

# Forgotten Wife : Let the Traitors Kneel Down Novel

## Chapter 221 - Chapter 221 (English Translation)

The smell of death hung heavy in the air as Abril, Sirius, and Taren rode throughout the day, making their way toward the next village-or whatever remained of it. When they arrived, the place was utterly destroyed. The streets were stained dark with a viscous liquid, and the houses appeared as if they had been burned, standing alone in the shadows. A strong odor of blood and decay wafted toward them, and Abril felt a wave of nausea rise within her, struggling to keep from vomiting. Sirius and Taren dismounted their horses, and Abril followed suit. "What happened here?"

Where is everyone?" Taren asked, glancing around anxiously. Sirius responded, "This place must be crawling with monsters." They advanced cautiously into the village, the stench growing stronger. Abril covered her nose and mouth with a cloth, her heart racing. Bodies lay strewn about, a grim testament to the horror that had unfolded. In the plaza, the remains of villagers were piled high, grotesquely destroyed and putrefied. Upon witnessing such a horrific scene, Abril could no longer contain herself. She doubled over, retching until her stomach was completely empty.

"Is this why they've piled up like this?" Taren wondered aloud. Sirius approached Abril, concern etched on his face. "Are you alright?" Abril wiped her mouth with the back of her hand, her voice shaky from the retching. "Yes, I'm fine." The sun hung low in the sky, casting an eerie light over the devastation. A chill ran down Abril's spine, a sense of something sinister lurking nearby. "What's wrong, Abril?" Sirius asked, noticing her unease. "Something is approaching, and it's not good at all," she replied, her hands igniting with silver flames.

Taren drew his sword, and Sirius conjured a barrier to protect them from whatever was coming. "Where is it coming from?" Taren asked, scanning the surroundings. "I don't know; it feels like it's coming from everywhere," Abril said, her heart pounding. They tensed, ready to fight as the shadows deepened around them. As night fell, a massive creature slithered into view, moving like a serpent. "Is that what you felt?" Taren asked, disgust evident in his voice. Abril nodded. "It's not the only one."

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Get ready." Smaller monsters began to swarm, but they crashed against Sirius's barrier, shaking it violently as they tried to break through. "We can't stay hidden here until morning. We have to destroy them," Abril urged. "There are too many," Taren replied, glancing back at the horde. "I've faced an army of monsters before," Abril insisted. "Not like this," Taren countered. "We can't risk it." Abril touched the sharp edge of Taren's sword, her flames igniting along its blade. "This will make your sword more effective."

It will kill any monster you touch, no matter how grave the wound." "Are you sure?" Taren asked, uncertainty creeping into his voice. "I believe so," she replied, determination hardening her resolve. They approached one another, and Abril touched her flames to Taren's sword,

igniting it with a fierce glow. "Now you're ready," she said, her voice steady. Sirius watched the silver fire dance along Taren's blade, marveling at its brilliance. "I suppose it's time to fight. Stay close to me; it's the only way we'll survive." Sirius dispelled the barrier, a grim determination in his eyes.

"I hope I don't regret this." As the monsters began their assault, Sirius used his magic to block their attacks, wielding the flames to incinerate them. Each creature that touched the ground was reduced to ash, consumed by the fire. The battle raged on through the night, and Taren, overwhelmed by the sheer number of monsters, turned to Sirius. "What will we do with the dead?" "The best course of action is to burn them once they're completely destroyed," Sirius replied. Every time Abril looked at the fallen villagers, she felt their spirits trapped in the charred remains.

Closing her eyes for a moment, she concentrated, and her flames transformed into a brilliant silver blaze, engulfing the bodies and turning them to ash. Sirius watched in awe as the flames danced, realizing they were unlike any he had seen before. "These flames are not ordinary." Abril sat back, exhausted from the horrors she had witnessed. "I told you, my magic is unique. The flames I wield consume everything they touch, turning it to ash." In that moment, Sirius understood the duality of Abril's power. She had the ability to save the world, yet she was also capable of its destruction.

As the first rays of dawn broke, the sky began to lighten, and the remnants of the village were swept away by the wind, leaving nothing but ash behind. They searched for their horses, but the beasts had been slain by the monsters. Reluctantly, they set off on foot. As they walked, Abril felt a strange pull to the north, a dark presence emanating from that direction. "We're moving away from the capital," Taren remarked, glancing back at the horizon. "It's not your imagination; we are veering off course," Sirius confirmed.

"We should have gone straight to the royal capital." "Now it all makes sense," Abril said, her voice low. "I felt something dark coming from the north." "What's wrong?" Sirius asked, concern etched on his face. "I don't know, but I have a bad feeling about it," Abril admitted. "It will take us a while to reach the next town, and we don't know what awaits us. We should wear our bracelets for protection," Taren suggested. "If we're too tired, we can rest for a bit." "You're right; we need to be prepared for whatever comes next," Abril agreed, eyeing the thick forest ahead.

"We must find our way to the capital."

When Cassian entered Alessandro's workshop, he noticed the king's irritation. "What's wrong with you? You look upset," Cassian asked, arching an eyebrow. "It's not that," Alessandro replied, his voice tight. "It's just that I don't want Maya to get too close to me. She keeps interrupting us with those piercing glances every time she thinks I'm not looking." "In that case, she'll be gone soon," Cassian said, trying to lighten the mood. "I tried to hate him, but I can't help it. He seems so imposing, and I find him... unpleasant," Alessandro admitted, frustration creeping into his tone.

"Technically, Maya is not family yet," Cassian pointed out. "But she soon will be," Alessandro countered, his protective instincts flaring. Cassian's concern shifted as he recalled the time he spent at sea. "Now you need to focus on your work. There's a lot to be done." "I'm expressing my concern for you, so please show a little gratitude. If you were in my shoes..." Cassian trailed off, shaking his head. "I don't know how to help you with this. My future wife wants to kill me, and frankly, I don't care about that anymore," Alessandro said, his voice laced with exasperation.

"Maybe you asked the wrong person," Cassian suggested, glancing at Gabriel, who was also married. "You should talk to someone more experienced." "Gabriel, are you happy with your wife?" Alessandro asked, shifting the conversation. "Yes," Gabriel replied, though uncertainty flickered in his eyes. "Don't they resent you for taking you away from them?" Alessandro pressed. "Hmm... I believe they do, but they've never shown any discontent with me, at least not openly. I help them, after all." "I suppose I tend to bother you because of my situation," Alessandro said, his tone softening.

Just then, someone knocked on the door. Gabriel opened it to reveal the steward, who held a covered cage in his hands. "Your Majesty, I bring what you requested," the steward announced, placing the cage on the desk. The steward retreated, leaving the covered cage behind. Alessandro approached it, lifting the cloth to reveal a falcon. "What do you think of Zer?" he asked Cassian, his eyes gleaming with purpose. "Please send the collar to Zer," Cassian replied, recognizing the bird as the one Alessandro used to send messages to his friends.

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"Carrying letters is one thing, but delivering a collar is another matter entirely." "I don't know Taren, but I hope you can find him without any trouble," Alessandro said, fastening one of the collars Maya had given him to the bird's leg. With a gentle toss, he released the falcon into the sky, watching it soar away. Meanwhile, Maya sat on a bench in the garden, lost in thought. Barto, her brother, observed her closely before asking, "Do you like your new life?" "Why do you ask?" Maya replied, a hint of defensiveness in her tone. "It's just that I don't quite understand you.

You've always been a free spirit. This place is beautiful, but it feels like a cage. Did you want to return to Ras sooner?" Barto pressed. Maya caressed her brother's cheek and said softly, "I'm fine." "Are you really?" Barto challenged. "Maya, we grew up together. No matter how much we try to convince ourselves otherwise, deep down, you know you're not truly happy." With a long sigh, Maya tucked a strand of hair behind her ear. "I hate that part of you." "Is it the part that cares for you?" Barto shot back, sitting beside her. "Maya, let's go home.

Forget about this arrogant prince and start anew," he urged. Maya knew that freedom was not just about physical constraints but also about the burdens she carried-the whispers of her fairy lineage reminding her daily of the life that held her back from happiness. But that was something Barto could never understand, so she chose to share her undeniable truth. "Barto, there are many things that bother me, making it impossible to be completely happy. But Cassian is not one of them. In fact, he is the only one who brings me joy, filling me with the strength to fight against my destiny.

"So please, stop asking me about it." "I know you're hiding something that torments you, but remember that I care for you and will always be there for you," Barto said, concern etched on his face. "Thank you, brother," Maya replied, her heart warming at his words. "If you ever need me, just say the word," he added, determination in his voice. "I need to start defending myself. I don't believe Cassian would ever hurt me; he loves me too much," Maya insisted. "Even so, if he were to break an arm or a leg..." Barto began, his protective instincts flaring.

"Do you dislike Cassian?" Maya asked, her brow furrowing. "Um... if I saw you completely happy, I would be pleased. But since you're not, I can't help but feel a certain contempt for him," Barto confessed. "Barto, Cassian makes me happy. It doesn't matter what the future holds; don't hate him." "I can't promise I won't hate him. If anything were to happen to you because of him, I would make him pay," Barto warned. "Maya, you are my precious sister. Your happiness is one of the reasons I intend to protect you," he said, his voice firm.

"I hope you keep that promise," Maya replied, looking at him earnestly. "Just step back and love him. I don't want you to regret anything," Barto urged, his expression softening. "Don't worry. There will be nothing to regret. But I insist that you visit home and see Father. He misses you dearly," Maya said, her tone lightening. "I'll go visit them soon. Tell Dad I love him and that I miss him," Barto promised. "I will," Maya replied, a smile breaking through her earlier melancholy. "Are you ready to eat? I'll prepare your favorite dishes," Barto said, eager to change the subject.

"Yes," Maya replied, her heart feeling a little lighter as they moved toward the kitchen together.

223

Cira was buried in the cold, earthen soil, having absorbed all the monsters that lurked there. It had been a torturous experience, and she felt completely exhausted, yet she could sense her magic resetting itself, restoring her strength. The voice in her head urged her on. "We can do this whenever you want. With your current power, you can reach the cry of Hades without any problem." Cira pushed herself up from the ground, every part of her body protesting, but she ignored the discomfort, forcing herself to stand. She made her way toward the cave's exit, where the sun awaited her.

After more than an hour in darkness, she felt the warmth on her skin, and it invigorated her. It was as if she were a mouse basking in the sun, and the voice in her head insisted she stop wasting time. Using a teleportation scroll, Cira transported herself to the outskirts of the royal palace of Laios. The immense golden towers loomed overhead, and she felt a sense of belonging; this was her home, her kingdom, and she was determined to reclaim it. She searched for a secret entrance belonging to the royal family of Venobich, moving stealthily through the shadows until she reached a black door.

Her father had never allowed her to cross that threshold, and stepping through it in disobedience had marked a turning point in her life. She hesitated, her hand hovering over the doorknob, questioning what lay beyond. The voice in her head screamed at her. "These thoughts are useless. Open the door, and you will obtain true power. Everything you desire

will be yours." Cira inserted the key into the lock, and as the door creaked open, a blast of cold air greeted her. The interior was dark, the shadows thick as ink, just as she remembered.

For a moment, she hesitated, but the voice inside her urged her forward, pulling her deeper into the darkness that felt like home. She conjured a flame in her hand and began to descend a spiral staircase, feeling her strength wane with each step. As she walked alone, the sound of her footsteps echoed against the marble, and the voice in her head urged her on. "We are almost there. Prepare yourself." "What will I encounter?" she wondered aloud. "Patience. Just be ready." Cira had never been one to remain silent, and fear gnawed at her insides, urging her to turn back and flee.

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But the voice within her insisted otherwise, pushing her to continue. The darkness seemed to deepen around her. "You must jump." The words echoed in her mind. "You're crazy," she thought. "If you want to reclaim what was taken from you, you must jump." Meanwhile, Abril was gazing toward the woods when Sirius approached her, concern etched on his face. "You should rest. You've been using a lot of magic, and if you don't sleep, you'll be exhausted when we reach the royal capital." "I know, but I can't shake this feeling.

It's as if something bad is about to happen." "All the more reason to rest. We will need your power to succeed." "I understand," she replied, her voice heavy with worry. "Then let me prepare some herbs that will sustain you for a few hours." "No, I'll try to stay awake while Taren prepares the food." "Very well." Abril found a place to rest, laying her blanket on the floor. She leaned against her armrest, trying to sleep. At first, it seemed impossible, but gradually, her eyes grew heavy, and she slipped into a deep slumber.

Soon, she found herself in a dark, desolate place, on the edge of a great chasm. It was just as foreboding as it had been before. There, she saw Cira, looking weak and exhausted, as if she had been crying. Abril's heart raced as she reached out toward her sister. "Cira!" she cried, her voice filled with urgency. Abril's skin prickled with fear as monstrous figures began to emerge from the shadows, grotesque and filled with malice. One creature, with writhing tentacles, reached toward her. Just then, Sirius approached, his brow furrowed with concern. "Are you alright?

What happened?" "I saw my sister," Abril replied, her voice trembling. "I believe she is in Laios. I saw her jump into what seemed to be the cry of Hades." "Calm down. You were sleeping; it must have been a nightmare." "No, it wasn't a nightmare. Sometimes I can see what will happen in the future or what is occurring elsewhere while we are awake." "Are you sure of what you're saying?" "Yes. When my mother was linked to me, she was the seer. She showed me what would happen or what was happening in other places. I recently discovered that I can do the same, but I cannot control it.

We must go into the royal palace of Laios." "First, you need to calm down. If your sister is in the royal palace, we cannot act recklessly. We need to think very carefully about what we will do." "Calm down? Taren was going to use some magic to help us return before we get there." "Then we must proceed cautiously." When it was time for food, Cassian felt extremely uncomfortable. Barto had taken his place next to Maya, and he couldn't help but feel the

tension every time she glanced his way. Barto had made it clear he harbored resentment toward Cassian.

Later, as Barto prepared to leave for the city of Farell, Maya offered to accompany him to the door to say goodbye, but he declined. "I prefer that you accompany Prince Cassian. I would like to speak with you for a moment before I leave." "Very well," Barto replied, planting a kiss on his sister's forehead. "Remember, you can always count on me," he said softly. Maya embraced him tightly, her eyes glistening with unshed tears. "Take care of yourself." Barto caressed her cheek, just as he had done countless times in their childhood.

"I will." Cassian walked alongside Barto through the wide hallways, but Barto remained silent. At one point, Cassian wondered if what he had read was a lie, a mere excuse for Maya to avoid following him until he departed. "Take care of my sister," Barto said suddenly, breaking the silence.

224

A new danger loomed. Cassian was searching for a moment to speak, and Alessandro replied, somewhat surprised. "I would give my life for her," he said. "She would hate you for it. Maya is not someone who shares your pain, no matter how hard you try to protect her. There's nothing she should have to suffer." "Then you should never let anything happen to my sister," he warned. "Sometimes you will arrive at something, but losing her... her death would be a torment for me." Barto was satisfied with the response he received, so Alessandro remained silent.

As they reached the entrance, he bid farewell with a gesture of his hand and turned to leave. Maya had rushed to her room when her brother departed. She stepped out onto the balcony and watched as he crossed the palace doors. The pixie appeared, and Maya spoke with great regret. "Why have you gone so soon? I wanted to talk with him again." "You have nothing to discuss with him," the pixie replied. Maya had spoken with Barto all night, but that was something she didn't dare confess. Why would she crush her own heart with such a burden? "He was a wanderer.

I was just curious about him, about the kind of life he leads," she said, omitting part of the truth. With deep regret, Maya responded as she felt her brother disappear behind the high palace walls. "A normal life, something I can never return to." When Taren returned, he was agitated, struggling to remain upright as he pressed his hand against his waist to steady himself. Blood oozed from between his fingers. Sirius rushed to his side, helping him to stay on his feet. "What happened? Who attacked you?" Sirius asked, concern etched on his face. "A monster...

there's construction in the forest," Taren gasped. He knew he wasn't an excellent warrior, that he would end up hiding from the creature, but that didn't matter. It was too strong, and that was why he had become a hero. "April, come immediately!" Sirius shouted, trying to rouse her. April obeyed Sirius's command, but they couldn't reach him in time. They found, among the trees, a tall, slender monster, completely human-shaped.

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It halted its advance, and with a fierce heat, Taren shouted, "It has been killing those who carry it!" Abril used her silver flames against the creature, but they extinguished as if they were nothing. She held on to April, who used her magic to attack the monster. If she managed to inflict any harm, it was their fault. Sirius let go to assist April, but the creature retaliated, launching an attack that sent Abril sprawling. April created a barrier, but she couldn't regret it; the creature's sharp claws clashed against her defenses.

She rose from the ground, focusing her power as she ran with Sirius's help, grabbing the creature by the waist and attempting to infuse it with despair. Sirius seized the opportunity to immobilize the creature while April unleashed her magic. Taren, closing in, brandished his sword and struck, blood splattering across his clothes as the monster's head fell away. "I wanted to unleash my power like a torrent," Abril thought, as the silver flames consumed the creature, turning it to ashes. Taren fell to the ground, faint and covered in sweat.

Abril rushed to his side, placing her hand on him and infusing her magic into him. As the heritage closed, color returned to Taren's face, but he remained unconscious. Sirius approached Taren and said, "We must move." "It's dangerous to teleport, even now," Abril replied, concern in her voice. "I healed him, but he lost a lot of blood," Sirius insisted. "Losing him would be more dangerous than staying here. We know there could be more monsters in this forest. We can't detect them, and finishing them off isn't easy.

We need to go." Abril knew it was wrong to move Taren, but she recognized the truth in Sirius's words. The creature was unlike any monster she had faced before. "You're right. It's better for us. Let's hope Taren survives the journey." Sirius pulled some parchment from his bag, a teleportation scroll. He had to act quickly before they were discovered. Abril was surprised to see the unfamiliar landscape. They stood in a dark street where food lay stale and forgotten. "Where are we?" she asked. "In the wretched capital of Laios," Sirius replied, holding Taren steady. Abril's heart sank.

This place was nothing like she remembered from when she was taken to the kingdom of Cosset. "Are you sure? It looks different from what I recall," she said, scanning their surroundings. "We're in one of the poorest neighborhoods," Sirius explained. After a quick look at the dilapidated buildings lining the street, Abril felt a sense of unease. The streets were completely empty at first, and she feared they might be alone, especially given the deplorable state of the area. But soon, curious eyes appeared in windows and through slightly ajar doors.

Sirius remarked, "I believe it will be impossible to go unnoticed. We're the only ones on the streets." "Everyone seems convinced that we're trouble," Abril said, her voice low. "I don't know, but hurry. It's not wise to linger here," Sirius urged. They moved from the main streets toward an inn, knocking insistently on the door. "Open up! We need shelter!" Sirius called. A few eyes peeked out, and a male voice replied, "We're closed. It would be better if you left." "Our friend is sick and needs to rest. Please, let us in. We'll pay you well," Abril pleaded.

The man didn't seem willing to open the door, so Abril took out her purse of gold, letting the coins jingle enticingly. "We have plenty of generous offers. Please, let us in," she insisted. A large, strong man with dark skin and hair appeared, eyeing them warily before finally opening the door. "Thank you," Abril said, her relief palpable. She didn't want to fall apart in front of

Taren. "Follow me," the man instructed, leading them to a room with two beds. He carefully deposited Taren onto one of the beds and asked, "You're not from around here, are you?"

Where do you come from?" Sirius answered, "We are travelers, passing through, but everything is closed. What has happened here?" "There are never any roses in the lower neighborhoods, but now it's worse. Monsters are killing everyone they encounter. People are too afraid to leave their homes, terrified of being the next victims."

225

The answer Abril sought was elusive, slipping through her fingers like grains of sand. The guards had done nothing to help. "The guards are useless; their weapons have no effect," she thought bitterly. Magic users could only hold the monsters at bay, but it seemed no one felt that way about the situation. It was just another day filled with despair. "Yes, but I escaped," Alessandro had said, his voice steady despite the chaos around them. He approached the door, his expression resolute.

"Call Dovant if you need anything; he can provide whatever you ask for." "Could you at least give us something to eat?" Abril asked, her voice tinged with desperation. Sirius, standing nearby, nodded in agreement. "We'll need a change of gear as well," he added. "We need to clean ourselves up." At the end of the hallway, they could find a place to wash up. Once they exited the room, Sirius appeared at the door, ensuring no one was listening before he spoke again. "It's not enough to just attack the monsters," he said, frustration evident in his tone. Abril felt a pang of guilt.

"I don't understand why Enzo didn't tell me how bad things were. If he had, maybe we could have done something sooner." "You shouldn't blame yourself; it's not your fault," Alessandro replied, his voice softening. "Just think, if you had closed the gate to Hades, none of this would have happened." "Stop dwelling on what could have been. It will only eat away at you," Abril urged, her hand resting on his arm. She turned to Taren, channeling her magic into him.

"I hope he recovers soon." "Taren is like a cockroach; no matter how much you try, he never dies," Sirius replied with a hint of a smile. "If he recovers, we just need to give it time." "I hope so," Abril whispered, her heart heavy with worry. Dantriell had gone to the elven kingdom's dungeons, where the two guardians resided. No one seemed to care about their fate, but intrigue gnawed at him. The cell where Ethan was held loomed ahead, and Dantriell hesitated for a moment, torn between entering and fleeing. Ultimately, he steeled himself and stepped inside.

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Ethan hung limply against the stone wall, bound by thick steel bars. Dantriell saw the queen before him, her head held high as she addressed him. "I've been sent to call you," he said, his voice steady. "What does this mean, Your Majesty? Is something wrong?" Dantriell asked, concern creeping into his tone. The queen regarded him coolly, lifting his chin with her fingers to meet her gaze. "No, just taking precautions," she replied, releasing him and moving toward the chair that dominated the room. Her voice turned icy.

"Begin." Dantriell stiffened as one of the guards approached with a heated iron in hand. He thought, They're going to torture me. But instead, the guard turned and headed toward Ethan, pressing the



iron against his arm. Ethan didn't scream; he merely gritted his teeth, hatred burning in his eyes. Dantriell repeated the name of his sister over and over in his mind, hoping to summon the strength to endure. "What happened to my sister?" he demanded, his voice rising. The king crossed his legs, watching Dantriell with indifference. "Ethan, you need to cooperate.

If you keep denying me, this will not end well for you." Ethan remained silent, enduring the torture until he was left half-dead. The queen's annoyance was palpable, her expressions shifting from anger to frustration. "You will die," she warned, drawing her sword and pressing it against Ethan's skull. "Please, just tell me what you want," Ethan gasped, desperation lacing his words. With a slight smile, the queen replied, "That will depend on you." Dantriell's anger surged uncontrollably. The elf queen stepped closer, her voice low and commanding.

"I want to know what happened to my sister, and I want the truth. Do you understand?" "Yes, Your Majesty. But please, cure Ethan. If you leave him like this, he will die," Dantriell pleaded, desperation creeping into his voice. The queen's expression softened momentarily as she cast a healing spell over Ethan. "Take him to the dungeons," she ordered, her voice cold once more as she turned away from them. As the guards escorted Dantriell to the queen's office, he felt a pang of guilt for Ethan. He wished he could have done more, but time was against them.

"Sit," the queen commanded as he entered her chamber. He obeyed, knowing better than to defy her. "Start speaking, and this time tell the truth. If you lie to me again, you will regret it," she warned, her eyes narrowing. "I wouldn't dare lie to my king," Dantriell replied, his voice steady despite the tension in the room. "But it's worth it if you don't," she countered. "Your Majesty, there's something I'd like to ask before I begin," he ventured carefully. "I believe you are not in a position to demand anything," she replied sharply.

"If I tell you everything you want to know, will you let me go?" he asked, desperation creeping into his tone. "You may be freed, but not for a long time," she stated. Dantriell recounted the story of Princess Sophia and her daughter, the mestiza. The queen listened in silence, her face betraying no emotion, but Dantriell could see the anger simmering in her eyes. "Where is the mestiza?" she demanded, her voice low and dangerous. "What do you intend to do with her?" Dantriell asked, wary of her intentions. "Is she important to you?" the queen pressed, her gaze piercing.

"She is in the kingdom of Cosset," he replied, bracing himself for her reaction. The queen rose abruptly, summoning the guards with a wave of her hand. "Take me to her," she ordered, her voice firm and resolute. As they moved to obey, Dantriell felt a chill run down his spine. The queen was a force to be reckoned with, and the fate of the mestiza hung in the balance.

226

Taren lay unconscious all afternoon, and when he finally woke, it was night. Abril stood nearby, concern etched on her face. "How are you feeling?" she asked softly. "Where are we?" Taren mumbled, trying to gather his senses. "In the royal capital," Abril replied, her voice steady. "We're in one of the lower neighborhoods." "I thought we were going to the royal palace," Taren said, frowning. "With you unconscious, that wasn't an option," Abril pointed out, her tone firm yet understanding. "You're right; it wasn't a good idea," Taren admitted.

"Was that the monster that attacked us in the woods?" "No, that was the first time I've seen a monster like that," Abril said, her expression serious. "The only time I faced one was when it was after me." Sirius, who had been listening quietly, interjected, "I believe there are stronger monsters out there. Just when we thought we had finished with them, it seems the battle is far from over." "I thought that once we sealed the rift to Hades, everything would end," Taren said, struggling to sit up in bed. Abril moved closer to help him.

"Although our victory seems like an illusion," she said, "our peace is a lie we cling to desperately." "Peace is never easy to obtain," Taren replied, a hint of frustration in his voice. "What are we going to do now?" "For now, we need to seal the rift to Hades," Abril said decisively. "Then we can think about our next steps." Just then, a bird flew into the room, a messenger from the king. It wore a red collar shaped like a tear and clutched a small note in its beak. Sirius took the collar and the note, reading it aloud. "For Abril, when you think of me.

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Alessandro." He handed the note to Abril, who took it with a mix of hope and longing. "Is there anything else?" she asked. "Just that note and the collar," Sirius replied, offering the bird a small piece of meat. Abril approached the bird, her curiosity piqued. "How can you find us?" "This bird uses a magical stone embedded in its collar," Sirius explained. "It's so small that if it hadn't been marked, we wouldn't have realized it was there. It can send messages to anyone, no matter where they are." "I wish I could send a letter to Alessandro," Abril said wistfully.

"Could I send it with this bird?" "It can transport small objects, but your letter would require more magic," Sirius replied. "I can send a brief note, but I must also send my report." "Please, don't tell Alessandro about the new kind of monster we faced today. I don't want to worry him," Abril said, her voice trembling slightly. "Don't worry, I won't," Sirius assured her. "Thank you. I just don't want to add to his burdens," Abril said, her heart heavy. As she began to write a letter to Alessandro, she glanced at the necklace he had sent her.

"When you don't touch me," she whispered to herself, recalling the times she had held it tightly, yearning for his presence and the laughter of their daughter. "Aby," she murmured, repeating her daughter's name until she felt a connection, a reminder that it was not an illusion. She could hear Alessandro's voice, a comforting sound that broke through her despair. "Lesan, is that really you?" she asked, hope igniting within her. "The necklace acts like a communicator," Alessandro's voice echoed in her mind.

"I didn't imagine you would be able to hear me this way, but now the distance between us feels smaller." Tears filled Abril's eyes as she thought of the terrible days they had endured, filled with pain, guilt, and suffering. She had left her family to fulfill her duty, yet she had remained strong for them. "Alessandro," she whispered, feeling the weight of her emotions. "Abri! What's wrong? Are you okay? Are you hurt?" Alessandro's voice was filled with concern. Abril wiped her tears, trying to steady herself. "I'm fine.

I miss you so much." "How is our little one?" he asked, his voice soothing. "She's doing well. Cassian and Maya are helping to take care of her. Lissana is always with Maya; she loves being with her." "Has there been any trouble?" Alessandro inquired. "No, everything is fine

here," Abril replied, letting out a sigh of relief. "I'm glad you're all safe," he said, his voice warm. "Just be careful. Remember, we're waiting for you," Abril urged, her heart aching with longing. "I will," he promised. "If you encounter any problems, use the necklace." "I would never misuse it," she assured him.

"Neither would I," he replied. Suddenly, a loud noise erupted outside, followed by chaos in the streets. "Go, we'll talk later," Abril said urgently, tucking the necklace into her pocket. Sirius moved toward the entrance to see what was happening, and Abril followed, feeling a wave of dizziness wash over her. She steadied herself, determined to face whatever lay ahead.

227

They were monsters, appearing every night to attack them. Cries for help echoed around the door. Sirius was about to open it, eager to assist those in need, but Dovant held him back. "Don't go to that door, if you can help it. We can't afford to see the dawn," Dovant warned. Abril listened intently to their exchange. "We can help you," she offered. "What could you possibly do against the monsters?" someone retorted. "More than you can imagine," she replied confidently. Sirius, distracted by the chaos outside, finally opened the door.

People were fleeing from the monsters, and the scene was utter pandemonium. "I won't let myself be caught by a monster, especially one that resembles a wolf," Sirius declared as he stepped out, positioning himself in front of the beast and conjuring a barrier to block its path. Abril grabbed Dovant's arm, urging him to move. "We need to get to safety," she insisted, her voice steady despite the fear swirling around them. Sirius returned to Abril, urgency in his eyes. "There are too many monsters. We can't draw their attention.

What do you propose we do?" Abril thrust her sword into the ground, the weapon trembling slightly in her grip. Though her handling was clumsy, she knew it was a blessed weapon. "We don't need to kill them," she said, determination in her voice. "We just need to fight back." "Search for weapons-anything that can help us defend ourselves," she commanded, her eyes scanning the area. Sirius looked around, but there were no weapons in sight. Then he remembered the decorative weapons adorning the walls of the inn-swords, bows, and quivers filled with arrows.

He dashed back inside to retrieve them, annoyance bubbling beneath the surface. "What do you think you're doing?" someone shouted at him. "I'm trying to save us!" Sirius replied, brandishing his sword. "Let me help you," Abril insisted, her resolve unyielding. Sirius knew Taren's condition was precarious, but in this desperate situation, they needed all the help they could get. He handed Abril a bow and a quiver filled with arrows. "Come on, find a high place to defend ourselves." "Understood," she replied, determination etched on her face. Taren struggled to keep up, barely able to stand.

Follow new episodes on the

She knew that if she fell behind, she would be a burden in her weakened state. As they prepared for the fight, Abril blessed the weapons they held, her voice steady as she whispered incantations. They fought hard throughout the night, even as the monsters

continued to swarm. Despite their losses, the creatures would not relent until the sun rose, driving them back into the shadows. Abril surveyed their surroundings, noting the destruction wrought by the monsters.

Many of the precarious houses lay in ruins, as if the beasts had torn them apart to hunt the people inside, treating them as mere prey. Once the monsters finally retreated, Abril searched for Sirius and Taren. When she found them, she felt a wave of relief wash over her. They had survived, but the laughter of onlookers echoed around them, their gazes filled with curiosity and expectation. "It would be best for us to leave before it starts again," Abril said, attempting to conceal her face with her hair, knowing its color could change easily, but her features were unmistakable.

Sirius supported Taren as they moved, her strength waning. They turned a corner, hoping to evade the curious stares that followed them. As they exited the neighborhoods, they approached the guards stationed at the palace gates. "Move aside, don't block the path," Sirius ordered. "We request an audience with the king," he added. The guards exchanged glances, their laughter derisive. "The king has more important matters than attending to beggars. Be gone." Abril felt irritation flare at their disdainful attitude. "Tell him I'm here to fulfill my promise.

If you wish to enter, relay my words." "Who would heed the words of a beggar?" one guard scoffed. "If you truly value your lives, I advise you to let us pass and inform him of my arrival," Abril shot back, her voice firm. The guards hesitated, their expressions shifting as they took in her words. They decided to announce her presence, though skepticism lingered in their eyes. "We'll announce you, but I doubt it will matter," one guard muttered as he turned away. The other guard, noticing his partner's change in demeanor, apologized to them. One of the guards led them into the palace.

As they walked through the corridors, they encountered a few servants who regarded them with contempt. Yet, they held their heads high, despite their ragged appearances. The guard guided them to a room filled with color, but Abril, despite having lived in the palace, did not recognize any of the places they passed. Though she had once been a princess, she had never felt like part of the royal family. "Wait here. They'll be ready for you," the guard instructed before leaving. They sat in silence, the weight of their situation heavy in the air.

"Do you think we're ready for what's to come?" Abril asked, breaking the stillness. "I hope so," Taren replied, her voice barely above a whisper. A few minutes later, the door opened, and Enzo entered, looking weary and worn. When he saw Abril, he hesitated, not recognizing her at first. But as he studied her face, realization dawned. "Finally, you've come," he said, relief flooding his voice. "I'm sorry I couldn't come sooner," Abril replied.

"I received your letter, but I was overwhelmed by the guilt of the monsters' attacks and felt compelled to help." Enzo sank into the lone sofa in the room, completely ignoring Taren and Sirius. "The towns are silent, constantly under attack. We can't endure much longer; it will be the end for the kingdom of Laios." "Things were so dire, why didn't you ask for my help sooner?" Abril pressed. "I did. I've sent you messages, but someone has intercepted them—monsters disguised as nobles, hiding among us and wreaking havoc," Enzo explained, frustration evident in his tone.

Abril recalled a time when her mother had shown her a scene of betrayal, where nobles had been assassinated, their humanity stripped away. Enzo continued, "The first few months after I took the throne were peaceful, but then the monsters began attacking small towns and cities. I left the cities to fight without rest."

228

A good king had always tried to keep his people safe, but as Alessandro knew all too well, there were monsters in the world that threatened them. He was the only one who could put an end to their terror. "I'm sure you know how to prepare for what lies ahead," he said, his voice steady. "I'm here to fulfill my promise." "Can you tell me that some of the creatures have been slain?" Enzo asked, his brow furrowed with concern. "These monsters are nothing compared to what you have created." "We were there when the monsters attacked," Alessandro replied, frustration creeping into his tone.

"I couldn't just stand by and do nothing when I could help." "You must close the Hades Rift immediately," Enzo insisted, but Alessandro shook his head. "I believe that may not be possible," he said, his voice heavy with the weight of responsibility. "I would like to rest with you, but we couldn't do that since I arrived." "Ask for housing preparations and an exchange of clothes," Enzo suggested. "I believe they have what you need." "Thank you," Alessandro replied, grateful for Enzo's support. Enzo knelt on the floor, his expression serious. "Are you ready to meet someone who can help us soon?"

"I have a lot of work to do." Before leaving, he turned to Abril. "The monsters returned to attack at night. Can you help us with weapons?" "Perhaps after I take a bath and rest a little," she said, her voice softening. Enzo opened the door and marched out. Sirius followed him, shaking his head. "I thought being a Venobich would make you a complete fool," he remarked. "And it does," Enzo replied with a wry smile. "But I believe it's necessary for this kingdom and for the people who inhabit it. We must help, even when we don't want to." Alessandro was consumed by worry.

Abril had cut off communication abruptly, and he hadn't slept all night. He had tried to reach her countless times, but to no avail. As dawn broke, his messenger bird returned, weary from its journey. He needed to send a message to Sirius; he had to know that Abril was safe, or he would go mad. His heart raced with fear and anxiety as he worked in his workshop, lost in thought until Cassian arrived. "Lessan, are you alright?" Cassian asked, concern etched on his face. "Cas," Alessandro replied, his voice strained. "I've been calling at the door for a long time."

"When you didn't respond, I had to come in. What's wrong?" "It's Abril," Alessandro said, his voice breaking. "Did something happen?" Cassian's eyes widened. Alessandro ran a hand through his hair, feeling the weight of dread. "No, I was talking to her yesterday using the collar Maya gave me, but then there was a loud noise and chaos. Communication was cut off, and since then, I've heard nothing from her." "Have you tried to reach her again?" Cassian pressed. "Yes, all night. She hasn't responded. She must still be wearing the collar; I'm terrified something has happened to her, Cassian."

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I can't lose her." "Don't worry, brother. Taren and Sirius are with her. I'm sure she'll be fine, even if she didn't know how to use the collar and for that reason, she didn't seal it. Did you explain how to use it?" Alessandro recalled that he had been vague in his instructions, and Cassian noticed his doubt. "It seems to me that you didn't say it clearly," Cassian pointed out. "I wasn't very clear about how it worked," Alessandro admitted. "Maybe she was in a place where she could speak, and that's when communication was cut off.

I'm sure she'll be in touch soon." "But-" "Lessan, I understand your anxiety. I feel it too. The woman I love is in danger, and it's not easy. You always think of the worst, but try to think positively. She is powerful, and the monsters are no match for her. If she starts attacking, she'll turn them to ashes with her silver flames." "I know, but the monsters aren't the only thing that worries me. She'll see her brother and sister again, and we don't know when they might attack again." "You have a point, but I don't believe Enzo is incapable of doing anything.

If he prevents it, the bond they share will protect them. Abril has defeated Cira before; if she crosses her path again, I'm sure she can do it once more." Cassian's words eased some of Alessandro's anxiety. "Thank you, Cas. You always know how to calm me down." "That's what brothers are for," Cassian replied with a reassuring smile. Shortly after Enzo left the room, a servant entered to guide them to their quarters. The three of them were close together, and their shared presence was a comfort in enemy territory; they did not think it wise to separate.

Before entering his room, Sirius turned to them. "If you need anything, don't shout unless you're dying. Right now, I just want to take a good bath and rest." He said it jokingly, but Abril and Taren understood the underlying seriousness of his words. "If anything unusual happens, just shout," Taren said. When the servant opened the door, Taren and Sirius entered first, checking the room for any signs of danger while pretending to admire its beauty. "I hope our rooms are as lovely as this," Sirius remarked.

Abril entered confidently, and Taren and Sirius began to praise the room with exaggerated compliments, ensuring they all felt at ease. After that, the servant informed them they could request anything they desired; they only had to call for assistance. As the servant left, Abril felt a wave of exhaustion wash over her. She sat on the bed, which was so soft that for a moment she contemplated lying down, closing her eyes, and sleeping like a log. But she remembered how abruptly their last communication had ended, and she knew Alessandro must be worried.

She took the collar from her pocket, placing it around her neck, and began to call for Alessandro, thinking of him as she spoke his name. "Alessandro, are you there?" Alessandro had been wearing his collar all the time. When he heard Abril's voice, it felt as though a great weight had been lifted, allowing him to breathe again. "Aby, are you alright?" he asked, his voice filled with relief. "Yes, I'm fine." "I was so worried. I tried to reach you, but you didn't respond. What happened?" "We were caught up in a commotion in the streets, which is why I couldn't communicate.

And don't argue with me about why I had it in my bag instead of wearing it." "Listen," he said, feeling relieved that nothing terrible had happened. "Thank God you're okay. I thought something had gone wrong." "I'm sorry for worrying you." "I believe it's partly my fault. I should



have made sure you knew that the collar only works if you wear it. I'll keep it on at all times from now on." "Good. By the way, I'm in the palace of Laios." "How did it all turn out?" "Everything is fine on my end. Please have faith; I trust you completely." "I do too, but right now, I don't know what I can do.

You need me to secure your kingdom." "Just be careful. We don't know if you could be helping your sister." "Don't worry, I will." "I hope to see you soon." Abril longed to be with her family in Laios, but she knew it would take a little longer to reunite with them. Feeling melancholic, she replied, "I hope to see you soon, my love."

229

Abril had been speaking with Alessandro, trying to calm his anxiety and fears. She wanted to sleep, but she also needed to use the bathroom. She rose from the place beside the bed. "I'm here to help," she said, her voice steady. Abril knew that one of the servants, Liona, would take care of her when she needed it. It was a nefarious thing, she thought, to rely on someone who had made her life more miserable than it already was. Liona had heard that servants were important and should be treated with respect. However, when she saw the person who loved her, she turned her back.

Even though the color of Liona's hair was different, Abril recognized her immediately. "What do you want?" Liona asked, her voice laced with illness. Abril noticed the contemptuous attitude Liona wore like a cloak. She supposed Liona thought she could play the part of a forgotten princess, just like a neglected wife, hoping to become a beloved queen. Abril approached her, determination in her eyes. "Do you know that you are a servant?" "Who?" Liona replied, her tone defiant. "I have a question for you. Do you know that you are a servant?" Abril pressed, her voice firm.

Liona responded with a towering arrogance, "You think I should bow my head before someone of greater status? Do you want me to punish you?" "You've already gone mad!" Abril snapped, frustration bubbling to the surface. Abril wanted to teach Liona a lesson, to make her understand her place. "No, I just want to discipline a servant who doesn't know where her place is," she said, her voice cold. Abril had always despised Liona, believing her to be without magic, just a useless burden. But perhaps she was wrong.

Liona was no longer the dizzy and naive princess; she was a woman who, despite her brave appearance, held her dignity and power. With a flick of her wrist, Abril conjured a fireball that enveloped Liona. The flames danced around her, and Liona screamed, panic overtaking her. "Those flames only affect monsters or those consumed by darkness," Abril thought, watching as Liona writhed in fear. Abril felt a pang of confusion; there was no trace of darkness in Liona.

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Just then, the door burst open, and Sirius and Taren stormed into the room, their eyes widening at the sight of Liona covered in flames. "What's going on here?" Sirius demanded, taking in the scene. Abril extinguished the flames, exasperated. "I was just educating this servant," she replied, her voice laced with irritation. "Monstrous! You're a monster!" Liona

screamed, trying to flee, but Abril blocked her path. "Is this how you treat guests?" Sirius questioned, his brow furrowed. "She must have lost her mind," Taren added, glancing at Liona.

"I'm in charge of ensuring she receives appropriate punishment, if you allow it." Abril was not someone to be trifled with, but she was also not one to be overly kind, especially not to Liona. "Do what you want," she said, grabbing Liona by the arm and dragging her out of the room. Once alone, Sirius turned to Abril. "Is this girl afraid of darkness?" "Yes, but my flames do not harm humans; they purify them. Perhaps she is so rotten inside that my flames affect her," Abril replied, her voice steady. "Are you sure there are no traces of darkness?

No monsters?" Sirius pressed, concern etched on his face. "There is darkness within her own heart," Abril stated, her gaze unwavering. "Then why does she scream?" Sirius was taken aback by Abril's words, her insight striking him. "She was supposed to take care of me," Abril continued, her tone softening slightly. "But she never increased her efforts; on the contrary, she made my life miserable." "Imagine that you were someone spiteful," Sirius mused. "I am human. Just because I act with light doesn't mean I'm a saint.

Occasionally, I too want to be driven by my emotions," Abril replied, her voice tinged with frustration. Sirius shook his head, heading towards the exit. "You seek more attention than you deserve," he teased lightly. "Don't worry, I have no intention of doing that," Abril said, her thoughts drifting to Taren, who was nearby. As she contemplated her next move, she felt utterly exhausted. She returned to the blanket beside her bed, wishing for a servant who would fulfill her duties correctly. The dungeons were the worst place anyone could be sent, and Liona was being taken there.

She knew she would face punishment for her actions, but she never imagined she would end up in the dungeons. Panic set in as she screamed for mercy. "Silence! You've brought this upon yourself," one of the guards snapped, slapping her. Liona had always been despised by Abril, and she thought her actions would never be forgiven. But there was something wrong; Abril was mistaken, and someone else could be ignored. Liona screamed in fear of being struck again, tears streaming down her cheeks. They entered the dungeons, the damp, rotten smell assaulting her senses.

As she walked through the dark corridors, she heard the cries of the lost souls trapped within, begging for death. "Please, let me go," she pleaded, but one of the guards held her shoulders firmly. "Don't hold back; keep moving forward," he commanded. With trembling legs, Liona continued, her heart racing as they approached the cells. The darkness loomed around her, and she tried to resist entering, planting her feet firmly as she begged to be spared.

230

The guards closed the cell door behind them, taking with them the flickering light of the lanterns and leaving behind a suffocating darkness. Lying in the cold sweat of that hideous cell, Alessandro kissed Princess Abril, feeling a surge of hatred mixed with longing for what she had done. "Compared to Liona, she was very kind," he thought, recalling how Abril had treated him with respect. She had prepared his bath and provided him with a change of clean clothes, even bringing delicious food. Afterward, she had retired to let him rest.

Abril slept for only a few hours before a servant awakened her, saying that the king required her presence. Before following the servant to the throne room, she steeled herself, knowing she would need to support her brother. Enzo was waiting for her next to a tall man with long blond hair and brown eyes, who regarded her with a respectful demeanor. He bowed slightly as she approached. "Greetings, Your Majesty. I am Hans Boroski," he introduced himself. "Is there something wrong?" Abril asked, her brow furrowing with concern.

"Yes, they are my right hand, so you need not worry about him," Hans assured her. "Does anyone else know my identity?" she pressed. "No, they are the only ones who know, aside from ourselves. The others are dead, with the exception of the servant locked in the dungeons. We have no time for useless questions; we must prepare our weapons and be ready to defend the kingdom tonight." Abril remained silent, noting the genuine concern etched on his face for the citizens of their realm. She used her magic to bless each weapon in the room, watching as they glowed faintly with her power.

"Yes, I can distribute these weapons among your soldiers," she confirmed. "That was quick. Are you sure it will work?" Hans asked, skepticism creeping into his tone. "I assure you it will work. If you don't believe me, you can put it to the test this evening," she replied confidently. Enzo had been in a desperate fight, one he could not afford to lose. He felt torn, unsure whether to trust his sister completely, but he had no choice but to believe in her. "Hans, distribute these weapons among the soldiers. Tonight, we will face the monsters," Enzo commanded. Hans bowed again.

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"As you wish, Your Majesty. I will take care of it." Afterward, they gathered the blessed swords and daggers, securing them within their clothing. Enzo turned to Abril and asked, "When will you regain all your power?" "Why do you ask? To close the Hades Rift, I will need all my strength. The cry is not small, and I need to know when it will end," she replied, her voice steady. "The darkness and your monsters are strong. I tried to do it tomorrow, but I want to see the Rift with my own eyes," he insisted. "We can go now if you wish to visit the asylum," Abril offered.

"Yes, let's go," he agreed, though he warned her, "This place can double the spirit of men. If your friends accompany you, they may not return as they were." Sirius was strong, and Taren shared his confidence. "We will be fine. If you haven't been controlled by darkness, neither will we," Taren assured them. "What if your decision was made without you? After all, you don't see them," Enzo challenged. Abril felt a pang of concern. Enzo had never been corrupted by the dark, and she asked him, "Have you ever tried to control it?" "Why would I try to control you?"

You must have a strong spirit to deny it. The darkness will always be there, offering you what you desire most. If you're not careful, you could end up as one of its puppets," he warned. They emerged from the armory, making their way through the palace corridors until Enzo stopped before a black, locked door. "This is the entrance. I advise you to separate," he cautioned. Standing before the door, which loomed like a shadow, Abril shivered. She could feel the malevolence lurking behind it.

When Enzo unlocked the door, she braced herself, knowing that whatever lay beyond was unlikely to be good. As the door creaked open, a wave of dark energy hit her like a physical force. She instinctively summoned her flames, wrapping them around her brother and herself, shielding them from the encroaching darkness. "Don't worry; my flames repel the darkness. I can protect you if you wish," she offered. "I'd rather not go up in flames," he replied, a hint of humor in his voice. "You are a fire user. What do you fear?" she teased. "That you might kill me," he shot back.

"I remind you that I didn't kill you, just as you didn't kill me," Abril said, raising her hand to show him the red mark that bound them. Enzo looked at her, his expression softening as he accepted her offer. "This is fine. I hope you embrace your flames, but it's worth noting that you don't seem worried at all." "You were a Venobich once. Tears don't hide the darkness within you," she replied, taking his hand and wrapping it in her flames. To her surprise, they did not harm him. "You seem surprised, sister. Did you think the flames would affect me?" he asked, amusement dancing in his eyes.

"Not at all," she admitted. Enzo stepped through the door, leading them down a spiral staircase illuminated by silver flames. Despite the darkness surrounding them, Abril was astonished to find the atmosphere calm. "I thought this place would be full of monsters," she remarked. "There are no monsters here in physical form. Something changed a few months ago," he explained. "The first time I entered this place, I was with Cira. One of those sinless monsters took possession of her. You could feel their presence crawling in the dark, but now...

it's as if they've escaped," Abril recalled, her mind racing. "Do you think Cira released them?" Enzo asked. "I don't know," she replied, anxiety creeping into her voice. "If Cira screams now, and if she leaves this place..." Her words trailed off, the weight of their situation settling heavily between them.