

Alpha's Regret: The Hybrid's Royal Contract novel

Chapter 3 The Alpha King's Secret - -

Author

Dominic Wolfe had hunted enemies across borders, crushed rebellions before breakfast, and once made three Alpha councils kneel with nothing but a raised eyebrow.

Yet the woman sitting beside him in the car had nearly undone him with a contract and a mouth sharp enough to draw blood.

Elara Park stared out the window, spine straight, chin high, one hand resting protectively over the document in her bag. She believed she had married Damian Sterling.

Dominic should have corrected her.

He did not.

His wolf paced inside him, furious and delighted.

[Mine.]

Dominic tightened his grip on the steering wheel.

[Not yet.]

The wolf snarled.

[She is wounded. Another male rejected her. He touched what was ours and threw her away.]

Dominic's jaw clenched so hard the muscle jumped.

He knew.

He had known Elara for three years, though she had not known him at all.

The first time he saw her, he had been leaving Alpha Academy after a lecture no one had enjoyed but everyone had pretended to understand. He was already bored, already irritated by elders whispering about heirs and royal bloodlines.

Then her scent hit him.

Bergamot and rain.

Clean. Bright. Defiant.

His wolf had gone still for one impossible second, then slammed against his ribs with such force Dominic nearly shifted in public.

He turned and saw her near the academy steps, laughing at something Zack Blackwood said.

Even then, Dominic had disliked him. The boy smelled like polished ambition and hidden cowardice.

Elara had looked at Zack with warmth. Trust. Hope.

Dominic had almost crossed the courtyard anyway.

But he was the Alpha King, last awakened Lycan royal on the continent. Every move he made carried political consequences. If he openly pursued a young hybrid already bonded to another Alpha heir, the packs would turn her into prey.

So he watched.

He told himself he was protecting her.

His wolf had called him a liar for three years.

Now fate had delivered her into his suite with a marriage contract and a bruised heart.

Dominic glanced at her.

Elara felt his gaze and narrowed her eyes. "Do you always stare at your business partners like you're deciding where to bury them?"

His mouth twitched. "Only the interesting ones."

A mindlink snapped open.

Owen, his Beta.

[Alpha, the council discovered the fertility arrangements. They know you lied about the women they sent.]

Dominic almost sighed.

The council.

Of course.

Just yesterday, twelve elders had filled the royal hall, faces tight with panic. They had spoken of bloodlines, enemies, continental stability, and the danger of a king without an heir.

"You are thirty," the Chief Elder had said, as if Dominic had misplaced the number. "You are the only awakened Lycan royal bloodline in North America. If you die without an heir, the royal line dies with you."

Another elder had slammed his fist on the stone table. "Our enemies are watching. Without a royal heir, the European Lycan houses will challenge us within months."

Dominic had sat on the throne, bored enough to count the cracks in the marble.

His wolf had muttered, [Tell them you found her.]

[No.]

[Then tell them to choke on their bloodline charts.]

[Tempting.]

When the elders pushed too hard, Dominic finally stood.

His Lycan aura rolled through the hall like a storm. Twelve powerful wolves dropped their eyes within seconds.

"My mate," Dominic had said softly, "will not be chosen by committee. My heir will not be bred like livestock. If any elder here finds that difficult to accept, I can arrange retirement. Permanently."

No one spoke after that.

Now Owen's voice buzzed with alarm.

[Alpha, did you hear me? They know.]

[I found my Luna,] Dominic replied.

Silence.

Then Owen choked. [You what?]

[There is one complication.]

[Please define complication in a way that does not shorten my life.]

[She thinks she married Damian Sterling.]

Another silence.

[Alpha.]

[Yes?]

[Why?]

Dominic glanced at Elara again. She was pretending not to listen, but her eyes had sharpened. Clever little wolf. Even without access to the mindlink, she sensed tension.

[Because she came looking for him,] Dominic said. [And because if I introduced myself as Dominic Wolfe, Alpha King, the man who has been watching over her for three years, she would stab me with the contract pen and escape through a window.]

Owen sounded pained. [That is... not impossible.]

[Keep Damian Sterling away for one week. Quietly. Make sure his family believes he is unavailable.]

[Unavailable how?]

[Creatively.]

[Understood. And the council?]

[Tell them I am handling the heir issue.]

[That will make them worse.]

[Then smile while they suffer.]

Dominic ended the link.

Elara turned toward him. "Problem?"

"Nothing you need to worry about."

Dominic laughed before he could stop himself.

He couldn't wait to see her face when she found out. First shock. Then confusion. Then recognition. When her wolf finally recognized him.

Soon, the whole werewolf world would know who Elara Park belonged to.

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