

## The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

### Chapter 141

came to very slowly. The last thing I remembered was a lot of felling between, Sawyer, Leon and Rhys... I frowned. Wait, that couldn't be right. Sawyer hadn't been there when we started the ritual. He had been at home, right? Resting. He was still healing. But why could I so vividly hear him yelling at Rhys and Leon. And Leon had been so mad... What happened?

I sat up slowly, my whole body aching, but no longer in searing pain. I blinked. This wasn't the cabin. I wasn't laying on the cushions still or even in the bed in the loft. This room was bright white that reminded me of the hospital. Did the ritual fail and they had to bring me here? But there was no medical equipment, and most importantly to me, no Rhys. Rhys would have never left my side if something was wrong, so why was I here and here alone?

"Hello?" I called out as I untangled myself from the sheets. I hated when the sheets were tucked under the mattress, it always made me feel trapped, and I felt like I had to fight my way out of bed.

"Hello?" I called out again as my bare feet hit the wooden floor. Okay... Definitely not the hospital. They would never have wood floors, even if it was fake. "Is anyone here?"

I noticed a door to my right and I opened it, slowly, unsure of what to expect, only to find a beautiful bathroom room with white and black tiled floors, two fancy sinks, and not only a humongous shower, but also a clawfoot tub on the other side of a half wall, and the fanciest toilet I had ever seen.

“Whoa.” I breathed as I spun around to enjoy it all.

I frowned in surprise as I caught sight of myself in the mirror. My messy hair made me cringe. My face still had the purple goo that Sandra had drawn on me. But the thing that really got me was that the dress I was wearing was not what I had been wearing prior to the ritual... It was a long sleeve white dress with a lacy skirt and just off the shoulder sleeves. It was beautiful... But it wasn't mine..

I stepped out of the bathroom in confusion, only to hear my name being called from somewhere in the distance. I noticed another door across the room, and opened it up into the hallway, carefully stepping out into it.

“Grace!” The voice called out again. It was louder than a whisper, but it definitely had a raspier sound to it that I didn't recognize.

The hallway was prestigious too. Black candles lined it, lighting my way as I walked forward.

“Hello?” I called out again, but I felt nervous this time, like I didn't really want anyone to answer.

The hall led to an empty kitchen, but whoever was calling my name was getting louder. It looked like someone had been in the middle of preparing dinner but for some reason stopped, leaving a bit of a mess in their wake. I couldn't help but notice there was a steak knife just laying out. I hesitated for just a moment but then swiped it off the counter, knowing it would make me feel safer. I knew I probably wouldn't win a fight with it, but at least it would be better than no protection, since I had no idea where the hell I was.

“Yoohoo!” The voice called out again, “Keep walking through, Grace, honey. You are wasting time, dear.”

I walked slowly in the direction of the voice and entered into a large dining room. Once again everything thing was black and white as the theme seemed to be in this place. The table was black and could fit at least 45 people at it, and at the very far side head of the table, there was a woman wearing sunglasses and a headscarf, and her light blue dress was the only pop of color in the place.

“Welcome, darling,” The woman said ecstatically as she popped a piece of what looked like steak into her mouth. “Please, have a seat. We only have a little bit of time to chat, and there's so much to tell you.“,

I took **the** seat at **the** end of the table nearest to me where I noticed a white plate with my own **piece** of steak **on it**.

“I'm sorry,” I said quietly, “But who are you? And where am I?7

The woman just smiled and waved me off. “It doesn’t matter where we are dear, only that we are here,”

I frowned. “I don’t understand...”

“No, no, of course not, dear. But you will, Just not today. Now, have so much to show you, and not a lot of **time**, are you ready?”

“Ready for what?” I asked.

The woman just smiled, and I was no longer in the dining room table, I was in the corner of the same dining room, now it was full. Laughter echoed off the walls, people were dressed to the nines and dancing, and a large tree was decorated in the corner. I seemed to be in a party of sorts, but didn’t understand the sudden change.

“Did you hear?”

I turned toward the voice, but the woman wasn’t talking to me. She was turned toward her friend who was grabbing dessert off the side table on the wall.

but

“Did I hear what?” The younger woman questioned.

They both looked to be in their early 20s and were by far the youngest

at

this

party.

“About the prophecy,” The girl with dark brown hair cried out in exasperation. “They **say** it’s been foretold that a girl has been chosen to bear the weight of the sins of all supernatural beings, and she will bring them all to peace!”

“They’ve been saying that for years.” The redhead rolled her eyes. “There is nobody coming to save anyone.”

“I know they’ve been saying it for years,” The dark brown hair girl replied. “But they never said one has been chosen before.”

Her friend thought about it for a moment before asking, “But what does that mean? Do you think it will affect us?”

The dark hair girl shrugged. “I have no idea, but I hope not. To bring peace like that means to live through utter chaos, and I don’t want to do that.”

The redhead laughed. “Agreed.”

Suddenly, I was back at the table in the black and white hall with the only color being the woman across the table’s dress.

“Do you understand now, child?” She asked. I couldn’t see her eyes, but I knew she was looking at me with. that I didn’t understand.

atensity

I shook my head.

“No.” I told her honestly. “I don’t understand any of this, at all

“You are the chosen one, my dear,” The woman said sharply. “Start acting like it!”

The room started spinning, and I grabbed for the arms of my chair to hold onto, but there was nothing to hold on to as it all disappeared into nothingness, and I was next.

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I awoke with a gasp, my body flailing in an upward direction.

Hey, hey,” Rhys’ familiar voice met my ear as his arms snaked around my waist, stabilizing and comforting me all at once. “You’re okay. Everything is okay.”

I leaned away from him as a dizzying sensation took over, and felt my stomach churn.

“Can someone grab a-”

But throw up waits for no one, and I puked all over the floor. My body was in more pain than I ever remembered being in. It was like a pulse of energy almost that I couldn’t control in the slightest.

“Never mind...” Rhys called out; his voice so loud in my ears as he pulled the hair out of my face till I was done.

“Too loud.” I told him as I sank back into the bed.

“Is she aw-” Sawyer’s voice called out, but he stopped dead in his tracks as he looked at the scene in front of him. “Ah, okay. I see. Lemme just grab a trashcan, and something to clean that up, then I’ll check her vitals.”

I closed my eyes trying to block out the dizziness. If I had known I was going to wake up feeling this awful, I would have never chosen to wake up at all.

“Where am I?” I asked Rhys when I could open my mouth without chucking everywhere.

My eyes were still closed, but I knew Rhys well enough to sense his relief fade to confusion and worry, and that his frown was back on his face.

“At the cabin, still. We just moved the bed down, so you’d be more comfortable. Do you not remember being here?” His

tone laced with worry.

“I do.” I answered. “Just wanted to make sure I wasn’t dreaming again.”

I could feel Rhys’ confusion through the bond, but I didn’t feel like explaining to him everything that had happened to me quite yet. Not when I felt this shitty.

“Gracie, I’m so sorry,” Rhys’ voice broke, and I opened my eyes despite the dizziness to look at him. His eyes were red with bags under them. He looked utterly dejected and exhausted. He didn’t in any way look like the Alpha King I knew he was.

“Why?” I asked in confusion.

“I almost killed you.” He stated in horror that I would even ask that.

“My choice.” I told him, closing my eyes again as Sawyer came back over to us and the spinning room made me want to hurl again.

“You don’t understand...” Rhys pleaded with me.

“No.” I told him. “I’m here. I’m okay.”

That was too much for Rhys apparently. He broke down, burying his head in my neck, his tears soaking my ripped shirt.

**Wait.** Ripped? Damn. I liked this shirt too. That was a disappointing realization.

“Grace? Can you open your eyes for me **so** I can start my exam? Sawyer asked.

Not unless you want me to throw up on you.” I told him, feeling that an exam was unnecessary at this point. I was alive “and that’s what mattered.

“Dizzy?” He asked in surprise.

“Very.”

“Pain level out of 10?”

“8.5.”

“That high?” Again he sounded surprised.

A large part of me wanted to lie because Rhys was **so** distraught I didn't want to add to it, but there was no real point in lying right now. It was obvious, at least **I** thought it was, that I **was** not in good condition.

"Yes."

"Where?"

"Everywhere. And you're too loud."

Sawyer ignored my last comment and placed his cold stethoscope touched my chest, and it took all I had not to **jump** away from it. He seemed satisfied with whatever he heard because next I felt the blood pressure cuff go around my arm, and he moved the stethoscope to go under it.

"Well, the good news is all your vitals are completely stable," Sawyer stated as I heard him dig through his bag.

"Did the ritual work?" I asked.

"It appears so," Sawyer answered sort of reluctantly. "I see no **signs** of any bindings. You both are lucky it worked."

“Good.” I answered. “That’s good.”

“Come on, let’s go ease your pain with a bath,” Rhys said, his voice husky with exhaustion.

I nodded and he scooped me up carefully. The bath soothed a lot of my pain, and getting clean made me feel even better. I’m convinced hot water is healing.

By **day** three, I was feeling almost completely normal. As much Rhys had wanted a little getaway, I don’t think he expected for us to stay that long at the cabin. But he stayed by my side the whole time. I woke up several times as he was handling work **things**, but when I was awake, all of his attention would turn to me, no matter what he was doing before.

Rhys asked me what I needed, and I told him I just needed to **sleep**, and that’s what I did for 2 more

“Gracie?” Rhys called out as I tied my hair into a loose knot at the base of my neck.

“Yes?”

“Are you well enough to head back tonight?” He asked hesitantly.

“I’m good.” I told him, pecking his cheek as he wrapped his arms around my waist.

“Promise?” He asked.

“Promise.” I answered, but it was barely a whisper.

“Okay... Then there’s one thing I want us to do before we leave He sounded hesitant, so I realized right away what he wanted.

“You want me to shift?” Lasked so he didn’t have to ask me.

“Yes,” He breathed.

“Okay, then let’s go do it.” I smiled at him, and the relief on his face was palpable.

We went outside in the snow, but I was only wearing a pair of biker shorts and a sports bra. And it was freezing.

“So how does this work?” I asked, fighting to keep my teeth from chattering.

“Have you heard from your Lycan at all?”

“No? But Ethan made it sound like it’s just another version of me, so I’m not sure I’m supposed to.” I answered, moving

from side to side to stay warm.

“Okay, well for me, I just have to envision my other form and allow it to take over.” Rhys said, like it was easy.

“Okay.”

I shook my body out and then tried to envision growing into what only a couple weeks ago I had called a monster. But nothing happened. I didn’t grow claws and fur. My torso didn’t elongate. My arms and legs didn’t change shape. I just stood there, cold.

'I give you control,' I tried to tell my monster if she was in there, but if she was, she didn't care. She didn't want to come forward. I tried to shift at the same time as Rhys. We tried go on a run throughout the forest. We tried meditation. But again, nothing worked.

My whole body was shaking and a sob raked through me when finally accepted it.. Everything I had went through over the last week had been useless and a waste of time because I might not be bound anymore, but I still couldn't shift.

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Aaaaaahhhh, more please AO

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I watched Grace closely. She sat as far away from me as the car allowed, her body shaking like crazy from the cold. The heartbreak she was feeling was flooding the bond, and I knew it was only a fraction **of** what she actually felt, and right now, **there** was nothing I could do to help. She wanted space, and I would give her a little since it was **my** fault she felt like **this**.

I couldn't shake the image of her in the snow. Her knees drawn up to her chest in utter defeat. The sobs that racked through her body. The sound of her cries. She had looked so broken. She was so broken. And it was my fault... I had thought that calling upon Sandra to help free her wolf had been a good idea. I had wanted her to be free so she could protect herself like she had with Ethan. All I had wanted was to give her a weekend away and some freedom... However, all I managed to do was make her feel like a failure.

The only thing I could do was hold her tight. I hated that I was the reason she felt so heartbroken. I had been so **sure I** was doing the right thing for her, only to completely let her down.

Eventually, Leon had forced us to come inside, worried even though we were wolves and Lycan, we were going to freeze to death. Grace had carefully untangled herself and walked inside without a word. Silently, with all the unspoken words between us, packed everything in the cabin that had been scattered all over the cabin over the **last** 6 days.

And now, we sat on opposite sides of the car, the silence hanging heavily over us as we approached the packhouse. She hadn't moved in over an hour. Her blonde hair sat in a messy bun on top of her head, and she was turned in her seat, so she was staring directly out the window. Tears were still pooling in her eyes, but she was no longer letting them fall. I knew there was nothing I could say to make her feel better. She had been through hell this weekend and I seemed to be nothing but fucking useless to her.

"Grace?" I tried when the car stopped.

But she didn't move. I wasn't even sure she recognized that we weren't moving anymore. She just stared out at whatever she was looking at but not really seeing.

I got out of the car, and walked around to her side, opening it up slowly, so as not to alarm her. She blinked in surprise as the sunlight hit her face, and she looked up at me helplessly.

"Rhys?" She whispered in surprised.

I held my hand out to her, and she took it reluctantly. There was something about the way she was slowly moving that triggered my brain into thinking your hurt.

"Are you hurting?" I asked, not sure I really wanted to know the answer.

“Hurting?” A small sad smile crossed her lips. “Yes. But hurt? No.”

I sighed and pulled her into my side a little tighter.

“I’m **so** sorry.” I told her.

She shrugged me off, putting a little space between **us**.

“You have nothing to apologize for.” She said, turning to face me, but there was still a horrible few inches between us.

I have every reason to apologize.” I told her, forcing myself to respect the distance she put between us.

“**No.**” She placed her hand on my chest, the first contact she had initiated in hours.

“Grace...”

No. You did what you thought was right. You were trying to help. You believed in me even when you shouldn't have. It "wasn't the bindings that was holding me back from shifting. My wolf or Lycan or whatever the hell I am **isn't** strong

enough to shift. I am not strong enough to shift."

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"Baby, no," I cupped her face, begging her to hear me. "You are the strongest person I know."

“Then what?” Her voice broke. “I’m not worthy enough to have Lycan? Am I that broken?”

“You are beyond worthy, my love,” I tried to comfort her, but I knew nothing I said would be good enough. “Maybe when you partially shifted, it took a lot out of her. Maybe she just isn’t ready to make an appearance. She seems to be a bit of a showoff, breaking out of the bonds at important moments.” I tried to tease, but as soon as the words were out of **my** mouth, I knew they had fallen flat.

“Come on, we have meetings to attend.” Grace said, ignoring my words because she didn’t believe them.

“Gracie...”

She didn’t answer, and I knew her well enough to know at this time she wasn’t going to talk about it anymore. I reached out for her hand though, and she didn’t pull away, so I took that as a win.

We walked into the packhouse, and the mask of being a leader slipped on like it was second nature. The usual scowl that I wore painted itself on my face without me even realizing I was doing it. Grace’s eyes were still rimmed red, and everyone stared at us, but to her credit, she didn’t falter. She just walked right past everyone and up the steps to my office

Well, actually, right past my office into Leon’s where everyone was sitting on the floor with books and papers scattered

between them.

“You’re back!” Maizie exclaimed happily, jumping to her feet to wrap Grace in a hug.

Grace stiffened for just a moment but then relaxed in the younger girl’s arms, hugging her back.

“What are we working on?” I asked, as they pulled a part and Maizie returned to her spot on the floor.

“Two different things actually,” Maizie answered. “Michael and I are currently mapping out what we know the program looks like. Where they sleep, where the kids sleep, where we know things are, and what we know they hold there. Sawyer and Leon are currently doing a deep dive into some of Sawyer’s med books to find –” She trailed off looking at Sawyer and Leon. I wasn’t sure she actually knew what she they were looking up, or if she didn’t want to say it for some reason. “Something.” She finally said with a shrug.

“What are you searching for?” Grace asked them quietly.

“I’m looking for case studies on the effects of trauma on the wolf.” Sawyer told her.

I felt myself stiffen, no wonder Maizie wasn't sure if she should say anything, but Grace just nodded and sat down on the floor near Maizie and Michael and began to skim one of the books that was on the floor.

I grabbed a chair and my laptop from my office and began answering emails. Being away for the last week had put me more than a little behind in work. I was lucky to have great people who worked for me and took care of a lot of stuff in my absence, but I was the pack leader and there were things that I was needed for.

Around 5 o'clock everyone started putting their things away, but I was still pretty engrossed in work. Grace, who normally waited for me, came over and kissed my cheek, saying, "I'm going to grab dinner with Alana and Maizfe, is that okay?"

"Do you want me to come with?" I asked, already knowing the answer.

"**No, that's** okay, You can keep working. I'll meet you upstairs later."

**I nodded**, but my stomach clenched. I didn't want her to leave my sight. I knew that was unreasonable, but I kept almost losing her. And as **she** walked through that door, I wondered if we would ever be okay again...

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I **sat** down at the table with Alana and Maizie in the corner by the window. There was no snow here, but the air was definitely chilly and seeping in through the window. However, I barely felt it. I felt numb inside. How could I have **been so** Stupid to believe that I was anything special? I was nothing but weak human, who had been bound for no reason. That partial shift had been, I don't know, self-defense, and that voice I had heard, I had just imagined it. I had just imagined all of it. My brain's way to cope or some stupid shit like that. That's all it seemed like anyway. No amount of begging would change that either.

Alana and Maizie were both kind and didn't bring up that anything was amiss. They both kept trying to include me in the conversation even though I kept zoning out, but I appreciated their effort. I had never really had this before. I had never had anyone who really cared that I was down or in today's case, wallowing in self-pity. I would have been called every name in the book at my old pack, but they didn't miss a beat. Instead, they talked about when I wanted to have my wedding, and what kind of dress did I want, and tell me all about the proposal. And when I didn't give much, they gushed about what they thought I would look good in and shared their own ideas about the things. I appreciated them pretending that nothing was wrong, and grateful that they didn't press it.

I nodded along and occasionally gave my opinion, but when the dining room started to clear out, I didn't know what I was supposed to do and felt frozen. I couldn't go back to my room and face Rhys again.

"Come on," Alana smiled gently, looping her arm through mine. "Let's go watch

a

movie."

I followed Alana and Maizie to Alana's room and plopped onto her bed. Maizie and I both hadn't seen very many movies, so we deferred to Alana about what to watch. I guess it wasn't totally just me in the pack that had been isolated, but I had just been more isolated than the others.

The first movie was a romcom that I wouldn't say I liked, but I hadn't felt was believable either. They had fallen in love a little too quickly for my taste, but to each their own. We then watched a werewolf film made by humans, which Alana critiqued the whole time, saying that 90% of the movie was just simply not true.

By the third movie, I could barely keep my eyes open and didn't make it through the opening credits. The bed was just so comfy, and to be surrounded by two people I considered to be friends, I felt safe.

It was light the next time I woke up, and I probably would have slept longer, except there was an incessant pounding on the door. Alana rolled out of bed with a groan and headed toward the door.

“Yes?” Alana asked sleepily.

“Is my mate in there?!” A voice demanded, laced in worry.

I peeped my eyes open, the voice was familiar, but I really didn’t want to get up.

“Oh!” Alana gasped, suddenly fully awake. “Uh yea, **we** fell asleep watching a movie last night.”

The person brushed past Alana and crouched down in front of me. My eyes refused to focus on him, but his scent filled my nose, and his hand grazed my cheek.

“Gracie?” He purred.

“No.” I told him closing my eyes again.

“No?” I could feel the hurt flood our bond, but I didn’t want to **feel** it, so I shut it off.

“Not ready.” I told him, refusing to open my eyes again.

“Gracie... It’s 10 am...”

No.”

“Can I at least take you to our bed?” He asked.

I gave a non-committal noise, but he took it as a he wins and scooped me up into his arms off to somewhere I didn’t know. And honestly, the truth was that I didn’t care. He could have dropped me off into a volcano and I wouldn’t have cared. Being melted alive by lava seemed niore appealing than being a fake Lycan, which is what I was.

I was gently set on something soft, and it took me while to realize it was my bed. Rhys was kind and gently wrapped me up in the blankets, so I was basically in a cocoon before laying down on the other side of me.

“You’re staying?” I asked in surprise as he wrapped his arms around me, pulling me in close to him.

“For as long as you need me.” He answered, and I let myself drift off to dreamland again.

The next time I woke up, I was sweaty from being wrapped up in all the blankets and Rhys, but he was sound asleep beside me, and I really couldn’t get myself to care how I felt. Everything felt surreal. I didn’t belong in bed with the Alpha King. I didn’t belong anywhere. I was nothing. So, I let myself drift off again.

The next time I woke up, I didn’t feel quite as tired, but I also couldn’t fathom getting up even though I had to pee. I could hear Rhys typing away from the other side of me, but I kept my back to him. I knew he probably sensed I was awake, but he didn’t say anything, which I was grateful for. I just stared at the wall, letting my mind fade to nothingness again.

I waited as long as I could, but I eventually got up to pee. Rhys eyes never left me as I walked across the room and shut the bathroom door, but to my relief he didn’t say anything. When I was done, I made my way back to the bed, crawling back under the blankets, much to Rhys’ disbelief, sinking back into the nothingness, hoping to stay there for a while

longer.

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I had never truly felt guilt before. I had felt bad for some of the things I had done. I had empathy for the families that I had hurt on rampages. I had felt for those whose lives had been effected by the endless wars of werewolf kind, I had even felt bad for not rescuing Grace quicker from the Red **Blood pack**, and the way things had gone down with my brothers. But none of those had even come close to this. None of those things had eaten away at my soul **and fell** like **they** were killing me in the same way this was. No. This was different.

It had been nearly a week and Grace hadn't moved. Not really anyway. She got up to pee, but that was it. She'd always just crawl right back into bed. I couldn't get her to talk and if I wanted her to eat and drink I had to hand feed her. Otherwise, she just laid there in a burrito of blankets, sleeping or **staring** at the wall. Nothing I said, seemed to matter. I'm not even sure she was hearing me at all.

Sawyer, had been in several times to check her out, but she never acknowledged his presence and as far as he could tell there was nothing physically wrong with her. My mate had survived being beaten nearly everyday of her life for years. She had all but been abandoned by her family all those years **ago**. **She had** survived so much. But I was the one who broke her.

"How is she today?" Sawyer asked quietly as he brought in two trays of for us, I hadn't left the room since we had gotten back.

I looked up from my laptop at my little mate who was currently asleep or pretending to be asleep; I honestly couldn't tell.

"No change." I answered, turning back to my laptop.

"Has she eaten today?" He questioned.

"4 bites **was** all I could get her to eat." I sighed.

"Rhys, if this continues, we're going to have to take her to the clinic and give her iv fluids and a feeding tube. I'm worried that her body is going to start shutting down."

**For** the first time in a while, I felt a flicker of panic come through the bond. I **wasn't** glad that the hospital still **scared her**, but I was **glad** that she **could feel** something and let me in that little bit even if she hadn't exactly meant to.

"I'll try harder to get her to eat and drink, "I promised. "But I'm not traumatizing her."

"Traumatizing her is better than killing her." Sawyer argued.

“I said not right now. Give her a few more **days**. She **just** needs more time.”

“We don’t have time, Rhys!” **Sawyer** shot back in exasperation. “We are no closer to anything than we were 2 weeks ago!”

“I know.” I said lowly. “But she needs time, and I’m going to give

to her.”

My brother glared at me. Things had been weird between **us since Caleb** had come back. **As far as I knew**, the two hadn’t had a proper conversation **yet**. And Sawyer was pissed at me for putting Grace through what I did, and not only that, but then also pissing off the witch who then left us **a** freaking cryptic as hell note.

“In case you have forgotten, you **are** the Alpha King.” **Sawyer** said through gritted teeth.

“I have not forgotten.” I replied coldly.

“Then act like it.” He bit out before storming out of the room.

**Grace** flinched at the slamming of the door, but otherwise, there was no physical reaction to what had just happened. **She** had **long since shut the bond** down when she had **felt** me at it's edges. And I hated that she didn't **trust** me with what she was feeling.

I moved to sit in front of where she was laying on the bed, her tray in my hand.

“Gracie?” **I tried**, but her eyes **were** closed even though now I **knew** she **was** awake. “Can you please eat and drink **something** for me?”

She didn't move. I knew she had heard Sawyer, but she seemed unable to **just unfreeze**. **She** had been through so **much hurt, that I just didn't have any idea** how to help. She didn't **cry**, so I couldn't **wipe** her tears away. She didn't **scream** to just let it all out. **She** just laid **there, letting it eat** her away. **Destroying** herself from the inside out. And all I could do was hold her, and whisper that things were going to be alright. I **kept telling her to take** all the time **she**

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needed, but the truth was, I didn't want to wait. I needed her. I needed her to be alright. I needed her to help me. I needed her mile. Her laugh. I recen **every** single thing she could bring me, and I was the reason she couldn't **do any** of that, I was who broke **her**.

A knock at **my** door, pulled my attention away from my sweet girl, and I got up to answer it, tabling the food for later.

“Leon, what can I do for you?” I asked.

“I need you to see this.” Leon stated, his voice serious.

“See what?” I asked in confusion, all he was carrying was a children’s book, and an old one at that.

He raised the book, and shut my bedroom door, forcing me fully into the hallway. Whatever this was, he didn’t want Grace to **see** it.

“What is that?”

“It’s a children’s book.” Leon answered.

I frowned. “I can see that for myself.” I retorted. “Why did you bring it to me?”

“Read it.” Leon shoved the book at me.

The Alpha’s Choice.

I felt my frown deepen.

Once upon a time there was an Alpha, whose mate **was special**.

She had magic in her veins, and they all feared her.

She could rain blood on them and turn the sky dark with only a flick of her hand.

She was kind, but the world made her cruel.

The Alpha had to choose whether to save her or his pack.

The prophecies told of greatness in their reign,

But the Alpha broke her instead,

And the Alpha's choice was made.

What the fuck did I **just** read?

## The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

### Chapter 147

There was something about the nothingness that I couldn't escape. I didn't want to leave it. I didn't want to escape it. I didn't want to feel anything at all. No. I didn't want that. I didn't want anything that would come out of life. Rhys kept begging me to come back to him, but I couldn't. I couldn't cut my way out of the ocean I was drowning in, and most of all, I didn't want to.

If I let myself, I could feel his guilt and dejection, but I didn't let myself. How he was feeling after how everything had happened, wasn't my problem. I **was** being selfish for the first time in my life and I liked it.

Rhys had done almost everything he could think of to get me out of bed. Both Sawyer and Leon had both been in to try and talk to me. Both had told me what a difference I had made since entering their lives. And how much they missed just talking to me and how worried they all were. But I barely heard them. I couldn't make myself care about what they were saying. It didn't matter. I didn't matter. But it didn't stop them from trying.

Rhys never left my side. He did work sometimes from our little chair in the corner. But that was about it. The only time I was ever out of his sight **was** when he or I went to the bathroom, and sometimes when he showered, but that was it. And I couldn't say I cared one way or the other. The nothingness told me that it didn't matter. But a small part of me didn't want to be alone.

The door opened slowly, but I didn't move to see who it was, knowing it was either Sawyer or Leon here to talk to Rhys or have another failed attempt to get me out of bed. I just closed my eyes again, forcing the panic back, just beyond the wall I had built up to hold all feelings away from me.

"Thanks for coming." I heard Rhys say, which surprised me a little, but not enough to look. "I just don't know what else to do..."

"I can't believe it took you this long to call me in here." A familiar voice cut through my fog.

"I thought we said no kids in the room," I grumbled, refusing to look at them.

I felt surprise flood our bond, I hadn't spoken to well anyone in, I don't know how long.

"That was before you refused to get out of bed and eat for 2 weeks." Rhys replied, kissing my forehead. "This is now, and desperate times call for desperate measures."

I didn't dignify his response with an answer. Two weeks? He must be exaggerating. That seemed ludicrous. But then again, time was nothing to me. Everything was nothing to me.

"I have permission to do whatever's necessary?" Maizie asked, a hint of excitement in her voice.

"Within reason..." Rhys answered nervously. "You can't break her..."

"Alpha King, I hate to break it to ya, but she's already broken. And you can't fix something by breaking it more. So, with all due respect, get out, and let me talk to Grace."

"I'm not leaving her." Rhys growled.

“She’s not going to do anything while you sit here and stare at her, so go away, you can wait outside the door. You’re hovering. And that’s the last thing she needs.”

“She’s fragile, Maizie.” Rhys pleaded for her to understand something, but what I wasn’t sure.

“I’ve got this, but get out.”

I didn’t have to look to know that Rhys was giving her a hard look, but eventually, his feet shuffled across the room, and the door shut, actually left.

“Why would you do that?” I mumbled tiredly.

me he

“Because you are far too comfortable with your mate here.” She answered, and I felt the other side of the bed dip down before suddenly I was moving up and down.

I rolled over in exasperation to see Maizie/jumping.

“What are you doing?” I questioned in irritation.

“You know exactly what I’m doing.” Maizie answered easily, but didn’t stop.

“I don’t want to get up. I don’t want to talk. I don’t want you here. Please just leave me alone.”

“No.” The word was said so simply with so much self-assurance, I was almost sure that she would win in the end, even though I didn’t want her to.

“Why?” I bit out angrily.

“Because I don’t fail at missions.”

I scoffed. “I am not a mission.”

“My presence here says otherwise.”

I rolled my eyes, not giving her the satisfaction of a response. I was not a mission. I did not need her here. I was fine. I would just spend the rest of my life rotting away in this bed, not being a burden to anyone else.

“Grace,” Maizie sighed, plopping down next to me on Rhys’s side of the bed. “No one said any of this was going to be easy. But we need you out there, pot in here, pretending the world isn’t out there waiting for you.”

“There is nothing out there that needs me.” I mumbled.

“That’s not true.” Maizie answered in astonishment. “Those kids out there have grown accustomed to your help. They miss you. Sawyer, Leon and Alana want their friend back. Rhys is out there, desperate missing you, wanting you, needing you to come back to him. If he didn’t care, he would have never allowed me in here. If he didn’t care, he wouldn’t be working all those crazy hours trying to find something, anything to help you through this mess. Grace, you might not know it, but you are a light in this world to everyone who knows it, and as someone who has been through some **crazy** shit too, I get how heavy that darkness is. But you can’t let it take you out of the game, girlfriend.”

“I can’t shift.” I confided in a whisper.

“That’s what this is about?” Maizie asked in surprise. “They got the binds off and you can’t shift?”

“Yes. I am nothing special at all.”

“Get your ass up right now.” Maizie shoved me, so I all but rolled off the bed, barely catching myself before I hit the ground.

“Hey!”

Rhys’ concern flooded the bond, and the door immediately, but I wasn’t looking at him, my eyes were on Maizie.

“No hey’s. No complaining. Go get in that shower right now. Stop feeling bad for yourself. Stop the pity party and do something about it, god damn it. You are Grace. Your worth doesn’t lie in if you can shift or not. Your worth lies in your heart. You are a good, kind person, who has fought like hell to be here. Everything else is irrelevant. And anyone who thinks otherwise is thrilled to see you lying in this bed feeling like garbage. So, get up, and do something about it, if it isn’t enough!”

## The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

### **Chapter 148**

“Maizie,” Rhys said calmly, but there was a hint of danger in his voice. “I thought we agreed not to push.”

Maizie rolled her eyes, but there was a part of me that knew she was right.

“No.” She replied, not even the slightest bit scared that he was Alpha King. “You said, not to push... I never agreed to such a thing. She needs pushed.

“Maizie!” Rhys said sharply. “I mean this nicely but get out.”

“Not until she agrees to shower and then meet me on the training field.” Maizie pushed, her eyes meeting mine with a determination I could only ever dream of having.

I looked at both of them. There was something in Maizie’s fire that seemed to spark something in me. I still felt numb and useless, but there was a little edge. A tiny voice saying that I wasn’t done yet. I stared at her as she gave me a, ‘let’s play with fire’ look, but we had played with fire, hadn’t we? We had lost. Game over. I was incapable of anything special. But the look she gave me screamed, ‘try again’!

So, without agreeing to anything, I made my way slowly to the bathroom. A shower would feel nice. I felt grímy and gross. I couldn’t remember **if I** had showered when we had gotten back from the mountain, or if I had just crawled right into bed, but either way, if they were right, two weeks was a long **time** to just lie away.

I still felt like I was in a fog, and I slowly closed the bathroom door, and started the water before undressing. A part of me just wanted to crawl into its stream without bothering to take my clothes off, but that would **be** counterproductive. I could do this.

When I finally climbed under the stream of water and sat down just letting it hit me. **It** was like the sudden, the dam I had built over the last several **weeks** to hold back all of my emotions, broke. **A** sob made its **way up** my throat, and for the first time since getting back, I let it escape.

The bathroom door opened after a few minutes, but I didn't know if it was Maizie or Rhys **or** someone else entirely, but I didn't really care. It wasn't until the shower door opened after a few minutes, and a pair of boots clouded my vision, and the water was no longer hitting my skin, but his.

He didn't have a shirt on, but his jeans were now clinging to his body in a way that looked increasingly uncomfortable as **he** knelt in front of me **and** wiped away my tears with his thumb.

"Gracie," His voice was desperate, begging me to understand something that I didn't.

"I'm sorry." I gasped out, the full flood of everything hitting me so hard it physically hurt. I had been tortured my whole life. I had never been wanted. I would never be good enough. I was only **ever** meant to rot away, and be something everyone could destroy. That was my purpose, I had been naive to think otherwise. I had been naive to believe I was worthy of anything else. "I understand if you want to **reject** me."

“Reject you? Why would I want to **reject** you?” There was a fierceness and an anger that I hadn’t expected in his voice.

I looked up and met his eyes for the first time in a while. All I could see was distress and exhaustion in them, and I knew I **was** the cause of both.

“I’m not enough.” I told him honestly as another sob wracked my body and I rested my head on my knees, refusing to look at him anymore.

“If anyone is not enough, it’s me, **Gracie.**” He said quietly, shifting slightly so **the** warm water would hit us both.

I looked at him in surprise. “What?! That’s not true! **You** saved me from them! You’re **perfect!**”

“But **I** can’t save you from yourself.” The raw emotion in his voice, shook me to my core. God, what did he mean? He couldn’t **be** serious. He **had** done **so** much. This was all me...

Oh god, this was all me.

I hesitantly reached out and touched his face, **the** anguish I could feel through **the** bond, melted away **as** soon as I touched him. I missed touching **him**.

“I’m sorry.” **It** came out barely a whisper, but I meant it this time.

“I’ve missed your voice.” He admitted. “I don’t like when you go quiet on me.”

“I –” but I didn’t know what I was trying to say. Going quiet was my **body’s** natural defense **system**. Up till now anyway. It was the **only thing that** i could control for so long.

“Don’t apologize,” Rhys growled, stopping me from having to say anything more. “I know why you do it. I know why you shut down. I understand, You deserve time to heal, Gracie. You have been through hells that I can’t even imagine, and these last two weeks, have been hell for me. But **you** needed it That’s why I didn’t push... You’re allowed to feel whatever you feel.”

“And what if I feel nothing?” I asked.

“Then i hope you let me sit with you in the nothing.” Rhys answered.

I ran my hands down his chest, and he shuttered, making me realize how deprived of touch he was. **I** shifted so I could rest my forehead on his.

“You are my everything, Grace. Please don’t leave me again.” His **voice** broke again, and I realized just how bad I was hurting him in my decision **to be** selfish.

“I won’t,” I promised, breathing him in.

His mouth kissed met mine hungrily, but it ended too quickly. The water no longer was warm,

**way.**

and the chill of **the** air had **me** shivering and not in the good

“Come on,” He said quietly, pulling me to my feet. “Do you think you can eat?”

I still wasn’t hungry, but I nodded anyway, eager to do anything to **ease** his worry. I couldn’t feel much, but god, I loved this **man.**

**Chapter Comments**

LIKE

## The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

### Chapter 149

I sat at the small table in our room that Rhys had had brought in for us. I had stared at my closet for a long time, unsure of what to wear, Rhys, noticing my indecision, had been kind enough to pull out a pair of leggings, and a long sleeve shirt for me. Apparently, while I had been cocooning in bed, **winter had** rolled right in. The mountain had seen it first. The mountain that I hated. The mountain I had been proposed to on. The mountain I had nearly died on. The mountain that had proved what I had always known: that I was nothing special.

“Stop staring,” I mumbled, moving a piece of toast slowly to my mouth. I really wasn’t hungry, but Rhys seemed to think I needed to eat.

“I’m just so happy you’re eating.” He said sheepishly, a slight blush tinging his cheeks.

“I ate.” I retorted with a little more fire than I had intended.

Rhys narrowed his eyes at me, “Three bites of

meal does not count as eating.”

I averted my gaze from his intense one. I didn’t like making him angry, but food didn’t sound appealing at all.

“You’ve lost weight, Grace,” Rhys chided.

I looked up at him in surprise. “Am I prettier?” I asked, Kinsley’s words running through my head. She had always said I was too fat, and no guy would **ever** want me. I wanted to be enough for Rhys.

The horror on Rhys’ face though made me look away.

“Gracie,” He said sternly, forcing me to look up at him again. “You have **always** been perfect to me. But I don’t **want** to see your ribs. I don’t want you fading away right in front of me. I don’t want to lose you because of **some** fad. I want you, and all of **you**, no matter what you look like. You are the **most** beautiful person in the world to me. And nothing could ever change that.”

My heart fluttered, perhaps even happily for the first time in a while. There **was** just something about this **man** that always seemed to know exactly what **I** needed.

“I wasn’t too fat?” I asked, feeling small. “I had gained quite a bit of **weight since** I had arrived.”

A possessive growl escaped Rhys’ lips, and his **eyes** flickered from their usual color to a darker almost black color.

“No.” He finally bit out, still fighting his wolf for control. “You will always look perfect to me. But I prefer you to be healthy and not wasting **away**. I love you for you, Grace. Your looks are only a small part of you. But as much as I love your looks, I **love your** mind too. I love you as a whole.”

“Even if I can’t shift?” I had asked him this already. I knew his answer, but I needed reassurance right now. “Even if I will never be able to shift?”

“Especially when you can’t shift.” He assured me, reaching out and running his fingers through my loose, still damp, hair. “I love you for all that you are, not all that you’re not.”

There was a knock at the door, but whoever it was didn’t wait for **clearance**, and just walked right in.

“Grace!” Sawyer gasped in surprise.

Inerable. I didn't love that

as inside of **myself**. **The** way I

I managed a small smile, but I couldn't meet his **eyes**. **He** had seen me at my absolute worst and knowing that made me fe Rhys had seen me at my worst... The way I had been nearly killed by the witch. The way I had tried to shift and broken wha had laid in that stupid bed for goddess knows how long. I could live with Rhys **seeing** me like that... He was my mate after all. But know Sawyer had? And Leon? Oh god, that was mortifying.

“What are you doing here?” Rhys asked tiredly.

Sawyer looked back and forth between the two of us in a stunned **silence** before finally shaking himself out of it and moving toward us.

“These came today.” **Sawyer** said finally, reluctantly handing over the vanilla envelope.

Rhys took **the** envelope cautiously as if he was nervous about its contents. It was odd

I wanted to ask what it was, but I didn't feel like talking anymore, especially in front of Sawyer. **Talking** was the one thing I could **control**.

**Rhys** slowly opened the envelope and pulled out the contents, which looked like pictures. I leaned **in** closer, wondering what **they** were,

But I immediately regretted it. The photos were grotesque. Mutilated bodies. Blood leaking from every orifice of their body. Marks of various ages. **Male**. Female. Black. White. Young. Old. I looked away, unable to look at them any longer. How could anyone do this?

“Who delivered these?” Rhys asked, his voice shaking ever so slightly with something I didn't fully understand.

“That's the thing... No one saw...”

“They were dropped at our front steps.”

Goddess, I felt sick.

“Just like the last ones?” Rhys asked, his anger evident now.

“Yes.” Sawyer answered simply, his eyes not leaving the pictures, but his face showed no emotions.

Wait... The last ones?

I looked at Rhys, hoping he understood my question without me having to ask.

He looked at me, his gaze softening just a bit as his eyes met mine, but the anger on his **face was** still palpable.

“This is the third one we have received since we got back...” Rhys explained, picking up the photos and shoving them back **into** the folder.

I grabbed one out of the pile though, there was something terrifyingly familiar about it. It looked to be a young kid, maybe 11 **or 12**. His hair was blonde **in**

a bowl cut. His back was torn apart by what looked like whipping marks. I had had enough of them that I knew what that looked like. I couldn't put **my** finger on

what drew me to the image, but the weirder part to me was that unlike all of the others, this kid looked to be... Alive.

## Chapter Comments

### The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

#### Chapter 150

A week had passed relatively slowly. We gradually were getting back into the swing of things, but every time I felt like we were close to something, I felt like we were going further from it. Like maybe everything was just a distraction. I couldn't for the life of me figure out what the true purpose of any of this. Why were kids being raised the way they were? Why had Grace been separated? How long had this been a plan? What were we missing?

I stared at my coffee cup, letting my thoughts swirl around in my head. All these things weren't adding up, but honestly, they weren't **the** main things consuming my thoughts. I was worried about Grace. She was talking again, but she still wasn't herself. At least, how I had known her since I had realized she was my mate. I knew that she hadn't really had the time to find herself, and I loved her no matter what, but I didn't like this version of her. I wanted her **to** chat with me. I wanted her to laugh. To smile. To be happy. And she wasn't happy. That much was obvious.

I looked across the dining room to where she sat in a window seat with Alana as they looked at something on Alana's computer screen. I wondered what they were

up to, but they were having girl time, and I knew I was being a little clingy. Grace could have her space, but she was not leaving my sight.

“**Hey** man,” Leon greeted as he sat down, blocking my view of Grace.

“What do you want?” I growled in irritation.

“Stop snapping at me.” Leon shot back tiredly. “I’m not who you’re mad at.”

“And who do you think I’m mad at?”

“Yourself.”

The answer was so simple, like he really believed it.

“Now why would you say that?” I sighed.

“You blame yourself for what happened. But Rhys, you couldn’t have known what was going to happen. You **were** trying to do what you thought was best for her,

and it didn't work out. And I'm sorry for that. But stop moping around. You can't make her happy if-

"I can't make her happy." I interrupted him. I was the Alpha King. I was cruel. I was heartless. I had dislocated people's joints when torturing them just for fun. I wasn't what she needed.

Leon looked at me in disbelief but there was also a look of sorrow and understanding in his eyes.

"She just needs time to heal." Leon said after a long moment. "She's had a rough life, and thinking it's just going to get better because she's here **isn't** real. We are at war, Rhys. And she might take a lifetime to heal from that. But she needs her mate to help her through it, not carry guilt that **destroys** you both."

I looked at my best friend. He had been there from the time we were young with me. Life was brutal. We weren't raised by loving and caring people who gave to shits. We were raised to carry burdens and be warriors. We were raised to wear our **scars** proudly. But what he was saying didn't match that. He somehow managed to come out of everything almost normal.

He had found his mate young, and had kept her a secret, knowing his father would have killed her. I saw all the beautiful ways Heather had changed him, and I had wanted it for myself. He understood this mate thing because he had lived it... He and Heather had always been nearly inseparable. I hadn't even

noticed when that changed.

A pain suddenly shot through my chest. He wasn't saying this just for my benefit... This was his truth... This is not just what **Grace** needs from me, her mate, but what he needs from his. That's why he understood this so **well**.

"**I'm** sorry I let Caleb come back."

Leon shrugged and gave me **a small** smile. "I'm not mad about it." He answered. "I understand. He's changed; anyone can **see** it. He's your brother. But I do think he's starting to lose it a bit stuck **up** there with all the kids. **Maybe we** should really try and figure out what to do with them now. And maybe, it's time to accept Caleb back into the pack."

I looked at Leon in shock but tried to keep my features schooled. "You really think I should do that?"

"You've been locked away with Grace, and that's fair and understandable. But I've been with him helping with the kids, and **Sawyer** has been on **Red Blood** pack tracking, and Caleb has been helping me. He's trying."

“And is that enough for you?” I asked hesitantly.

“I think it has to be.”

I nodded, thinking over his words. Currently, my brother **was** upstairs in the Alpha suite, probably in the middle of the lunch chaos that hopefully **would end** soon. I couldn't understand how he had changed so much so quickly. But then again, I had for **my mate**, and I couldn't imagine having **a daughter I didn't know about** either. His whole **life** had changed in a matter of moments, and maybe that was enough.

I looked around Leon so I could **see** the person who had changed me **forever**. I blinked. She was gone.

I frantically looked around the room, but there was no sign of her. The window seat was now empty. She **wasn't** in line **at** the buffet **station**. **She** wasn't making coffee or tea. She **was** not in the room at all. Where the hell had she gone? I reached for the bond, but I was blocked as I had been **so often these** days. I don't even think she was doing it on purpose. It was **just** one of those things that she did to protect herself. But **I** hated it. I hated it **so much**. **And** now she was gone...

I couldn't help it, the words came out broken, but I didn't care as I asked the question that was eating me alive.

“Where's Grace?”

