



27 27-Without A Wolf

Helanie: 1

Showering in his bathroom was incredibly soothing. After finishing, I felt this sudden urge to sit in the bathtub.

I had never owned a bathtub before, but I had seen people enjoying them in movies. I filled it with warm water and carefully lowered myself in. Taking a deep breath, I clung to the edge of the tub until I felt settled.

The beautiful wall with its blue patterns caught my eye, and I found myself lost in admiration, forgetting everything else. The calmness of the water washed over me.

As I began to close my eyes, a distant memory started to unfold in my mind.

Flashback:

"Helanie, are your parents coming for your first transition?" the girl to my left asked, her question sending a shiver through me at the mere mention of them.



I wanted them to come, but I feared that if I upset them somehow, they would punish me later.

My gaze shifted to my left, noticing all the parents lined up, offering their children reassurance, giving them thumbs up to boost their confidence. On my right, it was the same scene. But among all the faces, there wasn't a single one there for me. That scared me, and I started to doubt whether I was ready for my first transition.

"Oh, poor Sally is an omega," someone remarked when Sally's transition revealed her status. I felt sorry for her. She would likely face a beating and perhaps never be loved again.

However, to my surprise, her mother and father stepped forward, pulling her into a warm group hug.

"It doesn't matter. You're still our precious Sally. So what if you're an omega? You're our angel." Their words must have filled her heart with comfort.

I couldn't understand how one girl could receive so much love without having to do anything for



her parents, while another child, working tirelessly every single day, would be hated.

I was only twelve, but I had taken on responsibilities since I was eight. I began with cleaning fish and handling other small chores, but over time, I was given more significant tasks that consumed most of my day.

I loved the idea of studying, of becoming a doctor one day, but that dream felt far away now. There was no time to pursue anything with the heavy routine I had.

But in that moment, all I wanted was to receive my wolf.

"Don't worry, okay? Even if you don't have a powerful wolf, remember, your father and I saved enough to help you get into a better school,"

A mother beside me spoke tenderly to her daughter. The warmth in her voice touched my heart, but it also brought tears to my eyes.

Ever since my parents' divorce was finalized, I had been forgotten. It was as if they only cared about me when they were still in love. Was I just

a product of their love and nothing more?

I clutched my sweater tightly, a sudden chill running through me. Everything around me felt so dull and sad.

After everyone else had transitioned, it was finally my turn. I doubted anyone cared about me —my own parents certainly didn't. But just before I could step into the woods for the transformation, I saw my stepbrother, Sullivan, appear with his friends. He was only a year older than me, and he had found his wolf last year when he turned twelve. He had been thrilled to discover he was a gamma wolf.

He quickly became the star of the house.

He gave me a quick hand gesture, urging me to get on with it. So, my father sent him to check on my results?

Taking a deep breath, I left the curious eyes behind and entered the deep woods. But right away, I felt strange.

It was a full moon, and all the twelve-year-olds were transitioning. The first transition wasn't a complete one; it was just the meeting of our



wolves.

I stood still in the forest, trying to channel my wolf, closing my eyes and focusing on her. But all my sadness and worries kept flooding my mind.

I felt as if I would never be happy, that no one would ever love me.

My father despised me—he couldn't even stand the sight of me. And my mother? She had left me, so angry that she swore she would never contact me again.

How would I ever find her? 1

Instead of finding my wolf, I collapsed to the ground and started crying. After a few minutes, I realized I needed to go back before the warriors came looking for me. As I emerged from the woods, I noticed all eyes were on me. I had taken so long that everyone was dying with anticipation. 1

My brother and his friends were staring at me, their bodies tense, their breaths barely making their chests rise.

Everyone waited, holding their breath, as I



uttered the words, "I didn't hear her." 1

End of flashback:

"Are you okay in there?" The knock on the door startled me awake. I couldn't believe I had fallen asleep in the bathtub. As I tried to get up, I slipped and rolled onto the floor, the impact making me sore where I had landed. Still, I forced myself to my feet, feeling guilty as I drained the water from the tub.

I quickly slipped into my old dress and hurried outside, where I found the car all washed and Maximus waiting for me.

"You took a shower just to slip back into an old, wet dress?" He almost laughed, teasing me until his smile slowly faded.

"You don't have another dress?" he asked, and I shook my head.

"I have three, but I want to save them for training days," I muttered, noticing the puzzled look on his face.

"Change into something warm, Helanie. You'll catch a cold," he said, his exhaustion evident in



his voice.

I began to wonder why he seemed so drained. Was it because he thought my whole life was just one long, sad story? 1

He went into the bathroom to take a shower, and when he came out, he gestured for me to go inside and change. I knew I had to change quickly before he started making comments about how miserable my life seemed. I didn't want to come across as a victim of everything. 1

So, I went back inside, this time choosing a red dress with small white flowers on it. After slipping it on, I walked out, expecting Maximus to be ready to grab some food. But instead, I saw him standing at the entrance with none other than Kaye.

Kaye looked even taller as he stood there in his black leather jacket and pants, his bike parked beside him.

"You've cleaned it well," Kaye remarked, turning to glance at Maximus, then doing a double-take when he saw me. His face shifted to surprise, and then his expression darkened.



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"What the heck is she doing here?" he yelled so loudly that I immediately knew this was about to turn into a very unpleasant conversation.

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