

Read Novel Big Bad Alphas Chapter 46

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The stairs let out a creaking noise as I land on the second to last step and I contemplate hurrying back up. The wood is cold against my feet. The house seems to be dead. No one comes searching for the cause of the creaking noise. I am like a ghost with no one to scare.

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I remember a lot of things from my time here.

I remember sliding down the tree trunk, scraping up my arms as part of Olivia's revenge. I remember swiping Eric's shirt when he left the room, smelling it like an expensive cologne. I remember running away only for Olivia to choke me, and only for Eric to believe he did it himself. I remember throwing a glass bowl at Eric's head, thinking he was the father of someone else's child. I remember planning a party, a ball, just for Olivia to find her mate, but Caroline to discover hers instead. I remember our first night together, the sensations, the emotions, the intimacy.

I wander into the empty kitchen, finding a tray of white chocolate roses spaced evenly apart. I stare down at them, wondering where they came from.

"I always make them during times like these."

Turning to the side, I see Marina walking into the kitchen from the dining room. "We have a dinner with the family, then I make red velvet cakes and set them on top. It's been like this since Sebastian's grandfather died, a tradition I suppose. The recipe is passed down."

"Will there be a funeral?" I ask, looking back down at the roses whose petals open up at me.

"There will be, when Evangeline is ready." Marina looks over the roses then grabs out supplies from cabinets, preparing to make dinner. "Would you like to help me?"

I nod and do as she says, collecting ingredients and boiling pots of water. “Who will be coming?”

“Evangeline, Eric, Caroline, Lucas, myself, and you of course. Only close family,” she explains while chopping up various vegetables.

“I’m sorry for your loss, Marina. I know you took care of Sebastian.”

Marina stops cutting. “He was a good man, a good Alpha. Loyal. Evangeline must be devastated.”

“She’s back? They found her?”

“Yes. She went off into the forest. Her grandmother used to live nearby, I believe she went to that house.”

I continue assisting Marina with dinner, feeling less anxious since she told me that Evangeline, Eric, and Caroline are spending time alone together. I assume they are at Evangeline’s home, crying, talking, reminiscing—everything people in mourning do. I only know stereotypical things as my father’s death was not dealt with normally. I assume Sebastian’s death is being dealt with in a normal manner.

I have not seen Eric since I said my goodbyes, when the gun was about to be held up at my chest. But I want to see him, desperately. If only he was not in pain, feeling the effects of a parent’s death. If only I could just lay in his arms, as if everything is normal again. Though, nothing has ever been normal between us.

Marina lets me go and I end up back inside my bedroom, told to get ready for dinner in an hour. Wanting more time with my thoughts, I run a bath and sit on the side of the tub as the water fills up. I can see my face in the mirror, but I look away, back at the water. When it is ready, I strip my clothes and submerge myself in the clear, warm water, leaving the very tops of my shoulders out of the small ocean. I lay here for a while, and I do not notice myself sinking further down at a steady pace, as if my body is simply sliding against the bottom of the tub. Soon the water reaches my chin.

I feel relaxed, my anxiety slipping away. My many encounters with death have me distraught, and for a moment I truly believe that I should be dead right now. It should be me, not Sebastian.

I have always feared death, acting brave when I have to. Death is final, permanent, endless, an intense escape from life itself. I should be dead. How do I keep escaping it? How do I race death and beat it to the finish line? I should feel an adrenaline rush from this, but I only feel like a cheater.

The water reaches my lips, and I feel myself sinking faster than before.

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The water is at my eyes, hovering just below. The room is silent, I hear nothing, my ears are submerged. There is no panic. I know I cannot breathe and I feel fine.

The water engulfs me, swallowing me whole. My eyes are open, confused by the blurriness, seeing a smudged version of my body, then I look up. The bathroom light shines down directly on me, leaving the room dim. My dark hair sways around my face, floating in and out of my vision, light slipping through the thick strands.

My toes and fingers feel numb, and then the rest of my body does, as if I have detached myself. Just as I close my eyes, just as my lungs burn heavily, just as my body seems to cave in on itself, it all stops.

An interruption during my correction.

"What the hell are you doing!"

I am yanked harshly from the water, lifted back into the air only to release an array of coughs and gasps. My hair sticks to my neck and back like wet clothing, some pieces latched to my face. My heart jolts from the interruption, somewhat upset and angry.

I peer up to see Eric holding onto me, and he looks both furious and distressed. He lifts me out of the water like a child, I stand on my own two feet, then he wraps a towel around my bare body before leading me into the bedroom.

I expected shouting, but instead he motions to the bed, and I sit down while he stands in front of me, ready to scold me.

"What were you doing?" He questions calmly, but like he is holding it all back.

I swallow. "I was taking a bath before din—"

"No, Isabella," he raises his voice and catches himself, bringing it back down, "what were you doing? What were you doing under the water?"

He knows, and it is painful to hear him ask anyways.

Eric is already dressed for dinner, something formal which I was expecting. Marina told me to dress nice. I set the dress I was going to wear out on the bed, and it is still there.

A black one, shorter, wraps around and ties in the front with a thin, delicate string. The sleeves are short and the skirt is not tight to my thighs, it flows just above my knees. It is simple and elegant.

"I was taking a bath," I repeat and stand up. "I'll get ready, meet you downstairs when everyone is—"

"I haven't seen you," he interrupts. "I haven't seen you since you tried to kill yourself."

I pause just before I make my way to the closet. "I wasn't trying to kill myself, I was saving everyone else. He was going to kill you and Kendra."

"I could have handled it without you putting your life on the line."

"My life was already on the line, and so was yours."

He shakes his head, disagreeing. "If you would have waited—"

"You can't live without me, I know. I can't live without you either. It was selfish, but I couldn't be the one left behind. I couldn't become my mother. I wouldn't be able to take the pain and I would end up dead too. I thought you could live through the pain if I died, eventually move on. If I died at least one of us would live."

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"You need a distraction, Eric. You need a break from it all. And I need to feel something," I murmur and reach my hands to the top of his shirt, fiddling with the first button. He takes over and I move my hands to his belt, yanking him closer to me before I unbuckle it.

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Read Novel Big Bad Alphas Chapter 47

Big Bad Alphas Chapter 47 I slip on the black dress and brush my hair, running the bristles against every strand. Standing in the mirror, I watch myself while consistently glancing over at Eric who had just finished redressing himself. He does the same, looking over at me.

Eric stands behind me and places both hands on my shoulders, so I softly set my hairbrush down. Our eyes connect in the mirror. “They’re downstairs waiting,” he murmurs, his arms wrapping around me. I set a hand on top of his as they rest against my stomach.

“Will you be alright?”

Eric nods then takes my hand in his, running his thumb firmly against the top of my hand, almost as if he is making sure I am really here. Without saying a word he leads me out of the room—my hand still in his, a loose leash—and down the hall. From the top of the stairs, I can hear the conversation from the dining room. Marina, Lucas, Caroline, and Evangeline waiting patiently.

Stopping our movement, I place both my hands on the sides of Eric's face. "I'm sorry for what you saw me doing. It was selfish, and probably hard for you to understand. But I'm here for you. Okay?"

My question is answered by a kiss on my forehead, his lips warm against my skin.

Together we climb down the stairs and enter the dining room, causing all eyes to shift. A small, delicate smile appears on Caroline's face, and I give her the same back. We will talk later. But my eyes continue their detour, falling upon everyone, dressed lovely, then finally Evangeline. I swallow.

She seems lost as if this was never her home. She seems empty, like a statue or a doll, propped up on the chair. She seems like her heart has turned cold. I sit down, forcing myself to look away, to stop staring. It is like looking at my mother, yet more intense. Marina takes control and starts passing around the large dishes of food, plates I recognize from our making earlier. Eric touches my leg, pressing the 'on' button.

"You look beautiful," I tell Caroline and she blushes. Lucas glances at her approvingly.

It is a sad dinner. Minimal conversation, many deep breaths, and a few stray tears from Caroline. She picks up her napkin and dabs it underneath her eyes, not smearing her mascara. Lucas grabs her hand whenever this happens.

Evangeline remains silent the entire time, hardly taking a bite of her food placed on her plate by Marina. She stares at a downward angle, at the center of the table. Not tears, no deep breaths, no conversation, nothing. She is a lonely soul, torn from her true love, stepped on like a bug by life itself. Whenever I look at her for too long, Eric squeezes my leg and I tell Caroline, Marina, or Lucas something.

"It's going to rain tonight," I say and take a bite of steak. "It's been cloudy all day."

Soon comes dessert and Marina carries in the cakes with the white roses on top. She places one in front of all of us before sitting down herself. Evangeline watches the cake as if the flower is wilting in front of her.

"They're beautiful," Caroline comments and Marina smiles.

I slice through the cake with the side of my fork, realizing the center had been hollowed and filled with a chocolate mixture. A thin chocolate shell keeps the cake from the

mixture, stopping it from seeping in. It is like hatching an egg. I let it bleed out on my plate. It has a rich, lovely taste.

“Kendra is back home safe, I got the call earlier,” Caroline tells me and I nod.

“Do you know how she—”

“She ran back to the house,” Caroline explains, “I’m sorry you didn’t get to say goodbye. I’m sure you’ll see her very soon, though. Your mom said thank you for keeping her safe. I told her you’d call back when you’re free to talk things through.”

I nod again. “And Olivia?”

“She’s left the pack. I found a note and a few of her things gone. She’s abandoning our world to live amongst the humans, she thinks it’s what’s best for her.”

“That’s it?” I question. “She just left?”

Caroline gives me a sad look. “She killed her own mate, Isabella. I’m sure she’s sick and tired of our kind. I just hope she’ll be content out there.”

“She saved my life. I never got to thank her for her sacrifice.”

“I’m sure she knows. You helped her to safety.”

I did not help Olivia, I abandoned her and told her to run to the house alone. I did not help her inside, check for wounds, make her comfortable. I simply pointed in a direction and yelled ‘go’. That is something I will have to live with. I can only hope she is as Caroline says, content with the human world.

“And Heath?”

“Just a few cuts and bruises. He’s perfectly fine,” Eric tells me.

I turn to him and nod.

After dinner, Caroline and Lucas bring Evangeline home, Marina shoo’s me as I try to help clean up, then she leaves herself. Eric and I find ourselves back in the bedroom, and I sit on the bed, staring into nothing as I take off my earrings. The small pears roll in my palm, given to me by Caroline a while ago. I place them on the dresser and loop my fingers around the ribbon of my dress. With a gentle tug, the bow unties and the fabric falls open.

I glance to see Eric standing the doorway of the bathroom, somewhat undone himself, yet I feel too guilty to strike. He watches me, watches as I crumble to pieces. “I’m ungrateful and selfish,” I confess, and the smile falls from his face. “Your father is dead.”

"I know," he says straightly with no emotion.

"Your father is dead and I've been too focused on myself to realize it. But you hardly show anything. You look fine," I hear Eric, urging him to give me a sign. "Why are you fine?"

"It's my job to be fine, Isabella."

"Yeah, we shared the profession, I know how it works. You don't have to be this way around me. I let you in, now you have to stop handing me slices and give me the cake."

Eric's expression softens, not taking me seriously. "I've shared a lot of things, and now I just want to sleep. Let's just sleep, alright?" He walks to the bed, but I step in front of him before he can crash down. "Sleep can wait a bit longer, I suppose," he grabs my dress, but I smack his hand away.

"I want you to know that you can open up to me about everything, not just some things."

Eric seems somewhat amused. "For a k!ss?"

I roll my eyes. "I'm not afraid of you anymore. I'm not afraid to k!ss you anymore, considering what we've done."

Suddenly Eric brings his lips to mine, surprising me. Before I can lose myself, I move back, letting go. His face hardens. "You want to talk about my feelings?"

I nod and cross my arms.

"I feel alright. I feel fine. Death isn't a stranger to me, Isabella."

"But it's not just any death, it's your father."

Eric sighs. "I feel more pain for my mother than my father. He left her, and now she's dying without him."

"It wasn't his choice, Eric. I'm sure if he had the choice he would choose her."

Eric shakes his head. "He's more Alpha than a mate."

"What would you choose? Being an Alpha or me?" I ask softly.

"Why ask? You know the answer already."

"Your father is the same way. He is an Alpha who loves his Mate, in life and death. He can't help it, the bond is too strong for even an Alpha to ignore. You can't help but pick me, and he can't help but pick Evangeline. That's how it works," I say, reaching out to

him, “you two are more similar than you think. Sebastian didn’t abandon Evangeline on purpose, he couldn’t even if he tried.”

Eric struggles. “Then why is he dead?”

“Ask your mother.”

Read Novel Big Bad Alphas Chapter 48

Big Bad Alphas Chapter 48-There is a knock on the door, so I open it to find Evangeline standing on the porch, looking depressed but different than at dinner last night. Immediately I urge her to come in, but she asks to walk with me outside. Together, we head off slowly in a random direction. The sun is beginning to fall.

“How’s your day been?” I ask, surprised that she came to me in the first place.

“You told my son to talk to me,” she says, getting right to the point. “Thank you for caring for him.”

I nod, still quite confused. “Yes, I told him to ask about his father’s death. I’m sorry if I brought on unwanted questions. It’s still fresh and you were clearly in no state to talk about—”

“No, don’t apologize. He deserved to know what happened to his father, and I’m sure Eric blamed it all on him.”

We continue on until we reach a path going through the trees, our voices quiet. “Yes, that’s why I told him to ask you.”

“He saved my life, Isabella. Damn him,” Evangeline mutters. “I knew he would, one day.”

I begin to realize that we are heading towards the training grounds, recognizing the trail. Eric is there with Heath. He must have seen Evangeline this morning then.

“We—We were walking towards the house when everything went wrong. Sebastian could tell somehow. He didn’t want to leave me so we hurried together to find Eric, assuming he was at home. W-When we got there, there were people from the Kenn Pack outside—we hid in the trees,” she explains. “Sebastian wanted to go and confront them, knowing something was wrong, but I begged him not to. Of course, they were all around us. Behind, beside, in front, we just didn’t see them until it was too late. I-I was distracting him, I was the reason we didn’t see them. They attacked us.”

I stay quiet, giving her a moment to breathe.

“I’ve never. . . I don’t fight people—I haven’t in a while. Two children and two decades. . . I wasn’t prepared in the slightest. I thought I was going to die, and I was okay with that as long as I knew my children and my mate were okay, but I didn’t. It was horrible. Too many started coming and Sebastian couldn’t defend himself and me. If I could’ve. . . If I could’ve fought, well, he’d probably still be here.”

We near the training grounds as my chest grows tight, her story bringing tears to my eyes and letting a few go from hers.

“He yelled at me to run, but I just screamed at him. I couldn’t. Then he stopped yelling,” she says. “I ran for my children, and my heart felt as if it was being crushed in the palm of the Goddess’ hand. I ran into the house, closed all the doors and heard a gun shot. The men outside fled off in that direction. Some time your sister came in, then Olivia. They tried to help me. They held me down. I-I wanted to die,” she says. “I can never forgive her for taking my love away.”

We come up to the training grounds, Evangeline swiftly wiping the tears from her eyes like traitors, but I stop her before she continues through. “My mother—she lost her mate at a very young age. She may be missing a piece of herself, but she still finds joy in the things she loves. Working for the Luna is the only thing that makes her feel normal again. You just have to find your thing, another purpose now. You have two amazing children who love you and who are there for you, be there for them. That was my mother’s mistake, to her, her family died when her mate died. So, let your purpose be them if there is only one,” I tell her. Together we look over to Eric as he notices us standing across the field. “We love you, and there are still things to look forward to.”

Evangeline smiles at me, her arm linking with mine as we walk towards Eric. “You’re a good girl, Isabella. A good Luna.”

“With you as my inspiration, I’m sure I have much to improve on. We can work together.”

Eric approaches us, not expecting to see his mother at such a public place as the training grounds. “You look well,” he tells her. “What are you two doing here?”

“Isabella is going to learn how to fight,” Evangeline says, and I look down at her.

“You want to fight?” Eric asks, glancing at me.

“Yes,” I improvise, “I want to be able to defend myself. If anything ever happens, I want to be able to help.”

Evangeline seems to be very satisfied. “Well, go on. I’ll be watching with Heath.”

We watch as she walks away before looking to each other. “So, are you going to teach me?”

Eric crosses his arms. "If you like."

"Oh, well if there's someone better than maybe I should—"

"Come on," Eric sighs, "I usually don't train people, you're quite lucky for this opportunity."

I roll my eyes. "Just teach me. What are we doing? Should I shift?"

"No, everyone starts in human form. It's much easier to begin like this. Once you know the basics, then you can shift."

I scan the area quickly. "But everyone is shifted. They're going to know that I'm a wimp."

"They've been training since they were sixteen years old. Now do you want to learn, or not?" He questions.

"Wow, you're a tough teacher," I mutter.

"And you're a difficult student." Eric lets his arms drop, "Now this is only for self-defense. I don't want you fighting anyone when you don't have to."

"Okay."

Eric grabs my wrist with his right hand. "Get free."

I raise an eyebrow before yanking my arm from him, but he is holding on too tight. "Your grip is too tight."

"No, it's not. Don't just pull away, twist your wrist so your thumb lines up with mine then yank back."

I do as told, but I am still trapped. "You're being too rough."

Eric seems amused. "You love it."

Taking advantage of his moment of distraction, I pull my wrist from his grasp. "I'm not your mate right now, I'm your student. I want to be able to defend myself. It'll make your mother happy."

Eric crosses his arms again. "You talked to her."

"Yes. She told me what happened on the way over," I elaborate, "I think she'll be alright. She just has to know that there is still purpose in her life."

"Now," I tell him, "you be the attacker, and I'll be myself."

“Just because you can get out of a wrist hold, doesn’t mean you know how to defend yourself.”

“I know,” I say, “It can be more learn as you go.”

Before Eric can respond, I swing my scrunched up hand at his face, knowing he will stop me. It takes a fraction of a second from him to catch my fist. “Alright,” he tells me, “I’m the attacker. Run.”

I take two steady steps back before turning and breaking out into a full on sprint into the trees. Wishing I could shift, I try to bury myself within the forest, moving in a way that could get me lost. I hear him behind me, somewhere, but I do not see him as I glance back.

He is the attacker, this is what I asked for, and for some reason it makes my heart race with a sort of fear. It is just a game, just practice, but the scenery gives me déjà vu.

I stop and lean up against a tree, waiting to hear a certain sound. I have had to improvise while fighting, so maybe it will be easier than I think.

I stray from the tree and wander to the left, trying to be as stealthy as possible. Something suddenly grabs my arm, bringing it against my back, bringing my wrist to my armpit, folding and lifting slightly. I yelp from the unexpected contact and the uncomfortable position of my arm.

Eric lets go and turns me around. “You never checked behind you, Isabella.”

“I thought I was in front of you.”

“Didn’t run fast enough,” he says, “I passed you.”

“What did you do to my arm?”

Eric does it again, slowly. “Get their arm behind their back, bend the elbow so their wrist is being forced to the back of their armpit and their elbow is pointing at the opposite h/p bone. Then lift up on the arm gently. Not too hard or you could dislocate the shoulder,” he explains then let’s go. “Basic hold.”

“It hurt,” I say.

“It’s supposed to.”

I fall back against the tree. “You’re a ruthless teacher.”

Eric nears me. “You asked for it.”

“Maybe I don’t have to fight. Maybe I can just lure in my enemies.”

Eric raises an eyebrow. “Oh, really? And how are you going to do that?”

I smile and motion for him to come closer, which he does. “All I have to do is look up with big, innocent eyes, touch your arm, pout, and say: Please don’t hurt me, Sir. Then give the arm a little squeeze, let them know you mean it. Then—” swiftly, I bring my knee to his crotch, stopping right before I do any real damage, “hit them where it hurts. Caroline told me that.”

Eric clenches his jaw. “I can tell. Let’s just be glad that Caroline isn’t training anyone.”

“It worked on you? I could see it on your face,” I say amused, “please don’t hurt me, Sir.”

“Alright, that’s enough.”

“Wait, I didn’t finish,” I murmur before leading his lips to mine.

There is a moment of silence as we kiss as if the world has suddenly stopped spinning. There are no more thoughts of Sebastian, no more worries for Kendra, no depressed Evangeline, no crying Caroline, or attacks, or murderous Alphas, there is simply just us.

I pull away slightly. “Everything will turn out alright, and even if it doesn’t, as long as I have you, I’ll be alright. Even if the biggest, baddest Alpha comes for us, just remember that everything happens for a reason. We were matched for a reason. I couldn’t be more fulfilled with anyone else. I may have cheated death one too many times, but I couldn’t love anyone else as much as I love you. I will cheat death for as long as I can just for one more moment,” I softly murmur. “So, let’s just enjoy this moment, let’s just enjoy our every moment together until our last.”

Then the world resumes.