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The 5-time Rejected Gamma & the Lycan King by Stina's Pen Chapter 161 - 162

Chapter 161

"So, cuz. It's safe to say that we've been played on all those projects." Christian noted in anger before drowning down the coffee in his polystyrene cup as the four of them sat at a table in the court cafeteria. Judge Cook ordered a short recess after Marie Martin fainted at trial.

Xandar was as infuriated as his cousin was when he responded, "And to think I was absurd when I thought she or the others who backed her up shared some form of relationship with the companies they voted for. It was so obvious that those companies weren't the best!"

"But why would you dismiss your suspicions, darling?" Lucianne asked innocently as her small hand rested on his lap.

With much shame, Xandar took her hand and laced their fingers. He then peered into her black orbs, before saying, "Because we did a background check, and we couldn't find any blood relationship between our ministers and the companies they voted for. And the ministers all had a mate at that time. Martin's own mate died from a car accident only around... three years ago, I think. I never thought someone could bribe any of them by using sex. And since the audit department didn't put a red flag on anything, I thought I was just being paranoid."

Lucianne nodded in understanding as she uttered, "Looks like your suspicions have been justified all along."

Xandar scoffed. "And what's the use of that? The damage remains. Nothing can be done to rectify the years of unfair competition. Now, the whole Kingdom would know about the countless projects during my reign that are tainted by corruption. One for the history books."

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“No, Xandar. There is still something that can be done.” Lucianne said sterly, demanding her mate’s attention before she continued.

Even Annie and Christian’s eyes focused on her as Lucianne spoke, “Issue a statement by tonight. Tell the Kingdom what happened.”

“And say that the government wasn’t involved?” Xandar asked doubtfully.

“No, dearest. Say that it was. Own up to it. Marie Martin and the rest of them were governing members. It is clear that the government was involved. But they have been removed from government as soon as you and Christian found out what was going on behind your backs. Tell the people what they deserve to know: the truth.”

“The truth is that certain companies successfully secured government contracts with the help of corrupt ministers, who had always managed to get the majority vote in government; the truth is that you’ve done a background check on these ministers but there was no evidence suggesting that there was dishonest behavior because you found no blood ties or relationships between them and the company members, and there were no suspicious activities in the audits that were faked; the truth is that you did everything within your reach to ensure that there was fair competition but unfortunately, senior ministers were crafty and manipulative. They went behind yours, Christian’s and every other honest minister’s backs to vote for particular contracts for their own benefit.”

Lucianne lifted up his hand to peck a kiss on his fingers as she whispered, “The truth is that the corruption was uncovered during the early years of your reign, my love. Kings rule for hundreds of years. This is only your nineteenth. Not all is lost. Things can still be turned around. See this setback as an opportunity to gain the trust of the people. By owning up to it, you’re giving everyone in the Kingdom

something you’ve always given me whenever you’re in the room: assurance.”

“You’re assuring them that no issue, good or bad, will be swept under the mat. You’re assuring them that no matter how bad things are or will be, you will not choose to look the other way or bury it. You’re assuring them that you will always get to the bottom of things and find a solution. You’re assuring them that transparency and accountability will always be guaranteed as long as you’re King.”

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“And as for the projects from unfair competitions...” Lucianne shrugged and said, “You could always give away a portion of the profits generated by the government from the public’s use of the finished projects...o I you could lower the tax rate a little if it makes you feel any better.”

Xandar’s eyes glistened in happiness and gratitude. He pulled Lucianne into a deep kiss before parting their lips to ask, “How did I get so lucky to be bonded to you, my love?”

Christian coughed to get his cousin’s attention. His voice was more cheerful than before when he said, “ Sorry, cuz. But she’s bonded to all of us, as in, the whole Kingdom. You have to share her. She’s everyone’s Queen, not just yours.”

“Thanks for spoiling my moment with my mate.” Xandar complained with narrowed eyes.

Christian disregarded his cousin’s sarcasm and offered a wide grin and a playful bow as he said, “As your favorite cousin, it is my greatest pleasure to annoy you, your Highness.”

When Lucianne was chuckling from watching the Duke bow like that, her mate pecked a surprise kiss on her cheek before whispering into her ear, “Thank you, baby, so much. I needed that.” A kiss on her ear lobe and he uttered, “I love you.”

As the usual blushes crept up her cheeks, Lucianne said, “I know. I love you, too.”

They still had some time before the court resumed its session. So, Xandar got out his phone to type out a draft for the press statement. The four of them then passed his phone around amongst themselves to proofread and edit the text until they were all satisfied.

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After recess, the court invited Patrick Dupont to take the stand next. And after the first few questions, it was clear that Dupont was derailing from his original defense. Initially, he said what the other ministers said, which was that he accepted the money due to Greg Claw’s coercion.

Today, however, Dupont argued that he didn’t have a clue” that government funds in large sums had been channeling into his account for almost two decades!

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Chapter 162

The prosecutor asked with furrowed brows, "Mr Dupont, didn't you say that you knew about the fund transactions but that you were coerced to perform those illegal transactions?"

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Dupont faked a smile and answered, "I said that I was coerced, yes. But I didn't say I had been aware of the transactions."

"So, what did you think you were coerced to do?"

"I was told to keep quiet about whatever the Duke was thinking of doing. But I didn't know I'd be paid to be silent."

"The document I've just placed before you shows the list of properties you acquired in the past eighteen years. Tell me, Mr Dupont, do you own them?"

"Yes."

"How did you purchase them?"

"With money."

"Money from your salary?"

"Well, that's what I thought. It wasn't until you sent the audits to my lawyers did I realize that part of what I spent may well be from the government."

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“And a percentage was transferred to a company, Wu Bi Corporation, why?”

“I don’t know. I’ve never heard of the company. Perhaps it’s the missing Duke’s?”

“Do you have evidence that Greg Claw is the owner?”

“Well, no. It was simply a guess.”

“So, you’re saying that you never knew that you’ve been transferring funds to Wu Bi Corporation, and that you had been spending the government’s money?”

“Yes, I didn’t have a clue.” Dupont acted so well that Lucianne was even thinking of nominating him for an Oscar award. Xandar, on the other hand, wondered how many hours Dupont practised his act in front of the mirror before taking the stand.

The prosecutor’s eyebrows raised in disbelief as she questioned, “You truly believed that your salary was enough to acquire a stamp collection in the millions, and palatial mansions in the billions?”

“Well, I don’t have a habit of constantly checking on the amount I have left in my bank account, so when I purchase a property and my card isn’t rejected, I assume that I have the necessary funds to purchase the property in question.” 1

The prosecutor was finding it harder to hide her disgust for the witness. She composed herself, and asked, “Mr Dupont, how did you come about being the Deputy Finance Minister?”

“Fortunately, I was the best of the best, la crème de la crème, you know.” Dupont said with pride.

“How does one become the best of the best, Mr Dupont?”

“Oh, there’re very stringent requirements. Good education was the primary consideration, of course.”

“And what was your ‘good education’ that got you appointed?”

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Dupont glowed like he was just given a chance to brag, and brag he did. "Well, I was educated in Helm University, and I was the top three students in my year."

"Your degree is in Finance, correct?"

"With First-Class Honors." Dupont added with a monkey grin.

"Don't you find it odd when a top student in Finance, graduated from the top university of the Kingdom, doesn't check his own finances?"

"No. On the contrary, I find my habits to be most appropriate. With experience comes less worry."

"You have a daughter in a music school, is that correct?"

"Yes, the best one in the Kingdom." He glowed even more radiantly.

There was a glint in the prosecutor's eye when she said, "And, unsurprisingly, the most expensive. Her tuition itself costs five hundred thousand dollars a year. Now, tell me, Mr Dupont, how did you afford it with the modest two hundred and forty thousand dollars you earn annually?"

"Savings."

"What savings?"

"I've started saving since I was a boy. It's a habit that my parents saw fit to instill in me."

"How old are you, Mr Dupont?"

"Four hundred and two as of last month."

"Do you realize that even if you didn't spend a single cent on living expenses, it still would have been impossible for you to own all the assets that you do?"

"I did not realize that, I'm afraid."

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“Strange. And as for these telephone records and transcripts between you and Helena Tanner regarding the transfer of government funds, what do you have to say about it?”

“That wasn’t me. Whoever it was must have been hiding behind my name.”

“We traced the call to your phone.”

“Someone must have stolen my phone to make the call.”

“Voice experts confirmed that it was your voice at the end of the call with Tanner.”

“A voice-alteration device, I suppose.”

The prosecutor paused for a moment before she continued, “Alright. Then, answer me this, Mr Dupont. Why were these calls traced to your home?”

“I don’t know. I’m not familiar with the latest technology.”

“So, you didn’t know government funds were channeled into your account; you didn’t know you couldn’t afford the stamp collections and mansions; you didn’t know your daughter’s music school would’ve forced you into bankruptcy; you didn’t know about the calls made between Helena Tanner and someone who sounded exactly like you. Is there anything you did know, Mr Dupont?”

“I knew that I was coerced to keep quiet about the Duke’s plans.”

“Without being given anything in return?”

Dupont chuckled darkly, “If you knew him, you’d know that he can make one do anything without offering any sort of compensation. And if we were to look at the audits you presented, prosecutor, wouldn’t you admit that the Duke took some amount as well?”

“Less than fifteen percent compared to what you took, Mr Dupont.”

“Well, I didn’t even know I took anything! Those telephone records you have may well be someone else altogether!”

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“So, you’re saying that someone could’ve broken into your home, undetected, on multiple occasions, stolen your phone, made the numerous phone calls, put the phone back and left your house?”

“Yes, that’s the only plausible explanation.” It was baffling how Dupont chose to use the word ‘plausible’ when whatever the prosecutor just suggested was nowhere near plausible.

The prosecutor didn’t give up. “What if I told you that the cameras around your home showed no one entering or leaving your residence before and after the call?”

Dupont shrugged and said, “I’d tell you that my cameras could’ve been hacked for all we know.”

“I’m quite relieved you didn’t suggest that someone could’ve used some made-up underground passageway that you didn’t know about, Mr Dupont. As for your cameras, we’ve verified that there was no tampering.”

“Well, I don’t live alone. Anyone could’ve had access to my phone in that span of time. And if they did, they were probably just fooling around, pulling a prank, if you will.”

“Mr Dupont, are you suggesting that your own daughter or your wife could have colluded in this corruption scheme using your identity?”

His wife’s eyes widened in horror at the front row, and his daughter was shaking her head in his way, pleading with her father to deny it.

Dupont was unperturbed when he said, “Well, I doubt it was them. But my family isn’t the only ones who live in my humble abode, prosecutor. I have servants. Ten of them. Any one of them could’ve done it. I’ve even changed servants over the years, so any of those who’ve been dismissed could be the culprit as well.”

“Which servant of yours knows the passcode to your phone, Mr Dupont?”

“I’m not sure about that.”

“Perhaps I can help you be sure, Mr Dupont. We’ve spoken to your servants. And all of them said that you have never allowed any of them near your phone. You’d rather make your way to the other end of your home to answer a ringing call than to ask one of them to bring it to

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you. Two years ago, you dismissed a servant because you caught her glancing at the number of an incoming call on your screen. What do you have to say about this?"

"I've dismissed servants for a wide range of reasons, I don't recall this particular occasion."

"Your selective amnesia is astounding, minister, as is your ability to derail the line of questioning. Let me ask again, more simply this time do you allow your servants to touch or be anywhere near your phone?"

After glancing at Mr Clark, Dupont uttered, "I'm not sure."

"Would you fire a servant for glancing at an incoming call by accident?"

"I'm not certain."

"Has any servant ever answered a call on your behalf before handing your phone to you?"

"I don't recall."

When the prosecutor was satisfied that Dupont's ambiguous answers only strengthened the evidence the prosecution had against him, she ended her questioning. . Mr Clark started the cross-examination.

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