

## Chapter 216 Sweet innocence

William sat on the edge of the bed with their baby held carefully in his arms. It was bundled in a golden blanket and could barely open its eyes yet. He was... he was absolutely beautiful. Everything about him was beautiful. 1

It was like looking at the image of pure sweet innocence.

He looked like his father, Doris could barely see with the tears the pooled in her eyes. This little baby was what she carried for nine months. "Our ... that's our baby." She whispered.

William smiled at her, teeth and all. Her heart melted in her chest and she wanted to paint this image to hang on her wall forever. Her family. Nothing could take this from her—nothing.

Slowly, he placed their baby in her arms for the first time. "He's so beautiful." Doris whispered as she held him carefully to her chest. Lightly, she brushed her finger across his cheek. They made this, this beautiful baby came out of her and now it was safe in her arms.

"I didn't want to name him without you." William moved to lay next to her. He wrapped his arms around them and pulled them against his chest.

"How long was I out?" Doris asked, unable to take her eyes from his little face. He had a little head of dark brown hair and blue eyes. His heart beat calmed and steady inside his small chest. He was healthy and that alone calmed her more than anything ever could.

"You were out for about three days now." William whispered. Both of them were too afraid to speak louder than necessary. "I knew you would want to see him the moment you work up."

Doris smiled, her nightmares were already faded at just the sight of her family. A year ago she thought she would be far from this palace, but now she couldn't imagine herself anywhere else. 1

"He looks like an Alexander." Doris said softly. "Alec for short."

William said nothing for a long moment. He only stared at their baby's little face. "I like that. Alec."

Doris smiled as she looked up at William. "He looks just like you."

William chuckled and ran his fingers through her

hair. "What did you dream of this time? Was it horrible?" He asked gently. She liked this side of William. Calm, gentle, loving. Ever since she had gotten pregnant he showed more of it. Part of Doris was worried that it might go away now that the baby was born.

Doris blinked quickly when images of fire and death returned to her. She shook it out of her head. "It was... horrible." Doris whispered. She rocked the baby slowly against her chest. "I don't know why my dreams are always so full of death when I take that blood. It's the only time I get nightmares like that."

"I was once told that the blood gives visions of your worst fears, mixed with a sight at the future." William whispered. He held her close to him as their baby slept.

"What?" Doris turned to look at him. "A sight of the future? That can't be true. It was just a bunch of... fire and death. Something in my dream just kept taunting me and trying to scare me."

William nodded silently, "Then it must just be all of your fears trying to haunt you. Some from the past and the present."

Doris swallowed. She hoped that was all it was.

After another day of rest Doris was finally ready to take care of her baby on her own. Her wounds had healed and William's confidence in her was all she needed to get out of bed and be a mother.

Alexander was fast asleep in his crib by her bed as she dressed for the day. Beth joined her for a quiet tea break on the other side of the room.

"How did it feel when you... pushed him out?" Beth whispered. Her eyes were wide as she glanced at Alec's crib. Beth was starting to become just as obsessed with Alec as his parents were.

Doris snorted and had to cover her nose so tea didn't pour out. "Beth, it quite literally felt like I was dying! I did almost die."

Beth grew pale at her words. "I don't think I want to have children." She shivered. "I don't want to die at childbirth."

"Oh, have you told Enzo that you don't want children?" Doris raised her brows with a small smirk on her lips.

Beth turned scarlet red and picked up her teacup.

"I don't know why you think he would care what I

want."

"Beth! I've wanted long enough, spill!"

Beth glanced around the room as if she was looking for an escape. She suddenly seemed to realize that there was none so she deflated back against the couch.

"I... I suppose you could say that there is something growing between us." Beth said cautiously. "We... have spent a lot of time together these past few months and I feel a bit attached to him."

"Beth, I know you. I know that you would never stay anywhere with that much snow unless there was a reason. I'm your best friend, don't you dare try to cover up how you feel!"

Beth smiled a little and covered her face. "Fine! Fine. Enzo and I are more than friends but I asked him not to announce it to the world."

Doris grinned, "It looks like he wants to scream it at the top of the roof whenever he looks at you, Beth."

"We just... I don't know. I've never met a man like him. He's... he's charming and kind and everything I could have ever asked for. He never pushes me

to do anything I don't want to do and always makes sure my voice is heard. I thought men like that only existed in books, Doris!"

Beth sighed and closed her eyes. "I feel awful for not telling you sooner. I know I should have but—"

"Beth, it's okay. I didn't tell you about William for a long time. I knew you would eventually come around." Doris nudged her friend. "Have you two..."

Beth widened her eyes. "Doris!" She hissed with a laugh. "No. I told him I wasn't ready and he hasn't tried anything since I said that. He knows I've never been with another."

Doris sighed happily for her friend. She really did find a rare gem. Most men would guilt the women to give up that part of themselves, but Enzo would never. 1

Alec started crying, Doris hurried up to go feed him. Once she was done, she carried him back to the couch to sit with Beth.

"You're a wonderful mom, Doris. I knew you always would be. Ever since I first met you." Beth said gently as she took Alec's little hand.

"Thank you, love." Doris whispered. "I just.... I just feel strange sometimes."

Beth tilted her head in question. "What do you mean?"

"Ever since I had those nightmares, I feel strange inside. I feel like something bad is going to happen and I won't be able to prevent it."