

The Alpha CEO's Unloved Wife Chapter 18

The Snuff Box that Isn't

Jane sought escape in the bathroom, but there *was* a queue already forming, and she saw Angelique amongst them, laughing with the other s he-wolves. When she saw Jane, Angelique muttered something, and all the heads between her and Baron's blonde mistress turned to look at her with varying degrees of hostility.

As Jane retreated, she heard their laughter follow her.

"Jane," Alice caught her by the elbow and pushed her into a side room. The moment the door closed behind them, Alice slapped her, knocking Jane to the ground. Alice put her foot on Jane's hand, and Jane cried out in pain.

"Alice, please," Jane pleaded tugging at her sister's foot. "It was not my fault."

"You are a disgrace," Alice said through her teeth.

"An embarrassment to our family and your husband. No more calling our father pleading to come home, Jane. Your only use to us is through this marriage to Baron Western. Do you understand?" "Yes," Jane sobbed out. "Please Alice."

Alice stepped off of Jane's hand and reached down, picking her up. "Now, you said to our father that Angelique says the connection will end. What did she mean by that?"

"I don't know," Jane tried to move her fingers, her hand throbbing. "I don't know."

"Find out," Alice hissed and sighed heavily, releasing Jane, and smoothing her dress down. "And for f-ck sake Jane, get yourself together, you are an utter mess," she said as she closed the door behind her.

Jane tidied herself up, using her compact to see if Alice had left a mark on her face, but with her sister's usual skill, she had hit with maximum pain and minimal damage, keeping her hand open to disperse the blow. Jane's fingers were uncoordinated, but she was certain there were no broken bones.

She re-joined the queue to the bathroom, and, without Angelique in the queue, there were whispers and looks, but no open hostility.

She made it to the head of the queue and locked the door behind her with relief, using the toilet, washing her hands, and fixing her

make-up, the damages of her tears and Alice's attack disappearing behind powder and lipstick.

As she left the bathroom and made her way back into the main room, a drunk Charles Wolston pinned her against the wall. "I have always wanted to try an omega," he breathed alcohol over her. "I am told they submit so sweetly."

"Charles," Baron's voice was hard. "That is my wife you have your hands on."

"Oh, come now Baron, everyone knows you are f—king Angelique and only married Jane to get in with the Corbyn pack," Charles was unembarrassed and jovial. "I'll pay you ten thousand for her next heat. I've always had a hankering to f—k an omega through one." "Charles," Baron's voice was icy. "Release my wife before we come to blows."

"Alright, then, Baron," Charles Wolston was disgruntled. "No need to get your hackles up."

"We're leaving," Baron sneered. "Good night, Charles." He propelled Jane before him, the guests parting before them with shocked looks as they took in his thunderous expression.

"What did she do?" Someone asked.

"I don't know, but she's going to get a beating." Out the front, whilst they waited for their limousine to pull around, Jane struggled to regain her breath and fought back tears. Baron's grip on her arm was painful and he bristled with anger like a storm about to break. Charles Wolston had put it aptly; if Baron had been in wolf-form, his hackles would be raised.

"Baron," she pleaded. "Yes, Jane?" His eyes searched the driveway for the limousine.

"You are hurting me." He looked down at her in surprise and released her immediately. "I am sorry," he murmured, smoothing the sleeve of her dress erasing his fingerprints from the velvet as if he thought to erase the bruises that he had left below the fabric. "I am sorry, Jane." Not angry at her, she thought with relief.

The limousine arrived and he opened the door, beating the chauffeur to it, and handed Jane in. As he closed the door behind him, he sank back onto the seat with a sigh, his long legs sprawled before him, and pulled something out of his pocket that looked like a snuff box. He opened it, and Jane saw within an impression of a key. He closed it again carefully, and the tension released from him. "I am sorry," she whispered.

“About what?” He looked at her in confusion and then his expression cleared. “Oh, f—king Wolston,” he grimaced and pushed himself up tugging his dinner jacket back into order. “He is a known lech, Jane, when he gets a few drinks in him. If it wasn’t you, it would have been some other poor unfortunate girl trapped against a wall and under his hands. “He’s otherwise a bore, but a benign one,” he tucked the snuff box that wasn’t away into his breast pocket. “He’ll ring me first thing in the morning, when he has slept off the drink and recalls his wrongs, and he will be profusely apologetic for feeling up my wife. I will use the opportunity to get him to sell me a property he owns that I want. “I owe you an apology,” he put his arm around her shoulder and drew her against his side, pressing his face into her hair and breathing in her scent. “I used you to get Angelique out of a situation.”

“What situation?” She wondered, and then realised that she shouldn’t have asked. “I am sorry, it’s none of my business.” “No, it is,” he replied. “And the question is justified, but it is safer for you, and for us, if, at the moment, you don’t know the details. I will tell you everything when there is no danger in doing so. Let’s just say that Angelique had a key that she shouldn’t have had and needed the opportunity to return it where it should have been, and me stomping out of the party like that afforded her the distraction she needed.” “Oh,” she didn’t know whether to be relieved or angry that he had convinced everyone in the party that she was in trouble. Her reputation didn’t matter to him at all, she thought angry tears burning hot trails down her cheeks so that she turned her face to the window to hide them from him.

“I am sorry that I frightened you,” he said gently, passing her a silk handkerchief. She nodded and dabbed at her cheeks futilely with the silk. “I can’t blame Charles anyway,” he stroked his hand down her arm. “You are a walking temptation in this dress. I think I will need to get it off of you as soon as we get home.”