

The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

Chapter 261

“I know exactly who you are, Grace Cairstairs.” The words reverberated through my head like an echo. Why would she say it like **that? I had** saved them... Hadn't I? I had been part of the plan anyway until I pushed too far and needed my own rescue...

I didn't have to turn to know Rhys had approached us apprehensively, and I wasn't the slightest bit surprised when he rested his hand on my hip.

“Oh great, and now the Alpha King is here,” The woman rolled her eyes dramatically, and a flashback to the prison hit me like a ton of bricks. She looked just the same as she had then, tall and lanky, but no meat on her bones, and her face still incredibly pale. “I'm Laura, **Maizie's** mother.”

Laura. She was the summoner who had gotten the keys for us. We had originally thought it was a man who was volunteering, but he had actually been volunteering her services much to her dismay.

I smiled at her politely. “Thank you for summoning the **keys** for us.”

“I thought I was going to be free, not for you to kidnap us just like you did our children!” She snapped.

I frowned, and Maizie looked at me in confusion, but I **just** shrugged.

“I’m going to let you handle this, unless you need me.” Rhys said into my mind, and it took everything in me not to **jump**, but I nodded slightly, not wanting to break this moment.

“Firstly,” I said, gathering up my courage. “This is the Alpha King, and I am his mate, we will be shown respect, despite whatever you **are** currently feeling. Second, nobody kidnapped you. You could have stay behind, and you were given that choice. You are also free to leave, but I don’t know where you’d go. You will be thrown right back in prison if you return, I assume, and you don’t have any money or anything to **go** elsewhere, but I’m sure if you asked nicely, my mate would help set you up somewhere. And third, your child **was** not kidnapped, she was sent to kidnap me, and she chose on her own free will to stay in our pack where we could keep her relatively safe.”

Laura looked flustered. Her eyes kept darting from me to Maizie as **if** she was sure I was lying. And I understood. She had been living in a pack that only knew lies the same as I had, the same as Maizie had. We all had things to unlearn. But I didn’t know why her allegations had me so riled up.

“Is it true, Maizie?” She demanded after a moment.

“Do you know what the program is, Mom?” Maizie asked, not acknowledging her question.

“Not really,” Laura’s frown deepened. “I was always told that you and Blaire **were** very gifted, and that’s why they needed you. That you were going to **save** us **all**.”

“**Save** you from what?” Maizie asked curiously.

“Tyranny.” Laura answered **as if** the word left a bitter taste in her mouth **as** she glared at Rhys.

It was Maizie’s turn to roll her eyes. “How were children going to **save** you from tyranny, Mom?”

And she **was** right to ask that question, it didn’t make sense. None of anything that had happened was making any **sense**.

“They **were** making you guys smart. So, that you could think for **yourselves** and when you **grew** up you would know how **to protect your people**.

That you would be smarter than those who came before **you**.”

“You didn’t think that **was** weird?” Maizie asked, her mouth hanging open.

“No, children are our future.”

“No, Mom. They trained us **to** be weapons. To attack and not ask questions. They made us **live** in fear. I’m only here **because I tried to attack**

Chapter 261

them in order to **try** and protect Blaire. **They should** have killed me. **I** attacked the Alpha **Prince**. But they realized we were **kids**. **They** gave as a **chance** to be kids. Something we never got there. We were granted mercy. And I **owe** everything to Rhys and Grace. **I’m** not the **only one** protecting the kids **anymore**, **they** have them too.”

“**And** what about your sister?” Laura demanded, anger on her face.

I put my arm on Maizie’s shoulder. “Go pack,” I muttered to her. “We’re leaving.”

She looked from me to her mom before turning on her heels and leaving. When I was sure she was gone, I turned back **to** her **mother** and said coldly, “Despite everything your daughter has been through, she is one of the bravest, strongest people I know. Her sister **isn’t** safe **because you** didn’t fight for her. Maizie has done EVERYTHING to protect not just her sister, but ALL of those kids. And if **you want to** see her, and **me, and** Rhys **as** the bad guys, that’s on you. She is a wonderful girl who has been through hell and back. She deserves more from you.”

Rhys squeezed my side gently and mindlinked, “Should we **go** get ready to leave?”

“**Yes.**” I replied.

“Are you going to let her talk to me like that?” Laura stammered, looking right at Rhys.

“**Yes.**” He **answered.** “We owe you no loyalty.”

“You are the Alpha King! You **owe** us your loyalty!” She shouted. And the chatter that had been happening in the other room ceased, **and I** could feel more eyes on **us.**

“And you owe me **yours,**” Rhys replied coldly.

Rhys guided **us** out of the room without another word. I couldn't believe that woman's audacity. Her daughter had done more for the people she cared about than anyone could ever had asked of her. **I** could see the way fear played into both of their reactions. Laura let fear control her. She would always be a bit of a sheep. I could even see Maizie leading their family even as a young child because fear didn't control Maizie. She used it to empower her, to protect those around her. But right now, she was the one who needed protection, and I would not be backing down from the challenge.

Chapter Comments

The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

Chapter 262

I walked out of the kitchen away from Rhys, Grace and my mom, but I had no destination in mind. I felt like I couldn't think straight. Normally, I prided myself on keeping my cool, but I have nearly completely lost in twice in the last week or so. Ever since I saw **that** picture of **my** sister. Since I learned that Sawyer was my mate. Since Grace had been missing and come back. Without Grace, I had felt completely lost, **and** I didn't know what to do with that. It had scared me. And today, **as** soon as she had entered my line of sight, I had settled, and I didn't know what to make of that. Of any of it. None of these things were making any sense.

"Maizie?" Sawyer's voice called out.

I whirled around, but I didn't see him before realizing I had walked into our room and he was sitting directly in front of me.

"Hi, sorry, I was lost in my head for a moment." I confided as he stood up and covered the distance between us.

"Did something happen?" He questioned.

"I uh- my mother is here."

"Your mother?" Sawyer frowned. "Is this a good thing or a bad thing?"

It was a fair question, but my relationship with her was complicated at best. I honestly hardly remembered her. We had spent so little **time** together, and I was taken at such a young age, I didn't know her true views about the pack we lived in or even her story. And honestly, I'm not even sure they mattered. There was so much going on that we had to worry about, adding a parent to the mix seemed to be completely bonkers. I liked the way things had been going. Sawyer and I had been getting to know each other more, and Michael, my best friend was being "adopted" by Grace and Rhys. And I loved Grace and Rhys. They had saved me from a life that I never wanted to go back to, and they were fighting for those we left behind. The fact that Grace had decided to free the people in the prison was a testament to her character. It wasn't a front or a lie, it just simply was her. And I hadn't realized how much I had missed her.

“I don’t know.” I admitted. “We were never really very close. It sounded like she was in the prisons with Grace.”

Sawyer stiffened right as he pulled me into him. “Do you think she’ll play **spy**?” He asked.

“I don’t know.”

“Okay,” Sawyer answered, running his fingers through my hair. “You know, you never wear your hair down like this. I find it to be really

something.”

me,

I laughed. Only Sawyer could make a compliment about my hair weird like that. But that’s part of why I adored him so much. He **was** made for

which was crazy. There were talks of mates in the Red Blood pack, but I honestly don’t think too many Lycans actually ever found their mates, or maybe they just didn’t value them the way I had seen in the Alpha Pack. Rhys practically worshipped the ground Grace walked **on**, and Sawyer was trying to do the same. It was funny to me though. Sawyer was one of the smartest people **I’ve** ever met,

and he **was** trained for nearly every social situation, but in private, he was so awkward sometimes. It made me love him even more.

He kept asking to at least mark me, but I didn't know if I was ready for that yet. I could admit that he was my mate, and that I was reallyyy in love with him, but marks felt like a jump I wasn't quite ready for yet, and as far **as** we could tell, no Werewolf and Lycan had ever completed the bond before, and I was not about to be a guinea pig or trigger the end of the world or something. Nope. Not a chance. No thanks. We would **wait**, and when things settled down, and we weren't in constant danger, I would consider it, but I was not going to make Sawyer a target. Not with everything going on.

"I'll remember that," I told him smartly as I threw it up into a high ponytail.

He chuckled slightly and cupped my cheek **as** his eyes glazed over a little.

"Rhys wants us to get a move on. He doesn't like that we're this close to the border."

I nodded but didn't move to get ready, instead Tjust walked right into Sawyer's chest, and he wrapped his arms around me without a second thought. And we didn't move. If **we** moved, it meant that we were accepting the crazy that was our life, and I wasn't ready for that. At **least not** quite yet. I just wanted to enjoy this moment with my mate for a little bit longer.

Chapter 262

A knock interrupted us, and I sighed, finally pulling away, and answering **it**.

“Yes?”

“Hi, I just wanted to **check** on you,” Grace said looking a little disconcerted at how I answered the door.

“We are all good, Grace,” Sawyer said, placing his hand on my hip as a way to show that we were together. I rolled **my** eyes **at** his actions.

“OH!” She exclaimed. **“I’m sorry.** I- I didn’t realize. Mates?” She asked.

I smiled at how flustered she **was**. I wasn’t sure how she was going to come back from the Red Blood Pack, but she was **still very much** herself. **She was Grace.**

“Sawyer is being rude.” I answered, playfully smacking him. **“But yes, mates.”**

“Oh, I’m so happy for you guys!” She exclaimed happily before throwing her arms around us. “I’m **so sorry** I missed your birthday!”

“Are you kidding? You were clearly dealing with your own shit.” I waved her off. “I’m just happy that you made it out of there **alive.**”

“Me too.” She smiled before gasping and asking, “Does this mean that you can shift easier?”

I frowned. Lycans often shifted earlier than Werewolves. There was no set age like Werewolves were 18, but the program had fucked me up. They had controlled our shifts in ways I couldn’t even begin to understand, and I hadn’t really wanted to shift since leaving them. It **wasn’t** out of fear, it’s just that my shifts have never been used for good reasons. But I also found it challenging. There was some mental block still there, despite my best efforts. And honestly, I didn’t care. We were at war, sure, but no one would ever use my power against me ever again, **and** if anyone truly understood that it was Grace.

So, when I told her no, she just smiled, and said we had a lot of catching up to do.

Chapter Comments

LIKE

The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

I threw the small backpack that Rhys had brought for me into the truck. I was beyond grateful to have some of my own clothes after **what** felt like forever in the same outfit that had been bloodied and ripped nearly to shreds. Rhys had offered to burn it, and I said he could send **it** straight to hell for all I care. He had laughed and told me it was good to have me back. And I had to agree. It was good to be back. It already

felt like normal.

Five meetings later, we had finally figured out a plan that worked for everyone. We would leave about twenty warriors here in the Golden pack. Their job was to train the Golden pack warriors and help them come up with effective strategies to keep the Red Blood pack out. They were also to report anything strange back to us. Leon, Heather, Caleb and Sammy would all return to the Alpha Pack and work on moving everyone closer to the packhouse. We decided that everything needed to be within sight so we could effectively protect everyone, at least for the time being. We needed to be ready for an attack when we made our move, and they would make sure we were, even though Sammy was pissed about it. And the rest of us and Iris were going to meet with the vampires. We didn't have much of a hope that they would be helpful, but we had to try. That was another reason we were splitting up though, if we were walking into a trap, at least only the 4 of us were stuck in it. The others would be free to keep fighting.

“Ready?” Rhys asked through the mindlink before I could even see him.

“Ready.” I replied, but the truth was, I wasn’t sure I was. Everything felt like it was moving a little too fast. I just wanted to sleep for a little while longer, but I would keep myself together. I was not going to cave into those feelings anymore.

“Your feelings are valid.” Rhys reminded me.

I smiled slightly as I climbed into the backseat. “Get out of my head, Alpha King.” I teased.

“Nope. You’re stuck with me.”

I laughed slightly as he climbed into the driver’s seat and Maizie climbed in next to me. It felt so right to be back with them all again. I felt bad that Maizie was leaving her mom behind, all of the refugees were going home with Leon, but it seemed like a good thing to give some space too.

I barely noticed time pass as we flew through the country on the road. Michael and Iris were both asleep in the very back within 5 minutes of us being on the road. Sawyer and Rhys were talking in hushed tones in the front. And Maizie and I chatted about everything I had missed while I was away. She told me about her and Sawyer’s first time, and how wonderful he was to her. I knew she said some of the things just to make the guys uncomfortable, and it definitely worked. Both of them had red cheeks, and Rhys begged me to tell her to stop, he didn’t want to hear about his brother’s sex life, but I didn’t stop her, I found it funny as well. She also told me how much Sammy had missed me, and how hard it had been without me. I appreciated her kind words even if I didn’t quite believe them.

Everything was going so smooth, I was almost certain we were driving straight into a trap. As we approached the Vampire city, Maizie and I both fell quiet. The city was beautiful, and yet nearly completely empty. Which I guess made sense, it was nearly dusk now, but the sun still was touching the part of the city we were in.

As we approached what I assumed to be the castle, I realized nearly everything was in a sort of black and white pattern, which was honestly sort of hypnotizing.

“Okay everyone, remember why we’re here. But also be careful. Vampires take words very seriously. They will twist the things you say, but they need ‘permission’ for most things, so please don’t forget that.” Rhys reminded us as we pulled through the gates.

Despite being the Alpha King, Rhys had very little experience with the vampires. There was a council that met once a year, so he knew the basics, but it didn’t feel like enough, and I **wasn’t** sure anything would be.

I gently shook both Michael and Iris awake, and they both looked at me bleary eyed as they tried to quickly shake **the sleep** from their bodies. Iris was still bratty, and wasn’t speaking to Michael, but I knew that wouldn’t last too much longer. I waited for Rhys to **open** the car door for me. Despite the confidence I had been feeling lately, it was hard not to just slip back into that old shell of myself. But honestly, I **wasn’t so** sure that would be a bad thing here. Maybe that’s what I needed to do.

“Alpha King Rhys, consort Grace,” Someone called out from the shadows.

“It’s Luna Queen Grace, actually,” Rhys corrected.

“Oh, I am sorry, dear, I didn’t know the ceremony had happened yet.” The slimy, husky voice of a woman conceded.

“It hasn’t, but she is still my mate, and I

expect her to still be treated with respect.”

The woman smiled a cold smile as she made her way out of the shadows. She was stunning. Her pale, nearly white, face was framed by her long, black hair. She looked like something straight out of a picture book. Beautiful and terrifying all at once. All she needed was a raven on her shoulder and she would look exactly how I imagined her.

“Hence why I called her Consort Grace.” The woman answered snidely. “And you Consort Grace have quite the reputation, and I cannot wait to see what business you are going to bring to me today.”

The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

Chapter 264

I pulled Grace closer to **my** side as we walked, and I grabbed Michael by the shoulder so that he **was** closer to me. I didn't know the **vampires very well**, but I did know enough not to trust them. They knew Grace, and that made me worry.

Michael tried to pull Iris closer to him, the same way I had just done to him, but **she** shrugged him off and sent a glare his way. I **sent** them both a warning glance but returned to scanning the long hallway we were walking down. Every 10 feet or so there were doors leading to who knows what, and Margaret, the Queen, wasn't sharing.

"You don't need to act like **we're** strangers, Rhys," Margaret smiled back at us, "You needn't be so afraid. I don't bite... Unless you **ask me** to." She flashed her fangs at us, but I didn't flinch, I just gave her a bored look. She was always like this, a little bit **of a flirt**, but knowing full well nobody would take her up on it, at least not in our circles.

"Margaret, you haven't changed," I gave her a tight smile, but we both knew it was fake.

She laughed coldly and brushed me off. She was a flirt and a bit much, and I usually found the witches more intolerable.

"You knew her name, who is she?" Grace's sweet voice mindlinked me.

“Margaret Garrison. The Queen of the Vampires.” I responded easily. It was nice being able **to** talk to my mate in these delicate situations.

“Here,” Margaret stated, opening a door on the left side of the hallway. “This will be your suite while you are here. I think **it** should be large enough for your group?”

“Thank you, Queen Margaret.” Grace acknowledged the woman gracefully.

“My my, you do figure things out quickly, now don’t ya?” Margaret replied coyly. “Now, you all freshen up, but do not be late **dinner**.”

Margaret closed the door behind, and I immediately locked it as Sawyer did a sweep around the suite. There appeared to be 4 bedrooms all surrounding a small kitchen and living area. Unlike the rest of the vampire city, there were colors. The couch was a deep **red** wine color that appeared to be velvet. The walls were grey with portraits of fields and flowers that looked vaguely familiar. It was **eclectic and** beautiful **all at** once, but definitely not my style.

“Are we going to be here long enough to sleep or do rooms not matter that much?” Michael asked, his eyes wide as he took in **everything**.

“I don’t know.” I told him honestly. “I guess that depends on how dinner goes. There should be a variety of clothes in each room. Please **dress** nicely. We need this to go well, and style matters to vampires. But for now, Grace and I will take this room, and the rest of you fight it out.”

I then pulled **Grace** into the room I had chosen for **us**, and closed the door **as** chaos ensued on the other side.

“Now that was a little unnecessary,” She scowled.

“What?” I played innocent. “I didn’t do anything **except** remind them that they have free will.”

“**Is** it **really** free will if there’s a prophecy?” She asked nervously.

sucked in a breath. Of all the things to say, I didn’t expect her to say that. I leaned in and brushed a loose strand of hair **out of** the way **before cupping** her face.

“What **do** you know **of** it?” I asked uneasily.,

“**Well, it** seems like **you know** more.” She answered with surprise in her voice. “I thought we **agreed not to keep things from each other**

“Well, to be completely fair, I first truly heard about it when you decided you didn’t want to get out of bed for 2 weeks, and I was a little in-
over my head with everything. It sort of slipped through the cracks. I’m sorry, I should have told you.

I looked into her eyes expecting to see hate or resentment, but I just saw acceptance. We had spent so much time drowning lately, des

to know it wasn’t **like** I had kept this from her on purpose.

“I know you didn’t mean it.” She said gently. “Everything has just been a lot. You’re doing the best **you can**. I know **that**.”

“How do you know about any prophecies?” I asked, realizing that I might not have told her anything, but she **still** seemed **to** know **something** about them.

“Well, I’m not sure you would believe me if I told you.” She looked away from me, and the hesitation in her voice **nearly** killed **me**.

“Try me,” I responded, gripping her chin lightly, forcing her to look back at me.

“I had a dream. Before the first time we ended up in the Land of the Gods. I don’t know if it **was** a memory or if **I** was in the Land **of** the **Gods** and didn’t know it. But I met a woman. It wasn’t the Moon Goddess. I thought for a while she might be, but she **was too...** direct? **Plus**, when **we** went to the Land of the Gods, we met with someone else, who actually felt like the Moon Goddess. I know **that** sounds **crazy, but I’m fairly sure of** that...”

I frowned. She had been to the Land of the Gods before? Or had she entered another realm completely? What if it **was just a dream and none** of it was real? But then how would she know about the prophecy?

“Okay... And what happened?” I asked finally after I had had a moment to process.

She wrung her hands and looked away from me, and I didn’t force her to look at me again. I let my hand fall to my side **and** sat on **the bed in** attempting to look patient, and she plopped down next to me.

“Well, I don’t really remember.” She answered finally.

Chapter Comments

LIKE

POS

The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

Chapter 265

“Well, I don’t really remember.” I answered after a long moment. “I thought it was just a weird dream, but parts of it still come back to me. I was in this house that was huge, honestly, it kind of had the same vibes as this castle now that I think about it. Anyways, I met with **this** woman... She had red hair and was quite blunt. She kept talking in cryptic sayings, and I remember feeling lost... Then she showed me, I don’t know what it was, maybe a memory? Her memory? Someone else’s? I’m not really sure, but I digress. I was thrown into this **memory**, and there were two girls talking at this party. And they said something about the um, I don’t remember exactly what they called it... The chooser maybe? But they said it fit the prophecy, no one had ever done that before. And then I was thrown back to that table with that woman, **and she** asked me if I got it yet, and I told her, no, I didn’t understand any of it. But she just told me I would and called me the same name the girls had been calling someone. And that’s really all I remember.”

I wrung my hands nervously as I waited for Rhys to say something... Anything. I didn’t want him to think I was keeping things from him either. I had just thought it was a dream until recently. In fact, I hadn’t really thought about it, at least not till I was trapped in prison with nothing else to think about. A lot of crazy things had gone through my mind, and this story made me feel crazy.

“The Chooser?” Rhys questioned, his brows furrowing with his thoughts. “That’s what they called you?”

“Something like that, yea,” I answered. “I don’t remember the exact word, but it was close to that.”

Rhys’ frown deepened as he processed what I had said. I wanted to know what was going through his mind, what it **was that** he seemed to know about the prophecy.

“What do you know about the prophecy?” I questioned, surprised by how tired I felt.

Rhys sighed and I knew he felt the same heaviness I did. It had been a long day travelling, and the last thing he really wanted was to be having this conversation, and I agreed. I didn’t want to be having this conversation either, but we needed to, and that **was** enough.

He then began to recite:

“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

nade.” her or his pack. The prophecies told of greatness in their reign. But the Alpha broke her instead, and the Alpha’s choice

My confusion grew. “What?” I questioned. “What is that?”

“That is the “prophecy” I found, well, Leon found, but all same. It was in children’s book. Could be just a warning, but it felt a little too on the nose.” He answered uneasily.

“You don’t really believe **that**, do you?” I asked him a little nervously.

It was his turn to look surprised, and I could feel his nerves through our bond.

“What do you mean?” **He** asked, but it **wasn’t** nearly as steady **as** he usually sounded.

“You don’t think you’re going to break me, do you? Because babe, **I’ve** been through hell and back. I’m not afraid. I don’t think you **can** break **me** any more than **I’ve** already been broken. In fact, I came to you broken, and **you** loved me anyways.”

“There is more than one way to break someone.” Rhys answered quietly. “And you are magnificently everything you need to be. You have so much power, I never want to **be** the reason **your** light dims again.”

“**Then** don’t be.” I answered, climbing onto his lap, so that I was straddling his legs before leaning in and kissing **his lips**.

“I will choose you over my kingdom, any **day**.” He promised, and I kissed his lips again, silencing **him**.

I didn’t

care. He could **destroy** me. I would **let** him. **He couldn’t choose me over the pack, and that was okay. I knew how much that must have** been weighing on him. From **the** time I **had** first met him, he had changed so much, **just** like I **had**. **Or maybe changed wasn’t quite the** right word, maybe grew was a better one. Because **this** was who **we** always were, **it’s just that** it was buried **wep in the hurt we had both** accrued over **time**. And I knew **that Rhys** loved me, **even if it was hard to believe sometimes. He had done everything possible to prove it to me, and he over time. And I knew**

had done well. But when it came down to it, I hoped he’d choose his pack. I was just one person, his pack, his kingdom, thousands relied on him, and I was no more important than the next, even if he didn’t **see it** yet.

“If you keep going, I won’t be able to stop.” Rhys said, his voice husky.

“You **say** that like it’s a bad thing.” I answered, using our newfound mindlink connection.

“It’s not. I just don’t know how much time we have.” He admitted.

“True.” I responded with one more kiss. “But later, we will be finishing this.”

He smiled and pecked my lips, and I got off his lap.

“So, how do we think this dinner is going to go?” I asked, dropping the prophecy talk for now. We could dive deeper into that later, but for now, we had to change gears and focus on what was in front of us: The vampire dinner.

Rhys laughed as he grabbed a suit out of the closet. It was a deep blue that really made his olive skin stand out and his eyes pop. Goddess, he would look gorgeous in that, and he hadn’t even put it on yet. He then grabbed a strapless navy dress that almost matched his perfectly and handed it to me.

“Dinner is going to be a shitshow.” He said, still laughing. “Be ready for anything,”

Chapter Comments

LIKE

The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

Chapter 266

It would be a lie if I wasn't a little unnerved by my conversation with Grace about the prophecies. Her version of it seemed to be different than mine, but I'd be lying if I said I wasn't a bit confused by it too. She had also taken mine much better than I had expected. It was almost like **she** expected me to break her... And maybe she did. I sometimes forgot how broken she was when she first came to me. There were moments when I completely forgot all the things she had been through because she was so different than that girl in the beginning. But I didn't want **to** break her, and those words from that poem had haunted me since the moment I had first read it.

I shook my head in an attempt to try and refocus my thoughts. We would have to revisit this conversation in the near future, but for now the Vampires were vying for our attention. They had already come knocking once. We needed to be ready the next time someone came back.

“Well, how do I look?” Grace asked as she walked out of the bathroom. She was wearing a strapless, navy blue, floor-length dress that hugged her figure in all the right places. She had curled her hair and pinned half of it up in the back so that it wasn’t falling in her face.

“Like a little piece of heaven,” I told her, pecking her lips when

close enough.

She laughed, and I knew she didn’t believe me, but that was okay. It didn’t matter **if** she didn’t believe me. The fact that she was feeling confident enough to wear it after all she had been through made me proud.

But I felt my face fall when I realized her scars were gone.

I spun her around and ran my finger over her back.

“What?” She asked worriedly. “Did I miss

spot?”

“What did you do to your scars?” I demanded.

“I put concealer over them, Allana showed me a cool trick to get all of them a while ago. I never really cared before, but I didn’t want to look weak in front of the vampi- why are you looking at me like that?”

I couldn’t conceal my glower in the same way she could her scars. “Your scars do not make you look weak,” I growled. “They are a part **of** you as much as your skin is. I never want you to hide any part of yourself. Not like that. Not today. Not ever.”

“But-”

“No. Go get that god awful stuff off your skin.”

She looked at for a moment. I would have done anything to take back the words I had **just** said. The hurt and horror on her face said everything she didn’t. She just turned around and walked back into the bathroom.

“Grace...” I tried **as** I knocked on the door, but I had heard it click. She had locked it, and locked me out in the process. “Grace, please.”

It **was** fruitless though. She didn't respond, and I didn't want to push... I had messed **up**. My mate **was** beautiful, but to me her **scars** were a

testament to her strength not her weakness, and I never wanted her to feel like they made her less, especially because there were more **now**. But yelling at her wasn't going to change her opinion of them,

"I'll be out in the other room when you're ready." I said when she didn't respond, and I could feel the hurt flooding our bond,

I was surprised to see everyone sitting around In the sitting area. I had expected them all to be still getting ready, **and** with the **exception of Grace** and Iris, they all were already. Without talking, we had all picked something with blue in it. Sawyer was wearing a **grey** suit **with a** blue button up, and accented tie. Maizie was wearing a blue and white high-low sleeveless dress, **and** Michael was in a blue suit that **was nearly** identical to mine.

"Where's **Grace?**" Michael asked when he realized she wasn't with me..

he teal

I ran my hand over my **face** tiredly, but bef

I could say anything, Maizie exclaimed, “You seriously **got in a fight with her already?! She’s**

barely been back 24 hours!”

Chapter 266

I sighed. It **wasn’t** easy navigating our relationship. Maizie would learn that relationships weren’t easy the longer **she** was **with** Sawyer, **Grace was** vulnerable, and **I was** impatient; it was always **going** to be a recipe **for** disaster,

“What **did** you do this time?” Sawyer asked, his brows raised in question.

“I **was** rude and inconsiderate.” I admitted. “I’m only human, Sawyer.”

“Want me to go talk to her?” Maizie asked.

“No, just give her a few minutes. Where’s Iris?” I asked changing the subject.

“She’s refusing to change,” Michael said with a sigh. “She’s st

still

pretty

mad at me and this whole situation.”

“Well, if she promises not to leave the room, she can stay here while we’re at dinner.” I conceded. I didn’t really love the idea **of** being separated, but the **last** thing I really needed was Iris fucking things up with the **Vampires**. Dinner was going to be stressful **enough without her** little jabs and attitude.

“Deal!” She called out from her room, the door never even opening.

Huh. She had been listening. It was good to know that she was that kind **of** person. She might not what was going on outside her closed door.

us,

but she **at least was curious** about

A knock at the door came and I sighed, moving to open it. Maizie wordlessly got up to **get** my mate as I made small talk with the attendant. Once Maizie and Grace came out of the room, they both took their respective places **next** to Sawyer and I, but no amount of concealer **could** hide the tear-stained cheeks of my mate. She let me take her hand though, and all I could do was kiss it softly as we walked in **apology**. We had a game to play now, and all that really mattered was that we were on the same team. But honestly, whatever team **Grace was on, so was I. And** if this whole dinner went to shit, then I would walk out of here with no qualms and Grace's hand in mine.

The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

Chapter 267

The banquet hall was exquisite. It was exactly how I had imagined it. For vampires, it was beautiful. The marble floors and **walls. The black table** and chairs. The white dishes. The banners representing things that I did not understand in the slightest. **I** was impressed by **the ability to-** do **so** much with so little variety. They really followed the black, white and grey, color stereotype to a T.

I pulled out a chair for Grace, and she nodded her thanks. Gods, I would do anything to have her speak to me for a moment, but I know now wasn't the time for that. I just hated when we'd fight. I had been an asshole. I got that. But it wasn't fair. I wanted her to be **herself**, and comfortable with it at all times. Not whatever this was.

“My my, aren’t you all a quiet group,” Margaret teased from the head of the table, and I placed myself between her and Grace with Michael on Grace’s other side. Sawyer took the seat on the other side of the Queen with Maizie next to him. Through our bond, I could feel Grace’s nerves, now that we were fully mated, she couldn’t block me out like before, but on the outside, she looked perfectly composed. “I don’t bite other royalty, and I am in the presence of royalty.”

“Now Margaret, do not make promises you can’t keep,” A deep voice interrupted.

A Vampire with jet black hair and pale features, stepped out of the shadows. I had had a feeling that he would show up, but I had never met the man. If I wasn’t mistaken, he was the Vampire Prince, Elijah.

Margaret just scoffed. “How many times must I tell you to call me Mother?”

“At least a hundred more.” Elijah answered coolly. “I’m Prince Elijah.”

Elijah had never come with Margaret to the any of the Counsel meetings, but he was known everywhere. Everybody had heard **of** him, even Maizie and Michael by the looks on their faces which they quickly schooled back to neutral.

“Have we met before, beautiful?” The Prince asked, staring directly at Maizie.

I could tell how uncomfortable he was making her. He stood directly behind her chair, staring down at her, and smelling her? But she stayed composed.

“No. I don’t believe we have.” She answered. Her voice was tighter than usual, but still polite and composed, and I couldn’t tell if she was lying

or not.

“But your scent, I recognize it.” He stated as he took his seat at the other end of the table, and for some strange reason, I was really glad Caleb wasn’t here.

Sawyer growled lowly, and I shot him a look. Elijah was purposefully being an ass and trying to provoke both of them. I knew it and he knew it, and it was working. But that didn’t give Sawyer the right to react. We needed to keep our calm. If Maizie could keep calm, then so could

Sawyer.

“You must be mistaken.” Maizie answered, placing her hand gently on Sawyer’s arm in an attempt to help settle him.

“Oh I see,” Elijah smirked **as** he took his place at the end of the table. “You belong to the little Prince. But darling, I could offer you an entire Kingdom.”

I frowned at his comment. Out of the corner of my eye, I caught **Grace** looking at Margaret though, and not Elijah.

“**Yes, we** are happily mated.” Sawyer responded angrily.

“You must **have a** thing for older men,” Elijah winked.

“What do you see?” I mindlinked Grace, super grateful that ever since **we mated** we had **been** able **to** mindlink, **something I was sure** we **were** never going to be able to do.

“She’s surprised and disgusted by her ‘son’s’ **behavior**. There’s **more** going on here.”

“Great, another mystery.” I sighed.

She laughed slightly in my head, which for a moment I forgot we were fighting. Or maybe we were done **fighting**. I didn’t **know**.

“What’s so amusing, Alpha King?” Elijah asked coolly.

“I didn’t realize how true the rumors that you liked mated women. And *I* didn’t know the Vampires had a Kingdom.” I recovered smoothly. **I** didn’t want to give away my secret connection with Grace. Years and years of training had prepared me for this sort of thing. I couldn’t tell **you** how many hours I had spent playing politics with my dad and mom, giving me a million scenarios we might encounter, and none of them were this. “I only knew of the city. **Is** this the empire you are referring to?”

“A part of it.” Elijah answered cryptically.

“The City is our main location, yes, but we do have others outside of it,” Maragret gave her son a strange look. She didn’t **seem** to understand what game he was playing, but I did. She might not be aware of what was happening outside of her borders, but he **was**, and he was a part of it. I had absolutely no questions about it. And he knew we were here, we could be in some serious trouble.

“Anyways, there’s a party tonight, we’d love for you to all join.” Elijah smiled coldly. “**Since you** have such a lack of understanding of the vampire world, we’d like to give you a real true glimpse at it.”

“We are here on business, actually,” Grace responded, surprising me.

“Oh, and what might that be?” The Prince asked with fake intrigue.

“Oh, it’s girl talk, actually.” Grace smiled at him with a sweetness only she could muster. “I’m afraid no **boys** allowed. Maizie **and** I have been just having a little trouble... But you wouldn’t get it. **As I** said, girl talk.”

Oh my Gods. She was **a** genius. She kept us from revealing completely why we were here but also giving her and Maizie a chance **to** find out anything they could.

A dark look crossed Elijah’s face and he glared at his mother who was looking at him curiously. She clearly didn’t know why **Grace** wanted to talk to her, but that didn’t stop it from infuriating her son.

“Well, I must insist that you come to the party then.” The darkness in his **voice** was unsettling, but I was proud that none of **my** people even flinched.

“Dear, if they **are** here on business, surely, they must be getting back to their pack-”

“Nonsense! I insist. Party tonight, business tomorrow.”

Chapter Comments

The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

Chapter 268

The party was in full swing. I suppose I expected it to be formal, but it was more like what I had imagined a rave might look like. There were and the music was so loud it was reverberating off the wall.

disco lights coming from all direction

I gripped Rhys' hand tight, and he wore a serious expression as we walked around. As soon as we had gotten back to our suite, we **had** discussed that there was no good reason that Elijah was requiring us to stay. All of us were suspicious as hell of him. Maizie had barely spoken since dinner, and it wasn't hard to tell that something was wrong. She looked a little lost and kept zoning out, but she was also still being a great guest. She just held Sawyer's hand and ignored whatever feelings she was having.

Michael also was not leaving my side. He wasn't normally so clingy, but something about the Vampires seemed to have both **of** the **younger** ones in our party on edge.

A woman walked over to where Rhys and I were standing, and she immediately began flirting with Rhys. Right in front of me. Which in **my** opinion was incredibly rude. But it was nothing new. I knew how attractive my mate was. If Kinsley

hadn't mated Adrian, I expected she would have gone after Rhys like all the women who had come before me. I knew she hated that I had mated above her, especially since she **only** saw me as worthless. I had heard many of the other girls talking about his looks too, especially after I had moved into his pack. But **to** know **who** I was to him, standing right next to him, made her flirtation way **worse** to me.

"This is my mate, Grace," Rhys introduced me as an attempt to make her stop, which I appreciated.

The girl looked me over with a dirty look. But before I could respond, something caught my eye. A flash of movement.

"Rhys, I'll be right back." I told him, slipping my hand from his and taking off without another word.

"Is everything okay?" Rhys mindlinked worriedly.

"I'll let you know in a minute." I responded, slipping through the open doorway, hoping my absence would not be otherwise noted.

I could feel Rhys' worry through the bond, but I ignored it. There was no room for that right now. I didn't mind taking risks for Michael or any

of the others, but I didn't feel the same with her. Not yet anyway. And I couldn't let anything happen to her, despite my feelings on it.

"And what do you think you're doing?" I demanded just as her hand reached for another door.

She turned around to face me, her cheeks turning a bright shade of red.

"Grace... What are you doing here?" Iris exclaimed in a hushed whisper, placing a hand over her heart.

"Following you." I answered coolly. "You said you didn't want to go to the party. I understood that. But that does not give you permission to go sneaking around a castle of people we don't know!"

"I-" She stuttered, looking like a deer caught in headlights. "You don't understand!"

"Try me." I responded, crossing my arms over my chest.

"I can't." She whispered.

“She wanted him to help her.” Someone answered from the shadows.

I turned to **face** the voice, but I didn’t see anyone, and if my nerves weren’t on fire already, they were now.

“Who to help her?”

“My brother.” A small girl, who looked no older than 7 stepped into the dim light. “Elijah. He worked in your program, **did** he not?”

Iris stared at the younger girl in horror, her mouth gaping open **as** she nodded.

“You’re **Princess** Elara?” I asked uncertainly. In our few hours here, her name had been mentioned several times at dinner, **but we had yet to** meet her, and I wasn’t expecting her to be so young.

She nodded, and the prestige of **royalty** was evident in her every move. “No need to look at me like that,” She chided. “I’m far older **than** either **of** you will **ever** be.”

I snapped my jaw shut, unsure of what my expression had said, but forcing myself back into what I hoped was neutral features.

“My apologies, Princess,” I bowed my head.

“You’re her, aren’t you? The one they are all after?”

“The Red Blood blood pack, yes.” I answered uneasily.

“If they are all you are worried about, then you are in much more trouble than you think.” Elara answered.

“What do you mean?” I questioned.

“We don’t have time.” The girl responded as she peered behind her shoulder. “He has already called in **back**-up, **and** they have permission to **be** on our land. You have to get out of here.”

“Who’s coming?” I asked, my stomach dropping.

“Grace?” Rhys called out through the mindlink as fear filled me to the core.

“Whoever is closest.” She answered cryptically. “Come on, follow me.”

“Wait, I can’t leave without Rhys!” I exclaimed, refusing to follow her. “Or any of the others!”

“He will notice if all of you leave. He won’t if it’s just you two. He won’t help you, Iris. But you know that. You know how he is.”

“But-”

“If he told you that you were one of his favorites, then he lied to you like he lied to everyone else.”

“I’m not leaving without the others,” I protested. “Either we all leave or **we** all get caught, but **we’ve** been split up too often lately.”

“What’s going on here?” Queen Margaret demanded as she looked from her daughter to me and Iris.

I looked to Elara to see if she had an answer, but she wasn't looking at her mother. I didn't know if they were even blood related, I didn't quite know how vampire families worked, but for them to be blood-related seemed to be a little weird to me.

"Grace?" Rhys' voice came through again with more urgency.

"We have to get out of here," I responded through the link, "Tell the others, enact plan C."

Without Elara's help, I responded the only way I could think to. It was a complete gamble, but I said the words before could lose my nerve. "Your son betrayed us, and we need to leave now. Will you help us?"

The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

Chapter 269

It took little **to no** time to set up the distraction. We had known that the party was most likely a trap. It was obvious **by the way he had demanded** we attend at dinner. We had come up with 3 plans, depending on how it all played out, and we had gone over **every contingency we** could think of in the little time that we had. It was unsettling to me that **my** mate wasn't with me, but I didn't want **to draw more attention to** her, wherever she was.

My part of the plan was easy. The number of women who kept trying to flirt with me, even right in front of Grace was a little **much, but I** was going to use it to my advantage. That was the thing about parties like this. It didn't matter that I was the **Alpha** King of the Werewolves, **it** only mattered that I had the word King in my name.

I leaned in close, and whispered something into the girl's ear, she giggled, and I was glad that Grace wasn't here to see **this**. I didn't like using women for my own gain, but I also wasn't going to stay here and wait to be slaughtered with my family. Girls **at** these things were always predictable. Always wanting a taste of power, and one taste was never enough. I was sure that the Vampire Prince had slept with over **half the** girls here, but that was going to serve me well.

"Can you go get me a drink?" I asked the woman who was practically hanging off me. She was target number one in phase one **of our plan**. I slipped my hand in her pocket, dropping something in it, but pulling her back toward me so she didn't notice.

The blush that filled her cheeks made me nauseous, but it had had to be done. And I knew the **next** one I did would make me feel even **worse**. She turned back away from me and scurried off to get my drink.

As predicted, another woman immediately took her place. I immediately started to work on her too, flirting it up, **and turning** on the charm I was trained to have.

Out of the corner of my eye, I saw Maizie wrap her arm around someone in a seemingly friendly nature. For how 'standoffish' we had been **at** the beginning of the party, people would assume the alcohol was doing **its** job, and I knew that

was **exactly** what Prince Elijah wanted to happen. But none of **us** had actually had a single drop.

I couldn't see Sawyer, but I knew he was doing something similar as his mate and I. But I was a little concerned that I couldn't see Michael. I knew there was no real chance that Maizie had let him out of her sight, but I still worried for the youngest among **us** surrounded by enemies. "Let's get out of here," I whispered to the woman who was now hanging off of me.

She smiled at me, and I let her take my hand, leading me toward the hallway that Grace had disappeared through a little bit ago. I had hoped that this was the direction that we would go, but I hadn't been sure.

"Coming your way," I warned Grace.

I felt her bristle at my words, but she didn't respond.

"Iris?" I heard Michael's voice before I saw him. "What are you doing? I thought you didn't want **to** come..."

"Well, I'm not at the party now, am I?" She retorted.

I couldn't see Michael's face, but I knew the hurt he was feeling **at** her snipe.

“Michael...” I heard Grace beckon him. I don’t know if she knew something or not, but I could hear the worry in her voice.

“**Yea**, listen to the traitor, Michael.” Iris snapped **as** she **came** into view.

“Iris, you don’t understand!” Michael replied desperately.

“Ohhh, sorry,” The woman exclaimed when she finally realized we were walking into a crowd in what **was supposed to be** an **empty hallway**. “We will just be passing through.”

“Like hell you will.” Grace **snapped**. I knew she wasn’t really angry, but her face told a totally **different story**.

Chapter 269

Ohh, you’re here,” The **woman** who I didn’t even bother learning her name sneered.

Yea. **I am**. And my mate **isn’t** going anywhere with you.”

“You aren’t married. And he is the Alpha King.” The girl argued heatedly.

“What are you up to?” A different voice demanded.

“Elara?” I responded in surprise. Elara, I knew. She was the smartest in the Vampire family, and I actually respected her opinion usually at **the** meetings. “I didn’t know you were here.”

“Well, I try and stay out of the way when Elijah is around, but you guys are making that awfully hard.” She answered in her usual **dry**, unimpressed, tone.

“Go back to the party.” I told the woman I had used to get here. “My mate isn’t going to let us have any fun.”

“Damn straight.” Grace growled, and this time I did feel a wave of jealousy roll off of her.

The girl pouted, gave me a longing look, but did **as** I said, and my arms around her.

as

soon **as** she was out of sight, I made my way over to my mate **and** wrapped

“Would somebody for the love of the gods **please** tell me what **is** going *on*

Grace shrugged, and turned to face the woman.

Queen Margaret demanded, I hadn’t even noticed she was **there**.

“You might want to look into your son’s business a little harder. He is part of experiments on Lycan children in an effort to I believe make a stronger **race** that combines multiple different genes. I’m not sure what his **exact** role in everything is, but he set **us** up to be **captured**, using this party to do it.” I answered bluntly.

Screams filled the air from the direction of the party, and I knew it would only be a matter of moments before Maizie and Sawyer joined **us**.

“And why would you think that?” Queen Margaret frowned.

“Because **I’ve** seen him there, ma’am,” Michael spoke up. “I lived in the program. He **was** a director.”

My heart clenched for him. For all three of the younger ones with **us** who had lived and breathed that life. I couldn’t imagine how terrifying it

so calm. would be to be in the same place as an abuser like that and still be

“Now, we would love to chat more, but we need to **leave**, can you show **us** the tunnels now?” **Grace asked as** Maizie and **Sawyer** barreled through the door, reuniting our party.

Margaret looked at each of us as the chaos from the party grew louder before nodding.

“This **way**.”

The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

We followed Queen Margaret down the black and white stairs. The party had had some color, but we were back **in the usual vampire style world**. The steps were marble. At least for the first few levels. The deeper we went, the more the stairs changed. No longer **were they marble**. but eventually they were wood, and then just simply a ladder.

Queen Margaret didn't hesitate, and if I didn't know any better, I would think she was leading us to our death or something. **But** Margaret didn't seem to have any bad intentions. I didn't know why I was so sure on that, but I was. So sure that I would bet my life **on it if** I had **to**. But I didn't have to, at least not yet.

When we finally reached the bottom, I fought to catch my breath. I hadn't been in the Red Blood prison for too long, but long enough for my body to not be quite right. I felt weak and tired, and my lungs burned. But there was no time to think about how I felt. We **didn't** have time **for** that.

"I'm still not sure about what's going on." Queen Margaret made

eye

with each and every one of us.

"It's not good, Mother," Elara said quietly as she jumped off the ladder just behind Maizie.

"I suggest finding out who's loyal to you and trying to get as much information from Elijah as you **can**. Maybe you can help us from the inside." Rhys told them.

“He will know we helped you.” Elara answered. “It will no

longer be **safe** for

us here.”

“Then I suggest you come with us.” Rhys responded, surprising

1. me.

“Are you sure about this?” I asked through the mindlink.

“It’s the right thing to do.” He replied to me.

“I can’t leave my people.” Queen Margaret frowned.

“You won’t do them much good if you’re rotting inside a prison.” Rhys retorted.

“Mother, we have to go with them...” Elara said calmly.

“But we have nothing!” Queen Margaret argued.

Elara shook her head slowly and pulled two bags out from behind a wall. “I’ve been packed for weeks. And I put **as** many obstacles **as** possible in his path, but they won’t hold him forever if he gets smart... We have to go...”

Queen Margaret nodded slowly, and I didn’t know what to think **of** any of this. I wouldn’t say, I was opposed to them coming with us. **Not even** a little. **I just** worried how much we could actually trust them. I trusted my gut, they didn’t seem like bad people. But this seemed like a risk that seemed a little bit too big for my comfort, and the logical part of my brain was screaming another trap, even if I didn’t actually **feel that**

way.

It didn’t matter though. The decisions were made. Queen Margaret pressed **up** and down **on** the wall farthest away from **us**. **I was beginning to** think she had totally lost when it moved.

I jumped backwards, and Rhys squeezed my hand and smiled at my reaction. I blushed, embarrassed at my reaction, but no one else seemed **to** be paying attention.

“Keep Iris close to you,” I told Rhys though the bond.

“Okay.” **He** answered **easily**, moving so that Iris would be in front of us. “Did something happen?”

“**Yes** and no.” I responded. “It’s complicated.”

“**Isn’t** everything?“,

I chuckled out loud and got some weird looks from the others. I just shook my head, and we hastened our pace now down the new tunnel.

I kept checking behind us, worried that they had found which way we had gone, but I saw nothing. I wasn’t sure **we’d** even be able to tell if we were being followed. Vampires were notorious for their silence and their speed, but it didn’t stop me from checking every few minutes.

On the walk, the Queen asked all sorts of questions about what was going on, and I didn’t blame her. She had known that her son had some interesting habits. He had always seemed a little extra hungry, but she hadn’t realized how far he had been willing to go for power. At least that was our assumption of what was happening.

Elara was oddly quiet. She just observed everything, and I wished I could get to know her. I couldn't imagine being trapped in **a** child's body for forever. That seemed absurd to me, but I could see how there might be some benefits to it. For one, no one would ever suspect her of anything, and maybe that's what unsettled me the most.

Eventually, we made our way to a ladder. We had been in the tunnels for hours, and my body was tired. I hated the way my body was ready **to** give out, and we still had to climb out.

"I wonder if the Red Blood pack has tunnels like this." Rhys wondered aloud.

"They do have tunnels. That's how Caleb got people out... But they aren't this extensive. But I have **an** idea about that." I told him carefully. "**I** never really thought about it until tonight, but what if the reason the Red Blood pack is disappearing so easily is because of **a** combination of powers?"

"What do you mean?" Rhys asked as we climbed, and I **was** grateful that this conversation was **just** between us at the **moment**.

"I mean, Vampires are silent and fast. Witches have powers that we don't truly understand. All it would take would be **one** successful kid... **And** they'd be able to silence and hide the whole pack right in front of us."

“You think one kid would have that much power?” Rhys asked.

“I think the right kid would... Or maybe several together. Maizie mentioned how they used to force shifts on her, **and I** wonder if there is **a way** that they harness power and can transfer it between people. Or maybe there’s a drug they use. I don’t know exactly... But I think it gives **us** something to actually work with... I could be wrong, but after everything that’s happened in the last couple days, I think I’m right.”

Rhys and I took the stairs slowly, but I hadn’t realized that anyone was close enough to be listening. At least, that is until Elara began to **slow** clap behind us.

I turned to face her in confusion, but to my surprise, she wore the same blank expression she had since I’d met her.

“Congratulations, you are not an idiot Grace Cairstairs. You just might be able to save us after all.”