311 THE STOLEN JEWELRY

Maria used the second alternative that her mother had informed if Red had declined her offer, 1

Once she got to her bedroom, she made an invisible stitch on her husband's favorite tunic,

She knew how much he loved wearing it and she knew that it would be important to her cause,

Her mother had given her a needle that was made of dark magic,

Maria had never for once used dark magic, but her mother had dabbled in it,

"Take this," Her mother said, "When the whore refuses to accept and leave the pack, you will use this needle to sew a strand of your husband's hair together with yours on his favorite clothe,"

"What do you mean when? How sure are you that she would not take my first offer?" Maria asked

"Because I am a woman and I know what woman can do" Her mother said,

And sure enough Red had declined her offer.

"And what will it do?" Maria had asked.

"Your husband will turn away from her and face you." Her mother promised.

She sewed the strands of their hair together so neatly that it was barely visible.

And then she folded his clothes back in its place.

He joined her in bed when it was already past one at night and Maria could not help feeling the betrayal and deceit in her chest.

She knew that he was coming back from that whore's room.

A few days after she had made the stitch, Maria could barely see any changes.

It was still the same and especially with his attention on Red.

And then one day the opportunity prevented itself.

Word came in that they were having trouble with some lawless wolves who were encroaching on their own territory.

Bale had left it to his gamma but it seemed that it had become worse.

And now since the day that he had brought Red to the pack, he was now forced to leave.

Maria watched as he wore his clothes in their bedroom.

It was almost dawn and he was leaving early.

"I shall return." He promised her as he bent down and kissed her cheek.

"I will be waiting here my love." She informed him.

And then she watched as he walked out of the bedroom.

This was her time to shine.

She hurriedly rushed to her bedroom balcony and watched as he left with his men.

She waited for about an hour when she was certain for sure that he had truly left.

And then she went into her bedroom and got dressed.

She made sure to look her finest.

She wanted to feel and look more beautiful than the bitch when she was doing what she did.

She marched to Red's bedroom and the door

was barged open by her guards.

Red jumped up a frown on her face.

Urma was together with Red too.

Maria should have known.

The old hag would be here with her, she had never for once liked Maria and neither had Maria liked her in return.

"What is the meaning of all of this?" Red demanded.

Maria looked at her and then nodded at the men.

"Search her things." Maria said.

The men proceeded to disrupt everything that had been put into place.

Urma marched up to Maria.

"Seize this nonsense!" Urma warned her. "How dare you just come into her bedroom and tear the place down." 1

Maria ignored her and turned her face to the men.

"Tear the place down if need be." Maria instructed.

Urma grabbed Maria's arm and hurled her to

face her.

"How dare you do this?" Urma demanded. "In what grounds are you carrying out such search."

Maria jerked her arm free. "If you just know. My most prized jewel is missing."

Urma's face fell sour. "What makes you think that she stole it? It is obvious you misplaced it."

Maria twisted her face. "I received word that someone saw her enter my room when no one was within."

"That is a lie!" Red jumped up. "I have never ever stolen anything in my entire life. Neither have I stepped into your bedroom."

"And then why would someone lie against you? What could you have to offer that would make them create such a lie about you?" Maria demanded.

"I have no idea but-

Red groaned and her hands went to her stomach.

"Easy my child." Urma told Red. And then Urma looked up at Maria. "She is unwell. You need to stop this nonsense. Your jewelry is not here. If

your husband was here he would never allow it."

Maria gave a wicked smile. "Thank the gods you said if he were here. But he Is not here is he?"

Urma's face was filled with rage and anger as she held Red.

Maria turned her face away from their pitiful show.

"My lady." A guard called out.

He walked to them and handed her a sparking diamond necklace .

"My NECKLACE!" Maria gasped. "You found it!"

She collected it and held it to her chest.

"I have never seen that necklace in my life!" Red swore.

"Don't worry. She set it up." Urma said looking at Maria dead in the eye.

Then Maria looked at her guards. "Arrest her."

"No." Red said.

The guards went to them and forcefully separated the two women.

They roughly grabbed Red.

"The punishment for theft in our pack, is fifty lashes." Maria stated. "And eventual exile."

"You truly do not mean to do that to her! She is pregnant!" Urma gasped in shock. "She will not survive it. And deep down you know that she had nothing to do with it."

Maria put her head well up on her shoulders. "There are no exceptions for the pack laws. She will received her punishment as expected of her. Take her away."

And to the greatest horror of the women present Red was dragged away while saying that she had nothing to do with it.

"How can you be so wicked to your fellow woman?" Urma demanded.

"You have zero idea how wicked I am." Maria assured her and walked away with a smile stamped on her face. 1