

Accidentally Pregnant By My Alpha Best friends

We Listened to the Darkness by Sorin Pax 161

161–Maybe I Want To Marry Someone Else

Madeline:

“You’re trying to irk me,” I yelled at Silver, who suddenly rushed toward me with her claws out, as if she were ready to scratch me. Something inside me snapped. I knew my wolf had woken up.

However, before she could fix her eyes on me, her claws scraped across someone’s back. I opened my **eyes** and **saw** Baxter standing in front of me. His expression held clear anger.

Silver yelped and stepped back from him, while he turned to face her. Now that his back was toward me, I **realized** she had clawed him instead of me when he stepped between us.

“I did not want to hurt you,” she screamed at Baxter for coming between us and making it appear as if she had raised her claws at an alpha.

“So you wanted to attack her? Is that your confession?” Baxter shouted at her, and she shivered.

“And you, what are you doing standing here letting her instigate Madeline?” Baxter yelled at Elgin, who groaned when he saw Silver.

His daughters started crying. They were as little as my children, and I felt bad for them.

“You have caused enough ruckus,” Elgin yelled at Silver, who looked between the alphas in shock, giving each a brief glance before turning her gaze to me over Baxter’s shoulder.

“This woman has driven you all crazy,” she yelled.

“Mommy, why are you screaming so much?” Hailey, with her two little ponytails, mumbled as she hugged herself, while Hannah stayed silent with her face in her hands.

“Everyone, please quiet down. They are suffering,” I finally snapped, and the room fell silent for a moment.

“Please, everybody, return to your homes. It is nighttime for heaven’s sake,” I remarked, glaring at everyone one by one.

“Not only are my children resting, but these girls have been crying too,” I added.

“I’ll be waiting for you in the house. If you want to spend time with Hailey and Hannah, you have to come back to the guest house.”

Silver snapped at Elgin before she held both her daughters by their hands and started to pull them out of the house. However, Elgin did not step after her right away, giving me the sense that he needed to say something to

1. me.

“I will go check on Hailey and Hannah while Baxter is here,” Elgin remarked, yet he still did not step away. “But I also want to make sure you understand that I do not agree with your decision,” he continued, causing Baxter to glance between us in confusion.

“We do not have another option, Madeline. You must marry me,” Elgin told me.

As he finished, Baxter snapped his head toward me again, as if trying to show that he recognized something was wrong. Elgin then turned around and wandered off.

As soon as he was out of my sight, Baxter faced me.

“What was he talking about? Did your husband say no to marrying him?” Baxter questioned me, not even acknowledging the claw marks on his back.

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161 Maybe I Want To Marry Someone Else

+25 Bonus

“No, my husband is not the problem,” I replied, rushing to grab a first aid kit.

However, he followed after me in confusion.

“What are you doing?” he asked.

I gave him a look and poured some ointment onto a clean cloth. When I stepped behind him, I noticed the claw marks on his back were gone. He instantly turned around, keeping his back away from me.

“You did not even transition,” I wondered aloud, hinting at the fact that a werewolf must either transition or let their wolf take partial control to heal.

In his case, he had done neither. I looked into his eyes, holding back the questions rising in my mind, but he already knew what I was thinking.

“Forget it. Some things are not going to change,” he muttered in defeat, and I already understood what he meant.

“Did you not get help for it?” I asked.

He only shook his head to change the subject.

“Tell me, what did you say to Elgin, and why did you say it?” he pressed, repeating the question again and again.

“I have noticed something about Elgin’s behavior toward the children,” I replied. It struck me how suddenly I was being honest and sharing things with Baxter.

“What do you mean by his behavior toward the children? What is it?” he asked, looking concerned.

“I think he does not see the other children the same way he sees his own daughter, Elara,” I explained.

As I finished, Baxter slapped his forehead and shook his head.

“He is so immature. I can speak with him if you want me to,” he suggested.

I began to shake my head.

“I do not want to marry him. Silver could become really messy, and I do not want to ruin her marriage. Even though he says nothing has happened between them, they are still married,” I mumbled, anxiously rubbing my palms together.

“Do you want me to speak with him about it? Maybe he is planning on leaving her?” Baxter wondered.

Once again, I shook my head.

“No, I do not want you to do anything. I do not even know what I want myself,” I mumbled, taking a deep breath before sitting down on the couch in defeat.

“Do you want to marry someone else?” he asked.

As soon as he asked, my body flinched.

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Ruby Walker

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We Listened to the Darkness by Sorin Pax

162

162—Someone Attacked My Girlfriend.

Baxter:

I watched her face while waiting for her to tell me her decision, and it seemed as if it had changed into something that maybe I wanted to hear as well.

“Tell me,” I insisted.

“Do you want to marry someone else?” I asked, taking a deep breath.

She silently stared at me, and something in my chest began to twist.

“I mean, I don't have to stick to the lie of having only one mate.”

As soon as she said that, blood rushed through my body.

“Oh, it will not be difficult for others to believe that I have three mates. They already think something is wrong with me because I gave birth to three different children from three different alphas. I don't think saying that I have three mates would add much.”

There was a hidden hint in her voice that I struggled to understand.

Who was she thinking about marrying if it was not Elgin?

And if it was only about her mates, then she must have been referring to Graham.

Even though the texts were a lie, I remembered her conversation with her friend on the phone, where she made it clear she was not ready to marry or bear the responsibility of my temper, my behavior, and my unstable wolf.

As soon as I thought about it, my hopes began to fade. What hopes could I even name? I had no idea.

I had come here after promising my fiancée that I would get engaged to her soon and make her my official fiancée everywhere.

“I was thinking about-” Madeline gathered the courage she had been waiting for to respond to me.

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Before she could speak, my phone started ringing again, and this time I noticed the way her eyes settled on the

screen.

“She’s calling you at this time. It must be important,” she remarked in a defeated tone.

“It’s okay. I will quickly attend it, and then I want you to tell me what you are thinking about,” I told her, answering the call without giving it too much thought. 1

In my mind, I believed we would talk for a moment, exchange only a few words, and then I would return my

attention to Madeline.

That was not how it ended.

The moment I answered the call, I heard Yuvonne scream and cry in the distance, while my mother was the one speaking.

“Please come here soon. Please save her, save my daughter,” she pleaded, crying.

“There is a man—he is he is assaulting her,” she screamed on the phone.

—

I lifted my head and looked at Madeline, who understood the urgency from my expression.

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162—Someone Attacked My Girlfriend

“What is going on?” I asked, but the call disconnected.

“Is everything okay?” Madeline wondered.

+25 Bonus

“I do not know. Her mother called me. She said there is some guy, he is...” I paused as her words returned to me. Assaulting Yuvonne.”

That was all I managed to say before anger burst through my mind.

“What?” Madeline responded, her shock matching my own.

I caught on instantly and sprinted toward the door without wasting a second.

In no time, I was already on the road, running at full speed toward Yuvonne’s home.

It was not far from here, so I arrived quickly.

The moment I did, I saw a man jump out of the house with Yuvonne’s father behind him, firing a bullet at him.

“You are an asshole!” he shouted. “I will get you arrested. I will kill you!”

The old man dropped to his knees, unable to catch him, but I rushed toward the fleeing man.

He stopped briefly on the road and turned to look at me, and his face burned itself into my memory.

His skin was very tan, his eyes blue, and his hair golden. It seemed as if I had seen him somewhere before.

The way he panicked when he looked at me made it clear he realized I had recognized him.

I was somewhat recognizing him. And even if not, I was going to find him now that I had seen him.

sprinted toward the road, and as I attempted to follow him, I heard Yuvonne crying.

I froze for a moment, feeling torn. I needed to check on her.

I had already seen the man. I was going to catch him regardless. So I decided to go to Yuvonne first.

I turned around and entered the house.

The next thing I saw was shocking. There was blood everywhere, and Yuvonne was whimpering from behind the couch.

I rushed to her and saw her in a state that instantly angered me.

She was covered in blood. Her lip was split. A chunk of her hair was missing.

Her clothes were partly torn. More importantly, she had been stabbed a few times, and she was bleeding heavily.

She was so frightened that she tried to crawl away from me before her hands slipped in her own blood.

“It is me, Yuvonne. It is me, Baxter.” I reached for her arm and pulled her toward my chest, holding her.

She immediately held on to me. She did not even have the strength to speak.

She only cried and screamed, her fingers tangled in my shirt, her body shaking violently.

I turned to the door and saw her father enter, wiping his tears.

It seemed the man had failed **to** complete whatever he intended, because Yuvonne’s father had also taken control

of the situation.

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He looked at me, then turned around again. I saw a gun in his hand.

“No, wait. Let me take care of it!” I shouted, but he did not listen and rushed out.

“Don’t leave me. Please don’t leave

>>

me, Yuvonne cried.

I looked around for her mother in confusion.

After a few minutes, her mother ran inside with several warriors behind her.

“He was here,” she said, stopping when she saw the empty house.

It seemed she had run out after calling me, planning to bring the warriors herself.

As soon as the warriors entered, I pointed toward the road.

“Go and look for the man. Her father has also gone after him,” I informed them.

The warriors followed my instruction and rushed out.

The others stayed behind because we needed to take Yuvonne for immediate special care.

Ruby Walker

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163

163—Too Eager To Get Engaged To My Half Sister

Madeline:

When Baxter left, Elgin returned. He told me he had put his daughters to bed and that Silver had continued arguing with him.

I told him what had happened to Baxter, and he called Graham to go and check on him.

“Did you get another call from him?” I asked Elgin as I stepped out of the room.

I had slept for only two hours before waking up in worry over what was happening.

“Madeline, don’t worry. She is fine,” he replied, and I released a deep breath, though the worry stayed with me.

“You don’t understand, Elgin. Somebody assaulted Yuvonne. It is serious,” I said anxiously, rubbing my palms together.

I know I did not get along with her, but any woman or any man going through such brutality is horrendous.

“I know. I got the details from Baxter. He said there was a man. He recognized him, but he does not remember who he was. He came with the sole purpose of killing Yuvonne,” Elgin explained.

As soon as he said that, my heart dropped in my chest.

“He did stab her, and she is in a very bad state, but thankfully no vital organs were hit,” Elgin added. “Besides, the doctor has helped her regain her senses. In a few hours, he will help her transition and then she will heal. Don’t worry.”

He tried to reassure me, but it did not help. Not at all.

“It is so confusing. Why would anyone want to kill her?” I asked.

As I sat on the couch, Elgin stood from his sofa and came to sit beside me.

“Madeline, I know what made you not want to marry me,” he remarked.

As soon as he said that, I uncovered my face and turned to look at him.

This was not the topic we were supposed to discuss.

“Listen, I am not going to force you, but I felt the other alphas would not be happy with me interacting with their children, especially Graham. And I know how Baxter is, so I thought he would be against the idea. I know it is no excuse, but I truly care for all three of them. And even if you still do not believe it, we are not marrying because I think you will accept me. I am marrying you so you can keep your children with you,” Elgin explained before reaching for my hand and holding it.

“And Madeline, I will not force you into anything, but it is true that...” He paused.

I already knew what he was going to say. I tried to stop him, but he said it anyway.

“I love you.”

His confession struck me hard, but there was no reason to focus on it.

Our attention needed to be on the children.

“Please, please marry me, and I will keep the children protected,” he urged, making me keep my hand under his,

163-Too Eager To Get Engaged To My Hat! Sister

+25 Bonus

because I realized he was not lying.

Out of the three, he was the only one who promised to take care **of** the children and who had not wronged **me**. Graham had damaged everything, and I was not going to marry him no matter what, because that would make him believe his actions had worked.

Then there was Baxter.

Even though he was extremely kind, helpful, and an ideal man in many ways, it did not change the fact that he had no explanation for blocking me after sleeping with me.

And tonight, the way he sprinted away showed he already had a responsibility.

Unlike Elgin, who clearly told Silver in front of me that their relationship meant nothing and that she was only the mother **of** their children, Baxter was in love with Yuvonne.

So even thinking of him as an option was wrong.

“Okay,” I said.

As soon as I did, Elgin took a deep breath and smiled.

“Thank you,” he replied.

I got up and went back to my room to lie down and finally get some proper sleep.

When I woke early in the morning, I stepped out to find Elgin and my three children sitting at the dining table having breakfast.

This time, Elgin had cooked. Not only that, Gina was in his lap, and he was feeding Baxter and Elara himself.

As soon as he looked at me, he smiled.

“Come on,

I have made breakfast,” he remarked.

My children looked so happy. I guessed he was right.

I had been chasing the wrong person. Besides, it was not as if we were getting married for love.

When I approached him and sat down, I noticed something lying on the table.

“Is it an engagement invitation card?” I asked.

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“Yeah. They have changed the dates for the engagement ceremony,” Elgin replied, too busy helping the children to look at me directly.

I opened the card and saw they really had changed the dates.

The new card said the engagement ceremony was in one day

Baxter had decided to get engaged to her sooner than planned. (1

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164

164-Losing An Alpha

Madeline:

+25 Bonus

“Silver will be there, but I have warned her not to do anything that would make me reject her immediately. So do not worry.” Elgin spoke from outside the room as he rushed in, fixing his cufflinks, until his words stopped.

I turned toward him in confusion and noticed the way he was staring at me.

He looked as if he had never seen me before.

“Wow.” That was all he remarked before I turned away to avoid his gaze.

We had spent the previous day getting ready and buying clothes for the engagement ceremony.

Since everything had **been** planned ahead of time, we did not have outfits prepared.

Elgin took us out, and we bought new gowns. I wore a peach gown covered in sparkles and diamantes.

It glimmered even from far away.

I left my brown hair open with curls at the ends, and I had professional makeup on, along with brown shimmery lipstick.

“You are going to take someone’s breath, and I am afraid it will be mine,” Elgin commented as I rolled my eyes.

In the past day, we had actually had a good time.

He behaved well and took care of the children, so I guessed he was truly a good choice.

As we walked out of my room, I stopped when I saw Elara and Gina standing near the front door.

They were wearing matching pastel-colored frocks, each decorated with sparkles and small diamanté stones.

Their hair was clipped neatly on both sides, and their cheeks were turning red from excitement.

Bodhi stood next to them in a small gray suit that looked exactly like Elgin’s.

He straightened his jacket with both hands as if he wanted to appear older than he was. I smiled at him.

Elgin walked up while adjusting his own collar, and I noticed he looked very good today.

He always did, but he looked particularly handsome, as if he had put effort into getting ready.

“Come on, we should leave,” he told me as he lifted Baxter into his arms, since Baxter was having a hard time with his suit. 1

We stepped out **of** the house together, and an SUV was parked outside, ready for the trip.

“Hailey and Hannah will be in the SUV behind us,” Elgin informed me as he pointed toward the second vehicle and then helped Gina climb inside.

I knew he was excited for my children to meet his daughters.

Once we **all** sat down and the car started, the children began talking excitedly about attending an engagement ceremony for the first time, especially a werewolf one,

Elara kept asking questions, Gina repeated what she wanted to see, and Bodhi tried to explain how an engagement worked, even though he had never been to one himself.

1/3

Their voices filled the **car** the entire way.

When we approached the main royal garden, I saw the venue for the day.

The setup was large and wide. Lights hung across the pathways, and everything sparkled gently in the open **space**.

Rows of white chairs were arranged neatly. Decorated tables were placed further inside the garden.

Long curtains in soft colors framed the entrance, and flowers around the area added a clean and pleasant touch.

Guests were already arriving. I recognized several alphas walking in groups with council members beside them.

The three council leaders stood together, Lord Eldon, Lady Abigail, and Lord William, all wearing matching light gray suits, except Lady Abigail, who wore an all-white dress with a white sweater.

The SUV behind us also stopped, and Silver stepped out first.

She wore a yellow dress with a very low cut in the front.

Her little daughters, Hailey and Hannah, came out right after her, wearing pastel dresses that matched the colors of the day.

The moment they saw Elgin, they rushed forward, almost tripping over their own feet.

Elgin bent down and caressed their cheeks, greeting them softly the way a father would.

He then turned to my children.

“Guys, these are Hailey and Hannah,” he introduced, motioning toward his daughters. “And Hailey, Hannah, these are your siblings. This is Baxter, this is Gina, and this is Elara. Remember I told you about them.”

My children greeted them happily, already excited to make new friends. Behind them, the nannies Elgin had brought waited patiently.

“Take them to the playground,” Elgin instructed the nannies.

Each child would have two nannies watching them, along with one guard to keep an eye on the nannies.

It was a perfect arrangement Elgin had prepared, and I felt satisfied with it.

The playground was set up beside the large garden, with guards and caretakers maintaining a strict environment.

The children followed the nannies quickly, their laughter spreading across the area as they joined the other kids.

Once they were gone, Elgin walked in the center while Silver and I walked on either side of him.

Silver did not say anything or taunt me, exactly as Elgin had promised.

She stayed quiet, looking straight ahead.

As we walked through the passage, I looked at the setting around us.

Large trees stood on both sides with lanterns hanging from their branches.

Small bulbs were placed along the trunks, lighting the path.

Between one tree and another, long strings of fairy lights were arranged, giving the entire place a clear shine even during the day.

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164-Losing An Alpha

Everything was arranged carefully, and every detail looked neat.

+25 Bonus

My steps slowed for a moment because I realized today was the day my mate was going to get engaged to my sister, the same person who had shown me nothing but cruelty.

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165

165—The Bride's Arrival

Madeline:

It was difficult for me to accept, but ever since Yuvonne had been stabbed the other day, Baxter had not come to see me or tried to contact me.

I understood then that he was taking his engagement seriously, and I had been foolish to have second thoughts about marrying Elgin to protect my children.

So I forced myself to push every thought of him out of my mind.

As I moved forward, I noticed Graham and Kaylee standing near the side of the garden.

The moment Kaylee saw me, her expression tightened.

She looked at me with clear disdain.

Her light-colored dress and her hair tied in a bun, with loose strands framing her face, looked good on her, but her confidence seemed dim.

I guessed it was because of the way Graham looked from her to me.

It was obvious he had been staring at me with admiration.

Kaylee noticed it as well. Her lips pressed tighter, and her eyes narrowed slightly.

I saw Graham trying to approach me, but I walked past them without stopping, moving toward the other side of the garden where other guests stood.

The music softened, and the chatter grew louder. It was time for the bride and groom to arrive.

My stomach tightened when I turned around and saw Yuvonne and Baxter walk into the garden through the passage.

She wore a beautiful purple gown that caught the light easily.

Baxter walked beside her in a light blue suit.

The sight made something heavy settle inside me, and I could not ignore how uneasy I felt.

I watched Baxter and Yuvonne step farther into the garden, and I felt his eyes land on mine almost instantly.

There was a brief pause in his body language before he continued walking, but his stare held mine in place.

There was something deep in it, and it made something warm and painful rise in my chest.

I tried to hold his gaze for a moment, but the sight of his hand wrapped around Yuvonne's arm forced me to look away.

I lowered my eyes and breathed out slowly, hoping it would calm the pain running through me.

When I looked up again, I noticed how Yuvonne was clinging to his arm.

Her fingers curled around his sleeve as if she believed someone might come after her again.

She kept a soft smile on her face, but her grip on him stayed firm.

Baxter glanced down at her and tapped the back of her hand gently, a small gesture to show her she was safe with

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105 The Bride & Arrival

+25 Bonus

him.

The simple touch made my throat tighten. I reached out and took a glass of wine from a passing server.

“Thank you,” I murmured quietly as I lifted the glass **to** my lips, hoping it would distract me even a little.

Behind the couple were their parents.

His mother, Eugenia, looked around the garden with a stiff expression.

She had not followed the theme properly.

She wore a black and white dress, and the colors made her stand out sharply among the bright decorations.

She did not smile. She examined the arrangements with a calm but distant stare.

Even though I knew she had ordered the engagement and helped plan the setting, the way she looked around, unimpressed, made it clear she expected everything to be perfect.

She was the mother of an alpha. She knew nobody would dare comment on her behavior.

Behind Eugenia were my father and my stepmother.

My stepmother walked in a bright pink gown, smiling widely as she held my father’s arm.

He wore a gray suit and nodded politely at the people around him.

They both looked proud of their daughter for getting an alpha.

That much was obvious. But not once did my father look at me.

I watched him for several seconds, waiting for even a single glance, but he did not raise his head in my

Something inside me weakened even more.

I knew he would never have been this happy for me if it had been my engagement.

Everything around me felt heavier for a moment.

My mate was getting engaged. My best friends were distant.

My father did not want to acknowledge me.

direction.

My chest tightened, and my wolf pushed hard inside me, letting out silent howls because our mate was with someone else.

I knew the mate bond would make tonight painful.

Baxter and Yuvonne stepped onto the raised platform.

The music grew louder for a moment, then faded away as the hall quieted down.

Eugenia stepped forward gracefully, moving with the calm confidence of someone who liked being watched.

She picked up the microphone, lifting her chin slightly.

Her movements were slow and elegant, almost like she had practiced for this day.

She glanced at the guests before her eyes landed on me.

2/3

165-The Bride's Arrival

+25 Bonus

A smirk appeared on her lips, almost like a challenge, or a reminder that I was still standing here alone, even after

so many years.

“Today is a special day,” she announced, her voice carrying across the garden.

She paused as she tightened her grip on the microphone.

“My only son is getting engaged. I hope this day brings them a peaceful future. I hope everything goes well for them from here.”

She finished with a smile that did not reach her

eyes.

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166

166—Dancing With The Alphas

Madeline:

Two young teens approached the couple with trays, each holding a ring.

The golden designs of the rings made them look **so** beautiful even from far away with diamonds shining in Yuvonne's ring.

Yuvonne moved first. She grabbed the ring and smiled at Baxter while holding his hand.

She looked eager as she slipped the ring onto his finger without hesitation.

Baxter reached for the ring meant for her, but he paused.

In that pause, his eyes lifted and found mine once again.

It felt like everything stopped. Even the air around us grew silent.

The rise and fall of my chest became too visible as I fought to control my breathing.

If I did not stop, a cry would have escaped me.

Then he looked down.

I let out a deep breath, but it did nothing.

He turned back to Yuvonne and placed the ring onto her finger with steady hands.

I lowered my gaze, holding the wine glass tightly, trying not to fall apart in the middle of the crowd.

Then I forced a smile at myself, realizing what a fool I had been.

Baxter and Yuvonne shared a hug as everyone cheered for the newly engaged couple.

Afterward, my stepmother asked them to dance. They stepped down from the stage together.

People moved aside, giving them space and clearing the center of the garden.

The music began to play softly. They started to dance slowly, holding each other with love and affection.

Yuvonne looked at him as if she had been given the world, and Baxter kept a gentle smile on his lips.

As the two matched their steps, other couples began to join them.

Some teased each other playfully, making jokes, while others looked at one another with more romantic expressions.

Soon the floor filled, and I stood on the side watching everyone.

That was when Elgin appeared beside me.

He stretched his hand toward me with a smile.

“May I?” he asked, lifting an eyebrow.

Before answering, I looked up and saw Baxter watching us.

His eyebrows were drawn together. Even while dancing with Yuvonne, he kept an eye on us.

1/3

186–Dancing With The Alphos

+25 Bonus

I noticed the quick tightening of his hand on her waist.

His jaw locked visibly, as if he took in every part of my interaction with Elgin.

A slight ache rose in my chest, and I refused to stand there allowing anyone to pity me.

I placed my hand in Elgin’s and replied sweetly,

“Let’s go.”

We stepped onto the dance floor, joining the others.

The moment we did, I noticed heads turning toward us.

Some of the men, while dancing and passing one another, glanced in our direction.

A few whispered to each other. Their partners looked slightly confused.

I noticed them trying to question their men, but the men only shrugged and shook their heads.

“I hope I’m not messing it up,” I told Elgin, feeling highly conscious.

“That’s not what the gazes are for,” Elgin replied, his hand steady on my back while his other hand held mine.

“Really? It seems like they’re judging us,” I remarked, frowning.

A few men drifted closer while dancing with their partners..

“Elgin, let us borrow your beautiful partner for a moment,” one of them joked.

That was when I understood what Elgin meant about the gazes not being judgmental. Elgin chuckled, shaking his head.

“Not yet,” he remarked, keeping me close to make it clear that I was with him.

However, that was the moment Silver arrived.

She slipped between us in the most impolite way and smiled.

“Madeline, can you dance with someone else?” she requested as she brushed her hair behind her shoulder and glanced around. “I need to dance with my husband too. Everyone is watching us,” she almost hissed under her breath.

At that point, Elgin let go of my waist, though he still held my hand until Silver took his hand, and he had to release mine.

I stepped back because I noticed the eyes on us, and I did not want to cause a scene.

To make it seem playful, I smiled and stepped away.

Before I could turn around and leave, a warm hand caught mine.

I did not have time to register who it was before he pulled me forward, twirling me in a turn.

I spun and landed gently against his chest. He held my waist and guided me into the rhythm.

“You’re not leaving without dancing with me,” Graham whispered, drawing several curious glances toward us.

I gulped. I knew the council would be watching as well.

2/3

166–Dancing With The Alphas

+25 Bonus

However, everyone had been drinking heavily, and they were already dancing with each other’s mates, so nothing seemed unusual to them.

If anything, they smiled. Some even slowed their steps to watch us as Graham moved smoothly, keeping his hand firm on my back.

He guided me with light pressure whenever he needed to step forward or back.

That was how I kept up with his rhythm while he never looked away from my eyes.

He twirled me to the side again. My dress lifted slightly with the motion.

He reached out to pull me back, but another hand caught mine from the other side.

Strong fingers wrapped around my palm. I felt the strength in the grip immediately.

My breath caught as I turned toward the person.

It was Baxter.

Ruby Walker

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We Listened to the Darkness by Sorin Pax

167

167–Dancing With The Groom

Madeline:

Baxter twirled me gently, guiding each step to make sure I did **not** trip.

Before I could catch my breath, he drew me toward him in one swift **motion**.

His arm slid around my waist, holding me firmly as he shifted our pace.

Then he lowered me into a deep dip, supporting my back with one hand while the other steadied my arm.

My body leaned back, suspended in his hold, my hair dancing in the air as he kept me secure in mid-air.

For a moment, everything felt silent. His eyes stayed on mine, and my breath caught.

+25 Bonus

The music softened around us. All I could sense was the strength of his grip and the warmth of his hold as he kept me to the side.

The music suddenly stopped, and everyone fell silent.

Baxter swallowed, his eyes fixed on me, his breathing erratic.

Everyone around us stood frozen.

My gaze shifted to Yuvonne, who now stood right beside us, glaring at me.

Her eyes were narrowed, and no smile touched her lips.

She took another step forward with her hands clenched at her sides.

Baxter slowly raised me from mid-air and balanced my body until I stood firmly again.

Now that I stood next to him, Yuvonne approached us.

The crowd watched her, likely wondering what she intended to do.

For a moment, it looked as if she might strike me. However, once she stopped, she smiled.

“Thank you, sister, for coming,” she stated. Her voice sounded sweet, although fake.

She reached for Baxter's hand and linked her arm through his.

"Come on, baby. Let's go. Enough dance for the day," she stated quietly, though she kept a smile on her lips.

Then she pulled him away from me, lifting her chin so everyone could see.

I remained in place while people gathered around the stage.

The couple was preparing to cut the engagement cake.

The crowd pushed closer. My chest grew tight, and I felt as if I were being swallowed.

As I tried to step back, my heel caught on something.

I almost tripped before an arm wrapped around my waist and steadied me.

I opened my mouth, ready to thank Elgin, but when I turned, my eyes widened.

It was not Elgin.

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167-Dancing With The Groom

+25 Bonus

It was Alpha Ron.

He stood there in a light grey suit. His hair was combed back neatly, and his jaw was cleanly shaved.

He looked handsome as he raised an eyebrow at me.

"Why are you staring at me like you have seen a ghost?" he wondered.

I swallowed and looked away for a second.

"Oh no, it's not that. I thought it was Elgin."

The words slipped out before I could stop them, and I noticed the way his face tensed.

A faint hurt crossed his eyes before he forced a smile.

"Still, thank you very much," I added quickly and hesitantly.

He held my gaze for a few seconds, making it easy to notice when his eyes softened.

I stepped back, and when I glanced up, I noticed Baxter.

His brows were pulled together. His attention was fixed on Alpha Ron while he stood there.

It confused me because Baxter was standing with Yuvonne, holding a knife to cut the cake.

He still looked unhappy. But he had no right to feel that way. He was the one getting engaged.

Both Alpha Ron and I looked toward the couple. Baxter cut the cake first.

He fed a piece to Yuvonne, but when she fed him back, she smeared too much of it on his cheek.

Laughing and giggling followed as others joined in.

The crowd was excited to watch such a playful couple.

He wiped his cheek with his thumb, looking slightly awkward because I knew he was not the type to do something like that in public, but this was how love changed people.

He then fed cake to his mother and father. Yuvonne did the same.

The crowd clapped and cheered loudly.

My attention stayed on them until I noticed Elgin stepping toward me.

He placed himself between Alpha Ron and me, adjusting his coat

The rest of the evening passed in a blur. People wandered around giving gifts. Some congratulated the couple.

Others moved toward the food tables. I stood in the corner watching everyone.

My feet had begun to ache.

I had never been to such a busy evening in the werewolf community, and I knew most conversations revolved around their wolves, their strengths, and their ranks.

I did not fit in, and today felt the same. Everyone kept mentioning Yuvonne and how lucky she was to be an omega who found an alpha.

Then I heard people talk about me. How Yuvonne's sister never had a wolf.

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How I ran away as a human but now there were rumors that my wolf had awakened.

There was too much being said. Some even whispered that my children came from alphas and not only one, but several, and others wondered if I had cheated on my human husband.

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We Listened to the Darkness by Sorin Pax

168

168—Leaving **The Ceremony**

Madeline:

I grew tired of all the conversations. I wanted to go home.

Before the food was served, I decided to give my gift so I could leave.

I stepped toward Yuvonne and handed her a small box.

“This is for you,” I mentioned, offering a polite smile even though I did not have to.

She opened it. Inside was a diamond necklace, something I had earned through my own work.

She lifted her chin, and I noticed the slight raise of her eyebrow.

“Well, thank you,” she replied, not looking pleased, probably because she did not expect me to afford something

like that.

“I heard about the attack. I just wanted to let you know that I am really sorry,” I started quietly, trying to sound understanding because I did not want anyone to think I was jealous of her.

However, the look on her face told me she did not like it. She lifted her palm to stop me.

“You do not have to bring it up and ruin my day, Madeline,” she warned under her breath.

Heat rose up my throat. I felt disrespected, but I stayed quiet because I knew not many people had heard her speak to me that way.

I decided to leave. I did not have to stay any longer. But before I could turn around, a voice spoke from behind me.

“You’re not going to congratulate me?”

I turned slowly and saw Baxter standing next to Yuvonne.

He had a smile on his lips, and his eyebrow was raised slightly as if he were trying to appear playful.

To me, it felt more like teasing. I was already annoyed, so the attempt only irritated me.

“Congratulations,” I muttered under my breath. “I’ll take my leave now,” I added, noticing his smile fade completely.

“Why?” he asked, a crease forming on his forehead. “The food is about to be served.”

“It is late,” I replied, my eyes shifting briefly to my sister, who avoided looking at me directly.

She kept her attention to the side, her face showing clear exhaustion.

“I have never been away from my children for this long at public events. They do not get along well with the other kids. It is their first time being in a place like this. I want to take them home before they become fussy and ruin the whole evening.” I came up with the excuse quickly.

Baxter parted his lips as if he wanted to insist, but Elgin arrived at that moment, and I was grateful.

“It’s fine. I’ll take her home,” Elgin stated, stepping closer to me.

Baxter’s eyes moved toward the small space between us before he adjusted his coat and stretched his neck slightly.

I did not understand him sometimes. He behaved as if something bothered him, even though he was holding my

1/3

sister's arm.

"Okay. Take care of them," Baxter replied, visibly upset, almost like a child reacting poorly.

"Come on, let's go, Elgin," I stated, noticing the slight breath of relief Yuvonne released from the corner of my

eye.

She clearly wanted me gone.

I held back my tears as I walked toward the side garden where the children were playing.

The moment I entered the playground, I caught sight of Silver.

I had no idea when she slipped out of the royal garden.

She crouched beside her daughters, whispering something.

Her daughters nodded and moved away from my children.

I already knew what Silver had told her.

"Stay away from them," I heard her say before she quickly straightened her back when she saw me.

Anger rose inside me. It was unfair how everyone here treated me and my children.

"There's nothing good about you," I told her, realizing I was about to take my anger out on her.

My jaw tightened as she opened her mouth to speak, but I continued, "You will always be the same, always so toxic and always a bully."

Silver scowled at me, but she stayed quiet because Elgin stood beside me.

She still tried to defend herself.

"I was just—"

Elgin raised his hand in a warning gesture, stopping her immediately. I could tell she had disappointed him again.

However, the moment she noticed I was gathering my kids to leave with Elgin, her eyes widened.

“My kids are fussy too. Do you think, Elgin, you should drop us home as well?” she asked, lifting her chin and folding her arms across her chest.

“You should also spend some time with your daughters. They have travelled all the way from their pack to spend time with you,” she hissed.

I turned to Elgin and gave him a look.

“It is okay,” I told him. “You can spend time with them. I will go in the other SUV.”

He did not have to sit with us in the same car, and I did not want Hailey and Hannah to feel left out.

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169

169—Torn Between **His** Children

Madeline:

I saw the hesitation on his face, but he finally nodded.

I took my children to the first SUV while Elgin helped his daughters into the second. We drove back to the house.

When we arrived, his daughters dragged him toward the guesthouse door.

“You did not read us any stories last night,” Hailey complained as she pulled his hand.

Elgin glanced at me.

His eyes softened, and he looked torn between coming to my place to spend time with the children here or returning with his daughters.

It was only fair that he went with them.

My kids did not see him as a father, so they would not be bothered by his absence.

His daughters, however, would be upset.

I gave him a nod to show it was fine. I was not planning to ask him to join me, especially because I wanted to be alone for a while.

He followed his daughters inside the guesthouse.

I took my children into mine. I changed into black shorts and a loose white shirt.

After helping the kids change into their night clothes, they sat on their beds waiting for me to tuck them in.

“Mother,” Bodhi asked, tilting his head, “why is Uncle Baxter marrying Yuyonne?”

“Because he likes her,” I answered gently, pulling the blanket over him.

“But you look way more prettier than her, Mother,” Elara remarked, making me turn to give her a comforting

smile.

“That is not how it works, Elara,” I replied, reaching over to her bed and hunching down to tuck her in, brushing her hair with my fingers. “The prettier one is the one the groom wants.”

I laid them down, pulled their blankets over them, kissed their foreheads, and turned off the light.

We were all tired, so I knew they would not ask for a bedtime story tonight.

When I stepped out of their room, I took a deep breath..

My chest felt tight, almost to the point of pain.

I sat on the couch in the living room and stared through the big window at the empty road. The house felt too quiet.

There were moments when I wanted to email my so-called husband, but I knew he would be too busy with his side -check again.

I took a few drinks to calm my nerves, and then I fell asleep on the couch outside.

When I began to wake up, the light coming through the window told me it was morning.

1/3

My neck felt stiff, and when I shifted, a blanket slid off my shoulder. I frowned, confused.

I did not remember covering myself. Someone must have come in.

Before I could think about who it was, I raised my head and saw Elgin stepping out of the kitchen.

He carried a plate full of fresh pancakes in one hand and a coffee mug in the other.

The warm smell reached me before he did. He walked over and set everything on the small table in front **of** me.

“I came in last night,” he explained quietly. “You were already asleep on the couch.”

I pushed myself up, still wrapped in the blanket. I reached for the coffee and took a sip.

The taste was strong and warm, spreading through my chest.

“Thank you,” I told him. “For everything.”

My gaze dropped to the coffee and pancakes as I spoke.

“It’s okay,” he replied, sitting on the other side of the table.

He adjusted his posture, and the change in his expression made it clear he looked anxious.

He rested his hands on his knees before speaking.

“I want to tell you something,” he began, clearing his throat. “I am planning on rejecting and divorcing Silver. I don’t want you to feel like any **of** this is your fault or like you are taking someone’s husband. I want you to know where I stand.”

My hand paused around the cup. I lowered it onto the table but kept holding it to warm my fingers. I shook my head.

“Do not do that,” I told him. “I already said it before. We are only marrying to keep the children with me. I do not want her coming after me because of a rejection.

I urged him, but I could already tell he was stubborn.

“I have already made up my mind, Madeline,” he replied, his voice carrying more confidence. “I have been thinking about it for a while, so do not feel guilty.”

I opened my mouth to answer him, but before either of us could speak again, a knock came at the door.

We both froze for a moment.

Elgin stood and opened it. The person who stepped inside was someone I had never expected to see here.

It was Lord Eldon.

I was prepared for him to start trouble, but instead he spoke calmly.

“I would like Madeline to come with me. There is an emergency, and we need her.”

As soon as he said it, I understood it was about the sickness. I had no choice but to leave.

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170—My Guard Attacked My Sister

Madeline:

I stepped out after Mr. Eldon, though I already knew I would not be getting into the same car with him.

When I stopped near his car, I could tell he had sensed it.

“Don’t worry, Baxter is also coming with us,” he told me.

The moment he said that, the guesthouse door opened and Baxter stepped out.

The hair on the back of my neck rose as yesterday’s engagement ceremony flashed in my mind.

My heart started pounding harder, but I forced myself to look calm.

“Good morning,” I greeted him.

He looked fresh, as if he had just showered.

“Morning,” he replied with a smile before turning to Mr. Eldon. “What is it? What was the emergency that woke me so early?” he wondered, resting his hands on his waist as he tucked his shirt into his pants and fixed his belt.

“There’s something I want you to see,” Mr. Eldon remarked, giving both of us a look. “Now, are you going to drive, or should I drive?” he asked Baxter.

Baxter shot him a judgmental glare, rolled his sleeves up, grabbed the keys from him, and strolled to the driver’s seat.

Mr. Eldon moved to the passenger side while I slipped into the back.

I began to wonder if Baxter and Yuvonne shared a room last night.

“Something happened, and I thought you would want to know,” Mr. Eldon told Baxter, who was still adjusting his collar.

“I hope I didn’t disturb your sleep with your newly engaged special mate,” he added.

My fist clenched in secret. Baxter adjusted the rearview mirror, made brief eye contact with me, then settled back into his seat.

“What do you mean by that? We were not sharing a room,” he replied, and while saying it, he threw another quick glance toward me, almost as if making sure I heard him.

“I mean, even if you did, it is fine. She is your fiancée now,” Lord Eldon insisted, repeating himself. “I heard you are marrying her soon. I hope the marking goes well. The

attack on her was awful.” He continued focusing oddly on Baxter’s engagement with Yuvonne until he added, “I’m taking you somewhere related to Yuvonne.”

The moment he said that, Baxter turned to him. The glance lasted a little longer than brief.

“What is that supposed to mean?” Baxter asked.

Even my attention sharpened. What did he mean by that?

“You remember the guy who attacked her? We have found him,” he told us.

The moment he said it, Baxter was not the only one who was shocked.

“Really?” I asked, feeling a rush of excitement because justice was finally going to be served.

1/3

170-My Guard Attacked My Sister

+25 Bonus

“Yeah, **you** will be surprised,” he replied, and I leaned back in my seat.

The way Lord Eldon said it **felt** strange, but I decided to keep my judgment to myself for now, especially since the site was already in view.

He guided us toward the side of the woods, a little farther from Yuvonne’s home.

I could tell many warriors were wandering around. Several cars were parked there, along with an ambulance and other equipment already set up.

Once the car stopped and we stepped out, I began to feel eyes on me.

There were whispers too, and everyone moved aside for us.

Baxter and I reached the area, and he immediately hurried forward because he could see the man’s face from a distance.

He reached the dead man and pointed at him.

“It is him,” he confirmed, and I briskly reached the spot with Lord Eldon.

However, the moment I did, my reaction was nothing like theirs because I recognized the man too. I almost gasped at the sight.

Even Baxter appeared taken aback. He lifted his head from the corpse and looked at me.

“It is a human,” Baxter remarked, speaking the thought I couldn’t voice.

“Exactly, you two are right,” lord Eldon confirmed. “And I still do not understand why your guard, the one you brought with you, would try to kill your sister.” The attention around us shifted straight to me.

“I don’t understand,” I said, stepping back and placing a hand on my forehead.

“This is the guard named Justin that you brought from the human world. And this man was caught assaulting and attempting to kill your half-sister,” Lord Eldon explained.

For a moment, it felt as if everything around me was starting to turn bloody.

“Baxter, are you certain this was the man you saw that night?” Lord Eldon asked again.

Baxter hesitated but eventually nodded.

“Yeah, I didn’t feel anything unusual with him because we were far away, but I remember his face,” he replied, mentioning not realizing he was human that night.

Another car stopped then, and my stepmother and father stepped out. They rushed over and gasped.

“This is that bastard!” my stepmother screamed. The warriors had to restrain her before she kicked the corpse.

“It seems he was shot that night by you but died here after losing blood,” Lord Eldon told my father, reminding him that when he fired at the man, he had struck him well, yet Justin tried to escape.

He could not and died here.

“Who is he? Why did he want to kill my daughter?” my stepmother cried.

“He is a human, a human guard brought here to our land by your own stepdaughter,” Lord Eldon announced to everyone standing around me, and I began to feel judged.

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