

Chained By The Alpha By Jessica Hall Chapter 11

I don't know how long has passed, but my body is beginning to feel numb. Although, I do have feeling back in my leg, and boy is it painful

Zayn's lips look a little blue, and even his body heat isn't doing much to keep us warm now. He now observes me with something that looks like concern in his eyes, but I think I imagined it because as soon as it comes, it is gone

"Are you alright?" he asks. I nod, but he knows it's a lie because my body is shaking like crazy

He sighs, his breath fogging the air. "I'm going to shift into my wolf form. I'll be able to keep you warm better."

Seriously? Did he think of that now? "I'm glad

you finally realized," I scoff, not that the idea had come to me either

Suddenly, he grabs hold of my neck tightly

"Careful there, princess. If it weren't for the fact that your father pays me for protection, I could fucking care less. But if you must know, our wolves aren't human, or have you forgotten that? Your scent is driving my wolf mad, so don't provoke him," he snarls, pushing me off his lap roughly

My heart thumps as I look at the man before me, surprised at his sudden change in behavior. His eyes flash a shimmering black that burns to a bright silver

"Wait!" I blurt, now worried his wolf will kill me. I'm Alpha blood, and his wolf is an Alpha

What if he thinks I'm a threat to him and mauls me?

"What, Cleo?" he growls angrily

"Maybe you shouldn't shift? It was one thing for him to heal me while you had control, but you are giving him full control," I tell him, and he rolls his eyes. Before I can utter another word, his bones start snapping

"At least tell me his name!" I blurt

"Zarek," Zayn tells me, and I swallow when he quickly shifts into his massive, black wolf

He is huge, and his aura only seems to grow stronger in this form. He growls then stalks toward me, and I freeze, pressing against the wall as his wolf sniffs me

“Don’t eat me,” I cringe as his wolf puts his face so close to mine that our noses are touching

Hesitantly, I reach up and brush the fur on his
shoulder

“Nice Zarek, good puppy,” I tell him, he huffs at me calling him a puppy. I wonder how much control Zayn even has in this form

His giant wolf then licks my cheek and drops to the ground beside me. I watch him for a second and see him roll his eyes, making me realize Zayn must have more control than I thought because that is clearly a human trait. He sets his giant paw across my lap and drags me against him, pulling me close. Despite his harsh words earlier, I snuggle into his thick, soft fur,

welcoming the renewed warmth of his giant body

Right now, the important thing is to survive

The warmth gives me hope that perhaps we’ll make it, and someone will find us before I die down here

I know Dad won’t give up until he’s found me..

Wrapped in Alpha Zayn’s wolf’s warmth, I somehow drift off once again into an uneasy sleep, one filled with rogues, bloodshed, and dead bodies

It is only when I hear a loud explosion that I am snapped out of my sleep, making me shoot up, and the Alpha growls. A second explosion blasts more debris into the already tight space, forcing him to shift back

At that very moment, light seeps into the freezer room, and I turn to see none other than my father standing there in wolf form. Several men are with him, but his eyes are on us, a look of pure rage in those burning eyes of his. A terrifying growl leaves him, echoing off the walls and trembling through me

“Get off my daughter!” Dad roars, making me look up into the eyes of Alpha Zayn; his lush, dark locks are covering his forehead

It is then, with pure horror, that I realize that not only am I in my skimpy bra, but the Alpha is on top of me, straddling me totally butt-naked

“Wait! Dad, it’s not what it looks like!” I scream when I see my father move to grab him. Zayn, however, is much quicker. I find myself precariously caught between two Alphas wanting to rip each other to pieces as Zayn pulls me up with him

But it is too late; Alpha Zayn's eyes narrow at my father as he stands to face him with me caught between them

"She was freezing to death, I was trying to keep her fucking warm..." he spits out in a cold voice

that surprises me. Dad doesn't seem to care and steps closer, pushing the Alpha away from me

"You may be the Alpha of your pack, but you have no right to touch my daughter!"

His voice booms through the room as they square off against each other; both are huge Alphas full of power and might, though only one could win this battle for

supremacy..

The tension in the air is so thick, you could cut it with a knife. My dad and Alpha Zayn are at each other's throats, both exuding menacing auras, their eyes locked in a challenging stare

"You're making out like I am hurting her. I'm not interested in hurting your fucking daughter Joseph, now get out of my way!" Zayn snarls furiously

Dad, however, refuses to bow down to him, and

I find myself caught between the pair of them

"Don't push your luck with me." Zayn's voice is menacingly low as he looks Dad straight in the eyes

Standing tall between them both seems futile

They are both so much bigger than I am,

and

their anger is only escalating with each word being spoken

"She's my daughter!" Dad roars, his voice echoing through the confined space. "And you had no right to touch her, regardless of the circumstances!"

"As I said," Zayn retorts, unyielding, "She was freezing. What was I supposed to do?"

Let her freeze to death?"

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The two Alphas looked like they are mere seconds away from lunging at each other when I hesitantly set my hand on Zayn's bare chest. His heart thumps beneath my palm calmly when his eyes fall on me

"Please," I mouth to him, needing him to back off. I know my father's temper, and if Zayn doesn't back off, I know this will turn into a bloodbath. Zayn's brows furrow briefly, and he grips my hand, moving it off his chest. But he doesn't let go like I expected he would, even after I turn to my father

"Can we go, please? It's cold, and Linda and Lydia are probably worried," I tell my father, knowing his mate is most likely the only person

to distract him or stop him from causing a scene

My father pauses briefly, considering my words at the mention of his mate. "Fine, but I will deal with you when I get home. What is wrong with you? How could you allow him to be all over you like that?!" he snaps angrily, grabbing my arm. Great! I hoped to use his mate to distract his attention away from Zayn, only to get it pointed right at me

I glance at Zayn, who presses his lips in a line but nods to me, but he doesn't look impressed about letting my father walk away with his life

He squeezes my hand and lets me go just as my father yanks me toward the exit, where the debris has been cleared away, not that there is much left of the place. And I see the source of the explosion: the huge gas tanks for hot water and kitchens

turns back to Samuel and Lydia. You'd think those two would hate each other since Linda left Samuel for my father when they met at an Alpha meeting a few years back. Samuel seemed to accept it almost immediately. My mother, however, wasn't so inviting to Linda but eventually, she came to terms with it, it is not like she had a choice. Linda and my father are fated mates. Yes, it is true that you can also reject your mates and take chosen ones. Some take chosen mates then ditch them for their true mates when they come along, true mates will always be stronger than chosen and will override a chosen mate bond, if the true mate marks them, which is what happened to my mother. When my mother caught my father cheating it was because Linda marked him, it severed her bond to him instantly

I glance back at the building and see Zayn emerge from the wreckage, immediately taking

charge. He's barking orders at various members of his pack, directing them to tend to those who are injured. The man is fully in Alpha mode, but something in his eyes tells me that the confrontation with my father isn't over

My stepmother Linda shows up, rushing past me to embrace Lydia

"Oh, my poor baby! Are you okay?" she gushes, and I roll my eyes

The words turn my stomach. "Poor baby?" I mutter under my breath. Linda always worried about her daughter and never anybody else

What about the people who are actually hurt?

Ignoring the scene, I walk over to Dad's car, pulling on the door handle, only to find it locked. Dad and Samuel are in a heated

discussion a few yards away. And I try to listen

"Wait, what happened?" Linda demands, looking at Samuel. But my father is the one that answers her

"Samuel isn't providing the pack protection we pay for each month, it's provided by Alpha Zayn!" my father snarls at her

Samuel shrugs, trying to explain himself to his ex-wife and his friend. "My hands are tied. I am short of men for my own border patrols with all the recent attacks, and I wasn't going to leave my daughter unprotected, Joseph!"

"But him! No, I won't allow it... I don't want him anywhere near my pack."

I turn my attention away, rubbing my arms, trying to warm them

The cold is starting to seep back into my bones, making me regret the loss of Zayn's warmth. But before I can dwell on that thought, someone drapes a blanket over my shoulders

I turn around to find Zayn standing there, now wearing a pair of shorts

"You looked cold," he says gruffly

"Thank you," I whisper, pulling the blanket tighter around me

"Doesn't

your father ever get sick of yelling at people?" he mutters, and I chuckle

“Apparently not,” I sigh, knowing I will have to listen to him rant all the way home

“Are you really going to leave my pack defenseless?” I ask, chewing my lip, and he scratches his chin. “I will work out something with your father. Don’t you worry about it,” he says, and I am about to ask another question when I hear my name being called

“Cleo!” Another voice calls out, and I look over to see Deacon rushing toward me from the club next door. The relief on his face is evident as he wraps me in a hug, nearly squeezing the life out of me

“Thank God, you’re okay! I’ve been trying to reach you. Why weren’t you answering your phone?”

I glance back at Zayn, remembering he took my phone. Before I can ask him, I catch him glaring at Deacon. I clear my throat, wondering what has gotten into him. He looks at me and then seems to come to his senses, but then snaps at me

“Oh, I’m sorry. I left your phone in my pants, which was destroyed while I was saving you!”

I blink at him, not expecting such a harsh reply

Honestly, I wasn’t going to ask him at all because I knew there was no way he had my phone now. Not after the constant shifting and fighting

“Oh, you must be Alpha, Zayn. I’ve heard about you. I’m Deacon, Cleo’s mate,”

Deacon says, holding out his hand to Zayn. Zayn, however, growls at his gesture

“I highly doubt that she isn’t even old enough to recognize her mate yet,” Zayn snarls, but Deacon is oblivious to his anger

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“Well, not yet, obviously. But we plan to mate and mark each other once she is of age,” Deacon adds, and Zayn’s gaze flicks to me. His eyes flicker, and I take a step back from him, bumping into Deacon at the feral look he gives me

“Is that so?” he asks, his eyes narrowing

I suddenly don’t know how to answer the question. Was it a question? Why is he so angry?

The interaction is thankfully interrupted by the sound of my name being called again. "Cleo!"

This time, it's Dad. "I thought I told you to get

in the car!" he commands. "Deacon, hands off!" my father snaps at him as he approaches us. I

pull on the handle to show him the car is locked

"I wasn't disobeying, but last I checked, Dad. I'm a werewolf, not a ghost; I can't walk through solid objects," I retort

He glares at me but then hits the button on the fob. "We'll see if you're so smart when we get home and you find yourself grounded."

"I'm nineteen!" I growl at him. I was so excited the first time I growled. I remember it fondly

Roughly a year ago, Lydia and I were fighting (what else is new?). I startled both of us when I did it. However, Dad seems unimpressed with me using it against him right now

"Under my roof, it doesn't matter if you're five

or fifty. What I say goes!" he snaps, opening his door and climbing in. I see Lydia smirking as she walks to her mother's car, and Deacon quickly hugs me

"New club opens up tomorrow," he whispers

"I'm grounded, didn't you hear?" I ask him

"Never stopped you before." He pecks me on the lips, but I push him away, worried Dad may have seen. Deacon gives me a wink. He holds up two hands, indicating with his fingers to meet him at 7 p.m. I nod before turning to climb in the car, only to spot Zayn storming away, and I climb in the car to endure my father's wrath

The entire drive home, I have to listen to my father rant about how the rogue attack was all Alpha Zayn's fault, and that the Alpha meeting should never have been held in the same place

every month

Yet, this brings my thoughts back to border patrols: if my father isn't allowing Alpha Zayn's men near our borders, we'll be sitting ducks

"Are you really not going to allow Alpha Zayn's men to patrol our borders?" I ask him, and he glances at me

"He is not coming near our pack," he growls, and I shake my head

"We don't have enough people to watch the borders, especially near the forest edge. We need him!" I snap. The house lights reflect in the windshield of my father's SUV as he drives us home. It's a large two-story house on the outskirts of the city, yet the suburb it is in is huge

My father's eyes narrow. "We don't need him, and you will not tell me what I can and cannot do, Cleo."

My father's face is scarlet red, his eyes are bulging, and his fists are balled

"Yes, we do," I mutter as I watch the trees pass by as we drive down the road, my eyes glazing over, making each tree run together like a mass of brown, green,

"No, we don't. And you do not question me on this. You are not alpha, and you do not make decisions for our pack!"

I press my lips in a line. He is being ridiculous

All this because his ego is hurt over god knows what. Apparently, that is reason enough to put the entire pack at risk

I climb out of the car and quickly make my way to the front door, wanting to get away from my father. I was so close to getting a chance to voice my opinion, but he just shut me down as usual. I take a deep breath in and out, trying not to let his words get to

me

But when I reached the door, I stopped in surprise. It's not just my father here; the pack doctor is waiting for us, too

"Cleo dear, your Father, he mind linked me. He said you're hurt?" He looks me over, and his eyes widen at my leg before he pushes me into the house

"It's stopped bleeding now. I'm fine," I tell him, but Doc shakes his head, leading me into the kitchen

"Sit!" he tells me, and I move toward the table,

pulling out a chair obligingly. Doc grabs scissors, cutting my pants to get to my leg when my father walks in. He glances at my leg, his face paling with worry

“Seriously, Joseph, you should have taken her straight to the hospital; if she were human, she would be dead with how much blood she has lost.”

My father fumbles for a response. “I didn’t realize it was that bad. She never said anything,” he blubbers out, and Doc shakes his head

“How is the pain?” he asks, and I shrug, not wanting to give Dad more reason to be angry, yet his temper seems to dim a little. A few moments later, Lydia and Linda arrive home

Lydia is talking excitedly about the ball next door. I roll my eyes. Seriously? How much more selfish could she get? We have more pressing

issues, and she is gushing about some poor soul she’ll use until she has no use for him

My father cuts them both a glare when they enter the kitchen. Linda looks at me, and her eyes take in my injured leg before the fake blubbering waterworks start. Linda’s high-pitched squeal of horror sounds like that of a dying cat. She rushes over, pretending not to be the conniving bitch I know she is. I swat her fussing hands away as she tries to embrace me

“I’m fine,” I tell her, not interested in putting up with her theatrics and her crocodile tears

“Linda, I need to stitch her up,” Doc says as I hiss in pain when the needle pierces my skin

He presses gauze against the wound while pulling the thread through, stitching me

moves onto my arm where there is another cut that needs stitches, too. Even though they were painful for a moment-Doc’s experienced hands work fast enough to get them done quickly so that it’s not too bad

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“Take these, and they’ll help with the pain. Try to stay off your leg for a few days.”

“Thanks, Doc,” I say, standing and accepting the pain medication from his outstretched hand

“Bring her by next week, and I will remove the stitches provided she doesn’t reopen it, no training, and she needs to try not to tear them open again,” Doc tells my father. At the same time, I take that as my excuse to head to the bathroom

Climbing the stairs, I hiss with every step, feeling the stitches tugging slightly. Once on the landing, I retrieve a towel from the linen cupboard and move toward the bathroom

Once in the bathroom, I strip off and hobble to the shower. As I wash, the soap burns my skin, yet it feels good to get all the gunk and grime off me. As soon as I am clean, I grab the pill box Doc gave me and read the instructions. Popping two pills in my mouth, I swallow some water before heading to my bedroom

I gingerly crawl into bed, and my stitches tug at my skin as I move about. I pull the blanket over myself and grimace as a sharp pain shoots up my leg. The medication hasn't kicked in yet, and the pain is almost unbearable. I remember the talk with my father and his refusal to allow Alpha Zayn's men near our borders

Despite the pain medication, I toss and turn. My mind revolves around rogue attacks, specifically the day I found my mother dead in the kitchen

It makes me wonder why my father would risk us again like that, knowing the damage more

attacks can cause. Tossing and turning, I stare at the roof, which seems to be oscillating, the drugs finally kicking. My eyelids droop and my thoughts float away

Maybe it's time to take things into my own hands, I think as the room fades. I have to speak with Alpha Zayn, I have to try to convince him to keep his men along our borders somehow, but what can I offer him in return? Before I can decide, the pain meds take hold completely

Despite tonight's events and the worry that is plaguing me, I drift off into a deep sleep where nothing can touch me, not even my father's orders or Linda's plotting schemes. She may make out I'm hers but I remember the way she treated my mother and sometimes I get a smug satisfaction knowing that no matter how long my mother has been gone, everyday she still has to see her face through me

~The next day~

I wake early the following morning to find my leg throbbing in pain. I am sweating, no doubt from a fever. Pulling the blankets away, I hiss when the sheet sticks to my leg. The wound must have leaked while I was asleep. With a groan, I rise from my bed and take a few moments to gather myself, welcoming the cool air

My thoughts immediately turn to Alpha Zayn, and an idea begins to form about how I can get to Alpha Zayn's pack. Hopefully, he'll speak with me. Despite our bickering, it seemed like he cared about me enough

I look over to check the time on my alarm clock

The red numbers on the alarm clock shine dimly into the dark room. The barely rising sun through the blinds shows the room in an eerie,

bloodied-like glow. The digital numbers blink: 6:18 a.m. I lay back down, trying to get back to sleep, knowing it is far too early to catch a bus into the city. If only I had a car, I think to myself. I should have my car. If only Lydia hadn't backed into it the other day

Cursing at Lydia and my legs, I get up and grab the pain medication and my robe hanging on the door. Wrapping it around myself, I move toward the door and open it. The house is dark, so I descend the stairs quietly, heading for the kitchen

I grab a glass of water and take two of my pills when I spot my father's car keys sitting next to the fruit bowl. I chew my lip, debating whether I should. I am grounded, after all. Yet, thinking that Deacon's words flit through my mind

'Since when has that stopped you?' I know that this is my chance. If I can make it to Alpha

Zayn's pack before anyone notices I'm gone, then maybe he will meet with me and listen to what I have to say before more people get hurt

Snatching the keys, I pull my robe off before looking down at my pajamas. Great, I curse, I'm sure this will be a really convincing outfit

Moving as quickly as possible, I move toward the door, where I spot Lydia's jacket. I pull it on

I know climbing the stairs back to my room will risk waking my father when the stairs creak

This is my only chance, so I take it, wearing my fuzzy hot pink pants with bunnies on them. On the bright side, I probably won't have to get out of the car; I can just ask the patrols to get Alpha Zayn

The drive is long, my leg is throbbing painfully, and I've broken out in another sweat. It takes 20 minutes to reach the city and another 20 minutes before I eventually arrive at pull up out front, the car is surrounded by several wolves, their eyes sharp and suspicious. I wind the window down when one of them taps on it

"What are you doing here?" one of them demands

I take a deep breath before speaking up. "I'm Cleo, Alpha Joseph's daughter from the

Shadowcrest pack," I explain firmly. "I need to speak with Alpha Zayn." He glances at one of the other men, who shrugs, and I watch his eyes glaze over as he uses the

mindlink

After waiting a few moments, he tells me Alpha Zayn is on his way down. I nod, leaning back in the chair and resting. My skin is hot, and I can feel sweat beading and rolling down the back of my neck. My hands are clammy, and I groan,

feeling the pain meds kick in

Shit, and I need to try to drive home like this

Now, this entire thing doesn't feel like a good idea. How could I be so stupid? I don't know how long I am waiting, but I jump when I hear my name

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"Cleo!" comes a husky, deep voice. I turn to find Zayn leaning in the window. He presses a hand to my forehead. "What are you doing here?"

I shake myself, wondering if I'm dreaming

"Cleo?" Alpha Zayn growls before opening my door. "You have a fever. Did your father not take you to a pack, Doctor?" he asks

"I'm fine. It's just the pain meds," I tell him, coming to my senses

"Slide over into the other seat," he says, motioning towards the car. I stare at him. "It wasn't a question. Slide over, now!" he orders, and I press my lips in a line. I am here for his

help. I won't get it if I start arguing with him.

Alpha Zayn starts my father's car, and I briefly wonder how I will explain his scent to my father. Oh well, that is the least of my worries.

The glow of the dash illuminates the Alpha's face, his face a picture of confusion as he glances at me with his steely gaze. He looks handsome and clean as ever, quite the contrast to my sick, sweaty, bleeding self. His scent envelops me, vanilla and sandalwood. It's intoxicating, and my racing heart slows a little as his scent calms me down

The huge gates open, and Zayn drives me through the gated community to his pack house, which is huge. He pulls up near the front door on the circular driveway. "You live here?" I ask, peering out in awe

Landscaped gardens surround his pack house,

made of stone and wood and appear to stretch for miles. "Yes, I do, unless I have to stay in the city for work," he confirms, and I follow him out of the car, wincing in pain as my leg protests

Zayn looks down at my leg. A trickle of blood runs down the inside of my thigh. I groan, about to reach back into the car to look for a tissue when suddenly, my legs go out from under me. I shriek, grabbing hold of his shoulders before coming face to face with Alpha Zayn

"You never should have come out here," he growls before walking toward the house

"I'm fine, put me down," I snap at him when he jostles me, grabbing a handful of my bare ass peeking out from under my booty shorts

"Keep thrashing, and I will toss you over my shoulder," he warns. So I stop, glaring at him

instead. However, he doesn't seem to mind my death stare; instead, I see the ghost of a smile tug at the corners of his lips, which makes my blood boil

"What's wrong with you?" I demand as he carries me through the front door

"I could ask you the same thing," he replies, his lips curving into a smirk

"You show up at my pack house and wake me up wearing fuzzy booty hot pants and bunny slippers, with a fever, looking ready to drop dead in my driveway, and now you're bleeding all over me. What is wrong with you, Cleo?"

I flush, suddenly aware of how ridiculous I look

"You didn't have to bring me here, I was fine outside your gates!" I snap at him

"Well, you're here now," Alpha Zayn says. "Let's see to that leg of yours," he chuckles

"What's so funny?" I ask, feeling irritation rising in my chest

"You," he chuckles, "I can't decide if you're brave or just plain foolish."

"I'm not foolish," I say, scowling at him

"Really? Breaking your father's punishment and coming here on your own to an Alpha's pack, an Alpha you barely know?" he says, raising an eyebrow. "What if I don't let you leave?" he taunts, and I stare down at him. He looks at me, his lips curving into a smile when his eyes flicker

"You won't hurt me, you're not that stupid, it would start a war," I tell him

“My pack is the largest in the country. Do you think I fear war?”

I chew my lip nervously. His saying that really puts things into perspective at how foolish this indeed is

“Or your old man of a father? Pfft,” he chuckles suddenly, making me nervous as he climbs the stairs toward his house. “Never let your kidnapper take you to a second location,” he growls, and my eyes widen in horror at his words, having heard that once on a crime documentary. I curse myself again. Am I his willing victim? I thrash in his arms, but he laughs, maneuvering me. When I palm him in the face, he grabs my arm, trapping me, so I bite him as hard as I can

“Ouch, what the fuck, you damn cannibal! Chill, I am just playing; if I wanted to hurt you, I

would have killed you when we were trapped in the freezer!” he snaps at me. I let his arm go, pulling away to see I made him bleed. He looks at his arm and growls

“You took a chunk out of me! I should bite you back!” he growls, pushing his front door open

“Who says something like that and expects someone not to react to it,” I spit back at him

He growls and glares at me. “You’re impossible,” I mutter under my breath as he carries me inside

The pack house is just as impressive on the inside as it is on the outside, with soaring ceilings and ornate furnishings

“Wow!” I blurt, looking up at the enormous round skylight that opens up the ceiling in the foyer

Zayn walks through to a sitting room. A huge fireplace sits in the center of one wall, and a huge flat screen on another. He sets me on the couch. “Stay here. I will get something to patch your leg,” he tells me, wandering off

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When he returns, he gestures for me to lift my leg. I do so reluctantly, realizing that relieving the pain is worth sacrificing my pride. He examines the wound on my thigh. His touch is surprisingly gentle as he cleans the wound and applies a bandage

"There," he says when he's finished. "See, you'll be fine."

"Thank you," I say in a small voice, feeling extremely awkward

"Now, what brings you here?" Alpha Zayn asks, taking a seat next to me. His eyes are intense as they lock onto mine, sending shivers down my spine

I take a deep breath. "I know you hate my father," I start, and he raises an eyebrow at me

"But my father is making decisions that are hurting our pack, and he won't listen to anyone."

"I don't get what this has to do with me?" he asks. Zayn watches me carefully before sighing

"This is about your border patrols, isn't it?" he says, and I chew my lip. "Your father refused my men on his borders. There isn't much I can do," he tells me

"He's angry, please. You can't remove your men; we'll be sitting ducks out there, and my father is too stubborn to listen," I admit

"I have no alliance with your father. My hands are tied; the last thing I need right now is the human factions getting involved if a war breaks out because your father attacks one of my men,"

he tells me

"Please, I know you don't have an alliance with my father, but my father has one with Samuel

Can't you find a workaround?"

Zayn runs his fingers through his perfectly-styled hair in frustration. "It doesn't work like that. There needs to be contracts in place, and I was only filling in for Samuel; that was what the meeting was for: to build alliances. Your father shot every offer down," he states

"My father's pack has been attacked by rogue wolves twice now," I protest, but he only watches me with those intense gray eyes. "Can't I make an agreement with you?" I ask him, and he tilts his head to the side

"You're not the Alpha. Your father is."

“Only for now, until I get my wolf. I want to make an agreement with you to keep your men along our borders to prevent any more attacks.”

Alpha Zayn’s gaze narrows, and he leans back on the couch. “And what would I get out of this agreement?” he asks

Ugh, I groan internally. I was hoping he wouldn’t ask this.

“What do you want?” I ask nervously, and his eyes flicker to his wolf fleetingly. “I’m not fucking you if that is what you are thinking!” I snap at him

He scoffs. “I have no intention of forcing you to fuck me,” he snarls

“Then what do you want?”

“Nothing you can give me, clearly. Do you even have a job?” he asks, and my heats face

“No, I am still in college.” I defend myself

He pauses for a second. “Nightshade City College?” he asks, and I nod. “I’ll think it over; I will get back to you. What is your house number?”

I shake my head. “You can’t ring home, and if my father finds out I am here, he will kill me.”

“And exactly how do you intend to explain my scent in his car or your whereabouts this morning?” he asks. I sigh because I know already that I am so busted

“Fine!” he says abruptly, getting to his feet and over to the hall stand in the foyer. He retrieves something before coming back to me. He holds

it out to me

“Use this until you get another one,” he says, holding out his phone to me

“I can’t take your phone,” I tell him

“Cleo, take it. How else am I supposed to get in contact with you if I can’t ring your house phone?”

I shake my head

“So damn stubborn, you get that from him, you know that! How are we supposed to make a deal if you stay this stubborn!” he growls before moving toward the door.

“Stay here, I’ll be back soon.”

“Wait, where are you going?”

“To get you a phone,” he says, leaving before I can protest

Laying back on the couch, I try to think of an excuse to give my father for his scent being in the car. Yet, I come up with absolutely nothing

Feeling defeated, I know I will be in trouble once I get home and lie down on the couch

Wow, I really really should’ve thought this through a bit more. Maybe I can blame it on the pain meds? My entire body is aching like I’ve run a marathon. I tug at my top, feeling it sticking to the sweat covering every inch of my

body

At some point, I must doze off though because I wake to a hand touching my forehead. In turn, I lurch awake, coming face to face with Zayn

“Take these,” he growls, handing me some pills

I look at him

“I am not taking those. What even are they?” I ask him

He tosses me a box, and I find they are antibiotics. “They should help rid any infection

for your leg, and if they don’t, you might need to see your pack doctor. Rogue bites are full of poisonous bacteria,” he informs me like I don’t already know that. Reluctantly, I take them when he passes me a phone

“Seriously, I can’t accept that. When you said phone, I thought it was a cheapo one, not..

this!” I stare at the brand new iPhone. He shakes his head, looking annoyed

“Just take it and shut up about it,” he says, refusing to take it when I try to hand it back

“I can just ring you in a couple of days,” I tell him, setting the phone down

“You are unbelievable, it’s a phone. Not a house,” he snaps

“An expensive phone that’s newer than the one I had,” I tell him. What doesn’t he get?

Also my father would definitely ask questions about how I got it

“Do you want my help or not?” he asks, folding his arms across his chest, which makes him seem even taller

“Yes, but...”

He turns away from me before I can finish grabbing his keys and mine

“Now, are you right to drive home, or am I taking you?” he asks. I jump to my feet

“I’m fine,” I tell him as a wave of vertigo from

Yoncaly

“I’m driving you,” he states. I go to protest when he grabs me

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“Put me down, what is it with and being so damn handsy?” I snap at him

Zayn rolls his eyes, ignoring my comment

Instead, he lifts me effortlessly off the couch and carries me, bridal-style, towards the door. I cringe at the sudden proximity, feeling heat rising in my cheeks

“Can’t you just let me walk?” I say, my voice coming out a bit too high-pitched

“You can barely stand,” he retorts, not bothering to look at me

We make our way towards my car parked outside. Only another man is there waiting. His

hair is the same color as Zayn’s, but his eyes aren’t as silvery gray as Zayn’s and his expression is perfectly neutral. Though I do detect a glint of humor in his gaze as he looks at me. His lips are thin, and his jawline is sharp and angular, giving off a very serious vibe. I stare at him, he has an uncanny resemblance to Zayn, and I peer up at Zayn

“My brother Vance, he’s also my Beta,” he explains, answering the question before I can ask it

“He’ll follow in my car,” he tells me. I nod, not knowing how I feel about that. Zayn sets me down gently on the passenger seat before walking around to the driver’s side. The

car is silent as we drive towards my house, the tension so thick you could almost cut it with a knife

I keep stealing glances at him from the corner of

my eye, taking in the sharp lines of his jaw and the way his dark hair falls across his forehead

Aggravating though he may be, there's no denying he's handsome. He looks like he's in deep thought, his expression unreadable

As we pull into my father's territory, my anxiety starts to grow. I have no idea how I'm going to explain this to my father, and knowing him, he'll want answers

"Pull over here; if my father catches me with you, he'll kill me," I blurt

"Either way, he'll know I was with you. Your car reeks of my scent," he states, and panic rises in me as he continues driving. As we come to the main gates, he begins to slowly pull up when two pack warriors wave to us, too. I wind my window down, recognizing Mitchel. He's one of the training instructors for my father's

pack

"Cleo, your father put out an alert..." Mitchel pauses, his eyes moving to Zayn in the driver's seat before they dart back to me. "You wanna have a good excuse being in that man's presence, Cleo," Mitchel growls. I growl back, refusing to be scolded like a little girl. Putting up with my father's wrath is terrible enough; I won't take it from one of his men. Not when I will be their Alpha one day

"I don't need an excuse," I spit back at Mitchel, my pride stinging. Zayn's hand lands on my thigh, and I jump, not expecting the sudden contact. He squeezes gently, a silent message telling me to calm down

"Seen her in the city, she was looking for her phone in the wreckage. My brother is in the car behind us. Cleo looked on the verge of passing

out. Figured I best drive her home," Zayn cuts in smoothly, the lie sliding off his tongue with practiced ease. "Is there a problem?"

Mitchel eyes him suspiciously for a moment before shrugging. "Just wanted to make sure everything was okay," he says before waving us through the gates

As we drive towards my house, I can feel Zayn's gaze on me

"Are you okay?" he asks softly, and I nod, not trusting myself to speak

I stare at him for a moment, taking in the sincerity in his eyes. For all his rough edges and gruff exterior, there's something kind about him, too

"Thank you," I say softly, meaning every word

The car falls into a tense silence once again until we pull up outside my house. Zayn nods before getting out of the car and coming around to open my door for me. As I step out onto the pavement, I can't help but feel a sense of safety with him around

But as I turn to face my house and see my father standing on the porch waiting for me, that sense of safety is short-lived. "Thanks for the ride," I say, turning to face Zayn. He nods, his expression serious

"Will you be okay dealing with him?" he asks, and I glance at my father to see him storming over to me. Before I have a chance to say anything, my father growls

"Where the fuck have you been?" he demands

"I was just out taking care of some things," I say

carefully, trying to keep my tone neutral

"With him! What business have you got with him, Cleo?" he snaps, grabbing my arm when I feel Zayn's presence suddenly behind me. His hand goes to my waist, the warmth of it seeping into my skin. I fight the urge to look down at it, my skin buzzing slightly at his touch

"Your men really aren't good at communicating

As I told your man at the front gate, I ran into her in the wreckage looking for her phone."

"You could have called me to pick her up," my father snarls, glaring at him

"Would you have answered?" Zayn replies quickly, and my father falls quiet

My father doesn't look convinced, but after a moment, he sighs and shakes his head

"I don't have time for this right now. Go clean up and get some rest," he says before walking away

I let out a sigh of relief when I feel Zayn's breath sweep across my neck. "I'll call you in a few days," he whispers, and I nod when his hand grabs mine suddenly. I look up at him, only for his lips to graze mine. He is that close. Stunned, I just stare at him for a second when he smirks "Your keys," he adds, then chuckles

I shake myself out of the daze I am in. "Thanks, I say awkwardly, and he steps away, moving toward his car parked on the curb

Chained By The Alpha By Jessica Hall Chapter 18

"I wonder how Deacon would feel knowing you're hanging out with random Alphas?" comes Lydia's taunting voice. I turn to find her leaning on the railing of the porch, looking smug as usual

"He gave me a lift home, that is it; I was looking for my phone."

Lydia chuckles and stands up, coming down the steps toward me. "Sure you were." She pauses beside me. "But I guess we will find out if Deacon believes your lies," she laughs before walking back inside

Sighing, I head inside and to my room. Lydia has always had a thing for Deacon. She makes

sure I know it, too, with the way she is always touching and flirting with him whenever he is near

Later that night, Linda calls me down to help make dinner. With a groan, I heave myself off the bed. My stitches tug painfully, and I instantly reach for my painkillers. Snatching them off the bedside table, I head downstairs, where I find Linda standing in the kitchen

"You look like shit," she says, and I can't help but chuckle. She's right, I do look like shit

Linda's wearing a simple white summer dress with short sleeves and white flowers. Her hair is down with curls hanging lazily about her face

She's wearing silver hoops in her ears

A slight smile tilts her lips as she glances up

She's standing at the counter, a pot, and spatula in hand, with a bowl on the counter. I can smell

the aroma of food wafting from the pot

"Your father told me that you ran into Alpha Zayn this morning?" she questions as I grab my drink bottle from the fridge. I nod before popping my painkillers in my mouth and swallowing them

"Here, come stir this," she tells me while grabbing a chopping board from beside the microwave. Glancing in the pot, I find it's chili

"When will Dad be home?" I ask her while stirring the pot as she cuts up something to add to it

"He'll be here shortly," she says when Lydia comes into the room all dressed up in a skin-tight body-con dress

"Hmm, chili," she says, moving past me

"You look cute," Linda tells her

"Always do," Lydia chirps, and I roll my eyes. "I'm heading over to the new nightclub that opened," she informs her mother when I remember I am supposed to sneak out there and meet Deacon

"Are you coming? I can give you a lift into the city?" Lydia asks, and my brows furrow. Since when does she voluntarily want to spend time with me?

"She's grounded!" Linda tells her, and I press my lips in a line

"Seriously?" Lydia chuckles. "Grounded like a child?" she laughs, and I feel like slapping her

Linda shrugs. "That is what her father told me."

"But depending on if she tells the truth, I may be able to sway her father," Linda adds, and I glance at her over my shoulder

"Excuse me?" I ask, wondering what she is getting at. She leans on the counter, her arms folded across her chest

"Where did you go this morning, and don't feed me the same bullshit you told your father," she states. I look at her and then at Lydia, who is watching keenly

"To look for my phone," I lie

"Really, because Samuel was there this morning and didn't mention you being there. He was helping with the cleanup," she tells me

Pressing my lips into a line, I know I have been caught out when I hear the front door open up. I growl, knowing she has set me up. My father wanders into the kitchen. He pecks Linda on the lips before taking the spatula off me. He dips it in the chili, tasting it

"Hm, I love Chili," he beams. I have to give Linda one thing, she is a great cook

My father takes in the room before glancing between us all while Linda and I are locked

in a staring competition. "What's going on?" Dad asks. Linda raises an eyebrow at me, and I try to keep my face neutral, yet my heart beats fast in my chest

"Well?" Dad asks, looking at me expectantly,

but before I can open my mouth, Linda cuts me off

"Cleo lied about her whereabouts this morning, she was not looking for her phone. I spoke to

Samuel earlier, who had been at the Hotel helping to clean up the mess from the rogue attack. Since daybreak, she has never been there," Linda tells him

My father turns to look at me. "You lied?" he asks me. I say nothing, knowing he'll take her side over mine any day. He always does since she is his mate and he can't seem to see what a manipulative bitch she is

"I went to visit Zayn," I admit. My father blinks at me

"And why would you do that?" he asks, and I growl. He knows exactly why I would do that!

"Cleo?" he demands, and my eyes dart to his

"Because you are letting your ego get in the way of your judgment. You had him remove his men

from our borders when they are the only thing keeping the rogues out!" I tell him, and his face reddens with his growing anger

"You went behind my back to a rival Alpha

Disobeyed your Alpha?!" he growls angrily

How does he not see the risk he is putting the pack in?

"Yes, because you are putting the pack at risk

How can you not see that!" I snap back at him

"That wasn't your call to make. You have no idea how to run a pack, and you certainly

are not entitled to try to make treaty alliances without my say so!"

"That's what you will tell the pack when their loved ones are killed because of your stupidity?" Task

"Excuse me?" he demands, but I don't stop

"Or are you hoping this arranged marriage you've decided you can force me into with Alpha Dane's son will be the end to your problems?"

"Arranged marriages are part of pack alliances, Cleo. You know this! Is this what all this is about? You're having to marry to help your pack?" he demands. I scoff at him

"Have to? I am not marrying Boyd, I am not allowing him to take over my mother's pack because you are too blinded by your ego to allow Zayn to help!"

"You won't have a choice. You want the pack

You have to make sacrifices. This is one of them!"

"Exactly, father. Call Zayn and fix our borders; don't dump that on me, too. Somehow, I don't think our pack will agree with you risking them for your own selfish reasons.

Or do you plan to tell them your ego was worth more than your pack members?" I ask.
"Let's just hope they believe your ego is more important than their lives!"

We stand in the heavy silence of the argument weighing on me. My chest tightens as I stare at my father, the Alpha, with defiance burning in my eyes

Chained By The Alpha By Jessica Hall Chapter 19

"You dare speak to me like that! You have no idea who that man is! What he has done! He killed my best friend!"

"I know exactly what he's done, father which is try to help us and until you show proof of this friend or give up a name as far as I'm concerned it's moot. And quite frankly, I believe his actions were justified and so does everyone else, or he wouldn't hold the status he does! You can't make assumptions based on conspiracy theories, there are two sides to a story and then there is the truth! Everyone is quick to assume and point the finger but no one has bothered to look at the reasoning behind his actions, shit no one even can answer if he truly did it!" I yell back at him

The moment my rant is over, my father's hand connects with the side of my face. My cheek burns violently, and my ear rings at the impact

In shock at what he did, I touch my cheek, feeling how every finger had welted into my skin

I stand there, staring at my father in disbelief

His handprint stings, and I know that it will leave a mark. Linda gasps, and Lydia tries to hide her smirk as she leans against the counter and checks her phone

All I can do at first is stare in shock. My father has never hit me. Never. What would my mother say?

However, if I am expecting an apology, I know I won't get one with the way my father glares at me

"You are grounded until further notice," he says through gritted teeth. "And you are forbidden from leaving this house without my permission

If I catch you going behind my back again, especially to that mongrel, you'll find yourself rogue."

This is not fair. I had gone to do what was right for the pack, to keep them safe from the rogues that lurked just beyond our borders. But my father, blinded by his own pride and arrogance, refused to see the truth of the situation

As he turns to leave the room, I speak up one last time. "You will regret this decision," I tell him in a low voice

He whirls around, his expression fierce. "You will not threaten me!" he growls

I simply shrug. "I am not threatening you," I say

calmly. "But actions have consequences. And when our borders get breached again by rogues, you can have fun explaining to our pack why their loved ones are dead."

"I don't know what has gotten into you lately, but it ends now. I won't tolerate the disrespect. I don't like punishing you; I've been a good father and a..." His words hang in the air

I scoff at his words

"Yeah, you have, Dad. You've always been a

good father, but since mom died, you've been a shitty Alpha!"

He seems taken aback by my words. Will he hit me again?

"Maybe if Mom were still here, things would be different, but she is just collateral damage right

off another shitty decision you made?" I spit venomously, each word like a dagger piercing his heart. I can see the pain in his eyes, but my anger didn't allow me to feel any sympathy for him

Even though my parents weren't mates, I still mean what I said. The pack never had issues like this until Linda came along and got in his ear. Now, the pack is barely staying afloat with her outrageous spending habits and the stupid alliances she has with Samuel. The same alliance that got my mother killed when he canceled pack protection with Alpha Greyson, who is the alpha of Lakeview Pack. For a little while Alpha Greyson and my mother dated until my father put an end to it after Linda got in his ear

Linda had convinced my father that my mother would marry Alpha Greyson, and they'd be

without a pack if my mother removed my father's title and merged packs, since my mother had grown closer with the Alpha when Linda came into the picture. My mother never refused to let my father keep his mate despite them being married. But, he refused to let her divorce him out of fear of losing the pack, since it legally belonged to my mother. Linda worried about her status had my father break the treaty alliance, and a few days later, my mother was killed in a rogue attack because our borders weren't protected

"Watch your tongue, Cleo!" he growls, his face turning red with a mixture of hurt and rage. But Tam sick of holding my tongue and just enduring his stupid mistakes

Linda, steps between us, her dark hair framing her eyes as she glares at me, pointing an accusing finger at me. "You ungrateful little

brat. Your father has done everything for you, and all you do is cause problems!"

"Ungrateful?" I scoff, incredulous. "What has he done for me besides trying to control every aspect of my life? I am not some puppet that he can manipulate!"

"Enough!" my father roars, silencing both Linda and me. "Cleo, get out of my face and do not disrespect my Luna. She is only trying to help."

"Help?" My mind races with anger and confusion. How could they not see that I was suffocating under their expectations and rules? Lydia never has to attend meetings, train with the pack, or be used as his personal secretary

Yet, I am the problem child?

I am the one dragged from meetings and forced to work after school while Linda does absolutely

nothing, just like her daughter, who gets everything handed to her on a silver platter. I take a deep breath, feeling the weight of their disapproval pressing down on me and knowing nothing I say will get through to him

Unable to find the words to express myself. I retreat, storming out and back to my

I lay down on my bed, flinging my arm over my eyes, blocking out what little light is in the room. Yet, the more I sit in the room, the more my anger at my father's foolishness

festers

Chained By The Alpha By Jessica Hall Chapter 20

I spend most of the day in the room, refusing to speak with my father. However, later in the afternoon, I hear a knock on the door. Sitting up, I see it's my father. Though right now, he looks guilty and remorseful. He hesitantly walks over, dropping my car keys on the bedside table

I pick them up, looking at him questionably you did.

"I'm sorry I slapped you, but you were not entitled or authorized to do what Nor do you have the right to speak to Linda like that." He sighs heavily. I say nothing to him. I know he's not in a space to hear what I have to say so I decide to save wasting my breath

At my silence, he scratches the back of his neck nervously, then grips my shoulder

"Anyway, I paid your outstanding bill on the car," he says. I nod, and he presses his lips in a line. He knows he fucked up by hitting me; he can't take that back

I watch as he walks out. I stare at the door where he left before glancing at my keys in my hand. Getting up, I grab some clothes and pull them on, hissing as I pull my leggings up my legs. I need to get out of here

Fuck Dad's rules

I am going to enjoy the rest of my holiday before I return to college. For now, though, I need some time away from them all and to think things through

Without a second thought, I grab my purse and head for the door. Jogging downstairs, I storm into the kitchen, my anger still boiling from the

confrontation with my father and Linda. Despite him apologizing, he still had no right to hit me

The air in the kitchen is thick with tension as Lydia and I exchange barbs. Her smugness irks me, but I can't let her see how deeply her words cut. I grab my drink bottle from the fridge, feeling its cold surface against my palm. I take a long, deliberate sip, letting the silence stretch between us. I can feel Lydia's eyes on me, analyzing, judging, waiting for me to crack

"You really think you can handle being Alpha?" Lydia taunts, her voice dripping with condescension. "You can't even handle a simple conversation without running away."

I turn to face her, my grip tightening around the bottle. "Handling the pack is more than just smooth talk and pretty dresses, Lydia. It's about making tough decisions, something I'm more

than capable of."

She scoffs, crossing her arms over her chest

"You? You're too emotional, too impulsive. You think with your heart, not your head. That's not what the pack needs."

Her words sting, but I refuse to show it. "Maybe that's exactly what the pack needs," I counter

"Someone who cares about them, not just the power and status."

Lydia rolls her eyes, but I can see a flicker of uncertainty in her gaze. I know I've hit a nerve

The truth is, Lydia has always been about appearances, about maintaining a facade. But being an Alpha requires more than that. It requires strength, determination, and a willingness to put the pack above all else, something she isn't capable of. Drinking half my drink, it tastes a little off, I set it on the counter as I rustle in the pantry for something to snack on and chose a beef jerky stick. I bite a piece off when she speaks again

"You're going out?" Lydia asks me, and I glance at her

"I thought you were too?" I ask, and she shrugs

"I'm just waiting for Amber to show up, do you want a lift into the city?" she asks me, and I eye her suspiciously. What is she sucking up for?

"Not from you," I tell her, holding up my keys. "I can drive myself."

"How did you afford to get that out?" she demands

"Dad got it out of the shop for me."

"Typical, your father is always rewarding bad behavior," she hisses

"You'd know, your behavior is hardly the little princess you make out in front of him."

Lydia laughs. "I'm not gonna be the next Alpha

You are," she says, unable to hide the bitterness from her tone

"You're right, I will be, and I can't wait because that means I can kick your freeloading ass to the curb!" I sneer, going to grab my drink bottle from the fridge when I don't notice it on the counter. I could have sworn I left it on the counter. How did it get in the fridge?

"Did you put my drink in the fridge?" I ask Lydia. She looks at me like I'm a fool

"Why would I touch something you've had your

cock sucking lips on?" I roll my eyes, turning back to my task, I rinse the bottle and

refill it with iced coffee when I remember that I left my jacket upstairs. With a growl of annoyance, I head for the stairs and cringe every step. Once back upstairs, I snatch it off the back of my chair next to my desk and head back downstairs

My hands shake from the pain of moving down the stairs, but I ignore it and move to the kitchen. Lydia stands beside the fridge. "Don't get caught now," Lydia sneers

"I'm sure you'll snitch the first chance you get," I retort when she hands me my drink bottle

"Sure will, I can't keep my reputation so clear with daddy dearest without muddying yours."

Troll my eyes at Lydia who wears a malicious glint in her eyes. Refusing to pay her any more attention. I tighten the cap on my bottle and take a large gulp. desperate to quench

"Enjoy your night, Cleo," Lydia sneers, sashaying her hips as she walks away. "Oh, and Cleo? Don't get too wasted, you don't want to be too hungover when your father punishes you for sneaking off!" she adds