

## Chapter 130: Meeting Preparation

*“An assassination attempt against the two of you earlier this morning?”* Kristil’s jaw dropped. *“That is troubling indeed.”*

*“Indeed,”* Lysette started. *“I’ll be doing what I can to figure out more, but I would advise you and your brother to be on alert. While I don’t think you’ll be targeted directly, if our friends know that the two of us are affiliated, I could see them going after you as a way to get to me.”*

*“If this is how your other friends treat you, I don’t want to know how bad your enemies have it out for you.”*

Lysette laughed. *“Thank you. I needed that bit of levity.”*

*“Changing the subject slightly,”* Kristil continued, *“we’re going to have a meeting for our group tonight. Should we go ahead and cancel it?”*

*“Of course not. And thanks for letting me know. I’m going to be there. And if anyone is foolish enough to try something, well, you remember what happened to Lacos and his goons.”*

*“Lacos? I don’t know that name.”*

*“The leader of the soldiers who attacked the Academy during the blood moon.”*

Kristil tried to remain focused, but a brief chuckle escaped her lips. *“Kinda difficult to forget that display! And if a literal demigoddess in the flesh is guaranteeing our safety, I suppose I can’t in good conscience postpone our meeting.”*

Lysette had far less confidence in her own abilities than she portrayed to Kristil. For one, there was at least one other Godslayer in the city, not to mention any number of other demigods and humans who rivaled or exceeded her in martial capability. And if this individual was brazen enough to attack in broad daylight with hundreds of potential witnesses, then they certainly had enough confidence in their speed, stealth, and other capabilities.

But a few factors kept Lysette from revealing her concerns. First, and most selfishly, in order to actually achieve the strength to reach her goals, she needed the unshakeable faith in as many people as possible. Secondly, the handful of people who actually could face Lysette in direct combat had thus far seemed content to operate behind the scenes, through assassins, intermediaries, or otherwise. And finally, there was a good chance that Kristil was already in the crosshairs of whoever was behind these incidents.

She already was the public face of the movement with no small number of enemies in the highest echelons of Domarian society. Previously, the forces opposed to her movement were likely content to simply ignore her pleas, given she had little concrete sway to effect her proposals. But with Lysette now acting as a standard behind which Kristil and her movement had begun to rally, it was plausible that Kristil herself was now a target. And if so, the safest place she could be was at Lysette's side.

"Well, if it isn't my favorite rival out and about!" Lysette looked up and saw Serrena and her signature smirk approaching. "Had a feeling I'd find you here."

"Well, you know me, Serrena," Lysette said. "First opportunity to eat custard delight in a week, so I'm splurging and having two." She pointed to the empty cup in front her and the half-full one in her hand.

Serrena shook her head and took a seat next to Kristil. "No matter how serious things get, it seems your damned custards aren't far from your mind."

"Oh, no, these are definitely blessed custards, not damned ones. My full compliments and blessings to the chef."

"Um..." Mirae said.

*“I know,” Lysette messaged. “And I stick by what I said. As long as this chef continues to supply us with such delectable delights, they shall enjoy the blessings of Reciprocity for as long as they live.”*

*“I– I suppose that is in keeping with your Domain.”* Mirae smiled.

“What are you two smiling over?” Serrena said. “Wait, no, I don’t want to know. Forget I asked. Changing the subject, are we still going to leave tomorrow morning as planned?”

“I don’t think I should leave Domark for the time being. So I was going to ask if you and Mirae would go together.”

“Hmm. That does make sense. I’m just surprised you actually suggested being away from Mirae for any length of time.”

“I’m not thrilled about it. In truth, I’m a bit scared that something might happen to them.”

“You don’t think I’m capable of defending them?”

Lysette sighed. “It’s not that. It’s just–”

“You’re worried I’m going to make a move on your partner while you two are separated?”

“What? I– Wait, I didn’t think that sort of thing appealed to you in the slightest.”

“Well, of course not. Though, I don’t remember ever telling you that.”

“You didn’t until just now. But it wasn’t exactly well-hidden either. You’ve never expressed any interest in romance or relationships, and even go so far as to act disgusted when Mirae and I get affectionate with one another.

“That could be we’re still in our lovey-dovey, new relationship phase. I’m sure we’re sickeningly saccharine at times. But at the same time, you’re a gifted Cultivator. You’re attractive, and if you chose to pursue a certain path, you’d be well-poised for success and wealth

near the top of Domarian society. In other words, you're the type of woman that most men and no small number of women and others would bend over backwards to woo.

“And yet, despite having your pick of suitors, you've not only chosen none of them, but don't even seem to acknowledge the idea. So, I figured you just... weren't into relationships.”

“Yeah, that's pretty much the long and short of it. Never have been excited by the idea of dating or romance or sex. Not expecting that to change anytime soon.”

“I was the same way, more or less, until that night,” Lysette said. “I'd been on a couple dates before, but no real attraction or physical desire from any of them. So, I guess what I'm saying is, if it does, I hope you'll let it.”

“Well, we'll cross that bridge when, or much more likely *if*, I ever reach it. Changing the subject, does anyone have plans for tonight?”

“Well, Kristil and I have been talking and apparently they're having a meeting tonight. I'll be going, as... armed security, if you will. And if either of you two would like to tag along, I'd appreciate it and I'm sure she would as well.”

Kristil nodded. “Of course. The more, the merrier.” She paused for a moment. “With that said, I must take my leave and prepare.”

With another nod, she got up and left. Serrena sat back down, staring at Mirae.

“So, how are you liking the new look?”

“I love it. I feel more in tune with myself than ever before. Are you considering changing your look?”

“I see no reason to.” Serrena smirked. “I've cultivated this body for twenty years now and, as your girlfriend so kindly pointed out, I am rather attractive and proud of my figure. Not going

to lie, I do enjoy the envious gawking I sometimes get. Do wish that some of them would be a little less *brazen* about it though.”

Mirae broke down laughing, while Serrena stared in bemusement. After half a minute, Mirae composed herself well enough to speak, still with a bright red face. “Now you know how I feel when I’m around Lyse in public.” They turned to Lysette and planted a kiss on her cheek. “Mine. All mine.”

Serrena shook her head. “Normally, this is where I’d gag and leave, but given I pretty much walked right into that, all I can really do is say ‘fair enough.’ Changing the subject, do either of you have any plans before tonight?”

“Can’t say that I do. Maybe test out the limits of how far I can use telepathy? Also want to check in on Amalia.” Lysette switched to telepathy. “*And I still need to figure out how this eye works. It has alerted me to danger multiple times, and I can zoom my vision in about ten-thousandfold before the stamina drain becomes too great for me. But I still have no idea how to peer into the Celestial realm, of if it wasn’t just some hallucinogenic vision from the pain at the time.*”

“*Sounds like a royal pain in the ass.*”

“*Nah, the ruler of Domaria is actually pretty nice.*”

“*You met the king?*”

“*No. I mean, yes, I met the king. But I’m not referring to the king here. I mean the real ruler. Turns out that Domar’s Godslayer is the one running things in the shadows.*”

“*Ugh, and I thought one Godslayer operating in the shadows of Aimarion was bad enough.*”

“*I will ignore the slight between friends. Though, I wouldn’t get your hopes up, Serrena. I’m sure it’s far more than two. I wouldn’t be surprised if there are one or more behind all the major*

*nations. And, while this part is purely speculation, perhaps a Godslayer was responsible for the disappearance of Solanna Raesh.”*

*“Well, that does give me an idea. When the situation here gets resolved sufficiently, the two of us need to head back to my hometown and meet with my parents. I’d thought about doing so earlier, during the downtime after the attack. But you were gone and I was training and the opportunity never really arose. Maybe after the next blood moon.”*

*“I’d like that. That reminds me that I also need to meet Mirae’s mother and brothers at some point.”*

*“Well, I’ll leave that between you two insufferable lovebirds. I’m going to get a little Cultivation session done this afternoon, and I will see the both of you tonight.”*

Serrena walked off, and after she left, Lysette recounted the previous conversation to Mirae. They listened intently through it all, but at the very end of Lysette’s recounting, their eyes lit up and their smile was so big and bright that Lysette fathomed it could outshine the sun.

“You’re really okay with coming and meeting my family?”

“I mean, you’ve already gone with me to visit my former hometown and saw where I used to live. It’s only Reciprocal that I do the same for you. And I think we owe it to them to inform your family of who, and more importantly, what you are now. Besides, they might be my in-laws someday, so I—”

Mirae cut Lysette off with a long and passionate kiss. And even though a few students stopped and stared, Mirae did not relent, only deepening their liplock further. For over a minute, Mirae continued their unrelenting assault on Lysette’s tonsils, only stopping once they finally needed to come up for air.

“That happy with me?”

“I like hearing the affirmation that you want to be together with me for the long haul. I know, when I was coming to terms with myself, that there was a chance that I might never find someone who would accept me for me. But now that I have, I don’t want to. Not until death do we part.”

*“Well, I don’t plan on dying. And I don’t plan on letting you either. So I guess you’re stuck with me for all eternity.”*

*“I think I’ll manage, Lyse. Changing the subject, are you okay with a little Cultivation tonight before our meeting?”*

*“I’d like that, Mirae love.”*