

Chapter 68

CHAPTER 68: Rhysand

I slammed into the floor of the townhouse, and Amren was instantly there, hands on Cassian's wings, swearing at the damage. Then at the hole in Azriel's chest.

Even her healing couldn't fix both. No, we'd need a real healer for each of them, and fast, because if Cassian lost those wings ... I knew he'd prefer death. Any Illyrian would.

"Where is she?" Amren demanded.

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"Get the Book out of here," I said, dumping the pieces onto the ground. I hated the touch of them, their madness and despair and joy. Amren ignored the order.

Mor hadn't appeared—dropping off or hiding Nesta and Elain wherever she deemed safest.

"Where is she?" Amren said again, pressing a hand to Cassian's ravaged back. I knew she didn't mean Mor.

As if my thoughts had summoned her, my cousin appeared—panting, haggard. She dropped to the floor before Azriel, her blood-caked hands shaking as she ripped the arrow free of his chest, blood showering the carpet. She shoved her fingers over the wound, light flaring as her power knit bone and flesh and vein together.

"Where is she?" Amren snapped one more time.

I couldn't bring myself to say the words.

So Mor said them for me as she knelt over Azriel, both of my brothers mercifully unconscious. “Tamlin offered passage through his lands and our heads on platters to the king in exchange for trapping Feyre, breaking her bond, and getting to bring her back to the Spring Court. But Ianthe betrayed Tamlin—told the king where to find Feyre’s sisters. So the king had Feyre’s sisters brought with the queens—to prove he could make them immortal. He put them in the Cauldron. We could do nothing as they were turned. He had us by the balls.”

Those quicksilver eyes shot to me. “Rhysand.”

I managed to say, “We were out of options, and Feyre knew it. So she pretended to free herself from the control Tamlin thought I’d kept on her mind. Pretended that she ... hated us. And told him she’d go home—but only if the killing stopped. If we went free.”

“And the bond,” Amren breathed, Cassian’s blood shining on her hands as she slowed its dribbling.

Mor said, “She asked the king to break the bond. He obliged.”

I thought I might be dying—thought my chest might actually be cleaved in two.

“That’s impossible,” Amren said. “That sort of bond cannot be broken.”

“The king said he could do it.”

“The king is a fool,” Amren barked. “That sort of bond cannot be broken.”

“No, it can’t,” I said.

They both looked at me.

I cleared my head, my shattering heart—breaking for what my mate had done, sacrificed for me and my family. For her sisters. Because she hadn’t thought ... hadn’t thought she was essential. Even after all she had done.

"The king broke the bargain between us. Hard to do, but he couldn't tell that it wasn't the mating bond."

Mor started. "Does—does Feyre know—"

"Yes," I breathed. "And now my mate is in our enemy's hands."

"Go get her," Amren hissed. "Right now."

"No," I said, and hated the word.

They gaped at me, and I wanted to roar at the sight of the blood coating them, at my unconscious and suffering brothers on the carpet before them. But I managed to say to my cousin, "Weren't you listening to what Feyre said to him? She promised to destroy him—from within."

Mor's face paled, her magic flaring on Azriel's chest. "She's going into that house to take him down. To take them all down."

I nodded. "She is now a spy—with a direct line to me. What the King of Hybern does, where he goes, what his plans are, she will know. And report back."

For between us, faint and soft, hidden so none might find it ... between us lay a whisper of color, and joy, of light and shadow—a whisper of her.
Our bond.

"She's your mate," Amren bit at me. "Not your spy. Go get her."

"She is my mate. And my spy," I said too quietly. "And she is the High Lady of the Night Court."

"What?" Mor whispered.

I caressed a mental finger down that bond now hidden deep, deep within us, and said, "If they had removed her other glove, they would have seen a second tattoo on her right arm. The twin to the other. Inked last night, when we crept out, found a priestess,

and I swore her in as my High Lady.”

“Not—not consort,” Amren blurted, blinking. I hadn’t seen her surprised in ... centuries.

“Not consort, not wife. Feyre is High Lady of the Night Court.” My equal in every way; she would wear my crown, sit on a throne beside mine. Never sidelined, never designated to breeding and parties and child-rearing. My queen.

As if in answer, a glimmer of love shuddered down the bond. I clamped down on the relief that threatened to ~~shatter~~ any calm I feigned having.

“You mean to tell me,” Mor breathed, “that my High Lady is now surrounded by enemies?” A lethal sort of calm crept over her tear-stained face.

“I mean to tell you,” I said, watching the blood clot on Cassian’s wings with Amren’s tending. Beneath Mor’s own hands, Azriel’s bleeding at last eased. Enough to keep them alive until the healer got here. “I mean to tell you,” I said again, my power building and rubbing itself against my skin, my bones, desperate to be unleashed upon the world, “that your High Lady made a sacrifice for her court—and we will move when the time is right.”

Perhaps Lucien being Elain’s mate would help—somehow. I’d find a way.

And then I’d assist my mate in ripping the Spring Court, lanthe, those mortal queens, and the King of Hybern to shreds. Slowly.

“Until then?” Amren demanded. “What of the Cauldron—of the Book?”