

Tasting Nora-Pleasing Her Stepbrother Mates #Tasting 351 - Read Tasting Nora-Pleasing Her Stepbrother Mates Tasting 351

Tasting 351

351–The Old Me

Nora:

I had cleaned up nicely. When I wore a brown dress, braided my front hair, and tied it back while leaving big curls of my hair to flow freely, I almost didn't recognize myself.

"You're all set," the woman doing my hair and makeup stepped back, exiting the room while I continued to stare at my reflection. For a moment, I saw the old me—the unruly and detached version of myself.

And I hated that image.

I quickly got up and fixed my shoes, making sure to hide the anklet behind them as instructed. Despite everything being in place, I still felt incomplete. In that moment, it was as if I was dead inside. Even the faintest light and colors were overwhelming.

"Brody wants you to come to one of the big bedrooms and pretend you've been in there—" Rollo knocked on the open door, startling me when he suddenly fell silent.

"You're the first person to knock on my door," I commented, avoiding his lingering gaze.

"So, he wants me to act like I was in the master bedroom?" I asked, finally noticing how long he had been staring at me.

"What's wrong?" I glanced down at my dress, wondering if something was amiss.

"Wow!" He shook his head and looked away. "Yeah, Brody wants—" He closed his eyes, making me raise an eyebrow in confusion.

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351 The Old Me

28 Vouchers

“Are you okay? Having stomach issues?” I asked, genuinely concerned, and he immediately burst into laughter.

“You’re just too cute, you know that, right?” His words stunned me. For a second, I couldn’t move.

I had heard that word before—right before people used and betrayed me.

“I’m not cute—I’m a mother of four children,” I replied bitterly, clearly catching him off guard as he hurried to correct himself.

“You’re more than just a mother, Nora,” he said, though I had no interest in finding out what he meant. I was done trying to understand things I no longer cared about.

“Anyway, I-” I paused when I noticed him holding something in his hand.

It was my ring. The ring that had kept me safe for so long. Now I realized the importance of it.

I thought I had lost it when I took it off the first time. I never really felt the need to wear it again. Akira was what mattered now. In fact, she was the only one who mattered. Without her, this pack would have disappeared from the charts.

“Brody wants you to wear this,” he held the ring out to me, and I silently stared at it. The memories of the past few years made me feel numb.

“I thought I had lost it,” I extended my hand and grabbed the ring.

“Brody had it,” Rollo answered. “Listen, I know he won’t tell you this, but I don’t think he plans to let you meet your babies until the alpha kings leave,” he whispered, as if sharing a secret.

“He’ll make up excuses, but-” he stopped abruptly and stepped back.

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351 The Old Me

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258 Vouchers

I had started out as an enemy with Rollo, but over time, I began to wonder if he could be trusted. Of course, I wouldn't trust anyone except myself and Akira, but he did seem more like a friend than a foe.

"So, that means I have to make sure the brothers leave as soon as possible," I put the ring on and nodded, understanding the task ahead.

Gone were the days when I'd cry and ask questions with obvious answers. Now, I didn't argue. I knew even if I argued or cried, the outcome would be the same. Brody wouldn't let me see my babies.

So now, I save my energy and focus on finding solutions.

"Yeah, and let's go before the brothers come out of their rooms. They went to the guest rooms to freshen up," he quickly added, and I sighed.

"Sure, let's go. Lead the way, boss," I joked, and he chuckled, walking ahead of me. I was holding my true emotions back because I wanted to remain cold but it was shocking how I was feeling slightly lost after the arrival of my mates. That's what happens whenever they are around.

He once told me I seemed like someone who could be forgiving. Maybe he misunderstood—I had become someone who didn't care much about

people anymore.

The reason I could joke with him now was because it didn't mean much to me. I hardly dwelled on their past actions.

Once we were in the mansion, I took a deep breath and felt goosebumps. The scent of the brothers was strong as I twisted the ring on my finger. But I quickly adjusted it and walked into the master bedroom that Brody had set up to make it look like we were living here together.

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Tasting 352

352—The Adventure Of Seeing Them Again

Nora:

There was a king-sized bed in the middle of the room, with a window behind it. A balcony offered a full view of the beautiful mountains, the same ones I only visited to slay monsters or capture them. The room was adorned with elegant decor, a closet full of new clothes, a spacious bathroom complete with a large tub.

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"If you're ready, we-" Brody walked in, dressed sharply in a but he paused as if he'd seen a ghost.

ack suit,

"I'm ready," I said, walking up to him so we could leave, but he chose to stand in the doorway, eyeing me like a creep.

"I forgot how fragile you could look," his compliment felt more like a slap.

"Huh? Is it really that easy to fool you alphas? All a woman needs to do is dress up, and suddenly she's fragile, and that intrigues you?" My comment instantly erased his smile.

"At least smile when someone compliments you," he rolled his eyes. "Please make sure they leave quickly."

The fact that he added "please" for the first time was because he didn't want to outright threaten me with my children's lives and safety. He was cunning but also foolish to think that just because he wasn't saying it out loud, he wasn't guilty of it.

"It will be soon—if you get going," I gestured for him to step aside, and he did. We walked out of the room, and even when he tried his best to hold

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352 The Adventure Of Seeing Them Again

288 Vouchers

my hand, I kept mine clasped in front of me, fiddling with the ring on my finger.

"Hey, welcome to my pack," Brody, who had already met them, greeted the visitors again as we entered the living room.

I had to hold my breath and quickly look at the TV to avoid making direct eye contact with them. I wanted to appear as if their presence meant nothing to me, but it did. It reminded me of the endless nights of weeping and pain.

"Hi, Nora!" Lord Atwood quickly got up and came toward me for a hug, but I stepped back, making it seem natural.

“Hello, how was your journey?” I asked with a wide smile, extending my hand for a handshake.

He stared at my hand for a moment before accepting it.

The brothers had been silently watching me the entire time. But I was trying my best to not look directly at them.

“It was tiring, but seeing you made it all worth it,” Lord Atwood spoke in his usual sweet tone, but this time, I wouldn’t be fooled.

“That’s great. You guys sit and talk, I’ll go see what the maids are up to,” I gently patted Brody’s arm, summoning all the courage I had to touch him.

I gave them a smile, deliberately avoiding direct eye contact with the brothers, keeping my gaze solely on Lord Atwood. I could tell they wanted me to stay, but I needed to get away from them. They had to know I was over them so they’d leave early, and I

early, and I Ould finally see my babies.

Besides, i thought it wouldn’t be so crazy seeing them but oh! The mate bond was making me go crazy even when I had a ring on my finger. Or maybe it was my emotional attachment to them that was making me act

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352–The Adventure Of Seeing Them Again

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“Sure,” Brody quickly agreed, while the others remained silent. I got up and swiftly moved out of the living room, taking a deep breath to calm my

nerves.

“Not easy, huh?” Rollo commented, leaning over the back of the couch as I stood in front of it. This was a small living room after the guest living room. I wondered why Rollo didn’t enter the room to meet up with the royals as he was a royal beta.

“I hate pretending like I want to stay in contact with certain people,” I didn’t bother hiding it anymore. I had cut ties the last time they kicked me

out.

I still managed to text Ryker, but his response made me feel so ashamed of myself that I promised never to let them fool me again.

“I wonder if you stay talking to me because you have to, or is it because I am not that bad to keep around,” he joked and I rolled my eyes.

“That’s alright. They’re only here for a day or two. Brody has already contacted the council to request the brothers return to their pack and take care of their own people,” Rollo added, and I sighed in relief. “care of their own people,” Rollo ad

“That will be so helpful,” I remarked.

“I hope it’s not because you’re missing our adventures together?” There he was, joking with me again.

“Not reall—” Before I could finish, I heard someone interrupt.

“Nora!”

My body flinched at the voice, instantly recognizing it as Nash’s.

Tasting 353

353–The Talk With Nash

Nora:

“I will be at your service when you call me,” Rollo gave me a sly smirk, and I rolled my eyes before turning to face Nash. Belonging

He was wearing a gray t–shirt that revealed his well–defined biceps; he looked more muscular now. His hair had grown longer too. His eyes still held that same bright silver hue, subtly different from gray.

“Hello,” I forced a smile onto my lips while he stood frozen, staring at me like he had never seen me before.

“How are you?” I turned to the side, reaching for a sofa and sitting down calmly. Thankfully, I had my ring, so Akira was spared all the pain in the world.

“What was that?” Nash asked sternly, making me wonder what he was talking about now.

“Umm, what?” I raised a brow, crossing one leg over the other and twirling a strand of hair around my finger.

“Nora! What adventures was Royal Beta Rollo talking about?” he hissed, sitting on the couch and facing me.

“Oh, that. As my Royal Beta, he shows me around the pack, and we work together for the betterment of our people,” I shrugged, while he narrowed his eyes at me.

I couldn't help but recall flashes of our last conversation—both times when I asked him to let me stay, and both times he reacted like I was some repulsive creature.

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353 The Talk With Nash

288 Vouchers

“You're managing the pack? You and Brody?” His voice carried a tinge of sadness, which I found hard to believe.

“Why is that so shocking to you? Yes, Brody and I accepted each other, remember? That was probably about ten months ago, if my calculations are correct,” I pretended to be lost in thought, then flashed him a smile.

“Tell me, how is Daphne?” I watched his eyes well up when I mentioned his girlfriend, acting as though it pained him.

“I broke things off with her,” he replied in a flat tone and suddenly the tears disappeared. Who were the tears for then?

I would be lying if I said I wasn't shocked. He left me for her and then broke up with her? I had imagined them getting married. Of course, if a mate leaves his fated mate for someone else, he must love the other person deeply.

“Oh! That's unfortunate. Don't worry, you'll work things out with her again,” I said in the softest tone possible.

now,” he shifted to the edge of

“Okay, I'm going to be serious with nt to his lips before I quickly

the couch, and my gaze involuntarily

looked away.

The temptation was strong, but I had much more control over myself now.

“You weren’t serious before?” I joked, but he didn’t seem amused.

“Nora! I’ve come here to take you back with us.” The moment he said that, my fake smile vanished. I felt a surge of tears that made my nose tingle.

It was like taking a bite of pure

Vasabi.

Oh, how I had longed to hear those words. I had cried for them. Every night, I would dream of them coming here, asking me to return with them.

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353 The Talk With Nash

259 Vouchers

And every morning, I would wake up to the cold reality of my prison walls.

“What?” I managed to ask, my voice barely steady. “I’m living here now. I’m married to Brody. How can I go back with you?” It took every ounce of courage to say that.

Not because I feared losing him, but because admitting it meant I would finally feel a sense of freedom after hurting him.

Which I did.

He instantly gasped, his jaw tightening.

“There’s no way you’re serious about this. He doesn’t deserve you. You only dated him to clear your name-” As he tried to reach for my hand, I swiftly slid back in my seat.

“Clear my name? Oh, damn! It’s been so long, I’d almost forgotten about that. But what made you suddenly remember it now?” I taunted, though I wasn’t sure he’d catch on.

“I don’t care how many times you say you’re happy here—you must come back. Your feelings stem from anger and vengeance. You’re just trying to get back at me for leaving

you when you wanted me to hold your hand. This... whatever relationship you have with Brody, it's nothing. You need

in his voice was shocking.

to come back home now." The co

"Huh? Are you okay? Being delusional isn't a good look, Nash." I felt a surge of anger rise within me as I listened to him suggest that my life was just a reaction to his abandonment.

"I know you're upset with us, but I can explain why we did all that." He

kept shifting in his

seat, clearly table.

"Why would I be upset? Maybe briefly, but now... I'm happy. I'm so glad

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353–The Talk With Nash

288 Vouchers.

things turned out the way they did. I'm happy with Brody." Every time I mentioned Brody, his jaw would clench tighter.

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Tasting 354

354–Confronting Her

288 Vouchers

354–Confronting Her

Nash:

I watched her sit before me, looking so pretty and content. She didn't seem like she had missed any of us—or me. Had she not thought about me all these months?

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It wasn't like she hadn't changed physically either. She was weaker than she used to be, more tanned, with toned muscles on her arms now. But regardless, she looked even more beautiful. She seemed like someone who had been training a lot.

"Nora!" I closed my eyes, trying to calm my frayed nerves. Hearing her talk about Brody like that was killing me softly.

"I don't care. You have to come home. You can't just forget that—" I hissed under my breath, trying to move closer to her, but she didn't even flinch.

This wasn't the Nora I remembered as my mate. She seemed indifferent.

"You can't force me," she replied calmly, though the smile had disappeared from her face.

"Really? Fine. Does your husband know you have a fated mate

somewhere?" I didn't want to resort to this, but my anger knew no limits, and I couldn't stand the thought of her with anyone else.

"He doesn't. Because I don't have a fated mate," she looked me directly in the eyes and repeated the very words I had once told her.

I was stunned.

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354—Confronting Her

288 Vouchers

But it made sense. Of course, she threw it back in my face. I remembered how she had begged me to make her stay, and I had pushed her away.

"I can explain—" I clenched my fists, my body trembling with discomfort.

"There's no explanation for anything you're saying. I'm not your mate; I never was. And even if you believe we were, I'm married now. So I'd suggest you don't interfere in my

matters. Go home, fix things with Daphne, and marry her-" There wasn't a trace of pain in her voice as she spoke to her supposed mate about another woman.

"It doesn't hurt you at all?" I asked in disbelief, studying her face.

"No! Why would it hurt me? I'll be very happy for you if you end up with the woman you love, just like I am with the man I love." She shrugged so nonchalantly.

It was as if she was on a mission to break my heart. But I wasn't okay with it.

"I'm going to check on the maids," she clicked her tongue, but before she could stand, I placed my hands on the sofa, trapping her in.

The way she raised her brow and didn't flinch confirmed that she had truly changed.

"What was that about? If he loves you so much, why the hell were you fighting a mutant in front of everyone like a slave?" I hissed, glaring into her eyes.

I was shocked when I saw that. Who would let his beloved mate step into the arena and fight a mutant? The injuries she sustained made my heart ache, but Brody didn't even bat an eye. He was happily watching the crowd, gauging their reaction.

The more the fight delayed, the happier Brody turned. In that moment, my

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354-Confronting Her

brothers had to hold me from physically jumping in the arena and dragging Brody in with me for

288 Vouchers

mutant to fucking kill him. The Nora,

that was so fragile that an army of stepbrothers were busy protecting her and looking like evil beings, was thrown in front of a deadly mutant? how did Brody not stop it?

"It was my choice. He trained me for it after I asked him to. And unlike you, he respects my wishes," she said, and I called it out as complete

nonsense.

I respect her wishes, but would I let her die or get beaten up like that? Even if she won, it was surprising to watch her fight with such skill. Still, I would never allow it—especially not for the sake of entertainment or betting money.

“No! I know this attitude is because you’re strong now, which I don’t even understand,” I began to ramble, and she sighed, gently placing her hand on my shoulder to push me away.

That touch took me back in time. It used to be just for me. Was it true? Did she really give herself to that asshole and fall in love with him now?

“Nash! I have maids to attend to,” she repeated like a broken record, but there was emptiness in her eyes.

She stood up and left, while I remained in my spot, hurt and in pain.

“Did we really expect to wait for her all these months? Of course, she moved on, and I feel responsible for it. If I hadn’t been crushed-” My wolf felt the pain as deeply as I did.

“She is so different now,” I admitted. She really seemed happy here.

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Tasting 355

355—That Night With Silas!

Nora:

Nash took things too far when he asked me to move back with them. In fact, he even made a statement that he thought my life still revolved around him and that is why I was with Brody? huh! and his apology! Just one sentence, and he thought I would forget all about their actions?

I felt anger simmer for as long as I sat in front of him. But I didn’t lose my composure and kept a smile on my lips, determined not to give him the satisfaction of seeing me suffer because of them any longer.

I had to step away and went straight to the kitchen where Mrs. Fisher and the other maids were working. The minute they saw me, they gasped but then began eyeing me with disdain.

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“Look at her, she didn’t miss the chance to dress up,” a maid whispered from the side. I turned to face her, and her expression darkened as she met my glare.

“When have I ever come out naked?” I raised my brow, sarcastically giving her a closed lip smile.

“Say it to my face,” I insisted, my eyes flashing with threat.

As expected, she looked down and fidgeted nervously with her fingers. She wouldn’t dare confront me, not after seeing me take down a mutant monster from the woods.

“I’m sorry,” she quickly apologized and turned back to the dishes.

“Don’t be afraid of her-” Of course, Mrs. Fisher would use my children against me, but before she could, someone’s arrival interrupted her.

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355–That Night With Silas!

288 Vouchers

“Why wouldn’t they? She is the Luna of the pack, right?” I recognized the voice but didn’t turn around to face him. Instead, I closed my eyes briefly and took a deep breath.

“Alpha King Silas,” Mrs. Fisher must have bowed so low that her face was nearly in the dirt.

“Everyone, out! I need to speak to Nora,” he ordered, and my body tensed

further at his command. I didn’t want to be left alone with him but I further at his command.

couldn’t protest visibly.

I knew I had to turn around, so I did and watched as Silas observed the maids leaving. Once they were gone, he turned to me, and I straightened my back and gave him a confident smile.

“Nora!” His voice softened, reminding me of the night we were together before he fled the pack like a coward.

“Hi, wow! You’ve let your hair grow so much?” I acted nonchalant, causing him to momentarily lose his composure. He touched his hair and smiled before he quickly gulped to drag himself back to

reality.

“Huh?” He shook his head, then gulped. “I need to talk to you.”

“Sure, we’re talking,” I giggled at his awkwardness, tilting my head and maintaining eye contact.

I’ve learned how to mask my true feelings. I could be smiling on the surface, but deep down, I was filled with anger and hatred for the person in front of me.

“That night when we felt the mate bond-” Before he could delve into that topic, I knew I had to cut him off. He had no right to come back and bring up that subject after being told I was happily married now.

And that too after so many months. He couldn’t have stayed a day or a few

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355–That Night With Silas!

hours to tell me he had to leave? He just fled and next time we met, he didn’t even apologize.

“What night?” I gave him a closed-lip smile. “You must have dreamed about it. I have only one mate, and that is a chosen mate–Brody.” The shrug of my shoulders caught his eye, and he frowned.

288 Vouchers

“Okay, I get it. You’re angry with me. But I had to leave because-” I cut him off again.

It was so satisfying to frustrate others, especially when they had once enjoyed hurting you.

“Because of the pack’s emergency, Silas! I understand. I now take care of a pack myself, so I know how important these things are,” my casual tone seemed to intensify his frown.

He looked almost angry, which only fueled my irritation.

“What are you doing? Do you think I don’t understand that you’re trying to act cool just to hurt my feelings?” His audacity to mention feelings after ghosting me for months was astounding.

“Huh? Silas, calm down. Look, I was upset in the past, I won’t lie about that. But why are you bringing it up now? I’m happy here,” I managed to make him hurt even more. And honestly, it felt so good.

The hurt in their eyes was because I was happy with someone else. I never imagined I’d have the opportunity to make him jealous. It was like a task I hadn’t even added to my bucket list.

I thought I would never get to enjoy this day. But now I had to face the others too and do the same to them as well.

Tasting 356

356—She Doesn’t Care About Her Fated Mate

Silas:

I couldn’t help but keep staring at her. She looked even more beautiful now. I couldn’t understand how someone could glow up every time I saw them. But then, it was her words that tore my chest open and destroyed

1. me. She was opening her feelings for Brody, something she never would have done before.

Because she used to be so into me.

I remembered that night when she came to my room, and we felt the mate bond. I wished I hadn’t slept with her, only to leave her and cause her pain. If I had controlled my urges, she wouldn’t be so angry with me now. I wanted to be with her, but not the way I did.

“What about me?” The words slipped out before I could stop them. I needed to know why she hadn’t waited for me. I never imagined her act so cold with me.

“I don’t know. You can find love, Silas. I don’t want to dwell on the past. I’m in love now, and I don’t want to ruin that,” she said, looking so innocent as she confessed her feelings for her useless husband.

If I didn’t care about her tears, I would fucking snap her husband’s neck right away and steal her from him.

“How could you love someone else when you have a fated mate?” I

sounded like such a hypocrite. First, I left her with a man who was always around, waiting for his chance, and now I expected her not to fall for him? Even after everyone told her to move on?

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288 Vouchers

356—She Doesn't Care About Her Fated Mate

It didn't make sense, but I didn't care about her feelings for Brody. I just knew deep down that I couldn't let her go.

“Silas, I was accepted by him after you kicked me out of the mansion and the pack. Brody took care of me, and that's how I fell in love with him. When I had no one else, he was there for me. I find it odd that you're even asking me that,” she said, rolling her eyes, making my heart skip a beat. Of course, I didn't want her to look at me like that. I had to say the right things—was there even a chance left for me?

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“Now, let me get everything ready. You are our guest and I want you guys to feast well,” she smiled, but

then she added the words that shattered my heart. “Silas, please, don't think about the past. I hope you find happiness too, just like I did. Sometimes fated mates don't end up together. Get over it.”

I was left speechless, the way she casually told me to move on, as if it could be that easy for anyone to forget their fated mate. But what happened to her? When did she become so Heartless?

“Now go and wait for dinner,” she gestured playfully, waving her hand at me, teasing as she urged me to leave.

I couldn't stand there any longer, watching her be over me. I had to leave. She was driving me insane. Her beauty had only intensified in the past months, and I feared losing control and hurting her even more by demanding her to leave with me. I needed to be careful.

I walked out of the kitchen and signaled the maids to go back inside. As they left, I came face-to-face with Nash, who looked like he needed to talk. Belonging

“I guess it didn’t go well with you either,” he said, his expression dark.

“I’m so frustrated that she’s acting like she doesn’t even care,” I hissed, not

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yet to my

mate.

I knew my brothers had been with her before, but that didn’t bother me. She was my mate, and once I claimed her, I’d fix everything. But now, it seemed harder since she refused to accept that I was her fated mate.

“We must have hurt her so much,” Nash groaned, sounding exhausted.

“Of course we did, brother. Don’t you remember how she begged us to let her stay? Then she came here, into a completely new environment. She was upset with us long before that, even when the drama with those girls started happening every day,” I paused, clenching my jaw.

“And despite us knowing everything, we couldn’t hold her hand and tell her that we know she is innocent. We just had to fall for the tricks of those bitches because in the long run, we had to hurt Nora so that she remained safe,” I used to think my curse was just something I could deal with easily until now.

“But we had our reasons for what we did,” Nash argued.

“She didn’t know, and she doesn’t want to know,” I said, my heart aching. I desperately needed to shift and cool off.

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Tasting 357

357–Messing Around

Nora:

After Silas left, I took a deep breath and sipped some water, only for Mrs. Fisher interrupted and snatched the glass from my hands.

“You are not allowed to use any of the royal dishes,” she hissed at me, her voice low so that no one else would hear.

“Really?” I met her gaze directly, then grabbed a large spoon and licked it thoroughly, watching her face twist in shock. I loved doing obnoxious things just to get under her skin, and it was always satisfying when I got an explosive reaction out of her.

Provoking people had become a game for me now. But even I could sense something had changed within me. The girl who used to cry after being dismissed by her mates was gone. The moment they were out of sight, I was fine, even joking around.

“There you go, savor it. It’s a blessing from a fighter,” I teased, winking at her as I continued to mess with her. She groaned in frustration while the other maids laughed. It didn’t bother me as much anymore. Ever since they’d seen me fight the mutants, their comments were mostly behind my back—and even then, they’d apologize quickly afterward.

“Everyone, is dinner ready?” Brody walked in, addressing the maids as he wiped the sweat from his forehead with a sigh. The brothers were giving him a hard time.

“My dear husband is sweating in the middle of winter?” I joked, leaning against the counter as I grabbed a can of mixed fruit, casually eating spoonfuls. Food from the royal kitchen tasted incredible, and I wasn’t

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57–Messing Around

288 Vouchers

allowed in here anymore. I only got fresh fruits and bottles of milk. Not going to lie, I was starving most of the time. They needed me in good health to keep fighting the mutants and bringing them wealth yet they didn’t do that.

“I really want them gone,” Brody muttered before turning his full attention to me. He walked over and stood in front of me, hands on his hips.

“They came to see you. What did they talk about?” he asked, his

expression tense. He looked so serious that I couldn’t help but mess with him a little.

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“They said they suspect we’re hiding something,” I whispered, watching his eyes widen in alarm.

“Huh? Did they pick that up from my behavior or yours?” he asked, his voice shaky. So he wanted to know which one of us is messing up? Did he really expect me to say my own name?

“Yours. They said someone told them you have a second wife and that you’re hiding her right now,” I continued lying, and the sweat on his forehead turned into a flood.

I knew Brody had sent Janet away to some hotel, hoping the brothers wouldn’t find out. However, he did mention that if they did, we would act like I had allowed it.

“Oh no, that means I shouldn’t hide her. If they find out before I tell them, they’ll think something’s wrong and might extend their stay,” he whispered to himself, nodding as if confirming his own plan. It was fun watching the world burn around me.

“You’re right. Wow, you think so well,” I praised him, making him break his gaze from the floor and look at me. A blank stare, followed by a smile creeping onto his lips.

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357–Messing Around

289 (Vouchers

“Thank you. But would you be okay if I brought her back? I mean, I don’t want you to feel uncomfortable, especially in front of them, knowing I’ve brought another mate above you,” he asked so innocently that no one would believe me if I told them this was the same man who had let me be watched by thousands in the arena, getting beaten and forced to kill a

mutant.

“Of course not. I want them gone as much as you do,” I straightened my posture, setting the can aside. Belonging

“You do?” The gleam in his eyes made me chuckle.

“Of course, I’ll finally get to hold my babies then. Why else would I want them gone?” I raised an eyebrow, shattering whatever hopeful thoughts he had.

Did he think I was going to say something like, *‘Because I want to spend time with you, Brody?’* These alpha kings were seriously delusional. I bet they thought their one gaze can soften a mountain. That is not how it works. Brody is not that handsome for me to have one look at his face and forget about his mistreatment.

“Right. I’ll go ask the driver to bring Janet back. But please, handle everything. Don’t let them figure out what we’re hiding,” he said as he started to walk away. I cleared my throat, stopping him with one last question.

With a forced smile on my lips, I asked, “And what exactly is that?”

I bet he knew if he started explaining what we were hiding, he’d look like the villain.

68.971

Tasting 358

358—My Sweet Mate Can Act

Ryker:

“Ryker, please calm down,” my father eyed me, gesturing at my brothers to make sure I didn’t do something stupid.

But how could I not be angry? Nora was fucking acting like she was so happy here.

H

“The dinner is being served,” Brody announced as he returned, and with him came Nora. My heartbeat raced in my chest once more. I had to quickly lower my gaze and steady my breathing. It wasn’t easy for me to see her with him—or with anyone, for that matter.

But what hurt the most was how I had exposed myself as a monster in front of everyone and then, in hidden words, asked her to wait for me for a few months. Yet, she didn’t. She moved on and now acted as if she felt no guilt about it. I couldn’t understand why.

Had my last phone call with her upset her that much? In that same call, I had asked her to wait and prove her love by not falling for Brody. Maybe that’s what her love for me was—weak. But I wouldn’t let that hold me back. I twisted my neck and stretched it, not caring how psychotic I might have looked to anyone.

“Why don’t you all rest in your guest rooms until then?” Nora spoke up, making me raise my head and look at her. My dad hadn’t stopped staring at her. He looked so defeated, and I knew he would fall ill after this visit if she didn’t forgive him for his cold behavior in those final weeks before she left us for this place.

“Brody,” before anyone could agree to leave, I called for the man’s

78%

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358–My Sweet Mate Can Act

288 Voucher's

attention. He used to be full of himself before, and now he looked even cockier. And why wouldn't he? He had a mate like Nora by his side. He must think he won the lottery.

"What was that whole crap in the arena?" I wouldn't pretend to appreciate what I had witnessed. To put Nora in an arena with a beast, betting money on her survival, was downright insulting.

"That was my wish," Nora quickly defended her husband, making my fists clench even tighter.

"But why? Why would you

ou

t to go through that?" my father asked,

and honestly, everyone else seemed to want to know the same.

"Because I wanted some excitement in my life and also to help my husband's pack grow

front of everyone, my heart sank. She needed to stop this. Otherwise, I would lose control and shift right here. And if that happened, they would all be in grave danger.

in wealth. "" Then she

held Brody's hand in

"But why put yourself in danger?" Dad pressed, trying to make eye

contact with her, though she kept avoiding his gaze, staring instead at her hand in Brody's grip. She was trying so hard to make it seem like they were madly in love, but I called it what it was—bullshit. It looked forced.

I knew my Nora, and when she was truly happy, she looked it. She looked wild, stubborn, and radiant. This was not that.

This mature and calm version of her felt so fake, especially when she professed love and adoration for her mate.

“Danger? Did you see her in that arena?” Brody’s excitement was visible. My brothers and I exchanged glances, and when he noticed, he cleared his throat, trying to compose himself with a less unsettling smile. “I’ve trained her for months. Do you really think I would’ve allowed her to do this if I wasn’t absolutely certain she’d be safe?”

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358–My Sweet Mate Can Act

288 Vouchers

“Really? Tell me again how a mere human is fighting a mutant? Those punches she threw had the strength of something far beyond human, but she doesn’t have a wolf, right?” I challenged him, knowing the truth. I had always known.

She was special, and that’s what terrified me. I had become so

overprotective of her that it probably made me look clingy, but I didn’t care. I feared for her life more than anything.

“I do have a wolf,” she corrected, her voice firm. “Maybe you’re all forgetting that I’m a monster’s daughter. The Whistler’s daughter. And while I used to keep my wolf hidden, when I came here, my dear husband made sure I didn’t do that anymore. He helped me realize I didn’t need to hide her or feel ashamed. He helped me gain control and use her for a better purpose. And look at me now— what was once seen as a monstrous existence is now hailed as heroic,” she finished, shrugging as if her whole speech had been casual.

Brody stood there, beaming with pride. But just as we were processing her words, something—or rather, someone—walked in and stunned us all.

“Babe, I’m home!”

A woman rushed in, arms wide open, heading straight for none other than Nora’s beloved husband, Brody.

77.80%

Tasting 359

359–They Are Planning Something

Nora:

The woman that just came around was not Brody's sister or relative, the brothers could tell. She looked so obnoxiously into Brody. I bet they must be noticing it and they were. They were sharing glances.

Brody awkwardly stood up to give Janet a proper hug, and I couldn't help but relish his discomfort. However, the moment my eyes landed on the brothers, my happiness evaporated. They were scrutinizing my every

move.

This could delay their stay.

"Hello," Brody broke the hug and cleared his throat, turning to face the audience, who were waiting for Janet to be introduced. "She is, umm- Janet-"

He struggled to complete the introduction. Janet was already aware of the plan, but I wasn't sure how long she could maintain the facade of being okay with Brody having another mate. She already looked like she wanted to attack me.

"I am his second wife and mate," Janet announced, cutting off Brody's hesitation. She wouldn't let him stumble over his words when it came to

her.

Lord Atwood and the others immediately stood up, their concern for me evident. Of course I lied about them suspecting Brody having another

mate.

"What is this woman saying?" Lord Atwood demanded, using a much

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359-They Are Planning Something

more authoritative tone than before.

It reminded me of the overprotective stepfather he used to be.

"What is going on? How can it be possible?" Lord Atwood hissed, his eyes shooting glares at Brody and Janet.

288 Vouchers

Brody was struggling to come up with an excuse, his lips had turned blue out of fear. But I was worried if he would take that frustration out on my babies.

“She’s not lying. She’s my friend, and I suggested to Brody that he-” I tried to explain, but Cain stepped forward before I could finish.

He had never looked so aggressive before.

“This is bullshit. You’d suggest your husband take another mate, and he accepted? What kind of twisted games are you two playing with us?” I should have anticipated that my plan to make Brody anxious and nervous would backfire.

Their anger was intense, but I didn’t understand why. It wasn’t like it was as bad as being brutally kicked out of your own house.

“Easy! I wanted this. Actually, I’ve been so busy that- I couldn’t give Brody enough time. He was suffering because of me, so I suggested he marry my friend. If he didn’t-” I tried explaining, but every time I made it seem like I had coerced Brody into marrying Janet, her anger grew.

Cain looked like he could transition any minute.

“Oh, eut the crap!” Ryker finally hissed. His eyes were filled with an emotion I couldn’t quite place. Even when I was upset with him, I couldn’t forget how he had stepped up to save me that day. He was the only one I felt might have a legitimate reason to be angry with me, especially since I had openly admitted to being afraid of him while he was imprisoned for

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359–They Are Planning Something

my sake.

“And this horny alpha agreed?” Ryker’s outburst snapped me back to reality as he yelled at Brody.

“Hey, this is between us. She insisted hard, and I had no other choice,” Brody replied, sounding both clever and clueless. He had no idea how bad he looked for saying it out loud.

288 iVouchers

“Huh? What are you, twelve? You couldn’t take a stand and tell her you didn’t want-” I had to cut him off or else things might escalate. I didn’t want Brody to suspect I had lied about the brothers

suspecting he had another wife.

“What could he have done when I was preoccupied with my own life and made it clear that I would leave if he didn’t agree with my wish?” I folded my arms over my chest, watching as the brothers stared at me in shock. Cain lowered his head and then leaned towards Nash, whispering something in his ear with such secrecy that others didn’t notice.

Nash’s eyes widened, and he nodded in understanding.

What were they discussing now?

“That makes sense,” Nash whispered, elbowing Silas. Then he relayed whatever Cain had discussed with him. I was curious. I always hated when they whispered and made plans together.

It was now up to Silas to approach Ryker and reveal what they had been discussing. But Ryker wasn’t so subtle; he turned his face clearly to listen to Silas.

“Yeah, maybe that’s it. I hope that’s why,” Ryker replied loudly before taking a deep breath and straightening his posture again.

“If it was her wish, we’re okay with it,” Cain spoke confidently, making

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me narrow my eyes at him suspiciously. What had they talked about?

The way they were looking at me now made me wonder if they would come to discuss it with me after dinner.

Tasting 360

360–It Hurts

Ryker:

The dinner was so uncomfortable. I couldn’t even eat anything properly. I hadn’t come here to feast on food anyway. I had come here to take Nora back. However, the way

she had been acting made me wonder if it would be a difficult task until Brody introduced his wife to us.

“We shall return now,” Dad hadn’t been able to ease up when one weird secret after another was exposed. First, he met up with the horrifying sight of Nora fighting in Arena, and now the second mate and his wife.

“You guys go ahead and help Dad get comfortable while I take a walk with Nora,” the minute I said that, I watched Brody and Nora exchange a glance.

“With

my

wife?” Brody asked, all smiles, but there was a hint of discomfort in his voice that only I could detect. I had been his friend. once, so I knew him very well. He had done something very wrong here, and I wasn’t going to let it slide that easily.

“Why not? She was his stepsister once. They had a bond of friendship; why can’t a Luna of the pack show the Alpha King her garden?” My dad was quick to come to my defense, making my wish to speak with the Alpha King’s wife seem like a more serious matter. Usually, Luna’s of the packs would invite us for walks where they suggest or request some help for their packs.

He provided a reasonable excuse. “Of course, I didn’t mean to act like I was objecting. Janet, you should join them too and see if you can share the pack’s ideas with the Alpha King as well.” Brody

clearly thought he could outplay me.

1030

“Why? Is she the one fighting him at Arena?” Janet stopped when I asked that question. “I only want to take a stroll with the fighter. I would love to hear the Luna’s opinion and suggestions on how to improve one’s pack.” My smirk made Brody’s face darken.

Of course, he was reminded of one fateful night when he lost his mate. after she had taken a stroll with me. The look on his face fulfilled my heart. I didn’t need a dessert for that reason alone. I knew it would be enough to sweeten my mood.

“Shall we?” I asked Nora directly, who confidently got up and shrugged. I had never seen her so confident before. Although I was impressed and happy that she had learned to control her wolf and put it to better use, I still felt uneasy about the vibes the three of them were giving off.

Nora and I walked out of the mansion in silence. Her cologne was enough to speak to me and mesmerize me.

“So, congratulations on your wolf,” I started, sliding my hands into my pockets. I had to look away every few seconds to calm myself. Walking with her under the cloudy sky and the mild wind carrying her scent was not easy for me. I kept thinking about ways I could hold her and express my feelings.

“Thank you. My husband worked really hard for it,” she mentioned Brody almost as if she wanted to provoke me.

“And then he married your friend. By the way, I didn’t know you were friends with the Alpha’s daughter that Brody was conducting business with. Isn’t it an odd coincidence?” The way I asked that question was bound to provoke a response from Nora.

Her body flinched, but it was so subtle that I wondered why she was trying so hard to act like nothing was weird.

“Well, he really listens to me,” she replied.

1020 D.

“The girl who was so possessive that she wouldn’t even let her mate look at someone else requested her husband to marry her best friend? What made you change so much?” I paused once I knew we were far from the mansion. The roads were so silent at this time of night.

“Time changes everything. You mature up,” she shrugged, looking around and taking deep breaths to inhale the fresh air.

“Is that so? Or maybe it’s because you didn’t want to get intimate with him because you weren’t over your fated mate?” I asked her directly this time, without beating around the bush. She gave me a harsh glare in response.

“You think I made him accept someone else so that he stays busy and doesn’t ask me to be intimate with him?” she questioned, and without hesitation, I shrugged, lifting my chin.

But before I could be satisfied with the explanation we brothers had come up with, she broke my heart when she admitted, “Ryker, we have sex almost every day. He starts and ends the day with me, maybe has a moment in the middle with Janet, but I am always the main one.”