

The Alphas forbidden mate

Chapter 6

Isabella's POV

O

I squinted, trying to force my eyes open. Everything blurred together, and a sharp pain throbbed in my head. When my vision finally cleared, the unfamiliar walls and sterile scent made it obvious—I was in a hospital.

O

Panic flared in my chest as I tried to move, but my body felt heavy, almost paralyzed. A drip was taped to my hand, and no matter how hard I tried, I couldn't remember how I'd ended up here. My breath hitched. The baby. My hands trembled as I pressed them against my stomach.

O

Before I could spiral further, the door creaked open. A doctor stepped in, followed by Zachary and his mother. Their faces were unreadable, cold, and carefully guarded. My pulse quickened.

O

"I see you're finally awake," the doctor said, his voice calm, offering a practiced smile. I wanted to ask about my baby, but with them in the room, I swallowed my fear and stayed quiet.

O

"You had a minor concussion, but you and the baby are fine," he added.

O

My stomach dropped. No. He wasn't supposed to say that—not in front of them.

O

"You're pregnant?!" Zachary's voice exploded, raw and angry. "And you didn't think to tell me?!"

O

The room froze.

O

"Lower your voice, Alpha," the doctor warned, his tone sharp but professional. "It won't be good for her—or the baby."

O

The word baby rang in my ears. My heart pounded, but I couldn't focus. I couldn't think.

O

"The doctor's right," Maris chimed in, her voice sickeningly sweet. She stepped closer, her eyes gleaming. "My daughter-in-law is carrying the heir of our family." Her grin stretched wider. "Don't worry, dear. I'll take very good care of you."

O

Her words felt like a prison sentence. I wanted to scream, to tell her this wasn't the plan. I was supposed to be far away from these people by now, free from their suffocating control.

O

The doctor ran a few checks, murmuring something about my vitals and discharge papers. I wanted to beg him to keep me here—to hide me from them—but no words came out.

O

Zachary walked me out of the hospital, playing the role of the devoted husband in front of everyone we passed. His arm rested firmly around my waist, as if I was something fragile—or something he needed to keep caged.

O

But I knew the truth.

O

I saw the hatred simmering beneath his forced smiles. He hated me. I hated him too. And worst of all, he was the reason I was here in the first place.

O

The car ride home was painfully quiet, filled only with the hum of the engine and the suffocating weight of unsaid words. Normally, Maris would have filled the silence with her usual taunts—reminding me how worthless I was for failing to give her grandchildren.

O

Not anymore.

O

Now I was carrying their heir. The sudden shift in their treatment felt more like a leash tightening around my neck than mercy.

O

When we finally reached the house, Zachary carried me inside as if I were precious, placing me gently on the bed. But all I could see were the ghosts of him and Betty tangled in these sheets, the echoes of their betrayal seeping into the fabric.

O

The urge to scream at him clawed at my throat. I wanted to slap him, spit in his face—anything to make him feel the disgust I felt.

O

Instead, his mother's voice pierced the room.

O

"We should have announced your pregnancy at the party," Maris said, smug and pleased with herself. "Not your silly divorce pranks."

O

Her words lit something inside me—hot, blinding rage.

O

I snapped.

O

"This child isn't Zachary's."

O

The words fell out before I could stop them. The room went still.

O

Zachary's eyes widened in shock, and Maris froze, her smile dropping like shattered glass.

O

I couldn't take the words back now—not even if I wanted to. And as their stunned expressions lingered, I realized...

O

I didn't want to.

O

"What did you just say?" Zachary's voice cut through the air like a blade, sharp and disbelieving.

O

I met his glare, forcing myself to stay steady even as my heart pounded. "The child isn't yours," I said, my voice firm and deliberate. I took a step closer, straightening my shoulders, daring him to challenge me. "You're impotent—obviously. That's why I couldn't get pregnant all these years. It was never my fault."

O

The tension in the room thickened, heavy and suffocating. Zachary's jaw tightened, his eyes darkening as fury radiated off him in waves.

O

"What did you just say, you insolent child?!" Maris's voice exploded like thunder.

O

Before I could react, her hand flew across my face. Pain shot through my cheek as the impact sent me sprawling onto the cold, hard floor. Blood filled my mouth. I spat it out and let out a sharp, bitter laugh that echoed around the room.

O

"How dare you disgrace my son!" Maris seethed, her chest heaving with rage.

O

I pushed myself up slowly, wiping the blood from my lips. My gaze locked onto hers, unyielding. "You're only angry because it's your son being exposed, right?" My voice trembled, but I forced it to stay strong. "Where was this anger when I was the one being blamed? When I was humiliated—called barren and worthless?" I took a step closer, my voice rising. "Now that the truth's out—that he's the one who can't give you your precious heir—what are you going to do about it?"

O

Maris's eyes burned with fury, but it was Zachary who snapped.

O

"Who did you cheat on me with?!" he roared, his body trembling as his primal form pushed to the surface.

O

My breath caught. I stumbled back, heart racing as claws extended from his fingers, his frame expanding with raw power.

O

“Zachary—stop!” Maris stepped in front of him, placing a firm hand on his chest.

O

For a moment, I thought he’d ignore her, that he’d tear me apart right there. But then, with a low snarl, he shifted back into his human form, muscles still taut with rage.

O

“Don’t touch her,” Maris said, her voice unexpectedly calm. She reached for his arm, steadying him. “She’s pregnant. You can’t hurt her.”

O

Zachary’s head snapped toward her. “She betrayed me! She doesn’t deserve to live!”

O

I scoffed, folding my arms despite the tremor in my hands. The sound only seemed to stoke his fury further.

O

“You wanted a divorce, right?” he spat, his voice dripping venom. “Fine. I’ll give it to you.”

O

Relief swept through me like a flood, and for the first time in weeks, I let myself feel hope. But before I could savor it, Maris’s voice shattered it all.

O

“You can’t divorce her.”

O

Her words slammed into me, and the flicker of hope inside me died.

O

Maris’s eyes locked onto mine, cold and unyielding. “The world can’t know that you’re infertile, Zachary.” Her voice was low but sharp, each word laced with authority. “She’ll stay with you, and

you'll raise this child as yours. We'll protect our reputation—and secure what we've worked so hard for.”

O

My stomach twisted. I felt sick, the walls closing in around me. What had they worked so hard for? What kind of plan were they willing to protect at all costs?

O

I took a shaky breath, my voice breaking the silence. “I'll tell everyone the truth. The world will know this child isn't yours.”

O

Maris's hand shot out before I could move. Her claws dragged against my skin as she gripped my chin, tilting my face up to meet her eyes.

O

“You won't do such a thing—or believe me, I'll kill your sick mother and make sure you never see her again,” Maris hissed, her claws pressing deeper into my skin.

O

I froze. The air felt too thin, my chest tightening as her words sank in. My eyes widened, panic creeping into my veins like poison.

O

“You'll be the good, obedient wife you've always been,” she continued, her voice low but sharp enough to cut through me. “And you'll keep quiet about this.” Her claws dragged against my jaw before she shoved me back, letting go with enough force to make me stumble.

O

I pressed my hand against my stinging chin, my breath uneven. My skin burned where her nails had dug in, but it was nothing compared to the fear clawing at my insides.

O

“You'll regret this.” Zachary's voice snapped me out of my thoughts. His glare was sharp, filled with loathing as he stood at the door. “You'll regret what you did to me.”

O

He turned and stormed out, his footsteps echoing through the hallway. Maris followed, her heels clicking against the polished floor like a countdown to something far worse.

O

The room fell silent. My chest heaved as I stumbled toward the nightstand, yanking open the drawer and pulling out my phone. My fingers trembled as I dialed my mother's caretaker.

O

Come on. Pick up.

O

The ringing seemed endless, each second tightening the knot in my stomach. Finally, the call dropped, and a robotic voice informed me the number was unreachable.

O

"No," I whispered, my pulse quickening. I dialed again. Same result.

O

Not reachable.

O

My legs wobbled, and I sank onto the edge of the bed, gripping the phone so tightly my knuckles turned white.

O

"What if—" The thought broke free before I could stop it, but I slapped my hand over my mouth, silencing the words.

O

Tears stung my eyes, but I blinked them back, refusing to let them fall. I had to stay strong. I had to find out if my mother was safe. If Maris had touched her—if she had even come close—there would be no forgiveness.

O

My fingers hovered over the phone, ready to dial again, but hesitation rooted me in place.

O

What if I was already too late?

O