

Claimed by the Alpha's Love

Claimed by the Alpha's Love

Chapter 31

"How considerate of you to send your little friend away," Lisa said, her voice deceptively soft.

"Afraid she'll find out about your past? Or afraid of what I might do to he

I met her gaze steadily. "In broad daylight in a public place? What exactly do you think you can do?"

Lisa's smile didn't reach her eyes.

"That's right. You're not afraid of me anymore, are you? Four years in Silver Fang, and suddenly you think you're untouchable."

"I didn't say that." I kept my voice level. "I just don't see why I should fear you."

Her nostrils flared, anger replacing the cold calculation in her eyes.

"You killed my son, you little bitch!"

Several heads turned our way. I lowered my voice, "Your son tried to force himself on me. He killed my brother!"

"Lies!" she hissed, leaning forward. "Noah would never-"

"He would and he did," I cut her off, feeling Tracy stirring beneath my skin
"And if I had to choose again, I'd make the same."

Lisa's face contorted with rage.

She half-rose from her seat, one hand reaching across the table toward me
"You murderous little-

I caught her wrist before she could touch me, my reflexes faster than either of us expected.

59%

“Don’t,” I warned quietly. “I’m not the same terrified Omega you screamed at in court four years ago. I won’t let you or anyone else touch me ever again.”

Surprise flickered across her face before hardening back into hatred.

And you can stop wasting your time coming to my workplace or following me around town, I continued, my voice low but steady.

I’m not hiding anymore. I have nothing to be ashamed of.”

Her lips curled into a snarl. “You’re a murderer!”

“Noah’s death isn’t just on me, I continued, my voice barely above a whisper.

It’s on you, too. You raised him to believe he was entitled to take whatever he wanted. You taught him that Omegas were beneath him, just objects for his amusement. You made him the monster he became.”

I leaned forward slightly.

“Your endless coddling and blind defense of his actions made him think he was untouchable—that he could even take a life and face no consequences. You made him the monster he became.”

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1/2

18:32 Fri, Feb 6 BGR

Chapter 31

Her face paled, then flushed with fury. “How dare you-

“The worst part is, you know I’m right, I said, releasing her wrist and staling.

“Deep down, you know exactly what kind of person your son was becoming

I threw enough moonstone on the table to cover our bill, then turned to leave.

‘This isn’t over, Lisa called after me, her voice shaking with rage.

“Not by a long shot. You’ll pay for what you did. A life for a life—that’s the way it’s always been and always will be.”

I didn’t look back, keeping my pace steady as I walked out the door.

Only when I was several blocks away did I allow my hands to tremble, the delayed reaction of adrenaline coursing through my body.

Tracy whined anxiously in my mind. She’s dangerous.

“I know,” I whispered to myself. “But so am I now.”

I leaned against the cool brick wall of a closed boutique, head bowed as I tried to steady my breathing.

Every time the events from four years ago resurfaced, it was like tearing open a wound that never truly healed.

59%

No matter how much stronger I’d become, no matter how many times I’d played those moments in my head, the memories still had the power to send my heart racing and my hands shaking.

I stared at the sidewalk, watching my trembling shadow as I counted breaths.

One. Two. Three. Four.

A pair of polished black leather shoes stepped into my line of vision.

I froze, slowly raising my gaze.

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Chapter 32

Lucas’s POV:

59%

“The proposed territory adjustment along the eastern border is reasonable William Sullivan said, tracing his finger along the map spread across the conference table.

“My pack can accommodate the shift without issue.”

I nodded, studying the proposed boundary lines while only half-listening to the discussion.

These quarterly Alpha meetings were necessary.

Our four packs-Grayson, Sullivan, Shepherd, and Freeman-had formed Moonhaven together centuries ago, governing the city in relative peace despite occasional conflicts.

Over generations, the once-distinct bloodlines had begun to blur through intermarriage. Surnames spread beyond their original packs, creating a complex web of relationships where a name no longer guaranteed pack affiliation.

“Lucas? Your thoughts on the proposed downtown development policy?” Dylan Freeman’s voice pulled me back to the present.

“No objections from me,” I replied, straightening in my chair. “The Grayson Pack supports the proposal as it stands.”

I forced myself to appear engaged, but my thoughts kept drifting to Tori.

When I’d escorted her home last time, I’d given her my contact information-made it clear she could reach out if she needed anything.

Yet she hadn’t called or messaged once. Not that I should care. But Duke certainly did, and my wolf’s restlessness was becoming harder to

ignore with each passing day.

I forced myself to concentrate on the documents before me, but my enhanced senses picked up movement outside.

That’s when I saw her.

Tori Sullivan was leaning against the brick wall of a boutique across the street, her silver-gray eyes closed as she took deep breaths.

Even from this distance, I could see the slight tremor in her shoulders, the tension in her jaw,

Something had happened.

Duke, my wolf, instantly perked up with excitement, no longer showing the fatigue from the meeting

Look! It's our mate.

"Excuse me," I said, rising from my chair. I need to make a call.

William and Dylan exchanged a look but nodded.

I grabbed my jacket and strode from the conference room, ignoring the questioning glances from my security detail in the hallway.

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18:33 Fri, Feb 6 BGR

Chapter 32

59%

The crisp autumn air hit my face as I stepped outside, my eyes never leaving Tori's slender form.

She must have sensed my approach-she lifted her head, our eyes locking immediately. For a moment, surprised recognition flashed across her face before we simply stared at each other, the rest of the street fading in background noise...

"What are you doing here alone?" I asked, scanning her face.

"Just... taking a walk. Clearing my head." Her voice was steady, but her scent betrayed her emotion.

I glanced around, not noticing anything unusual except for a few pedestrians who seemed to recognize me.

"Have you eaten lunch? I asked abruptly.

"Yes, I already ate," she replied, looking slightly confused by my question.

"Then perhaps you'd like something to drink?" I continued smoothly. "The restaurant in this hotel makes an excellent raspberry tea. Perfect for

clearing one's head."

Tori opened her mouth, clearly about to refuse, when I added, "Actually, I have something to discuss with you after my meeting. Would you

mind waiting for me there? It won't take long."

She hesitated, her silver eyes searching my face with that careful wariness I'd come to recognize.

Finally, she nodded. "Alright."

I guided her to a quiet corner table, well away from the windows and prying eyes.

After signaling a waiter, I ordered the raspberry tea and a plate of lemon cookies-comfort foods that might help put her at ease

"I'll be back shortly," I promised, then returned to the conference room where my meeting awaited.

I returned to the conference room to find Dylan and William deep in conversation.

Both looked up when I entered.

"That was quick, Dylan remarked with a smirk. "Though I noticed you brought back a pretty little Omega-who is she?"

I kept my expression neutral as I took my seat. "Just a student who needed some assistance."

"A student?" Dylan's eyebrows shot up.

Dylan leaned back in his chair, his smirk widening.

"So... huh? Then you wouldn't mind if I went over and introduced myself? Maybe get her number?"

Something dark and possessive flashed through me. Duke snarled violenti in my mind.

She's OURS. This womanizer isn't getting anywhere near our mate.

"She's still in school," I said flatly.

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18:33 Fri, Feb 6 BGA

Chapter 32

Dylan waved dismissively. "So? We could get to know each other. By the time she graduates-"

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"Like you got to know that shewolf from the north district?" I cut in, my ice dropping to a dangerous whisper. I wonder what your mother would think if she knew you got that poor girl pregnant."

"Damn, Lucas. Dylan shook his head, a reluctant smile tugging at his lips. You weren't this protective when I mentioned wanting to ask out Chloe last month."

"That's because Chloe has the sense to see right through you, I said dryly

Dylan's eyes lit with sudden understanding.

"Wait... you're afraid the Omega might actually like me, aren't you?"

I felt my jaw tighten.

The truth was, I had no idea what type of men Tori was attracted to. If she actually did prefer smooth-talking players like Dylan, that would be... problematic.

Better to prevent any possibility of them meeting in the first place.

William cleared his throat, effectively ending our standoff.

"Perhaps we should return to the boundary discussion, he suggested mild, though his eyes held a knowing gleam.

"Dylan, I'd advise you to value your continued health and leave the girl alone."

Dylan raised his hands in surrender, but the amused look didn't leave his face.

"Fine, fine. Message received.

"If we've covered everything," I said, gathering my papers, "I'll take my leave. William, I trust you'll email me the final draft of the proposal?"

William nodded, his expression neutral but his eyes knowing. "Of course."

I strode out of the conference room, loosening my tie slightly as I made my way back to the restaurant.

Through the glass divider, I spotted Tori sitting at the table, her fingers dimming nervously on her purse as she glanced toward the exit.

She was clearly contemplating whether to leave before I returned.

I couldn't help but find it somewhat amusing yet frustrating. Even when been nothing but restrained around her, she still seemed determined to avoid me at every opportunity.

I quickened my pace, reaching the table.

'Want to run?'

3/4

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Chapter 33

Tori's POV:

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I froze at Lucas's question, caught in the act of planning my escape.

His piercing blue eyes held a hint of amusement, as if he could read my every thought.

"No," I said, straightening my shoulders and willing my heartbeat to slow down. "I was just... thinking."

He knows you wanted to leave, Tracy, my wolf, snickered inside my mind. Why bother denying it?

I silently told her to be quiet.

Tracy seemed to get excited every time we were near Lucas, probably sensing the powerful Alpha aura. My inexperienced little wolf apparently

had no self-control when it came to strong dominance signals.

“Of course.” His tone made it clear he didn’t believe me for a second. “Are you ready to leave?”

I blinked in surprise. “Your meeting’s over already?”

The Alpha meetings were notorious for dragging on for hours as the four pack leaders debated territory and resources. He couldn’t have been

gone more than twenty minutes.

“I addressed what needed to be addressed,” he said simply, his expression revealing nothing.

“Well, thank you for the tea,” I said, gathering my bag. “I should get back to my dorm.”

“I’ll drive you.”

It wasn’t a question, just a statement delivered with quiet authority.

“That’s not necessary-” I began.

“It is. His tone left no room for argument.

Just accept his help, Tracy urged. What are you afraid of?

What was I afraid of? Perhaps the inexplicable pull I felt toward him. Orybe four years in Silver Fang had taught me to question everyone’s

motives-especially when someone powerful showed unexpected interest.

“Fine,” I conceded, knowing refusing again would just make things awkward between us.

I followed him outside to where a sleek black Maybach waited at the curb

“You’re driving yourself?” I blurted out before I could stop myself

Lucas glanced at me, one eyebrow raised. ‘Did you expect me to be chauff red everywhere?’

I didn’t answer because, well, I had expected exactly that. In my mind, someone like Lucas Grayson-the Alpha of the most powerful pack in

1/3

18:33 Fri, Feb 6 BBQ

Chapter 33

50%

Moonhaven-would never drive himself ywhere.

The mental image id constructed of him always included a driver, security detail, and probably a personal assistant holding an umbrella if there was even a hint of rain.

My silence apparently spoke volumes, because a flicker of amusement cred his face before he walked to the passenger door and opened it, gesturing for me to get in.

I'll just sit in the back, I said quickly, moving toward the rear door.

I reached for the handle, but it wouldn't budge. Locked. I looked up, embarrassment flooding my cheeks as I met Lucas's knowing gaze.

He'd clearly anticipated my attempt,

"Sitting in the back would be treating me like a driver, he said, a hint of something that might have been humor in his voice. 'I'm not your chauffeur, Tori."

"I didn't mean- I stammered, feeling foolish.

He simply nodded toward the open passenger door, waiting.

With no graceful way out, I slid into the front passenger seat.

The proximity to Lucas was immediately more intense, his scent stronger, his presence almost overwhelming,

He smells so good, Tracy practically purred. Like strength and safety,

I firmly pushed her comments aside as Lucas pulled away from the curb.

"You said you had something to discuss with me," I ventured after a moment of silence.

Lucas glanced at me and nodded, as if just remembering his earlier words at the restaurant.

"What was it?" I asked when he didn't elaborate.

Is there something troubling you? Something you can't handle on your own?

The question caught me off guard.

“No,’ I said quickly-too quickly. “Everything’s fine.”

“Really?” His tone made it clear he didn’t believe me.

“Yes, I insisted, uncomfortable with his scrutiny. “But why do you suddenu ask this?”

“Morgan mentioned you haven’t been sleeping well lately,” he said, his ex fixed on the road ahead

I remembered -oversleeping and being late for class when Morgan had tome wake me up, the morning Id shown up to meet her for shopping with dark circles under my eyes and red-rimmed eyes that no ant of cold water could fix.

2/3

18:33 Fri, Feb 6 BBR

Chapter 33

But I hadn’t expected Morgan to share those details with Lucas of all people.

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I frowned, suddenly wondering if Morgan and Lucas’s relationship was mo complex than she’d let on. Did they talk about me often? What

else had she told him?

Mental note: tomorrow at school, I was definitely going to have a little chit with Morgan about what constituted private information.

The silence stretched between us until the car pulled to a stop near my dormitory building. I reached for my bag, eager to escape the confining space and his unsettling presence.

Before I could open the door, Lucas reached into the glove compartment and pulled out a small paper bag. He handed it to me without

explanation.

I accepted it cautiously. “What’s this?”

“Open it.”

Inside, I found a sleep mask designed to produce soothing steam and a small bottle of lavender sleep aid diffuser oil.

I stared at them in confusion, genuinely taken aback. Not only had he remembered what Morgan said about my sleep issues, but he'd actually gone out of his way to get me something to help?

This didn't make sense. Why would Lucas Grayson, an Alpha of his status, pay such close attention to an Omega?

I could almost understand the previous times he'd helped me-maybe he was just one of those secretly kind-hearted people beneath a cold

exterior.

But this? This felt like too much, too personal.

Still, I'd observed enough during our interactions to recognize one thing about Lucas Grayson: he didn't appreciate being refused or

contradicted.

"I... thank you," I said.

With a quick nod, I gathered my things and exited the car, clutching the per bag to my chest as I watched the sleek Maybach pull away from

the curb and disappear around the corner.

Comments

R Visitor

5 Comments >

Lord i will be glad when Tori reaches her 18th birthday so he can recognize Lucas as her mate. I will also realize that that Hannah person is not her real mother, at least that is what I am thinking

7 days ago

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18:33 Fri, Feb 6 GB R

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Chapter 34

Lucas's POV:

59%

The drive back to the Grayson estate gave me little relief from my thoughts.

My patience was wearing dangerously thin.

› Despite our repeated encounters, we seemed to be making no progress whatsoever. She still regarded me with the same wariness, still kept

herself at a careful distance.

Perhaps I need a different approach entirely, I thought. The subtle route clearly wasn't working with Tori Sullivan.

When I arrived home, the massive wrought iron gates opened automatically as my car approached.

I pulled into the garage and made my way inside, expecting the solitude I'd craved after a long day. Instead, I found my mother in the living

room, a book in her lap that she immediately set aside when she saw me.

"You're back earlier than expected," she commented, her elegant eyebrows rising slightly.

I shrugged off my coat. "The meeting concluded sooner than anticipated."

"Did it?" Her lips curved into a knowing smile.

"That's interesting, because Dylan Freeman called to thank me for that bottle of scotch I sent over. He mentioned you suddenly remembered an urgent matter that needed your attention."

I sighed heavily. Of course, Dylan couldn't keep his mouth shut. The Alpha of the Freeman Pack had always been notoriously unreliable with

information.

"Dylan talks too much," Duke muttered.

"He also mentioned a young lady," my mother continued, her eyes gleaming with curiosity. "Someone who apparently required your personal attention. Who might this mysterious girl be, Lucas?"

I kept my expression neutral. "Dylan should focus more on his own affairs and less on mine."

Elizabeth sighed deeply, her shoulders dropping slightly. "Your mate situation has been my primary concern for years now, Lucas. You know

that."

Here it comes. I braced myself for the conversation I'd successfully avoided for months.

"Even your nephew Ethan has found a mate before you,' she said with a sigh. "Though I admit, after that terrible business four years ago, he was unstable for quite some time. Flying into rages, drinking himself unconscious... Being with Fiona has helped him tremendously."

"Ethan's situation was different, I countered.

"He was obsessed with that girl who went to prison. It took years before he finally came around and agreed to take Fiona as his mate."

"Lucas," my mother's voice softened, "I worry about you. At thirty-one, me Alphas have found their Lunas, started their families."

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Chapter 34

“I’m aware of my responsibilities,” I replied,

“Are you?” She leaned forward. “Sometimes I wonder... you’ve shown no interest in any of the she wolves I’ve introduced you to.”

I met her gaze directly. “They weren’t right.”

59%

“None of them?” She tilted her head, studying me with motherly concern. Lucas, darling, you know I would support you regardless, but... you’re

not gay, are you?”

I nearly choked on my water. “No, Mother.”

“Because if you were-

“I’m not.”

She raised her hands in surrender. “I’m simply saying, at this point, my only requirement is that you bring home someone female. I cannot compromise further than that.”

An image of Tori flashed through my mind-her silver-gray eyes reflecting moonlight like rare precious metals, the defiant tilt of her chin despite the weight she carried.

Every detail about her seemed designed to capture my attention.

“Don’t worry, Mother,” I found myself saying. “I’ll find her. Before the years out, I’ll bring her home.”

Elizabeth’s eyes immediately brightened. “This sounds promising. Does this mean you already have someone in mind?”

I didn’t answer her question. Instead, stood and headed toward the stairs “Good night, Mother.”

The following morning, I walked the polished hallways of Moonridge High School.

After the Grayson group established a substantial scholarship program and made a significant investment in the school’s facilities, the administration eagerly extended an invitation for me to tour the campus.

Dr. Williams, a nervous principal, seemed determined to showcase every improvement made possible by my company's funding.

"And here is our mathematics wing," Dr. Williams explained, gesturing toward a row of classrooms. Our students have shown exceptional

progress in-

I stopped abruptly as we passed one particular classroom.

Through the glass panel in the door, I spotted Tori immediately. She sat at the window, the morning sunlight catching in her dark hair.

A male student-tall with sandy brown hair-had just approached her desk and was leaning against it casually. Their interaction seemed comfortable, almost friendly, as the boy smiled at something Tori said.

An unexpected surge of possessiveness shot through me.

2/4

18:33 Fri, Feb 6 GB R

Chapter 34

Dr. Williams followed my gaze.

"Ah, that's Tori Sullivan. Quite remarkable student-she's currently the top ranked student in her grade despite missing four years of

education. The pride in his voice was evident.

I felt a strange sense of satisfaction hearing about Tori's academic achievements. 'Is that so?'

59%

"Yes, absolutely brilliant, especially with lunar calculations. She has an intuitive understanding that's quite rare," Dr. Williams said proudly.

Tori is actually the first recipient of the Scholarship your company established."

I couldn't help the surge of pride that washed through me.

I nodded, still watching the interaction between Tori and the boy.

“And the young man speaking with her?”

“That’s Daniel Cole, class president of our advanced placement program.

My eyes narrowed slightly. “So he’s not from her regular class?”

“No, he’s not,” Dr. Williams replied, suddenly noticing my shift in demeanor and becoming somewhat uneasy.

“Perhaps,” I suggested coolly, “the school should enforce stricter policies about students wandering between classrooms.”

Dr. Williams swallowed nervously. “You’re absolutely right, Alpha Grayson I’ll make an announcement immediately.”

“Wait,” I added, my tone deceptively casual, “perhaps a reminder about appropriate relationships between students would be beneficial as well.”

The principal’s eyes widened slightly. “You mean... a policy against dating

“Just a suggestion,” I replied, finally turning away from the classroom door

Dr. Williams nodded vigorously, hurrying to keep pace with me.

“I completely agree, Alpha Lucas. This is precisely the time when students should be focused on their academic development. Romantic

entanglements only serve as distractions from their studies. I’ll add that the announcement immediately.”

As we turned the corner, we nearly collided with a girl hurrying from the direction of the restrooms.

She had curly brown hair pulled into a messy ponytail and wore the same uniform as Tori. I recognized her immediately-Morgan Baker.

Upon seeing me, Morgan’s normally bright expression faltered.

Unlike her usual exuberant greetings, her eyes briefly met mine before daring away, her face flushing with unmistakable guilt.

I opened my mouth to address her, but before I could utter a word, she nobled a barely audible ‘excuse me and darted past us, disappearing

around the corner with remarkable speed.

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18:33 Fri, Feb 6 GGR

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Chapter 35

Tori's POV:

59%

I was halfway through solving a complex lunar phase calculation when the classroom door burst open.

Morgan rushed in, her curly hair disheveled and her cheeks flushed with a unnatural redness.

Her eyes darted around the room before landing on me, and something in her expression made my wolf, Tracy, instantly alert.

Morgan hurried to her seat beside me, her breathing slightly labored as if he'd been running.

"You won't believe who I just-" she began in an excited whisper, but abruptly cut herself off.

I followed her gaze to find Daniel Cole beside my desk, his expression friendly but cautious.

His sandy brown hair fell across his forehead as he offered Morgan a small smile.

"Hey, Morgan," he said, his voice measured and polite.

To my surprise, Morgan replied with an unusual edge to her voice. "What are you doing here? You're not even in our class."

Daniel's eyebrows rose slightly at Morgan's hostile tone.

"I don't understand why you're so hostile toward me, Morgan. I was just trying to talk to Tori about-"

The school's PA system crackled to life, cutting through our conversation with a shrill feedback sound before Dr. Williams's authoritative voice

filled the room.

"Attention all Moonridge High students," the principal announced, his voice unusually stern.

"This is an important reminder that students are not permitted to visit classrooms other than their assigned ones without proper authorization. Furthermore, the school board wishes to emphasize that romantic relationships between students are strongly discouraged as they distract

from academic focus and achievement."

A collective groan rose from several corners of the classroom, along with few snickers and meaningful glances between couples.

Dr. Williams continued: "Any students found violating these policies will receive appropriate disciplinary action. That is all."

As the announcement ended, an awkward silence fell over our small group

Daniel's face had taken on a slight flush, and he cleared his throat uncomfortably.

"Well, I guess that's my cue," he said, adjusting the strap of his backpack. He turned to me with a small smile. "Maybe we can talk another time,

Tori.

"Yeah, sure," I replied neutrally.

Daniel nodded, then headed for the door, his posture slightly deflated.

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18:33 Fri, Feb 6 BBA

Chapter 35

As he left, I turned to Morgan with a raised eyebrow, silently demanding explanation for her uncharacteristic behavior.

The moment the door closed behind Daniel, Morgan practically exploded with barely contained energy, leaning in so close I could see the

flecks of amber in her brown eyes.

59%

Oh my God, Tori, you won't believe who I just ran into in the hallway!" whispered frantically, glancing around to make sure no one was

listening.

I instinctively glanced toward the window and saw no one except a few classmates hurrying back to the classroom.

"They're gone now, Morgan said, following my gaze.

"But Alpha Lucas was here! Right here in our school, with Dr. Williams. Literally almost crashed into them when I was coming back from the

bathroom."

I wasn't surprised by Morgan's panicked state. After our confrontation, where she'd confessed to being Lucas's informant, seeing him

unexpectedly would naturally put her on edge.

Just hours ago, I'd confronted Morgan about why she had told Lucas about my sleep problems. I'd been relentless, sensing she was hiding

something and demanding to know what she was keeping from me.

When she'd tried to brush it off with vague excuses, I'd delivered an ultimatum.

"If you don't tell me the truth right now," I had threatened, "then we're done. I can't be friends with someone who keeps secrets from me."

Morgan had crumbled immediately, confessing everything-how Lucas had summoned her before I arrived at school, how he'd instructed her to befriend me and report back on my well-being and activities.

"So all this time, you've been reporting back to him about me? The betrayal stung, even though a small part of me understood her position. Going against an Alpha's wishes wasn't easy, especially for a Beta like Morgan whose family worked on Grayson land.

"Not everything!" Morgan protested. "Just... general stuff. Like if you seemed okay, if anyone was giving you trouble. And I haven't told him much lately because... she hesitated, then continued in a whisper, "because I started to feel like a traitor to you."

I took a deep breath, processing this revelation. Morgan watched me anxiously, her usual confidence replaced by vulnerability.

"Morgan, this hurts, I admitted. I thought you wanted to be my friend because you liked me."

"I do like you!" Morgan insisted, grabbing my hand.

"Tori, I swear, I might have started talking to you because Alpha Lucas asked me to, but I stayed your friend because I genuinely like you."

I studied her earnest expression, and Tracy nudged me gently. She's telling the truth, my wolf confirmed.

After a moment of consideration, I nodded slowly. Okay. I believe you."

The relief on Morgan's face was palpable. Really? You're not mad?

"I didn't say I wasn't mad, I clarified. But I understand you were put in a difficult position. What I don't understand is why Alpha Grayson is so interested in me in the first place.

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Chapter 35

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Morgan relaxed slightly, hearing in my tone that our friendship wasn't irreparably damaged.

“I don’t know,” she admitted. He never explained.”

I chewed my lower lip, considering the implications. Well, I understand you can’t just ignore an Alpha’s request. But from now on, can you at least tell me what you’re planning to report to him? We can decide together what information is okay to share.

A slow smile spread across Morgan’s face.

That’s actually a really good idea. I was so stressed about being caught between you two.” She looked genuinely relieved. “This way I’m not directly disobeying him, but I’m also not betraying your trust.”

My thoughts came rushing back.

“Morgan, don’t worry,” I said, touching her arm reassuringly. “I won’t tell cas that you told me anything. He doesn’t need to know we had this

conversation.”

“You really mean that?” she asked, hope brightening her expression.

“Of course. If we don’t say anything, he’ll never find out,” I replied with a small shrug. “It’ll be our secret.”

Morgan visibly relaxed, letting out a deep breath.

“You’re right. This will be our secret.”

What I couldn’t understand was why Lucas Grayson would go to such lengths to keep tabs on me in the first place.

Was it because of Ethan? I wondered. Did Lucas know about our past relationship and worry I might cling to him?

But that didn’t quite make sense either. If Lucas wanted me away from Ethan, why would he help me when I was in trouble? Why offer me a

ride home or give me sleep aids?

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Chapter 36

Lucas's POV:

59%

I leaned back in my leather chair, staring out the floor-to-ceiling windows of my office at Grayson Enterprise.

The cityscape of Moonhaven sprawled below, but I barely registered the view. My mind was stuck on what I'd witnessed at Moonridge High earlier today.

The image of Tori sitting at her desk, her silver-gray eyes lighting up as she spoke with Daniel Cole, kept replaying in my mind.

There had been an ease to her posture, a relaxed curve to her lips that I had yet to witness when she was around me.

The memory made Duke pace restlessly inside me, a low growl rumbling through our shared consciousness.

She should look that way with us, not him, Duke growled.

I pinched the bridge of my nose.

How was it possible that after weeks of carefully orchestrated "accidental" meetings, providing her with sleep aids, and offering her rides, Tori still regarded me with cautious suspicion while she seemed perfectly comfortable with that Cole boy after what-a few class periods together?

A thought suddenly struck me.

In all my planning and maneuvering, I had overlooked something fundamental-I had no idea if Tori was already interested in someone.

I pulled out my phone and typed a message to Morgan:

Does Tori have someone she likes?

I expected Morgan's usual lightning-fast response.

The girl typically replied within seconds-especially to my messages. But this time, the minutes ticked by with no response.

I found myself checking my phone repeatedly, my impatience growing with each passing moment.

A knock at my door interrupted my thoughts.

"Come in, I called, setting my phone down.

Jack entered with a stack of files, his expression professionally neutral as ways.

Alpha, we have the final bids for the Northside Development project, heid, placing the folders on my desk.

"Two companies have submitted competitive proposals. I need your input which direction you'd prefer."

I opened the first folder. Morris Construction.

They were a well-established company in Moonhaven with solid credential I'd heard that the Morris family had lost their son in some tragic incident four years ago.

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Chapter 36

I flipped open the second folder. Cole Industries.

I stared at the name, my mind immediately conjuring the image of Tori an Daniel Cole in that classroom.

"Cole... any relation to Daniel Cole from Moonridge High?"

Jack nodded. "His father's company."

I felt an irrational surge of irritation and abruptly closed the Cole Industries folder, setting it aside.

Turning my attention to the other proposal, I asked, 'What's your assessment of Morris Construction?'

≈ 59%.

Jack, ever the professional, gave a measured response. "Their bid is competitive, and they have an excellent track record with similar projects.

They would be a solid choice."

I rubbed my temple, feeling a headache forming. "Let's go with them then

Jack gathered the folders. "I'll prepare the paperwork."

As he turned to leave, suddenly, I realized how childish I was being.

Was I really making business decisions based on jealousy toward a high school student? I was 31 years old, the Alpha of the most powerful

pack in Moonhaven, not some territorial adolescent.

'Wait,' I called out before Jack could reach the door. 'Leave the files here. I should review both proposals more carefully before making a

decision.'

Jack paused, then silently placed the folders back on my desk and left the room.

My phone vibrated, and I snatched it up. Finally, a response from Morgan:

No, she doesn't have anyone special right now.

The relief I felt was embarrassingly intense. But before I could relax completely, I sent a follow-up:

What type of men does she like?

This time, the wait was even longer.

I tried to focus on the project files, but my attention kept drifting to my sent phone.

When my phone finally buzzed again, I opened the message with more anxiety than I'd felt negotiating multimillion dollar deals:

She likes thoughtful, quiet guys. Studious types who don't try to dominate conversations. She mentioned liking guys who are humble and ask for help when they need it. Oh, and she seems to prefer guys around her age.

I read the message twice, and my expression instantly darkened.

Quiet? Studious? Humble? And worst of all-someone her own age? The description couldn't be further from what I was.

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Chapter 36

As an Alpha, I was dominant by nature, over a decade older than her, and asking for help wasn't exactly my strong suit.

The description was practically a blueprint for Daniel Cole and couldn't be further from me if it tried.

Shit.

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A wave of regret washed over me.

Perhaps I had miscalculated from the beginning. Maybe my careful, measured approach had been a mistake.

The first time I scented her, recognized her as my fated mate, I should have claimed her immediately-made it clear to everyone, including Tori

herself, that she belonged with me.

If I had announced our mate bond immediately, she wouldn't be looking at other males, and no other wolf would dare approach what belonged

to an Alpha.

The thought of Tori forming a bond with someone else, perhaps even accepting another wolf's mark, made my blood run cold.

Duke growled fiercely, the primitive possessiveness surging through our shared consciousness.

She is OUR fated mate, he snarled with absolute conviction. OURS alone. Any male who tries will face our fangs."

With a decisive movement, I stood up and grabbed my car keys from the desk. The project could wait. The contracts could wait. Everything could wait. I needed to see Tori now, to make some kind of progress before it was too late.

As I headed for the door, my phone rang. Jack's name flashed on the screen.

"Jack, I'm heading out. Whatever it is can wait until-"

"Alpha, there's been an accident," Jack's voice was tight with urgency. "At the intersection near Moonridge High. A student was hit by a car."

My blood ran cold. "Who?" I demanded, already knowing the answer before Jack spoke.

"Tori Sullivan," he confirmed. "She's being transported to Moontouch Medial Center now."

I don't remember ending the call or running to my car. The next thing I knew, I was speeding through Moonhaven's streets, my knuckles white on the steering wheel, Duke howling in my mind.

If anything happens to her...

I couldn't finish the thought. The very idea sent a pain so sharp through my chest that it was hard to breathe.

I'd only just found her-my mate, the one person meant for me and I hadn't even had the chance to tell her what she was to me.

3/4

18:33 Fri, Feb 6 BBQ

Editorial board

Editorial Board: Our editorial team works behind the scenes to refine each chapter, maintain consistency, and deliver the best reading experience.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters. Tap the middle of the screen to reveal Reading Options.

Chapter 37

Lucas's POV:

59%

The Maybach shot through Moonhaven's streets like a silver bullet.

I weaved through traffic, cutting corners and running red lights. The half our journey to the hospital was shrunk to fifteen minutes under my desperate driving.

She can't die. She can't die. She can't die.

The mantra repeated in my head over and over again.

Duke was howling inside my mind, a primal sound of pure anguish that reflected the terror gripping my heart.

Each second felt like torture.

As I screeched into the hospital parking lot, the ambulance carrying Tori ad just arrived. The emergency bay doors were thrown open, and

medical staff rushed forward to meet it.

My eyes locked onto the gurney being wheeled rapidly through the sliding doors. Morgan was there, her face streaked with tears as she ran

alongside the stretcher, her hands clutching Tori's limp one.

I quickly jumped out of my car, not even bothering to turn off the engine, and sprinted toward them.

The sight of Tori's face, which just this morning had been so full of life, now lay motionless and blood-stained on the stretcher, sent a physical

pain through my chest.

Her black hair was matted with blood, and her eyes were tightly shut.

“What happened?” I demanded, my voice a barely controlled growl as I fell into step with the medical team.

My fists clenched so tightly my knuckles turned white, and I could feel Duke’s rage surging through me, threatening to break my human façade.

The scent of Tori’s blood made my vision flicker red around the edges as they rushed her inside.

“Tell me exactly what happened. Now.”

“A-alpha, Morgan stammered, her expression a mixture of relief and distress.

“We were-after school-walking to the café where she works. And then-She broke off, a sob catching in her throat. “A car just came out of

nowhere, straight at us. Tori pushed me out of the way. She pushed me

Morgan’s voice cracked, words tumbling out incoherently.

‘One second we were laughing about something stupid, and the next-St shook her head. The car was aiming for us, Lucas. It wasit an

accident. It swerved toward us.”

A cold rage settled in my bones at her words. My wolf snarled, demanding

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Chapter 37

“Lucas?”

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I turned to see Matthew Howard approaching, his brow furrowed in conce. He’d clearly been in the middle of his rounds, stethoscope around

his neck and chart in hand.

“Are you injured?” he asked, his eyes quickly scanning me for signs of trauma.

I shook my head, struggling to find my voice through the haze of anger and fear. "Not me. It's Tori Sullivan. Car accident. Just brought in."

The casual concern on Matthew's face immediately transformed into professional focus. His entire demeanor shifted as he handed his chart to a nearby nurse.

"Where is she now?" he asked, already moving toward the emergency bay.

"They just wheeled her in," I said, following him as he quickened his pace. "There's blood... her head and her leg..."

Matthew nodded curtly. "I'll take a look at her right away."

He placed a reassuring hand on my shoulder.

"Try not to catastrophize, Lucas. "

Morgan, who had been trailing behind us, suddenly rushed forward and grabbed Matthew's arm.

"Please, Dr. Howard," she pleaded, her voice breaking. "You have to save her. Please..."

Matthew's expression softened slightly as he gently extracted his arm from Morgan's grip, patting her hand.

"Let's not assume the worst, okay? She might not be as badly hurt as you fear," he said, his tone gentle but firm. "I'll do everything I can for

her, I promise."

He gave my shoulder another quick pat before moving with purpose toward the emergency room doors.

The double doors swung shut behind them, leaving Morgan and me in the sterile hallway.

I stood there, staring at those doors, feeling more helpless than I ever had in my life. As Alpha, I was accustomed to control, to having the

power to fix problems, to protect my pack.

But now, when it mattered most, there was nothing I could do but wait.

The next two hours were the longest of my life.

Morgan paced the waiting area while I sat motionless, every muscle in my body tense. Duke's distress mirrored my own, our shared

consciousness fixated on the sense of Tori beyond those doors.

I could feel her faintly, like a distant heartbeat. The mate bond between, though unclaimed and incomplete, provided the thinnest thread of

connection.

Chapter 38

"It should have been me, Morgan whispered, her voice raw and guilty. "She pushed me out of the way."

"Did you see the driver?" I asked, my voice low and dangerous.

Morgan shook her head, wiping at her tears with trembling hands. It all happened so fast...

She drew in a shuddering breath, her eyes haunted.

*After she pushed me... when I looked up, she was just lying there in a pool of blood. I couldn't... I couldn't think about anything else."

Fresh tears spilled down her cheeks.

"I'm sorry," Morgan continued, her voice small and broken. "I should have paid more attention, I should have-

"It's not your fault, I cut her off, my voice cold and controlled despite the rage simmering beneath.

Without another word, I pulled out my phone and dialed Jack's number. He answered on the first ring.

"Alpha."

59%

"I need you to access every security camera near the accident site, I ordered, not bothering with pleasantries. "Jack, find that hit-and-run vehicle. And dig up whoever's behind this."

"Yes, sir," Jack replied without hesitation.

"I'll update you as soon as I have something."

I hung up, sliding the phone back into my pocket.

Just then, the surgery light above the double doors went dark.

Morgan and I both stood immediately, our attention fixed on the doors as they swung open. Matthew emerged, still dressed in his surgical scrubs, removing his cap as he approached us.

I held my breath, searching his face for any sign of bad news. The few seconds it took him to reach us felt like years.

"She's going to be fine," he said, and I can barely stand with relief.

The head injury was just a scalp laceration lots of blood but no concussion or skull fracture. Her right leg has a minor fracture that required some pins, but with proper rest, she'll heal completely."

Morgan let out a sob of relief, covering her face with her hands.

"When can we see her?"

"She's in a coma now. They'll move her to a private room soon. Matthew ve me a knowing look. Tve arranged for the best room we have."

I nodded in gratitude.

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Chapter 38

59%

"I'll stay with her, Morgan volunteered, wiping away the last of her tears can watch over her. It's the least I can do after she saved me."

"No," I said firmly. "I'll stay with her."

Morgan's brow furrowed in determination. But I want to help. I need to be here when she wakes up. I need to thank her-

"Morgan, Matthew interrupted gently, placing a hand on her shoulder.

'You've had quite a shock today, too. The best thing you can do for Tori right now is to take care of yourself. Get some rest, clear your head, and come back tomorrow with energy to help her through recovery.'

Morgan looked from Matthew to me, then back again, clearly wanting to protest further. But something in Matthew's expression-or perhaps my own-made her reconsider.

"You'll call me the minute anything changes?" she asked, reluctantly gathering her backpack.

"Of course," I promised.

After Morgan finally departed and the nurses settled Tori in her private room, I took the chair beside her bed.

The beeping of monitors and the soft hum of medical equipment filled the silence as I studied her face.

The color had returned somewhat to her cheeks, and without all the blood, she looked more like she was sleeping than injured.

I reached out to take her hand, careful of the IV line, needing the physical connection to reassure myself she was really here, really safe.

I spent that night watching Tori breathe, counting each rise and fall of her chest.

I didn't sleep. I couldn't. Every time my eyes closed, I saw her pale face on that gurney, saw the blood in her hair. My wolf and I kept vigil,

guarding what was ours.

Only as dawn's first gray light filtered through the window did exhaustion finally overcome me.

My eyelids grew heavy, impossible to keep open despite my best efforts. I allowed them to close, just for a moment, my hand still holding

Tori's.

I couldn't have dozed for more than a few minutes when I felt it—the slightest movement against my palm.

Tori's fingers had twitched in my hand.

Chapter 39

Tori's POV:

Pain was the first thing I registered.

A dull throbbing in my head and a sharper, more insistent ache in my right leg

The antiseptic smell hit me next.

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I blinked slowly, my vision adjusting to the dim light.

White ceiling. Beeping machines. The soft hum of medical equipment.

Confusion washed over me as I tried to piece together how I'd ended up here.

Then it hit me—the car, the screeching tires, Morgan's terrified face. I remembered pushing her out of the way, the sickening crunch as metal

collided with my body, and then... nothing.

I was hit by a car. I'm in the hospital.

Tracy, my wolf, stirred anxiously within me. We're okay, I assured her, though I wasn't entirely convinced myself.

I shifted slightly, trying to assess the damage.

My right leg felt heavy, probably bandaged or in a cast. As I moved my hand, I realized with a start that someone was holding in

Warm fingers wrapped firmly around mine, keeping me tethered to the world outside my pain.

Turning my head carefully, I froze,

There, slumped in a chair beside my bed, was Alpha Lucas. His head rested at an uncomfortable angle, eyes closed in exhaustion.

Even in sleep, his face maintained that Alpha intensity, though softened fatigue.

What was he doing here? Why would the Alpha of the Grayson Pack be sping in a hospital chair, holding the hand as he barely

knew?

4 tried to gently extract my hand from his, not wanting to wake him but ing suddenly well conscious

The slight movement war einuph

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Our eyes luckwil, and for a moment, beither if i spoke

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Chapter 39

"You're awake," he finally said, his voice low and rough with sleep.

His hand tightened slightly around mine before he seemed to realize he still holding it and slowly released his grip

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"Why are you here?" I asked. It made no sense. Alpha Lucas had no reason to be at my bedside, to hold my hand while I was concious

His eyes met mine, that intense gaze softening slightly.

"I'm taking care of you," he stated matter of factly, as though it were the most obvious thing in the world

I blinked, thrown by his directness.

"But why you?"

He reached for a cup of water on the bedside table and offered it to me. His movements were careful, deliberate, as he helped me take a sip

The cool water was a blessing against my parched throat. "Where is Morgan?" I asked, suddenly anxious. "Is she—"

"She's fine, Lucas assured me. "You pushed her out of the way. She wasn't injured."

Relief flooded through me. At least I'd managed to do that much.

"Where is she now?" I asked, glancing around the empty room.

"I sent her home to rest, Lucas said quietly. His tone held that unmistakable Alpha authority that brooked no argument:

"Too many people would disrupt your recovery."

I blinked in surprise.

If anyone should leave to help me rest, shouldn't it be the intimidating Alpha I barely know, not my closest friend?-

You sent Morgan away.' I repeated slowly, but decided to stay myself? The question came out more bluntly than I'd served,

confusion had stripped away my usual caution.

Lucas's expression remained impassive, though something flickered briefly in his eyes,

"Yes," he replied simply, as if that explained everything

The silence stretched between us

I thought about all the strange interactions as I had test the past weeks to be sure in the cryngstay, that text and vengo code, (huk

mysterious interest in my well being. None of it made sense

Why is your doing this? I asked. In truth, by some of the questions why anyone would set me

One day I realized so He is giving me a drapetion of wheels

Your lie I mean I topped to an up staged prope

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Chapter 39

"What do you want from me?"

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Lucas's expression shifted, something unidentifiable flickering across his features. He leaned forward, elbows resting on his knees, his gaze never leaving mine.

Is it really so difficult to believe someone might be concerned about your welfare, Tori?

"Yes," I answered honestly. "Especially when that someone is you."

A shadow of something-hurt, maybe?-crossed his face before his expression became carefully neutral again.

“What if I told you I like you?”

For a moment, I thought I’d misheard him.

The words seemed so out of place coming from Lucas Grayson’s mouth that my brain struggled to process them.

“What?” I managed, certain I must have misunderstood.

“I like you, Tori Sullivan.” His voice was calm, matter-of-fact, as if he were stating that the sky was blue or water was wet.

I stared at him, waiting for the punchline, for some explanation that would make more sense than the impossible words he’d just spoken.

But his expression remained steady, unwavering.

That s- I shook my head, unable to form a coherent response. “That’s not possible.”

Of all the explanations for Lucas’s behavior toward me, this was the one I never considered, never even imagined. An Alpha-this pha- interested in me? In what universe would that make any sense?

Tracy, usually quick with commentary, was suspiciously quiet.

“Why?” I finally asked, the only word I could force past my lips.

Lucas leaned forward slightly, his eyes never leaving mine. “You need reasons to hate someone, Tori. Not to like them.”

I felt suddenly dizzy, and it had nothing to do with my injuries.

The most powerful Alpha in Moonhaven had just confessed to liking me-n Omega with a criminal record and absolutely nothing to offer someone of his standing.

It was absurd. It was impossible. It was the most unbelievable thing I’d heard in my twenty-one years of life.

Comments

Chapter 40

Tori's POV:

59%

"Are you..." I swallowed hard, my throat suddenly dry. "Are you messing with me?"

Lucas's expression didn't change.

"Why would I joke about something like this?" His voice was calm, controlled, the perfect Alpha tone that revealed nothing.

I couldn't hold his gaze anymore and looked down at my bandaged leg instead. "Because it makes no sense," I said quietly.

"Thank you for staying with me," I said formally, attempting to sit up. "And for everything else you've done, but I should-"

My leg felt impossibly heavy as I tried to move.

Lucas's hand was instantly on my shoulder, gently but firmly keeping me place.

"Your leg is broken, Tori," he explained, his voice softening slightly. "You need to rest."

I stared at him, then down at my immobilized leg.

"How long?" I asked, panic rising in my chest. "I can't stay here long. I have work, and classes, and-"

"And all of it will still be there when you're healed," Lucas cut in, his tone making it clear this wasn't up for debate.

Before I could respond, the door opened, and a man in a white coat entered.

I recognized him as Dr. Matthew Howard, the one Morgan had mentioned was Lucas's friend.

“Ah, our patient is awake,” he said with a warm smile. “How are you feeling Tori?”

“Like I was hit by a car,” I replied honestly, which made him chuckle.

“Well, that’s to be expected.” He moved to check my vitals. “Any dizziness unusual pain besides the obvious?”

Just a headache and my leg feels like it’s being crushed,” I admitted. “How long until I can get out of here?”

Matthew’s expression turned serious as he reviewed my chart.

“We’ll need to keep you under observation for about 48 hours to monitor your concussion symptoms. After that, if everything looks good, you can continue your recovery at home with regular check-ups.”

The door burst open again, and Morgan rushed in, holding a container that smelled like chicken soup.

Her eyes were red and puffy, and when she saw me awake, they immediately welled with fresh tears.

“Tori!” she cried, rushing to the bed. “Oh my god, you’re okay! I was so worried

She carefully hugged me, mindful of my injuries, but I could feel her trembling.

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Chapter 40

‘I’m fine, Morgan,’ I reassured her, awkwardly patting her back. “It’s just broken leg.”

She pulled back, wiping her eyes.

59%

“You could have died! That car was coming straight for us, and you pushed me out of the way. Her voice broke. If something had happened to you because of me, I would have felt guilty for the rest of my life.”

“Hey,” I said firmly, squeezing her hand. It wasn’t your fault. And I’m fine see? Still breathing.”

Morgan nodded, but her eyes were still watery. “You saved my life.”

“You would have done the same for me, I replied, uncomfortable with her gratitude.

Then a thought hit me, and I groaned.

“Oh no, the coffee shop! Greg is going to kill me. I was on my way to work when the accident happened, and I didn’t even call-

“Relax, Morgan interrupted, a small smile breaking through her tears. “I already called Greg and explained everything. He was super worried about you.”

“Really?” I was surprised. Greg was a good boss, but I’d only been working there for a short time.

Morgan nodded. “Actually, it worked out perfectly. He said the café is closing for renovations this week anyway. Something about updating the ventilation system.”

Relief washed over me. At least I wouldn’t lose my job over this.

Morgan opened the container, releasing the comforting aroma of chicken and ginger.

“I can feed myself,” I protested with a small laugh. “I broke my leg, not my arms. My hands still work perfectly fine.”

“Are you sure? You still look pretty weak.”

“I’m sure.”

I took the container and spoon from Morgan, carefully balancing them in my lap before taking a small sip of the warm broth.

The comforting taste of chicken and ginger spread through me, soothing in a way only home-cooked food could be

Is it good? Mom added extra ginger because she read somewhere it help with healing. Morgan hovered anxiously beside me, watching my every reaction.

It's perfect, I assured her after another spoonful. "Tell your mom thank you.

Matthew glanced at the scene, then turned to Euras with a knowing smile

I think we've become completely irrelevant in the presence of hiendshiped chicken soup,' he said quietly. "Shall we give them some space?"

Lucas lingered for a moment, his eyes meeting mine. Then he followed Mathew out, chasing the door softly behind him.

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18:34 Fri, Feb 6 BGR

Chapter 40

'I'll be back to check on you later," Matthew called out as he left.

As soon as they left, Morgan pulled her chair closer to my bed, her eyes wide with excitement and concern.

"You should have seen Alpha Lucas last night," she said, gesturing dramatally.

"When they brought you in, he was absolutely beside himself. I've never seen him like that he was pacing, demanding updates every five minutes.

59%

I almost choked on my soup. "He did what?"

“I’m serious! He refused to leave your side the entire night. Jack told me he even canceled three major meetings this morning.

Morgan shook her head in wonder. “I don’t get it, Tori. Why is he being so protective of you? It’s like he’s personally invested in your recovery or something.”

I stirred my soup slowly, avoiding her eyes.

Lucas’s words echoed in my mind: I like you, Tori Sullivan.

But I couldn’t bring myself to share that with Morgan. It seemed too absurd, too improbable.

What game was he playing?

Comments