

The 5-time Rejected Gamma & the Lycan King by Stina's Pen Chapter 123

Chapter 123

When Xandar's jet landed, the rest of the alliance along with Christian and Annie were there to greet them. Xandar brought Lucianne straight to Dr Yeil's medical center, and everyone else followed them there despite Lucianne insisting that it wasn't necessary for them to come.

After Dr Yeil had taken her blood to run tests, Xandar convinced Lucianne to get a full body scan done to see if the poison on the arrow was affecting any other part of her anatomy. His biggest worry was that it was damaging her bones or her neurons.

Dr Yeil and his nurse got Lucianne to lie down on a table in a medium-sized examination room with white walls. When the scan started, blue beams of light appeared from all four walls, moving up and down

Lucianne's body before the beams moved side-to-side.

Outside the examination room, everyone was watching the process in eerie silence. Juan came to Xandar's side, and the first thing that came out of the Alpha's mouth was, "If she can't bear children, would you leave her?" Everyone was stunned by Juan's sudden question.

Christian and Annie's eyes widened in shock. Xandar's worried eyes on Lucianne in the room were replaced with disbelief and anger as he met Juan's hard gaze. The King, with furrowed eyebrows, questioned rhetorically, "Would I leave her? Me? Leave her? Me?"

The King's response held so much devotion that Juan's hardened features softened slightly, and there were sighs of relief from most of the wolves in the room. Even so, Christian and Annie couldn't help but feel insulted

by how Juan and the other wolves were questioning Xandar's love for Lucianne. They knew Xandar, he wouldn't let something like this come between him and his mate.

Despite the already-eased atmosphere in the room, Xandar went on, "Juan." He sighed in frustration before continuing, "If anything, I should be the one worried that my mate would leave me. Not the other way around. Honestly, before I knew Lucy loved kids, I didn't even care if she didn't want them. All I ever wanted was to be with her, to love her and to make her happy."

Xandar averted his gaze to pressed away the tears from the comers of his eyes before his sights returned to Lucianne in the room as he uttered, "I keep telling her that I would protect her, and time and time again, I've only showed how incompetent I am as her mate. Every screw-up just feels like I'm one step closer to the love of my life...rejecting me."

Xandar was looking at Lucianne through the one-way mirror with nothing but guilt, and the pain and fear from Lucianne rejecting him was getting suffocating. He was also wondering whether there was a mute button in his head to silence his whimpering animal for a few hours.

Suddenly, Juan patted Xandar on his shoulder, and the King met the Alpha's warm smile as Juan said, "I'm sorry I doubted you, your Highness."

Xandar shook his head slightly and muttered, "With Lucy's past, you have every right to be." Something was still bothering him so he looked at the floor and asked incoherently, "Do you think she would...will she ...will Lucy leave me?"

Xandar was too afraid of the answer, so it was a surprise when Juan chuckled lightly before he said, "Well, I hope not."

“That’s not very assuring, Juan.” Xandar said, still ominous.

“Well, she did ask me not to blame you for what happened so I’d say you’re still on her good side.” Juan

added, genuinely trying to make Xandar feel better now.

Staying on her good side wasn’t enough for Xandar. Lucianne asked Juan not to blame Tate and Clement, too. So, the two Alphas were on her ‘good side’ as well. Xandar didn’t want to just be one of the many people Lucianne defended. He wanted to be the intimate partner she would choose to love, the mate she would choose to mark, and the significant other she would choose to spend the rest of her life with. Staying on her good side was far from enough.

After the examination was done, they waited for a few minutes before the nurse came back with the preliminary test results. Lucianne’s basic anatomy was fine. Her bones were normal and so was her nervous system. However, the creases of worry and despair on everyone’s foreheads did not smoothen when they were told that certain hormones relating to pregnancy had been suppressed by an unknown substance.

“Is the concentration not subsiding?” Xandar asked as he caressed his mate’s shoulders from behind her.

Dr Yeil glanced at Lucianne sadly before his sights went to Xandar, “No, my King. I’m afraid not. But do bear in mind that this is merely the preliminary results. The extensive analysis would take a few more hours,”

Lucianne’s mind wasn’t in the room anymore. She just wanted to get out of there and be alone for the rest of the day. When they took their leave, she thanked Dr Yeil and his nurse numbly with a forced smile. Xandar’s

hand never left her waist as he led them out of the building and towards the parking lot.

The alliance walking behind them didn't say a word to each other as well, all lost in their own thoughts. They all parked near each other so they walked in the same direction. As they approached their cars, a swarm of journalists and reporters appeared around the corner and immediately started snapping photographs with their phones and cameras.

One of them immediately shouted out, "My Queen, how are your injuries from Ms Sasha Cummings's attack yesterday?"

Lucianne was not in the mood for this but she knew better than to cause a scene, so she hastened her footsteps towards Xandar's car as she responded to the journalist with a meek smile, "I'm all healed. Thank you for your concern."

Another reporter shouted out his question, "Were you here for a check-up of the arm injury from Ms Cummings's attack, or was it for something else, my Queen?" The glint in his eye and his choice of words showed that he knew more than he wanted to let on. He knew she was here for 'something else'.

Lucianne stopped in her tracks but before she could speak, Xandar wamed the nosy party in a low, menacing tone, "The Queen is drained out from defending the Forest Gloom Pack from rogue wolves AND rogue Lycans. She will not entertain any further questions from any of you."

The same undaunted reporter with large-frame glasses and a tablet in his hand asked, "My King, don't we have warriors for that sort of thing? And conventionally speaking, isn't it undignified for a Queen to be on a battlefield?"

“Undignified?” Xandar uttered as his partially-onyx eyes turned completely onyx when they penetrated into the reporter’s being, and the insensitive reporter was beginning to regret asking his question.

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Xandar fixed his death glare at the reporter who labeled his mate’s bravery and nobility as “undignified”. The King then asked in a low voice, “What is your name and who do you work for?”

The reporter swallowed a lump in his throat and opened his mouth but nothing came out. Xandar growled in impatience, and demanded in a roar, “Answer me!”

The reporter shook as he stuttered in response, “A-Apologies, m-my K-King. M-My name i-is Ian P Pollock, and I w-work for T&C News Corporation, your Hi-Highness.”

“Truthful & Credible News Corporation?” Xandar muttered his way.

The reporter nodded and tried his best to fidget less but the fear spurring in his being made it impossible for him to stand still.

Xandar huffed condescendingly and said, “SO, T&C’s stance is that a Queen fighting alongside her people i s undignified? That’s the truth your company is advocating for? And you and your colleagues claim to have the credibility to judge what is or is not dignified when it comes to what the Queen chooses to do?”

When there was nothing but the sound of Pollock’s fidgeting teeth in the parking lot, Xandar said, “Tell your boss I expect a front-page apology

for what you just said about my mate. As for your career in reporting, it's safe to say that it is time for an early retir"

'Darling, a two-week suspension would do.' Lucianne linked him, as her tired black orbs peered into his angered onyx eyes.

His gaze softened as he linked in despair, 'Babe, the more mercy we show, the more they'll try to push our boundaries. Take Cummings, for instance. We showed her mercy and she ended up hurting you!'

'Which is why I didn't object to imprisoning her. But this reporter was just doing his job. All of them here were just competing to report and write-up the next big scoop for their employers. They have professional targets to meet and families to feed. It was not right for him to ask what he did but a permanent banishment isn't necessary, Xandar. They were insensitive but insensitivity is not a criminal offence that requires career destruction. A simple suspension would do, as a warning.'

The small crowd was silent as the King and Queen mind-linked each other. When their eyes cleared, Xandar sighed before planting a deep kiss on Lucianne's forehead. He then turned back to the reporter who was already drenched in cold sweat as Xandar said, "If it were me, you'd be jobless and dead by now, Pollock. Fortunately for you, our Queen insists that a two-week suspension would be a good-enough punishment."

A glimmer of hope appeared in Pollock's features but then Xandar added, "As much as I love and respect m y mate, I speak from observation when I say that our species don't learn very well from light punishments so I will be insisting on a six-month suspension and a personally-written apology submitted across all news sites. If I find a single word that displeases me, you'd better hope I don't track you down and end you. Do I make myself clear?"

“Y-Yes, your Highness.” He then looked at Lucianne and bowed as he uttered, “I convey my most sincere apologies, my Queen. Thank you for offering mercy.”

Lucianne’s face was unperturbed when she spoke with as much strength as she could muster, “You’ve received information about my condition, about the likelihood of a certain poison hindering particular aspects of my bodily function. Who gave you this information?”

The reporters and journalists gasped in shock and glanced at each other nervously. How did the Queen know? Who told her? Lucianne thought only Pollock had been tipped off at first but the scared and guilty faces of every other journalist and reporter before them showed that they were all given the same tip. If she could find the source, she may find out who ordered the poison for her.

Pollock’s teeth rattled a little before he said, “W-We don’t know, my Queen. It w-was an anonymous tip, a p h-phone call.”

“What was the number?” Christian asked, his phone already out as he waited for Pollock to respond.

Pollock was getting paler as he said, “I-I don’t know, your Grace. B-But I can request my superiors to ask for the call record.”

Christian’s dissatisfied expression met Pollock’s fearful one as the Duke warned in a threatening tone, “You’d better make sure I get the number within the next hour.” Pollock gave quick, vigorous nods without needing to think

“That includes all of you.” Annie directed fiercely to the rest of the journalists, surprising everyone present, including her own mate. Christian couldn’t remember the last time he saw Annie showing this much ferocity. Was there even such a time? 4

After Pollock's incident with the King and Queen, no one dared challenge anyone in the royal family, thus they merely offered a slight bow and uttered obediently in Annie's way, "Yes, your Grace."

Lucianne threw Annie a grateful smile, and Annie winked in response. Her confidence ignited a fire in Christian but only sparked confusion in Xandar, who felt left out when his beautiful mate smiled at the Duchess like something went on between them which he didn't know about.

Being the attention-seeking mate that he was, Xandar pecked a kiss on Lucianne's temple to get her attention before uttering affectionately, "Let's head back, my love. You should rest." Lucianne offered a small smile and nodded dotingly in response.

Xandar pecked a kiss on her nose before leading her to the car and holding the door open for her to get in. They didn't speak all the way back but Xandar held Lucianne's hand and stroked it lovingly while he drove them back to the hotel.

In the hotel room, Xandar washed Lucianne's body and his own in the shower before helping her into her clothes. After he tucked her in and pecked a kiss on her forehead, he was about to leave her bedside when Lucianne called out in a soft voice, "Xandar,"

Xandar's eyes widened, and he stroked her hair with a warm smile as he asked, "Yes, sweetheart, what is it?"

"Um..." Lucianne thought for a moment before she asked, "What happens if..if I can't give us children?" Her eyes began glistening at the thought of having to reject him, or have him reject her.

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Xandar's smile turned into a frown as he leaned into her to hold her in his arms. "That's what you've been worrying about? Lucy, if kids really mean that much to you, we could always consider adoption."

"You mean...you don't mind...not having your own kids?" Lucianne asked in a coarse and broken voice.

He held her tighter as he whispered, "I only mind not having you, Lucy. I don't even care if we didn't have any kids."

"But you wanted...a daughter."

Xandar sighed, already regretting the way he expressed so much enthusiasm in having a little girl with Lucianne that she now felt like having a daughter was a must when it wasn't. He kissed her forehead before declaring firmly, "Baby, a daughter with your genes would have been magical but my life isn't any less magical without one. I meant what I said the other day, I just want to be with you. That's all I need."

"What about an heir to the throne?" Lucianne asked in a small voice.

Xandar answered matter-of-factly, "Well, if we do adopt, then that child would be next in line. Otherwise, it would be one of Juan's kids, hierarchically-speaking."

Lucianne's saddened expression turned contemplative as she asked in surprise, "Juan's kids?"

Xandar then explained, "Yes. When the King and Dukes have no successors, the next in line would be the next closest family member. In our case, it'll be Juan's family since he's like a brother to the Queen. Greg is already disqualified from all those corruption charges against him.

So, after us, Christian and Annie, Juan's children are technically next in line."

"They're wolves though." Lucianne noted the obvious.

Xandar chuckled lightly at his mate's worried look. "Well then, my love. We have a lot to do in our years as King and Queen to make sure that there is little to no disparity between our species for a harmonious succession of your niece or nephew." 1

Lucianne's eyebrows furrowed in disbelief as she asked, "You're not joking? That's really what would happen?"

Xandar shrugged like it was just another logical reasoning for him, "Yeah. That's just how it goes in royal succession."

"Huh." Lucianne noted to herself and internalized whatever she was just told.

Xandar kissed her forehead to smoothen the creases there before he whispered, "Now that that's out of the way, can you please just sleep, Lucy? When you wake up, I'd like to know the inside joke between you and Annie. I don't like being left out."

"What inside joke?" Lucianne asked.

Xandar narrowed his eyes at his mate as he said, "Don't play dumb, sweetheart. Annie was never as fierce as she was today. You two must have said or done something between yourselves to get her to speak the way she did."

"Oh, that." Lucianne responded in realization before snuggling her head deeper into the pillow and slowly letting her eyelids fall.

“Wait, you’re really not going to tell me, babe?” Xandar asked in mock annoyance.

Lucianne’s eyes opened slightly as she muttered sleepily, “You said you wanted to know after I wake up.”,

Xandar chuckled at Lucianne’s clever retort and kissed her temple before he whispered into her ear, “I love you.”

He only left her side after she muttered, “I know. I love you, too.” After flipping off the light switches, he crawled under the bedsheets next to her and, like the last time, Lucianne snuggled into his chest before they both dozed off.

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When they woke up a few hours later, Xandar got the devastating confirmation from Dr Yeil that the

poison was indeed one that suppressed pregnancy indefinitely. On the couch, Lucianne was numb as she sat on Xandar’s lap. He stroked her arm in soothing motions while he asked Dr Yeil, “Any possible cure?” 3

“We could have the Queen take hormonal medication in the course of her pregnancy but I must caution you, my King, that a healthy fetus would be unlikely.” Dr Yeil said. There was a pause when Xandar became distracted with Lucianne turning away from him to wipe away her tears.

Xandar held her closer to his chest and pecked a kiss on her tear stain before Dr Yeil’s voice came through the line, “What happened to the Queen was unjust and wrong, my King. I wish I could be of more help. I have sent her blood to our largest research centre in hopes that they’ll manufacture a cure but I must admit that...I’m not sure if a solution would present itself in the near future.”

“I see. Thank you, Dr Yeil.” Xandar uttered.

“It’s a pleasure to be of service, your Highness. Do give my best to the Queen. She’s a gem that the Kingdom cannot afford to lose.” Dr Yeil responded, knowing fully well that Lucianne’s situation was the result of fighting off rogues and saving countless lives.

Xandar tried to speak as steadily as he could, “Will do. Thank you.” It was so unfair that Lucianne had to bear the brunt of ruthless attacks when she had done so much for everyone.

After Xandar hung up, he kissed Lucianne’s temple and she muttered in a choppy voice, “I just th-thought that...since I could heal from silver and Oleander...I could somehow heal from this.”

Xandar pressed her into his chest as he responded in a whisper, “I know, baby. I know.”

They sat in silence. Since it was time for dinner, they called room service, and not long later, the hotel staff walked in with Xandar’s lobster and Lucianne’s salmon. Lucianne didn’t fight Xandar this time when he placed her on his lap and caged her between his arms when he sliced the salmon into small parts before feeding it to her.

Suddenly, Xandar’s phone on the armrest started to ring, showing ‘Yarrington’ on the screen. Lucianne’s hand went underneath her mate’s arm to reach for his phone before Xandar uttered, “Put him on speaker, sweetheart.”

After swiping to answer, Lucianne put Yarrington on speaker and held his phone near him as Xandar put another piece of salmon into her mouth.

“Yarrington?” Xandar’s firm voice rang through the line.

“Your Highness, Weaver and I have just heard about the Queen at the doctor’s from the news. May I ask...is she alright?”

Lucianne nodded her head while chewing the food in her mouth.

Xandar’s voice was softer when he responded, “She’s holding up better than anyone can expect.”

There was a sigh of relief from the minister’s end before he said, “Well, I suppose I shouldn’t be too shocked. She is stronger than most Lycans we heard of, men and women alike. But there’s another reason why I called, my King. The uh...the sexual harassment complaints have been curated but...” he sighed, before he said, “There appears to be a hiccup.”

“What hiccup?”

Yarrington was visibly nervous when he said, “W-Well, your Highness. Ten complaints have been made against the Duke.”

It was zero surprise for Xandar that Greg would be one of the perpetrators of this kind of offence. The King continued slicing through his mate’s food while responding to the minister like it was no big deal, “That’s hardly a hiccup, Yarrington. That cousin of mine doesn’t have a reputation of being respectful, much less t o women.”

“No, my King. I wasn’t talking about the Duke from your father’s side.” Xandar’s hands on the knife and fork halted, and Lucianne’s chewing paused as their eyes converged on Xandar’s phone.

With the sudden silence, Yarrington assumed that the King wanted him to continue speaking so he did,” Ten complaints have been made accusing the other Duke, the second-in-command, Christian Blackfur.”

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Lucianne coughed profusely after choking on the broccoli she was chewing in her mouth when they were told that Christian was one of the people they'd have to investigate for sexual harassment.

Her choking made Xandar's eyes snapped wider in worry as he took his phone from her hand and placed it on the couch while he rubbed comforting circles on her back, holding a glass of water near her.

"My Queen! Are you alright?!" Weaver's panicked voice came through the line.

After a few more coughs, Lucianne took a few sips of water before she managed to say, "F-Fine, Sir Weaver. Thank -" Cough. "Thank you. Sorry about that, Lord Yarrington. Please continue."

Weaver spoke before his mate could, "My Queen, this is entirely our fault. You shouldn't have to apologize."

Lord Yarrington sounded guilty when he said, "Apologies, my Queen. I didn't mean to startle you."

"No no. I'm fine. Please continue the uh...complaints made against Christian. Who are they?" Lucianne insisted as she took sips from the glass of water Xandar placed into her hands, prompting her to drink it to clear her throat.

Yarrington proceeded to explain, "The ten complainants are all wolves from different packs, my Queen. And the range of the complaints goes

back ten years, one in each year. But there's also a possibility that this may be a false complaint lodged for...slandrous intentions."

Xandar then asked, "What makes you say that?"

"Well, my King. There have been three complaints made against Weaver, alleging that, on separate occasions, Weaver coerced the complainants into performing sexual intercourse at a nightclub in the neighboring town. I checked the times and dates the purported intercourses took place, and I found that it can't be true. Weaver and I were together on all three occasions. The first one was when we were both at a gender-reveal party at my sister's place; the second was when we were at the movies on our anniversary; and the third was the night when Weaver had food poisoning, and I was by his side all day as he made frequent trips to the washroom. It couldn't be Weaver." 1

"Maybe it was just someone who looked like Weaver and the women were confused?" Xandar suggested.

Weaver spoke next, "That was what we thought at first, too, my King. But we think that it's too much of a coincidence that three people from the collaboration can mistake me for someone else. Your Highnesses, we think that someone may be trying to...have this swept under the mat. Seeing as how close you both are to the Duke, implanting fake complaints may be a way to defeat the progress of the investigation." 1

"Well, we can't let that happen." Xandar muttered.

Lucianne then asked, "Are Sir Weaver's complainants wolves as well, Lord Yarrington?"

"Yes, my Queen."

"Which packs are they from?"

“Uh...just a moment, my Queen.” There were a few clicking sounds before Yarrington responded, “Black River, Fleet Woods and Night Pine.”

Lucianne scoffed, “Fleet Woods hasn’t existed since a rogue massacre four years ago. No one survived. I’ll check with the Alphas of Black River and...”

“That’s actually a brilliant idea!” Weaver was so excited that he accidentally cut Lucianne off. She didn’t mind but Xandar did. To calm her beast, she stroked his arm as she mouthed, ‘It’s okay.’

Weaver’s enthusiastic voice continued to ring through, “We’ll just cross-check the complainants’ names from every pack to see if they exist!”.

Yarrington then built up on his mate’s efforts, “Yes, I probably should have thought of doing that.”

Xandar then said, “In the meantime, there needs to be a change in who gets involved in this investigation.” Everyone was silent as they waited for their King to continue. “I now see why you both suspect that whoever made these false complaints either have slanderous intentions or intentions of forcing us to close this matter without following through what we promised to our people.”

He held onto his mate’s small hand before he uttered, “They must have known that the ones involved in this investigation are Christian, you and me, Yarrington. So, they accused Weaver to get you off the investigation because of the conspicuous conflict of interest seeing that he’s your mate. And they lodged

plaints against my cousin and second-in-command to remove his right to investigate, and to remove my right because of the conflict of interest I have seeing that he's my confidant."

Lucianne stroked his hand to comfort him as he continued, "Since Weaver is in the clear now, he can help you with the investigation but I'm afraid the Duke and I have to step aside for now, in the name of fairness and transparency. Yarrington, the reins are yours. Appoint whoever you deem necessary. Find out who's playing with us. They're going to wish they made a complaint against me instead of my best friend."

There was a moment of silence, and Xandar had to take a whiff of Lucianne's scent from her hair just to cool his radiating anger. Lucianne was getting uncomfortable with the ensuing silence so she asked, "Sir Weaver, Lord Yarrington, is that okay?"

"Y-Yes, of course, my Queen." Weaver said.

Yarrington then spoke seriously, "We'll look into it and try to get to the bottom of things as soon as possible, your Highnesses. And, my King, for the Duke's...issue, would you like me to tell him?"

"That won't be necessary, Yarrington. I'll do it." Xandar responded immediately.

"Yes, that would be better. Weaver and I will get to it now. Have a good night, my King, my Queen." Yarrington said.

"Good night." Xandar and Lucianne uttered in unison.

As soon as he hung up on Yarrington and Weaver, Xandar mind-linked his cousin, 'Hey, Christian.'

‘What’s with the ominous tone, cuz? Is the Queen alright?’

‘She’s fine. This is about the sexual harassment complaints.’

‘Oh, right! It’s been one week already. Okay, where do we start? What do we do?’

‘Nothing

‘What?’

‘Yarrington is taking the lead. We both can’t be privy to the investigation in any way for now because...ten complaints have been made against you, Christian’ There was a moment of silence before Christian’s angered voice linked back, ‘WHAT THE F*CK!!!’

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At breakfast the next day, Christian was still pissed. The only consolation he got was that Annie didn’t believe he did any of those things alleged by the so-called ‘victims’. Yarrington and Weaver assured the Duke that they were looking into the complaints made against him first, and asked for an alibi for the dates and times mentioned in the ten complaints.

He and Annie went through their photographs in their iCloud Drive, and managed to negate the validity of two complaints. Then, they got out their photo albums, where Annie had a habit of writing the dates on the back of every photograph. Christian began regretting not making time to upload every photograph they took together on the Drive.

They scoured through the thousands of pictures they took over the years, praying that there would be a date and time which would match up with the ones in the allegations. After four hours, they managed to negate another three complaints.

Xandar and Lucianne cross-checked the dates and times with government meetings recorded on Xandar's laptop, and managed to negate the credibility of another three complaints. That left two more complaints standing against the Duke.

What made the Duke's temperament worse was that the anonymous informant's number that the journalists and reporters gave him turned out to be unreachable. Chief Dalloway and his people tracked the phone to a dumpster, and retrieved it before sending it to the lab for a fingerprint scan. Alas, the scan turned out to be fruitless because no registered citizen's fingerprints matched the ones found on the burner phone.

"I honestly can't see how my wife is so calm about this. I can kill, and I mean literally kill right now, cuz, you know what I mean?" Christian said after swallowing his food.

Xandar gave his cousin an encouraging pat on his shoulder before he said, "They're looking into it. Yarrington and Weaver have always been efficient. They'll crack this case soon, Christian."

Christian's orbs were onyx when he declared, "The only thing I'm going to crack is the complainants' heads over these fake complaints. All ten of them. I don't care if you put me in jail, cuz."

"I could break you out if you do it." Lucianne offered. 1

That seemed to calm Christian a little. He managed a small smile as he bowed slightly in her way when he said, "Thank you, my Queen."

Xandar looked at his mate in mock disapproval, “My Queen, that is no way to treat a murderer. And do you even know how to break someone out of prison, sweetheart?”

Lucianne shook her adorable head as she said, “No. But there’s a first time for everything.”

The cousins chuckled lightly in response. Lucianne felt bad for Christian when he had to go through the frustration of being blamed for something he would not even think of doing, so she was glad that she could lighten his mood, even if it was just momentarily.

She spoke to Annie before breakfast, and the Duchess was more worried about her mate losing his temper in public than about the harassment allegations made against him.

Just when things couldn’t get any worse, Chief Dalloway and two policemen stood at the entrance of the dining hall. Lucianne was the first to notice their presence. The Chief then spoke discreetly to the event

manageress who came to greet them. She looked uneasy as she nodded his way before walking towards the table of the royal members.

Lucianne was up on her feet, and when her mate and the Duke saw the Queen standing, they too stood without knowing who they were expecting. After exchanging bows with the event manageress, she said, “Your Highnesses, your Grace, Chief Dalloway from the police force is requesting for a private audience. He said it’s urgent.”

The three of them glanced at the Chief, who looked exhausted and fearful. Lucianne then said, “Let’s not keep him waiting, then.”

The three of them left their unfinished food on the table and left the hall, turning a deaf ear to all the whispers, and turning a blind eye to the stares

that they were garnering. The manageress got her staff to clear a small meeting room down the hallway.

As they sat around the resin wood table, Chief Dalloway cleared his throat uneasily before he said, “Your Highnesses, your Grace. There is no easy way of saying this. I am sorry to report that Sasha Cummings was taken two nights ago.”

“I’m sorry, what?” Lucianne asked in disbelief.

“What do you mean ‘taken’?” Xandar asked, more ferociously than his mate.

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The Chief chose to avert Xandar’s glare and locked eyes with Lucianne instead as he explained, “Two nights ago, close to midnight, one of our own people unlocked her cell and let her out, handing her over to someone we are still trying to track down. The...mole among us then made his way to solitary confinement, where we held the rogue, and he requested to meet the prisoner.”

“And you let him?” Christian hissed.

“No, your Grace, my men didn’t, which was why the mole shot one of the three guards outside the rogue’s room.” Chief Dalloway paused for a moment before he continued, “The other two guards restrained him, forcing him onto the ground. What we didn’t predict was that his comrade would enter from the ceiling and shoot the other two guards who were pressing the mole’s body to the ground.”

“The mole, his comrade and the rogue then sought to escape through the ceiling. By then, we were all alerted by those watching the cameras. I ordered a complete lockdown of the prison but they took one of our

helicopters to escape. Only six hours ago, our trackers found the helicopter on a deserted island fifteen miles from here. We managed to find a tunnel underneath the island sand but it has been blocked by a large boulder. I've just returned from that island in the last hour. Further investigations are still underway for now. I am deeply sorry for this debacle, your Highness."

"Don't be. You did everything you could." Lucianne muttered as soon as he finished speaking. Both the cousins were about to throw a fit but seeing as how Lucianne didn't criticize the incompetence of the police force, they chose to silence themselves.

Lucianne stared at the table and pondered for a moment before she asked, "The ones who were shot, did they survive?"

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Chief Dalloway shook his head woefully, and the policeman who stood at the door held his head low. The Chief then said, "The Oleander bullets penetrated right through their hearts. The medical team couldn't save them."

Lucianne inhaled deeply and exhaled sadly before she said, "I am so sorry for your loss."

"Thank you, my Queen." Chief Dalloway responded with a polite smile, and the policeman gave her a grateful nod.

Lucianne then cleared her throat before asking, "As for the location where the helicopter was found, do you happen to have any pictures of the site?"

“I do, in fact. A moment please, your Highness.” The Chief took out his phone from his pocket, and scrolled through it for a while before placing it on the table and gently pushing it towards Lucianne.

She lifted up the phone and enlarged the photo to study the sandy beach and thick jungle next to where the hijacked police helicopter seemed to have landed safely. Lucianne then pushed the phone in the two cousins’ way for them to have a look as she asked the Chief, “The jungle is being searched now, I presume?”

“Indeed, my Queen. It’s been two hours but we haven’t found anything as of yet, I’m afraid.”

Xandar then asked, “Does Alfred Cummings know where his daughter would be taken by any chance?”

“I doubt it, your Highness. When I questioned him on the matter, he was genuinely shocked and worried. My men had to restrain him when he started throwing expletives and blaming the police force for what he labeled as an ‘abduction’ of his daughter.”

Christian then muttered in dissatisfaction, “Looks more like an escape to me. Any thoughts of seeking ransom from abducting the daughter would just backfire. Her father’s assets have been frozen.”

Xandar grew contemplative as he thought aloud, “If ransom is out of the question, and it’s really not an abduction....why would someone want to help his daughter escape? What could she possibly have to offer? As far as I know, she has no wealth of her own so she wouldn’t be able to contribute to anything financially. If the escape was aided by someone who she shares close relations with, her brother is the only one that comes to mind after her father. But her brother doesn’t seem to get along with her so it’s unlikely that he would help her escape.”

Chief Dalloway's uneasiness returned when he said, "If I may, my King. Mr Sebastian Cummings did visit his sister late evening the other day when she was brought into police custody."

Lucianne held her mate's hand to calm him as Xandar asked, "What was the context of their conversation? Was it about planning her escape?"

"No, my King. Uh... it was about..." the Chief looked at Lucianne nervously. Lucianne helped the poor old man by saying what was in his mind, "Me."

He nodded and continued, "Ms Cummings felt that her brother was still carrying a torch for you, my Queen. And in doing so she criticized him for being blinded by what she deemed to be the truth, that her so-called..misfortune and that of her father's have been caused by y--"

Before he could finish his sentence, Xandar slammed the table as he growled and shouted, "THEY ARE THE CAUSE OF THEIR CURRENT PROBLEMS! HOW DARE THEY BLAME THE FUTURE QUEEN! HOW DARE

THEY SPEAK AGAINST MY MATE!!"

"Darling, darling. Please, just breathe. Just breathe. Shh. Just breathe, my love. Breathe." Both of Lucianne's hands were on one of his now as she squeezed it assuringly, trying desperately to calm Xandar down. As usual, his animal took in her soothing voice, and his human part let her touch cool his bubbling infemo. 2

The small room fell into dead silence as Lucianne continued cooing her enraged mate. When he had better control of his temper, Xandar sighed in frustration before lifting Lucianne's hands up and pecked a kiss on them before speaking to the Chief in a still-angered tone, "And why was this not brought to my attention?"

The Chief stuttered when he said, “B-Because the member who was present during the siblings’ conversation was...”

“The mole.” Christian concluded, and the Chief nodded in confirmation.

Lucianne then said, “I hope the entire police force is undergoing a screening process, Chief? Especially when it comes to newer members who join the force?”

He immediately said, “Yes, my Queen. A team of senior members has been formed to look through everyone’s backgrounds. I’ve personally looked through theirs before appointing them. And we’ve decided to have two people instead of one in the visitation room for high-profile criminals such as Ms Cummings. We’ve also unanimously agreed to have a third person transcribe all conversations from such visitations, so as to ensure anything said between the prisoner and the visitor is heard by a pair of fresh ears.”

“It’s good to know that appropriate measures are being taken.” Lucianne nodded in understanding. “Are you going to question Sebastian Cummings about his sister’s disappearance?”

“Two of our agents are questioning him as we speak, my Queen. I’ll happily send over the transcript of the interrogation later today, if necessary.”

Xandar’s hardened expression was fixed on the Chief as he answered in a firm voice, “Yes, it is necessary, Chief.”

The Chief nodded in compliance, “Very well. I’ll personally see to it that it’ll be sent to you once it is done, my King.”

“Thank you, Chief.” Lucianne responded gratefully, offering him a small smile.

After a moment of pin drop silence, Lucianne asked, “Xandar, Christian. Is there anything else you’d both like the Chief to tell us?” Christian shook his head and sighed in defeat as he slumped back into his chair, absorbing whatever they’ve just been told.

Xandar smiled in Lucianne’s way and stroked her hand lovingly as he responded gently, “Not as of now, m y dear.”

Lucianne then faced the Chief again and asked, “Is there anything else we should know, Chief?”

“Well, it’s not a matter of knowledge on our part but we were wondering, my Queen...uh...how well do you know a woman by the name of Livia Aphael?”

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Chapter 129

“Livia Aphael?” Lucianne asked, clearly oblivious. When the Chief nodded, even the policeman at the door was surprised to see Lucianne looking lost as she said, “I don’t know anyone by that name.”

The Chief was surprised at her answer so he unlocked his phone to look for a photograph before showing i t to Lucianne and asked again, “Do you really not know her, your Highness?”

Lucianne’s eyes widened in recognition as she exclaimed, “Oh, her! I’m sorry, Chief. I didn’t know that was her name.”

“But you seem to remember her quite well, my Queen.” His tone wasn’t accusatory. It just held genuine confusion.

“I do. I’m not sure if you’re aware, Chief. But Sebastian Cummings was my previously-bonded mate, and I severed our bond after finding him making love with this woman, who up until today, I didn’t know the name to.”

“Ah, I see now. We were aware of the previous bond from the conversation between the two siblings but we were unaware of the full events leading up to the severance.”

“How is this relevant?” Xandar asked impatiently, not at all pleased that his mate’s past rejection was being raised

“Well, my King. Livia Aphael’s name came up in their conversation during Mr Cummings’s visit. Seeing that Ms Cummings is gone, we are tracking everyone who may possibly be offering her shelter. After speaking to neighbors and bartenders, we discovered that Ms Cummings and Ms Aphael share a close friendship. So, we were looking into her.”

Christian sat upright again as he questioned, “What do you mean you ‘were’ looking into her? She’s in the clear now?”

“That’s the problem, your Grace.” The Chief’s exhausted eyes peered into the Duke’s irritated ones as he said, “She’s missing. Her whole family is missing.”

Christian then muttered to himself, “You’ve got to be f*cking kidding me.”

Xandar then uttered, “So, it’s safe to say that this woman is our prime suspect in helping Ms Cummings escape?”

“That’s the theory for now, yes. And what makes Ms Aphael’s position worse is that she was the woman who was at the other Duke’s residence, the one who made sexual advances before being thrown out by the Duke

himself. Seeing as he is also missing, we thought she might have something to do with their disappearances.”

“That’s possible.” Xandar muttered in agreement. “She could be the one who hired those men to help break her friend out of prison.”

“Yes, my King, that is unless the results from the interrogation with Mr Cummings offer a different conclusion.” Dalloway then looked at Lucianne and asked, “My Queen, if I may ask, when did you last see Ms Aphael? Was it when the bond was severed?”

Lucianne spoke calmly when she replied, “No, the last time I saw her, inadvertently, I must add, was when we were at a restaurant...” she did a mental count before she continued, “...five days ago. What’s the name of the restaurant we went to the other day, Xandar? The one with the huge aquarium?”

“Le Paradis Luxueux.” Xandar said without hesitation, and he couldn’t help but smile at the memory of their dinner date.

The policeman at the door jotted down the name of the restaurant in his notepad as the Chief asked, “May we know the approximate time when you saw her, my Queen?”

“Around eight, I guess. She was in a one-shoulder red crepe dress with a high slit on the side. Uh... I think she was with someone. The seat in front of her had a plate of unfinished food but she was alone at her table when I noticed her presence. When she felt my stare on her, she started speaking on her phone and made her way out.”

When the policeman’s furious scribbling came to a stop, the Chief asked, “And has there been anything

else from the missing Duke, your Highness?”

“No, Chief. Are you able to locate him yet?” Lucianne asked in curiosity.

“I’m afraid not, my Queen. But we are expanding our search now, so our chances of finding him and Tanner are higher than before.”

Lucianne nodded in understanding. “I see. Is there anything else you need from me?”

“No, my Queen. Thank you for your time. And both of yours as well, my King and your Grace.” The Chief shook their hands and bowed in gratitude before leaving the room with the other policeman.

When the three of them were left alone, Christian started complaining, “Who would need to recruit a dumb blonde with a poor temperament and a high affinity to tilt towards insanity?”

“It couldn’t be Greg, could it?” Xandar asked, basically making wild guesses now.

Christian scoffed and said, “What would Greg do with her? Next to him, her skills are probably worse than a beginner’s. I doubt it’s for sex, too. I’ve seen them both in the same room before. Zero chemistry and almost zero overlap in social circles. He’d be around ministers’ daughters, and she...well, before she was kicked out, she would be around...you, actually, cuz, even when you were just the Crown Prince.”

“And it was bloody irritating. It’s like she won’t take the hint that I’m not interested.” Xandar muttered as he held Lucianne’s hand on his lap.

That was when he realized his mate hadn’t said a word since the policemen left. The cousins looked her way, and noticed that she was lost in thought as she stared at the beige walls in front of them. With a gentle

stroke on her hand, Xandar, in a soft voice, said, “Baby, a penny for your thoughts?”

Her black orbs which were far away were brought back to the room in an instant. Xandar ran his fingers through her hair as he asked, “What’s on your mind, sweetheart? You seemed so far away.”

Her wolf purred under his touch, and Lucianne smiled meekly before she said, “I just didn’t know Sebastian’s bed warmer had access to such resources. If she could find people to break her friend out of prison, why didn’t she just hire someone to sleep with Cummings? Why did she do it herself?”

“Maybe she really liked him?” Xandar offered a suggestion.

“Hm. That’s a possible explanation, I suppose.” Lucianne analyzed aloud. “Something’s still bothering you, Lucy. Tell me. What is it?” Xandar uttered.

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Chapter 130

Lucianne blinked before she sighed in frustration, “I honestly don’t know what to think, Xandar. Whatever we just heard, and whatever we went through these past few days just feels like this complicated web of events that may be connected, but may not be so at the same time.”

“What do you mean by that, sweetheart?”

Lucianne stared into space as she started explaining, “Well, I understand that Sasha’s behavior on the training ground was because she thinks that I’m the reason behind her father’s imprisonment. On the same day she’s

placed in police custody, the strongest packs get threats from rogues to draw me to Forest Gloom. Jake mentioned that they were acting for a client. What if Livia Aphael is that client?"

Xandar's hand holding hers tensed up a little when he said, "If she is, she's going to have a lot to answer for,"

"But that's where things start to not make sense." Lucianne looked at her mate like she was trying to solve a confusing puzzle as she said, "Why would she want me infertile? Up until today, I didn't even know her name. If this is about me being bonded to Cummings, whom she hypothetically likes, then I still don't see what her problem is. I never took him away from her. If anything, I made it easier for her when I rejected him. And...if she had the resources to make Greg disappear, why would she let him give me those incriminating evidence? She could very well make any piece of evidence vanish into thin air. Besides, from what you guys have been saying about Greg... I don't really see why he would need any help in disappearing. He seems really capable of doing that on his own. And how does Tanner fit into all of this?"

Xandar couldn't give her an answer so he looked at his cousin uneasily. Christian merely uttered, "Don't look at me, cuz. I thought I was lost. But what the Queen said just made me feel more lost than before." 1

Xandar sighed before running his fingers through Lucianne's hair again as he suggested, "Maybe it's not connected, sweetheart. Maybe they are all separate events."

"Then why are these events happening one after another? Why are the people we're hunting down disappearing one after another? It's as if they know who the police will be going after next, and they disappear just in time to avoid getting caught." Lucianne said. 1

Blink! A sudden sound in the small room made Lucianne flinch in surprise.

“Oh, that’s my phone. Sorry about that, my Queen.” Christian said as he got out his phone.

Xandar chuckled lightly at Lucianne’s reaction, and wondered how she could look so adorable even when she was shocked. Lucianne narrowed her eyes at him when she mistook his affection as a way of teasing her.

Right after he pecked a kiss on her cheek, Christian said, “That was Annie. Just checking what time I’ll be picking her up from home tonight.”

Xandar’s eyes snapped to Christian’s as he asked, “You’re not joining us tonight?”

“What do you mean, cuz? Of course, I am. Annie’s joining us tonight, too. We’re coming together.” Christian explained casually

“Really?” Xandar asked in disbelief. Christian studied his cousin in confusion. Why was Xandar so surprised that Annie decided to join government events, especially when he knew that Lucianne and Annie spent hours together at the café the other day?

When the Duke came to the only possible conclusion, he threw Lucianne a cheeky smirk and said, “You didn’t tell him, did you, my Queen? It’s not good to keep the King in the dark, especially when it comes to your good deeds of bringing others back into the light, you know?”

Xandar looked at his beautiful mate as he uttered, “Lucy, you said you only encouraged Annie to go along with her intentions to contribute as Duchess.” 1

She shrugged and uttered innocently, “That’s exactly what happened.”

“Hah! That wasn’t even half of it!” Christian started chuckling at his cousin who looked like a sad, left-out kid on the playground.

“Babe! What did you not tell me?!” Xandar asked as he held her wrists and leaned towards her.

Lucianne thought for a moment before muttering, “Uh... I did tell her to disregard certain...derogatory remarks made by people who aren’t worth the attention. Hm...Also, we’ll be there for her whenever she needs us, and...I guess that’s about it.”

“Still not even half of it.” Christian muttered under his breath before he said aloud, “Let me do it, my

Queen.”

“Alright, but I don’t know what else there is to add. That was pretty much the gist of our conversation. Don’t exaggerate anything, please, Christian.” Lucianne said, and returned her sights to her mate before she declared, “I’ll see you guys on the training ground.” !

Right after she pecked a quick kiss on her mate’s cheek and stood up to leave, Xandar held onto her forearms and said, “Oh, no no no. You’re staying, sweetheart. You can’t leave me alone here while my cousin gloats about knowing what you said to Annie when I don’t.”

She rolled her eyes and said, “You’ll be fine, my King.” She tried to tug her arms away but his firm grip was not letting her go. “Darling, we’ve

been gone long enough. I need to guide the wolves and Lycans on the new techniques. I have to go!” Lucianne whined and used her large doe-eyes on her mate.

After losing his own animal’s support, Xandar sighed and pecked a kiss on her nose before he muttered ‘over-responsible Queen’ and let her go.

When the door closed with a gentle thud, Xandar faced the smug-looking Christian and he asked, “What? You’re gonna make me beg for information now, Christian?” The Duke started chuckling and patted Xandar on the back before heading for the door as he said, “I’ll tell you on the way to the training ground, cuz. C’mon.”

Xandar reluctantly got up from his seat and followed his second-in-command as he grumbled, “What is it with you people and the need to head for the training ground at the exact moment I want to know something?”