

CHAPTER 44

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XANDER'S POV

Lightening flashed across the sky, illuminating the kneeling figure in the gardens. In that brief flash of light, I saw the look in her eyes. Dread, and hatred. She shuddered, her arms wrapped around her body. She disobeyed my instructions. Again. And all for what? Caldan?

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Perhaps the cold rain will give her a fresh perspective and some time to reflect on her actions. And also offer a chill for her. For the meantime, I have work to do.

I headed to my study, and Caldan was already there. Just who I wanted to see.

"Brother!" He ran up to me the moment he spotted me. "Please, it's raining out there!

I glared at him coldly. "Yes. And

"You asked Sabrina to kneel, in the rain"

"And you prompted her to ignore my instructions

He pursed his lips and drew back.

"Get out, Caldan."

"No" He reached out for my arm and held me. "Let her go inside! She'll catch a cold this way! Why are you even doing this?!"

I looked at his hand gripping my arm. Back at his face. He didn't budge.

I have pardoned Caldan for a lot of things. I really have.

I would have had no problem if the girl in question was another girl.

And above all, I have given Caldan his freedom. I have given him liberties. I let him do as he pleased, so long as he was within rules. I let his peculiar tendencies go, I let a lot of things slide.

The title of my younger brother he bore wasn't one he chose for himself. Fate can be rather cruel, and I understand that.

"Do not touch me" My voice came out an angry growl. Caldan stumbled back, nearly tripping on his feet. I took a step closer to him, and he backed away. Back and forth till he was up against the door.

"You're punishing her for nothing" Caldan said, but his voice lacked the bite he had earlier. His bright eyes are dark, and he looks terrified.

Ah, I can only guess why.

"Caldan, you are getting on my nerves. You've been getting on my nerves a whole lot."

I'm so close.

So close to doing something I have never done before.

The urge to do it has never been this strong before. And I mean never

Just one command. One sentence. And all of this will be over. He won't even know that he's being compelled. He won't even know that his memories have been tampered with. He will walk out of here and forget Sabrina, and never cross her path again. To him, it will be like she never existed and will never exist

My wolf howled inside of me. He wants it, more than anything. Get rid of Caldan. Dispose of him.

Those closest to me are off bounds for compulsion. Nifra. Caldan. A solemn vow I made to myself, a vow I have never broken.

Caldan is testing my limits.

I looked at my brother, and I felt even

more angry.

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TNSst the door knob and pulled the doon vysen showing how of the wom I sawed the doon chat

Ten minutes later. Team is Team' think straight

bus.

The rammed to son, Team well.

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Dekoe and howded to the gardens to check in on Sabrina She is on the ground, conse

My hout skipsst a

Your majesty Aver sand beside me

Tuned to see Nifra. She appeared unbothered by the cold, her eyes glowing with a strange light

"Take her inside. Have some attend to her."

"Back to her tom? Nita asked

room?"

passed out in the rain, and it could have been won NO.

I sent her to kneel in the

in Clouded by anger, I gave her such a sentence

1 should have known. Her body is trail. Ive seen it over and over again.

Guilt festered in the centre of my chest. Perhaps I should have seus Callan to kneel is, he low hol a hand is this.

And to think that she's here right now, somewhere in the palace. I just close my eyes custod her

No. 1 must not. She disobeyed me. She flaunted my orders. I shouldn't be thinking of gong to her. I shouldn't have unch thoughts.

And yet, I found myself pacing.

It's three am in the morning, and I haven't gotten even a wink of sleep I can't push thoughts of Sabsina o ot un sind How is she? Has her fast healing kicked in, or was it worse this time?

I paced the floors, restless and agitated.

If she had simply done as I asked, none of this would have happened. But I know that it may not be the case Sabrina is a stubborn woman. I see the defiance that flashes in her eyes each time she looks at me the contempt, the harrest I see it all. One way or another, she would still do as she pleased.

I couldn't ignore it any longer. I have to see her for myself.

Theaded to the haren house where her room was. I was rarely ever here, and the night provided a cover for me. Most of the girls were asleep anyway.

I followed the tug in my chest and it led me to Sabrina's room...

I hadn't expected that this was the place she slept in. The room was small, cramped and dark. The only furuume of note wax A half bed and a rickety chan. There were no windows, and there was

burn mark

the side of the flour and walls

Glupter 11W@©.©OVeRW0rM.co(m)

The guilt continued to fester.

The sound of her breathing, hard and wheezing. I walked over to her bedside, the excuse of a blanket that covered her body would barely provide any sensible warmth. I touched her forehead, she was burning up. Her expression was strained, a low moan in her throat. This is bad. Very bad.

I looked around the room one more time:

e and

I felt my skin crawl.

I heard a sound behind me and turned. Caldan stood in the doorway. He sighed, his shoulder slumping

"I came to see her." He said.

I stepped to the side, showing him the view of Sabrina sleeping. "You have seen her."

He stared at me for a few seconds, looking like a helpless puppy.

I turned to Sabrina and carried her off the bed bridal style. She sobbed softly, whimpering in pain. Even in her fever induced sleep, she struggled against me.

"Hold

"Hold still." I whispered. I'm not going to hurt you.

I could feel her body burning up. At least Nifra has changed her into some dry clothes. Her head rested on my chest, and she didn't stop whimpering.

I did this to her. She's this way because of me.

I turned to the doorway. And Caldan was still there. I ignored him and carried Sabrina out of the room. I took her back with me, back to the palace. I mind linked the Royal healer to show up. Immediately. I took her to the far east wing. The rooms there had windows. They were mostly used for visitors, but this place hasn't had visitors in over a hundred years.

I picked out the best room there and took Sabrina inside. I laid her on the bed, and she exhaled softly. Her eyes fluttered and for a moment I feared she would wake up. But she didn't. She rolled over and pulled a pillow to her chest.wvW.no©e@Wr.rM.coM

The healer arrived in two minutes. I stood by Sabrina's bed side, apprehensive as the healer checked her.

"It's just a cold your Majesty. She said. "The fever will go down in a few hours. I'll give her a tincture, and everything should be alright by tomorrow.

Just a cold. It's just a cold.

"Do what you must." I said..

The woman nodded.

By tomorrow, Sabrina will be alright. I felt relieved to hear that news.

Her fever didn't subside till two hours later.

I stayed by her bedside long after the healer had left. The sky outside the window was starting to lighten, and that worried me a bit. Even though there were thick curtains over the large windows, any sort of sunlight would still be harmful to me.

But Sabrina was still unconscious. And I am not leaving her bedside till she's awake.

I forbade anyone from entering the room, including Nifra. And most especially, Caldan.

Ichecked her forehead, nodding to myself as I noted that her temperature was stabilizing Outside it was fully morning

I made sure to stand away from the window, in a spot that was shielded from the sun.

It turned noon outside. I barely felt the passing of time.

Sabrina woke up.

She sat up, her eyes vacant for two seconds as she took in her surroundings. She did a stretch and yawned mumbling

something about a headache. She looked around her, and I saw how her eyes widened and she gasped in surprise. She likes the room, that's good.

She looked right at me.

And screamed.

I felt mild irritation at her reaction, but at the same time relief

She scrambled away, her back pressed into the orange head board. She pulled the blanket up to her chin, and her eyes shot daggers at me.

"What are you doing here?! She yelled, all respect and caution thrown out of the window.

"Good afternoon to you too" I snapped back.

She looked out of her window and her eyes went wide. "What She sighed "Where am I! What is She pulled the blanket up and pecked down. Then she sighed in relief. "Thank the goddess."

My eyes twitched. This woman.

She turned to me, eyes dark with hatred. "Good afternoon, your majesty" She said sarcasticallyvW.nôvE(L(w)ORm.coM

I don't blame her. I did yell her to kneel in the rain after all.

"I can see you're awake and in good health."

She didn't reply.

"My apologies for last night" If you had been obedient, it wouldn't have happened.

"I don't need your apology," She said. "Your majesty

Dear heavens. This is how she reacts? When will she ever stop glaring at me like that?

"Next time, don't disobey my orders." I said, my face a mask of composure. "It may have ended well today, but that is not guarantee it will end well again."

She pushed the blankets off and jumped to her feet. Thank you for your kindness. 1 shall be taking my leave now" She said and bowed. Without waiting for a reply, she headed to the door. "You're not going anywhere," I said. She paused and turned to me. This is your room now