

# Seducing My Ex's Father In Law

## Chapter 441

Judy's POV

"Sammy?" I said as I turned on my bedroom light. She stood by my desk across the room, eyes wide like a deer caught in headlights. I could practically hear her heart pounding as she stared at me—caught snooping through my personal things. "What are you doing in here?"

She visibly swallowed.

"I thought I lost something," she said. "I wondered if maybe it accidentally ended up with your stuff."

I furrowed my brows—it was clear she was lying.

"What were you looking for?" I asked, glancing at the clock. It was almost midnight. "At this hour?"

"It's not that important," she said quickly, moving toward the door. "I'm really sorry. I didn't mean to intrude. I was honestly just trying to find something I couldn't locate. Please forgive me."

I didn't know what else to say. It was obvious she wasn't being truthful, but I didn't know why. I might've understood if she'd just told me the truth—depending on what it was. I watched as she hurried out of the room, shutting the door behind her.

Still trying to process what had just happened, I got ready for bed. I felt a bit violated by Sammy being in my space without warning. I wanted to give her the benefit of the doubt, but her explanation left me unsettled. I made sure to lock my door before crawling into bed.

It took a while, but eventually, I drifted into a dreamless sleep. I managed to push aside the thought of Sammy snooping and my run-in with Donna Landry and Daisy Baldwin. Instead, I focused on my date with Gavin—it had been wonderful. He took me to my favorite restaurant and then to an amusement park, both of which were completely new to him.

He'd been so childlike and adorable.

I fell asleep with a smile on my face and my heart full from the memory.

Chester was making breakfast when I walked into the kitchen. He was humming a tune and wore a cheerful smile of his own.

"You're in a good mood," I said, taking a seat at the counter. "Have a good night?"

"You could say that," he replied with a grin.

As if on cue, Nan walked into the kitchen and froze when she saw me. My eyes scanned her body, and my brows lifted. She was wearing nothing but Chester's T-shirt, which was just long enough to cover most of her slim frame. Her short hair was tousled from sleep, her cheeks were flushed, and her lips were still slightly swollen.

"I can see you two had a good night," I teased, a grin tugging at my lips. "Also, Nan... did you forget that other people live here too?"

"It's early," she replied, running her fingers through her hair. "I didn't think anyone else would be up yet—especially considering how late you got in last night."

I shrugged and took the coffee mug Chester placed in front of me.

"I've got a morning class today," I told her.

"I don't have class until this afternoon, but if you wait a minute, I can get dressed and we can head to school together."

"Are you sure?" I asked. "I don't want to ruin your morning or anything." I wiggled my brows at her, and she rolled her eyes in response.

"I'm sure. Plus, I want to hear all about your date," she said, winking as she turned to leave the kitchen.

Chester's eyes followed her, filled with such love and desire that it made my heart swell for my best friend.

I remembered what it was like to have a mate look at me that way—and the thought made me a little sad, knowing it wasn't going to happen again.

"You better not break her heart," I told him, giving him a serious look. "If you ever do what Ethan did to me—"

"I never would," Chester cut in firmly. "I'm not perfect, but when I tell her I'm all in, I mean it. I am all in. Now more than ever. Last night... it was incredible. Better than anything I've ever experienced. I don't ever want that feeling to end. Hurting her would be like breaking my own heart—and that's something I'll never do."

I nodded, believing him. Chester was many things... but he wasn't a liar. I trusted him with my best friend.

He finished cooking and placed a plate in front of me. Then he made another for Nan, set aside a few more for the mansion staff, and boxed up the rest.

"Where are those going?" I asked.

"The packhouse," he replied. "They're short a few chefs this morning, so I figured I'd help out and make some extra food."

## Chapter 441

### Judy's POV

"Sammy?" I said as I turned on my bedroom light. She stood by my desk across the room, eyes wide like a deer caught in headlights. I could practically hear her heart pounding as she stared at me—caught snooping through my personal things. "What are you doing in here?"

She visibly swallowed.

"I thought I lost something," she said. "I wondered if maybe it accidentally ended up with your stuff."

I furrowed my brows—it was clear she was lying.

"What were you looking for?" I asked, glancing at the clock. It was almost midnight. "At this hour?"

"It's not that important," she said quickly, moving toward the door. "I'm really sorry. I didn't mean to intrude. I was honestly just trying to find something I couldn't locate. Please forgive me."

I didn't know what else to say. It was obvious she wasn't being truthful, but I didn't know why. I might've understood if she'd just told me the truth—depending on what it was. I watched as she hurried out of the room, shutting the door behind her.

Still trying to process what had just happened, I got ready for bed. I felt a bit violated by Sammy being in my space without warning. I wanted to give her the benefit of the doubt, but her explanation left me unsettled. I made sure to lock my door before crawling into bed.

It took a while, but eventually, I drifted into a dreamless sleep. I managed to push aside the thought of Sammy snooping and my run-in with Donna Landry and Daisy Baldwin. Instead, I focused on my date with Gavin—it had been wonderful. He took me to my

favorite restaurant and then to an amusement park, both of which were completely new to him.

He'd been so childlike and adorable.

I fell asleep with a smile on my face and my heart full from the memory.

Chester was making breakfast when I walked into the kitchen. He was humming a tune and wore a cheerful smile of his own.

"You're in a good mood," I said, taking a seat at the counter. "Have a good night?"

"You could say that," he replied with a grin.

As if on cue, Nan walked into the kitchen and froze when she saw me. My eyes scanned her body, and my brows lifted. She was wearing nothing but Chester's T-shirt, which was just long enough to cover most of her slim frame. Her short hair was tousled from sleep, her cheeks were flushed, and her lips were still slightly swollen.

"I can see you two had a good night," I teased, a grin tugging at my lips. "Also, Nan... did you forget that other people live here too?"

"It's early," she replied, running her fingers through her hair. "I didn't think anyone else would be up yet—especially considering how late you got in last night."

I shrugged and took the coffee mug Chester placed in front of me.

"I've got a morning class today," I told her.

"I don't have class until this afternoon, but if you wait a minute, I can get dressed and we can head to school together."

"Are you sure?" I asked. "I don't want to ruin your morning or anything." I wiggled my brows at her, and she rolled her eyes in response.

"I'm sure. Plus, I want to hear all about your date," she said, winking as she turned to leave the kitchen.

Chester's eyes followed her, filled with such love and desire that it made my heart swell for my best friend.

I remembered what it was like to have a mate look at me that way—and the thought made me a little sad, knowing it wasn't going to happen again.

“You better not break her heart,” I told him, giving him a serious look. “If you ever do what Ethan did to me—”

“I never would,” Chester cut in firmly. “I’m not perfect, but when I tell her I’m all in, I mean it. I am all in. Now more than ever. Last night... it was incredible. Better than anything I’ve ever experienced. I don’t ever want that feeling to end. Hurting her would be like breaking my own heart—and that’s something I’ll never do.”

I nodded, believing him. Chester was many things... but he wasn’t a liar. I trusted him with my best friend.

He finished cooking and placed a plate in front of me. Then he made another for Nan, set aside a few more for the mansion staff, and boxed up the rest.

“Where are those going?” I asked.

“The packhouse,” he replied. “They’re short a few chefs this morning, so I figured I’d help out and make some extra food.”

## Chapter 443

By the time we arrived on campus, both our minds were spinning with possibilities. Something was definitely going on with Sammy, and we were determined to find out what it was. We hadn’t seen her all morning, so we didn’t bother heading to school with her.

I had a morning class, so I had to part ways with Nan pretty early on.

We’d been so caught up talking about Sammy that I hadn’t even told her about my date yet. I made a mental note to fill her in later.

As I reached class, I spotted Lukas. Our eyes met, and he froze. His eyes widened before he quickly looked away, keeping his head down as he walked into the classroom. I frowned at his reaction and followed him inside, nodding a quick hello to Professor Rivers as I passed.

Lukas sat down in his seat—right next to mine. He dug through his backpack, clearly trying to act like he hadn’t noticed me sit beside him. I didn’t take my eyes off his flushed face as he clumsily pulled out his notebooks and textbooks, laying them out in front of him. Then he grabbed a handful of pens—more than anyone needed for a single class—and carefully arranged them on the desk. His hands were trembling.

It was obvious he was just trying to stay busy.

But the question was... why?

I knew Gavin had freaked him out the other night. I probably should've warned him that it was technically Gavin's mansion I was staying in. Lukas had Lycan blood in his family line, so I could've been more thoughtful. But still—did that really mean Lukas and I couldn't be friends?

"Are you mad at me?" I finally asked, cutting through the silence—or at least trying to. My words only seemed to make him tense up even more.

"Mad?" he squeaked. "N-no, why would I be mad?"

I narrowed my eyes at him, though he wasn't looking at me to see the expression on my face.

"Because you're avoiding my eyes," I said, tilting my head.

This was the first time I'd seen him since our study session at the mansion the other night. I assumed he'd just been busy these past few days, which was why I hadn't heard much from him. I'd been busy too, so I didn't think his silence meant anything—just us living our lives. But now, I was starting to think it meant something more.

"I'm not avoiding your eyes," he told me, though his actions clearly said otherwise.

I crossed my arms over my chest and leaned back in my seat.

"Oh yeah?" I challenged. "Then look at me, Lukas."

When he didn't budge, I leaned in closer, studying the side of his face carefully and watching as the skin along his neckline grew redder by the second.

"Lukas," I said again, my voice low, laced with an unspoken warning. "Look at me."

His eyes finally shifted toward mine, and I could tell it took effort—like it actually pained him to look at me. I didn't understand why.

"What's wrong?" I asked gently, searching his eyes. "Why can't you look at me?"

He tore his gaze away and let out a breath, like it physically hurt him to maintain eye contact. I didn't know why, but it stung a little more than I expected.

"Because I was commanded not to," he admitted in a quiet murmur.

My eyebrows shot up.

"I'm sorry—what?" I asked.

"Gavin came to me and ordered me not to look in your direction again," he said. "He even called my uncle to tell him what happened. My uncle reprimanded me and said if I

screw up again while I'm here, he's pulling my tuition fee and sending me back to his territory."

My heart dropped into my stomach, and a white-hot rage began to boil inside me.

"Gavin did what?" My voice came out harsher than I intended.

Lukas swallowed, his eyes locked on his notebook.

"What did you expect? I was getting close to someone he considers his... and he's a Lycan. They're possessive, Judy. I would know."

I shook my head, my anger bubbling just beneath the surface. I had to keep it in check—we were in a classroom, and it was quickly filling up with other students.

"I do not belong to him. He's not my mate," I said in a sharp whisper. "I don't know where you got that idea, but—"

"So, you didn't go on a date with him last night?" Lukas asked, finally lifting his brows, though his eyes remained fixed on the table.

I froze, caught off guard that he knew about the date. My mouth opened, but no words came out.

"I..." I tried to say.

After a few seconds of silence, he sighed and grabbed his phone. He swiped across the screen, typed something quickly, and then turned the screen toward me.

That's when I saw it—today's headline on Shifter Daily.

## Chapter 444

Lycan Gavin Landry was spotted with Gamma competitor and winner, Judy Montague, on a romantic date.

There was a photo of Gavin and me at dinner as the featured image, along with another shot of the Ferris wheel.

I shouldn't have been surprised that someone had snapped pictures of us that evening—but still, seeing them in a news article the very next day made my stomach drop. I sighed and buried my face in my hands, letting out a groan.

"Just great," I muttered.

“You went on a date with him,” Lukas said, sliding his phone back into his pocket. “He has a claim on you.”

“No, he doesn’t,” I said firmly. “Our relationship is complicated. We never really talked about what any of this means. So what if I went on a date with him? You probably go on plenty of dates with women—it doesn’t mean you’re in a relationship with all of them.”

I wasn’t blind to the fact that Lukas was attractive. And being a Merriweather meant he had Lycan blood, too. I had no doubt he got attention from women—and I doubted he treated every date like something serious.

His face flushed slightly, and he gave a small shrug.

“Yeah, so what?” he mumbled. “None of them are Lycans, and none of them are Gavin Landry.”

“Look, all I’m saying is that Gavin had no right to tell you not to look at me. He had no right to command you at all. You’re not just someone I’m paying to tutor me—you’re also my friend, Lukas. He doesn’t get to tell me who I can and can’t be friends with.”

“I understand where you’re coming from... I really do,” he said, shifting slightly away from me to put some distance between us. The move made me frown.

“But you also have to understand where I’m coming from. He used an Alpha command on me. He’s powerful, and he’s scary. One wrong move, and he could kill me—or my uncle could pull my tuition and force me to go back home. I can’t let that happen. I have dreams that only this school can help me reach. I have to keep my nose clean... just like my uncle said.”

I stared at him a moment longer. He still refused to look at me, but now I knew it wasn’t because he didn’t want to—or that he was afraid of me. It was because he literally couldn’t. A slow-burning rage ignited in the pit of my stomach, but I didn’t argue with him. There was no point.

One thing was clear—I wasn’t going to let Gavin get away with this. I was furious, and I needed answers fast.

When class ended, Lukas was quick to leave. Normally, we would’ve made plans to study in the library or meet up somewhere, but he didn’t even try today. And now I understood why.

I met up with Nan in our usual spot by the oak tree on the quad. She was leaning against the trunk with a textbook in her hands, her legs crossed in front of her. She smiled when she saw me approaching, but the moment she caught the frustration on my face, her smile faded.

“What happened?” she asked.



"I'll tell you later," I said. "I need to cool off. I might skip our usual study session in the lounge and hit the gym instead."

She nodded and stood up.

"I'll come with," she said. "Could use a workout before class anyway."

I nodded back, and we started heading toward the gym. As we neared the entrance, a familiar voice caught our attention from around the corner. We were still outside, so I knew the voice had to be coming from behind the building.

I looked at Nan, who gave me a matching frown. She recognized the voice too. I motioned for her to follow me, and she did.

We walked around the building—and then I stopped short.

There was Sammy, pacing back and forth with her phone pressed tightly to her ear. Her brows were furrowed in deep concern.

"I just don't think it's a good idea... I want to—" Her voice was low and tense.

She paused, her face suddenly going pale.

"Of course not, but..." she said, trailing off again as whoever was on the other end spoke. She bit her lower lip, and I could swear I saw tears welling in her eyes. "I don't want tha—"

Another pause. Her body slumped against the stone wall behind her like it physically hurt to stand. She lowered her eyes to the ground, shoulders sagging, and let out a long, heavy sigh.

"Okay," she finally said, after what felt like an eternity. "I'll do it... I'll reach out to him..."

Chapter 445  
Judy's POV

"Who do you think she's talking to?" Nan whispered. "Or about?"

I shrugged.

It was strange to see her having a secret conversation behind the gym. Just as we were about to step away, she turned the corner and froze when she saw us.

"Judy," she gasped, then her eyes flicked to Nan. "And, uh... Nah. Hi. What are you girls doing here?"

I glanced at Nan before turning back to Sammy.

“We were just heading to the gym, and I thought I heard your voice. We came to check it out.”

Her cheeks flushed, and she started looking anywhere but at us.

“We didn’t hear anything,” Nan quickly said. “We just got here. Were you on the phone?”

She nodded.

“Yeah,” she replied. “Just talking to family. I have to go, though. I’ll see you girls later.”

Without another word, she brushed past us and took off, leaving us staring after her, dumbfounded. I looked at Nan, and her confused expression mirrored mine. After a moment of silent hesitation, we headed into the gym.

It wasn’t crowded, thankfully. A few people from my combat class were using the weight machines. They gave us respectful nods before continuing their workouts without bothering us.

Nan made a beeline for the treadmill while I chose the nearest weight machine so we could still talk during our workouts.

Despite her petite frame, Nan had always been athletic. She’d played multiple sports in middle and high school, with track being one of her favorites. So, I wasn’t surprised when she immediately set the treadmill to its highest setting and began sprinting.

“Maybe she got back together with her boyfriend and is embarrassed about it?” Nan said after a while. Clearly, we were both still thinking about Sammy and that mysterious phone call.

“It didn’t sound like a boyfriend,” I said, frowning. “She said it was a family member. But it sounded like they were asking her to do something she didn’t want to.”

Figuring this out shouldn’t be hard—especially since I was in Gamma training. It was literally my job to uncover things like this. If I couldn’t, that’d be embarrassing.

“Maybe her family wants her to get back together with him,” Nan suggested. “He was an Alpha, right?”  
I nodded.

“Yeah, but he never took on the role of an Alpha. He entered the Gamma competition, which meant he wanted to join the Elite Force.”

“Do we even know who he is?” Nan asked with a frown.

“She never told us his name.”

“He definitely exists, though... right?” Nan asked, her brows furrowed.

The fact that she could sprint that fast and still hold a conversation—with full facial expressions—was impressive.

“Sammy wouldn’t lie to us... would she?” I asked. But even as the words left my mouth, I wasn’t so sure. She’d been snooping around in my bedroom and hiding phone calls from us. It was strange behavior, and I couldn’t shake the feeling that Sammy was lying—or at least keeping something from us. The thought left an unsettled feeling in the pit of my stomach.

“I don’t know,” Nan said softly. “I’m a little worried that we’re being deceived.”

We both fell silent as we continued our workout. After an hour, we were panting and sore—but we felt better.

Nan finally slowed the treadmill to a walk while I reduced the weight on my machine.

“Maybe we should talk to her again,” I suggested. “Or at least keep an eye on her.”

Nan nodded in agreement.

She glanced at her watch and sighed as she turned off the treadmill and hopped off.

“I have to get to work. Will you be okay if I leave?” she asked.

I nodded.

“Yeah, Taylor’s picking me up in a few minutes. I’ve got work tonight, too. I promised Matt I wouldn’t bail on him again,” I said as I sat up on the bench. “Call me later, okay?”

She nodded, grabbed her things, and hurried out of the gym.

I stayed a little longer before calling it a day and packing up my own stuff.

As I reached the parking lot, I spotted the familiar car that Beta Taylor usually drove parked out front. There was no sign of Sammy, so I figured she wasn’t riding with us. That was fine—I wanted to head straight to the Villa anyway. Honestly, I still wasn’t sure how I felt about her, so maybe some space was exactly what I needed.

I was about to head toward the house, but then, from the corner, the door opened and Gavin walked out. He approached the car door and leaned in, only to see me already sitting in the passenger seat.

“Hey,” I said to him. “Where’s Beta Taylor?”

“He had something to take care of,” Gavin replied, his eyes scanning the area as he waited for me to buckle in.

“Erik couldn’t pick me up?” I asked. Erik was usually my backup driver at the mansion—if Taylor couldn’t get me from school, it was typically Erik.

Gavin narrowed his eyes at me.

“Do you have a problem with me picking you up?” he asked, raising an eyebrow.

I snapped my head toward him.

“No, of course not. I’m just wondering why you went out of your way,” I said honestly.

We hadn’t talked since our date last night, and things were a little weird. The date had been amazing, and it ended on a good note, but I wasn’t sure where we stood now. Were we still keeping it casual? Or was this something more? I wanted to ask him, but I decided to keep my mouth shut—for now.

“It wasn’t out of my way,” he muttered, almost defensively. “I was passing by and figured I’d pick you up on my way home.”

I raised an eyebrow.

“You were passing by?” I asked, suspiciously.

Looking at his profile, I noticed how tense he was. I had the sudden urge to reach out and touch him, to give him some sort of comfort. His knuckles were turning white from gripping the steering wheel so tightly, and I frowned when I saw his biceps flexing with the strain.

I opened my mouth to say something, but his words cut through the silence.

“My mother wants us over for dinner this evening.”

My heart practically stopped. I turned to him, eyes wide, jaw nearly dropping.

“What?” I asked, unsure if I’d heard him right.

He sighed, gripping the wheel even tighter, the tension in his body radiating through the car.

"She insists we go to her place for dinner this evening," he told me. "Don't overthink it... she saw us out last night, and now she wants to get to know you."

"Your mother wants to know me?" I asked, my jaw practically on the floor. "Why?" From the few encounters I'd had with his mother, none of them had been pleasant.

"Are you forgetting what the purpose of our arrangement was in the first place?" he asked, eyes fixed on the road ahead. "To get my mother off my back about marriage. She thinks we're in a committed relationship, and now she wants to know you better. Make amends for the times she was rude to you. Her words."

"And you believe her?" I asked, raising my brows. He couldn't seriously be that naïve... could he?

"She's been spending all her time with Daisy. Is she going to be there too?"

"No," he said, his expression darkening. "She won't be there. You don't have to worry about that."

Even though he said I didn't have to worry, I was very worried. What was the real reason his mother wanted to see me tonight? I had a hard time believing it was just to "get to know me." Not after everything that had happened.

"I don't have anything to wear," I told him.

If I was going to dinner with his mother, I knew I'd have to dress appropriately. The former Luna lived in a stunning manor tucked away in a secluded part of the pack territory—and only those personally invited were allowed through the gates.

"I'll take care of it," he murmured. "I already have someone shopping."

My stomach twisted into a knot.

I didn't like any of this, but I wasn't about to start an argument. So I nodded and turned to stare out the window, trying to mentally prepare myself for what tonight would bring. This was the last thing I wanted to deal with. I needed to study and tutor Matt—not face off with a Landry at dinner from hell.

Just then, my phone buzzed, pulling me from my thoughts. I dug through my bag until I found it and glanced at the screen.

Nan's name lit up.

It was a text—actually, a picture message.

I opened the image, and my heart dropped.

It was a photo of Sammy... talking to Ethan.

## Chapter 447

### Judy's POV

My heart stopped when I saw the photo. They were tucked away in a private corner of the local coffee shop near the school, speaking quietly. I couldn't tear my eyes away from the image when Nan texted again.

Nan: I stopped by on my way to work and saw them together. What do you think they're doing?

My mind immediately jumped to the worst-case scenario. Had Ethan somehow gotten to her? Was he trying to charm her now? Could Sammy really be naïve enough to fall for his lies after everything she already knew? I had told her all about what happened between Ethan, Irene, and me.

But maybe he twisted the story, making himself look like the victim. My wolf whimpered at the sight of her mate with another woman, sensing that his intentions weren't pure. I hated that he still had this effect on her, that my wolf would shrink whenever he was near—or even mentioned. Gavin's presence helped somehow; around him, she felt calmer. Still, the image of Sammy and Ethan together made her recoil.

"What is it?" Gavin asked. For a moment, I had forgotten he was sitting beside me, driving us to the villa. I considered lying and brushing it off, but I didn't trust my voice to carry the lie, so I told him the truth.

"Nan stopped by a coffee shop before work and saw Sammy talking with Ethan," I said, trying to keep my voice steady despite the concern creeping in.

Gavin glanced at me with a frown before turning his eyes back to the road. We were approaching the villa; it was now visible in the distance.

"I didn't think they knew each other," he said, his tone hard to read. "When did he get back into town?"

"I'm not sure," I replied. "It must've been recently, because this is the first I'm hearing about it too."

He mulled it over for a moment and then nodded slowly.

Once we reached his villa, he pulled into the driveway and shut off the engine. Turning to face me, he spoke firmly.

“Stay away from him. I don’t know what he’s planning, but I don’t want you caught in it. Understand?”

My cheeks flushed, and I nodded without hesitation.

“I don’t want anything to do with him. I’ve cut all ties—especially now that Irene is safe from his grip and my dad is finally out of prison,” I said, with firm conviction. “But I am worried about Sammy. She’s my friend.”

“If she’s meeting with him behind your back, that’s not a real friend,” he said, his eyes narrowing.

I mulled over his words, hating how much truth they held. I had caught Sammy going through my things just last night—was that because of Ethan? Had he asked her to snoop for him?

The thought made my stomach turn, a wave of nausea rising in my chest.

Gavin’s gaze sharpened as he studied me carefully.

“What is it?” he asked.

“Nothing,” I replied a little too fast. I’d already decided not to tell Gavin about Sammy going through my stuff. After all, he’d just hired me to be the maid at the mansion—I didn’t want to jeopardize anything for either of them.

“Judy—”

“I should head inside,” I cut in, unbuckling my seatbelt. His frown deepened. “Matt’s waiting.”

I quickly got out of the car, relieved when he didn’t stop me.

I heard Gavin’s door open behind me, but I didn’t look back. I just hurried forward toward the villa doors.

“Oh, hi Judy...” came a soft, familiar voice as I stepped inside. I looked up to see Irene coming down the stairs. Her sleek blond hair was loose, one side tucked behind her ear. She wasn’t dressed in her usual high-fashion style—just a simple T-shirt and jeans.

She also wasn’t wearing any makeup. Though she was naturally beautiful and didn’t need it, it was still strange to see her face so... bare.

We had parted on good terms back at the resort, but we hadn’t spoken since coming back, so I wasn’t exactly sure where we stood now.

“Hey,” I said, waiting for her to reach the bottom step.

"I'm sorry I haven't talked to you since we got back," she said, gently biting her lower lip. "I just needed time to process everything. But please know—I'm not mad at you."

## Chapter 448

Honestly, I was relieved to hear that.

"It's okay," I told her. "I understand. You don't have to explain."

"No, I do," she insisted, tears welling in her eyes. "I did some really awful things that I shouldn't have. All because I thought you were after Ethan... but I was so wrong. I mean, I basically poisoned my own brother—"

"You did what?!" Gavin's voice sliced through her confession. I turned to see his face darkening as he walked through the door. Irene went pale as she finally noticed him behind me.

"D-Dad..." she whispered, her voice barely audible.

"Tell me I didn't just hear what I think I heard," he growled through clenched teeth, his eyes blazing. "Are you telling me the peanut butter incident from months ago was your doing?"

I looked down, unsure how to defuse the situation. Gavin was livid—his fury radiated off him in waves. Irene was completely unraveling, clearly not expecting her father to be nearby and hear everything. My heart went out to her, but the truth remained: she had poisoned Matt, whether intentionally or not. Gavin had blamed me for it at the time, until Ethan paid a maid to take the fall. Gavin exiled that poor woman, branding her a rogue.

That had been months ago. She was likely dead by now. Not many survive in rogue territory.

"I wasn't trying to hurt him. I was just—"

"What exactly did you think was going to happen, Irene?" Gavin cut in, his tone deeper, more dangerous, as he stepped closer. "What was your end game?"

Irene's eyes flicked to mine, and I wished I could help her—but I had no words. She was in the wrong. From the very beginning, what she did to Matt was unjustifiable. And she knew it. Her eyes didn't hold malice—just guilt.

"I thought Judy was after Ethan back then," she admitted, her voice cracking as tears spilled over. "And I wanted her out of the way."

"You could have killed your brother," Gavin growled, barely keeping his rage in check. I could tell he was trying—this was his daughter, not just some wolf or enemy—but the



anger radiating off him was impossible to ignore. “Do you have any idea how reckless that was? All because of what... petty jealousy over someone who wasn’t even worth your time?”

Irene flinched at his words, but she knew he wasn’t wrong.

“It was selfish and disgraceful,” she admitted, her bottom lip trembling. “I understand that now... I’m so sorry.”

“You nearly let Judy take the blame for something she didn’t do. I almost fired her over it,” Gavin pressed on. “And that maid who took the fall... Did you convince her to do it?”

Irene shook her head and looked up at him.

“No...” she whispered. “I don’t know why she did it. I never even spoke to her. I swear.”

I believed her. I knew it had been Ethan who bribed the maid. He promised her money and protection, but it was all a lie. After Gavin exiled her and declared her a rogue, Ethan abandoned her completely. He even gloated about it for weeks. The memory made my stomach churn.

“I banished her from the pack, Irene. I turned her into a rogue. She’s probably dead by now,” Gavin said coldly. “That was an innocent life you helped destroy. Matt may have survived, but that doesn’t erase the damage you caused.”

He stared at her for a long time, and I watched as she seemed to shrink in on herself. Part of me wanted to reach out, to offer some comfort. I wanted to believe she deserved another chance. But I couldn’t—not for this.

“I need you to go to your room,” Gavin finally said, stepping away from her. “I can’t look at you right now.”

She recoiled like he had physically slapped her, but she didn’t argue. She turned her tear-filled eyes to me.

“I’m so sorry,” she whispered, her voice cracking.

Then she turned and hurried upstairs, leaving Gavin and me standing in silence.

## Chapter 449

### Gavin’s POV

The rage that boiled inside me when I heard Irene’s confession was almost unbearable. I watched her retreat up the stairs toward her room, my eyes narrowing and my jaw clenching tightly. My fists clenched and unclenched as I struggled to calm myself down and avoid doing something I’d seriously regret.

“Gavin, try to calm down,” Judy said behind me, her tone low and cautious—like she was trying not to provoke the big bad wolf.

“Calm down?” I turned to look at her. The concern in her eyes made me pause for a moment, but the second I remembered what Irene had done, the anger surged back. “How am I supposed to calm down after learning what my own daughter did??”

She bit her lower lip, and my eyes drifted to her mouth before snapping back up to meet hers.

“Irene was in a really bad place at that time,” Judy said gently.

“And that makes it right?” I asked through gritted teeth, stunned that she was defending Irene. I’d nearly fired her because I thought she’d hurt my son. I did fire a maid after she confessed and banished her. If it hadn’t been for that maid... it could’ve been Judy. I was grateful the doctors saved Matt, but things could’ve turned out so much worse. “Whatever Irene was going through, whatever jealousy she felt, it doesn’t excuse what she did. She nearly killed Matt—and she probably caused that maid’s death, too.”

“We don’t know if she’s dead,” Judy said, trying to reason with me.

“But she could be—and that’s on Irene,” I snapped, my eyes blazing. “Why are you defending her right now?”

“I’m not... I’m just—” Her voice trailed off as she searched for the right words.

That’s when I saw it in her eyes.

“You knew it was her this whole time... didn’t you?” I asked, a sharp ache hitting my chest as I looked down at Judy’s small frame.

Judy glanced at the floor, nibbling her lip as she struggled to answer. But it wasn’t a complicated question—it was yes or no. She either knew, or she didn’t.

“Tell me the truth,” I demanded, my patience wearing thin. “Did you know, or didn’t you?”

Judy’s shoulders slumped as she gave a small nod.

“I knew,” she finally admitted.

“And you weren’t going to say anything to me?” I asked, unable to hide the hurt in my voice. “Were you planning to take the fall for it? Or were you just waiting for someone else to, like the maid?”

“I didn’t know the maid was going to take the fall,” she said quickly. “I was planning to take the blame myself.”

“Why?” I growled through clenched teeth, my wolf’s instincts pushing us closer to the edge.

“I was trying to protect her...” she admitted softly.

“Why?” I snarled again. “Why would you want to protect her after what she did??”

“Because she’s your daughter,” she replied, looking up at me—and my heart faltered. “She’s your daughter, and I didn’t want your relationship with her to be ruined because of me. She did this because she wanted me out of the picture—and it nearly worked. But in that moment, all she really wanted was her father on her side, and you chose her. I was trying to protect her... and Matt. If Matt ever found out what his sister had done, it would destroy him, Gavin. Completely. I couldn’t let that happen. I was going to take full responsibility... but then the maid confessed out of nowhere.”

My jaw tightened as I stared into her tear-filled eyes. She was telling the truth—and that’s what hurt the most. She cared more about me and my family than she did about her own innocence or reputation.

“Do you know why the maid confessed?” I asked, my tone low and tense.

Judy went quiet for a moment, and the silence said everything. My eyes narrowed, daring her to go on—because we both knew she knew exactly why.

“Ethan...” she finally said, her shoulders sagging. “He promised her a fortune and told her he’d protect her if she took the blame.”

My blood boiled at her words. I wanted nothing more than to punch Ethan in the face for the role he played in all of this.

“Then the maid’s okay, right?” I asked, scanning Judy’s face.

Her face paled, and she bit her lower lip again—a clear sign she wasn’t telling me everything.

## Chapter 450

“Judy,” I urged. “Tell me the truth.”

“As soon as you banished her, Ethan cut all ties with her. He lied and abandoned her... so I’m not entirely sure where she is now. But if I had to guess...”

“She’s probably dead...” I growled. Judy nodded, unable to speak. “And how do you even know this?”

“He told me,” she admitted. “Irene doesn’t know—not as far as I’m aware. But Ethan gloated about it to me for a whole week afterward. He wanted me to understand just how much control he had over everything.”

I wanted to break something. I wanted to find Ethan and punch him in the face for everything he’d done. But I stayed silent for a long time, trying to process the flood of information I’d just been hit with.

“I should’ve been told the truth from the beginning,” I muttered.

Judy nodded, her gaze dropping to the floor.

“I was protecting your family,” she said, her voice barely a whisper. Something about the way she said it made something inside me snap—and the next thing I knew, I had her pressed up against the wall, pinning her between my body and the hard surface.

Her breath hitched as my lips crashed into hers. I kissed her deeply, my tongue sliding into her mouth with greedy urgency like I couldn’t get enough of her. She tasted sweet, her breath warm, sending a shiver down my spine in the best possible way. Her body molded against mine, fitting too perfectly—too naturally—while my cock hardened in my pants, the pressure becoming unbearable.

I groaned into her mouth, overwhelmed by the contact between us. She clung to me, her body melting into mine like it belonged there. I caught her bottom lip between my teeth, tugging and sucking on it like it was the sweetest thing I’d ever tasted.

She sighed softly, the kiss lingering far too long in the middle of the villa foyer. When we finally pulled apart, our breaths were ragged and tangled as we fought to steady them. I closed my eyes and leaned my forehead against hers, still keeping her pinned to the wall like I’d fall apart if I let go.

“What was that for?” she asked finally, her voice breathless.

“For protecting my family,” I whispered. “For being there when I couldn’t be. For being you...”

The words slipped out before I could fully grasp them—but as I said each one, I realized just how true they were... how real they felt.

She licked her bottom lip and gave a small nod, her body trembling slightly against mine.

I finally stepped back, taking in her flushed cheeks and the hooded look in her eyes. I wanted to pull her back into me and kiss the breath out of her. I wanted to pull her back in, but I chose to stay silent, my eyes scanning her face, searching for something... anything.

"I'm sorry for keeping this from you—and that you had to find out like this," she finally said, bringing the conversation back to where it had started. "I really am sorry."

I shook my head.

"Don't be," I said, my voice coming out a little too gruff. "It's okay."

She gave a small nod, though the blush still lingered on her cheeks.

"I should get to Matt. I'm late for tutoring."

I nodded, running a hand through my hair. Without another word, she turned and hurried off toward the back parlor where she usually met with Matt.

I let out a sigh and glanced up at the staircase. I knew I'd have to talk to Irene sooner or later about all of this... but first, I needed answers.

I pulled my phone from my pocket and called Taylor.

"Hello?" Taylor answered cautiously, unsure whether this was a social or business call.

"I need you to gather some information," I said quickly.

"Of course, Alpha," Taylor replied, instantly recognizing the tone. This was work. "What do you need?"

"That maid I fired months ago... I need you to find her. If she's dead, find out what happened. If someone killed her, I want the rogue responsible. If she's alive, bring her back to the villa. I have questions only she can answer."

Taylor raised his eyebrows. He knew why that maid had been dismissed and banished. He couldn't believe Gavin was willing to let her return.

"Are you sure you want to do that?" Taylor asked, narrowing his eyes, though Gavin couldn't see him.

"Don't argue with me, Beta," Gavin snapped into the phone. "I'm not in the mood. Just do as you're told. I want a full report on my desk by the end of the day."

There was a brief pause before Taylor sighed.

"Yes, Alpha."