

The Alphas forbidden mate

Chapter 4

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Isabella's POV

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My knuckles turned white as I clenched my fists, struggling to steady my breath. Standing in front of Zachary's stepbrother, Asher, felt like my worst nightmare coming to life. I'd known this moment would come, but I'd prayed—desperately—that it wouldn't be tonight.

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"Nice to meet you, Mrs. Hales ," he said, extending his hand.

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His voice was smooth, but the grin tugging at his lips made my stomach twist. My palms felt damp, and I hesitated before taking his hand in a quick, shaky shake, pulling away almost instantly.

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"I—um—I need to use the restroom. Excuse me," I mumbled, not waiting for his response before turning and hurrying away.

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Once inside, I gripped the sink and stared at my reflection in the mirror. My cheeks were flushed, my eyes wide with panic.

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Calm down. You can't mess this up. End it tonight.

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I splashed cold water on my face and whispered the words again like a mantra. But just as I exhaled, trying to steady my nerves, a knock on the door startled me. Assuming someone needed the restroom, I unlocked it without looking and turned back to the sink.

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When I glanced at the mirror, my heart dropped.

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Asher.

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He leaned casually against the doorframe, his eyes dark with amusement.

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I gasped and spun around, but before I could say anything, his palm covered my mouth.

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“Shh.” His voice was low, almost playful, but his eyes said otherwise. “Unless you want everyone out there to know what we’re talking about, you’ll stay quiet.”

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I froze, my breathing shallow as he smirked.

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“I’m going to let you go now,” he added, and slowly removed his hand.

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“What the hell are you doing here? This is the ladies’ room!” My voice shook as I backed away from him. “You need to leave. Now.”

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“Leave?” He took a step closer, his eyes never leaving mine. “You want me to just walk away?”

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His hand reached out, brushing my cheek, but I slapped it away. The grin slipped from his face, replaced by something colder, darker. Before I could react, he grabbed my arm, his grip firm.

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“You really thought you could just sleep with me and walk away like nothing happened?” His voice was low, but the sharp edge in it sent shivers down my spine.

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“I—I was drunk! I didn’t know—” My words tumbled out as I tried to pull free. “It was a mistake. I’m sorry, okay? Just let me go.”

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“You’re sorry?” He leaned in, his breath warm against my ear as he whispered, “You’re going to take responsibility for this.”

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I stiffened as his lips brushed against my earlobe, and his voice dropped even lower.

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“This scent...” He inhaled deeply, his hand sliding down my arm. “I’ve missed this scent.”

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Goosebumps rippled across my skin, and I swallowed hard, forcing myself not to react.

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“Stop it!” I hissed, trying to push him away, but my voice came out weaker than I wanted. “What do you think you’re doing? I’m your brother’s wife.”

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The words hung between us, my voice barely above a whisper.

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“I don’t care who you belong to.” Asher’s voice dropped, low and sharp. “What I do know is that I’ve tasted you—and I can’t let you go.” His eyes bore into mine, dark and hungry, making it hard to breathe. “You don’t get to decide when this ends. I call the shots.”

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Before I could push him away, his lips trailed along my neck, leaving heat in their wake. My breath hitched, and for a moment, my body betrayed me—frozen under his touch.

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“Enough!” The word burst out of me as I shoved him back, my chest rising and falling with shaky breaths. “You have no decency! You’re nothing but a pervert.” My voice trembled, but I held my

ground. “I was drunk! I made a mistake! But you—you weren’t drunk. You knew exactly what you were doing when you slept with a married woman!”

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A low chuckle rumbled from him, and it sent a chill down my spine. His smirk deepened, and the dark glint in his eyes made my pulse quicken.

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“Fiesty.” He tilted his head, looking at me like I was prey. “I like that. Congratulations, Mrs. Isabella. You’ve managed to grab my full attention.” He stepped closer, and my back hit the wall. “You won’t escape me.”

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His words left my mouth dry, and panic clawed at my chest. What have I done?

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“Please,” I whispered, my voice softer now. “Don’t ruin this party for me. I made a mistake, and I’ll face the consequences. But not here. Not tonight.”

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For the first time, something flickered in his eyes—confusion, maybe even curiosity—but it was gone as quickly as it came.

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“I don’t take orders,” he said, closing the distance between us.

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I tried to step away, but the wall behind me offered no escape. He leaned in, his lips inches from mine. I shut my eyes, bracing myself.

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Then he pulled back.

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“I’ll see you out there.” His voice was casual, almost amused. I opened my eyes just in time to see him wink before walking out the door.

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I pressed a hand against my chest, forcing air into my lungs.

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“This won’t end well,” I muttered.

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Back at the party, Asher was already mingling with guests, looking as if nothing had happened. My eyes darted to Zachary, who was standing beside his mother, unaware of the storm brewing inside me.

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Now’s my chance.

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I stepped onto the small stage, grabbing the microphone. The chatter in the room died down as all eyes turned toward me.

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“Attention, everyone!” My voice rang out, steady despite the chaos I felt inside. “Today is a joyous day, and I’m so glad you’re all here to celebrate it with us.”

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Zachary’s head snapped up. His eyes locked on mine, and he quickly moved through the crowd, reaching the stage.

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“What the hell are you doing?” he hissed, his voice low but sharp as he leaned close to me.

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I gripped the microphone tighter, my heart pounding. This is it.

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“You don’t have to worry, dear husband.” My voice rang out, steady despite the tremble in my hands. “I’m only here to make today a memorable day—for you and your mistress.”

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Gasps rippled through the crowd. Conversations died, and all eyes snapped to me.

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Zachary's face paled. "She doesn't know what she's saying!" He forced a laugh, but it sounded hollow. "She's had too much to drink tonight." He stepped closer, reaching for the microphone, but I stepped back, gripping it tighter.

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"Oh, don't worry. I'm as sober as ever." My heels clicked against the floor as I moved through the crowd, my eyes locking on her.

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Betty.

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I stopped in front of her, and her face drained of color.

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"This is even better news!" I threw my arm out, gesturing toward her. "The so-called mistress isn't just a rumor—she's right here, smiling in our faces like she's done nothing wrong."

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Betty opened her mouth, but no words came out. The whispers around us grew louder, sharp with judgment.

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"And you," I turned back to Zachary, my voice cutting through the noise, "my so-called husband, the leader you all look up to—has been cheating on me throughout our entire marriage!"

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A collective gasp echoed in the room. Zachary's jaw tightened as he reached for my arm, but I yanked it away.

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"Well, I won't stand for it anymore." My voice hardened, and I let the words fall like stones. "I want a divorce."

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The room went still. I held my ground, my chest heaving as I dared anyone to speak against me. Zachary's face darkened, but for once, he had no words.

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