who could only cry dry tears...Kael Ignis would regret the day he decided to meet her when he was attacked by the force that was the Frosts.

Chapter 739: Jealous Much

"It's all your fault!" Dora hissed at Cai as he helped her out of the car, her voice laced with frustration. Cai, unbothered, could only shake his head in exasperation.

"How is that my fault?" he asked, his tone dry. "You keep saying that, as if I'm the one who slept with him! I only suggested what I did for you guys to be able to have a talk. It is not my fault that you decided to do what you did in your hotel room. And then decided to sleep in. I tried warning you, didn't I? It is totally your fault for sleeping the morning away!"

Dora scoffed then as he tried to pull the innocent look. She wasn't having it. "Well, you could have done something to stop them from coming over."

Cai let out a small, sarcastic laugh. "Really? You really think I can stop the mighty Aunt Nora from going somewhere once she's made up her mind? Me and which typhoon? Maybe I should have thrown myself down in front of her car and said the only way she could go was over my dead body? Then maybe, maybe she might have stopped?"

Dora shot him a glance, the image of Cai lying dramatically in the driveway flashed in her mind, and despite herself, she giggled. She shook her head with a smirk. "Nah. That would have only made her more curious."

Cai gave her a knowing look, his raised eyebrows saying, "Exactly," without a word needing to pass between them. Before they could continue their bickering, the head of the small orphanage stepped forward from the entrance and greeted them with a formal bow.

"Greetings, Your Highness. It is a great pleasure to have you here with us today."

Dora straightened, her earlier playful demeanor disappearing as she adopted a more formal stance. "It is my pleasure to be here, Mr Robbie."

The man blushed as he realized that the Princess knew his name and bowed once again, "Thank you for the trouble. I never could have imagined that you would take so much trouble for the children here. I didn't even know Mina had invited you here until your assistant called to arrange a time. I apologize on her behalf. The little girl, since she has discovered she had little time left, she has become...." He shook his head then, "She is sleeping at the moment, so I request you to meet the other children until then, please. They are all very excited to meet you."

Dora smiled then and nodded, "And I am excited to meet them. But first," She turned to Cai then, "This is Dr Caius Frost. He's here to meet Mina. I apologize for not informing you in advance of his arrival but I wasn't sure if he would be able to make it here in time. Please arrange her reports and let him go to meet..."

"Of course, Of course, your majesty. Please come this way, Dr Frost."

"And there she is, ladies and gentlemen," a reporter's voice filled with excitement echoed over the news. "Princess Dora has just arrived at the local orphanage, accompanied by the renowned Dr. Caius Frost. As many of you know, Dr. Frost has been a leading figure in news these past few days for his biggest and most ambitious project in collaboration with Prince Rafael is set to take off. "

Kael, who had been sitting at his desk, focused on work looked up at the mention of the names, just in time to see Caius Frost helping her out of the car as they continued to talk and his eyes narrowed! "Why was this man always with her?", he seethed. The television which had been white noise until now, seemed to be the most interesting thing now as he stared fixedly at the television where the reporter continued

"As many of you know," the reporter continued, " This project could transform Petrovia's medical landscape. And while the professional partnership between Cai and the royal family continues to grow, there has been increasing speculation about the close friendship between the Princess and Dr. Frost which excites the public. Such a bond could prove incredibly beneficial for Petrovia in the years to come."

Kael's grip tightened on the pen in his hand. His jaw clenched as he stared at the screen, where Dora, all smiles and grace, was seen entering the orphanage beside Cai. The easy camaraderie between them sparked something dark and unsettling within him. She was his danm it! Just this morning, they would have been together again if not for Cai!

Enough was enough! There was no way he was going to let this continue. He would have to clear the air about their past and make sure that she understood that they were in an exclusive relationship! He slammed the pen on his desk before standing up forcefully. It was time to clear the air.

Decisively, he stood up and walked out of the office, startling his entire team of assistants and secretaries as they watched him leave as if going on a war.

As Cai and Dora waved goodbye to the children, having played with them for hours on end, they did not expect to come to the scene outside.

Cai grimaced as he felt the almost familiar death stare and turned to look at Kael who was standing there leaning against the car. With a resigned shake of his head, he turned to Dora who had just hugged the last of the children and said in a low voice, " Aunt Nora is right, you know. You need to come clean! I can almost feel my life force declining everytime I come in front of Kael and his death stares."

Dora looked up in surprise at Cai's out of the blue comment but before she could say anything, a shadow fell over her and she looked up to see Kael standing there, with a thin smile on his face. "You?"

"I came over for our date? You don't remember?"

Before Dora could protest or claim that she really had no knowledge of this so called 'date' Kael had already started to escort her towards his car...

Chapter 740: Break Up

"Actually, I had a meeting with Rafe and Cai just now," Dora exclaimed, watching Kael as he drove, his knuckles tight around the steering wheel. He was driving like a man possessed, pushing the car faster than necessary.

Without saying a word, Kael reached for the dashboard screen, stabbing at it with more force than required. The sound of ringing filled the car, and Dora's eyes widened. A beat later, Prince Rafael's voice answered the call on the car's speaker, "Kael, I was just about to—"

But Kael cut him off before he could say another word. "Your next meeting with Dora has been postponed for today," Kael muttered coldly. "Just do whatever you want."

Before Rafael could protest, Dora giggled softly at the absurdity of it all. Kael didn't even give his brother a chance to respond, not bothering to wait for any form of protest or explanation. The moment Rafael tried to speak, Kael disconnected the call with a sharp tap and switched off his phone altogether.

"Poor Prince Rafe," Dora murmured, still amused by the interaction. "He has such a difficult little brother..."

The comment was meant to lighten the mood, but Kael wasn't having it. He shot her a sharp glance, his eyes narrowed in warning. With a flick of his wrist, he engaged the auto-cruise mode on the car, allowing the vehicle to manage itself as it sped down the road.

Before Dora could process what was happening, Kael unsnapped his seatbelt and leaned toward her with a sudden intensity that made her heart skip a beat. She barely had time to react before his lips crashed onto hers, hot and demanding. Her gasp of surprise was swallowed by the kiss, and even as she instinctively hit his arm with her fist in protest, she found herself returning the kiss with equal fervor.

"Are you trying to get us killed?!" she hissed, as he moved back. "What the hell is wrong with you, Kael?"

His response was chillingly casual, "I don't like you taking other men's names," he said, his tone matter-of-fact.

Dora opened her mouth to fire back, to tell him he was being ridiculous, but the words caught in her throat. Nora's warning from that morning rang in her ears, echoing louder than her own indignation. "It's fine to make him jealous if you want to teach him a lesson, but don't keep pushing it, Dora. If the seed of suspicion and insecurity takes root, the tree it grows will be dangerous for your relationship. Clear the misunderstanding before it's too late."

Dora grimaced and opened decided to come clean. After all, she already knew that Evana and Lucien had almost broken up due to a lack of communication. But before she could say anything, Kael stopped the car in front of a small house...

Curiously, she looked out at the quaint house and then at Kael, "Where are we?"

"A safe place where we can talk."

Dora looked around at the furnishings of the house or rather the lack of and then at Kael who was pacing the floor. He wanted to talk.. But he'd been only walking in front of her for the past twenty minutes.

"While I appreciate you walking around and preening for me like some peacock, though let me tell you they dance to attract," she quipped, "Can we talk? My next meeting is—"

"Break-up." Hurriedly, Kael came to kneel in front of her while she blinked, feeling a bit of pain. They'd only slept together, and had one date and he wanted to break up with her? Fine! She would not beg for crumbs of affection.

Slowly, she nodded, "Okay..."

He looked at her, relieved and she frowned. Did he have to look so happy so suddenly? Fine they'd not been in a long term relationship but it wasn't as if she would cling to him. She had her own self-respect.

While she was cursing him out in her head, he hugged her, throwing his arms around her, as he pulled her tight into him. "I can't believe you agreed so easily. I thought I would have to argue with you. Thank god, you've agreed! Thank you!"

Dora felt tears prick at her eyes. He really was happy about them 'breaking up' even though they had never been officially together. She struggled in his arms, intent on not showing her pain as she glared up at him, "Let go of me! And now that you're done talking, I want to go back."

Kael frowned as he looked at her carefully. Was she really so upset about breaking up with Cai? He could see that she was trying to stop her tears... The jealousy inside him roared and he quickly held her, wanting to soothe her but not knowing how without letting her continue her relationship with Cai, "What is wrong?"

"What's wrong?!" she repeated incredulously, her voice sharp and on the verge of breaking. "You just asked me to break up with you! And then—then you have the audacity to look relieved about it! Happy even!" She let out a shaky laugh, full of disbelief. "Kael, I don't know what I did wrong, but I don't deserve this. I won't beg for your attention or your affection if this is how little you think of me."

Kael's eyes widened in realization, his heart sinking as the words hit him. "Wait—what? No! Dora, that's not what I meant at all!"

"You literally just said 'break-up,' Kael," she snapped, her eyes glistening with unshed tears that were now threatening to fall over.

Kael shook his head frantically, stepping closer to her. "No, no, no. God, no. I don't want to break up with you. That's the last thing I want. I was talking about you and Cai!" he explained, the words tumbling out in a rush as he tried to make her understand. "I want you to stop seeing Cai. Not me. Never me. I meant that you should break up with Cai!"

"Cai?" Kael nodded at the question but then felt his heart sink as she shook her head slowly...