

## Alpha-less 71

### Chapter 71 Revelations and Reactions

"How did it go? Lambert asked.

"Mr. Lambert, it's a perfect score!" Kevin's voice trembled with excitement.

Even he might not have achieved a perfect score on such a challenging set. A student with a notorion reputation turned out to be a hidden gem, and Navoris High had struck gold!

"What' Mr. Clark, are you sure you didn't make a mistake? Freya couldn't believe it.

Tessa had only spent an hour on it. How could it possibly be a perfect score?

"Mr. Lambert, let me take Tessa under my wing. I'll coach her for this year's physics competition" Kevin was thrilled. As an ambitious teacher, he had never encountered such an outstanding student.

Let's discuss this later."

Lambert was also astonished. Initially accepting Tessa was a favor to the Frost family of the Nightshade Pack -he hadn't expected to uncover such a treasure.

"Tessa, you can go now. We believe you didn't cheat. Lambert's tone was even more gentle.

Tll be going then."

After Tessa left, Lambert returned to his seat and his demeanor towards Freya hardened.

"Ms. Knox, I'm concerned about your ability to teach physics effectively at this point. Here's the plan, you'll oversee the student dormitories for now. Use this time to brush up on your skills. You'll

take the final exams alongside the students. If there's no improvement, you'll continue in the dormitory role. I can't allow an unqualified teacher to continue impacting our students negatively. Of course, if you're not on board with this, you're welcome to resign-I can make that official right now." Lambert was firm and uncompromising

To preserve her job, Freya had no choice but to leave, but she harbored a deep resentment towards Tessa. Damn Tessa, if not for her, how could I have ended up in such a miserable situation!

Meanwhile, Tessa returned to her eighth-grade class, and everyone was quietly watching her.

"Tessie, how did it go?"

Seeing her silent, Ysabel thought Tessa had been asked to leave the school and began packing her things.

"Tessie, let's go. We don't need to stay at such a school."

Tessa stopped her.

"Go where? I don't need to leave. Tessa returned to her seat.

"Really? Freya didn't-\*

"Ysabel, I'm fine. I didn't cheat. What can she do to me?"

At that moment, Hamilton arrived with Kevin.

With Tessa, a true gem in their midst, Kevin had volunteered to teach eighth-

grade physics, a request Hamilton was only too happy to fulfill.

Kevin was one of the highest-regarded physics teachers in the grade.

"What's going on?"

"Isn't Mr. Clark the advanced placement teacher? Why is he suddenly teaching us?"

"What an honor! To have Kevin, such an impressive teacher, come teach us."

Hamilton clapped his hands and said, "Also, the overall scores for this month's exams are out. Everyone can check the bulletin board. Next Monday, we have a parent-teacher meeting. It's very important; make sure your parents come."

As soon as Hamilton mentioned the scores were out, the students from class eight rushed out to see.

At the same time, the top students from class one also heard the news and went to check the bulletin board.

"Winona, let's go see the scores."

"Nico is always at the top, and Winona is usually second or third. They're hardly curious about their scores!"

"Let's go! After all, the exam was quite challenging." Winona got up, more interested in seeing how Tessa had done than her own scores.

Tessa had boldly claimed she would surpass Winona in both academics and athletics, which Winona found hard to believe.

Tessa's performance over the past years at Falindale had been clear to Winona, and academic success isn't achieved overnight.

And as for athletics, Winona was even less worried. Tessa didn't even have a wolf, and in next month's physical tests, she was sure to utterly outperform her!

Now, she just wanted to see Tessa's rank on the exam to really rub it in her face!

By the time Winona and her friends arrived, the bulletin board was already crowded.

"I'll check Tessa's scores first, no matter

she's still my sister, and I hope she did well."

Winona confidently walked to the bottom of the list, sure Tessa hadn't done well.

"Winnie, you're too kind! Being nice to others doesn't mean they'll appreciate it. Her reputation is so bad, don't let it drag you down."

In upper-class werewolf society, reputation is everything.

"I don't care about that, she's still my sister."

"Not last place?" Everyone assumed Tessa would be at the bottom-a drop-out

from Falindale couldn't possibly perform well.

But they couldn't find Tessa's name among the last ten. and Winona's smile faltered. They moved up the list.

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"Oh-"

No name at all? Tessa really must be in bad shape now.

Meanwhile, Ysabel pulled Tessa out to check the scores.

"Goodness! Tessie, am I hallucinating?" Ysabel rubbed her eyes.

She looked again, and sure enough, Tessa was ranked second in the grade.

"Tessie, how did you do it?" Ysabel was stunned.

"I just took it easy," Tessa answered nonchalantly.

She didn't want to be first, so she intentionally got a few questions wrong;

otherwise, Nico wouldn't stand a chance.

Winona approached, overhearing and sneered.

"Tessa, how could you not even have your scores posted? How badly did you do

that the teachers don't even want others to see your grades?"

"Winnie, don't bother with her. You can't help someone who won't help themselves."

"They probably haven't seen such a terrible student at Navoris High before, so

they're too embarrassed to post her scores!"

"Ha-"

Ysabel laughed, amused by their low expectations.

"What are you laughing at?" A bespectacled girl couldn't stand it. "If you did poorly,

just hide in the classroom and don't embarrass yourself."

"I'm laughing because some people must be blind! Our Tessa's name is right there, in the easiest spot to find. Yes, some people are truly blind," Ysabel retorted sharply.

Hearing this, Winona had a sinking feeling and hurried over to check the scores.

First place, Nico; second place, Tessa; third place, Winona.

"How is this possible?" Winona couldn't believe her eyes. How could Tessa, a dropout from Falindale, possibly rank higher than me?

Chapter 72 The Echoes of Envy

Everyone noticed Winona's shocked reaction and came over to see Tessa's scores. One by one, they were

stunned.

"How is this possible?"

"Winona, isn't your sister supposed to be a poor student?"

"Yeah, wasn't she supposed to be all about trouble and hanging out with Rogues? What's going on?"

"Ha, jealous much? Our Tessa excels in both brains and brawn; she's a total powerhouse," Ysabel gloated, happier than if she had scored first herself.

"It can't be." Winona looked at Tessa skeptically. "You

must have cheated, right?"

"Heh." Tessa chuckled coldly. "Cheated? I'd like to see you try to cheat on a test this hard. Even if I gave you the answers to the last physics question, you couldn't memorize them!"

Winona's face turned even sourer. How could this be, when Tessa hadn't taken her studies seriously at Falindale at all, even getting expelled?

"Ysabel, let's go, it's time for class."

Tessa and Ysabel walked away, leaving Winona frozen in place. With Tessa's return, things had changed dramatically, and she felt like she was losing control of the situation. What exactly went wrong?

"Winona, are you okay?"

"I'm fine." It was just one exam; no big deal. She could still outdo Tessa with more effort!

To Winona's further dismay, during the third period, which was English class, the teacher read Tessa's essay aloud, continuously praising how well-written it was. In the following classes, Tessa's papers were even used as examples, fueling Winona's jealousy.

That evening at home, Lila immediately inquired about Winona's exam results. "Winnie, you haven't told Mom how you did yet." She had hired so many tutors for her daughter, aiming for her to get into a top university.

Nowadays, large pack alphas looking for a Luna wanted someone both strong and smart to ensure strong genes for their offspring, and Lila had always emphasized this aspect of Winona's upbringing.

"It was okay."

Winona didn't dare tell Lila that Tessa had scored higher; she feared Lila would only see Tessa's excellence.

"What's wrong? Did someone bully you at school?"

Winona had been down since she got

home.

"It's nothing, just tired from studying for the exams, I guess."

want later. Think about Connor, you've always liked him, right?"

She knew what the Lawson family looked for in a girl.

"Also, you've been neglecting your painting lately. You need to focus on that; I'll finance an exhibition for you."

"Okay, I know." Mentioning painting restored Winona's confidence. Mrs. Lawson of the Thunder Pack loved painting and was a well-known artist on the werewolf continent. Having a talent for art set her apart from many girls.

"Mom, there's a parent-teacher conference on Monday. Can you make it? It's okay if you can't."

She didn't want her mother to go this time; no matter what, she didn't want Tessa to gloat.

"Monday? Sure, I'll be there."

"What about attending Tessa's conference? Maybe you shouldn't go to either!"

"Winnie, you are my hope. How can you compare yourself to Tessa?" Given Tessa's reputation, she was a lost

cause.

Hearing this, Winona leaned into her mother's embrace.

"Mom, you're so good to me; I won't let you down," Winona promised.



"That's good to hear. You have to succeed in becoming Connor's mate. As for that 20% of the shares Tessa owns, I'll figure out a way to get them for you as a wedding gift!"

### Chapter 73 Surprise Guests

On Monday morning, as soon as Tessa arrived at school, Ysabel came looking for her.

"Tessie, who's coming to the parent-teacher conference this afternoon from your family?"

"No one." Tessa didn't want to bother her grandfather, given his age, and she hadn't even mentioned the meeting to Yardley and Lila.

"Oh, that's okay! My uncle is coming, and I asked him to bring Nathaniel with him to cover for us," Ysabel suggested.

It was indeed strange; her dad couldn't make it due to a business trip, and considering Landon, the alpha of the Nightshade Pack and CEO of Thorne Corp, was even busier, it was surprising how quickly he agreed to help when she mentioned it.

It looks like my uncle really does care!

"It's no trouble at all," Tessa replied indifferently.

"Not at all," Ysabel insisted warmly. "Tessie, you're my friend, so my uncle is your uncle too. Wait up, I'll call him right now."

By noon, Landon and Nathaniel had joined them at Wisteria Apartment for lunch.

Seeing the two men dressed to the nines, both Tessa and Ysabel couldn't help but smirk. It was just a parent-teacher conference. Did they really need to dress up so much?

"What do you think about our outfits today, Ysabel?" Nathaniel asked, standing up to show off his carefully chosen ensemble.

Ysabel settled back on the couch.

"Good heavens, someone might think you're off to an awards ceremony!"

"Don't we look good?"

Nathaniel was confident in his appearance, and though he might fall a bit short compared to Landon, he was still strikingly handsome.

Tessa glanced at Landon and chose not to comment. That man could wear the cheapest clothes from any street vendor and still exude an aristocratic air, attracting everyone's gaze.

Turning to Nathaniel, she said, "Mr. Frost, thank you for stepping in as my guardian today."

Nathaniel scratched his head. Had Landon not told her I was supposed to be Ysabel's guardian?

And, he suspected Landon might be attending as Tessa's future mate!

But since Landon hadn't mentioned it, Nathaniel kept quiet.

"You're welcome, I didn't have much else today."

Ysabel just huffed.

"Come on, let's cat," Landon interrupted, preventing any further chatter.

At 2 PM, the chauffeur drove Lila and Winona to Navoris High. Due to the conference, the school's limited parking meant most cars were turned away at the gate.

After the driver parked, Lila and Winona stepped out. Navoris High was attended by students from either wealthy or influential werewolf families, and today, various luxury cars lined up at the entrance.

The Sinclair family's car wasn't the finest there.

"Winnic, you must connect with the Lawson family of the Thunder Pack. Only then can our family hope to regain its prominence," Lila whispered, determined not to let other packs covet the alpha position.

"Mom, I understand."

Winona, always among the top three in her class, was somewhat of a celebrity at Navoris High.

Parents familiar with Lila stopped to chat along the

affirming Lila's decisions.

way, praising how smart and beautiful Winona was,

Winona felt supremely satisfied, basking in the attention. Yes, she was the center

of everyone's attention. Tessa, on the other hand, would always be a stain on their

reputation, her academic successes unnoticed and unappreciated.

Just then, a white Porsche Cayenne pulled up. Nathaniel, dressed sharply, stepped out and opened the door for Ysabel.

Following them, a silver Lamborghini arrived, and after the driver opened the door, Landon stepped out, followed by Tessa.

The two men and two women, each striking in

appearance,

caused

to stop everyone

and stare.

Some girls even started screaming. Is a celebrity filming here today?

Even without knowing who they were, their powerful auras and top-tier family backgrounds were unmistakable.

Hearing the commotion, Lila and Winona stopped and turned around. Seeing Tessa, Lila's face darkened considerably.

Chapter 74 Unwelcome Whispers

"Lila grabbed Winona's arm and marched off. Tessa was nothing but an embarrassment to her. Just thinking about people gossiping because of her daughter was unbearable for Lila.

As she witnessed her mother's attitude, Winona couldn't help but feel even more smug.

Indeed, Tessa had become a permanent stain on the Sinclair family's reputation, no matter what she did.

"Tessie, don't be sad, you still have me," Ysabel said, immediately taking Tessa's hand as she noticed the cold treatment from Winona and Lila.

Tessa was used to Lila's indifference and felt unmoved by it as the four of them arrived at the senior year's Class 8.

"Ysabel, where are you sitting?"

"Here."

Nathaniel took a seat right at Ysabel's spot, thinking it perfectly suited his young niece's height.

"And you?" Landon asked Tessa.

Only then did Tessa realize that Landon was there to support her at the parent- teacher conference. She led him to the back row where he took her usual seat.

As students continued to bring their parents in, those who saw Landon sitting in the back-a man not even thirty-felt an inexplicable pressure, even those a decade older seemed to hold their breath and instinctively wanted to keep their distance. His presence was intimidating, despite his attempts to tone it down.

However, everyone quickly diverted their attention back to discussing their children's grades.

"Did you hear? Class 8's physics scores used to be second to last, but ever since that Tessa joined, it's gotten even worse."

"Yeah, I heard. My daughter told me that Tessa is nothing but trouble, messed around with Rogues in middle school and got herself in trouble."

"How can they allow such a student in Class 8? I'm planning to talk to Mr. Hamilton today. We're nearing high school graduation and the college entrance exams; this is a critical time. We can't let one bad apple spoil the bunch!"

"I agree. Let's all speak to Mr. Hamilton together."

Their voices weren't quiet, and other parents in the class could hear them.

Landon tapped on the desk, his eyes cold.

"You should step outside for a bit," he said to Tessa, his voice containing a chill. "Okay."

"I'm not bothered. Let's grab a bottle of water from the store."

Tessa and Ysabel headed to the snack shop.

At 2.30 PM, the parent-teacher conference officially began. Hamilton displayed a presentation with photos of the students taken throughout the school year, warmly accompanying each with a caption.

After dozens of slides, the parents had seen how their children had been doing at school.

Hamilton welcomed the parents and shared some tips for this critical phase of their education before finally addressing the subject that concerned the parents the most-the grades.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I will have the students distribute the report cards now, and then we can discuss the results of the recent monthly exam together."

Before the report cards could even be handed out, a parent stood up.

"Mr. Hamilton, I've heard that a student who was expelled from Falindale Navoris High has transferred here. Since when did our Navoris High start picking up other schools' trash? They didn't want her, and you took her in? This is a crucial time for studying, and having a troublemaker who associates with Rogues in school severely impacts our children's learning. We hope the school will expel her."

Chapter 75 Old Money, New Problems

Hamilton frowned, taken aback by the harshness of the parent's words.

"Lindsay, I know you all care deeply about your children's education, and I understand that this stage is

crucial..."

"Mr. Hamilton, you agree with me, right? If that's the case, just expel this Tessa. My daughter shouldn't have to share a class with trash."

"This parent keeps calling her trash. I think it's your manners that are trash!" Nathaniel couldn't listen any longer. Was Tessa's life at Navoris High really this unbearable?

"You-" Lindsay was furious. At home, her daughter Megan constantly complained about Tessa, and naturally, she believed her. "It's not just me who thinks this, right?"

The other parents chimed in.

"Yes! Mr. Hamilton, there's some truth to what this parent is saying. Falindale- what kind of place is that? A student they didn't want is now here causing trouble for our kids!"

"Exactly, my child is studying for exams! We've spent so much money sending our kids to Navoris High, not to be in class with someone so disgraceful."

"Kick Tessa out of Navoris High!"

"Out with her!"

Faced with the parents' vehement protests, Hamilton quickly responded, "Parents, Tessa is actually doing very well. Those rumors-nobody knows if they're true or not, but her recent performance is genuinely impressive."

"Hamilton, we know you're a good teacher and want to protect your students, but Tessa's past scandals at Navoris are very real. Her parents were so embarrassed by her they kicked her out of their home and pack!"

Landon smirked coldly. These adults, all in their thirties and forties, harbored such malice towards a minor.

Thinking about what Tessa had to face made Landon's heart ache. If she were here right now, he would embrace her without a second thought. How old was she when they first started speaking ill of her?

Just twelve or thirteen, shamed by her own kin and cast out to fend for herself in remote Falindale, without even having shifted into her wolf form. How had she managed all these years?

Just thinking about her defiant eyes and how she faced everything made Landon feel a destructive urge.

Flex, too, struggled to control himself, wanting to take over Landon's body. "Let me out! I want to teach these people a harsh lesson!"

But Landon kept Flex in check. As the alpha of the Nightshade Pack, he couldn't just lash out at people, but he knew those who slandered Tessa needed to be taught a lesson.

So, Landon coldly instructed Nathaniel, "Nathaniel, investigate the backgrounds of these people who insulted Tessa. Have our lawyer contact them, and let's sue them for defamation."

He rarely got angry over anything; usually, he'd just make those who crossed him wish they were dead.

But this time, because of Tessa, he felt anger.

"You've got some nerve! Are you Tessa's guardian? Aren't you ashamed to have such a child? And with so many parents here against her, do you think you can sue us all?" Lindsay scoffed, clearly oblivious.

"Parents, look at the results of this month's exams. Tessa is second in her grade. How can a student like that possibly be a bad influence? In fact, she might even be able to help your children!"

Hamilton finally found his voice again. He had the students quickly distribute the test rankings.

"Mr. Hamilton, are you serious?"

Lindsay glanced at the results, Tessa was first in her class and second in her grade, while her daughter Megan ranked thirtieth in class and over five hundred in the grade.

"I know everyone wants what's best for their children, but we need to be realistic. Tessa is not a bad kid."



Lindsay sat down, her face burning red. She had never been so embarrassed. Her daughter, ranking over five hundred, questioning the influence of a student who was second in her grade-it was humiliating.

The homeroom teacher discussed some areas where parental cooperation was needed, and the meeting ended.

Landon and Nathaniel walked out of the classroom, and Nathaniel confronted Lindsay as she came out.

"Madam Lindsay, right?"

"What do you want? It's broad daylight; what are you planning?"

She had been so focused on maligning Tessa that she hadn't noticed the formidable presence of these two

men.

Now, standing close, she realized their overwhelming aura, almost making her want to kneel in reverence- a testament to their high-ranking werewolf lineage.

Chapter 76 Brews and Betrayals

Nathaniel casually pulled out a business card and handed it to Lindsay, "Since you led the charge in slandering Ms. Sinclair, here's her lawyer's business card. He'll be in touch"

Lindsay received a sleek black card with gold lettering that read "The Jones Law Firm," below which was the name Hudson.

Even Lindsay, usually out of the loop, had heard of it, and Hudson was known as the most formidable werewolf lawyer in Montedra. He had never lost a case.

"Sir, there's been a misunderstanding. I didn't mean to slander Ms. Sinclair. Lindsay's hands trembled.

Landon scoffed coldly.

"I don't care if it was intentional or not. I'm here to make it clear that Tessa is not someone you can just slander."

"Sir-" Lindsay attempted to reach out to Landon, but a cold glare from him made her quickly retract her hand.

She was completely immobilized by his Alpha's Presence, forced to watch helplessly as the two men walked

away.

At that moment, Megan approached, noticing her mother's pale face.

"Mom, what's wrong? Are you sick? Should I call the driver to take you to the hospital?"

Lindsay slapped Megan across the face.

The slap was swift and harsh; Megan didn't see it coming. She covered her cheek, staring incredulously at her mother.

"Mom, what's going on? Why did you hit me?" It was the first time her mother had ever struck her.

"Go apologize to Tessa now, and ask her not to sue me," Lindsay said, her voice shaking.

Everyone knew of Hudson's reputation. If he got involved, their family would be ruined.

"Mom, why are you so scared? Tessa is just a wild child thrown out by the Sinclair family and expelled by the Frostmoon Pack. They don't care about her! Even if, by some chance, she still is considered a part of the Sinclair family, they've fallen from grace-we have nothing to fear from them!"

"Just go and apologize now. You have no idea who you've messed with. You're going to get me killed."

Lindsay truly hadn't anticipated provoking such a powerful figure.

Someone who could casually engage Hudson must hold a higher status. And crossing such a person could mean the downfall not just for their family but for their entire pack!

After leaving the scene, Landon and Nathaniel called Ysabel.

Upon learning they were at a coffee shop, Landon and Nathaniel headed over.

A hint of pride finally appeared on Landon's usually impassive face. That's right, she's mine! Tessa will definitely

be mine!

When Landon and Nathaniel arrived at the upscale coffee shop next to Navoris High-catering to the wealthy students who attended- they found Tessa and Ysabel sitting by the window. They joined them, with Landon sitting next to Tessa and Nathaniel next to Ysabel.

"Thanks for today. Let me treat you guys to coffee," Tessa offered.

"Sure."

After she spoke, Landon picked up the cup Tessa had been drinking from and took a sip.

The other three stared at him in surprise.

"Uncle, aren't you a germaphobe? You never use anything after someone else,

and that's the cup Tessie was drinking from!"

Landon had been acting out of character lately.

Nathaniel chuckled quietly. Is Landon indirectly kissing her? I never thought

Landon had such a cute side.

Tessa watched Landon calmly.

"Sorry, I'll order you another one."

"Tessa, you did amazing! Second in the grade-that's really impressive at Navoris High."

"It's okay."

For Tessa, it genuinely didn't seem like a big deal.

"Yeah! Tessie is just that impressive."

Landon ordered another cup of coffee for Tessa.

Soon, the waiter brought over two coffees. Nathaniel graciously his, while

Landon continued to drink from the cup Tessa had used.

Tessa drank the one Landon had ordered for her.

"Let's go! I'll take you guys out to eat. Don't you have evening classes later?" Navoris High, being one of the most demanding high schools in Montedra, kept a rigorous schedule, especially for seniors gearing up for college.

It's vital to ensure the students are well-fed, given their exhausting schedules.

The group headed out, but Tessa realized she'd left her phone in the classroom. The other three waited

outside while she went back to retrieve it.

She bumped into Lila and Winona, who were just coming down from upstairs.

## Chapter 77 Recruitment Woes and Heroic Offers

Seeing Tessa, Lila's face twisted into an expression of impatience; she didn't want to bump into Tessa outside. She found it embarrassing.

Tessa noticed them too but didn't bother to engage, simply continuing on her way upstairs.

"Mom, Tessa's attitude has gotten so bad. She didn't even greet you. And to think, she was the one who messed up five years ago..."

"Let's not bring up that old story. If she wants to act superior, let her. I doubt she'll be smug for long," Lila didn't want to hear anything about the incident from five years ago.

"Winnie, you're still second in your class. Keep it up, and you'll definitely get into a good college. Then I'll organize another art show for you, Mrs. Lawson will surely grow even fonder of you."

Tessa grabbed her phone and went outside to find Landon and the others.

Nathaniel and Ysabel had already left. When Landon saw her approaching, he got out of the car and opened the door for her. As Lila and Winona were heading to meet a teacher, they saw Tessa getting into a car with a

man.

"Who's that?" Lila squinted her eyes, still bitter about the lingering gossip from five years ago which occasionally resurfaced, tarnishing her reputation. "Is Tessa messing around with men again?"

"I don't know him, but I've seen Tessa with him a lot recently."

"Hmm."

"Mom, do you think Tessa has given up on herself? That guy looks wealthy. What if he's just playing with her?"

"I'll have a talk with Tessa soon. I don't care what she does with her life, but she better not affect your future."

Nathaniel had chosen a Michelin-starred restaurant not far from Navoris High for their dinner. When Landon and Tessa arrived, they unexpectedly ran into Charlotte.

Seeing Landon arrive with Tessa made Charlotte's face fall.

"Landon, you're dining here too? What a coincidence."

Landon nodded, his face showing slight irritation.

"Why don't we join you?" Charlotte suggested boldly.

"No, thanks," Landon replied curtly and proceeded with Tessa into a private dining room.

Charlotte stood there, embarrassed, as her friends watched. She had hoped for at least a bit of acknowledgment to save face.

"Isn't that Landon? And who's that pretty young thing with him? She could be a model or even a star!"

"Pretty, isn't she?" Charlotte's voice was dull, her heart sinking.

"Just eat. I've lost my appetite," Charlotte snapped, knowing her friends were aware of her feelings for Landon. Were they trying to provoke her?

One friend grabbed her hand reassuringly.

"Come on, she might be pretty, but she's just a girl without a wolf. How could she compare to you, Charlotte? You awakened your wolf early, you're strong, and you're a renowned perfumer. Didn't your latest fragrance sell out?"

Charlotte's mood lifted slightly at her friend's words.

"Let's eat. We need energy if we're going to chase after men."

Reluctantly, Charlotte followed her friends to their table, her eyes lingering on the direction Landon had gone. She's just a normal girl, not even a wolf! I'm the one who's right for Landon.

Inside the private dining room, Nathaniel was playing mobile games with Ysabel. Landon pulled out a chair for Tessa gracefully-he was always such a gentleman. Nathaniel had already ordered, so they just needed to wait.

"I'm going to use the restroom."

Tessa excused herself and walked out. In the restroom, she ran into Charlotte, who was touching up her makeup.

Tessa nodded in greeting. Charlotte twisted her lipstick back down and capped it but didn't leave immediately.

When Tessa and saw Charlotte still lingering, she didn't bother with another nod.

Charlotte broke the silence. "You're Tessa, right?"

Tessa looked up at Charlotte.

"Do you like Landon, with his alpha status?"

Charlotte emphasized the word 'alpha' to underscore Landon's prominence, suggesting he was beyond the reach of an ordinary student like Tessa, who

lacked his wolfish qualities.

Chapter 78 Stick of Gum, Stack of Problems

Tessa pulled a stick of gum from her school uniform pocket, popped it into her mouth, and crumpled the wrapper into a ball before tossing it into the trash can.

"Who are you?"

Charlotte was taken aback by the young girl's aloof demeanor.

"Who am I? Tessa, are you kidding? Don't think just because you got lucky winning at pool last time that you can look down on everyone!"

Tessa briefly recalled the encounter, vaguely remembering someone like that. People who didn't matter to her life, she typically didn't bother remembering, especially since Charlotte's outfit was different from last time, making her hard to recognize at first.

"Oh, and then?" Tessa's tone remained indifferent.

She remembered that the other girl was Landon's friend-Cameron's sister.

That was as far as her impression went.

"I'm telling you, here in Navoris, even across the Montedra werewolf continent, nobody dares to cross the Quest family!"

Tessa was even more puzzled, "And this concerns me how?"



"Heh, you really are clueless! Stay away from Landon; he's not someone you, a wolfless nobody, can get involved with! If I see you trying to seduce him again, I'll make sure you disappear without a trace."

Charlotte stayed just to deliver that threat.

Born into one of the four great families, the Quests, and as a high-ranking werewolf, Charlotte genuinely looked down on someone like Tessa, who was all looks and no substance.

Someone without a wolf should know their place and not meddle with people out of their league!

Tessa chewed her gum and began to laugh.

"What's so funny? In Navoris, there's nothing the Quest family can't do."

"Is that so? Well, try me." A threat? This Charlotte really was laughable.

"You-"

"Why is it taking so long? Let's go back for dinner." Landon had come looking for her, seeing that she had been gone a while.

"Oh."

Tessa didn't give Charlotte another glance and walked away with Landon.

Before leaving, Landon gave Charlotte a look.

"Nope!" Tessa chuckled, "Do I look like someone easy to bully?"

"Not at all," Landon replied with a light laugh.

He knew he had to give some face to Cameron as his sister, because Cameron had been his childhood friend.

Jealous, Charlotte clenched her fists. Is Landon serious about Tessa?

It hadn't been long, but he had come out personally to find her.

Back in the private dining room, the food was already served.

The four of them dined merrily. Nathaniel asked Ysabel, "Ysabel, your birthday is coming up. What are your plans?"

Typically, a werewolf's coming of age was marked with grand ceremonies led by esteemed pack elders and involved trials in dangerous forests. successful

completion was celebrated with grand festivities, and

sometimes, the young werewolf found their destined mate.

But Ysabel was unique-she couldn't turn into a wolf, so none of these rituals applied to her.

If it were any other wolfless werewolf, they might dread turning eighteen, as tradition views the lack of a wolf as a disgrace.

However, Ysabel grew up cherished by the Thorne family, who never made her feel less for being wolfless but instead showered her with even more love to compensate.

So, she was not shy about her coming of age and had planned a grand birthday party to celebrate with all her friends for years.

"Of course, I'm spending it with Tessie!" Ysabel cheerfully hugged Tessa's arm. Such an important moment should be shared with the most important people. Nathaniel facepalmed, but then shrugged it off. Ysabel is just like that.

"Tessie, you have to come to my party, okay? Or else we're through!"

"Yeah, I'll be there." Tessa smiled at Ysabel's buoyant spirit, relieved that her friend was in good spirits.

After the meal, the group left the private room, and Tessa unexpectedly spotted a familiar face...

Chapter 79 Badges and Boundaries.

Ethan had been trying to get in touch with Tessa ever since he brought Richard around, but no matter how much he searched, he couldn't find any information on her. Today, while out for a meal with friends, he hadn't expected to run into her.

"Ms. Sinclair, could we have a word in private?" Ethan was extremely polite, his tone carrying a hint of respect.

Navoris was a big place, and Tessa hadn't anticipated running into Ethan here, but she wasn't opposed to him either.

"You guys go ahead! I'll head to school on my own in a bit."

Landon glanced at Ethan and then, without saying anything more, headed downstairs.

Ysabel kept her eyes on Ethan. Who is this guy? How does he know Tessie? And he looks like he's not someone to mess with.

Ysabel wanted to keep watching, but Nathaniel pulled her away.

"What are you looking at? Is he better looking than me?"

"He is better looking than you! No, I have to go back; who knows what he wants with our Tessie? She's too attractive. Though, they do look good together..."

Nathaniel couldn't help but glance at Landon walking ahead.

Nathaniel sighed helplessly, shaking his head. Does she not see how interested the alpha is in Tessa? And she dares to say such things now.

"Nathaniel, you take Ysabel to school," Landon said, clearly relieved.

"Uncle, I'll wait for Tessa."

Landon looked at Ysabel. Fine! In front of her uncle, she wouldn't dare make a fuss and resignedly touched her nose and left.

Meanwhile, Tessa politely asked Ethan, "Mr. Ethan, what else do you need?"

"I need a favor and didn't have your number. Could you give me your number?" Ethan's friend came out to use the restroom and heard him. He couldn't help laughing. "Mr. Ethan, if you want to ask her out, just say so. The young lady is quite a looker."

"Get lost." Ethan's response was curt..

"Alright, I'm gone. Won't hang around to be a third wheel."

Ethan was considered mature beyond his years. At twenty-eight, he had risen to his current position through undeniable competence.

Yet here he was, slightly embarrassed in front of a seventeen-year-old girl.

Tessa smiled.

"Phone."

Ethan handed her his phone, and she quickly keyed in her number.

"Tessa, are you interested in joining our special police unit?" Both the detective and the special units needed

her.

Tessa chuckled lightly, "Since when does the detective unit recruit people without a wolf?"

Ethan hurried to explain, "You're different! You're a high-end tech talent. Even without a wolf, the police would make an exception for you. We really need someone with your skills!".

Tessa still shook her head and said, "Not interested."

"Please consider it. I really hope you'll join the special unit." Ethan extended a sincere invitation. "By the way, where are you headed? Can I give you a ride?"

"No thanks, I'm heading back to school. You're busy, go ahead!"

Watching Tessa walk away, Ethan pondered; this young lady was no ordinary girl.

Tessa descended the stairs and exited the restaurant, spotting Landon still waiting outside.

He stood there, casually holding a cigarette, lost in thought.

Even smoking, Landon was a sight to behold, effortlessly drawing the gaze of many girls.

Yet his strong presence deterred anyone from approaching.

Tessa walked up to him.

"Didn't I tell you to go ahead? Why are you still here?"

"Waiting for you."

Landon didn't ask further; his car was already brought around. He opened the door for her.

"Taking you to school?" It was almost time for evening classes.

"Yes."

He had waited just to take her to school.

Of course, Landon wouldn't admit he was there because he was worried some other guy might whisk Tessa

away.

That man's look at Tessa had been troubling, and he could sense the other was

also a high-ranking werewolf. This gave Landon a sense of urgency.

After all, his girl wasn't officially his yet...

Chapter 80 Grandpa's Gambit

On Friday, Tessa went back to the Sinclair family home to have dinner with Walter,

"Tessie, are you going to attend the shareholder meeting on Monday?" The annual Sinclair Corp shareholder meeting was approaching, and since Tessa now held twenty percent of the shares, she was naturally eligible to attend.

"Dad, she's just a kid; what does she know? I can exercise her rights on her behalf. The company isn't a playground,"

Yardley snapped, irked that Walter had bypassed him to give the shares to Tessa. I am the only son, why didn't dad trust me?

"Yeah, grandpa, Tessie is still a minor and hasn't awakened her wolf. If the shareholders decide to challenge her, she won't be able to defend herself. Maybe it's better not to let her attend," Lila added, thinking how pitiful she would appear if Tessa attended the meeting when she herself had nothing. Despite having advantages over Tessa in every other aspect, this situation undermined her.

"Dad, Winnie has a point. For Tessie's safety, maybe she shouldn't go," Lila was firmly against Tessa attending.

"Tessie, this is your decision to make," Walter said, dismissing their concerns. "Also, since I've given you the shares, I won't interfere with how you use them. Just do whatever makes you happy. Let's talk more in the study after dinner; it's too noisy here."

Walter led Tessa to the study, away from the noisy dining table.

"What do we do now?" Lila asked anxiously. Tessa always had a rebellious streak.

If she didn't listen to us at the shareholder meeting, what should we do?

"It's all thanks to your wonderful daughter, look what she's turned into! She doesn't even consider me her father anymore."

Yardley pondered. I'm managing her shares, isn't that my right?

"And this is my fault? Can I make a baby by myself?"

"Just make sure Winnie is alright. With the support of the Lawson family from the Thunder Pack, I doubt Tessa, that wolfless nobody, can make any waves."

Even without the Lawsons, Yardley held forty percent of the shares, making him the largest shareholder in Sinclair Corp. He wouldn't be overshadowed by Tessa!

In the study, Walter sighed, "Tessie, don't mind your parents' short-sightedness. Sinclair Corp will be ruined

father's hands sooner or later. It's lost its former glory, and while it still ranks among Navoris' top ten groups thanks to its legacy, it's merely a shell of its former self..."

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your

He felt his age and knew his abilities were waning. Tessa was his only hope now. Despite her frail health and the prophecy that she wouldn't awaken her wolf, Tessa had always been sharp. If she set her mind to something, she excelled at it.

The modern werewolf society wasn't as barbaric as in the past: other skills were just as important as physical

But the rest of the Sinclair family only saw Tessa's physical weakness and overlooked her strengths. Walter had a feeling that Tessa was destined for greatness.

If it weren't for being called to the frontlines during the vampire conflict, he wouldn't have allowed Tessa to be discarded in Falindale for five years by those short-sighted people.

"Grandpa, don't worry! Sinclair Corp won't be destroyed."

If Walter cherished it, she couldn't let it fall apart.

"I hope you will lead Sinclair Corp one day. Cedric may be the alpha of the Frostmoon Pack, but he lacks the capacity to manage such a vast corporation. And your father, though stronger than Cedric, was changed by the war with the vampires; his reduced strength and mindset are unsuited for leadership."

He placed his hopes on Tessie now.

"I hope you'll become the CEO of Sinclair Corp."

He believed she could handle it.

"Okay, grandpa, you need to rest more and not worry so much."

"Tessie, do you blame me for giving you such a heavy burden? At your age, you should be carefree and whimsical, yet here I am burdening you."



"How could I? Grandpa, you're the one who cares for me the most."

Tessa knew Walter's intentions; he was the only one in the Sinclair family who

truly cared for her and believed in her, despite everyone else viewing her as a hopeless case without a wolf.

For Walter, she would protect Sinclair Corp.