

## The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

### Chapter 181

I didn't sleep well after the last few days. My mind couldn't stop racing. Rhys had scared me when I realized he had been drinking. We had lost Leon and Caleb. Sammy **was** a wreck. The sweet girl followed me everywhere. Once we had finished our research and debrief, **Jack**, had told me **that** Kammy wouldng stop crying and was afraid I left her too. So, for the rest of the day, I let her be attached to my hip. When I went to help in the **kitchen**, she was on my back, when I went to the bathroom, she sat outside the door. And now, she was curled up in bed with me and Rhys, taking up half the bed. But all is aff everything felt just a little out of hand.

"Good morning, love." Rhys' sleepy voice called out from the other side of the bed as he pulled me close to him and kissed **my** neck. "You're up early

"Couldn't sleep." I told him, as I moved slightly to give him better access. "Plus, I promised that I would help get the kids to school this morning

His fingers grazed my side, and I inhaled sharply. Oh Goddess, I wanted him.

"We can't." I forced the words out of my mouth before I was in too deep to think straight.

“And why is that?” He asked, not stopping, and I squirmed with desire.

“Because Sammy is in our bed.” I told him.

He immediately took his hands off me and rolled back to his side **of** the bed with a groan.

“I forgot,” He mumbled.

“It’s okay.” I told him, rolling over to face him. “I’m sorry I broke the rules and brought **a** child in.”

Rhys reached out and touched my face **as** he stared at me with what looked like admiration. “I think these **circumstances** allow that rule **to** broken. She’s attached to you at the hip.”

“She’s scared everyone she loves will just disappear.” I told him. “I know the feeling **of** when the ground you’re standing on starts **to** shake. She **just** needs a little extra reassurance right now, and I don’t mind the extra hugs.”

“I can give you more hugs,” Rhys said eagerly.

I rolled my **eyes** at his dramatics. He literally sounded like a child. But I also loved this version of Rhys. Everyone else saw the harsh man who took **no** shit. Kill first, ask questions later. But I got this Rhys. This Rhys that probably hadn't been free to be exposed since he was **a** child. And I **was** happy to **be the** reason it got to come out to. I got to see the kind, gentle, wanting Rhys. The hurting Rhys. The Rhys that **was** childlike at times. The Rhys who **had** such **a** big heart, I forgot who he could be at times. But this Rhys was mine, and mine alone.

“You're so good with her.” He said after a long moment. “Do **you** want kids?”

I gave him a small smile. “I think that's part of my job **as** your mate and **wife**, seeing **as** those titles make **me** the Luna Queen.” I reached out and ran my fingers through his hair.

“No.” There was no more playfulness in his tone. He was back **to** the Rhys the world seemed to know.

“What?”

“No. If you don't want kids, then I don't need an heir. I can put that pressure on Sawyer's kids, or maybe **even** Sammy. You have **given up enough of your** life to do what other people needed to survive. I will never make you do anything that you don't actually want. Especially something **so big, life hanging.** and lifelong.”

“But what do you want?” I asked him uncertainly. I didn’t know what I wanted his answer to be honestly.

“It doesn’t matter what I want.” **He** answered with a little bit of a sad **smile**.

“It does to me,” I said quietly.

He gave me a real smile and kissed my hand. “The idea **of seeing** you pregnant with my pups would be **something I don’t think** I would **ever tire of** **I’ve** seen **you** with the kids here. The kids love you. You’re even **great** with the teenagers. I love watching **you with** them. I would **love to** see **you with a baby**. **Carrying** him or her everywhere with us. **To** meetings. **To** play. **To** after school activities. I would love to **experience everything from** the beginning **with you**. **But i**

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only want it with you if you want it to.”

“Okay,” I whispered.

“Okay?” He frowned in confusion.

“I might not **have** an answer right now. But that life sounds nice with you.” I told him. “I have been through so much. And I trust **you** to be a good father. but I don’t know if I’ll be a good mother, and until I do, I don’t want to have kids.”

“I respect that.” He answered, kissing my forehead. “But I know that you will be great.”

“Would you still want a child in this chaos?” I asked, remembering that there was a war happening just outside our doors.

Rhys looked thoughtful for a moment before saying, “I mean, do I think **there** are better times? Maybe. But as the Alpha King, I have learned **there is** always something going on. As long as my child is loved and knows their loved then I don’t think anything else really matters.”

I thought about what he said. He did have a few **years** on me. He had experienced more life than me. **Maybe even** multiple lives compared to **me**. I **wanted to** experience **life** too. But maybe... **Maybe** I would like experience it with a child **too**.

“I think we should let the two oldest kids stay with us,” I said after a long moment lost in my own thoughts. “And Sammy. **We can’t** replace **their** parents, but like it’s hard for older kids to find homes usually, and we could give them that.”

Rhys looked at me and then sat up a little to look over at Sammy. I turned too. The little girl had cried herself to sleep last **night, much** like the **night** before. Her hair was the same color as her dad's, sprawled out in a tangled mess. Her small arm was thrown up over her head, and her cheeks were flushed with sleep.

“I think I'd like that.” **He** answered, pulling me back to him, so he could kiss my **lips**.

I smiled. I wished that we could have more, but right now, **I was** happy to just have this moment with him. My heart was full, knowing **we** would have **a** full day in front of, and we would handle it, just like we always did.

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The next couple of weeks passed without any new incidents. About 10 of the kids have been placed into foster homes as per part 1 of our **plan**. We were working on the next phase of placements, adding in few more of the kids cards. The Alpha apartment felt emptier already though, and I didn't actually know if I liked it or not.

School had started too. I found myself more often than not, volunteering my time there. One, because I wanted to make sure my little ones were all **being** treated alright. And two, because I had never been to school before. It was a universal experience that nearly everyone got to experience, and now I was getting to in such a unique way. I was also learning so much. Not to mention that the completely empty apartment freaked me out.

After school, training would ensue. Rhys had found several elite warriors who were willing to help with the training. The youngest groups would work on strength and conditioning as well as self-defense during the 3-5p hours. The adults had the opportunity to train either 10a to **12p**, or 6p to 8p two to three days a week.

I had been to the training sessions everyday with Maizie and Alana. Maizie would go to the 'kids' one and then again with us to the adult one. It was clear that Maizie had been raised to be a weapon, but in some ways that was good. She pushed me and Alana to do better, which was a good thing at least, I kept telling my **very** sore body it was.

After the trainings, we would spend the next two hours in Rhys' office going over various plans, ranging from how we travel to how we utilize our warriors and set up border protection. Sometimes it was more business related - I wasn't a big fan of those meetings. They bored me.

No matter where I was, Sammy tended to be near by. She was traumatized after losing both her mom and dad in such a short time. Somedays, **she** wouldn't leave my side at all, other times, she just needed to know where I was. Other than Sammy, all of the other kids seemed to be adjusting well to the new changes, and we hadn't had any problems with people accepting them, which I **was** grateful for. I didn't know how I would have reacted if it had gone **any** different. I fear I would have lost it.

Today, I was in the school volunteering in Sammy's classroom. I had rotated classrooms on several occasions, but Sammy was being extra clingy today, **so I** was trying to be cognizant of it. I was currently cutting out shapes for the classroom board that the kids would decorate for Thanksgiving soon. I **think** that was the weirdest part of being here in the Alpha King's Pack **was** that they celebrated holidays. I couldn't remember anyone celebrating any sort of holiday. **I** would have assumed that Kinsley would have love forcing me to work on those big days, but I had no recollection of such a time.

Thanksgiving, I had learned was a time to be grateful. It involved a big meal, and according to Rhys, his pack had what they called the **Pack** games which occurred just after the large afternoon meal. As the Luna Queen, I was expected to organize it, but really this **was** something that Alana had **taken** over for me. I helped where I could, but she had an eye for design and planning things. She was also helping me plan my Luna ceremony and **my** wedding.

I rubbed my head tiredly and stared out the window. I sat up immediately **as I** caught a glimpse of blonde hair sneaking into the woods.

I stood up immediately.

“I’ll be right back,” I told Ms. Ellen, the 1st grade teacher.

She nodded at me, not bothering to pause her story time to ask any questions. Not that I would have stayed to answer them. Not when he should be in school. I walked briskly to the class I knew he’d have right now.

I threw open the classroom door, and scanned the room, startling everyone inside.

“Mr. Tate, I’m sorry to interrupt, but is Michael in here?” I asked when I didn’t see him.

“No.” Mr. Tate frowned at me, “No, he just went to the bathroom, should be back any minute now, is everything alright Luna Queen?”

“Yes, thank you.” I rushed the words, backing out of the classroom before anyone could ask any more questions.

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1. ss. She **was**

I didn't think. I didn't even consider going to find Rhys, I just took off toward the woods where I had seen Michael disappear in. I knew stupid, and that Rhys would be mad if he found out, but there was something different this time. My Lycan was on the edge of my consc pushing me forward as well. I caught Michael's scent easily. I had **never** really tried to track anyone before, but I followed him easily. I could see each of his last steps and I just knew I was going the right way.

Suddenly, he was in my sight, but I stopped when I saw a shadow jump from a tree down in front of him.

I dropped myself into the brush and tried to hide my scent with mud. I was close enough where they could **have** seen me, but I was hoping and **praying that** they hadn't. Both turned and looked in my direction, but they turned back to each other.

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**The** person Michael **was** meeting had grey hair that **was** spiked up. The man's eyes **were** a striking blue that narrowed at Michael and sent chills down m **spine. I had** met this man before. He had been one of my many guards when I had been imprisoned by my sister. He was as cruel **as** they came.

"We're you followed?" The old man demanded, and I held my breath, begging to Moon Goddess that I hadn't made a mistake in following **the young** fid.

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I closed my eyes and forced myself to breathe, but as quietly as I could. Oh goddess, this was not good, not good at all.

“You’re fine.” The little voice I was beginning to become accustomed to said, “Shut up

and listen.”

I took a shaky breath, and peaked through the brush, hoping it covered me enough to keep me hidden. This part of the forest was thick. I wouldn’t want in be here alone. I honestly wasn’t sure I wanted to be here at all. I also knew I would have to answer to Rhys later, and I was sure he was not going to be happy

“N-No sir.” Michael stuttered, his blond hair looking much darker in the low light of the forest. His stuttering also took me by surprise. He always seemed **so** calm, cool and collected.

“Hmmpf.” The grey-haired man huffed.

Whoever he was, I didn’t want him anywhere near me. Something about him gave me a terrible feeling.

Michael said nothing. I had always just thought he was a quiet kid, but he seemed to have been taught the same lesson I had; that quiet caused less trouble.

“Any new information?” The man interrogated.

“Not hardly since the last time you called for me.” Michael said sarcastically.

Goddess, I would have never dreamed of talking to a superior like that. I would have been beaten without a second thought. And right on cue, Michael was slapped by the-grey-haired man.

“Surely there is information to share!” The man tried angrily.

“All the meetings this week have been about the Luna Ceremony and placing the kids from the programs into school, homes **and** training. Making it harder for you to start trying to take them back.” Michael responded with no regard for his tone.

“Hmm. The Luna Ceremony?” The man asked with intrigue, focusing on the part that he seemed to accept as an answer. “Do they have a date?”

“Yes.” Michael responded flatly, his arms crossed across his chest.

“Well, what is it?!” The man shouted at him.

My heart sank. We had picked the date to be in about a month... We would get married the week before Christmas and then the Luna Ceremony would be during the time between Christmas and New Years. Rhys wanted it to be like a month long of celebrations and then come January we would be ready to travel and see our allies and enemies, setting ourselves up, so we would be able to attack.

“February 5th.” Michael responded without hesitation.

For a moment, I almost believed him. For a moment, my heart couldn't believe he would just give away some of the secrets from our meetings so thoughtlessly. It

took a moment for the truth to dawn on me... He lied to this man... He lied with a straight face... But why?

“Good work, son!” The older man exclaimed, hitting Michael’s shoulder in excitement. “We can use that information going forward!”

Michael nodded, but he looked anything but happy, in fact he looked kinda sick.

“I kept my side of the bargain,” Michael stated firmly. “Now it’s your turn.”

“Ah yes, you’re siblings. Iris is fine. Mark and Aaron are fine. **They** are thriving in the Program, the same way you did. Claire, however, is struggling a little. She’s just taking a little more time to adjust.” The man said casually.

I watched Michael’s **face** pale, even in the low light, I could tell that what was said, was not expected.

“You promised that Claire would not enter the program.” His voice shook as he struggled to fight for control of it.

“**Well**, I know, but the price they offered for her was just too good to pass up. You understand, right? She **was** such a powerful young girl.”

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**My** heart hammered in my chest so loud that I was sure that they could hear it. Michael was trying to **keep** his cool, but I could see the pain in his features

“Yes, I understand, sir,” The words were bit out like they were bitter. Like he hated everything about not just the man in front of him, but himself too

“Good.” The man answered with a satisfied smirk. “Now, you’ll drop these at the front door of the packhouse. Make sure no one sees you. I’ll keep your siblings as safe as I can.”

Michael nodded, but I knew he didn’t believe a word of it. I mean, it was clear that this was a manipulation tactic by the older man, but I understood. I had played the game even longer than Michael. I had only had to take care of myself, but Michael, he was trying to protect his siblings who were no longer under his protection. That meant the stakes were even higher. That meant, unfortunately, I understood why we were here.

The man gave Michael a pat on the cheek and started to walk away. “I’ll meet you back here in a week. Please do bring more information. “And an **invite** to the Luna ceremony would be lovely.”

Michael nodded, but the guy was no longer facing him. Michael stared after him from a while before turning to head home. I stood up from my spot **and** crossed my arms.

Michael sucked in a sharp breath when he saw me. I quickly ducked behind a tree, more than a little aware that there was a good chance that the other guy had heard Michael gasp. Michael kept walking, and when I felt that coast was clear, **I** followed him.

We were nearly out of the tree line when I grabbed at his **wrist**.

“We need to talk.” I told him seriously.

“What is there to say?” Michael said bitterly. “You’re going to go right back and tell **Rhys** that I’m a **spy**, and then I’ll be dead.”

“I’m not going to tell Rhys.”

“What?”

“At least not until I have all the information.” I answered tiredly. And it was true, I wouldn’t tell Rhys a word until I could defend the kid. “**Who was** that man?”

“He’s my dad.” His voice broke, and so did my heart for him.

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I drummed my fingers against the desk with a frustrated sigh. There was no reason my businesses in the city should be failing. It was clear to **me that** the Red Blood pack was behind it, but how they were doing it, I had no idea. They were one step ahead of us on every front. It was clear they were playing the long game. They had a plan. One that even my best warriors couldn’t seem to see. It was infuriating. There was nothing I could do to defend **against** would have to go on

the offensive soon or I would lose everything I had worked so hard to build. I, of course, could rebuild, but I didn't want to.

"Hey, did you see the accounts for Woodland's is down over 20%?" Sawyer asked as he walked into my office without knocking.

"Yea, I'm looking at it right now." I sighed.

"We need to do something to stop it from dropping anymore." He urged.

I felt bad... Ever since Caleb had disappeared again, he had thrown himself into work in the most unhealthy way. He was doing the work of my Gamma, a doctor, and a beta, which shouldn't be his responsibility. I had invited Heather to step in as Beta, since it was her right, but she had declined. She was barely hanging on. I made sure that I stopped by at least once a day to check on her, and make sure she ate, but there isn't much anyone can do for a broken heart, except to be there as they pick up the pieces on their own time. So, I was trying to be there.

Heather had said, that she didn't think the mate bond was broken, she still on a low-level felt her bond with Leon, which was reassuring, but I wondered what horrors they were doing to him, since he was completely at their mercy, and they had already used him as bait.

"And what do you propose we do?" I asked tiredly. I had used

everything in my arsenal. I had no idea how I was supposed to fix this.

“I don’t know.” Sawyer replied in exasperation. “Fire some people. Put more money into marketing. Sitting back is just giving them the opportunity to take more!”

“Sawyer,” I said as patiently as I could muster. “They are going to keep attacking our profits until we take them out. Any effort we put toward our finances is going to be fruitless. We have to just wait this one out, and things will recover once we win the war.”

“How can we take that chance?” Sawyer demanded angrily.

“Because if we lose this war, we lose those profits too. Right now, we have enough. We can still pay our people even with our losses for a long time. We can still fund our economy, especially if we focus on local places within our pack community. We just won’t have the large income coming in that we are used

to.”

“But holidays are coming up... The pack games... You’re wedding... Christmas... The Luna Ceremony... All of these things are big and expensive. What is your plan for those?”

“Alana and Grace have the budget for each of those things. I figured out how to make it work for the holiday season, then there is a very small budget for all other celebrations after that, as well as we have discussed saving what we can from those celebrations to use in the future. Alana is very organized, and Grace is lucky to have her to help.”

“Yea, a little weird that the person you chose to be Grace’s personal servant has now become her friend and is working admin for us.” Sawyer grumbled.

“That was always the plan.” I confided. “I always planned for Alana to be a safe person for Grace. And Alana is professional enough to know working vs when her and Grace are on their own time. But I picked Alana for that reason. I might not have known that Grace was going to be my mate, but f

en she’s

trusted Alana’s judgement of her, she just didn’t know I was doing that...”

“Wait... Did you do that for your other brides too?” Sawyer asked in surprise.

“I did. I didn’t use Alana every time, and with Grace really didn’t need Alana’s help in that department, but the only person who I brought home that Alana got close to was Grace which I find telling.”

“You don’t think Alana is close to Grace for personal reasons, do you?” Sawyer asked hesitantly.

“Like to give info to the enemy?” I clarified.

Sawyer nodded and swallowed hard.

“No.” I answered. “I’ve known Alana nearly her whole life. She grew up in this house. She’s not that kind of person. We may have a mole, but I’m certain **it’s** not her.”

“That sort of confidence is going to get us all killed.”

**I rolled** my eyes. Did I think we had a mole? Yes, absolutely. Did I try to keep most meetings to the bare minimum of knowledge **needed**? **Also** jen me did **that** mean we were safe? No. Not at all.

“Stop stressing about things out of our control. Until you can prove the mole to me, I don’t want to talk about it. There’s been less getting **out** since pre made our meetings smaller. Alana only just joined. I highly doubt it’s her.”

Sawyer looked around the room. I knew he wasn't happy with my answers, but they were my answers,

nonetheless.

"Wait, where is Grace? She's usually attached to your side."

"Oh, she's been at the school all week." I answered easily, turning back to my laptop. "She wanted to make sure the kids all settled in okay to the new routines, especially the ones who have moved into new homes. She was really worried about how they'd be treated, but there haven't been **any** issues **to my** knowledge. I think now it's just she's using it to learn a bit in a way that she also feels helpful."

Sawyer nodded absently. "Speaking of the kids moving out," Sawyer said suddenly sounding kind of nervous. "I think you should give Maizie a room **here**. She's almost 18, and I don't think she should have to uproot her knew life like that."

Was I surprised at my brother's request? Not really. But did it take me aback a bit? Yea.

"Grace and I have already agreed to keep the oldest kids with **us**." I told him. "Both Maizie and Michael aren't going anywhere. We just haven't told **them**

yet.”

He breathed a sigh of relief, and I could only guess why he cared. Not that it mattered. What mattered was that the kids felt safe, no matter what was going on outside these walls. And it was our job to make that happen.

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“He’s **my** dad.”

Those three words had repeated over and over in my head since the first time I had heard them. How does one respond **to that** sort of confession. Her ch tell him I understood? That my dad had ignored me for most of my life, and that his dad had kept me locked in a cell for years. **That** I understood ki cruelty, probably better than anyone. How could I say any of it and not make it about me?

Now, we were walking back toward the packhouse, and my heart was going to beat out of my chest. I needed to talk to Rhys... **And** I needed to talk to him before one of his guards told him what happened, and he made a rash choice to hurt a kid. Not that I think he would mean to, but **without** all the information, he would be harsh. I hoped the Rhys that I knew would understand. He had to...

“Listen,” I grabbed at Michael’s wrist before he could knock. He was putting on a brave face, but I knew he was terrified, I could feel **him** shaking **beneath** my grip. “I am on your side in this, okay? Rhys will get it, but if he starts to get mad, get yourself out of the room, okay? **I** will keep you safe, **but** you have to trust me.”

Michael swallowed hard but nodded all the same. I felt scared too. I had no idea how Rhys would actually react, I was just hoping it was my **Rhys** and **not** the Alpha King Rhys in there right now.

I knocked. I mean, I was the adult here... Michael was only 16, and he was doing what he had to to keep his family safe. At 16, sometimes, there **feels like** no other options. But me and Rhys, we would be an option for these kids. I would not let them walk the path alone like I had to.

The door creaked open, and I was met with Sawyer’s dark eyes.

“Oh.” I squeaked, “Sorry, are we interrupting something?”

“No,” Sawyer gave me a small smile. “No, I was just leaving, I have to get to the clinic, unless you need me to stay?”

“No, that’s okay.”

He nodded at us, but gave a curious look as he slipped out of the room. I watched him walk down the hall before entering Rhys’ dark office.

“Grace? Michael? Is everything okay?” Rhys asked immediately shutting his laptop so he could give us his full attention.

“Yes and no.” I answered, taking the seat across the desk from Rhys and gesturing for Michael to take the seat next to me.

“Okay...” Rhys answered, looking back and forth between the two of us. “Care to explain?”

I nodded and squeezed Michael’s arm to reassure him. “But I need you to promise not to lose your cool and think through this first, okay?”

“You’re making me nervous, Grace...” Rhys said.

“Promise me you’ll keep your cool.” I repeated.

“Okay... I promise to keep my cool...”

“Okay, so today, Michael came to me and said that he and his family are in trouble.”

Michael looked at me in surprise, but I needed him to also keep his calm. We needed to bring Rhys in on this, but that also didn’t mean he needed **the** whole truth. I knew how to spin it to make him see the truth... At least, I thought I did.

“Family? I thought your family was in the program?” Rhys questioned, his eyes narrowing in immediate suspicion.

“They are,” I answered before Michael could. “At least, some are. Today, he came to me because he’s scared. He’s been meeting his Dad at the **border every** couple of weeks in an attempt to protect them

Rhys sucked in a sharp breath, but I just continued. “Today he found out his youngest sister, Claire, who has some mental disabilities, was **admitted into the**

program.”

“How were you trying to protect them Rhys asked. I could tell he was trying to keep the anger from his **voice, but I knew he already knew the information.**

**\*I was giving the information, sir,**” Michael said quietly. **It was** clear he was ashamed **of** what he was doing, **but he** had felt that it won the con

“No, **tell** him the truth.” I said firmly, cutting him off.

“**What?**” Both Rhys and Michael said at the same time.

“Grace, that was the truth.” Michael said uncertainly, looking back and forth between Rhys and I.

“No. You left out a very important word.” I responded, and waited to see if he would get it. The look **on** his face was still dumbfounded, so I continued “Partial, you gave them partial truths.”

“So, we give you a home, and safety, and you chose to betray our trusts?” Rhys asked angrily.

“Rhys,” I warned.

“No.” Rhys cut me off. “Grace, he’s dangerous, and he’s been in on all of our meetings!”

“And he protected our most important info!” I shouted back. “He did what he thought he had to. That is something to be honored and **not looked down on** We all do things we aren’t proud of when it comes to protecting our families. To survival. You can be mad that some information has gotten **out**. You can **be** mad that he should have come to you first. But just because we gave him a house, and tried to include him, does not automatically mean he feels **safe!**”

“Grace” Rhys tried, but I cut him off.

“No. You don’t get to do that. Because that guilt of being safe while those you love are not, and not only that, but are actively in danger is something **that** is indescribable. You don’t get to judge him.”

“Are you finished?”

I gave him a look but gestured for it to be his turn. His dark eyes were angry, but he was much more in control than I had anticipated.

“If you don’t want me to punish him, then why did you bring him to me?” He asked, barely keeping the growl out of his voice.

“I’m so glad you asked,” I smiled a little mischievously, “With Michael’s permission, I want to use it to our advantage.”

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“No, that’s okay.”

He nodded at us, but gave a curious look as he slipped out of the room. I watched him walk down the hall before entering Rhys’ dark office.

“Grace? Michael? Is everything okay?” Rhys asked immediately shutting his laptop so he could give us his full attention.

“Yes and no.” I answered, taking the seat across the desk from Rhys and gesturing for Michael to take the seat next to me.

“Okay...” Rhys answered, looking back and forth between the two of us. “Care to explain?”

I nodded and squeezed Michael’s arm to reassure him. “But I need you to promise not to lose your cool and think through this first, okay?”

“You’re making me nervous, Grace...” Rhys said.

“Promise me you’ll keep your cool.” I repeated.

“Okay... I promise to keep my cool...”

“Okay, so today, Michael came to me and said that he and his family are in trouble.”

Michael looked at me in surprise, but I needed him to also keep his calm. We needed to bring Rhys in on this, but that also didn't mean he needed **the** whole truth. I knew how to spin it to make him see the truth... At least, I thought I did.

“Family? I thought your family was in the program?” Rhys questioned, his eyes narrowing in immediate suspicion.

“They are,” I answered before Michael could. “At least, some are. Today, he came to me because he's scared. He's been meeting his Dad at the **border every** couple of weeks in an attempt to protect them

Rhys sucked in a sharp breath, but I just continued. “Today he found out his youngest sister, Claire, who has some mental disabilities, was **admitted into the**

program.”

“How were you trying to protect them Rhys asked. I could tell he was trying to keep the anger from his **voice, but I knew he already knew the information.**

**\*I was giving the information, sir,**” Michael said quietly. **It was** clear he was ashamed **of** what he was doing, **but he** had felt that it won the con

“No, **tell** him the truth.” I said firmly, cutting him off.

“**What?**” Both Rhys and Michael said at the same time.

“Grace, that was the truth.” Michael said uncertainly, looking back and forth between Rhys and I.

“No. You left out a very important word.” I responded, and waited to see if he would get it. The look **on** his face was still dumbfounded, so I continued “Partial, you gave them partial truths.”

“So, we give you a home, and safety, and you chose to betray our trusts?” Rhys asked angrily.

“Rhys,” I warned.

“No.” Rhys cut me off. “Grace, he’s dangerous, and he’s been in on all of our meetings!”

“And he protected our most important info!” I shouted back. “He did what he thought he had to. That is something to be honored and **not looked down on** We all do things we aren’t proud of when it comes to protecting our families. To survival. You can be mad that some information has gotten **out**. You can **be** mad that he should have come to you first. But just because we gave him a house, and tried to include him, does not automatically mean he feels **safe**!”

“Grace” Rhys tried, but I cut him off.

“No. You don’t get to do that. Because that guilt of being safe while those you love are not, and not only that, but are actively in danger is something **that** is indescribable. You don’t get to judge him.”

“Are you finished?”

I gave him a look but gestured for it to be his turn. His dark eyes were angry, but he was much more in control than I had anticipated.

“If you don’t want me to punish him, then why did you bring him to me?” He asked, barely keeping the growl out of his voice.

“I’m so glad you asked,” I smiled a little mischievously, “With Michael’s permission, I want to use it to our advantage.”

## Chapter Comments

*LIKE*

## The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

### Chapter 186

I stared at my mate. She couldn’t possibly be serious, but the determined **look** on her face told me she was she wanted a kid to be way for as He was 16-1 understood that he thought he was protecting his family. I didn’t like it, but I got it. I couldn’t say what I would do in his nation. I didn’t really want to think about it if I was being honest. And Grace said he only gave partial truths... She seemed to think that mattered. I’m not ere it did. But I needed to know exactly what she meant.

“What?” I asked finally, but she wasn’t looking at me now. She was looking at Michael.

“Your plan is to use me?” Michael asked, his voice breaking slightly. I almost felt pity for him, but then I remembered what he had cost me, and I then it down.

Grace though had no issue with showing her emotions, and her face immediately softened. “You will not be required to do anything that you don’t want to do.” She told him, and I wished she hadn’t. If I liked her plan, then we would be using it, no matter what the boy said.

“Well, what is your plan, Grace?” I asked tiredly.

“We would control the information he gives. He’s been giving information that’s true, but also wrong. Like he said the Luna Ceremony had a date but gave the wrong date. In order to protect Michael’s siblings, we have to give some truths. But I think we set up a trap. We give some true things, so they really trust us, well, Michael, but it’s all leading to a trap that we set up when we’re ready.”

I stared at my mate, this time in total awe. How could someone **so** smart have kept her mouth shut for so much of her life?

“Michael, your thoughts?” I asked despite myself.

“I mean, it makes sense, I guess.” Michael said hesitantly. “But I need to get my siblings out of there... I can’t risk their wrath... If I get caught, they’ll kill them.”

I shared a look with Grace, and I knew we were on the same page.

“I know. And we’ll make sure that is a part of our plan.” Grace told him gently.

“So, you aren’t going to kill me?” The young kid asked, his eyes wide and terrified, so different from the kid I usually saw.

“No.” I answered before awkwardly clearing my throat.

Michael looked at me in confusion, Grace and I had talked about it. We wanted to invite him into our family. Him betraying us put a damper on it for me, but I knew whatever had happened before they came to me, had not dampened any of her ideas of it.

“Uh, how many siblings do you have Michael?” I asked.

“I’m the oldest of 5, sir,” Michael answered uneasily.

“Names and ages, please, so we have a reference?”

“You aren’t going to kill them, right?” He asked hesitantly.

“No, son. I just want to make sure as we start to plan, we have all the information we need.”

“Aaron and Iris are 14. Mark is 12. And Claire is 7...” He answered.

Oh lord. 5 kids. 5 kids all at once. We didn’t even have 1. I mean, we had Michael, I guess, but that didn’t count yet, did it? We weren’t actively raising him. We weren’t actively raising anyone. This was huge. And yet, it was the right thing to do, wasn’t it? My gut was telling me it had to be... I hope Grace wanted a big family because I’m not sure she was prepared to be a part of one or had even thought that far in advance.

“Well, that’s good to know, we’ll have to probably kick Sawyer out of the Alpha unit,” I said, making eye contact with Grace. “Maybe even add on to it

somehow.”

Her eyes lit up. I knew she understood what I was hinting at by her reaction, even if she hadn’t expected it to happen.

“What?” Michael frowned. I don’t understand.”

“Well, you know how we were trying to find homes for everyone!

Grace attet.

“Yea...” Michael said hesitantly. I could tell he was still confused at why he wasn't dead

“Well, we were thinking that you, and I guess, when your siblings come, that you would all continue to stay with us and join our Camila

Michael blinked as if he couldn't believe what he was hearing.

“You mean, even though I betrayed your trust, you're not only not going to throw me out, but you're asking me to be a part of your familyTM

“That's exactly what we're asking.” I responded.

Grace reached for the kid's hand, and pulled it into her lap, and he looked at her with wide eyes. “We're not asking you to think of us as your parents. **The** have those. As bad and complicated as they may be. And to be quite honest, your dad

isn't going to make it out of this alive, but I think you knew that already. What we want is to be a place where you can feel safe. A place that you can call home and not worry about anything other than normal kid stuff, we want to be that for you, if you'll let us."

He turned toward me, and I felt my heart pull a little. He was just a scared kid. And Grace was right to ask questions first.

"And all is forgiven?" He asked nervously.

"I still want to know everything you've already told them, but yes, you're a kid Michael. You deserve a place to call yours."

To my ultimate surprise, Michael threw himself at Grace. She opened her arms just in time as he flew into her. For the first time, the cool, calm, and collected, Michael shed tears. I couldn't imagine the weight we had just lifted off his shoulders. For the first time in my life, I felt like I **had truly** done the right thing. If I never got anything else in life, this moment would be enough because for one moment, I got to play a real hero, and I didn't have to use violence to do it. It was the day I started my family with Grace and the rest of our forever, we would never walk this life alone again.

Chapter Comments

LIKE

## The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

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“Riley, what’s wrong?” thys astra, his voice back to being commeNGING

“I’m sorry to bother you why, but to couple of things have come up. Fir being, aunty be incansable dight now that the main Luna Queen Grace left the school earlier, and never came back, and Sammy won’t ran down saying that the wind in the west. next problem we can’t find Luna Queen Grace. We searched the woude, and she’s nowhere to be Asund \*

“Hi, right here,” I waved as I stood up and came into his line of sight. “I’ll go to Santary, I think we’ve done are

Riley immediately breathed a sigh of relief, his shoulders sagged with the weight off of them. I sort of felt bad for having stressed

Rhys stuck his arm out, forcing me to stop just before the door.

“How long age did you find out my mate was missing?” He demanded.

Riley immediately stiffened. I could practically feel his nerves set in.

“Rhys don’t be silly, I’m right here. I’m not missing.” I tried, but he ignored **me**.

“How. Long. Was. She. Missing?” He emphasized every word, even Michael was sitting straight up in the chair we had left him in.

“About 30 minutes, sir,” Riley finally answered. “We didn’t know if Sammy was a credible source, so we thought we’d check it out first before notifying

“Is there some issue with your mindlink?”

“N-No sir.”

“Well, if you had mindlinked me to let me know my mate was missing, I could have A. helped if it was actually true, or 3. told you she was in a meeting with me, and you wouldn’t have wasted 30 minutes looking for someone who wasn’t actually missing.”

Riley looked down, obviously ashamed of how he had handled the situation. “Yes, Sir.”

“From now on, someone is to know exactly where my mate is at all times, am I clear?”

“Yes, Sir,” Riley repeated.

“Good. Now, go figure out how you’re going to do that. We have to go get Sammy.”

Riley said one **more** “Yes, sir,” and scurried off to do what Rhys had just asked. Rhys was so dramatic sometimes, but I appreciated him caring about my safety. I just didn’t know if I really wanted someone to know where I was at all times. That felt a little terrifying to me.

“Well, let’s go get her,” Rhys said, running a hand through his hair. “Come on, Michael, you should be at training tou.”

I looked at Rhys curiously. “We? I can go get her, I don’t want to disrupt your day even more

“Nope. I’m keeping you in my sight right now because apparently you are missing.” There was a slight teasing in his voice, but I also knew he knew that earlier. At least a little bit. “Plus, I’ve been meaning to come to training for the kids. I wanted to see what their bowlate looks like since it’s their first week.”

He had mentioned he wanted to do that the other night, but I still didn’t believe him.

“Is it okay if I skip training today? I kinda just want to be alone right now.” Michael asked as we started down the hall.

“Alone where?” I asked, narrowing my eyes at him.

“Just upstairs,” He answered. “Today has just been a lot. And no one should be up there right now.”

I nodded at him. Did I truly think inviting him to stay with us forever was really going to outrank his dad when it came down to it? I wasn't sure. **It** could go either way. And I understood that. It was hard to know where the right place was to place your loyalty, I had struggled with it for years. I was loyal to **my** family even if I hadn't thought about it that way. I had done everything they asked and kept my mouth shut about the horrible things they were doing. **I had** served them to the best of my ability. And I still found it hard at times to go against them. There were still moments where knowing that eventually, **when** this war was over, my sister would be dead felt like it was too much. I mean, she was my blood. I had felt the same with Ethan before it was all a lie. **Like I** owed him loyalty for being of my blood. And I knew Michael would eventually face the same questions I had. He would choose whoever could keep **his** siblings safest. And I just hoped it would be us. But I'm not sure how he could think that when we couldn't even keep ourselves safe right now.

Chapter Comments

The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

I reached for Rhys' hand as we meandered out way down to the training field. I loved that we were getting to a point where we could be independent outs **did** miss him at times. I liked that today we were getting a little bit of extra time, since this past week had had us in mostly different places.

I scanned the training field. Most of the kids looked uncoordinated and lacked proper form. I imagined that was how I looked when I trained. Eat the good news was that they were learning, and the more they trained, the better they'd be.

It wasn't until my eyes fell on Maizie who was holding a screaming and flailing Sammy, did I remember why I was truly here. I immediately dropped thy hand and hurried toward the inconsolable child.

"Sammy," I called out when I was close enough. "Sammy, hunny, I'm here."

The small girl let out a relieved squeal, scream thing, and jumped out of Maizie's arms and threw herself into mine.

"I'm here," I whispered. "I'm here."

"Thank goddess your here," Maizie cried out in exasperation. "I don't know how much more of that I could have taken!"

“I thought the bad guys got you!” Sammy sobbed. “You were there and then you weren’t!”

“I’m sorry I scared you.” I told her gently. “No bad guys, I just had something I had to do. But I’m here now. You’re safe. And I’m safe.”

Sammy clung to me like she was afraid I’d disappear again. I hadn’t meant to scare the poor girl. I felt terrible. I should have known that she was going to freak out when she couldn’t find me. I should have prepared her better. I had been in such a rush to make sure Michael was okay, I hadn’t thought about how Sammy would feel.

“I thought the bad guys had come for you!” She said again. “They want you so bad.”

I frowned. How did she know that? We had worked so hard to keep the **kids** out of things, except the two oldest who seemed to need to be involved. I stole a glimpse at Maizie, but she looked just as confused as I was. Where was Sammy getting her information?

“There you girls are!” Rhys’ chipper voice cut through the weird moment. It was almost like he knew we needed a change in subject.

“Uncle Rhys!” Sammy squealed, leaping out of my arms into his. How she did it, I had no idea. My body wouldn’t move on that.

Rhys started asking Sammy about how school was, and Sammy fell for, the distraction, but I was still stuck on her words, and a quick glance at Maizie told

me she was too.

The rest of the evening passed without any more weird occurrences. We finished the kid training, joined the adult training, which Rhys led today. He **was** shirtless within the first 20 seconds which whoa mama is my favorite thing in the world, even if every other woman around thinks the same thing. He was mine, and everybody knew that.

After training, we grabbed dinner and headed to the office. The debrief wasn't much today. We were losing a lot of money which long-term would be a problem, but for now, it was under control. At least that's what my mate told us. We didn't often talk business, but this seemed to be a d the Red Blood pack was doing. Everyone was surprisingly quiet throughout the meeting. I wondered if they found business stuff boring, or other things on their mind.

nk to what they just had

We ended our usual meeting early. I think, honestly, that everyone just needed a break. Everything had been so go, go, go, lately, we were in survival mede But in order to be the best, we needed more than that. We needed to be at our best.

I trekked up to the Alpha floor with Rhys just behind me, and Sammy pulling at my hand just a step ahead of me.

“Let’s do something fun tonight.” Sammy said. She had calmed down a while ago, but she hadn’t let go of my hand in hours. Even during my meetings, she had just sat on my lap quietly.

“Like what?” Rhys asked, humoring the little girl.

“Like a movie night! With everyone!” She exclaimed.

I smiled. This little girl had big dreapis, and I loved that for her. I looked over to Rhys, and gave him a little **shrug as to say, I’m down if you’re down**. Khy?

## Chapter 188

**nodded** back to **me** before jumping in front of me and grabbing Sammy to tickle her. Sammy squealed and I laughed at their shenanigan

“**On the steps?** Really, Alpha King?” Alana sighed, coming up on us. “That’s so dangerous.”

**Rhys** shook his head and took off running up the rest of the stairs, leaving me and Alana in the dust.

“Sammy wants a movie night tonight, and I think it’s just the medicine we all need. Help me

‘set it up?’”

Alana frowned. “Do we have everything we need? What kind of snacks? Should I send someone to the store? Kid movie nights can be intense, we should pick the movie first or at least give two options, so we don’t have any fights on our hands over what to watch.”

“This is a lot more work than I thought it would be,” I muttered. “I thought we would just put on a movie.”

“We could do that,” Alana agreed. “But it will be a lot more fun, if we have snacks and extra blankets and pillows for comfort.”

I laughed. “Of course, should we set it up in the ballroom and invite the whole packhouse?”

“Well, that does sound splendid,” Alana laughed too. “Come on, we have to hurry if we want to pull this off before it gets too late.”

We both took off at a sprint down the steps. We needed something for morale and this was it. We just needed a few good snacks, and a good movie and everything would be okay. We could make it happen. I was sure of it.

## Chapter Comments

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## The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

### Chapter 189

The Alpha floor was chaos like usual. I had somehow gotten roped into a game of freeze tag with Sammy nearly the second I **walked** onto **the** floor. Marin and Sawyer were sitting on the counter watching the whole shindig and calling out any cheaters. It was actually a lot of **fun**, I didn't **get to** play zu lie kids like this that

often, but I tried to make time at the end of the day when I could. I was having so much fun, that I didn't even **realize** that I hasn't seen Grace in a while until Sammy asked about why she wasn't playing.

"Hey!" I called over to Sawyer and Maizie. "Have either of you seen my mate?!"

"She's working on something with Alana!" Maizie called back over the chaos. "She said she would let us know when it was ready!\*"

"When what's ready?" I frowned. Was she working? I thought we had ended early so that we could rest and reset.

"It's a surprise, apparently." Sawyer replied with a shrug, looking down at his phone.

"Oh, for nie?" Sammy asked excitedly.

"Uh, I don't know." I answered uncertainly. "I couldn't tell you. You lost her when I did."

"She's not actually lost, though, right Uncle Rhys?" Sammy asked, and I immediately felt bad for how I had phased my comment. She was

incredibly, **and** rightfully insecure about losing people. The poor girl had lost everybody important to her. And after her breakdown today, I felt even worse.

“No, she’s not actually lost.” I told her. “I just don’t know exactly where she is. But that’s okay because Aunt Grace is a strong independent woman, **who is** fully capable of taking care of herself.”

Sammy gave me a pensive look as she thought about what I said. I wondered how many times she had actually seen anyone in the Red Blood pack as a strong independent woman. I wondered if she had ever even considered herself to be one. I mean, she **was** such a little thing, but yet she was capable of so much. Just like Grace.

Sammy accepted my answer, and the game for us resumed for a while. At least until Maizie stood on the counter, making me cringe a little, and shouting, “FREEZE OR I’LL SEND YOU BACK TO THE PROGRAM!”

Every single child froze in what appeared to be terror. I knew the conditions hadn’t been good according to Maizie and Michael, but this response by the kids hurt my heart a little. And to know that some of them had family still trapped there made my desire to get them out a little more desperate.

“Maizie, that wasn’t very nice,” I chided.

Maizie didn’t care though. She very rarely appeared to care about much. She just shrugged me off and continued on with her announcement.

“The Luna Queen is on her way up, and everyone is to be quiet and listen.”

The pack link was suddenly alive, but I couldn't make out any of it. Everyone was talking over each other, and the only thing I could discern was excitement. And as if on cue, the Alpha floor door swung open, revealing my **very** startled mate and Alana, who seemed more than a little taken aback by the spotlight.

“Grace,” I greeted with a little smirk. I was curious to know what my little mate had been up to during this time I had been playing with the kids.

“Uh hi,” Grace stuttered, and I could tell she was fighting the urge to never speak again. “If everyone wants to find their buddy and then follow me, I have **a** surprise for everyone.”

I grabbed Sammy and approached my mate as all the kids scrambled to buddy up.

“Wait! I need Jack!” Sammy cried out.

“Jack!” I snapped my fingers, immediately finding the little boy and gesturing for him to meet us at the front of the line. His relief was palpable when he spotted Sammy, and I couldn't help but wonder if we would ever be able to separate them. Would I have to keep him too? This group was **growing by the** day...

“What have you been up to, mate?” I asked as I kissed her tips. She has been away from me too much this **week**. I was missing **her** more and more **by the**

minute.

The mischievous look on her face gave away no information other than she was pretty proud of herself **for** whatever she **had done**.

## Chapter 189

“**Everybody ready?**” **She** called out. “Let’s go!”

**There was** a chorus of noise behind us, but it sounded more confused than excited, I could feel **Grace** faltering slightly, **but** the just taker het chow high **taking** Jack’s hand in hers as she led the group down the stairs.

**To** my surprise, there were people everywhere. This time of night, the Packhouse was usually quiet with only a few **people** in the family **room and** he kitchen. This **was...** surprising. And everyone seemed to be heading the same way.

“Grace?” I questioned, feeling a little nervous.

She smirked at me and shuffled us into the ballroom. My jaw dropped. There were blankets and pillows scattered all over **the** floor, **and** a pile **of them** as we entered for people to grab. A balloon arch stood next to what looked to be a snack table, and I literally gasped when I **saw** the ice cream **bar** on **the** other side.

“What? Cat’s got your tongue, Alpha King?” Grace teased as Jack dropped her hand and took off running toward the snacks.

I froze for a moment. She teased me, calling me the Alpha King. She used to **say** it instead of my name... It had been a distance holder between **us for so** long, and to hear her say it now, so casually, my heart stumbled a bit.

“Is this all you?” I asked finally finding my voice, and pulling her into me and Sammy.

“I had a little help, but we all work so hard. This was a little way to give the kids and everyone a little something fun to do. Do you like it?”

“Are you kidding me? My love, this is perfect. You did amazing, this was **!**” I told her **as** the room filled with chaos, and Alana flickered the lights **telling** everyone to settle down so she could start the film.

I kissed her lips again, but Sammy yelled “Ew,” Making it a lot shorter than I wanted it to be. But that **was** okay. We’d have the **rest** of forever, and that couldn’t come fast enough.

## Chapter Comments

### The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

#### Chapter 190

The movie had finished about an hour ago, and now all that were left was our small crew. Alana was taking down the balloons. Savryer was putting **away** the tables. Maizie and Michael were eating what was left of the ice cream. And Grace, was sweeping the popcorn **and** other treats **up** off the floor with Sarsty hanging off her back, half asleep, as I picked up the extra blankets and pillows, careful not to disturb Jack who was asleep in the same spot we left him earlier.

“Are you two going to help?” Sawyer asked the two teens who were still indulging in the special snacks.

“We are helping.” Michael answered with a mouthful of ice cream. “This ice cream would have gone to waste if it wasn’t for us.”

“We could have just put it back in the freezer.” I told him as I walked by and ruffled his hair.

“You can do that?!” Michael exclaimed, and I wasn’t sure if he was kidding or not. Either way, I was going to keep more ice cream on hand for **him**. Clearly, the kid needed some simple luxuries, and it was the least we could do for him.

“Yes,” I laughed. “We’ll make sure to keep the freezer stocked with it.”

Michael’s eyes lit up. It was like since our conversation today, he was a totally different kid. Gone was the kid who was indifferent and cold. This was a kid who was suddenly a kid again. We had taken the responsibility off of his shoulders, eased his fears, and for the first time he seemed to actually believe we were trying to help. We still needed to have a true conversation about the information he had shared, but Grace believed in him, and for me, right now, at this moment, that was enough.

I piled the blankets and pillows neatly into a pile like Alana had asked me to. I had been surprised at how many pack members had showed up to the impromptu movie night, but it had made me proud of Grace. She had interacted with so many different people throughout the movie and after. **It** really seemed that her little event made an impact on the pack. I knew for sure that the kids had loved it. They had all even offered to help us clean up, but Grace told them that it was okay to go to bed, they had enough responsibilities, they didn’t need this one too.

It was late by the time everything was put away and settled. I walked over to my mate and pulled Sammy off of her back. The little girl hardly stirred; how she hadn’t fallen off Grace’s back was beyond me.

Grace sagged in relief and stretched her body tiredly. I could read the exhaustion on her like a book. The short day that we were supposed to have had turned into a longer than usual day, but that did seem to be a pattern these days.

“Ready for bed?” I asked.

She nodded. I knew her well enough to know that she was pretty talked out right now. I would give her the moment, but we would discuss the day in the end because it was a day.

I shifted Sammy in my arms to my right side and reached for Grace’s hand. She took it without any hesitation, and I couldn’t help but be grateful for how far we’ve come. My whole world shifted when she came into my life. It was crazy to look back and see how much we’ve both changed. And as we all crawled into bed, exhausted, I couldn’t help but wonder where we would go next.

I woke up slowly, and despite sleeping so well, I didn’t want to wake up. I reached across Grace’s side of the bed to pull her close again, but I only found an arm that was too small for Grace. My eyes popped open to find no sign of Grace, but the sound of the shower turning on, caught my attention. Had she been up long?

I sluggishly dragged myself out of the bed and made my way to the bathroom. I opened the door slowly, and my breath caught when I saw her hair loose and wet from her shower. She was wrapped in only her towel, her skin covered in little water droplets, attracting me right to her.

gblonde

“Oh!” She shrieked in surprise when she saw me. She had been so lost in her head; she hadn’t noticed me come in or that I was slowly approaching.

“Sorry,” I said unapologetically. “I should have knocked.”

She gave me a look that told me that she didn’t believe me, but she didn’t seem to actually mind. “I’m sorry, did I wake you?” She asked.

“No.” I told her as I got closer. “No. I just reached for you and realized you weren’t in bed.”

She gave that familiar small smile that I had fallen in love with, and I wrapped my arms around her. I kissed her neck slowly in the way I knew **she** liked, and she immediately granted me better access. My hands roamed her body, and her sharp intake of breath told me that she was enjoying this moment too.

I tugged at her towel, but she held it firmly in place, and I groaned in protest.

“I want to see your beautiful body.”

“Samimy is in the other room,” She hissed back.

I sucked that sweet spot on her neck that held my mark and pulled away. She immediately deflated a little bit, but I just smirked. There was something about having such an affect on her that I loved.

I clicked the lock on the door into place, and turned back to my waiting mate.

“We don’t have to let that stop us.” I told as I walked back to the exact spot I left her, turning her to face me.

Her eyes met mine hungrily. She wanted this as much as I did, and she was going to get it.

### **Chapter Comments**

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