

Episode 8- "Collateral Damage"

Michelle thought she could take my child and get revenge by sleeping with my Jon? She had another thing coming. It wasn't hard to pinpoint her once she contacted me. I found this cabin she was at and blasted the door open. I saw her and Jon sitting in the living room. "Jon, what is the meaning of this?! Have you defected?!" I demanded, full of fury.

Jon bowed. "Of course not, my Empress. The Princess came to find you. I only came with her for her safety. This Michelle took me hostage", he lied.

"Where is my daughter?" I demanded.

"Mommy!" Harley called running in the room.

"Harley, thank god you're ok." I said pulling my daughter into my arms.

"I'm not a monster like you. I wouldn't hurt a child." Michelle glared.

"This has been a fun adventure. I got to meet another Jon and his family. This Michelle didn't kill Jon's family here and it was nice to meet them." Harley said.

I glared. I did not like to be reminded of what I'd done to Jon's kids. I considered it my only failure. "Good for them." I turned to Jon, "I suppose that means you saw them as well and you hate me again."

Jon shook his head, but stood a little straighter. "Not again. My feelings toward you about that have never changed. I saw what I could have been. What they could have been. I hate you for what you took from them. But, me... You made me better" I glanced at Michelle.

"You can never really hate me Jon. You love me. You always have. You always will. If you would have channeled your hate you could have been by my side...my emperor...instead...you're a servant...a lowly servant." I said glaring at him.

Jon stood up straight. "Your daughter wants me to be her personal advisor. That's why she came to find you" he said.

Harley nodded. "Yeah! I like Jon. I want a personal advisor like you and Daddy and I want it to be Jon. He's my best friend. And Daddy tried to kill him so I want to protect him."

I froze, "What? Hunter tried to kill you?"

Jon nodded and pulled his collar down to show the fading bruises on his throat. "He did" he said.

"Bastard. He knows better. I'll deal with him later. For now I am dealing with you." I said glaring at Michelle.

"Sure. While you've been talking my team has been surrounding this place and prepping to fire an attack on you all at once, which I'm pretty sure even you can't withstand. Stand down and go back to your world." Michelle glared.

I glared back, "This was a trap? They were never your prisoners...Jon, you did betray me."

"No, he was my prisoner. I just wouldn't have actually hurt an innocent." Michelle said.

I glared, I looked at Harley then Jon, trying to plan my move.

“Make me her advisor”, Jon said, “Of course, I’ll no longer be able to serve your needs then.... But, you might be able to escape without us”.

“Why exactly do you think you can’t serve me if you are her advisor? I see no reason you can’t do both.” I said

“Because I refuse” Jon said.

“You refuse? You refuse me?!” I asked, dumbfounded.

Jon nodded, but his face had gone pink and he was visibly sweating. “I refuse to serve two masters” he said.

“Get real. You can’t refuse me Jon. You never could. You never will be able to.” I scoffed.

Jon held his head high. “I can and I will”, he said.

“What the fuck has gotten into you?” I demanded.

“Self-respect” Jon said, “It’s worked wonders for me”

“I’m about to give you your wish and let you join your family.” I growled.

Michelle stepped in front of him. “Try it.”

“You fucked this bitch and now you think you’re free...” I scoffed.

Jon stared at her. “How do you know about that?”, he asked.

“She told me, but even if she hadn’t it’s obvious in the way you look at her. It’s how you used to look at me.” I said.

“It’s your fault that I still don’t. I used to love you. You killed that love and replaced it with hate and fear. I don’t fear you anymore. I don’t fear death. The only thing I fear is leaving the Princess and her complete upbringing in your hands. She needs a voice of reason. She is the only good thing left in my life” Jon said.

“You will never rule this world Empress. Just go home and take your daughter with you.” Michelle said.

“I will never back down!” I cried as I held up my hands, ready to fire a blast.

“NOW!” Michelle cried.

I heard all the Soldiers fire attacks at once then a voice. “MOMMY NO!” Harley cried as she ran in and pushed me down. She was hit by the attacks then fell to the ground. “HARLEY!!!!” I screamed.

Jon ran to Harley and knelt beside her. He looked up at Michelle, then glared at the Empress. “You did this” he hissed as he scooped Harley up. He held her close to him and breathed a sigh of relief. “She’s still breathing, no thanks to you” he growled.

“They did this! They did this to her!” I screamed as I ran to Harley’s side.

“You and your warmongering did this. Saturn and the outer planets weren’t enough for you. You had to try to conquer a new Universe. And look what happened! Just go home while you still can!” he screamed.

“They have to pay for what they have done to Harley! We just need to regroup. Get Harley, let’s go Jon. We have to plan our next move.” I commanded.

Jon held Harley closer to his body. "No" he said. "We're staying here. She needs rest and medical attention". He looked to Michelle. "Can your doctor friend come and help her?" he asked.

Michelle nodded, "Of course."

"Like hell, stay the fuck away from my daughter." I growled.

Jon rolled his eyes. "It's not up to you. She needs help. I'm getting her help. I don't care about your ego right now".

"Jon wants her to stay here...this time you take orders from him. Retreat and let us help Harley or we will attack you again." Michelle growled back at me.

I glared, "Fine, this isn't over." I said as I teleported away, fuming more than I ever had.

Jon

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Once she was gone I took a deep breath. "Let's get her to a bed and see how much damage is done. Call your friend" I said. It was strange to be running the show.

Michelle nodded. "Actually we have a doctor here...this is Sailor Mercury...Amy. She's a doctor."

Amy nodded and led me to the room to put her in the bed. "I'll be happy to treat her. I am so sorry she got caught in the crossfire." she said.

"Me too", I said as I laid her down, "I know that you all didn't mean to hurt her" I watched as Amy began to look at her wounds. She found a pair of scissors and cut away her clothing.

"She has a few burns. And I think her right arm may be broken. I believe her being unconscious is just a concussion. I'm not seeing signs of any deeper injuries. But I don't have any of my supplies with me" She looked at Michelle. "How soon can Adam be here? He travels with a supply bag, right? With his help, we can treat her" she said.

Mina spoke up. "Actually, Adam and Darien are already on their way. I texted them while Michelle was arguing with the Empress. They'll be here soon. What can we do in the meantime?"

"I need something to clean her wounds with. Paper towels and clean water will work for now. And something to splint her arm. A wooden spoon and a hand towel will work. Field medicine isn't my forte, but I can make it work" Amy said.

I held Harley's hand in mine, feeling completely helpless.

Michelle nodded. "We can do that." she ran off and got some supplies for Amy.

"The rest of us need to stand guard in case Empress comes back." the Soldier in green said.

Mina nodded. "Lita is right. Amy, Michelle, and I will stay here. The rest of you are on guard duty."

They nodded and followed Mina's orders.

Michelle put a hand on my shoulder. "She'll be ok." she said softly.

I nodded. "She has to be" I whispered, "I was serious. She is the only good thing I have left. Nothing can happen to

her”.

Amy took the supplies from Michelle and set about cleaning her wounds as I looked on.

A few minutes later two men came in. One was Adam so I presumed the other was Darien.

“What do we have Amy?” Darien asked kneeling next to Harley.

“A Sailor attack... She was caught in the crossfire. Several burns. I don’t have an xray here, but I think her right arm is broken. She’s been unconscious since it happened. I don’t sense any deeper injuries. I didn’t have supplies, so I’ve been making due with what we could find here. I’m glad the two of you are here. Now we can properly dress her wounds” Amy said.

Darien nodded. “I brought the portable x-ray with me. We can figure out what’s going on with her arm. Adam, can you clean and dress the burns while I x-ray her arm and head?”

Adam nodded. “Of course.” he said as they set to work. A few minutes later they spoke again.

“Broken arm, a couple of bruised ribs, some burns, and what appears to be a concussion. As long as she wakes up soon she should be ok.” Darien said.

I looked up at Darien. “Should be?” I asked.

“With head injuries it’s hard to say for sure.” Darien said.

“We will know more when she wakes up.” Adam said reassuringly.

I sighed. “Is there anything I can do until then?”.

Darien shook his head, “All we can do is wait.”

Michelle reached for my hand. “Let’s go wait in the living room. Give the doctors some space to work.”

I nodded and followed her. “I could kill her for this” I said through clenched teeth.

Michelle squeezed my hand. “I know. I am so sorry this happened. This was not part of the plan. Harley was not supposed to get hurt. I am so so sorry.”

“I know. It’s her fault. She thought she could have everything and it hurt the one thing she actually loves. And the one thing I love too” I said. “She has to be ok”

Michelle nodded. “She will be.” she said as we heard her phone. She picked it up. “What the hell?” she asked as she appeared to be reading something. “Oh god damn...what the fuck else can happen today? I can’t even.” she sighed.

“What’s going on?” I asked.

She turned her phone around to show me a headline that said ‘Former Guitarist Confirms Jon and Michelle Affair’. “Rich went to the media.” she sighed.

“Richie?” I asked, “Wait...former guitarist? A lot has happened in this Universe...” I said, shaking my head.

Michelle nodded, “Rich got Steph into some hardcore drugs. She ODeD and almost died, but pulled through. When Jon put the pieces together about what happened he never forgave Rich. It’s been a drama since then...mostly one-sided drama on Rich’s side. Anyway, I guess this is his next play to get back at Jon. Come out with our past affairs.”

"Sometimes I think this Universe is worse than mine. At least evil is straightforward" I said.

"Well, yes. That much is true. I need to call Jon. I'll be right back." she said stepping into the other room.

Michelle

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I dialed my Jon's cell number. He'd been texting me all morning. Obviously I'd been busy.

"Michelle?" he answered, "I'm sorry about this. Richie is being such a dick"

"Obviously. What the fuck is his deal? Why drag me into this?" I asked.

"It's all to get back at me. It actually has very little to do with you. He just thought he could hurt me" he said.

"Either way, it looks like he's blowing the lid off our past affairs going back years. How the hell do we do damage control on this? And exactly how pissed is Dot?" I asked.

"She's pissed, but she obviously knew. She just doesn't like having all the dirty laundry aired in public" he said.

"There was a time Rich knew better...there was a time we all knew to keep our mouths shut." I said.

"Well, I think he might need another lesson" he said.

"That's your thing. In the meantime, what's the plan for damage control?" I asked, not knowing how to handle something quite this big.

"My plan is to just ignore everything he says. If we look like we're worried about it, that just makes it seem true" he said.

"Um, Jon, it is true. We did have an affair every time he claims we did." I reminded him.

"So what? The public doesn't have to know it's true" he said.

"So deny. Ok...that's fine. I can do that...that being said, there is something else you should know. I would rather you find out from me than someone else. I've been helping your counterpart and...things happened." I said, not knowing how he would react.

Jon laughed. "You fucked him? How did I know that would happen! You just can't stay away from me", he continued laughing.

My eyes narrowed. I know he couldn't see me but it didn't matter. "Actually it was him I couldn't stay away from. A better version of you."

He stopped laughing. "You mean a weaker version. I met him. He was scared of everything. I can't believe you fell for that... And I know he wasn't better than me. He was probably afraid to touch you", he said.

"Well, actually I find him to be stronger than you. He knows what he did to his Michelle was wrong. He knows he should have treated her better. He has genuine remorse. Overall, he was everything I always wished you could have been." I said honestly.

"Whatever. Go fuck your new toy and I'll deal with the press" he said, hanging up.

I glared at my phone. I couldn't let this stand. I fired off a text to him. "OK, nice to you know aren't sorry in the least.

Same old bastard you've always been. Thanks for the reminder why I divorced you." I went back into the living room trying to hide the tears welling in my eyes. "You doing ok?" I asked the other Jon, trying to hide my own emotions.

Jon nodded. "I'm just anxious for Harley", he said. He noticed the look on my face that I had been trying so hard to control. "But, you're not ok. What happened?" he asked.

I sighed, "I just talked to your counterpart. He made it pretty fucking clear he has no remorse for any of the hell he put me through. It was just a tough reminder."

"I'm sorry" he said, "but it makes sense. My remorse had a steep price". He sat on the sofa and looked up at me and shrugged. "I guess there's no sense in feeling bad for what someone else is doing. He's me, but he's not me. All I can do is say that I am truly sorry for everything that he put you through", he said.

"Thanks...that actually is nice to hear. I just wish he were more like you." I said softly.

"So do I" he said. He stood up and embraced me. "I really do. You deserve it" he said.

I practically melted into his arms. "I know I shouldn't, but I really like how it feels when you hold me." I whispered against his chest.

Jon nuzzled into my neck and sighed. "I like it too" he whispered.

I was just settling into his embrace when the door to the bedroom opened.

"Jon, Harley is awake." Darien said.

Jon looked up and smiled. "That's great!", he said as he went to Harley's bedside. "Hey. How are you feeling?" he asked. I followed him in.

"My head hurts and....well everything hurts. What happened?" Harley asked putting her hand on her head.

Jon looked to Michelle, then back at Harley. "Well... Your Mommy was here. And there was a fight. You got hit with an attack accidentally", he said as gently as he could.

Harley nodded slowly. "Where is Mommy then?"

"She left" he said, matter of factly, "She's not happy with me".

"Is it my fault? Is it because I promoted you?" Harley asked.

He shook his head. "No, Princess. It's my fault"

Tears welled up in Harley's eyes. "I want my Mommy and Daddy."

I looked at Jon. It was easy to forget this kid was only 6, but she was. I didn't know what to do. I hoped he did.

Jon gently pushed her hair out of her face and rubbed her head gently. "I know, Princess. But you only have me and these nice people right now". He looked at Darien. "Is it safe to give her something for pain so she can rest?", he asked.

Darien nodded. "Yes, I can give her a low dose of Morphine. That should help."

Jon nodded. "I don't want her in any pain" he said.

Darien gave Harley some pain medicine and minutes later she was out again.

"At least we know she's ok this time." I said.

Jon nodded. "Now we can focus on the task at hand. Empress will be back. And I suspect she won't come back alone".

I nodded, "You're probably right. What sort of army can we expect?" I asked.

Jon smiled. "She won't bring an army. She'll bring Hunter".

I gasped. "Shit."

"Just what we don't need. Another Hunter." Mina echoed.

Jon nodded. "He's not as powerful as she is, but he is effective. And he would do anything to please her".

"And I can't fight Hunter again. I can't." I said remembering when my Hunter was working for Lothor. It was awful.

Jon grabbed my hand. "It's ok. We'll do it together", he said.

I took a breath. "OK...should we warn Hunter that his counterpart may be popping up?"

Jon nodded. "You might want to do that. Things could get weird. I popped up on your Jon and it didn't go well"

"Mina, can you call him?" I asked.

"Um, I could, but I think it should be you after...what happened already." Mina said.

I sighed and looked at Jon. "Empress seduced Hunter. She pretended to be me and slept with him and convinced him to attack the Soldiers, until I told him the truth."

"Oh", Jon said, "I thought the people here were good. Not the same as my Universe. He sounds the same"

"No, just...he thought I was in danger. He would do anything to protect me." I explained.

Jon nodded. "Like I said, the same. It doesn't matter. Someone should let him know. He could be in danger. Especially since Empress has already contacted him once. She knows where he is".

I sighed. "OK...ok. I'll call him." I said picking up my phone. I didn't like it but I didn't really have a choice. Empress forced my hand. It was time to suck it up and do what had to be done.