

52 Uncomfortable in doing it.

"You mean you are from the royal blood?" Arwen asked, holding the fork mid-air, waiting for him to answer as she still processed everything she had just learned about the Winslow family history. 1

Aiden shook his head as he sliced his meat elegantly before taking a bite. "We founded this country. We aren't the royals. We were the ones who backed the royals and helped them administer it with our resources and shared capability," he said calmly, as if discussing something that wasn't astonishing.

"The royals still exist in our country, which means you still hold the power over them?" Arwen blinked at him in pure amazement.

Aiden turned to her just in time to catch the adorable expression on her face. Shaking his head, he corrected, "We hold the authority over them."

"We?"

Nodding, he hummed in response. "Yes—'we' as

in you too. You are a Winslow now."

Although Arwen was a Quinn, the wealthiest among many, having authority over royalty didn't come from wealth. It's a privilege that's possessed by rarest of the rare-s.

Her heart skipped a beat at how easily Aiden included her in such a powerful position. Did he really trust her that much? After just two days of knowing he, he didn't flinch while giving her rights over everything?

Was this what he meant when he said that he didn't do contract marriages? That if it happens, it happens for real?

Arwen felt a wave of warmth engulfed her heart. It was overwhelming, so she quickly pushed the fork into her mouth, savouring the pasta that had been waiting. And the moment the taste hit her, a moan escaped her lips and her eyes closed, savouring the deliciously familiar taste.

"Mhmm ... Delicious!" she complimented.

And Aiden felt his self-control shredding away. His gaze lingered on her expression before zeroing in on her lips, painting a vision that had

often kept him restless at night. He knew this wasn't the moment, but every fiber of his being ached to close the distance between them and fulfil the desire he had always harbored. 2

While Aiden fought an internal battle, completely unbeknownst to his struggle, Arwen turned and innocently asked, "How did you make it? It's just perfect."

But her gaze faltered when she caught something close to primal hunger in his eyes. A shiver ran down her spine. For a moment, she didn't know how to react. It felt strange and hot, a sensation that made her skin tingle. But the next second, the feeling disappeared.

Their gazes broke and Aiden looked away, finally saying, "It means it didn't disappoint you."

Arwen felt a little unsettled. If not for the tingles still coursing through her, she would have dismissed it as an illusion. "Yes, I mean it — it's really the best pasta I have ever tasted. Just the right flavour, which I feel particularly curated for me. Not even our chefs at Quinn Villa could match this," she said, forking a little more before enjoying the taste again.

It was a little awkward at first, but the discomfort didn't last for long. Aiden soon shifted the conversation back to a more normal topic, which Arwen was grateful to.

Dinner ended soon, and once it was over, they headed upstairs towards their room. Arwen had already seen which room would be hers during the house tour, but she hadn't had the courage to step inside. At that time, she had made an excuse, but now she couldn't avoid it for longer.

"Your clothes have been arranged in the walk-in closet there," Aiden informed, gesturing towards it. "If you want you can go to freshen up first."

Arwen's gaze followed his to look at the closet before nodding in response. "Fine, I will go first." As she move to slide, she paused and turned around. "Wait, you are injured. You can't take a bath."

"I don't sleep without taking one," Aiden replied.

Shaking her head, Arwen spoke more firmly, "Your wound shouldn't get wet. But if you are really used to having a bath, you can take a sponge bath instead."

Aiden stared at her for a moment as if contemplating something before nodding. "Fine. But if I am doing that, you have to help."

Arwen's eyes widened in surprise as she pointed at herself to ask, "Me?"

Aiden nodded nonchalantly, as if the idea was completely reasonable. "You sent everyone away earlier. They must have already left. So, with no one else around, you will have to help me."

She remembered. She had asked them all to retire for the evening. But...

"Can't we just call them back?" she asked, feeling a little nervous inside.

Aiden noticed her expression and smiled internally. "We could, but with you here, if they come to help me bathe, it might..." He trailed off, leaving the thought unfinished, but Arwen understood what he meant. He had said he wanted a real marriage, and now, as his wife, it would be strange for others to help him with such personal matters. It would certainly raise suspicions. It would only be right if she helped him.



"Fine, I will help you," she agreed, stepping towards him ignoring a hard thump she felt inside her chest. "Let me help you bathe first . I will freshen up afterward."

Aiden fingers curled tightly, but he nodded, keeping his demeanour all calm and composed.

Arwen went into the bathroom, returning with a basin of water and the necessary supplies. It took her a while to gather everything, but she found what she needed. "I have got everything here. Are you ready—" Her last word stretched out longer than needed but she couldn't help. The sight before her was simply too much to process calmly.

"W-What are you doing?" she asked, trying her best to not let her composure falter.

Aiden looked up at her without a hint of embarrassment. "Taking off my clothes. I thought you would be uncomfortable doing it for me. Did I read something wrong?" 5

