

Fated To Not Just One, But Three #Chapter 461: What's Next - Read Fated To Not Just One, But Three Chapter 461: What's Next

Chapter 461: What's Next

Olivia's POV

Levi's hand closed around my arm, firm and trembling. He pulled me to face him, his eyes dark with worry and exhaustion.

"Olivia," he said quietly, his voice low but edged with frustration. "What did you do?"

His tone struck something inside me, that same mix of guilt and fury I'd been holding back.

I yanked my arm free, glaring at him through tears. "Why do you sound like that? Like you're afraid of what I might do instead of hoping it works? Sometimes I feel like you don't even want him back!"

The words came out before I could stop them, and I hated myself for it.

Levi froze. The look on his face shattered me instantly—a flicker of disbelief, then pain. His jaw clenched, his voice breaking. "How can you say that?"

For a heartbeat, guilt stabbed through my chest. I hadn't meant it, not like that. But the pain inside me was too raw to take it back.

"I didn't mean—" I started, my voice softening, but it didn't matter. The damage was already done.

Levi stepped back slightly, shaking his head. "Everything we did, every choice we made, Olivia, was to save you. And now you think we don't want our brother back?"

Louis stepped closer, his tone gentler. "He's right. You think we don't miss him too? You think we sleep easy knowing what we did?"

I looked between them, my throat tight. "I'm sorry," I whispered.

A moment of awkward silence hung in the air before I added, "I have a plan."

Levi frowned, his brows furrowing. "What are you talking about?"

I hesitated, then exhaled shakily. "I met with the witch. The one who helped me bring my mother back."

Louis's eyes widened. "Olivia—"

"She's helping me," I cut in quickly. "She told me what to do. It's risky, yes, but it will work. I'm going to bring him back."

Levi's voice dropped, rough with disbelief. "You went back to her?"

"I had to," I said firmly. "She said there's a way to wake him. It'll take seven nights. My blood. My energy. That's all I need."

He was quiet for a long moment, his chest rising and falling slowly. Then he sighed, rubbing the back of his neck. "If this witch really helped you before, then maybe this time, it's not a bad idea."

That caught me off guard. I blinked at him. "You mean that?"

He nodded slightly. "Yes. If it gives us a chance to get him back, I'll take it."

For a brief moment, something softened between us, but it didn't last.

Levi's gaze met mine again, heavy with something else. "But, Olivia," his voice trembled, "can you ever forgive us? For what we did?"

I stared at him—at both of them—for what felt like forever.

Then I took a slow step back. "Pray," I said quietly, my voice shaking, "that when Lennox wakes up, the mate bond wakes with him. Because if it doesn't..."

My eyes burned as I looked at them one last time. "You won't only have me to answer to; you'll have him too."

Neither of them spoke.

I turned toward the door, forcing my voice steady even though my heart felt like it was tearing apart. "Until then, I can't forgive you."

And with that, I walked out, leaving.

The garden was quiet when I stepped outside. The soft scent of morning dew clung to the air, and the early breeze brushed against my face.

I drew in a shaky breath and sank onto the stone bench near the fountain. My chest still felt heavy, my eyes stinging from the argument. I closed them, trying to calm my heart.

For a while, there was only silence until I felt a presence behind me. Familiar. Unwanted.

I frowned before even turning. "Frederick," I muttered.

He walked around and sat beside me, his usual calm expression unreadable. The faintest trace of a smirk touched his lips. "You knew it was me."

"I can feel you," I said flatly. "You have a way of ruining quiet moments."

He chuckled lowly, not denying it. For a moment, neither of us spoke. The sound of running water filled the stillness. Then I turned to him, folding my arms. "What now?"

His eyes lingered on the garden ahead, far too calm for someone like him. "Selene," he said suddenly. "I love her."

The words caught me off guard. My brows lifted slightly. "You love her?"

He nodded once, his gaze still distant.

A strange feeling—relief—fluttered in my chest. "Then that means..." I hesitated, my voice softening. "You'll let go of me?"

He didn't answer right away. Instead, he tilted his head, the corners of his mouth twitching. "She thinks I killed her mother."

I turned sharply toward him. "Didn't you?"

Frederick scoffed, finally looking at me. "What do you take me for? A monster?"

I stared at him, searching his eyes for the truth. "I don't know what to take you for anymore."

He gave a dry laugh and shook his head. "No, Olivia. I didn't kill her. Deborah was a good student. A bright one. She didn't deserve what happened to her."

Something in his tone sounded real, like he was being sincere.

"Then what happened?" I asked softly. "If you didn't kill her, why does Selene believe you did?"

He looked away, his jaw tightening. For a moment, it seemed like he might answer, but he didn't.

I leaned forward, narrowing my eyes. "You're in love with her, aren't you? Deeply. So why not be with her? Fight for her?"

Frederick's expression hardened. He rose from the bench slowly, brushing imaginary dust from his sleeves. "Until I prove my innocence," he said quietly, "Selene won't want to be with me."

He turned away and began walking toward the edge of the garden.

"Frederick," I called after him, but he didn't stop. "We made a deal, you remember?"

He only paused long enough to say, without looking back, "Yes, Olivia, and I believe you should have gotten your answer now."

And then he disappeared into the trees, leaving me alone again with more questions than answers.

Chapter 462: Leftovers?

Olivia's POV

It had been two long days since I started the ritual. Every morning, I cut my palm and let one drop of my blood fall into Lennox's mouth, just like the witch told me to. She said my blood would help him find his way back—that it carried the last bit of our broken bond. But nothing had changed yet. Lennox still lay there, quiet and pale. His chest moved slowly, but he didn't wake.

I sat beside him, holding his hand. My heart hurt, but I refused to give up. "Please," I whispered, tears running down my face. "Moon Goddess, please help him. Let him come back to me. I'll give anything."

Behind me, I heard footsteps—Levi and Louis. They had stopped trying to talk me out of it. Now they only watched from the corner, their faces full of worry. I didn't turn around. I just kept my eyes on Lennox.

"You once told me you'd always find your way back to me," I said softly, brushing my hand across his face. "So do it, Lennox. Find your way home."

The candlelight flickered. The air around us felt different—like something was starting to move. Or maybe... I was only dreaming. Still, I stayed there, hoping, waiting, believing.

"Olivia, you need to please eat," Levi pleaded the moment I stood up from the bed beside Lennox.

Louis nodded gently. "Yes, dear... you've not eaten since yesterday."

I sighed, shaking my head. It wasn't that I didn't want to eat—I just couldn't. My stomach turned at the thought of food. Too much was happening, and the last thing I could worry about was a meal.

"I'll eat when I'm hungry," I said quietly.

Neither of them liked that answer. Levi's jaw tightened, and he stepped closer, his voice low. "You say that every time, and you never eat. You're going to collapse, Olivia."

I frowned, glancing at him. "I'm fine."

"You're not fine," he said, louder this time. "You're hurting yourself!"

His tone startled me. Levi rarely raised his voice—not at me. He ran a hand through his hair, frustrated. "Do you even see us anymore?" he asked softly, his voice cracking. "Or are we just shadows standing beside your pain?"

I blinked, not sure what to say. Louis's eyes darted between us, but he stayed quiet. Levi took another step toward me, his face filled with exhaustion and raw pain.

"I know you love him, Olivia. We all do. But we're your mates too. We've been here every minute, watching you fall apart—and it's killing us."

My throat tightened. "Levi..."

"No," he cut in, his voice trembling. "Do you know what it feels like to hold you, to see you break, and still know that no matter what I do, I'll never be enough to take that pain away? That even when I touch you, you're still reaching for him?"

Tears blurred my vision. "That's not fair," I whispered.

He gave a weak, bitter smile. "Neither is watching the woman I love bleed for another man—even if that man is my brother."

Silence. The kind that makes breathing hard.

I stared at him, anger and disbelief twisting in my chest. "How could you even say that?" My voice rose before I could stop it. "How could you be jealous of your own brother—when he's fighting for his life?"

Levi blinked, stunned. "Jealous?" he repeated, his tone low.

"Yes!" I shouted, my voice breaking. "That's what this sounds like! You're standing here talking about how I make you feel unseen when he's lying there between life and death!"

Louis stepped forward, trying to calm the situation. "Olivia, he didn't mean it that way."

I turned on him too, my chest heaving. "Then how did he mean it, Louis? Because I'm trying to save his brother, your brother, and somehow that's a problem now?"

Louis's voice stayed calm but firm. "No one said it's a problem. But you're acting like we don't exist, like Lennox is the only one who matters. Like he's your real mate, and we're just... what? Leftovers?"

I froze. "Leftovers?" The word burned in my ears.

Louis sighed, his own pain showing now. "You know that's not what I mean."

"Then why say it?" I snapped, my voice shaking. "Do you really think that little of me? Of us?"

Levi stepped closer, his face pale. "We don't, Olivia. But it's hard—watching you pour everything into him when we're right here, bleeding with you. You haven't even looked at us the same since—"

"Since what?" I interrupted, tears spilling. "Since you took away my bond? Since you decided for me what was best?"

The room went still. I took a shaky breath, my voice breaking as I shouted, "You think I don't see you, Levi? You think I don't feel you, Louis? You're wrong. I feel everything. The pain. The loss. The guilt. But this—this isn't jealousy! This is love! If either of you were lying here instead of Lennox, I would be doing the exact same thing!"

Louis shook his head slowly, his voice rising for the first time. "We're not saying you shouldn't care. But you don't eat, you don't sleep—you breathe only for him. Sometimes it feels like the rest of us could die, and you wouldn't even notice."

Something inside me snapped.

"This," I shouted, tears streaking my face, "is exactly why Lennox is better than both of you! If either of you were in his place, he'd be more worried about your lives than wondering who I love most!"

Levi flinched. Louis's fists tightened at his sides.

"He wouldn't stand here counting affection," I went on, my voice trembling. "He'd be helping me save you! That's who he is! That's why I—" I stopped, my voice choking on the words.

Silence fell again—the kind that made the air too heavy to breathe.

Then, lower, I whispered, "You two need to kill whatever jealousy you're holding onto... before it turns into something darker. Because right now—"my throat tightened painfully—"right now I'm scared to even leave him alone with you."

Louis's mouth opened slightly, shocked. Levi stared at me like I'd stabbed him straight through the chest. I hadn't meant it. Not like that. But it was too late.

Levi stepped back slowly, shaking his head. His voice came out rough and heartbroken. "You really think that little of us."

"Levi—" I reached for him, guilt flooding through me, but he turned away.

Louis's voice was low, trembling with hurt. "We'd die for him, Olivia. Just like we'd die for you. But I guess you don't believe that anymore."

Neither of them said another word. And as they walked out, I felt the room grow colder—like another piece of my heart had been ripped away.

I turned back to Lennox, clutching his hand tightly. "Please," I whispered, my tears falling on his skin, "come back soon... before I lose everyone."

Chapter 463: Coming Back

Levi's POV

I didn't stop walking until I was outside.

The door slammed shut behind me, but her words still rang in my head over and over, like knives cutting through me.

"Right now, I'm scared to even leave him alone with you."

I staggered to the hallway wall and pressed a hand against it, trying to breathe. But the air felt too heavy, too thick.

Louis came out a moment later, quiet as always. He didn't say anything at first. He just stood beside me, watching the floor like he didn't know how to start.

"She didn't mean it," he said finally, his voice low as if trying to comfort me.

I let out a short, bitter laugh. "Didn't she?"

He looked at me, frowning. "You know she's hurting. You can't take everything she says right now—"

"I can't?" I cut him off, turning toward him. "Louis, she said she's scared of us. Scared we'd kill our own brother!"

The words came out rough, and my throat burned. I dragged my hands through my hair, pacing the hall. "What kind of monster does she think I am?"

Louis didn't answer. Maybe because he didn't know either.

I punched the wall hard enough to make my knuckles split. "I did everything to save her, Louis. Everything! And now she looks at me like I'm the enemy."

"She's not thinking clearly," Louis said quietly, stepping closer. "You know how strong their bond was."

I shook my head, tears stinging my eyes. "That's the thing, isn't it? It's always been their bond. Even when she was with us, it was like there was this invisible wall, something we could never touch."

Louis's jaw tightened, but he didn't disagree.

"I thought I could handle it," I said, my voice breaking. "I thought I could live with being the one she turns to second. But hearing her say it—hearing her choose him even when he's half-dead—it's..." I swallowed hard. "It's like dying without ever being allowed to die."

Louis looked down, his fists clenched at his sides. "We made this mess, Levi. We broke the bond. We can't expect her to forgive us overnight."

I sank down to the cold floor, my back against the wall, my chest heavy. "You think I don't know that? I hate myself for what we did. For what I did. I keep telling myself it was the only way to save her, but every time I look at her face, I wonder if maybe we should've just let her decide her own fate."

Louis crouched beside me, his tone soft. "She'll come around. When Lennox wakes up, things will change."

I gave a small, empty laugh. "If he wakes up."

Louis looked away, guilt flickering in his eyes. "He will. He has to."

For a moment, we both sat in silence. The only sound was the faint echo of wind against the windows.

Louis's words broke the silence again. "She still loves us," he whispered, almost like he was trying to convince himself more than me.

I let out a broken breath, staring at my bleeding hand. "Yeah," I said quietly. "But not the same way anymore."

Louis frowned. "You don't know that."

I gave a bitter smile. "I do. You saw the way she looked at me, Louis. Like I was something she had to protect him from. That kind of look... it doesn't go away."

He sighed and sat beside me, his back against the same wall. "She's angry, Levi. Angry, hurt, confused. You can't blame her for that."

I turned to face him slowly. "I'm not blaming her. I'm blaming us. We should have just let her decide her fate"

Louis stayed silent, his jaw tightening.

I leaned my head back against the wall, closing my eyes. "You know what's funny? We've fought rogues, warlocks, vampires—but none of that hurt as much as hearing her say she's scared of me."

Louis's voice softened. "We'll fix this."

"How?" I asked, my voice cracking. "Even if Lennox wakes up, even if she forgives us—what's left of us after this?"

He didn't answer. He just stared ahead, his eyes distant.

The hallway was quiet again, filled only with the faint echo of the wind and our breathing.

After a while, Louis whispered, "You know what scares me?"

I turned my head slightly. "What?"

"That she's right," he said. "That if this jealousy doesn't die, it'll eat us alive. And when Lennox comes back... we won't recognize ourselves anymore."

I swallowed hard, staring at the blood dripping slowly from my knuckles. "I feel things will never be the same again.. I just can't explain it.... but..."

Louis turned toward me sharply. "Don't say that."

I gave a hollow laugh. "Why not? We tore apart a sacred bond. We turned her grief into something poisonous. Tell me, Louis—what kind of mates do that?"

He clenched his jaw. "The kind that love her enough to save her life."

I looked up at him, tired and bitter. "Then maybe love isn't enough anymore."

Louis opened his mouth to respond but stopped when a sudden gasp from Olivia reached us.

We both froze.

It came from Lennox's room.

"Did you hear that?" I asked.

Louis nodded, already on his feet.

We rushed back inside.

Getting to Lennox's room, my eyes fell on his fingers, and I noticed they twitched faintly on the sheets.

Louis turned to me, eyes wide. "Levi..."

But I was already moving closer, my heart hammering.

"Lennox?" I whispered, my voice trembling.

His eyelids didn't open, but his lips moved—barely—forming one broken word.

"Liv..."

Louis let out a sharp breath. "It's working."

Olivia held his hand, sobbing.

"Yes Lennox... I'm here..."

My chest tightened as I watched Olivia cradle Lennox's hand, whispering his name like a prayer. Her tears fell on his skin, her voice trembling with a mix of fear and hope.

For the first time in days, there was movement—proof that he was still there somewhere.

But instead of relief, a cold, creeping dread began to settle inside me.

Louis smiled faintly, almost in disbelief. "It's working," he said again, voice shaking.

But all I could do was stare at Lennox—his still, pale face... and the faint shadow that passed over it when he whispered Olivia's name.

Something about the way the air shifted felt wrong. It wasn't just energy; it was heavy, darker. Like whatever was pulling him back wasn't meant to return.

My heart began to pound. "Olivia," I said slowly, stepping closer, "move away from him."

She turned sharply, glaring at me. "Don't you dare tell me that! He just spoke, Levi. He spoke! He's coming back!"

"Olivia—" I started, but stopped. There was no point. She wouldn't hear me right now—not through the rush of hope she'd been starved of.

Louis glanced at me nervously. "Levi, what's wrong?"

I didn't answer. I couldn't explain it—the dread crawling under my skin, the whisper in my gut that something wasn't right.

My gaze shifted to Lennox's face—peaceful, yet unnaturally still.

Olivia kept crying, holding Lennox's hand tightly, whispering words of love and promises of forever. I wanted to go to her, to hold her—but something inside me froze.

Because as much as I wanted him back...

a small, terrified part of me wondered if the Lennox who returned... wouldn't be the same one we lost.

Chapter 464: Guests

Olivia's POV

"What's wrong?" I asked anxiously, my voice trembling. The witch stood over Lennox, her wrinkled hands hovering just above his chest, her eyes glowing faintly with that strange golden light again.

He had moved just moments ago, his fingers twitching, his lips whispering my name. For a heartbeat, I thought he was waking up. But then... nothing. He'd gone completely still again.

Now, watching the witch silently examine him, panic clawed at my chest.

"Why isn't he moving anymore?" I asked again, louder this time. "He said my name; he spoke! Why would he go still again?"

The witch didn't answer. Her expression remained unreadable as her fingers traced. I could hear my heart thundering. "Please, talk to me! Is something wrong with him?"

Finally, she exhaled long and tired. "Something is changing," she said quietly.

I blinked. "Changing? What does that mean?"

The witch's eyes met mine, sharp and serious. "His soul has started to return, but the passage is unstable. The pull between realms isn't complete yet."

I frowned, stepping closer. "So he's... stuck?"

"Not stuck," she corrected softly. "Fighting. His spirit is trying to merge with his body again, but there's resistance."

My heart clenched. "Resistance from what?"

She hesitated, glancing briefly toward the faint glow around Lennox's chest. "When a soul returns after being disconnected from its bond, it no longer knows which thread to follow. His heart seeks you, but the bond that used to guide him is gone. Without it, he's wandering between life and something else."

Tears welled in my eyes. "So what do I do? Tell me what to do!"

The witch looked at me long and hard. "You keep doing what you've been doing. Your blood is anchoring him."

I turned back to Lennox, brushing my hand gently across his face. His skin was still pale, but beneath my touch, I could feel the faintest warmth beginning to return.

"Come back to me," I whispered. "Please."

Behind me, the witch murmured another spell under her breath, and the air shimmered faintly. "He will wake," she said. "But the question, Olivia..." her voice dropped to a whisper, "...is who he will be when he does."

Her words brought a chill to me, and I frowned. "You sound as if you know what will happen. Why don't you tell me?"

The witch shook her head. "I have no idea, but all I know is that a price will be paid for the return of his soul. You all should just be ready."

I swallowed hard in panic and stared at Lennox, wondering what would become of him when he wakes up. But one thing I know is that nothing could be worse than his death, so I am willing to risk it all.

Before I could ask more, the sound of hurried footsteps echoed down the hallway. I turned toward the door just as it flew open.

"Lennox!"

It was Sir Damon and Lady Fiona, Lennox's parents. Their faces were pale, their expressions a mix of panic and exhaustion.

Fiona rushed past everyone straight to the bed, her trembling hands hovering over Lennox's still body. "My boy..." she whispered, her voice cracking. "What happened to him?"

I swallowed hard, standing back to give her space. "He's... he's fighting to come back," I said softly.

Damon's eyes darted to the witch, narrowing immediately. "Why is she here?" His voice was sharp, full of suspicion.

The witch didn't flinch. "Because without me, your son would already be dead," she said calmly.

Louis and Levi appeared at the doorway then, their expressions hard.

"What are you guys doing here?" Levi muttered under his breath. His tone carried no warmth.

Louis crossed his arms, his jaw tight. "What are you doing here?" he asked coldly. "You shouldn't be here until your trip is over."

Fiona turned sharply to face them, her voice rising. "We are still your parents. No matter what, Lennox is our son!"

Levi scoffed quietly. "Interesting."

"Enough," Damon snapped, stepping forward towards his sons. "We had to come back the moment we heard of Lennox's condition, and until he is fine, we are not leaving. That's final."

I noticed Louis and Levi glaring at him. They wanted to kick against his decision, but out of the little respect they still had for him, they just let it be.

Lady Fiona, who was caressing Lennox's hair, was now sobbing, whispering, "What happened? What went wrong?" but no one answered her. The room was just silent.

Feeling exhausted, I decided to leave the chaos in Lennox's room and go take a breath of fresh air outside.

Reaching the garden, I met Selene sitting quietly by the fountain, her long dark hair spilling over her shoulder, her fingers tracing small circles in the water. She looked up when she heard me.

"Olivia," she said softly. "You look exhausted."

I managed a weak smile. "You could say that." I walked closer, lowering myself onto the stone bench beside her. The afternoon air was cool against my skin, carrying the faint scent of roses and dew. For a moment, we just sat there in silence.

Then I finally asked, "What now?" My voice came out tired. "Everything feels like it's falling apart, and I don't even know how to hold it together anymore."

Selene sighed quietly, her eyes distant. "I know," she whispered. "It's... a lot."

Before I could respond, I heard footsteps behind us, slow, heavy ones. When I turned, it was a maid.

She bowed her head politely. "Luna Olivia," she said softly, "you have visitors waiting for you in the main hall."

I frowned. Why was she addressing me as Luna? "Visitors? Who?"

The maid hesitated. "I... I think you should come see for yourself."

Something in her tone made my stomach twist. I exchanged a quick glance with Selene before standing up.

The walk back to the house felt strangely long. My steps echoed faintly down the corridor, my mind racing with questions. Who could it be now? I wasn't in the mood for anyone or any pity visit.

But the moment I stepped into the living room, my breath caught.

There they were.

My parents.

Mr. and Mrs. Parker.

Chapter 465: We Meet Again

Olivia's POV

For a moment, I couldn't move. I just stood there, staring, my heart slamming against my ribs as if it was trying to make sense of what I was seeing.

My parents.

The two people I thought I'd never see again.

My breath caught as my eyes roamed over them.

Mother looked... different somehow. Her face had more color than I remembered, and she'd gained a little weight—not too much, just enough to make her look healthy. Her eyes glistened when they met mine, filling with tears instantly.

But it was him who froze me to the core.

My father.

The man I'd mourned for years. The man I'd buried in my memories when I was fourteen.

He stood there alive, real, breathing—looking older, yes, but still every inch the father I remembered. His dark hair was streaked with silver now, his broad shoulders still proud, though I could see the weight of time in his eyes.

I couldn't speak. My mouth opened, but no words came out. My body felt locked between shock, anger, and disbelief.

How?

How was this possible?

My father took a slow step forward, his gaze soft and full of guilt. "Olivia," he whispered, his voice trembling.

Hearing him say my name broke something inside me.

Tears filled my eyes, and before I could stop myself, I moved—one step, then another, then I was running.

Straight into my mother's arms.

She caught me tightly, pulling me close, and I finally let go. The tears came hard and fast, burning my face.

"My baby," she sobbed against my hair. "Oh, Olivia, I'm so sorry. I'm so, so sorry."

Her words shook me. Sorry? Sorry will never be enough.

When I finally pulled away, I turned to my father. "You..." I choked out. "You deceived me."

He gave a small, pained smile. "I'm so sorry."

My throat tightened. "You let me believe you were dead."

His expression faltered—regret flashed in his eyes. "It wasn't by choice," he said quietly. "There were... things you didn't know, things we couldn't tell you. It was the only way to protect you."

I stared at him, stunned. "Protect me from what?"

He didn't answer. His silence was enough to make my heart sink.

I shook my head, stepping back. "You don't get to say that after all these years! You don't get to show up now after everything and pretend you did this for me!"

My mother reached for me again, but I pulled away, trembling. "Do you have any idea what it was like? To think you were dead?" I said, glaring at my father, then turned to my mother. "And you? You knew all this time, and you never told me anything. You kept it away from me."

Her tears fell harder. "I'm sorry, sorry."

I wanted to hate them.

Truly, I did.

For months, I'd carried the pain of losing them—the anger, the emptiness, the sleepless nights wondering why they betrayed me the way they did.

And now here they were, standing in front of me.

Part of me wanted to scream. Another part just wanted to hold them and never let go.

"I can't do this," I whispered, my hands trembling. "I want to hate you both for leaving me... but I can't."

My father's eyes softened. "We are sorry," he said quietly. "Alpha Levi reached out to us. He said you needed us."

I blinked, caught off guard. "Levi?"

He nodded. "He told us about Lennox. About what happened. We came as fast as we could."

I sighed and slowly sank down onto the sofa, my legs suddenly weak. "Of course he did," I muttered under my breath. "He always thinks he knows what's best."

My mother sat beside me, her hand resting gently on my knee. "You look tired," she said softly. "Are you eating at all?"

I gave a small, humorless laugh. "That's what everyone keeps asking."

She smiled faintly, brushing a strand of hair from my face. "Because we worry. You've been through so much, my darling."

I looked at her—really looked at her. Her warmth, her familiar scent, the way her eyes still carried that same motherly love I grew up with.

And even though I knew she wasn't my real mother by blood, it didn't matter. She was my mother. The woman who raised me. The woman who loved me.

"I missed you," I whispered.

Her face softened, her voice trembling. "I missed you too."

We sat there in silence for a while, the sound of our breathing filling the space between us.

Finally, I asked, "Are you leaving today?"

Before either of them could answer, a voice came from the doorway.

"No," Levi said quietly, stepping into the room.

I looked up sharply. He stood there, his hands in his pockets, his eyes moving between me and my parents.

"They'll be staying for a while," he continued. "At least until things are stable again."

I didn't know when I flashed him a grateful smile. It was so thoughtful of him to do this for me. "Thank you," I whispered.

Levi nodded and then turned and walked away.

After Levi left, the room grew quiet again. My parents began talking softly behind me, but I wasn't really listening. My mind was already somewhere else.

It had been days since we'd really spoken. Not since that argument. I had hurt him with my words. And yet, even after everything, he still called my parents here. He still looked out for me.

That thought sat heavy in my chest. Maybe... maybe it was time to talk. To stop pretending that I didn't care, that the tension between us didn't ache every time I saw him.

I turned to the maid standing near the door. "Please show my parents to their room," I said quietly. "They must be tired from the trip."

She nodded and began leading them away. My mother squeezed my hand before leaving, her smile soft but full of questions I wasn't ready to answer.

Once they were gone, I exhaled deeply and followed the faint scent of pinewood and whiskey that lingered faintly through the hall. Levi.

It didn't take long to find him.

The door to the study was half-open. Inside, I saw him leaning against the desk, his sleeves rolled up, a glass of amber liquid in his hand. The bottle beside him was already half-empty.

He looked tired, like the weight of the whole world was resting on his shoulders. Such a sight made my wolf stir with unease.

I stepped in quietly, closing the door behind me. "Drinking this early?" I asked softly.

Chapter 466: Make Me Forget

Olivia's POV

Levi didn't even flinch when I stepped closer. He just stared down at his glass, swirling what was left inside before taking another slow sip. I reached out quietly and took it from his hand. He didn't fight me. He didn't say a word.

"I think you've had enough," I said softly.

He let out a faint, humorless chuckle. "Since when did you start caring for me?"

I ignored the jab and set the glass down on the desk. "Since I realized we needed to talk."

At that, his eyes finally met mine—dark, heavy, guarded.

"Talk," he repeated flatly. "About what, Olivia? About how you think I'm jealous of my brother? About how you're scared I'd hurt him?"

His words stung. I could hear the bitterness under them, the pain he tried to bury behind that calm tone.

"No," I said quietly. "About us."

He frowned. "Us?"

"Yes," I said, stepping closer. "You and me. Levi, we've been avoiding each other like strangers when we both know we can't keep doing this."

He stared at me, his jaw tight. "You think a conversation is going to fix what's already broken?"

My chest tightened. "Maybe not. But pretending it's fine is breaking it even more."

Silence. The air between us felt thick—heavy with all the things we'd left unsaid for too long.

I moved closer until I was standing right in front of him. "Levi," I said softly, "I don't love you less."

He froze.

"I need you to understand that," I went on, my voice trembling. "Just because I'm fighting to bring Lennox back doesn't mean what I feel for you has changed. I love him too—maybe differently—but that doesn't mean I stopped loving you."

His breathing hitched. For a moment, his eyes flickered with something raw, something vulnerable.

"I love you, Levi... you should never doubt that."

He didn't answer. He just stood there, staring at me like he was torn between walking away and pulling me closer.

My chest ached, my voice trembling. "I hate that we're like this. I hate that I can't fix it. I hate that every time I look at you, I feel like I'm losing you, even when you're standing right here."

His jaw clenched. "You're not losing me," he said quietly.

"Then why does it feel like it?" I whispered.

That broke something in him.

He took one step closer, then another—until the space between us disappeared. His hand came up slowly, his fingers brushing a tear from my cheek. "Because," he said softly, "every time I look at you, I remember that I'm the reason you're hurting."

My breath hitched. "You're not—"

"I am," he cut in, voice low. "We both are. I shouldn't have destroyed your bond with Lennox. I thought I was doing the right thing." He apologized.

Despite how much it hurt and how angry I was, I knew he believed he was saving me. As my mate, he thought it was his responsibility. And maybe... if I were in his place, I might have done the same.

"Can you forgive me?" Levi pleaded, his eyes filled with sincere guilt. "I hate it when you are angry at me."

Before I could say another word, he cupped my face in both hands. The warmth of his touch burned against my skin. I had missed his touch.

"Levi..." I whispered, my heart racing.

He hesitated for a second—just one—and then his lips crashed against mine.

The kiss was desperate, painful, full of everything we'd been holding back. Guilt. Love. Longing. Regret. And even though I knew it was wrong, that everything between us was tangled in too much pain, I kissed him back.

Because for that moment... I just wanted to feel something other than pain. I wanted to forget.

My hands trembled as they moved to his shirt, unbuttoning it slowly. Levi's breath caught. "Olivia, what are you doing?"

"I want this," I whispered. "I want to forget everything that's happening—even if it's just for a moment."

He searched my eyes, his voice hoarse. "Are you sure?"

"Yes," I said, my voice steady even as my heart raced. My fingers slid down, reaching for the zip of his pants.

"Olivia," he whispered again, as though saying my name might stop what was already happening. But his voice wavered, betraying him.

I rose on my toes, my lips grazing the edge of his jaw. "Don't," I breathed. "Don't stop me."

His hands found my waist, uncertain at first, as though he was afraid I'd change my mind. But I didn't.

I felt a sudden jolt as he shifted, easily scooping me up. I automatically wrapped my legs around his waist, clinging to him as he moved us the short distance to the desk. He set me down gently, the cool mahogany pressing against the back of my thighs as I sat on the edge.

He braced his hands on either side of me, trapping me. His eyes, dark and turbulent, searched mine.

"You're sure about this, Olivia?" he asked again, his voice a low, rough murmur.

"Yes," I breathed, my hands sliding up his chest, tracing the hard lines of muscle beneath the now-open shirt. "I just need you. Right now."

The last remnants of his hesitation seemed to shatter. His control, the careful wall he'd kept up for days, finally gave way.

He moved between my legs, his hips pressing against me, sending a sharp, sweet wave of longing through my body. He tilted his head down, and his lips found mine in a kiss that was no longer desperate, but pure, raw need.

It was a silent admission of everything he couldn't say: I miss you. I can't live without you. Forgive me.

My fingers tangled in his hair, holding him close as the kiss deepened. The air was charged, thick with the scent of his skin and the ghosts of our past. I felt the heat rising between us, burning away the pain, the guilt, the confusion—for just this suspended moment.

Then, he broke the kiss, his breathing ragged. His eyes dropped from mine, moving slowly over my face, my neck, before focusing on the simple, elegant fabric of the gown I wore. With a shaky hand, he reached for the hem.

He lifted it slowly, deliberately, the silk whispering as it slid up my legs. The gesture was agonizingly slow, drawing out the tension until it was almost unbearable. His gaze followed the material, then drifted lower, settling on the skin he exposed. Then he went on his knees.

He leaned in, his lips brushing against the inside of my thigh, a feather-light touch that still made me gasp. "I love you," he whispered against my skin, a vow and a confession all at once. "More than I know how to handle."

I reached out, my fingers trembling as I cupped the back of his neck. "Levi," I choked out, a wave of emotion—not pain, but profound, complicated love—flooding my chest.

He parted my legs wider, resting his hands gently on my inner thighs. The simple, possessive act felt like coming home.

In this moment, there was no Lennox, no worry, no broken bond—only the profound, undeniable connection of two people who desperately needed to be reminded of what they were to each other.

Chapter 467: Sex In The Study

Olivia's POV

The moment his lips found my inner thigh, the world outside this room vanished. His whispered words—"I love you"—didn't just resonate; they became the only truth. A fierce, possessive kind of love that mirrored the terrifying depth of my own.

I tugged at the back of his neck, urging him closer, wanting to feel him, all of him, not just hear the confession. "Show me, Levi," I breathed out, the command husky, desperate.

He didn't need to be told twice.

He lowered his head, and the light, tentative touch became a hungry, demanding kiss that stole my breath. A gasp tore from my throat, raw and unrestrained, as a shockwave of pleasure unlike anything I'd ever known arced through me. The feeling was electric, a searing brand that reminded me exactly who I belonged to, in every sense of the word. My nails dug into the firm muscle of his back, anchoring myself to him as the intensity ratcheted up, eclipsing thought, guilt, and memory.

He worked with a devastating, focused need, his tongue and lips mapping every sensitive peak. The desk pressed coolly against my skin. My body arched, a natural, involuntary response to the flapping of his tongue in my pussy.

"Levi... please," I choked out. I was running out of patience. I needed him inside me.

He paused, a low, guttural sound rumbling in his chest, a sound of control barely contained. He lifted his head, his eyes meeting mine—dark, blazing, and completely consumed. He rose, his hands not leaving my thighs, his gaze never leaving my face. The sheer raw intensity in his eyes was the most beautiful, terrifying thing I'd ever seen.

He stood before me, chest heaving, his half-open shirt a mess. He finished what I had started moments ago, yanking the rest of the clothing away with quick, impatient movements. I watched, my chest tight, as he released the zipper of his pants.

The sight of him, hard and ready, was the final trigger. My own body was aching, thrumming, a chaotic mess of sensation.

He reached down and settled his hands around my hips, tilting me forward on the desk's edge, positioning me with a possessive strength that I craved. He leaned in, his mouth finding mine in a brutal, urgent kiss. It was a kiss of reunion, of claiming, a furious battle of two people trying to pour every unspoken word and every regret into a single, desperate act.

Then, with a low groan that vibrated against my lips, he drove into me.

The connection was immediate, an instant, painful completeness that had me crying out against his mouth. He filled me entirely, banishing the emptiness, the loneliness, the cold space that had been there since we started this painful dance. It wasn't gentle; but I loved it.

He pulled back slightly, his eyes searching mine again, a final, silent check. "Olivia," he whispered, his voice thick with a tortured emotion I knew was mirrored in my own eyes.

I wrapped my legs tighter around his waist, pulling him deeper. "Don't stop," I begged, clutching his shoulders.

That was all he needed.

He began to move, slow and deep at first, then accelerating into a powerful, rhythmic pace that rocked my world. Each thrust was a hammer blow, driving out the pain, replacing it with pleasure so sharp it bordered on agony. I threw my head back, losing myself in the dizzying sensation, the sound of skin on skin, the scent of him, the raw power of his body moving against mine.

My vision blurred, and a scream of pure, unadulterated release tore from my throat as I bucked against him.

He held me tighter, burying his face in the crook of my neck, his own ragged, guttural cry joining mine as he fucked me harder.

"Forgiven?" he finally rasped against my neck, circling his waist as he hit my G-spot.

I didn't answer with a word. I simply tightened my hold on him and released a soft moan of pleasure.

He kept his pace relentless, the pounding deep and steady, and I could feel the tension coil tighter and tighter in my core with every powerful thrust.

"Say it, Olivia," he demanded, his voice a low, rough growl by my ear, his breath hot against my skin. "Say you forgive me."

But the words wouldn't come. Only pleased gasps and moans could escape my throat.

He drove in one last, agonizingly deep time, and I felt the world dissolve entirely. My body convulsed around him, another wave of pure, shattering release sweeping through me, pulling a final, choked cry from my lips. His own body tensed, a final, ragged groan escaping his lips as he released inside me.

He held still for a long moment, breathing hard into my neck, his body heavy and warm against mine.

Then, with a slow, drawn-out groan, Levi pulled out, the sudden separation leaving me feeling momentarily lost and cool. He didn't step away, though. Instead, his strong hands settled firmly on my waist.

"Not done yet," he murmured, his voice still thick with desire, the hint of a predatory smile touching his lips.

Before I could fully process it, he smoothly turned me around on the edge of the mahogany desk. I braced my hands flat on the cool wood, my ass facing him, my body still trembling from the intensity.

He didn't waste a second. He gripped my hips, pulling me back against him until he was perfectly aligned. He drove into me again, this time from behind, the angle deeper and more brutal than before. I gasped, the sudden new invasion sparking a fresh surge of need.

He leaned forward, pressing his chest against my back, his mouth finding the sensitive skin of my neck and shoulder. His left hand wrapped tightly around my hip, anchoring me to the desk, while his right hand came around my chest.

His fingers found my nipples, already hard and sensitive from our previous intensity. He played with them, pinching and teasing the tips as he began to move inside me with a fierce, punishing rhythm.

The combination—the deep, pounding pressure inside, the sharp, exquisite tug on my chest—was too much, too fast. My spine arched, and a sound that was half-scream, half-plea tore from my throat.

"Look what you do to me," he whispered savagely into my ear, his voice ragged with desire as he continued to drive into me, pushing us both toward the edge once more. "You're mine, Olivia. Always."

I couldn't answer. I could only hold onto the desk, completely lost in the fierce way he was making love to me. It wasn't just sex; it was a desperate, raw fight for our connection.

Levi was losing control. His breathing was ragged, and his movements got harder and faster. Each powerful push shook my whole body. My hips lifted off the desk, trying to pull him deeper. This was the hardest he had ever taken me, and the speed made my head spin. I felt a sweet, blinding rush building fast.

My body was on fire, every muscle tight. I squeezed my eyes shut, and I was seeing stars exploding behind my lids. The pleasure was so strong, so overwhelming, it wiped away all the pain and guilt. I cried out his name, a desperate, broken sound lost in the heat of the room.

He kept going, holding my hips tight, his thumb circling my nipple. We were so engrossed in the moment, in the raw pleasure, that we didn't hear the door open or someone walk in.

We didn't know we were no longer alone until we heard a voice cut through the air—a voice that was cold, hard, and full of absolute shock and anger.

"Are you fucking kidding me?"

The sound was like a bucket of ice water.

Levi froze instantly, his body locking rigid inside mine. His powerful movement stopped, and the room went dead silent, thick with the scent of sex and sweat.

My eyes snapped open, and I tried to turn my head. Levi's grip on my hip tightened painfully, trying to hold me still, but it was too late. I followed the line of his sudden, wide-eyed stare.

Chapter 468: Wrong?

Olivia's POV

I turned slowly, my pulse hammering in my ears. Louis stood by the door, his face pale with fury, his jaw tight, his eyes dark with disbelief. For a long, terrible moment, no one said a word. The silence was deafening, thick with disbelief, guilt, and something worse—disappointment.

Louis's voice came again, lower this time but sharper, like a blade. "Tell me I'm not seeing this."

"Louis—" Levi started, but Louis cut him off with a bitter laugh that sounded nothing like him.

"Are you for real right now, Levi? Here?" His voice cracked with rage. "In the damn study while Lennox is lying there, fighting for his life?"

The words hit like a slap. Shame burned through me. I pulled away from Levi, clutching the edge of the desk, trying to catch my breath. My body trembled—not from desire now, but from humiliation. My throat felt tight, the weight of Louis's stare crushing me.

"Louis, please," I whispered, my voice shaking. "It's not—"

"Not what?" he snapped, his eyes flashing. "Not what it looks like? Because it looks exactly what it looks like, Olivia."

Levi stepped forward then, his jaw clenched. "Enough," he said firmly, trying to keep his tone calm. "You don't get to talk to her like that."

Louis turned to him, his anger flaring hotter. "Don't you dare defend this, Levi. You should be ashamed too. Lennox would—" He stopped himself, his voice breaking for a second before he forced it back under control. "He would be disgusted."

Levi's nostrils flared. "You think I don't care about him?"

"Doesn't look like it," Louis shot back, his tone dripping with contempt. "While he's dying, you're in here doing this. How can you two even think of sex in a time like this? Disgraceful."

My wolf whined inside me. The pleasure that had filled me moments ago died instantly.

Levi took a step closer, his voice dropping into a growl. "Watch your words, Louis."

"Oh, I am," Louis spat. "Because someone has to say them!"

The air between them grew heated. Both brothers stood face-to-face now—Levi's fury meeting Louis's heartbreak. I could see it in both their eyes—the love they had for Lennox, the guilt, the frustration, the grief twisting into anger.

I stepped forward weakly, my voice breaking. "Please, stop. Both of you."

But they didn't stop.

Louis jabbed a finger toward Levi's chest. "You think sleeping with her helps anything? Can't you keep your dick away for even a moment? You've completely lost it!"

Levi grabbed his wrist, his grip tight but not violent. "You don't know what you're talking about."

"I know enough!" Louis snapped, jerking free. "You're both out of control!"

Tears stung my eyes. I could barely speak. "Louis, please..." I whispered again, but my voice faltered. "It's not what you think."

Louis turned to me then, and the look in his eyes broke something inside me. It wasn't just anger—it was hurt. Deep, personal hurt.

He shook his head slowly. "No, Olivia," he said quietly. "It's exactly what I think."

He turned and stormed out, the door slamming behind him so hard the sound echoed down the hall.

The silence he left behind was unbearable.

Levi exhaled shakily, dragging a hand through his hair. "Damn it..." he muttered, his voice raw with frustration.

I sank down onto the edge of the desk, covering my face with my hands. "What have we done?" I whispered, my chest aching.

Levi stepped closer, his voice low and comforting. "He'll calm down," he said softly. "He always does."

"Levi..." I whispered finally, lowering my hands, my voice barely audible. "Was what we did... really wrong?"

He was quiet for a moment, his chest still rising and falling heavily as he stared at the floor. Then he shook his head slowly, stepping closer.

"No," he said quietly but firmly. "It wasn't wrong."

His voice was steady, but I could hear the strain in it—the conflict he was trying to hide. "We didn't plan this, Olivia. It just... happened. It was real. And I won't ever regret feeling you—even if the timing was a mistake."

I looked up at him, his words burning into me. My heart ached with confusion, torn between the truth of what I felt and the guilt clawing at me.

"But still," I murmured, my voice trembling. "What if someone else had walked in? What if it wasn't Louis, but anyone else? What would they think of us, Levi?"

He looked at me, his brow furrowed, but I pressed on before he could answer.

"One of your brothers is fighting for his life, and I—" my voice cracked, "—I was in here doing this. What was I thinking?"

Tears blurred my vision again. I could still hear Louis's voice echoing in my head, full of disappointment and disgust. How could you think of this while he's dying?

Levi ran a hand through his hair, his expression dark with regret. "You were scared," he said softly. "So was I. We've both been drowning in this for too long, and maybe we were just trying to feel something that wasn't pain for once."

His words were gentle, but they didn't make the guilt fade. If anything, they made it worse—because they were true.

I nodded slowly, my throat tightening. "It still feels wrong," I whispered. "Like I betrayed him."

Levi stepped closer again, kneeling in front of me. His hands found my knees in a comforting manner. "No," he said quietly. "You didn't betray anyone. You just... broke. And I did too."

For a moment, we just stayed like that, the air heavy between us, the silence filled with everything we couldn't say.

Then I pulled away gently, wiping at my face. "I should get dressed," I said softly.

Levi nodded, his jaw tight. He turned slightly, giving me his back out of respect—something I hadn't expected but was grateful for.

I stood shakily, my legs weak, my body still sore and trembling. I reached for my clothes scattered across the floor, gathering them with trembling hands. Each piece I picked up felt heavier than it should have—like a quiet reminder of what had just happened, of how fragile and messy we both were.

The room still smelled like him, like us—and I hated that I wanted that scent to linger.

I pulled on my clothes in silence. I caught a glimpse of myself in the mirror across the room—my hair tangled, my eyes red, my cheeks flushed—and I barely recognized the woman staring back.

By the time I was dressed, Levi had straightened his shirt too. He looked tired—not physically, but emotionally drained, like a man who'd just realized something he couldn't take back.

He turned to face me, his voice low. "We'll figure this out," he said softly. "But right now... let's not lose focus. Lennox needs to wake up."

I nodded, swallowing hard. "Yeah," I whispered. "He does."

Chapter 469: Cheating

Sofia's POV

"Do you want me to come over?" I asked, my face full of worry. Olivia had just told me everything that was happening, and I could hear the fear in her voice. I thought maybe she needed me close.

"I can come if you want me to," I offered gently.

But she sighed over the phone.

"No, Sofia... don't worry about me," she said weakly. "Just pray. That's all I need right now."

Her words tugged at my heart, but I didn't push further. "Alright," I whispered. "But remember, I'm here if you need me."

When the call ended, I sat quietly for a moment, staring at the wall. I hated feeling so helpless. Olivia was my friend, my sister in every way that mattered—and she was breaking.

A maid appeared at the doorway and bowed slightly. "Lady Sofia, dinner is ready."

I nodded slowly and stood up, even though I didn't feel hungry. When I reached the dining table, I noticed something immediately—Damien's seat was empty. Again.

He had been avoiding me for days now, or maybe he just didn't want to be here at all.

I tried to ignore the hollow ache in my chest as I picked at my food. "Where's Alpha Damien?" I asked the maid softly.

She lowered her eyes respectfully. "He isn't back yet, ma'am."

I looked toward the door, then sighed. Of course he wasn't.

Part of me wanted to ask if he was alright—if he'd eaten, if he was coming back soon—but I stopped myself. Damien was strong. He didn't need me worrying about him. What mattered now was finding answers about Rebecca's death, because until that mystery was solved, things could never be the same as they used to be between us.

After making sure our son was asleep, I went to my room, but I couldn't sleep.

It was almost 1 a.m., and Damien still wasn't home.

I sat in the living room, the clock ticking loudly in the quiet house. I told myself not to worry, that he was probably working late again. I even picked up my phone and scrolled through jokes online, trying to distract myself.

But my mind wouldn't rest. Every few minutes I found myself looking at the door.

Then I heard it—the sound of a car pulling up outside.

My heart jumped.

It was him.

Quickly I composed myself and put on a nonchalant look so he wouldn't think I was waiting for him.

A moment later, the door opened and Damien walked in.

He looked tired, his tie hanging loose, his shirt wrinkled.

"Still awake?" he asked flatly, his voice cold, like a stranger's.

"Yes," I said softly, studying him.

He didn't look at me. He just walked past, heading for the stairs.

But as he moved, I caught a faint smell—something sweet and familiar. I knew that scent. That same scent I noticed in his office—the scent of his secretary. Then I saw it.

A red mark—lipstick—on the collar of his shirt.

I froze, staring, my heart pounding.

He didn't notice. Or maybe he didn't care.

When he disappeared up the stairs, something in me broke.

I told myself not to care. It didn't matter. After all, we weren't together. He could be and sleep with whoever he wanted. But I was lying to myself. I cared. I fucking cared a lot.

Not able to hold back, I stood up and followed him, anger and disbelief rushing through me.

I pushed open the bedroom door just as he was unbuttoning his shirt.

He looked up, surprised, but didn't speak.

My voice shook, but I couldn't hold it back. "So this is what you've been doing, Damien?" I snapped, my voice trembling with anger and disbelief.

He froze halfway through unbuttoning his shirt and slowly looked up at me. His expression was calm—too calm. That calmness made my blood boil even more.

"What are you talking about?" he asked coolly, not bothered by my outburst.

I took a step closer, my fists clenched at my sides. "Don't play dumb with me. I can smell her on you." My voice cracked, but I didn't care. "That sweet perfume—your secretary wears it. I know that scent anywhere. And that—" I jabbed a trembling finger toward the lipstick stain on his collar. "That mark doesn't lie."

He exhaled slowly, his jaw tightening. "You're imagining things, Sofia. It's nothing."

"Nothing?" I laughed bitterly, my heart pounding so hard it hurt. "You come home past midnight smelling like her, with her lipstick on your shirt, and you expect me to believe it's nothing?"

He finally met my eyes, his own dark and hard. "I said it's nothing. Don't turn this into drama."

"Drama?" I repeated, my voice breaking. "You think this is drama? I stayed up worrying about you—thinking maybe you were hurt or working late—but no, you were too busy fucking your secretary, weren't you?"

His eyes flashed, but he didn't look away. "Watch your mouth."

"Why? Because I'm right?" I hissed. "Because the truth makes you uncomfortable?"

He threw his shirt onto the chair and stepped closer, his voice low but sharp. "You have no right to question me, Sofia."

I blinked, stunned. "No right? I'm the mother of your child, Damien. For Goddess' sake, I'm your—"

He cut me off, his tone cold as ice. "You were the one who said you didn't want to be with me anymore. Remember that?"

My breath caught in my throat. His words hit harder than a slap.

"So what if I did fuck her?" he went on, his voice rising. "You made your choice, Sofia. You said you were done. You walked away first."

I shook my head slowly, tears burning in my eyes. "That doesn't give you the right to betray me like this."

"Betray you?" He let out a harsh laugh. "You ended us. Don't act like you suddenly care now."

He stared at me then, silent, his chest rising and falling. For a brief moment, I thought I saw a flicker of something—regret, maybe—but it disappeared just as quickly as it came.

The silence that followed was deafening. I felt the distance between us like a wound that would never heal.

My lips trembled. "So you did sleep with her?"

He didn't answer. He didn't have to. The look in his eyes said everything.

Chapter 470: It Didn't Happen

Sofia's POV

My wolf whimpered in my chest, her pain mirroring mine. I wanted to scream, to tear at something, but instead, I stood still, cold and numb, refusing to let him see how much it hurt.

"Fine," I said quietly, forcing my voice not to shake. "You're fucking other women, then I guess I can too."

His head snapped up at that, his eyes flashing with something dark, but instead of the rage I expected, he only scoffed.

"I never stopped you," he said flatly. "Do whatever you want."

Those words shattered me. Completely.

The Damien I knew, the man who once couldn't stand another man even looking at me, was gone. The Damien who used to pull me close, mark me, whisper that I was his and no one else's—he wasn't standing here anymore. This version of him was cold, distant, and unrecognizable.

I swallowed hard, my throat burning. "Right," I whispered. "Do whatever I want."

I turned away before the tears could fall, before I humiliated myself any further. My legs felt weak as I walked out of the room, but I didn't stop until I reached my own. I closed the door quietly behind me and leaned against it, my breath shaking.

The moment I was alone, I crumbled.

I curled up on my bed, hugging my knees to my chest as silent sobs tore through me. I hated myself—for still loving him, for still wanting him even after everything. For caring when I should've stopped a long time ago.

Every memory of us came rushing back—the laughter, the moments together, the promises. And now, all that was left was this emptiness that clawed at my heart.

I cried until I couldn't anymore, until exhaustion numbed the ache in my chest. My eyes were swollen, my throat raw, but finally, I drifted into a half-sleep, my mind too tired to fight the pain.

Then, I heard it—the sound of keys turning softly in the lock.

My heart skipped a beat. Instantly, I knew it was Damien.

I quickly wiped my face and closed my eyes, pretending to be asleep. My breaths came slow and steady as I listened to the door creak open.

Footsteps. Slow, deliberate. The air shifted with his scent—warm, musky, achingly familiar.

He stood there for a while, just watching me. I could feel it, the weight of his gaze heavy on my skin.

Part of me wanted to sit up, to scream at him, to ask why. But I couldn't. I stayed still, silent, my heart pounding painfully in my chest.

When he finally moved closer, the mattress dipped slightly as Damien sat down beside me, his scent wrapping around me in a way that made my chest tighten. I kept my eyes closed, my breathing even, pretending to be asleep. I couldn't face him. Not after what he said.

For a moment, he didn't move. The silence stretched between us, heavy and suffocating. Then his voice came, low and rough, carrying that familiar edge that always seemed to cut straight through me.

"I know you're awake, Sofia."

My pulse quickened, but I didn't move. I couldn't. My back was still to him, my hands gripping the blanket tightly.

He sighed softly. "You always try to hide when you're hurt."

The sound of his voice alone made my eyes sting again, but I forced myself to stay still, to keep pretending. I didn't trust myself to look at him—because if I did, all the anger I had left might collapse into longing.

He shifted slightly, his voice quiet, almost hesitant now. "I wasn't with her."

I swallowed hard, my heart hammering. Don't react, Sofia.

He continued, his tone sharper now, like he was trying to convince both of us. "She—my secretary—she drugged me tonight."

My fingers tightened around the sheet.

"I didn't know it at first," he went on, his voice low but urgent. "She came into my office after a meeting, said she wanted to discuss something important. She offered me a drink. I didn't think anything of it." He exhaled shakily. "But then everything started to blur. My body wasn't responding right. She tried to—" He stopped, his jaw tightening audibly. "She tried to take advantage of that."

He paused, letting the words hang between us.

"But my wolf reacted before things could go further," he said, his tone rough, sounding sincere. "He neutralized the drugs. I didn't touch her, Sofia. I swear I didn't."

A tear slid silently down my cheek, but I still didn't turn. I wanted to believe him—Moon, I did—but my heart was too raw, too bruised to let hope in again so easily.

Damien's voice softened then, the edge giving way to something I hadn't heard in a long time. "That's why I was late. I wasn't out with her. I was dealing with her. Making sure she'll never step foot in my office again."

He moved a little closer, his warmth brushing against my back. I could feel the tremor in his voice when he spoke again. "You think I don't love you anymore, but you're wrong."

My breath caught.

He let out a faint, humorless chuckle. "Maybe I've done a terrible job showing it. Maybe I've said things I shouldn't have... but the truth is, Sofia, I still love you more than I know how to explain."

The silence stretched again. My wolf whimpered softly, her anger melting into confusion and aching hope.

"Maybe one day," he said quietly, almost in a whisper, "I'll prove it to you. Maybe one day you'll see that I never stopped."

I kept my back to him, my eyes squeezed shut as tears fell silently onto the pillow. I didn't move, didn't speak. Because if I did—if I turned around now—every wall I'd built to protect myself would come crashing down.

So I stayed still, pretending to sleep, while his confession hung in the dark like a fragile truth neither of us knew how to handle.

And when I felt his fingers brush lightly against my hair, trembling before pulling away, I knew that despite everything, he still cared.

And worse, I still did too.