

Love, unconventionally.

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Author's Note: The rank's used in this article are from the Canadian military, except for the Commander rank on which I made a mistake, so it represents the rank of Lt Col.

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From Chapter Fifteen

"So what is this... Tal'Shiar? I presume since you said you are now loyal to me, that you can divulge that information." Jason stated.

"The Tal'Shiar is terror... personified." The man said blackly.

Chapter Sixteen

The director stood from the chair at the end of Jason's bed, and removed his long white trench coat, laying it on the back of the chair. He had on a pair of off-white pants, with white dress shoes, a black long sleeved shirt, and a white vest.

"No offense, but you're worse at giving answers than my dog." Jason replied. The man didn't know that he didn't have a dog. It made the statement even that more true.

"The Tal'Shiar was formed at the time of the Empire, with the first Pharaoh. We are funded by the government, but we're not a government agency. The director is appointed by the Pharaoh and Queen. Except for myself, everyone else works in cells, with information passed out on the sly, using... untraceable methods. All the cells do their own recruiting." The director replied.

"How do you know your methods are untraceable?" Jason asked.

"We've done it since the founding of the Empire." The director simply replied. "All of our agents have 'day jobs'. Their cells meet on a weekly to biweekly basis to train, get updated, and so forth. Our network is even more vast than Imperial Intelligence. We have agents in many foreign governments. We don't get involved in the politics of the Empire. Our job is to protect the royal family, and carry out the odd job. We successfully assassinated President

Lillehammer of the Yhije Republic last year.”

Jason blinked a moment.

“In fact, a few members of your personal protection detail will probably also be members of the Tal’Shiar. The royal guard is quite loyal, but we like to have more than one layer of protection.” The director continued.

“Have you ever... prevented a coup?” Jason queried.

The director gave a small laugh. “Yes Major, many times.”

Jason scratched his head a little. “So... why now?”

“I imagine by the end of the week, we’ll be reporting to you.” The director replied.

Jason looked confused.

“You’re getting married, right Major?” The director asked Jason.

Jason looked up at the director. “Yes.”

“The first thing that usually happens when you marry, you are awarded the title of Prince. However, in your case, things are going to go a little... um... faster.” The director said.

“How much faster?” Jason asked.

“How do you feel about being inaugurated before you leave on your honeymoon?” The director looked at Jason.

Jason simply flopped back on the bed, took the pillow, and put it over his face. “I think I’d rather face those questions of yours again.”

The director raised an eyebrow.

“At least there I knew I didn’t have a target on my back.” Jason said.

The director chuckled a bit. “That’s what we’re here for. To watch out for you, and protect you. Besides Major, you have a cute ass.”

Jason just blushed under his pillow.

Having freshed up after his ordeal, Jason dressed up smartly. He wore a pair of suit-like black pants, with a nice shirt tucked in. With the Pharaoh just a little behind, Jason nodded to Lt. Saunderson, and entered Keith’s room. He looked at his fiancé who slept quietly.

“I’m awake, you know” Keith quietly said.

"Could have fooled me. I didn't know that your species could look *dead* while sleeping" Jason attempted to joke. But no force of nature could keep them apart any longer. Jason went over, and sat on the bed next to Keith, taking him carefully into his arms, and leaning over for a soft, gentle kiss.

A tear coming to his eye, the Pharaoh cleared his throat a little. "Boys, you'll have lots of time at home to practice that particular... activity."

Jason just looked up at the Pharaoh and starred at him coldly. This was a man he resented after his ordeal with the Tal'Shiar. Even Keith could feel the tension.

Keith looked up at Jason, in his arms still. "Jason, what's wrong?"

Jason maintained his glare at the Pharaoh. There hadn't been any time between his return and coming here to confront the man. He barely tolerated him on the ride over.

"Jason" Keith said a little more forcefully, "you're scaring me. What's wrong?"

"One of you could have had the decency to warn me." Jason spit coldly.

Jason kept his gaze on the Pharaoh. He knew the room wasn't secure. "About my... interview" he said tactfully. "And about your... accelerated retirement plan."

The Pharaoh calmly said, "We talked about your future as Queen, Jason."

"Yes, we did" Jason started cynically, "but at no time did you say it was going to start within the week!"

Keith heard the words, and looked up to his father. He had heard none of this about retirement. He only had a faint idea of what Jason might have experienced with the Tal'Shiar.

The Pharaoh, for the first time since he took the throne, was at a loss of words. Where his son was concerned, he had only wanted the best. And Jason was the best, in his eyes.

Keith couldn't stand the tension. He thought they might come to blows if this didn't end, and soon. In an attempt to change the subject, Keith finally said, "Dad, tell us about the legendary warrior."

The Pharaoh finally blinked, looking into his son's face. "The what?"

"The legendary warrior." Keith replied.

"I don't know what you're talking about." The Pharaoh replied.

"Old Cranky told me to tell you to shut up and tell us the story." Keith said plainly.

The Pharaoh's jaw just dropped, like he had just seen a ghost.