

Chapter 212 Friends together again

Doris immediately tried to push herself out of bed but she quickly failed. William had to get up and help her stand but he didn't seem happy to know that Doris had visitors. She already knew in her heart who it could be—there was only one person that came to mind.

"Who is it?" He demanded. Doris held her stomach and waddled to the door. He was right behind her like a protective shadow that never faded.

Penelope hesitantly knelt down to help Doris into a new pair of slippers that went right on. The cushion felt like heaven and she only wished it would be acceptable to wear slippers everywhere even after she had given birth. ¹

"They told me she has been expecting them. Beth —"

"Beth?" Doris squeaked. She hadn't seen her best friend in person for months. If she could run, she

would bolt across the palace just to reach her.

"Where are they?"

"I set them in the tea room down the hall to wait —"

Doris hurried past her maid with a wide smile on her face. William was always a step behind. There weren't many moments where she was alone lately—which was ironic since she had been feeling so lonely.

The private tea room was luckily right down the hall from their own room. Two guards opened the doors for her and revealed Beth and Enzo sitting close on a loveseat couch. They instantly stood when they saw her. 1

"Oh my! Doris! Look at you!" Beth grinned as she hurried across the room to trap her in a warm hug. Doris wanted to melt into the feeling of her friend with her again. It felt as if years had passed since they saw each other last and there was so much she wanted to tell her that couldn't be said in letters.

Enzo neared them with a smile on his lips as he watched them. He eyed William who was glaring

at him across the room and held his hands up. "No worries, old friend. I know how vicious males can be over their pregnant mate. I'll stand over here and hug myself."

Beth pulled away and took a good look at Doris as she gripped her hands. "How are you feeling? Oh, you must be in so tired all the time!"

"I am, and I feel like a walking balloon at all times." Doris said as Beth helped her to the couch. She instantly fell into her nurturing mode as she made Doris a cup of tea with a side of cookies.

"Nonsense, you're glowing." Enzo grinned. William snorted in a rude way as he crossed his arms over his chest tightly.

"Ignore him, he doesn't like any man near me right now." Doris rolled her eyes.

Beth tried to hide her smile. "I can't believe you're going to be giving birth any day now! I hope you don't mind me staying a little longer after the baby comes."

Doris perked up. "You will?"

"Only until you've gotten a hang of it." Beth grinned. She glanced at Enzo who watched them

with a small smile still on his face. Doris could see the affection they both had for each other and Doris only wished she was alone with Beth so she could hear everything about what happened between them. Her friend liked to spill everything when they were in private. 1

"I hope you don't mind, but..." Beth hesitated as she looked at Enzo again. This time his face sobered instantly and he turned to William.

"I know this may come as a shock, but Sir Antony wanted to come—"

"What?" William spat and straightened himself. Even without his crown, even when he was angry, he still looked like a king. "He's here in my palace?"

"Well, not technically. He's out in the gardens waiting to see if you were going to have a tantrum before he came in." Enzo clasped his hands infant of him. "I see that was a wise choice." 2

William snarled. "I don't want him in here near my lady."

"He has no bad intent for either of you. He only wanted to see his great grandchild once before he went back to the north." Enzo said. He scratched

the back of his head as if he didn't know what else to do. "He's a good man, William. He's getting old and each day he looks weaker."

William rolled his eyes to the ceiling. "I'm sure he's a good man to you and all of his little followers." William closed his hands into fists at his side. "You should have asked permission before allowing him near my palace. No one is coming close to my baby, certainly not him." 1

Doris frowned. She knew that William didn't want a relationship with his grandfather. He felt as if the man never truly cared about him and never tried to care even though he knew full well that he existed. William never let the man patch up that hole in his chest, and it seemed he wasn't willing to start now. 1

Doris reached out to grab William's hand. He looked down at her and his anger slowly started to fade. He took a deep breath.

"I don't want him near the baby." William said more calmly. 1

Enzo nodded respectfully. "Understood. Should I send him home?"

"He can leave when you do, but I don't want to cross paths with him. Make sure I don't." William said as if it was a threat. Enzo though—he never seemed to take anything William said to heart. Perhaps that was why they hadn't killed each other yet.

"I will lock him in a dark room until we're ready to leave." Enzo clapped William on the shoulder with a grin. "Now tell me how you've been, you grumpy beast."

William shrugged off his hand but he didn't look annoyed. He almost looked as if he was trying not to smirk.

"Fine." William muttered and seated himself on the other side of Doris. "Not so well now that you're staying."

"Ah, I love when you lie." Enzo seated himself across from them, careful not to look at Doris for too long even in the friendliest way. "We couldn't miss a moment in history like this."

"I wouldn't call it that." Doris said with a blush. Beth squeezed her hand.

"If only you knew, Doris. There is not a soul in this

kingdom that doesn't obsess over you and that baby."

"What?" Doris turned to her friend. "Surely that can't be true—"

"Oh but it is! Normally babies are ignored when a lady gives birth, but you are engaged to William and this baby very well might be the next heir."

Beth grinned. "You are the most important thing in this kingdom at the moment and everyone knows it."

William shifted beside her. A look of alertness crossed his features.

She knew what he was thinking without him having to say it. If she was the most important thing in the kingdom at the moment, it only made her a bigger target to unknown enemies.