

Alpha-less 291

Chapter 291 No Time for Distractions

Tessa stayed late with the others, spending hours discussing plans for Avery Band's new album.

It wasn't until Landon called that she finally put aside her work.

"You're flying out tomorrow. We'll keep in touch over video."

Tessa stood up. Landon was waiting outside, so she didn't linger.

+8 Pearls

There was still so much to take care of in Navoris. She had to deal with it quickly before she could head to Falindale and handle everything left unresolved there.

As she stepped out of Apartment One, she saw a swarm of reporters from the werewolf entertainment press camped outside. Tessa pulled up the hood of her black down coat and walked straight toward Landon's car.

"Someone's coming out!" The moment the reporters spotted her, they rushed in.

"Miss, you just came out of Apartment One. What's your relationship with Avery Band?" One reporter stepped in front of her, blocking her way.

Tessa frowned, clearly displeased by the situation.

"Miss, please answer our questions!"

"No comment." Sure enough, she hated these vultures with their cameras and microphones. She'd rather fight someone than deal with reporters.

"Miss, are you dating one of the members of Avery Band? Who's your boyfriend?" After all these years, there had never been a female werewolf around the band- she was the only one. It was only natural for them to suspect something.

"Move." Tessa released a surge of high-ranking werewolf pressure.

Her aura exploded like an invisible storm, roaring toward the surrounding reporters.

The low-ranking wolves instinctively bowed their heads, parting obediently to clear a path for her.

Some of them even whimpered involuntarily, submitting to the sheer force of her power.

Tessa seized the moment and climbed into Landon's car.

As soon as she got in, Landon started the engine and pulled away, leaving the reporters chasing behind in vain.

She took off her hood and let out a deep breath.

"What's wrong? Are those reporters really that scary?" Landon teased.

She wasn't afraid of anything-how could a few reporters shake her?

"Yeah, kind of. That's why I've always stayed away from the entertainment industry. I don't like people prying into my personal life."

barely anyone knows you're the infamous Mr. Thorne."

"I just don't like unnecessary trouble."

"Funny. Neither do I."

A few days ago, heavy snow had blanketed the area. Temperatures in Navoris were now well below freezing.

Despite the icy roads, Landon drove steadily and smoothly.

Landon asked, "Did Mateo talk to Evan?"

"Yeah. Evan refused to terminate the contract." It was never going to be easy. If Avery Band had been just mediocre, ending the contract wouldn't have been a problem.

But now, Avery Band alone was sustaining Thornbane Pack's entire entertainment business. There was no way Evan would give that up.

"Don't worry about it just yet," Landon said calmly.

Tessa wasn't worried. She trusted Landon to handle it.

"By the way, isn't Sinclair Corp's shareholders' meeting coming up? How's your

prep going?" Beauty Luxe had been performing exceptionally well. Unless something unexpected happened, she was all but guaranteed to become Sinclair Corp's Executive President.

Chapter 292 No Accidents Allowed

"There won't be any surprises." Tessa wouldn't allow it. If she wanted something, she'd make it happen-no exceptions.

"Mr. Thorne, take me to the Sinclair Residence. My grandfather was discharged today. I need to check on him." Walter was being difficult again.

He had barely recovered and was already insisting on going home.

Samuel had no choice but to let him.

"Alright." Landon started the car and headed for the Sinclair estate.

Sitting in the passenger seat, Tessa breathed in the fresh pine scent of his pheromones. It relaxed her completely, and before she knew it, she had fallen asleep.

When she woke up, it was already eleven at night, and they had long since arrived at the Sinclair Residence.

"Why didn't you wake me up?" Tessa rubbed her eyes, still groggy.

She didn't understand it herself. Whenever she was around Landon, she fell asleep so easily. Her sleep was unusually restful with him nearby.

"You looked so peaceful-I couldn't bring myself to wake you." Landon watched her with soft eyes, and he couldn't help but reach out and ruffle her hair.

Tessa unbuckled her seatbelt. "I'm heading in, then."

"Okay."

She pushed open the door, then glanced back. He was still looking at her, his gaze warm and affectionate, and suddenly her face felt hot.

"There's a lot of snow on the road. Be careful heading back."

"I will. Don't stay up too late talking with your grandfather. Tell him I'll come visit in a few days."

"Got it."

Tessa quietly acknowledged the unspoken understanding between Landon and Walter.

She stepped out of the car but didn't go inside right away. Instead, she circled around to the driver's side, opened the door, and stood outside, looking at him. Landon frowned slightly. "What is it?"

It was freezing outside. She had only been standing there a few seconds, and her ears had already turned

red.

But they weren't red from the cold-they were red from shyness.

For some reason, she didn't want to leave Landon just yet. She didn't know why, but ever since she'd

Seeing her like that, Landon couldn't hold back any longer. He reached out, wrapped an arm around her waist, pulled her toward him, and kissed the lips he'd longed for day and night.

This time, Landon managed to restrain himself. He didn't kiss her so hard that her lips would swell-after all, she still had to go see Walter.

"If you weren't going to see your grandfather, I definitely wouldn't let you go that easily."

His voice was low and husky, rich with that dangerous kind of allure that made her heart race.

Tessa leaned in and kissed him back-just a small kiss, but it was her first time taking the initiative. "I promised Grandpa I'd see him tonight. Otherwise, I wouldn't want to leave you either."

As soon as she said it, she slipped from his arms and ran off, flustered.

Landon stood there stunned by her words. When it sank in, he felt like he could take off and fly.

He never imagined Tessa would kiss him first. That she'd actually say she didn't want to leave him!

To him, that was a confession. The first one.

Yes, Landon thought, that was definitely a confession.

Moments like this had only ever existed in his dreams.

And now, it was real.

Unable to contain his excitement, he opened the mind link to Flex. "Hey buddy, did you hear that? She confessed to me!"

"Of course I heard! If you hadn't blocked me, I would've come out to meet her! I

want to run with her through the snow, show her how strong I am, how much I like her! I want to meet her wolf too..."

Chapter 293 A Feeling Too Strong to Hide

"Don't worry, buddy. Sooner or later, it'll all come true," Landon said, soothing the overly excited Flex.

Even though Tessa had stopped suppressing her wolf, Flex still couldn't sense it. Every time he tried to catch the scent of Tessa's wolf, it was like lunging into a fog. There were only a few explanations. Either Tessa's wolf ranked higher than his own, making it undetectable to him, or she possessed some kind of ancient bloodline power that masked her wolf from others entirely...

Either way, Landon was happy.

The stronger Tessa was, the safer she would be.

He was sure that one day, he'd get to meet her wolf. After all, she had just confessed to him, hadn't she? Thinking back on that moment, Landon couldn't help himself-he pulled out his phone...

Tessa had only just stepped through the door when his call came in.

She answered and brought the phone to her ear.

Neither of them spoke at first. But she could tell the call had connected.

"Tessa," Landon said at last, "what do I do? It hasn't even been a full minute, and I already can't wait to see you again. Do you know how happy I am that you kissed me? That you opened up to me like that?"

He went on, "You don't have to say anything. I'm already so happy I can't control it. Not even winning a war or taking over a pack, not even landing a deal worth tens of billions-none of that has ever made me feel like this. You're different. You really are."

The feeling was overwhelming.

"Mr. Thorne-" Tessa hadn't expected such a small gesture from her to affect him this much.

"You should get going."

Her ears turned red. She knew she was strong, but when it came to love, she was still a blank slate. That's why, when she was with Landon, there were moments she didn't know what to do.

But she knew one thing-Landon was different.

She liked his scent, felt drawn to him without meaning to, wanted to stay close to him all the time.

Even Emma was always itching to come out and meet Landon's wolf.

That urge had only gotten stronger as her coming-of-age ceremony approached...

"Yeah. I know. Let's meet tomorrow-I don't think I can wait much longer," Landon said, his voice bubbling with excitement.

"Mr. Thorne, go home right now. If your place is too far, just go back to Wisteria Apartment. Once you're

comfortable.

And honestly, Landon had just been thinking about doing exactly that. He was surprised by how well she understood him.

"Okay. I'm heading back now."

"Drive safe." Tessa ended the call. It was already late-if they kept talking, he'd just get home even later.

As she hung up, she realized Walter was still sitting in the living room, waiting for her. He didn't approach until she ended the call.

"Who were you on the phone with just now? Was it Landie? If he came all the way here, why didn't you invite him in? It's not like we don't have enough rooms. In this weather, sending him back out is dangerous."

"Grandpa, why won't you behave? Weren't you supposed to stay in the hospital a few more days to recover?" Tessa didn't take the bait-instead, she gave him a stern look.

She hadn't forgotten the reason she came back tonight.

Chapter 294 A Quiet Night Turns Deadly

Walter pretended not to hear her and turned to the butler, changing the subject. "Louis, Landie's a good kid, don't you think?"

The butler nodded wordlessly.

It wasn't surprising that Walter didn't want to stay in the hospital for too long.

"Tessie, the shareholders' meeting is in a few days. Are you confident?" Walter hadn't slept all night, waiting up just for this.

As long as the matter wasn't settled, he couldn't rest easy.

Sinclair Corp wasn't just a family business he built from the ground up-it was the economic backbone of the Frostmoon Pack, a symbol of their territory.

In werewolf society, losing your territory was no different from losing your pride. He would never allow Sinclair Corp's legacy to be trampled by another pack.

Tessa knew that. Her wolf, Emma, was howling within her, vowing to protect what they had inherited.

"Grandpa, do you not believe in me? If you've already handed Sinclair Corp over to me, then step back. I won't let you down."

So this was why he'd left the hospital early?

"Mm." Walter didn't say anything more.

"Alright, it's really late now. Go to bed. If you don't, I'm not handling the company anymore."

"You-! I know you won't walk away from it." Even as he said it, Walter turned in and headed upstairs.

Tessa stayed with him until he was tucked in and had a blanket pulled over him. Only then did she quietly leave his room.

Louis followed her out.

"Ms. Sinclair, it's getting late. You should get some rest."

"I will. You've been working hard lately. You should rest too, Louis."

Tessa returned to her room.

She hadn't stayed in this room in years, but everything was spotless and exactly where she left it.

Walter must've told the staff to keep it clean. The rest of the Sinclair family probably wished she'd never

come back.

As soon as she stepped inside, her phone rang.

It was a video call from Landon.

apter 294 A Quiet Night Turns Deadly

"I miss you," he said before she could hang up.

She didn't know how to respond. They hadn't even been apart that long.

But hearing those words still made her heart race.

She gave him a sideways glance.

+8 Pearls

What was up with this man? He kept flirting with her lately. And now this? It hadn't even been two hours since they separated!

"Mr. Thorne, it's late. I'm going to sleep." With that, Tessa ended the call.

Back at his place, Landon let out a laugh from the couch.

How could Tessa be this adorable? She was clearly flustered.

All he'd said was "I miss you"! That was it!

And yet, lying in bed, Tessa spent a long moment trying to calm herself before patting her cheeks and muttering, What's wrong with me? He didn't even say anything that bold. Why is my heart

racing and my face so hot? She lay in bed, but all she could think about was Landon's unfairly handsome face.

Ever since Tessa returned to the Sinclair estate, Winona hadn't slept. Staring at her ruined right hand, all she could think about was revenge.

After seeing Tessa enter her room, Winona waited patiently. Once she was certain everyone had gone to sleep, she pulled out a dagger and silently made her way to Tessa's door.

She did fear Tessa.

But she refused to accept it.

Tessa had destroyed everything. There was no way she could just let it go.

No matter what, Tessa had to pay.

Standing at the door, Winona formed a pair of wolf ears and listened carefully.

When she heard the steady rhythm of Tessa's breathing, she judged that she was asleep and slipped side.

Her movements were silent, not making a sound.

She approached the bed and leaned down.

In her hand was a dagger coated in Wolfsbane.

She'd paid a steep price for it. It had been prepared just for Tessa.

smug smile tugged at Winona's lips. Finally, her moment had come.

Or so she thought..

Just as she was about to strike, Tessa's hand shot out and clamped around her

wrist. Her beautiful eyes snapped open, now cold and unyielding.

The stench of Wolfsbane filled her nose. Her pupils flashed with a dangerous silver gleam in the dark.

She squeezed Winona's fingers with steady, growing pressure. "Looking to die?"

Chapter 295 The Cost of Revenge

Winona struggled with all her might. "You're the one who deserves to die! Tessa, just die already! Only if you're dead will everything in the Sinclair family belong to me. Only if you're dead will people finally see me! I liked Evan first! Who gave you the right to steal him from me?!"

She couldn't accept it. She refused to accept it.

With one swift motion, Tessa disarmed her and snatched the dagger away. Then she kicked Winona off the bed.

Winona collapsed on the floor in a mess, sobbing uncontrollably.

She was so loud that Tessa started getting a headache. She grabbed a cleaning towel lying nearby and stuffed it into Winona's mouth.

"What are you screaming for? You sound like a dying pig. Winona, you've really grown bold, haven't you? But tell me-do you honestly think you're a match for me?"

Tessa casually twirled the Wolfsbane-coated dagger in her hand, then slapped it lightly against Winona's twisted face. "Why don't you ever learn your lesson? You already know you can't beat me, yet you keep coming back for more. So tell me, what should I do with you this time? Cripple your other hand? Or turn you in to the police?"

Winona shook her head frantically.

No, she couldn't let that happen.

One hand was already ruined-if she lost the other, her life would be completely over.

And going to the police? That was out of the question. With a criminal record, she'd never break into the werewolf elite again.

Tessa looked down at the trembling girl with cool indifference.

If it weren't for the fact that they were both Walter's granddaughters, she would've never let someone who tried to harm her multiple times off the hook.

But if she crippled Winona's other hand, Walter would be heartbroken.

And if this ended up at the police station, the Sinclair family's name would be dragged through the mud.

Walter might have lost faith in the rest of the family, but he still cared about them- and he definitely cared about the family's reputation.

In werewolf society, a family wasn't just a continuation of bloodlines. It was the foundation of a pack's strength.

The Sinclair family's standing within the Frostmoon Pack was already on shaky ground. If their name was further tainted, the other noble families in the Frostmoon Pack would seize the opportunity to take them down-and replace them as the alpha house.

That was something Walter absolutely couldn't accept.

+8 Pearls

Stay here and reflect on your life."

With that, Tessa yawned and went back to sleep.

The bathroom had no heater. The air inside was icy cold, and Winona shivered uncontrollably as she spent the entire night freezing on the floor.

Early the next morning, Lila went to wake Winona for breakfast, only to find her room empty. She immediately searched the house from top to bottom.

"What's going on? She was definitely home last night. How could she just disappear?" Yardley was running out of patience with Winona.

Now that he knew the man around Tessa was the alpha of the Nightshade Pack, Yardley had shifted all his attention to her.

If Alpha Mr. Thorne were willing to offer even the smallest bit of support to the Sinclair family, they could instantly reclaim their former glory.

"I don't know. She's been in a bad mood lately. You know she injured her hand because of Tessa..."

Just then, Tessa came downstairs with Walter. As soon as Lila saw her, she hurried over.

"Tessie! Have you seen Winona? I can't find her anywhere!"

"Oh, she's in my bathroom," Tessa replied without hesitation.

"What? What do you mean?" Walter was stunned. "Winnie? In your room?"

There was no love lost between the two girls. It wasn't like they'd ever share a bed.

"Yeah. Last night she tried to slash my face with this dagger. I caught her in the act. Didn't want to wake everyone, so I tied her up and left her in the bathroom." Tessa casually spun the dagger in her hand-the one still reeking of Wolfsbane.

Lila didn't waste a second. The moment she heard Winona was tied up in the bathroom, she rushed straight to Tessa's room.

Walter, meanwhile, stared at the blade in her hand and caught the bitter scent on

it.

"Why does that smell like Wolfsbane?" His expression changed instantly.

Chapter 296 The Price of Mercy

The atmosphere in the dining room was heavy. Neither Walter nor Yardley had any appetite. Only Tessa ate her breakfast as usual.

She even took the time to gently nudge Walter, "Grandpa, just for you, won't pursue what happened last night. But you should eat something. You're still not fully recovered-you can't skip meals."

Walter let out a long sigh. "Tessie, we didn't raise her right. You've had to suffer for it."

"Tessie, don't worry. I'll be sure to discipline her properly," Yardley added, his tone bordering on sycophantic.

Tessa ignored him and kept eating.

Just then, Lila came downstairs with a trembling Winona, clearly displeased as she looked at Tessa. "Tessie, Winnie's still your sister. It was bad enough that you ruined her hand-how could you treat her like this too?"

"Enough!" Yardley slammed the table, cutting Lila off. His voice thundered with anger. "If you hadn't spoiled her all this time, would she have turned out like this?"

"But Dad, this was clearly Tessa's fault-"

Before Winona could finish, Yardley slapped her hard across the face. "And you! Didn't I warn you not to hurt Tessa? Do you think I was just talking to the wind?!"

"Dad?" Winona clutched her cheek in shock, overwhelmed with humiliation.

Her father had always been on her side.

But now, he was hitting her-for Tessa?

"How could you hit Winnie?!" Lila pulled Winona into her arms protectively.

"Maybe you should look at what she did first!" Walter snapped, reaching into his pocket and tossing the dagger onto the floor in front of Lila. "Your darling daughter tried to slash Tessa's face with a dagger coated in Wolfsbane! If Tessa hadn't caught her in time, she'd be in the hospital fighting for her life!"

"What?" Lila gasped. She hadn't expected Winona to be that vicious.

She'd always assumed Winona's bullying was just petty sisterly squabbling. She never imagined her daughter would go so far as to use Wolfsbane-especially against her own sister.

"Winnie, you've really disappointed me." At that moment, Lila couldn't defend her daughter anymore.

"We're supposed to be a family. And look at us now-sisters trying to kill each other. If word gets out, I'll never be able to show my face again," Walter muttered in dismay.

"Alright, Grandpa, don't be upset. Like I said, because of you, I won't make a big deal out of it this time. But if there's a next time... I won't be so forgiving." Tessa cast Winona a cold glance, and Winona flinched immediately.

him

much

"Tessie really knows what's best for the family."

They were both his granddaughters, but the difference between them was night and day.

"This winter break, you'll go to the Frostmoon Pack's lower-tier training camp for discipline," Walter declared. "You walk around with your nose in the air, chasing power, hurting your own sister. It's time you learned the discipline and loyalty that low-rank wolves live by. Maybe then you'll understand the meaning of family."

"Mom!" Winona clung to Lila's arm, pleading for help.

She couldn't go train with those lowly omega wolves!

But Lila didn't dare say a word.

After what Winona had done, the only reason she wasn't being sent to jail was because Walter wanted to protect the Sinclair family's reputation.

If it weren't for that, Winona would already be behind bars.

"Tessie, finish your breakfast. Aren't you going to Beauty Luxe soon?"

Walter spoke as if Winona didn't even exist anymore.

"Okay." Tessa resumed eating, not wasting another second on a lunatic. She honestly thought there was something seriously wrong with Winona.

Winona stood frozen in place, face full of indignation and hands clenched tight. But no one cared about her anymore.

That's fine. Everything they'd put her through today-she'd pay it all back in full one day.

None of them will have a happy ending.

Chapter 297 Just the Beginning

As Tessa stepped out of the Sinclair Residence, she saw that Landon was already waiting outside. His sleek silver-gray car stood out even in the snowy weather- impossible to miss.

She walked over, opened the door, and had barely fastened her seatbelt then she caught him staring at her.

"What are you looking at? Is there something on my face?" Even if there was something there, did he really have to stare like that?

He was practically burning a hole in her face.

"Nothing. Just wondering how someone like you even exists-someone who can draw me in like this."

Where the hell did he learn to say stuff like that? It was honestly too much.

"Alright, let's go."

It was about time. She had to head to Beauty Luxe's branch office-these next few days were her last push.

Noticing the pink flush at the tips of her ears, Landon let out a quiet laugh.

The whole ride there, he was in a great mood. But once they arrived in front of the Beauty Luxe building, his mood dropped again. They'd only just started dating, and already they had to part ways.

"I'm heading in now." Seeing the reluctant look in his eyes, Tessa finally said something. The truth was, they were both way too busy to be hanging off each other every day.

"Tessie, are you really not even a little tempted to join me at Thorne Corp?" Landon had wanted to poach her from the very first moment they met.

That desire had only grown stronger since then. If Tessa joined Thorne Corp, he'd get to see her way more often.

"Not even a little."

What would she go to Thorne Corp for? She had plenty on her own plate. Sure, Sinclair Corp wasn't anywhere near Thorne Corp in size-for now. But that could change.

"Alright then." Landon sighed. Why do I keep asking questions just to get rejected?

"You just got a break too. Don't work yourself to death. And when you have time, remember to call me." She was still in high school, yet here she was handling all this complex stuff-it made even him feel bad for

"Got it. I'm heading up now." It really was time-she needed to go.

"Mm. Go ahead. I'll stay here and watch you go in."

"Mr. Thorne, don't be like that. You're making me feel guilty," Tessa said with a soft smile.

That small smile alone made him willing to walk through fire for her.

"Come here," Landon said, curling a finger at her.

"If anything comes up that you can't handle, just remember-I've got your back. I'm always here, twenty-four seven."

"Mr. Thorne, it's not like Beauty Luxe is some kind of bottomless hell. You're being dramatic. Okay, I really have to go."

There really wasn't any time left.

"Alright."

Tessa sat in the conference room, flipping through the latest sales reports from Beauty Luxe.

Overall, she was satisfied.

Just a month ago, Beauty Luxe was basically infamous. And now? They'd turned things around in less than thirty days. That was no small feat.

"Ms. Sinclair, is there anything else we can do to guarantee we win?" Harper asked. She was well aware of the bet between Tessa and Sinclair Corp.

She sincerely hoped Ms. Sinclair would continue leading them after this. That's why she wanted the numbers to look even better.

"You've already done an excellent job," Tessa said, nodding with approval.

Harper finally let out a breath of relief.

"There are three days left until Sinclair Corp's shareholders' meeting. In that time, Beauty Luxe needs to push one last round of sales."

Tessa laid out the final targets, then began presenting her new marketing strategy.

Just listening to her, Harper was already beyond excited.

Ms. Sinclair was incredible. This kind of plan-only she could've come up with something like it.

"I'm on break right now, so if anything comes up, feel free to call me."

With that, Tessa stood up..

"Ms. Sinclair, are you heading out already?"

"Yeah."

Samuel was flying back to Yalvaria later today. She still needed to see him off.

The flight wasn't for a while yet, though-just enough time for her to make a quick stop at Lightwing Order.

Chapter 298 Shadows Stir Again

At exactly noon, Landon's call came through right on time.

At that moment, Tessa was at the Lightwing Order's headquarters... playing video games.

98%1

+8 Pearls

No one would have expected that the legendary, unstoppable Phantom-the name that struck awe in elite circles-was now doing absolutely nothing except gaming at Lightwing Order's main base.

"Phantom, aren't you getting a little too distracted with this?" someone muttered.

She'd been ignoring client requests just to play.

"Not interested." Tessa wasn't someone who needed money. So whether she took a job or not completely depended on her mood.

And right now? These requests didn't excite her in the slightest-so why bother?

"You're impossible," her teammate sighed. "The clients keep asking for Phantom specifically. If you won't take the job, I'll have to turn them down."

"Every member of Lightwing Order is top-tier. If they're only here because of me, how am I supposed to care?" Tessa replied without looking up.

After all, she had personally recruited every member of this team. Their skills were just a notch below hers, if that.

"True. All of us have proven ourselves. But still... your name carries weight. When people hear 'Phantom,' they trust. They know the job will get done."

She didn't know how to respond to that. But it was true. Back before Lightwing Order was even formed, back when it was just her solo... she had been unstoppable.

"Final exams are over. You really not even considering a quick job for fun?"

"Not fun."

Tessa genuinely thought the current jobs were boring and not worth her time.

Just then, the silver ring on her hand lit up faintly.

Her wolf, Emma, growled uneasily from deep within her consciousness-sensing a distant and foreign threat.

Tessa frowned. It had been a long time since this ring had glowed.

She'd thought they'd forgotten about her.

But clearly, today... they reached out again.

"What is it?" Lina asked, noticing Tessa spacing out. It had been a long time since she'd seen her like this.

"Nothing."

At that same moment, inside a towering skyscraper in Yalvaria, a cold-faced man

sat in silence-his expression dark.

"Alpha, the signal was lost."

He slammed a fist into the desk. A crack split through the thick surface.

"Keep trying. Get in touch with her."

Did she really think she could get away?

In this world, once he set his sights on a target-there was no escape.

"Tell her: if she doesn't come back soon, Samuel dies."

His eyes blazed with manic light.

"Tess, you think you can run from me?" he whispered. "This time, once I bring you back... you're never leaving again."

At Navoris International Airport-

"Tessa, I'm heading out. Please take care of yourself, alright?"

Honestly, he didn't want to leave. But he had no choice. The calls from Yalvaria had been relentless.

"Remember-after your university entrance exam, come find me in Yalvaria. I swear, you're a medical genius. If you're willing to come, you'll become a legend in werewolf medical history."

Samuel said all this earnestly, worried she might not listen.

"Samuel-" She'd heard it a thousand times already.

"I promise. After the college entrance exams, I'll visit the werewolf medical organization. I'll give you a chance to convince me."

She really couldn't take his endless nagging anymore.

"Deal."

The boarding announcement for his flight echoed through the terminal.

Samuel still hesitated. He clearly didn't want to leave.

"Alright, just go already," Tessa urged.

But then, Samuel's face grew serious. "Tessa... has he contacted you?" He was still searching for her. And he wasn't the type to give up easily.

Chapter 299 The Hunter Still Hunts

The moment Tessa recalled the signal from Lightwing Order earlier, that man's cold, brooding face flashed through her mind.

"What is it? Did he actually reach out to you?" Samuel asked, visibly uncy at her reaction.

"It's fine. I can handle it." No matter what that man was trying to pull, she could deal with it.

Tessa had never been someone who ran from danger.

"Tessa, come to the werewolf medical organization with me. That's the only place he wouldn't dare touch. Everywhere else is dangerous."

"Samuel, I told you-I'm not afraid of him. Stop worrying about me," Tessa said calmly. "I'm not the same Tessa I used to be."

No one could bully her anymore.

Still, Samuel couldn't relax.

Tessa gave him a gentle push toward the gate.

"Alright, get going already. Otherwise, your plane's going to leave without you." And planes didn't wait.

"You... no matter what happens, remember-you need to take care of yourself. If something goes wrong, call me. I'll come back, even if it kills me."

"Please. Just go. I should be the one saving you, not the other way around," she shot back with a smirk.

Samuel glared at her.

"Tessa, you're seriously heartless. I'm here worried sick about you, and you say stuff like that? Do you even have a conscience?"

Unbelievable. They were all tearing their hair out worrying about her, and she didn't even seem to care.

In the end, Samuel still left reluctantly.

When Tessa turned around, she saw Landon waiting for her. He'd just parking the car and was walking up.

"He gone?"

Landon didn't hide the fact that he minded Samuel. After all, he and Tessa had gone through a lot together.

Anyone would be uneasy about that kind of bond.

"Yeah. He's gone."

"Alright, let's go." Landon took her hand and started walking.

"Nope. You're right. Actually, I have a problem with any guy around you who doesn't have good intentions."

He didn't bother hiding it.

After spending so much time with him, Tessa could tell-he was definitely jealous right now. She let out a soft laugh and squeezed his hand. "Samuel's just a friend. That's all."

The kind of friend who would give his life for hers-and vice versa.

"But you're not," she added.

Landon's face lit up at her words. "Then who am I to you?"

Tessa hesitated for a second, then looked into his hopeful eyes. Fighting through

her embarrassment, she murmured quickly and quietly, "Boyfriend."

Her voice was barely audible-but Landon, with his werewolf hearing, caught every syllable.

He couldn't help but laugh out loud, grinning from ear to ear as he guided her into the car, absolutely elated.

On the way back, Tessa kept staring out the window at the snow-covered streets, unconsciously twisting the silver ring on her finger.

The same silver ring that man had forced on her-to track her, to contact her whenever he wanted.

Back then, she hadn't been nearly as strong as she was now. To escape his twisted control and obsessive possessiveness, she'd faked her own death.

Pulling that off had taken intricate planning and a unique ability passed down through her werewolf bloodline-one that let her suppress all signs of life.

That ancient gift had fooled him. Fooled even his wolves.

For years since, she'd tried everything to remove or destroy the ring-but nothing worked.

Thankfully, the ring had remained silent all this time. She'd hoped he believed she really was dead.

But today, it had started glowing again.

That meant... he might have sensed her.

That obsessive man, she thought, of course he wouldn't believe I'm dead so easily.

He's still trying to find me...

Chapter 300 The Alpha Steps In

"We're here."

Landon's voice pulled Tessa out of her thoughts. She looked up and realized they'd already arrived at Wisteria Apartment.

"You alright? You seem distracted." Landon had noticed something was off. In his mind, Flex growled lowly, having caught a faint trace of unease on Tessa's scent.

"I'm fine," Tessa said as she unbuckled her seatbelt. "I'm heading up. You should get some rest too." She wasn't the same person she used to be. Even if he came looking for her now, she wouldn't be afraid. Landon reached for her hand. "If you're not in a hurry to go back... can I stay with you tonight?"

Now that Avery Band was abroad and Samuel had left, it was rare that she had time to spend with him.

And he could feel it-Tessa's heart was slowly opening to him. He had to make the most of every chance they had to be alone, to let their relationship deepen.

"I mean it. I just want to be with you a little longer. That's all."

"Do what you want," Tessa said casually.

She turned toward the elevator, but had barely taken a few steps when several tall male werewolves leapt out from the shadows and blocked her path.

Tessa frowned. Seriously? Again? I wasn't even planning on fighting anyone today.

"Move."

This was already the fifth wave that woman had sent after her.

She didn't have the patience to keep entertaining them.

"Ms. Sinclair, just cooperate. All we want is one hand. If you don't, it's not gonna stop there," the lead werewolf sneered, flashing sharp fangs.

Tessa chuckled. "And you think I'd just give it to you because you asked? You really didn't do your homework, did you?" She looked relaxed, but her presence hit like a blade.

The physics competition was coming up fast. Sharon clearly couldn't sit still anymore.

Each time she sent someone, their skill level had improved.

Too bad none of them were even close to being enough.

"Then don't blame us for what happens next."

"No more talking. She hasn't even awakened her wolf. You think we all need to step in? I'll handle this myself."

ipa steps in

48 Pearis

Madam Dawson had already sent four waves of Mistwolf Mercenaries before them-all of them had failed.

Now she'd dispatched some of the top-ranked ones.

"What a joke." The tattooed man lunged-

But before he could even lift his arm, Tessa's foot slammed into his guts

She moved with blinding speed, explosive strength surging through her werewolf bloodline, and launched him backward like a ragdoll.

Landon had just parked the car and walked up... only to be greeted by chaos.

Looks like his Tessie really was a magnet for trouble.

He'd only gone to park, and she was already throwing punches.

The air around the werewolves reeked of blood. The faint sheen of poison on their claws clearly marked them as Mistwolf mercs-killers who'd taken countless lives.

"Get out of my way before I take you out too!" the tattooed man roared. Having been sent flying by a girl, his pride was on fire.

"You've got guts, I'll give you that," Tessa said calmly.

But does he even know who he's talking to?

If he realized that the man standing in front of him was the alpha of the Nightshade Pack, would he still be this bold?

"Damn right I do!" the merc growled, ready to rip her apart. "Madam Dawson gave orders-we only need one of your hands!"

"Madam Dawson?" Landon's voice cut through the air like ice. His tone was

glacial. She wanted to take Tessa's hand?

"Sharon Dawson, right?"

"Yeah, that's right. You scared now? Then get out of the way!"

The tattooed man's temper was boiling over.

Tessa was speechless.

Mr. Thorne, scared? Yeah right. That would be the day.

"Tessie, step aside and wait for me. I won't take long." Landon shrugged off his coat and handed it to her.

A golden glint sparked in his eyes. And in an instant, his alpha aura exploded like

a storm, crashing over the mercenaries in a suffocating wave of power that made their instincts scream.

Their wolves trembled uncontrollably...