

Fated To Not Just One, But Three #Chapter 681: The Deal - Read Fated To Not Just One, But Three Chapter 681: The Deal

Chapter 681: The Deal

Olivia's POV

The atmosphere at dinner was suffocating. Usually, our meals were a chaotic symphony of the boys bragging about their training and the twins giggling, but tonight, the long oak table felt miles wide.

I sat between Lennox and the empty space where Louis usually sat—he was still out at a late meeting. Across from me, the twins were picking at their mashed potatoes, their little faces dark with a stubbornness they had definitely inherited from the man sitting at the far end of the table.

Levi had insisted on joining us. He wasn't in the wheelchair, but he looked exhausted, his face gaunt as he sat upright in a high-backed chair. He hadn't touched his food. He just watched the girls, his sea-blue eyes filled with a desperate, quiet hunger to be noticed.

"Pass the salt, Daddy," Lyra said, nudging Lennox's arm.

Lennox didn't move. He looked at Lyra, then at the salt shaker sitting right in front of Levi. "The salt is right there by Levi, Lyra. Ask him."

Lyra's little jaw set. She looked at the shaker, then looked back at Lennox, her eyes narrowing. "I'm asking you, Daddy."

"And I'm telling you that your father is sitting right there," Lennox's voice was stern, lacking the usual playful indulgence he showed them. "Use your words, Lyra."

The silence stretched, thick and uncomfortable. Lyra looked at Levi for a split second—a cold, fleeting glance—before she stood up on her chair, reached across the table, and grabbed the salt herself. The legs of her chair screeched against the stone floor.

Levi flinched at the sound, his hand trembling as he lowered his fork. He looked like he'd been slapped.

"Lyra, that was rude," I said, my voice filled with frustration. "Sit down and apologize to Father Levi for reaching across him."

"No!" Lyra shouted, her eyes sparking with that familiar Alpha fire. "Why do we have to be nice to him? He just came here and made everyone grumpy! You were happy before he woke up! Now you're mean and Father Lennox is mean!"

"Lyra!" Lennox roared, his palm hitting the table with a loud thwack.

The twins jumped. The boys went dead silent, their spoons frozen halfway to their mouths. Lennox had never raised his voice like that at the girls. Never.

"Listen to me," Lennox growled, his eyes glowing with annoyance. "You two have been pampered too much. But that ends tonight. This man," he pointed a shaking finger at Levi, "is the reason you are alive. He is the reason your mother is alive. If you cannot show him respect in this house, you will not sit at this table."

Lana's bottom lip began to wobble. "But we don't know him, Daddy Lennox..."

"Then learn!" Lennox snapped.

Levi suddenly pushed his chair back. The wood scraped harshly. He stood up slowly, his legs shaking so badly I thought they might snap. He looked at Lennox, a look of profound defeat in his eyes.

"Don't, Lennox," Levi whispered, his voice cracking. "Don't make them hate me more by forcing it."

"They don't hate you, Levi, they're being brats," I said, standing up to steady him.

"No, Olivia," Levi said, stepping away from my touch. He looked at his daughters, his heart bleeding out in the middle of the dining room. "They're right. I'm a stranger who moved into their home and stole their peace. I'll eat in my room from now on."

He turned and began the long, agonizing trek out of the room, one shuffling step at a time.

As soon as he was gone, Lyra looked at Lennox, expecting him to soften. "Can we have dessert now?"

Lennox looked at her with a coldness I had never seen him direct at her. "No. No dessert. Go to your room. Both of you. Now."

The girls scrambled out, realizing for the first time that their "favorite daddy" wasn't on their side anymore.

I sank back into my chair, rubbing my temples. "That went well," I muttered sarcastically.

"I tried, Olivia," Lennox groaned, burying his face in his hands.

Just then, the front door opened, and Louis walked in. He looked at the half-eaten food and the heavy silence. "Did I miss something?"

I looked at Louis, my eyes resting on my swollen belly. "Everything is breaking, Louis. And I don't know if we can fix it before this baby comes."

I watched as Louis sighed, running a hand through his hair before heading toward the twins' room. I followed him silently, my heart heavy, standing just outside the cracked door to listen.

Inside, the room was filled with the sound of muffled sobs. The girls were huddled on Lyra's bed, looking small and miserable. As soon as Louis stepped inside, they scrambled toward him, their faces blotchy.

"Daddy Louis!" Lana cried, reaching for his hand. "Mommy and Daddy Lennox are being so mean! They shouted at us because of the man in the chair!"

Louis sat on the edge of the bed, his expression unreadable. He waited until their crying subsided into small hiccups—he, like Lennox, couldn't stand it when they cried, but tonight his gaze remained firm.

"You know," Louis said, his voice a low, steady rumble. "I just walked into a dining room that felt like a graveyard. Your mother is upset, Father Lennox is furious, and Father Levi... well, Levi is back in his room feeling like he should have never woken up at all."

"But we don't like him!" Lyra stomped her foot on the mattress. "He's boring and he's not our daddy!"

Louis went quiet for a moment. I held my breath in the hallway.

"Okay," Louis said suddenly, leaning forward. "Why don't we strike a deal? A secret deal, just between us."

The twins stopped sniffing, their curiosity piqued. They loved secrets, especially with Louis.

"Each day you are nice to Daddy Levi—and I mean truly nice, like giving him a hug or asking him one question about his day—I will give you one extra hour of training in the woods with me and the boys," Louis promised. "And... I'll make sure you get anything you want."

The girls' eyes widened. Training with the big boys was the ultimate prize in our pack.

"But," Louis added, his voice turning stern. "If I hear you were rude, or if I see you ignore him when he speaks to you, the deal is off for a whole week. No woods. No gifts. Just extra lessons with the pack scholars."

Lyra and Lana exchanged a long, silent look.

"Do we have to call him Daddy?" Lana whispered.

"You call him whatever you want for now," Louis said, standing up. "But you treat him like family. Do we have a deal?"

Slowly, both girls reached out and shook Louis's large hand.

I leaned against the wall in the hallway, closing my eyes. It felt a bit like bribery, but at this point, I would take anything.

Chapter 682: Caught

Olivia's POV

The Next Morning

I was in the kitchen fixing a snack for my growing belly when I heard the slow, rhythmic thump-drag of Levi's footsteps. He was still refusing the wheelchair, determined to walk even if it killed him.

He made it to the sunroom and sank into a chair, looking utterly exhausted. A moment later, I saw Lyra and Lana walk in. They were stiff, their little hands clenched at their sides. Levi looked up, his sea-blue eyes instantly filling with a guarded hope.

"Good... good morning, girls," Levi rasped, his voice hesitant.

Lyra took a deep breath, looking like she was about to swallow a lemon. She walked over and stood two feet away from him.

"Good morning... Father Levi," she said, the words forced but clear. "Did you... did you sleep okay?"

Levi froze. I froze in the kitchen, a strawberry halfway to my mouth. Levi's entire face transformed. The crushing weight of sadness that had been there since he woke up seemed to lift for a split second. A genuine, shaky smile touched his dry lips.

"I did, Lyra," he breathed, his voice trembling. "Thank you for asking. I... I slept very well."

Lana stepped forward then, holding out a crumpled dandelion she must have picked from the lawn. She didn't look him in the eye, but she thrust it toward him. "This is for you. For your room."

Levi took the weed as if it were made of solid gold. He clutched it to his chest, his eyes shimmering with unshed tears. "It's beautiful, Lana. Thank you."

The girls didn't stay. They turned and bolted toward the backyard, likely looking for Louis to claim their reward. Levi sat there in the sunroom, staring at the dandelion in his hand, a soft, broken sob escaping his throat.

I walked into the room and placed a hand on his shoulder. "I told you they'd come around."

Levi looked up at me, his eyes bright. "It's a start, Olivia. It's finally a start."

The "progress" continued for the next few days, but it felt... mechanical. The girls would walk in, recite a polite sentence, hand Levi a rock or a leaf, and then dart out of the room like their hair was on fire. Levi didn't seem to notice the stiffness; he was just drowning in the joy of finally being acknowledged.

Until Tuesday Afternoon

I was heading toward the sunroom with a tray of tea when I saw Levi standing near the glass doors, hidden by the heavy velvet curtains. He was watching the garden, a soft smile on his face as he looked for the girls.

Outside, on the patio, Louis was sitting on the stone wall. Lyra and Lana were standing in front of him, jumping up and down with impatience.

"We did it, Daddy Louis!" Lyra's voice carried clearly through the cracked door. "I asked him about his breakfast, and Lana gave him a shiny stone from the driveway."

"And he smiled at us," Lana added, tugging on Louis's sleeve. "Can we get new toys now? You also promised an hour with the big boys!"

Louis chuckled, ruffling their hair. "A deal is a deal. You were good to him, so you get your reward. And I've got the double-fudge ice cream waiting in the freezer for when we get back."

"Yay!" they shrieked, racing toward the tree line where the older boys were waiting.

I felt the air leave the room. I slowly turned my gaze toward Levi. He was frozen. The dandelion Lana had given him yesterday was tucked into his shirt pocket, right over his scarred heart. His face wasn't pale anymore—it was grey. The light that had been returning to his sea-blue eyes went out, replaced by a hollow, crushing realization.

"Levi..." I whispered, stepping forward and reaching for his arm.

He flinched away from my touch, his breath coming in shallow, jagged gasps. He leaned his forehead against the cool glass of the door, his shoulders shaking.

"It was a bribe," he rasped, his voice sounding more broken than the day he woke up. "My daughters aren't coming around, Olivia. They're... they're being paid to look at me."

"Levi, Louis was just trying to help," I pleaded, my heart breaking at the sight of him collapsing back into that chair. "He wanted to break the ice—"

"By making me a chore?" Levi looked up at me, and the raw agony in his eyes made me want to scream. "By making a 'deal' so they can tolerate the stranger."

He reached into his pocket, pulled out the crumpled dandelion, and stared at it. A moment ago, it was a treasure. Now, it was just a weed bought with ice cream.

"Lennox and Louis didn't mean to hurt you," I whispered, kneeling beside him.

"They didn't hurt me. They just confirmed what I already knew." He let the dandelion fall to the floor. "I can't buy their love, Olivia. And I won't let my brothers buy it for me."

Suddenly, the door to the sunroom burst open. The girls had forgotten their dolls and came running back to grab them, stopping dead when they saw Levi sitting there, staring at the floor, with me kneeling beside him.

"Oh," Lyra said, her voice dropping into that polite, fake tone. "Hello again, Father Levi. Do you... do you like the sun today?"

She looked at Louis, who was standing in the doorway behind them, waiting for his 'deal' to be fulfilled. Levi looked at Lyra. Then at Lana. For the first time, he didn't look at them with longing. He looked at them with a quiet, regal dignity that made the girls fidget.

"You don't have to do it anymore," Levi said softly.

The girls blinked. "Do what?" Lana asked.

"The deal," Levi said, his gaze shifting to Louis, who went rigid with guilt. "You don't have to ask me questions. You don't have to bring me flowers or stones. You don't have to be nice to me for ice cream or trips to the woods."

The twins looked at Louis, then back at Levi, their faces turning red with the shame of being caught.

"I'm sorry I'm a stranger to you," Levi whispered, his voice trembling but firm. "But I'd rather you stay away from me forever than have you pretend to care because you were promised a treat. I am your father... not a price you have to pay."

He stood up, his legs shaking, and without looking at anyone, he began the slow, painful walk back to his room in total silence. Lyra and Lana stood there, stunned. For the first time, they didn't look bored or annoyed. They looked at the dandelion on the floor, then at the retreating back of the man they had been mocking.

The silence in the room was deafening, and for the first time in four years, the girls looked truly, deeply guilty.

Chapter 683: The Plan

Levi's POV

I sat in the darkness of my room, the curtains drawn tight. The silence felt heavy, a reminder of the four years I had lost and the family that felt like sand slipping through my fingers. My legs throbbed with a dull ache, but the pain in my chest was sharper. I felt useless.

I stared at my hands—thin, scarred, and trembling. I didn't want to see Olivia. I didn't want to see Lennox or Louis. I didn't want to see the pity in their eyes or the guilt on their faces.

A soft knock echoed through the room. I didn't respond. I didn't have the energy to pretend I was okay.

"Daddy?" A small, steady voice came from the other side. "It's Liam. And Leon and Leo. Can we come in?"

My heart squeezed. I couldn't say no to the boys. They were the only ones who looked at me without that complicated layer of shame or forced politeness.

"Come in," I rasped, clearing my throat.

The door creaked open, and the three of them filed in. They approached my bed with a strange kind of solemnity.

"You didn't come for lunch," Liam said, crossing his arms. He was the eldest, already exhibiting the character of Lennox.

"I... I was feeling a bit weak today," I lied, looking away.

"You're lying," Leo said bluntly, hopping onto the edge of my bed. "You're sad because of the girls. And because of the deal Daddy Louis made."

I flinched. Even the children knew. "It doesn't matter, Leo."

"It does," Leon added, sitting on a chair nearby. "They don't hate you. They're just... they're mad. They're mad because you weren't there to watch them grow."

"I didn't choose it," I whispered, the bitterness leaking into my voice.

"We know that," Liam said, stepping closer. "But they're girls. They're dramatic. And they've been the center of the world for four years. They think they can punish you because everyone else lets them."

I looked at him, surprised by the wisdom in his young face. These boys weren't just kids; they were sharp. They saw the cracks in this house better than the adults did.

"We have a game," Liam continued, a mischievous glint appearing in his eyes. "We use it on them when they get too bossy. It works every time."

"What game?" I asked, curious.

"The Ghost Game," Leo chirped. "You start ignoring them. You don't look at them. You don't answer them. You act like they don't even exist in the room."

I stared at them, horrified. "I can't do that. They're my daughters. I just got them back."

"You don't have them back yet," Liam countered firmly. "Right now, they think you're a puppy waiting for a scrap of bread. They like the attention. They like that you're sad for them. If you stop giving it to them, they'll go crazy. They'll start begging for your attention."

"It's the only way, Father," Leon said. "You have to do it... trust us... this will work."

I looked at the three of them. They were barely nine, yet they talked with a calculated intelligence that reminded me so much of the power the Trinity used to hold.

"I'll... I'll think about it," I said softly.

"Don't think too long," Liam said, standing up and heading for the door. "We're going down to the pits to train. You should join us. Daddy Louis is there, and he feels bad. But you should come and show the girls what a real warrior looks like, even if you're just watching."

I watched them leave, their small shoulders held high. They were right. I had been playing the victim, waiting for love to be handed to me.

I stood up, my legs shaking, and reached for the cane by my bed.

I made it to the edge of the field, leaning heavily on my cane. Louis was there, helping Leon with his footwork. He looked up, his face filled with immediate relief and a deep, aching regret.

"Levi," Louis breathed, taking a step toward me. "I'm so sorry about the deal. I just wanted—"

I held up a hand, cutting him off. I didn't look at him. My eyes stayed on the boys. "Not now, Louis."

A few yards away, Lyra and Lana were sitting on a bench, holding their dolls. They saw me. I saw Lyra nudge Lana, her expression shifting into that practiced, "polite" mask. They waited for me to look at them, to wave, to offer a sad smile.

I didn't.

I turned my back to them, focusing entirely on Liam's form as he swung a practice sword.

"Good follow-through, Liam," I called out, my voice stronger than it had been in years. "Keep your weight on your back foot."

Liam grinned, catching my eye and giving me a subtle nod. The game had begun.

I could feel the twins' stares burning into my back. They were confused. Usually, I was desperate for their gaze. Now, I was acting like they didn't exist.

"Father Levi?" Lana's small voice piped up from the bench.

I didn't turn. I didn't even flinch. I just leaned closer to Louis, pointing at the boys. "He's dropping his shoulder, Louis. Fix it."

Out of the corner of my eye, I saw Lyra stand up, her doll dropping to the grass. Her sea-blue eyes were wide with shock. Usually, I would have turned around at the mere sound of their voices, desperate for even a cold "hello." But I kept my eyes locked on the boys.

"Again, Leon! Lock your wrist!" I commanded, my voice carrying that old Alpha authority that used to make the pack stand at attention.

I could hear the soft thump, thump, thump of small footsteps on the grass. They were coming closer. They weren't used to being ignored; they were used to being the center of every room they entered.

"Father Levi?" Lyra's voice was closer now, lacking its usual sharp, bratty edge. It sounded small. Uncertain.

I didn't acknowledge her. I stepped forward, wincing as my weak leg protested, and took a practice wooden sword from the rack. I showed the boys a few tricks with the wooden sword.

"Father Levi," Lana whispered, her sea-blue eyes wide as she watched me move. "Will you... will you teach me how to do that? The way you moved your arm?"

My heart did a violent somersault in my chest. Gods, how I wanted to say yes. I wanted to drop the sword, scoop her up, and tell her I'd teach her everything I knew. I wanted to see her smile without a bribe for the first time in my life.

I felt a sharp gaze on me. I glanced at Liam. He was shaking his head almost imperceptibly, his expression hard. "Stick to the plan," he mouthed.

I forced my face into a mask of coldness. I didn't even look at her. I kept my eyes on the wooden sword in my hand, wiping a smudge of dirt off the grip.

"No," I said, my voice flat and detached. "I'm busy with the boys."

The silence that followed was deafening. I could practically feel the shock radiating off them.

"But..." Lyra stammered, her voice rising in confusion. "But we want you to show us."

I finally shifted my gaze, but I didn't look at their faces. I looked past them, toward Louis, who was watching this entire exchange with a look of pure bewilderment.

"Father Louis can show you," I said, my tone as distant as a winter mountain. "He's the one you usually go to for everything, isn't he? Ask him."

I turned my back on them again, focusing on Leo. "Leo, your stance is wide. Close it up."

I heard a small gasp behind me. Lana's scent spiked with a sudden, sharp distress—not anger, but the sting of being pushed away. It was a mirror of what I had felt every day since I woke up.

"But Father Louis is busy with Leon," Lyra argued, her voice trembling. "We're asking you."

I didn't answer. I acted as if her voice was nothing more than the wind through the trees. I walked over to the water barrel, leaning heavily on my cane, and took a slow drink, completely excluding them from my world.

"Father Levi!" Lyra shouted, stomping her foot.

Nothing.

I started a conversation with Liam, my back still toward my daughters. I could hear them whispering frantically to each other.

"Why isn't he looking at us?" Lana whispered, her voice sounding like she was on the verge of tears.

"I don't know," Lyra replied, sounding genuinely panicked. "Is he... is he still mad about the act?"

They stood there for five more minutes, waiting for me to break. I didn't. I laughed at a joke Leo made—a real, hearty laugh—and the sound of my joy seemed to hurt them more than a scolding ever could. I was happy, and they weren't the reason for it.

Finally, unable to handle the cold shoulder, they turned and trudged back toward the mansion. They didn't run. They walked slowly, looking back over their shoulders every few steps, hoping I would call them back.

I waited until the heavy oak doors shut behind them before I let out the breath I'd been holding. My hand shook so hard I nearly dropped my cane.

"That was brutal," Louis whispered, walking over to me, his face pale. "Levi, they looked... heartbroken."

"They needed to be," Liam said, stepping up beside me and patting my arm. "See? They wanted you. Tomorrow, it'll be even better. We go to dinner, and you don't even talk to them."

I looked at my son—my nephew, but my son in every way that mattered. "I hope you're right, Liam. Because that was the hardest thing I've ever had to do."

Chapter 684: Keep Acting

Levi's POV

The dining hall felt too big that night. The chandelier above us gave off a cold light, making everything feel even colder. Usually, during dinner, I would spend my time trying: offering the girls the best pieces of meat, asking about their day, and trying to start conversations. Most times, they would answer with one word. Tonight, I didn't even look at their side of the table.

"So, Louis," I said calmly, leaning back in my chair while holding a glass of dark wine. "About the western border patrol. I want the boys to join the scouting team next month."

"Father!" Lyra said quickly, her voice too bright, too eager. She was trying to interrupt the serious talk. "I drew a picture today. It's a wolf. Do you want to—"

"Pass the salt, Liam," I said smoothly. I didn't blink. I didn't turn my head. I didn't look at her.

Liam slid the salt across the table. His eyes flicked toward the twins, and there was a small, cold smirk on his face. Lana tried next; her voice was softer.

"I... I missed you at lunch today, Father Levi. I saved you a sweet roll."

I took a slow sip of my wine. "Lennox," I continued, ignoring Lana completely, "did you hear that the southern pack wants a trade agreement? We should talk about the terms later in the study after the boys finish their lessons."

The silence that followed was painful. I could hear Lyra scraping her fork against her plate again and again—a sharp, nervous sound. Then, a chair suddenly scraped loudly against the floor. Lana stood up, her eyes full of tears. Without saying anything, she ran out of the dining hall. Lyra followed a second later, her drawing crushed tightly in her hand.

My heart felt like someone was squeezing it hard.

"Levi..." Olivia whispered, reaching for my hand. "That was... that was too much."

"It's working," Liam said quietly, his face serious and hard. "Don't stop now."

An hour later, the girls did exactly what the boys expected. They came looking for me. They thought I would be alone in my dark room, feeling sad. Instead, they found the study door slightly open. They looked through the small gap and saw me sitting on the floor with the three boys, a large map spread out between us. We were laughing—real laughter.

"And then," I said, chuckling as I ruffled Leon's hair, "your Father Louis fell straight into the mud. Best day of the summer."

"Tell us more about the Great War, Father," Liam said loudly—loud enough for the hallway to hear. "The parts the girls aren't allowed to hear because they're too... delicate."

From outside the door, I heard a sharp gasp. They weren't just being ignored anymore; they were being replaced. I was giving the boys the stories, the history, and the secrets—the things the girls believed belonged to them.

"They're leaving," Leon whispered, his ears twitching. "They're going to their room to cry."

I felt bad... but the boys shook their heads.

"Don't feel bad, Father... if you don't do this, they won't learn. Trust us... we know them better than you do."

I swallowed hard and nodded. I couldn't believe I was following the directions of my little boys.

The next morning, I sat on the porch, staring at the fog covering the woods. My cane rested beside me. Then, I heard soft footsteps.

"Father Levi?" It was Lana. She was holding a book—the one with the worn leather cover I used to read before I fell into unconsciousness. I wondered how they knew about it and found it. Beside her stood Lyra. She was carrying a tray with a cup of tea, and her hands were shaking so much the cup rattled.

"We... we brought you tea," Lyra said softly. Her usual attitude was gone; her voice was small. "And we wanted to read to you, since your eyes get tired sometimes."

They stood there in front of me, two small girls looking up at me with hope. This was what I had wanted for days: for them to come to me, to want to sit with me, and to want my attention.

I looked at the tea. I looked at the book. Then, I looked away toward the trees.

"I'm going to the training pits with the boys," I said flatly. "I don't have time for stories today. Give the tea to the kitchen staff."

"But we made it!" Lana cried, tears falling down her face. "We stayed up late to find your book! We're sorry, Daddy! We're sorry we were mean!"

I stood up, gripping my cane, and walked past them without looking at them. I felt like a monster—a cold, heartless one. I took five steps, and then I heard the tray fall. Porcelain shattered loudly against the stone floor.

"Please!" Lyra screamed, her voice breaking. "Don't hate us! We'll be good! Just look at us! Please just look at us!"

I stopped walking, but my back was still turned to them. Across the yard, Liam stood near the training grounds, watching everything. He gave me a slow, serious shake of his head, silently telling me not to soften.

My wolf growled inside me, hating this idea, but I had to do it. I gripped my cane, the wood biting into my palm as I forced myself to walk away from the sound of Lyra's sobbing. My wolf was pacing in my chest, snarling at me for hurting our pups, but Liam's steady gaze held me to the path.

"Eyes forward, Father," Liam murmured as I reached the pits.

For the next two hours, I threw myself into the training. I pushed the boys hard, and in return, they pushed me. I demonstrated strikes that made my leg scream, but the physical pain was a welcome distraction from the mental image of that shattered porcelain. I was showing Leon how to roll out of a grapple when a heavy shadow fell across the dirt. I didn't need to look up to recognize the scent of rain and mountain air.

"Liam, Leon, Leo—go take five at the water barrel," Lennox's voice boomed. It wasn't a suggestion.

The boys hesitated, looking at me. I nodded once, and they scurried off. I stood up slowly, wiping sweat from my forehead with the back of my hand, using my cane to steady my shaking frame.

"Levi," Lennox began, his arms crossed over his massive chest. His face was full of annoyance. "What happened on the porch? I just walked past the foyer and found Olivia holding two hysterical little girls. They think you hate them. They think you don't want them."

"I'm teaching them," I said, my voice rasping. "Something you and Louis clearly forgot to do while I was asleep."

Lennox took a step forward, his eyes flashing Alpha gold. "You're being cruel. They are children, Levi. They brought you a gift, an apology, and you stepped over it like it was trash. This 'Ghost' nonsense you're playing... it has to stop. Now."

"It stops when they learn that I am not a toy they can put on a shelf and ignore until they're bored," I snapped back, my own temper flaring. "You've spoiled them, Lennox. You and Louis turned them into little queens who think they can do anything and get away with it. I am their father, and it is my duty to teach them... just a little discipline won't kill them."

"They are not just your daughters!" Lennox roared, his voice shaking the very air. "They are ours. In this house, in this Trinity, every child belongs to all of us. When you hurt them, you hurt me. You don't get to break them just to 'fix' them."

My frown deepened. "Then maybe you should have taught your 'daughters' respect," I said, my voice dropping to an angry, low growl. "You want them to stop crying? Teach them how to be daughters instead of brats. Until then, stay out of my way."

I didn't wait for his response. I turned my back and began the long, painful trek back toward the house.

"Levi!" he called out, but I didn't stop.

I reached the hallway near the kitchen and paused. I could hear them. Lyra and Lana were in the sunroom with Olivia.

"He doesn't want the book," Lana was sobbing. "He doesn't want us anymore. He likes the boys better because they're strong."

"He's just tired, sweetie," Olivia's voice was strained, clearly exhausted from the drama.

I leaned against the wall, closing my eyes. I felt like a monster, just like I had on the porch. But then I remembered: this was for the best.

Chapter 685: Followed

Levi's POV

For two days, the silence I gave the girls was a wall they couldn't climb. Every time they entered a room, I left it. Every time they tried to catch my eye at breakfast, I was deep in conversation with Liam. I saw the way their faces fell, the way their "princess" posture was slowly collapsing into something smaller, humbler.

But something else was happening: my body was finally catching up to my spirit. The dull ache in my leg had faded. On the third morning, I stood in front of the mirror and didn't reach for the cane. I took a step. Then another. No limp. No stumble. The Alpha blood in me had finally burned away the last of the weakness.

I walked down to the breakfast table without the cane. Everyone was there—Lennox, Louis, Olivia, the boys, and the twins. The girls looked exhausted, their emotions pitiful. I ignored the empty chair at the head of the table and stood, placing my hands firmly on the wood.

"I don't need the cane anymore," I announced.

Louis looked up, his eyes widening with genuine joy. "Levi... you're walking. You're fully healed."

"I am," I said shortly. I didn't look at him for long. I turned my gaze to the three boys, who were watching me with sharp, knowing grins. "And because I'm back to full strength, it's time for the next stage of your training."

I felt the twins lean forward, their breath hitching. They were desperate for me to include them, to say their names, to even scold them. Anything but the silence.

"Liam, Leon, Leo," I announced, my voice booming. "Pack your gear. Heavy cloaks, skinning knives, and your trackers. We're leaving within the hour for the Great North Ridge."

"The Ridge?" Lennox asked, his brow furrowing. "That's a three-hour trek, Levi. The terrain is brutal this time of year."

"They're ready," I said, staring Lennox down, challenging him to bring up our argument from the pits. "We're going on a hunt."

Lana's fork clattered against her plate. "A... a hunt? For throughout the day?" she whispered, her voice trembling. "Can we... can we help pack the bags?"

I didn't even look in her direction. It was as if she were a breeze passing through the room.

"Boys, I'll meet you at the armory," I said, turning on my heel. "We leave through the mudroom. Don't be late."

As I walked away, I heard Lyra's chair screech back.

"Father! Wait!" she cried out, her voice breaking into a sob. "Please! We'll be quiet! We'll be strong! Don't leave us here again!"

I felt the familiar tug at my heart, the urge to turn and scoop her up. But I felt Liam's presence behind me as he followed me out.

"Don't look back, Father," he whispered urgently. "We are almost there."

I swallowed hard and kept walking. Behind us, I heard Olivia's soft voice.

"Don't worry," she murmured gently to the girls. "We can have a girls' outing all day."

"No," the twins spat through tears. "We want to go hunting."

An hour later, the boys and I were in the woods. The boys moved well. Liam tracked quietly. Leon adjusted his footing with care. Leo kept scanning the tree line like I had taught him. I felt pride swelling inside me.

We moved deeper into the forest. And that's when I felt it—a faint disturbance in the air. A scent. Familiar. Too familiar.

I slowed. But before I could speak—a loud scream tore through the forest. High-pitched. Terrified.

My heart stopped. It was them. I spun around, my eyes blazing.

"Stay here!" I ordered the boys.

Then I ran. Branches snapped under my boots as I sprinted toward the sound. Another cry.

"Father!"

My blood went cold. I broke through the trees and saw them. Lana and Lyra were on the ground, their legs trapped in a steel snare meant for wild game. The metal teeth had clamped around their ankles, digging into their skin. Blood. Too much blood.

"Goddess..." I breathed.

I dropped to my knees beside them immediately. "What were you thinking?!" I demanded, but my voice cracked. They had followed us the entire time.

Lyra's face was pale with pain. Lana was shaking violently.

"We didn't want to be left behind," Lana whispered through tears.

My heart shattered. I grabbed the trap carefully, examining the mechanism. "Don't move," I ordered, my voice steady now. Alpha steady. I didn't want them to notice the fear in me.

Behind me, I heard the boys approaching despite my command.

"Father..." Liam whispered.

I snapped my head back. "Be careful."

I reached down, my hands gripping the cold, rusted steel of the snares. With a roar of effort that came from the depths of my soul, I pried the teeth open, the metal groaning against my strength until the girls' legs were free. They collapsed against me, two small, broken birds.

"I've got you," I rasped, my voice thick. I tucked Lana under my left arm and Lyra under my right, lifting them both easily.

Levi. Olivia's voice exploded in my mind, sharp with panic. The girls are missing. I can't find them anywhere in the house, and I feel pain... immense, jagged pain. Something is wrong. Where are you?

I closed my eyes for a second, feeling the heat of their tears against my neck. They are with me, Olivia. We're coming back. Now.

With you? Her confusion was obvious in her voice. Did you take them? Levi, why would you—

No, I cut her off, my mental tone grim. They hid. They followed us into the Ridge. They stepped into a hunter's snare. They're injured, Olivia. Have the medical supplies ready.

I heard her gasp through the link, a sound of pure horror. I'm teleporting to your location—

No, I countered, already moving at a dead run through the brush, the boys flanking me like a silent honor guard. We are already close to the clearing. Just be ready.

By the time the mansion came into view, the girls had gone silent, their faces buried in my shoulders, exhausted by the agony and the blood loss. I burst through the mudroom entrance and into the main hall.

The sight was chaotic. Olivia stood there, her face ashen, her hands already glowing with a soft, green light. Lennox was pacing, his aura so violent it made the air vibrate, and Louis was hunched over a chair, his face contorted in pain.

"What did you do?" Lennox roared, stepping toward me, his eyes glowing a lethal gold.

I didn't flinch. I walked right past him and gently lowered the twins onto the long velvet sofa. "Help them," I told Olivia.

She didn't waste a second. She placed her healing hands over their mangled ankles. The scent of ozone and lavender filled the room as the skin began to knit back together.

Louis rushed to the side of the sofa, grabbing Lyra's hand. "How did this happen? Levi, they're children! You were supposed to be watching the woods!"

"They followed us," Liam said, stepping forward before I could speak. He was defending me. "They stayed downwind so Father wouldn't scent them."

Lennox turned his glare toward the boys, then back to me. "This is because of your 'game.' You pushed them until they did something suicidal just to get a look from you."

I looked down at my daughters. Their breathing was leveling out as Olivia's magic worked, but their faces were still tear-stained, and their small hands were still gripped tightly in the fabric of my shirt. They wouldn't let go. Even in their sleep, they were holding onto me.

Chapter 686: We dont hate you

Levi's POV

I stood there and watched Olivia work. The flesh knit together before my eyes. Muscle, skin, bone—seamless. Not a mark was left behind. Her power was terrifying in its precision: incredible, controlled, and divine.

The girls' breathing slowly evened out. The tightness in their faces softened. Their small fingers loosened their grip on my shirt as the pain left their bodies. Then, as the last of the magic faded, they both slipped into a deep, healing sleep. Their lashes rested against their cheeks, their faces pale but peaceful.

Olivia exhaled slowly, brushing her fingers gently over their hair. "They'll sleep for a few hours," she said quietly. "The magic drained the shock from their systems."

Olivia stepped forward softly. "You all should leave. Let me stay with them."

I nodded once. We filed out of the room, and the moment the door closed behind us, the air changed. It turned sharp. Heavy.

"Say it," I muttered.

The silence stretched. Then, Lennox spoke first.

"You see what your games caused?" he said, his voice dangerously calm. "The girls were hurt, Levi."

Louis stepped forward, no longer the peacemaker. "How far were you going to take this?" he snapped. "They are children. Your pride almost got them killed."

Their words hit hard. I clenched my jaw. "It's not my fault," I shot back. "Where were the guards? Why weren't they watching the house? How did two little girls walk out without anyone noticing?"

Lennox's eyes flared. "Don't you dare turn this on us," he growled. "If it wasn't for your stupid game, they wouldn't have felt desperate enough to follow you."

"They followed because they chose to!" I barked back. "I didn't tell them to come!"

"You pushed them!" Louis roared. "You ignored them for days! What did you think was going to happen?"

"They needed discipline!" I thundered.

"They needed their father!" Lennox shot back.

The words landed like a punch. My chest tightened. For a split second, guilt flickered. Then, Louis said something that made the room go still.

"If this is how you're going to be," he spat bitterly, "then maybe you shouldn't have woken up at all."

The silence that followed was suffocating. Even Louis seemed to realize what he had just said. My body went cold.

Louis's face drained of color. "I didn't mean that," he said quickly, stepping forward. "Levi—I didn't mean it like that."

Lennox turned sharply toward him, his gaze sharp and warning. "Watch your mouth," Lennox said quietly.

Louis swallowed hard, looking at me now. "I'm sorry," he said again. "I was angry."

I didn't answer. Because the truth? It hurt. Not because I believed him, but because a small, broken part of me wondered if they had all been better off while I was asleep. And then I remembered saying these exact words to Lennox.

Lennox's jaw was tight, but his voice lowered slightly. "Don't take to heart what Louis said..."

I looked at my hands. They were still shaking. "I would never hurt them," I said hoarsely.

"We know," Louis said quietly this time. "I'm sorry for what I said... I didn't mean it."

I nodded and didn't say a word. I just turned and walked back to my room, Louis's words echoing in the silence of the hallway.

Hours passed. I sat in the darkness of my room, staring at my hands, seeing the ghost of the blood that had been there earlier. Eventually, the moonlight shifted across the floor, and I knew I couldn't stay away any longer. I needed to see them.

I walked to the girls' room and pushed the door open quietly. I expected to see them sleeping, but instead, two pairs of bright eyes snapped toward me.

"Father Levi!"

The cry was simultaneous. Before I could even take a step into the room, they were out of bed—limping slightly but moving fast. They collided with me, their small arms wrapping around my waist and legs, clinging to me as if I might dissolve into mist if they let go.

"You came back," Lyra sobbed into my shirt. "We thought you were going to leave again."

I sat on the edge of the bed, pulling them both into my lap. "I'm here. I'm right here."

"We don't hate you, Daddy," Lana whispered, her face red from crying. She looked up at me with raw honesty. "We were just... we were so angry. You weren't there. You wouldn't wake up, and everyone was sad, and we thought you didn't want to come back to us."

"We were mean because we wanted to hurt you back for leaving," Lyra confessed, her voice small. "But we don't want to be mean anymore. We'll be good girls. We'll listen. We'll be kind—just please don't ignore us. Please don't look away again."

My heart, which I had tried so hard to keep guarded and "disciplined," finally shattered. I tucked their heads under my chin, my own eyes stinging.

"I'm sorry," I rasped. "I was angry too. But I will never, ever look away again. I promise."

Lana pulled back slightly, her big eyes searching mine. "Do you love us, Father Levi? Even when we're brats?"

I managed a small, tired smile and kissed the top of her head. "I love you more than anything in this world."

"More than anything?" a soft, teasing voice drifted from the doorway.

I looked up to see Olivia leaning against the frame, her eyes shimmering with relief and affection. She had been watching us.

"Even more than me, Levi?" she teased, though her smile was full of warmth.

I looked at my daughters, who were now giggling through their tears, and then back at the woman whom I love more than my life.

"It's a different kind of love, Olivia," I said, my voice steady for the first time all day. "But tonight? Yeah. Maybe even a little more than you."

Olivia let out a soft laugh and walked over, resting her hand on my shoulder. For the first time since I'd woken up, the house didn't feel too big. It felt just right.

Chapter 687: Avoiding Me

Olivia's POV

The dining hall finally felt like a home again. For the first time in what felt like an eternity, the air wasn't thick with tension.

Breakfast was lively, filled with the sounds of clinking silverware and the children's chatter. The boys and girls were actually talking to each other—no more cold glares or hissed insults. When it was time for lessons, the twins and the boys stood up, exchanging quick hugs and kissing me goodbye before scurrying off together.

Lennox was the first to leave. He leaned down, his massive frame casting a shadow over me as he pressed a firm, lingering kiss to my lips.

"I have a meeting with the border council," he murmured, his thumb grazing my cheek. "I'll be back by mid-afternoon."

Louis was next. He moved, leaning over to kiss my forehead and then dropping down to plant a gentle kiss on my stomach, whispering a quiet "hello" to the life growing inside me.

"I need to be at the training grounds," Louis said, looking over at Levi. "The new recruits are messy."

"I'm joining you," Levi added, standing up. He looked strong—no cane, no limp—just the formidable Alpha I remembered. He offered me a small, tight smile, the kind that didn't quite reach his eyes, and began to walk away.

I watched him go, and a cold realization settled in my chest. Ever since he woke up, Levi had been different. He was a father again, yes. He was an Alpha again, certainly. But as a lover? He was a ghost. He hadn't kissed me. He hadn't reached for me. He avoided my touch as if I were made of glass—or fire.

"Levi," I called out, my voice ringing clearly through the hall.

He stopped, his back stiffening, but he didn't turn around immediately. Louis and Lennox had already cleared the room, leaving just the two of us in the sudden silence of the morning.

"Wait," I said, standing up and smoothing my dress. "We need to talk."

He finally turned, his expression guarded, his hands shoved deep into his pockets. "I should get to the pits, Olivia. The boys are waiting."

"The boys can wait five minutes," I said, walking toward him until I was close enough to scent the woodsmoke and rain that always clung to him. "You're avoiding me."

He looked down at his boots, his jaw working. "I'm not avoiding you. I'm just... getting my bearings."

"You kissed the girls' foreheads. You ruffled the boys' hair," I countered, stepping closer into his space. "But you haven't touched me once. Not like you used to. Why?"

Levi's gaze shifted from his boots to the far wall, anywhere but my eyes. The silence stretched between us, heavy and suffocating. The man who used to pull me into his lap the moment I entered a room now felt like a stranger standing in my mate's skin.

"Levi, look at me," I commanded softly.

He finally complied, and the vulnerability in his dark eyes made my breath hitch. It wasn't anger. It was a profound, aching uncertainty.

"A lot has happened, Olivia," he said, his voice barely a whisper. "Four years. That's a lifetime for a wolf. I'm scared of touching you because I don't know who you are now... or what we are."

"What do you mean?" I asked, my heart sinking.

"Do you still like the way I touch you? Do you still like the things we used to do?" He took a step back, finally pulling his hands from his pockets, and I saw them tremble. "I don't know what you've become in the last four years. I'm worried that the man who went into that coma isn't the man you want anymore."

I understood him then. He thought the time had eroded the foundation of us. He thought the woman he had left had outgrown the love we shared.

I moved closer, stepping firmly into his personal space, and reached out to grab the front of his shirt. I forced him to feel the heat radiating from my body.

"Nothing has changed, Levi," I told him, my voice unwavering. "You are still my mate. You are still the man who can make my soul quiet. I am still the same Olivia who loves you, who waited for you, and who ached for you every single night."

He searched my face for a long moment, looking for any sign of doubt. Finding none, a ghost of a smirk finally touched his lips—the first real spark of the old Levi I had seen all morning.

"So," he murmured, his voice dropping into that low, gravelly tone that always made my knees weak. "I can kiss you then?"

He didn't wait for an answer. He smiled and pulled me toward him, his hands sliding down to grip my waist. When our lips met, it was like a dam breaking. Goddess, how I missed this. He was still so good at it—the way he claimed my mouth, the way his scent overwhelmed my senses.

He shifted his grip, his large hands sliding down to grab my ass, squeezing firmly as he pulled me flush against his hips. I let out a sharp moan, my fingers tangling in his hair as I deepened the kiss, my tongue seeking his. As we pressed closer, I felt the hardness of his cock against my thigh.

I pulled back just an inch, a playful smile dancing on my lips. He looked momentarily embarrassed, a slight flush creeping up his neck as he realized I knew exactly how much he wanted me. I couldn't help it—I laughed, the sound bright and full of genuine joy.

"I missed that too," I whispered.

He leaned down, pressing a lingering, tender kiss to my forehead. The embarrassment faded, replaced by a look of fierce, renewed devotion.

"I have to go," he said, though he didn't let go of me for another heartbeat. "The training grounds are calling, and I think I have a lot of energy to burn off now."

He gave my hip one last squeeze before turning to head toward the door, his stride confident and strong. For the first time since he woke up, he wasn't just a father or an Alpha. He was my mate.

Chapter 688: Again

Levi's POV

The training ground smelled like dirt and sweat. The sun was high in the sky, beating down on us as the young fighters ran laps and practiced their moves. You could hear grunts, heavy breathing, and the sound of feet hitting the ground. Dust rose into the air every time someone fell.

We had been training all morning.

My arms felt heavy. My legs burned. Sweat ran down my back and soaked my shirt. But I didn't mind the pain. It felt good. It reminded me that I was strong. That I was healing. That I was still me.

For the first time in a long while, I didn't feel lost.

The kiss I shared with Olivia earlier was still warm in my chest. I tried not to think about it too much, but it kept coming back to me. The way she looked at me. The way she held on.

I caught myself smiling.

I felt like a kid who had been away from his favorite candy for years and finally got a small taste again. Just a little taste—but enough to remember how sweet it was.

After training, Lennox, Louis, and I sat down on a wooden bench near the edge of the field. Our chests rose and fell as we tried to catch our breath. No one spoke at first. The fighters were still moving around us, but between the three of us, there was a strange kind of peace.

For once, things didn't feel tense.

For once, it felt calm.

Lennox wiped his face with a towel and leaned back. "Now that you're back to yourself, Levi," he said, "we can finally ask Olivia to marry us again."

I stopped moving. I was holding my water bottle halfway to my mouth. "Again?" I asked, confused. "What do you mean again? Didn't you guys already have the wedding while I was gone?"

The air went quiet. Lennox turned to look at me, his face calm but firm. "How could we marry her without you?" he asked. "How could we stand there and call her our wife when one of us was missing?"

Louis nodded. "We did a small hand-fasting ceremony," he explained. "It was to keep the pack strong and united. She has been our Luna in every way. But we never had the real wedding. We never said our vows."

My heart beat faster.

"We decided," Louis continued, "that we would not fully marry her until you woke up. Until you were strong enough to stand beside us. Until you could put the ring on her finger yourself."

I couldn't speak for a moment. I had spent days feeling left behind. I thought they had moved on without me. I thought they had built a life while I was stuck in darkness.

"You waited four years?" I asked quietly.

"We would have waited a hundred," Louis said with a small smile. "It wouldn't be a real wedding without you, Levi." He paused. "And Olivia would have refused," he added. "She said she would only do a wedding when her 'Grumpy Alpha' was back."

My throat felt tight. I looked down at my hands. Just hours ago, they were shaking from shame and doubt. Now they were steady. "Then we shouldn't make her wait any longer," I said, smiling.

Lennox laughed loudly and hit my shoulder. "Good," he said. "Because I already have a plan."

"So," I said, leaning forward, my curiosity piqued. "What's the plan? I know you, Lennox—it's probably something loud and over the top."

Lennox grinned, a mischievous glint in his eyes as he leaned in closer. For the next ten minutes, he laid out the entire strategy. He talked about the location, the way we would involve the children, and how we would catch Olivia completely off guard. By the time he finished, even Louis was impressed, nodding along with a satisfied smile.

"It's perfect," Louis admitted. "She won't see it coming."

I leaned back, thinking about the woman who had held our lives together for four years. She deserved the world, and this plan was a start.

Olivia's POV

The house felt strangely empty after breakfast. Lennox, Louis, and Levi had all left in a rush, muttering something about a "mandatory council meeting." I sighed, settling into the sofa with a book, but I couldn't focus. The silence felt heavy.

Then, I heard soft footsteps. Liam approached me first. He wasn't running or playing; he looked serious, almost formal. He held out a single, deep red rose.

"Fathers told me to give you this," he said softly. He handed me a small, cream-colored note.

"For being the anchor that held us steady when the sea was rough."

I blinked, my heart fluttering. "Liam, what is—" but he just smiled and walked away.

An hour later, I was in the kitchen when Leon and Leo burst in. They weren't their usual loud selves. They were holding bright sunflowers, their petals glowing in the sunlight.

"This is for you, Mom," Leo said, his voice unusually gentle.

"For the light you kept burning in the windows so we could find our way home."

I clutched the flowers to my chest. Something was happening. My wolf paced inside me, sensing a change in the air—a sweetness I hadn't felt in years.

By mid-afternoon, the twins found me in the sunroom. Lana and Lyra were dressed in their favorite dresses. They were carrying a bouquet of white lilies, and their eyes were bright with secrets. "This is for you, Mommy," Lyra whispered, tucking a flower into my hair.

Lana handed me the third note.

"For the forgiveness we didn't deserve, but you gave anyway."

I was crying now, soft tears of relief. The children gathered around me and led me toward the back doors. "It's time," Liam said, taking my hand.

The garden was transformed. It was my favorite place, but now it looked like a dream. Hundreds of tiny lanterns hung from the old oak trees, casting a golden glow over the rosebushes. The three of them were waiting. They stood in a semi-circle near the fountain, dressed in dark suits, looking like the powerful Alphas they were. But their expressions were soft—vulnerable.

I walked toward them, my breath hitching in my throat. The children stepped back, forming a line of little witnesses. Lennox took the first step forward. He took my hand, his large thumb brushing over my knuckles.

"Olivia," he began, his voice deep and vibrating. "I know our journey hasn't been perfect. I know I've been hard, and I know we've faced situations that nearly broke us. But I promise to spend every day of my life proving that you are my queen. I will protect your heart with everything I am. Will you still marry us?"

Then Louis moved in, his eyes shimmering with that familiar kindness. He reached out, his hand resting briefly on my stomach before he took my other hand.

"You are the glue, Olivia. When Levi was gone, you were the one who kept us from falling apart. We didn't have the wedding because a Trinity isn't a Trinity if a piece is missing. We waited because we wanted you to have all of us. I promise to be your comfort and your joy, forever. Will you still marry us?"

Finally, Levi stepped into the center. He looked at me with so much raw love and regret that I almost couldn't look away. He took a small velvet box from his pocket but didn't open it yet.

"I know that I don't deserve you, but I love you, Olivia, and I will spend the rest of my life making sure you never doubt my love. You are my soul, Olivia. Will you still marry us?"

I looked at the three of them. My mates. My world. The air was still, the only sound being the soft splash of the fountain and the quiet breathing of our children. I didn't just say yes. I felt the word rise up from my very soul.

"I never stopped wanting to be yours," I whispered, reaching out to pull them all closer. "Yes. A thousand times, yes."

The children all started clapping. "Does this mean the wedding is happening soon?" Liam asked excitedly, looking up at us with wide eyes.

Leon jumped up and down. "Yes! Are we getting a real wedding?"

Lana held her hands together. "Will Mommy wear a big dress?"

Lyra gasped. "Can we throw flowers?"

The boys looked at Lennox with shining eyes. Lennox smiled slowly—that confident Alpha smile that always made my heart race. "Yes," he said clearly.

The children squealed. "This Saturday," he added.

The garden went silent for a second as everyone processed it. "This Saturday?" Louis repeated with a grin.

Levi laughed softly. "That's five days away."

Lennox looked at me then. "Are you ready?" he asked gently.

Everything in me felt warm and steady. For so long, our life had been storms and broken pieces. But right now, standing here with our children and the three men I loved, it felt whole. I placed one hand on my stomach, rubbing it softly without thinking.

"Yes," I said. My voice didn't shake this time. "I'm ready."

The children cheered again, rushing toward us and hugging our legs. Lennox stepped closer and pulled me into his chest. Louis wrapped his arms around both of us. Levi came behind me, resting his hand over mine on my stomach.

Chapter 689: Preparation

Olivia's POV

The morning after the proposal felt like waking up in a different world. The golden sunlight streaming through the bedroom windows felt warmer, and for the first time in four years, the air in the house didn't taste like grief. I lay in the center of the massive bed, watching the three men I loved as they slept. Lennox was a wall of muscle to my right, Louis was curled peacefully to my left, and Levi was sprawled across the foot of the bed, his hand still resting possessively on my ankle even in sleep.

I felt the tiny flutter in my stomach—the new life growing inside me. With the Trinity finally whole, I felt strong enough to face anything.

I walked down to the kitchen, expecting the usual morning chaos. Usually, the boys would be chasing each other with wooden spoons, and the twins would be complaining about their hair. Instead, I found Liam sitting alone at the long oak table.

He was only eight years old, but as I watched him from the doorway, he looked forty. He wasn't eating his pancakes. Instead, he was focused on a small whetstone, carefully sharpening the edge of a wooden training dagger. His face was set in a hard, serious line—a perfect imitation of Lennox when he was in a foul mood.

"Liam?" I said softly, stepping into the room. "Why aren't you eating, honey?"

He didn't look up immediately. He finished one long stroke against the wood before setting the dagger down. "I'm not hungry, Mom. I have a lot to do today. With the wedding coming up, there will be a lot of strangers on our lands. Security needs to be tighter."

I felt a pang in my heart. "Security? Liam, you're eight. That's what the sentries and your fathers are for."

He finally looked at me, and his eyes were so intense it was startling. "Fathers will be busy for the wedding."

He stood up, tucked his dagger into his belt, and marched out toward the training grounds without a single smile. I stood there, stunned. My sweet, playful boy was trying to carry the weight of the entire pack on his small shoulders.

Later that morning, I went out to the training grounds to find the children. I expected to see the boys playing and the girls sitting in the shade. What I saw instead stopped me in my tracks.

The twins, Lana and Lyra, weren't wearing their usual princess dresses. They were in sturdy leather tunics and leggings. Their hair was pulled back in tight, messy braids. And they weren't playing with dolls—they were standing in a circle with Liam.

"Again," Liam barked. He sounded exactly like a drill sergeant.

Lana and Lyra took a deep breath and lunged at him. They were small, but they moved with a desperate kind of speed. Liam parried their wooden sticks with ease, but he wasn't being mean. He was teaching.

"Footing!" Liam shouted. "If your feet are too close, I'll knock you over. Like this!"

He swept Lyra's leg out from under her. She hit the dirt with a thud. I almost ran forward to catch her, but I stopped myself when I saw Lyra's face. She wasn't crying. She looked determined. She scrambled back up, wiped the dirt from her nose, and growled.

"I won't let a trap catch me again, Liam!" she yelled, swinging her stick with renewed fury.

I watched them for a long time. The accident in the woods had changed them. The twins were no longer content to be "broken birds," and Liam was no longer content to just be a big brother. He felt like he had failed them when they got hurt, and now he was trying to turn them into warriors so it would never happen again.

"They've been at it for two hours," a voice said behind me.

I turned to see Levi leaning against a wooden pillar. He was watching them with a mixture of pride and deep sadness.

"Liam told me this morning that he has to be 'the shield' while we are busy with the wedding," Levi said, his voice husky. "He's trying to grow up too fast, Olivia. He's mimicking my worst traits because he thinks being hard is the only way to be safe."

"We have to help him, Levi," I whispered. "He's an eight-year-old boy, not a soldier."

"I know," Levi sighed. "But look at the girls. They're actually listening to him. They trust him more than they trust us right now because he was the one who was here when I wasn't."

The five-day countdown to the wedding was a whirlwind of activity. The mansion was filled with the scent of lilies and roasting meat. Tailors were running around with measuring tapes, and pack members were arriving from all over the territory to see the Trinity officially joined.

But through all the noise, I kept my eyes on Liam.

On the second day, I caught him in the armory. He was trying to lift a real steel sword, his small muscles straining and his face turning red.

"Liam, put that down!" I cried, rushing over to take the heavy weapon from him. "You're going to hurt yourself."

"I have to be strong enough!" he yelled, his voice cracking. "Everyone says I and my brothers are the next Alpha, but I'm just... I'm just small."

I sat down on a crate and pulled him into my lap. He was getting big, but he still fit against my chest. I rocked him slowly as he finally let go and sobbed into my shoulder.

"Liam, listen to me," I said, lifting his chin. "Being an Alpha isn't about being the strongest or the scariest. Look at your Father Louis. He leads with kindness. Look at your Father Lennox. He leads with wisdom. And your Father Levi? He's learning that leading with fear is a mistake."

"But I want to be like them," he sniffled.

"You will be," I promised. "But right now, your job is to be Liam. Your sisters don't need a general; they need a brother who will play tag with them. I don't need a guard; I need my son."

As the wedding day approached, the house became a beautiful mess. On Wednesday, the twins decided they wanted to help with my dress fitting.

"Mommy, you look like a star!" Lana gasped as I stepped out in the white silk gown. The lace was delicate, and the dress was designed to flow comfortably over my small pregnancy bump.

"Can we have swords under our dresses?" Lyra asked, her eyes gleaming.

I laughed, the first real laugh I'd had in days. "No swords at the ceremony, Lyra. But maybe we can get you some silver daggers for your belts after the vows."

They cheered, jumping around the room. Liam stood by the door, watching. He wasn't holding a wooden knife for once. He was holding a tray of tea he had brought for me. He walked over and set it down carefully.

"You look beautiful, Mom," he said quietly. Then, he looked at his sisters. "If you want to be warriors, you have to learn to be graceful too. A wolf is silent before it strikes."

The girls stopped jumping and tried to walk "gracefully," which ended up looking like they were walking on eggshells. We all ended up in a heap of laughter on the floor, the heavy tension finally breaking.

Friday night was the eve of the wedding. The pack had set up a massive bonfire in the clearing. Everyone was celebrating.

I sat on a raised platform with Lennox and Louis, watching the flames. Levi was down on the grass, sitting with the children. I watched as he pulled Liam aside. They talked for a long time. I couldn't hear them, but I saw Levi take off his own leather wristband—the one he had worn throughout his life—and strap it onto Liam's arm.

Liam looked at the gift like it was made of gold. He hugged Levi, a real, tight hug, and for the first time in a week, he looked like a little boy again.

The twins were running around with the other pack children, their new "training" making them the fastest ones in the game of hide-and-seek. They weren't the fragile princesses they used to be.

Lennox leaned over and kissed my cheek. "Everything is ready, Olivia. The pack is united. The children are safe. And tomorrow, you are officially ours."

Louis took my hand and kissed my palm. "The Trinity is whole. And this little one," he said, nodding toward my stomach, "will be born into a world of peace."

I looked out at the fire, at my children, and at my three mates. We had many Chapters of a new life ahead of us. There would be rogue attacks, there would be the challenges of a difficult pregnancy, and there would be Liam's journey toward becoming a leader.

But as I watched Liam finally join the other kids in their game, his new wristband gleaming in the firelight, I knew we were ready.

Chapter 690: Wedding

The sun was high. The sky was blue and clear. It was a perfect day for a wedding. White roses were everywhere. They lined the long walk toward the altar. Soft music played in the breeze. The guests sat in their chairs. They were all smiling and whispering about how happy they felt.

Olivia stood at the start of the aisle. She looked like an angel. Her dress was white and simple, but it made her glow like the sun. Her hair was styled in a bun, giving a clear view of her V-shaped face. Her eyes were bright with love, not fear.

At the end of the aisle stood three men:

Lennox.

Levi.

Louis.

They all wore black suits. They looked at Olivia like she was the only person in the world. Next to them stood the boys. They wore small suits. They tried to look like grown-up guards, but they were smiling too much to be serious.

Olivia began to walk, with the girls in front of her pouring flowers on the floor. Everything went silent.

Lennox's face became soft.

Levi swallowed hard to keep from crying.

Louis wiped a tear from his eye before anyone saw it.

She reached them, and they took her hands. Their grip was warm and strong. The priest smiled at them. "Today," he said, "we join these souls together. We join them in love and in strength."

Then, it was time for the vows.

Lennox spoke first. His voice was deep. "I promise to protect you, even when you are strong enough to protect yourself. I will fight for you forever."

Levi went next. He looked into her eyes. "I promise to listen to you. I promise to really see you. You will never be alone again."

Louis spoke last. He squeezed her hand. "I promise to choose you every single day. On the good days, and especially on the hard days."

Olivia had tears in her eyes. "I promise to stop running," she whispered. "I promise to trust you. I will love you the way you deserve to be loved."

The priest smiled wider. "Then, by the power given to me, I pronounce you—"

BOOM!

A loud explosion shook the earth. The ground trembled. The guests screamed. Dark smoke filled the air. Suddenly, arrows flew across the field.

"Rogues!" someone yelled.

The enemies ran out from the trees. One rogue shouted, "Kill the Alphas!"

Lennox moved fast. He pushed Olivia behind his back. Levi and Louis stepped forward like a wall of steel. Guards ran to the front and rushed the children away to safety. More rogues charged toward the altar. Without waiting, the three brothers shifted. Their clothes tore apart as their bodies changed. Seconds later, three massive, powerful wolves stood where the men had been. They were beautiful and terrifying.

Olivia's eyes flashed with power. She felt a fire inside her. A rogue ran at her with a knife. She didn't move. She just lifted her hand. A great wind slammed into the man and threw him across the field like a toy.

The three wolves fought together. Lennox lunged at two rogues at once. Levi knocked another down with a heavy blow. Louis snapped his jaws, protecting their side. They fought back-to-back. They were a team. They were protecting their home.

One rogue tried to sneak up behind Olivia. A deep, scary growl shook the air. Before Olivia could react, Lennox tackled the man to the grass. Lennox shifted back into his human form. He was naked and covered in dust, but his eyes burned with anger.

"You touch my wife," Lennox growled, "and you die."

The last rogue tried to run away. Levi chased him down. Louis blocked the path. In just a few minutes, the fight was over. The field was quiet again. The smoke began to blow away.

The guests slowly stood up. Everyone was safe. No one was lost.

Olivia walked toward the three brothers. They shifted back into men. They stood there breathing hard. They were naked and had blood on their skin from the fight. Quickly, the guards ran over and handed them blankets and new clothes to cover themselves.

Olivia looked at them and shook her head. "You just had to ruin the perfect moment," she said softly.

Lennox gave her a tired smile. Levi laughed. Louis wiped a bit of blood from his lip and grinned. The priest stood behind the altar. He was shaking a little bit. He cleared his throat. "Should... should I finish?"

Everyone let out a shaky laugh. The priest picked up his book again. "By the power given to me, I now pronounce you husbands and wife!"

Lennox pulled Olivia into his arms. Levi and Louis joined them. They all kissed her right there, in the middle of the mess. They kissed her in front of the battlefield.

Despite the smoke and the dirt, the party did not stop. The pack members were strong, and they were used to fighting. They helped the servants clean the garden. They put the chairs back in place and turned the music back up.

Lennox, Levi, and Louis went inside for a moment to wash the blood from their skin and put on fresh suits. When they came back out, they stayed close to Olivia, their hands constantly touching her waist or her shoulders to make sure she was really okay.

The smell of roasted meat and sweet cake soon filled the air, hiding the smell of the smoke. The children came back out from the safe room, running to Olivia and hugging her tight.

"Did you see the big wind, Mom?" Liam asked, his eyes wide. "You went whoosh!"

Olivia laughed and kissed his forehead. "I did. But I hope I never have to do it again."

As the guests began to dance and eat, Golden walked up to the three husbands. His face was very serious. He bowed his head to Olivia and the Alphas.

"Alpha Lennox, Alphas Levi and Louis," Golden said quietly. "We have finished counting the bodies."

Lennox frowned. This was the first time rogues were able to gain access into their pack in years. Their pack was one of the most secure and safest packs. How the hell did those rogues get in?

Lennox stepped forward, his eyes narrowing. "How many?"

"Fifteen rogues in total," Golden reported. "But there is something strange. They did not come from the forest like we thought. They came through the old tunnels under the south border. Those tunnels were supposed to be blocked years ago."

Levi's jaw tightened. "If they knew about the tunnels, they had help. Someone told them how to get in."

Louis looked at the happy crowd dancing nearby, then back at the guard. "Did any of them survive? We need names."

"We have one," Silas said. "He is badly hurt, but he is alive. We have him in the cells now."