

# ALPHA'S REGRET: HIDING MY EX-HUSBAND'S TWINS

## HIDING 32

Annual Ball

ISABELLA'S POV

I stood in front of the full body mirror, my reflection staring back at me in the dim light of the room. Today was the Annual Ball, and I was preparing myself for it later. I was currently wearing an elegant, deep emerald gown that was nothing short of luxurious. It clung to my curves in all the right places, like a second skin, accentuating my figure with a subtle, sophisticated look.

The fabric shimmered softly under the light, the color contrasting beautifully with my golden hair, which fell in natural waves down my back. The dress had a sweetheart neckline and leaves more than half of my back bare. It was backless and had a slit that goes up on my upper right leg. Though I slightly felt uneasy with showing too much skin, the gown made me feel powerful and confident.

This is my first time wearing something like this again after such a long time.

As I adjusted the gown on my body, I caught sight of Liam behind me in the mirror. He walked towards me quietly with his green eyes wide with admiration.

"You're so beautiful, mom..." He said earnestly with a voice full of genuine smile.

Lily also appeared beside him, her golden curls bouncing as she ran towards me.

"Mommy is the prettiest in the world!" She slightly squealed with a pure, unfiltered

enthusiasm, her eyes lighting up as she scanned me from head to toe.

I smiled at them, feeling my heart swell with warmth after hearing their words. I reach down to

gently smooth Lily's hair and kissed the top of her head as well as Liam's. Seeing that I was

still in the middle of preparing, they went back to the couches and started busying themselves

watching the TV.

The sun has just set, and tonight is the Annual Ball. A night I have to attend, no matter how

nervous I feel.

As I rummaged through my makeup kit, my eyes caught sight on one specific box nestled with my other jewelry boxes in the vanity. It made me froze for a moment, my heart skipping a beat as the memory of receiving it last week flooded back.

There was only one person whom I knew would send it.

Xavier.

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this one. I hadn't even dared to wear that bracelet, nor had given the identical matching one to Lily.

His intentions were unclear, and it deeply gnawed at me, leaving me conflicted and uneasy.

Moreover, it was only a few hours before the ball tonight. The anxiety within me began to rise once more. I knew that there was a high possibility that I might see him tonight.

I don't even know how I would be able to face him again.

"We're downstairs. Have you finished preparing?"

I snapped out of my thoughts when I heard Raymond's familiar voice on our mind link.

I took a deep breath, before replying. "I'll be there in a minute."

Pushing away all those thoughts bugging me, I hurriedly applied the final touches to my makeup, slightly fixing my natural curls though it didn't need much attention.

After grabbing my purse, I stood up and glanced back at the twins as I went towards them.

"You're like a goddess, mommy!" Lily exclaimed with her eyes sparkling as she looked at me. Liam also nodded in agreement beside her.

"Mommy..." Lily added as she stood up and went to my side, looking up at me. "Can I go to the ball too when I grow up?"

I smiled at her, feeling my heart softening even more. "Of course, you can, sweetheart. When the time comes, I'm sure you'll be the prettiest girl there."

She giggled at my response while Liam also stood on the side with a teasing smile to his sister. Recalling the time, I gave them a few gentle instructions before finally leaving the room.

As soon as I stepped out of the hallway, I encountered Alexander who was walking towards me, dressed in a sharp, formal suit that accentuated his tall and strong frame.

He stopped in front of me, his gaze sweeping over my appearance.

"You look stunning."

I smiled back at him. "Thanks."

"Shall we go?" He extended his arm, offering it to me and I nodded, slipping my hand into the

crook of his arm.

We walked downstairs where Raymond and Hailey were already waiting for us. They were dressed in matching elegant outfits that made them look every bit of the power couple they

were.

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Hailey's eyes widened as soon as she saw me, letting out a small whistle afterwards.

"Damn, you're slaying it! You look so gorgeous!" She gushed, making me chuckle lowly.

"You look amazing too."

Raymond gave me an approving nod before the four of us finally made our way to the car waiting outside. The ride towards the venue made me feel tensed once more. The closer we got, the more my nerves frayed that I had to force myself to take slow, steady breaths to keep

calm.

Hailey noticed my anxiety and teased lightly. "Are you nervous you'll shock the world with this beauty tonight?"

I let out a small laugh, but it was strained. I glanced at her, my voice dropping slightly lower in a helpless tone. "You know it's not that."

"Alright, don't worry." Her face softened as she reached over to squeeze my hand reassuringly. "There'll be many people out there tonight. Besides..." She trailed off, winking at me,

Alexander's with you."

I nudged her playfully, shaking my head with a small smile on my lips. However, her words

offered little comfort. My thoughts kept circling back to Xavier and my fear of encountering him tonight.

We finally arrived at the venue, and as I stepped out of the car, the cool, evening breeze

caressed my skin, offering a brief moment of calm.

"Shall we go in?" Alexander came by my side, offering his hand once more.

I took a deep breath, nodding before I placed my hand in his. As we walked towards the grand entrance, he leaned in slightly and whispered. "Don't be nervous, I'm here."

I gave him a small smile, gathering all the courage I could muster as we finally stepped into

the grand hall. The moment we entered, the room fell silent, and I could feel countless eyes on us. The air was thick with whispers and murmurs that I couldn't quite make out, and the

weight of their attention made my heart race.

The last time I had attended this ball, I had been Xavier's Luna, and my presence had been

much more subdued because I wanted to stay lowkey that time. Now, all eyes were on us.

Alexander led me towards the area designated for Alphas and their partners. We were greeted by several Alphas from various packs along with either their Lunas or partners too. Alexander

introduced me to them, his hand resting on my waist.

"Bella, this is Alpha Ethan from the IronClaw Pack, and his Luna, Celeste."

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A tall man with a commanding presence and a woman with a kind smile stood before us. I

also smile as I shook their hands.

"It's a pleasure to meet you."

Another Alpha, a burly man with a thick beard also stepped forward a few moments later, his inquiring eyes flickering between me towards Alexander.

"Is she your Luna, Alexander?"

Alexander only smiled mysteriously at him. "She's my partner for tonight."

I felt a wave of awkwardness wash over me, but I forced myself to smile, trying to stay

composed as the conversation continued.

I was still on high alert, but my initial nervousness began to subside as I realized Xavier was nowhere in sight... or perhaps due to the large amount of people, we might not even cross paths today. The thought somewhat eased my nerves.

I started to mingle in the crowds of pack healers from different packs. But just as I started to relax, I felt a gentle tap on my shoulder, before I heard someone call me from behind.

"Luna Isabella?"

Annual Ball (Part 2)

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Annual Ball (Part 2)

ISABELLA'S POV

The sudden address sent a jolt of nerves rushing through me. I turned slowly, my hands feeling cold.

"Marina?" My heart skipped a beat as soon as I recognized the middle-aged woman standing before me.

Her eyes also widened, surprise was evident on her face. "Luna Isabella, it's really you!"

Slowly, I tried to keep my composure, forcing a smile in front of her. "Yes, it's me. It's been a long time, Marina."

Marina is the head pack healer at the Lunar Crescent Pack. Moreover, I was very familiar with her... in the past. Back then, she was like an elder to me. And now she could still recognize me too. I didn't expect I would meet her today and I didn't know how to feel at the sudden

encounter.

Meeting her this time means there's another high possibility I would run into another member of the Lunar Crescent Pack.

"It's been years, Luna Isabella..." Marina spoke, her eyes searching mine with a look of shock and hesitation. "If I may ask, where have you been all this time?"

Her question caught me off guard. Although I anticipated being asked about this, the weight still pressed down on me. For a moment, I didn't know how to respond.

I hesitated, sighing before I spoke in a low tone. "So many things have happened, Marina. But there's one thing I'm not your Luna anymore. You don't have to call me this way now."

She went silent at my words. She looked as if she wanted to say something more, but before she could, the hall fell silent once again. Gasps and murmurs spread through the crowd as everyone's attention got drawn to the entrance.

I turned to see what had caused the commotion, and my breath hitched as soon as I realized what was happening.

Xavier has arrived.

He walked in alone, his tall and mighty figure commanding the attention of everyone in the room. I could feel my heart pounding nervously in my chest. The mate bond also started flaring to life, making my entire body shiver as I tried to resist the pull starting to overwhelm

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Annual Ball (Part 2)

For a split second, I thought he looked towards my direction, and I was so nervous that I immediately forced myself to look away, turning back to Marina who now wore a complicated

look on her face.

"You and Alpha Xavier..." She began, her voice trailing off.

I swallowed the lump on my throat, before I forced another smile to her.

"It's good to see you again, Marina." I immediately spoke, not really wanting to hear her mention anything about me and Xavier as I tied to excuse myself.

"But I need to go first. My companions are looking for me."

Marina still looked hesitant, but she didn't press further. She only nodded after hearing and I

quickly excused myself, mingling with the crowd. My heart was racing after witnessing

Xavier's arrival. I immediately mind-linked Alexander, asking where he was.

He instantly replied, and a minute later, I finally found him. He had been looking for me too as he approached me with large strides.

"He's here." His voice was low, and I knew he was talking about Xavier. "It's better if you stay by my side."

I nodded in agreement as I heaved a sigh. The ball was about to start, and I needed to keep my composure. I keep telling myself I shouldn't get too affected by Xavier's presence.

The ball finally started with some speech and announcements from different werewolf council members. I sat beside Alexander as I tried to focus on the event currently unfolding. But as

minutes went by, I couldn't shake the feeling of being watched.

I knew it was Xavier. I could feel his gaze burning into me across the hall. And I wasn't mistaken. I roamed my eyes around and accidentally met his gaze. Our eyes locked once

more, and his intense stare sent a jolt through me.

But before I could react, Alexander subtly moved in front of me, blocking Xavier's view at me as he offered me a reassuring smile.

I shifted on my seat, smiling despite the discomfort. As the night went deeper, I could still feel the tension lingering in the air. I tried so hard to ignore Xavier's intense stare that bore into me

from time to time, but I knew I couldn't completely hide away from him.

I was left alone when Alexander was called away by other alphas. Luckily, I was able to blend in with the other guests, finding myself in small talks in different circles from time to time.

When a waiter passed by offering a drink, I immediately accepted it, hoping the cool liquid would calm my nerves.

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Annual Ball (Part 2)

But then, I heard someone call me once more.

"Isabella?"

Turning around, I found myself face-to-face with a familiar beautiful woman. I stilled,

immediately recognizing her. It was Thalia, the Luna of the Blood Crane Pack which has the closest relationship to the Lunar Crescent Pack.

Seeing her today was like a punch to my gut, another reminder of the past I had tried to leave

behind.

Thalia and I had been close once. We were friends, but I lost all connections with her after that incident when I decided not to go back to the Lunar Crescent Pack anymore.

"I thought I was mistaken." She spoke, her voice a mix of shock and disbelief. "But it's really you!"&nbsp;

I flashed her a small smile, nodding. "Long time no see, Thalia."

She reached out to me, moving close as her hand rested lightly on my arm as she stared at me with an inquiring look on her face. "Where have been all these years? I heard Xavier has

been searching for you all this time... but why were you with another alpha earlier?"

Her words hit me like a ton of bricks. Xavier had been searching for me? The thought was so impossible, and I couldn't believe it. It had to be some kind of misunderstanding.

I struggled to search for the right words as I cleared my throat. "It's a long story."

"Then you should tell me. We haven't seen each other for such a long time!" There was a warmth familiarity in her tone that made me feel slightly at ease, realizing she didn't change

much.&nbsp;

She was still the sweet and quirky girl I know from the past.

But just as I was about to speak, her eyes widened in alarm as she stared behind me. Speaking of..."&nbsp;

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I stilled. I didn't need to turn around to know who was approaching. I knew it was him, the mate bond seemed to scream at me. The air around me grew heavy, charged with Xavier's presence.&nbsp;

"I'll meet you later. You have a lot to tell me," Thalia whispered, giving me a mysterious smile. "But I think you two need to talk first."

Before I could stop her, she immediately slipped away into the crowd, leaving me standing there, alone and exposed. Panic set in inside me as soon as I saw Xavier who was now only a few feet away from me.

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Annual Ball (Part 2)

Without thinking, I followed my urge to flee from the scene, mixing through the crowd. I didn't stop until I spotted a door before I finally stepped out of the hall.

I was panting heavily, my heart still pounding loudly in my chest, each beat echoing in my ears. The cool night air hit my skin as I took a deep breath, trying to calm the storm inside me.

I knew it was cowardly of me to run. What if it wasn't me whom he was looking for earlier? What if I just assumed everything? But then, all of those doesn't matter now. I couldn't deny the sense of relief on me as soon as I thought I finally avoided him.

But just as I thought I had escaped, Xavier's voice suddenly cut through behind me, making me freeze.&nbsp;

"You always like to run away from me, huh?"

Every muscle in my body went rigid. I gritted my teeth, clenching my fists as I finally gathered the courage to face him.

"And why are you following me?" My voice went out sharp as I stared straight at him, contrary to the raging emotions inside me.

He also stared back at me with that same intense gaze, but before he could speak, another voice interrupted us.

"Xavier, you're here..."

The woman's voice was sickeningly familiar. As soon as she stepped into view, my guess was confirmed.

Dressed in a red gown that clung to her every curve, her eyes sparkled as she sensually moved towards Xavier's side, linking her arms on his as she stood facing him.

"I was looking for you. You disappeared from the crowd earlier!"

My heart sank, a cold numbness spreading through my veins.

It was Sophia.