

# **Tasting Nora-Pleasing Her Stepbrother Mates #Tasting 401 - Read Tasting Nora-Pleasing Her Stepbrother Mates Tasting 401**

Tasting 401

401 The Pairding Of Our Lost Love

401–The Painting Of Our Lost Love

Nora:

I made it inside the mansion to find Lord Atwood standing at the entrance. His sons were right behind him, their arms folded across their chests, except for Cain. He was nowhere to be seen.

“I see you’ve brought her here,” Lord Atwood remarked, nodding toward the living room. I stepped further inside and saw Daphne lying on the couch, deep in slumber. She stirred only to walk around aimlessly before collapsing back into sleep again.

As expected, her condition was terrible, and I had no idea how much worse it would get before everything was resolved—or if it would just keep deteriorating from here.

“I thought it would be a good idea to keep her in sight. Last time when we let the victim out of our sight, we lost him,” I replied, ignoring the

underlying meaning behind their stares. They stood there like they had a bone to pick with me.

“I don’t want to interfere with your judgment regarding the mission, but having her live here might make you uncomfortable,” Lord Atwood surprised me with his hypocrisy.

I didn’t want to say it aloud, but I vividly remembered when he had brought in Natalya and April. Did he not think they made me uncomfortable too?

“Oh no, it’s fine. I’m more concerned about her than I am about the possibility that she might irritate me with her behavior,” I replied casually, noticing them exchange glances with one another.

401–The Painting Of Our Lost Love

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“Anyway, I’d like her to stay in my room, if that’s alright,” I suggested, once again souring their mood.

“Why in your room? She despises you. She’s done so much wrong to you –” Silas groaned as he stepped forward, attempting to argue, but Lord Atwood gestured for him to step back.

“It’s okay. Whatever you decide,” Lord Atwood agreed.

With a nod, I walked over to Daphne and stood beside her, debating whether I should wake her up and disturb her sleep or wait for her to wake on her own so I could take her to my room. I decided to let her rest for now. She was incredibly sick, and I didn’t want to make it worse. I knew the brothers were still around.

“Silas—may I ask for your help?” I called out, catching them off guard as they were about to head to their respective rooms. Text .

Silas turned to his brothers and gave a strange smile. I noticed Ryker and Nash exchange questioning glances before Nash stepped forward to speak.

“Why him? You could ask me. I can help you.”

I raised an eyebrow, tapping my foot on the ground with my hands on my hips.

“You two should rest. I can handle it,” Ryker cleared his throat and

offered his assistance. With their father already gone, they were no longer hiding their competitiveness.

“I asked Silas-,” I started to explain why I’d chosen Silas, but Nash groaned, cutting me off.

“I was with her the whole day. So why is it that now, when she needs help, you two are suddenly stepping in?” he growled at his brothers, surprising me. Why was he so eager to assist me?

10 44

#### 401 The Painting Of Our Lost Love

“Alright, fine. Nash—can you help me?” I said, hoping to prevent any more arguing that might wake Daphne. I chose Nash, though it was clear his brothers were not happy with my decision.

“Thank you. You two can go ahead; I’ll take care of her,” Nash said, his tone carrying an odd, smug hint as he dismissed his brothers, who left reluctantly.

“So, tell me what do you need me to do?” Nash asked, stepping inside and stopping just when he was uncomfortably close to my face.

“I want you to sit here and watch Daphne for me while I go freshen up, okay?” I gave him a smile as I handed over the task, watching his smile slowly fade.

“Pffft! Yeah, Nash, be a good boy and take care of your ex,” Silas joked, laughing under his breath. Nash’s jaw clenched, clearly not pleased. What did he think I was going to ask him for?

I didn’t stick around, even as the brothers kept laughing and pointing at Nash from the staircase.

“Move!” I ordered the two as soon as I reached the stairs, and they hurried off as if their tails were on fire.

However, I wasn’t only thinking about taking a shower—I had something else in mind.

I remembered Cain saying last time that he had burned my painting because he was trying to protect me. I don’t know why he lied when he could have just told me the truth. Of course, he did it to hurt me.

So this time, I was going to make his statement true. I stormed into his studio, knowing he wasn’t home, and grabbed the painting.

I was going to burn it—my painting. He should not be having my painting in his studio anymore.

10 44

401—The Painting Of Our Lost Love

I have moved on, and thankfully, I could now get rid of the painting.

10 44

Tasting 402

402—My Brother And My Mate Played Me.

28 Vouchers

402—My Brother And My Mate Played Me.

Cain:

Months Ago:

“What is going on, Nash? Just get to the point,” I demanded, standing in front of the canvas. I was trying to recall all the details of Nora to create a new painting, but with everything being rocky between us, I had to rely on my own memories.

She had lied to me and cheated on me, and it hurt more than I’d like to admit. I had saved myself for my mate, only to be fooled by her into thinking she was loyal. I wish she had at least told me she had cheated before we slept together. That way, I could have made an informed decision instead of finding out on my own.

“It’s about Nora,” Nash repeated, still catching his breath.

“You’ve said that already. Just explain what’s going on. Is she okay?” I started pacing around my studio, anxiety building. It was unnerving how much I still worried about her, even after learning she had played me.

“Something happened at her school today. Remember that friend of hers? The messy one who stayed with us for a while?” Nash’s voice was cautious, as if he knew I would catch on quickly.

And of course, I did.

I never liked that girl. She monopolized Nora’s time and even flirted with me. I still remembered the day Nora asked me to paint her friend. It made me feel low. Why would she ask me to paint her friend naked? That day, I

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10:47

258 (Vouchers

402 My Brother And My Mate Played Me.

began to suspect that Nora wasn’t as possessive of me as I was of her.

She handed me over to her friend, almost testing me to see if I’d lose control. I wonder how she would have reacted if I had asked her to be in a

room with my naked friend? She would have not liked it and I would have never asked her. If it weren’t for years of restraint, I might have made a mistake—not because I was attracted to Natalya, but because... I’m cursed.

“I remember,” I said, focusing back on Nash.

“So, basically... she took pictures of your paintings, and one of them is of Nora,” Nash said, and I closed my eyes, frustration washing over me.

Of course, she did. It made sense now why she had rushed back to the room and left the painting unfinished. She took a photo of it and decided to use it against us.

“And now rumors are spreading that Nora, you, and... Ryker-” The moment Nash mentioned Ryker, it felt like the ground had been pulled out from beneath me.

“Ryker? Why would she drag Ryker into this?” I didn’t care if I sounded suspicious. I was more concerned about Ryker being involved than the implication of having an inappropriate relationship with my stepsister.

And that was because Ryker, my dear brother, knew very well that Nora was my mate.

“There’s a rumor that... Natalya has a picture of Ryker kissing Nora outside her room,” Nash said, flipping my world upside down once again.

I closed my eyes, taking deep breaths, but no matter how hard I tried, I felt like I was losing control. That can’t be true. She wouldn’t cheat on me with my brother, too. First, she slept with someone else, and now—my

27.26%

402 My Brother And My Mate Played Me.

brother?

Or could it be the same guy?

No! Ryker knew

Nora was my mate. He would never do that to me. Or... maybe he did. After all, maybe he’s held a grudge against me all these

years.

“Cain? Are you there?” Nash snapped me back to reality with his sharp

tone.

“Huh?” I gulped, struggling to focus.

“Okay, let’s get her phone and remove the data,” I shrugged, wondering why Nash seemed so worked up. There was more to worry about. My eyes kept getting filled with

tears as I imagined my mate and my brother being in a secret relationship behind my back.

“We can’t do that. We don’t know if she’s saved the images somewhere else. Besides, she might have chats with Nora too—if I’m not mistaken. Overall, Natalya has enough damning evidence to drag Nora into a huge mess,” Nash spoke urgently before adding, “We’ve got to protect Nora.”

I understood exactly what he meant. If these rumors proved true, Nora would be labeled the pack’s outcast. Not only would she be punished, but we might not even be around to help her.

“Okay, I’ve got a plan,” I said, temporarily pushing aside the thought of my brother’s alleged betrayal.

“Tell me,” Nash asked desperately.

However, Instead of responding to him, I zoned out. My mind kept traveling back to all the interactions Ryker had with Nora in front of me. But then again, why? Why would Nora do that to me?

60.20%

402—My Brother And My Mate Played Me.

288 (Vouchers

Why would she sleep with my brother of all the people? And not only rob me from a mate but make me lose trust in my own brother?

“Cain! Where did you go?” Nash grunted, waking me back to the harsh reality. I gulped and prepared myself to explain to him my plan.

“We’ll get Silas to hypnotize Natalya and find out if the images and evidence are saved anywhere else,” I suggested, thinking it would be a simple solution. But when Nash stayed silent, I realized something wasn’t right.

Finally, in a calm yet definitive tone, he dismissed my idea by saying, “Natalya can’t be hypnotized.”

87.92%

Tasting 403

403—Even When She Cheated

Cain:

tha

My heart sank once more as I started to grasp the meaning of my brother's words.

"I'll break it down for you in just one sentence," Nash said, his voice steady. "Natalya doesn't have a wolf, and our dear brother here has the ability to hypnotize wolves."

I nearly hurled my phone at the wall, frustration boiling inside me. Even I was beginning to feel anxious about the entire situation.

I had thought it would be easy to resolve, but clearly, I had been deceived by my own confidence.

"So, what now? Should we just kill her?" I blurted out, though I knew the answer. Nash grimaced at my suggestion.

"If it were that simple, I would've handled it already. But remember, Nora would despise us for killing someone over this. We don't murder people for our personal gain or to keep our secrets hidden," he reminded me firmly.

Even though we had vowed to stand by each other, even to the point of breaking the rules if necessary, killing was not something we would resort to just to bury our secrets.

"And Natalya isn't the only one who knows about those pictures," he added, his voice tinged with guilt.

"Wait, who else knows?" I frowned, feeling the weight of the situation grow heavier.

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0.00%

10 35

403—Even When She Cheated

268 Vouchers

"April and... Daphne," he muttered, spitting out Daphne's name through clenched teeth.

I should have expected it. That girl didn't take the breakup well at all. So now, three snakes have conspired together to make Nora suffer?

“And what’s your plan for silencing Daphne?” I asked, my annoyance clear. I had once painted her after she begged me to, and even when she tried to seduce me, I had done nothing with her.

I was cursed, but I still had a lot of self-control.

Unfortunately, my reputation wasn’t the cleanest, and if Nora’s name were to get linked with mine right now, it would ruin her.

“I gave her what she wanted,” Nash admitted, a subtle shame creeping into his voice. My focus immediately shifted.

“And what does she want?” I raised an eyebrow, knowing full well that he couldn’t see me through the phone.

“I’m dating her again,” he sighed heavily, and a shiver ran down my spine.

“I was wondering if you know what Natalya really wants,” he added, hesitation clear in his voice. It was obvious he suspected that Natalya’s interest might be in me.

“She wants me,” I groaned in frustration.

But there’s no way I’m giving myself to anyone else. I’ve waited for my mate for years. When Nora first arrived, I lost control, not understanding why at the time. But now, it’s clear—I had fallen for her long before the mate bond revealed itself.

After being betrayed by her, I no longer desired a mate or any  
companionship.

10.3500

403 Even When She Cheated

I’m fine being alone.

1206 (Vouchers

“Then you have to do what I did to keep Nora safe,” Nash jumped in, explaining the complexity of the situation before I could open my mouth to protest. “Remember, we will be leaving shortly. If we’re gone, who will keep Nora safe?”

“So what do you suggest? I date Natalya, and then what? How does that keep her safe when I’m gone?” I didn’t even realize when I stopped using ‘we,’ but my promises to stop thinking about Nora always faded, and I found myself acting possessively once again.



"Do you have a better plan?" There was a bitter edge to Nash's tone as I dismissed his idea. Why must I suffer if he was suffering too?

"How about-" I took a deep breath, knowing I was about to say something that might make my brother uncomfortable. Given my reputation, he might even think I was a pervert, jumping at the chance. "I say that she is my mate?" I finished, biting my bottom lip.

"We can lie," I quickly added.

"Hmm, and then what? Remember, when we leave, she'll want to stay with us. Do you not recall what will happen then?" Nash's tone turned bitter. "How could you even suggest that? If you say she's your mate, she will come with us and become a victim of our enemies. And if she stays behind, she will still be a target. You know she'll be a helpless mate of an Alpha King left behind." I lowered my gaze, fully aware that my brother was subtly referencing my enemies.

"Fine. I will date that bitch-" I hissed under my breath, dreading the torment that awaited me in the coming weeks.

"Not just date her, but make sure you don't cross her. She must not release those images," he warned, and I nodded my head reluctantly.

57.69%

10.35

403—Even When She Cheated

1

He hung up, leaving me staring at Nora's painting. I would have to hide it somewhere and then break Nora's heart. Even though it was easy for her to break my heart, I knew I wouldn't be able to do the same to her and feel good about it.

That was the difference between my love and hers.

93 74%

Tasting 404

404—Breaking My Heart

Cain:

I had been out the whole day, at least since Nora said all that to me. I was shocked every time I looked into her eyes and saw no guilt or even any emotion directed towards me. If she couldn't feel guilty about cheating on me, she could at least be angry. But no! It was as if she had more feelings for others than she had for me.

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'Maybe it's because she likes Ryker,' my wolf chimed in, causing me to scratch my tattoo on my ribs. Nic had been struggling with the news just as much as I was.

'Do you really think my brother and my mate betrayed me?' I just didn't understand why they would do that.

But lately, hearing Ryker talk about her made me question if they did cheat on me. She had been with him on the days we were flirting too. When Natalya was staying over, things were escalating quickly between me and Nora. We had felt the mate bond as well. But then I found out that Natalya had taken a picture of them kissing. That shattered my heart into countless pieces.

Ryker knew she was my mate, so it felt like both of them were playing me while I was slowly pursuing Nora.

"Where did I put it?" I entered my study, searching frantically for her painting. I had heard that Daphne had arrived home to stay with us. Nora brought her back, making me wonder if she cared about anything at all. She had become so unpredictable.

'Something happened in Brody's pack. Don't tell me you haven't noticed

10 350

0.00%

404—Breaking My Heart

268 vouchers

the change in her body,' Nic commented, and I hushed him. I didn't want to point it out, but something seemed very different about her, as if she had been given a new life, a rebirth of some sort.

"There's no way I moved it-" I grew impatient, trying to avoid thinking about what Nic was saying. Just thinking about Brody caused me stress. The day I got my hands on him for whatever he did to Nora, the entire world would witness my torture of Brody.

"What the heck! Where did it go?" I muttered loudly, throwing a fist in the air as I stormed into my room but couldn't find her painting anywhere.

“Did someone touch my belongings?” That was it. I wasn’t going to find it in my room or studio. I had checked all the paintings, and hers was the one that was missing. Besides, hers was always in the middle of my collection, right in my line of sight.

I needed answers. I had seen Nash sitting in the living room when I arrived home, so I rushed downstairs to ask him some questions.

“Nash!” I reached the living room, watching him quickly press his palms together to hush me.

“Don’t wake her up; I don’t want to deal with her,” Nash whispered, looking distraught. Nora put him in that position? Did she not realize that Daphne was his ex and was obsessed with him?

“Did anyone go into my studio?” I ignored his plea and focused on my own concerns. He looked lost, so I immediately knew I was asking the

wrong person.

“No! I didn’t. You can go ask the others. They are being very messy tonight,” Nash shrugged, speaking in hushed tones so that she wouldn’t wake up and throw herself at him again like all the other times.

“What do you mean by messy? No one is allowed in my studio-” I hissed,

32.38%

10 350

404 Breaking My Heart

29 e hers

stomping my foot before turning around to sprint upstairs. To my surprise, Silas was already on his way down.

“Ugh! Silas!” Even when I caught him on the staircase, I yelled, making him step back and quickly examine my body language.

“Yo! What are you screaming about?” Silas asked cautiously.

“Did you go into my studio? Did you move my stuff around?” I was growing angrier with each passing minute.

“Huh? No! Why would I go into your studio?” Silas seemed honest enough. It made zero sense. Now the only one left was Ryker, who I knew didn’t usually mess with anyone’s

things—until I remembered how he had changed. He surely had his eyes on my mate. What if he took her painting out of my room because he didn't like me having it? My heart broke again at the thought of Ryker and Nora.

"Where is Ryker?" I questioned Silas in a heavy tone. Confronting him might bring out many complaints I had kept bottled inside.

"He is with me. We've been talking about the recent issues. By the way, you should join us if you have time. Ryker noticed something about Nora today—" The moment he said her name, I began to form a clear picture of who might have tampered with my things.

"There is no way—" I uttered, watching Silas narrow his eyes at my expression. I then sprinted upstairs to confront her.

70.606

Tasting 405

405—The Dirty Painting

Nora:

The hot water poured over me, the steady stream creating a comforting rhythm against my skin. Each drop felt like it was melting away the tension in my muscles, soothing the knots that had been tightening all day.

I remembered my babies, and my heart ached. My eyes closed as I sank deeper into the warmth, my mind blissfully blank for the first time in hours. The steam wrapped around me like a thick, soft blanket, blocking out the world beyond this moment.

Then I heard it—the unmistakable creak of my bedroom door.

At first, I froze, the sound slicing through the calm like a knife. I held my breath, waiting and listening. Footsteps followed—heavy, purposeful, and angry.

I didn't need to see who it was. I knew.

It was him—someone who was once known as my stepbrother.

His footsteps were always distinct, but tonight, there was something different. They felt heavier, filled with a quiet aggression that made the air feel thick. Each step was deliberate, as if he were stalking through my space with an intensity that would have unnerved anyone else.

But not me.

I didn't feel fear. Not even a flicker of it. Instead, I exhaled slowly, turning my face up to the water again as if it could wash away what I'd done.

0.00%

10:350

405–The Dirty Painting

258 Vouchers

He was angry. That much was clear in the way he moved and how the floorboards groaned beneath his weight. He was probably waiting for me to come out so he could confront me about it. The way he had placed it in the middle of the studio made me even happier when I took it.

I turned off the water slowly, letting the silence stretch. The only sound was the drip of water from my skin onto the tile. I reached for the towel, wrapping it around myself deliberately, savoring the calm before what I knew was coming.

I stood there, listening as his footsteps stopped just outside the bathroom door, my pulse steady. Then, as I met my own reflection in the fogged-up mirror, I felt a strange sense of calm wash over me.

I was not guilty of anything. Instead of immediately leaving the bathroom, I decided to casually dry my hair and then my body, picking up a purple silk nightie that I had grabbed for the night.

It had been a while since I wore such clothes. Previously, I had only a few dresses—just two before giving birth, and one more for tasks and battles that came after. It was only recently that Brody had allowed me these “luxuries,” as everyone called them.

After I finished getting ready, I opened the door and saw Cain standing there as if he hadn't moved at all. Our eyes connected in a brief, heated moment, and I could see a flood of emotions fill his gaze.

“So you just barge in nowadays?” I said casually, trying to get past him, but he sidestepped, blocking my path.

“Okay, now that's rude,” I commented.

“What did you do to my painting?” he asked, his tone heavy and filled with warning.

“You mean my painting? I was the model, and I didn't like how I posed in

29.21%

10:350

#### 405–The Dirty Painting

1. it. I felt exposed,” I shrugged. “Besides, I think it’s inappropriate to have someone else’s painting in the room, not to mention in the state it was in,” I watched his jaw clench. Each word I spoke seemed to fuel his anger.

“Nora! It was done with your permission. It was my property—and I had made it with-” He closed his eyes, blinking hard before opening them again, revealing how red they were as if he were trying to fight back tears.

“Daphne is staying with us. I had to get rid of it.” The moment I said that, I watched his mouth part as a gasp escaped him. I didn’t expect that reaction from him.

“You got rid of it?” His question held a hint of warning, as if he wanted me to rethink my answer.

“I burned it so Daphne wouldn’t see it and the rumors wouldn’t reach Brody’s ears,” I explained. But instead of yelling at me or saying something hurtful, he just stepped back.

There was a sea of emotions in his eyes, shocking me for a moment.

And then, without saying a word, he simply left. I remained in my spot, watching him disappear. When I walked toward the door, I looked outside to see Cain bump into Nash.

The silence thickened as Nash examined his brother.

“Are you okay?” Nash asked, his eyes steadily landing on me behind them. But then Cain rushed past him without uttering a word, and I found myself facing his concerned brother.

68.42%

#### Tasting 406

#### 406–Threatening To Kiss Me

Nora: .

Nash approached me, looking intimidating as always. Of course, he had something to say—he looked so worked up.

“Seriously?” he asked, his eyes narrowing as he glared at me, shaking his head in disbelief.

“What?” I shrugged, trying to walk past him. He had left Daphne downstairs, which worried me. We weren’t supposed to leave her alone for even a second.

“You know you’re hurting him, right? What did you do?” Nash questioned, stepping into my path, making me nearly bump into him.

“How am I hurting him? I just got rid of the painting he did of me so Daphne wouldn’t see it and go running to Brody,” I replied, watching as he narrowed his eyes at me like he didn’t believe a word I said.

“He can have another mate, but you can’t even keep a painting Cain drew of you?” he placed his hands on his hips, visibly frustrated.

“He hates you guys. I’m sure I don’t need to hide that from you. He’d be furious if he found out Cain painted me. And if I told him it was from when we were pretending to be step-siblings,” I rolled my eyes dramatically, “he’d think I was crazy and believe the rumors were true.”

Nash sighed, staring intently at me, “You burned his painting, Nora-” it finally dawned on him just how upset Cain would be.

But I didn’t think he would be. He got over me quickly enough and

0.00%

10.35

406–Threatening To Kiss Me

started dating Natalya. Not only dating her, but always siding with her.

289 (Vouchers

“Anyway, that’s not why I’m here right now. Where is Daphne? Why did you leave her alone?” I pouted, watching him roll his eyes at me.

“She woke up to use the restroom. Did you expect me to follow her inside too? Look, you brought her here, so you take care of her. I’m her ex, and I don’t want her thinking there’s a chance for reconciliation,” he sounded so done with the whole situation.

I mean, he had been done with her before, too, but then he ended up dating her again. So I half- expected them to get back together at some point.

Not that it bothered me. I didn't care.

I'd be going back home soon, and they'd be out of my life again. Whatever they did wouldn't matter to me.

"Fine, I'll take her to my room so she can rest," I said, but as I started heading downstairs, I saw Nash following me.

"She's already asleep in the guest room for the night. I don't think she even has the energy to walk upstairs," Nash explained. I slowed down, which is exactly what I had been afraid of.

"Okay, I'll stay with her then," I commented while Nash continued walking downstairs beside me, towering over me with his imposing

presence.

When I reached the guest room, I intended to go in and check on her. But before I could even enter, I stopped at the sound of voices coming from inside.

I gestured for Nash to stop walking so I could eavesdrop. She was crying inside—sobbing like her world was crumbling apart.

29.82%

10:35

406—Threatening To Kiss Me

1

mal

"Moon Goddess, please, this stay the best for me. Please, make him love me again."

I turned to Nash and shot him a glance. He folded his arms over his chest, clearly aware that she was pleading with the Moon Goddess for him.

"Please, I want nothing but him. My broken heart will only mend if you give me Nash," her sobbing continued, making me shift uncomfortably as I listened to the desperate prayer.

"She knows we're out here," Nash mouthed, still stunned that she was crying over him.

I gave him another hand gesture, trying to focus on my surroundings. The more Daphne's heartbreak deepened, the colder the air seemed to grow.



“Go ahead, comfort your admirer,” Nash teased, his sarcasm grating on my nerves. I finally gave in and turned toward him.

“She’s your ex, someone you always end up getting back together with, no matter how bad the breakup or the issue. So, go ahead and hug her,” I snapped, pushing him slightly. Of course, he barely moved.

That irritated me.

I was so much stronger now, but the fact that I could hardly budge him or his brother made me feel a competitive fire burning inside.

“Why would I? I don’t want to,” Nash said, grabbing my hand and pulling me toward his chest, catching me off guard. “You touch me again-” I expected his warning to be more menacing, until he added, “-then I’ll touch you too.”

There was a brief hesitation in his threat as his eyes flickered down to my lips. “Don’t push me too far. I might push back much harder... and end up kissing you.”

63.09%

10:350

406–Threatening To Kiss Me

My heart flipped, and suddenly my body was enveloped in a strange wave of heat. It hadn’t happened in months. What had he just done to me?

96.87%

10.35

Tasting 407

407–Mark Her With Force

Nash:

Months Ago:

She kept staring at me, her innocent eyes brimming with tears. She had been asked to leave, and she had come to talk to me about it. I knew she

was here to plead for the chance to stay, but I couldn’t allow it. She had to

go and not return for a while if she didn't want to face a horrible death at the hands of me and my brothers. And it wasn't a threat or a warning- just the harsh reality of our lives.

"Mark her!" My wolf was losing control. He kept urging me to mark and mate with her, but that would be far too dangerous right now.

I had to let her go.

She would return in a few months, and by then, I'd be back to myself. I couldn't force her to stay here and suffer because of my curse.

"What are you thinking? Look at her neck—doesn't it tempt you?" My wolf had never been like this. He was losing control earlier than usual.

The effect of my curse.

As long as she stood in front of me, I felt the overwhelming urge to be violent with her. Even marking her would be brutal.

"Shut up! Do you want me to lose her forever?" I yelled at him, and he whimpered.

"I don't know what's happening to me. I can't control the urge—kick her

11.130

407—Mark Her With Force

#1

26 Vouchers

out, Nash. Or else... I'll do something I'll regret. Please." I understood what he was saying, and I was trying to act on it.

My mind was in chaos. I just knew I had to get her out before I completely lost control.

"But she won't listen," I hissed at him. When I looked at her, my heart softened, and I knew I had to be harsh to make her leave.

"Then reject me if you're truly over me and don't want me, reject me."

The moment she said those words, my heart flipped inside my chest. I swallowed hard but kept my gaze fixed on her, trying to appear unfazed.

"She's asking for a rejection," I mumbled, confused.

Had I pushed her too far?

Damn it! I couldn't even focus on my own thoughts. What had I done?

"Don't worry. Play along. Tell her you won't reject her because you don't want to admit she's our mate. She'll take the bait. Don't you dare let her reject us," my wolf growled, and he was right.

I couldn't let that happen.

We had come too far. After enduring this torment, I might be able to sit her down and explain what's wrong with me. By then, I could prepare her for the next torture months in three years.

She was already terrified, and she'd barely seen anything of Ryker.

I had to push her away—to keep her safe until I had things under control.

"Why would I reject you when we're not even mates? Do you have proof

27.85%

11-130

407—Mark Her With Force

288 Vuchers

that we are?" I tried to smirk, but deep down, I was torn apart.

It wasn't fair. .

The curse wasn't fair—to us.

To me.

To me and my mate.

We should've been able to be together without any obstacles. To think I'd found the perfect mate, someone I would die to hold hands with, yet couldn't be with her because of my own cursed existence—it was breaking me beyond repair.

"Now go. Get out of my sight and leave with your chosen mate," I snapped.

I couldn't let her stand there, looking so sweet, so innocent.

She was driving me crazy.

“Or maybe we should stay and mate with her,” my wolf growled, slipping back into madness. He had once been strong and stable, but ever since the curse, he was losing control more and more each day.

“And don’t forget how she agreed to be intimate with our brothers. How can we let that slide? Doesn’t it make you furious?” The moment he brought that up, something twisted violently inside me.

I quickly walked past her, forcing a smirk that was nothing but a lie.

“What the hell are you doing?” I yelled at my wolf, even though I knew it wasn’t his fault. Anger coursed through my veins like fire.

“She played us. She can’t belong to anyone else. Mark her, pin her against

\$0.259

11:13

407–Mark Her With Force

the wall, and mate with her until she-” I covered my ears, unable to hear him speak about her that way.

But soon, I wouldn’t be able to resist. Soon, I wouldn’t be able to protect But soon, I wouldn’t be able to resist.

her. My curse would take over, and my rage would consume everything.

I walked downstairs, tears in my eyes, and saw Silas watching me with the same sadness mirrored in his. For him, it was different—he cared about her as his stepsister. But for me, the pain was far greater.

She is my mate. And now she’s leaving to stay with that bastard.

www

87 70%

Tasting 408

408–Her Silver Anklet

Ryker:

"Here," Silas entered the room and placed a beer can in front of me. I grabbed it and pressed it against my forehead. My head had been throbbing ever since I started investigating Nora and her life.

"Is Cain joining us for this discussion?" I asked Silas, who was busy opening his own beer can.

"I just texted him. Nash will be here in a few minutes, but I think Cain had some kind of argument with Nora," Silas replied, sitting down on the couch while I remained leaning back on his bed.

"What are they arguing about?" I asked, watching Silas shrug.

"Something about Nora burning a painting he did of her," Silas shifted uncomfortably in his seat, and I had a feeling I knew where this

conversation was headed.

"He painted her!" Silas tried to appear casual, but I could hear the surprise in his voice. He might have been pretending not to look too deeply into it, but I could tell his curiosity had been piqued.

"I know the rumors, but—did you ever think about what it must have been like when she—posed for him?" Silas didn't say it out loud, but I could see the wheels turning in his mind.

"Just admit you're imagining her naked," I teased. The second I said it, he spat his beer out, laughing uncomfortably.

"No! I'm not," he protested.

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71 197

408—Her Silver Anklet

"Good. You better not, Silas." I wasn't sure what had come over me lately,

but I had become so shameless.

The next few torturous months felt like years apart, leaving me with too much time to try and make things right. I was no longer afraid of anyone discovering my mate bond with Nora. But she was scared of it, and that worried me. I wanted to take her back from Brody, but I didn't want to do it by force.

Silas stared at me silently for a moment before looking away. I wanted to ask him directly, but none of us brothers had ever talked about it openly. I knew Nora felt the mate bond with me, Cain, and Nash. Cain was aware that I knew about the bond, but I wasn't sure how much Silas or Nash knew. Nash must have realized he was fated to her because they had experienced the mate bond.

It was becoming so complicated.

That's when Cain burst into the room, his hair wet as though he'd taken a quick shower. His eyes were red, and without hesitation, he snatched the beer from Silas' hand before dropping onto the couch beside him.

His shoulders slumped, and his body hunched forward.

Silas and I exchanged a glance, then both looked back at Cain.

"She's hiding something. All this with Brody, pretending they're madly in love, it's all an act. Otherwise, she wouldn't be so terrified of him finding out about the painting," Cain muttered, his head lowered, his words heavy with emotion.

I wasn't entirely sure how much of that I believed. I knew she was lying about her feelings for Brody, but as for the painting—I was certain she destroyed it on purpose.

29.68%

17-135

408—Her Silver Anklet

28 Vouchers

I remembered that we had to hurt her to make her leave us and stay away for a while. I guess she was just taking revenge on us by hurting us in the same way. But I didn't mention it to Cain; he already looked so upset, and that would break his heart even more.

"She wears a silver anklet, and not just any anklet—" Silas captured our attention.

"Huh?" Cain and I sat up, our eyes fixed on Silas, eager for him to explain this new piece of information.

"It's one that someone can control remotely and can give her an electric shock," he said, and it felt like he had wrapped the same anklet around my neck.

Anger surged through me so suddenly.

“Fuck! You think Brody-” I stopped mid-sentence as the immediate urge to wrap that anklet around his neck and shock him until he couldn’t function took over.

“I will fucking kill him. I’ll shove that anklet up his ass,” Cain yelled, throwing his beer can away and getting up with a growl.

Silas rushed toward the door and pushed Cain aside while I hurried to try to open it.

“Both of you, stop! If it is indeed Brody and not what Nora is saying, then he must have something on her to make her keep quiet,” Silas reasoned. Cain and I exchanged a glance before stepping back.

“I heard her ask Brody about some angels,” I said, confused. “But then she mentioned jewelry and how she didn’t want to share it with Janet.”

“Oh, she is lying to us—hiding something significant,” Cain declared, and

66.18%

408 Her Silver Anklet

we all agreed.

Tasting 409

409—The Danger Behind The Brothers

Nora:

Nash’s eyes bore deeply into mine, making my heart skip a beat. The moment that happened, I knew I had to step back and away from him. I didn’t want to return to my state of being miserable and helpless.

“Ugh!” I lowered my head and pushed him away. “I am someone else’s mate now.”

I didn’t even glance into his eyes. That was how much he could affect me with his proximity. At least I realized it now. Therefore, I would be careful enough not to let him come any closer to me again.

“Anyway,” with my hand on his hard chest, I slowly pushed him to the side instead of making a rapid motion and then stepped closer to the door again. She was still weeping.

“You can go if you have nothing else to do. I will handle this matter on my own.” I didn’t turn around to answer him, but I expected him to leave.

What I didn't know was that all the brothers had decided to join us.

"How can we help?" I heard Silas ask, and my body spun to see three handsome men standing together. They looked determined, so much so that Nash stepped out from behind me to look at them.

I had expected Cain to avoid showing his face after I had upset him, but here he was, standing tall and looking angrier than ever.

"Ummm, start by—protecting Daphne," I uttered with difficulty. Why on

11-14

409—The Danger Behind The Brothers

earth were they all in my space?

"Sure!" Ryker tilted his head, causing my heart to skip a beat.

17

chers

They looked awfully satisfied with what they were doing. One by one, they began to approach me, so I stepped back but ended up bumping into Nash's hard chest.

"Ohh! Don't be all rubby—rubby," I heard Nash say in the discreett tone. He rubbed his hand on his chest, smirking at me.

"What the heck! There's a girl who is in danger, and you all are—" I paused as Cain finished the sentence for me.

"Horny? Absolutely not; I guess we are just really happy to help you." His tone was full of sarcasm, but a hidden determination could be heard in his

voice.

"Okay! Then don't surround me; surround the mansion to make sure nobody—nobody gets inside." With a big gulp running down my throat, I gestured for them to scatter away.

"Aye!" Silas gave me a salute of obedience and then turned around to

leave with his brothers.



“And you—stop acting weird around her,” I heard Cain complain to Nash, even slapping his chest.

“Don’t touch me there; it’s a sacred area,” Nash uttered as he pointed at his chest that I had touched, making me roll my eyes at his comment. Soon, they had left the mansion to stand guard while I remained outside her door.

“I don’t like it when he goes away from me,” I heard Daphne say. With the brothers leaving, at least I got to pay full attention to her again.

29.53%

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409—The Danger Behind The Brothers

11

“I feel like—hurting everyone,” she must have been having a difficult time speaking because her voice came out all muffled.

“I want that sadness gone; sadness is such a killer-” she continued to cry, and I felt the area around the room grow colder and colder. I reached for the window and looked outside again.

The brothers had arrived outside, but weirdly enough, they were all clustered in one area. I rolled my eyes hard; of course, they wouldn’t follow the directions.

Being alpha kings made it so hard for them to obey simple orders. They always wanted to be in charge of the situation and wouldn’t listen to others’ directions, not even once.

I watched them stand in a circle, talking about something important. My body flinched because I had a growing suspicion that they were discussing me.

Why weren’t they leaving me alone?

Were they even interested in this case like I was? Or was I the main case they wanted to solve?

“To think they wanted us gone like anything, but now they are desperate to get us back just confuses me so much,” Akira was not wrong. That bothered me as well.

Then, my eyes landed behind them. As Daphne’s cries grew louder, her sadness became the problem.

I watched a weird fog appear behind the brothers. They were so consumed in their gossip that they didn't even realize what was happening right under their noses.

60 69%

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409–The Danger Behind The Brothers

But I was watching it all.

11

289 Vouchers

Slowly and steadily, the fog grew, turning into a shape and then multiple shapes. I recognized the forms; I had encountered them before.

They gathered behind the brothers—the fog people.

“There they are-” I smirked, “the weeping guardians.”

Oh! I had no idea I would feel so good for being so right about this.

Now I just had to wait and watch one more thing.

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Tasting 410

410–Silas Must Hypnotize Her

Nash:

We walked outside to discuss the matter. I noticed the expression on my brother's faces and knew immediately they had found something significant to talk about with me.

“Silas told us about the anklet she wears,” Cain started, pacing back and

forth once we were outside the mansion.

“Yeah, I discussed it with him,” I replied, glancing around. “We are not exactly surrounding the mansion.”

I knew this was what Nora had asked us to do.

“Stop being a child and obey her every command,” Ryker groaned at me. Oh, I see what he was doing.

He was so clever, thinking he could upset me by not following her orders and become her favorite. Well, right now, none of us was really her

favorite.

But if there was someone, it would be me. I am her mate. Her only mate that she can trust and love.

“Okay! Guys, this is not looking good. Nash! I want to know what is going on,” Silas faced me as if I knew something and wasn’t telling them.

“Yes, tell us what you are hiding,” I was stunned when Cain accused me as well.

“I know all that I have told you,” I folded my arms, but my brothers shook

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11:140

410 Silas Must Hypnotize Her

their heads.

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788 Your hars

“Fine. I will go ahead and tell you guys something I have been concealing for some time.” My heart flipped inside my chest when Silas cleared his throat to say something, but before he could proceed, I noticed Ryker shift in his position.

“Silas-” there was a strange gleam in his eyes as he looked at Silas, “you are going to help us.”

“Help you how?” Silas frowned.

“You need to hypnotize her to find out what she is hiding.” The minute I suggested that, my brothers looked surprised and even pleased until Cain pointed out something.

“But Silas cannot question someone who doesn’t have a wolf, and she wears a ring to silence her wolf.”

“Yeah, but she has a wolf,” Silas uttered.

"Silas-," Cain stretched his neck, and in that moment, I knew he was putting pressure on him.

"Why couldn't you hypnotize Natalya back then to make her answer our questions?" I watched Cain confront Silas, who shrugged.

"I didn't even know if anyone needed my assistance. You guys assumed I couldn't hypnotize her. I mean, it would have been hard for someone whose wolf is not awake, but I am sure I could make her say a few things here and there," there was a peculiar look on Silas' face, "I learned it right then and didn't tell you guys. But how was I supposed to know that you needed me to get some information out of her?"

He was not wrong because we had practically assumed. "However, even if

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410 Silas Must Hypnotize Her

11

he could hypnotize her, what about April and Daphne? Those two have powerful people around them. Brody and Mr. Ford had prepared them well on how to avoid getting hypnotized. They even carry wolfbane with them to take quickly whenever they feel threatened in such a manner."

I was trying to calm down the situation, but I was also telling the truth. .

"So if Natalya told us where she had kept the stuff, April and Daphne could have still lied. They couldn't be hypnotized, so we wouldn't know where they were keeping the evidence," Silas interjected, explaining, "but it really is saddening that the girls deceived you guys."

I narrowed my eyes at him for being so tricky before my gaze landed on Cain and Ryker.

We communicated silently, making Silas look at all of us one by one.

"I am on your side. I swear nobody told me what was going on. I could have helped, but still, Daphne and April-" As he continued to talk about those two, we silenced him with our new plan.

"You will hypnotize Nora and make her answer some tough questions," Ryker folded his arms over his chest.

“What? No! She will get so angry,” Silas complained, shaking his head vigorously.

“Oh, sorry! He doesn’t want to look bad. He’s not like us who can make themselves appear evil just to keep her safe. Not everyone can take such a huge step for someone he has only called stepsister for a year,” I pouted, giving him a sad look but definitely getting under his skin.

“Excuse you! She is not just a stepsister to me-” he instantly fell silent after receiving a hard glare from Cain and Ryker.

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410-Silas Must Hypnotize Her

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“Yeah, but still—we can do a lot for her. For us, we care about what she is hiding. But for you, it’s just about staying in her good graces, which we understand.” Of course, I had hit the right nerve,

He stared me right in the eye and then muttered, “Fine. I will do it.”

“That is the spirit. Because once we find out what is holding her back from leaving that asshole’s pack and why she is wearing that anklet, we will save her, and then—you will be the first one she thanks,” Ryker patted his shoulder, and a strange look of pride crossed Silas’ face.

“Oh and by the way, Silas couldn’t have hypnotized Natalya at all. Her wolf waking up a little inside her was a lie,” Cain casually told us.

85.44%