

Scars by Jessica Bailey Chapter 5

Chapter 5

Amelie

“Wake up, Am!” I was jolted awake by the wind, yet again, being knocked out of me as James was sitting on top of my chest. He jumps up and yells, “Revenge is sweet!” Oh, he was going to get it after his heir ceremony. He’s lucky we all have to behave and act like grown-ups. Well, I was awake now, trying to catch my breath, but I was awake.

I rolled out of bed and grabbed my phone. I take a deep breath as I brace myself for what was about to come. It’s still pretty early, and there’s a good chance that Tate will still be asleep. I take in one last deep breath before dialing. It rings and rings, then to my waiting ear, his voicemail picks up. “Thank the goddess,” Inari chimes in.

“Hush, I’m leaving a voicemail.” I scold her. “Hey, babe, it looks like you are still asleep. I wish I was too. We have a ton to get ready for today, and I’ll be greeting guests from all over the country. I’ll try calling later tonight. Bye. Have a good day, love you.” With that, I hang up and let out a sigh of relief. Then, I jumped up and got my day started.

As I’m getting ready, I can’t help but laugh at how James woke me up just a bit ago. The three of us have always played pranks and teased each other. We were the only ones who made each other feel normal. Growing up, we all had run-ins with people trying to get close for the wrong reasons or just flat out hate us due to their jealousy. In front of the world, we had to project a proud, strong and, stone facade. Behind closed doors, we let loose and treated each other like any family would. I knew my baby brother was feeling the pressure and if sitting on me to wake me up helped ease some of that tension, I would let him have it. All I can do today is be the best big sister I could be and support him and my family. I get dressed in jeans and a t-shirt, knowing I’ll be changing later for the party. Time to get to it.

I head downstairs, and we eat a quick breakfast. Celest gives us a review of what we need to do before releasing us to our assigned tasks. I’m in charge of the kitchen staff and food prep. Celeste knows that cooking is my third favorite thing after jewelry making and gardening. I’m delighted to take on the task; it’s a major responsibility. The Ashwood packhouse had three wings; it honestly was huge. One wing was for the Alpha and his family and could be closed off from the main wing. The secondary wing was for the Beta and his family as he needs to be close to the Alpha. Both had a family kitchen and private areas. The main wing or Main Packhouse resembled more of a small hotel or lodge. The entry was large and open, with glass letting in all the natural light and views of the woods and mountains. It had a grand ballroom that was used for Pack business, events, and festivals. Off to the back of the ballroom was my destination, the Pack kitchen. It had everything a major restaurant would need to finish dinner service. I walked in and, with a loud but joyous shout, “Ladies and gentlemen, are we ready to show them what we are made of!” Giving my team of cooks our battle cry. In unison, I

got a “Yes Ma’am!” I grabbed an apron and called over the Head Chef to go over each course and station.

One of the things that set our Pack apart from others was how my Father handled Omegas. Werewolves took pride in power and strength, and a warrior spirit. My Father is a progressive thinker who encouraged talent of all kinds. He had some of the best restaurants in all the Packs. The great thing was those great cooks and chefs were here in this kitchen, working together to bring the event together. I swelled with pride, knowing these wolves found their home here and respected my Father and would give that respect to my brother one day. Roth was the head chef. I pulled him over to get more details.

“Roth, what’s our plan so far, and what are we lagging in?” I pull him over to the side.

Roth gives me a serious look and quickly gets down to business. “Amelie, I have reviewed the guest list, and we have added a bit more protein to the buffet.” Looking at the amounts, it was more than “a bit.” I was confused as to why we would make such a significant last-minute change.

“Was our protein order shorted? Why the last-minute change?” I needed to keep our waste down, and that much protein could easily be wasted, and we could look frivolous to the visiting Packs. This could be seen as an insult as we could come across as arrogant.

Roth looked at the edited menu and, with a furrowed brow, gave his reason. “The Druid Guard RSVP’d more than we planned; as you know, they are a warrior Pack and shift daily,” I cut him off.

“I completely forgot they were coming, and their Alpha is participating in the Heir Ceremony. Looking at the menu again, we may need to also increase overall carbs as well. How much bread do we have on hand?” Roth dropped his head with a slight shake.

“Not even enough.” He looked at me, desperate. I knew what he was trying to ask.

I put my hand on his shoulder to reassure him we would make it happen no matter what. “It’s still early morning; we have time. I need AP flour, yeast, sugar, hot water, milk, eggs, and butter. If we don’t have enough here now, I’ll start with what we have, and we can send someone out to get more. I need two sue chefs with strong arms; we will be putting our all into these rolls. Roth also gets someone to start on an alfredo sauce with grilled chicken breast. I call to get some pasta made as well.” Roth nodded in agreement as the team got fired up. I loved making bread and pasta, so this was no issue for me at all.

After hours of kneading and proofing, we had around 200 Parker House rolls ready to go and about 150 servings of fettuccine noodles. My work was done. I had to check in with Celest and then get ready.

I found my Stepmother scolding James. He had sneaked away when he was tasked with greeting guests. I helped him out by telling Celest about the dinner crises we averted, and she was relieved. I winked at my brother and gave him a nod to go while I had his mother's attention. He slowly stepped away but got caught right before going down the corridor to our family wing.

"James, go find your Father in his office. He has a few last minutes things to review with you." At that, James turned around and went to our Father's office, which was in the main wing. Celeste turned to me. "Honestly! Is there hope for that boy?" We both giggled a bit, knowing he would be a great Alpha, but he was still a teenager. "Am, love, we both need to get ready for tonight. I have hair and makeup coming to my room in an hour. Shower and bring your dress; the three of us girls will get ready together." I nod, giving a slight smile. It reminded me of old times growing up.

We walked down the corridor toward our wing. All of a sudden, I felt something wanting me to turn around. It wasn't strong, but it was like a gentle breeze wanting me to follow. Then, I caught the slightest whiff of eucalyptus. "Inari, do you feel that? What is that?"

"I don't know, but I know it's not bad. It feels comforting." She's just as perplexed as I am.

I keep walking to my room, trying to figure out what that feeling was. Before I knew it, I was back in my room. I quickly brushed out my wavy curls and jumped in the shower. I tossed on some sweats and a button-up, as I didn't want to pull my shirt over my head when my makeup was finished. I grabbed my dress and head to my parent's room.

It was abuzz with hair and makeup artists and Hope bouncing around. I was quickly grabbed by one of the ladies and forced into a chair. The next thing I know, the coldest gel mask was placed on my face making me jump a little. Hope thought it was hilarious until it was her turn. The rest of the time was spent with "girl talk" as the ladies chatted away, then one of the unmated ladies brought up the Druit Guard with a hungry look on her face. "Have you seen them? They are a perfect example of a male wolf I have ever seen. I hope one of them turns out to be my mate. I would never leave my bedroom." she gave a big smile and wiggled her eyebrows. The whole room burst out in laughter at her lustful comments.

Soon enough, we were done and ready to put on our dresses. My Stepmother liked to color coordinate at these kinds of events. She said it showed solidarity and that we were the ruling family. Her go-to color was deep shades of purple. It reminded her of old-world royalty. My dress was an eggplant purple and nude. It had two pieces; the under-piece, which was nude, had a sweetheart neckline fitted corset it was fitted and stopped right above my knee. The top overlay was purple lace with long sleeves and a high

neckline; the skirt part was an A-line that went all the way to the floor. I loved the peekaboo feel, but I was still covered. It had a satin sash for the waste. I added some 3-inch nude sandals and chandelier earrings. My hair had been pulled up and let to fall loosely down the back of my neck. I always felt like an actual princess in these moments as my sister and Luna Celest finished getting ready as well. I remembered I again had neglected my phone. I had brought it with me, so I quickly pulled it out.