

Claimed by the Alpha's Love - Love Demands Real Courage Author: Michael Anderson 141

Chapter 141

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Chapter 141

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I noticed Olivia's approving smile as she observed this interaction.

"Thank you for joining me tonight, Tori, Olivia said, squeezing my hand gently.

"The pleasure was mine," I replied sincerely. "Thank you for dinner and...or sharing your stories."

I watched her leave, her chauffeur helping her into the sleek sedan with practiced ease. Once her car pulled away, I turned and walked to the Range Rover where Jack was already holding the rear door open for me.

Hannah's POV:

The Silver Fang Detention Center's exit gate clanged shut behind me.

Freedom at last, though it hardly felt like victory.

Seven days in that hellhole-seven days!-because of that ungrateful little bitch I gave birth to.

My fingers involuntarily curled into fists, nails digging into my palms until I felt the sting of broken skin. The pain grounded me, a welcome distraction from the humiliation burning through my veins.

People were watching—the guards, the other released inmates, and worst of all, Alexander waiting by the car.

The drive home was silent. Alexander’s eyes flicked toward me in the rear view mirror, but I ignored him.

“She’ll pay for this,” I whispered to myself. “That little bitch will regret ever being born.”

Back at our mansion, the staff sensed my fury and scattered in all directions, desperate to avoid my wrath.

Alexander cornered me in the study. “Hannah, this has to stop. Your vendetta against Tori—”

“My vendetta?” I laughed, the sound sharp and brittle. “She put me in jail Alexander, Me! Do you have any idea what that place was like?”

“You tried to kidnap a child. His voice was cold. “Be grateful your mother dropped the charges and Alpha Lucas didn’t demand worse punishment.”

That thing sent fresh rage coursing through me. “Don’t speak to me about that.”

“You need to listen.” Alexander gripped my shoulders. “Tori has the First pha’s protection now. Four of our major business partners have already severed ties with us, afraid of Grayson’s retribution. You keep pushing, and we’ll lose everything.”

I wrenched away from him. “A filthy Omega thinking she can claim an Arctic bloodline Alpha? She doesn’t deserve him. She’s nothing!”

His disgust was plain, though he tried to hide it. How dare he judge me? He who had once loved me enough to accept another man’s child as his own?

“What about Fiona?” Mia’s timid voice came from the doorway. “Will she be okay?”

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Alexander sighed. "She's facing three to seven years of exile. But since she's carrying a Grayson pup, they won't enforce it until after she gives

birth."

Alexander's expression softened slightly as he looked at Mia. Don't worry too much. As the mother of their future pup, they won't let her be

exiled.

I retreated to my room, slamming the door so hard the frame shook.

The next morning, a small unmarked package arrived for me.

Inside, glossy photographs spilled out-Lucas and Tori locked in an intimate embrace, his mouth on hers, her body yielding.

I gasped, rage burning through me as I snatched up the photos.

Who would dare send me this? Was someone mocking me? With a furious snarl, I hurled the photographs to the floor, watching them scatter across the polished hardwood.

As they fell, I noticed something at the bottom of the package-a small piece of parchment.

Curious despite my anger, I picked it up.

*Your child was shamelessly seducing an Alpha. Will you do nothing?"

My initial rage gave way to something colder, more calculated.

I picked up the fallen photos, a slow smile spreading across my face. My mother-Eileen-was always so concerned about propriety and

reputation.

When she heard I was pregnant with a wealthy man's child all those years ago, she immediately dragged me to terminate the pregnancy. Only my threats of suicide had convinced her to let me keep the baby.

The irony was delicious.

If she discovered that Tori was now intimately involved with the wealthiest Alpha in Moonhaven, she'd be furious.

The traditionalist in her would never accept such brazen behavior from an unmarried Omega-especially given her obsession with proper social standing and suitable matches.

"Tori, darling," I whispered, tracing her face in the photo with my fingernail hard enough to leave a scratch. "You've given me exactly what I

need to destroy you."

Comments

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Chapter 142

Tori's POV:

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The drive back to Lucas's private residence was quiet.

As Lucas had said, the house was empty when I arrived. After wandering through the silent rooms for a few minutes, I decided to take a long

shower, hoping the warm water would help clear my tiredness.

Wrapped in a fluffy towel, my damp hair cascading down my shoulders, I had just stepped out of the bathroom when my phone rang suddenly,

shattering the tranquility.

I froze when I saw the caller ID: Grandmother Eileen.

What could she want at this hour? My mind raced through possibilities-was this about Hannah? No, that couldn't be it. Hannah had been

released yesterday.

Perhaps she just wanted to check on me after everything that had happened.

Taking a deep breath, I answered the call.

"Hello, Grandmother," I said cautiously.

"Is it true?" Her voice trembled with an emotion I couldn't immediately identify. "Tori, how could you? After everything..."

"Grandmother?" My stomach twisted with anxiety. "What's wrong?"

"You've been temporarily marked by Alpha Lucas?" Each word was strained as if forcing its way past her lips.

My hand instinctively flew to my neck, where Lucas's mark remained. "How did you-"

"The entire community has seen the photographs!" Her voice rose sharply, edged with both anger and humiliation. "You and him... embracing, kissing... his mouth on your neck! The mark was clearly visible!"

I felt the blood drain from my face. Photographs? Of Lucas and me?

"Everyone is talking about it," she continued, her breathing becoming increasingly labored. "How an Omega girl who killed a male and was imprisoned is now... now seducing the First Alpha! Moving from the nephew to the uncle? Didn't you listen to my warning last time? How

could you have so little self-respect-"

Her words dissolved into harsh, wheezing coughs.

'Grandmother! I gripped the phone tighter, panic rising. "Are you okay? Please calm down."

More coughing, then shuffling sounds came through the line.

“Tori? It’s Janet.” My aunt’s worried voice replaced my grandmother’s. “Let your grandmother calm down for a moment. She’s getting too worked

up over this.”.

“What the hell happened?” I asked urgently.

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“Someone sent photos of you and Lucas Grayson to the entire community. Janet explained, her voice tight with stress. “Anonymous packages

appeared at everyone’s door this morning. Your grandmother opened hers while chatting with neighbors... everyone saw them.”

I closed my eyes, imagining the scene-the whispers, the shocked expressions, my elderly grandmother’s mortification.

“The photos show you with a temporary mark,” Janet continued. “People are saying horrible things-that you’ve moved from Ethan Grayson to

his uncle, that you’re using your body to climb the pack hierarchy.”

“Some are even saying this explains why you’ve been looking down on Andrew-that you were setting your sights on bigger game all along.

She sighed softly. “I know you’re not that kind of person, Tori. But you know how vicious people’s gossip can be. Your grandmother is just upset

and speaking from emotion right now. Please don’t take her harsh words to heart-she loves you very much.”

“Thank you, Aunt Janet,” I said, my throat tight with emotion. “That means a lot to me. Please take good care of her.”

"I'll. Just give her some time to process this." Janet replied. "These things have a way of blowing over eventually."

As soon as the call ended, I threw my phone onto the bed, my hands clenched into fists.

This was no coincidence. The timing, the targeted delivery to my grandmother's community-this had Hannah written all over it. Fresh out of

jail and already plotting her revenge.

I wiped away the angry tears that had formed at the corners of my eyes, my grief quickly crystallizing into cold fury.

With deliberate movements, I picked up my phone again and punched in Hannah's number.

The line connected almost immediately.

"Well, if it isn't my dear daughter," Hannah answered, her voice dripping with false sweetness.

"Cut the act," I said coldly. "I know what you did."

"I'm sure I don't know what you mean," she replied, but I could hear the satisfaction in her voice.

"The photographs, Hannah. Delivered to my grandmother's community." My voice remained steady despite the rage pulsing through me. "Only you would know my grandmother's address. Only you have this level of hatred toward me."

There was a brief pause on the other end of the line.

"So what if I did? Hannah finally said, dropping all pretense. "You deserve it. Did your precious grandmother enjoy seeing what kind of girl she raised? An Omega whore who jumps from one Grayson to another?"

"I bet your grandmother is absolutely mortified. She's always been so concerned with appearances and reputation. I'm sure the whispers throughout her entire community are just eating her alive right now."

Her words were like venom, meant to wound deeply.

"How dare you?" I hissed. "Eileen is your mother too. How could you deliberately hurt her like this?"

Hannah's laugh was cold and brittle. "Mother? A real mother doesn't send her own daughter to prison."

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"You're disgusting.

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"Am I? You're the one who got caught with the Alpha's mark. Don't tell me you're ashamed now? I didn't spread any rumors, Tori. I just shared some interesting photographs. If you're bold enough to let an Alpha mark you, you should be bold enough to own the consequences."

I took a deep breath, forcing the rage down into a cold.

"You think this hurts me?" I asked. "You've only proven to everyone that the First Alpha has chosen me. But I wonder what Alpha Lucas will

think when he discovers someone distributed private photographs of him without consent."

A momentary silence followed.

I ended the call before she spoke again, hands shaking with repressed anger.

For a moment, I considered calling Lucas, but decided against it. This was my battle to fight.

Lucas already had enough on his plate every day as First Alpha. I didn't want to burden him with more problems. But that didn't mean I was

going to let Hannah get away with this so easily.

I scrolled through my contacts and paused, my thumb hovering over a particular name. After a moment's hesitation, I typed out a brief message

and hit send.

“You pushed me to this, Hannah,” I muttered under my breath, setting my phone down with grim satisfaction.

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Around me, the Grayson family had gathered like a pack circling wounded prey – Richard with his perpetual scowl, Cecilia with her judgmental glares, Arabella holding Leo close, and of course, Lucas, standing tall and imposing near the window.

The memory of last night's chaos flashed through my mind – Elizabeth's sudden collapse during dinner, the panicked shouting, servants running for help.

The Grayson estate had erupted into frenzied activity. Alpha Lucas was urgently summoned home. I'd never seen the composed Graysons so utterly frantic before.

We'd all rushed to Moontouch Medical Center, the emergency staff whisking Elizabeth away immediately.

The endless hours in the waiting room had stretched, tension thick enough to choke on.

After the longest night of anxious waiting, the first pale rays of morning light had just begun filtering through the blinds when Elizabeth's eyelids finally showed signs of movement.

"She's waking up," Arabella whispered, leaning forward as Elizabeth's eyelids fluttered.

I squeezed Ethan's hand, but he barely responded, his skin cold against mine. The gulf between us had grown wider since I was sued by Tori, and I was running out of ways to bridge it.

Elizabeth's eyes finally opened, confusion momentarily clouding them before recognition set in.

"What are you all doing here?" Her voice was weak but carried the unmistakable Grayson authority.

"Mother, you had an episode," Lucas explained, moving to her side.

Elizabeth waved away his concern with a frail hand. "Don't make such a fuss," she said with surprising firmness. "We all face our mortality sooner or later. It's simply my turn to be reminded of it."

She glanced around the room again, her shrewd eyes taking inventory of each face. "Though I am surprised to see the entire family assembled. Don't you all have responsibilities to attend to?"

Cecilia leaned slightly, her voice barely above a whisper yet still audible in the quiet room.

"I notice not everyone bothered to come," she murmured. "Your precious Luna-to-be couldn't be bothered to show up."

The temperature in the room seemed to drop several degrees as Lucas's head snapped toward Cecilia, his eyes flashing with warning.

"Tori and I haven't formally completed the mating ceremony. This isn't her responsibility." His voice dropped to a growl. "Besides, there are too many people with ill intentions here. I chose not to inform her."

Cecilia's lips pressed into a thin line, but she didn't dare challenge him further.

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I suppressed a smirk. "As expected, even Cecilia isn't brave enough to challenge Lucas directly.

Elizabeth's gaze lingered on Lucas, a knowing look crossing her features.

"Lucas is right. The girl shouldn't be subjected to family drama before she officially Luna." She reached for Lucas's hand. "Though that reminds me... I had the strangest dream while I was unconscious."

The room fell silent as everyone leaned in slightly.

"I dreamed of your second brother," she said softly. "He had returned home and in his arms was a silver-furred wolf pup with the most remarkable eyes." Her voice took on a wistful quality. "It felt so real, like a vision from the Moon Goddess herself."

Lucas remained perfectly still, his expression unreadable.

I shifted uncomfortably, the mention of Lucas's second brother sending a ripple of curiosity through me.

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"I've been thinking, Elizabeth continued, "about the mistakes I've made. Separating your brother from the one he loved was perhaps my greatest regret."

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Lucas's jaw tightened almost imperceptibly. "I will consider it carefully, Mother."

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“Of course, I remember. That child carries our bloodline too. Her words were gracious.

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Chapter 144

Alexander's POV:

64%

I leaned against the cold hospital wall, watching Fiona slip into Hannah's room.

My head throbbed with every heartbeat-not from alcohol this time, but from the weight of our family's rapidly deteriorating situation.

The sterile hallway lights cast harsh shadows that seemed to mirror my darkening prospects.

Through the half-open door, I could see Fiona approach Hannah's bed with practiced caution.

My wife lay there, bruised and bandaged, her usual perfect appearance now marred by the violence of last night's attack.

The doctors had assured me she would recover physically. What they couldn't tell me was how to salvage what remained of my business

empire.

"Are you absolutely sure you don't know who did this?" Fiona asked softly, her hand resting protectively over her baby bump. "Was it... was it

possibly related to Tori?"

Hannah's eyes darted nervously to the door where I stood. When she spotted me, something in her expression hardened.

"I've already told Alexander and the police-it was random," she insisted, wincing as she adjusted herself on the pillows. "Wrong place, wrong

time.”

I noticed her lie but didn't press further. Even if she had done something else to deserve this attack, Hannah would never admit it to my face.

She had been causing one problem after another lately, but I couldn't waste time on her deceptions anymore.

My company-my entire life's work-was on the verge of collapse. Her latest indiscretion was just another pebble in the avalanche burying us.

“We have bigger problems right now.”

Fiona looked between us, confusion creasing her brow. “What do you mean?*

I closed the door before speaking, unwilling to let anyone in the hallway overhear.

“Three of our largest trading partners canceled their contracts this morning.”

“That's... that's impossible, Fiona whispered.

“Our resource supply chain is completely cut off. No one will sell to us, not even at premium prices.” I ran a hand through my hair, feeling

years older than I had just days ago. “No one breaks business ties with Price Enterprises simultaneously unless they have protection from

someone more powerful.”

Hannah's face had gone deathly pale. “You think Lucas is behind this?”

“Who else commands that kind of respect in Moonhaven? Who else could make established businesses risk their own profits just to isolate us? The bitter taste of reality coated my tongue. “Fiona, you need to reach out to him. Try to arrange a meeting.”

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12:13 Thu, Feb 19 C

Chapter 144

Fiona shifted uncomfortably, one hand protectively covering her baby bump.

5.64%

*1... I don't think I should be the one to call him. My position in the Grayson household is already precarious after Tori's lawsuit. Ethan barely speaks to me, and Richard looks at me like I'm contaminating their bloodline."

"Are you serious?" The words exploded from me, my patience finally snapping.

"I've clothed you, fed you, and treated you like a princess for over twenty years! You've never wanted for anything under my roof. And now, when I ask you for one thing-one simple phone call-you refuse?*

"Alexander, please- Hannah started, but I cut her off with a sharp gesture.

I'm not even sure if this matter is related to you being sued by Tori! *

My voice dropped to a dangerous whisper. "Let me make something perfectly clear, Fiona. If you won't help your family now, don't come crying to me if that Grayson boy abandons you after the baby is born."

Fiona's face paled. Her hand trembled visibly as she finally pulled out her phone. "I... I only have Jack's contact information," she admitted

quiethy

She dialed the number, putting it on speaker. After three rings, Jack Greens cool, professional voice answered.

Comments

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Claimed by the Alpha's Love - Love Demands Real Courage Author: Michael Anderson 145

Chapter 145

“Ms Price.”

64%

“Jack, Fiona began, her voice steady despite her obvious discomfort. “My father-Alexander Price-would like to request a meeting with Alpha Grayson regarding some urgent business matters.”

There was a long silence on the other end. I could almost picture Jack holding his hand over the phone, consulting with Lucas. Finally, his

voice returned.

“Eight o'clock tonight. Golden Moon Club. Don't be late.”

The call disconnected abruptly.

Fiona looked up at me, her expression a mixture of relief and apprehension. “There. It's done.”

The Golden Moon Club's private room was impeccable.

I arrived thirty minutes early, rehearsing my approach. I would be respectful but dignified. I would acknowledge any legitimate grievances while emphasizing our family's value as allies rather than enemies.

Eight o'clock came and went.

Nine o'clock arrived with no sign of Lucas.

By ten, I had called Jack six times, receiving only brief, dismissive responses: “Alpha Lucas is delayed,” and later, “Alpha Lucas is still

considering whether this meeting is necessary.”

At 10:17, my phone finally rang.

“Mr. Price,” Jack's voice was coldly professional. “Alpha Lucas has decided against meeting tonight. He asked me to inform you that due to the

actions of your wife and daughter, Ms. Eileen was nearly hospitalized with dangerously high blood pressure. He suggests you focus your

attention there before seeking business discussions.”

I sat up straighter, shock coursing through me. “That’s impossible. Hannah hasn’t even left the Moonhaven center. ”

“Perhaps you should ask Mrs. Price and Ms Fiona about that yourself, Jack replied, his tone remaining detached and formal.

The call ended before I could respond.

I sat alone in that massive room, the silence crushing me like a physical weight.

Eileen-Tori’s grandmother. What had Hannah done now?

Fingers trembling with rage, I dialed Hannah’s number.

“Alexander? Her voice was cautious.

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III

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12:13 Thu, Feb 19 m

Chapter 145

“What did you do to your mother?” I demanded, my voice dropping to a dangerous growl.

‘I don’t know what-

64%

“STOP LYING!” I roared into the phone. “Lucas Grayson just canceled our meeting because apparently you and Fiona nearly sent an elderly woman to the hospital! What. Did. You. Do?”

The silence stretched for several seconds before Hannah’s resistance crum led.

“It was just some pictures...

T

After hearing her full confession, I hurled the phone across the room with such force that it shattered against the wall.

I grabbed the whiskey bottle and took several long swigs directly from the neck.

When I'd first met Hannah, I'd known she was petty, small-minded, and vain. But back then, those flaws had been balanced by a certain vivaciousness that I'd found irresistible-like a thorny rose that could draw blood but remained beautiful enough to make the risk worthwhile.

Now, the disasters she kept creating were beyond my ability to contain. Everything I once found charming had transformed into something contemptible.

The Rose had lost its bloom, leaving only thorns.

I drank until the bottle was nearly empty, paid my tab, and stumbled toward the exit.

The alcohol had dulled the edges of my rage but deepened my despair.

As I pushed through the door, the world tilted sideways, and I collided with someone-the female I'd seen last time who bore an uncanny resemblance to my ex-wife.

The next morning.

I woke in an unfamiliar luxury apartment, the morning sun assaulting my eyes.

My head pounded as fragments of the previous night flashed through my mind. The meeting that never happened. Hannah's confession. The bar. And then... a female.

I shifted uncomfortably, suddenly aware of the cool air against my skin.

I looked down to find myself completely naked, beside me was equally undressed female.

Comments

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12:13 Thu, Feb 19 m

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Claimed by the Alpha's Love - Love Demands Real Courage Author: Michael Anderson 146

Chapter 146

Tori's POV:

3.64%

The journey to Grandmother's home passed in a blur of pine trees and winding roads.

When I arrived, Eileen greeted me at the door with a glance without a word. The silence that followed felt heavier than any accusation.

I stared at the empty chair across from me, the sound of my knife against the apple's flesh painfully loud in the kitchen's silence.

Through the window, I could see Grandmother sitting alone in the garden her silver-streaked hair catching the afternoon sunlight.

She hadn't spoken more than ten words to me since I arrived three hours ago.

This silent treatment cut deeper than any argument could have.

I sliced another piece of apple, arranging it carefully on the plate. Grandmother had always loved my fruit arrangements. Today, though, I

doubted she'd even look at it.

My phone vibrated against the wooden table, Morgan's name flashing on the screen. I hesitated before answering.

“Hey, I answered quietly.

↳

“Tori, thank God you picked up! Have you heard about Hanna?” Morgan’s voice came through breathless and agitated.

I tensed, my knife pausing mid-slice. “What about her?”

“She was attacked on her way home last night. She’s in the hospital now. Morgan lowered her voice to a whisper. “Her face is swollen like a

pig’s head. They’re saying it was those kidnappers she hired. Maybe they had some disagreement about payment or something.”

Memories of the confrontation with Hannah that night came flooding back

After hanging up with Hannah, I stared at my phone for a long moment.

Her smug voice still echoed in my ears. My fingers trembled slightly as I strolled through my contacts to a number I’d obtained from the police

report.

I heard Hannah stiffed you on your final payment. You must be the worst kidnappers ever-lost your freedom AND your money.

The reply came almost immediately: Who is this?

I hesitated briefly before typing: Someone who doesn’t matter, but I can help if you’re interested in payback. Hannah Price, 1422 Crescent Heights, drives a white Mercedes GLE, usually shops at Howling Plaza on Thursday afternoons.

After sending Hannah’s schedule and usual hangouts, I turned off my phone and set it aside.

Whatever happened next wasn’t my concern. I’d simply provided information-what they chose to do with it was their business.

Later, my phone buzzed with a message from Lucas.

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12:13 Thu, Feb 19 m

Chapter 146

Won't be home tonight. Go to bed early.

I stared at the text, feeling a strange sense of relief. After what I'd just done, the thought of facing Lucas made my stomach twist with nervousness.

That's fine. I'm heading to my grandmother's for a few days. She needs me.

His reply came quickly: Of course. Take care. Call if you need anything.

Back to reality, Morgan spoke puzzledly on the phone.

"Tori, are you still there?"

64%

I fought to keep my expression neutral, though no one was there to see it

"Yes. The evil one eventually will meet other evils."

"Exactly! Karma finally caught up with her." Morgan paused dramatically. But that's not all. The Elder Council is convening at the end of the month to review your case from four years ago. So when are you coming back?"

I glanced at Grandmother through the window, her small figure hunched slightly in her garden chair.

The distance between us felt impossible to cross.

"I'm not sure, Morgan. Some things have happened, and I need to be here with my grandmother right now." I traced a finger along the wooden grain of the table. "I'll probably come back the day before the hearing."

"Wait, so you're going to be away from Lucas all that time?" Morgan sounded alarmed. "Aren't you worried someone might snatch him up while

you're gone? I saw Vivienne yesterday, by the way. She really did relocate her design studio to Moonhaven."

My wolf stirred uncomfortably at the mention of Vivienne's name.

"And did you know Elizabeth is in the hospital?" Morgan continued. "Vivienne visits every single day, acting like she's Elizabeth's own daughter

or something.”

I froze, my finger stopping mid-trace. “Elizabeth is in the hospital? When did this happen?”

Also last night. It was really bad-she collapsed around midnight and wasn’t stable until morning. Morgan replied.

The realization hit me hard. That was the same night Lucas had texted me saying he wouldn’t be home. So he’d been at the hospital with his mother. Why hadn’t he told me?

“I’m sorry, Morgan, but I need to make a call right now,” I said, my mind already racing with questions.

“Of course, go ahead. Call me later!” Morgan replied, her voice understanding despite her obvious desire to continue gossiping.

As soon as we hung up, I stared at my phone for a long moment before tapping Lucas’s name.

My heart pounded as I listened to the ring, rehearsing what to say, how to ask why he’d kept Elizabeth’s hospitalization from me without sounding accusatory.

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12:13 Thu, Feb 19 m.

Chapter 146

It rang three times before someone answered-but it wasn’t Lucas.

‘Alpha Lucas’s phone,’ came a smooth, familiar voice.

I stiffened, instantly recognizing Vivienne Blackwood’s refined tones.

After a moment’s pause, I kept my voice neutral. “Where is he?”

64%

“Oh, Tori? Lucas is... unavailable at the moment, Vivienne replied, her tone casual and confident, as if answering his calls was her natural right. “Is there something urgent? I’d be happy to relay a message for you

My eyebrows drew together. “No need. I’ll call him later.”

I was about to hang up when she quickly said, “Tori, wait.”

“They say you’re quite... indiscriminate. First the

“Do you know what people are saying about you?” she continued, not waiting for my response, then the uncle. Men can be so easily blinded by a pretty face, making impulsive decisions they later regret.”

My gaze hardened. “I was under the impression that the Blackwood family was known for producing well-bred ladies with proper manners and discretion. Clearly, I was mistaken.”

The line went silent for a moment before Vivienne replied.

“You certainly have a sharp tongue, Tori. But what can you possibly offer Lucas besides tarnishing his reputation?”

“If you truly cared for him, you’d consider what’s best for him. Or is it just his power and wealth you’re after?”

I smiled despite myself. “That’s not your concern. But I will offer one piece of advice: rather than fixating on another female’s mate, perhaps focus on finding your own.”

“And if I’m determined to take yours?” she asked with false sweetness.

“If you can take him,” I replied coolly, “then he was never really mine to begin with.”

I ended the call before she could respond.

I set down my phone, returning to the apple slices.

Outside, Grandmother shifted in her chair, her profile catching the fading afternoon light, still resolutely facing away from the house-and from me.

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Chapter 147

Lucas's POV:

64%

I pinched the bridge of my nose, fighting off the beginnings of a headache as I stood at the hospital administration desk.

The staff at Moontouch Medical Center scrambled to process Elizabeth Grayson's paperwork with extra efficiency.

"Just a few more signatures, Alpha Lucas," the receptionist said, sliding another form across the counter.

"Is there anything else?" I asked, signing the final form.

"No, sir. Dr. Howard has personally taken charge of your mother's case."

I nodded my thanks and turned to head back to my mother's VIP suite.

The hallway seemed unnecessarily long as my thoughts drifted to Tori. I hadn't told her about my mother's condition, not wanting to burden

her while she was dealing with her own family issues.

As I approached my mother's room, Duke grew more agitated.

I quickened my pace, my senses suddenly alert. Even before I opened the door, I caught the subtle scent of anxiety-sharp and acrid-coming

from inside.

My eyes narrowed as I stepped into the room.

Vivienne Blackwood stood beside my mother's bed, but it wasn't her presence that triggered my suspicion. It was the quick movement of her

hand as she placed something on the bedside table-my phone.

“Lucas,” she said, her voice honey-smooth as she straightened. “That was fast.”

I let the door close behind me, my expression neutral even as fury began to simmer beneath my skin. “What were you doing with my phone,

Vivienne?”

She laughed lightly, the sound brittle. “Just checking if you had any important pack business coming through. I didn’t want you to miss

anything while you were busy with the paperwork.”

The lie hung in the air between us, almost tangible.

“Is that so?” I moved closer, watching how her shoulders tensed despite her practiced smile.

I picked up my phone, unlocking it with my thumbprint,

I checked the screen, and my suspicions hardened into certainty.

A missed call notification from Tori showed it had been answered forty minutes ago-while I was still dealing with hospital administrators.

“You answered my phone.” My voice dropped several degrees, the Alpha timbre threading through it involuntarily. “You answered Tori’s call.”

Vivienne’s smile faltered. “I thought it might be important. I simply told her you were busy with your mother-

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12:13 Thu, Feb 19 m

Chapter 147

“What else did you tell her?” I cut her off.

63%

“Nothing inappropriate,” Vivienne insisted, though her scent betrayed her. Just that you were occupied.*

I scrolled through the call log, noting the duration of the conversation-nearly four minutes. Far too long for a simple ‘he’s busy message.

I stepped closer, towering over Vivienne. “This is the last time, Vivienne. Say out of my personal life.”

Her chin lifted defiantly. “I’ve known you for years, Lucas. This Omega girl she’s beneath you. The daughter of a disgraced woman, with a criminal record... what could she possibly offer the Alpha of Grayson Pack

Duke’s rage matched my own, but I kept my voice controlled, deadly quiet

“Tori is my fated mate. Any attempt to interfere with that relationship is an act against me personally. Do I make myself clear?”

Her face paled, finally understanding the gravity of her actions.

Still, she couldn’t resist one last dig. “An Omega mate for a Prime Alpha? The council will never-

“The council’s opinion is irrelevant,” I said coldly. “And your advice on my choice of mate is neither needed nor welcome.”

Vivienne stared at me, her expression wavering between hurt and anger. “You’re making a mistake, Lucas. Someone of your position needs-”

“Given that you’ve kept my mother in good spirits these past few days, I’ll overlook this incident,” I cut her off, my gaze distant and cold, my

voice carrying a clear warning. “Remember, there won’t be a second time.

Vivienne’s face paled instantly.

Without sparing her another glance, I strode toward the balcony, sliding the glass door closed behind me as I dialed Tori’s number.

I dialed Tori’s number, tension coiling in my shoulders until she answered on the third ring.

“Lucas?” Her voice was guarded, uncertain.

The sound of it immediately softened something in me.

My brow softening, gentle warmth replacing the coldness that had been diffected at Vivienne, a subtle smile playing at the corners of my eyes.

“Tori. I’m sorry about earlier. Vivienne shouldn’t have answered my phone!

“It’s fine,” she said, though her tone suggested otherwise. “But why didn’t you tell me Elizabeth was in the hospital?”

‘It’s nothing serious, Matthew says she’ll make a full recovery with rest. assured her. “Besides, you’re already dealing with your grandmother.

I imagine she’s quite upset about the photos situation.”

A pause. “You... know about that? About Hannah sending those photos?

I smiled despite myself.

“I know about that, and about how you arranged a little payback for Hannah too.”

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12:13 Thu, Feb 19 m

Chapter 147

“Oh,” she said, her voice suddenly small. I could almost picture her cheeks lushing with embarrassment.

‘Don’t worry,” I said softly. “I’m actually glad you’re starting to fight back, o protect yourself. It’s about time.”

“You’re not angry?”

3.63%

“Why would I be? Hannah deserved it. I watched a hawk circle lazily over the hospital grounds. “I’ll come to your grandmother’s as soon as I’m finished here.”

“There’s no need to rush,” Tori replied.

“Don’t you want to see me? I teased, my voice dropping lower.

Another pause, shorter this time. “You know I do. I just worry about you going back and forth so much. It seems exhausting.”

“Seeing you makes it all worthwhile,” I said softly, meaning every word.

“I’ll be there as soon as I can. Just wait for me, alright?”

“I will,” she promised, her voice warm with an undertone of something that sounded like longing.

After we hung up, I stood watching the city lights flicker on one by one. Duke had settled, content with the knowledge we would see our mate soon.

Comments

Claimed by the Alpha's Love - Love Demands Real Courage Author: Michael Anderson 148

Chapter 148

Tori's POV:

63%

I hung up the phone, feeling a strange mix of relief and tension.

Lucas’s voice still echoed in my ears, warm and reassuring despite the distance between us, but reality quickly crashed back down.

What a mess everything had become – Hannah’s revenge with those photos Eileen’s silent disapproval, and now this awkward standoff in my grandmother’s house.

If Lucas came here as he promised, Grandma would surely freeze him out, maybe even refuse to let him through the door.

The thought made my stomach twist with anxiety.

The evening light filtered through the curtains, casting long shadows across the floor.

I pushed open the window, letting the cool breeze sweep away some of the stifling atmosphere that had settled over the house since yesterday.

The scent of wildflowers drifted in from the garden, mingling with the faint smell of chamomile tea.

Grandma Eileen still sat in her wicker chair.

“Who was that on the phone?” she asked, breaking the heavy silence between us.

I hesitated, my hand still on the window frame. “Lucas,” I answered honestly, watching her face for a reaction.

A shadow passed over her features. She set down her teacup with a soft clink.

“That Alpha,” she murmured, more to herself than to me.

“Yes, that Alpha,” I confirmed, my voice steadier than I expected.

Grandma’s fingers trembled slightly as she smoothed the blanket over her knees.

“Tori, I’ve seen what happens when girls like y

e you get involved with powerf Alphas. Your mother-” She paused, pain flashing across her face.

“Hannah was so young when she got pregnant with you. Left alone to raise a child.”

“This is different,” I said, though my voice wavered.

“Is it? That male’s heart is colder than the Arctic wind. You’re too young, o inexperienced to control someone like him.”

I moved away from the window, feeling a flare of frustration.

“And Andrew White would be better? You think he wouldn’t hurt me?” I challenged. “His own grandmother told me I wasn’t good enough for

him.”

“The Whites are easier to manage,” Grandma replied with unexpected pragmatism. “They’re not as powerful. If they hurt you, there are ways to fight back.”

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12:13 Thu, Feb 19 m

Chapter 148

She shook her head slowly. “I invited Lucas Grayson into this house once. Now I regret ever opening that door.”

Her words stung, but I held my ground. “You don’t understand what he’s done for me, Grandma.”

“Then tell me,” she challenged, her eyes suddenly sharp.

I took a deep breath. “He’s helped me in ways no one else could. Or would

63%

I continued, my voice gaining intensity. “When I first got out of Silver Fang, I had nothing. No money, no job, not even proper clothes. People would cross the street to avoid me, like being an Omega with a record was contagious. Hannah and Fiona made sure I was humiliated at every turn—publicly humiliating me, spreading rumors, even locking me in bathrooms.”

I swallowed hard, remembering those dark days.

“Lucas stepped in when no one else would. He found me work when every door was slammed in my face. He made sure I had food when I was skipping meals to save money for your medicine. When Hannah withheld your medication to blackmail me, he made sure you got what you

needed.”

Grandma’s eyes widened. “I didn’t know-

My voice cracked with emotion. “Not once did he use his help to pressure the or make demands.”

“He’s never forced a mark on me,” I continued. “He’s respected my choices every step of the way. That’s more than I can say for most Alphas.”

She studied me for a long moment, then sighed deeply. “Debts can be repaid in the next life. But you shouldn’t sacrifice your happiness in this life to repay kindness.”

“It’s not a sacrifice,” I insisted.

Grandma’s gaze drifted to the family photos on the wall, lingering on an old picture of me as a child.

“I remember how the other children used to taunt you. ‘The bastard with no father,’ they called you.” Her voice cracked slightly. “I saw what

that did to you, how it shaped you. I don’t want you to suffer more pain.

I knelt beside her chair, my throat tight with emotion. “I know you’re afraid for me. But Lucas isn’t like that.”

“All Alphas change once they have what they want,” she whispered. “Your mother learned that the hard way.”

Grandma’s expression remained guarded, but I could see the conflict in her eyes.

“I’ve never asked you for anything, Grandma,” I said, my voice barely above a whisper. Tears pricked behind my eyes. “But I’m asking now. Please don’t make me choose between you and him. Please don’t make me walk away from the one person who makes me feel safe.”

A tear slid down my cheek as I finished, landing on her weathered hand.

Grandma didn’t open her eyes or respond immediately.

The silence stretched between us, heavy with unspoken words and years of complicated history.

My phone vibrated in my pocket. I glanced down at the screen to see Luca’s message:

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12:13 Thu, Feb 19 m

Chapter 148

Just finished with Elizabeth's situation. Everything's stable. Don't be afraid. I heading your way now. Should be there in about an hour. – L

My heart jumped into my throat.

One hour. In sixty minutes, Lucas would be here, at this house where he wasn't welcome.

I looked back at Grandma, anxiety blooming in my chest.

63%

"Grandma?" I whispered. "Lucas's mother, Elizabeth, was taken to the hospital last night, I explained, hoping this might soften her stance. "That's why he couldn't come sooner.

I tucked my phone back into my pocket, my fingers still trembling slightly

"He's already on his way here now. I know you don't approve, but please, st... just meet him properly."

The thought of Lucas arriving to Grandma's cold reception made my stomach twist. These were the two people I cared about most in the world, and I couldn't bear the thought of being torn between them.

I watched her face carefully, hoping to see some softening, some willingness to at least hear him out.

Instead, her eyes hardened and her jaw set in that stubborn line I knew all too well.

"Even if he comes here in person with all his Alpha aura and charm, my answer won't change," she said firmly, her voice stronger than it had been all day.

She reached for her tea with slightly trembling hands.

The hour that followed was painfully quiet.

I busied myself cleaning the kitchen while Grandma remained in her chair lost in thought. Each minute that ticked by only increased the

tension coiled in my stomach.

As the clock struck seven, the distinct purr of a high-end engine cut through the evening silence.

The sound grew louder as it approached the house, then stopped abruptly My heart leapt to my throat.

Moments later, a confident knock sounded at the door.

Lucas had arrived, exactly when he said he would.

Comments

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Chapter 149

Lucas's POV:

63%

I pulled up to Eileen Sullivan's modest house with Roman beside me, the father portfolio containing our documents secure in his hands.

I stepped out of my car. I could smell the tension in the air, mingled with orl's distinct vanilla and moonstone scent that called to my wolf even through closed doors.

"Wait here until I call for you," I instructed Roman, my voice low but clea

Roman nodded, his professionalism unwavering. "Of course, Alpha."

I approached the door and knocked.

Within seconds, I heard hurried footsteps, and then the door swung open.

Tori stood there, her silver-gray eyes meeting mine, relief and anxiety bating across her features. Tear tracks marked her cheeks, and exhaustion shadowed her face.

My chest tightened at the sight.

Without thinking, I reached out, gently brushing my thumb across her cheekbone.

“You’ve been crying,” I said softly, the realization making something protestive and fierce rise within me.

“It’s nothing,” she whispered, leaning slightly into my touch despite herself. “I’m just glad you’re here.”

The vulnerability in her voice made my wolf stir. I wanted nothing more than to pull her into my arms and shield her from whatever had caused those tears, but I knew we had more important matters to handle first.

“Is your grandmother ready to see me?” I asked, dropping my hand reluctantly.

Tori nodded, her expression turning serious. “She’s in the living room. Lucas, she’s... not happy about this.”

“I expected as much.” I offered her a reassuring half-smile. “But I didn’t come unprepared.”

She stepped aside to let me enter, and I immediately sensed the tension filling the small house.

The living room was modestly furnished but clean, with family photos adorning the walls. In the center, sitting rigidly in an armchair, was

Eileen.

Her silver hair was neatly pinned back, and despite her age, her posture was straight and proud. Her eyes were cold as they assessed me.

I approached and inclined my head respectfully. “Mrs. Eileen. Thank you for seeing me.”

“I didn’t have much choice, did I? Her voice was brittle but controlled. “When an Alpha of your standing comes calling, refusal isn’t really an option.”

From the corner of my eye, I saw Tori flinch. I kept my expression neutral refusing to rise to the bait.

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12:14 Thu, Feb 19 m.

Chapter 149

“I understand your concerns,” I said evenly. “And I respect that your priority is Tori’s wellbeing,”

“If you truly understand, then perhaps you should keep your distance from Tori,” she challenged immediately.

63%1

“My granddaughter may be young and inexperienced, unable to fully comprehend what she’s getting into. But you-shouldn’t a Chief Alpha of your standing know better than this? Or is the mighty Alpha Lucas also incapable of making responsible decisions?”

Tori stepped forward. “Grandma, please-*

I raised my hand gently, stopping her. “It’s alright, Tori. Would you mind giving your grandmother and me a few minutes to speak privately?”

Uncertainty flickered across her face, her eyes darting between Eileen and me. “Lucas, I don’t think-”

“Trust me,” I said softly, meeting her gaze with reassurance.

She hesitated, biting her lower lip, clearly torn between staying to defend our relationship and respecting my request. Finally, she nodded reluctantly.

“I’ll be in my room if you need me,” she said, her voice barely above a whisper.

She cast one last concerned glance at her grandmother before leaving the living room, her footsteps fading down the hallway.

After Tori left. I met the older woman’s gaze directly.

“I’m not here to take Tori from you. I’m here because I love her, and I want to do this properly, with your blessing if possible.”

“Love?” Eileen’s laugh was sharp. “Alphas like you don’t love, Alpha. You possess. You control.”

Rather than argue further, I nodded toward the door.

“I know exactly what you’re afraid of, Mrs. Eileen. I’d like to show you something, if I may. Roman?*

Comments

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III

Write Comments

Claimed by the Alpha's Love - Love Demands Real Courage Author: Michael Anderson 150

Chapter 150

At my call, Roman entered, his steps measured and professional.

63%

He handed me the leather portfolio with a slight bow before retreating to stand by the wall. I opened it and extracted a document bound with

silver thread.

“This is a Moon Oath,” I explained, placing it on the coffee table between us. “A blood contract, written in my own blood and signed with my

Alpha signature.”

Eileen looked at it skeptically, making no move to touch it.

“In this document,” I continued, “I pledge myself to Tori completely. I swear on my Alpha bloodline and the honor of the Grayson pack to love,

protect, and cherish her for all my days.”

I met Eileen’s eyes unflinchingly. “And should I ever break this oath, should I ever cause her harm or heartbreak, the magic of the Moon Oath will trigger immediate consequences. I will suffer a physical backlash that will strip me of my Alpha status and abilities, rendering me essentially powerless.”

* Additionally, everything I own-my properties, my businesses, my personal fortune-will transfer to Tori immediately and irrevocably. I would become nothing while she would gain everything.”

Eileen’s hands trembled slightly as she finally reached for the document. She read through it carefully, her expression shifting from skepticism to disbelief.

“This is... unprecedented,” she murmured.

After a long pause, she looked up at me, eyes narrowing. “But why her? Why my Tori specifically? I understand fated mates are rare, but after centuries of evolution, our kind has moved beyond such biological imperatives. Especially Alphas like you-you have options, choices that

others don’t have.”

I held her gaze steadily, appreciating her directness.

“With all respect, Mrs. Eileen, who I love and choose as my mate is my decision alone. Fated mate or not, Tori is who I want.

I leaned forward slightly. “If you’ll accept this oath as proof of my intentions, I ask that you stop making Tori feel torn between us. You are

extremely important to her, and watching her struggle with your disapproval is painful for both of us. I don’t want her forced to choose

between the two people she cares about most.”

Eileen studied me for what felt like minutes, her face a complex mixture of wariness, resignation, and perhaps the faintest hint of respect.

Finally, her shoulders relaxed slightly.

“You’re persistent, I’ll give you that,” she said, folding the document. “And his...” she tapped the oath, “is not something I expected. I won’t pretend I’m completely convinced, but I won’t stand in your way either.”

“Thank you,” I said, genuine gratitude in my voice. “In that case, would you mind if I went upstairs to speak with Tori?”

Eileen closed her eyes and turned her face away, offering neither permission nor refusal.

III

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12:14 Thu, Feb 19 m

Chapter 150

I recognized the silent acquiescence for what it was and stood, making my way toward the stairs. I’d only taken two steps when her voice

stopped me.

“Don’t stay too long, she said, eyes still closed. “It’s getting late.”

“I won’t, I promised, continuing on my path.

I climbed the stairs quietly, following Tori’s scent to a door at the end of the hall.

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As I approached, I noticed it was cracked open, and through the narrow gap I could see Tori crouched down, her silver eyes peering anxiously

through the stair railing toward the living room below.

She was so focused on trying to overhear our conversation that she didn't notice my presence until I was right in front of her door.

When she finally looked up and saw me, relief washed over her face. She quickly straightened, a blush coloring her cheeks at being caught

eavesdropping.

"Were you that worried about me?" I asked, unable to keep the amusement from my voice despite the seriousness of the situation.

grandmot

"Afraid your grandmother might have me for dinner instead of just conversation?"

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