

The Alpha King's Claim chapter 51

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Serena

"Then, I'll kiss you back."

I flung my arms around his neck and pulled him to me. He followed my lead and claimed my lips once more.

As promised, I reciprocated his ardor. Our tongue sparred. Our mouths molded. I couldn't breathe properly, but again, I didn't care. He was my oxygen. The longer we kissed, the more alive I felt.

I couldn't really describe how good it was to finally set my desire free. From my sexual dreams with him to the real yearning from deep within my heart, I was certain I was on the right path. Never mind the fact that we were in different worlds. Never mind the fact that he was a werewolf and me, a human. Never mind the fact that he hated women. We both wanted each other and that was enough.

His hands moved to cup my breasts. They were already aching to be attended. With his thumbs, he pressed my nipples again and rolled them in an excruciatingly delicious fashion.

I bit his bottom lip as an impulsive response. Goddammit, it was making me go wild.

He stopped our kiss to hike down to my neck and again, with his tongue, he lapped me from my throat up to my chin. I shivered at the contact. Such a sensation was exquisite. Maybe it was a special skill learned from being a wolf?

His hands stopped kneading my breasts. I groaned in disappointment, but he soon replaced it with his mouth. I honestly felt like mush when he sucked on one breast. His tongue was divine on my nipple. The way he flicked it, circled it, sucked it hard—I was easily addicted. Then, he moved to the other and did the same thing all over again.

I buried my hands in his fine locks. It was the only thing I could do as he ate me.

He continued his exploration of my body; caressing every part of me like I was a damned goddess, and when I said, every part of me, I meant it. The water didn't hinder him from taking his full share of the meal. I watched with lazy lids as he slowly dipped underwater and venerated my core. I was a moaning mess the whole time.

Honestly, I didn't know how long the king could hold his breath, but he took his time there: spreading my legs, licking my folds, sucking my clit, gratifying me on a whole different level. The pressure of my womb reached its peak. It wanted

release, but I didn't give it. I wanted to explode with him. Preferably his cock inside me.

By the time he resurfaced, he was a holy vision. Water dribbling from his dark locks created runnels on his bare chest. My hands hastened to feel his muscles: his hard obliques and quads, and his V cut that managed to peek past his black pants. With my palm, I felt the drumming of his heart against his rib cage too. It was perfectly in sync with mine.

"Serena," he stared at me with lust-filled eyes, "I want you. Now."

Reacting to his declaration, I reached out to press my hand on his bulge. I felt him stiffen and sadistic as it may be, I relished it.

I relished the fact that I was his first. I relished the fact that I could do precious things to him that no woman has ever done. Call me a first-timer too yes, but that didn't mean I didn't have the basic DNA of procreation. That didn't mean I didn't have the carnal instincts embedded in me. Just like any other woman, I craved for a man too, and who I craved was the King of Phanteon. My husband.

"Then take me, my king," I urged, squeezing the bulge as hard as I could.

A deep growl emerged at the back of his throat.

I helped him unbutton his pants. He pushed it down in one swift motion, effectively releasing his cock that had long been detained. Long been restricted to a woman's warmth.

Staring at it with my mouth open, I couldn't help but think just how much I wanted it inside me.

"Please..." I whimpered, wrapping his shaft with my hand and pointing the blunt tip towards my abdomen. My mark flared up and a pleasing sensation formed around my wrist. I was taken aback. It seemed it was agreeing with my desire too. It was seconding with what I want.

King Aero kissed me back. He wrapped his arms around me, lifted me up, and pressed me against the boulder. Naturally, I wrapped my legs around him, making sure I wouldn't fall, but just like that his cock and my folds met.

"God," he grunted, "damn," and I immediately saw his jaw tense up. "Fuck."

I cupped his face and gently, brushed his lips as a way of a tease. "Chickening out now?"

"Never," he snapped and with just a slight shift of his hips, his cock entered me full and thick.

"Ahhhh!" I cried out whilst squeezing my eyes shut. The fullness of his cock was consuming me, stretching me. The pain was there, but it was so faint, I couldn't

almost feel it. I had great belief the healing properties of the hot spring was the one responsible.

Strong as he was as the Alpha King, he stabilized me effortlessly against the boulder. I didn't worry about falling at all.

"What are you doing to me?" he asked, slowly pulling his cock from inside me, and then, thrusting it in in a very deliciously painful fashion.

We were both locked up with the pleasurable sensation; our foreheads pressing together, our breaths mixing into one.

"Aero..." I muttered, feeling weak, feeling full, feeling blessed with his cock.
"Oh!"

I threw my head back and huffed, unable to contain the roiling emotions inside me as he moved again.

"Fu...ck..." I heard him say.

Panting, I returned to gazing at this handsome man who was squeezing his eyes shut, knotting his brows, clenching his jaw, and just trying to indulge with the pleasure of us becoming one. He was a picture of one pussy-whipped king.

"Move, please," I ordered, but my hips undulated anyway.

"Arghh," I heard him grunt at the movement. "Fuck, Serena, you feel so good."

"And the same goes to you," I replied, panting again. "Move, my king. Thrust deeper inside me."

He didn't disappoint. With my encouragement, he penetrated me again and again, and again with each thrust closer to the promise of an explosion.

I grabbed his shoulders as tightly as I could and cried out another string of erotic sounds. My god, he was so long, so thick that I just couldn't keep myself from praising it through moans.

"Aero!"

He smashed his mouth on mine, inserting his tongue, muffling my moans, but he couldn't contain me for long.

"Oh god!" I cried out, as I sensed my orgasm looming. "Oh...my...ahhh!"

And I reached it. Basked in it with each breath.

My stomach somersaulted when I felt his mouth on my throat again. He continued pumping upwards, deeper than before. I felt his balls slapping at my

inner thigh, felt his grip on my waist tighten. And then, he followed me with a powerful orgasm of his own.

Hot semen spurt inside me. I clenched my inner walls milking it more. His chest vibrated at the action, liking what I did. I wasn't sure if this was a good idea, having unprotected sex and all, but I guess it was too late to think about that now.

"Fuck, this is better than my dreams," he murmured; releasing a long sigh near my ear.

I bit my lips and chuckled. "Yes, I agree."

We stayed still, just catching our breaths, just feeling how close we had gotten together. Oddly enough, I didn't feel his cock softening. It was still thick and hard inside me.

Minutes later, he withdrew slightly and lowered me on the water. Our intimate connection was cut off and in that instant, I felt a large void fill my core. I wanted his cock back.

I must admit, this man had ruined me the perfect way I wanted him to.

"If you want to continue bathing—"

"No," I interjected and held his elbow, "bath with me, please. It's lonely here."

He lowered his lashes and contemplated something.

"I might...take you again," he feebly stated, acting like a shy high schoolboy.

My cheeks warmed up. Damn it, he was going to say that after taking me raw and rough?

I pressed my breasts against his chest and palmed his jaw. "Then take me, Aero. I want you to."

He grabbed a handful of my hair and pulled it down. It wasn't painful, but he did prove his point. He was definitely holding back on ravishing me more.

"I have deprived myself of a woman's touch, Serena, too damn long. Don't say I didn't warn you."

Fortunately for me, this didn't scare me at all.

"I'll take whatever you could give me, Aero. Come at me."

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Aero

What was intended to be an hour of swimming turned to an all-out intimate tryst until midnight. The snow moon's first phase didn't influence me. It was all me. All my accumulated desire for her freed in one night.

As a man who hadn't touched a woman before, I was half-crazed, half-tempted to fuck her the whole night long, but I reminded myself she was a human. She was easily breakable, so preciously fragile, so I settled for four...four magnificent love makings: three inside the cave where I usually spend my time after court meetings and the last one, on her chamber.

The hot spring cave was my little solace. Now, I had shared it with another and with a woman, her, no less. I couldn't be happier.

On our second, I stripped myself of the confining pants and soaked boots. Fully naked, I took her under the waterfall, in a hidden area where a slab of rock slanted. Warm water rushed behind her. It muffled her screams of ecstasy for awhile, screams that I preferred only I could enjoy.

The third was in the same area, but this time, I was half lying on a different slab of rock with her straddling me. She took charge. Impaled herself on my erection with her face writhing in passion. Her supple breasts, the ones I used to sneer at, became my favorite dessert. She obviously liked the sensations whenever I gave it the royal treatment. Together, we rode the wave of orgasm, reaching to new heights I had never been before.

I must admit, this was a million times better than jerking myself off.

Finally deciding to return to the castle, we both left the blessed cave. I didn't transport us back to the castle using my ability to hop realms. I decided we return the same way we did when we went to Mount Thersa—her riding me. There was something delicate and special when she rode my wolf. Something that just seemed right.

Serena was kind enough to fold our clothes—my black pants and her riding dress—preferring not to leave it and soil nature. She embraced it before she climbed up on my back. Afterward, I ran and ran as a new wolf...a mated wolf.

With my shirt, she was protected by the elements and with my fur, she was warmed as I ran back to the castle. Once there, I immediately jumped to her balcony and entered her bedroom. In there, we did our fourth tryst of the night.

Slightly damp from swimming, I threaded her hair with my fingers just as I claimed her lips. She moaned under her breath and parted her mouth wider for my easier access.

This time, I undressed her, taking off my shirt that was three sizes bigger for her small frame. Slowly, I unbuttoned it, and slowly, I caressed her neck.

Her hand, probably impatient, wrapped my erection. Using her thumb, she teased the head and in reaction, I growled.

"You're so sensitive, my king," she chuckled, returning my words that I used to define her earlier.

"I'm not sensitive. Your hand is just wicked," I sermoned.

"Oh yes?" she teased, grinning up at me.

"Yes," I muttered, grinning back. It was my time to punish her wickedness.

Her feet left the floor when I lifted her up. She wrapped her legs around me and once again, our sex contacted. The feel of her softness against my cock was driving me crazy. I wanted to take her right there and then; however, I resisted the temptation. Pleasuring her was my top priority.

In the king-sized bed, we sank: her, perfectly under me while I hovered above. I recaptured her lips, made most of our mouth fucking before I pulled back and knelt in between her legs.

With no water to restrain me this time, I hooked my arm underneath her calf and then pulled one leg up. As her ankle appropriately leveled with my face, I then ran my tongue slowly up to her knee.

"Aero...oh..." she whimpered.

Hearing this, my chest swelled with pride. I was doing it right. I was hitting her sensitive spots.

To continue, I worked my way up to her inner thigh: sucking on every inch of her skin along my path and leaving hickeys for as many as I could. She squirmed underneath me and sang more erotic sounds.

Closer to her center, my nostrils flared, indulging on her sweet scent that I had longed for since that particular morning. Due to the water earlier, I could never gauge just how soaking wet she was. Now spread wide for me in the bed, I could, plus more.

Thrusting my tongue out, it hit right at her center, specifically on her clit that had been throbbing nonstop. A hard suck twice and a heavy lick thrice, she belted out my name.

"Aero!"

Encouraged with this, I did a continuous cycle. She arched her back in reflex and clamped her legs around my head.

“Ahhh! Oh god—ahhh!”

I claimed her cum that moment. She was gushing and I was eager to lap it all.

Funny how much I avoided her in the past when she was the answer to my self-imposed suffering.

My wrist mark, like how I expected it to react, warmed up to favor our union. It was giving me an ache that was nowhere near painful. No doubt, Serena was feeling the same too and I had a sudden epiphany because of this.

I hated the mark back then, now I was more than happy to be its receiving end.

“Save your voice, my queen. I’m not done yet,” I told her whilst kneeling back.

Looking all spent up and flushed red, she weakly stared at me and said, “Is the Alpha King tireless?”

I smirked at her. “I already warned you, didn’t I?”

She moistened her lips and blinked. “I thought you were just bluffing.”

“No,” I shook my head and looked at her darkly. “I don’t bluff.” My hands traveled down her inner thigh wherein once there, my right hand thumbed her clit while the other positioned my cock at her entrance. “Especially with you.”

With one swift motion, I entered her. We both cried out at the glorious feeling. The fullness of my cock inside her; her pussy so tight against mine, it was all the same as the first time, yet it had a special quality of its own.

“Aero! Ah!” she sharply cried out when I started moving. Back and forth, inch by inch, it was blowing my mind.

I stooped low and crushed her lips, unable to contain myself with how good she was making me feel. She reciprocated me, touched my tensed jaw even as gently as she could. She told me she was under my mercy, but no, I had to argue with that. In reality, it was the other way around.

As minutes ticked by, the pressure deep inside me grew. I sensed that she was the same.

“Aero, I’m close!” she cried out. “I’m so close!”

And I was too.

Releasing an animalistic sound, I quickened my pace, gave her powerful thrusts that drove us both insane.

Then, we both came.

I felt her stiffen. I felt her juice released all over my cock and groin while I was in my own share of bliss too.

All my foreplay had culminated into one powerful explosion. My mind blanked for awhile. My nerves snapped and reconnected itself. My whole body shook at every wave of ecstasy I felt and because of this, I reached another realization:

Pleasuring myself was child's play. The real deal was so much better. Her pussy was so much better.

Feeling supremely satisfied, my large frame occupied her left side when I lay beside her.

"Sleep, my queen. I'll grant you this much tonight," I said whilst brushing a rogue lock off of her face.

"Stay?" she looked up at me with half-lidded eyes and gave me a small smile.

I inched forward and placed a gentle kiss on her forehead. I thought it would be hard to do that super simple gesture considering I had never done that to anybody, but...doing it to her, it just came easy. Almost natural.

"I will," I said and returned to my side of the pillow.

That night, I received the best sleep of my entire life.

Sunlight had already passed through Serena's sheer curtains when I woke up. Lying supine, I blinked my sleep away and stared at the dome-shaped ceiling. I had forgotten this room was specifically built under my father's order for my future wife. I used to scoff at the notion whenever he brought it up with me, but huh, look what had happened now. My father must have been laughing on his grave.

Releasing a long sigh, I redirected my attention to the very reason for my downfall.

Her. Serena.

She was still sleeping so peacefully, her face and body angled towards me. Her nakedness was covered by the duvet. I remembered arranging it on her at one point in the night. I was tempted to take her again at that time, but I was a man of my word, so I behaved.

Now, I was highly tempted again, so with a groan, I slipped out of her bed and went directly to her bathroom to take a very cold shower.

By the time I returned to her bedroom, I was refreshed, but to my dismay, my cock was still sporting a half-mast. It was quite visible under the white towel I wrapped around my waist.

I found Serena already awake and not only that, she was standing near the window, against the sunlight, with half her body—the intimate parts specifically—covered in thin linen, secured by her right hand. Her hair fell neatly behind her, covering her naked back.

She was smiling when she looked at me, it was enchanting, but what really caught my notice was her left hand hanging in the air with two rainbow-colored shimmering insects perched on her pointy finger. They were the same bugs that troubled me in the past few days, the same bugs that I saw in Ehnrelil. Five more were flying towards her coming from the half-open balcony door. This confused me.

“Good morning, Your Majesty,” she greeted, putting her hand down, showing not an ounce of irritation with the winged creatures’ presence.

“Good morning, my queen,” I replied, trying to keep myself from frowning.

Confidently, I strode towards her. She blushed when finally she noticed the scarcity of my dress and in effect, the erection that it hid.

“You are friends with these bugs?” I asked whilst tipping her chin up with my finger.

She parted her lips and stared at my mouth, showing her eagerness for something. I knew exactly what it was.

“I’d like to think so. I feel at ease with them,” she replied.

“Hmm, I must confess. I wanted to thank one of your friends. It served me well one time.” I combed my fingers through her hair, remembering our first morning sleeping together; my first morning tasting her. She reacted by closing her eyes and raising her head more towards me.

“I’m curious as to the story,” she murmured, tipping the corners of her mouth up.

I lowered my head and whispered the words in her ear, “Let’s just say the bug brought us closer.” My other hand found her waist, pressed her closer to me, and gave her a morning kiss-turned passionate and needy.

“I want...you...Serena,” I drawled to say in between kisses.

She hummed first, then awarded me a grin when she withdrew. “I would need to shower first though.”

“Let me bring you to the bathroom then.”

'Brother, where the hell are you? I need to talk to you now,' Elijah, with impeccable timing, connected in my mind.

Fuck. There goes my blessed morning.

'I'll see you in the war room,' I answered, inwardly groaning at the same time. In front of me, Serena patiently waited, but she seemed to notice my inattention.

"Its Elijah, he—"

"I know," she butted in. "I figured as much you brothers know how to telepathically communicate. If you have to go, I won't stop you."

"I won't take long," I said, stroking her plump lips.

"It's okay. I understand. You are the king after all. In the meantime, I'll check on the fire victims."

The bugs returned to perch on her bare shoulder. I was jealous for a moment, but I reminded myself they were just harmless insects. However, I couldn't shake off the feeling that their presence in my kingdom and their attraction to Serena meant something.

I knew I had to closely monitor this.

"I'll have William and Rhea accompany you. Don't overdo your duties again or else we will be returning to the hot springs," I stated.

She gave me a cheeky smile. "To cure my weary muscles or to add more hickeys on my thigh?"

"Both," I frankly stated.

She bit her lip, lowered her lids to look at my bulge, and nodded. "I'll be sure to put that in mind, Your Majesty."

I clenched my hands when I left her room, teleporting myself to my chamber to choose a wardrobe. Whatever the crown prince was about to tell me, it had better be good, or else he'd kiss his junior goodbye.

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Aero

Transporting myself inside the war room, a deep scowl was already etched on my face. Elijah was already sitting in one of the chairs of the oval table, dressed still in his travel clothes. Agotta, or the realm of the witches, was a fifteen-day ride by horseback and five days lesser when traveled in wolf form. There were two gates through it when a visitor wishes to cross. It cuts the travel time in just a day, but even then, it would still cost the traveler tired muscles and a whole lot of migraine.

That was exactly the second reason why I didn't want to visit that place. The first was simply because that realm was filled with women. The first and last time I visited Agotta was with my father when I was young. Like Ehnrelil, I couldn't stomach how glimmering and bright their world looked.

Elijah had volunteered to be my vassal when dealing with the witches and I was under the impression he had enjoyed each of his visits there. Our magical food and the ability to be already wearing clothes post-shift were one of the many gifts given to him by the witches. Of course, despite my refusal, he talked me into accepting them for the benefit of the general 'were' community.

Staring at him now, he didn't look like he suffered complications post-travel, but he wasn't the usual jovial man either.

"Speak," I started, my voice almost sounding like a growl. I sat at the head chair and glared at him, ready to execute my anger at a moment's notice. "But I'll warn you ahead, Elijah, make your report count."

"Oww, someone is stingy this morning," he feigned hurt, wincing, but then he threw a toothy grin at me.

I stand corrected. It seemed his playful side was still intact.

"What now? Did you and Queen Serena bicker again?" he asked.

My sour expression didn't change, but at the back of my head, I snickered at his remark. Oh, we did bicker alright and more. So much more.

"What news have you brought me?" I asked him again, diverting his attention from the sensitive subject. He didn't need to know Serena and I consummated our so-called fake marriage. If he did, he'd likely pester and tease me with how quick I caved in.

Elijah, clueless, leaned forward towards the table and released a long sigh.

"I got good and bad news for you. Which—"

"The good," I interjected, preferring to set aside the nitty-gritty parts for later.

"Well," he broke into a smile. "Lady Yllana and the Order of Witches met with me. The good news is they didn't suspect us killing the three witches despite finding

them in our realm. They understood our side and they are willing to help with regards to the investigation.”

Hmm, that’s wasn’t painful to hear.

“And the bad?” I asked, continuing to frown.

“We did the autopsy of the bodies and Lady Yllana used a spell to see their past and mayhap, see the face of the killer, but it was to no avail. There seems to be a force hiding the truth. She said the power was either ancient or novel, something she needed more time researching.”

I frowned even more. This definitely wasn’t a good sign.

“And another thing brother,” Elijah continued, making a serious face, “one of the killed witches was an elemental witch. She uses fire.”

“Fire?” My brow arched.

“Yes,” he nodded. “I heard the market of Cirelles was half engulfed in flames yesterday. Do you think it could be connected?”

“I am yet to meet with General Halcynos, William, and Alpha Aaron, but all possibilities are taken into consideration, Elijah,” I answered, clenching my jaw in anger.

He looked at me somewhat taken aback; his arms crossed while he gave me a raised brow.

“I thought you already attended to this problem yesterday? It is unlike you to put a matter like this for another day.”

I lowered my lashes and subtly stared at the bulge on my pants. “I was...preoccupied.”

“Hmm, well, I am not surprised,” he shook his head as if he was disappointed. “With you still rejecting the queen, it is no wonder you would try your best to avoid her, thereby avoiding your duties in the castle too. You’d probably turn out to be an old and lonely wolf in the future.”

Again, my subconscious side laughed. Oh, what would my dear brother say when he finds out the truth?

“What I want to know is how the witches and that murderer arrived in our realm,” I went on and huffed. “Farryl must have been slacking in her responsibilities as the guardian of our gate.”

“I can’t blame her,” he shrugged his shoulders. “You’re being hardheaded with your hate on women, Aero. In return, she hates you for it.” But then, he also released a long sigh and sank on his chair. “However, despite this, she had taken

the oath to protect Phanteon. Could there be a possibility she didn't know of this just like what happened in the past with that dead vampire?"

I groaned at the unwelcomed memory of the past. Roughly twenty years ago, a female vampire was found dead on the outskirts of Trevana, a town west of my manor. Since I was near, I personally attended on the matter. Two days old, skin, muscles, and bones eaten by worms, and with a face that looked like dried plum — those were my first observations on the corpse once I saw it. The second was the bite marks on her neck, like a wolf's, and scratch marks on her body which again looked like from a wolf's.

I personally delivered the corpse to Kerus. A trial was made thereafter. Obviously, I pleaded not guilty on behalf of Phanteon and my people's innocence was proven. In the end, this case was placed on a standstill. No other evidence was found and just like the dead witches now, the spell of seeing the past proved to be a failure. The killer was certainly making sure its identity wouldn't be tracked down.

"Farryl claims innocence and was proven by the council of guardians," I stated, returning to our conversation. "I hope she remains innocent on this 'witch matter' or else I will personally deliver her death."

"I will talk to her, brother, leave it to me," Elijah volunteered.

I nodded.

"See to it that that happens, and while you're at it, schedule an audience with the guardian of Ehnrelil. I have an important matter to discuss with him."

With that, thoughts of the mysterious insects around Serena occupied me. I couldn't ignore their presence anymore.

"I'll do that," he agreed.

"The evidence we have so far leads me to believe someone is trying to frame us on the death of the witches," I said in a grim tone. "If the queen wasn't there to witness it, we would have one great misunderstanding with the Order."

"We dodged war with Agotta, brother," Elijah remarked with a sigh, "all thanks to Queen Serena."

The corner of my mouth quirked up. Pride filling up my chest.

"Yes, she is a blessing in disguise..."

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Serena

Once King Aero left, I went for a bath. True that I would have preferred him with me, but of course, I couldn't be selfish. The kingdom needed him and as their fake-now-turned-real queen, I got to practice sharing.

Looking at myself in the mirror afterward, I couldn't keep myself from sighing. There were lots and I mean lots of hickeys all over my body proof that what happened to us last night was real. Proof that I yielded to him and to my desires. Finally.

Making love with him felt so good, so right. So complete. I could never regret giving in to him. He was more than I could hope for in a lover.

The hickeys too were proof that he submitted to me—a woman—and proof that he could change. I doubt he'd place the same respect and high regard for the rest of the women in his kingdom, but I was a promising start. He could change for the better.

In high spirits, I donned in a dress that didn't scream royalty or wealth. I was planning to do some manual labor after all and wearing a queenly gown would defeat the purpose. Plus, taking the hickeys on my arms and neck into consideration, I chose the best one that would hide all of it. It would be embarrassing to broadcast my sexual life to the people of Phanteon through the love marks no matter how much they love to hear it.

Rhea was already in the receiving room waiting for me. With two other maids, they prepared breakfast on my coffee table. We exchanged morning greetings and I got to eating right away, absentmindedly realizing I was already feeling famished.

"As per the king's orders, I will accompany you later to the south wing, Serena," Rhea notified while she observed me.

I nodded. "Right, thank you, Rhea."

I gave her a smile but she was too preoccupied to look at my back to even reciprocate the gesture. Her eyes were wide and full of wonder. I had to turn and check just what got her so mesmerized.

Chuckling, I lifted a finger in the air and one winged insect approached and nestled on the tip.

"They are beautiful right?" I said.

Rhea neared me, her eyes set on the insect's glittering rainbow-colored wings.

"Yes, they are. Are they native here?"

I shrugged my shoulders. "I'm not sure, but I had seen them many times since we returned from Lord Hale's mansion."

"Are they harmless?" She lowered her face and meticulously examined the insect like she as a professor would normally do.

I took a hold of her hand and pressed it close to my finger. The creature somehow understood my intention and dutifully transferred to her hand.

"Yes, they are and I find them very calming," I told her, smiling.

She giggled and made a silly face when the creature climbed up to her elbow with its spindly legs.

"Hmm, with constant gaze, yes, they do give that kind of effect," she agreed. "These are remarkable creatures."

"They are," I replied and went back to finishing my meal.

Half an hour later, Rhea and I marched up to the castle's north entrance. William was already outside waiting for us with two stallions behind him: one black and one brown, all with shiny mane and slender limbs.

"Your Highness, good morning," he greeted and bowed.

"Good morning too, William." I took the reign from his hand and ushered the black horse in a safe distance for climbing.

"I prepared one for Lady Rhea too," he informed.

With a thankful smile, Rhea grabbed the reign and positioned herself for mounting. "Thank you, William," she said.

We both looked at each other and exchanged nods.

"Try to keep up, Sir Beta," I cried out, grinning at him. "See you in the south wing."

"I will try not to disappoint you, Your Highness," he stated, bending his head.

Once our horses galloped forward, I heard bones crackling from behind, telling me he had shifted to his wolf form.

When we arrived in the south wing, there were already people lining up, holding with them empty plates. I spotted a male server at the start of the line, sitting under a makeshift tent with a big casserole laid on a table.

After disembarking the horse, I neared him whilst waving at the fire victims who were happy to see me.

“Do you need help?” I asked when I was a few feet away from him.

The server blinked twice before answering me. “No, Your Highness. Thank you for the offer but you mustn’t do any hard labor.”

I narrowed my eyes at him and placed my arms akimbo. “Dear me, I am fit to work, you know. Where are the other servers? Why are you alone?”

I gestured for Rhea at the same time to create two lines. She understood this and left me.

“They are still preparing for the rest of the food, Your Highness. The servants assigned in the kitchen of the castle are only a few since the crown prince and the King seldom eat together. And since the other castle staff was also affected by the fire, we are short on hands here.”

“Then allow me to help you,” I said, awarding him a serene smile. “Don’t worry, King Aero won’t behead you.”

The man, probably in his fifties, blushed and looked sheepish. “Thank you, Your Highness. You have helped so much yesterday, we couldn’t possibly ask you to help us today as well. This means a lot to me and to the people here.”

“You’re welcome,” I muttered, then shifted my gaze to William. “We need all the help we can get. Ask for those who volunteered yesterday if they still want to help out today and tomorrow. Let the Alphas meet me by late afternoon too. I want to hear their plans on rebuilding the market.”

“Your will, Your Highness,” William nodded, and off he went, shifting again to his wolf form to deliver my message.

“Now,” I turned to the first person in the second line—a little boy with doe eyes—and smiled, “let’s get your breakfast, shall we?”

The boy enthusiastically bobbed his head up and down.

The rest of the morning, I busied myself with setting up the needs of the fire victims. I found a hallway on a detached building just a few meters away from the victims’ living quarters. I used this as a mess hall and prepared a buffet table with Rhea’s help.

Thankfully, a lot of the volunteers answered my call and they expressed willingness to continue their services until all affected by the fire get their new homes. Most of the volunteers were women of different ages. This warmed me and I hoped this was enough for Aero to see the goodness of our gender.

By noon, we handed out packs of lunch and ate our meal inside the mess hall. Of course, I did this after I sent a messenger to Aero. I didn’t get a reply from him and I reckoned it was because he was busy himself.

Sometime in the afternoon, Rhea patted my shoulder, asking for my attention. I stopped organizing the relief goods and looked at her with confused brows.

"Hm?"

"What's up with those insects?" she said, pointing to the ceiling and to the walls near me. "They had been following you since this morning, Serena."

"Yes, so I noticed," I stared, crossing my arms and leaning against the table behind me. "They must be attracted to my scent? I don't know."

"I think there could be a deeper meaning to their attraction to you," she declared whilst looking at me like a specimen ready for examination.

I chuckled at her statement. "You're really playing the part, Professor. Please, I'd be happy to become your guinea pig if it meant I get to learn why these insects are attracted to me."

"I'll see what I can do with the books in the library," she stated, showing enthusiasm suddenly. "Or if there would be none, I'm sure Cedric could help me out."

"Hmm... are you sure it's the insects you are excited about or the crown prince's help?" I teased, jabbing her rib.

She blushed at my remark and looked away.

I wanted to laugh at this and tease her more, but my head immediately gave out a shooting headache. The exact same pain I felt before.

"Hmmmh!"

Wincing, I touched my forehead and squeezed my eyes shut. Rhea must have noticed this for she immediately grabbed my shoulder.

"Hey, are you alright?"

I shook my head, still with closed lids. "No, I'm having a headache."

"You've been having those too since we returned from the vampire realm," she pointed out, worry roping her voice.

"It's a side effect of that vampire's attack on me," I told her, remembering that bold vampire who wanted me for revenge. The healers said they had already healed me, but why does this headache keep coming back?

"I think you should stop now," she stated. "Relax. Let William and I, and the rest of the team take care of the distribution." She guided me to a couch to sit. It was cushioned and it was enough for me to lie down and steal a short nap.

"Thank you. I'll take your offer and rest for an hour or so," I said, looking at her through my wincing eyes.

"I'll make sure no one disturbs you and I'll let the king know through a messenger."

"No!" I quickly told her, pausing from lying down. "Don't tell him. I'll be fine. I just need some rest." Honestly, I didn't want the king to find out about this silly little headache. He'd probably overreact and get too worried about me and might cancel the meeting with the alphas. I couldn't have that from happening.

"Alright, if you insist," she said, giving me an understanding nod.

When she left, I eased down the couch. With this angle and with tables and boxes of goods in front of me, I was hidden from view, but the insects, they still managed to find me. They surrounded me, perching on the couch as if they were my little guardians. It didn't take me long to lose my consciousness afterward and it also didn't take me long to start dreaming.

Dreaming of a long distant past when I was but a teenager and a man who called himself Marius, introducing me to my adoptive family.

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Aero

Hearing Serena's message through the messenger, I felt all my plans crashed down. My idea was to bring her to the manor and eat lunch there after a swim in a nearby lake. It would have been a great experience for both of us, but then she chose to spend time with my people.

Them over me. Huh.

I gripped the arm-handle of my throne tightly, choosing to displace my anger through it. The messenger waited for my reply, but with my unstable state, I shooed him away without giving him a single word.

Disappointment etched my face, but a part of me knew I was being unreasonable. I was throwing a tantrum. I was like a boy who couldn't get a lollipop and was acting pathetic.

I understood her side of the story. She was being kind. She was doing her duties like a good queen was supposed to do. But still, fuck. I just couldn't keep myself from acting childish.

What's worse, hell, I didn't realize I was getting romantic by the second, and that sickened me. I wasn't like this the day before. I certainly hadn't chased a messenger away just because of a woman.

But oh no, not just any woman. Her. My wife. My queen.

Serena.

With all things considered, I thought all of this sickeningly sweet feeling was worth it. Goddammit, she was worth it.

And after realizing I screwed up by not giving her a reply, I decided to join her in the south wing. However, before I could even poof my way out of the throne hall, the double doors opened, and in came General Halcynos, Alpha Aaron, and William.

I inwardly groaned. Damn it, I forgot we were supposed to have a meeting. That was exactly the reason why I was sitting in this blasted throne in the first place.

"Your Majesty, we are here to report on the fire incident yesterday," Alpha Aaron began right after they lowered their heads in deference to me.

Begrudgingly, I returned to my seat and cooled myself off. Now was not the time to be distracted by my queen.

"What caused the fire?" I asked straight ahead.

Alpha Aaron and General Halcynos exchanged glances first before the former answered.

"I initially thought it to be just a case of faulty wiring, Your Majesty, but after the queen found a flaming rune behind one of the charred trees, I realized it must be arson. My suspicion was confirmed when the queen said she saw the arsonist."

"A rune?" My brow arched. Heck, runes were tools that only witches could use. However, with Prince Elijah's story earlier, they couldn't have been the culprits. Something just didn't add up.

"Yes, Your Majesty. This leads me to believe it is the work of a witch," Alpha Aaron confessed.

"Careful now with your words, Aaron. We could never be sure unless we capture the arsonist," I warned, scowling.

"My men and I searched the whole town and even extended to the whole kingdom, Your Majesty. The culprit is very slippery and it seems it used a cover spell," Halcynos, wearing his prized battle armor, butted in, informing me whilst carefully avoiding using the witch word. "We couldn't track it down because it doesn't have a scent. We are on high alert now."

Halcynos, out of all the Alphas, was the oldest, but despite the graying hair and visible wrinkles on his face, his strength could equal that of a young Alpha. As the leader of the army pack, he had given the royal family great pride, and as my father's beta, he served as a father figure to me. I trusted him more than the others and hold high regard in his decisions. If he said they were having difficulty tracking down the culprit, then I believed it without hesitation.

Two seasons after the snow moon wanes, he'd probably choose a new alpha to take his position. A coveted rank for sure, but not an easy one to take hold. The new alpha had to show the kingdom his strength and irrevocable loyalty to the crown, and he had to go through me in a battle of arms; something that I enjoy immensely if it were to show all why I became the Alpha King.

Returning to the matter at hand, I gave the general a nod of approval. His proactive attitude had spared me a great deal of burden. With how distracted I was yesterday, I didn't think I could send orders properly.

"With what happened in the Baltic Forest and in Cirelles, it appears we have ourselves a troublemaker gentlemen," I remarked, smelling already the stench of blood in the air. "Whether it be a witch or another creature, he or she will be sure to face our wrath. I'll keep Prince Elijah and your accounts in mind. For now, I'm going to have to secure the statement of our queen. We have to complete the puzzle gentlemen, and she likely has the last piece."

"Your Majesty, with your permission, I bring news about Her Highness," William stepped in and lowered his head.

"Speak," I signaled.

"Queen Serena has called for a meeting with all the Alphas by late afternoon today, Your Majesty. The topic would revolve around the rebuilding of the market and the needs of the fire victims."

"Really now?" I restrained myself from grinning.

Seeing her and some of the Alphas yesterday, I knew already she secured a soft spot in their hearts. I was confident she would gain the majority's favor. What I was curious about was how she would handle a big task like this. Will she be overwhelmed? Or will she carry herself with grace?

It would be interesting to find that out.

"You're dismissed," I told them with a wave of my hand. They exited without a fuss, but surely, in their minds, they were also looking forward to the meeting later.

A queen asking for a meeting? That was unheard of. My fucked up mother never did that during her reign. She was busy frolicking with cocks to care.

Anyway, as King, I was expected to attend, but since this was Serena's order, I would give her all the spotlight she needs.

When the grandfather clock of my conference hall hit five in the afternoon, I was already present, but not quite visible to everyone. I sat near the viewing glass of a room that was still connected to the hall. This area had served my father well when he wanted to be just an audience in a council meeting. Now, I was about to do the same; the first time ever since I was crowned king of Phanteon.

Below my room were rows upon rows of pews and they were occupied by my Alphas—all fourteen of them.

And my queen?

Well, she stood in front of them, on a raised platform that was used to situate the royal family. She looked confident and sure of herself. Her back was straight, her chin raised. There was not a single sign that exposed her nerves—if she ever was feeling that now.

She chose the safest gown in her closet. A gown that was enough to cover all my prized hickeys, but with my angle in the viewing room, I could see one that was angry red peeking just behind her turtleneck.

I couldn't stop myself from remembering our tryst last night; our lewd voices mixed into one, her tightness, my thrusts...and because of that, I couldn't stop my cock from hardening again. Shit.

"Alphas of Phanteon, thank you for answering my call," she started, forcing me back to reality. I cleared my throat and renewed my attention to the happening below.

Quite contrary to tradition, Serena actually lowered her head to them. My mother never showed that sincerity to her subordinates. She always kept a haughty face to all who met her, me and Elijah included.

Bitch.

"You all know what happened yesterday. A big fire has caused undue hardship, stress, and agony to the people of Cirelles," Serena continued, placing a hand over her chest. "It brings me great grief watching them suffer. I am here now as their voice. I am seeking your help. Tell me please, what plans do you have in order to help these people regain their normal lives?"

Silence filled the whole room. It stretched until Serena started to wander her eyes. Then, she saw me. I gave her a short nod, my face neutral with any expression. She did the same, minus the nod, and then returned her attention to the Alphas.

I felt a rush of excitement then, coupled with the warming of my wrist mark. We connected, she and I, and I was sure she felt the same, but hmm, credit to her for hiding her emotions well.

"Your Highness, Alpha Trevor, at your service," the first man to heed her call stood up. Where I sat, I was only able to see his broad back, but that didn't hinder me from arching a brow. From long locks, Alpha Trevor, the young leader of the Sotana pack, now sported short hair. It had just been days since I last saw him inside the castle. The heat of the sun must have finally affected him.

"Here we have a blueprint of the new Cirelles market. It will be new construction, but my colleagues and I target to finish it in five days," he continued, handing the queen a spread of papers.

She placed them in a readied table just below the platform and studied them for a few minutes.

"Very well, this is a promising start," she stated thereafter, "but isn't five days too tight?"

Alpha Trevor confidently shook his head. "It won't be, Your Highness. Our pack has enough people to get it done."

"Oh, sweet," Serena smiled. "Thank you, Alpha Trevor. That is good news."

"It is my pleasure, Your Highness." He bowed again and returned to his seat.

"My queen, I am Alpha Edmond," another man stood up and called her attention. This alpha here was old-school, literally. He, along with General Halcynos, served my father well and the same with the general, he would soon relinquish his status as the Alpha of Cydan—the benevolent ones.

"My pack is working on the basic commodities needed by the affected families. With your permission, we could start purchasing the items so that it would be ready once they transfer to their new abode."

Serena neared him just enough that she could take a lengthwise piece of paper from his grasp. Then, she examined it again, twisting her lips while doing so, and the whole god-forsaken time I was practically distracted by those lips.

Fuck, just when will this meeting end?

"This is great, but be sure to customize the list per family," she finally commented, looking back at him. "Each has its own unique needs that won't be covered by the basics. We aim to fulfill these needs. Prioritize medicine and their sleeping implements. A healthy body and a good sleep make for a productive day."

And just like that, I saw all heads nodded in agreement.

"This is highly noted, my queen. Thank you," Alpha Edmond stated.

Another Alpha stood up, then another, and another and so on and so forth all of them reporting their plans for the benefit of the people. The meeting went on

for two hours with Serena praising them, scrutinizing their plans, and sometimes adding her own ideas. She afforded them with respect and treated all with equality.

The whole time, I was with bated breath, but it looked like my council—a group of testosterone-filled men—were in awe of her. It granted me a bit of ease, but overall, my chest filled with pride.

She did it. She really did.

She carried herself with grace and power that it made me admire her more.

While the Alphas started leaving the conference hall, Serena stole a glance at my direction. I captured her gaze that instant and quirked my mouth up. 'Congratulations,' I worded.

She responded by just smiling.

This woman, she'll be receiving a gift from me later for doing a good job.

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Serena

Once all the Alphas left, I took a sigh of relief. Honestly, my nerves were all over the place before the meeting. After my nap and thank God, free of the headache, anxiety overtook me. I questioned myself if I would be able to face these men with confidence. If I would stammer... If I would become a laughing stock... I was second-guessing myself. But then, I thought of the family's affected by the fire, their suffering, and their pain. I didn't want to be a queen who chose to do nothing just because of nerves. I wanted to act and give these people a voice.

Rhea also helped me overcome my hesitation. She reminded me of my spunk back in Lord Hale's lair against the ever haughty Sofia. She also mentioned about my boldness in front of the many vampires in that vampire auction. She had great belief in me. She was confident I could finish this meeting with flying colors.

And I was happy I was able to do so.

At one point, I got a little distracted when I saw the king observing us. My wrist mark burned with need when our eyes contacted. I had to control my neutral face from cracking else I'd embarrass myself in front of the Alphas. I was glad he remained silent during the whole meeting. I would have wanted his input too, but that could be reserved for later when we're alone.

And speaking of alone...

I counted to ten whilst I gathered my writings on one folder.

One. Two...

And it didn't even reach to three before the king materialized within my peripheral vision.

"It looks like you got my Alphas declaring their loyalty to you," he commented, leaning against the lowest balustrade of the audience area.

I paused from fixing the papers and glanced at him. Goodness, he was looking as dashing and handsome as always, but this time, minus the scowl. As opposed to the many times we used to meet before last night, his eyes now were filled with unfettered desire. Very strong and very clear. And it was all directed to me.

"I was only doing my job as queen, Your Majesty," I said, "but their loyalty would be a nice addition."

"Hmm, keep that up and they'll be declaring their love to you too."

I narrowed my eyes at him before slowly sashaying towards his spot.

"Your Majesty...Aero, you can't possibly be jealous over your subordinates, are you?" I couldn't help but ask.

His eyes turned to slits and his mouth formed into a darker line.

"With you, Serena?" he pulled my shoulders quickly when I was an arm's reach away and pressed me flush against his chest. "Always."

My heart immediately quickened its pace.

I wasn't able to reply for he captured my lips that moment. His kiss...oh they were the same as last night—crushing, punishing, and passionate. He devoured me and I was happy to give in.

"Hmmm," I moaned as I returned his kisses. My hands wandered to his back and felt all the tense muscles there. It didn't take long before I sensed the growing need in me.

I wanted to feel his body. I wanted him to taste all of me. I wanted him inside me again so much that my body was burning in flames. But as strong as these feelings were, my body was also aching for something...

"Hungry?" I muttered in between our kisses.

He pressed his groin closer to me and groaned out a heavy 'yes.'

"I am hungry, Serena. For you," he drawled, then started tracing kisses along my jaw.

I chuckled at his words.

"No," I whispered, withdrawing from his caressing. "What I mean is dinner, Aero."

Instantly, a scowl appeared on his face.

"Food can wait," he said sternly before crashing his mouth on mine again.

I reciprocated it with the same zeal, but minutes later, I whispered again.

"I am...famished though."

As embarrassing as it sounds, my stomach was growling. The last time I ate, it was at lunch. The meeting with the Alphas was also draining so my body was looking for some nourishment too.

A cross between utter frustration and sadness colored the king's face when he slowly pulled away. He was so cute, acting like a little boy that I couldn't help but bit my lip.

"Then, let's get you some dinner," he said after staring deeply into my eyes, "but after that, I'm not stopping, Serena, you hear me?"

Giggling, I gave him the widest grin in response.

"Highly noted, my king."

Together inside the main dining area of the castle, Aero and I ate. He was thoughtful enough to give me some time with my food, but after the last of the dessert was offered, he opened up a topic that I didn't expect at all.

"Can you tell me what you saw in that forest, Serena?" he started, staring straight at me with enough gravity. "I know remembering those dead witches again especially while we're in the dining table would be awful; however, I need to know—"

"It's okay," I cut in, giving him a reassuring smile. "My stomach is trained for such queasy moments. My adoptive father used to work in the police department of our town. Sometimes, he tends to bring his cases complete with gruesome pictures to dinner despite us opposing."

Something in his eyes lit at my confession. Maybe he was surprised I was adopted? Or maybe surprised I actually shared a personal story about my life?

"Okay," he blinked a few times before continuing, "then tell me, Serena. Before I arrived, you said you saw the murderer?"

"Yes, but due to the cloak, I couldn't detail out the gender," I answered. "My gut is telling me it is a man though. He stood near one of the witches holding a bloody sword, but that wasn't what surprised me. It was the flames in his right hand. It was burning constantly but it appeared he wasn't hurt at all." I paused and frowned at the memory. "Like he was immune to the fire."

"Did you notice anything unusual other than that?" he asked, leaning towards me.

"No, but in the market fire yesterday, I saw that same cloaked person again."

My eyes immediately widened when I remembered Alpha Aaron's words.

"Was General Halcynos able to capture him? Alpha Aaron said they would organize a hunt."

The king simply shook his head. "No, unfortunately, the murderer-turned-arsonist got away."

"Alpha Aaron and I saw a rune in the spot where the culprit hid. He said the fire was the work of a witch, but as much as I wanted to believe it, I couldn't. I don't see the connection at all."

He appeared to digest my words; his attention rerouted to the glass of wine in front of him. I gave him time. Plus, I was enjoying myself watching him display a serious expression. He looked sexy in a way.

"I understand now..." he murmured after a few minutes.

I stopped spooning my cheesecake-like dessert and looked up at him. "Hm?"

"Serena, that cloaked person stole the elemental magic of the dead witch and used it to start a fire in the market," he declared, so very sure of himself. Then, his mouth curved into a jeer. "Such a typical act if one wants to cause destruction and confusion in Phanteon. With your account, I can now verify that someone is really trying to frame us; make the Order of the Witches think we killed those three and make the people of Phanteon think a witch started the fire."

I frowned upon hearing this.

"That's unacceptable."

Who would want this to happen? Werewolves could be arrogant and boastful, yes, based on what I know from mainstream media, but to actually cause disorder among two realms? That's just downright heartless.

Lord Hale maybe? Vampires and werewolves always hated each other.

I thought of the possibility but quickly shook my head. No, I didn't have enough evidence to back that up. Plus, it didn't feel right to stereotype someone just because of that basis.

"What I want to know is how that culprit stole the witch's magic and what was his motive for doing this?" Aero continued, creasing his forehead even more. Noticing how tight he clenched his hands on top of the table made me realize just how much troubled he was with this.

"I'm sorry I couldn't be of further help," I stated, feeling a little letdown.

"No," he quickly stated, returning his attention to me. "On the contrary, Serena, you helped me a great deal."

His words lightened my mood a little bit and a small smile resurfaced on my face.

"But like I said before, leave this problem to me," he reached for his wine flute and took his last gulp of the contents. "Don't worry too much. I don't want you involved and in the process, get hurt."

Lowering my lids, I took a deep breath and urged myself to spill the words.

"Be...careful though. I...I don't want you to get hurt too."

With that, my cheeks heated up. Making love with him and voicing out my feelings were entirely different things. Each has its own uniqueness. Each has its own sensitivity. To me though, the latter was more difficult to express for it would mirror my heart.

I heard a low grumble first, then he stood up and reached for me.

"Come here," he said.

I looked up at him as he lifted my elbow and pulled me out of my seat.

"Aero?!" I cried, feeling confused. What was he doing? The way he manhandled me wasn't the kind that would instill fear in me. Oh no. It was far from that. It was not rude. It wasn't assaulting. It was...a turn on and in his beautiful hazel-green eyes, there swirled desire again. The same one I saw before we ate dinner.

"Let's get some fresh air to lighten the mood," he stated and marched out of the dining area with me in tow.

I kept myself from grinning because I knew exactly what would come after this.

Outside, we strolled at the east side garden. This part of the castle had flowering bushes that also served as guides to different parts of the landscape. As Aero said, the fresh air indeed lightened our mood, but as expected, it also lit up a different kind of need in us and we soon answered its call.

"Aero..." I whimpered as his hands started roaming all over my body.

Under the cover of the gazebo, inside the garden still, he kissed me and that kiss soon turned heady. Using his strength, he lifted me up the ground and arranged me to sit on one of the gazebo's wide balustrade. Consequently, we were at eye level and that proved to be useful as he began to unhook my gown from behind. My neck got exposed first, followed by my chest.

Not waiting any second, he leaned forward and lapped my neck; his tongue moistening my skin and creating nonstop sensations inside me. Yes, like small fireworks exploding and I was blessed to take it all.

I made my own exploration too by slowly discovering the buttons of his shirt, opening them, and feeling for his damn hard abdomen. To be honest, I was dying to do this since this morning and daydreamed of it in my little sweet moments of peace.

His large hands skillfully found my breasts, but with the gown a problem still, he forcefully yanked it once and down it fell, crumpling on my waist. His hands returned and cupped my breasts full.

I arched my back and released a moan at the contact. "Aero..."

"You've performed well today, Serena. I want to reward you," he whispered against my neck. Cold air blew past my skin, but I didn't flinch. I was on heat inside. A heat that kept on climbing and climbing the more he kneaded my breasts.

"You already have, last night," I replied, closing my eyes and savoring the sensations he was bestowing on me, "the hot spring was my reward."

"Hmm, but I'm feeling generous," he declared, then pressed his lower body more onto me.

"Well, it shows," I chuckled as I felt his solidness in between my thighs. This man here was turning bolder and bolder every night. Could it be because of the snow moon?

"Hold me tightly, Serena." His attention on my breasts stopped only to smother me with his embrace. I was confused about why he said those words, but I obliged anyway, embracing him too.

A swift second later, I felt some soft material behind me and I realized it was a duvet. Glancing to my right, I saw that we were in a bed and glancing up past Aero's broad shoulders, I saw that we had changed location. From the gazebo, we were now in a semi-dark room. Glancing to my left, I saw the source of the gentle light. It was the lighthouse outside this room's floor-to-ceiling glass wall.

I gaped.

“Aero, where are we?”

He awarded me a grin before lowering his head to whisper on my ear:

“Welcome to my estate in Greece, my queen.”

The desire in his eyes was still the same and with no snow moon in my world to actually affect him, I realized this desire was his alone. Pure and true towards me.

And my core moistened even more because of this.

Author’s Note: Feel free to swim in that moistness, my king. XD

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Serena

“Is bringing me here the reward you were talking about?” I inquired, acting seductive, tracing a finger along my collar bone, and brushing a few locks of hair away from my shoulder.

“Partly, yes,” the king muttered. His eyes wandered down my exposed breasts and decided to test one nipple with his thumb. I inhaled sharply as tingles shot through my toes at the contact.

“And I bet I’ll be receiving the other part tonight?” I stated, smirking towards his way. Purposely, I bent my knee so that the bony part would hit his erection.

His hips jerked a little at the contact, then followed by a warning growl.

“If you behave, yes,” he told me. He transferred to the other nipple and carefully started stimulating it too. A soft moan escaped my lips because of it. Damn, his fingers were god-sent.

Reaching for him, I wrapped my arms around his neck and pulled him closer.

“But I can’t promise anything, Aero,” I told him, my lips stopping just inches away from his.

He heaved a sigh, one that was controlled, and then grabbed both of my wrists in a vice-like grip.

“Then, you’ll have to face the consequences again, my queen.”

He placed them above my head resulting to me fully exposed, fully vulnerable to anything he had planned.

My heart drummed a wild beat again and my breathing picked up. I was more than ready to receive whatever he has in store for me. So, so ready. So, so wet. I didn’t care if he’d shackle my hands against the headboard just to get that.

Drunk with desire, his mouth descended on mine. His tongue followed and started French kissing me with abandon. I was so happy to return the fervor.

Minutes later, he growled low, released my wrists, and pulled my gown down and off my legs lightning fast. Eagerly, I helped out with undressing him. First was his vest—which of course was very easy. Then, it was followed by his shirt. As it was already unbuttoned earlier, he had to only pull it off his arms.

The whole time, our kisses didn’t break. Our lips were super-glued together I was sure they’d get an apple-red color tomorrow. But, who cares?

Then, it was time for his pants, but we had prolonged too much of the inevitable, allowed ourselves to suffer from our desires that now, the thought of fully undressing or even the act of foreplay was considered gone with the wind.

“Aero, inside...” I muttered in between our kisses, “I want...you...inside. Now.” I hurried to unzip his pants.

With still my underwear on, my legs wrapped around his waist and I bucked up to feel his bulge. Happily, I was able to feel it and my goodness, he was already thick and deliciously long underneath his drawers.

“Se...re...na...”

He groaned, almost biting my lip, and then reached for my underwear. I thought he’d pull it to the side to make a clear path, but oh no, he instead ripped it to pieces. Easily. Without any hint of remorse. I didn’t need to wonder how. Heck, he was a werewolf after all.

“Hmm!” I complained, feeling sorry for my dear misused lingerie, but that muffled complaint turned to a sharp cry as his cock penetrated me, long and hard, and fucking to the hilt. Fucking direct to my cervix.

And I liked it. Dear heavens, strike lightning on me, I loved it.

The feeling of him inside me completed my soul. Completed my very being. Rhea and Elijah used to tell me that I’d soon find a good reason to stay in the Kingdom of Phanteon and I thought maybe...this was it.

My king. My husband. Aero... He would likely become a solid reason for my decision to stay. The wrist marks were the reason why I was forced to live in this

realm in the beginning, but with the current situation now, I didn't think I would want to go away. I didn't think I would want the mark to be erased. I wanted to keep it. I wanted to keep him.

"Fuck, you're so wet, so tight, Serena," he grumbled against my ear.

Squeezing my eyes shut, I moaned underneath him, slowly adjusting myself with his girth. It was torture. It was sweet. It was agonizingly satisfying.

Tightly, I gripped his shoulders, readying myself for a good pounding and good gracious what a cycle of pounding it was. Thrust after thrust, the sound of our skin slapping and our overexcited voices enveloped the room.

He was in his element. From a missionary, he repositioned my legs; assisted one to rest on his shoulder while the other, he straddled.

His cock, coated with my juices, remained in the air for an agonizing second until he splendidly embedded it inside me.

They said all wonderful things come when one closes their eyes.

I chose to open mine and witness his power and rule over me. Witness his torso flex, his abdominal muscles tense, his forehead and chest decorated with sweat as he fucked me again and again.

"Ae...ro!" I cried out when the build-up of sensations were too much.

He increased the rhythm, penetrated me deeper, grunted, and groaned harder in time with mine until we both reached our orgasm.

Wracked with the inter-realm wave of bliss, I screamed the loudest. Cried out a string of expletive I learned from some movies on Netflix.

"Shit. Shit. Shit. Ahhhh!"

With a wolf-like growl, Aero grabbed my head and hoisted me up. He met me midway and crashed his lips on mine again, stopping my very vocal expression of our loving making.

His hot seed, it leaked along my groin nonstop and as if that wasn't enough, my core kept on tightening, milking his cock even more.

"Goddamn, we should have consummated our marriage earlier," he confessed, gritting his teeth and squeezing his eyes shut.

I wasn't sure if it was intended or not, but the words were out of the bag already. He had no way to deny it.

Cupping his jaw, I directed his attention on me and smirked. "Says the man who is more stubborn than an ox."

He looked apologetic and disappointed with himself.

"I was rude and disrespectful to you, I know. I was a prick. You win."

I controlled myself from laughing. It felt so good to have him realize his faults, but I didn't want to add salt to his wound. I didn't want to ruin his state of repentance.

"Yes, I win, but..." I pointed my eyes to our sexes and bit my bottom lip. "Do you have any plans to...uhh...pull it out?"

His eyes turned mischievous and that caused a flood of warning inside my head.

"Later. Let it drown inside your moistness first."

"But Aer—ahhh!" I cried out when he suddenly drove his cock backward and inside me again. Damn it, he was tireless.

His large hand covered my mouth and then continued on moving his hips. My erotic pants were muffled. Even my breathing came out harsh.

"The night is still young, my queen," he whispered close to my ear. "I aim to make up for lost times—all twenty-nine years of it on Earth time."

My eyes rounded. I wasn't sure if I could actually take such an enticing beating, but heck, let the rounds begin...

"So, in Greece?" I weakly stated, when after six more orgasms, he had finally allowed me some reprieve.

Laying on the side with his chest as my pillow, I looked up at his relaxed form and witnessed the twinkle in his eyes followed by a serene smile.

"Yeah, Greece," he murmured. "Hearing you talk about your family over dinner earlier, I thought you missed being on Earth, so here we are."

"But Greece though?" I gushed. "I had never been here."

From staring at the ceiling, he rerouted his eyes on me. "I'm glad you find this change of location exciting, Serena."

I chuckled.

"No wonder Elijah knows Greek language because you have an estate here."

“He used to come here with me, especially during the first few years after our father died. In a way, this place became our sanctum.”

Then, I remembered our conversation in the past.

“Wait, I thought you hated Earth for its pollution?” I pointed out.

His mouth curved upward slightly. “With the exception of this place of course. You’ll see tomorrow why.”

A wide smile appeared on my face, feeling giddy all of a sudden. “Well, I’m counting on it.”

Aero

I squinted my eyes when the morning sun hit my face. Hell, that’s the disadvantage of having a floor-to-ceiling glass wall in a bedroom—the bright light always forces the person to wake up early.

I disliked doing just that, but on this occasion, having my wife beside me, I was ready. Very ready. And my cock sure was too.

I liked it that I brought her here. There was no Elijah to bother us and there was certainly no bug to compete with her attention.

She stirred when I ran a finger down her exposed spine. She was lying far away from me, facing the wall that was completely uninteresting.

“Good mor...ning, Your Maje...sty,” she greeted sleepily but didn’t move to face me.

Her inattention offended my person, but fortunately for her, it only fueled my desire.

I scooted closer to her, pressed my body against her back, and lowered my head so that I could whisper on her ear: “Good morning, my queen.”

Her hips jerked backward towards me, probably sensing the tip of my cock that had comfortably rested on her ass.

“Hm...hmm,” she muttered unintelligibly, still closing her eyes.

With this, my left hand snaked inside the duvet and trespassed her still-sleeping pussy.

“A morning gift for my queen,” I stated, then began to work with her folds in time with my licks on her nape.

“Ohhh...” she whimpered. “Aero...”

I released a triumphant grin.

My middle finger traced her swelling clit and pressed it, and just like that, her eyes popped open.

“Aero!” she shouted.

I wasn't done yet. Rubbing her faster and faster, I also licked her skin, lapped her neck, and sucked it until there were fresh love marks visible for me to relish.

“Oh yes...”

Boldly, she grabbed her own breasts and started kneading them. I couldn't hide a smile. This woman was not ashamed of her sexuality and she certainly knew what she wanted.

To assist her, my free hand found its way on one of her breasts. As I squeezed it tightly, she let out a soft cry.

“I'm close,” she said. “I'm so close. Faster, please!”

I heard her wish and so I obliged.

I attacked her pussy with nothing but my fingers: sliding in and out of her core, squeezing her clit again and again until she finally screamed a passionate sound.

Watching her like this in this angle, made my cock harden even more. I wanted to take her fully right then and there, but suddenly she shifted to face me, still panting, but with renewed strength in her eyes.

“Please, Your Majesty, don't move,” she said, straddling me and then lowering her face to level with my cock.

When she wrapped her hand around the shaft, I completely stilled and my wolf and lycan sides, hell, they started drooling.

“My gift in this morning too,” she said before her mouth descended on me, covering my cock, and blanketing it with her tongue.

“Arghh...” I groaned; the tightness, the wetness, the feel of her mouth—everything—was a whole new different experience. She wasn't able to put everything in, but it was more than enough to jumble up my brain.

Then, she retracted, releasing my cock from the enclosure. Her hand started to pump, clutching my erection like it was her lifeline.

“Sere...na, fuck,” I tossed my head back as bliss started enveloping me.

She chuckled.

I felt her tongue run down my shaft. Up and down, then teased the tip. She kissed the head, licked it after, then placed half of my erection inside her mouth again.

This was a first for me, so despite how much I wanted to hold it in, I couldn't. My orgasm, I released it all as she continued pumping her hands and mouth.

Cum shot inside her as I growled; my mind convulsing; my brain swimming with euphoria. She didn't show any sign of backing away. Instead, she pushed forward and drank all of my semen. I wasn't able to stop her. Selfishly, I didn't even know if I wanted to, but as she pulled back, she looked at me, fully satisfied, licking some of the white liquid trickling at the corner of her mouth.

Hell, I seared that memory inside my head.

The whole experience, I must say, was definitely enlightening. I was then reborn into a man who now experienced first hand the undeniable attention of a woman.

"I didn't permit you to drink my cum," I narrowed my eyes at her, feigning disappointment.

She shrugged her shoulders and arched a brow, showing not at all repentant with what she did. "I wasn't asking, Your Majesty. I just wanted...to know what you taste like."

"That is going to cost you, you know," I warned.

"I know," she grinned at me.

Standing up and out of the bed, she didn't mind covering her nakedness. She knew I was looking and examining her under the lovely morning light.

"Where are you going?" Like a hungry wolf—which I was, I kept an eye on her movements. "We are not done yet."

"I know," she said over her shoulder, teasing me with her shapely ass. She neared the glass panels and pressed a hand against it. "I suppose no one is inside this building except us right?"

Her attention was directed on the view below and I knew exactly what she was looking at.

"Yes," I said, standing up, butt naked myself.

"Then, would you mind if I try your pool?" she turned to me and asked.

I approached her, each step sealing our impending union. "Skinny-dipping in the hot spring and now skinny-dipping in the pool? You have one weird fetish, my queen."

She placed her palms on my chest and smiled. "Only when I'm with you, Aero."

"Hmm, good to know," I answered, then tipped her chin, and captured her lips without any hesitation.

Instantly, there it was, my rawness. She tasted of me and smelled of me, and yes, that didn't disgust me. That instead gave me real pride.

"Let me take you to the pool," I said, lifting her up from the ground, wedding style.

Giggling, she buried her face on the crook of my neck. "If you insist, Your Majesty."

For convenience's sake, I planned to transport us to the first floor of the house, but I refrained. With her in my arms, I wanted this moment to last longer. I wanted to treasure this simple action with her. The damn pool and the beautiful scenery around it could wait.

Author's Note: Your Majesty, you should start buying condoms while you're in Greece. O_o

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The Alpha King's Claim chapter 58

Serena

We passed by one hallway and one flight of stairs before we reached the swimming pool of the house. It was connected to the main living area where Aero just pressed a button and a mechanism opened up the whole room to the poolside.

Under the safety of his arms, I made a mental note of how sterile and modern the interior was. The inner paint was of two tones: gray and white. Pops of sky blue and lime green were also visible in the form of decorative pieces. The ceiling was high, the furniture complemented each other, and the hardwood floor spanned across the entire square footage of the house.

The glass panels of his bedroom continued to the kitchen and living spaces. I figured this house must have been built with that in mind to fully take advantage of the view outside.

Once we arrived in the pool area, he placed me down and gave me a devilish smirk. He seemed to be up to something, but I couldn't quite figure out what it was.

"The water awaits you, my queen," he said.

I arched a brow at him and placed a hand on my waist. "Join me?" I asked; my eyes trying not to wander down his nether regions. Under the heat of the sun, I was pretty sure what would welcome me there.

He simply shook his head, acting still secretive. "Later. I have something to do first."

"Hmm, right," I surrendered and turned around to face the pool. This was when I admired how breathtaking the view was.

We were on top a cliff it seems and the only building present. Around us, there were trees and trees everywhere and around the trees was a vast color of blue: the ocean.

In this angle I could see the lighthouse and next to it was a modest one-floor house. Common sense told me the whole place was an island, a C-shape at that, and a private one surely since the owner...uhumm...the alpha king...had a prickly attitude towards strangers.

Slowly, I tested the waters first before I fully submerged my body. The temperature was just right; not too cold, not too hot, and I found it a blessing since I was butt naked and vulnerable to the elements.

The pool was rectangular in shape, enough for me to be able to swim from one point to the other, and so, I did. I swam and swam, but then, I suddenly noticed the water shake.

I resurfaced and scanned the whole area around me. Nothing was amiss, except for the king, grinning from ear to ear with a remote control in hand.

"What are you doing?" I narrowed my eyes at him, really suspecting him to be the cause of the vibration.

"Just something to give you a shock, my queen," he answered, eyes filled with mischief.

That's when I saw how the water drastically moved.

What was supposed to be stationary water, now turned to a river. I felt a mild current underneath my feet as the water started moving towards the edges of the pool. From where I was, I saw the ground on the sides open up to reveal an infinity pool. It was surprising, yes, but what really gave me a fright was how the floor opened up to reveal a hundred-foot drop to the sea below.

On instinct, I cried and swam back to the deck. Then, in my anger, I marched towards my dear husband who was infuriatingly still grinning and jabbed him at the ribs.

"You...bully!" I cried.

Naturally, he was quick to block it, and I was under his mercy in the next second; caged in by his arms; my breasts pressed up against his chest.

"Alright, I'm satisfied with your reaction," he murmured near my mouth. Then, captured my lips for another intense, toe-curling kiss.

What delicious show must it have been if someone was watching us, but I was at ease knowing no one was around.

"This place is beautiful, Aero," I remarked when we pulled back. He didn't release my waist when I turned around and watched the greens, the turquoise, and all the colors in between that comprised Greece's magnificent ocean.

"I told you so," he replied with pride. One hand started kneading my breast while the other was slowly creeping down my folds.

I bit the inside of my cheek and savored his touch.

"I own this island," he explained in a hushed tone that I deemed sexy. "I have a caretaker who takes care of the lighthouse and maintains the beach. His wife cleans the house and trims the garden."

"Hm...hmmh," I acknowledged, closing my eyes.

"In fact, they might be arriving here soon."

"What?!" My lids shot open and all my senses jumped anew. "Aero—"

"Be still now, I'm yet to make love to you," he warned against my ear as I started squirming under his sudden tight hold.

"But the caretaker and his wife!" I cried out, feeling concerned now. I certainly didn't want them to find us spread-eagled in the pool's lounge.

"It will be fine," he said, then started lapping my neck, sending renewed tingles all over my skin. Though there was still this feeling of apprehension, I decided to trust him, put my worries at the back of my head, and just submit to our passion.

Aero brought me in a twin-size chaise lounge of the poolside and in there, pounded me hard and rough dog—or in this case—wolf-style.

Maybe if indeed our visitors had arrived, they must have heard a woman singing the operatic sound of orgasm...

Aero

Taking her in broad daylight was another new for me and I must admit, that somehow added to the excitement of our lovemaking. Yes, I was beginning to grow insane for this woman and I knew it had nothing to do with the snow moon.

Promising that the customized pool was safe, she returned to swimming and I took note of her joyful expression seeing the view below. Elijah used to tell me I was crazy for demanding this from the architect, but he and his team pulled it off just like I expected them to. Of course, I rewarded them for a job well done.

Elijah added his touch and had the architect construct a lighthouse. Since we were always away, we hired a couple living closely in the mainland to care for the island. Greece had numerous picturesque islands, but this was the only place we found worthy of our attention.

After swimming, she asked me if we could tour the island. That was already my plan so naturally, I agreed.

Since there were no female clothes available inside the house, she used my beach short and over-sized white t-shirt. I, on the other hand, just stayed half-naked, wearing my drawers since I planned to shift into my wolf form and let her ride my back. Since Earth clothes didn't have witch enchantments, I let her bring a duffel bag with my clothes to wear for later.

For half an hour, we toured the whole island. Each stop allowed Serena to admire the place more. I continued to watch her and the way her eyes twinkled. It became my treasured time.

The last area we visited was the lighthouse. We blessed it with a quickie: her back against the huge lamp while I penetrated her standing up...

"A yacht?" she remarked, once we arrived in the dock a couple of meters away from the house.

I shifted back to my human form and nodded.

"A useful mode of transport for a secluded island like this," I said.

She handed me the duffel bag with her cheeks blushing a dark red. "Please wear your clothes. The sun is ravishing you."

"As my queen wishes," I replied and gave her a grin, hinting a dirty thought in my head. I was proud of my nakedness and I was proud of how my cock stood for her.

We boarded the sailboat together and once there, I left her to tour the place herself while I changed into suitable clothes. Minutes later, I found her in the control room, absentmindedly touching the steering wheel.

"You want to drive?" I asked, nearing her.

She immediately backed away from the wheel and waved her hands in the air. "Oh no, I can't possibly do that. We'd be stranded in the middle of the ocean if you let me drive."

"I can teach you," I offered bluntly. "Come here."

She hesitantly moved, but I quickly grabbed her wrist and arranged her hand on the wheel.

"It's easy, Serena," I murmured on her ear as she stood in front of me, "just as easy as you turning me on."

I started the ignition, pressed some buttons first, and then guided her hand to the lever.

"There," I said as the water transport started moving. "Easy as giving me a blowjob."

She laughed at my remark and elbowed my ribs. Damn, it hurt a little. "I didn't know you have a dirty mouth, Your Majesty."

"It can get dirtier tonight," I said, surprised myself with how bold I was becoming. She looked at me and from the looks of her eyes, I knew she knew what my words meant.

"Or we can do it now while I put the yacht on autopilot mode," I offered, my wolf and lycan sides agreeing with me, always looking forward to tasting her again, licking her folds, and sucking out her juices.

Inside my embrace, she managed to turn and face me. "You really are insatiable, Aero," she said, silently agreeing with me by way of a deep kiss.

Thirty minutes was all it took for us to reach the mainland and half of that time, I spent it with making my queen cry her lungs out...

Author's Note: Ellipsis (...) I hate them. Makes me wonder what happened during their...

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The Alpha King's Claim chapter 59

Serena

"I have a smaller boat too, but Mr. and Mrs. Bradley uses it," Aero told me while we ate inside a taverna by the sea in the very charming village of Lesvos. Our table was near an arched window overlooking a windy but stunning beach.

We had just finished touring the area and me changing into a printed maxidress when our stomachs really demanded to be attended too. I chose the spot where to eat and he chose the food since I wasn't acquainted with the menu yet. Fluently, he spoke Greek with the waiter and I just listened, amazed by how flexible he was both in Phanteon and on Earth.

"I believe they're still here right now. They only visit my island in the afternoon."

He looked up at me with that mischievous expression of his again.

"I lied, you know," he finally said.

My lips curved upward just as my eyes narrowed at him. "Oh yes, I know," I said, already feeling like the winner. "I know you lied about the caretaker and his wife coming to the house."

He smirked at me, almost taking pride in my confession. "When did you figure it out?"

I forked a square of cheese and ate it first before answering: "When we left the house. They still hadn't arrived. I was actually looking forward to meeting them. And then, when we were at the dock, I noticed that your yacht was the only sailboat visible."

"Very observant, my queen. I'm impressed."

"Hmf," I rolled my eyes heavenward and relaxed on my chair. "And what pray tell was your motive for doing that?"

He drank his wine and then cracked another grin on me. "I enjoyed seeing you squirm."

I bit my bottom lip and quickly, reached across the table to steal his prized wine.

"You really are a bully," I drank it in one gulp, and then lifted it up in the air. "The king of all bullies!"

He laughed; the dark richness of his laughter made my insides flutter.

"Thank you. That's a compliment, Serena."

“Stupid ass king,” I murmured, sinking back into my chair and glared at him.

“Are you afraid of heights?” he asked again with still that infuriating smirk of his.

“No, but who wouldn’t be afraid to suddenly see a hundred-foot drop to the sea without warning!” I hastened to say, venting out my frustration in the lowest voice I could make. There were still customers inside the taverna after all.

He then stood up after giving me a hard stare. Reaching out his hand, he pulled me from my seat and gave me a really long, I-don’t-give-a-fuck-if-the-waiter-is-watching-us kind of kiss.

My knees weakened. Heck, all of my joints weakened.

“Day by day I learn new things about you,” he whispered against my forehead while his hands cupped my face.

I controlled the fluttering feeling inside my stomach. My God, this man had turned from a hard block of stone to a soft cotton ball. I can’t anymore.

“That’s what we agreed right?” I said, “To know more about me and how different I am to other women?”

“Yes,” he answered in a hushed tone; his lips still against my forehead. “Makes me feel all the more a dickhead for treating you badly.”

I sensed the regret in his voice and that little spark of anger, so in haste, I looked up and palmed his jaw.

“Hey, every day I’m starting to understand you too. Your sacrifices, your strengths, your kindness, your loneliness...”

Then, I traced his damnable lips.

“You’re opening up to me, Aero. That’s quite an achievement.”

“Are you sure you’re not a witch that has cast a spell on me?”

I chuckled.

“Why? Is the Alpha King of Phanteon susceptible to witch spells?”

He arched a brow.

“No, I’m immune, but maybe they discovered a new form of magic. Maybe they created a lo—”

He suddenly paused, cringed a little, then drew an inch backward away from me.

“Never mind. Forget what I said.”

I wasn't sure what he was just about to say that time, but it certainly sounded like the first syllable for lo-ve. Love. But as tantalizing as the notion was, I didn't want to entertain myself with it too when I was in deep shit myself—confused with my own feelings. Now wasn't the time at all.

“Well, I'm going to tell you one honest bit, Your Majesty,” I stated, acting like nothing was amiss, withdrawing from his embrace and facing the pristine white sand and beach. “If I was a witch in disguise and had cast a spell on you, you probably had turned into a toad already as punishment for being the ill-mannered, meanest king ever.”

He chuckled at this.

“Yes, you certainly have a point.” He held my hand and squeezed it tight. “Now, do you want to eat dessert or continue touring?”

“Tour please,” I smiled at him. “And maybe buy something for Rhea and Elijah?”

A frown appeared on his face then.

“Just Rhea,” he said, “You don't need to think about my brother.”

I released a long sigh in response.

“Oh, don't be too harsh on him. He's the reason why we're together, you know.”

Right then and there, I saw his expression lighten.

“Hmm, indeed, he is,” he murmured; his tone soft and appreciative.

Just like planned, we toured the next village, specifically visiting buildings, stalls, and stores that caught my eyes. At one point, I saw an establishment that catered to almost everything of Greece's merchandise. Grabbing Aero's elbow, we entered the building and I started choosing baubles that would fit the two lovebirds in Phanteon.

There were a lot of customers inside: from Asians to Europeans, to Americans, all were as enthusiastic as I was with buying. Aero just silently followed me as I transferred from one shelf to the other.

When I reached a new shelf, I suddenly paused and glanced behind. Aero arched his brow in silent question. Smiling, I picked up a small blue box with a grossly informative picture.

A picture of a condom.

After making love with him a number of times, I knew wearing this birth control device would only be a waste, but still, who said I couldn't have a little fun and test his reaction?

"Hm?" I voiced out.

His sharp eyes stared at the box for two counts, then to me, then back to the box and flatly said, "No."

"But, this is safe se—" I tried to explain, but then he cut me off.

"I know what that is, Serena, and still, the answer is no."

He took the box from my hand and tossed it back to the basket like it had herpes; his face a picture of disgust.

"I'm not wearing that dreadful thing," he declared openly. I couldn't help but giggle. It was fun to watch him complain.

"Oh, you like it raw huh?" Someone—a woman with a Mediterranean accent—suddenly voiced out from behind him. She was as tall as him, with a slender figure, long, sunkissed hair, and breasts that almost pop out of her strapless dress. She was beautiful, I admit, but she was eyeing Aero provocatively. My husband.

"My kind of man," she added, then puckered her lips.

An emotion, deadlier than anger, suddenly fired up inside me.

"Exc—" I was about to say, but I suddenly fell silent when I felt an energy from Aero. An energy that was definitely murderous.

I looked at him and true to my description, his eyes, they lit like it was looking for the God of Death himself.

"Disappear from my sight, pest," he said in a dark, menacing voice.

The woman, from sexily flaunting herself, flinched backward with her lips quivering and sweat trickling down her forehead.

"Uh...I'm sorry," smiling awkwardly, I stepped in and grabbed Aero's elbow, "he sometimes has mood swings."

I lowered my head, supposedly feeling jealous but now feeling sorry for her, and muttered, "Excuse us."

I pulled Aero away and out of the store lightning fast; my heart thumping and my insides flipping.

Really, here I was feeling suddenly jealous with that woman's obvious flirting when in fact, I didn't need to be. Aero still harbored the same hate for women as the past. I'm unsure whether I should be happy about this or not, but one thing was for sure, this situation gave me a good laugh inside.

"You almost made her cry!" I told him when we were a good distance away from the store. I wanted to hold my laugh, but it just escaped from my mouth unchecked.

"I won't hold myself responsible for such weak outburst," he grounded, crossing his hands over his chest. "Tsk, women are nosy creatures."

Placing a hand on my chest, I recomposed myself and took a deep, calming breath.

"Okay, now 'that' I have to agree," I stated, watching Aero's constipated expression. I straightened up and placed a hand on his chest, to where the heart lay and said: "We probably should return to Phanteon before you meet another one of my kind and scare her away. Sounds good, yeah?"

Gradually, a soft smile emerged cracking his glower.

"I'll grant whatever the queen requests."

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Aero

As much as I didn't want to part with my queen, I had to. Elijah had confirmed my meeting with the guardian of Ehnrelil and I believe he was already waiting for me in the throne room when Serena and I left Greece.

Serena told me she wanted to change into her gown and head out to the south wing to check the progress of the fire victims. I let her while I too changed my casual clothes, choosing an ensemble that would fit the occasion: a royal-grade button-up shirt and slacks, and a dark blue embroidered frock coat.

As soon as I finished, I marched out of the walk-in closet, but then I was impatient already to meet him, so I decided to teleport there.

"Nevannir, I hope you didn't wait for me that long," I said the moment I materialized next to my grand seat with my hand touching a fang of my enormous wolf statue. Just as I ordered, there was no one but the two of us inside the throne hall.

Dressed in fine Ehnrelil silk, he slowly shifted to me, taking his eyes away from the ceiling painted with Phanteon's royal crest.

"Your Majesty," he lowered his head and executed a calculated bow. "Quite sublime to meet you again. The Crown Prince said you wanted to discuss an important matter with me."

My brow arched up as I eyed the rich gold of his long, braided locks. It was a silver back when I last saw him...when Ehnrelil crowned a new king. He must have changed the colors to fit the new rule, but really? Gold? Quite showy for my taste.

Sitting down the throne, I cleared my throat and went on, "Yes, I want to. Recently, I have had recurring visitors in my kingdom; winged creatures that I am sure is native to your realm."

On my signal, William entered bringing with him a metal birdcage. Inside it was two insects I had told him to capture while I was still in my impromptu honeymoon. They were as still as stone, perching on the vertical wooden beam at the center of the cage as if they weren't concerned they were captured.

"Care to explain what these bugs are and their purpose?" I added once William placed the cage at the base of the stairs and left.

Silence ruled the hall first. Nevannir examined the creature without even moving an inch of his feet to at least take a closer look. I gave him time, during which I also took note of his expression to get some clues. Even though guardians declared honesty and fairness with their treatment in all realms, Nevannir was still a fae, and faes, based on my experience, couldn't be trusted.

Well, except for a few handfuls like Adamar and Adaen.

"My..." he finally spoke and cracked a small smile, "this is unusual." Judging from his reaction, it was obvious he had seen them in the fae realm.

He neared the cage, stooped low, and opened the hatch, effectively freeing the bugs.

I didn't mind them escaping. They already served their purpose well.

"These creatures are not bugs, Your Majesty," Nevannir said whilst standing up. "They are called 'Filliyaen' or Familiars in simple terms—energy spirits in the form of animals or insects that are rare in Ehnrelil. To find one is considered a blessing in the fae realm but to find one in Phanteon makes me confused."

"My thoughts exactly. I'm also confused," I confessed, but smartly chose not to mention Serena's connection with their presence. He didn't need to know. "What are the purpose of this so-called Familiars, Nevannir, especially these special bugs?"

"Hmm," he lowered his lids and acted as if he was contemplating something. "I could tell you more about these 'bugs', but...this is going to cost you, Your Majesty."

My fists clenched upon hearing his subtle hint of blackmail. Huh. Just as I thought.

"I'm aware, so continue. Name your terms, but don't hold back on whatever information you have on these Familiars."

"Well, I'd be happy to, Your Majesty."

Beaming a smile, he continued and I, silent and unmoving, digested all the information as much as my head could hold...

Serena

Visiting the south wing again sure brought me back to reality. Being with the king, making love with him, just spending time and getting to know each other seemed like heaven to me. I didn't want it to end, but as royals, we had to return to our duties.

I found Rhea fixing the buffet table when I arrived in the mess hall. There were also other volunteers with her, but I specifically called her attention, signaling for us to meet outside. She followed me when I exited the building and in a shaded area a few feet away from the doorway, we talked.

"For you and Elijah," I said, handing her six bottles of extra virgin olive oil and four bottles of high-grade honey all in one box. "The king and I went to Greece this morning and I figured I could bring you two some souvenirs."

Her face was a picture of happiness immediately. "Wow, thank you, Serena!" Taking out one bottle of honey from the box, she lifted it up and positioned it against the sun. "Yup, this is their product alright. The golden yellow color is a good hint. Let's open one bottle and try it!"

I nodded at her whilst flashing a smile. She certainly read my mind.

We went inside the mess hall again and in there, we called the volunteers for a little snack together. One of them neared me and smiled. She was a beauty: long, black hair with streaks of white, pale face, bluish-black lashes, and eyes that have an icy blue shade. She was as tall as me but looked to be four years older or maybe more by Phanteon standards.

"Hello everyone, try this, it's uhmm...my special recipe," I stated, deciding to lie since they didn't still know yet I came from a different realm.

With Rhea holding up the tray, the volunteers started sampling the snack: a piece of toasted bread with Greek honey spread on top.

The black-haired volunteer smiled again and picked her share all the while she gazed at me. "Thank you, Your Highness. This is delicious," she said.

"You're welcome. Are you one of Alpha Aaron's pack?" I asked, thinking that with her beauty she could well be a partner of a very capable Alpha.

She chuckled first before facing me fully. "No, Your Highness. I don't belong in Alpha Aaron's pack or any other pack for that matter. Let me introduce myself formally."

Stepping backward, she then executed a curtsy, much like the ones humans do on Earth. It was a surprise to watch.

"I am Farryl, Guardian Extraordinaire of the Realm of Werewolves, Your Highness. I am well pleased to finally meet you."

The moment I heard her name, I gaped. I had wondered when I could meet her. Although he didn't promise, Prince Elijah did say he could arrange a meeting for the two of us. Was this what he was talking about?

"Farryl," I muttered, not at all breaking my gaze with her. "Thank you for accepting Prince Elijah's invitation to meet me."

Her brows furrowed as if confused, then she laughed a little. "There must be some mistake, Your Highness. I hadn't met the Crown Prince yet. I came to meet you at my own free will."

"Oh," I blinked. "Then, let me extend an even greater appreciation for your visit." I lowered my head and placed a hand on my chest, acting all respectful, but at the back of my mind, I was hoping this was how a queen was expected to behave under such circumstances.

Rhea saw the exchange and was sensitive enough to give both of us privacy. She ushered the other volunteers in another table a few feet away from us and there, they continued eating.

I took a glass of water from the table behind me to flush out the sweetness of the honey and thereafter, refocused my attention on her.

"I guess there's a reason for you to see me like this? Under normal conditions, we were supposed to meet in the throne room with my husband, King Aero."

Very subtly, her face changed expression: from calmness to disgust. It was so fast a change that I thought I was just imagining things. I understood why though. I was well aware she hated the King of Phanteon.

"Honestly, Your Highness, I had always wanted to meet you since the day you first stepped foot in this realm."

My eyelids fluttered fast, feeling surprised, but then I reminded myself she was a guardian. 'She could very well know everything that was happening in this realm, my presence included.'

"You came without my knowledge," she added.

' Or not. '

"All visitors in this realm should go through me first, but you...you bypassed me by suddenly materializing inside the king's chamber," she continued. "I wanted to reach out to you since then but an unknown force I couldn't figure out kept on stopping me."

Oh wow. That was something I didn't expect at all. An unknown force she said?

My curiosity peaked, so I decided to dig deeper.

"Since you're here now, I reckon this unknown force you speak of, you must have figured already?"

She scoffed and shook her head.

"On the contrary, no. I'm still working on it." Then, she looked at me with deep interest. "You are a precious being, Se...re...na. I long to learn more about you."

Disregarding the fact that she used my first name and even went as far as stating her interest in me, I cleared my throat and asked, choosing to stay within the topic, "So how did you manage to reach me now then?"

Sighing, she gestured to all of me and dipped her head.

"I was hoping you could answer that question. Whatever unknown force that kept me from nearing you seems weak now and I first noticed it at the start of the snow moon's phase."

I directed my eyes on the floor and mused. Two days ago...that was when the snow moon started. And two days ago...Aero and I...we first made love. That was when we gave in to our desires. I doubt that that was the reason, but all possibilities were welcomed.

"I, unfortunately, couldn't answer that, Farryl," I stated whilst meeting her gaze.

This woman was giving me a sense of calm, but also I sensed extreme anger inside her.

"No worries," she shrugged her shoulders. "That doesn't matter anymore. I'm just happy we could talk, as queen and as a guardian, and a woman to woman. You do know you could trust me right?"

It was an unexpected question, but not difficult to answer.

"I'm unsure," I replied. "You are after all still a stranger in my eyes."

"Hm, safe words, Your Highness." She didn't seem hurt by my honesty.

"I asked Prince Elijah to invite you to the castle as my guest out of courtesy since you're this realm's guardian," I started, explaining my side. "I wanted to meet you and maybe establish a bond. How about you, then? What are you here for? Why do you want to meet me?"

She stayed silent for a moment, then signaled me to follow her. We exited the mess hall, walked past the front door, and continued to a garden nearby. Maybe because she was posing herself earlier as a volunteer that's why I didn't notice, but now I certainly could see how determined she was with her footsteps.

The garden we chose had mostly untrimmed grass. It had shrubs of flowers and slim trees, but still, the place looked grim. Mentally, I noted to have them tended later.

"If I had the chance..." she started, facing a pathway towards another area of the garden, "I would have warned you of this realm's king. I would have sent you back to Earth to be safe from him and his awful attitude. But, I see now that you have grown accustomed to life here as his queen, so I had to ask..." She turned to face me with her brows furrowed, marring her beautiful face, and then continued, "What did he promise you? I'm sure he struck a deal with you. With such a despicable character, I'm sure the king forced you to marry him."

Her teeth clenched, but it wasn't the kind when a woman gets jealous. It was the kind when injustice was done. I was taken aback. Sure, at first, King Aero was exactly the man she described, but...

"I want to help you out of his control," she went on. "Tell me, Serena, what agreement did you make with him?"

'Our agreement...' my mind blankly wondered. Didn't that turn out to be null and void now that we consummated our marriage? Now that I decided to stay for the time being in Phanteon? Our wrist marks certainly weren't an issue anymore so...

"There's nothing of the sort," I told her, partly lying, partly telling the truth. "I simply agreed to marry him."

Her expression turned into a full-fledged frown.

"You lie," she declared without hesitation. "I can see it in your eyes that you're lying. Are you made to do so because he ordered you to? That damn king would do everything to crush your spirit simply because you're a woman. I have the power to ease your pain. I can send you back to Earth, Serena. You only need to ask and all this hardship with him will disappear. Think about it."

And I was. Heck, I was. Her offer was indeed tempting, but having experienced my husband's kindness and passion, and the endless possibilities while we're together, I couldn't accept it.

"No, but thank you for the offer, Farryl," I declined, smiling serenely at her.

This, however, she didn't accept well.

"You're insane. He hates women don't you understand? You're nothing but just a tool for him!"

"Your Highness," William's voice cut through the air, effectively saving me from an awkward moment. Immediately, I turned around and faked a smile.

"Yes?" I said.

"Alpha Trevor needs your presence at the construction site," he informed; his eyes shifting from me to Farryl with uneasiness.

"Right, I'll be there," I said. Returning my attention to her, I sighed and lowered my head.

"Farryl, I understand your concern, but really you don't need to worry about me." We held gazes; hers still a raging fire while mine a calm river. "I am here on my own free will. Plus, I can't leave Phanteon just yet. I have a mission to fulfill."

I began to walk but then paused halfway and glanced at her over my shoulder. "Thank you for volunteering by the way. If you wish to continue serving, you are welcome to do so. I'll see you around."

"You're making a mistake, Serena. A grave mistake," she voiced out; her tone a dead warning. I decided to ignore it and just continued to walk towards the awaiting stallion with William guarding me.