

Alpha-less 491

Chapter 491 18+ Only - Minors Keep Out

Landon swiftly undressed Ms. Tessa, and the moment her bare body stood before him, his pants instantly grew tight.

He lifted her into his arms and placed her in the tub, then stripped off his own clothes and stepped in after her. "Perfect timing-I needed a bath too. Let's do it together."

Ms. Tessa smiled as he got in, not the least bit shy.

He wanted her, and she wanted him just as much.

For mates destined by the moon, physical intimacy was its own form of release.

Steam fogged up the bathroom, condensation glistening on the tiles. The air was thick with the scent of body wash.

In the wide tub, warm water rippled gently. Ms. Tessa sat nude in Landon's lap, her skin glowing against the water. Droplets slid down from her collarbone, tracing graceful lines over her curves.

Landon's eyes burned with desire. His arousal pulsed underwater with undeniable presence.

He gripped her waist and pulled her closer, making her straddle him. The searing heat of skin on skin made them both catch their breath.

"You little vixen," Landon said in a low, husky voice, a teasing smirk tugging at his lips. "Trying to tempt me, huh?"

His hands pressed firmly into her waist, firm enough to make her shiver.

Ms. Tessa tilted her head back, locking eyes with him. A provocative gleam sparked in her gaze as her tongue flicked over her lower lip. "Afraid you can't handle it?"

Her voice dropped a pitch, laced with pure provocation. She shifted her hips beneath the water, brushing deliberately against the hardness beneath him.

Landon let out a growl and crashed his lips to hers, his tongue plunging deep to steal her breath away.

Ms. Tessa wrapped her arms around his neck, nails digging into his skin, responding with equal hunger.

The sound of water sloshed around them, mingling with sharp breaths. His lips traced down her jaw to her earlobe, nipping gently, then trailing heat across her neck. He sucked a mark into her skin, leaving it flushed and hot.

A moan escaped her lips, and her body pressed tighter against him. Her sensitive peaks brushed against his chest, sending jolts of pleasure through her.

"Can't wait, can you?" he murmured against her ear, voice low and thick with need.

His fingers slid between her thighs underwater, stroking slowly but with unmistakable intent.

Ms. Tessa trembled, letting out a soft gasp. "Stop talking..."

Her words came in pieces, soaked in urgency. She moved her hips, chasing the heat of his touch.

Landon's breath hitched, then he chuckled. "Little troublemaker. I'm not letting you off easy tonight."

He stood briefly to grab a bottle of massage oil from the bathroom shelf. Popping the cap, the lavender scent quickly filled the air.

Pouring some into his palm, he warmed it before rubbing it into her shoulders. The slick texture made her skin gleam like polished silk.

His hands roamed down her back, from gentle pressure to firmer kneading, until they slid over her hips. He gave her rear a sharp smack, splashing water and drawing a surprised gasp.

"You dare spank me?" she shot him a glare, cheeks flushed.

"That was me being gentle," he murmured, eyes dark with desire. His hands continued massaging her backside, the oil making her skin even more sensitive.

He turned her around and bent her over the edge of the tub. The cool porcelain against her front only heightened the heat of his body behind her.

Her hips rose instinctively to meet him, trembling in anticipation.

Landon growled low in his throat, his arousal pressing firmly against her entrance. Slowly, steadily... he pushed in-

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The overwhelming sensation of being filled drew a soft moan from Ms. Tessa's lips.

Landon's rhythm started slow. With every deep movement, she could feel his searing warmth and steady strength.

Water splashed between them with each motion, the sounds of water and her soft cries echoing through the bathroom, weaving together in a hazy, intimate melody.

"Feel good?" he murmured in her ear, giving her backside a firm smack. The sudden impact pulled a louder gasp from her.

Ms. Tessa bit her lower lip, eyes glimmering with tears. Her voice came out broken. "It's... it's too deep..."

Her reaction only made Landon move more boldly. His pace quickened, each motion striking deep, sending intense tremors through her body.

He reached for the showerhead, switching it to pulse mode. The warm stream struck a sensitive she gasped soundlessly, body instantly tensing.

spot,

and

"Lan... no, it's too much..." Her voice trembled with a mix of pleasure and distress. Her legs grew weak in the water, barely holding her up.

Landon let out a low laugh and pulled her into his arms, continuing his movements with growing wildness.

The clash of water and motion alternated rhythmically. Ms. Tessa's breathy cries came in fragments, her body shuddering under the layered sensations.

"Relax. Let me handle it," Landon whispered, his voice low and magnetic.

He adjusted the showerhead to a gentler setting, letting the stream wash over her chest, grazing her sensitive red tips.

Ms. Tessa clung to the edge of the tub, her knuckles pale. She called his name in a trembling, beautiful voice.

He picked up a soft towel, folded it, and gently covered her eyes, tying it behind her head. The sudden darkness heightened her senses, turning every touch into something sharper and deeper.

"Doesn't this make it even more exciting?" Landon asked with a low chuckle, his fingers tracing circles on her chest. Her slick skin, now deprived of sight, became even more reactive to his touch.

Ms. Tessa's breathing grew heavier. "You're... so bad..." she whispered, shy yet unable to hide the need in her voice.

Landon didn't stop. He picked up a bath sponge, squeezed some body wash onto it, and gently rubbed it over her back. The foam spread smoothly over her skin, leaving a fine, tingling sensation.

The sponge wandered along her waist and hips, brushing over delicate areas now and then, drawing soft, involuntary sounds from her.

He slowed down deliberately, circling the sponge along the inside of her thigh.

The mixture of bubbles and oil was nearly too much for her to bear.

"Still hanging in there?" Landon teased softly beside her ear.

Tossing the sponge aside, he let his hand glide through the lather to the most sensitive part of her.
His

precise and relentless. fingers pressed in lightly, syncing with the shower's rhythm

Ms. Tessa's body arched suddenly, and in the darkness, her cries became unrestrained. The sound of water blended with Landon's breathing as she cried out, reaching her peak.

The way her body clenched made Landon tense all over. He held himself back, waiting for the wave to pass.

She'd been exhausted these past few days, her mind running in circles. He wanted to help her let go to give her a way to unwind completely, to feel pure, unfiltered pleasure.

No need to think. Just follow him, and rise to the very edge of bliss.

Once the rhythm of her pulses began to ease, Landon reached for a slender bath massager from the shelf. Its surface was smooth and cool to the touch.

He dipped it in massage oil and slowly trailed it across her abdomen. The cold tip

made her jolt with a sharp gasp. "What... what are you doing...?"

Her voice was tight with nerves - but laced with unmistakable curiosity.

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Landon chuckled low. "Don't be scared. Try this."

He slid the vibrator to her most sensitive spot, pressing down gently, rotating slowly. The slick surface rubbed against her skin, bringing a whole new wave of stimulation.

Ms. Tessa let out a sharp cry. Her body had just climaxed and was still unbearably sensitive.

As Landon continued, she trembled in the dark, gripping the edge of the bathtub so tightly her nails nearly dug into the tiles.

"Landon... it's... it's too much..." she whimpered, her voice broken and thick with tears.

With his other hand, Landon adjusted the shower head. The pulsing stream hit her chest in sync with the vibrator's rhythm, pushing her up to another peak-and then another.

He turned her over, unwrapped the towel covering her eyes, and let her lean back against the tub wall.

Her eyes shimmered with dazed satisfaction, and when they met his, there was both shyness and surrender in them.

Landon leaned down and kissed her, his tongue invading her mouth with wild hunger. His hands gripped her hips, lifting her up so her legs could wrap around his waist.

His desire pressed against her entrance-and then drove in hard, pulling a loud gasp from her throat.

Water splashed wildly as they moved. Landon's pace was fierce and powerful, each thrust making Tessa shudder all over.

She clung to his shoulders, nails raking down his back, cries echoing in the steamy bathroom, raw with need and pleasure.

His growl came hot against her ear. "Tessa... you're so tight..." His voice was hoarse, thick with lust.

He grabbed the shower head again, switched it back to pulse mode, and aimed the stream at where their bodies met. The intense pressure made her jolt violently, gasping out, "Ting... it's too much..." Her voice cracked, her body spasming uncontrollably under the dual assault.

But Landon didn't stop. He held her tight, forcing her closer, his rhythm growing wilder.

He picked up the vibrator again, gliding it over her chest. The cool touch combined with the pounding water created a third wave of sensation, pushing her higher and higher.

Tessa's cries rose in pitch, mingling with the splashing water and Landon's ragged breathing. The atmosphere in the bathroom was nearly unbearable in its intensity.

Her body arched suddenly, his name spilling from her lips as another climax ripped through her.

Landon gave in at last, roaring as he released deep inside her.

Their foreheads rested against each other as they tried to catch their breath.

Only the sound of running water and their ragged breathing filled the room, thick with heat and the heady scent of intimacy.

Landon set the vibrator and shower head aside and turned off the water. He cradled Tessa in his arms, lowering her gently back into the tub to rest against his chest.

Her cheeks were flushed, eyes dazed with satisfaction. She lay lazily in his arms, soaking in his warmth and heartbeat. Landon pressed a kiss to her forehead and asked softly, "You okay?"

Tessa gave a sleepy hum, voice tinged with mock annoyance. "I'm exhausted... all your fault."

Landon chuckled. He only ever got to see this side of her in moments like this. He ran his fingers through her damp hair. "My fault? Pretty sure you started it."

She shot him a glare, but her lips curled up despite herself. She nestled deeper into his arms, unwilling to

move.

He picked up a towel and began gently drying her off, every touch careful and tender.

As the steam faded, the bathroom settled into stillness. The two of them stayed there in silence, wrapped in each other, speaking nothing yet saying everything with their touch and their gaze.

In that moment, time seemed to stop-leaving nothing but the intimacy and the peace between them.

Chapter 494 Suspicion on the Road

The next morning, after getting washed up, Ms. Tessa headed to the dining room. The maid had already come by and prepared breakfast.

Landon had also gotten up early and was watching the news on the sofa.

The moment he saw her, he got up and wrapped an arm around her waist. "Tired from last night? Eat first- I'll drive you to TS Entertainment afterward." He knew her work had been focused there recently.

Ms. Tessa shot him a glare.

As if it wasn't his fault she was tired. Tonight, she definitely couldn't let him go wild again-though she had to admit, it did feel pretty good...

"Why are you blushing?" Landon teased. "Thinking about last night?"

"No!" Tessa's cheeks turned red as she quickly sat down at the table. "Let's eat!"

Without looking at his smug expression, she bowed her head-and began eating.

Landon chuckled and sat beside her, dropping the teasing and joining her for breakfast.

After the meal, he personally drove her to TS Entertainment.

"Rehearsals are tough, but don't push yourself too hard, alright?"

"Relax, I know my limits. You're busier than I am-you need to rest, too."

"Don't worry. See you tonight."

"Okay."

While Ms. Tessa threw herself into concert rehearsals, Ysabel was also making remarkable progress.

Another piece of good news came: university admission results had been released, and Ysabel had successfully been accepted into the music program at Navoris University.

Meanwhile, Ms. Tessa's exceptional grades drew the attention of the most prestigious schools in Murica. Both Navoris University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology wanted her. The presidents of both institutions personally visited to extend their offers, even dangling generous incentives-freedom to choose any major, full tuition waivers, and even a house.

Ms. Tessa told them she would think about it seriously, and only then did the two presidents reluctantly

leave.

She wasn't playing hard to get-she genuinely hadn't decided yet. There were other things she had to consider...

When news spread that two top universities were competing for her, everyone was together to celebrate.

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"Tessa, why don't we take a break from rehearsals today and have a proper celebration for you and Ysabel?" suggested the members of the Avery band.

"Let's wait until the concert is over. I still haven't decided which university I'm going to."

She glanced at Avery-she knew he was pressed for time and didn't want to waste precious rehearsal Hours on a celebration.

"Alright! We'll throw a proper celebration after the concert!"

With that, everyone threw themselves back into the intense rehearsal session.

After it ended in the afternoon, Ms. Tessa changed clothes and was about to find Landon-only to see Avery getting into a heavily modified off-road vehicle.

The people in that car had an intimidating presence. They clearly weren't ordinary.

Just then, Stephen came out and saw Ms. Tessa still standing there. He paused and lowered his window.

"Tessa, heading somewhere? I can give you a ride!"

"Get out."

"Huh? What do you mean?" Stephen looked confused.

"I said get out. I'm borrowing your car."

When he still didn't react, she pulled him out herself, climbed into the driver's seat, and took off.

Something about Avery didn't sit right with her-maybe it had to do with those people...

Stephen was left standing there, completely bewildered.

What just happened?

"Tessa!"

He called out, but the car was already far down the road. Nothing he said would matter now. "What the hell just happened?"

Ms. Tessa tailed them for a while, but the people in the other vehicle must have noticed and started trying to shake her.

She was a skilled driver when it came to tracking-but Stephen's car was way too conspicuous.

Not at all suited for following someone...

Chapter 495 No One Scares Me

"Sir, someone's tailing us! Want us to take them out?"

At the alert, Avery turned around-only to see Stephen's car behind them.

He frowned.

Did Stephen find something out?

"That's my friend. Don't you dare lay a hand on him," Avery said coldly. Walter had called him in today for a meeting between mercenary groups, and he had agreed.

Since he'd agreed, he knew it was time to slowly return to that world.

But no matter what, he wouldn't let anyone harm a member of the Avery band.

"Sir!"

"What? Are you not hearing me?" Avery's voice was frosty, his-aura sharp.

The men in the vehicle fell silent immediately.

"Just lose him. That's all."

He glanced back one more time.

Stephen, huh?

His driving had improved.

The mercenary driving the vehicle had excellent skills and knew the terrain well.

Still, it was surprisingly hard to shake the car behind them.

"Who's that back there? They seem to have anti-tracking skills."

Avery's frown deepened.

Seriously? Stephen?

That didn't sound right.

There was only one explanation-Stephen wasn't the one driving.

Then who was it?

All the band members had clean backgrounds. It wasn't possible for any of them to possess those kinds of skills.

Could it be... Ms. Tessa?

Eventually, reinforcements arrived and helped them shake her off.

Ms. Tessa pulled over, only for a few men to block her car.

"Little girl, do you even know where you are? You've got guts coming here." One of them rolled up his sleeve to reveal a tattoo of a gray wolf on his forearm- clearly trying to scare her off with the insignia.

"I don't know where I am, but if I wanted to come, then I came. What are you gonna do about it?" she shot back without flinching.

"Feisty one, huh? Listen up, this is Gray Wolf Mercenary territory. If you know what's good for you, get lost. They'd been instructed not to harm her, so the warning was all bark and no bite.

"Gray Wolf Mercenaries?"

So Avery was connected to them?

"Scared now? Better leave while you still can."

Ms. Tessa snorted. "Scared? Don't make me laugh." There was nothing in this world that could scare her.

"You really don't know when to quit, huh?"

She casually pulled a piece of gum from her pocket, unwrapped it, and popped it in her mouth.

"What's Avery's connection to you guys?"

They'd taken Avery with them-there had to be some kind of tie. Otherwise, he wouldn't have gone with them so easily.

At the mention of Avery's name, the men exchanged uneasy glances.

Then one of them said, "No idea what you're talking about. Who's Avery?"

"Looks like you won't talk unless I give you a reason to." Ms. Tessa blew a bubble and walked straight toward them.

"Hey, I'm warning you! Don't come any closer or we won't be so nice!"

"By all means-don't hold back."

With a swift spinning kick, she took down one of the burly mercenaries.

"Get her!" someone shouted.

No way they'd let themselves be beaten down by some girl-how humiliating would that be?

But in just a few moves, Ms. Tessa had them all stacked like dominos.

She dusted off her hands and stood in front of them.

"Talk. If you tell me the truth, I won't make this harder than it needs to be."

Her patience had already run out.

Chapter 496 The Truth About Avery

Because of direct orders from above, the Gray Wolf mercenaries didn't use their enhanced wolf abilities when dealing with Ms. Tessa, which meant the fight had been pure hand-to-hand combat.

But even with basic moves exchanged, they could tell immediately-they were no match for her.

Still...

"We really don't know what you're talking about! Avery? I swear, I don't know anyone by that name!"

Ms. Tessa frowned. "You sure about that?" It was the last chance she was giving. "I swear, I don't know!"

She stepped forward and seized the man's wrist. With a quick twist, pain shot through him, and he bared his teeth in a grimace.

Cold sweat broke out across his forehead.

"Please, have mercy!"

"We really don't know Avery. We're just grunts," another one blurted out. They were outer-circle mercenaries-too low-ranking to be trusted with any real information. All they knew was that their orders were to block the girl.

Who would've thought the sweet-looking girl was this terrifying?

Seeing they genuinely had no clue, Ms. Tessa released his wrist.

"For your sake, I hope you told me the truth. If I find out you lied... I won't let it slide."

She looked like a perfectly pretty young woman, but her words sent a chill down their spines.

Without sparing another glance at the group crumpled on the ground, she turned and got into the car.

Just as she started it up, her phone rang. Stephen.

"Tessa, are you alright? Where are you now?" he asked, clearly anxious.

"I'm fine. I'm keeping your car for now-I'll return it tomorrow," she replied, shifting into drive.

Something was definitely off.

What exactly was Avery's connection to the Gray Wolf Mercenaries?

Now that she finally had a lead, there was no way she was letting it go.

"The car doesn't matter. Keep it if you need it," Stephen said. He just wanted to be sure she was okay.

"Okay. I'm hanging up now."

Before he could say anything more, she ended the call and immediately dialed Avery.

As expected, his phone was off.

She tried again and again—but every call went straight to voicemail.

Without wasting another second, she drove straight to the headquarters of Wings of Light, Shen Die hadn't seen her in a while and was thrilled by her sudden visit.

"Wow, what a surprise! Missing me already?" Shen Die teased, grinning like an idiot.

"Cut it out. I'm here to check something."

"Aww. And here I thought you finally remembered poor little me. I've been keeping

an eye on Wings of Light for you and you couldn't even drop by once!"

"I'm here now, aren't I? Consider this me checking in."

Wings of Light was doing perfectly fine—she had no reason to visit unless something serious came up.

"Oh, so I'm just an afterthought now? You're breaking my heart," Shen Die said dramatically.

"Alright, quit whining. Be good and quiet down."

With that, Ms. Tessa sat down at the computer, logged in with her private account and password, and started digging into Avery's background.

Before this, she'd never thought to look into him.

Everyone had their secrets, and she'd always respected that. She never wanted to pry.

But this situation was different. It wasn't something she could ignore.

And sure enough, once she started digging, the truth came out. Avery-was the only son of the Gray Wolf Mercenary Corps' leader. And not just that-he was the heir.

The Gray Wolf Mercenary Corps ranked among the top three werewolf forces in the global underground. Within the dark world's power map, they were/a feared and ruthless symbol, known for their brutal tactics, elite professionalism, and ability to vanish without a trace.

They only accepted the most high-risk and top-tier missions-like infiltrating heavily guarded deep-sea bases to steal military secrets, escorting nuclear materials through armed warzones, or even wiping out bio- labs flagged by Interpol as top global threats, with mortality rates over 80%.

Through their bloody precision and flawless execution, they had carved out an unshakable po world of mercenaries-respected by allies, feared by enemies.

Chapter 497 No More Secrets

So Avery-the blazing star of the entertainment world was actually the heir to the Gray Wolf Mercenary Corps? This world really was full of surprises.

But when Ms. Tessa finished reading through the files, she wasn't even shocked.

She had always sensed there was something unusual about Avery. Now, it was just confirmation.

"You okay? You've got a look on your face," Lina asked, concern in her voice.

"I'm fine."

Ms. Tessa shut the computer, got up from the chair, and was about to leave.

Seeing that, Lina called out quickly, "Tessa, you're leaving already? You didn't even spend two minutes with me!" After all this time, she shows up just to run a search and then leaves? Cold-hearted!

Ms. Tessa glanced back at her.

"Well, now you've seen me, I've got things to do today, so I'm not sticking around for lunch." And with that, she walked off-cool and collected.

Leaving Lina behind in a daze.

She really was the definition of "comes and goes like the wind."

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Meanwhile, Landon had also gotten hold of Avery's background. As soon as he confirmed the intel, he rushed back to Wisteria Apartment to tell Ms. Tessa.

They arrived almost at the same time. Since the housekeeper was out, Landon brought dinner back with him.

During the meal, Ms. Tessa seemed distracted.

"What's wrong? Did something happen at TS Entertainment?"

"No, it's Avery. He's actually the heir to the Gray Wolf Mercenary Corps!" She didn't plan on hiding this from Landon.

"So you already found out." He gave a small smile. This girl could dig up anything-she barely even needed him.

"What do you mean? You found out too?"

"I knew it was bugging you, so I had Nathaniel look into it. You're not mad, are you?"

Ms. Tessa shook her head.

Of course she wasn't mad-he did it for her.

"Of course not."

"But even knowing he's the heir to the Gray Wolf Mercenary Corps... I still don't understand why he left the band."

Don't dwell on it too much. If he doesn't want to come back, no one can force him. But we'll be here if he does. Right now, what mattered was what Avery wanted.

Yeah, I know."

With Landon around, there really wasn't much to worry about.

"Once all this settles down, university's going to start. Have you decided where you're going?"

If she was heading to Yalvaria, he'd have to start preparing to deal with his responsibilities back home. No way was he letting her go alone.

Especially with Nathan still over there.

He didn't know exactly what history she had with Nathan, but that didn't matter.

He just couldn't let her go off without him.

"Navoris... I'm still deciding which university."

She wanted to stay in the country.

To be honest, hearing that made Landon deeply touched.

"Is it because of me? Ms. Tessa, you don't need to change your plans for my

sake. I want you to do what's right for you."

University wasn't something to compromise on.

If she did end up going to Yalvaria, then he'd go with her. It was only four years-

he could manage that.

"School's the same anywhere."

She was a fast learner. Geography wouldn't make a difference.

Though it did mean turning down Michael's offer.

"It's not just because of you, but yes, you're part of it. I don't believe I have to go abroad to continue my studies, you know?"

"Fair enough."

Even being part of the reason was enough for him. It meant she was including him in her future.

The next day, when it was just her and Avery at TS Entertainment, Ms. Tessa decided it was time to talk.

"I called you yesterday. You never answered. Where were you?" she asked, casual as ever.

"Just had to handle something personal."

Avery had no idea she already knew everything.

"Avery, let's be honest. I know who you are."

He froze.

He had no idea what to say.

"Ms. Tessa... I never meant to hide anything from you. It's just... my identity has always been kept secret"

His father had gone to great lengths to protect him. That's why no one knew.

Chapter 498 The Weight of the Wolf

"I know."

Some things were never truly his choice to begin with.

"Do you really want to lead the Gray Wolf Mercenary Corps?" That was what mattered most to her his will, his choice.

And maybe she was the only one who ever cared about what he actually wanted.

Everyone else just expected him to obey.

"It's my responsibility," Avery said quietly. "Since I'm the heir to the Gray Wolf Corps, I can't turn my back

on it."

"You might not know this, but every time the corps takes on a mission, the commander has to activate the Wolf Battle Formation. That formation is our core technique—it links everyone's wolf power together. On the Siberian tundra, it helped us resist the cold. When we were seizing crystal mines, it let ten men fight like a hundred. It's the only reason we're able to take on those high-risk jobs."

His fingers tapped lightly on the body of his guitar.

"My father's getting old. His control over the formation is slipping. Just last month, the core energy destabilized during a mission. Three squads lost their wolf forms early. They nearly froze to death out there."

He took a deep breath, his voice low.

"The Council of Elders has been pressuring me every day to take over. If I don't step up soon, and the formation fails again during a mission, the entire corps could be wiped out. My father's been pushing himself for my sake, but his body can't take it anymore. Last time he used the formation, he coughed up blood. If I keep avoiding this... he might not survive the next one."

His voice cracked slightly. He stared into the distance, his eyes full of helplessness-and resolve.

He wasn't the kind of person who could live selfishly.

These years away had already been the greatest indulgence his father had ever allowed him.

"You don't have to think that way," Ms. Tessa said calmly. "You're not the only one who could lead the Gray Wolf Corps. If you don't want to do it, then let's find someone else capable to take your place."

Sometimes things were complicated-but sometimes, they were simple.

"My father would never accept that. The Corps is his life's work. There's no way he'd hand it over to someone else."

Avery didn't want to lead the Gray Wolf Corps.

But he didn't see another way.

He had to protect the people around him. He couldn't bear to see them harmed- not even a little.

"And what about your dream?" Her voice softened. "Are you really going to give that up? Don't tell me you've had enough-I know how much you love music."

He had held on for so long for a reason.

Avery stayed silent.

She was right.

That dream had always lived inside him.

To build the most legendary rock band-not just in Murica, but the entire world.

And the Avery Band was that dream.

It held his ambition, his love, and his brotherhood.

"If it's because of your father, then let me talk to him."

"It won't work. It doesn't matter who talks to him. He's stubborn. Ruthless. That's how he held the top seat for so long." He gave a bitter laugh. "Tessa, promise me you won't take any risks. I don't want you getting involved in this."

"Avery! We're brothers!"

"And that's exactly why I don't want any of you dragged into this."

Every member of the Avery Band was someone he cherished. He would never let harm touch them.

"Promise me, okay? Don't go looking for my father. Let me handle this myself. Just like I've never pried into your past... I've always respected your space." Ms. Tessa fell silent.

He was right.

She had her own secrets, her own hidden past. And he had never once asked. All he'd ever done-was quietly watch over her.

Chapter 499 Farewell in the Spotlight

"I'm sorry," Ms. Tessa said sincerely.

"Don't be. You've done nothing wrong. Honestly... getting to know you has been one of the best things that's ever happened to me."

And meeting the guys in the Avery band-those brothers who shared his passion- was the greatest stroke of luck in his life.

There weren't many people in the world like him.

He'd spent the past few years doing something he truly loved. And he'd done it well.

"Yeah."

"But let's not tell the others about any of this. I don't want them to worry." He knew his departure was inevitable. "Once I'm gone... maybe you could find a new lead singer."

A dull ache stirred in Ms. Tessa's chest.

Even now, he was thinking of everyone else.

That was just who he was-on the surface cool and aloof, but deeply caring about the people he held close.

"Do you really think that'll be a problem with me around?"

"Maybe... you could become the Avery band's new lead singer. That would be the best possible ending." Avery's voice was earnest.

Ms. Tessa had the heart and soul of rock and roll.

The fact that she was a woman didn't make a bit of difference.

"Avery, you know I'm not the kind of person who wants to go public." She really liked the life she had now. Yes, she loved music-but not in the way Avery/did. He lived it. Breathed it. Built his whole career around it.

"That's fine. There's no rush. I still have over twenty days left with you all-just think about it, okay?"

He didn't want to pressure her.

"Alright, enough talk. I'm heading to rehearsal. This concert really matters to me-

it'll be the first time all six of us perform together."

He'd looked forward to this for so long.

After Avery left, Ms. Tessa remained standing there, frozen.

Lead singer of the Avery band?

Could she do it?

She still had so much to take care of...

Tessa! Why are you spacing out?"

Ysabel came bouncing in and waved a hand in front of her face.

Ms. Tessa snapped back to the present and smiled at her. "Your training's done for the day?"

"Just a break!" Ysabel said, proudly holding up a letter. "Look-1 got my acceptance from Navoris University! Tessa, I bet you got a whole bunch too. Have you decided where you're going?"

Ms. Tessa pressed her lips together for a moment. Then she answered, "At first, I wanted to go to Navoris. But after thinking it over... I've decided not to."

Even though it was the best university in the country, and everyone dreamed of getting in-

She felt there wasn't much left for her to learn there.

"What? You're not going?" Ysabel was stunned. She'd hoped they could still be together.

"Then where are you going?"

"Medical school. It's right next to Navoris."

"Oh! That's not bad! At least we'll still be close. If I miss you, I can just walk over." Ysabel just didn't want to be far from her.

"You're an artist under TS now. We'll see each other there all the time, you know?"

"But I want to see you at school too!" And walking to class together sounded pretty perfect.

"Alright. If it makes you happy, that's all that matters."

"I wish you weren't so cold about it, Tessa. At least act a little excited. You're

making me look completely one-sided over here!"

"It makes me really happy that we'll be neighbors. Satisfied?"

"Very!"

When it came to Tessa, there wasn't a single thing to complain about. No matter what she did, she was her idol.

"I mean it, Tessa-you should debut. You're incredible on stage. Absolutely magnetic."

If she debuted, she'd have fans of every gender wrapped around her finger.

"Alright, enough. End of discussion. Break's o

Go back to training."

Being an artist under someone else's management really did mean giving up your rights.

"Okay, okay, boss! Don't worry. I'll train hard. I promise!"

"Tessa! Why are you spacing out?"

Ysabel came bouncing in and waved a hand in front of her face.

Ms. Tessa snapped back to the present and smiled at her. "Your training's done

for the day?"

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Chapter 500 Future Dr Tessa

That evening, after returning to Wisteria Apartment, Ms. Tessa wasted no time telling Landon about her decision.

"You've settled on medical school?" Landon raised an eyebrow.

It wasn't what he had expected-but it wasn't surprising either. Samuel had once told him that she had real talent in this field.

Still, the thought of her becoming a surgeon stirred something protective in him. Being a doctor was no easy path.

"What's that look for? Do you disapprove?"

"No, not at all. I support anything you choose. It's just... being a doctor is tough."

Ms. Tessa leaned against him.

"Ever since my grandfather fell ill and I couldn't do anything to help, I started thinking-it wouldn't be so bad to be a doctor. At least then, I wouldn't feel so powerless in the face of life."

The idea had been growing in her for a while now. She had just never had the courage to fully commit to it.

Until now.

"That's a good reason."

Neither of them could've predicted that one day, it would be Landon lying on the operating table—and Ms. Tessa performing the surgery.

"So you're really not upset about this?" She could read him well now-his little mood swings were getting easier to spot.

"Why would I be upset? I'm proud of you for doing what you want, future Dr. Tessa."

Ms. Tessa smiled.

"And by the way-I'm not going to Yalvaria. So you don't have to shift your whole life around for it."

"But didn't you promise Samuel you'd go?"

Landon hadn't forgotten that. Not for a second.

She nodded. "I did. And I still need to go. Mr. Michael saved my life, and I made him a promise. I have to- fulfill it."

Even if she had decided not to join the international medical organization, she still owed him a proper visit.

To deliver her decision in person.

"When are you planning to go? I'll go with you."

"It's only two or three days. You don't need to come with me."

She knew how busy he was lately.

I'm going.

Landon wasn't budging.

After everything that had happened last time in Yalvaria, how could he possibly let her go alone?

"You're not secretly afraid I'll stay, are you?"

Samuel had said once she saw the international medical group, she'd fall in love

with it. Was that what he was worried about?

"Both. I'm worried you'll fall for it. And I'm worried I'll miss you too much."

He wasn't going to pretend otherwise.

"And if you really do want to go, I won't stop you." Nothing could change how he felt about her.

"Ting, I told you-I'm going to medical

nool."

Even if it wasn't the world's top school, Navoris Medical University was still excellent.

"Alright. That's settled, then. Just let me know when you're heading out." "Okay."

Since he insisted on going with her, she didn't argue further.

When word got out that Ms. Tessa had chosen Navoris Medical University, both Navoris University and the Institute of Technology were heartbroken.

Both presidents came to see her again.

"Ms. Tessa, are you absolutely sure? You can still reconsider!" Mr. Oscar from Navoris University was not ready to let her go.

"Exactly! Ms. Tessa, you have incredible potential in scientific research. You came in first place at the national physics competition—"

"Enough, both of you. I've made my decision."

"But listen, you don't have to enroll full-time at Navoris to join our research institute. What if you just picked up a secondary major here?" Mr. Oscar was desperate now. As long as she didn't completely walk away, it was still a win.

She could study medicine and do research at the same time!

Mr. Oscar was clearly pulling out all the stops.

"Alright. I'll consider it." With

Cr abilities, taking on two majors at two different schools wasn't impossible.

"We can handle the course schedule! I'll personally adjust your classes so they won't clash with med school.

Mr. Oscar was pulling strings like crazy.

Ysabel nearly choked.

Wasn't Mr. Oscar supposed to be one of the coldest, most serious academic figures in the country?

Why did all these cold types turn into puppy dogs around Ms. Tessa?

Tessa, what kind of spell do you have over people?

"Ms. Tessa, our Institute of Technology can do the same! Whatever you need,

we'll make it happen!" the tech university president added, refusing to back down.