

# A Broken Alpha Heiress' Revenge

## Chapter 4

Riley's POV

The prison gates groaned open like the jaws of some ancient beast.

Light hit my face for the first time in five years. It should have felt warm.

It didn't.

The clothes I wore when I entered—now sagged off my body, hanging loose over skin stretched too tightly across brittle bones.

I limped forward, one foot dragging behind the other. Not because I wanted pity.

Because that's all my body had left to give.

A black Bentley idled at the curb. The window slid down with a soft mechanical whir.

Kael.

His gaze dragged over my legs, a sneer curling his lips.

"Still pretending to be weak after five years in a cell?"

His voice was sharp, cold—like glass dipped in poison.

My throat tightened. The sting behind my eyes caught me off guard.

My brother.

The one I once tried so desperately to please.

I said nothing. Just kept limping past him.

Kael stiffened behind the wheel.

In his memory, I was the eager puppy, always rushing to serve him, always begging to be seen.

He remembered me waiting outside his office with homemade soup during winter storms.

He remembered me massaging his shoulders when he came home late, pressing slippers to his feet with trembling fingers.

He remembered the girl who adored him like a god.

But that girl died somewhere between the prison bars and the courtroom bench.

"Get in," he snapped.

When I didn't move, he huffed and softened his tone—just a touch.

"Mom and Dad arranged a welcome dinner for you."

Mom and Dad.

The words felt foreign now.

Three years in that house taught me a bitter truth: I was never their daughter.

Not really.

I was the inconvenient reminder of a life they tried to forget.

And Scarlett? She was their sun, moon, and stars.

I said nothing. Just kept walking.

Kael cursed, slammed the door, and came after me.

His hand clamped down on my wrist and yanked hard.

"Are you done playing this little drama?"

I stumbled, hitting the ground hard. Pain shot through my leg like a knife. I tasted blood.

Kael towered over me, face twisted in disgust.

"Still acting fragile? Five years wasn't enough to knock the lies out of you?"

He yanked me to my feet like I was garbage.

"You lured Tessa into that forest. You know what happened to her. And you still dare to act like a victim?"

I looked up at him from the ground, swallowing the scream in my throat.

"You were convicted because of evidence. Because the scent at the scene was yours."

"And Scarlett's?" I whispered.

He didn't answer.

Because he knew.

He knew the earring he'd found in the mud wasn't mine.

He knew the message came from Scarlett's device.

And yet, he stood in court and said nothing.

He yanked me to my feet, sneering.

"Don't think your time's up. Tessa's still unconscious. Until she wakes, your guilt remains. And you still owe Scarlett an apology."

Apology?

I didn't answer. Just pulled my arm free, stepped away.

The distance stung him more than my words could.

"Come home," he said again, trying to make it sound like an offer.

Like it meant something.

"Riley."

My heart clenched.

That voice.

Even after all these years, I knew it immediately.

Maddox.

He stepped into view—shoes polished, suit immaculate, face carved from the same cold stone as always. But it was the voice that gutted me.

"Congratulations on your release," he said, like this was some kind of graduation ceremony.

If someone else had said it, I might've forced a smile. Might've said thank you.

But not him.

Not the boy who once swore to protect me.

Not the man who stood in court and helped condemn me.

Not the one who begged me—begged me—to take the fall so Scarlett wouldn't have to suffer.

"She wouldn't survive prison," he'd said.

"But you... you're strong, Riley. You're used to pain."

I nearly vomited.

This man—this mate—had stood in the courtroom and watched them drag me away.

He'd looked me in the eye as the sentence was read and said nothing.

Worse.

He'd rejected me through the bond the moment the cell door closed.

I still remembered that pain. The mindlink tearing like muscle off bone. His voice saying,

"I reject you."

And now?

He wanted to pretend we were still something?

He reached out. "Riley, I came to take you ho—"

"I'm going home with Kael," I said, cutting him off without looking at him.

Just loud enough for him to hear the contempt in every syllable.

Kael blinked in surprise.

Maddox's hand froze mid-air.

I walked away—limping, trembling, barely holding myself together.

But I didn't look back.

Not because I wanted to go home with either of them.

I didn't want to go anywhere with anyone.

But the truth was, I was still on a leash.

One month. That's how long my observation period lasts.

One wrong move, one excuse, and the Vale family could have me thrown right back into that werewolf prison.

And this time, I wouldn't come back out.

So I walked. Not for Kael.

Not for Maddox.

Not even for myself.

I walked because the system was still watching.

And for now, I had to play the part.