

Tasting Nora-Pleasing Her Stepbrother Mates #Tasting 411 - Read Tasting Nora-Pleasing Her Stepbrother Mates Tasting 411

Tasting 411

411–The Creator

Nora:

I kept watching the weeping guardians, and as I had expected, they started to walk away in a cluster. I took a deep breath and moved away from the door, heading in the direction of the exit and towards where the brothers were having a meeting.

“Guys, I’ve figured it out,” I said happily, feeling proud of myself.

They all turned to me and shared a glance, looking confused as they saw me smiling so brightly.

My smile grew wider, and I rushed forward, almost skipping. I didn’t expect Cain to step forward and spread his arms, as if he thought I was running into them.

“Yes, we figured it out too,” Cain muttered, a strange mix of emotions crossing his face. I dodged him and hurried to the center of the group.

Nash snorted a laugh at Cain before turning serious and giving me his full attention.

“The weeping guardians–” As soon as I said that, Cain narrowed his eyes and slid his hands into his pockets, looking grim.

“I know what’s causing them,” I looked at each of them, waiting for their response.

“What is it?” Silas asked, looking interested. I don’t know what they had been talking about all this time. They must be coming up with plans to get answers from me. I wasn’t that stupid to not realize that had become the

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411–The Creator

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mission of their lives.

“Sadness,” I shrugged, causing them to look less than impressed.

“Oh! You think because I’m sad these days, the—,” Ryker somehow made it about himself, but I shook my head at him with a pitying expression.

“Not you—the victims. When they come across the weeping guardians and either stare at them for too long, let them get too close, or walk past them, they get infected. The minute their sadness deepens, they’re killed.” I knew I wasn’t making much sense because Cain had a look on his face like he was about to sneeze.

“Okay, let me explain it better,” I took a deep breath, but Silas glanced at his brothers and shrugged.

“Those were simple words. I understood every bit,” he said, slipping his hands into the pockets of his hoodie and glancing at his brothers.

Nash turned to him, folding his muscular arms over his chest. “Sure, then how about you explain it to us instead of her?”

Why were they always turning things into a competition?

But part of me wanted Silas to explain. I wasn’t sure why, but their banter was amusing. Oh no, I shouldn’t get carried away.

“So—sadness attracts the weeping guardians, right?” Silas looked at me, his beautiful eyes shining from behind his glasses.

“Yes!” I nodded. “It’s like—when I was sad, I encountered them. But I turned away and didn’t let them take over me. The others, however, gave in to their sadness, and that’s why they died from illness. Fevers, flu, cold—,” I watched them nod in understanding.

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“No wonder there weren’t any marks or torture wounds on the victims’ bodies,” Ryker concluded.

“So, does that mean we’re pretty much screwed? The only thing we can do is make sure nobody gets sad?” Nash asked.

As soon as I nodded, Cain pulled his hand from his pocket and gently pinched my shirt between his fingers to get my attention.

It was done so subtly that I couldn't help but feel my heart flutter, which I hated.

"I'm sad—make me happy if you want this cycle to stop," Cain stepped forward, facing me and demanding this in the calmest tone imaginable.

"Hey, you're not sad. I saw you laughing at one of my jokes earlier," Silas complained from behind him.

But Cain kept staring into my eyes. "Why? Are you not worried about the mission anymore?" he asked, pouting as if waiting for my reaction.

"I'm dying from sadness," Ryker chimed in. Their desperation reminded me of myself. Was I this clingy too?

But there were too many of them, and I was just one person.

How could I handle all of them when they were demanding so much attention?

"This isn't how it gets resolved," I stepped back from Cain, then moved to face the others as well.

"She's changing her statements," Cain grumbled, turning to complain to his brothers, but stopped when he saw me glaring at him.

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411—The Creator

"I know where these weeping guardians are coming from," I said, watching as their faces grew pale. "There's someone responsible for their creation."

They narrowed their eyes at me before Cain sidestepped. "I didn't do anything," he raised his hands in surrender.

"I knew it. I knew this guy was trouble," Nash's comment made me slap my forehead.

"But he's our brother. We can't get rid of him. What do we do?" Silas asked, genuinely concerned but clearly mocking Cain.

"It's Daphne," I finally explained, and they all turned serious. "Daphne is the reason these things are created. Every time she gets sad, these

creatures are born."

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Tasting 412

412—Just Stay!

Nora:

"How can she create something so powerful?" Nash was pacing around the room, asking me the right kind of questions.

"And how did you find out?" Ryker added, his curiosity piqued.

We had returned to my bedroom, but before that, we made sure to feed Daphne some sleeping pills and watched as the weeping guardians returned and disappeared. As long as she was asleep, they wouldn't hurt anyone. But of course, we couldn't keep her in a coma for too long.

I stood near the window, my eyes drifting to Cain, who was on the other side of the room, standing right in front of me. He was silently staring at me, not commenting much on the situation.

"I figured it out when she told me she hadn't come across these things. I started wondering why she looked like one of the victims. It didn't make sense. But then I confirmed something with Nash. Remember when you broke things off with her before? That's when I first encountered these creatures. So, I put two and two together and brought her here to confirm it. The creatures didn't even come after her because she's their creator. They left to find some lone sad wolf to prey on," I explained, noticing how the brothers were listening intently.

However, the minute Silas gulped, I knew he was up to no good. He turned to Nash and patted his thigh. The two had been sitting on the bed the whole time.

"You should marry her," Silas suggested in the most calm and matter-of-fact tone.

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412—Just Stay!

“Huh?” Nash slapped his hand away, glaring at him.

“Did you not hear what Nora just said? Every time you break up with her, she gets sad, and these deadly monsters come out and attack innocent pack members. Your pack members,” Silas said with a strange gleam in his eyes.

“Silas isn’t wrong, though. You’ve asked us to do things for the sake of others before. And you dated Daphne once because you wanted to save someone. So why can’t you do it again to save the entire werewolf race?” Ryker added, sending chills down my spine.

He dated Daphne to save me?

Of course, that’s what they were insinuating. But why would he date her to save me? He was an Alpha King; he could have saved me without dating her.

“That was different,” Nash groaned, looking away before turning his gaze back to me. “Do you think I should date her?”

I noticed the pain forming in Nash’s eyes. In that moment, everyone’s gaze turned to me. I knew I could find satisfaction in telling him to date her, but my wolf kept resisting, even with the ring on.

“Tell me, Nora, do you want me to date her?” Nash asked as he stood up, visible pain etched across his face.

I could have said yes, relished in his misery, and broken his heart, but instead, I opened my mouth and said, “No! That is not the solution to this.”

The second the words escaped my lips, I saw Nash let out a sigh of relief. But I was shocked—that wasn’t what I was going to say.

“See? She doesn’t want me to date her, so how about you all keep quiet?”

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412—Just Stay!

Nash snapped at his brothers, his tone harsh this time.

He didn’t stick around long and stormed out of the room, slamming the door hard enough to let us know just how mad he was.

"I'll go after him," Ryker scratched the back of his neck, sending me a quick, sneaky glance before he left the room—not slamming the door, thankfully.

"I should go and apologize—," Silas started to rise from the bed, but Cain placed a hand on his shoulder and pulled him back down.

"Don't you have something more important to deal with?" There was a silent exchange between them, like they were speaking through their eyes.

"Right now?" Silas whispered, and then, noticing me watching, he spoke up. "I mean, she's pretty tired. We can talk about the weeping guardians in the morning."

I wondered why Cain was so insistent on Silas staying behind to discuss this issue now. We'd already talked about it, so what else was left?

"Maybe you should figure out why Daphne is able to create these things? She's not that special, so why her?" Cain's grip on his brother's shoulder seemed odd, like he was subtly pushing him to stay.

But when I focused on Cain's words, I nodded in agreement.

"That's fine. I'm not that tired if you're up for it," I said to Silas, who glanced at his brother, almost like he was asking for help.

Was he afraid of being left alone with me?

"See? Now go help her out, and do it properly," Cain pronounced every word with precision before stepping away from his brother,

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413—Have Some Drinks

Nora:

Silas watched his brother in silence, and I did too. Cain casually slipped his hands into his pockets once again, but instead of walking toward the door, he strolled straight toward me.

"Don't tire yourself too much. Rest when you need it," he said, making me frown until he did the unthinkable. He bent over and placed his lips on my cheek.

I swear I stopped breathing in that moment. His warmth enveloped me, causing my heart to pound louder. It wasn't just a peck; he lingered, giving me soft kisses, and I stupidly stayed still.

Then he stepped back and sighed as if he had taken some drugs. “Ahhh! Night, love.”

I wasn’t sure what had just happened, but that jerk looked so pleased with himself as he walked toward the exit.

He dramatically held the door and did a full spin while closing it, winking at me right before he left.

Now it was just Silas and me, both of us filled with questions in our eyes.

“What was that? Why did—he—” Before Silas could continue questioning me, I raised my palm to stop him.

“I’ve been intimate with him in the past. Do you not remember? As for what he just did, I’m not sure what kind of drugs your brother takes, but they shock me as well,” I tried to sound casual and unconcerned, but the

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413—Have Some Drinks

hair on the back of my neck was still standing.

I was beginning to acknowledge something very pertinent even now.

“Anyway, I was thinking about something,” I didn’t sit down because I didn’t think we could find any answers in my room.

“We should use your library to do the proper research,” I suggested. He seemed lost, but he nodded slightly.

“Okay.” I could tell he wasn’t very happy with the idea of his brother kissing my cheek.

He held the door open, and I walked past him, watching Cain’s studio door close. My body twitched, but we quickly rushed upstairs to discuss this problem.

“The issue is that Daphne is not the one creating all this on purpose. I feel like she doesn’t even know she’s doing it,” I said, taking steady breaths and wondering what was happening.

We reached his library and started the research right away. I didn’t want to waste any more time. She was not getting happier, so the minute she woke up, more people would become victims of her sadness.

“What is this?” I asked Silas, showing him a report of cases from months ago.

“There were some cases in Brody’s pack as well,” he said. I didn’t know about that.

“I thought it was just restricted to—”

“Remember you just said that you think Daphne is emptying this on purpose?” Silas asked, and once I nodded, he continued.

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“Are you sure?” However, Silas confused me a little.

“Because I was thinking about it, and I realized one more issue regarding her and the Weeping Guardians’ case. Remember when I came to Brody’s pack? Although I didn’t go there for that reason, I later discovered that someone had become a victim of the Weeping Guardians, and guess what? It was around the same time Daphne had come there,” he said, watching him intently.

“But where does this prove that she is doing this on purpose?” I observed him grab the file out of my hand and then place it back on the table.

“Those days, we were going into lockdown, and the guards were supposed to stand in front of every house. It seems like she came to Brody’s place because she somehow knew if she remained in one spot, the guards would talk about the Weeping Guardians emerging from her mansion.” It was as if he had given me the biggest shock.

I won’t lie; even my skin had formed goosebumps.

“She might not want to do it, but she might know that she is the cause behind it,” Silas was impressively astute. He had caught all that in just a few minutes.

“But why—? The question remains the same: why? Why is she able to control such creatures?” I looked around for any books that could explain the whole Weeping Guardian phenomenon.

“Who is Daphne’s father? I mean, her biological father, not that jerk,” I needed to know more about her background, and only then could I figure out more about the Weeping Guardians.

However, suddenly Silas was distracted; his eyes were on his phone as he received some texts.

“Umm, I’ll be back in a minute,” he didn’t even look at me and rushed out.

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I lingered around, checking out books and articles on Weeping Guardians when he returned again.

This time, he was carrying two glasses of mango mocktails.

“Here,” he offered me one, making me raise an eyebrow at him in confusion.

“I thought we needed energy to work better,” he pouted, making me stare at the drinks and then back at him.

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414—Hypnotizing Me?

Nora:

“Come on, this is for you,” he had a strange smile on his face as he insisted I accept the drink. However, I was keenly observing his .

mannerisms. Something about his body language told me he was not being honest with me.

“Sure,” I finally replied, extending my arm to take the glass from him. He took a sip from his drink and placed it on the desk, but it seemed like he was going to finish it.

“You know what? Can I get more ice, please?” I requested, tightly gripping the glass in my hands.

“Okay! Give me that; I will add in ice,” he extended his hand, but I pushed the drink almost to the side, as if preventing him from touching my glass.

“Just get me the ice tray. By the time you come back, I will have taken a few sips from it,” I said. As he silently watched my face, I took a sip from the drink right before his eyes.

Feeling suspicious, he awkwardly nodded and left the library. I sensed he only left because he saw me take a sip.

The moment he was out of sight, I spat the drink behind the shelf where I had kept it in my mouth, just to deceive him. I had a feeling the drink was part of something sinister. But I didn’t want to assume the worst about Silas.

He wouldn’t drug me to assault me. He was a heartless jerk who had

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414—Hypnotizing Me?

abandoned his mate after sleeping with her, but he wasn't a monster. That much I could say about all these brothers.

Before he returned, I picked up his glass and wiped my lipstick from the rim of my own glass, replacing the two. I quickly drank some from the new glass just as he walked in. He almost stopped in his tracks when he saw how much I had consumed so far.

"Oh, sorry! I couldn't control myself. It tastes so good," I smiled, gesturing toward the drink. Silas nodded his head and put the ice cubes down.

At that point, I was the only one drinking, and once I finished the mocktail, I put the glass down and wiped my mouth.

"Aren't you going to drink that?" I asked, watching him shake his head slightly. I had a feeling about what was going on, but I needed to remain calm to find out.

"Nora! Can we please sit

to talk?" I watched him take off his glasses

and place two chairs facing each other.

Without hesitation, I sat down. I wanted to know where he was going with all this odd behavior.

He sat down as well, looking slightly uncomfortable.

"What's going on? Are you okay? Or perhaps tired? If so, you can rest; we can continue the work in the morning," I shrugged, pretending I wasn't noticing the agitation in his body.

"No! I'm alright. I want to talk about it," he said, raising his head and watching me frown. He was noticing my body language as well,

"Okay, so I was thinking—" I tried to get up to grab the books I found on Weeping Guardians when he silenced me.

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414—Hypnotizing Me?

“Please, keep sitting,” he insisted, and I sat back down, furrowing my brows at his demands.

“This is not what I want to talk about,” he groaned inwardly, causing me to pout.

“Then what is it? Are you going to talk about the same topic where you tell me your brothers had a reason—” My chatter stopped abruptly when, out of the blue, he cupped my face in his hands.

I could easily escape his grip, but in that moment, I began to understand his motives.

“Look into my eyes,” he demanded, and I complied.

“You will respond to me with all your honesty,” his voice was deep and husky, his gaze penetrating mine.

“No lies,” he added.

“Tell me, are you going to answer me truthfully, without lying or hiding anything?” he questioned, taking shallow breaths.

I didn’t blink my eyes, nor did he, and then I uttered, “I will.”

He took a deep breath and even let a gulp pass through his throat before narrowing his eyes into mine, as if he were digging for something.

He was searching for answers.

“Tell me, Nora, what is it that Brody has on you that you are unable to leave his pack? What did he do to you while you stayed there?”

I watched his face in silence, not because I was going to answer him but because I realized he was hypnotizing me.

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414—Hypnotizing Me?

However, I hadn’t consumed the medicine from the glass. But he didn’t know that, and he asked me yet another question, “Why do you have the anklet? Why are you fighting the mutants?”

Tasting 415

415—Giant Panda

Nash:

After Silas took the glass of medicine upstairs, we brothers stood silently in the kitchen, exchanging uneasy glances for a moment. Without speaking, we shared a look, each of us instantly understanding what the others were thinking.

“Do you think he’ll pull it off?” I asked Cain, who was holding a beer can, staring at it blankly before taking a sip and shrugging.

“Let’s hope so. We need answers, and it feels like we’re just one step away from getting them,” Ryker agreed, his voice low with anticipation.

All we could do now was wait for Silas to return. The tension between us was so intense as we exchanged anxious looks, our body language stiffening with anticipation. Cain set his beer down on the counter and fixed his gaze on Silas, who had reappeared suddenly, hurrying towards the refrigerator.

“What are you doing back here?” Ryker was the first to speak, stepping forward to confront him.

“What? She asked for some ice,” Silas groaned, clearly irritated by our impatience, his face showing frustration at our skeptical stares.

“Alright, but make it quick,” Ryker muttered, giving him a sharp look for wasting time.

“Don’t worry, she already took a sip of the medicine. I’m confident she’ll give us the answers we need today.” Silas replied, sounding more certain this time.

415—Giant Panda

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We wanted to believe him—Silas rarely failed—but there was something about Nora that kept us on edge. She had become sharper, always prepared to counter any question we threw at her. Even when we knew she was lying, she had a way of making it impossible for us to call her out on it.

“Well then, go get those answers from her,” Cain said, placing a hand on Silas’s back and giving him a gentle push forward.

Silas nodded and rushed off with the tray in hand. We fell back into silence, but curiosity was gnawing at us.

“Let’s go see what’s happening upstairs,” Ryker finally suggested, breaking the quiet. We all agreed without hesitation.

After exchanging determined looks, we headed up to the third floor. As we neared our destination, we slowed down, tiptoeing cautiously. I led the way, hunched over slightly, carefully raising each foot before setting it down gently to avoid making noise.

Halfway down the hallway, I heard snickers behind me. I paused and turned to see my brothers pressed against the wall, their faces flushed with stifled laughter.

“What’s so funny?” I hissed at them, keeping my voice low.

“You—you look like—a giant panda—trekking—through the hallway,” Ryker stammered, barely able to speak as he pressed a fist against his mouth, trying not to laugh.

I knew exactly what he meant, and shot him a stern look. But before I could respond, we heard faint murmuring from the room ahead—Silas was already questioning Nora. We exchanged quick glances, then hurried toward the door and peeked inside.

Nora sat across from Silas, who was watching her face intently, as if

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waiting for the moment she would finally crack. We held our breath, our eyes glued to her every move.

I felt a lump in my throat as we anxiously watched Nora’s reaction. And then—before anyone could anticipate it—she raised her hand and slapped Silas across the face, so hard that my ears seemed to ring from the impact.

“You’re trying to hypnotize me!” she snapped, standing up abruptly and shoving the chair aside, while Silas, stunned, slowly lowered his head.

That’s when she noticed us. We were no longer hidden—she looked up and glared at each of us, her fury unmistakable.

Cain, who had been inching closer, hoping Nora was already under the spell, froze. His attempt to be clever backfired, and he now clung to the wall awkwardly. Half of him was still visible, and I was certain she could see him.

With his hand on the wall, Cain tried to save face. “I, uh, just came here to check this wall. Do you think we should paint it blue?” His voice trembled with fear as Nora’s eyes narrowed.

“Maybe we should wait, and she’ll paint it red,” Ryker muttered under his breath, glancing away to avoid her seething gaze.

Nora's anger was volcanic. She shot each of us a deadly glare. "I can't believe you all stooped so low," she hissed, stomping her foot. Just as she was about to leave, Cain spoke up again.

"I didn't do anything! I just paint, like an innocent teddy bear," he protested. I couldn't believe my ears. My brother, who usually played it cool and aloof, was now trying to seem harmless to Nora. I was definitely jealous.

"And you know me, Nora. I don't lie," Ryker added, using his smoothest, most romantic tone. That's when it hit me—I had to say something too. I

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couldn't be left out.

"And...everyone calls me a panda," I blurted out. It sounded far better in my head, but the moment the words left my mouth, I regretted it. I should've stayed silent.

"Then you animals belong in the wild," Nora snapped, brushing past us as we all turned away, trying to avoid her wrath.

Her slap had left Silas speechless, and we were genuinely worried she might leave the rest of us with missing teeth or bruises. Once she was gone, we cautiously entered the room to check on Silas.

"How does it feel to be on our side of things?" Cain, ever the smart-ass, patted Silas on the back, referring to all the times we'd had to sacrifice our dignity to save Nora.

"Did you guys know she'd figure it out?" Silas finally spoke, rising from his chair. He couldn't direct his anger at Nora, the one who had left a visible handprint on his cheek, so he directed it at us instead. .

"What—no!" Ryker exclaimed dramatically, shaking his head in denial, while Silas glared at each of us in turn.

"I want you all out of my study. Right now," he ordered, his voice dripping with frustration. We had seen this coming—Silas kicking us out was inevitable.

All jokes aside, we were back to square one.

Tasting 416

416—Everybody Loves Nora

Silas:

I hissed at Nora before I walked downstairs with Cain. She had come to the rooftop to convince us to let her stay. But we had to be rude to her. Yet she wanted to stay, that innocent sweet Nora.

We would never do that.

Never!

"She cannot stay here," I insisted again as I reached the last step of the staircase.

"I know," Cain agreed.

"If she stays, I will-" I quickly looked away, unable to tell my brother exactly why I didn't want her to remain with us.

"I don't know what I will do," he admitted, being more honest about his emotions than I could ever be.

"She will be safest when she is away from us," he nodded, patting my back.

How could I be satisfied with her leaving with that jerk? But ever since Yuki had developed her hatred for her, I was afraid to let her stay in this pack when my brothers and I couldn't properly protect her.

'She should stop talking. Seriously. Every time I hear her voice. I feel this strange surge of emotions. I cannot control myself around her,' my wolf finally spoke up.

416—Everybody Loves Nora

I tried to make her stop talking, but she wouldn't listen. That was the issue with innocent little Nora.

She wouldn't understand anything. I wished I could tell her about my feelings, but I couldn't. She was already afraid of Ryker; imagine how she would feel watching her stepbrothers transform into monsters and roam the mansion looking for someone to devour.

And her scent was something we couldn't ignore.

'I know. But why? She is a she-wolf, not our mate. Why are we feeling this way?' I was utterly lost. Even my wolf, Laso, had no idea why we were experiencing these emotions.

We just knew that we needed to kick her out for now. Once she was gone and the few months of torment were over, we could bring her back.

'What if she had fallen for Brody by then? The way everyone is upsetting her is not good for her health,' Laso would squirm and groan every time we distressed her.

'If we don't do this, she will not leave. She is stubborn, Laso. If we reveal our truth to her, she would insist on staying and taking care of us. And you know that is impossible. I wouldn't want my brothers looking at her in that state. They would tear her apart, and not just in a brutal way,' I fell silent, knowing that her scent could drive anyone

If I was feeling this way, they would too.

nad.

Especially Cain. His desire would likely lead him to take her to bed, and then what?

'I don't want to fight my own brother,' I hissed, feeling the pain in my heart. This would be the toughest year for me.

Knowing Nora was living with Brody while I endured the agony of a

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hundred deaths, I didn't know how I would survive it.

"Maybe that will keep us going? With every passing year, the pain intensifies, and this year will be worse for us. But thinking about staying alive to see her again would help us," my wolf was so right.

That would do wonders.

If I could get through these next few months, I would be ready to do whatever it takes to ensure she doesn't end up as our stepsister again.

No way would I allow it.

"Dad is calling you," Cain said, gently shaking me awake and handing me his phone.

"Yes, Dad?" I asked.

"You did the right thing. She needs to leave. I love you boys, but I wouldn't want you to hurt her. I can't take care of her or look after her, and this old man Yuki has developed a strange fascination with her misery. So, I am sure she won't be safe here. But I promise you, once it's all over, we will bring her back with respect and maybe even explain why —"My poor dad was suffering so much.

He had found a real daughter in her. Except the next time he saw her, I wouldn't allow him to call her my stepsister.

"But Dad, why the hell did Yuki say Brody has to accept her?" I grumbled, frustrated by that part.

They were making it difficult.

"My son, I don't want her to live somewhere without a title. Besides, wouldn't it be good if she found love in the meantime?" Of course, Dad had no idea what he was talking about. Cain gave me a reassuring look to

416—Everybody Loves Nora

calm me down.

We were already late and needed to make Nora leave soon. .

"Dad—fuck you—" I paused, knowing my dad wouldn't mind. He understood our curse and what happens when we are in pain.

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"Don't worry; she can always leave him if she wants because she wouldn't be marrying him," that part at least gave me a glimmer of hope.

Tasting 417

417—Someone Has A Crush On Silas

Nora:

"I think a slap was a bit too harsh," Akira remarked, causing me to roll my eyes at her.

"He was trying to invade my privacy, Akira. Stop feeling sorry for them and stay on my side." I reached my room and paced around anxiously. I couldn't believe Silas had stooped so low.

"Because they are curious," she insisted.

"Curious about what, Akira? About why I'm staying with Brody? Weren't they the ones who wanted me gone? Now that I'm out of the picture, they're trying to insert themselves back into my life," I hissed, shaking my head while my hand ran through my hair.

"I understand that talking about children can get them in trouble, but they don't realize that. And if you give them enough of a chance, they might reveal something-" I had to cut her off right then and there.

She didn't grasp what she was saying.

"I have endured pain that no one could ever imagine, Akira. Neither you nor they were with me when I felt the first kick and then more. I was terrified that night. I-" I paused as a faded memory of that horrifying experience flashed before my eyes.

"I knocked on the door and begged everyone to convince Brody to take me to the doctor. And why are you forgetting what Ryker said to me when I told him about my baby-" I stopped to collect myself when Akira interjected.

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"And yet he wants to know why you want to stay with Brody. Doesn't that make you feel like the one texting you that day wasn't Ryker? Did you forget that he told you April had his phone?" The moment she said that, I decided to end the conversation.

I knew the truth could be anything. The issue was that I just had to stop her. Something inside me had changed.

Something that no longer wanted to look at anyone and label them innocent.

The anger that fueled my strength would eventually shake, and then they would appear innocent too.

I didn't want that. I was so furious that all I wanted was to fight and hurt someone.

The mutants were a good target now.

"You are losing touch with your humanity, and that's what I'm afraid of," Akira said softly as I sat on my bed.

"Brody told me in no uncertain terms that if I informed the brothers about anything, or if they tried to come after him, I would never see my children again. Besides, what if the brothers change their attitude once they hear I've given birth to their babies? Didn't they get scared of taking on that responsibility last time, too?" That was the last thing I said to her before deciding to rest.

We didn't discuss anything after that, and I went to bed. When I woke up in the morning, it felt like nothing Silas had done mattered to me

anymore.

I was fine and ready to tackle the mission. As I walked downstairs in blue jeans and a white top, I realized everyone was already in the garden.

417—Someone Has A Crush On Silas

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The maids and servers were preparing food, and the brothers were taking a stroll.

"Morning!" I called out cheerfully, watching Daphne turn to me and surprise me with how dull she looked.

Carla appeared fine. She wore a blue dress and had curled her hair perfectly. I had never seen her apply makeup so flawlessly either.

But her eyes remained fixated on Silas the entire time. I wondered what the brothers were discussing now.

They noticed me but didn't make an effort to approach. However, their walk ended the moment I approached.

"Good morning. Seeing you always cheers me up," Lord Atwood mumbled, a beautiful smile gracing his lips.

"How are you feeling today, Daphne?" I didn't do it on purpose; the moment I sidestepped Lord Atwood's cheerful greeting, his expression fell.

However, I quickly looked away because grappling with emotions and the feelings of others wasn't something I wanted to deal with.

"I'm feeling awful," Daphne replied. "How long

Can they attack me when I'm with others too?" "o I have to stay hidden?

to recall what Silas had told me. .

she asked, prompting me

She must know, or else why would she have run to Brody's pack?

"Umm-," as I pondered the perfect response for her, Carla spoke up.

"I don't think Nora knows much. She's just a fighter," she rolled her eyes, making me smile at her.

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"I'm not talking to you. Mind your own business," Daphne snapped. Always looking down on those of lower rank, she obviously only addressed Carla before because she wanted to belittle me.

Her comment left Carla momentarily speechless.

It was then that I formulated a plan. I could tell Daphne was growing impatient and despondent at the sight of Nash.

"Actually, Carla is a beta herself," I reminded Daphne, which made Carla stand a little taller.

"And I'm sure a walk with her would help you feel better," I might have surprised Carla too, as she stared at me, probably confused about whether to feel proud of the opportunity I was giving her or perplexed by my motives.

"Really?" Daphne asked, eyeing me skeptically. "With her?" She wrinkled her nose in disgust.

"Nora has finally realized she cannot help you. Let me take you for a walk. I can recite poetry, you know." Carla instantly grabbed Daphne's hand and dragged her out of the chair.

I knew what I was doing. Carla needed to learn a lesson, and now was her time.

Tasting 418

418-They Know!

Nora:

I watched Carla leave with Daphne, but they weren't going far. Of course, I wouldn't let Daphne out of my sight. I only allowed them to take a walk through the royal garden. That was when the brothers began to return to the table.

"How are you?" Before they could arrive, I turned to ask Lord Atwood. I wanted to be harsh with him so he could understand that when he hurt me, he broke my trust in him. But Akira kept pushing me from inside, even when I had the ring on.

"I am not well," he answered.

“Why? What happened?” I felt a slight flutter in my chest.

“Because my daughter is angry with me,” he said as the brothers took their seats.

“Don’t worry, Dad; she is angry with everyone,” Ryker complained, leaning back in his chair.

“Did you know, Dad, Nora likes diamonds these days?” Cain suddenly spoke up, and I frowned at him in offense. When did I ever say I liked diamonds?

So I focused on Cain, eager to hear him continue.

“Really? Then I must get her some diamonds. I know jewelers who make the best bracelets and necklaces,” Lord Atwood replied with such enthusiasm that I began to wonder if the previous months had even

418—They Know!

happened. Why was Lord Atwood acting like nothing had transpired? He was back to being all sweet and nice with me.

“There will be no need for that. I don’t know why Cain is concocting stories,” I uttered with disdain.

He must have noticed because he looked away, adjusting his coat, which he wore without a shirt.

“Really? You said it yourself.” It was Ryker who stood up to back up his brother’s lies. I narrowed my eyes at him, thinking they were merely picking on me until I recalled why he was saying that.

“Ohhh!” I felt like my heart sank into my stomach. “I do like—my diamonds. But only the ones that I purchased myself.”

It felt like they knew something. The brothers were constantly exchanging glances, which made me extremely uncomfortable. Lord Atwood must have been oblivious to his sons’ actions; he looked utterly lost in the midst of our silent battle.

“Anyway, so Nora shares her mate with her best friend, but she doesn’t share her diamonds with her best friend,” Ryker said, and the three of them burst into laughter, causing me to clench my jaw.

“That is her personal business,” thankfully, Lord Atwood noticed that I was uncomfortable with his sons’ jokes.

"I get it. But it's funny, you know? Because I sent out my pack's courier to Brody's mansion to get her diamonds here since she likes them so much. But guess what her best friend, Janet, said-" My eyes widened in shock as I watched Nash casually talk about something they had been doing behind my back, and I had no clue about it. I thought they couldn't do anything if I didn't say a word.

"What?" Lord Atwood asked Nash. This time, Silas raised his head and

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looked me in the eye so intently that it truly petrified me. Did they find out?

"Janet said she would give me the diamonds the day they can start walking."

I didn't know what that meant; it could be interpreted in so many ways.

"In short, Janet told us that Nora doesn't have any diamonds," however, Cain quickly added before I could react anxiously or aggressively.

"But Nora just said-" The rest of the conversation blended into the outside noise as I recalled how much Janet despises me. What did she mean by all that?

I need to call Brody- My thoughts were cut off when we heard screams louder than anything. I remembered Carla, and instantly, I felt a sense of calm. Her screams were like a melody to my ears.

"What happened?" Lord Atwood got up, following everyone else except for me. I remained seated, waiting for Carla to come into view.

She did.

She was running toward us while Daphne trailed behind her, briskly making her way to catch up.

"Stay away from me! Because of you, it all happened!" Carla screamed at Daphne, who looked utterly guilty. I turned in my seat to observe them. It was like watching a scene unfold before me, from the fog people appearing to the victim facing them and the creator reacting to it.

"The fog people—they appeared, and I bet I'm a target now." Carla dropped to her knees the moment she arrived and started sobbing.

I noticed two things. First, Carla was incredibly foolish. They only make

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victims when they are alone. They obviously appeared because they are drawn to their creator, but those with the creator or anyone else are never the target. The second thing was that Daphne looked remorseful, almost as if she was unhappy that someone was so frightened because of her.

Tasting 419

419—Silas Is Dating Carla?

Nora:

“Calm down; you will be fine,” Cain rolled his eyes at Carla before stepping away to move closer to me.

Carla had been crying nonstop ever since she saw those weeping

guardians. It was amusing how quickly she turned her back on Daphne at the sight of trouble. She desperately wanted to support her story until she realized the danger of standing with a victim.

Daphne, however, had remained silent throughout this ordeal. She looked puzzled, sad, and a mix of guilt.

“You knew this would happen,” Cain whispered, folding his arms over his chest and leaning against the wall, his gaze fixed on me.

“A little fun can’t harm anyone,” I commented with a shrug, my eyes on Carla as she subtly inched closer to Silas on the couch.

My expression hardened when Silas shot Ryker a look of disbelief and attempted to get up. That was when Carla threw herself at him, shocking

everyone.

“I’m so scared,” she screamed. Her fingers clutched Silas’s hoodie, pulling him closer, but it was evident he wanted to escape her grip.

Soon, she rested her face against his hoodie and cried on his chest. An uncomfortable silence thickened the air as we all stood like statues, watching the awkward scene unfold. Lord Atwood gently patted her head, seeking a way to rescue his frightened son,

“My dear child, the weeping guardians only target someone when they

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catch them alone.” The moment he said that, Carla sniffled and lifted her

head.

That's when Silas rose to his feet and jumped away from her.

"What the heck is her problem?" Silas mouthed to Cain, who then glanced over at Ryker, making direct eye contact with Nash afterward.

I knew in that moment they were up to something. Whenever the brothers shared a deep gaze, they either discovered something significant or concocted a plan.

"Really? So does that mean I'm fine?" Carla sniffled, quickly turning to her left to look for Silas, disappointment etched on her face when she realized he had already moved away from her.

"Yes, you're fine," Lord Atwood confirmed. She let out a deep sigh of relief before glancing around. "I think I need some fresh air. Dear Lord Atwood, would you be kind enough to ask your son Alpha King Silas, if, of course, he doesn't have a problem, to take me out for a car ride? Actually, my brother always does that for me. He takes me and my rabbit out for a ride," she fluttered her eyelashes frequently, practically demanding Lord Atwood to make Silas take her out.

I couldn't help but narrow my eyes at her. What a cunning witch!

"Um, sure," Lord Atwood replied. Now that she had directly requested something, how could he say no?

By shaking his head, perhaps, but that's a discussion for another day,

"Silas!" Lord Atwood walked away to search for Silas, who had left with the brothers after they exchanged an eerie glance. I knew they had gone to discuss something.

Now that it was just the two of us, with Daphne sitting far away from us,

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419—Silas Is Dating Carla?

her head bowed, I watched Carla get up and walk over to me. The puffiness of her eyes screamed that she had been crying a lot.

"Nice try," she hissed.

"You wanted to hurt me or worry me, didn't you?" There was so much animosity in her voice, even though she had no reason to hate me. Initially, she despised me because Brody had brought me to the pack with the intention of marrying me, but now that was far from the truth. We could never get married, nor would I ever fall for him.

Yet, her anger never faded. Even when I could see her casting glances at Silas, she continued to direct her aggression toward me.

“You are delusional. I gave you a chance to prove yourself useful, but you couldn’t even do that.” With that, I folded my arms over my chest and rolled my eyes.

“Be careful what you ask for, Nora. I’m not someone you can toy with. Don’t forget, if I call my and tell him how you planned to make

brothe me the victim of the weeping guardians-” she paused, knowing she had captured my attention now.

“Then he will be merciless too,” she leaned in closer and whispered those words, causing my body to flinch.

“And the day your brother harms my children, Carla, I will fucking burn the Silver Jaw’s pack to dust,” I hissed back. “So be very careful.”

My threat didn’t change the smirk on her face. This was what she wanted from me—a reaction!

“Awe! Seems like I scared you. Don’t worry, I’m not so heartless. Especially when I’ve moved on,” she shrugged and stepped back. Just when I thought it was over.

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I was a fool not to understand who she had moved on to. It wasn’t a new story; any girl who sees my damn mates gets thirsty for them. However, I knew Silas would never pay attention to someone like her.

That’s when Lord Atwood returned, and I smiled. Now Carla would taste rejection and realize not to mess with me.

“My dear, my son said he will take you out for a ride and even for dinner afterward. Go get ready,” he announced. This was unexpected. It felt as if someone had punched my heart once again. That

kind of feeling hadn’t surfaced in so long, and it was incredibly bitter.

How thirsty and desperate was Silas?

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Tasting 420

420—Getting Engaged To Carla

Ryker:

The way Clara clung to Silas made heads turn in their direction, and then my brothers and I shared a glance.

“Cain—a word!” I gestured for him to follow me. He raised an eyebrow but didn’t move quickly. Oh, I get it.

He was standing next to Nora, inhaling her scent through his flared nostrils.

“Cain—,” I groaned angrily, and he finally understood the urgency. Nora was busy focusing on Lord Atwood and Clara now, even glancing at Silas.

“What is it?” Cain asked as he stepped out of the living room, following me to the kitchen.

“Did

you notice anything?” I wanted to first confirm whether Cain had observed the same thing I had.

“Nora looks really cute when she acts evil?” he replied. “I noticed that too. When she acts all tough and wicked, I want to bend her over—” Cain suddenly fell silent as we reached the kitchen and then looked away.

I had noticed that he had started to act very secretive about his feelings for Nora around me.

He knows that I know about his mate bond with her; then why the awkwardness?

“Anyway, that’s not what I was referring to. I was talking about Clara,” I

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420—Getting Engaged To Carla

redirected him, as we needed to pay full attention to the people around Nora in order to help her.

“Oh! Really?” Cain suddenly turned to me and smiled widely. “You like her?” The way he asked froze me.

The excitement in his voice and the gleam in his eyes suggested he desperately wanted me to agree with his interpretation of my brief mention of her name. Not even a statement; I just said her name, and he thinks I like her?

“No! There’s nothing to like about her. I mean, I think Clara likes Silas,” I explained. After looking disappointed for a moment, Cain zoned out and then nodded his head.

“Maybe you’re right,” he replied, sounding a little lost.

“What are you guys talking about?” Nash interrupted us, rushing inside to ensure we weren’t discussing anything in his absence.

“Ryker was checking out Clara,” Cain said loudly, making me look at his face in disbelief.

“Nora is not behind me,” Nash narrowed his eyes at Cain, as of course he too found it strange the way Cain had said it so openly.

“Oh! Okay. Ryker thinks Clara likes Silas,” now that Cain knew Nora wasn’t eavesdropping on our conversation, he chose the right answer.

But I shot him a sidelong glance. Why would he want Nora to hear about me having eyes on someone else?

And I wasn’t checking out Clara; why the heck would I, when I could gaze at someone like Nora all I wanted?

“Really?” Nash scratched his chest, looking around as if to recall Clara’s

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interactions with Silas. “Oh, maybe Ryker is onto something.”

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The excitement Nash displayed proved I wasn’t the only one who had noticed it.

“I think if he wants, he can make her answer some questions,” Nash smirked, and I nodded in agreement. But that’s when I noticed Cain shaking his head slightly.

“I don’t think that would work. She is a beta’s daughter, she must have some sort of anti-hypnotism potion given to her prior to coming here because Brody knows a lot about us.” Cain was right.

If Silas tried anything with Clara and she found out, like Nora did, Clara would go back and inform Brody about it, and then Nora might get in trouble.

There was no doubt that Nora was lying about literally everything.

"Then what do we do?" I asked, watching Cain's expression. I directed my question at him particularly because of the way he was tapping his finger on his chin. It was as if he knew something.

"But we can engage Silas with Clara." The minute he said it, I realized he had lost his mind.

I started to feel sorry for him. He was only focusing on getting us out, almost as if he suspected we all had feelings for Nora.

"Thank you, Cain, for thinking about your brother, but how the hell would that help us?" I questioned, with Nash echoing my sentiment, hands on his hips.

"Brody is confident enough to let Nora come here. Whatever he has on her is so strong and definitely rooted in his pack that it's making her not open up. So we need to be in his pack to investigate," Cain explained. But

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Nash interrupted him to remind him how exactly it had gone the last time we tried to talk to Nora.

"And well, are you forgetting he wouldn't allow us into his pack?" Nash rolled his eyes.

"Umm, yeah, because we seem like a threat. But if the beta's daughter gets engaged to Alpha King Silas, nobody would dare stop him from visiting the pack," Cain concluded, making Nash and my eyes widen. I did not expect Cain to be so good at coming up with a plan.

But what he said made total sense too.

"And Silas would be on the same list of people who dated someone Nora didn't like, just like the rest of us," Nash was spot on.

Silas got the better end of the deal. He didn't have to be seen as a total jerk like the rest of us, so it made complete sense.

And that's when Silas arrived.

"What is going on?" he asked, a hint of discomfort on his face from how we were watching him.

"You are getting engaged to Clara," Nash didn't beat around the bush, striking at poor Silas when he least expected it.

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