

Fell for the Alpha-less Queen

Shadows of Rivalry: Tessa's Unyielding Resolve

Chapter 16 Shadows of Rivalry: Tessa's Unyielding Resolve

That Chapter 16 feeling again.

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Just like the first time their eyes met, Tessa found herself captivated by Landon's deep, penetrating gaze. It was as if the rest of the world had disappeared, leaving only him.

Her usually steady heartbeat raced uncontrollably,

They were so close that she could catch the faint, comforting scent of pinewood from him. It was intoxicating. A strange, unfamiliar desire to step even closer stirred within her.

For all her capabilities, Tessa was a complete novice when it came to matters of the heart. Realizing how out of sorts she felt, she quickly averted her eyes and took a step back to create some distance.

Landon noticed her sudden retreat and immediately spoke to diffuse her discomfort. "You don't have to overthink it. I didn't mean anything by it."

Though it wasn't entirely true. Landon did feel something for her, but Tessa was young, and he had no intention of scaring her.

"I didn't overthink anything." Tessa replied tersely, trying to push down the unfamiliar emotions bubbling up inside her. She turned abruptly and went inside, closing the door firmly behind her.

The moment the door shut, Flex's voice. echoed in Landon's mind through their Mind Link.

"You upset her! She's definitely mad because you made her uncomfortable!"

"No," Landon responded calmly, "She's just shy."

Recalling her flustered, almost annoyed expression, Landon couldn't help but smile.

Since meeting Tessa, her demeanor had been mostly indifferent, cool, and detached. But tonight, he'd seen a glimpse of something new-something youthful and endearing, and it stirred something in him.

Tessa, meanwhile, took a shower and lay down. She had planned to play games for a while but fell asleep almost immediately, the events of the day having drained her energy.

The next morning, York dropped Queenie off at school

Last night had been Queenie's first time, and while she was inexperienced, she believed that's what men liked in innocent girls.

"Yorkie, about tonight..." Queenie hinted shyly, hoping to keep him interested. She wanted to use their newfound intimacy to secure her place in his heart.

York patted her cheek dismissively. "Be good. I have plans tonight. I'll come find you when I'm done." "Yorkie, are you not satisfied with me?" she asked, her insecurities surfacing.

"How could I not be? You were perfect," he replied smoothly

"Really? Then don't forget to come find me later." Queenie clung to him, willing to do anything to keep his

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attention.

After dropping Queenie off, York didn't leave immediately. Instead, he lingered outside Navoris High, waiting for the girl who had been on his mind all night

When he finally spotted Tessa approaching the school gates, he moved quickly to intercept her.

"Tessa, hi. I'm York, from the national team," he said with a confident smile.

Tessa recognized him as the guy from last night who had been staring at her. She didn't bother responding, brushing past him without a word.

For the first time, someone ignored his charm, and York's lips curled into an amused smile. He caught up

to her.

Tessa, don't be like that! There's no harm in making friends, right?" he said, handing her a business card. Tessa took the card and glanced at it. "York? National basketball team?"

York mistook her tone for admiration and nodded smugly.

"Let's be friends," he insisted.

Without hesitation, Tessa walked over to a nearby trash can and tossed the card in.

-You-York was stunned. No one had ever treated him like this before. Girls usually flocked to him, eager for his attention.

But instead of anger, York felt intrigued. "Interesting. I like a challenge," he muttered. "Tessa, just wait. One day, I'll tear off that mask of yours."

To York, all women were the same. They acted tough until they were conquered. Once that happened, they became as submissive as Queenie, begging for his attention.

Unbeknownst to him, this entire interaction was being watched from a car nearby- by Winona

Winona smirked. "Tessa, you won't last in Navoris, even without me lifting a finger."

In her mind, Queenie was more than enough to handle someone like Tessa.

Whether it was five years ago or today, Winona was determined to see Tessa cast out of the Sinclair family

once more.

Chapter 17 Unraveling Bonds: Tessa's Struggles and the Alpha's Conc.....

Chapter 17 Unraveling Bonds: Tessa's Struggles and the Alpha's

Concern

+5 Free Cota

The last class of the morning was PE. Ysabel, being wol less and naturally frail, usually skipped it. But with Tessa now around, she decided to give it a try.

"Tessie, honestly, we don't have to attend PE in the twelfth grade. Let's just go to the snack shop and grab

hing to eat. I'm starving." Ysabel said; rubbing her empty stomach.

"Sure.

Tessa indulged Ysabel easily. Though they hadn't known each other long, Ysabel had a charm that made her hard to dislike.

"Tessa, stop right there!"

Before they could leave the basketball court, Queenie appeared, her voice dripping with hostility.

"Good dogs don't block the way," Tessa shot back lazily, not even bothering to look at her. Some things never changed-Queenie was still the same as ever.

Seeing Tessa's indifference, Queenie moved to block her path.

"What did you say to my boyfriend this morning? Tessa, how shameless can you be? Are you really trying to seduce someone else's man?"

Earlier that day, Winona had gleefully told Queenie that Tessa had been chatting with her boyfriend, York. Furious, Queenie had stormed straight to find Tessa.

Of course, this shameless girl would stoop to anything. Queenie thought, her blood boiling.

"Tessa, York is Queenie's boyfriend! He's a national basketball reserve player and will probably make it to the NBA one day!" one of Queenie's friends chimed in fanning the flames.

"York? A national basketball reserve? Is that supposed to be impressive?" Tessa asked, her tone still nonchalant as she raised an eyebrow,

"Tessa, I'm warning you-stay away from my boyfriend, or I won't let you off so easily!" Queenie snarled. "You should focus on keeping your boyfriend in line instead of worrying about me," Ysabel interjected, unable to stay quiet. "In Tessie's eyes, York is nothing-barely even a blade of grass

"Tessa, this is your final warning. Don't even think about getting close to my boyfriend!"

You're crazy," Tessa said coldly, pushing Queenie aside Turning to Ysabel, she added, "Didn't you say you were hungry? Let's go."

Ugh, I've lost my appetite, Ysabel said, scrunching her nose as she glanced back at Queenie.

"You've seen worse. Don't let garbage ruin your mood, Tessa said matter-of-factly.

"Queenie, did she just call us garbage?"

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Chapter 17 Unraveling Bonds: Tessa's Struggles and the Alpha's Conc...

"Wow, she's so arrogant. I've never met someone this shameless."

45 Free Coins

"Queenie, you better keep an eye on your boyfriend. Tessa might actually have the looks to steal him."

Queenie clenched her fists. I won't let Tessa stay in Navor any longer. She's too dangerous.

"Don't worry. There's no way York would ever fall for someone as lowly as her." "Tessie, let's go out for lunch! It's the last class anyway.

"Okay."

"Tessie; what do you feel like eating?"

"Anything's fine."

Ysabel took Tessa to one of her favorite small restaurants. But shortly after leaving the place, Tessa suddenly felt something was wrong. Her stomach clenched painfully, and she doubled over

"Tessie, are you okay? You're so pale! Are you feeling sick?" Ysabel asked, panic evident in her voice.

"I'm fine."

Tessa squatted down, clutching her stomach to try and ease the pain.

"Tessie, what should I do? What's happening to you?" Ysabel crouched beside her, clearly out of her depth.

"Take me to a hospital," Tessa said calmly.

Although she could summon Emma to heal her, she couldn't risk revealing her wolf right now. Her current persona was that of a wolf-less, ordinary student. Going to the hospital was the logical response.

Ysabel wasted no time and brought Tessa to the best werewolf hospital in Navoris.

"Doctor, what's wrong with her? She's not going to die, she?" Ysabel's voice trembled as she clung to the doctor's arm.

"Miss, please wait outside while we run some tests," the doctor replied gently."

"Tessie." Ysabel looked at Tessa worriedly as she was wheeled into the examination room.

"I'll be fine. Just wait for me outside." Even in pain, Tessa remained calm. I know won't die.

After the examination, the doctors decided that surgery was necessary. Hearing this, Ysabel burst into

tears.

When the doors to the operating room closed, Ysabel panicked and immediately called her uncle. Landon was in the middle of a Nightshade Pack meeting when he saw Ysabel's name flashing on his phone. He declined the call without hesitation.

But when she called again, he frowned. What's so urgent that she's calling repeatedly?

Answering the call, he barely had a chance to speak before Ysabel's panicked voice came through.

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Chapter 17 Unraveling Bonds: Tessa's Stru

"Uncle, what do I do? Tessie-she's going to die!"

"What?" Landon shot up from his chair, his voice sha

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Chapter 17 Unraveling Bonds: Tessa's Struggles and the Alpha's Conc...

"Uncle, what do I do? Tessie-she's going to die!"

"What?" Landon shot up from his chair, his voice sharp with alarm.

Chapter 18 The Alpha's Vigil: A Night by Tessa's Side

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The meeting was filled with Nightshade Pack Elders, all watching Landon with growing unease.

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What could have happened to make their alpha, normally composed even during a vampire invasion, look so unsettled?

"Where are you? I'm coming right now." Landon's voice was sharp as he spoke into the phone. On the other end, Ysabel was crying so hard she could barely form a coherent sentence.

Flex, meanwhile, was in a frenzy inside Landon's mind, urging him to get to Tessa as quickly as possible. The chaos in his head made it impossible to think clearly about what might have happened.

Hearing that her uncle was on his way, Ysabel managed to calm down slightly.

"This meeting is adjourned." Landon's declaration left the room silent and the Elders exchanging puzzled glances as he strode out.

When Landon arrived at the hospital, Ysabel ran to him, her tears flowing even more freely.

"Uncle, what do we do? Tessie still hasn't come out!"

"She'll be fine," Landon reassured her. "Nathaniel will come and take you home. I'll stay."

"No! I'm staying until Tessie comes out! Ysabel refused to leave.

Just then, a doctor emerged from the operating room.

"Doctor, how is Tessa?" Landon's voice was calm, but his eyes betrayed his worry.

"It's nothing serious, just an appendectomy. She'll need to stay for two or three days to recover, but she's fine.

"Appendectomy?" Ysabel blinked, her face flushing with embarrassment. She had cried so much, and it turned out to be something so minor.

Landon finally felt the tension in his chest release. From the moment he had received Ysabel's frantic call,

was okay, he could breathe

he'd been on edge, a tightness weighing heavily on him. Now, knowing Tessa "ed Ysabel's frantic call,

again.

"You'll still need to notify her family," the doctor continued. "Even for a minor surgery, someone will need to look after her."

"Thank you, doctor."

At that moment, Tessa was wheeled out. Her face showed surprise when she spotted Landon.

J'hat's he doing here? Doesn't he have Nightshade Pack duties and Thorne Corp responsibilities? she wondered,

"Tessie, thank goodness you're okay! You scared me to death," Ysabel exclaimed, rushing to her side.

"I'm fine, Tessa replied with a faint smile.

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Chapter 18 The Alpha's Vigil: A Night by Tessa's Side

5 Free Coins

The nurse wheeled Tessa toward her room, but Tessa, trying to be independent, started to get off the gurney on her own.

"Don't move." Landon's voice was firm.

Before Tessa could react, Landon scooped her up effortlessly. Instinctively, she wrapped her arms around his neck to steady herself, her face mere inches from his.

"I can walk," she protested softly, feeling the closeness between them. Her heartbeat quickened, and her. cars grew warm. If she tilted her head just a little, her lips would brush against his jawline.

Ignoring her protest, Landon gently placed her on the hospital bed and adjusted her IV line with meticulous care.

By 11 p.m.. Ysabel had been taken home by Nathaniel, But Landon showed no signs of leaving.

"Mr. Thorne, you can go now. I don't need anyone to take care of me, Tessa finally said, breaking the.

silence.

If he doesn't leave, how will I use Emma's healing powers? she thought.

Besides, she didn't even need healing. It was a minor surgery-she could already get out of bed if she Wanted to.

"Don't worry about me. If you're tired, just sleep."

"What do you mean?" she asked, her brows furrowing.

"I'm staying here with you."

"What?" Tessa blinked, unsure if she'd heard him correctly. This was Landon-Nightshade Pack's alpha, the man whose mere presence made Montedra tremble-and he was offering to stay and keep her company?

"Are you hungry?" he asked, ignoring her shock.

"I'm fine," she replied, though her appetite was non-existent.

Taking her words as a yes, Landon made a call, ordering corn porridge from a Michelin-starred restaurant. When the food arrived, it wasn't in a typical takeout box but a beautifully designed thermal container.

Landon ladled the porridge into a bowl, sat beside Tess, and scooped up a spoonful.

"Here," he said, holding the spoon near her lips.

"Cough, cough" Tessa almost choked on her own disbelief.

The alpha of Nightshade Pack, the head of Thorne Corp, the man who controlled half of Montedra's economy, was feeding her porridge?

It was too surreal for her to process.

Chapter 19 Bound by Care: The Alpha's Watchful Vigil

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"Mr. Thorne, I can feed myself" Faced with Landon's attentiveness, Tessa wasn't sure how to react.

Landon noticed her discomfort and didn't push further

That's fine, I can wait. She'll get used to having me around.

He handed her the bowl and spoon.

Tessa took a bite of the porridge, finding the taste surprisingly pleasant. Slowly, she finished the entire bowl

"Would you like more?"

"No, that's enough. Thank you."

Even though they weren't close, Landon's care made her feel a little uneasy.

"Mr. Thorne, you can leave now. This is a hospital-it's safe here."

"Get some sleep. I'll rest on the sofa tonight," Landon said as he tucked the blanket around her and settled on the couch, showing no intention of leaving.

"Mr. Thorne?"

"What is it? Aren't you sleepy?"

Maybe it's just a Thorne family trait to repay kindness so thoroughly, Tessa thought, giving up on reasoning with him. After all, she had saved his life once.

The room fell silent except for the sound of their steady breathing. After what felt like an eternity, Tessa finally drifted off to sleep.

Hearing her soft, even breaths, Landon stood and approached her bed.

She looks so peaceful, like a little angel, Flex whispered in Landon's mind.

Landon agreed.

The sleeping Tessa shed all her defenses, looking so innocent and serene. She was beautiful, like something fragile he wanted to protect at all costs.

The next morning, Landon instructed Nathaniel to bring both Nightshade Pack's pack-related documents and Thorne Corp files requiring his review to the hospital.

Between reviewing documents, Landon would glance at Tessa's IV drip, promptly calling for a nurse when

Necessary.

With Landon keeping such a close watch, Tessa had no chance to summon Emma for healing and had to settle for standard hospital care.

When the IV

IV drip made her need to use the restroom, Tessa tried to handle it herself. She got up and

Chapter 19 Bound by Care: The Alpha's Watchful Vigil

reached for the IV stand, intending to wheel it along.

But before she could, Landon was already at her side, detaching the IV bag and holding it up. He even leaned in as if preparing to carry her.

Tessa instinctively raised her hands to stop him, only to find her palms pressed against his chest.

Landon wore a white shirt, the top two buttons undone since he'd removed his tie the previous night. Her hands brushed against his bare skin.

It felt like a jolt of electricity ran through her. Tessa quickly pulled her hands away.

"Sorry, that wasn't intentional." The way he looked at her made her feel like he thought she'd done it on purpose.

As the alpha of Montedra's strongest pack, Landon was not only powerful and influential but also devastatingly handsome. Despite his many admirers in Navoris, he had no mate. Many female werewolves dreamed of catching his eye. Some had even gone as far as orchestrating physical contact with him, only to be coldly rejected and thrown out. Afterward, no one dared to approach him.

Yet here she was, accidentally touching his skin.

"I wouldn't mind if it were intentional," Landon said with a teasing smile. "In fact, I'd welcome it."

Tessa's eyes widened in disbelief. Was he flirting with her?

"Weren't you heading to the restroom? Or would you prefer that I carry you there?"

"I can manage on my own." She immediately reached for the IV bag.

But Landon refused to let her handle it, insisting on accompanying her to the restroom.

"Mr. Thorne, could you step out for a moment? I can't go with you here," she said, her face heating up.

Though it was just a hospital bathroom, she was still a girl, and having a man standing by made it impossible to relax.

Finally, Landon handed her the IV bag. "I'll wait outside. Call me if you need anything."

Relieved, Tessa nodded. Watching him step out of the room, she let out a long sigh.

After finishing in the bathroom, she felt much better. Returning to her bed, she hung the IV bag back on the stand and decided to pass the time with a game. Then there was a knock at the door.

Who is it? Landon?" she called out, knowing he wouldn't knock.

"Come in," she said, unable to guess who it might be..

Chapter 20 Court of Confrontation: The Alpha's Rising Flame

Chapter 20 Court of Confrontation: The Alpha's Rising Flame.

The door opened, and Tessa saw York walking in, holding a bouquet of vibrant red roses.

She frowned. What is he doing here? Haven't I made my interest clear enough?

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"Ms. Sinclair, remember me? I heard you weren't feeling well, so I came right over to check on you. Are you okay?"

York had taken Queenie to school earlier when he overheard her mention Tessa being in the hospital. Immediately intrigued, he dug up Tessa's location.

Despite her tarnished reputation and lack of a wolf, her beauty was undeniable.

That face, that figure... She's exactly my type. I have to have her.

"And you are?" Tessa asked coldly, She didn't even want to waste energy pretending to be polite,

"I'm York! From the national basketball team," York said proudly. "I couldn't stand the thought of you being here alone, so I took the day off to keep you company."

That's unnecessary. You can leave now. Tessa's tone was sharp. Someone who was with Queenie couldn't possibly be worthwhile.

"Tessa. it was love at first sight! Please, give me a chance I'll prove my sincerity to you, York said, attempting his most charming smile.

This man is revolting. Tessa's frown deepened.

"Aren't you Queenie's boyfriend? How can you say something like that to me without feeling ashamed?"

"Queenie is just clingy. You wouldn't believe how desperate she can be. Don't worry-I'll set things straight with her," York replied smoothly. Compared to Tessa's elegance, Queenie seemed plain and unremarkable.

"That's your problem, not mine."

"Tessa, I'll show you how much I care."

"You can go now," Tessa said, her patience wearing thin

Her dismissiveness only fueled York's interest. She's got fire. I love a challenge.

As soon as York left, Landon returned, his sharp gaze immediately landing on the bouquet of roses on Tessa's bedside table.

"Someone came by?" he asked, his tone neutral but probing

Trash. Tessa replied bluntly. Her disdain for York was unmistakable.

"Hmm." Landon picked up the roses, walked over to the trash can, and dropped them it without hesitation.

Tessa didn't object.

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Chapter 20 Court of Confrontation: The Alpha's Rising Flame

By noon, Tessa convinced the doctor to discharge her.

+5 Free Colos

Landon, noticing how much she disliked the hospital, personally handled the paperwork and drove her back to Wisteria Apartment.

Once alone, Tessa summoned Emma, her wolf, and quickly healed herself fully.

That afternoon, now completely recovered, Tessa insisted on going to school with Ysabel

When they arrived, Queenie was waiting at the entrance with a group of her friends, glaring at Tessa like she was public enemy number one.

Tessa, stop right there!" Queenie yelled, her voice trembling with anger.

Earlier, York had broken up with Queenie, saying he was in love with Tessa and couldn't continue their relationship.

Queenie was both heartbroken and furious.

It must be that shameless Tessa's fault! She seduced York and made him leave me!

Tessa ignored her, walking past with Ysabel. Her indifference only infuriated Queenie further.

Fuming. Queenie grabbed a basketball and hurled it directly at Tessa.

"Tessie, watch out!" Ysabel shouted, instinctively stepping in to shield Tessa.

Tessa reacted quickly, pulling Ysabel aside as the basketball narrowly missed her and bounced away.

Tessa turned to face Queenie, her expression cold and unamused.

"Queenie, are you insane?"

Queenie's face twisted with rage. "I warned you, Tessa! Stop trying to steal my boyfriend! You're the one who started this!"

"Tessa, you're so shameless! How could you go after Queenie's boyfriend after they've been together for a month?"

"She's just like that-always going after men!"

"Yeah, with looks like hers, it's all she's good for."

Tessa's lips curled into a smirk. "Queenie, you're on the basketball team, right?"

"What's it to you?"

"You're looking at our team captain!" one of Queenie's friends boasted.

"Perfect," Tessa said, her voice calm but cutting-

"What's that supposed to mean? Are you challenging her? You? A wolf-less loser who probably doesn't even know how to dribble?"

Chapter 20 Court of Confrontation: The Alpha's Rising Flame

"Exactly. All you know is how to throw yourself at me. You're in no position to compete with us.

Tessa bent down, picking up the basketball Queenie had thrown.

"Five of you. Let's play," she said, her tone dripping with quiet confidence.

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5 Free Colms

She had planned to ignore them entirely, but Queenie had nearly hurt Ysabel.

Now, Tessa decided they deserved a lesson.