Mated in the Shadow of My Sister Chapter 151

Chapter 0151

(James POV)

After the conversation with Lily, I was much too wired to nap. Instead, I opted to take a shower and mind-

link Joey to meet me at one of the local diners for lunch. The Hoffman diner, specifically.

Coming out of the bathroom, I was surprised to see Sheila in my room. It looked like she had been taking

things out of my closet and laying them haphazardly over my bed.

"What the f&&k are you doing in here?" I growled.

"Hello, my s**y future husband," she responded in a suggestive tone of voice. "I was waiting for you to

get out of the shower."

"Get out," I yelled at her.

"Oh, darling, do not be like that. Margie told me the good news. We will be husband and wife in just a

couple of weeks."

She came towards me and tried to put her hand on my naked chest. I shoved her hand away before she could touch me and quickly put on one of the tshirts that had been thrown on my bed.

"Do not touch me, Sheila."

Sheila rolled her eyes. "James, you know once we are married, you are going to have to get past your no-

touching rule."

y life."

"Until then, Sheila, let me enjoy what is left of my life."

Sheila shrugged her shoulders and walked to the closet. She came out a moment later with another

handful of my clothes.

"GET. THE F&&K, OUT. OF. HERE. SHEILA. I WILL NOT TELL YOU A THIRD TIME."

Sheila put the clothes in her hands on my bed. "Darling, relax. I am just clearing out a little bit of space in

our closet for my things. Once I am done making some space, I will leave." "I SAID NOW, SHEILA."

"And I said I would leave when I am done," she responded defiantly.

I grabbed her firmly by her upper arm and shoved her towards the door. "I am hanging on by a thread

here, Sheila. Do not push me. I am only going along with this insanity because

I have been threatened. If

you are not careful, I will look to solve the problem in a different way." "You could not hurt a fly, James. Everyone knows that."

"You are welcome to remind everyone of that after I snap your neck," I responded coldly.

Sheila recoiled at my statement, and then brushed my hand off of her arm. "Fine, James. Have it your way. But you should know that your mother and Margie have agreed that you should be required to mark me during the wedding, just like it was done during the old days."

Sheila then scanned my body with her eyes, pausing for an uncomfortable amount of time on the area between my legs.

"After the marking, you will make it up to me. You will not be able to resist me. I will enjoy ever last

ounce of you."

Over my dead body, I thought. "Mine, too," Luke linked.

With that, Sheila walked out the door. Good f&&king, riddance.

Joey was already waiting for me, by the time I made it to the diner. I slid into a booth across from him.

"This is a safe place to talk?" I asked him in the mindlink.

"One of the safest," he confirmed.

"Did you accomplish the tasks this morning?" I asked.

Joey smirked. "Sir, you realize that it has not even been 24 hours since you gave me those tasks."

"Your point?"

"They were not easy tasks, Sir."

"Your point?"

Joey continued to smirk. "I got them all done this morning. Sir."

I grinned. "Thank you. Now I have two more tasks for you."

Joey raised his eyebrows. "What would those be?"

"First, I want you to find out if Sheila is really pregnant. And if she is, I want to know who the baby daddy

is "

Joey visibly gulped. "If she is pregnant, do you plan to do something to the father?"

"It depends on who he is. Why do you ask?"

Joey rubbed his neck. Seriously, I need to get him to work on his "tells."

"There is a possibility that Aiden is the father."

"Aiden, as in guard Aiden who went with us to Hawaii?"

"Yeah, that Aiden. I kind-of convinced him to sleep with Sheila in order to keep

her busy. And then I begged him to keep doing it when you did not come back right away."

"Is Aiden bad news?"

"No, Sir. That's the thing. He is not part of the movement, but he also isn't a horrible guy. Or at least he is

ny more horrible than I am. He is a friend."

not

any

"Is he on Margie's payroll?"

"Not to my knowledge, Sir."

"Then do not worry about it. If he turns out to be the father, I will adjust the plan accordingly. But first let's confirm she is pregnant at all."

Joey nodded. "What is the second thing?"

"It is more of a question than a task. I was thinking about everything that we were talking about last night, and I realized that there is a massive missing piece."

"What is that, Sir?"

"Where has Beta Robert been in all of this? Does he know what Margie and Stephanie were up to?"

"I do not know, Sir. I am new to the movement, and the main times I have heard Beta Robert's name come up have been to say he was on a business tri

or not home or busy. I really do not know what he knows."

"Then let's call it a task after all. I need to know how he fits in to all of this. Lily adored her father growing up. Before we take him out, I want to know if he was worthy of that love, or if he is just as bad as everyone else."

"Got it, Sir. I will see what I can find."

"While you are at it, I would like you to find out about Nick and Jenny, too." "Will do."

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Chapter 0152

(Alpha Brady POV)

I have been having absolutely the best time with Sammy. Despite the fact that I hardly get to see him, Sammy is very much a mini-me. He has my mannerisms, my sense of humor (minus the sexual innuendos), and many of my same tastes in food, movies, and activities. Since he arrived at Black Moon for his winter break, we have spent every waking moment together, with the exception of 60 minutes each day

that I devote to dealing with pack paperwork and other duties that my beta cannot handle.

If it was not for me worrying about Lily, this would have been the best break with Sammy yet. Evelyn had

even agreed to extend Sammy's trip by a couple of weeks, citing construction at his school that was

going to allow for a longer than normal winter recess.

Unfortunately, Lily's disappearance does continue to weigh heavily on me. I have tried not to let it show

when I am around Sammy, but it is always gnawing on me at the back of my mind. One of the things I do

during my 60-minute work sessions each day is check in with the trackers. So far, my trackers still have not found anything out about Lily or where she went, and she has not

reached out to me either. It angers me a little that she has not reached out to at least let me know that

she is safe, but at the same time I understand that she had her reasons to leave, and that she probably

has her reasons to not reach out.

In retrospect, I wish that my father and I had just told her what the risks are. We did not do so because

my father is convinced that Lily needs to mark a mate voluntarily, and not because she feels rushed to

mark someone before the enemies find her. That is why Rose has not told her either. The sad reality is

though, until Lily marks a mate, she will continue to be in danger. Lily's value to our enemies largely

depends on them finding her and getting her to mark them before she marks any other male. Now that

she has turned 20 and is at prime mating age, the enemies are

understandably getting desperate to find her.

Once Sammy leaves, I have decided that I am going to go out and search for her personally myself. I

briefly considered reaching out to my father to see if he had heard from her, but I know if he had, he

would have already come here and raged at me for allowing my security team to fall so short. Not only

would I prefer to spare myself my father's rage while Sammy is here, but also

I think it would be difficult for him to rage at me without drawing unnecessary attention from any enemies that may be watching the pack. (In case you were wondering, both sets of grandparents regularly visit Sammy in Canada so that I can have as much uninterrupted time with my son as I can when he is at Black Moon. That is why my parents

are not here now.)

Speaking of my security team, I have started to wonder if I made the right decision when I blanket-fired all of the 18 guards that had been assigned to Lily. Now that the shock of Lily leaving has started to wear off, I have realized that Lily sneaking out of the pack was probably fairly easy for her to do regardless of who her security team was: Lily is smarter than anyone gives her credit for, and Rose has many gifts and powers as well.

Of course, the guards absolutely should have noticed that Lily was not coming out of her room, but given. the regular shift rotations and the fact that they saw me go up there every night, perhaps it is not as much as surprise that they missed it as I originally thought. I should have assigned someone to coordinate the shifts and track security notes so that sort of thing could have been noticed more quickly.

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Chapter 0153

With the exception of losing Lily, the guards had not done anything to cause me to worry about their dedication or fitness. Even though my instincts told me (and still tell me) that something was wrong with my security team, I wonder if I should have been more strategic about who I let go instead of blanketfiring all of them.

It has been difficult to replace 18 guards all at once, especially given that packhouse assignments at Black Moon require special training and clearances. The same guards who were assigned to watch over Lily would have also been assigned to watch over Sammy, and it has been making me a

little nervous to have new guards responsible for his day-to-day supervision and safety.

I will have to think about it some more. Perhaps once Sammy leaves and I do the alpha-order interviews, I will bring some or all of the fired guards back. I am absolutely sure that my father would agree that firing them was the right thing to do and that he would think re-hiring them would be a mistake even if it was nothing more than incompetence and my own errors that led to the situation- but I do not necessarily want to be the same kind of alpha that my father was. Ruling by fear worked well for my father, but it is that really who I want to be?

Sammy and I were just returning from a long afternoon run in the woods -Sammy loves riding on Kalen's back when I saw a face that I had not seen in person in years. She was waiting for us on the steps of the packhouse.

I froze. She was even more beautiful than the last time I saw her.

"Mommy!!!!" Sammy yelled happily as he ran up to Evelyn and gave her a huge hug.

"Hi, Baby! Have you been having fun with your dad?"

"So much fun, Mommy! Kalen just took me for a run in the forest!"

"Hmmmm... That explains why you smell like you have been eaten by a grass field," she joked as she

tickled his tummy.

Evelyn glanced over at me. "Baby, why don't you run upstairs and take a shower while I talk to your dad,

okay?"

"Okay, Mommy. I love you!",

"I love you too!"

With that, Sammy headed upstairs and Evelyn fully turned her attention to me. "Hi, Brady."

"What are you doing here, Evelyn?"

I hate to be cold to her, but seeing her still impacts me far more than it should. Despite the lack of a mate bond between us, just seeing her makes my heart ache.

"I always come with Sammy on these trips. You know that."

"Yes, but you spend the time visiting with your family and avoid me like the plague. It has been years. since I have actually seen you face to face. What are you doing here now?"

Evelyn sighed. "It has not been years, Brady. Your memory is faulty. Regardless, though, we need to talk." "I am listening."

"Not here. Can we talk in your office?"

"Are you sure you are willing to be alone with me? Would Andrew be okay with that? I did not bite before,

but I like to bite now." 1

"Brady, stop it. Do not be inappropriate. We are grown adults and we have a child together. Put a shirt on and let's go and talk in your office."

"Does it bother you to see me without a shirt on?" I teased.

"Brady, I am being serious. Grow up. We need to talk."

I rolled my eyes but reached for the t-shirt I left on the porch before Sammy and left. I put it on as I

followed her into the packhouse and towards my office.

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Chapter 0154

(Brady POV)

As I walked into my office with Evelyn, my heart continued to pound forcefully against my chest. Despite

my feelings for Lily, seeing Evelyn and being this close to her without being able to touch her felt like a

cruel, painful reminder of just how st upid I was all those years ago.

Evelyn sat down on a guest chair, and I sat down behind my desk.

"What is going on, Evelyn?" I said with forced coldness.

need to talk to you about a couple of things."

"So you said."

"How are you, Brady?"

"You want to talk about how I am? That's what this is about?"

Evelyn shook her head. "No, Brady, that is not what this is about. But I hate that we cannot

communicate. There is always so much tension in the air between us. Don't you think that after all these

years, we should be able to have a decent conversation like the friends we once were?"

"We talk all the time, Evelyn."

"By text. About Sammy. And even then, those messages are me talking and you giving me one or two-

word answers in return."

"Sometimes my texts have a few more words than that."

"Brady."

"It still hurts, Evelyn." There, I admitted it.

"Even now?" she asked, sounding sympathetic. "It has been years, Brady." I looked her in the eyes. "I never stopped loving you, Evelyn. Never. I know how st upid I was back then,

but I was 20 and I panicked. I made one mistake and it cost me my mate, my son, and my entire life."

Evelyn shook her head, the sympathy suddenly replaced by anger and hurt. "Wolves in this

pack talk,

Brady. It was not just one mistake. Panicking was mistake one. Rejecting me was mistake two. And the

she-wolves you slept with afterwards? Well, they were mistakes three through one hundred."

"I did not sleep with ninety-eight other she-wolves," I protested.

Evelyn glared at me. "Are you joking right now? Do you really want to fight with me about what number you got up to? That is your defense?"

"But I never enjoyed it! All I thought about the whole time was you! All I wanted was you! You were my life, Evelyn, but you just left! And you took my son with you!" (

on years

Evelyn stood and put her hands over her face. "We are not doing this right now, Brady. It has been

I am with Andrew now. I have moved on. You need to move on too and let me go."

I looked at her curiously.

"Are you saying that I not affect you anymore? That you really do not love or miss me anymore?"

Surely I cannot be the only one affected here.

"Brady, I love and miss you as a friend. That is it! I miss the Brady that I was friends with. That I could talk to. But, no, I do not miss you in the way you mean. Andrew is my mate now, Brady. Andrew did not need to sleep around to understand how important I am to him. Andrew saw my worth from the first day

that I met him. I love him now, Brady, and only him."

I stood up and walked towards her. "Do you love him more than you used to love me? Does he... does he

make you feel better than I used to make you feel?"

Evelyn turned, put her hand up, and gave me a look of pure hatred. "Do not take a single step closer to me, Brady," she said angrily. "And do not dare touch me. I am warning you."

I smiled. "So I do still affect you."

I took another step forward.

"Brady, so help me, if you take another step forward, I will leave right now and take Sammy with me."

I did not move.

"What about that girl that my parents told me about. Lillith or Lillian or Lillibet? The one that you have

been seen with lately. My parents said that you seem interested in her. You took her on some trip."

Nicely played, Evelyn, I thought to myself. Now I felt like a bucket of ice water had been poured all over me. Worse, I felt guilty for basically hitting on Evelyn despite being in love with Lily.

I walked away from Evelyn and sat behind my desk.

"Her name is Lily," I responded quietly.

"Are you together?" Evelyn asked.

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"Are you jealous?"

"No, Brady. I was actually grateful when my parents told me about her. I was hoping that you being with someone else meant that you had moved on and that you and I could be friends."

I did not say anything.

Evelyn sat down again. "Clearly I was wrong. You are not ready to be friends. Fine. Let me just jump right

into what I wanted to talk to you about."

"Okay, and what is that?" I asked, forcing the coldness back into my voice.

"Two things. One, I wanted you to hear it from me and not Sammy. I am pregnant."

Her words felt like they shoved a dagger into my heart. "Wow. Congratulations."

"Thank you. Andrew and I are really happy. We are having a baby boy, due in early summer. We plan to

tell Sammy when we get back to Canada."

"What... what is the second thing?"

"This is the hard one:

Telling me that she was pregnant with another male's baby wasn't the hard one?

"I know that our original plan was that Sammy would come and live with you full-time when he turns 16,

but I would like us to talk about whether that is still a good idea."

"Why v

wouldn't it be? Sammy is my heir. He belongs here."

Evelyn sighed and started to wring her hands. "Because Andrew and I would like Sammy to make his

own choice when it comes to his future."

"His own choice about what? He is my heir. He will take over Black Moon, just like I took over for my

father."

"What if... what if he would rather stay up in Canada with us?"

"Why would he want to stay up in Canada?"

"Because his family is there."

"His family is here, too, Evelyn."

"But Andrew and I will be up there. And his baby brother as well."

"And he can go and visit you all whenever he wants just like he has been visiting me up until this point.

But he will be alpha here. He will not want to give that up."

"He could be alpha up there, too, Brady."

"What? How?"

"Our luna just gave birth to her fifth pup, a little female. That makes five female pups for them. The alpha and luna are happy and overwhelmed with their litter, and they do not want to try for a male pup

anymore. That means that the pack will need to select an alpha heir, preferably from the beta line. The alpha suggested to Andrew and I that, because Sammy has alpha blood, Sammy could be the future alphal and our new pup could be the beta heir."

"SAMMY HAS ALPHA BLOOD BECAUSE HE IS MY HEIR! An alpha cannot just claim another alpha's heir

as his own!"

Whatever longing I had for Evelyn minutes ago was quickly converting to pure, 100% anger. How could she even think this was a good idea, much less say it out loud? What was she thinking?

"No, but Sammy can choose it if he wants to. He can forfeit his right to be your heir and take on the role

in Canada."

"NO!"

"Brady, please calm down."

"NO! YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT TAKING AWAY THE RIGHTFUL HEIR TO THE BLACK MOON PACK!

ABOUT TAKING MY SON AWAY FROM MEI"

"No. I am talking about a decision that is almost a decade away from having to be made. A lot of things

can change between now and then."

"Why are you bringing it up now then?!?!?!!"

"Because we are going to

art talking to Sammie about the possibility of it, just like you already talk to him about him potentially being alpha here. We want him to grow up knowing that he has options. And

have time to... create your own heir."

hecause... because I want to make sure y

"I HAVE MY OWN HEIR, EVELYN! MY HEIR IS-SAMMY!"

"It will be Sammy's choice, Brady. Not yours, not mine. Sammy's."

"And I am sure you will not try to influence that decision at all, will you,

Evelyn?" I said sarcastically.

Evelyn did not say anything.

The longer she stayed silent, the angrier I got.

"GET OUT!"

Evelyn stood and walked towards the door. "I am sorry that you are hurting,

Brady, but I think you will see

in time that this might be the best thing for everyone." T