

## Alpha-less 91

### Chapter 91 A Dress to Impress

"It's about time for me to head back; how about you guys?" Hudson spoke up, his life always organized with strict routines for himself.

"Since that's the case, let's call it a day. Nathaniel, could you drop Ysabel off for me?"

None of them could drive after having drinks, but thankfully, the driver was already waiting outside.

"Of course, don't worry, I'll make sure she gets home safe."

Nathaniel was actually looking forward to some alone time with Ysabel.

"Let's go, I'll take you home."

Landon's tone was exceptionally gentle as he spoke to Tessa. Even as they got into the car, Tessa still felt dizzy; she hadn't expected to lose her first kiss just like that.

"What's wrong? Do you feel like you lost out because I kissed you? How about this-I'll let you kiss me back."

"No need, I don't want to." Tessa was a bit through gritted teeth, resigned to the fact that the loss was hers regardless.

When she woke up the next day, Tessa thought about the kiss and touched her lips. Jeez, Tessa, get over it! It was just a kiss.

After brushing her teeth and washing her face, Tessa was about to head out for breakfast when the doorbell

rang.

Opening the door, she saw Landon with breakfast in hand.

"You know you could just come in, right? This is your place after all, why bother with the doorbell charade?"

"I've said it before, this is your place now. I won't come in without your permission, unless it's an emergency." He truly respected her privacy.

"Let's have breakfast, and afterward, I'll take you to pick out an evening gown." Ysabel's birthday party tonight required formal attire.

"No offense, but since you hardly ever wear dresses I figured you wouldn't have a gown ready, so I thought I'd help you pick one out today."

"There's no need to explain; it's fine by me."

She wasn't one to fuss unnecessarily. If it was needed, then it was needed.

After breakfast, Tessa changed her clothes, while Landon waited outside.

Tessa dressed simply as usual, in a long-sleeve white T-shirt, overalls, and a duckbill cap.

"Let's go!"

On the way to buy the evening gown, Landon suddenly asked, "Tessa, do you have any age preferences for your future mate?"

Tessa, resting her hand on the car window, glanced back at him upon hearing his question.

Seeing her stare, Landon coughed.

"Just asking, no other reason."

"Me? I like them young and good-looking." Tessa said, and upon seeing Landon's slightly stiff expression, she couldn't help but laugh first.

Landon comforted himself. I'm 27, still young enough, right?

They arrived at a boutique specializing in custom-made evening gowns, clearly too late for a tailored design.

"Mr. Thorne."

The designer came out to greet Landon personally

Tessa knew such boutiques tailored gowns to fit one's physique and demeanor, and it was definitely too late for that now.

"Bring Ms. Sinclair's gown."

"Mr. Thorne, everything is ready."

The designer instructed the staff to bring out the evening gown.

"I don't recall ever being here before!" Tessa was puzzled.

"Mr. Thorne provided your photo a week ago and asked me to design an evening gown for you," the designer explained with a smile. "You looked great in the photo, and seeing Ms. Sinclair in person, you look even more stunning. Ms. Sinclair, you're a perfect fit for my brand. Would you be interested in modeling for us?"

Chapter 92 The Workspace Chase

"Thank you, but I'm not interested in modeling." She didn't like too much attention on her private life.

"That's too bad; I really think you'd be perfect for it. You don't have to rush your decision—take your time to think about it, and if you ever change your mind, you can call me anytime."

The designer handed Tessa his business card. At that moment, the assistant brought over the high-end gown Landon had ordered.

"Ms. Sinclair, please come with me to try on the gown. If there's anything that needs adjusting, we can fix it right away."

Guided by the assistant, Tessa entered the fitting room and with some help, slipped into the black evening

gown.

"Ms. Sinclair, this gown suits you perfectly. Mr. Thorne will be thrilled to see you." Amazement filled the assistant's eyes; although many beauties frequented their shop, the young woman before her was perhaps the most stunning.

"Thank you."

"Let me do your hair!"

The assistant gathered Tessa's chestnut hair into an updo, revealing her elegant swan neck. Even without makeup, Tessa looked breathtaking.

"All set."

The assistant opened the door, and Tessa stepped out.

When Tessa emerged, Landon was making a call by the floor-to-ceiling windows. Hearing the noise, he elegantly turned around and saw Tessa approaching in her sleek black dress.

The typically composed Landon found himself speechless.

He had always thought black suited Tessa well.

Now, seeing her in this sleeveless Audrey Hepburn-style black cocktail dress, he was convinced his taste was spot on; Tessa looked stunning enough to skip a heartbeat.

Landon ended his call and approached her.

"How do you like it?" The sleeveless design and the hem just above the knees revealed her beautiful long legs and allowed her graceful arms to shine.

"Isn't it a bit short?"

The thought of other men eyeing her long legs at the party made Landon uneasy. "Not at all, this length is perfect, showing just the right amount of arms and legs."

The designer was very pleased. As a designer, she hoped her clients could fully embody the essence of her

"Ms. Sinclair, Mr. Thorne specifically picked this out for you!"

"Thank you." Tessa thanked Landon, whose taste matched her aesthetics perfectly; she really liked the

gown.

"Glad you like it," Landon's gaze nearly clung to her "Let's go have lunch, and then I'll take you to the dinner party."

"Okay."

Tessa returned to the dressing room to change back into her clothes.

After instructing the clothing assistant to deliver the dress to the specified location, Landon took Tessa out for lunch.

After lunch, Landon realized he had left something at the office and took her to the legendary headquarters of Thorne Corp.

"I can wait in the car."

"It's fine, come up with me and I'll give you a tour of my workplace."

With that, Landon opened the car door.

Tessa reluctantly got out.

Thorne Corp's headquarters were located in Navors' most luxurious business district, housed in a ninety- story skyscraper.

Landon escorted Tessa directly to the top floor via the CEO's private elevator. The entire floor was his office, equipped with everything one might need.

It was divided into two areas, one was the working area with the CEO's office, five secretary offices, a luxurious reception room, and a large pantry stocked with everything.

The other area was Landon's private space, akin to a presidential suite, complete with every conceivable. amenity.

"Do you live here?" Tessa hadn't forgotten she was now residing in his Wisteria Apartment.

"I stay a few days when it's busy."

Thorne Corp was Montedra's largest conglomerate owning various companies. Between managing Nightshade Pack's affairs and overseeing such a vast conglomerate, Landon was naturally busy.

When overwhelmed with work, he stayed here to work late into the night, never skimping on his own

comfort.

"Take a look around yourself; I'll go to my office to handle some things and come

find

you

afterward."

"Okay."

Landon left Tessa in his private area.

No sooner had he left than the phone rang.

Tessa answered, "What's up?"

"Phantom, it's bad-someone's attacking our Lightwing Order's firewall!"

Chapter 93 Cyber Secrets

Tessa's tone was even, "And the result?"

"Of course, nothing came of it. The Lightwing Order's firewall is your handiwork, after all. Who in the world could breach it? But, it seems there might be vulnerability, so maybe check it out when you have time."

Despite her words, Lina was still worried.

Someone was targeting the Lightwing Order, and since the enemy's strength was unknown, they had to be

cautious.

"Alright, I'll make time to come over."

Tessa had founded the Lightwing Order three years ago and had personally developed the software and fortified its firewall from the start.

Many top hackers on the werewolf continent had tried to crack the Lightwing Order's firewall, eager to uncover the secrets of this mysterious organization

Despite countless attempts by numerous top hackers, none had succeeded in breaching the firewall.

Tessa had absolute confidence in her programming.

After playing around for a while, Tessa had handed over the reins of the Lightwing Order to Lina, although she still visited occasionally.

"By the way, have you been hanging out a lot with Landon, the alpha of Nightshade Pack?"

Knowing she would come made Lina feel relieved, and she couldn't resist indulging in some gossip.

"Phantom, I know you love a challenge, but Landon is no fun at all. I'm worried about you getting into trouble with him." Phantom was young, and the other members often felt overly protective.

"I know."

She was well aware of the rumors surrounding Landon.

"Don't worry. I can take care of myself, even with Landon around."

I've lived for seventeen years and haven't been afraid of anyone yet!

"By the way, when Landon was in Falindale, some werewolf mercenaries tried to kill him. Can you tell me who was behind it?"

look

"There must be many who want Landon dead."

Whether because of his status as the alpha of Nightshade Pack or the CEO of Thorne Corp, many would love to take his place.

After all, the more power and wealth one accumulates, the more others covet it...

"Phantom, don't fall just because Landon's good-looking; he's not right for you."

Phantom could have anything she wanted; there really was no need to get entangled with Landon.

"You're overthinking it."

"Am I? I hope I am."

"Alright, just send me the information when you find out who it was." Tessa cut off Lina's gossip.

Returning to Navoris had been so eventful she'd almost forgotten to investigate the mercenaries. If they were sent by the mysterious organization she suspected... it would be troublesome, but she could handle it.

"Okay, I'll get on it as soon as I can."

There wasn't anything the Lightwing Order couldn't find out in this world. "Nothing else, I'm hanging up."

"Remember to come to headquarters." Lina reminded her before hanging up.

Lina felt her life was tough-coaxed into taking over the Lightwing Order by Phantom, and now bound to serve it indefinitely. Is there anyone more pitiable than me?

After hanging up, Tessa didn't feel like watching TV anymore and started playing video games instead.

Landon came in and saw her gaming.

He sat down beside her and watched her play.

After finishing a round, Tessa quit the game.

Landon stood up and offered his hand, "Let's go, it's about time."

Tessa didn't move, just looked up at him, "Mr. Thorne, can I skip the party with you?"  
Chapter 94 A High Society Gathering

Today's party attracted the elite of werewolf society from large packs, and being with Landon was too conspicuous. Tessa wanted to keep it low-key.

"Why? Don't you like being with me?" Landon's mood visibly soured when he heard her.

"I just don't like too much attention... and you, you're like a beacon drawing eyes wherever you go." Tessa was honest about it.

Landon looked at her for a while before speaking somewhat petulantly, "Fine! If you don't want to be with me, then do as you please."

Tessa fell silent. Is he throwing a tantrum?

Indeed, Landon was upset. He had brought her into his private domain, and yet, she didn't want to be seen with him in public.

Lacking experience in placating others, Tessa said nothing further, especially since Ysabel's birthday party was set on a diamond yacht.

Starting at six-thirty, guests with invitations began boarding the yacht.

At the dock, numerous reporters gathered, hoping to get on board and glean insights about the Nightshade Pack's alpha family-the Thorne family. Unfortunately for them, the yacht's tight security thwarted any such attempts.

Those boarding the yacht also had to surrender their phones, a measure to protect the privacy of the Thorne family and ensure no photos leaked.

A black Mercedes pulled up at the dock, and Winona stepped out, dressed in a light yellow cocktail dress with her hair styled in a princess updo, carrying a silver clutch.

She had heard of the diamond yacht but seeing it in person for the first time thrilled her.

The yacht hosted top families from Montedrawerewolf society. Decades ago, the once-thriving Sinclair family might have mingled in these circles.

But now, the Sinclair family was far removed from these elites, and Winona had never been inside-until today, when she could finally rub shoulders with the high society werewolves.

The driver opened the car door for Margot, who emerged in a pink haute couture evening gown, her hair also styled in a princess updo, and wearing matching high heels.

It was also her first time on the diamond yacht, and she was equally excited.. "Winnie, come on! I'll take you inside." Margot was eager to get going.

Today's party was filled with young werewolves. Now of age, Margot hoped she might even find her destined mate.

Even if she didn't, it was an excellent opportunity for matchmaking. If a future heir from a large pack took interest in her, she could lift the Shelby family to new heights.

"Margot, I would never have this opportunity without you."

Many reporters snapped photos, making Winona feel like a superstar, basking in the limelight and momentarily forgetting who she was.

"Winnie, you're my best friend, and of course, I'd bring you to something like this." Only in front of Winona did Margot feel a sense of superiority.

Winona wasn't blind to her friend's motives; she knew that sticking with Margot was her ticket to these

events.

So, she didn't mind Margot finding a sense of superiority through her.

Margot handed her invitation to the werewolf security guard, who scanned the QR code against a computer.

Validation failed! The guard scanned it again, but it still failed.

"Miss, I'm sorry, but your invitation is fake. You cannot board."

"What? There must be some mistake. How could my invitation be fake?" Margot couldn't believe it.

Chapter 95 The Fake Invite Fiasco

"Miss, I'm sorry, but your invitation is indeed a fake



"That's impossible." Margot's face turned green with rage. "Do you know who I am? There's no way our family's invitation could be fake."

"I'm sorry, I don't know who you are, nor do I care. But I'm certain you cannot board the yacht."

"You-"

Margot was livid.

"I don't have time for this. I'm good friends with Ms. Thorne; I'm here to celebrate her birthday, and I'm getting on that yacht today."

Margot tried to pull Winona onto the yacht, but the security stepped in to stop them.

"Please leave, or we won't be polite."

Margot thought they wouldn't dare to touch her, but the security picked them up like they were nothing and escorted them out.

"Margot, what's going on? Isn't this the invitation your dad gave you?"

They were truly embarrassed now, with reporters still snapping photos.

"Just wait, I'm going to call my dad and find out what's happening. There must be a mistake; it can't be fake!"

Just then, a taxi pulled up to the dock, and Tessa stepped out.

As soon as Tessa got out, she immediately drew the reporters' frenzy.

"Which pack's noble family does that girl in the black dress belong to? She's gorgeous!"

"Absolutely! Such a refined demeanor, she must be an aristocrat."

"She even outshines the celebrities!"

Hearing the crowd, Margot and Winona turned to see Tessa heading towards the yacht.

Margot was in disbelief, "How could she be here? How could the Sinclair family possibly have an invitation from the Thorne family?" The Shelby family didn't even have one; how could Tessa?

"I don't know." Winona clenched her fists, frustrated that if they couldn't get in, Tessa shouldn't either.

They intercepted Tessa.

"Tessa, what are you doing here? Do you even know what this event is? People like you don't belong here."

Margot was blunt, nearly forgetting that her own invitation was a fake.

"Yeah! Tessie, only those with invitations can enter the diamond yacht. You can't get in, so just go back

"Move aside."

Tessa had no patience for their barking.

"Do you have an invitation? Like this one?"

Margot was sure Tessa didn't have an invitation and flaunted her own.

"Look at you, all plain and simple. There's no way you have an invitation."

"What does my invitation have to do with you?"

Tessa ignored them, checking the time; she needed to board the yacht.

She wondered if Landon had arrived yet; that man really knew how to hold a grudge.

Margot grabbed her hand.

"I'm just trying to save you embarrassment. Without an invitation, you can't board the yacht, and it'll reflect badly on the Sinclair family."

Tessa was losing her patience.

She grabbed Margot's hand and squeezed lightly, causing her to yelp in pain.

"Ah! Tessa, what are you doing? Let go of me; you're going to break my hand."

"Didn't I warn you before not to try to make yourselves known in front of me? Can't you understand?"

"Tessie, stop it! Let go of Margot."

Winona moved to intervene, but one stern look from Tessa froze her in place.

What's going on? Why do I feel an alpha's Presence from Tessa, a werewolf trait reserved for high-ranking wolves?

"Tessa, you wench, let go of me now or I won't let this slide," Margot groaned in pain, sweating from the

agony.

How could a wolfless nobody be so strong, strong enough that I couldn't even resist?

"Such a filthy mouth. Since your parents clearly never taught you how to behave, I guess I'll have to do it today."

With that, Tessa released Margot's wrist and slapped her twice.  
Chapter 96 Crashing the Party

Margot was in disbelief. She had been hit-struck by Tessa, a supposed nobody without a wolf! "How dare you hit me?" Margot roared, blinded by rage, so much so that she almost shifted into her wolf form to ear Tessa apart.

However, just as her sharp claws began to emerge, a chilling wave of an Alpha's Presence swept over her, severing the connection with her wolf spirit instantly. She felt the wolf's power drain from her body swiftly, and in a moment, she was forced back into her human form!

Margot's face turned pale, her body drenched in sweat; she looked at Tessa with eyes filled with horror and disbelief. What kind of terrifying power was this?

The power reached deep into her soul, striking her wolf with such precision that she was left powerless!

"Stay away from me in the future, or else, making me uncomfortable won't just end with a slap."

Tessa pulled out a tissue from her bag, wiped her hands, and tossed it into the trash. Today was Ysabel's coming-of-age ceremony, and she did not want these messes to ruin such a significant moment. Today was not the day for a brawl, not here.

Reporters nearby snapped away relentlessly. Tessa glanced at them before calling Lina, asking her to make sure those photos were deleted.

Then, under the watchful eyes of Winona and Margot, she walked over to the check-in.

"Miss, your invitation, please."

Tessa frowned; it was just a party, and yet an invitation was required.

Ysabel had not given her one.

"I don't have it."

"Sorry, miss, but you cannot board the cruise without an invitation."

The security on today's cruise was stringent, not just any werewolf was on board.

Just then, Ysabel's call came through.

"Tessie, why aren't you here yet?"

"I'm here; did you forget to give me an invitation?"

"Oh, the invitation, right, I forgot. No worries, hand your phone to the security."

After Tessa handed her phone to the security guard his demeanor immediately changed to one of warmth and politeness.

"Oh, you're Ms. Thorne's friend! I apologize for the delay, please, go right ahead."

Tessa took her phone back and boarded the cruise. Margot, recovering from her shock, was stunned to see Tessa board without an invitation.

Despite her fear and shock at Tessa's mysterious power, Margot's desire to ascend in high society still overcame her fear. She approached the security again.

"Why can she go in without an invitation, and we can't?"

"Miss, if you continue to cause a scene, we'll have to call the police."

Margot was about to argue again when Winona pulled her back.

"Margot, let's just go. It's too embarrassing with all this media around."

Margot fell silent, glancing around at the flashing cameras. She had never been so humiliated. And all was Tessa's doing!

"I won't let her get away with this."

No matter what mysterious power Tessa possessed, she was still a nobody without a wolf. Margot's own family and pack had powerful members!

She would not let this go!

Tessa, having boarded the cruise, noticed most guests had arrived, though Landon seemed to be missing. She decided to find Ysabel and give her the gift. Suddenly, someone bumped into her, and Ysabel's gift fell to the ground. "Sorry! It wasn't on purpose."

The Wolf Clan socialite who had bumped into her stooped to pick up Tessa's gift.

"Give it back.":

She was clearly deliberate; Tessa's gaze cooled.

"What rare thing haven't I seen? Look at you, why so petty?" The Wolf Clan socialite opened the gift box and scoffed upon seeing a rock inside.

"Ms. Thorne hasn't seen everything! You're giving her a mere rock?"

"Yeah! So stingy, giving Ms. Thorne a mere rock."

"Enough, ever heard of Sinclair Corp? She's the third heiress of the boss, but the boss doesn't even acknowledge her; getting a rock isn't too bad."

The Wolf Clan socialites on the cruise were clearly targeting Tessa.  
Chapter 97 Socialite Fights

"What are you doing?" Charlotte burst from inside, rushing to Tessa's side. "She's Ms. Thorne's close friend; she'll be upset with how you're treating her." "Charlotte, we didn't do anything to her! It's just that Ms. Sinclair is being too stingy, giving the young miss a mere rock. What kind of friend does that?"

"Give it here."

Tessa was already losing patience.

"It's just a lousy rock; you're making such a fuss. We've got plenty of those at home; just pick them up from our yard if you want."

The group of Wolf Clan socialites laughed wildly.

Tessa walked over, snatched her gift back, and stepped on the foot of the girl who had bumped into her. She was wearing high heels and deliberately used the heel. She held back from using her wolf strength; it was already a mercy.

"Sorry about that! Didn't see you there."

Tessa's apology was clearly insincere.

The sharp pain from the high heel had made the Wolf Clan socialite squat down, clutching her foot.

"Danielle, are you okay?"

Danielle was helped up by her friends.

"Damn it, do you know how important my feet are I'm a ballet dancer; my feet are everything to me I won't let you get away with this."

"Is that so? Well, if you bother me again, I guarantee your foot will really be ruined. Consider this a small lesson."

After that, Tessa headed straight to find Ysabel, ignoring them completely. Charlotte approached Danielle.

"Dani, are you okay? I told you not to be impulsive, she said, feigning concern.

"Charlotte, you know I've always liked alpha Landon. What's so great about that wild girl?"

Danielle was visibly upset.

"Whether it's family background or abilities, how am I not better than her?" Just thinking about it made Danielle feel even more frustrated.

"Love is complicated! Just don't make trouble. Otherwise, Landon will be upset if he hears about it."

"I know."

Danielle was frustrated but also knew well how terrifying the continent's most powerful alpha, Landon, could be. Although she liked him a lot, she dared not provoke him; otherwise, she wouldn't even know how she might end up dead.

"Look at her, boarding the Diamond Cruise and giving such a pathetic gift as a rock. Landon wouldn't be seen with someone like that; he's probably just playing with her."

"Enough, don't talk about her anymore. Be careful andon doesn't hear you."

At that moment, Landon boarded the cruise, and the ship began to sail.

As Landon arrived, several Wolf Clan socialites vied for his attention, each more pretentious than the last.

"Landon, you're here."

Upon seeing him, Charlotte rushed to his side.

"Landon, could you be my partner tonight?"

There was a dance at tonight's party, and she hoped to dance with him. Since he hadn't arrived with Tessa, perhaps she had a chance.

"Sorry, I already have a partner."

Landon looked around, not seeing Tessa and figured she might have gone to find Ysabel.

"Landon, I-"

"Charlotte, don't make me say it twice." His patience for other women was always limited.

Watching Landon walk away, Charlotte's face turned sour.

Danielle approached.

"Charlotte, you're really overestimating yourself! Landon is out of your league; you really thought he'd be your partner?"

Danielle was doing it on purpose. Charlotte thought she was something special, but even if she tried, he wasn't interested.

"You-"

Charlotte was fuming.

"Danielle, watch your tone."

"What's wrong with my tone! You like Landon, and so do I. Why should I be nice to you?"

"Really? What do you think Landon would say if he knew you were giving Tessa a hard time? After all, the only woman by his side right now is Tessa."

"You-"

Danielle hadn't expected her to use that against her

"Danielle, stay in your lane and don't covet what is yours."

Landon is supposed to be mine! If they wanted to compete they'd have to see if they were up to it.  
Chapter 98 A Necklace to Remember

Tessa arrived at Ysabel's room and found her lying on the bed, seemingly without a care about messing up her meticulously styled hair.

The moment Ysabel saw Tessa, she got up immediately. "Hey, I thought you weren't coming!"

Tessa sat down on the bed too. "It's your birthday; how could I not come, Ysabel? You look beautiful today. She genuinely complimented her.

Ysabel leaned against Tessa's shoulder. "I'm just a bit less dazzling than you, Tessie. You really suit that black dress!"

If it wasn't for seeing her fight, one would never believe such a delicate-looking girl could be so fierce.

Unable to resist, Ysabel hugged Tessa around the waist. "Tessie, why don't you just marry me?"

Tessa laughed. This girl always said the wildest things.

"No, seriously! I mean, aside from not being able to have kids, I can do everything else," Ysabel pitched herself enthusiastically.

"Really?"

Just then, the door burst open, and an icy voice made everyone shiver. "Uncle, what are you doing in my room?" Ysabel was clearly upset.

Landon's gaze lingered on Ysabel's hand, and its placement seemed to irk him. "Your dad wants you in his room," he said in his usual calm tone.

"Oh, okay! Tessie, wait here for me. If you get tired, just rest. I'll see what my dad wants."

"Go ahead. Don't worry about me." Tessa was very adaptable.

Ysabel hurried off to see her father.

"Come here."

Now alone in the room with Landon, his voice carried an austere tone. Tessa didn't move. Am I supposed to just come when he said so? What about my dignity?

"Fine, if you won't come here, then I'll have to come to you." He was still so agreeable.

Hearing this, Tessa stood and walked over to him.

"What is it?"

Landon pulled out a jewelry box and took out a necklace. The necklace was obviously expensive.

"I forgot to give this to you." He thought it suited her perfectly when he saw it, so he bought it.

"Mr. Thorne, this is too valuable." She couldn't accept such an expensive gift without merit.

"It's just a loan."

Well, since he put it that way, what else could I say?

Landon moved behind her and personally clasped the necklace around her neck.

"How much is this? I can't afford to lose it."

"It's quite expensive. If you lose it, I might have to sell you to cover the cost." Tessa gave Landon a speechless look, who was clearly joking.

"Let's go. It's about time to witness Ysabel's coming-of-age ceremony."

Seeing how Landon stood, Tessa reluctantly linked her arm with his. She really didn't want to draw attention, but Landon wouldn't let her off the hook so she had to stand out just this once.

Finchiert

Landon led Tessa into the cruise ship's main hall, where the scions and socialites from various major packs were already gathered.

Seeing Tessa arm-in-arm with Landon, the Wolf Clan socialites gritted their teeth. That damn vixen, what right does she have to be so close to Landon?

Landon usually disliked attending such gatherings, and on the rare occasions he did, he never brought a date. Yet, this time not only did he bring one, but he also allowed her to touch his arm.

They all wanted to rip Tessa's hand off.

"Don't be afraid; I'm here," Landon whispered, leaning close enough for his breath to tickle her sensitive ear. Seeing how the Wolf Clan socialites glared at her, Tessa felt quite helpless. Tonight, she knew she would make many enemies.

Though she wasn't afraid, the trouble...



"Mr. Thorne, that's enough," she protested. His gesture was too affectionate for such a public setting, and it was just pulling more hatred her way.

"Alright."

Despite his words, Landon wrapped his arm around her slender waist.  
Chapter 99 A Quiet Moment Away

Tessa stiffened momentarily as Landon's arms encircled her waist. Her dress was form-fitting, and his closeness made her extremely uncomfortable.

"Let's go! Everyone's watching us."

Was it my fault? Tessa was sure Landon was doing this on purpose!

"What the heck!" Danielle was itching to stride over and pry Landon's hands off. How could he embrace another woman, especially Tessa, the outcast and disgraced of their pack?

"Dani, calm down, stop looking. Ysabel is coming out."

Ysabel appeared on stage, arm in arm with her father, Ryan.

Ryan approached the microphone and began his speech. Landon pulled Tessa closer to the front.

Charlotte's eyes were glued to Landon. He had refused to be her partner, yet he willingly held Tessa close.

Standing by Landon's side, Tessa, who should have been scorned for her lack of a wolf, suddenly became the center of attention.

And those envious glares, which should have been hers, were now all for Tessa. How could she accept this?

Landon's hand remained around Tessa's slender waist, making her feel uneasy.

"Mr. Thorne, you can let go of me now."

The feel of his hand was admittedly pleasant, and Landon wasn't planning to let go, but seeing the look in her eyes, he figured she might hit him if he didn't.

Landon chuckled softly and finally released her.

"Finally, I want to thank everyone for their kindness towards my daughter and thank you all once again."

Ryan his speech and handed the microphone to Ysabel. He had other guests to attend to and left the young people to their festivities.

Ysabel took the microphone and said, "I'm really happy today, thank you all for coming to my coming-of-age celebration. I hope everyone enjoys themselves."

Ysabel wasn't one for long speeches; she handed the mic back to the host and let him take over.

Ysabel stepped down and approached Tessa.

"Tessie, I-" Ysabel started, intending to show Tessa around the cruise, but Nathaniel interrupted

"Ysabel, come see the gift I prepared for you."

Ysabel's coming-of-age gift had been in the works for a long time.

"Go ahead!"

Once they left, Landon was no longer interested in staying; it was too noisy, and he preferred quieter settings.

"Let's get out of this madhouse."

Tessa wasn't keen on staying either. The Wolf Clan socialites weren't minding their own business, just staring at her, making her very uncomfortable.

"If you're tired, you can rest on your own. I'll find a quiet place to be alone for a while."

But Landon didn't give her a chance to say more, just draped his arm over her shoulder and led her away.

Tessa, resigned, followed him out.

-Landon took Tessa to his room, which was even larger than Ysabel's and had a much better view. Sitting on

the carpet, they could see the city's nightscape illuminated below.

The colorful lights were dazzling. Landon opened a bottle of red wine and sat down with two glasses.

"Sit down. Aren't your feet sore from those heels?"

She was tall enough without needing heels.

However, for Tessa, wearing heels with her dress was a must; anything else would just look awkward.

Landon fetched a cushion for her, and Tessa sat down on it.

Her dress was quite short, and sitting this way risked a wardrobe malfunction.

At first, Landon hadn't thought about this.

After all, he usually didn't care about the women around him.

But now, seeing her long, fair legs, Landon involuntarily swallowed hard. Realizing

what he had done, he felt a bit embarrassed.

Standing up, he grabbed a small blanket and draped it over her legs.

Tessa hadn't expected him to be so considerate.

And he was quite the gentleman, which was rare among male werewolves.

Many high-ranking male werewolves, with their strength, often disrespected women, thinking only of taking advantage.

Landon, as the strongest alpha in Montedra and a king among werewolves, was different.

His gentlemanly behavior and respect for Tessa were part of why she felt good about him and a't mind continuing their interaction.

"No need to thank me too much. I'm just afraid I might lose control."

Tessa was speechless. Okay, but was that really something he needed to say?

Chapter 100 The Price of a Stone

Landon and Tessa had shared some red wine, and noticing the time, Landon stood up. "Let's go! It's time, for the birthday cake."

"Okay."

They headed out together, and just as they opened the door, the door across the hall opened too. Charlotte emerged, and seeing Tessa and Landon coming out together from a room, her complexion worsened.

"Landon." Charlotte greeted him and then hurriedly left.

She didn't want to see, nor dare to think too much about it.

Landon led Tessa back to the main hall, and this time, he didn't embrace her, making Tessa feel much

more at ease.

The staff had rolled out an eighteen-tiered cake. Ysabel had been searching the crowd for Tessa and upon spotting her, she ran over to pull her toward the cake.

Tessa stood by Ysabel, lit the eighteen candles, and everyone sang the birthday song.

Since Ysabel hadn't awakened her wolf, they couldn't hold a traditional werewolf coming-of-age ceremony, so they celebrated with a lavish human-style birthday party instead.

As the birthday song played, Ysabel made a wish and blew out the candles!

During the cake cutting, Ysabel expressed her joy, "Tessa, I'm really glad to meet you, and I love your gift too."

Ysabel showed off her favorite gift-a simple stone.

Danielle, seeing the stone, couldn't help but laugh. "Ms. Thorne, you're really giving her too much credit for a mere rock. What kind of friend gives such an unthoughtful gift?"

"Yeah! I never thought someone would actually give a rock as a gift. It just shows she's an outcast from her family and pack, with no abilities and thick-skinned."

"Ysabel was really upset by these mean girls' comments. "Ms. Thorne, may I see that stone in your hand?"

The speaker was a werewolf named Taylor, a prominent figure in the Navoris collecting world, renowned for his expertise in antiques and jewelry.

"Sure, but please don't damage it."

Ysabel wasn't interested in arguing with those distasteful people.

Taylor carefully picked up the small stone. As the most famous collector in the Wolf Clan, his keen senses immediately detected the unique charm within the stone. Holding it, he could even feel his wolf's power slightly increasing.

His eyes lit up with astonishment, and excitement was evident on his face. Such a gift was wasted in the hands of Ysabel, who hadn't awakened her wolf. He wondered if he could buy it from her.

"Ms. Thorne, can I buy this stone from you? I'll pay any price.

"What? Are you crazy? It's just a rock." Danielle shrieked incredulously,

"You don't know anything. This little stone, you couldn't buy it for less than 18 million dollars." Taylor dismissed the snobby Wolf Clan socialites with a look of disdain, always loathing those who flaunted their family's power without any real culture or refinement.

"You-"

Danielle wanted to say more, but her friends quickly stopped her.

"Don't talk, that's Taylor, the famous collector from Navoris. If he says it's valuable, it really is. The more you talk, the more ignorant you appear."

"Right! Stop, it's embarrassing!"

Danielle fell silent. She hadn't expected Tessa to be able to afford a 1.3 million dollars stone to give to Ysabel.

"Sorry, no matter the price, I can't part with it. It's my favorite gift."

Hearing this, Taylor reluctantly handed the stone back to Ysabel.

Ysabel looked at Tessa gratefully. "Tessie, thank you so much, but really, you didn't need to spend so much."

It was hard to imagine she had spent 1.3 million dollars on that stone.

"It's nothing, just 1.3 million dollars. As long as you like it, it's worth it."

For Tessa, money was not an issue; what mattered was that Ysabel liked it. "I really do."

Beside them, Nathaniel felt somewhat inferior; his gift paled in comparison to Tessa's.

Tessa disliked noisy events. After the cake was cut, she slipped away to admire the cityscape from the cruise ship.

She didn't look for trouble, but trouble seemed to find her.

Danielle and a few of her Wolf Clan friends followed her outside.

"Tessa, that stone was bought by Landon, wasn't it? Your family couldn't possibly afford 1.3 million dollars."

Danielle refused to believe Tessa could afford such an expensive item.

"Sure! You saw the necklace Landon got at the auction, right? You think you can afford a 1.3 million dollars item?"

"If thinking that makes you happy, I won't argue," Tessa said dismissively. "Are you done? If so, you can leave."

"Leave? Who do you think you are telling to leave?" Danielle continued to make her presence felt.

"I'm talking to you."

"You-"

Furious, Danielle, using her wolf's strength, rushed at Tessa intending to slap her. Unexpectedly, Tessa moved quicker, dodging with agility, and Danielle ended up falling flat on the ground...