

## Alpha-less 241

### Chapter 241 Tessa the Hidden Boss

"Tessie! My Tessie! You're always so understanding," she thought. She never fought for anything

And yet, the people at home still didn't understand her. They had no idea that Tessa didn't even care about the Sinclair family's wealth and resources, or even the entire Frostmoon Pack.

"Grandpa, don't be like this," she said. She didn't like to see Walter in this state; it was as if he had no intention of ever waking up again.

Walter held Tessa's hand and said, "Isn't this just pathetic? At his age, it was embarrassing to still be so

weak.

Tessa shook her head..

"Grandpa, anyone would be afraid of death," she said. She had felt the approach of death herself.

Because of that, she understood what Walter was feeling. Seeing the look in her eyes, as if she could see through everything, see straight into his heart, Walter turned his gaze away.

"Promise me; if I don't make it off the operating table, take care of the Sinclair family for me"

Grandpa, that's not going to happen. It's almost time. Samuel's already gotten everything ready."

Everything had been prepared; all that was left was for him to cooperate.

But Walter refused to get out of bed.

"Promise me; I don't want to leave any regrets. After all Yardley was his only son; it was impossible for him not to feel heartache.

"Okay, I promise."

If Walter asked her for anything, she would do it no matter how hard it was; not that this was hard for her at all.

"Good; have Landie let him go," he said. Even now, he wanted Yardley by his side.

"Alright." Tessa didn't refuse him.

When Walter was wheeled out, Yardley and Lila were already there; Winona was there too. Seeing Walter like this, Yardley felt a pang of pain for the first time. He walked over and grabbed Walter's hand.

"Dad, you have to be okay"

Until today, he hadn't felt this way; but now, seeing his father being pushed out like this, he finally realized that the father he had always thought of as great and invincible had really grown old.

Walter looked at his son standing before him.

"Yardley, you're my only son. I once had such high hopes for you. It's a shame that after you were injured in the Vampire War, even though your physical wounds healed, your spirit fell apart; the werewolf power in your body has become harder to control. In the future, remember to keep calm; don't lose control of your strength. Also, you don't have a gift for business. I'm not around anymore, I'll hand Sinclair Corp

"Dad, what are you talking about?" Yardley's voice was already choked with tears.

"A grown man like you; your daughter's already so big, and you're still crying? You're going to make people Laugh at you," Walter scolded him.

"Dad, you'll be fine," Yardley managed to squeeze out.

Walter was wheeled away.

Winona looked around but didn't see Tessa; she couldn't help but complain to Lila. "Mom, grandpa's having surgery today, and Tessa's not even here. She clearly doesn't care about him, even after how much grandpa loved her."

"Winnie, your grandfather's about to have surgery; stop saying things that upset people!" Yardley, facing his father's life and death, felt nothing but sorrow; he didn't want to hear Winona's complaints about Tessa

anymore.

Besides, ever since he found out Landon's real identity, he didn't dare provoke Tessa either.

Winona felt indignant. Why does everyone at home always have to be against me?

"Mom, I'm not feeling well; I'm going out for some air

Lila looked at her disapprovingly.

"Winnie, your grandfather's having surgery; don't act so willful. Hadn't she always been so well-behaved?

"Mom, actually, I have a date with Mr. Evan today," Winona said, unsure why her luck had been so good lately. She had heard Evan was dining at Silvermoon Estate, so she deliberately went there to run into him -and somehow, she had really caught his attention.

"What? Really?" Lila was overjoyed. 'Go! Make sure you seize the opportunity, understand?"

"Don't worry, Mom; I'll do my best to get close to Mr. Eyan, and work hard to become his mate-Luna of the Thornbane Pack."

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Winona knew exactly what her mother was hoping for. After getting Lila's permission, she immediately slipped away.

At the same time, in the surgical prep room, Samuel and Tessa had already changed into scrubs; both were finishing up their final sterilization routines when the door suddenly opened.

Tessa turned her head and saw Michael, the giant of the werewolf medical world, the founder of the Werewolf Medical Organization, and Samuel's mentor

Chapter 242 Landon Wants Front Row Seats

"Mr. Michael, what are you doing here?"

Seeing Michael, Samuel was completely surprised. In there a big experiment going on at the lab lately? How does he even find the time to come!

"I got a call from Mr. Thorne; I rushed over right away. You know I've been buried in the lab lately, so I had no idea what was going on with Mr. Walter; why didn't you tell me?" Michael said.

Samuel glanced at his mentor, then at Landon standing beside him, and

explained, "I didn't want to bother you; plus, I'm absolutely confident about this surgery, so I didn't think I needed to call

you over.

Michael turned to Tessa, "Tessa, you too; didn't I tell you that no matter what happens, you should always come find me? Your grandfather's surgery is such a big deal; how could you not tell me?"

"Mr. Michael, I didn't mean anything by it; I just thought you were too busy, so I didn't want to bother you, Tessa said, surprised but delighted; if Michael joined the surgery too, it would be foolproof.

"Get me a set of scrubs," Michael said without another word.

Samuel quickly brought a set over and personally helped him suit up; Michael began disinfecting his hands.

"Can I come in too?" Landon asked Tessa

At a time like this, he really wanted to stay by her side, even if he couldn't do anything, he just wanted to watch over her.

Bringing Michael here was the only thing he could do.

"Come on, Mr. Thorne; you think this is some kind of game? This is life and death! You think this is some kind of exhibit? Samuel said bluntly.

Landon didn't even look at Samuel; his eyes stayed fixed on Tessa.

Michael shot Samuel an annoyed look. "You talk too much; if Mr. Thome wants to watch, let him. What's it to you?"

When he was doing surgeries back at the Werewolf Medical Organization, he was never afraid of being watched. Tessa nodded too, she knew Landon just wanted to be there because he was worried about her.

Everything was ready; the four of them walked in a row toward the operating room. The automatic doors slid open; Michael and Samuel went in first.

Tessa paused for a second.

'Good luck, everything will be fine, Landon said. He wanted to hug her, but she was about to go surgery, and he couldn't.

"Yeah, I'm going in."

At this moment, any more words would have just been extra.

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As Tessa walked in, Landon felt his heart ache at the sight of her small, slender back; she was still so young. yet she carried so much on her own shoulders.

All he could do now was pray; he hoped Walter would make it through. He didn't even dare imagine what would happen to Tess if Walter didn't survive the surgery. When Tessa entered the operating room, everything was already in place. Michael didn't operate himself; he just stood by to guide them.

"Tessa, you assist Samuel," he said.

Tessa's hands had a unique advantage in this surgery.

Ever since awakening her white wolf bloodline, her hand dexterity and sensory perception were far beyond ordinary; even though Samuel's hand sensitivity and precision were already top-tier among werewolf doctors, he still couldn't match the enhanced abilities of Tessa's hands.

Tessa nodded.

The anesthesiologist had already put Walter under; now he just lay there peacefully, looking serene.

Samuel was ready.

"You got this!" he encouraged Tessa.

Tessa nodded again; with Samuel and Michael both here- the very best doctors in

the werewolf world- nothing could go wrong.

The surgery began; Tessa and Samuel worked together beautifully.

Their coordination was so seamless that it was almost breathtaking.

This was the first time Landon had seen Tessa perform a surgery.

Every movement she made was mesmerizing.

Tessa, completely focused on her work, was stunning; her beauty was almost otherworldly.

The surgery was going very smoothly; watching her like this, Michael wanted even more to take her back. to Yalvaria as his successor.

"You take over," Samuel said, handing Tessa the specially designed surgical forceps.

This was the final critical step; all they needed to do was remove the bullet

fragments, and the surgery would be a success.

There was no room for failure.

Chapter 243 Hands So Good They Glow

Tessa looked up. Are they rally letting me do it

"Only you can." Samuel said firmly. He had always known that after awakening her white wolf bloodline, Tessa's visual acuity and precision far surpassed his own, at a moment like this, when extreme finesse was needed, having her take over would only make everything twice as effective with half the effort.

"Tessa, you can do it. Michael encouraged her as well.

Through this experience, she would finally come to understand what it truly meant to be a doctor

They both believed in her so much; she couldn't possibly let them down.

"Okay."

Tessa took the surgical forceps, her eyes fixed on the silver bullet fragment embedded in her grandfather's

brain tissue.

This tiny piece of metal had caused Walter years of suffering. Now, she was determined to personally remove it.

Tessa's ice-blue eyes narrowed into thin slits the signature trait of her white wolf bloodline operating at

full force.

As she lifted the surgical forceps, her fingertips shimmered with a faint silver glow; she moved with precision, avoiding every critical area of the brain.

Twenty seconds!" Samuel exclaimed, staring at the monitor in shock; even he, a highly ranked medical werewolf, couldn't have achieved that speed.

When the silver bullet fragment was extracted, it still carried the lingering gleam of mithril-a material harmful to werewolves.

She had succeeded! Tessa exhaled sharply in relief

After removing the bullet fragment, the rest of the procedure was routine.

The surgesy ; Walter was transferred to the observation room.

Tessa and Samuel went to shower and change.

In the locker room, Tessa's hands trembled uncontrollably.

It wasn't because of fatigue; it was the aftereffect of burning too much White Wolf power and the extreme mental strain.



Staring at her trembling hands, Tessa bit down on her lip, only when the taste of blood spread in her mouth did the trembling ease a little. After showering and changing, she walked out to find Landon already waiting for her.

Landon immediately sensed something was wrong. He took her hand gently; the pine-scented pheromones of his Alpha nature wrapped around her, warm and soothing. "It's okay now, you did great."

Although Landon had no idea Tessa was a werewolf; he just assumed she was exhausted and stressed.

Tessa leaned lightly against

him and slowly closed her eyes.

"It's okay; you did amazing. Now go get some rest," Landon said, his heart aching for her. Watching her on the operating table, so breathtakingly focused, had been unforgettable, but as her man, he didn't want her to push herself so hard. Call him selfish if they wanted; he simply didn't want to see her worn out,

"I want to check on grandpa first, Tessa said. No matter how tired she was, she wanted to see Walter, she couldn't rest until she knew how he was doing. The surgery was over, but his recovery would depend on careful monitoring.

"Okay: I'll come with you to see Mr. Walter. Afterward, you go back and rest, I'll stay here and watch over him."

Tessa didn't refuse. She truly did need a break now; and besides, Walter wouldn't wake up for several more hours.

Walter had been moved to the observation room; normally, no visitors were allowed inside, but Tessa went

in alone.

"Grandpa, I've done everything I could; now it's up to you. You've always been a hero in my heart; I believe you can make it through. You won't let me down, will you?"

Walter was still under anesthesia, but Tessa believed he could hear her.

She couldn't stay in the observation room too long; after saying a few words, she stepped out.

As soon as Yardley saw her, he rushed over, concern written all over his face. "Tessie, how's your grandfather? Ever since they brought him out, we've asked so many doctors, but none of them know anything"

Yardley's attitude toward Tessa had changed dramatically.

Ever since he learned her backing was the Nightshade Pack's Alpha, he no longer dared to cross her.

Chapter 244 Dreams Sweet and Sour

"The surgery was a success, but as for the results, we'll have to wait until Grandpa wakes up to know for sure," Tessa said.

After all, he was older now; if he were still young, he probably would have recovered in just a few days through his natural healing ability. But now, he would need more time.

"As long as it was a success," Yardley murmured.

Lila gave Yardley a strange look; it was the first time she had ever seen him speak so gently to Tessa

"Alright; you're tired, go get some rest," Landon said, not wanting her to talk too much. One surgery had drained far too much of her energy.

Tessa didn't argue. With Landon escorting her, she was taken to a nearby VIP hospital room.

"Why were you being so nice to Tessa today? Did something happen that I don't know about?" Lila asked Yardley,

"From now on, you'd better treat Tessa better, our entire Sinclair family, and even the Frostmoon Pack will have to rely on her from now on." Yardley said. He had never expected it; he had always placed all his -bets on Winona, yet the real hidden powerhouse turned out to be Tessa.

Lila frowned. "I don't understand."

"You don't need to."

As the Alpha of the Nightshade Pack, Landon had always kept a low profile; aside from the top members of the Nightshade Pack and a few elite packs, almost no one even knew what he looked like.

Besides, Landon hadn't officially announced his relationship with Tessa either; clearly, he didn't want anyone else to know about it.

However, no matter what Landon considered Tessa to be, they no longer had any right to harm her.

Even if Tessa was nothing more than someone kept by the Montedra Alpha King, no one would dare provoke someone under the King's protection.

Landon brought Tessa into the hospital room; only after personally watching her lie down did he feel at

case.

"Get a good sleep, don't make me worry, okay? I'm going to keep watch over Mr. Walter; there won't be any problems."

"Mr. Thorne, thank you- really.

If it weren't for him being here, she wouldn't have been able to feel so at peace.

"You don't need to say that to me

Landon tucked her in, closed the door gently, and left.

Tessa fell asleep not long after, as soon as she did, she began to dream a long, long dream.

In the dream, she was about seven or eight years old; back then, Grandpa had shifted into his wolf form and carried her on his back, running freely through the forest.

The memory was so vivid that it was hard to tell whether it was a dream or a real memory.

And in the dream, she was smiling so sweetly.

Then, the dream changed, she dreamt about today's surgery, except this time the operation failed, and Grandpa died right there on the hospital bed.

"Grandpa-

Tessa jerked upright from the bed, her pupils contracting into vertical slits; her body was soaked in cold

sweat.

She looked around wildly before she realized it had just been a dream

Sitting on the hospital bed, she clutched her chest and gasped for breath; once she calmed down a little, she grabbed her phone to check the time.

She had only slept for about forty minutes.

Unable to fall back asleep, Tessa got up, dressed, and walked out. Landon had been standing guard outside the whole time; the moment she appeared, he saw her

He walked toward her, frowning in disapproval; she had barely slept, and now she was already up.

"Why didn't you sleep a little longer?" Landon pulled her down to sit in a nearby chair. Seeing the sweat on her body, he looked at her worriedly. "What's wrong? Did you have a nightmare?"

"Mr. Thorne, my grandpa's going to be okay, right?" As someone with deep medical knowledge, Tessa knew the surgery had been very successful; but as Walter's beloved granddaughter, she still couldn't help but ask such a foolish question.

Knowing she was only worried about Walter, Landon tightened his grip on her hand.

"Didn't Samuel already say so? The surgery was a complete success; you even participated in it yourself. didn't you?" She knew it all; she understood every step and yet, she was still afraid.

Tessa nodded. Yeah... I know.

She knew the cause and effect; she understood everything.

And yet, she couldn't help but worry; couldn't help but be scared.

Tessa leaned against his shoulder.

"I know I'm a mess; but I can't control it." She didn't like being this way either; but because she cared about Mr. Walter so much, she had become the worst version of herself.

Chapter 245 Grandpa Woke Up Just to See Tessa

"When you care too much you lose your calm; you've ready done more than enough," Landon said. As long as someone was human, with emotions and desire, there was no way to perfectly control themselves.

She had already done so well..

Just then, Samuel and Michael came over; seeing her like this, Samuel couldn't help but shake his head.

"Tessie, you really don't trust me, do you? Look, even Michael was here overseeing the surgery; everything went perfectly."

Tessa stood up.

"Mr. Michael, thank you so much for coming." Tessa said sincerely. She knew how busy he usually was.

Michael laughed.

"You, child; I wonder how long it'll take for you to finally call me 'Master. But no matter how long it takes, I'll wait," he said.

Michael was a titan in the werewolf medical world; he had founded the Werewolf International Medical Organization.

To this day, that organization gathered medical geniuses from all over the world.

But after meeting Tessa, his heart had been set on grooming her to inherit it someday.

Samuel rubbed his forehead helplessly. "Michael, enough, give her a little more time. She's just been through a lot: how can she be in the mood for that now?"

"Fine, I won't pressure you. I even learned your language for you; you figure it out," Michael said with a chuckle. His language skills were quite good now; although he still spoke with a slight foreign accent.

"I have to go; there's still a lot of work waiting for me back at the organization."

Before leaving, Michael held Tessa's hand and said again and again. "Tessie, you must come visit me in Yalvaria; even if you don't join the Werewolf Medical Organization yet, at least come take a look"

He was confident; once she stepped foot into the organization, she would be drawn in.

"Okay, I promise I'll visit the Werewolf Medical Organization," Tessa said.

Samuel personally escorted Michael to the airport: Landon had already arranged a private jet to take him back.

"Mr. Thorne, Mr. Walter is awake.

A werewolf soldier Landon had stationed to guard Walter came to report.

Hearing that Walter had woken up. Tessa immediately rushed over; as soon as she entered the room, she saw he was indeed awake.

Seeing Tessa, Walter lifted his hand, though he was conscious, he still couldn't speak.

Tessa hurried over and grabbed his hand.

"Grandpa, don't worry; the surgery was a success. home

Just rest well for a few more days, and then we can go

Samuel returned just then; hearing that Walter had awakened, he immediately came to check on him. After a thorough examination, Samuel looked very satisfied.

"He's recovering very well; don't worry. There's no problem. Grandpa, just rest a few more days and make sure to listen to the nurses, alright?"

Hearing him say that, Walter slowly nodded.

He was old; after such a major surgery, his strength wasn't what it used to be. But mentally, he was very

clear.

"Grandpa, close your eyes and get some rest, Tessa said tenderly.

Walter kept staring at Tessa; he knew she had carried a heavy burden these past few days. Now that he had woken up, she should finally be able to rest a little too.

"Grandpa, I'm fine, Tessa said, understanding his concern.

"Don't worry, Mr. Walter; I'm here to take care of her. She'll be alright, Landon said firmly, meeting Walter's gaze.

Hearing Landon say that, Walter visibly relaxed; somehow, he trusted Landon's words completely.

Walter soon drifted back to sleep.

Samuel patted Tessa's shoulder.

"Alright: Mr. Walter is awake now. You can finally relax, right? Samuel said.

Truthfully, he himself felt a weight lift seeing Walter wake up.

There was always risk in any surgery - especially one this dangerous - and Samuel had been worried

"Samuel, thank you," Tessa said

Samuel waved her off. "Tessa, if you thank me again, I'm going to get mad. It's no big deal; why would you and I need to be so formal?"

Tessa didn't answer, she just smiled.

"Alright; I'm exhausted. I'm going to sleep for a bit, Samuel said. He wasn't planning to leave yet; he would stay until Mr. Walter's condition stabilized.



Seeing how pale Tessa's face looked from exhaustion, Landon also urged her, "You should go back and get some real rest; Mr. Walter's awake now, and my men will watch over him. You don't need to worry."

Tessa shook her head. I'm fine.

"That's right, Ms. Sinclair; I'm here too," Walter's butler added. "Besides, if Mr. Walter wakes up and sees you so worn out he'll definitely be heartbroken."

Tessa though

for a moment, then nodded. "Alright; I'll rest for a bit, and come back after."

"Good."

Landon brought Tessa back to the Wisteria Apartments. Tessa took a shower and went straight to bed.

With the surgery a success and Walter stable, her mind finally settled; she fell into a deep, heavy sleep.

When she woke up, it was already past three o'clock in the morning.

Tessa got out of bed; the moment she opened her door, Landon, who had been in the next room, heard her and immediately got up, opening his door.

"What's wrong? It's so late; where are you going?"-Landon asked anxiously, afraid something might have gone wrong with Walter.

Chapter 246 Midnight Pizza

Seeing how nervous he was, Tessa felt a warm rush in her heart.

"It's nothing; I just haven't eaten properly all day. Now, I'm starving," she said.

Landon let out a breath of relief. "Oh, is that all? How about we go grab a late- night snack together?"

Tessa immediately nodded. "Sure! Give me a second; I'll go change." No matter how reckless she could be, she wasn't about to head out in her pajamas for a midnight snack.

Landon waited for her in the living room while she changed.

Without even realizing it, a smile crept onto his lips. Is happiness really this simple?

Just waiting here to go out for a late-night bite together and he actually felt this content.

It seemed that as long as he was with her, no matter what they did, he was easily satisfied.

Tessa put on a red hoodie and threw a black down jacket over it. The weather in Navoris was truly freezing. She left her hair loose; it made her look even smaller and more delicate.

Walking out with her, Landon was immediately struck by a sense of guilt.

He couldn't help but wonder if he was too old for Tessa,

"What's wrong?" she asked when they got into the elevator; he'd been staring at her the whole time.

"Nothing... I just think you look really good dressed like this today."

How was she supposed to respond to that?

"I think I look pretty good every day," she said without missing a beat.

Landon hadn't expected that kind of reply from her; he was momentarily stunned..

"I'm kidding," Tessa said, unable to hold back a laugh. How long had it been since I had felt so relaxed? It really was a wonderful feeling.

Landon took Tessa to a fancy pizza place. Neither of them had expected to run into Nathaniel and the others there.

As soon as she spotted Landon, Ysabel rushed over.

"Tessie, how's grandpa doing? I really want to go see him too." Her dad had been keeping a tight leash on her these past few days; if it weren't for Nathaniel, she wouldn't even have been able to come out tonight.

"He's doing great. What about you? Is your dad still keeping you locked up?"

At the mention of it, all Ysabel could do was sigh.

"Don't even bring it up; it gives me a headache just thinking about it. My dad's as stubborn as a mule; no one can change his mind."

company matters have been dumped on me. Tonight, you owe me a treat," Nathaniel said as soon as he saw Landon, full of complaints.

"Fine, my treat. If I don't drink you under the table tonight, I'm not Landon," Landon declared.

Nathaniel, well, he was just venting: getting drunk wasn't as fun as it sounded.

"Mr. Thorne, I was wrong! I'll call you whatever you want if you let me off the hook!" Nathaniel cried dramatically.

Cameron and Hudson burst out laughing at the sight of Nathaniel acting so spineless.

"Landon, Hudson and I are done eating. We're gonna head out; you guys enjoy yourselves. As for Nathaniel-feel free to bully him," Cameron said with a laugh.

Nathaniel grumbled in protest.

"Seriously? I take you out for a meal and this is how you treat me? Cameron, you're out of line," Nathaniel said, rolling up his sleeves like he was really about to start a fight.

Hudson didn't even acknowledge him; he just dragged Cameron away.

Nathaniel's raised fist only ended up swinging through empty air.

"Don't bully Nathaniel so much; can't you see how pitiful he is?" Ysabel said.

Hearing her defend him, Nathaniel couldn't help but glance at her. It was the first time in forever that Ysabel had ever taken his side.

Landon gave her a look as well.

"Nathaniel, you should take her home. Her dad's been keeping a tight watch on her; if you don't get her back soon, are you sure you'll be able to sneak her out next time?" Landon said, fully understanding his older brother's character.

Hearing that, whatever spark Ysabel had left immediately fizzled out.

She wilted completely.

"Tessie, I'll wait until Grandpa's doing better to visit him; I won't bother him tonight," Ysabel said

Tessa nodded.

"Alright, head on back."

Poor girl. She thought.

Ysabel left reluctantly with Nathaniel, glancing back with every step she took, looking utterly miserable.

Watching her, Tessa couldn't help but say, "Mr. Thorne, as Ysabel's uncle, can't you put in a good word for her?"

There was nothing wrong with her wanting to enter the entertainment industry; as long as she loved it, that should be enough.

Modern werewolf society was nothing like the ancient days where everything was about brute strength and bloody battles.

Nowadays, society was highly specialized; every industry needed skilled professionals.

Look at Camille-born a Red Wolf with a rare talent-and she had carved out a successful career in the entertainment world through hard work and talent.

With the Thorne family's status and power in the werewolf world, even if Ysabel entered the entertainment industry, no one would dare exploit or bully her.

She could absolutely chase her dreams and realize her worth in a field she loved.

Chapter 247 Busted Texting During Dinner

"Yeah; I'll talk to my brother in a few days." Landon had been so busy dealing with Walter's situation lately that he hadn't had time to worry about Ysabel.

But since Tessa had brought it up, he would definitely make time for it.

Landon took Tessa to a private booth; after ordering pizza, they sat down to wait.

During the wait, Tessa pulled out her phone and logged into the chat app.

As soon as she got online, Lina's message popped up..

Lina texted: "Phantom, you're finally online! What've you been up to? You've been missing for ages.

Phantom replied: "Some stuff at home; it's been busy lately. Why? What's up with the Lightwing Order?" Lina texted: "What's up? Do you need our help? If yes, let us know."

Tessa couldn't help but smile. Lina is still such a clown.

Phantom replied: "No need; my grandpa had surgery. Even if you came, you wouldn't be able to help

Lina replied: "Oh... alright then. I'll visit Mr. Walter at the hospital tomorrow; send me the address."

Phantom replied: "No need; he's still recovering. Right now, he needs to rest."

Lina replied: "Okay! I'll come by when Mr. Walter's doing better. I've always wanted to meet him; you have to let me know."

Phantom asked: "So, is there anything going on with the Lightwing Order?"

Lina replied: "Nope; under my leadership, the Lightwing Order's doing better than ever. Relax!"

Phantom replied: "Good. I'm logging off; you should get some sleep too."

She knew Lina was a total night owl, but seriously, it was almost dawn and she still wasn't asleep.

Lina replied: "Can't sleep. Broke up again. Guess I'm just not cut out for relationships."

Phantom replied: "Pardon?"

This girl had a breakup almost every month; Tessa really didn't even know what to say anymore.

Lina replied: "Sigh; it's not that I'm a heartbreaker. It's just that all the men I meet are trash."

Phantom replied: "That's enough; I'm about to eat."

Landon had been watching her the whole time; ever since they got there, she'd been glued to her chat with Lina.

Tessa exited the chat and put her phone down.

"Who was that?" he asked. Who could be more charming than me? Who could keep her so attached to her phone?

"Just a friend." Landon still didn't know she was Phantom; there was no way she could explain who Lina really was.

"Oh." Seeing she didn't want to talk about it, Landon didn't push.

The pizza was served; Tessa grabbed a slice right away and took a bite.

It really did taste amazing; way better than the typical fast-food pizza.

Seeing Landon still hadn't moved, Tessa picked up a slice and handed it to him. "Weren't you hungry too? Come on; cat!"

But Landon didn't take it; instead, he grabbed her hand, leaned in slowly, and took

a bite straight from the pizza she was holding.

The intimate move made Tessa's heart jolt; she froze on the spot.

Instinctively, she lifted her eyes to look at Landon; he was staring back at her, unmoving, those deep brown eyes full of anticipation, and an almost imperceptible tenderness and possessiveness.

A thought flashed through her mind. Is he asking me to feed him?

A faint blush rose to her cheeks.

But thinking about how he had personally taken care of her grandpa these past

few days, even going so far as to bring Michael in for support, a wave of hard-to- describe emotion welled up inside her.

After hesitating for a moment, she gave in. Her hand trembled slightly as she cautiously fed the pizza to him.

A satisfied smile tugged at Landon's lips.

He leaned into her hand, taking a gentle bite; in the process-whether by accident

or not-his lips brushed her fingers more than once.

The soft, warm touch made Tessa shiver; her heartbeat sped up uncontrollably.

By the time she feeding him, her face was as red as a ripe apple.

"I'm full," she said, her voice quivering slightly, still trapped in the lingering, intimate atmosphere

"Let's head back," Landon said, his voice low; a little reluctant to let the moment end

They left the pizza place and got into the car, only to spot Winona and Evan appearing at the entrance.

When she got a good look at the woman beside Evan and realized it really was Winona, Tessa let out a cold, mocking laugh. Wasn't Winona head-over-heels for Connor?

Now that Conner couldn't stand or hope to become the next Alpha of the Thunder Pack, she wasn't interested anymore.

But what is Evan doing with Winona? Tessa frowned tightly; a bad feeling creeping into her heart.



She hadn't forgotten-Evan had been the one orchestrating assassination attempts against Landon all along.

Him being with Winona. it could have been a coincidence, or it could have been something much more

sinister.

Chapter 248 Lines in the Sand

Landon saw it too-his eyes turned cold as ice.

Under normal circumstances, there was no reason for Evan and Winona to even cross paths.

Landon hadn't forgotten how Evan had once sent elite members of the Werewolf Mercenaries in a reckless attempt to capture Tessa and use her against him.

That close call still made his heart race. If Tessa hadn't been as powerful as she was, Evan would've succeeded long ago.

And now, Evan had allowed Winona to show up by his side. Was he targeting Landon-or was this about Tessa?

If it was about him, he didn't mind playing along. But if it was about Tessa...

A sharp pine-scented pheromone began to spill unconsciously from Landon, laced with a clear edge of killing intent.

Having faced off against Landon multiple times, Evan knew his pheromones well.

He picked up on that familiar, threatening scent immediately and locked eyes with Landon through the

car window.

Evan tightened his arm around Winona and flashed a mocking smile at Landon.

That's right-he'd brought Winona into his territory solely because of Tessa.

Over the past few weeks, he'd seen just how much Tessa meant to Landon. Hurting Tessa was as good as hurting Landon.

There was only one thing Evan wanted in this life-to crush Landon and drag him down into the dirt.

Winona, of course, had no idea about any of the tension beneath the surface. She only noticed Tessa glaring at her with a sour expression and assumed it was jealousy-jealousy over her climbing the social

ladder.

She couldn't help the smug grin that crept onto her face.

She hadn't even done anything yet-just standing next to Evan was enough to make Tessa jealous, wasn't it?

And if she actually ended up with Evan-became the Luna of the Thornbane Pack-wouldn't that drive Tessa mad with envy?

Tessa could read Winona's thoughts like a book. She had no interest in dealing with women like her-women who only knew how to cling to powerful male werewolves.

She pressed a button, rolling the window up and cutting off the view.

"Let's go," Tessa said calmly.

Who Winona attached herself to was none of her business. But she'd promised Grandpa she'd look out for

Landon tore his gaze away and started the car, heading toward the Wisteria Apartments.

No matter what, he swore to himself, I won't give Evan the chance to hurt Tessa. After the luxury car disappeared into the distance, Winona leaned into Evan. "Evan, it's getting late. Why don't we get some rest...?"

She made her move without hesitation. Evan had been keeping her by his side- there was no way he didn't have some feelings for her.

Evan checked the time. Yeah, it was late..

Winona, on her own, was admittedly attractive. But when compared to Tessa, she felt... lacking.

And the more he thought about how much Tessa meant to Landon, the stronger his desire grew-to take her for himself.

Everything that belonged to Landon-his status as the Montedra Alpha King, his woman-Evan wanted it all.

He spoke with a detached tone. "It's late. Your parents must be worried. I'll have the driver take you home."

"Evan, I don't want to go home. Where are you going? I'll go with you. My parents are really busy lately... They don't care what I do."

She'd worked so hard to get this close-there was no way she was giving it up

now.

"Evan, I like you. You can do whatever you want with me." She pressed her full chest against him suggestively, releasing a sweet, tempting pheromone.

Evan let out a laugh and gripped her chin tightly.

"I heard that both you and your sister-Tessa-used to fawn over the future heir of the Thunder Pack. So what now? He spends a few days in the hospital, and you've already changed your mind?"

## Chapter 249

Evan's grip was rough, enough to make Winona wince pain-but she didn't dare resist. Instead, she gazed at him with starry eyes.

"Evan, before I met you, I thought I liked guys like Connor. But after getting to know you, I realized it's strong and decisive men like you that I truly like. Connor's just a mama's boy. Even if he's the future heir of the Thunder Pack, he still just does whatever his mother says."

Hearing that, Evan couldn't help but laugh. Did this woman really think he was like Connor someone she could toy with so easily?

"Evan, why are you looking at me like that? Everything said is true. I really like you. I'd do anything for you. If you don't believe me, I'll swear it on the Moor Deity".

Evan tightened his grip, smirking. "You'd do anything for me?"

Winona nodded eagerly. "Absolutely!"

Evan ran his thumb slowly across her chin, voice suggestive. "That man hanging around your sister-you know who I mean. I don't like him."

"You mean Landie? Yeah, I'm not a fan either. But my sister likes him. I can't really break them up."

Just thinking about the handsome guy at Tessa's side made Winona's heart flutter a little.

But no matter what, he was Tessa's man-not hers. And compared to Evan, what did good looks even matter?

Evan was the Alpha of the Thornbane Pack. If she could just win him over, she- and the entire Sinclair family-could rise to power and prestige.

"I'm not asking you to break them up," Evan said lazily. I just don't like him. If you really like me, then show me you mean it."

With that, he signaled the driver to take Winona home

Winona didn't want to go, but from the look on Evan's face, she knew if she didn't leave now, he'd get

angry.

"Evan, don't forget to call me." She climbed into the car turning his words over and over in her mind.

Evan doesn't like Tessa's boyfriend... If I find a way to hurt him, maybe that'll prove I'm serious about Evan.

She was so deep in thought, she didn't even notice that the moment she left, Evan took out a wet wipe and carefully cleaned the hand that had touched her chin.

It was nearly dawn by the time Tessa decided not to return to the Wisteria Apartment, so Landon accompanied her to the hospital instead.

When they arrived, Walter was awake-but still wearing a ventilator, so speaking was difficult.

them space.

Landon stayed.

He took the towel from the nurse's hands and began wiping Walter down himself.

He was meticulous. Even the butler, Louis, was moved watching him. Louis, once Walter's beta, might've grown old, but his instincts were still sharp. Over the past few days, from the presence of renowned werewolf physician Michael personally overseeing Walter's treatment to the elite werewolf guards stationed outside the room, everything hinted that Landon's identity was anything but ordinary.

And then there was Nathaniel, beta of the Nightshade Pack-his respectful behavior toward Landon confirmed it: Landon was the alpha of the Nightshade Pack.

As Montedra's most powerful and revered Alpha King, Landon should have been enjoying the deference of others. Yet here he was, humbling himself, doing these menial tasks personally for Ms. Sinclair's sake.

He must truly care about her.

If Walter knew that the Ms. Sinclair he cherished had a boyfriend this strong and devoted, he would be overjoyed.

Walter might not know the full picture due to his surgery, but he could feel Landon's sincerity. Even his own biological son had never bathed him like this.

He knew it was all because of Landon's love for Tessa.

No matter who he is, Walter thought, with love like that... Tessie will be happy.

Chapter 250: Intentions and Illusions

"Mr. Walter, don't worry. Tessie got a few hours of sleep earlier."

Knowing that Tessa was always his biggest concern, Landon spoke gently as he wiped Walter's body, updating him with care on everything she'd done in the past few hours.

"Mr. Thorne, allow me," Louis offered the moment Landon moved to fetch water.

Landon didn't insist. He simply rolled his sleeves back down.

Louis carried the basin out of the room and turned to Tessa, who was waiting outside. "Ms. Sinclair, you can go in now. Mr. Thorne cleaning Mr. Walter. He's truly a good man. I think he must really care about you to be willing to do all this."

Tessa didn't know what to say. She slipped past him and entered the room.

She was met with a quietly harmonious scene-Landon and Walter getting along naturally, Landon's forehead was damp with a fine sheen of sweat from his efforts.

Tessa grabbed a few tissues and reached up to gently wipe the sweat from his brow.

It was the first time she had ever done something so intimate.

Landon was a head taller than her, so she had to rise onto her tiptoes to reach him.

She moved carefully, and Landon looked down at her with nothing but tenderness in his eyes.

Watching the easy, natural connection between the two even Walter's eyes crinkled with a smile.

It really was a beautiful moment. So beautiful, one could almost wish time would freeze right there.

"All done," Landon said, catching her hand and guiding her to sit down on the stool beside Walter's bed. "Don't worry about me. Just keep Mr. Walter company for a while."

Right then, his phone buzzed.

"I'll take this outside. Call me if you need anything," he told her before stepping out.

Tessa watched the door close behind him. That high-and-mighty Nightshade Pack Alpha felt so down-to-earth whenever he was by her side.

"Tessie..." Walter's voice called out to her.

She turned around immediately. "Grandpa? What is it? Do you need something?"

"Tessie, I really do think Landie is a good man. He's a bit older than you, sure, but as long as he treats you well, that's what matters. I just want you to be happy."

It was the first time Walter had spoken in over ten hours. His voice was hoarse.

Tessa nodded. "I know, Grandpa. Don't worry. I'll hold on tight to the happiness that's meant for me."

She was still young, but she knew very clearly who truly cared for her.

Around nine in the morning, Winona arrived at the hospital. Lila spotted her and pulled her aside.

"Why are you only showing up now? Your grandfather been awake for hours."

"So what if he's awake? I'm not a doctor. What's the point of me being here? He's never wanted to see me anyway. In his eyes, Tessa's the only real granddaughter" Winona muttered bitterly, full of resentment over Walter's favoritism.

"Lower your voice! Don't you care about the Sinclair family's inheritance?" Lila dragged her away from the hallway.

"Mom, I'm working hard to get Evan to like me. Once become his mate, I'll be the Luna of the Thornbane Pack, I couldn't care less about the Sinclair family's scraps-or the Frostmoon Pack's for that matter."

"Mr. Evan really likes you?" Lila's eyes lit up with excitement.

"Mhm. I'm going to make him fall for me. No matter what it takes," Winona said with conviction.

Once he was hooked, there'd be nothing he wouldn't give her.

"Winnie, keep at it. If you can tie yourself to the Thornbane Pack's alpha family, you'll be set for life." Lila's ambitions were crystal clear. The Thornbane Pack had once been the second most powerful force in Navoris, right behind the Nightshade Pack.

No one knew why the Thornbane Pack had suddenly relocated to Los Anville five years ago-but that didn't make them any less formidable.

"Don't worry, Mom. I won't let you down."



"Come on, let's go see your grandfather." Lila brought Winona into the hospital room.

The moment she spotted Tessa, Winona gave a snort.

So what if you've got men falling all over you? None of them can compare to Evan from the Thornbane Pack.

Just imagining her own dazzling future gave Winona a heady rush of satisfaction.

As she walked past, she deliberately rammed her shoulder into Tessa.

Tessa's brows drew together in a cold frown. "Are you blind?"