

Chapter 3

The sky was cloudy. Thunder grumbled above, low and distant. The storm hadn’t started yet, but I could feel it coming — the same way you sense danger before it strikes.

Sitting in a taxi, I stared at the sky while leaning on the backseat. My inner condition was like the weather.

Today was my mom's wedding day. I was going to attend the celebration. I wondered who she had chosen for herself. But I really wanted her to be happy in her life.

The taxi came to a halt outside the most expensive hotel in our pack.

I paid the driver and stepped out. The hotel towered above me — glass and gold, a world I’d only seen in dreams. Mom was marrying into it.

I walked into the hotel. I was mesmerized by the interior.

I approached the reception area and showed the invitation card to the receptionist.

She called a waiter and told him to lead me to the venue.

When the waiter brought me in front of a large door, he said,

"You are so lucky to attend the Alpha's wedding."

I was stunned. "What?"

He gave me a look. "You didn't know?"

I was confused. Did I come to the wrong wedding? Or was my mom going to marry an Alpha in rank? By how he had arranged the wedding in the expensive hotel, he was surely a rich businessman.

Two men outside the hall opened the door for me.

My eyes were blurred by how beautifully the hall was decorated.

I stepped into the hall and was surprised at how many people were there.

'Didn't Mom say it would be a private wedding? Why are there so many people?' I thought while looking for my mother.

I felt a bit small. People were everywhere, dressed in nice clothes. Meanwhile, I was in a not-so-expensive dress.

People gave me judging looks as I looked around. I felt uncomfortable.

"Elara!"

I heard my mother's voice, which made me feel relieved. I turned around, and my gaze fell on her.

She was approaching me in a white bridal gown.

"Mom, you look gorgeous!" I mumbled with a smile.

She rushed to give me a tight hug. "I am glad you are here."

I grinned at her. She broke the hug and turned her head to someone.

“Meet him, Elara,” Mom said brightly. “This is Alpha Gray.”

I froze. “Alpha… Gray?”

Her smile widened. “Alpha Gray Kingston.”

The name hit me like cold water. Kingston.

My chest tightened as I turned — and there he was, the man who ruled our pack, tall and commanding, his gaze weighing me like judgment.

'My mom is going to marry Alpha Gray?' I was still in disbelief.

There was something that pinched my heart, which I tried to avoid.

Alpha Gray gently stroked my hair and said, "Rise, my dear."

I straightened up and looked at him. He was a tall, muscular, and well-built man. He had been running our pack for a long time, and the pack members were really pleased with him.

It was time for the wedding, so they directly headed to the stage to take vows and complete their wedding simply.

I stared at them, unmoved. 'That means Trevor and Kevin are going to be my stepbrothers?' I thought.

My eyes widened at the thought. I glanced at my bandaged hand.

I felt tears blur my eyes. How could I accept Trevor as my brother?

I used to like him, but after he hurt me that day, my heart broke, and I don’t want to see him anymore.

I tried to control my heart and show my mom that I was happy for her new beginning.

The wedding was nice. Lots of smiles and happy faces. I discovered that the wedding was indeed private, with only the officials' family members as guests.

When the wedding ended, I saw my mom looked worried and Alpha Gray looked mad. I wondered what had happened.

I followed them into a room in the corner of the hall and stopped outside the door. The door was slightly ajar.

I could hear Alpha Gray's angry growls.

"I can't believe they didn't come! How dare they!"

My mom's soft voice was convincing. "Honey, please. Maybe they are still angry? Please forgive them. They are your sons."

“Did you see the bill I got? They intentionally wasted my money on the whole university. Did they think they could make me suffer like that?”

My brows shot up when I realized that they were talking about Trevor and Kevin. They had not shown up at the wedding. I recalled yesterday’s party on campus. So they were angry because of this wedding?

Somehow, I felt relaxed that they had not come. At least, I did not have to face them again.

'I think I should leave now,' I thought.

As I was about to move, my body hit a flower vase. It fell on the floor, making a loud noise. My mom and Alpha Gray came out of the room and caught me outside.

"I-I am sorry. I came here to tell you that I am leaving," I told them with an apologetic tone.

Alpha Gray frowned at me. "Leaving? Are you not going to attend the family dinner?"

I shook my hands in denial. "Another day, Alpha."

I bowed to him again. My mom nodded her head and said, "I am seeing you off then."

On the way to the gate of the hall, she asked me how I was passing my life.

"I am having a good life, Mom. Don't worry." I lied to her.

She smiled and was about to tell the guards to open the door for me.

But before she could speak, the hall doors burst open, wind curling through the chandeliers.

Two tall figures filled the doorway — rain glistening on their jackets, eyes sharp and unreadable.

The chatter in the hall faltered. Even the music seemed to hush.

I knew those silhouettes before my heart had time to prepare.

My breath caught, every nerve in my body remembering their voices, their cruelty.

“Trevor! Kevin, you’re finally here!” my mother exclaimed, joy breaking the silence.

Their gazes slid from her to me. The storm had arrived.

My mom moved closer to stand between them and me. She held my hand and said to them,

“This is Elara, your stepsister.”

As soon as they heard my mom, their smiles faded — like light dying behind glass.

Kevin’s jaw tightened first; Trevor’s eyes went cold and unreadable.

No one said a word.

But I knew.

They remembered me.