

Goodbye My Alpha Chapter 41

Think fast, I told myself, tapping a finger against my chin.

Crap, crap, crap...

“On the ninth of next month. He said he couldn’t give me an answer before then.”

“Damn!” Roman cursed. “Give me the video. I’ll talk to him then.”

My palms broke out in a cold sweat, and I racked my brain for something else.

“Beta Starke, using this method to threaten Alpha Knight to help you secure the project has already made him very dissatisfied with you. If you bring the video to him, it will only further anger him. Then, not only will you offend him more, you will also prevent yourself from getting the project—or any other projects in the future. Do you think that is the right strategy to take right now? You’ll have much better luck if you let me handle it. Don’t you agree?”

Roman was silent while he thought about it, and I waited for his response with baited breath.

He had to know that threatening Griffon in this way wasn’t honorable, that he would already be treading on thin ice. Especially a Beta doing it to an Alpha of a stronger, more powerful pack.

He finally spoke again. “I must see the contract on the ninth of next month. Otherwise, it won’t be your best friend’s new mate claiming her after the ceremony...it’ll be a group of my men.”

My heart skipped a beat—or ten. Roman knew the date of Harper’s wedding? Just how close of an eye had he been keeping on us?

Now, not only Harp but also her new mate might be implicated. I had to think fast.

Real fast.

I put down the phone and struggled to get up.

I went to the desk, pulled open the drawer, and took out a few medicine bottles.

Taking out the sleeping pills, I put them in another empty bottle.

Then, numbly, I picked up the other pills for heart failure and stuffed them into my mouth.

So help me goddess, I would see Harper mated, and I would see Roman pay.

Goodbye My Alpha Chapter 42

There were about ten days left before the ninth of the next month.

Every day, I went to different hospitals and got prescriptions so I could accumulate sleeping pills.

After coming home one day and placing the medicine on the table, I glanced at the box setting to the side.

I hadn't returned the dress and necklace to Roman yet. I was surprised he hadn't asked for it back given how expensive the necklace must be. I quickly picked up the phone and made arrangements to deliver them to him.

Although I had to deal with Roman, I would return what did not belong to 'ne.

The delivery man arrived quickly. After sending the package out, I felt much more at ease.

When Roman saw the dress and necklace being returned, he was pleased, and his wolf pawed at him.

"I know, I know," he soothed.

If it were someone else, they would have already sold the necklace, but Taya had returned it. Which meant she cared about him enough to return something that belonged to him, and she didn't care about the money.

Sure, she was resistant, but he'd dealt with this before with women. He loved a challenge. Right now, he just needed her to secure the project...and then he'd secure her.

Once I sent Roman's things back to him, I took a nap.

Harper calling woke me up.

"It's ready!" she screamed excitedly into the phone.

“On my way!” I answered.

The wedding dress Harper had custom made was ready.

As poorly as I felt, there was no way I was missing this, and I was genuinely excited with her.

I gathered myself and tried to forget about the exhaustion I was feeling. When I got to the bridal shop, Damian, Harper’s fiancé, was also there. When he saw me coming in, he greeted me warmly.

“Where’s Harper?” I asked him excitedly.

Damian raised his chin toward the fitting room. “She’s trying the dress on. I saved you a seat over here.”

Oh, thank the goddess there was someplace to sit.

It was getting harder and harder to stand for long periods of time. My body could never get enough oxygen anymore. The weaker my heart got, the worse the symptoms were. I knew it wouldn’t be long for me, but I HAD to see Harper and Damian’s mating ceremony if it was the last thing I did.

And...it might possibly actually be the last thing I did.

Goodbye My Alpha Chapter 43

Fortunately, Harper soon came out of the fitting room quickly.

Just sitting here had made me nod off a bit.

Harper called my name softly, and my eyes snapped open.

I was thankful Harper didn’t seem notice my strangeness. She was too wrapped up in her dress...as she should be. She lifted the hem of the big mating dress and walked around in front of her and Damian.

Wolf shifters didn’t have the same superstitions about mates seeing the dress before the wedding, which I’d always loved.

And I really loved the look on Damian’s face right now. It was one of absolute awe and worship.

“What do you think?” she asked.

“It’s beautiful,” I gushed.

“My baby looks beautiful no matter what she wears,” Damian replied, a huge grin on his face as he looked at his future mate.

Harper beamed and walked over to kiss his cheek.

Damian caressed her face affectionately.

I was so excited for them. They’d been together for a long time, and they’d already gone through so much. They’d been apart while Damian had gone to college, and Harper had confided in me that his childhood had been a bit rough, even though his situation was different than ours and he still had a family and a pack.

But it definitely made him understand Harper more, and—I knew that he would cherish the family they built together. They would both be amazing parents for their pups.

I wished I had found a man like Damian. Life would have been a lot easier and happier.

“Are you ready to pick your dress, Taya?” Harper asked me when the sales associate came over with a rack of dresses.

Harper’s dress had cost a small fortune, so the store was providing my dress.

“Umm...” I hemmed and hawed. I was so thin and pale, nothing would look good on me or fit properly. I didn’t even want to think about how awful any of these colors would look against my ghostly complexion. “They’re all so gorgeous, I don’t even know where to start...”

“Oooh! I’ll pick!” Harper clapped her hands together, her eyes gleaming.

Whew. Exactly what I’d hoped for.

Harper quickly picked a champagne-colored dress and asked me to try it on.

Once it was on, I stared at myself in the dressing room mirror, shaking my head before walking out. There was no way Harper was going to NOT see how much weight I’d lost.

Harper touched my waist. There was no flesh, only bones.

She looked at my face as if seeing for the first time how truly washed-out I looked. She narrowed her gaze on me, her face stern. “Taya, why have you lost so much weight?”

Goodbye My Alpha Chapter 44

Luckily, I’d already thought about this.

Now I just needed Harper to be so consumed by her mating ceremony preparations that she believed me.

“I lost weight for your mating ceremony.”

Harper frowned. “You’re practically skin and bones, love. Why are you still losing weight?!”

I opened my mouth > brush her off and tell her that I had stopped, but I was saved by one of the girls in the shop. coming over and ushering us toward the makeup counter to decide on our look for the day—of.

After we finished at the dress shop and getting dresses and makeup decided on, the three of us went to the hotel for a final meeting with the mating ceremony coordinator. Since Harper wasn’t officially part of Damian’s pack until after they were mated, she hadn’t wanted to have their ceremony at his pack center. A hotel was neutral territory and it would make Harper feel more comfortable.

“Let me take you both out to dinner when I get off work.” Damian kissed Harper’s cheek as we exited the hotel.

“I’d love that, babe,” Harper replied, standing on her tiptoes to return his kiss.

When Harper and I returned to the house, Harper started fussing around with packing. Damian had bought a house for he and Harper to live in after they were mated. It was on his pack’s land, so that they would be closer to his family, and they would have help with their pups once they started their family.

“I’m so glad you’re staying here,” Harper said as she packed. “Buying this house was the first thing I ever really accomplished, and I don’t like the idea of a stranger living here.”

Just another reason she was going to be devastated when I was gone.

I nodded with a smile, not able or wanting to verbalize how I was feeling right now.

“I’m going to leave a few things here, though. For when I stay over for girls’ nights,” Harper said, going through some of her pajamas and setting them aside.

I didn’t say anything. I couldn’t.

Better to change the subject. “I have a wedding gift for you.”

Oh?!”

“Wait a minute,” I said, then went to my bedroom. I opened the drawer, took out a debit card, and handed it to her.

Goodbye My Alpha Chapter 45

“This is a dowry that I saved for you.”

Harper took the card and looked back and forth between it and me, a confused expression on her face.

“But... what do you mean? Why?”

“I know Damian’s family said they didn’t need one, since they know your history. I just... I want to make sure you start off on the right foot with them, that they don’t hold it against you later.”

It was an old-fashioned practice, but wolf shifters typically received dowries when someone from outside of their pack married into their pack. Essentially, packs cared for their packmates. Everything from child care to school to food to medical. Anything that was needed, if you were part of a close-knit pack that abided by the “old ways” like Damian’s did, it was tradition for the she-wolf’s family to give a gift to help with the cost of anything needed for her or future pups.

Was the money actually needed? Nah. It was more a gesture of goodwill between the packs.

Over the years, I’d divided my salary into several parts—one for Griffon, one for Harper, and the other for living expenses.

It wasn’t a lot, but if something didn’t go smoothly for Harper after marriage, having some extra money on hand could give her peace of mind. Because if Damian and Harper split up, the pack would return the dowry to Harper, per pack law.

Harper was more than a little shocked when Taya handed her a debit card.

She didn’t think there was anything left after Taya paid Griffon back.

Hell, she’d thought about how she could help Taya out with expenses...not the other way around. So this? This was surprising to say the least.

No wonder Taya was so thin. She’d been scrimping and saving to not only pay Griffon back, but to do this.

Harper touched Taya's cheek and shook her head. "Taya... You didn't have to do this for me."

Taya smiled gently and said, "I wanted to."

Harper shook her head again and pressed the debit card back into Taya's hand. "I can't take this. I'm older than you; I'm basically your older sister. Only older sisters prepare dowry for younger sisters if their parents aren't around. Besides, since you aren't a shifter, it's not your responsibility."

"Harper-"

"Uh-uh. You need to keep this for yourself. Without a pack to rely on, I worry about you."

Goodbye My Alpha Chapter 46

Seeing that Taya was upset, Harper hurried forward to stop her from leaving the room, but Taya pushed her away.

Harper sighed helplessly. "Why are you so damn stubborn?"

"You've cared for me since I was young, since I didn't have a wolf to rely on. I've never been able to do anything for you. I've always been poor little human who couldn't fend for herself." Taya paused. "Just think of it as a gift from your little sister. A thank-you for everything you've done for me."

Harper still didn't agree. Taya's life was already difficult enough, and she wasn't sure how things would go now that she didn't have Griffon taking care of her and now that Harper was moving. How could she ever accept Taya's money when she didn't know what was going to happen to her?

But...what she could do right now was just take the card, don't spend anything, and give it back to her later. Maybe when Taya got married. Taya would be happy, and they wouldn't fight. Plus, one good dowry deserved another, right? Or something like that.

After packing some more of Harper's belongings, they lay in Harper's room on the bed.

Just like when they were younger, applying face masks and dreaming about the future.

Harper talked to Taya about getting mated, told her that breaking up with Griffon was good for her because a man of his status would never marry someone without a wolf. An Alpha like him needed a Luna, and unfortunately, no matter how much Taya wished for it, she couldn't be that for him.

“There are some humans around here, you know. Or at least men without wolves who were born into shifter families. You should find nice guy at some of the human bars. It’ll be too hard for you to mate a shifter. There are too many expectations regarding mating and pups.”

She also mentioned that no matter what happened to either of them, they would always have this house to come back to. Harper didn’t plan on selling it. The orphan in her would never NOT let her have a backup in case things went wrong.

With this house, they would always have security.

I sat in bed, agreeing with everything’ Harper said. I didn’t dare let her notice anything unusual.

I simply hugged her, feeling at peace and enjoying this moment with her.

Life might not have always given me the best, but it gave me Harper, my chosen sister. I could die knowing at least I’d had this.

I slept peacefully with Harper in my arms, just like when we were children.

This was the most calmly I had slept in the past few days. The time passed too quickly. In the blink of an eye, it was the day of Harper’s mating ceremony.

Goodbye My Alpha Chapter 47

I was a little reluctant to let Harper go, but I had to. Damian was Harper’s future. Damian’s pack and the family they would create together. Oh, how I wished I could be part of it, to see their pups, to be their auntie and play with them.

But that wasn’t in the cards for me. I had no room being selfish about Harper when I wasn’t even going to be here.

So I plastered on a smile and was as happy as I could be getting ready for the ceremony.

After the makeup artist finished doing our makeup, a photographer came to the house, took a ton of photos, and recorded a video of Damian coming to pick up Harper.

After barging into the room with the wolves who were going to stand beside him at the mating ceremony, Damian excitedly carried Harper outside.

I followed behind with a smile, holding Harper’s dress as best I could so it wouldn’t trail on the ground behind them.

The mating ceremony was at the hotel first, to be followed by a huge banquet.

One of the things I loved seeing was how clearly Damian placed great importance on Harper. It was evident by the glow on his face, the way he looked at her, the way he held her arm and wrapped his hand around her waist.

Part of me was jealous she had someone like him, but the bigger part of me was so happy he loved her so much, so relieved that she would have him to take care of her and help her through losing me.

Harper had no relatives; there was only me. And here at the ceremony, the only other person here as Harper's "family" was the orphanage's director.

Yet the hotel was full of guests, all of whom were relatives of Damian.

The main theme of the ceremony was romance under the starry sky. Twinkle lights were strung over the ceiling, creating a tapestry of stars above everyone.

It couldn't have been more perfect for a pair of wolf shifters.

Harper's white ceremony gown almost glittered under the faux night sky. She looked absolutely radiant from head to toe

standing at one end of the stage. The starlights shone on her from a distance as if she were bright and dazzling in the Milky Way.

When she crossed the stage and placed her hand in Damian's, tears filled my eyes.

From this moment on, Harper would start a new life, and I

would no longer have any regrets about leaving her behind.

Just as Damian was about to put the diamond ring on Harper's finger, a voice interrupted them.

"Why didn't you invite me to such a grand wedding?"

Goodbye My Alpha Chapter 48

More than a dozen Starke bodyguards in black with the Starke pack crest on their shirts pushed the door open and came in.

Roman put his hands in his pockets and swaggered in behind them.

The guests stilled, not daring to make a sound.

Harper and Damian were at a loss and stood rooted to their spots.

All the color drained from my face when I saw Roman.

I didn't think he would show up, and I never expected him to rush into a mating ceremony uninvited and unannounced.

I was terrified that Roman would ruin the ceremony, so I quickly got up and walked to him.

"Beta Starke!" I stopped Roman, who was walking towards the stage. "The contract has been signed. I'll give it to you tonight."

Roman looked me up and down, taking in my dress. It hugged my figure—thin as it was—and a spark of his wolf's desire instantly ignited in his gray-black eyes.

He wrapped one arm around my waist, pulled me up against

his body almost roughly, and embraced me. His voice came out in a low growl. "If you signed it already, why didn't you bring it to me earlier?"

I held back my disgust at being pressed against his body. I had to tread carefully, and it didn't help that so many people were staring at me right now—the only human in the room.

"I had to ensure at the ceremony went smoothly. Otherwise, what if you took the contract then broke your promise and disturbed my best friend's mating ceremony?"

"You don't trust me?"

"Of course not," I replied. "Beta Starke, if you want the contract, you have to wait until tonight. The deal was today, not by a specific time today."

I kept my expression stern, trying to portray all of the toughness and determination I didn't feel. There was no negotiating this, and I needed him to know that.

Roman smiled, his look almost amused. Which surprised me, given that a mere human was challenging him in front of a roomful of shifters from another pack.

"How do I know you're not lying to me?" he asked.

I pulled out my phone, opened a document, and showed him a fake contract I'd made in advance.

"You can see it here. This contract was issued by the Knight Pack, and it's stamped with their official seal."

My main work in the Midwest Packs Corporation was to receive business partners and manage the contracts: One of the reasons I'd been given a job like that was specifically because I WASN'T a wolf shifter. With no pack allegiance, they could trust me to be "more honest" with business dealings between different packs.

The Knight Pack was the largest pack and executed the most contracts within the Midwest Packs Corporation. Of course, I knew what their official seal looked like, and I was well-versed in what their contracts typically looked like. I'd simply created a copy of one of their boilerplates and asked someone to make a seal. Once it was in a PDF on my phone, you couldn't tell the difference between it and the real thing.

I scrolled through each page for Roman, one by one. When he was done, he seemed convinced, and gave me a satisfied smile.

Goodbye My Alpha Chapter 49

"Bring the contract to my villa tonight."

I knew what would happen at his villa. After getting the contract, he would force me to sleep with him now that he had what he wanted.

Or at least THOUGHT he had what he wanted.

After he moved of relief.

hand away from my waist, I let out a sigh

I gritted my teeth and said, "I will send an address where we can meet later."

There was no way in hell I was going to his villa on pack lands.

Once I entered, I would never be able to get out, and as a human, no one would come to help me.

I had a contract in hand now, and as far as Roman knew, it was real. If he wanted it, he had to follow my arrangements.

Roman frowned slightly and took a menacing step closer to me, "What kind of game are you playing?"

I shook my head. "No game." I shrugged, then added, "I just don't want to sleep with you. I want to be safe, and I won't be safe if I go onto your pack lands."

I made sure I spoke loud enough in front of all the guests, which made Roman a little embarrassed. After all, he was Beta Starke...with a human making demands of him.

How dare she.

Roman almost let his wolf's fury at being talked to that way take over, but at... considering his options, he decided to let it go.

It didn't matter where she wanted to meet—he would make her submit to him.

And as for what anyone here thought?

Meh. This wasn't a powerful pack family, and now that he had a deal with the Knight pack, once the news of him securing the Westen City project for the Starke pack, that's all that would matter.

Roman talked his wolf down from the ledge and curled his fingers into his palms to keep people from seeing his wolf rising. It wouldn't do for a Beta to seem as though he couldn't control himself.

He looked up and glanced at the newly mated wolves walking towards them, then smiled warmly. He lowered his voice to a whisper and threatened Taya, "You better bring the contract like a good little girl. Or my friends here will turn their dream mating ritual this evening into a nightmare."

After that, he gently tapped the tip of Taya's nose, pasting his "I'm not dangerous" smile on his face.

Taya swallowed and nodded obediently.

"Don't worry, Beta Starke. I'll be there."

With her guarantee, Roman took his pack bodyguards and left.

Goodbye My Alpha Chapter 50

As soon as the doors to the ceremony hall were shut, the guests began to whisper amongst themselves and point fingers at me.

I didn't take it to heart. I'm sure that whatever they were saying was probably right. Instead, I turned to Harper and Damian, who were walking toward me.

"Who was that?"

Harper looked at me, worry written all over her face. I'm sure her wolfie instincts told her that Roman wasn't one of the "good guys".

"The Beta of the Starke pack. He needs to see me for an important contract. That's all." I patted her hand with a smile, trying to brush it off.

As if one could brush off someone barging into a wedding they weren't invited to, where they didn't know anyone there.

And for a business contract, no less.

When I said this, I deliberately raised my voice just a slight bit.

There was a small microphone on Harper's wedding dress, so that everyone would hear the mating vows.

The guests heard my explanation and started whispering again. Now, I could hear them. They were saying things about how Harper's friend was amazing, and how impressive I was to know Beta Starke, that Beta Starke thought I was so important and vital to his pack's business that he came to me for something.

Damian's pack lands were on the outskirts of Arcadia. They were small and insular in their dealings, and they didn't work with or have relationships with the bigger packs, like Starke or Knight. But, of course, they all knew who the important Alphas, Betas, and packs were.

My explanation was enough to dispel everyone's opinions for the time being. Once people knew it was Beta Starke, the powerful and rich shifter, it suddenly didn't seem so odd for him to burst into a mating ceremony the way he had.

Because he wouldn't care about something like that. He would only care about getting what he wanted, when he wanted it. That was the right of someone in his position, was how most wolf shifters viewed it.

However, I could tell that Harper still felt uneasy. She'd always felt uncomfortable with my being a human and working with contracts for large packs. If anything went wrong, I'd be the easy one to blame.

Harper pursed her lips, gave her new mate a worried look, and then shifted her gaze back to Taya.

Something was up. For sure.

If it was really like what Taya had said, and all Beta Starke wanted was a simple contract, why did he bring so many of his pack bodyguards here?

Plus, he was touching Taya's waist!

His actions looked anything but business-like. To most, it might have look like Beta Starke was interested in Taya romantically, but to Harper, it looked like he was threatening her.

The more Harper thought about it, the more worried she became. She took off the microphone on her wedding dress, held Taya's hand, and looked at her anxiously.

"If you're in danger, you have to tell me. No matter what, I'll help you."

Ever since they were young, Taya always seemed to attract bad people and relationships. And this man definitely seemed like he belonged in that category.